

THE POLYETHNIC STATE: NATIONAL MINORITIES IN INTERBELLUM POLAND

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Interbellum Poland remains an important example of a polyethnic state and society in European history. Its short existence between the wars does not diminish the importance of its many peculiar aspects, nor does the fact that it can be defined as an unsuccessful example in organizing, institutionally and socially, a polyethnic community. The theoretical definition of the Polish experience has puzzled historians in the past. Polish historiography substantially ignored or steadfastly marginalized the nationalities in the Second Republic and in earlier historical times, an attitude echoed by Marxist historians in post-bellum Poland.¹ Now, indirectly, the topic is attracting attention again as a consequence of the new problematic caused by current European historical events both in the East and West.

The present interest in nationality issues is increasing, though it still remains essentially somewhat marginalized.² A well-known exception is the extensive body of studies on the Jewish national minority in interwar Poland and in earlier times, which in a way pioneered studies on minorities in general, although not from the more modern perspective of ethnopolitics.³ Certainly, a study focusing on ethnic problematics is needed, and using nationalities as a fundamental interpretative element may produce new discoveries, as may the study of Polish nationalism if viewed from the peculiar perspective of ethnonationalism.⁴

Interbellum Poland can be characterized as a mosaic of nationalities and, consequently, as an ethnopolitical mosaic, a definition which can be derived, although indirectly, from a former popular study by Holzer.⁵ More recently, definitions by Tomaszewski indicate an increasingly elaborate approach with the suggestion that Poland be defined as a "Republic of many peoples" and the "Homeland of not only Poles."⁶ Certainly Rothschild's is an appropriate ethnopolitical definition: the idea of a dominant central ethnic core opposed to peripheral ethnic segments in which "the core views itself as the historic, institutional, and symbolic creator, and hence appropriate hegemon, of the state, while the leaders of each of the peripheral minority segments must decide whether to pursue their respective group's goals and protect its interests through an alliance with other minority segments or through a separate bilateral arrangement with the dominant core's ruling elite."⁷

Elaborating along these same lines one could see the Poles occupying a central position not simply in terms of power, but also exercising the function of conservation of power from a conservative (anti-progressive and anti-democratic) vantage point, and finally, expansion of power

through the phenomenon of polonization, viewed here as an expression and product of ethnonationalism. The peripheral ethnic segments could thereafter find themselves in a position of promoting, usually but not always, progressive political agendas in opposition to the conservative and authoritarian ones of the central power. Moreover, they constituted a fixed and increasingly real body of "subversive" forces in their relation to the central ethnic core and its power, the Polish Second Republic, and, also by extension, to the question of the survival of the Polish nation-state itself. Boycott and sabotage, and active opposition, were the evident expressions of revolutionary or nationalistic subversiveness, and defined all the peripheral ethnicities.

Basically, two different categories of ethnic minorities or peripheries can be defined if equal weight is given to both territorial and political criteria. The territorial ethnicities had a majority or, at the very least, a high demographic concentration in specific areas. Politically, they produced claims for separation, independence, or possibly reunion with an already existent motherland. This was the case with the Ukrainians, the Belorussians, and to a more limited extent, the Germans. The non-territorial minorities were usually dispersed, even nomadic. They had no majority in a specific area, or the area was limited in extent. These minorities did not produce claims in relation to territorial issues, and sought neither independence nor territorial autonomy. They could not refer to a possible motherland with which to be reunified. In this sense they can be defined as non-territorial. Such was the case of the Jews, in spite of the fact that they had a demographic majority in several specific localities. In very different terms such was also the case of the Gypsies (the Roma people), who focused on maintaining their nomadic and semi-nomadic pattern of life.

Given the realities of the Polish political arena, Poland's peripheral ethnic segments had a difficult time elaborating viable political agendas and strategies with which, on the one hand, they could successfully integrate themselves fairly into mainstream society, or, on the other hand, separate themselves at least in terms of relative autonomy. A realistic agenda for an ethnic minority was to seek some agreement with the dominant Polish core, which implied first of all arriving at institutional agreements with the government (the ruling elite of the central core). This strategy clearly had limited objectives, for it did not guarantee that the central core, the Poles as a people, would respect the government's concessions.

A less common strategy was that of first forming strong alliances and forging compromises among the minorities themselves, and then presenting a somewhat unified front or political agenda to the opposition and the ruling core. This choice was clearly a defensive maneuver, and many thought it would be better to protect their interests in stronger ways. The

Jews, however, more than any other group, understood the viability and the strength of this strategy and tried to create a strong political party bloc composed of the minorities in the Parliament. But, the strong vertical division of the minorities was a reality unfavorable for a bloc's formation.

A political strategy based more on attack, than on defense implied a moving toward social, rather than exclusively ethnic, issues and would constitute an "unholy" marriage of subversives of diverse natures. Such a strategy implied a fight aimed at the destruction of the existent political order and regime, and the subsequent achieving of total liberation, first socially and then nationally. This option meant seeking an alliance amongst the revolutionaries whose aim was complete social change. Thus, the "subversive" potential of the strategy would begin to constitute a real and explosive menace. Yet of the two strategies it was the less realistic, for the minorities were not only vertically divided in social terms, but also in strong political disagreement with each other. Furthermore, the political arena offered only a small revolutionary force, consisting mostly of the Communist Party, which was confined to underground life and whose Comintern-driven internationalism could not appeal to large strata of the nationalities, including the peasants. Moreover, in Poland the Communist theorems of internationalism negated national and ethnic issues altogether.⁸

A limited socialist movement was ideologically fragmented and expressed diverse attitudes toward the minorities. Polish nationalism was still the trademark, and anti-semitism was still present amongst socialists. Here again, the Jews were able to produce the most original political solution to the necessity of producing a political force that might conjoin and articulate both social and national (ethnic) advancement, namely, the Bund.⁹

Encounters between revolutionaries or socialists on one side and national minorities on the other sprung from specific and temporary conditions in the political arena and to moments of mass radicalization or revolutionary moods, and they all ended without success. The mass moods were fragmented and not sufficiently channeled, the revolutionary agendas were not viable, the socialist tendencies lacked dedication to the cause, and the ethnicities remained a microcosm that reflected many of the contradictory characteristics of the Polish central core.

It can be stated in general that only limited sub-strata of ethnic elements made strong social demands, either by becoming attracted to socialist or revolutionary elements or remaining attached to their own isolated agrarian radicalism.¹⁰ In such cases, the ethnicities became particularly stigmatized by the society. For example the term *żydokomuna*, that is, Jewish Communist Conspiracy, was an extremely powerful label created by the media and immediately assimilated into the Polish mentality; it was a definition which welded together historic Polish anti-semitism

and the recent widespread fears of communism in Polish society.¹¹

The Polish central core and its governments did manage to maintain a dominant position in a society which remained Polish and hostile to integration of minorities on equal terms. Polish politics moved increasingly toward the right during the interwar period. Many Poles still saw the nationalities as the most serious menace to the survival of the young state as well as the element responsible for the destruction of the old Polish Lithuanian state. With Piłsudski in power in 1926, conditions became better for the nationalities, but Piłsudski's vision of political federalism and to an even greater extent his idea of ethnic pluralism remained underdeveloped within the Polish state.¹²

That is to say, the regime remained at all times based on a strong ethnonational perception of its power; ironically that sentiment was paralleled by an increased sense of ethnonationalism in all nationalities, including the non-territorial ones. On the other hand, the ethnic minorities often were not able to abandon the narrow confines of their own ethnonationalism for more sophisticated, practical, and realistic political platforms. They never achieved even a sense of cross-horizontal solidarity, even a purely defensive perception, operative solely on an emergency basis.

