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Collective Remembrance in Jedwabne

Unsettled Memory of World War II in Postcommunist Poland

EWA WOŁENTARSKA-OCHMAN

This article focuses on problems of remembering a painful and still contentious historical past and examines the interaction between remembrance and reconciliation initiatives undertaken by local communities, on the one hand, and state-sanctioned national commemorations on the other. Using the sixtieth anniversary of the massacre of Jewish inhabitants of Jedwabne in northeast Poland during World War II as a case study, the article argues that interference from the “outside”—in this case by groups holding political power, the media and intellectual elites—is detrimental to local remembering.

In 2000, a small Polish publishing house (Pogranicze), published a book by Jan Tomasz Gross, a Polish-born political scientist at New York University, entitled *Neighbors*, which described how Poles had killed 1,600 of their Jewish neighbors in the small town of Jedwabne in July 1941. The book was highly controversial and within a few months it had sparked an intense debate throughout Polish society on Polish–Jewish relations during World War II. This reexamination of Poland’s wartime history resulted in an investigation into the Jedwabne massacre, which was conducted by the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN); it also led to an official apology for the massacre, issued on the sixtieth anniversary of the events. This reassessment of Polish national values and cultural traditions, taking place while the Polish government was negotiating accession to the European

Union, attracted much attention in the Western media and was also the subject of many academic discussions and publications.¹

This article joins the existing literature on the subject, but proposes to look at the debate on Jedwabne from a new perspective, since scholarly analyses of the Jedwabne controversy have so far tended to concentrate mainly on Gross's book itself, the historical accuracy of his account,² and on situating the Jedwabne massacre in the broader context of Polish–Jewish relations during the war.³ A small number of academic enquiries have also focused on the national debate on the massacre and the motives that lay behind the responses of various Polish political groups to the debate.⁴ This article, however, will address the impact of official, state-sponsored re-remembering and the media treatment of Polish–Jewish relations on the reconciliation work undertaken by small local communities. It will focus on the question of whether forms of historical memory that are generated and implanted from “above,” rather than located in memorial sites and social practices, can have a constructive input in the formation of a new, postcommunist Polish national identity. In order to discuss these issues the article analyzes the Jedwabne community's response to Gross's book and investigates the events leading to its boycott of the official sixtieth-anniversary commemorations of the massacre.

The Jedwabne debate was conducted under the heading “Oczyszczanie pamięci” (Cleansing the memory), originally the title of one of the first articles published in a Polish national newspaper on the Jedwabne massacre.⁵ This term was used extensively as the Poles were invited to reexamine their collective memory and investigate their collective guilt and responsibility for any wrongdoings committed against their Jewish neighbors during World War II. This concern for Polish memory was expressed for the most part by democratically elected politicians. Even if inspired by admirable goals, the role of politicians raises complex questions. Can memory be cleansed? Whose memory exactly should be purified? Is it the memory of the generation that can remember the Nazi occupation or the memory of the generations who can remember only what they were taught to remember? What does cleansing the collective memory of the Polish–Jewish past actually mean?

If we adopt the term “collective memory” as understood by the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, the cleansing of memory could be identified with its reshaping.⁶ Since viewpoints and attitudes of Poles in

a democratic Poland have changed, memory, in order to remain relevant, has had to be adapted to the present needs and aspirations of the nation. If the past is to be employed in the construction of a new postcommunist identity, then the process of thinking about the past must now employ a different set of values and ideas. There is, however, a danger in the equation of collective memory with continuous reconstructions of the past that are adapted to the needs of the present. This approach, as Barry Schwartz has pointed out, questions continuity in history and underestimates the importance of core values and national traits that are passed on to successive generations.⁷ There is also a more fundamental problem with collective memory that goes beyond the field of critical theories of memory—the appropriation of collective remembrance by groups in power and state-sponsored commemorations and rituals, which has attracted the attention of critics of notions of memory. Idith Zertal, for example, warns that memory that is exploited and manipulated can lead to hatred or, even worse, can justify aggression and prevent true, genuine remembering.⁸ Similarly, Pierre Nora sees a danger in memory's becoming, instead of a liberating and emancipating force, an instrument of exclusion and an impulse for war.⁹ In turn, Jay Winter suggests that a distinction should be made between commemorative projects which are often "created far from the center of political power" and "originated within civil society" and the appropriation "by groups in power who feel they have the right and the need to tell us through commemoration how to remember the past."¹⁰ This distinction seems to be particularly crucial in a country like Poland where many groups that were silenced or discriminated against under communist rule are still trying to recover their past. This article intends to test the notion of the appropriation of local commemorative projects by groups in power by analyzing the case of Jedwabne and the sixtieth anniversary of the massacre.

THE MEMORY THAT MUST BE CLEANSED

Jedwabne is a small town in northeastern Poland, some nineteen kilometers from the city of Łomża. The town, which has less than 2,000 inhabitants, cannot be viewed as a success story of postcommunist economic transformation. According to official statistics, unemployment for 2000 reached

14 percent, but the more accurate figure has been estimated to be much higher, about 40 percent.¹¹ Before the fall of communism people found employment in a knitting factory, a farming cooperative and a huge textile plant in Łomża, which employed 3,500 people. However, none of these places survived the switch to a market economy. Even if some of Jedwabne's citizens were prepared to uproot themselves and move to more prosperous parts of Poland, they would be unable to sell their properties. Krzysztof Godlewski, the mayor of Jedwabne at the time of the Jedwabne debate, commented: "Probably people feel they are worse off than before 1989. Areas of poverty are getting bigger."¹²

The majority of today's inhabitants are people who were born in Jedwabne, or moved there, after World War II, and their knowledge of the town's history is limited. Many would find it difficult to imagine that before the war half of the town's inhabitants were Jews. Sixty years later there is only one Jewish woman (a convert to Catholicism) living in the town, and the only remnant of the once vibrant Jewish community is an old, ruined cemetery and a stone monument commemorating the murder of 1,600 Jedwabne Jews in 1941. There also remain former Jewish properties, but only the original inhabitants of the town and their families would be able to identify them.

On 23 June 1941 the Wehrmacht entered Jedwabne, replacing Soviet forces that had occupied eastern Poland for the previous twenty-one months. A few weeks later, on 10 July, the Jewish inhabitants of the town were rounded up and burned alive in a barn. The massacre was attributed to the Nazis and the number of victims was estimated at 1,600. But this version of the events was questioned by one of the survivors, Szmul Wasersztajn. He testified before the Jewish Historical Commission in Białystok in 1945 that it was Poles who, on the orders of the Germans, had herded Jedwabne's Jews into a barn and burned them alive. In a subsequent trial by the communist authorities in 1949, twenty-two local residents were charged with collaboration in the crime, and eventually eleven were sentenced. Over a decade later, local ex-servicemen from the Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy (ZBoWiD) commissioned a memorial stone commemorating the massacre with an inscription that read: "The site of torment of Jewish people. The Gestapo and the Nazi police burnt alive 1,600 Jews on 10 July 1941."

