
Between State Loyalty and National Identity

Electoral Behaviour in Inter-War Poland

JEFFREY S. KOPSTEIN and JASON WITTENBERG

RECENT HISTORIOGRAPHY has painted a complex and nuanced picture of the relationship among ethnic groups in inter-war Poland. Rather than study discrete ethnic groups as cohabiting solitudes, a new generation of historians maintains it is no longer plausible or even possible to tell the story of Poland without reference to ethnically non-Polish citizens. Especially evocative have been memoirs that focus on particular towns. Shimon Redlich's scholarly memoir of his native Brzeżany, Eva Hoffman's riveting study of Brańsk, and Norman Salsitz's panorama of his childhood in Kolbuszowa all provide us with first-hand accounts of the multitude of ways in which ethnic groups interacted and collectively experienced the economic and political tribulations of the inter-war Republic.¹ Padraic Kenney elegantly formulates the general point in referring to the role of Jews in Poland's national identity, a point just as readily made for Ukrainians, Germans, and Belarusians: 'they were not simply "also there" in the space that became modern Poland; they have been imbricated in the Polish national construction from the very beginning'.²

In this chapter we examine the political consequences of ethnic cohabitation: did the encounter between Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Germans, and Belarusians induce political moderation, or lead to political polarization? The memoir literature offers one point of entrance to this question, but rich as it is, it is ultimately anecdotal in nature. After all, which reality represents the 'true' Poland? Brzeżany,

For research support we thank the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research and the National Science Foundation (SES-0217499).

¹ S. Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzeżany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians, 1919–1945* (Bloomington, Ind., 2002); E. Hoffman, *Shtetl: The Life and Death of a Small Town and the World of the Polish Jews* (Boston and New York, 1997), esp. 159–200; N. Salsitz, *A Jewish Boyhood in Poland: Remembering Kolbuszowa* (Syracuse, NY, 1992).

² P. Kenney, 'After the Blank Spots are Filled: Recent Perspectives on Modern Poland', *Journal of Modern History*, 79 (2007), 139.

where according to Redlich ‘there was never a pogrom-like atmosphere’ before the war?³ Or Brańsk, where Hoffman notes the steadily increasing influence of the Endecja? Obviously they both represent different facets of an intricate political mosaic. We seek to explore that mosaic by investigating the relationship between local ethnic demographics and electoral behaviour for Poland as a whole. We are particularly interested in how the propensity of different groups to support parties advocating ethnic co-operation (or conflict) varies with their degree of local demographic dominance. For example, did ethnic Poles’ preference for the right increase as they came into greater contact with the minorities? Were the minorities more or less likely to support moderate ‘Polish’ parties when they lived among Poles? The answers to these and similar questions allow us to isolate conditions under which moderate political parties, and by extension moderate politics, were most likely to thrive.

The chapter proceeds as follows. We first describe the data on which our analysis is based. Ours is not the first foray into the political behaviour of Poland’s ethnic groups.⁴ Like these prior studies, ours relies on the published results of the 1921 census and the 1922 and 1928 elections to the Sejm.⁵ However, our data set is far more encompassing, comprising roughly 3,500 communities for which we have collected census and electoral data. Next we describe our method, which draws on recent advances in ecological inference. Ecological inference permits more accu-

³ Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*, 53.

⁴ The list of works discussing this at a general level is long. One early study of Warsaw is L. Hass, *Wybory warszawskie, 1918–1926: Postawy polityczne mieszkańców Warszawy w świetle wyników głosowania do ciał przedstawicielskich* (Warsaw, 1972), an excellent treatment of Warsaw’s ethnic vote using the city’s districts. Also on Warsaw’s Jews, see A. S. Zuckerman, ‘Division and Cohesion in the Process of Modernization: A Comparison of the Jewish Communities of Vienna and Warsaw during the 1920s’, in S. Volkov (ed.), *Deutsche Juden und die Moderne* (Munich, 1994). Zuckerman’s work re-estimates Hass’s data. Using local elections Daniel Blatman estimates Jewish support for the Bund in ‘The Bund in Poland, 1935–1939’, *Polin*, 9 (1996), 58–82. More general treatments are S. Horak, *Poland and her National Minorities, 1919–1939* (New York, 1961); A. Polonsky, *Politics in Independent Poland, 1921–1939: The Crisis of Constitutional Government* (Oxford, 1972); J. Holzer, *Mozaika polityczna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw, 1974); A. Chojnowski, *Koncepcje polityki narodowościowej rządów polskich w latach 1921–1939* (Wrocław, 1979); E. Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars* (Bloomington, Ind., 1983), 11–84; on Jews, see also J. Marcus, *Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919–1939* (Berlin, 1983), esp. 263–91. Two careful treatments of the Ukrainain experience (concentrating primarily on the Kresy) are C. Schenke, *Nationalstaat und nationale Frage: Polen und die Ukrainer, 1921–1939* (Hamburg, 2004), esp. 36–56 and 109–36, and W. Benecke, *Die Ostgebiete der Zweiten Polnischen Republik: Staatsmacht und öffentliche Ordnung in einer Minderheitenregion, 1918–1939* (Cologne, 1999).