Compromises and agreements with the Polish central core never really attained a level of security or stability for the national minorities, remaining always temporary, fragmented and dispersed. The ethnic peripheries remained a loose mosaic of different ethnic tesserae. One must also remember that the territorial integration of the new Polish state was not achieved until a few years after independence, and territorial settlements were certainly not considered to be definitive by the regime, which knew that its powerful neighbors thought the same but with opposite objectives in mind. Therefore, the ethnic core viewed minorities as objective obstacles to national integration as well as a constant source of social disorder and ethnic conflict. The issue of territory was extremely delicate. Minorities physically occupied a vast part of Poland. Indeed, they posed the danger of her territorial disintegration given their specifically territorial claims and demands for autonomy, independence, and/or reunion with a motherland which by definition was always an enemy of Poland.

The Polish state (the political ruling elite of the central dominant core) treated the ethnic minorities as cultural, political, and institutional inferiors suitable for polonization. This paralleled the historical phenomenon of germanization, emanating from the west, of which the Poles had been and were still the targets. Furthermore, the state championed national culture not only to preserve Polish identity but clearly to assert and vindicate cultural hegemony within its extant borders and beyond.

Religious principles were strongly integrated with cultural elements. Catholicism as a religion and the Catholic Church as an institution were

supported by the government as the state Church of Poland, in clear conflict with the different religions of the ethnic minorities. Polishness and Catholicism paralleled and expressed the interests of Polish farmers and the more rapacious of the Polish landlords on the *kresy*, the Ukrainian- and Belorussian-populated eastern provinces.

Within the urban environment, the recently formed bourgeoisie, possessing limited skills, could expand only at the expense of minorities such as the Germans and the Jews, who were already well-established and capable elements of the national economy.

In short, it was necessary for the central core to maintain its dominance over the peripheries, since the acquisition of its national independence was still recent, uncertain, and clearly problematic. From the very first moment of the new state's existence, the Polish government was conscious of the dangerous complexity of its heterogeneous ethnic composition and was also driven to address the ethnic problem by outside powers.

Polish Minority Policies

Poland signed the Minorities Protection Treaty in June 1919, thereby committing itself to full respect of the national minorities and their political and legal rights. The Treaty immediately became infamous among the Poles who judged it an external imposition aimed at limiting or questioning the sovereignty of their reborn state. Another story that gained notoriety was that the Treaty was nothing but an international Jewish plot against Poland. In 1921, the new Polish state's first adopted Constitution itself contained the provisions of the Treaty, a result certainly related to pressures from the Allied Powers.¹³ In the same year, the Treaty of Riga, which concluded the war of Poland against Soviet Russia, provided mutual assurances for the protection of the rights of the national minorities residing within the two countries' borders.

The following year, the status of Upper Silesia was defined in an international convention with Germany that also provided guarantees of political and legal equality to the local national minorities whose parties soon after gained twenty percent of the total vote in the general elections, quite a feat considering that abstention or sabotage was the measure adopted by some segments of the minorities.

The institutional legal guarantees did not, however, constitute strong enough support for peace. The regime itself, together with Polish society on the one hand and the ethnic minorities on the other, lived in a distrustful atmosphere marked by increasing friction and conflict. Furthermore, at an institutional level, the so-called Lex Grabski was passed to the satisfaction of the chauvinism of the Polish elites. The bill introduced a body of institutional and political measures that inhibited minorities, with the result that relations with the peripheral ethnic segments were exacerbated and pushed toward deeper hostility.¹⁴

The response of the ethnic peripheries to such policies was manifested in the idea and then creation of a political bloc of their parties. Though the project certainly represented much progress for the minorities in their ability to provide themselves with organized political representation, the bloc did not, and could not, effectively oppose the government's ethno-majoritarian policies within Parliament and their enactment throughout the country!¹⁵

The increasingly authoritarian policy of the government fell heavily upon the minorities. Generally, the policy negated any real autonomy of the minorities with respect to the Polish central core. In the economic sphere, for example, the urbanized Jews were the primary target, and efforts were made to reduce their presence, influence, and visibility in the metropolitan markets, among artisans and in industry. The growth of anti-semitism was accepted and favored. In territorial terms, the minorities, especially those in the *kresy*, started suffering from Polish colonization, and the areas noted for their German demographic concentration were targeted for fragmentation.

Far from approaching a realistic and workable solution to the problem of the ethnic minorities, these policies increased, or even generated where it did not already exist, an active reaction by segments of these minorities. Boycotts and terrorist activities manifested growing antagonism against the government. In 1922, Gabriel Narutowicz, the first president of the new Polish republic, was assassinated by a fanatic rightist who (together with the Polish right) saw him as a man of the national minorities since they had contributed with their votes to his election. The Ukrainian nationalist Fedak was responsible, in 1921, for a failed attempt on Piłsudski's life.

A change in the central core's attitude toward the minorities started immediately after the Piłsudski *coup d'état* of 1926. Piłsudski presented himself as a friend of the minorities. They too saw him as such, and supported him accordingly. The result was the creation, a few weeks after the coup, of the Committee of Experts on the Eastern Provinces and National Minorities, with, as an additional sign of good will, Leon Wasilewski, a socialist with a pro-minorities orientation, placed in charge. The *Sanacja* regime's effort to establish a new order, in both social and ethnic terms, tried to gain favor with the minorities without providing many concessions. Within about a year, the new regime removed the barrier of the *numerus clausus* quota system in higher education and recognized the full autonomy of the *kehilloth*, the Jewish communal bodies.

As a consequence, the regime succeeded in inducing various segments of the minorities to cooperate with the Bloc of Non-Partisan Cooperation with the Government (*Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem*), a new political formation intended as a broad coalition of forces aimed at controlling Parliament and implementing the *Sanacja* political agendas. The type of cooperation sought was, however, limited, submissive, and instrumental to the goals of the regime itself, goals that saw the minorities as constituting no threat, challenge, or obstacle.¹⁶

The cooperative spirit of the minorities, then, remained mild and their initial goodwill declined sharply. At the political level, most minorities' parties chose not to join the regime's political bloc in the 1928 general elections. They opted for presenting separate lists which, with over twenty-five percent of the vote for the *Sejm* and for the Senate, demonstrated a remarkable success.¹⁷

The result shocked the regime and caused it to move rapidly toward more authoritarian policies. The political relevance and visibility acquired by the minorities were moving in exactly the opposite direction that the regime had desired. This turn of events clearly imperiled the centralization of the regime. It was, moreover, a clear sign of ethnic and political disintegration which was institutionally untenable and therefore unacceptable.

Technically, an ostensible although partial solution, even from the narrow institutional viewpoint, was the implementation of more openly authoritarian policies. The newly elected Parliament was dissolved and elections rescheduled for 1930. This time the regime did not want to risk similar results and from the beginning tried to minimize any kind of opposition. Political opponents, ethnic and non-ethnic, were faced with institutional limitations, legal persecution, intimidation, and naked terror. The political parties of the minorities, territorial and non-territorial, fell victim to the regime's strategy. Nevertheless, these parties still managed to obtain over fifteen percent representation for the minorities in the national parliament.¹⁸

The regime's strategy had again failed. Minority representation was still too high, especially considering the limitations imposed. Attempts to reconcile the peripheral minorities with the dominant core became sporadic, inconclusive and undesirable. The time to search for a compromise was now over and the regime moved further toward the right. The lack of willingness to compromise at the political and institutional level reflected and mirrored the turmoil within a society where ethnonationalism was mounting. In the *kresy*, Belorussians and Ukrainians experienced, as early as 1930, a campaign of bloody pacification. Finally, little doubt was left about the future when in 1934, the Polish government suddenly and unilaterally abrogated the Minority Protection Treaty signed in 1919.