Although almost absent from Poland's official historical record, the massacre remained very much alive in local oral tradition and among Jewish survivors from the region. In 1966 the bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute published an article about the extermination of Jews in the Białystok region, which indirectly suggested that the local population was involved in the Jedwabne killings. A year later, the regional Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes started a new investigation but once again concluded that the Nazis had burned the Jews. In 1980 a memorial book of Jedwabne Jews was published in Jerusalem and New York: it included eyewitness testimonies, which held Polish neighbors responsible for the massacre. Nor was the incident forgotten in Poland. In 1988, a periodical entitled *Kontakty* published a report on Jedwabne that tried to establish, through conversations with elderly inhabitants of the town, what had actually happened on 10 July 1941. A decade later, in 1998, the filmmaker Agnieszka Arnold visited Jedwabne and interviewed people who remembered the tragedy. In a documentary about Polish-Jewish relations entitled "Where is My Older Brother Cain?" shown on the main channel of Polish state television a year later, Arnold included fragments of Wąsersztajn's testimony from 1945. Raw footage for this documentary was seen by Jan Tomasz Gross and inspired him to take Wąsersztajn's testimony as a starting point for a book on the massacre of Jedwabne's Jews.¹³ Gross's book *Neighbors*, published in May 2000, concluded that "the 1,600 Jedwabne Jews were killed neither by the NKVD, nor by the Nazis, nor by the Stalinist secret police. Instead, as we now know beyond reasonable doubt, and as Jedwabne citizens knew all along, it was their neighbors who killed them."¹⁴

In the same month that the book was published, an article by Andrzej Kaczyński appeared in a national daily newspaper, in which he confessed that he too had gone to Jedwabne and found people who confirmed that Poles had murdered the Jedwabne Jews.¹⁵ However, Kaczyński went on to place the murders in a broader context by referring to historical research that showed how German Nazis had deliberately provoked the local population in eastern Poland into performing acts of violence against Jews, and he noted the widespread belief amongst Poles during the Soviet occupation that Jews had sided with the occupier and were behind the denunciation of Poles to the NKVD. Kaczyński argued that it would be difficult to establish a version of events that would be acceptable to both

sides, but remained optimistic. Hoping for reconciliation between the Poles and Jews, he listed all the positive developments in Polish–Jewish relations that had recently occurred in Jedwabne and the surrounding areas: (1) The local bishop from the dioceses of Łomża had recited a propitiatory mass at the site of the Jewish massacre in Jedwabne; (2) in Wąsosz (a village near Jedwabne where the Polish population had also been implicated in the killing of Jews) a Polish-Jewish Committee had erected a monument commemorating the massacre of the Jews; and (3) a debate had begun in a number of local parishes, where Poles had been involved in discrimination against or extermination of Jews during the war, on how to examine the past and how to apologize for it.

Kaczyński's article was followed by an interview he had conducted with a historian from a nearby University, Adam Dobroński, who confirmed this "reconciliatory" trend. In his opinion, the reconciliation process—although still very fragile—could be successful, especially in places where contacts existed between representatives of the local population, such as local historians, and Jewish communities living abroad but originating from the region. Such interaction could result in various kinds of commemorative work, such as establishing a museum dedicated to the memory of the local Jews, erecting memorial stones, preserving traces of Jewish life, preparing publications and organizing educational visits. Dobroński explained that some of these commemorative projects had already been successfully undertaken. Tykocin, for example, a town situated near Jedwabne, now had a museum that was visited regularly by Jews from abroad, despite the fact that for a long time the place had been associated (by Jewish sources) with the worst atrocities committed against Jews by Poles in the Białystok region. Dobroński concluded that "when there are contacts it is possible to arrive at a common version of the past, verified and historically reliable."¹⁶

But was such a scenario possible in Jedwabne? Could Jedwabne have its own story of successful historical reconciliation? In another article, published two weeks later under the charged heading "Cleansing the Memory," Kaczyński argued that reconciliation in Jedwabne was possible, and he described a specific plan of action that had been agreed upon at a meeting on 8 May 2000 in Jedwabne attended by representatives of the local council, the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations and the cabinet of the Polish government. The program consisted of four directives: (1)

to establish the site where the remains of the victims of the massacre were buried and to designate this area as cemetery grounds; (2) to determine the true version of the massacre, that is, to uncover the reasons behind the killing, to name perpetrators and victims and to establish the behavior of witnesses; (3) to rectify all half-truths and lies that had been circulated in past years; and (4) to commemorate the tragic end of the Jewish community in Jedwabne and its several hundred years of history in such a way as to bring about reconciliation between the two communities and avoid dividing them further. At the meeting several other specific proposals were discussed. It was agreed that the inscription on the memorial stone commemorating the massacre should be replaced with one representing the true version of events. Piotr Zandberg of the Union of Jewish Religious Congregations announced that the Union would finance a memorial stone that would be dedicated to the Poles who had saved Jewish lives in Jedwabne and surrounding areas. An initiative to plant trees in Jedwabne in memory of the Jewish inhabitants of the town and to commemorate Polish rescuers was also considered, as well as a plan to launch an educational program about Jedwabne Jews, their culture, customs and religion, which was to involve the entire community: educational authorities, parents' committees in schools, and even the local parish.¹⁷

More consultations followed, involving Jedwabne's mayor, the town's citizens, representatives of the Jewish community from Warsaw and Catholic Church representatives in both Jedwabne and Łomża.¹⁸ In summer 2000 everything appeared to be on the right track. Five days after the May meeting, Father Orłowski, the Jedwabne parish priest, prayed with his parishioners for those who had lost their lives during the war because of the "uncontrolled greed of their neighbors." On the fifty-ninth anniversary of the massacre the Jedwabne mayor, Krzysztof Godlewski, and the chairman of the town council, Stanisław Michałowski, laid a wreath at the site where the Jedwabne Jews had been burnt, bearing the inscription: "To the murdered inhabitants of Jedwabne of Jewish nationality, in memory and as a warning—[from] society"¹⁹ A number of Jedwabne's inhabitants laid flowers and lit candles around the site where the barn had been. On 1 September 2000 the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) began an investigation into the massacre. Its president, Leon Kieres, announced that any perpetrators found still alive and liable for prosecution would be brought to trial.

The plan to cleanse Polish-Jewish memory was clearly in place; the mayor supported it, as did the Jewish community in Warsaw and representatives of the Polish government. However, ultimately, this project proved unsuccessful. Inhabitants of Jedwabne were absent from the sixtieth-anniversary commemorations on 10 July 2001, and the mayor attended the ceremony against the wishes of Jedwabne councilors who had voted against his representing the town. What, then, were the reasons for this failure to “cleanse” the memory of the massacre?

