Razing the Church: The Enduring Effect of Nazi Repression in Poland

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Abstract

Repression against religious elites and organizations is a common yet understudied phenomenon. We address this gap in the literature by analyzing the nature and longterm consequences of repression in Nazi-occupied Poland during WWII. We leverage the exogeneity of the border between the directly-incorporated Warthegau and the General Government in a spatial regression discontinuity design to show that repression in the Warthegau targeted the Catholic Church, perceived as a locus of Polish identity. We further show that the removal of Catholic clergy had an enduring negative effect on church attendance. At the same time, more repressed areas demonstrate higher support for nationalist parties in elections held when WWII repression was salient. The results suggest that repression against elites both achieves its goals of reshaping behavioral norms and backfires by strengthening nationalism. We consider the supply and the martyrdom channels through which the targeting of religious elites may produce this counterintuitive pattern.

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The little people we want to spare, but the nobility, clergy, and Jews must be killed.

Reinhard Heydrich, Director of the Gestapo, Sep. 8, 1939¹

1 Introduction

The imposition of foreign and domestic dictatorial rule is often accompanied by repression against religious elites. Bolsheviks in Soviet Russia, Meiji Japan in Korea, the Chinese Communist Party in Xinjiang, and ISIS in Iraq have all sought to erase or overwrite identities of the populations they governed by rounding up priests and boarding up churches and temples. Religious leaders and organizations are targeted because they serve as focal points for cultural communities, helping to pass down group identities from one generation to the next and thus challenge the new regime's attempts to impose alternative loyalties and ideologies.

How does this form of repression affect the persistence of group identities and religious practices? Few studies have engaged this question. Instead, research has focused on mass repression and indiscriminate violence. This work concludes that repression fails to achieve its goals and may backfire by strengthening ingroup attachments and opposition to the perpetrator identity (Balcells 2012; Lupu and Peisakhin 2017; Hadzic, Carlson and Tavits 2017; Dehdari and Gehring 2022; Martínez 2023). This effect can persist for generations and is more likely to appear once the coercive power of the repressive regime wanes (Rozenas and Zhukov 2019) and when past events become politically salient (Fouka and Voth 2022).

The repression of cultural elites and organizations may have different consequences. Clergy, educators, and intellectuals are targeted because of their high social and human capital, which can be used to maintain national attachments and cultural markers (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1992) and to mobilize collective action against the regime (Krakowski and Schaub 2022; Johnston 2019). Their removal, together with the closing of centers of cul-

¹Quoted in Huener (2021, 26).

tural socialization such as schools and churches, may be more likely to undermine identityenhancing behavioral norms. At the same time, violence against these prominent figures can elevate them to the status of martyrs, increasing attachment to identities they represent.

We study the short and long-run consequences of repression of religious identity using an original micro-level dataset on Nazi-occupied Poland. After the German invasion, Poland was divided into several annexed zones and the unincorporated General Government, becoming "an experimental area for repressive and utopian population policies never before seen in Europe" (Friedrich 2005, 715). While economic exploitation and violence against civilians were ubiquitous throughout the country, repression against the Catholic Church, perceived as a locus of Polish identity, was largely limited to annexed areas, and particularly brutal in the Warthegau, where 72% of the clergy were arrested and 97% of the Catholic churches were closed (Huener 2021). These measures were part of a larger plan to eradicate the Polish nation in the incorporated region through restrictions on Polish culture and education.

The boundary between the Warthegau and the General Government, where the Catholic Church operated with less interference, was set in a quasi-random manner, influenced by the competing agendas of Nazi regional leaders. It ran through the former Russian imperial partition and did not correspond to preexisting administrative borders, splitting an area with similar prewar demographic and political characteristics. We leverage the border's exogeneity to identify the causal effects of repression using a geographic regression discontinuity design. We also exploit variation in repression within different occupation zones to isolate the impact of repression against the clergy from other occupation policies.

Our first contribution is to identify key differences in repression between the Warthegau and the General Government using original individual-level data on victimized priests and teachers. We show that the former experienced significantly higher levels of repression, both in the extensive and intensive margins. We find a 1.5 and 1.3 standard-deviation increase in the fraction of municipalities with at least one priest arrested and in the natural logarithm of the number of arrested clergy, respectively. A similar pattern of results holds for the subset of priests who were executed or died in captivity. At the same time, we observe no discontinuities in violence against teachers. Finally, we find indirect evidence that the Warthegau population suffered more deportations: a slight decrease in the shares of the adult and male populations in 1946. The effect is short-lived, consistent with the temporary nature of deportations.

Our second contribution is to examine the long-run consequences of this repressive regime on political and social outcomes. We propose two, non-mutually exclusive channels through which repression of religious elites may change postwar political and social behavior. On the one hand, the negative shift in *religious supply* may reduce religious observance and, in the longer term, support for Catholic values. On the other hand, victimized priests may be venerated as martyrs in their communities, fostering a deeper bond with Catholicism and the Polish nation for which they endured such hardships. This *martyrdom channel* will thus translate into greater support for nationalist parties that highlight Polish suffering in WWII and view Catholicism as central to Polish identity.

In line with the supply channel, we find a long-run negative impact of repression on mass attendance. In particular, participation in Catholic mass was lower by 11.3 percentage points, or more than 0.5 standard deviations, in 1991, the earliest date for which municipal data exist. While the estimates for mass attendance remain negative throughout our sample period, the effect dissipated over time.

We then explore the legacy of repression on post-transition electoral outcomes. We find no differences in voting behavior during the 1990s parliamentary elections, when the key electoral cleavage was between the heirs of the Solidarity movement and ex-communist parties. However, in the 2000s, when WWII repression was particularly salient in political discourse, support for nationalist parties that emphasized Polish suffering and promoted the "Pole=Catholic" model – specifically, the Law and Justice (PiS) and the League of

Polish Families (LPR) – was 3.1 percentage points higher in the Warthegau. Thus, Nazi repression both backfired by increasing support for nationalist parties that emphasized Polish suffering in WWII and succeeded in its goal of weakening the influence of parish priests in their communities by reducing the number of regular church-goers. The backlash effect is particularly surprising given that PiS and LPR are more popular among religious voters.

While the Warthegau repression is a bundled treatment, persecution of the Catholic clergy is its distinctive feature. We provide suggestive evidence that this is a key factor behind our main results. Within the Warthegau, priest victimization rates predict lower mass attendance, in line with the *religious supply* channel. Using newly digitized data on priests' years of service, we confirm that an average parish affected by repression remained without a priest for the duration of the war and the vacancies were filled immediately after. This suggests that even a temporary, if drastic interruption in the availability of religious services can have long-term consequences on religious practices. We also find suggestive, though weaker, evidence for the *martyrdom* channel. Even though PiS and LPR rely on religious electorates, they secured significantly higher vote shares in municipalities with higher priest victimization rates in the 2005 election, a period when memories of German violence during WWII were particularly salient.

We address several alternative explanations for these patterns. Our results do not appear to be driven by the relative effect of direct versus indirect foreign rule, postwar communist policies toward the repressed localities, or differences in the socioeconomic characteristics of repressed municipalities.

We contribute to the literature on the legacies of repression by focusing on the persecution of cultural elites and organizations by a foreign power, an understudied phenomenon. We find that this form of repression may be more effective than indiscriminate violence in changing behavioral norms, such as church attendance, by reducing the supply of religious services. At the same time, by elevating its victims to the status of martyrs, it can backfire by strengthening attachment to the persecuted identity. In a related study, Peisakhin and Queralt (2022) show that Nazi repression against German Catholic priests in Bavaria *strengthened* religious identity. We complement their work by studying a setting involving higher levels of repression by a foreign entity (rather than domestic) with the purpose of destroying a national identity. Our divergent findings suggest that the effect of religious persecution depends on the nature of the oppressor and the severity of the violence. On the consequences of cultural repression, Dehdari and Gehring (2022) find that areas in Alsace-Lorraine exposed to repressive nation-building policies by the German and French states have a stronger regional identity. Our treatment differs not only in the intensity of its violence, but also in its focus on the dismemberment of a pivotal religious institution.

Our results also complement previous findings on the legacy of foreign rule (Ferwerda and Miller 2014; Grosfeld and Zhuravskaya 2015; Kocher and Monteiro 2016; Charnysh and Finkel 2017; Bukowski 2018; Aaskoven 2022; Fontana, Nannicini and Tabellini 2023; Martinez, Jessen and Xu 2023) by highlighting the heterogeneity of repressive tactics within one occupation regime and historical period and tracing the long-run consequences of these differences over time. To date, little is known about the effect of annexation relative to other forms of occupation (but see Cannella, Makarin and Pique (2021) on the consequences of repressive annexation relative to occupation in Northern Italy).

Finally, this paper complements the literature on the political economy of religion. This literature has focused on how religion shapes political preferences and outcomes (Spenkuch and Tillmann 2018; Bénabou, Ticchi and Vindigni 2022; Haffert 2022; Nalepa and Pop-Eleches 2022; Grzymala-Busse 2015). In the Eastern Bloc context, Wittenberg (2006) studies the role of the Catholic Church in reinforcing traditional values and pre-WWII political loyalties, while Nalepa and Pop-Eleches (2022) show that Communist infiltration of the Catholic Church allowed the regime to influence political preferences. Our contribution is to show that persecution against the Catholic Church dampened religious participation, but paradoxically strengthened support for nationalist parties that rely on religious electorates.

2 Context

2.1 Nazi Occupation of Poland

Germany attacked Poland on September 1, 1939. Shortly afterward, the Red Army entered Poland from the east. After a month of fighting, the independent Polish state ceased to exist. Its territory was split into different occupation zones (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Occupation Zones in Poland



The western and northwestern areas were incorporated into the Reich and divided into Reichsgau Wartheland or Warthegau (initially named Posen) and Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen (initially named Westpreussen). Several counties north of Warsaw were incorporated into East Prussia as district (*Regierungsbezirk*) Zichenau, and the southwest region around Katowice was annexed to the province of Upper Silesia as district Oberschlesien (Kattowitz).Central and eastern areas were combined into the unincorporated General Government (*Generalgouvernement*). While the General Government was not annexed to the Reich, it was administered by German officials and stopped being regarded as Polish occupied territory in 1940, when the possibility of peace with the Allies diminished (Furber 2004, 553).

The border between the annexed Warthegau and the General Government was the product of "political wrangling" between different German authorities (Chu, Kauffman and Meng 2013, 332). Hitler's early plans envisioned a return to a border similar to that of pre-WWI. Fears regarding the assimilation of territories that were not part of the Prussian Polish partition initially led to a border that excluded the city of Łódź, which had few Germans, and would have probably run along the Warta River (Chu, Kauffman and Meng 2013, 333). However, some Reich authorities including Hermann Göring wanted to move the border eastward. Arthur Greiser, Warthegau leader, and other gau officials advocated for the inclusion of Łódź, as well as Piotrków Trybunalski and Tomaszów Mazowiecki (Housden 1994; Chu, Kauffman and Meng 2013). On the other hand, Hans Frank, leader of the General Government, wanted to keep Łódź in the unincorporated territories. This position was shared by Goebbels, which points to the lack of consensus even among high ranking officials (Chu, Kauffman and Meng 2013, 336).

The final border, drawn on November 9, 1939, reflected these conflicting interests. It incorporated Kutno (coveted by Frank), Łódź and its surrounding hinterland into the Warthegau, but left other economic centers such as Piotrków and Tomaszów in the General Government. The new border "had no historical rationale" (Epstein 2010, 137), and did not correspond to prior administrative, ethnic, or economic divisions.² Neither did it follow the territorial organization of the Catholic Church, splitting the diocese of Łódź, Warszaw, Płock, and Czestochowa. Neither side of the border debate was pleased with this outcome and arguments continued for a year. In November 1940, Frank and Greiser wrote a letter to Hitler committing to put their differences aside until the war's end (Housden 1994; Chu, Kauffman and Meng 2013).

Although annexed regions were incorporated into the Reich, they remained separated

²The quasi-random nature of the division of Poland can be compared to the 19th-century partition of Africa (Furber 2004, 551).

by a police border from the "Old Reich" (*Altreich*). All individuals crossing this border were subject to passport controls in order to prevent Poles from fleeing west and to regulate the movement of ethnic Germans from the newly incorporated territories. Nazi control of the area would last through January 1945, when the Red Army began the Vistula–Oder offensive.

2.2 Differences in Repression within Nazi-occupied Poland

The nature of repression differed between the annexed territories, intended as a Lebensraum for Germans, and the General Government, which served as a reservoir of Polish laborers. In the former, all traces of Polish identity would have to disappear. This was accomplished through the arrests and executions of Catholic priests, the closure of churches, and restrictions on Catholic practices. Moreover, schools that served Catholic and Jewish populations were closed.