In the wake of Piłsudski's death, a new electoral law passed for the 1935 general election prevented any possible challenge to the regime by opposition forces; thus, the possibility for minorities to gain political representation was virtually abolished. The reaction of the minorities ranged from voting abstention to boycotts and sabotage. Different strategies arose according to the varying levels of politicization and radicalism of the various minority segments.

Within this climate of opposition, however, the regime did compro-

mise with some moderate minority elements, thus allowing them to present their own candidates. From the government's standpoint, a few individual representatives from the minorities were quite acceptable and innocuous, and twenty-four were elected to the *Sejm* and five to the Senate. But the ethnic minorities as a whole had to continue to struggle for cultural survival against the regime. Suffering violent assaults, particularly in Wolynia, the Ukrainians underwent polonization in various spheres of their life. Belorussians experienced intensive colonization and polonization of their culture, while Jews suffered from mounting anti-semitism and persecution in their economic life. Germans, in contrast, found themselves substantively protected due to the rising power of Germany and the pressure it imposed on Poland's western borders. Poland and Germany signed an agreement of non-aggression in January, 1934. Wanting to avoid any sources of conflict, the Polish regime allowed Nazi ideology and anti-semitism to grow freely within the German minority and in Polish society throughout the 1930s.¹⁹ Now that voiding conflict with the ethnic minorities was not the regime's policy, its practices resulted in increasing conflict with time. But the regime's ability to carry out "any" ethnicity policy, even an authoritarian one, remained fairly ineffective. Thus when the Nazis and Soviets occupied the country in 1939, the Polish government did not enjoy strong allegiance from as much as one-third of its population, its non-Polish citizens.

Poland's Ethnic Minorities

The ethnicity question in interwar Poland is complicated both in statistical and political terms. Although official census data recording ethnic minority populations had been routinely manipulated by the regime, existing figures do constitute a workable reference and may serve as a basis for further and more reliable estimates.²⁰ Analyzing how the censuses and statistics were organized and put to use provides valuable political insight. At the very beginning of the new state's existence, the Civil Administration of the Eastern Territories conducted a preliminary census of its populations. The data established by this preliminary census, despite substantial falsification, revealed very strong ethnic constituencies. A remarkable example is the case of the Kobrynsk district, where religious criteria were employed. In this census, 43 percent of the population declared itself of Mosaic convictions, 36 percent Eastern Orthodox, and only 21 percent Roman Catholic.

The census of 1921 had a limited scope as well. National territorial integration was not yet complete. Poland had not yet acquired the Wilno region and Upper Silesia. In addition, migratory phenomena had not been stabilized. The falsification of data varied depending on the region. For central Poland it was minimal, while for the eastern provinces it was significant. The census was conducted according to the criterion of self-definition of nationality. The structure and wording of the questionnaires left considerable room for ambiguous interpretations. The answers also

tended to confuse nationality with residence.

In the census of 1931, the criterion of "mother tongue" was substituted for that of nationality. Still, the ambiguity remained. It was easy to confuse and to manipulate the difference between the actual "mother tongue" and the language of daily use. Furthermore, the term *język tutejszy*, "local language," was used in the questionnaire. This term was extremely vague for it obscured the respondent's nationality. "Local language" was given as their language by 707,000 people, or 2.2 percent of the entire population. This answer was given primarily in the eastern provinces and thus represented a population of Belorussians and Ukrainians. In Silesia, a relatively common response to the question of mother tongue was "Silesian." This term was unsatisfactory since the Silesian language did not exist. In this instance, Poles, Germans and Czechs tried to qualify themselves as Silesians in an ethno-regional sense.

To summarize the official statistics as corrected by some more recent, more reliable estimates, the data of the early 1930s are as follows: Poles 20,640,000 or 65 percent; Ukrainians 5,110,000 or 16 percent; Jews 3,110,000 or 10 percent; Belorussians 1,900,000 or 6.1 percent; Germans 780,000 or 2.4 percent of Poland's population.²¹ Other minor ethnic segments may be added to the foregoing major ethnic groups: Lithuanians; Russians; Czechs; Slovaks; Gypsies; Armenians; Tatars; and Karaims. Finally, it is necessary to keep in mind that with the exception of the Germans, the ethnic minority populations grew considerably during the 1930s.²²

1. The Ukrainians constituted the most crucial ethnicity of the Polish state, and it was a territorial one. The Treaty of Riga, in March 1921, sanctioned the division of the Ukrainian lands. The census of 1921 put at about 4,000,000 the number of Ukrainians defined as Ruthenians. In 1931, using the criteria of mother tongue, and both the terms Ukrainian (*ukrainiec*) and Ruthenian (*rusin*) to create an artificial division, the number of Ukrainians was estimated at over 4,000,000. Less realistic appear estimates placing the number at over 7,000,000. Tomaszewski's estimate of over 5,000,000 (16 percent) in 1931 is more realistic, with definite growth occurring during the period of 1931-1939.²³

The Ukrainians lived in the southeastern territories, primarily in the *województwo* of Wolynia and the Southern Polesie, former Russian-occupied areas; and in the *województwo* of Lwów, Tarnopol, Stanisławów, former Austrian-occupied territories. Within the city of Lwów they numbered about fifty thousand or sixteen percent of the inhabitants.²⁴ They formed an almost entirely rural and relatively indigent population. The policies of the central government tended to keep them in poverty.²⁵ The Ukrainians, however, were capable of producing well-organized social institutions, and political aggregation developed along rural and populist ideological lines. A network of cooperatives constituted the focal point of

activity and the preservation of national life.²⁶

The schools did not have sophisticated curricula and were limited in numbers, but a Ukrainian intelligentsia, although small, developed and became an active vehicle for national identity.²⁷ The city of Lwów was the center of Ukrainian cultural and spiritual life. Yet, urban life in Ukrainian areas, limited to a few cities, remained dominated by Poles and Jews.