THE VIRTUAL AND THE REAL JEDWABNE

The memory work could not succeed in Jedwabne for a number of reasons.²⁰ The first factor paralyzing the memory project was, ironically, the national debate itself. The public reexamination of the massacre, which gained momentum after November 2000—when the leading daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* published the first discussion on Jedwabne²¹—indeed had a positive impact on a general reassessment of Poland’s treatment of its minorities and Polish-Jewish relations. It facilitated the rethinking of national values and encouraged the search for those fundamentals of Polish cultural and historical tradition that would help Poland find its way into the European Union. However, what was constructive for the Poles’ exploration of themselves was simultaneously damaging for the complicated work taking place in Jedwabne. First, once Gross’s *Neighbors* became available in Jedwabne names were attached to those who had been involved in the massacre. Suddenly, the town’s inhabitants could read for themselves in black and white which families had “Jewish blood on their hands” and, in some cases, experience all the consequences of finding relatives amongst those mentioned by Gross. Marta Kurkowska-Budzan, a historian from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, herself born in Jedwabne, gave a moving account of the town’s encounter with *Neighbors* and with the subsequent media debate. She writes:

Jedwabiniacy—that is how the residents of this town are called in the area—read articles in which intellectuals, scholars, and journalists speak of the murder in Jedwabne operating with the terms “the Sielawa Barn,” “the Laudański brothers,” and “the market square

in Jedwabne.” For the discussants these are building blocks in an academic, multidimensional—spatial and temporal—puzzle all of which comprise nonmaterial elements. For the Jedwabnians, “the Laudański brothers” mean personalities, emotions, a complicated net of genealogical connections and social relationships. Each new, and even the most random and abstract interpretational context in which “the Laudański brothers” appears on the pages of nationwide periodicals has, in the real Jedwabne, a somewhat different meaning. Here in Jedwabne it is read literally and has immediate effects on the current social scene.²²

The media “hunt” for perpetrators and witnesses was relentless. Suddenly, the small town in northeastern Poland, in a region considered as one of the least developed in the country, turned into a center of attention for national news. Journalists, television crews and radio reporters became a frequent sight for several months prior to the official commemorations on 10 July 2001. The more the national highbrow press appealed for feelings of guilt and collective responsibility, the more the inhabitants of Jedwabne felt isolated from Polish society. It was because of them that the Poles had to feel ashamed. Anna Bikont, a journalist from *Gazeta Wyborcza* and a frequent visitor to Jedwabne, reported in March 2001 that the atmosphere in the town had changed drastically as the debate progressed. People felt unfairly judged, especially those who had been born in Jedwabne or who had moved there after the war. There were feelings of anger, embarrassment, nervousness and abandonment. Regional and national news was followed closely and newspapers were read carefully as people tried to understand the nationwide “verdict” on the town. This was a confusing task since—while the IPN was conducting its investigation and Polish historians debated Gross’s book—the verdict on the town veered from positive to negative. Bikont also realized that people she had spoken to a few months earlier had begun to remember the events differently. The memory of the massacre, preserved in Jedwabne through two generations, had started to change, and the presence of the Germans at the massacre had begun to be central to people’s recollection of events. Some of the witnesses were no longer prepared to rely on their own memory but began to depend on the knowledge of “experts,” who could help to defend the town.²³

The judgmental approach adopted by the press to the Jedwabne response to *Neighbors* had further negative effects on the *memory work* that was being attempted in the town. Imperceptibly, the media gradually constructed a bipolar picture of Jedwabne. On the one hand were the positive personalities of the mayor and the chairman of the town council and on the other were those who actively opposed Wasersztajn's testimony, essentially the parish priest and his entourage, two or three councilors and some of the relatives of those implicated in the murder. Once their differences had been debated and judged in public it became very difficult for the mayor to encourage any cooperation and backing for his vision of memory work.²⁴ He ceased to be trusted and began to be seen as siding with deceitful outsiders. Moreover, over time all the inhabitants of Jedwabne were depicted by the press as part of the camp of "deniers," and the views of a few extremists in the town were taken to be the views of all Jedwabnians. When the infamous Komitet Obrony Dobrego Imienia Miasta (Committee for the Defense of the Good Name of Jedwabne) was established, the national and the international press reported that Jedwabne's inhabitants had organized themselves in order to oppose the truth discovered by Gross. In actual fact the committee was made up of only a handful of "activists" and did not survive for very long.

The media debate had simultaneously isolated Jedwabne's citizens from the rest of the population and Jedwabne's mayor from his local electors, which made it almost impossible to find the positive community spirit needed for reworking the past.

IN DEFENSE OF THE TOWN'S GOOD NAME

In 2001 the word "Jedwabne" no longer signified the name of a specific town but was synonymous with the murder of Jews by Poles; and the "illness" of Homo Jedwabicus was declared a major obstacle in Polish attempts to join the Europe of "free and progressive" countries.²⁵ Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that "advocates" of the town's good name often managed to win the trust of Jedwabne residents. These advocates came from different quarters of Polish society but broadly gathered around the far right press (*Tygodnik Głos, Nasza Polska, Myśl Polska, Nasz Dziennik*). Once they had seriously assumed the role of defenders of

Jedwabne, disinformation and confusion about what had really happened on 10 July 1941 spread and intensified daily. In their anti-Gross campaign, the far right media employed controversial historians who “rectified” his alleged inaccuracies and factual errors in detailed articles (such as a series of articles by Professor Jerzy Robert Nowak, entitled “One Hundred Lies of Gross,” which ran for weeks).²⁶ Simultaneously, the far right press exploited and quoted out of context articles questioning some aspects of Gross’s book that had been published by reputable historians in major national dailies or weeklies. It also brought into the debate scores of witnesses testifying to the large number of German troops in the town on 10 July 1941 and confirming Jewish cooperation with the NKVD during the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland. Moreover, the far right press undermined the findings of the Institute of National Remembrance and presented the conclusions made by the investigation as unproven, exaggerated and based on statements by only a few select witnesses, incomplete exhumation of the mass grave and a careless examination of German archives. Finally, as well as creating an atmosphere of doubt and disinformation, these media also gave endorsement to people who often hardly deserved the community’s respect (one of the members of the Committee for the Defense of the Good Name of Jedwabne, for example, had been convicted of rape and sentenced to ten years in prison).²⁷