The Catholic Church was the main target because it was considered a bastion of Polish identity. As early as July 1939, the Army High Command declared the Catholic clergy as "primarily responsible for nationalistic rabble-rousing" (Huener 2021, 53). The image of the "agitator-priest" (*Hetzkaplan*) as an enemy of Germandom drew on a legacy of Prussian animosity toward Catholicism during the partitions of Poland (Huener 2021).

The Warthegau, which had the largest Polish population within the annexed zones, experienced the brunt of these policies (Epstein 2010, 2). Hitler wished the Gau *"to become flourishing German land in ten years"* (Epstein 2010, 5), and he found a willing executioner in Greiser, an "anti-Polish Nazi zealot" from the formerly Prussian province of Posen.

Greiser succeeded in decimating the Polish clergy in the Warthegau: of the 2,100 secular and religious clergy, 133 (6%) were killed in the Gau territory, 1,523 (73%) were arrested, and 1,092 (52%) were sent to concentration camps, where two thirds died (Huener 2021, 208). As a result, entire districts had no priests to serve parishioners during the war (Huener 2021, 167). Charitable and educational institutions previously maintained by the Catholic Church were abolished. Some 97% of all church buildings and shrines were closed, desecrated, or destroyed (Huener 2021, 2). Nazi authorities also restricted the times of worship, prohibited public displays of faith, and tried to prevent individuals from travelling outside of their parish to attend services elsewhere.

Greiser closed Polish schools, although this policy was applied less consistently than repression against the Church. Instead of going to school, Poles aged 14 and above were forced to work. Poles were strictly segregated from Germans and faced restricted hours for using public baths and entering shops and markets. Public spaces and cafes were designated "for Germans only."³

Greiser also began deportations into the General Government in order to create space for German settlers. However, these slowed as Germans realized that they needed Polish laborers and farmers. From mid-1940 onward, thousands of Poles were put to work in the Warthegau or in the Altreich.

On the other hand, while the General Government also experienced large-scale violence and roundups for forced labor, de-Polonization was limited. There was "an unresolved conflict in Nazi minds" over whether this region should become a pure German colony (Lukas 2012, 32). For the time being, Nazi administration sought to control rather than eradicate Polish culture. As Gąsiorowski (2010, 72) states, "despite the difficult food and material situation and the growing terror in the General Government, it was still allowed to be a Pole."

Allowing religion was viewed as important for preventing unrest. It is estimated that 95% of the clergy in the General Government remained in the same parish during the war (Lukas 2012, 15), a marked contrast to the Warthegau. Religious life continued uninterrupted; there were no mass closings of churches or restrictions on religious services, although training new priests was prohibited (Kłoczowski, Müllerowa and Skarbek 1986, 354-355).⁴

³In the neighboring Reichsgau Danzig-West Prussia, Gauleiter Albert Forster adopted a different approach, forcing much of the indigenous population onto the German Volksliste





Notes: The figure plots locations of priests who were arrested, killed, or died during WWII. Abbreviations are as follows: General Government, GG; Warthegau, RW, Danzig-Westpreussen (DW), Upper Silesia (US), and Ziechenau (ZI).

In contrast to the Warthegau, vocational and elementary schools remained open to satisfy German need for qualified workers. However, subjects related to the Polish nationhood – such as Polish history, geography, and literature – were banned (Walczak 1987, 57).

Some elements of German repression were similar across occupation zones. All secondary and higher educational institutions were closed. Polish Jews were segregated and killed. Nazi authorities also engaged in wanton violence against civilians and pacified rebellious villages. Thousands of Polish elites from all around the country were arrested and killed; the earliest

and seeking to Germanize their children.

⁴As a result of milder occupation policy, some 1,200 new priestly ordinations were performed underground on the territory of the General Government (Kłoczowski, Müllerowa and Skarbek 1986, 367).

targets were listed in the Special Prosecution Book-Poland (*Sonderfahndungsbuch Polen*) compiled on the eve of the war.

We summarize key differences and similarities in the nature of Nazi occupation between the Warthegau and the General Government in Table 1. The variation in repression against Catholic clergy is illustrated in Figure 2.

Warthegau	General Government (GG)
Polish administrative structures dissolved	Polish police and local administration re-
	tained under German military rule
Repression against	the Catholic Church
72% of clergy arrested; one third survive	95% of the clergy remain in their parish
97% of churches closed or liquidated	no closing of churches
reduction in worship services	no restrictions on worship services
all church organizations dissolved	charitable organizations allowed
Repression against Polis	h schooling and language
all Polish schools are closed	primary and vocational Polish schools re-
	main
Polish language banned in public spaces	Polish language used in local administra-
and institutions	tion and public spaces
Repression ag	ainst civilians
Jewish Poles are herded into gl	nettos, exploited, and murdered
Intellectuals, activists, and	nobility arrested and killed
305,000 (8.0%) Poles deported into the GG	
360,000 (9.5%) Poles sent to Altreich for	940,000 (9.9%) Poles sent to Altreich for
forced labour	forced labour

Table 1: Variation in repression between Warthegau and the General Government

Notes: To compute percentages for deportations, we use estimates of 3.8 million Catholics in the Warthegau and 9.5 million Catholics in the General Government (83.3% from 11.4 million in December 1939).

2.3 Religion and Politics after WWII

After five and a half years of Nazi occupation, Poland was liberated by the Red Army. The 1945 Potsdam Conference determined Poland's new borders and marked its fate for the next four decades. Allied powers recognized the Soviet-led Provisional Government of National Unity as the country's government. Over the next few years, Polish communists gradually consolidated power and united under the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR). The PZPR would rule the country from 1948 to 1989. The first postwar years were characterized by a relative truce between the Church and the state, enabling the Church to rebuild its ranks. The Communist regime allowed the Catholic priests who survived German imprisonment to organize and to conduct regular pilgrimages. It also invested considerable resources in persecuting Nazi criminals and commemorating Nazi victims, alongside their Red Army "liberators."

Once the party strengthened its grip on power, however, the Church holdings were confiscated and Catholic education was restricted. Yet even during the Stalinist period, religious practices were tolerated, even among party members (Grzymala-Busse 2015, 155). Instead of restricting church attendance, the Communist government sought to harness religiosity to its advantage. In 1949-56, it enlisted priests sympathetic to the Communist cause to disseminate communist ideology from the pulpit. Survivors of Gestapo arrests and concentration camps were particularly desirable recruits, as the authorities believed they would be more supportive of communist policies. At the height of the infiltration campaign, approximately 10% of all priests in Poland were the so-called "patriot" priests (*księża patrioci*) (Nalepa and Pop-Eleches 2022).

After the 1956 "thaw", repression subsided and the Church was able to extend its influence. Religious education returned to the majority of Polish schools. In 1971, confiscated German Catholic Church property was transferred to the Polish Church and restrictions on new Church buildings were lifted (Ramet 2006, 120). In the last decade of Communist rule, the Church took a tougher stance against the government but did not fully align itself with the Solidarity movement (Ramet 2006, 121). The Church's opposition to the regime, with Polish Pope John Paul II at its head, led to it being trusted by close to 90% of Poles at the start of the transition period (Ramet 2006, 121).

The Catholic Church continues to hold enormous moral authority and institutional access in Poland, even though attendance at mass has dropped consistently over time. Scholars attribute the power of the church to repression during the communist period, which fused Catholicism and Polishness together, making the Church a symbol of Polish sovereignty (Grzymala-Busse 2015). They also emphasize the importance of religiosity in structuring political preferences (Stanley 2019). In the 1990s, when the party system was extremely fragmented and unstable, the main electoral cleavage was between communists and the heirs of the Solidarity movement. At the turn of the century, a new cleavage between the liberal, pro-European orientation and the more Euro-skeptic, populist orientation crystallized (Jasiewicz 2009). The latter camp was represented by the newly formed Law and Justice party (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS*), and the radical right-wing League of Polish Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin, LPR*). PiS and LPR relied on religious voters, embraced Polish nationalism, and emphasized Polish martyrdom in WWII.

They benefited from and contributed to the growing focus on WWII in political discourse. In 1999, the suffering of the Catholic clergy came into the spotlight when the Pope beatified 108 Catholic Martyrs of WWII who "laid down their lives for Christ", setting off a series of commemorative events across the country. Galvanized by this precedent, religious communities around Poland began gathering documentation on additional candidates for beatification, coming up with another 122 names by 2003. In 2002, the Polish Bishops' Conference designated April 29 as the Day of Martyrdom of the Polish Clergy in WWII. In September 2004, the Polish parliament passed a resolution calling for war reparations from Germany and moved to re-evaluate the country's losses during the war. After the 2005 election, which produced a PiS government, the rhetoric of the German and Russian threat briefly became "an officially sanctioned form of discourse" (Stańczyk 2013, 298). PiS went as far as to accuse the grandfather of Donald Tusk, the leader of its competitor Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO), of collaborating with the Nazis during WWII. When PO headed the government in 2007, it shifted away from the Polish victimhood story, instead highlighting the complexity of WWII experiences and seeking to improve the country's relations with Germany and Russia (Stańczyk 2013, 290).

3 Analytical Framework and Expected Effects of Repression

How can repression against religious leaders and institutions affect religious identity and political attitudes? The related literature has focused on indiscriminate repression and mass violence against civilians. The emerging consensus is that repression backfires, strengthening ingroup attachments and opposition to perpetrator identity among survivors. This effect can persist for multiple generations (Balcells 2012; Fouka and Voth 2022; Hadzic, Carlson and Tavits 2017; Lupu and Peisakhin 2017; Rozenas and Zhukov 2019).

Selective repression of cultural elites and organizations is qualitatively different and potentially more effective than indiscriminate violence in achieving the perpetrator's objectives. Religious elites in particular carry high moral authority in their communities and are pivotal in communal networks. They specialize in cultural socialization, transmitting norms and values "from one to many" (Cavalli-Sforza et al. 1982). We consider two non-mutually exclusive channels through which this more selective form of repression can affect cultural and political outcomes: religious supply and martyrdom.

Supply channel. The arrest and execution of clergy, along with the closure of churches, especially on the scale witnessed in the Warthegau, significantly diminishes the supply of religious services. We know that vacancies created by Nazi arrests and executions typically remained unfilled until the war's end.⁵ While the "orphaned" parishes were occasionally visited by the surviving priests from elsewhere, who secretly baptized children and officiated marriages, and some religious rites were perfomed by lay Catholics, an average repressed community experienced a disruption in religious practices (Huener 2021, 243). For example, the deportation of Father Ignacy Bronszewski from his parish of Białotarsk (Włocławek

⁵This is in part because most Polish bishops, who were in charge of (re)allocating priests to parishes, were also imprisoned.

diocese) to the General Government in March 1941 resulted in the interruption of worship until February 1945. As a result, most parishioners stopped attending church altogether (Huener 2021, 234). Even in parishes where the priests avoided persecution, the availability and quality of religious services were reduced. As noted above, the Nazi government restricted days of the week and hours of the day when the churches could operate. Eventually, most churches were closed, vandalized, or destroyed. In addition, overwhelmed with the demand from outside their parish, some priests asked their parishioners to attend services less frequently and to keep their confessions brief (Huener 2021, 244).

Supply shifts can have important consequences on future religious behavior (Finke and Iannaccone 1993). In our context, due to habit formation, those who were unable to attend religious services during the war may not have returned to their old customs. Intergenerational religious preference transmission and peer effects (Patacchini and Zenou 2016) can lead to changes in the religious practices of future generations. Hence, this channel predicts a drop in religious observance, which can persist for decades.

Reduced mass attendance may, in turn, change values and political preferences by restricting the Church's capacity to communicate political messages. This is particularly relevant in the Polish context, where religiosity predicts support for right-of-center parties like PiS and LPR (Stanley 2019). Therefore, this channel points to lower support for conservative parties when issues relevant to the Church are salient.

Martyrdom channel. At the same time, Nazi persecution of the Catholic Church may have strengthened the link between Catholicism and Polish identity and elevated the victimized priests to the status of heroes and martyrs for their fatherland. For example, after Germans shot Father Paweł Kwiatkowski (Częstochowa diocese) in September 1939 and had him buried in an improvised grave, his parishioners went through the trouble of reburying him in a solemn, well-attended ceremony. In 2002, a new monument was unveiled on the site of Kwiatkowski's execution, and the circumstances of his death, along with the martyrdom of other priests during WWII, were remembered. Kwiatkowski's death is now commemorated in three different locations: on his grave in the local cemetery, in his place of death and original burial, and inside the parish church.⁶ From 2002 onward, Nazi victims like Kwiatkowski have been remembered on the annual Day of Martyrdom of the Polish Clergy.