⁵ The census was published in fifteen volumes throughout the 1920s, one for each voivodeship, by the Main Statistical Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny) under the general title *Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw, 1923–6), and the electoral results appeared in two separate publications, *Statistique des élections à la Diète et au Sénat effectuées le 5 et le 12 Novembre 1922* (Warsaw, 1926) and *Statystyka wyborów do Sejmu i Senatu odbytych w dniu 4 i 11 marca 1928 roku* (Warsaw, 1930).

rate estimates of group support for political parties in a wider variety of contexts than is possible with older, aggregate data analysis approaches. After the methods section we present and discuss our estimates of who voted for whom in the 1922 and 1928 national parliamentary elections.

DATA

Both the census and electoral data have limitations. Poland's census of 1921 was a bold exercise for a very young country. Enumerators attempted to count every single person in the country and classify them with respect to nationality, religion, and socio-economic status. Ultimately results for the community (*gmina*) level were published only for nationality and religion. Socio-economic variables were published at the district (*powiat*) level. The census authorities published fifteen volumes of these data, one for each voivodeship, and then presented them by regions that reflected the historical divisions of Poland: Western, Central (Congress), Southern (Habsburg Galicia), and Eastern (Russian Poland, the Kresy).

The results revealed an ethnically diverse country in which ethnic Poles comprised only about two-thirds of the total population. Communities range from being nearly 100 per cent ethnically Polish to 100 per cent ethnically Jewish, Ukrainian, German, and Belarusian, with the vast majority occupying a place between these extremes. However, as Jerzy Tomaszewski has shown in a number of studies, the results seriously undercount the number of Ukrainians.⁶ His solution, the one we adopt in this chapter, is to infer ethnicity from religious affiliation. Roman Catholics, for example, are assumed to be Poles, Greek Catholics are assumed to be Ukrainians, and self-declared Jews by religious affiliation are considered to be Jews. This solution is imperfect for a number of reasons. It leaves out the not insignificant number of Protestant Poles, fails to differentiate between Orthodox residents in the Kresy who may have been either Ukrainians or Belarusians (or possibly ethnically Polish), and does not distinguish the significant number of Jews in Galicia who classified themselves as Polish by nationality. We compensate for these limitations by excluding settlements with high numbers of Protestants and focusing (mostly) on the Centre, the Kresy, and Galicia.⁷

The 1922 and 1928 electoral data were also collected at the *gmina* level, but were published only for communities with at least 500 eligible voters. This does not

⁶ Tomaszewski's re-estimations of the census are to be found in J. Tomaszewski, *Ojczyzna nie tylko Polaków: Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce w latach 1918–1939* (Warsaw, 1985), 50. An alternative for Galicia in about 1939 would be to use the less precise study by V. Kubijovyč, *Ethnic Groups of the South-Western Ukraine (Halychyna–Galicia), 1.1.1939: National Statistics and Ethnographic Map* (Wiesbaden, 1983).

⁷ A second census was held in 1931 but cannot be used because the *gmina*-level results were never published. The unpublished materials appear not to have survived the war and have never been located by the Main Statistical Office in Warsaw.

pose a problem for matching with the census data, but it does mean that we cannot analyse the electoral behaviour of a number of small rural estate settlements (*obszary dworskie*). This reduces the total population considered in our analysis by approximately one-third, a matter less serious for considering the Jewish vote because Jews tended to live in larger communities, but it does exclude some rural Ukrainians. Nevertheless, even with these considerations there are over 3,500 communities for which we have some electoral and ethno-demographic data. The data set provides an unprecedented view of inter-war Poland's ethnic and political diversity.

METHODS

Our goal in this chapter is to estimate the proportion of a social group voting for a particular party (or group of parties) using census and electoral data available only at the community (*gmina*) level. This poses a statistical problem. Our ultimate quantity of interest is an unobserved quantity: the proportion of a group of individuals voting for a party. We observe, however, only the aggregated geographical distribution of the social group and the electoral results. Historians and political scientists have usually solved this problem by examining the results from ethnically homogeneous areas. It is easy to discern, for example, how many Jews voted for a given party in a village that is 100 per cent Jewish. Considering areas where there are no minorities, by contrast, allows us to absolve the minorities from responsibility for whatever parties get elected in those areas. There is a limit, however, to the usefulness of such aggregate analysis. In mixed areas the proportion of each group that supports a given party cannot be 'read off' from the raw census and electoral data.