Religiously, the Ukrainians were divided mostly between Eastern Orthodox (the majority being former Russian subjects) and Uniate (former Austro-Hungarian subjects), with some of Roman Catholic faith, all in competition with each other. The Ukrainians joined with Poles in anti-semitic activities and programs, yet resisted the polonizing pressure of the Roman Catholic Church. In Wolynia, the Ukrainians (about 70 percent of the population) were Orthodox Christians, and in Eastern Galicia they were Greek Catholic Uniate. The conflicts between these two groups and the Polish Catholic Church were in both cases rather marked. The Greek Catholic Uniate Church was menaced with extinction, and the Polish Catholic attacks on it were constant and vicious.²⁸

Politicization among Ukrainians was very high although extremely fragmented among various political formations and parties. The rebirth of a national consciousness had occurred not long before in the context of the polyethnic structure of the Habsburg monarchy. All political groups except the revolutionaries focused on independence as the supreme objective, and as a minimal program tried to gain autonomy and independence in various degrees.²⁹ The most important legal organization was the National Democratic Ukrainian Union (UNDO), formed in 1925 with the political agenda of unifying all Ukrainians in one, independent state. In 1935, the organization compromised with the Polish regime and participated in the general political election, but its representatives at the Sejm were limited, and the temporary compromise soon came to an end. In all, the Polish regime did not change its policy toward the Ukrainians.³⁰

The nationalists and the irredentist-nationalists were very active and dynamic and sabotaged Polish elections on a regular basis. A Ukrainian Military Organization existed underground (basing its activities substantially on terrorism,) spanning a legitimate political arm in 1929, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. This kind of political formation employed terrorism and use of pseudo-military and political organizations akin to guerilla bands, some of which fought on the Nazi side during the war.³¹

A minor but active political force was the Communist Party of the Western Ukraine. It existed under the Communist Party of Poland's ideological and organizational umbrella although it operated according to its own strategies. It continued to exist after the Comintern's dissolution and destruction (in 1938) of the Communist Party of Poland.³²

2. The Jews were a non-territorial national minority. They did have a certain

degree of territorial concentration, but, more important for the definition here, they did not make territorial claims of any sort at any time. According to the census of 1921, using the criterion of nationality, the number of Jews was put at 2,846,855 or 10.5 percent of the population. Of these, 2,110,000 were classified as Jews by nationality, and the remainder declared themselves of "Mosaic persuasion." In 1931, using the criterion of mother tongue, Yiddish- and Hebrew-speaking, Jews were counted at 2,733,000 or 8.6 percent of the population. Better estimates place the figure at 3,114,000 or 9.8 percent of the population.³³ The estimate for 1939 of about 3,500,000, or greater than 10 percent of the total population, may be considered realistic. As previously mentioned, this minority is the best known and the most studied of all. Several studies, both general and monographic, constitute an established corpus of scholarship.³⁴

Except for western Poland, where their presence was negligible, Jews were dispersed throughout the country although higher densities existed in Eastern Galicia, where they were active in commerce and industry, and constituted the Jewish *Shtetl* in the small villages. Totalling over a quarter of the population in the largest cities (those over ten thousand inhabitants), the Jews were almost exclusively urban, visibly part of most of the urban economies, particularly in the southeastern towns. They were represented in every profession and occupation: as traders, artisans, and blue-collar workers. A very large number, however, lived in a situation of pauperism, constituting something akin to an urban "*Lumpenproletariat*"; one-third of Poland's Jews were on charity. They were minimally employed in the public services, (monopolized by the Poles,) and rural activities were limited to under one percent of their number according to some statistics. Although some very rich and powerful Jews existed, the claim of Jews as a dominant elite in the economy of Poland, especially during the interwar time, has been largely exaggerated.³⁵

Jewish society covered the spectrum from rich bankers and entrepreneurs to indigent workers. Community life and the communal ethnic identity were highly developed and organized. Autonomous communal bodies (*kehilloth*) supported a complex organizational structure and provided for extensive cultural and social life. The educational system was impressive and extensive. A new high level of culture was reached in religious seminaries and cultural centers, some enjoying an international reputation. This was the case of the progressively oriented YIVO Institute in Wilno and of the conservative Judaic Institute in Warsaw. Religious culture was profound and varied. Its chief expression was through the Orthodox and Chassidic branches of Judaism.³⁶ Politicization among Jews was extensive. The political arena was broad and dynamic, intellectually, theoretically and politically. Religious orthodoxy, Zionism, and Socialism were the major trends of thought, but assimilationism was also present. The first three trends led to the development of a diversity of political parties.

Many Jews customarily participated in Polish political life, often willing to compromise with, rather than antagonize, the government. The highest expression of this participation was reached in July, 1925, through the signing of a compromise agreement (*ugoda*) between Jewish representatives and the Polish government. In it the Jews reassured the Polish government of their loyalty and dedication and received in turn promises of more autonomy for their communities, rights and benefits for their schools, and protection. The *ugoda* spirit was short-lived, however, the government making use of it in the international arena and failing to maintain its promises internally. Under Piłsudski, the situation improved as the religious Agudat party opted for political compromise with the regime and established an alliance of sorts with it. The Agudat became the vehicle for assuring Jewish participation in the Piłsudski regime, and, in turn, Piłsudski favored the Agudat in its efforts to monopolize the Jewish *kehilloth*.³⁷ The Bund Party controlled the Jewish non-religious element and the working class. It was an old socialist party founded in Wilno in 1897. It perpetuated socialist traditions amongst the Jewish people and maintained a vigorous opposition to the Polish regime.³⁸ Revolutionary radicalism was evident in the short-lived Kombund, a separate revolutionary trend of the Bund, as well as in the many Jews in the Communist Party of Poland.³⁹

The situation for the Polish Jews worsened dramatically in 1935 after Piłsudski's death, for he had somewhat kept anti-Jewish activities and official anti-semitism at bay. The newly formed regime, consisting of incompetent and anti-semitic Polish colonels, was now escalating in authoritarianism, and with the participation of the Catholic Church hierarchy, favored extensive anti-Jewish activities and anti-semitism. The attitude of compromise on the Jews' part became much less viable. Consequently, in a progressively hostile environment, many Jews turned toward Zionism and started to leave Poland. The Polish regime became increasingly active in favoring mass Jewish emigration: Zionist organizations were actively helped, including assistance with military training. The regime now moved into an "ethnic cleansing" phase of the Polish economy and society,⁴⁰ in which anti-semitic sentiments rose to the surface throughout Polish society.

3. The Belorussians, like the Ukrainians, were an ethnically Slavic and territorial minority concentrated in the Polesie and Nowogródek areas of northeastern Poland. Together with the term "Belorussian," the censuses used "*tutejszy*" (local), an artificial definition designed to make Belorussian representation appear lower. The census of 1921 put Belorussians at about 1,110,000 (1,060,000 Belorussians and 50,000 *tutejszy*) or 4.1 percent of the population; the census of 1931 counted about 1,700,000 or 5.3 percent, using the criterion of mother tongue. Almost 1,000,000 were considered Belorussian speakers, and the more than 700,000 remaining were defined as *tutejszy*. Realistic estimates put the number of Belorussians at over 2,000,000 (or over

6 percent) in 1931, and at close to 3,000,000 in 1939.⁴¹

The Belorussian community was largely undifferentiated in social terms. The vast majority consisted of small landholding peasants and a large number of landless agricultural workers. The limited Belorussian landowning class corresponded in every respect to the Polish one in culture, language, and religion. In general, Poles were significant as landowners in Belorussian areas, owning over one-third of the arable lands. Beginning in the mid-1920s, Polish colonists (*osadnicy*) increased their presence.⁴² In the cities and towns, the population was mostly Polish and Jewish, and Belorussian workers were only a tiny presence.⁴³ A small Belorussian intelligentsia lived in Wilno, where the rebirth of a national consciousness had very recently transpired, although it did not have much visibility. Cultural life was developed, although it never reached the level of relevance and importance that was achieved by other ethnic minorities. Illiteracy was extensive. The educational system operated at the primary and secondary levels and was subject to constant polonisation. Cooperatives, credit unions, and self-help institutions existed in spite of their limited economic resources, although they too were never very visible. Politicization, not so well-established as with the other nationalities, was not rare among Belorussians, though there was a high degree of political fragmentation.

