

“Land for Votes”: Effects of the Land Reform on Electoral Results in Interwar Czechoslovakia

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Abstract

This article estimates the effects of the Land Reform in interwar Czechoslovakia on electoral support for political parties in the 1925 parliamentary elections, focusing on the Republican Party of Farmers and Small Landholders (RSZML). It tests the ‘land for votes’ hypothesis that states the reform was designed and executed by the party to better its performance in subsequent elections. It employs multivariate linear ordinary least squares regression analysis of data aggregated to the judicial-district level of public administration to estimate the effects, controlling for other variables that affect electoral performance, such as the structure of the rural workforce, nationality and religion. A strong positive correlation is found between the share of land redistributed under the reform and the electoral performance of RSZML *ceteris paribus*, offering evidence in favour of the ‘land for votes’ hypothesis.

Keywords: Czechoslovakia; land reform; elections; regression analysis

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1. Introduction

The land reform (*pozemková reforma*) that followed the First World War heralded one of the most dramatic changes to ownership structure in Czech national history. A number of historians have noted that execution of the reform was largely monopolized by the Republican Party of Farmers and Small Landholders (*Republikánská Strana Zemědělského a Maloroľnického Lidu – RSZML*), and that the party abused the reform at least to some extent to increase its electoral support in subsequent elections (Pekař 1923; Peroutka 1934; Pšeničková 2000; Harna 2005; Kuklík 2011). Since individual-level data can no longer be systematically gathered for this period of time, the ‘land for votes’ (*půda za hlasy*) hypothesis has been corroborated solely by citing specific cases of misconduct recorded in various historical sources. This evidence, however, is anecdotal at best, and it is difficult to assess whether abuse of the reform was simply a matter of a few ‘bad apples’, or rather reflected a systemic malaise. The aim in this article is to perform a regression analysis of the aggregated Land Reform and electoral data in the Czech Lands of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia.¹

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Corroborating the “land for votes” hypothesis using statistical analysis effectively means rejecting two null hypotheses. The first is the null hypothesis of no correlation between the share of land redistributed under the reform and the electoral success of RSZML or, to be precise, the hypothesis that the correlation between RSZML’s success at the polls and the share of land distributed is not significantly stronger than that of other major political parties when we control for other party electoral performance variables. The second no hypothesis is that no causal relation exists between the Land Reform and the electoral success of RSZML. Since correlation does not equal causation, if no correlation is found it is either the case that the reform was not abused to improve the party’s performance at the polls or that there was such a plan but for some reason it failed. An adequate positive correlation means *ceteris paribus* that the reform was abused or that there is a third latent variable that facilitated the positive correlation. Likewise, if a negative correlation is found, reform was not abused, or else a latent variable has given rise to the negative correlation. This research design cannot deliver a definitive answer no matter the results, but investigating the statistical relationship between the reform and electoral performance will at least help us steer future research by letting us confidently discard research designs based on statistical relationships other than that actually found.

The same test is performed for the other major parties to Czech whether relative effects of the Land Reform on electoral support were stronger for RSZML than for these other parties. If this proves to be the case, it will bolster the evidence for the ‘land for votes’ hypothesis. It has been explicitly stated that RSZML crafted the reform to win the votes of people who might otherwise vote for the Czechoslovak Peoples’ Party (*Československá Lidová Strana – CSL*), its main competition at the polls in rural areas. CSL’s electoral support should therefore evidence a weaker positive effect attributable to the reform-based land ownership change than does RSZML.

What follows has been divided into several sections. The first describes the Land Reform and the pertinent political context. The second briefly introduces the political parties of interwar Czechoslovakia, mainly aimed *at* readers not familiar with the topic. The third section reports on the methodology and data used, and the fourth section presents the results of the analysis and discusses their implications for our understanding of interwar Czechoslovak political history.

2. The Land Reform

The Land Reform followed soon after the Czechoslovak Republic was established as a sovereign state in 1918 and was one of its most significant political reforms in this region to-date. It came in response to postwar land distribution that gradually emerged after centuries of feudal and early capitalist economic development in the collapsed Austrian Empire. From an ideological standpoint, it was proclaimed to redress unfair land confiscations when the Czech Lands were annexed to the Austrian Empire in the seventeenth century and to rectify the Empire’s consecutive partial replacement of the indigenous nobility.