We use recently developed ecological inference techniques to estimate group preferences for political parties. The best of these methods combines deterministic information about the possible values of the quantity of interest (in this case the fraction of a particular social group in a locality that could hypothetically have supported a given party or bloc) with a statistical model of what the most likely values of that quantity are within that range of possibilities. For example, if there were a municipality with a population that was 90 per cent Jewish and the communist party received 5 per cent of the vote, then we know that at most 5.5 per cent ($5/90$) of the Jews there could have voted communist, and possibly none at all (if all the support for the communists came from non-Jews). The range of possible Jewish support for the communists is $[0, 5.5]$. The goal of ecological inference is to estimate where in that range the actual level of support is most likely to be. We employ the model presented by Ori Rosen and colleagues, which yields consistent estimates when there are more than two parties or social groups.⁸

⁸ See O. Rosen et al., 'Bayesian and Frequentist Inference for Ecological Inference: The $R \times C$ Case', *Statistica Neerlandica*, 55 (2001), 134–56. All estimates were computed using R 2.5.1 software.

Our analysis of group political behaviour focuses on Central and Eastern Poland in 1922 and the South in 1928. There are two reasons for this. First, they are the most usable results from each election. The 1922 Ukrainian boycott in Galicia and known administrative pressure in the East in 1928 render these less reliable than the 1922 Eastern and 1928 Southern results.⁹ Second, estimating each group's support for each bloc requires a large amount of non-missing data, and our method works best when there are at least some people from each ethnic group in each settlement. Both Central and Eastern Poland in 1922 and the South in 1928 (but not the West in either year) have enough observations to permit distinct analyses of majority and minority Polish settlements. Even then there are not enough data to permit a separate estimate of group support for the communists in 1922.

In both 1922 and 1928 we exploit data on the number of eligible voters to estimate voter turnout for each group. Turnout is important because it is a measure of integration into the political system, as indicated most dramatically by the 1922 Ukrainian boycott. We might expect the minorities, Ukrainians and Belarusians especially, to have a lower turnout than Poles. One methodological consequence of including turnout is that our numbers on group support for different political blocs represent estimates of the fraction of eligible voters rather than actual voters supporting a political bloc. Such estimates may be somewhat unorthodox, but they also provide a more realistic picture of the distribution of political preferences in society.

THE ELECTION OF 1922

Poland's constitution of 1921 called for a strong parliament and weak presidency. Historians generally acknowledge that this institutional outcome represented a victory for National Democrats, who expected to outperform the non-revolutionary left and especially Józef Piłsudski in any non-plebiscitary national election. The highly proportional voting rules induced twenty-two parties to run on the state list and dozens of other parties to compete on the regional lists.

The presence of so many parties, some with very similar platforms, permits the grouping of them into blocs. The main parties within each bloc are listed in the Appendix. Even where historians disagree on details, they do agree on the general contours of the country's party system in 1922.¹⁰ On the right, the National See J. Wittenberg et al., 'ei.RxC: Hierarchical Multinomial-Dirichlet Ecological Inference Model for $R \times C$ Tables' (2007), in K. Imai, G. King, and O. Lau, *Zelig: Everyone's Statistical Software*, <<http://gking.harvard.edu/zelig>>.

⁹ Most Galician Ukrainian parties boycotted the 1922 election as a protest against the creation of a Polish national state on Ukrainian territory. In many locations violators of the boycott risked social sanction and physical violence.

¹⁰ Our categorization of parties is based on the above-mentioned general works (see n. 4) along with the important analysis of the party platforms and press which appeared in A. Belcikowska, *Stronnictwa i związki polityczne w Polsce: Charakterystyki, dane historyczne, programy, rezolucje, organizacje partyjne, prasa, przywódcy* (Warsaw, 1925).

Democrats teamed up with various Christian Democratic parties to run as the Christian Alliance of National Unity (Chrześcijański Związek Jedności Narodowej; Chjena). On nationality questions, although their practice was frequently quite pragmatic, the electoral position of the National Democrats was clearly one of assimilation for the country's Slav minorities and discrimination against Poland's Jews and Germans. They viewed the country's security as threatened primarily by ethnic competition in urban areas. In the centre of the spectrum came the peasantist Piast, the working-class National Workers' Party, and the Polish Centre. It is appropriate to mention at this point that, on nationality questions, the position of the centre parties did not deviate a great deal from that of the parties on the right. Assimilation and discrimination remained the tools of choice. Even so, the emphasis in the campaigns of the two groups differed sharply, with the right stressing the peril the country faced from the sea of prospective minority members in the Sejm.

'Polish' parties on the left wing of the political spectrum opted for some version of accommodation with the national minorities that would today be characterized as 'multiculturalism'. Although there was some discussion of 'federation', such talk remained highly theoretical. In practice, the issues were far more mundane: funding for schools, the mandating of days of rest, and various employment quotas in public administration and universities. The main parties on the non-revolutionary left consisted of the Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna; PPS), which attempted to attract working-class voters and the urban intelligentsia of ethnic Poles, but also voters from among the country's minorities. 'Liberation' (Wyzwolenie), a left-of-centre party whose message was pitched at land-hungry peasants, also advocated accommodation with non-ethnic Poles. In practice, Poland's national minorities could choose to vote either for parties on the left or for parties running under ethnic banners.