The martyrdom channel predicts higher support for nationalist parties that highlight Polish suffering in WWII and endorse the "Pole=Catholic" model, such as PiS and the LPR. The effect should be pronounced particularly when WWII experiences are politically salient (Fouka and Voth 2022). In the Polish context, German repression commemoration activities increased in the early 2000s, starting with the beatification of the religious martyrs and culminating in 2005, the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War Two, when PiS doubled down on emphasizing Polish historical traumas. The martyrdom effect may also strengthen religious devotion and encourage church attendance, counteracting the supply channel. However, this need not be the case. In fact, while mass attendance has declined post-transition, most Poles continued to view the Church as a symbol of Polish identity.

Other effects of Warthegau repression. We expect the restrictions on Polish schooling to reduce levels of educational attainment in the general population. The effect is most likely for vocational schooling, which continued in the General Government and was not required in the post-war labor market.

Regarding economic development, we expect deportations into the General Government to produce a short-run effect on the demographic structure of the population in the Warthegau. Demographic structure, in turn, may lead to differences in economic productivity. However, we expect any discontinuity in this outcome to be transitory.

⁶"Karta Poleglego." *Bohaterowie 1939.pl*, https://shorturl.at/isEGU, accessed on Sep. 12, 2023. "Poświęcenie pomnika ks. Pawła Kwiatkowskiego". 2002. *Niedziela*, https://shorturl.at/rvOPR, accessed on Sep. 12, 2023.

4 Empirical analysis

4.1 Data

Our sample is made up of 1,268 current Polish municipalities (gminy). These municipalities fit two criteria: i) their territory was part of the Second Polish Republic, i.e. they exclude the territories Poland acquired from Germany after WWII, which experienced a nearly complete population turnover, and ii) their centroid was located in the Warthegau or the General Government. We construct a time-consistent database by using the 2015 municipal boundaries as our baseline, and then manually matching past municipalities into current ones.⁷ Below, we summarize our main data sources and variables (see Appendix B for details on data processing and Table B.1 for a summary of our sources).

Nature and Intensity of Repression. To understand the degree and nature of repression, we first compute municipal indicators of religious persecution by digitizing individuallevel data on Polish priests arrested or killed due to Nazi repression in German-occupied Poland from Jacewicz and Woś (1977). The source contains detailed information for most individuals including place of work, position, date of arrest, place of imprisonment, and date and cause of death. We then match parishes in which priests worked to current municipalities.

Second, we measure repression against Polish educators by digitizing individual-level information on Polish teachers who did not survive the war from Walczak (1987). We use the teacher's prewar place of employment to georeference each observation and categorize teachers based on information on their cause of death.

Third, we use a list of Nazi attrocities that was recently compiled by Wnek and Zyblikiewicz (2022), which provides information about more than 9,200 localities where attrocities

⁷We account for the creation and dissolution of municipalities, as well as name changes, but do not consider the transfer of territory among existing municipalities.

took place.

Finally, we digitized data on age and gender from the Polish summary census of 1946 to investigate the demographic effects of deportations in the Warthegau.

Religiosity and Priest Supply. We examine the long-run consequences of repression on religiosity using local-level data on mass attendance in 1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015, purchased from the Institute of Statistics of the Polish Catholic Church (*Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego*). Church attendance measures religious commitment and the willingness of a believer to spend time and effort, and is considered a strong indicator of religiosity (Grzymala-Busse 2012, 427). From the data, we calculate the percentage of obliged Catholics in the municipality who attended mass.

To check for effects on postwar priest supply, we digitized information from the 1946 yearbook of the Kielce diocese and the 1948 yearbooks of Łódź, Warsaw, and Sandomierz dioceses. We also digitized the 1971 Survey of Polish Priests (*Spis Duchowieństwa Diecez-jalnego w Polsce*), the first postwar priest census.⁸ These allow us to check for short and medium-run effects on priest supply.

Electoral Outcomes. We use the results of parliamentary elections in the 1990s and 2000s to examine the political legacy of repression. The data comes from the National Electoral Office (*Krajowe Biuro Wyborcze*).⁹ For the 1990s, we focus on the liberal Democratic Union (UD), the anti-communist Solidarity, and the left-wing Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), to capture main cleavages between ex-communists and their opponents. For the 2000s, we focus on PiS and LPR, right-of-center parties popular among religious and nationalist voters. The LPR started out as a coalition of right-wing Catholic parties and campaigned on the

⁸Using the information on the place of residence, we match every priest in the dioceses of Chełmno, Częstochowa, Gniezno, Kielce, Łódż, Płock, Sandomierz, Warszawa, and Włoclawek to a current municipality.

⁹Pre-1990 elections are not regarded as free and fair.

slogan "so that Poland can be Poland", quoting the late Polish primate, Cardinal Wyszyński (Szczerbiak 2002, 61). PiS combined Catholic nationalists and secular conservatives. Although its 2001 campaign focused on corruption and law and order issues, the party soon shifted toward WWII martyrdom and anti-German rhetoric.

Socioeconomic Outcomes. We check for demographic and economic effects by digitizing information on population density and growth, and non-agricultural population in Population and Housing Resources in the Years 1946-1974 (*Ludność i zasoby mieszkaniowe w latach 1946-1974*) published by the Polish Statistical Office - GUS. We examine the consequences of Nazi restrictions on education levels using data from the 1970, 1978, and 1988 population censuses.

Prewar Demographic, Political and Religious Characteristics. To validate our empirical strategy, we digitize information on population, total area, agricultural land and arable land from the 1931 census (GUS 1933) for the voivodeships of Łódż, Kielce, Lublin, and Warszawa. We draw information on prewar ethnic and religious characteristics from the 1921 census for voivodeships around the General Government and Warthegau border. We also measured the density of pre-war railroad system by geo-referencing 1939 railroad lines.

We provide additional evidence on pre-war religious characteristics by digitizing parishlevel information on parish priests from the 1938 catalogues of the (arch)dioceses of Częstochowa, Gniezno, Kielce, Łódź, Poznań, Sandomierz, Warsaw, and Włocławek. We geolocate and match each parish to a current municipality.

We also collected data on the results for the 1922 and 1928 parliamentary elections, the last free and fair prewar elections. We focus on the key political blocks or parties that were represented in both western and central Poland following Kopstein and Wittenberg (2005) in both 1920s elections. These include the National Democracy (*Endecja*), an antiGerman nationalist movement with a stronghold in Western Poland¹⁰, the left-wing Polish Socialist Party (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna, PPS*), and the Bloc of National Minorities (*Blok Mniejszości Narodowych*).

We check for balance in elite presence by using data on over 8,400 Polish intelligentsia members (including political leaders, scholars, professionals, and nobility) that were recorded in the Special Prosecution Book of Poland. The list was compiled in 1939, and was digitized and aggregated to contemporary municipalities by Krakowski and Schaub (2022).

Finally, we check for balance in geographic characteristics by computing mean altitude, mean rainfall, and mean temperature.

Tables A.1 and A.2 present descriptive statistics for postwar and prewar variables, respectively.

4.2 Empirical Strategy

To identify our treatment effect, we rely on the quasi-random nature of the border between the Warthegau and the General Government. The boundary did not coincide with relevant historical borders, nor did it follow ethnic or economic divides. As noted in Section 2, conflicting German interests and objectives led to a largely arbitrary and quasi-exogenous border which partitioned homogeneous areas.

To estimate the effects of repression in the Warthegau, we use a sharp geographic regression discontinuity (RD) design. The treatment assignment variable d_i is defined as the minimum distance between municipality *i*'s centroid and the Warthegau-General Government border. Hence, the RD estimand is:

$$\tau_{RD} = \lim_{d_i \downarrow 0} E\left[Y_{it} | RW_i = 1, d_i\right] - \lim_{d_i \uparrow 0} E\left[Y_{it} | RW_i = 0, d_i\right],\tag{1}$$

¹⁰The National Democracy vote combined support the Christian Union of National Unity (*Chrześcijański Związek Jedności Narodowej*) and the Polish People's Party "Piast" (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe "Piast"*) in 1922, and the Polish Catholic Bloc (*Polski Blok Katolicki*) and the Popular National Union (*Związek Ludowo-Narodowy*) in 1928.

where Y_{it} is the outcome in municipality *i* in period *t* and RW_i is the treatment status variable which takes a value of one if municipality *i*'s centroid in the Warthegau and zero otherwise.

We use local linear regressions to estimate τ_{RD} . In particular, we use Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*) robust bias-corrected estimator with a data-driven bandwidth selector. Our baseline results show the conventional estimate of τ^{RD} and standard errors, and the robust bias-corrected *p*-value levels (Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik 2014*b*). To compute standard errors, we use a nearest-neighbor-based variance estimator, the standard option in Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*).

We calculate our treatment assignment variable by geo-referencing the Warthegau-General Government border from a detailed map produced by the Reich Office for State Recording (*Reichsamt für Landesaufnahme* - RfL).

Our empirical strategy assumes that the expected outcomes based on treatment status, $E(Y_i(0)|d_i)$ and $E(Y_i(1)|d_i)$, are continuous in the treatment assignment variable, d_i . In geographical RD designs, the identification assumption may not hold if the treatment border is endogenous to local characteristics. We provide evidence on the validity of our strategy by checking for balance in prewar municipal demographic, ethnic and religious characteristics, as well as in prewar electoral outcomes and other covariates. The results are reported in Tables A.3 and A.4, and illustrated graphically in Figures 3 and 4.

First, we find no discontinuities in prewar demographic characteristics such as the percentage of males, population density, and annual population growth, which point to similar levels of urban development. In addition, there is balance in the presence of Polish intellectual elites registered in the *Sonderfahndungsbuch Polen*. Hence, there is no difference in Nazi targets for repression or perceived regime threats.

Second, the results in Panel B of Table A.3 show balance in prewar ethnic and religious characteristics. We find no significant discontinuities in the population shares of Catholics,



Figure 3: Prewar Demographic, Ethnic and Religious Characteristics Around the Warthegau-GG Border

Notes: From the top, left to right, the graphs plot the natural logarithm of population density in 1931; a dummy for the presence of prewar polish intellectual elites; the share of Catholics, Jews, Polish and Germans in 1921, respectively, as a percentage of the total population; a dummy for the presence of priests in 1938–39; and the number of priests in 1938–39 per 1000 inhabitants in 1931. The plots include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

Jews, Germans and Poles. Moreover, we find no discontinuities in the prewar number of priests, both in absolute terms and per 1000 inhabitants and Catholics at the border.¹¹

¹¹If the analysis is done at the parish level, there is a small positive discontinuity in the



Figure 4: Prewar Electoral Characteristics and Other Covariates Around the Warthegau-GG Border

Notes: From the top, left to right, the graphs plot prewar voter turnout; the vote share of Endecia; agricultural land in 1931 as a percentage of total land; and railroad density in 1939. Electoral data corresponds to the 1922 and 1928 elections. The plots include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

Third, there are no significant differences in past electoral outcomes. We find no discontinuities in average turnout and the vote shares of Endecja and other major parties in the 1920s. Geographic covariates such as altitude, rainfall, temperature, and prewar agricultural land are also balanced.

We find a slight significant estimate for railroad density in 1939, though this discontinuity is not clearly visible in Figure 4. This is mainly driven by the fact that while there are Northto-South railway lines running on both sides of the southern section of the border, the one in the General Government side is closer to the border. This is not problematic for our identification strategy for several reasons. First, as part of our robustness checks, we control number of priests per 1000 Catholics due to an outlier parish located next to the border. This biases against our result of lower religiosity. for this covariate and our results are unaffected. If anything, they become stronger. Second, as aforementioned, there are North-to-South lines on both sides of the border, and several East-to-West lines which cross the border, including the major Warsaw-to-Łódż and the Warsaw-to-Torun lines. Third, it is unlikely that the border followed a pre-defined path based on strategic railway network considerations. If this was the case, German authorities would have incorporated all nearby North-to-South lines to the Reich (as was the case with the partition of France during WWII). Finally, similarities in population density, population growth, agricultural land, and weather conditions point to no differences in prewar economic conditions.

5 Wartime Repression and Immediate Consequences

Figure 5 clearly illustrates a sizable and statistically significant increase in repression against the Polish clergy in the Warthegau. The corresponding estimates are shown in Panel A.i of Table A.5. We find a dramatic increase of 0.76 and 0.9 (or 1.5 and 1.3 standard deviations, respectively) in the fraction of municipalities with at least one priest arrested and in the natural logarithm of the number of arrested clergy, respectively. A large and significant effect is also observed for the percentage of prewar parish priests arrested, an alternative indicator. Similar results hold for priests who died due to persecution. We find strong positive effects in both the extensive and intensive margins.