Despite the relatively swift postwar expropriation of former Austrian nobles, land ownership was still skewed strongly in the young republic. Slezák (1994) reports 55 percent

of Czech farmers owned two hectares of land or less, while the 2000 largest landowners (most notably, the Roman Catholic Church and other religious organizations) owned some 30 percent of all agricultural land. Around 25 percent of that land was concentrated in only 236 estates (*latifundia*) of more than 2000 hectares. This perceived injustice led to mounting popular discontent and might have resulted in widespread social unrest similar to that which took place in other postwar countries. Land was also disproportionately concentrated in German hands, and Czech nationalist tendencies are cited as a prominent political cause of the reform (Čerešňák 1994).

Land ownership was perceived to be closely related to political power. Legally, all nationalities were treated equally under the reform, the only condition for participation being Czechoslovak citizenship. But the German press often portrayed the reform as an act of 'national revenge' and German members of the Czechoslovak National Assembly went so far as to formally complain to the League of Nations about nation-based discrimination by the Czechoslovak government. The reform was drafted exclusively by Czech and Slovak political elites, and civil servants of the Land Bureau (*Úřad Pozemkový*), a government agency responsible for execution of the reform, were almost exclusively Czech (Rychlík 1994).

Apart from its political motivations, the reform attempted to liberalize the agricultural economic system and remove defects that had accumulated over the decades of gradual transition from a feudal to a capitalist economy in the 19th century. Most of the largest *latifundia* were bound by family trusteeships (*fieldkomis*) and could not be divided or sold. This obstruction to the free exchange of land gave rise to a constant surplus of demand. It had hindered economic growth in the countryside since at least the agricultural crisis of the 1890s. The abolition of trusteeships had been one of the major political demands of RSZML and its predecessors since the late nineteenth century (Lacina 1994).

All Czechoslovak political parties acknowledged the need for land reform of some kind, but disagreed on the specifics. Most socialist and anarchist parties perceived reform as an opportunity to cut private ownership of the means of production. They demanded land confiscated remain in state hands and rejected the notion that financial compensation be provided. Other parties, including some non-Marxist socialists, proposed that the land should be redistributed to small farmers and endorsed or at least accepted the principle of financial compensation. Ultimately, compensation was provided for the confiscations, and the land was redistributed to small farmers (Červinka 1933). The seizures primarily took place under the Confiscation Act (*Záborový Zákon*, No. 215/1919 Coll.), the Redistribution Act (*Přídělový Zákon*, No. 81/1920 Coll.), and the Compensation Act (*Náhradový Zákon*, No. 329/1920 Coll.). All property owned by an individual beyond an initial 150 hectares of agricultural land or 250 hectares of land overall was to be confiscated. This covered a total of some four million hectares of land. However by 1938, only about 1.8 million hectares had actually been confiscated (Švehla, Vaňous 1987).

The original conception of the reform called for it to be carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture. But Karel Prášek, minister at that time in the cabinet of Karel Kramář, was known to be an advocate for large landowners. A Land Bureau was therefore established as a politically independent government agency. Its leadership was nominated by the cabinet and approved by the president. The Agrarian party, however, quickly managed to secure control over the Bureau via extensive political nominations and partisan interest groups, most notably

the Republican Union of Czechoslovak Farmers (*Republikánský Svaz Československých Statkářů*). The party merged the reform with its “Homeland” (*Domovina*) political campaign designed to establish local small farmer organizations that were more likely candidates to obtain confiscated land. The campaign began in 1919. It was aimed not only at bringing small landowners into the party rank-and-file, but also at utilizing ‘just’ land reform as a tool for securing rural votes in the first postwar elections (Peroutka 1934; Otáhal 1963; Lacina 1994; Pšeničková 2000). CSL, RSZML’s main competitor, was relatively handicapped in the struggle for these votes during the decisive years of Land Reform, because it had initially pushed strongly for the Roman Catholic Church to be entirely excused from the reform (Červinka 1933).

3. Major political parties in interwar Czechoslovakia

Political parties played a major role in the political system of interwar Czechoslovakia. System stability was largely dependent upon the ability of party elites to reach informal consensus. The parties’ strong position was due to a number of institutional factors, most notably the electoral system of proportional representation with no personalization and an imperative parliamentary mandate, as well as the multinational character of the Czechoslovak population. Each national group had its own party system, with parties occupying all or almost all intersections of the left-right, secular-religious, and centre-periphery cleavages. Only a few national groups, though, were numerous enough for more than one of these parties to attain parliamentary representation. Poles, Jews, and Russians, for example, were usually represented only by their largest national parties. Parties of smaller national groups also frequently participated in elections in coalition with the major parties.