Most of the German and a large number of Jewish, Belarusian, and Ukrainian parties ran in 1922 under an umbrella Bloc of National Minorities, with the understanding that the seats would be split up among them once the results of the election were known. Some of the Jewish parties (such as the East and West Galician Zionists—the Jewish National Union—the Bund, and Po'alei Tsiyon) and the pro-Polish Ukrainian Khlitoroby chose to run on their own. Since our analysis focuses in part on the extent to which Poland's ethnic minorities would vote for non-ethnic parties and the local demographic conditions under which this might occur, we group all these parties together under the category 'ethnic'.¹¹

At the extreme left of the political spectrum was the Communist Party of Poland, which, although illegal, managed to run in 1922 as the openly named Communist Union of Urban and Rural Proletariat on a state list. The communists attempted to attract votes both from the working class and from the country's

¹¹ Merging all ethnic parties together does not permit a more finely grained analysis of the impact of Polish presence on Jewish and Ukrainian support for different kinds of Jewish and Ukrainian parties, but—as we shall see below—this does not affect our analysis.

ethnic minorities, to whom it promised a future of non-ethnically based solidarities. It favoured a communist revolution, the creation of a Soviet Poland, and the rights of the country's minorities to the kind of autonomy which was evolving within the new Soviet state. In voivodeships with large Ukrainian and Belarusian populations, the communists had their own ethnically based communist organizations which were tenuously tied to the larger Polish organization. State authorities regarded all of these organizations as traitorous and irredentist.

In the end the right was the big winner in 1922. It received 29 per cent of the overall vote, compared with 22 per cent for the parties of the centre and 23 per cent for those of the non-revolutionary left, 22 per cent for the parties of the minorities, and a minuscule 1 per cent for the communists.

Table 1 shows the results for 1922 for Central and Eastern Poland (Congress and the Kresy). The table is broken up into three sets of estimates, one for the full sample of settlements, one for the sub-sample of communities where Roman Catholics lived in a clear minority, comprising less than 40 per cent of the local population, and one where Roman Catholics were a clear majority, exceeding 60 per cent. The interior of each cell represents the estimated percentage of the eligible voters of the relevant group supporting the corresponding bloc. To minimize the effect of invalid votes we exclude those relatively few settlements where more than 2 per cent of the votes were declared invalid.

We begin our analysis with turnout. As noted above, voter participation is an excellent indicator of integration into the political system. We report non-voting (100 minus turnout) in the last column of the table. Why should the rate of Orthodox non-participation (50 per cent) be nearly twice that of Roman Catholics (27 per cent) and three times that of Jews (17 per cent) in the Centre and East as a whole? Some of these non-voters were undoubtedly Orthodox Ukrainians who were supporting the Ukrainian boycott.¹² But there are other reasons to expect a lower turnout of Belarusians. They were concentrated in the poorest region of the new state, were far more illiterate than Jews, Poles, or Galician Ukrainians, and had the least experience in self-government.¹³ It is little wonder that so many stayed away.

If we now consider areas where minorities dominated (the middle set of estimates in the table) together with areas where Roman Catholics dominated (the bottom set), the most striking difference is that for all groups significantly fewer voters in primarily Polish settlements stayed home. Where Poles constitute the local majority, turnout rises to 72 per cent for both Catholics and Orthodox, and an astounding 94 per cent for Jews. Scholars consider the 1922 election to be largely free of the irregularities that occurred in 1928. Nevertheless, it is known that the

¹² Our estimate using a sample of over 1,000 settlements in Galicia shows that 89% of Uniates did not vote.

¹³ For literacy data, see J. Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle, 1974), 44.

Table 1. The 1922 Sejm election: ethnic group voting in majority- and minority-dominant communities in Central and Eastern Poland (estimated % of eligible voters)

	Left	Centre	Minorities	Right	Other	Not voting
Full sample (N = 287)						
Roman Catholic	30 (24,35) ^a	19 (15,22)	5 (2,7)	19 (15,23)	0	27 (24,29)
Orthodox	16 (12,21)	0	30 (25,35)	1 (0,2)	3 (2,4)	50 (47,52)
Jewish	0	2 (1,4)	68 (63,73)	9 (6,12)	5 (2,8)	17 (11,21)
Communities with 2–40% of pop. Roman Catholic (N = 173)						
Roman Catholic	5 (1,13)	15 (11,19)	14 (2,34)	14 (8,22)	8 (3,14)	44 (30,55)
Orthodox	19 (15,24)	1 (0,2)	29 (24,34)	2 (1,4)	2 (1,3)	47 (43,50)
Jewish	1 (0,2)	1 (0,2)	65 (59,72)	8 (5,11)	4 (2,6)	20 (14,26)
Communities with at least 60% of pop. Roman Catholic (N = 80)						
Roman Catholic	33 (24,41)	17 (12,23)	2 (1,3)	20 (15,25)	1 (1,1)	28 (25,32)
Orthodox	14 (1,43)	8 (1,35)	45 (31,62)	2 (0,10)	3 (1,4)	28 (5,47)
Jewish	27 (1,94)	11 (1,56)	47 (3,68)	7 (0,34)	2 (1,4)	6 (2,11)

^a Figures in parentheses are 95% confidence intervals.