Given a situation of widespread pauperism, oppression emanating from the Polish landed classes, and territorial pressure from Polish colonists, the politicization often took the form of radicalism, agrarian radicalism, and more developed revolutionary ideologies. The most noticeable and active political parties were, therefore, on the left. These parties saw social and agrarian radicalism as the solution to ethnic, social, and local problems. One such party of importance was the revolutionary Belorussian Agrarian-Worker *Hromada* Party.⁴⁴ Belorussian political parties usually agreed upon the final goal of national self-determination and free national existence; yet these principles often lacked a consistent theoretical and strategic framework. This was the case with the more Marxist parties, where ambiguity existed on the issues of social liberation versus national liberation, and of whether an independent existence was to be preferred to the goal of joining the neighboring Soviet Socialist Belorussian Republic. Besides these, there were also different agrarian radical and revolutionary parties. The more orthodox Communists formed a separate party which, like the Ukrainian one, operated under the political and organizational umbrella of the Communist Party of Poland.⁴⁵

The vast majority of Belorussians were Eastern Orthodox and, therefore, suffered continuous pressure from the Polish Catholic Church. Along the westernmost parts of the *kresy*, a small minority of Belorussians were Roman Catholic and were thus considered and identified officially as ethnically Polish by the central government and its institutions.

During the 1930s, the repressive policy of the central government intensified on Belorussian lands. Revolutionary forces were subdued and active

and extensive suppression of Belorussian cultural identity took place. Belorussian schools were closed, leaving illiteracy as the only alternative to polonisation for the local population.

4. Germans formed another territorial ethnic minority. They strongly presented both territorial concentrations and political claims. Furthermore, they enjoyed a unique political climate created by the continuously growing power of the German *Heimat*, to which almost all of them actively referred. Their visibility was multiplied by the pressure Germany exerted on western Polish borders, on Poland in general, and on the international arena in reference to the German minority in Poland.⁴⁶

Germans resided in significant numbers in areas that had belonged to Germany before Polish independence: Pomorze (Pommern), Wielkopolska (Posen) and Śląsk (Schlesien), had been disputed areas for centuries, and were still sharply disputed. Germans and German communities were also present in central and eastern areas of Poland. In 1921, the census put the number of Germans at about 1,000,000, not counting Upper Silesia. In 1931, applying the criterion of "mother tongue," they numbered about 700,000, this time including Upper Silesia. Germans strongly disputed such numbers, which they considered excessively low.⁴⁷ More realistic estimates put the number at no more than 1,000,000 in 1939, considering that emigration to Germany was constant throughout the interwar decades.⁴⁸

The German minority had a strong ethnic and cultural identity, and a specific socioeconomic character. The Germans were landowners, entrepreneurs, middle-class businessmen, skilled workers, and capable farmers. In general, they constituted the most prosperous and compact ethnic minority. Their standard of living was perhaps the highest in Poland, higher than the Poles, excepting for the impoverished German farmers in the eastern provinces.⁴⁹ They professed unremitting allegiance to the German *Heimat*, to which many voluntarily emigrated. Those who stayed received financial, political, and diplomatic help from both the Weimar and Nazi regimes. Germany, and particularly Nazi Germany, was in fact very capable of making Poland's German minority a voice in international issues, in keeping it a very hot topic within the international arena, and in constantly placing Poland on the defensive as it dealt with the issue.⁵⁰

The German minority was a compact, well-knit social body whose socioeconomic vitality was supported by powerful bank systems, credit unions, professional organizations, cooperatives, and trade unions. Cultural organizations played an important role in maintaining the solidarity, cohesion, and alertness of this community. The educational system was of high quality, well-developed, well-organized, with the final stage of education usually completed in Germany.⁵¹

With respect to religion, the German ethnic minority was about eighty-five percent Protestant of various denominations. German Catholics were

found mostly in Upper Silesia. The churches hardly differed on cultural matters and were strongly united in defending the interests of their ethnic minority. Politicization among the Germans was very high, and amongst Germans of various origins and backgrounds no relevant differences existed. Thus in the 1930s, the majority was pro-Nazi, while others were either members of Catholic parties, or Socialists.

Different political groups existed although political life was organized under, and dominated by, umbrella political organizations containing the parties themselves. These were very active and efficient in maintaining contacts with their equivalent or similar organizations in Germany. This caused the political groups in Poland to be *de facto* party branches or organizational extensions of their German-based counterparts, which thereby reduced their ability to create original political agendas more responsive to Polish realities. Consequently, with increasing frequency, the German parties viewed their situation, and thus the Polish western frontier, as temporary phenomena.⁵² An exception to this attitude in the German political arena was the German Social Democratic Party, which focused its attention on the ideologically fraternal Polish and Jewish parties within Poland, and therefore marginalized territorial issues.⁵³

5. Other ethnic minorities, or more aptly, ethnic segments, existed. Mainly because of their limited dimension, they are not exactly considered ethnic minorities. They were not territorially relevant nor were they able to produce territorial or political claims. Data are unreliable or insufficient, yet estimates may be made following religious criteria or sometimes according to language categories in local statistics, as in the cases of *język inny*, "other tongue," or *język nieznany*, "unknown language."⁵⁴

a) The Lithuanians were a small territorial minority concentrated in the northeastern territories, along the Lithuanian border. They lived in the provinces of Wilno and Białystok with a smaller number in Nowogródek, and some lived in the city of Wilno. Demographic data are unclear and somewhat unreliable, both from the Polish and Lithuanian sides. Some Lithuanian estimates placing the number of Lithuanians at about 800,000 were clearly exaggerations. The Provisional Lithuanian Committee in Wilno put its estimate at about 300,000. Official Polish sources from 1921 and later put the figure at 186,000. The real number was certainly higher than that.⁵⁵

The reawakening of the Lithuanian national conscience had been a fairly recent development. The Lithuanian land owners had been integrated into the equivalent Polish classes. Whereas the memory of the ancient Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth persisted, in the countryside, many ethnic Lithuanian farmers defined themselves linguistically as Polish. While the Lithuanians were predominantly Catholic, they were still in conflict with the Poles over the language to be used in the liturgy. With few exceptions they were farmers by occupation and most of them owned their land. From the very

beginning and throughout the interwar period, a rural cooperative movement existed which grew and acquired increasing importance. A significant factor in this development was the existence of a Lithuanian Cooperative Bank in Wilno.

The territorial issue constituted the major cause of friction between Lithuanians and Poles, the border between the two countries being viewed as temporary by both sides. It was this issue that motivated the political activity of the Lithuanian parties, the main ones being the Christian Democrats and Rural Populists, who were active in Poland and maintained strong links with their counterparts in Lithuania. In the 1930s, groups of extremist nationalists also existed which during the war sided with the Nazis against the Poles. The Polish government tried to repress Lithuanian political and cultural expression, as did the Lithuanian government on the other side of the border with respect to its own Polish minority. The center of political activity and conflict was the city of Wilno where, in fact, few Lithuanians lived. But, historically, it was the cultural center of Lithuania and the symbol of the nation. Here could be found Lithuanian schools, *Gimnazja*, the Lithuanian Scientific Association, and the Central Lithuanian Library.

b) According to the criterion of spoken language, official data of 1931 counted the Russians at 139,000, or 0.4 percent of the population, a number perhaps not far from reality. They resided mostly in the eastern territories which had once been part of the Russian Empire. There, the native peoples, Ukrainians and Belorussians, had undergone a rigid policy of russification. Few Russians in Poland lived outside of the eastern territories of Poland.⁵⁶ Following the Russian Revolution, some Russians left this part of Poland for Russia. Most, however, wanting to be in Russia but opposing the Soviet regime, decided to wait. A number of Russian refugees were also awaiting the end of the Soviet regime and considered their stay in Poland temporary.