The strong national character of electoral support is visible in Table 1. Shares of votes for major parties are broken down by lands and by areas of Czechoslovak majority or minority. Data on nationality is taken from the 1930 general census (*Sčítání Lidu* 1934a; 1934b; 1935). In line with the official state ideology that spoke of ‘Czechoslovak’ nationality with Czech and Slovak branches, Czechs and the Slovaks were reported as one Czechoslovak nation.

Shares of votes in the table were calculated using judicial- and political-district level data. In the Czech Lands, political districts consisted of 1–4 judicial districts. In Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia, these two layers of public administration overlapped. For the Czech Lands, I constructed Czechoslovak majority areas using judicial districts. For Slovakia, I used the political-district level of administration. In the Czech Lands, the largest national minority was the Germans while in Slovakia, it was the Hungarians. In Carpathian Ruthenia, there was no political district with a Czechoslovak majority. The Rusyns formed the largest majority there.

The Czechoslovak party system was relatively very stable, experiencing only occasional rebranding, party splits and instances of electoral collaboration. Five Czech parties constituted the so-called *Pětka*, an informal coalition that regularly met to deliberate legislation. Apart from RSZML and CSL, it included the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Workers Party (*Československá Sociálně Demokratická Strana Dělnická – CSDSD*), the Czechoslovak Socialist Party (*Československá Strana Socialistická – CSS*), and the Czechoslovak National

Table 1: Results of the 1925 elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the National Assembly

	Czech Lands, Czechoslovak majority	Czech Lands, Czechoslovak minority	Slovakia, Czechoslovak majority	Slovakia, Czechoslovak minority	Carpathian Ruthenia	Total
RSZML	17.6%	2.0%	18.6%	12.3%	14.9%	13.7%
KSC	13.0%	10.1%	12.7%	19.7%	30.7%	13.2%
CSL	17.1%	1.6%	1.5%	0.8%	2.5%	9.7%
CSDSD	13.2%	3.4%	5.1%	2.6%	6.6%	8.9%
CSS	13.4%	3.3%	2.5%	2.8%	6.4%	8.6%
BDL	2.1%	21.0%	3.8%	21.2%	12.1%	8%
HSLŠ	0.0%	0.0%	41.2%	9.7%	0.1%	6.9%
DSAP	1.6%	20.5%	0.1%	1.1%	0.0%	5.8%
DCV	1.8%	14.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%
CZOSS	6.9%	0.9%	0.9%	0.7%	0.0%	4.4%
CND	6.4%	1.0%	1.6%	2.2%	1.2%	4%
Other	6.9%	21.7%	12.0%	27.0%	25.6%	12.4%

Notes: Only parties that obtained more than 4 percent of the vote nationally are reported. In the Czech Lands, the Czechoslovak nationality majority was calculated at the judicial-district level of administration. In Slovakia, it was calculated at the political-district level. The largest share of votes for each party is in bold.

Source: The author, based on *Sčítání Lidu (1934a)* and *Volby do Poslanecké Sněmovny (1926)*.

Democracy (*Československá Národní Demokracie* – CND). There was one additional Czech party that regularly participated in governments – the Czechoslovak Tradesman and Merchant Middle Class Party (*Československá Živnostensko Obchodnická Strana Středostavovská* – CZOSS).

Slovak votes were to a large extent monopolized by Hlinka's Slovak Peoples' Party (*Hlinkova Slovenská Eudová Strana* – HSLŠ), an agrarian and Slovak autonomist party. Among the German parties, the three largest were the German Union of Farmers (*Bund der Landwirte* – BDL), the German Social Democratic Workers Party (*Deutsche Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei* – DSAP), and the German Christian Social Peoples' Party (*Deutsche Christlichsoziale Volkspartei* – DCV). The only major party that bridged national divides was the Czechoslovak Communist Party (*Komunistická Strana Československa* – KSC).

I limit my analysis to the 1925 parliamentary elections that followed the Land Reform. Although the reform formally continued until 1938, most land had been redistributed by that time. I analyse the results only of elections to the Chamber of Deputies, the lower chamber of the bicameral National Assembly. The Senate was elected simultaneously, using a near-identical electoral methodology based on proportional representation.