We find no evidence that Nazi repression in the Warthegau disproportionately targeted Polish teachers. Our results in Panel A.ii show no statistically significant discontinuity in the fraction of municipalities with at least (i) one teacher death, (ii) one Jewish teacher death and (iii) one death due to repression. We also find no evidence of an effect on the natural logarithm of the number of teachers killed. The lack of discontinuities is illustrated in the top row of Figure 6.

Was religious persecution part of a broader campaign of violence in the Warthegau? We find that the area did not experience greater levels of systemic violence (top-right graph in



Figure 5: Effect of Nazi Annexation on Wartime Violence Against Priests

Notes: From the top, left to right, the graphs plot an indicator variable for whether a municipal priest was arrested or died as a consequence of Nazi repression between 1939 and 1945, respectively; the natural logarithm of the number of priests arrested or killed, respectively; and the percentage of prewar parish priests that were arrested or killed, respectively. Those killed includes clergy who died in concentration camps. The plots include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

Figure 6). On the contrary, the prevalence of municipalities with least one atrocity site is slightly lower on the Warthegau side of the border.

Early on in the occupation period, numerous Poles were deported from the Warthegau to the General Government or to Germany as forced laborers. While disaggregated data on deportations is unavailable, we test for discontinuities in the gender and age composition of the population immediately after the war. Panel B of Table A.5 shows the corresponding

Figure 6: Effect of Nazi Annexation on Wartime Violence Against Teachers and General Population, and Postwar Population Structure



Notes: From the top, left to right, the graphs plot an indicator variable for whether a municipal teacher was killed due to Nazi repression; an indicator variable whether an atrocity site is located in the municipality; the male population as a percentage of total population in 1946 and 1950; the percentage of the 1946 population aged 18 or lower and aged between 18 and 59. The plots include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

effects. We observe a drop of 1.1 percentage points in the share of the population between the ages of 18 and 59 in 1946. In addition, there is a 0.9 percentage point decrease in the share of the male population. This effect disappears completely by 1950. Taken together, the results provide suggestive evidence that mass deportations of Poles to the General Government had a small, temporary effect on the age and sex composition of the Warthegau population.

Overall, our analysis shows that de-Polonization efforts in the Warthegau were geared towards persecuting and eliminating the Catholic clergy. This greater degree of religious repression was not matched by higher levels of violence against educators or the general population.

6 Long-term Consequences of Religious Repression

Did the persecution of Polish priests have long-term effects on religious observance in affected communities? Figure 7 shows a clear discontinuity in average mass attendance across four survey years (1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015). The results in Table A.6 show an effect of -6.9 percentage points, or 0.45 standard deviations, on average attendance. The estimate is largely driven by the first two years of our sample (see Figure A.1). In particular, we estimate an effect of -11.3 percentage points for the first year for which systematic data exist, which represents more than 0.5 standard deviations. The estimates for all survey years are negative, albeit they gradually diminish in magnitude and significance. Hence, the persecution of clergy appears to have weakened the norm of church attendance, with effects lasting into the early years of the post-transition period.

We then examine the effect of Nazi repression on voter behavior in parliamentary elections in the first two decades of the post-transition period. We split our analysis by decade to account for political realignment and the emergence of new parties after 1999. Figure 8 illustrates our main results, which are detailed in Table A.7.

We find no evidence of an effect on turnout or on the vote shares of the main parties



Figure 7: Effect of Nazi Repression on Religiosity (1991 - 2015)

Notes: The graph shows average mass attendance across the years 1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015, defined as the percentage of those obliged in the municipality who attended in mass. The plot includes a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

that took divergent positions on the role of religion in the Polish society in the 1990s (see left column of Figure 8): the liberal Democratic Union (UD), the anti-communist Solidarity, and the left-wing Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). The Church opposed the UD and SLD in 1991 and 1993-97, respectively, while it supported Solidarity in 1997.

A different pattern is observed in the early 2000s (see right column of Figure 8), when the supply of party platforms shifted and Polish martyrdom in WWII became more salient. We find a positive effect on support for the new nationalist, populist parties. In particular, we estimate a 2.9 percentage point increase in support for PiS. Adding the minor LPR to PiS vote share results in a 3.4 percentage point estimate. The estimate is driven, to a great extent, by the 2005 election when WWII was particularly salient (see Figure A.2). It appears that voters in the Warthegau were more likely to endorse parties like PiS and LPR, which stoked fears of foreign threat and endorsed the Polish-Catholic model of national identity.



Figure 8: Effect of Nazi Repression on Voter Behavior in Parliamentary Elections (1991 - 2007)

Notes: The graphs on the left plot the average vote shares of the Democratic Left Alliance, Solidarity and the Democratic Union, and voter turnout in 1990s elections. The graphs on the left plot the average vote shares of the Law and Justice, Law and Justice and the League of Polish Families, and the Civic Platform, and voter turnout in 2000s elections. Data for the 1990s corresponds to the 1991, 1993 and 1997 elections, except for the Democratic Union that did not participate in the 1997 election. Data for 2000s corresponds to the 2001, 2005 and 2007 elections. The plots include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

Robustness. We check for the robustness of our main results under different specifications. In particular, we exclude bordering municipalities with a sizable part (i.e., more than 20%) of their territory on the opposite side of the border, include covariates, cluster our standard errors, change the order of the assignment variable polynomial, and modify the estimation bandwidth. The results in Tables A.8 and A.9 show that the estimates are robust. Most importantly, the estimates and significance levels hold when we exclude split border municipalities and when we include railroad density in 1939 as a covariate. In fact, the inclusion of this control strengthens our results for religiosity and voter behavior. Finally, we calculate simulated p-values for our main results based on estimates for multiple placebo East (control) and West (treatment) regions. The results are shown in Column 2 of Table A.10. All of our main estimates remain significant.

7 Discussion

Our analysis confirms that the distinctive feature of Nazi repression in the Warthegau was the persecution of the Catholic clergy. We provide further evidence that variation in Church persecution is a key driver of our main findings, by analyzing the relationship between priest victimization rates and post-1991 religiosity and voting behavior within the Warthegau.

As shown in Table 2, municipalities with high rates of priest victimization had lower church attendance in the post-Communist period. This relationship holds for the average across our sample period and for 1991 and 1995 in particular, the years for which we observe more sizable treatment effects in the geographic RD framework. The result is consistent with the religious supply channel detailed in Section 3. We should note that in 44% of municipalities, all priests were removed, i.e. there is limited variation in the proportion of victimized priests, our main explanatory variable. This proxy for reduced supply of religious services also neglects the interruption of supply following the destruction or closure of church buildings, which was almost universal in the Warthegau.

Furthermore, even though mass attendance is a significant predictor of PiS and LPR vote shares, we find higher support for these parties in municipalities with higher rates of priest victimization (Table 2). The estimate is significant at a 10% level for the 2005 election, but not for other years. We interpret this pattern as suggestive evidence for the martyrdom channel. To further probe its plausibility, we geocoded the locations of bishops, priests, and other Catholics beautified as Martyrs of WWII in 1999.¹² Only a small number (2%) of priests who perished during WWII were beautified, but locations where these prominent victims worked during the war would have experienced a large martyrdom boost due to the formal recognition of their suffering. We thus include the martyr dummy alongside the share of victimized priests in our exploratory analysis. In the 2005 election, the coefficient on martyrdom variable is positive, substantively large, and statistically significant.

VARIABLES	Mass Attendance, % of Obliged			PiS+LPR Vote Share, % of Valid Votes					
	1991 - 2015	1991	1995	2001	-2007	2001	20	005	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
~							1		
% Victimized Parish Priests	-0.031*	-0.055^{*}	-0.045*	0.006	0.008	0.002	0.023^{*}	0.022^{*}	
	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.026)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.012)	
Mass Attendance (2001)					0.042**				
					(0.020)				
Dummy for 108 Martyrs								2.563^{**}	
								(1.287)	
Observations	353	349	351	353	351	353	353	353	
Sample				Wartheg	au				
Baseline Covariates				Yes					

Table 2: Relationship between Priest Repression and Main Outcomes

Notes: Table reports estimates and robust standard errors from regressions which control for the logarithm of 1938 Catholic population, 1939 railroad density, the logarithm of the distance to Lodz and Poznan, and an indicator variable for Prussian possessions. Column 8 includes an indicator variable for whether one of the 108 Catholic Martyrs of WWII resided in the municipality. Columns 1,4 and 5 correspond to averages across multiple years: 1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015 for mass attendance; 2001, 2005, and 2007 for PiS and LPR vote share. Results for all covariates are shown in Table A.15. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

Victimized parishes did, in fact, experience a shock in religious supply. To provide systematic evidence for this claim, we collected data on parish history for areas within 50 km of the Warthegau-GG border (see Appendix C for more information). We find that many victimized parishes remained without a priest until the war's end. The average period without a priest in the Warthegau was significantly longer than in the General Government

 $^{^{12}43}$ current municipalities have at least one martyr, out of which 18 are in the Warthegau.

(3.66 years vs 0.13 years per parish). The share of arrested priests and the number of years without a priest are strongly correlated, at $\rho = 0.60$ (p < 0.001).

However, this supply shock was transitory and the vacancies were filled immediately after the war. This conclusion is reinforced by our analysis of priest supply in 1948, available for a larger number of units and measured before the Communist government began to restrict church activities. We find no discontinuities in the availability of religious leaders, including in the ratio of postwar to prewar priests (Table A.11). Similarly, for 1971, we find no effect on priest supply or their age and length of service.

7.1 Alternative Explanations

Political Messaging in Repressed Parishes and Patriot Priests. Repressed priests may have changed their political attitudes due to their experience. If they returned to their prewar parishes, then differences in political messaging by repressed priests may partly explain our results. However, our analysis indicates that most priests were reassigned to alternative parishes. Data on pre and postwar priests for the heavily-repressed Łódź diocese shows that, by 1948, only 19 priests (8%) remained in their prewar parish. Of the 55 surviving repressed priests who remained in the diocese, the majority (72%) changed parishes by 1948. The shortage of priests due to Nazi repression was remedied, in part, by the arrival of 25 priests from the Wilno and Lwów dioceses, located in areas annexed by the USSR.

The reallocation of repressed priests also suggests that our results are not driven by communist infiltration of the church via the "patriot" priests, which were disproportionately recruited from persecuted clergy. As noted above, vacancies in repressed parishes were filled by 1945, i.e. four years before the regime began its infiltration campaign (1949-1955).¹³ We should also note that while "patriot" priests undermined the Church's effectiveness in fostering anticommunist attitudes, they had no impact on parishioners' church attendance

¹³The infiltration campaign was particularly successful in other territories: those acquired from Germany in 1945 (Nalepa and Pop-Eleches 2022).

and trust, by design (Nalepa and Pop-Eleches 2022). Our main religiosity finding is thus unlikely to be explained by this policy even if there was a discontinuity in the presence of "patriot" priests. In addition, since PiS and LPR are stridently anti-communist, failing to account for the (unobserved) levels of communist infiltration would bias us against finding a positive effect of repression on PiS and LPR support.

Annexed vs Unincorporated Territories. The Warthegau was annexed to the German Reich while the General Government became an unincorporated territory under German rule. Policy differences between annexed and unincorporated areas — which extend beyond cultural and religious repression — may partly explain our treatment effects. We provide evidence on the matter by comparing Zichenau, a region north of Warsaw incorporated into East Prussia, and the General Government. Table A.12 shows that wartime differences in religious repression at the border between Ziechenau and the General Government are small and insignificant. Correspondingly, we find no discontinuities in church attendance or support for nationalist parties in the post-Communist period. While these effects are not causal as we cannot confirm the quasi-randomness of the Zichenau border, they further support our preferred explanation that repression against the Church is a key channel behind our findings.

Economic Development and Education. Our results in Section 5 show a lower share of male and productive-age population in the Warthegau. Though this effect was short-lived, it could have influenced postwar migration patterns and economic development, with political consequences.

Table A.13 and Figure A.3 report the effects on population density, non-agricultural population, and annual population growth in 1950, 1960 and 1970. We observe no meaningful and statistically significant discontinuities in these outcomes. The estimates point to similar levels of urban development and local economic production patterns across areas. Hence,

our results are unlikely to be driven by economic differences or selective migration.

While we find no significant effects in violent repression against Polish teachers, Section 2 documents how Warthegau authorities limited Polish education, particularly vocational training. Figure A.4 shows a small decrease in the pre-transition percentage of the population with vocational education. However, our estimates in Table A.14 show that the result is largely driven by a 2.1 percentage-point drop in 1970, and the coefficient is smaller and insignificant by 1988. Hence, post-transition differences are unlikely to be driven by education outcomes.