Of course, the far right press was not the only defender of Jedwabne’s good name. As the national debate expanded into practically every sphere of public life, the small town in northeastern Poland attracted the most notorious anti-Semites of the 1990s. Leszek Bubel (the leader of the Society against Anti-Polonism) and Kazimierz Świtoń (the defender of the crosses in the Auschwitz controversy)²⁸ found this a perfect opportunity for regaining public attention. Their work included attempts to initiate legal proceedings against Jan Gross for allegedly insulting the Polish nation and the Polish Republic, and the distribution of anti-Semitic newspapers and leaflets “correcting” Gross’s “lies.” Leszek Bubel, a determined and relentless individual, was active in the town at each crucial stage of the commemorative work. He attended meetings of the town’s council instigating conflicts between the mayor and some of the councilors.²⁹ Bubel’s most spectacular attempt to disrupt the sixtieth-anniversary commemorations was his plan to buy a plot of land next to the site where Jews had been murdered, which regional authorities wanted to purchase for the future

cemetery since it partly bordered on the mass grave. Bubel offered the owner three times the sum that the authorities were prepared to pay. The farmer who owned the land was ready to accept Bubel's offer and only the threat of the state's expropriation of the land forced him to change his mind.³⁰

The representatives of the Catholic Church in both Jedwabne and Łomża gave further support to those who refuted Gross's work. The Jedwabne parish priest, Father Orłowski, became a central figure in mounting opposition against Gross's findings. He testified on several occasions that eyewitnesses had told him that it was the Germans who had murdered the Jedwabne Jews. He regularly commented disapprovingly in the press on the president's plan for an apology, the incomplete exhumation of the mass grave and consultations on an inscription for the new monument. His views reflected the old official version of the events and he continually refused to acknowledge the findings of the IPN's investigation.

Although more conciliatory, a local bishop from the Dioceses of Łomża, Stanisław Stefanek, who came to Jedwabne on 11 March 2001 at the climax of the national debate, also did not help the cause of reconciliation. Only a few days earlier President Kwaśniewski had announced his intention of apologizing for the murder, Polish Primate Cardinal Józef Glemp had stated that the Polish involvement was "incontestable" and Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek had called for a proper honoring of the memory of the victims. It was also a week after the establishment of the Committee for the Defense of the Good Name of Jedwabne, and Jedwabnians expected the bishop's sermon to indicate the direction that the town should take in the months preceding the sixtieth anniversary of the massacre. Moreover, the town's mayor hoped for words of support for his memory work.³¹ Bishop Stefanek, however, gave a very ambiguous sermon. He appealed to the town's citizens to reckon with any feelings of hate or revenge that they might have and expressed his full support for the honoring of the memory of Jedwabne Jews with a proper cemetery. He also called for the establishment of programs that would teach respect toward other people and promote "living in truth." But at the same time, he linked Gross's *Neighbors* to Jewish propaganda aimed at extorting financial compensation from Poland. He also suggested that the Jedwabne debate was part of a huge international campaign intent on reviving hatred and mistrust between Poles and Jews.³²

It is evident that the representatives of the Catholic Church in both Jedwabne and Łomża did not support the community's re-remembering of the massacre of Jedwabne Jews. But a question should be asked whether the local Church could have been enlisted in reconciliation work. We know that back in summer 2000 both the parish priest and the bishop had recited prayers for the victims of the massacre. Jan Gross must have also been more optimistic about the local Catholic Church's response since in the "Postscript" to the English version of *Neighbors* (published in April 2001) he wrote that a consensus on a cemetery and a new inscription reflecting the truth of events had been achieved with, among others, Catholic Church representatives from Jedwabne and Łomża.³³

THE INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE (IPN)

Even if not always believed, those who defended Jedwabne's good name managed to create an atmosphere of doubt and confusion, especially among those citizens who had not experienced World War II. Many residents found an explanation for the massacre in the alleged widespread Jewish collaboration with the Soviets or deflated the significance of the event by blaming the atrocities on a group of "bandits" who had followed orders given by the Germans.

Naturally, the town's coming to terms with the past could have been more successful if Gross's version of events had been uncontested, backed by reputable Polish historians and most importantly supported by the IPN. Mayor Godlewski, at the start of the debate (that is back in summer 2000), insisted that "the truth should be established, [the truth] which we would all hold to: we the Jedwabnians, and all Poles and Jews."³⁴ It was the responsibility of the IPN to establish what had happened on 10 July 1941 in Jedwabne and to give the mayor the foundations (a completed investigation) on which to build the reconciliation project. But this did not happen. The Polish political authorities made decisions regarding the sixtieth-anniversary commemorations of the massacre independently of the IPN's investigation. Of course, the investigation had been supposed to be completed before the sixtieth anniversary, but in March 2001 the prosecutor in charge, Radosław Ignatiew declared that it would be impossible to complete all procedures before 10 July 2001. However, this

announcement did not postpone the president's apology or the official commemorations.

Indeed, it could be argued that the IPN's investigation, like the national debate on the massacre, had a negative impact on the memory project in Jedwabne. However, it was not the investigation itself that was at fault but the way in which the IPN's work was reported in the media. Although the investigation—due to public and political pressure—was conducted under constant media surveillance, the IPN failed to work out an effective public relations strategy to prevent misinterpretations of its findings. At each crucial phase of the investigation there was a problem with communication. Although the "facts" were given to the public there was no proper indication of how they should be interpreted, and the influx of "raw" information created uncertainty over whether Jedwabne's inhabitants should apologize for the murder and what the inscription should be on the memorial stone.

Let us consider the major leads of the investigation and their impact on the Poles' and the Jedwabne inhabitants' perception of events in the town in 1941. The following stages in the investigation are relevant to our analysis: (1) reports on findings in German archives; (2) reports on findings in Polish archives; (3) reports on findings with regards to the number of Jews living in Jedwabne during the war; and (4) partial exhumation of the mass grave.

The principal task of the IPN's investigation was to establish how many Germans had been present in Jedwabne on 10 July 1941 and the role they had played in the massacre. Gross maintained that it was difficult to establish who had proposed to kill the Jews and whether the impetus had come from the Germans or the Poles, but he concluded: "the overall undisputed bosses over life and death in Jedwabne were the Germans." Having said that, Gross claimed that "the Germans' direct participation in the mass murder of Jews in Jedwabne ... was limited, pretty much, to their taking pictures."³⁵ It was the Polish population of the town that had actually murdered their Jewish neighbors. This version of the massacre was questioned by some Polish historians who maintained that both Germans and Poles had been directly involved in the killing. Hoping to verify one of these versions, the IPN sent Professor Edmund Dymitrów to Ludwigsburg in Baden-Wirtenberg to examine the German archives. His enquiry resulted in uncovering documents relating to an investigation

into the murder in Jedwabne that had taken place in Germany in 1968. A few officers of the SS, the Gendarmerie, the police and their subordinates had been accused of perpetrating crimes in Jedwabne and several other locations in the surrounding area. However, the investigation had been suspended because there was not sufficient evidence of guilt. As could be expected, the Polish media reported this discovery extensively.³⁶ The far right press immediately used this news as proof that Germans were more implicated in the massacre than Gross had suggested. Curiously, the IPN, although confirming the findings, did not attempt to explain whether it perceived the 1968 German investigation as an important development in their own investigation. A situation thus arose wherein the public could monitor the work of the IPN historians but was not in a position to assess the significance of the different leads revealed by the investigation.