Sources: Authors' computations from data available in *Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw, 1923–6) and *Statistique des élections à la Diète et au Sénat effectuées le 5 et le 12 Novembre 1922* (Warsaw, 1926).

Constituent Assembly (elected in 1919) did not wish to empower the Eastern territories and indeed had postponed the national parliamentary elections.¹⁴ A generous interpretation of the high non-participation rates in minority areas is that the Polish state lacked the administrative capacity to manage elections in these border areas. A less generous view would be that the state was finding ways to keep these voters, even the Poles among them, at home.

Turnout rates are also key to interpreting differences in voter choice as we move from minority-dominated areas (middle section of table) to Polish-dominated areas (bottom section). The most significant differences are the increase in support for the left (PPS and 'Liberation') and to a lesser extent the centre. For example, support for the left rises from 5 to 33 per cent among Poles, and, though the estimates are far more uncertain, from 1 to 27 per cent among the Jews. The most straightforward interpretation of this is that the voters from the increased turnout went to the left and centre. Such a view would fit well with our 'less generous' interpretation of the reason for low turnouts because the right, the dominant force in the Constituent Assembly, would have been keen on reducing support for the left, its principal political opposition. It is also true that both the PPS and Chjena were aiming at urban voters (Polish support for the right also rises modestly, from 14 to 20 per cent). Cities were the site of both ethnic tolerance and hostility, of both

¹⁴ See e.g. *ibid.* 48.

accommodation and perceived threat. The parties of the minorities seem to have benefited the most from the increase in Orthodox turnout. We speculate that the Orthodox, who on the whole were less willing than Jews to assimilate politically, preferred their own parties to 'Polish' ones when they dwelt as a local minority.¹⁵

THE ELECTION OF 1928

The election of 1928 was far more controversial than the exercise of 1922. It was held after the 1926 coup with the intention of securing Piłsudski's supporters a parliamentary majority.¹⁶ The vehicle for this majority would be the Non-Partisan Bloc for Co-operation with the Government (*Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem*; BBWR).

The BBWR was an odd organization. It was run primarily by state officials. Whereas political parties at this point in European history generally attempted to mobilize voters through mass organizations at the grass roots, the BBWR was in some ways a throwback to earlier parties of local notables. It espoused a general and vague ideology of state and bureaucratic rectitude but was clearly an anti-parliamentary parliamentary party and did not wish the population to remain active in politics once the election results were in.¹⁷ Timothy Snyder, in his study of Volhynia, characterizes the BBWR as an attempt from above to reconstruct the political 'centre' in Poland. In this he is probably correct: the BBWR tried to attract support across social classes and ethnic groups, but in doing so, it was required to remain far more ambiguous on its plans for ethnic accommodation than parties of the non-revolutionary and revolutionary left such as the PPS and the various communist parties.¹⁸

Both archival records and the data themselves demonstrate the huge advantage of authoritarian incumbency enjoyed by the BBWR. In the run-up to the election, local officials wrote regular reports on the activities of opposition parties and the measures taken to increase the BBWR's strength, which was understood to be

¹⁵ One seemingly puzzling result is the 7–9% of Jews who are estimated to have voted for the right. We suspect this to be a consequence of aggregation bias rather than actual voting behaviour. If the fraction of Poles supporting the right is highly correlated with the proportion of Jews in the community, then our method may attribute some of that support to Jews rather than Poles. Aggregation bias is a well-known phenomenon and serves to underscore the importance of having some theoretical expectation of how groups ought to be voting. A similar interpretation can be given to the 14% of Catholics estimated to have supported minority parties in minority-dominated settlements. If the presence of Poles caused increases in the proportion of minorities voting for minority parties, then some support for these parties might be inaccurately attributed to Catholics. It is also possible these Catholics were in fact ethnically Belarusian or Ukrainian.

¹⁶ J. Rothschild, *Piłsudski's Coup d'État* (New York, 1966), 311–28.

¹⁷ A. Chojnowski, *Piłsudczycy u władzy: Dzieje Bezpartyjnego Bloku Współpracy z Rządem* (Wrocław, 1986).

¹⁸ T. Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven, 2005), 64–74.

rooted not in civil society but in the state.¹⁹ The data on the elections themselves reveal a number of settlements, especially in the Eastern territories, where large numbers of ballots were invalidated.²⁰ Yet, the modicum of administrative pressure applied in selected areas does not entitle us to characterize the election as entirely fraudulent. The internal reports of the Ministry of Internal Affairs make this clear enough. So do the results. Not only did the BBWR not secure its parliamentary majority, the right still managed to win a respectable (if much smaller) number of votes, and the big winners were the parties of the left, mainly the non-revolutionary left but also the numerous communist parties, divided along ethnic and doctrinal lines, which, although illegal, still managed to run under a series of easily decipherable cover names. Several, such as the Ukrainian Sel-Rob, ran on state lists. Others ran on the regional lists with names referring to some combination of 'workers and peasants'. In total the BBWR received 24 per cent of the vote, the right won 16 per cent, the non-revolutionary left took 28 per cent, the Bloc of National Minorities won 19 per cent, and the various communist and pro-Soviet ethnic parties captured 8 per cent.