8 Conclusion

This paper explores the nature and intensity of Nazi repression in occupied territories and identifies the long-term effects of efforts to destroy religious identity on political and social behavior. Using an original local-level dataset on Nazi repression in Poland, we first establish that in the annexed Warthegau, where de-Polonization efforts were concentrated, the local clergy — but not teachers — suffered significantly more than in the neighboring unincorporated General Government. Hence, Warthegau repression focused on the destruction of Polish identity through the persecution of the Catholic Church.

We then show that this repressive regime had a significant negative effect on church attendance more than forty years later. This effect is largest in the early 1990s and gradually fades. We find no changes in voting behavior in the 1990s, but differences emerge in the 2000s, when WWII and identity issues became salient in political discourse. We find higher support for nationalist parties which emphasized Polish suffering during WWII.

While the Warthegau treatment is bundled, additional evidence suggests that religious persecution is a key driver of our results. Within the Warthegau borders, municipalities with higher priest victimization rates have lower mass attendance. These areas also exhibit greater support for nationalist parties in 2005, when Polish martyrdom in WWII was most salient. We find no evidence that our results can be explained by communist policies toward the church, socioeconomic effects of repression, or the consequences of direct vis-à-vis indirect foreign rule.

Overall, our results show that Nazi repression weakened behavioral norms through a temporary negative shock in religious supply. At the same time, it appears to have strengthened support for nationalist parties. The effects of targeted repression against religious leaders thus appears to affect behavioral norms and political preferences in opposite ways. Our findings also confirm that the legacies of repression outlast its immediate victims, and can persist for generations.

One caveat is that we lack information about political preferences and religiosity during the Polish People's Republic. Therefore, we are unable to assess the short and medium-term effects of Nazi repression on political and social behavior.

These findings advance our understanding of the differences in foreign rule and repressive regimes, and its long-term consequences. They also shed light on the legacy of targeted persecution against religious elites, which has been understudied relative to indiscriminate violence against civilians.

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Online Appendix for "Razing the Church: The Enduring Effect of Nazi Repression in Poland"

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A Additional Figures and Tables

Figure A.1: Effect of Nazi Repression on Religiosity by Survey Year



Notes: The graph shows the estimates for mass attendance in 1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015 defined as the percentage of those obliged who participated in mass. The plot includes both 95% and 90% confidence intervals estimated using robust standard errors.

Figure A.2: Effect of Nazi Repression on PiS and LPR Support by Election Year



Notes: The graph shows the estimates for the combined PiS and LPR vote share in the 2001, 2005, and 2007 elections, defined as the percentage of valid votes. The plot includes both 95% and 90% confidence intervals estimated using robust standard errors.



Figure A.3: Effect of Nazi Repression on Population Density and Non-Agricultural Population (1950 - 1970)

Notes: The graphs on the left plot the natural logarithm of population density and the graphs on the right plot the non-agricultural population as a percentage of total population in 1950, 1960 and 1970, respectively. These include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.



Figure A.4: Effect of Nazi Repression on Postwar Education Levels

Notes: From the top, left to right, the graphs plot the share of adults aged 15 plus - with at least basic education- that have at most basic, secondary, vocational, and higher education, respectively. Shares are averages for the three pre-transition years for which information is available. These include a linear fit on each side of the treatment cutoff, and 95% confidence intervals (in grey) estimated using robust standard errors.

Variables	Obs.	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Municipality in RW	1,268	0.29	0.46	0	1
Distance to RW - GG Border, km	1,268	139.4	77.0	0.06	327
Wartime Repression (1939–1945)					
Municipality with Priest Arrested	1 268	0.49	0.50	0	1
Ln (1+Priests Arrested)	1,268	0.56	0.68	Ő	4 69
Percentage of Prewar Parish Priests Arrested	690	42.9	40.6	Ő	100
Municipality with Priest Killed	1 268	0.35	0.48	Ő	1
Ln (1+Priests Killed)	1,268	0.35	0.54	Ő	3 81
Percentage of Prewar Parish Priests Killed	690	27.8	34.6	Ő	100
Municipality with Teacher Killed	1 268	0.69	0.46	Ő	1
Ln (1+Teachers Killed)	1,268	0.87	0.79	Ő	6 35
Municipality with Atrocity Site	1,260 1.268	0.90	0.30	0	1
	-,	0.00			
Postwar Religiosity and Priest Supply					
Mass Attendance (1991 - 2015), $\%$ of obliged	1,261	51.9	15.2	21.8	100
Presence of Priest (1948)	389	0.94	0.24	0	1
Number of Priests (1948) , per 1000 1950 Pop.	389	0.33	0.20	0	1.59
Presence of Priest (1971)	607	0.97	0.17	0	1
Number of Priests (1971) , per 1000 1970 Pop.	607	0.46	0.28	0	2.74
Avg. Age of Priests (1971)	589	45.4	6.69	24.3	75.0
Avg. Years of Service of Priests (1971)	589	18.7	6.26	0	52.0
$\mathbf{P}_{\rm eff} = \mathbf{E} \left[\frac{1070}{1000} \right]$					
Postwar Education (1970–1988)					
Education Level, % of Pop. aged 15+:	1.000	C 4 4	0.00	0.0.1	01.1
Basic	1,268	04.4	9.03	30.1	81.1
Secondary	1,268	13.7	6.06	5.58	42.1
Vocational	1,268	20.0	3.59	10.5	32.9
Higher	1,208	1.90	1.72	0.20	10.9
Post-transition Parliamentary Elections					
Turnout (1990s). %	1.268	44.3	7.33	22.8	64.5
Turnout (2000s), %	1.268	43.7	5.28	28.9	68.3
Vote Share of UD (1990s), $\%$	1.268	5.36	4.34	0.42	37.6
Vote Share of SLD (1990s), %	1.268	14.5	7.67	0.94	44.2
Vote Share of SLD (2000s), %	1.268	16.9	7.21	2.64	54.4
Vote Share of Solidarity (1990s), %	1.268	13.0	5.81	1.81	34.1
Vote Share of PiS (2000s), %	1.268	22.9	7.21	6.99	51.3
Vote Share of PiS+LPR (2000s), %	1.268	29.7	9.42	9.64	64.4
Vote Share of PO (2000s), %	1,268	14.9	8.26	1.35	52.3
Postwar Demographic and Economic Outcomes					
Population Density, Ln:					
1950	1,267	4.40	0.79	-0.74	7.97
1960	1,268	4.48	0.84	0.51	8.11
1970	1,268	4.52	0.89	1.43	8.18
Non-agricultural Population, % of Pop.:	1.025	05 5	05 4	0.00	00.0
1950	1,267	27.7	25.4	0.00	99.0
1960	1,268	35.1	25.5	3.00	98.7
1970	1,268	45.8	23.7	6.38	98.7
Annual Population Growth, %:					
1946–1950	1,267	-1.42	3.62	-43.3	27.2
1950–1960	1,267	0.94	1.59	-2.98	28.9
1960-1970	1,268	0.36	1.09	-2.43	10.7

Table A.1: Summary Statistics for Main Postwar Variables

Notes: See Section 4.1 for data description and sources.

Table A.2: Summary Statistics for Main Prewar Variables an	d Other Covariates
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Variables	Obs.	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Prewar Demographic Characteristics					
Male Population (1921), %	577	48.2	1.06	40.0	52.8
Population Density (1931), Ln	717	4.63	0.77	3.22	8.66
Population Growth (1921–1931), Annual $\%$	718	1.43	1.92	-1.39	29.7
Presence of Polish Intellectual Elites (1939)	1,268	0.44	0.50	0	1
Prewar Ethnic and Religious Characteristics					
Catholic Population (1921), %	577	88.3	12.6	22.8	100
Jewish Population (1921), %	577	6.97	10.3	0	63.2
Polish Population (1921), %	577	92.1	11.2	31.5	100
German Population (1921), %	577	2.98	8.02	0	68.5
Prewar Parish Priests (1938–39):					
Presence of Priest	718	0.96	0.19	0	1
Ln(1 + Number of Priests)	718	1.33	0.54	0	5.02
Number of Priests, per 1000 Pop. 1931	535	0.28	0.18	0	1.47
Number of Priests, per 1000 Catholics	718	0.39	0.18	0	1.39
Prewar Electoral Outcomes (1922–28)					
Turnout (1922 - 1928), %	728	83.3	6.18	49.8	93.6
Vote Share of Endecja (1922 - 1928), $\%$	728	30.2	15.3	1.65	75.4
Vote Share of PPS (1922 - 1928), %	728	15.5	10.8	0	64.8
Vote Share of BMN (1922 - 1928), %	728	8.54	9.85	0	57.8
Other Municipal Characteristics					
Mean Altitude, m a.s.l.	1.268	200	127	40.9	1.215
Mean Rainfall, mm	1.268	586	113	456	1.217
Mean Temperature, C	1,268	7.95	0.53	3.39	8.92
Agricultural Land (1931), %	717	65.9	25.7	0	99.4
Railroad Density (1939), km/km2	1.268	0.07	0.10	0	0.93
	,		-	-	

 $\it Notes:$ See Section 4.1 for data description and sources.

	RD	Ν.	Dep	o. Var.
	Estimate		Mean	S.D.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
A. Prewar Demographic Characteristics				
Male Population (1921), $\%$	-0.290 (0.249)	577	48.2	1.06
Population Density (1931), Ln	(0.174)	717	4.63	0.77
Population Growth (1921–1931), Annual $\%$	-0.143 (0.324)	718	1.43	1.92
Presence of Polish Intellectual Elites (1939)	(0.021) (0.106)	1,268	0.44	0.50
B. Prewar Ethnic and Religious Characteristics				
Catholic Population (1921), $\%$	-3.867	577	88.3	12.6
Jewish Population (1921), $\%$	(1.100) 0.013 (2.879)	577	6.97	10.3
Polish Population (1921), $\%$	-3.120 (3.667)	577	92.1	11.2
German Population (1921), $\%$	2.660 (1.980)	577	2.98	8.02
Prewar Parish Priests (1938–39):	· · · ·			
Presence of Priest	0.018 (0.051)	718	0.96	0.19
Ln(1 + Number of Priests)	0.170 (0.127)	718	1.33	0.54
Number of Priests, per 1000 Pop. 1931	-0.021 (0.047)	535	0.28	0.18
Number of Priests, per 1000 Catholics	0.069 (0.053)	718	0.39	0.18

Table A.3: Balance on Prewar Demographic, Ethnic, and Religious Characteristics

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Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates. Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Column 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.2. Average regression bandwidths are 52km and 49.1km for Panel A and B, respectively. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD	Ν.	Dep	. Var.
	Estimate		Mean	S.D.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
A. Prewar Electoral Outcomes (1922–28)				
Turnout, %	-0.481	728	83.3	6.18
	(0.926)			
Vote Share of Endecja, %	-3.667	728	30.2	15.3
	(4.618)			
Vote Share of PPS, %	-3.048	728	15.5	10.8
	(2.287)			
Vote Share of BMN, %	3.709	728	8.54	9.85
	(2.549)			
B. Other Covariates				
Mean Altitude, m a.s.l.	-4.573	1,268	200	127
,	(12.807)	,		
Mean Rainfall, mm	1.026	1,268	586	113
,	(5.929)	,		
Mean Temperature, °C	0.015	1,268	7.95	0.53
× ,	(0.050)	,		
Railroad Density (1939), km/km2	-0.036*	1,268	0.07	0.10
• • • • •	(0.022)	,		
Agricultural Land (1931), %	-4.474	717	65.9	25.7
	(6.888)			