4. Methodology and data sources

Electoral effects of the Land Reform are estimated using multivariate linear ordinary least squares regression analysis of the aggregate data. This research design obviously runs the risk of the ecological fallacy by incorrectly inferring individual behaviour from a faulty analysis of the aggregate data (see e.g. Gregor, Pink 2011). However, it is the best method available to rigorously test for reform effects on the electoral results, since any systematic analysis of individual data is now sadly out of the question. The dependent variables in the regression models are the vote shares attained by major political parties. Only parties that exceeded 10 percent of the vote in the Czech Lands in the 1925 elections to the Chamber of Deputies are analysed. The main independent variable of interest is the share of all agricultural land redistributed under Land Reform. In order to control the effects of other causes on electoral support variation, additional independent variables are included in the regression model.

First, the share of working class members in the agricultural workforce (henceforth abbreviated as PROLET) is included as an indicator of the mode of agricultural production. As previous research suggests (Gregor 2012), RSZML was a party of small independent farmers, while agrarian workers often voted for socialist parties. Data on the economic activity of the agrarian population comes from the 1930 general census. It splits the population into six occupational categories (agriculture, forestry and fisheries; industry and production; trade, finance and transportation; public services; freelance and military; household and personal services; other occupations; no occupation) and into three categories of economic activity (economically active, family members and household servants). The economically active population was further split into several categories difficult to translate accurately into English (*samostatní, nájemníci, úředníci, zřízení, dělníci, učedníci, nádeníci, domácí dělníci*). The agricultural proletariat is defined as the share of low-skilled, worker-like occupations (*dělníci, učedníci, nádeníci, domácí dělníci, domácí služebnictvo*) in the overall agriculture, forestry and fisheries workforce.

Second, the share of the primary sector in the economy (PRIMER) is included as an indicator of the rural population. It is defined as the share of the agriculture, forestry and fisheries workforce in the overall workforce. RSZML was obviously more successful in rural areas than urban areas. Third, RSZML was primarily a party of Czechs and Slovaks, although it was challenged by HESL in Slovakia. Its electoral support was negligible in regions populated by other ethnic minorities, especially Germans (Gregor 2012). To account for this, nationality must be also included in the regression models. As noted above, the census did not differentiate checks from Slovaks. Instead, it listed a single “Czechoslovak” nationality. It is therefore the share of the Czechoslovak population (NATION) that is included among the independent variables. It is safe to assume almost all Czechoslovaks in the Czech Lands were in fact Czech. Finally, RSZML was perceived as a Protestant party rather than a Roman Catholic party. The Roman Catholic rural population voted CSL, as a Christian Democratic party, especially in Moravia. The share of the Roman Catholic population (CATHOL) is therefore included in the regression models to take this into account. Data on nationality and religion is reported in the 1930s census (*Sčítání Lidu 1934a; 1934b; 1935*).

Since it is desirable to increase the number of cases in the dataset, it would be ideal to operate at the minimum aggregation level. Election results and census data on nationality

and religion were reported at the municipal level. Data on occupation, however, was not, nor was Land Reform data. The lowest level of aggregation available for this research design is therefore the judicial-district level. Small corrections are made to create a symmetric dataset, namely electoral results of large cities that consisted of multiple judicial districts are aggregated to match the Land Reform data. The final dataset includes a total of 324 territorial units, a number sufficiently high to perform regression analysis.

Apart from dealing with asymmetric data, the research design faces a challenge due to the fact that data was collected over a relatively long period of time. The results of the Land Reform are taken from Voženilek (1930) and therefore reflect the situation in the late 1920s. There is a gap of approximately three to five years between the electoral results and the reform data and an even longer gap between the electoral results and the results of the 1930 general census. Obviously, population parameters changed during this period of time. The cross-district net change is, however, unlikely to be large enough to significantly distort the regression analysis results and can therefore be omitted.

5. Electoral effects of the Land Reform

We begin the analysis with an overview of pairwise correlations of independent variables. A principal assumption of linear regression modelling is the perfect orthogonality of independent variables. Since this is extremely rare in social reality, we will relax this assumption to require only a sufficiently low level of correlation between independent variables. For example, Hendl (2009) recommends as a good rule of thumb for detecting problematic multicollinearity that the Pearson correlation coefficient values fall in the interval $(-0.8; 0.8)$. If one of the pairwise correlation values falls outside this interval, one of the corresponding independent variables must be removed from regression analysis. Table 2 shows pairwise correlations of independent variables. The results of statistical significance tests are not reported here or in tables of regression analysis results, because they are meaningless when operating with a dataset that includes the whole population.

Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficients of independent variables

	REFORM	PROLET	PRIMER	NATION
CATHOL	-0.17	-0.08	0.34	-0.41
NATION	0.35	-0.04	0.32	
PRIMER	0.29	-0.07		
PROLET	0.10			

Source: Author.

The strongest positive correlation is between NATION and REFORM (0.35), meaning that more land was on average redistributed in regions with a greater Czechoslovak population. This reflects the fact that – although disproportionately more land was owned by the Germans – pre-reform land ownership was more fragmented in German areas. The share of the

agricultural workforce (PRIMER) positively correlates with CATHOL (0.34) and NATION (0.32), indicating the Roman Catholic and Czechoslovak character of rural population. Not surprisingly, the reform was more intensive on average in rural areas (0.29). Even the loss of information in the data aggregation process does not strengthen the correlation. In some judicial districts, cities are aggregated together with rural areas, which results in lower overall rates of redistributed land. The only strong negative correlation is between NATION and CATHOL (-0.41), reflecting the fact that Czech regions were on average more Protestant than Roman Catholic. As we can see, all of the pairwise correlation coefficient values fall into the $\langle -0.8; 0.8 \rangle$ interval of acceptable multicollinearity. All the independent variables may therefore be included in regression analysis.

After I have ruled out a possibility of problematic multicollinearity, I now move to presenting the results of the analysis. First, I construct a series of bivariate regression models that include a single independent variable and observe values of the adjusted-R² indicator – the proportion of the independent variable's values explained by this simple model. The higher the value, the stronger the predictive value of the independent variable on its own. Second, I perform the same set of regression analyses on electoral support for the other four parties that gained more than 10 percent of the vote in the Czech Lands (CSL, KSC, CSDS, CSS). This yields a total of 25 regression models. For the sake of brevity, I do not report all parameters and associated indicators of these models, only selected figures.

Table 3 contains details of the five models where only one of the independent variables was regressed on the share of votes for RSZML at a time. The adjusted-R² indicator shows the best individual predictor of party support is the share of Czechoslovak nationality (NATION), followed by the share of the agricultural workforce (PRIMER). This is not surprising, given the ideological party's profile. The share of agricultural land redistributed by the Land Reform (REFORM) alone explains some 17 percent of the total variance of party support. It is therefore a better predictor than the share of agricultural proletariat (PROLET) and Roman Catholics (CATHOL) in the population.

Table 3: Bivariate regression models of RSZML's electoral support and independent variables

Independent variable	Intercept	Reg. coefficient	Standard error	Adjusted R ²
REFORM	0.02	0.97	0.12	0.17
PROLET	0.26	-0.25	0.08	0.03
PRIMER	0.60	-0.01	0.05	0.34
NATION	0.27	-0.02	0.01	0.59
CATHOL	-0.16	0.29	0.06	0.02

Source: Author.

Table 4 shows results of bivariate models where only REFORM and shares of votes for political parties are included. This allows us to compare the predictive value of this independent variable on electoral support. As we can see, the highest level of the adjusted-R² indicator is exhibited by the RSZML regression model. Table 5 includes partial results of multivariate regression models of political parties' electoral support. Each column contains

the regression coefficients of one regression model with the adjusted-R² indicator value reported in the bottom row. Standard errors are not reported in the table. Again, the adjusted-R² indicator value is highest for RSZML. This is not surprising, given the fact that the independent variables were selected to account for the electoral performance of this party. In the case of other parties (particularly socialist parties), a different set of independent variables must be used. Since these parties were strongly supported by the urban working class (see e.g. Gregor 2012), these would most likely be variables tied to industrial development.

Table 4: Bivariate regression models of political parties' electoral support and REFORM

Independent variable	Intercept	Reg. coefficient	Standard error	Adjusted R ²
RSZML	0.02	0.97	0.12	0.17
CSL	0.11	0.10	0.12	0.00
KSC	0.07	0.24	0.07	0.03
CSS	0.03	0.35	0.06	0.09
CSDSD	0.05	0.30	0.08	0.04

Source: Author.