The Orthodox Christian Churches of the largely Eastern Orthodox Russians functioned only in the eastern territories of Poland. An internal religious conflict smoldered between the Christian Orthodox and the approximately 35,000 who declared themselves Evangelical or Catholics. In addition, a few Russians were of the "Mosaic persuasion," Russian-speaking Jews.

Most Russians did not participate in the political life of the Polish Republic and contributed only sporadically to Polish culture. Politicization and political activity appeared to be limited. From Polish police reports it is known that a certain anti-soviet and anti-socialist political activity had been organized, and attacks against Soviet representatives in Poland are known to have occurred. The territorial issue was not relevant. The more politicized sector of the Russian minority concentrated its attention on the restoration of the monarchy. Some social organizations and cultural associations organized schools in the Russian language; in 1938 four *Gimnazja* whose language of instruction was Russian operated in Poland.

c) The Czech minority numbered a mere 38,000 in 1931, with over 30,000

residing in Wolynia, about 4,000 in the Łódź region, a small settlement in the Cieszyn region of Silesia, and the remainder was dispersed. Czechs had immigrated to Poland as a consequence of religious persecution, and such was the case of the Czech community at Żelów, near Łódź, an old and quite visible community.⁵⁷ The Czechs living in Wolynia were capable farmers and relatively prosperous when compared to local standard. Many of them were artisans and textile workers who had come in the second half of the nineteenth century, mostly from the Łódź area. Initially they were not a very large community but they increased in numbers as a result of the emancipation of the peasants in Russia and the availability of cheap land.

Before the interwar period, the majority of Czechs living in Wolynia had become Eastern Orthodox as a consequence of Imperial Russian pressure. According to data of 1931, only about 100 Czech-speaking persons had declared themselves of the "Mosaic persuasion." Czechs enjoyed a relatively developed community life and had rural sporting and fire-fighting associations. Separate Czech primary schools existed, although they were probably limited in number. A Czech periodical was published in Łuck, and one other appeared in Kwasilów, where an honorary consulate of the Czechoslovakian republic resided. This minority was quite resistant to assimilation, tenaciously maintaining its national culture, language, and tradition. The Czechs did not participate in political life, had no territorial claims, and made no political demands. As such they did not constitute a problem for the Polish state.

d) A small Slovak community also lived in interwar Poland, but its strength remains to a certain degree undetermined. Data from 1931 statistics put the number of Slovaks at around 1,000, living almost exclusively in the mountains around Nowy Targ on the Czechoslovakian border. This minority was probably larger than indicated by these data but no other reliable figures are available. The population in that area was not easily identifiable, and there was confusion in identifying the local language.⁵⁸ Slovaks had very little national consciousness, often defining themselves as Poles rather than Slovaks. In the interwar period they were generically referred to as mountain people: *Góral*. They adhered to separate Slovak native traditions and customs, and spoke Slovak and local dialects. During the Second World War, the Nazi occupying power tried to create, without success, an artificial classification for them by inventing the term *Goralenvolk*. Most Slovaks were farmers and Roman Catholic. In general there was little religious conflict between them and the Poles; however, prejudice on the Polish side, such as characterizing the Slovaks as heretics and ungodly people, was not uncommon. Slovaks could be viewed objectively as an element of the territorial conflict which existed with Czechoslovakia, although this did not appear to have affected the Slovak community in Poland, which never formulated territorial or political claims.

e) Gypsies (the Roma people) never appeared in Polish statistics although

this minority was present and visible during the Second Polish Republic. Some estimates place the population in 1930 at approximately 30,000.⁵⁹ Gypsies were not of European origin. They were distinct from all other ethnic groups in language, culture, and in their traditions. Furthermore, the Gypsy population was internally differentiated. Gypsies spoke their own language, articulated in several distinct dialects. Different tribal and family groups existed as did different "kings." Some Gypsies were able to accumulate considerable wealth and, quite unusually, some invested in industry. Though maintaining a nomadic life, the Gypsy population of Poland concentrated in the south and rarely ventured to other parts of the country. Some of the Polish Gypsies settled down or adopted a semi-nomadic life and lived as artisans or day laborers.

Conflicts and friction with the Polish state occurred on the social level as the result of intense discrimination. Much of the antagonism arose from prejudice and age-old popular beliefs about the Gypsy's asocial nature. (It should be remembered that Gypsies, together with the Jews, were the most targeted victims of Nazi barbarity.)⁶⁰

f) Armenians were estimated at about 5,200, living in some provinces of the *województwo* of Stanisławów, to a minor extent in the Tarnopol area, and in Lwów, the city which they referred to as their cultural centre.⁶¹ Since their arrival in Poland extended back to medieval times, by the interwar period Armenians were already at the end of a long process of assimilation into Polish culture. They still maintained a few separate and specific traditions and some contact with other Armenians abroad, but their language had been lost and replaced by Polish. They were members of the Roman Catholic Church, yet had rites of their own. Primarily, they were traders or workers, and generally not farmers. During the interwar period some Armenians gained prominence in Poland in different areas of Polish culture.

g) About 5,500 Tatars were living in Poland in 1935, mostly in the *województwo* of Wilno, Nowogródek and Białystok. Most followed the Islamic religion.⁶² Although they continued to observe some separate traditions and customs they were more assimilated than other minorities and were hardly distinguishable within the overall local and regional contexts. They considered themselves members of Polish society and added scholarly contributions to Polish culture during this period. There was no evidence or expression of national consciousness among the Tartars and no open conflict existed with other minorities or Poles.

h) The Karaites (Karaim) were the smallest ethnic segment in Poland and little is known about them. Their number was limited to a few hundred. A source from the Karaite Religious Union estimates about 1,500 members in Poland. Other estimates put the number at 900.⁶³ Beginning in the fourteenth century, at the invitation of Polish kings, the Karaites had established small communities in the villages of Łuck, Halicz, Troki, and Wilno itself. In the interwar period, they were to be found in the provinces of Wilno, Nowogródek,

and Białystok, with smaller groups further south. They were linguistically and religiously distinct. Their ancient language originated within the Turkic linguistic family. Their faith was based on the Old Testament, but differed from Judaism from which it sprang in that it did not accept the Talmud and rabbinism. In their religious writings and liturgy they used, at least in part, the Hebrew language and alphabet. At the beginning of the twentieth century, secular writings appeared using the Latin alphabet. Some Karaites became well-known scholars and orientalist in Polish culture. Two Karaite periodicals were published, one in Łuck and one in Wilno, together with books and other materials.