Of course, Poland itself had changed in important ways in the years between 1922 and 1928, which in some respects makes the later election more interesting. Most importantly, the coup had broken the parliamentary deadlock that existed between the right and the left, which could not be broken without the participation in some way of the country's national minorities—a clear taboo from the first election until the May events. As noted, the BBWR attempted to attract the votes of the country's minorities through policies of moderation and accommodation. In their view, these groups had little interest in the raucous democracy of the pre-Sanacja era, since that had proved to benefit primarily the demagogic National Democrats. Instead, if they could be incorporated through a 'state party', the irredentist threat to Poland from abroad could be attenuated and the country could return to a normal path of development. This new orientation, however, continued to compete with the non-revolutionary left (which had always advocated accommodation) among Poles and with the ethnic parties among the country's national minorities.

Table 2 breaks down the overall vote by ethnic group. As in 1922, we divide the results into two sub-samples of Polish-dominant and minority-dominant communities. However, we now present results from the South (though we shall introduce some results from the Centre and East), and estimate support for a slightly

¹⁹ Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warsaw (hereafter AAN), Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych (MSW), 1/849/1-200; AAN, MSW, 1029 and 1079.

²⁰ The total number of invalidated ballots was 320,142 out of 11,728,360. The corrected numbers, along with a detailed report on the conduct of the election, can be found in 'Udział ugrupowań wywrotowych w wyborach do ciał ustawodawczych w Polsce w roku 1928', in AAN, MSW, 1186. This report concentrates especially on the threat posed by the numerous communist parties, which were characterized as campaigning hard for a heavy turnout in minority areas, and on the steps taken to reduce turnout where they were expected to perform well.

Between State Loyalty and National Identity

181

Table 2. The 1928 Sejm election: ethnic group voting in majority- and minority-dominant communities in the South (Galicia) (estimated % of eligible voters)

	Communist	Left	Pro-govt.	Minorities	Right	Other	Not voting
Full sample (N = 1,080)							
Roman Catholic	0	22 (19,24) a	33 (28,37)	6 (3,9)	14 (12,17)	0	24 (21,27)
Uniate	8 (7,9)	0	15 (13,16)	49 (47,51)	0	9 (8,10)	20 (18,21)
Jewish	3 (1,4)	1 (0,1)	18 (13,24)	52 (46,59)	1 (1,3)	3 (1,5)	22 (17,28)
Communities with 2–40% of pop. Roman Catholic (N = 814)							
Roman Catholic	1 (0,3)	14 (11,17)	36 (28,43)	14 (4,23)	10 (8,12)	1 (0,3)	24 (15,33)
Uniate	8 (7,9)	0	14 (12,16)	48 (45,51)	0	9 (7,10)	21 (19,23)
Jewish	3 (1,5)	2 (1,5)	16 (12,21)	49 (43,55)	2 (0,3)	3 (1,4)	26 (18,32)
Communities with at least 60% of pop. Roman Catholic (N = 117)							
Roman Catholic	1 (1,2)	25 (19,31)	30 (22,38)	5 (1,10)	14 (12,17)	1 (1,2)	23 (18,28)
Uniate	7 (2,12)	1 (0,6)	20 (2,41)	50 (33,66)	2 (0,9)	7 (2,12)	12 (3,28)
Jewish	5 (1,13)	20 (1,56)	25 (1,81)	33 (2,64)	2 (1,5)	5 (1,14)	9 (3,19)

^a Figures in parentheses are 95% confidence intervals.

Sources: Authors' computations from data available in *Skorowidz miejscowości Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Warsaw, 1923–6) and *Statystyka wyborów do Sejmu i Senatu odbytych w dniu 4 i 11 marca 1928 roku* (Warsaw, 1930).

different set of blocs. Our potentially most controversial decision is to move the Piast from the centre to the right part of the Polish spectrum (see Appendix). This reflects the disintegration of the Polish centre after 1923, the party's own movement on nationality questions during its time in government together with the National Democrats before the 1926 coup, and its campaign statements on nationality issues printed in its own newspaper, *Piast*, in the run-up to the 1928 election.²¹ The centre has now been redesignated 'pro-government' to reflect the attempt by the BBWR to capture this space. We also now provide separate estimates of communist support.²²

How successful was the BBWR in its efforts at political integration? Judging by voter participation, the Sanacja's goal of politically integrating the country's minorities was partially successful. Whereas in 1922 only 11 per cent of Ukrainian Uniates were estimated to have voted, by 1928, without a boycott, the proportion increased to 80 per cent (i.e. 20 per cent not turning out). Jewish (and Polish) turnout was largely unchanged from 1922, at roughly 75 per cent. Not shown in the table, however, is the continued relatively low turnout of Orthodox Ukrainians and Belarusians, at just over 53 per cent.