Table A.4: Balance on Prewar Electoral Outcomes and Other Covariates

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heterosked asticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates. Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Column 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.2. Average regression bandwidths are 53.9km and 50.9km for Panel A and B, respectively. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD	Ν	Dep. Var.		
	Fatirest	11.	Marrie	оп. С П	
	Estimate (1)	(\mathbf{n})	Mean (2)	S.D.	
	(1)	(2)	(5)	(4)	
A. Wartime Repression (1939–1945)					
i. Religious Persecution					
At Least One Local Priest:					
Arrested	0.760^{***}	1,268	0.49	0.50	
	(0.084)				
Killed	0.643***	1,268	0.35	0.48	
	(0.088)				
Ln of 1+Number of Priests:	0.002***	1.000	0.50	0.00	
Arrested	(0.118)	1,208	0.50	0.68	
Killed	0.707***	1 268	0.35	0.54	
Killed	(0.101)	1,200	0.55	0.04	
Percentage of Prewar Parish Priests:	(0.101)				
Arrested	60.452***	690	42.9	40.6	
	(9.056)				
Killed	43.107***	690	27.8	34.6	
	(8.428)				
ii Other Bepression Outcomes					
n. Other Repression Outcomes					
At Least One Local Teacher Killed:					
All	0.031	1,268	0.78	0.42	
	(0.098)				
Jewish	0.021	1,268	0.04	0.20	
	(0.049)				
Repressed	0.049	1,268	0.69	0.46	
Les of the New box of Les of Transform Willed	(0.105)				
Ln of 1+Number of Local Teachers Killed:	0.001	1 268	1.04	0.81	
All	(0.196)	1,200	1.04	0.01	
Jewish	0.097	1 268	0.05	0.30	
	(0.061)	1,200	0.00	0.00	
Repressed	0.102	1,268	0.87	0.79	
-	(0.200)				
Presence of Atrocity Site	-0.125*	1,268	0.90	0.30	
	(0.062)				
B. Population Structure (1946–1950)					
Mala Davidation (7 af Davi					
Male Population, % of Pop.	0.071**	1.007	10.0	1 4 4	
1940	$-0.8(1^{mn})$	1,207	40.8	1.44	
1950	(0.343) 0.035	1 267	47 3	1 38	
1990	(0.030)	1,207	41.0	1.00	
Age Structure % of 1946 Pop	(0.022)				
18 or under	0.437	621	38.3	3.06	
	(0.610)				
18 to 59	-1.136*	621	53.4	2.49	
	(0.583)				

Table A.5: Effect of Nazi Annexation on Wartime Violence and Postwar Population Structure

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates, Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Columns 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. Average regression bandwidths are 59.5km, 75km and 55.9km for Panel A.i., A.ii. and B, respectively. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD N.		Dep.	Var.
	Estimate		Mean	S.D.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mass Attendance, % of Obliged:				
1991 - 2015 Average	-6.875^{***} (2.097)	1,261	51.9	15.2
1991	-11.342^{**} (4.271)	1,123	53.8	19.6
1995	-4.667 (2.774)	1,228	53.7	16.9
2001	-3.158 (2.148)	1,249	52.8	16.0
2015	-2.455 (2.450)	1,231	46.2	14.6

Table A.6: Long-term Effects of Nazi Repression on Post-Transition Religiosity

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Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity-robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates, Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Column 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. Average regression bandwidth is 80.2km. * denotes significance at 10\%, ** significance at 5\% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD	Ν.	Dep.	Var.
	Estimate		Mean	S.D
	(1)	(2)	(2)	(3)
A. 1990s Parliamentary Elections (1991, 1993,	1997)			
Party Vote Shares, % of valid votes:				
Democratic Union - UD (1991-1993)	0.455	1,268	5.36	4.34
	(0.837)			
Democratic Left Alliance - SLD	0.288	1,268	14.5	7.6'
	(1.350)			
Solidarity - NSZZ/AWS	0.926	1,268	13.0	5.8
	(1.261)			
Turnout, %	-0.783	1,268	44.3	7.3
	(1.301)			
B. 2000s Parliamentary Elections (2001, 2005,	2007)			
Party Vote Shares, % of valid votes:				
Democratic Left Alliance - SLD	-0.093	1,268	16.9	7.2
	(1.415)			

Civic Platform - PO

Law and Justice - PiS

Turnout, %

PiS+League of Polish Families-LPR

Table A.7: Long-term Effects of Nazi Repression on Voter Behavior in Parliamentary Elections

2.922

(1.825)

2.903***

(1.075) 3.402^{**}

(1.513)

-1.439

(1.122)

1,268

1,268

1,268

1,268

14.9

22.9

29.7

8.26

7.21

9.42

43.7 5.28

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates, Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titunik (2014a). Columns 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. Average regression bandwidths are 73.4km and 67.6km for Panel A and B, respectively. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

				RD E	stimates				N.	Dep.	Var.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	Mean (10)	SI (11
A. Wartime Repression (1939–1945)										
At least One Local:											
Priest Arrested	0.760*** (0.084)	0.757*** (0.098)	0.786*** (0.080)	0.782*** (0.086)	0.761*** (0.072)	0.778*** (0.101)	0.768^{***} (0.093)	0.735*** (0.068)	1268	0.49	0.5
Priest Killed	0.643*** (0.088)	0.618*** (0.104)	0.661*** (0.111)	0.644*** (0.082)	0.642*** (0.105)	0.640*** (0.130)	0.643*** (0.120)	0.640*** (0.084)	1268	0.35	0.4
Atrocity Site	-0.125^{*} (0.062)	-0.145* (0.081)	-0.150** (0.060)	-0.128^{*} (0.062)	-0.125** (0.055)	-0.156^{*} (0.072)	-0.124 (0.062)	-0.095** (0.052)	1268	0.90	0.3
Teacher Killed (Repression)	0.049	0.058	(0.1000) (0.116) (0.140)	0.049	0.053 (0.103)	(0.101) (0.142)	(0.1002) (0.141) (0.155)	0.049	1268	0.69	0.4
Ln of 1+Number of Priests:	(0.100)	(0.111)	(0.110)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.112)	(0.100)	(0.100)			
Arrested	0.903^{***} (0.118)	0.912*** (0.116)	0.878*** (0.117)	0.936^{***} (0.111)	0.905*** (0.117)	0.851*** (0.151)	0.872*** (0.125)	0.925*** (0.101)	1268	0.56	0.6
Killed	0.707*** (0.101)	0.697*** (0.115)	0.683*** (0.113)	0.729*** (0.098)	0.713*** (0.115)	0.646*** (0.138)	0.674*** (0.116)	0.715*** (0.093)	1268	0.35	0.5
Percentage of Prewar Parish Priests:	()	()	()	()	()	()	()	()			
Arrested	60.452*** (9.056)	64.089*** (9.329)	57.551*** (10.598)	59.148*** (9.384)	62.015*** (8.409)	55.582*** (11.600)	60.352*** (9.098)	66.968*** (6.390)	690	42.9	40.
Priest Killed	43.107*** (8.428)	44.280^{***} (9.656)	41.405*** (8.590)	42.098*** (8.585)	40.594^{***} (6.373)	36.958*** (10.739)	41.966*** (8.647)	48.527^{***} (6.147)	690	27.8	34.0
B. Religiosity											
Mass Attendance, % of Obliged											
1991 - 2015 Average	-6.875*** (2.097)	-8.302*** (2.594)	-5.053 (2.422)	-7.098*** (2.118)	-6.486** (2.440)	-3.362 (3.574)	-4.906 (3.056)	-6.988 (2.015)	1261	51.9	15.5
1991	-11.342** (4.271)	-14.766** (4.800)	-10.665** (3.500)	-11.967** (4.167)	-11.399* (4.705)	-10.041 (5.285)	-10.587 (5.008)	-12.916** (3.227)	1123	53.8	19.6
1995	-4.667 (2.774)	-6.330^{*} (2.890)	-4.548 (3.071)	-4.919 (2.637)	-4.348 (2.919)	-0.536 (4.832)	-2.395 (4.109)	-4.765 (2.708)	1228	53.7	16.9
2001	-3.158 (2.148)	-4.172 (2.994)	-1.379 (2.364)	-2.297 (2.485)	-3.199 (2.829)	0.267 (3.427)	-1.380 (3.042)	-3.886 (1.997)	1249	52.8	16.0
2015	-2.455 (2.450)	-4.782 (2.668)	-2.551 (2.390)	-3.666 (2.219)	-2.243 (2.642)	-0.168 (3.390)	-2.231 (2.668)	-4.513 (1.884)	1231	46.2	14.0
Polynomial Order	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st			
Baseline Covariates	No	No	Yes	Rail Den.	No	No	No	No			
Bandwidth (km)	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT NN Churt	CCT	50km	100km			
Standard Errors Sample	All	No Splits	All	All	All	All	All	All			

Table A.8: Effects of Nazi Repression on Wartime Violence and Postwar Religiosity Under Different Specifications

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity-robust nearest-neighbor (NN) variance estimator unless specified otherwise. Column 1 reports our baseline RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates. Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titunik (2014*a*). Columns 2 to 8 show our estimates under different specifications: (2) excludes border municipalities which are significantly split by the border (at least 20% of their area is in the opposite zone); (3) controls for a broad set of covariates (latitude, longitude, dummies for urban-rural and rural municipalities, distance to Lodz and Warsaw, mean altitude, rainfall and temperature); (4) controls for railroad density in 1939; (5) clusters errors using the cluster-robust nearest-neighbor estimator with errors clustered at the powiat level; (6) uses a second-order polynomial, (7) uses a 50km bandwidth; and (8) uses a 100km bandwidth. Columns 9 shows the number of observations available. Columns 10 and 11 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. * denotes significance at 15% and *** significance at 1%.

	DD Estimates				N.	Dep.	Var.				
				RD Est	imates					Mean	SD
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11
A. Education											
Education Level, Avg. % of Pop. aged 15+ (1970–1988)											
Basic	-0.426 (1.864)	-0.591 (2.074)	1.523 (1.475)	-1.351 (1.572)	-0.105 (1.960)	0.829 (2.357)	0.536 (2.054)	-0.327 (1.623)	1268	64.4	9.0
Secondary	1.547 (1.282)	1.921 (1.439)	0.208 (0.959)	2.210* (1.022)	1.506 (1.252)	0.459 (1.540)	0.628 (1.381)	1.597 (1.131)	1268	13.7	6.0
Vocational	-1.731** (0.595)	-2.058** (0.658)	-1.505** (0.641)	-1.570** (0.597)	-1.747** (0.701)	-1.321	-1.527	-1.821** (0.517)	1268	20.0	3.5
Higher	(0.550) (0.293)	(0.000) (0.662^{*}) (0.337)	(0.041) (0.189) (0.207)	(0.051) (0.661^{**}) (0.250)	(0.101) 0.543 (0.301)	(0.010) (0.580) (0.329)	(0.002) 0.363 (0.292)	(0.551^{*}) (0.266)	1268	1.90	1.7
B. Voter Behavior											
Party Vote Shares, % of valid votes:											
UD (1990s)	0.455	0.640	-0.192	0.784	0.495	0.219	0.142	0.183	1268	5.36	4.3
	(0.837)	(0.969)	(0.544)	(0.797)	(1.051)	(1.060)	(0.938)	(0.688)			
SLD (1990s)	0.288	0.448	-0.081	0.901	0.250	1.151	0.882	0.296	1268	14.5	7.6
	(1.350)	(1.426)	(1.041)	(1.342)	(2.161)	(2.061)	(1.764)	(1.344)	1000	10.0	
SLD (2000s)	-0.093	(1.560)	-0.923 (1.972)	(1.450)	-0.097	-0.181	-0.129	-0.127	1268	16.9	(.2
Solidarity (1000e)	0.026	(1.509)	(1.275)	(1.459)	(1.955)	(2.371)	1.046	(1.303)	1268	13.0	5.8
Solidarity (19908)	(1.920)	(1.523)	(1.104)	(1.324)	(1.830)	(1.601)	(1.476)	(0.082)	1200	15.0	0.0
PiS(2000s)	2 903***	3 003**	4 223***	3 006***	2 729*	3 189**	2 591	2 169**	1268	22.9	7 2
115 (2005)	(1.075)	(1.433)	(0.913)	(1.085)	(1.629)	(1.252)	(1.371)	(0.884)	1200	22.0	1.2
PiS+LPB (2000s)	3 402**	3 652*	4 941***	3 524**	3 460	3 676**	2.887	2 480**	1268	29.7	94
1.0 + 11 10 (2000)	(1.513)	(1.958)	(1.138)	(1.481)	(2.162)	(1.633)	(1.794)	(1.166)	1200	20.1	0
PO (2000s)	2.922	3.649^{*}	2.069	3.539*	3.325	3.930	2.178	2.776*	1268	14.9	8.2
	(1.825)	(2.052)	(1.272)	(1.697)	(2.810)	(2.043)	(1.982)	(1.444)			
Polynomial Order	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st			
Baseline Covariates	No	No	Yes	Rail Den.	No	No	No	No			
Bandwidth (km)	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	$50 \mathrm{km}$	$100 \mathrm{km}$			
Standard Errors	NN	NN	NN	NN	NN Cluster	NN	NN	NN			
Sample	All	No Splits	All	All	All	All	All	All			

Table A.9: Effects of Nazi Repression on Postwar Education and Voter Behavior Under Different Specifications

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity-robust nearest-neighbor (NN) variance estimator unless specified otherwise. Column 1 reports our baseline RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates. Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Caltaneo and Titunik (20144). Columns 2 to 8 show our estimates under different specifications: (2) excludes border municipalities which are significantly split by the border (at least 20% of their area is in the opposite zone); (3) controls for a broad set of covariates (latitude, longitude, dumnies for urban-rural and rural municipalities, distance to Lodz and Warsaw, mean altitude, rainfall and temperature); (4) controls for raihoad density in 1939; (5) clusters errors using the cluster-robust nearest-neighbor estimator with errors clustered at the powiat level; (6) uses a second-order polynomial, (7) uses a 50km bandwidth; and (8) uses a 100km bandwidth. Columns 9 shows the number of observations available. Columns 10 and 11 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. * denotes significance at 15% and *** significance at 15%.