In conclusion, reborn Poland found it difficult to reconstruct itself as a nation, in territorial, economic, social, political, and ethnic terms. From the ethno-political perspective, two developmental paths were possible. One was the formulation of an institutional structure of constitutional federalism and ethnic, "mosaic-like" pluralism. The other was the creation of a centralized institutional structure monopolized by a strong central ethnic core. This second path became the one pursued, although in the end it was not realized. Interbellum Poland remained an example of the unsuccessful organization of a modern polyethnic state and society. Still, a degree of cultural intercourse between the Polish and non-Polish elements of the population did exist, and benefitted both sides. On the one hand, an integrated and compact Polish state was necessary to guarantee its survival and continuation in the midst of predatory European neighbors. On the other hand, the Polish state contained a disproportionate number of ethnic minorities, in obvious contradiction of its geographical borders, a problem that was difficult if not impossible to overcome.⁶⁴

The Polish Second Republic failed to give the reborn Poland a stabilized society, nor did it resolve major problems of extreme economic and social complexity. Moreover, at the end of the Interbellum period, an authoritarian regime was *de facto* responsible for exasperating the generally disturbed situation, particularly with regard to the question of ethnic minorities. Larger and tragic historic events profoundly affected the fate of the minorities. After the Second World War, Poland reemerged as a newly reduced geographical entity, as a compact homogeneous ethnic society with virtually no ethnic minorities. They had largely been exterminated, had emigrated or now resided outside the redrawn Polish borders. Postbellum Poland has been free of its minorities. But, as other essays in this volume reveal, a specter is haunting Poland.

NOTES

1. For coeval accounts see J. Urbański, *Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce*, Warszawa, 1932; P. Włodarski, *Zagadnienia narodowościowe w Polsce odrodzonej*, Warszawa, 1936; K. Kierski, *Ochrona praw mniejszości*

- w Polsce, Warszawa, 1933. And the Journal *Sprawy narodowościowe*, published during the interwar time after 1926.
2. For a recent valuable overview of minorities, see E. Wynot, "The National Minorities of Interwar Poland: An Overview," *Poland between the Wars: 1918-1939. A Collection of Papers and Discussions from the Conference "Poland between the Wars: 1918-1939" held in Bloomington, Indiana, February 21-23, 1985*, T. Wiles (ed.), Bloomington, 1989.
 3. See note 34.
 4. Although not written in this perspective, see A. Chojnowski's useful *Koncepcje polityki narodowościowej rządów polskich w latach 1921-1939*, Ossolineum, Wrocław, 1979.
 5. J. Holzer, *Mozaika Polityczna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa, 1974. Although not concerned with the issue of minorities this work is a useful outline containing a review of major political parties of the minorities.
 6. J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita wielu narodów*, Warszawa, 1985. Also J. Tomaszewski, *Ojczyzna nie tylko Polaków. Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce w latach 1918-1939*, Warszawa, 1985. These two studies form part of the basis of this article.
 7. J. Rothschild, "Ethnic Peripheries Versus Ethnic Cores: Jewish Political Strategies in Interwar Poland," *Political Science Quarterly*, Winter 1981-82, p. 591. Although the focus of this article is on Jewish matters, I found it stimulating where broader inquiries and definitions are concerned.
 8. See G. Simoncini, *The Communist Party of Poland 1918-1929*, Lewiston NY, 1993, and M. K. Dziewanowski's well-known outline *The Communist Party of Poland. An Outline of History*, Cambridge MA, 1959.
 9. See note 38.
 10. For an introduction to the topic, see G. Simoncini, *Revolutionary Organizations and Revolutionaries in Interbellum Poland. A Bibliographical Biographical Study*, Lewiston NY, 1992.
 11. A representative example of coeval literature is R. Korsh, *Żydowskie ugrupowania wywrotowe w Polsce*, Warszawa, 1925.
 12. See J. Łobodowski, "Koncepcje wschodnie Piłsudskiego," *Wiadomości* No. 23, 1964; T. Piotrkiewicz, *Kwestia Ukraińska w Polsce w koncepcjach Piłsudczyń 1926-1930*, Warszawa, 1981; J. Wiatr, "Koncepcje polityczne Piłsudskiego," *Argumenty* No. 45, 1968; M. Król, *Józef Piłsudski. Ewolucja myśli politycznej*, Warszawa, 1981. In English see M. K. Dziewanowski, *Joseph Piłsudski. A European Federalist, 1918-1922*, Stanford, 1969. See also the several well-known works on Piłsudski by the Polish historian Andrzej Garlicki.
 13. A. Burda (ed.), *Konstytucja Marcowa 1921*, Lublin, 1983.

14. Lex Grabski defined a body of laws passed in 1924 dealing with minority rights such as those having to do with the school system, language, administration and legal procedure. For the text of the law refer to *Dzennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* for 1924.
15. The proposal for a political Minorities Bloc was made by Yitzhak Gruenbaum, a leader of the Zionist movement. See J. Rothschild, "Ethnic Peripheries Versus Ethnic Cores," *Political Science Quarterly*, Winter 1981-1982.
16. See A. Chojnowski, *Koncepcje..*
17. See *Mniejszości narodowe w wyborach do Sejmu i Senatu w 1928 r.*, Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych, Warszawa, 1928, and K. an T. Rzepeccy, *Sejm i Senat 1928-1933*, Poznań, 1938.
18. J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita..*, p. 35.
19. E. Wynot E, "A 'Necessary Cruelty': The Emergence of Official Anti-Semitism in Poland, 1936-39," *American Historical Review*, No. 77, 1971.
20. J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita..*, p. 35.
21. *Ibidem.*
22. Throughout this article I refer to the official data and to the elaborations on them done by different scholars. Official data are derived from *Rocznik Statystyki* and *Mały Rocznik Statystyczny*, the Polish government annual statistical reports for the 1920s and 1930s, particularly for the years 1921 and 1930. Also of value is the government publication *Mniejszości narodowe w wyborach do Sejmu i Senatu w 1928 r.* Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych. Warszawa, 1928. The data from the Polish government annual reports are reported and discussed in the chapter on Poland in J. Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, Seattle, 1974, p. 36 ff. Official data are also extensively reported and discussed in J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita wielu narodów*, Warszawa, 1985, p. 35 ff. E. Wynot also refers to the same data in his "The National Minorities of Interwar Poland: An Overview," in T. Wiles (ed.), *Poland between the Wars: 1918-1939*, pp. 149-160. For more data study and interpretations, at times controversial, see W. Mędręcki, "Liczebność i rozmieszczenie grup narodowościowych w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej w świetle wyników II spisu powszechnego (1931 r.)," *Dzieje Najnowsze*, No. 1/2, 1983; K. Srokowski, *Sprawa narodowościowa na kresach wschodnich*, Kraków, 1924; M. Drozdowski, *Spółeczeństwo, państwo, politycy II Rzeczypospolitej. Szkice i polemiki*, Kraków, 1972. Also of interest is J. Żarnowski, *Spółeczeństwo Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej 1918-1939*, Warszawa, 1973.
23. *Ibidem.* More detailed data and estimates are to be found in J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...* p. 78.