The real plan for the integration of Poland's minorities, however, was to have them vote for the BBWR. Our estimates (the top set in the table) suggest that this was also partially achieved: 15 per cent of Greek Catholics and 18 per cent of Jews

²¹ Based on analysis of each issue of the paper during the three months before the election.

²² The communist parties are listed in AAN, MSW, 1186, pp. 1–20

voted for pro-government parties, which included either the BBWR or its allies.²³ At the same time, however, the anti-system and pro-Soviet communists clearly made inroads among the country's minorities. Support for the communists was 8 per cent among Uniates and, though not shown in the table, 29 per cent among the Orthodox. Jewish communist voting remained very low, never exceeding 5 per cent.²⁴ Poles also strongly supported the BBWR, at 33 per cent.²⁵

To what extent were these results conditioned by ethnic demography at the local level? Despite the inclusion of the communist bloc and the geographical shift from the Centre and East to the South, the differences between Polish-dominated and minority-dominated areas in 1928 are qualitatively similar to those from 1922. As before, the proportion not voting is lower in Polish areas, though this applies only to minorities. Likewise, as before both the ethnically tolerant left and the right performed better among Poles in ethnically Polish communities (25 and 14 per cent, respectively) than among Poles in minority areas (14 and 10 per cent). The contrast with 1922 is that the divergences between the two types of areas are less stark, and, because Polish turnout does not vary, are less easily ascribed to a 'suppressed' leftist vote in minority areas. Rather, the left was simply more popular among Poles in Polish areas. The 'flattening out' of ethnic Polish political support across different types of communities (relative to 1922) is indicative of a nationalization of Polish politics, a point we return to in the Conclusion.

The story for the minorities is necessarily more speculative owing to the paucity of data in Polish-dominated settlements and concomitant wide confidence intervals around estimates for the Jews. However, our limited data do suggest that, as in 1922, increased turnout among Jews and Ukrainians in Polish-dominated areas redounded to the benefit of the moderate left and, as the newly reconstituted centre in 1928, the pro-government bloc. In the case of Jews, support for pro-government parties was greater in Polish-dominated areas (25 per cent, as against 16 per cent in minority-dominated areas), as was support for the left (20 per cent, versus only 2 per cent in minority-dominated areas). For Uniates there was a more moderate contrast in pro-government support (20 per cent and 14 per cent, correspondingly). The popularity among the minorities of the moderate 'Polish' parties, the BBWR in particular, is consistent with the idea that by 1928 substantial proportions of both Jews and Ukrainians viewed Pilsudski as a protector against the pathology of National Democracy. In the case of the Jews the combined proportion of the vote in Polish-dominated areas for the BBWR and the left exceeded that of the vote for the minority parties, indicating a degree of political assimilation to the

²³ In Central and Eastern Poland, where administrative pressure was more severe, 25% of Jews and 17% of Orthodox are estimated to have supported the BBWR.

²⁴ This finding buttresses our earlier research on Jewish support for communism, which was based on *powiat*-level data. See J. S. Kopstein and J. Wittenberg, 'Who Voted Communist? Reconsidering the Social Bases of Radicalism in Interwar Poland', *Slavic Review*, 62 (2003), 87–109.

²⁵ In Central and Eastern Poland the BBWR only attracted 12% support among Poles. This is not surprising, given that Pilsudski's original political base was in Galicia.

Polish state project that has gone largely unsubstantiated, if not unnoticed, in the literature on inter-war Poland. It was in these communities that the BBWR and parties of the tolerant Polish left could successfully compete with Jewish parties for the Jewish vote.²⁶

CONCLUSION

What were the political consequences of the local encounter between Poles and the minorities? There are two ways to interpret our finding that in both 1922 and 1928 voter turnout and support for moderate parties reached their peak in Polish-dominated settlements. On the positive side, it is a sign that both Poles and the minorities in these areas felt a stake in the success of the new system, and is thus indicative of an increasingly integrated polity. On the negative side, it serves as a stark reminder of the new state's administrative incapacity and fear of the minority vote. Clearly the state had some way to go to properly incorporate minority-dominated regions into the political system.²⁷

If we consider trends between 1922 and 1928, our principal finding is that for Poles electoral behaviour became increasingly independent of local ethnic demography. This is true of voter turnout, which increased sharply in minority-dominated areas, and of support for the left. We attribute the closing of the gap between Polish-dominated and minority-dominated areas to an ongoing regional homogenization of politics. This was occurring at the level of the state, which had increased its presence in minority areas in the intervening six years, but also at the level of party politics.²⁸

Perhaps our most interesting results concern the nature of the Sanacja regime and its impact on Poland's ethnic minorities. Judging from the increase in voter turnout across ethnic groups, Piłsudski and his followers successfully integrated the country's minorities into political life.²⁹ Of course, minority parties did not lose their dominant place among Jews, Ukrainians, and Belarusians, but the ability of the BBWR to attract voters apart from Poles in 1928 indicates that the regime

²⁶ The confidence intervals in the Jewish vote for the left and the BBWR in Polish settlements are large. However, the vote percentages and the confidence intervals across blocs indicate that the vote totals could rise or fall between these two categories, which supports the present point.