Table 5: Partial results of multivariate regression models of political parties' electoral support

Variable	RSZML	CSL	KSC	CSS	CSDSD
REFORM	0.26	-0.42	0.25	0.12	0.06
PROLET	-0.20	-0.12	0.13	-0.03	0.11
PRIMER	0.38	0.02	-0.26	-0.04	-0.13
NATION	0.21	0.28	0.05	0.08	0.13
CATHOL	-0.03	0.32	-0.05	-0.22	-0.02
Intercept	-0.01	-0.22	0.10	0.22	0.00
Adjusted R ²	0.74	0.63	0.31	0.59	0.37

Note: Each column contains the regression coefficients and other indicators for a single regression model. Standard errors are not reported. Dependent variables are indicated in the column headers.

Source: Author.

The effect of REFORM is strongest in the case of RSZML, in line with the “land for votes” hypothesis. It is also strong for KSC, but REFORM is a relatively weak predictor of electoral support for the party, meaning that including this independent variable in the regression models increases overall proportion of explained variance only slightly. The overall findings are thus in line with the “land for votes” hypothesis. Moreover, the regression coefficient of REFORM is negative in the case of the regression model of CSL’s electoral support. This means that, when controlled for other important variables, Land Reform execution actually inclines to lower electoral gains for the party. This is in line with the secondary hypothesis that, as the main competitor of RSZML in rural areas, CSL was handicapped by the reform.

As I discussed in the introduction, finding a positive correlation between the share of land redistributed in the reform and the electoral performance of RSZML, *ceteris paribus*, is sufficient to reject the null hypothesis of no statistical relation. If we assume that there is no hidden factor that affects both the extent of Land Reform and the electoral results and that facilitates the observed positive correlation, the null hypothesis of no causal relation between the two variables may be rejected as well. After carefully examining the Land Reform literature, I am not aware of any potential candidate for such an intervening variable. I thus infer that the reform was indeed designed and executed to improve the electoral performance of RSZML.

6. Conclusions

The aim of this article has been to test the “land for votes” hypothesis that states the Land Reform that took place in interwar Czechoslovakia was designed and executed to improve the performance of RSZML in subsequent elections. This paper represents the first time statistical analysis has been brought to bear on the hypothesis that Land Reform was linked to the electoral results in the Czech Lands. Multivariate linear ordinary least squares regression analysis was performed on aggregated data from 324 territorial units derived from the judicial-district level of public administration.

I constructed a number of regression models estimating the effects of the share of land redistributed under reform as of the late 1920s on the electoral results of the 1925 parliamentary elections, the first post-reform elections to the Czechoslovak National Assembly. Additional variables contributing to RSZML variance are controlled for, these being the share of the working class in the agricultural workforce, the share of primary sector employees in the workforce, the share of the primary sector in the economy, the share of the population declaring ‘Czechoslovak’ nationality, and the share of the population declaring allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. The data is taken from the 1930 general census.

I found a strong positive correlation between the share of redistributed land and the electoral performance of RSZML, holding other independent variables noted above constant. Land redistribution is also a relatively strong predictor of the party’s electoral success. The effect is stronger for RSZML than other major parties in the Czech Lands. These findings allow us to rule out the null hypothesis of no statistical relation between the Land Reform and electoral results. This provides evidence for the ‘land for votes’ hypothesis. Corroboration of the existence of a causal relation between execution of the reform and electoral results would require assurance that no hidden variables that might affect the extent of the Land Reform or electoral results exist to produce the correlation. To-date, no such variable has been proposed in the literature written on the Land Reform.

There are numerous potential ways to further advance research into the Czechoslovak Land Reform and its impact on political parties and party elites. Statistical analyses of its effects on electoral results may be greatly improved by constructing more granular datasets. The results of the 1925, 1929 and 1935 National Assembly elections are available at the municipal level, yielding several thousand territorial units. Statistical lexicons of municipalities (*Statistické Lexikony Obcí*) exist for the 1930 general census and include municipal-level

data on nationality and religion, two of the most important independent variables that must be controlled for when estimating the effects of the reform. The only remaining stumbling block is that the Land Reform data is not readily available for the municipal level. It would surely be a daunting task to construct such a dataset from the household-level data that exists on a partial basis in the Land Bureau archives – but the results are definitely worth the effort.

Notes:

1. The Land Reform data for Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia is not available in comparable quality. Also, the reform was progressing much more slowly there than in the Czech Lands. See discussion on data quality in Voženilek (1932).

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