	RD	D Simulated		Var.
	Estimate	P-Value	Mean	S.D.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
A. Wartime Repression (1939 - 1945)				
At Least One Local:				
Priest Arrested	0.760***	0.00	0.49	0.50
Priest Killed	(0.084) 0.643^{***} (0.088)	0.00	0.35	0.48
Teacher Killed (Repression)	(0.000) (0.049) (0.105)	0.40	0.69	0.46
Ln of 1+Number of:				
Priest Arrested	0.903^{***}	0.00	0.56	0.68
Priest Killed	(0.118) 0.707^{***} (0.101)	0.00	0.35	0.54
Teacher Killed (Repression)	0.102 (0.200)	0.51	0.87	0.79
B. Religiosity				
Mass Attendance, $\%$ of Obliged:				
1991 - 2015 Average	-6.875^{***}	0.01	51.9	15.2
1991	(2.097) -11.342** (4.271)	0.01	53.8	19.6
C. Voter Behavior (2001, 2005, 2007)				
Party Vote Shares, % of valid votes:				
PiS	2.903***	0.08	22.9	7.21
PiS+LPR	(1.075) 3.402^{**} (1.512)	0.09	29.7	9.42
РО	(1.313) 2.922 (1.825)	0.12	14.9	8.26

Table A.10: Effects of Nazi Repression and Simulated P-Values for Main Outcomes

Notes: Column 1 reports our baseline RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates. Column 2 presents simulated p-values based on 201 placebo assignment variables which split our sample municipalities into East (control) and West (treatment) regions. We compute these assignment variables by calculating the distance from a municipality to a longitudinal line that runs through the city of Łódź, and then adding/substracting 50km in 0.5km increments. This exercise is similar, though not equivalent, to calculating distances to 201 longitudinal lines. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD Estimate (1)	N. (2)	Dep. Mean (3)	Var. S.D. (4)
A. Diocesan Catalogues (1948)				
Presence of Priest	-0.017 (0.104)	389	0.94	0.24
Number of Priests, per 1000 1950 Pop.	-0.001 (0.141)	389	0.33	0.20
Ratio of Priests to Prewar Priests	0.019 (0.244)	369	0.98	0.41
B. Priest Census (1971)				
Presence of Priest	0.005 (0.063)	607	0.97	0.17
Number of Priests, per 1000 1970 Pop.	0.028 (0.061)	607	0.46	0.28
Mean Age of Priests	-1.242 (2.923)	589	45.4	6.69
Mean Years of Service of Priests	-0.776 (2.644)	589	18.7	6.26

Table A.11: Effect of Nazi Repression on Postwar Priest Supply

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates, Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Columns 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. Average regression bandwidths are 14.4km and 43.6km for Panel A and B, respectively. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD	RD N		Var.	
	Estimate (1)	(2)	Mean (3)	S.D (4)	
A. Wartime Repression (1939–1945)					
i. Religious Persecution					
At Least One Local Priest:					
Arrested	0.237	1,021	0.34	0.4'	
V:11, J	(0.177)	1 001	0.10	0.90	
Killed	(0.237)	1,021	0.19	0.3	
Ln of 1+Number of Priests:	(0.100)				
Arrested	0.259	1,021	0.33	0.55	
	(0.193)				
Killed	0.215	1,021	0.17	0.39	
	(0.134)				
ii. Other Repression Outcomes					
At Least One Local Teacher Killed:					
All	0.116	1,021	0.74	0.4	
	(0.125)				
Repressed	0.145	1,021	0.65	0.43	
In of 1 Number of Legal Taseborg Killed.	(0.171)				
All	0.213	1 021	0.96	0.7	
	(0.258)	1,021	0.50	0.1	
Repressed	0.182	1,021	0.79	0.7'	
-	(0.276)	,			
B. Religiosity					
Mass Attendance, % of Obliged:					
1991 - 2015 Average	0.289	1.015	52.1	15.'	
	(2.673)	_,			
1991	-0.096	864	52.4	19.	
	(3.269)				
C. Voter Behavior (2001, 2005, 2007)					
Party Vote Shares, % of valid votes:					
PiS	-0.338	1,021	24.7	6.8	
	(1.431)				
$\operatorname{PiS+LPR}$	-0.149	1,021	32.0	9.1	
DO	(1.987)	1 001	10.0	= -	
PO	-4.712	1,021	13.6	7.8	
	(3.634)	/ -			

Table A.12: Effects of Nazi Repression in Zichenau

Notes: Column 1 reports our RD estimates and standard errors for the effect of Nazi Repression in Zichenau using a first-order polynomial and no covariates. Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor (NN) variance estimator. Column 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable in the sample that includes municipalities in the General Government and Zichenau. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD	N.	Dep.	Var.
	Estimate		Mean	S.D.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Population Density, Ln:				
1950	0.146	1,267	4.40	0.79
	(0.173)			
1960	0.166	1,268	4.48	0.84
	(0.183)			
1970	0.183	1,268	4.52	0.89
	(0.196)			
Non-agricultural Population, % of Pop.:				
1950	5.132	1,267	27.7	25.4
	(6.166)			
1960	4.156	1,268	35.1	25.5
	(6.138)	,		
1970	2.532	1,268	45.8	23.7
	(5.927)	,		
Annual Population Growth. %:				
1946–1950	0.219	1.267	-1 42	3.62
1010 1000	(0.647)	1,201	1.12	0.02
1950-1960	0.168	1 267	0.94	1 50
1550 1500	(0.224)	1,201	0.04	1.05
1060 1070	(0.224)	1 268	0.36	1.00
1900-1970	(0.107)	1,200	0.30	1.09
	(0.100)			

Table A.13: Effects of Nazi Repression on Population Density, Non-agricultural Population, and Population Growth

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates, Significance levels are based on the bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Column 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. Average regression bandwidth is 74.7km. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

	RD	N.	Dep.	Var.
	Estimate	(2)	Mean	S.D.
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Education Level, $\%$ of Pop. aged 15+ with at least basic education				
A. 1970 Census				
Basic	0.161	1,268	74.9	8.62
	(1.703)			
Secondary	1.504	1,268	10.63	5.19
	(1.050)			
Vocational	-2.127^{***}	1,268	13.4	3.75
	(0.654)			
Higher	0.383^{*}	1,268	1.11	1.25
	(0.186)			
B. 1978 Census				
Basic	-0.656	1,268	63.8	9.64
	(1.999)			
Secondary	1.556	1,268	13.5	6.44
	(1.363)			
Vocational	-1.569^{*}	1,268	20.9	3.96
	(0.684)			
Higher	0.631^{*}	1,268	1.79	1.71
	(0.314)			
C. 1988 Census				
Basic	-0.765	1,268	54.5	9.46
	(2.031)			
Secondary	1.551	1,268	17.0	6.79
	(1.473)			
Vocational	-1.486	1,268	25.7	4.35
	(0.777)			
Higher	0.599	1,268	2.79	2.25
	(0.396)			

Table A.14: Long-term Effects of Nazi Repression on Education Levels

Notes: Standard errors are estimated using a heteroskedasticity–robust nearest-neighbor variance estimator. Column 1 reports the conventional RD estimates and standard errors for the treatment effect using a first-order polynomial and no covariates, Significance levels are based on the biascorrected confidence intervals following Calonico, Cattaneo and Titiunik (2014*a*). Column 2 shows the number of observations available. Columns 3 and 4 present the mean and standard deviation for the corresponding variable as in Table A.1. Average regression bandwidths are 69.5km, 69.3km and 67.5km for Panel A, B and C, respectively. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

VARIABLES	Mass Attendance, % of Obliged			PiS+LPR Vote Share, % of Valid				lid Votes	
	1991 - 2015	1991	1995	2001	-2007	2001	20	05	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
07 Victimized David Driveta	0.021*	0.055*	0.045*	0.006	0.009	0.009	0.092*	0.000*	
70 VICUIIIIZEU FAIISII FHESIS	-0.031	-0.055	(0.026)	(0.000)	(0.008)	(0.002)	(0.023)	(0.022)	
Mass Attendance (2001)	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.020)	(0.007)	(0.007) 0.042^{**} (0.020)	(0.000)	(0.012)	(0.012)	
Dummy for 108 Martyrs					(0.020)			2.563**	
								(1.287)	
Railroad Density, 1939 (km/Area)	-11.416***	-14.278^{***}	-6.428	0.721	1.122	3.566^{***}	8.235**	8.051**	
	(3.050)	(5.005)	(4.071)	(1.878)	(1.906)	(1.323)	(3.514)	(3.506)	
Ln (Catholic Population 1938)	-0.921	1.106	-2.576^{**}	0.177	0.204	0.275	0.523	0.383	
	(0.803)	(1.193)	(1.115)	(0.405)	(0.415)	(0.356)	(0.531)	(0.532)	
Ln (Distance to Poznan $+ 1$)	4.739***	8.156***	2.812*	-0.299	-0.517	-2.917***	-1.037*	-0.917	
	(1.064)	(1.600)	(1.521)	(0.450)	(0.453)	(0.447)	(0.612)	(0.630)	
Ln (Distance to $Lodz + 1$)	6.054***	8.406***	4.710***	-3.458***	-3.735***	-3.628***	-4.142***	-4.186***	
	(1.132)	(1.574)	(1.523)	(0.799)	(0.870)	(0.702)	(0.888)	(0.871)	
Dummy for Prussian Partition	14.226***	25.393***	12.841***	-0.434	-0.982	1.177^{*}	3.680***	3.755***	
	(1.837)	(2.556)	(2.155)	(0.783)	(0.775)	(0.669)	(1.039)	(1.029)	
	050	240	051	959	051	050	050	050	
Observations	353	349	351	353	351	353	353	353	
Sample				Warthe	gau				

Table A.15: Relationship between Priest Repression and Main Outcomes - All Covariates

Notes: Table reports estimates and robust standard errors from regressions which control for the logarithm of 1938 Catholic population, 1939 railroad density, the logarithm of the distance to Lodz and Poznan, and an indicator variable for Prussian possessions. Column 8 includes an indicator variable for whether one of the 108 Catholic Martyrs of WWII resided in the municipality. Columns 1,4 and 5 correspond to averages across multiple years: 1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015 for mass attendance; 2001, 2005, and 2007 for PiS and LPR vote share. * denotes significance at 10%, ** significance at 5% and *** significance at 1%.

B Data Appendix

Nature and Intensity of Repression. From the first volume of (Jacewicz and Woś 1977), we extract a list of clergy killed during WWII for each former diocese in Nazi-occupied Poland. We exclude priests who died due to military action (e.g. bombings, Warsaw Uprising) or were victims of Soviet or nationalist Ukrainian repression. Other volumes contain more detail information on victimized priests. To extract arrested priests, we assume that a priest was arrested if there is information on his date of arrest or on the prison camp he was sent to.

To match each arrested or killed priest to a current municipality, we use information on the priest's parish or other places of employment (seminaries, universities, etc.). We focus on clergy listed as *kaplan* (priest). In addition, when comparing the number of victimized priest to prewar clergy, we restrict our attention to parish priests to make both lists comparable. We do so by focusing on those priests who have the following positions: *proboszcz* (parish priest), *wikar* (vicar), *administrator*, *rektor* (rector), *kapelan* (chaplain), and *rezydent* (resident priest). Percentage measures of victimized priests (relative to prewar priests) are capped at 100.

Regarding teacher deaths in (Walczak 1987), we match each teacher to a current municipality, we use the prewar place of employment. From the full list of matched teachers, we compute the number of those killed due to Nazi repression by excluding those listed as having been killed due to war violence, Soviet/Ukrainian repression, and those for which there is no information and cause of death. We also compute the number of Jewish teachers by focusing on those listed as being Jewish and those who died in concentration camps for Jews.

Contemporary Religiosity and Priest Supply. For mass attendance, we compute both yearly and average mass attendance based on the four years for which we have data (1991, 1995, 2001, and 2015). For 1991, information is missing for a few counties in Lubuskie, Małopolskie, Podkarpackie, and Dolnośląskie voivodeships, which are located far from treatment border and therefore do not affect our analysis.

We follow the Polish Church definitions and calculate mass attendance as the percentage of all obliged Catholics in the municipality attending mass on the survey date. Obliged are Catholics aged 7 or above who are able to attend mass (i.e., are not limited due to their age or illness). For the few cases for which mass attendance is above 100 due to the presence of parishioners from other parishes, we capped the percentage at 100.