Around the same time another discovery caused some people to doubt the accuracy of Gross's findings. Daria Nałęcz, the director of the National Archives, presented depositions of witnesses and records of a Civil Court trial that had taken place in 1949 in Łomża in order to establish the death of persons whose heirs were claiming their inheritance.³⁷ The documents of the trial revealed that witnesses had held German functionaries and gendarmes responsible for the Jedwabne massacre. The IPN commented that the depositions of witnesses were often inaccurate, for example giving a wrong date for the massacre, but confirmed that they would be used as a comparison against other witness statements. What the comparison revealed, however, was never made public, as the debate moved on and, with each new week, the media were busy reporting new developments.

The number of victims of the massacre was another crucial part of the investigation. The prevalent opinion of Polish historians was that the figure of 1,600 was improbably high. Gross explained that his estimation was based on Wasersztajn's testimony, the first memorial's inscription, the memorial book of the Jedwabne Jews and the 1949 trial, which had cited a similar figure. Moreover, according to the General Census of 1931, there had been 2,167 inhabitants in Jedwabne, of whom 60 percent had identified themselves as Jews.³⁸ Therefore, Gross reasoned, if fewer than 1,600 Jews were murdered on 10 July 1941 then where had the rest of Jedwabne's Jews disappeared to?³⁹ But on 28 March 2001 Jan Jerzy Milewski, a historian of the Białystok Division of the IPN, brought a 1940

NKVD document from the Archive in Grodno showing that in 1940 there had been 562 Jews in Jedwabne. Moreover, Marek Kietliński, a director of the National Archives in Białystok, confirmed that judging by the records of property insurance against fire, which at that time was obligatory, the figure given by Milewski seemed to be correct. These findings were widely reported by the media,⁴⁰ but the Institute of National Remembrance has never clearly commented to what degree they were significant for determining how many Jews were murdered in Jedwabne. Actually, the findings made news only in April and later disappeared from the agenda leaving it open to speculation as to whether the IPN was impartial in its investigations.

There was, of course, another discovery, which brought the number of victims again to the forefront of the debate: the partial exhumation of the mass grave. It took place at the beginning of June 2001 but could not be completed because of protests by Jewish groups against disturbing the remains. The experts conducting the exhumation estimated the number of victims at between 300 and 400. They also found approximately 100 German ammunition shells at the site. At that time, it was believed that this finding confirmed that German troops had been involved in the killing. We now know that bullets found during the exhumation came either from weapons that had not been in use until 1942 or from older rifles not used by Germans in World War II. But this was only established by the IPN in December 2001, almost six months after the official commemorations. When, in June 2001, the IPN gave a report on the exhumation, it simply stated that 89 ammunition shells had been found and appeared to be of a type used by German troops during the war, suggesting that soldiers may have fired at Jews trying to flee the burning barn. The report also stated that further investigation into the bullets was necessary in order to establish their origin with certainty, but the IPN failed to make clear that the outcome of the partial exhumation could not prove anything—before careful analysis of the excavated material was completed—other than the existence of a mass grave of Jedwabne Jews.

In summer 2000 Mayor Godlewski believed that only after the official investigation was finished and it was confirmed that Poles had taken part in the killing voluntarily should the inscription on the old memorial stone be changed.⁴¹ Otherwise, he maintained, the monument would divide rather than reconcile both communities. But this did not happen.

The inscription was changed more than a year before the investigation was closed because the new monument had to be ready for the official commemorations on 10 July 2001. It was practically impossible to find a consensus on the new inscription. When the consultation began in Jedwabne in May 2001 both communities were deeply divided over the wording for the memorial stone. The descendants and relatives of the murdered Jews demanded that the inscription should read: "The Jewish citizens of Jedwabne and surrounding villages were murdered and burned alive by their Polish neighbors."⁴² At the same time, some of Jedwabne's inhabitants wanted to maintain the old inscription, which blamed the massacre entirely on the Germans. Eventually a compromise was reached and the new plaque did not specify who had perpetrated the massacre. But this compromise did not satisfy those sections of both communities who most needed to resolve their grievances. Father Orłowski and the relatives of Poles implicated in the murder did not accept the new monument, and Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, boycotted the ceremony on 10 July 2001 in protest over the plaque. The descendants and relatives of victims also expressed their deep regret over the choice of inscription.

But could the inhabitants of Jedwabne have accepted in 2001 a memorial stone that would blame only Poles for the massacre? Each new discovery in the IPN's investigation, which was carefully followed by the inhabitants of Jedwabne, was read as a verdict in the trial of the town. The investigation's findings, often ambiguous and open to interpretation, were deciphered in only one way—as exculpatory factors. For people whose relatives were accused of being savage murderers any factors that could somehow scale down the massacre (by finding, for example, that there were fewer victims than previously thought) were valuable. Hence, it was inevitable that findings that had been presented as proof of the involvement of Germans in the killing, when later judged by historians as misleading, would not be rectified in the minds of Jedwabne's population. This tendency was especially true after the IPN's investigation started to be interpreted for the population of Jedwabne by its defenders: the far right press and the "internal" camp of defenders headed by the parish priest.

Perhaps if the IPN's investigation had been conducted in a less charged atmosphere and less pressure had been exerted on its historians to produce speedy conclusions and verdicts, the people of Jedwabne would

have been able to rely on the IPN for guidelines and assistance in their memory project. If the official commemorations had been delayed until the IPN's investigation was completed, the Jedwabnians could have taken a greater part in the memorial ceremony. But in 2001 the "cleansing" of memory of Jedwabne's inhabitants was only a secondary constituent of a much larger task faced by the Polish political and intellectual establishment. Since the Jedwabne massacre was part of Polish-Jewish relations during World War II, the imminent publication of Gross's *Neighbors* in the United States and Western Europe meant that the reexamination of the massacre would acquire a new dimension. Poland's image abroad and the so-called Jewish question, so frequently used in Poland's internal politics, would become the dominant factors in the country's response to the Jedwabne massacre.