24. For general reference see W. Serczyk, *Historia Ukrainy*. Wrocław, 1979 and M. Papierzyńska-Turek, *Sprawa Ukraińska w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej 1922-1926*, Kraków, 1979.
25. See J. Tomaszewski, "Dokumenty w sprawie polityki agrarnej rządu polskiego w województwach południowo-wschodnich w przeddzień wybuchu II wojny światowej," *Dzieje Najnowsze*, No. 3, 1972.
26. Information can be drawn from W. Ruśński's general outline *Zarys historii polskiego ruchu spółdzielczego. Tom II, 1918-1939*, Warszawa, 1980.
27. On the topic of education for all nationalities see S. Mauersberg, *Szkolnictwo powszechne dla mniejszości narodowych w Polsce w latach 1918-1939*, Wrocław, 1968.
28. J. Mirtshuk, "The Ukrainian Uniate Church," *Slavonic Review*, No. 10, 1931-1932.
29. K. Srokowski, *Sprawa narodowościowa na Kresach Wschodnich*, Kraków, 1924. Also A. Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: The Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism, 1918-1929*, New York, 1980.
30. E. Wynot, "The Ukrainians and the Polish Regime, 1937-1939," *The Ukrainian Historian*, No. 7, 1970.
31. See K. Hrabys, *Sprawa ukraińska*. Poznań, 1935; R. Torzecki, *Kwestia ukraińska w polityce III Rzeszy*, Warszawa, 1962; T. Cieślak, *Hitlerowski sojusz z nacjonalizmem ukraińskim w Polsce*, Warszawa, 1968.
32. See R. Solchanyk, "The Foundation of the Communist Movement in Eastern Galicia 1919-1921," *Slavic Review*, No. 4, 1971; J. Radziejowski, *Komunistyczna Partia Zachodniej Ukrainy 1919-1929. Węzłowe problemy ideologiczne*, Kraków, 1976; G. Iwański, "Z dziejów Komunistycznej Partii Galicji Wschodniej (KPGW)," *Z Pola Walki*, No. 4, 1967. A comprehensive list of all Ukrainian and minority revolutionaries is *Postowe rewolucyjni w Sejmie. Wybór przemówień, interpretacji i wniosków*, Warszawa, 1961. See also G. Simoncini, "Ethnic and Social Diversity in the Membership of the Communist Party of Poland: 1918-1938," *WPIS I-92-13*, Hoover Institution. Stanford, 1992.
33. J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...*, p. 35, and S. Bronsztejn, *Ludność żydowska w Polsce w okresie międzywojennym. Studium statystyczne*, Wrocław, 1963.
34. The coeval work by I. Scupper, A. Tartakower, and A. Hafftk, *Żydzi w Polsce odrodzonej*, Warszawa, 1932-1934 remains fundamental. In two volumes, in particular volume two, part four: *Żydzi w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w okresie 1918-1933*, pp. 165-362. Also A. Hertz, *Żydzi w kulturze polskiej*. Paryż, 1961; J. Fishman (ed.), *Studies in Polish Jewry*, New York, 1974; C. Heller, *On the Edge of*

- Destruction. Jews of Poland between the Two World Wars*, New York, 1977; P. Korzez, *Juifs en Pologne. La question juive pendant l'entre-deux-guerres*, Paris, 1980; J. Orlicki, *Szkice z dziejów stosunków polsko-żydowskich*, Warszawa, 1983; J. Marcus, *The Social and Political History of the Jews in Poland, 1919-1939*, Berlin-New York, 1983; and Y. Gutman *et al.* (eds.), *The Jews of Poland between Two World Wars*. Hanover, 1989.
35. J. Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars*, Seattle, 1974, pp. 39-40.
 36. See note 34.
 37. E. Mendelson, "The Politics of Agudas Yisroel in Interwar Poland," *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, No. 2, 1972.
 38. J. Tomicki, "The General Union of Jewish Workers (BUND) in Poland 1918-1939," *Acta Poloniae Historica*, No. 45, 1982. Also B. K. Johnpoll, *The Politics of Futility. The General Jewish Workers Bund of Poland, 1917-1943*, Ithaca NY, 1967.
 39. See G. Iwański, "Żydowski Komunistyczny Związek Robotniczy Kombund w Polsce 1921-1923," *Z Pola Walki*, No. 4, 1974 and G. Iwański, "Powstanie i działalność Komunistycznej Organizacji Młodzieży "Cukunft" w Polsce (Styczeń 1922 - kwiecień 1923 r.)," *Pokolenia*, No. 3, 1974.
 40. W. Drymmer, "Zagadnienie żydowskie w Polsce w latach 1935-1939," *Zeszyty Historyczne*, No. 13, 1968.
 41. As a general reference see M. Kosman, *Historia Białorusi*, Wrocław, 1979.
 42. See J. Zaremba, *Stosunki narodowościowe w województwie nowogrodzkim z uwzględnieniem tła socialnego*, Warszawa, 1939, and J. Tomaszewski, *Z dziejów Polesia 1921-1939. Zarys stosunków społeczno-ekonomicznych*, Warszawa, 1963.
 43. J. Tomaszewski, "Robotnicy Białorusini w latach 1919-1939 w Polsce," *Acta Baltico-Slavica*, No. 5, 1967.
 44. See U. A. Poluiian, *Bełarуска Seliansko-Rabochaia Hramada*, Mińsk, 1967; A. Bergman, "Białoruska Włościańsko-Robotnicza Hromada," *Z Pola Walki*, No. 3, 1962; and A. Bergman, *Rzecz o Bronisławie Taraszkiewiczu*, Warszawa, 1977.
 45. See note 8.
 46. E. Wynot, "The Polish Germans, 1919-1939: National Minority in a Multinational State," *Polish Review*, No. 17, 1972.
 47. For a coeval German point of view on Upper Silesia see K. Junkerstorff, *Das Schutzrecht der deutschen Minderheit in Polnisch-Öberschlesien nach dem Genfer Abkommen*, Berlin, 1930.
 48. S. Potocki, *Położenie mniejszości niemieckiej w Polsce 1918-1939*, Gdansk, 1969. Also see note 22.
 49. Z. Cichocka-Petrażycka, *Żywiół niemiecki na Wołyniu*, Warszawa,

- 1933.
50. See J. Krasuski, *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie 1926-1933*, Poznań, 1964.
51. T. Kowalak, *Spółdzielczość niemiecka na Pomorzu 1920-1938*, Warszawa, 1965. Also T. Kowalak, *Zagraniczne kredyty dla Niemców w Polsce 1919-1939*, Warszawa, 1972.
52. K. Grünberg, *Niemcy i ich organizacje polityczne w Polsce międzywojennej*, Warszawa, 1970.
53. *Ze wspólnych walk niemieckiego i polskiego rewolucyjnego ruchu robotniczego w latach 1918-1939. Dokumenty i materiały*, Opole, 1976.
54. See J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...*, p. 237.
55. See J. Ostrowski, *Litwini na Ziemi Wilenskiej*, Wilno, 1930, and J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...* p. 244.
56. J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...*, p. 237.
57. *Ibidem*. Also W. Łypacewicz, *Stosunki Polsko-Czeskie*, Warszawa, 1936, and Z. Cichocka-Petrażycka, "Kolonie niemieckie i czeskie na Wołyniu," *Rocznik Ziem Wschodnich*, 1939.
58. J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...*, p. 251 ff.
59. See the well-known study by J. Ficowski, *Gypsies in Poland: History and Customs*, Warszawa, 1989; J. Ficowski, *Cyganie Polscy. Szkice historyczno-obyczajowe*, Warszawa, 1953; W. Mrozowski, *Wspomniki cygana*. Łódź, 1980; and J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...* p. 255.
60. L. Kabat, "Le Massacre des Tsiganes en Pologne." *Monde Gitan*, No. 33, 1975, and: J. Ficowski, "The Fate of the Polish Gypsies," in: J. N. Porter (Ed.), *Genocide and Human Rights: A Global Anthology*. Lanham, 1982.
61. J. Halicz, "Ormianie w Polsce południowo-wschodniej," *Rocznik Ziem Wschodnich*, 1939; J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...* p. 240.
62. S. Kryczyński, "Tatarzy polscy," *Rocznik Ziem Wschodnich*, 1938; J. Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita...* p. 239.
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