²⁷ We recognize that not just contact, but quality of contact, may influence political behaviour. The memoir literature illustrates how the complex relationships between Poles, Jews, Belarusians, and Ukrainians coloured everyday life: see, for example, Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*, 44–76. Alas, we lack the data to explore this more systematically. Moreover, apart from noting that certain parties directed their appeals either to urban or to rural voters, we have not conditioned any of our results on the socio-economic structure of Poland's districts and regions, and acknowledge that this might alter our conclusions.

²⁸ See Paczkowski's analysis of the inter-war press, in which even local editions of party newspapers were expected to hew closely to the national line. A. Paczkowski, *Prasa Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej, 1918–1939* (Warsaw, 1971), 26–33.

²⁹ The exception remained the Belarusians, only 53% of whom we estimate to have voted in 1928.

made headway, especially among Jews and Ukrainians who lived in Polish-dominated regions. Again, a reasonable interpretation of this is that, since the BBWR was so closely associated with the state, it would perform better in those areas where the state infrastructure was most developed.

Even in 1928 the Polish state was less articulated in minority than in Polish communities.³⁰ At the same time, Jewish willingness to back the BBWR as well as other 'Polish' parties in Polish-majority settlements opens the tantalizing possibility that for Jews, the prospect of political assimilation was real and not simply theoretical. Polish political culture was not unattractive to Jews, and if the country had been afforded more time, even with widespread political intolerance in the ethnically Polish population, perhaps this political assimilation would have deepened.

Even with the Sanacja's modest success, its strength was undercut, at least in part, by the growing popularity of pro-Soviet communist parties, which explicitly traded on their ethnic universalism. The communists gained among otherwise passive and non-voting Belarusians and even among the highly nationalist Galician Ukrainians, a success that did not vary with changing ethnic balance. Just as politics for ethnic Poles was becoming increasingly 'nationalized', for Belarusians and Ukrainians homogeneous communist support across both Polish- and minority-dominated areas reflected an incipient 'internationalization', at least on the extreme left.

Appendix. Party Blocs in 1922 and 1928

1922

Right: Christian Alliance of National Unity (Chjena) (National Democrats, Christian Democrats, and Christian National Party); National Union of the State; Polish Conservatives.

Centre: Polish Peasant Party (Piast); Polish Centre; Bourgeois Centre; National Workers' Party.

Non-revolutionary left: 'Liberation' (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe 'Wyzwolenie'); Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna; PPS); People's Councils; Peasant Party—Left Wing; Association for the Protection of Labour; Independent Socialists of Poland; Independent Socialists of Eastern Galicia; Union of Polish Women.

Communist: Communist Union of Urban and Rural Proletariat; Communist Party of Upper Silesia.

Minorities lists: Bloc of National Minorities; Committee of the Unified Jewish National Party; Jewish National Union; Jewish Democratic National Bloc; Khliboroby (pro-Polish Ukrainians); General Jewish Workers' Federation of Poland (Bund); Po'alei Tsiyon; Jewish National Unity Party; Committee of Independent Ukrainian Peasants; Agrarian Party of Ukrainian Peasants.

³⁰ Schencke, *Nationalstaat und nationale Frage*, 309–21.

1928

Right: Catholic National List (Endecja); Polish Peasant Party (Piast); Monarchist Organization.

Pro-government: Non-Partisan Bloc for Co-operation with the Government (Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem; BBWR); Peasant Association; National State Bloc of Labour.

Non-revolutionary left: Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna; PPS); 'Liberation' (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe 'Wyzwolenie'); Peasant Party (Stronnictwo Chłopskie).

Communist and pro-Soviet: Union of Workers and Peasants; Peasant Self-Help; Ukrainian Socialist Union and Peasants and Workers; Sel-Rob Left; Bloc of Workers and Peasants; PPS-Left; Ukrainian Party of Labour; Belarusian Union of Peasants and Workers; Cultural Union of Belarusian Workers; Belarusian Economic Union of Poland; General Belarusian Populist List; List for the Struggle of Workers and Peasants.

Minorities lists: Bloc of National Minorities; Ukrainian National Union; Ruthenian List; General Jewish National Federation in Małopolska; General Jewish National Bloc; 'For the Ukrainian Cause'; Electoral Bloc of the Ukrainian Socialist Party of Peasants and Workers; General Jewish Workers' Federation (Bund); Po'alei Tsiyon.