JEDWABNE IN NATIONAL POLITICS

Mayor Godlewski admitted a year after the commemorations:

Immediately after President Kwaśniewski's declaration regarding an apology a cynical exploitation of the memory of the Jedwabnian martyrs began.... For me the most important [thing] was not to let myself be confused by these politics, whether local or national. I would be lying if I were to say that there were no attempts made to use me in these games.⁴³

President Kwaśniewski announced his plans to apologize for the Jedwabne massacre, quite unexpectedly, in an interview for the Israeli newspaper *Yedi'ot Aharonot* on 2 March 2001. The announcement took Jedwabne's population by surprise as nobody had informed them of his decision, and many people in the town were still not convinced whether Polish involvement in the murders went beyond "a group of bandits and criminals." Two days after the president's announcement local active members of the camp of defenders of the Poles set up the Committee for the Defense of the Good Name of Jedwabne. In the first confusion and anger felt in Jedwabne over the president's intention to apologize, even the mayor backed the committee and became its chairman. But within a few days Godlewski walked out when he realized that the committee was being

used to oppose the president by local extremists and right-wing politicians who absolutely refused to rethink the official version of the massacre.⁴⁴ From this time forth, national politics started to shape and control the Jedwabne debate.

This exploitation of the Jedwabne controversy by the Polish political establishment and power groups had two aspects. First, the “cleansing” of the memory of Jedwabne was employed to address the establishment’s concerns and views regarding Poland’s immediate future in Europe. Many groups holding power in Poland were concerned that a lack of an immediate official response to the Jedwabne massacre might only reinforce the accusations against Poland as a nation of inveterate anti-Semites who, despite their claims to democracy and freedom, were not prepared to openly examine their country’s response to the Nazi occupation. Second, the Jedwabne massacre was used as a rallying point for parties and alliances before the forthcoming parliamentary elections in September 2001 and exploited for point scoring over ideological opponents. The Jedwabne controversy offered some politicians the chance to voice dissatisfaction with recent developments in post-1989 Poland and question Polish aspirations to join the European Union. Others used the Jedwabne massacre as an opportunity to demonstrate their opposition to postcommunist President Kwaśniewski and the eagerness of his postcommunist camp to utilize Jedwabne in its fight for gaining credibility and support from the liberal, progressive part of Polish society. As could be expected, these political exploitations of the massacre had an immediate impact on the memory project in Jedwabne itself. The political dimension of commemorations became a central factor in the debate, generating several negative effects and ultimately preventing genuine apology. The following list should illustrate the extent of the damage caused by political exploitations of the collective remembrance in Jedwabne:

1. Far right politicians, especially local ones, became active in the debate. The project dedicated to defending Jedwabne’s good name gained influential supporters.
2. The IPN’s investigation became politicized, especially when its president, Leon Kieres, became active in defending Poland’s image abroad and was forced to take a clear position on the massacre before the investigation was completed.

3. The decision on the new memorial's inscription was made before the IPN's investigation was completed.
4. Acceptance of Gross's findings or denial of Polish responsibility for the massacre began to indicate political affiliation rather than individual assessment of the facts. Supporters of the right or center-right felt uncomfortable backing the postcommunists' official position on Jedwabne (the need for apology) even if they personally agreed with it.
5. The Catholic Church's response to Jedwabne diverged from that of the state. The Primate made clear from the beginning that his decision not to attend the commemorations in Jedwabne derived from his reluctance to be involved in any political maneuvering.
6. No political consensus was reached on the issue of the president's apology and the memorial ceremony. Politicians of the right and the center-right (except for the Union of Freedom) were absent from the commemorations in Jedwabne. The (center-right) prime minister sponsored a separate commemoration in Warsaw, which in a sense undermined the ceremony in Jedwabne attended by the president.

As we see, the political exploitation of the Jedwabne massacre contaminated the process of remembering. Those who negated the voluntary involvement of the Polish population in the killing found powerful allies, whilst others, who preferred to stay neutral on the question of the apology, found "noble" excuses for not taking part in commemorations as ambiguity and "double-talk" became the chief characteristics of preparations for the official ceremony. During the reexamination of the massacre, Jedwabnians needed time to reflect and to find their own means for dealing with the past. The community could not recover its "own" true memory and commemorate it because all the outside factors and developments overwhelmed their collective attempt to remember. Mayor Godlewski, who had been trying hard for several months to accomplish the memory project (agreed upon in May 2000), commented with sadness on the failure of remembrance within the town:

Ultimately, it turned out that in reality the most important thing was that the commemoration took place.... Surely, if we had organized it ourselves, as a community, that would have been a completely daring

task, but to be accomplished, it would have been on a much smaller scale, it would not have had such implications, but we would certainly have appreciated far more the importance of this commemoration. But [as it happened] Jedwabnians themselves were the least aware of it [the commemoration].⁴⁵

COLLECTIVE RECKONING

The current questioning of what happened in Jedwabne in 1941 started with autobiographical memories. First came the renewed reading of Wasersztajn's testimony, followed by conversations that Agnieszka Arnold, Jan Gross, Andrzej Kaczyński, Anna Bikont and other journalists conducted with the inhabitants of Jedwabne. From these private memories it emerged that Poles from Jedwabne had voluntarily massacred their Jewish neighbors. Alongside these memories existed the publicly sanctioned official version of the events. That version was represented in the memorial stone with an inscription blaming the Germans for the massacre and reinforced by the conclusions of Polish investigations of the 1960s.

However, this account does not adequately depict all the ways in which the massacre was remembered in Jedwabne. Alongside the autobiographical and official recollecting of what had happened was another "expression" of remembering. The Jedwabnian historian, Marta Kurkowska-Budzan, has described instances of spontaneous communal commemoration of the tragedy in Jedwabne, associated with two permanent sites of memory. She recounts the story of a Jewish woman who was killed in July 1941 whilst holding a child. Many years after the war, in the exact location where the woman and child had died, "the weeds between the cobblestones ... grew in the shape of a cross," compelling people from Jedwabne and its surroundings to gather at the place "in propitiatory prayer." The second site is a pond where a Jewish man was drowned and where, soon after, a "miracle happened." According to the story, which is continually retold in Jedwabne, when the Jew's killers pulled the man's corpse out of the water to rob him (assuming that he would be wearing jewelry) the Jew was completely naked. Since then all those who have tried to dive into the pond to find Jewish gold "met with divine punishment—they all drowned."⁴⁶

These two memory sites, with their mythologized narratives of events, enabled the community to express collectively what could only be acknowledged privately. By locating the tragedy in the Christian narrative tradition of the sinful man and punishment by God, the Jedwabnians could work through the tragedy and the two sites could accommodate the community's feelings of guilt and contrition. This is why, as Kurkowska-Budzan writes, the stone memorial itself is somehow irrelevant to the local inhabitants since "for Jedwabnians the monument to the local tragedy is the pond itself or the two square meters of the market square where 'miracles' have taken place."⁴⁷

These instances of genuine communal recollecting described by Kurkowska-Budzan had been taking place in Jedwabne long before Gross's book was published. But, it is not clear how relevant such mythologized remembering is to younger generations of Jedwabnians, who neither feel personally responsible for the crime nor identify closely with Polish rural folk traditions and beliefs. Many present-day inhabitants of Jedwabne appear to have accepted the official version of events and have not fully comprehended the other forms of recollection. This explains why it was so difficult for the younger generations of Jedwabne to accept Gross's book. Undoubtedly, contemporary acts of remembering need to be rethought in order to become relevant to all inhabitants of the town and, most importantly, should involve the other community implicated in the massacre—the descendants and relatives of the Jewish victims.