For the 1971 priest data, we use place of residence to match every priest in the dioceses of Chełmno, Częstochowa, Gniezno, Kielce, Łódż, Płock, Sandomierz, Warszawa, and Włoclawek to a current municipality.We use year of ordination to compute years of service.¹⁴

¹⁴In few cases, the year of ordination is greater than 1971, in which case we assign a value of 0 to years of service.

Socioeconomic Outcomes. The document Population and Housing Resources in the Years 1946-1974 contains information on municipal total, male and non-agricultural population, population density, and number of residential buildings for 1950, 1960, and 1970, based on the 1975 territorial division of the country. In addition, information on population and density is available for 1946 and 1974.

Regarding education outcomes, we compute the percentage of the population aged 15 and above with at least basic education based for the following categories: higher (*wyższe*, for people with a diploma of higher education), secondary (*średnie*, for people with a secondary school-leaving certificate, which entitles them to apply for admission to a higher education institution), vocational (*zasadnicze zawodowe*, for people with a certificate of completion of a basic vocational school, which does not entitle to admission to higher education institutions), and basic (*podstawowe*, for people with a certificate of completion of a primary school).

Prewar Demographic, Political and Religious Characteristics. Data from the 1931 census is available for central and eastern voivodeships only . We checked for outlier values and found an error in the area for the municipality of Glowno.¹⁵ Hence, we compute that value as missing.

For the 1921 census, we digitized the volumes for the Kielce, Łódź, Pomorze, Poznań, and Warszawa voivodeships.¹⁶ To compute the percentage of Catholics, we consider both Roman and Mariavite Catholics.

¹⁵According to the census, Glowno had an area of just $0.3km^2$, which leads to a population density comparable to present-day Macao.

¹⁶For this census, the process of matching municipalities in Pomeranian and Poznan is particularly cumbersome. At the time, many small villages in these regions constituted their own municipalities. For these regions, We match towns and villages to current municipalities, but leave out rural estates.

Variable	Source
	Nature and Intensity of Repression
Repression against Catholic priests	Jacewicz, Wiktor and Jan Woś. 1977. Martyrologium polskiego duchowieństwa rzymskokatolickiego pod okupacją hitlerowską w latach 1939-1945. Warsaw: ATK
War losses among teachers	Walczak, Marian. 1987. Działalność oświatowa i martyrologia nauczycielstwa polskiego pod oku- pacją hitlerowska 1939-1945. Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków, Łódź, Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich.
Nazi atrocities	Wnek, Konrad and Lidia Zyblikiewicz. 2022. Raport o Stratach Poniesionych przez Polskę w Wyniku Agresji i Okupacji Niemieckiej w Czasie II Wojny Światowej 1939–1945 - Lista Miejsc Zbrodni. [Report on the Losses Sustained by Poland as a Result of German Aggression and Occupation During the Second World War, 1939 - 1945.] Fundacja Lux Veritatis z siedzibą w Warszawie – Instytut Pamięć i Tożsamość im. św. Jana Pawła II
Postwar age and gender structure	Powszechny sumaryczny spis ludności z dn. 14.II. 1946 r. [General summary census of 14.II. 1946] Warszawa: Główny Urząd Statystyczny.
Occupation zone borders	1941 Map of the Reich Office for State Recording (Reichsamt für Landesaufnahme - RfL) from the Archive of the Polish Military Geographical Institute (Wojskowy Instytut Geograficzny).
Population area agricul	Prewar characteristics Skorowidz gmin Programmatic Delekici - Index of communes of the Depublic of Poland 1023
tural/arable land	Warszawa. Glowny Urzad Statystyczny RP.
Distribution of priests and Catholics	Spis Duchowieństwa i Parahi Diecezji Lodzkiej. [List of Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese of Lodz] 1938. Lodz: Seminarium Duchowny w Lodzi.
in 1938-1939	Spis Duchowieństwa i Parafii Diecezji Sandomierskiej. [List of Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese of Sandomierz] 1938. Sandomierz: Seminarium Duchowny w Sandomierzy.
	Katalog Kościołów i Duchowieństwa Archidiecezji Warszawskiej na rok 1938. [Catalog of Churches and Clergy of the Archdiocese of Warsaw for 1938.] Warszawa. Seminarium Metropolitalny.
	Katalog Kościołów i Duchowieństwa Diecezji Częstochowskiej na rok 1939 [Catalog of Churches and Clergy of the Diocese of Częstochowa for the year 1939] Częstochowa. Kuria Diecezjialna. Druk. FD Wilkozewskiego.
	Elenchus Omnium Ecclesiarum Necnon Universi Cleri Dioecesis Kielcensis. [List of all the Churches and the Universal Clergy of the Diocese of Kielce] 1938. Typography "Jedność."
	Rocznik Diecezji włocławskiej. [Yearbook of the Diocese of włocławek] 1938. włocławek: Kuria Diecezjalna.
Ethnicity and religion in	Katalog Kościołów i Duchowieństwa Diecezji Siedleckiej czyli Podlaskiej na rok 1938.[Catalog of Churches and Clergy of the Diocese of Siedlec or Podlasie for 1938.] Siedlec. Kuria Diecezjialna. Skorowidz Miajscowości Bzeczwoczpolitaj Polskiej [Index of Places of the Bepublic of Poland] 1924
1921	Warszawa. Glowny Urząd Statystyczny RP.
Voting behavior in 1922 and 1928	(1) Statystyka Wyborow do Sejmu i Senatu Odbytych w Dniu 5 i 12 Listopada 1922 roku. [Statistics of Elections to the Sejm and Senate Held on November 5 and 12, 1922] 1926. Warszawa. Glowny Urzad Statystyczny RP. (2) Statystyka Wyborów do Sejmu i Senatu Odbytych w Dniu 4 i 11 Marca 1928 roku. 1930. [Statistics of Elections to the Sejm and the Senate Held on March 4 and 11, 1928.] Warszawa. Glowny Urzad Statystyczny RP.
Railroad density	Map produced by the German Army High Command in 1939, obtained from the Map Archive of Wojskowy Instytut Geograficzny
Anti-German elites	Special Prosecution Book of Poland (<i>Sonderfahndungsbuch Polen</i>), which includes the addresses of political leaders, scholars, doctors, lawyers, actors, and members of the nobility that were supposedly hostile to Germany. Digitized by Krakowski and Schaub (2022).
Distribution of priorts	Postwar outcomes
Catholics in 1946-48	1948. Lodz: Kuria Diecezjialna w Łodzi.
	Katalog Kościołów i Duchowieństwa Archidiecezji Warszawskiej na Rok 1948. [Catalog of Churches and Clergy of the Archdiocese of Warsaw for 1948] Warszawa: Seminarjum Metropolitalny.
	Rocznik Diecezji Sandomierskiej. [List of Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese of Sandomierz] 1948. Sandomierz: Seminarium Duchowny w Sandomierzy.
	Katalog Duchowieństwa i Parafii Diecezji Kieleckiej. [Directory of the Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese of Kielce.] 1946. Kielce. Kuria Diecezjlana.
Education level in 1970,	Based on historical census data published by GUS at https://stat.gov.pl/spisy-
1978, 1988 Population growth	powszechne/narodowe-spisy-powszechne/ludnosc-wedlug-spisow-dane-historyczne/ Population and Housing Resources in the Years 1946-1974 (Ludność i zasoby mieszkaniowe w latach 1946-1974)
Elections 1990-2005	Krajowe Biuro Wyborcze
Mass attendance in 1991, 1995, 2001, 2015	Purchased by the authors from the Institute of Statistics of the Polish Catholic Church (Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego)
Priests in 1971	Spis Duchowieństwa Diecezjalnego w Polsce. [List of Diocesan Clergy in Poland.] 1975. Poznan- Warszawa, Pallottinum.

Table B.1: List of Main Data Source

C Parish history analysis

To understand how Nazi repression affected religious services in the parish, we gathered detailed data on the turnover of parish priests (*proboszcz*) for parishes located within 50km of the border between Warthegau and the General Government from parish websites, (arch)diocese yearbooks, and other sources. We focus on priests who were appointed between 1921 and 1991 and exclude parishes that were created after WWII. Data availability varies by region: we were able to locate data for most parishes in the Łódź and Częstochowa Archdiocese, but not for the parishes in the diocese of Łowicz, created in 1992 from parts of Łódź, Płock and Warszawa (arch) dioceses. We plot municipalities for which data exist in Figure A.5).

We provide some examples of data structure in parishes located close to the former border between the Warthegau and the General Government in Table B.2. It is immediately clear from the table that the Wathegau parishes whose priests were repressed by the Nazis were often left without a priest until the end of the war. The table also suggests that although priest tenure varies considerably, priests were regularly moved between parishes.

To investigate the patterns of priest tenure more systematically, we compute the average number of years between successive priest appointments for each parish and the average duration of priests appointment for each parish before and after the war. We also count the share of priests appointed between 1949 and 1956, the period when the Communist government sought to infiltrate the church by appointing the Patriot priests, to the total number of priests appointed between 1949 and 1989.

Figure A.5: Municipalities within 50-km of the Treatment Border with Available Parish Histories



Warthegau	General Government
Parafia Najświętszego Serca Pana Jezusa i Trzech	Parafia Niepokalanego Poczęcia Najświętszej Maryi
Króli w Dłutowie	Panny w Koluszkach
ks. Wojciech Kubis (1933–1936)	ks. Jan Rubaszkiewicz (1930–1934)
ks. Gustaw Łaski (1936–1937)	ks. Zygmunt Wertyński (1935–1938)
ks. Stanisław Rabiński (1937–1941) ¹⁷	ks. Leon Leszczyński (1939–1948)
ks. Antoni Szarejko (1945–1946)	ks. Zygmunt Hołdrowicz (1948–1962)
ks. Tadeusz Szyszkiewicz (1946–1962)	ks. Tadeusz Szyszkiewicz (1962–1976)
ks. Leonard Wideński (1962–1964)	ks. Józef Masłowski (1976–1990)
ks. Piotr Beściak (1964–1967)	ks. Edward Wieczorek (1990–1999)
ks. Stefan Pietrusiak (1967–1977)	
ks. Włodzimierz Michałkiewicz (1977–1984)	
ks. Antoni Supady (1984–1996)	
Parafia św. Witalisa Męczennika w Tuszynie	Parafia Matki Boskiej Różańcowej w Łaznowie
ks. Stanisław Muznerowski (1910-1925)	ks. Stanisław Rabiński (1929–1937)
ks. Józef Pełczyński (1925-1930)	ks. Stanisław Lesiewicz (1937–1946)
ks. Romuald Brzeziński ¹⁸	ks. Franciszek Rzazek (1946–1956)
ks. Kazimierz Maluga (1945-1947)	ks. Józef Świątczak (1956–1963)
ks. Leon Dębicki (1947-1971)	ks. Henryk Fiutkowski (1963–1969)
ks. prałat Stanisław Wieteska (1971-2002)	ks. Franciszek Solarczyk (1969–1978)
	ks. Józef Nikiel (1979–1987)
	ks. Józef Stachniak (1987–1996)
Parafia Matki Boskiej Królowej Polski w Bedoniu	Parafia Wniebowzięcia Najświętszej Maryi Panny w
	Rogowie
ks. Leon Leszczyński (1929–1939)	ks. Czesław Stańczak (1923–1926)
ks. Eugeniusz Miller $(1940-1941)^{19}$	ks. Franciszek Psonka (1926–1928)
ks. Jan Wróblewski (1945–1948)	ks. Telesfor Kopydłowski (1928–1931)
ks. Antoni Sienkiewicz (1948–1954)	ks. Stanisław Drzymała (1931–1935)
ks. Józef Świątczak (1951–1956)	ks. Ignacy Kotlicki (1935–1954)
ks. Józef Świątczak (1951–1956)	ks. Stefan Pietusiak (1954–1967)
ks. Jan Przymusiała (1970–1996)	ks. Stanisław Wira (1967–1973)
	ks. Edward Nastałek (1973–2001)

Table B.2: Comparison of Priest Appointments between Warthegau and General Government for Parishes Near Border.

 Table B.3: Comparison of Priest Appointment Metrics

Metric	Warthegau	General Government	P-value
Average gap between priest appointments	3.66 years	0.13 years	< 0.001
Average length of priest tenure (1945-1989)	10.41 years	11.36 years	0.39
Share of priests appointed in 1949-1956	0.12 years	0.18 years	0.08
Number of municipalities	59	57	-

¹⁷Arrested and sent to Dachau
¹⁸Arrested and sent to Dachau (1930-1941)
¹⁹Arrested and sent to Dachau