In the summer of 2000 an opportunity to examine the remembrance of the past arose. A memory project was set up and a group of Jedwabnians was prepared to work on it. It was deemed possible to achieve a genuine re-remembering of the tragic events because the project was devoid of the generalizations that are endemic to debates and projects dedicated to cleansing the memory of Polish–Jewish relations. Jedwabne constituted a specific place with a particular memory that could be cleansed. Underpinning the project was a private, and still disturbing, memory (both Polish and Jewish), which needed public expression. The past had to be remembered collectively—not for any abstract or political reasons but to mourn the victims and to unburden the collective conscience.

The memory project in Jedwabne bore a clear affinity with what Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan have termed "collective remembrance" understood as "an activity of individuals coming together in public to

recall the past.” Winter and Sivan emphasize the significance of the effort and action undertaken to produce commemorative artifacts or ceremonies and argue that only the action itself is the real “collective remembrance.”⁴⁸ Thus, in Jedwabne, the action of coming together to remember lay at the root of the process of remembrance. A specific action was planned (for example, a new monument, a cemetery, an educational program) and there was a will to act upon it but, ultimately, the collective remembrance was unsuccessful. This happened for several reasons. First, the national debate and the extensive media presence in the town interrupted the memory project in Jedwabne and set the town’s inhabitants against the mayor and other individuals prepared to remember through action. Second, appropriation of the debate by internal politics led to the proliferation of defenders of the town’s good name who stirred up emotions in Jedwabne and disseminated disinformation and confusion about the historical facts of World War II. Finally, subordination of the commemorative celebrations to Poland’s reason of state—Poland’s image abroad—caused disregard for the investigative process and instigated an atmosphere of doubt regarding the impartiality of the Institute of National Remembrance and its president.

Of course, even without these outside negative factors the memory project could still have ended in failure. Winter and Sivan, when analyzing collective remembrance, note that a distortion of remembering is endemic not only to “state-produced commemoration” since “small groups do not have a more balanced view.” Even a small group adapts its memory and “highlights elements close to its own traumatized members.”⁴⁹ But in Jedwabne there was a chance for a joint, Polish and Jewish, memory project. Through a joint negotiation of the past a more balanced and more mutually acceptable collective remembrance might have taken place that would have satisfied both communities.

The case of the unsuccessful memory project in Jedwabne reveals the need for a more diverse approach to inquiry into local communities’ work of remembrance. Although the danger of exploitation and manipulation of commemorative projects by political groups is evident and requires further study, politically sanctioned and funded appropriation is only one of the factors impinging on communities’ attempts at remembering. The possible negative impact of media interest and interference in memory projects should not be underestimated. Similarly, insensitive attempts

made by intellectual elites to utilize local experiences and efforts to work through the communal past as a means of debating nationwide collective guilt and responsibility can disturb local remembrance and prevent a genuine rethinking of the past.

Equally, the case of Jedwabne reveals the need for cautious deliberation over calls for “ending the march of memory.”⁵⁰ It seems that Winter’s proposition that “collective memory is a term that should never be collapsed into a set of stories formed by or about the state,” requires careful consideration.⁵¹ Collective memory is first and foremost the memory of a group (ethnic, religious, territorial), which, if suppressed and left “unspoken,” can have a negative impact, not only on the group, but also on its relationship with the outside world. Therefore it is crucial to achieve the right balance between acknowledging the inherent dangers in exploitations of memory by politicians and also, at times, intellectual elites, and recognizing the need to encourage communal remembering and memory projects.

NOTES

1. See for example a number of articles dedicated to the Jedwabne massacre in *POLIN: Studies in Polish Jewry* 15 (2002) and 16 (2003); *Slavic Review* 61, no. 3 (fall 2002); *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 1 (137) (2002); *East European Politics and Society* 16, no. 1 (winter 2002); and *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 17, no. 1 (spring 2003).

2. Dariusz Stola, “Jedwabne: Revisiting the Evidence and Nature of the Crime. *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 17, no. 1 (spring 2003): 139–52; John Connelly, “Poles and Jews in the Second World War: The Revisions of Jan T. Gross,” *Contemporary European History* 11 no. 4 (Nov. 2002): 641–58; Wojciech Roszkowski, “After *Neighbors*: Seeking Universal Standards,” *Slavic Review* 61, no. 3 (fall 2002): 460–65.

3. William W. Hagen, “A ‘Potent, Devilish Mixture’ of Motives: Explanatory Strategy and Assignment of Meaning in Jan Gross’s *Neighbors*,” *Slavic Review* 61, no. 3 (fall 2002): 466–75; Ilya Prizel, “Jedwabne: Will the Right Question Be Raised?,” *East European Politics and Society* 16, no. 1 (winter 2002): 278–90.

4. Andrzej W. Tymowski, “Apologies for Jedwabne and Modernity,” *East European Politics and Society* 16, no. 1 (winter 2002): 291–306; Ewa Wolentarska-

Ochman, "Jedwabne and the Power Struggle in Poland," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 4, no. 2 (2003): 171–89.

5. Andrzej Kaczyński, "Oczyszczanie pamięci" (Cleansing the memory), *Rzeczpospolita*, 19 May 2000.

6. Maurice Halbwachs *La mémoire collective* (1950), published in English as *The Collective Memory*, trans. Frances J. Ditter, Jr., and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York, 1980); Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (1925), published in English as *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago, 1992); Maurice Halbwachs, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte* (1941; Paris, 1971). The conclusion to *La topographie* is translated in *On Collective Memory*.

7. Barry Schwartz, "The Reconstruction of Abraham Lincoln," in David Middleton and Derek Edwards, eds., *Collective Remembering* (London, 1990), 81–107.

8. Idith Zertal, "From the People's Hall to the Wailing Wall: A Study in Memory, Fear, and War," *Representations*, no. 69 (winter 2000): 98–126; see also Peter Novick, introduction to his *The Holocaust and Collective Memory* (London, 2001).

9. Pierre Nora, "Czas Pamięci" (The time of memory), paper delivered at a conference on "The Memory of the Century," held in Vienna, 2001, and published in *Res Publica Nowa*, no. 7 (July 2001): 37–43.

10. Jay Winter, "The Generation of Memory: Reflections on the 'Memory Boom' in Contemporary Historical Studies," *German Historical Institute Bulletin* 27 (fall 2000): 69–92.

11. Anna Bikont, "Proszę tu więcej nie przychodzić" (Please don't come here again), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 31 March–1 April 2001.

12. Ibid.

13. Jan Tomasz Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton, 2001), 21–22.

14. Ibid., 170.

15. Andrzej Kaczyński, "Całopalenie" (Burning alive), *Rzeczpospolita*, 5 May 2000.

16. Adam Dobroński interviewed by Andrzej Kaczyński, "Kontrowersje historyczne weryfikują się w dialogu" (Historical controversies are verified through dialogue), *Rzeczpospolita*, 5 May 2000.

17. Kaczyński, "Oczyszczanie pamięci."

18. See Gross, *Neighbors*, 172.

19. AKA, "Ku pamięci i przestrodze" (In memory and as a warning), *Rzeczpospolita*, 11 July 2000.

20. I borrow the term “memory work” from Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Neutralizing Memory: The Jew in Contemporary Poland* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1988).
21. Jacek Żakowski’s interview with Tomasz Szarota, “Diabelskie szczegóły” (Devilish details), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18–19 Nov. 2000.
22. Marta Kurkowska-Budzan, “Imaging Jedwabne: The Symbolic and the Real,” *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 1 (137) (2002): 114.
23. Bikont, “Proszę tu więcej.”
24. See for example Anna Bikont’s “My z Jedwabnego” (We from Jedwabne), which sharply contrasts the mayor and the chairman of the town council with those who refuted Gross’s work, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 10–11 March 2001.
25. “Homo Jedwabicus” was the title of an article by Jerzy Sławomir Mac in the Polish weekly *Wprost*, 22 July 2001. The term *Homo Jedwabicus* was supposed to classify those quarters of Polish society that are still anti-Semitic and intolerant.
26. Jerzy Robert Nowak, “100 kłamstw J. T. Grossa,” in the weekly *Niedziela*, 25 Feb.–29 April 2001.
27. Bikont, “Proszę tu więcej.”
28. In 1998 Kazimierz Świtoń initiated a cross-planting campaign outside the wall of the Auschwitz I main camp to protest against Jewish demands to remove the so-called “papal cross” from the memorial site. The “papal cross,” which had been erected for a mass held by Pope John Paul II at Birkenau in 1979 and later dismantled and stored in a local parish, was relocated in 1988 to the area adjacent to the camp, next to a building used by the Carmelite Convent, as a sign of protest against plans to relocate the convent. In 1999, to put an end to Świtoń’s campaign, the Polish Parliament passed a bill establishing a protective zone around Auschwitz. This bill forced the removal of the crosses and Świtoń himself, who was camped at the site. The “papal cross,” however, remained.
29. Paweł Wroński, “Inskrypcja na pomniku w Jedwabne” (The inscription on the monument in Jedwabne), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 29 May 2001.
30. See Urszula Arter, “Cena za mogiłę Żydów” (The price for the grave of Jews), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 28 April 2001.
31. Anna Bikont, “Jedwabne—rozpaczliwe poszukiwanie pozytywów” (Jedwabne—desperate searching for positives), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 23 March 2002.
32. An unauthorised text (based on a tape recording) of a sermon by Bishop Stanisław Stefanek was published in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 28 March 2001.
33. Gross, *Neighbors*, 172.
34. As quoted by Maria Kaczyńska, in “Spalić Żydów w stodole” (To burn Jews in a barn), *Gazeta Współczesna*, 14 July 2000.
35. Gross, *Neighbors*, 77–78.
36. See Piotr Jendroszczyk and Maciej Rybiński, “Czy Żydów w Jedwabnem zabiło gestapo?” (Were the Jews in Jedwabne killed by the Gestapo?), *Rzecz-*

pospolita, 21 March 2001; Andrzej Kaczyński, "Ślady gestapo w Radziwiłowie i Jedwabnem" (Traces of the Gestapo in Radziwiłów and Jedwabne), *Rzeczpospolita*, 6 April 2001; Wojciech Kamiński, "Komando śmierci" (The death squad), *Życie*, 6 April 2001.

37. Andrzej Kaczyński, "Świadkowie mówią o udziale Niemców" (Witnesses speak about Germans' participation), *Rzeczpospolita*, 27 March 2001; Paweł Wroński, "Nowe dokumenty w sprawie Jedwabnego" (New documents regarding Jedwabne), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 27 March 2001; Paweł Wroński, "Prof. Daria Nałęcz o odnalezionych zeznaniach w sprawie Jedwabnego" (Prof. Daria Nałęcz talks about discovered depositions regarding Jedwabne), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 28 March 2001; "Niemiecki plan?" (The German plan?), *Życie*, 27 March 2001.

38. Gross, *Neighbors*, 35.

39. Jan Tomasz Gross, "A Response," *Slavic Review* 61, no. 3 (fall 2002): 487–88. Although according to Gross's reasoning the figures relating to the number of Jews are unclear (60% of 2,167 is fewer than 1,600), he probably included in his calculation the unknown figure of Jews who migrated to Jedwabne from nearby settlements during the war. Antoni Sulek discusses Gross's lack of critical reflection on the number of pogrom victims in "A Sociologist Looks at Neighbors," *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 1 (137) (2002): 74–75.

40. See Robert Winnicki, "Ilu Żydów mieszkało w Jedwabnem?" (How many Jews were living in Jedwabne?), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 29 March 2001; Andrzej Kaczyński, "Liczba osób pozostaje nieznana" (The number of people remaining unknown), *Rzeczpospolita*, 29 March 2001.

41. Kaczyńska, "Spalić Żydów w stodole."

42. A statement by descendants and relatives of the murdered Jews of Jedwabne, 4 June 2001, published in *Jewish Post of New York*, <http://www.jewishpost.com/jp0710/jpn0710x.htm> (last accessed 21 Nov. 2005).

43. Krzysztof Godlewski interviewed by Waldemar Piasecki, "W cieniu Jedwabnego" (In the shadow of Jedwabne), *Przegląd*, 16 Sept. 2002.

44. Bikont, "My z Jedwabnego."

45. Krzysztof Godlewski interviewed by Andrzej Kaczyński, "Trzeba powiększać lobby normalnych ludzi" (It is necessary to increase the lobby of normal people), *Rzeczpospolita*, 29 Aug. 2001.

46. Kurkowska-Budzan, "Imaging Jedwabne," 115.

47. *Ibid.*, 116.

48. Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, "Setting the Framework," in *idem*, eds., *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999), 6–39, 8–10.

49. *Ibid.*, 33.

50. Nora, "Czas Pamięci," 43.

51. Winter, "The Generation of Memory," 73.