

Poles' Opinions About the Crime in Jedwabne—Changes in Social Consciousness

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## TREND REPORTS

### Poles' Opinions About the Crime in Jedwabne —Changes in Social Consciousness<sup>1</sup>

*Abstract:* Results of CBOS [Social Opinion Research Centre] reports on Poles' opinions on the crime committed in Jedwabne. Results show the level of society's information of it just after the disclosure of the crime and then after the official acts of repentance and apology from the Church and the representatives of the Polish State. The research concentrated also on showing the change of social consciousness related to this tragedy.

*Keywords:* crime in Jedwabne, victims, perpetrators, Jews, social consciousness

The opening of an investigation by Polish Institute of National Memory on the crime committed in 1941 on Jewish inhabitants of Jedwabne (Yedwabne) in which Polish people, common inhabitants of this town participated, and information about this by media and discussion on the topic, convinced us to design a research which would grasp the change of social consciousness related to this tragedy.

The first research, conducted in April 2001, allowed us to describe the level of society's information about the crime, its victims and perpetrators, reactions related to it, opinions considering the moral responsibility of Poles and a need of national act of repentance and apology for the crimes conducted on Jews.

The next research was conducted in August—after the official acts of repentance and apology from the representatives of the Polish state and Church which took place in May (a celebrated by Polish Bishops mass dedicated to forgiving the crime in Jedwabne) and in July (a participated by the president of Poland celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of death of the Jews in Jedwabne). We were interested, whether or not those events influenced the level of information about the Jedwabne tragedy in Polish society, their knowledge of its victims and perpetrators.<sup>2</sup> We also wanted to find out if the interviewed people were interested in the course of the Jedwabne celebrations and if they thought whether or not the official acts of expiation would contribute to tightening Polish-Jewish relations.<sup>3</sup> Besides that, we tried to describe the changes which took place between 1996 and 2001 in Poles' opinions concerning the religious ties connecting Poles with Jews.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on CBOS [Social Opinion Research Centre] reports on "Poles' Opinions about the Crime in Jedwabne," and "Present Problems and Events" prepared and analyzed by Bogna Wciórka.

<sup>2</sup> Research on "Present Problems and Events" (135) conducted on August 3–6, 2001 on a representative sample, 964 adult persons chosen according to random addresses.

<sup>3</sup> We were asking about the judgment of influence of the official acts of expiation on the relationships between Poles and Jews during the 'Omnibus' research which was conducted on August 16–20, 2001 on 1000 people representative sample of adult Poles.

## **What do We Know about the Crime in Jedwabne?**

### **Who Heard about this Crime?**

The information about the crime in Jedwabne got to almost all Poles (90%). Since April the percentage of the interviewees who had heard about the tragedy grew by 7 points. Society's knowledge about this fact became so common, that it was weaker related to respondents' socio-economic situation than in April. Still though, the level of education differentiates it. Every fifth respondent with a primary education (19%) did not hear about the crime in Jedwabne. Neither did every eighth with a basic vocational education (12%) nor small percentages of people with high school education (4%) and university degree (3%). Understandably, the worse informed people were those who were in the worse social conditions, having most often the lowest citizen's competency level, that is, the lowest education, and economic status and unemployed, as well as the eldest—over 65 years old. However, it has to be underlined that among the group of the worst informed youth in the age ranging from 18–24 was included. In this group, almost every fifth respondent did not hear about the crime in Jedwabne.

### **Opinions about Victims and Perpetrators of the Crime in Jedwabne**

Having a knowledge about the crime did not seem to shape people's thoughts considering the course of those tragic events. Similarly, in April, we asked the respondents who had heard about what happened in Jedwabne (866 people) who, in their opinion, was a victim and who was the perpetrator of this crime. The questions had an open character so that respondents were giving spontaneous answers which were later categorized.

The gross majority of respondents realized that Jews were the victims of this crime (79%). Sometimes, however, respondents included among the victims not only Jews but also Poles. The opinion considering this did not change throughout the last few months, although, presently, the respondents are stressing a bit stronger the supposed martyrology of Poles.

The respondents still most often blame German occupants. Among those who had heard about the crime almost one-third (32%) shows Germans (Nazis, Gestapo, Fascists) as the only perpetrators of the crime. Almost one-seventh (15%) underline that Poles were helping German occupants, sporadically those people were referred to as collaborators, Volksdeutsche, Polish police (1%). A small group of respondents (4%) blames Poles who worked from German inspiration, under pressure, supervision or force. Altogether, almost one-fifth of those who had heard about the crime in Jedwabne (19%) think, underlining the role of German occupants, that Germans and Poles had conducted the crime together. The smallest group of people was the group that perceived Poles as the perpetrators of the crime. Only Poles were blamed by every ninth respondent who had heard about the crime in Jedwabne (11%) including 3% who did it with hesitation and stress that the final results will be known after completing the investigation by Institute of National Memory.

Table 1

Who was the victim of this crime?	People who heard about the crime in Jedwabne		All respondents	
	April 2001 (N = 857)	August 2001 (N = 866)	April 2001 (N = 1036)	August 2001 (N = 964)
	In percents			
Jews from Jedwabne and the area, Polish Jews, Jewish families and similar descriptions pointing the Jews and only Jews as victims	83	78	69	70
Jews and Poles	8	10	7	9
Poles	1	3	1	3
Other descriptions	1	1	1	1
Difficult to say/I do not know	7	8	5	7
Never heard about the crime in Jedwabne	—	—	17	10

Table 2

Who, in your opinion, was a perpetrator of this crime?	People who heard about the crime in Jedwabne		All respondents	
	April 2001 (N = 857)	August 2001 (N = 866)	April 2001 (N = 1036)	August 2001 (N = 964)
	In percents			
German occupants, Nazis, Fascists, Gestapo, etc.—descriptions pointing Germans as the only perpetrators of the crime	41	31	34	28
German occupants and Polish collaborators, Polish Police, Volksdeutsche	1	1	1	1
German occupants with a help of Poles, i.e. Nazis and Poles, Gestapo and local Poles, supposedly Germans and Poles, Germans and a few Poles, Germans and Poles	13	14	11	12
Poles who worked from German inspiration, under pressure, supervision or force—a stress put on Poles as the perpetrators	2	4	2	4
They could be Poles—expressions pointing that it is necessary to wait for the end of investigation and/or expressing hope that the investigation will clear Poles, i.e. I hope they were German	3	3	2	2
Poles—no doubt	6	8	5	8
Others, i.e. Russians, Soviets	3	5	2	5
Difficult to say	31	33	26	30
Never heard about the crime in Jedwabne	—	—	17	10

Considering all adult Poles (not only those who heard about the crime) it figured out that over one-fourth (28%) of respondents blame for the murder exclusively German occupants, one-sixth (17%) agrees on collaboration of Germans and Poles and one-tenth (10%) blames exclusively Poles.

The perception of the perpetrators of the crime changed when compared to April. Presently, less people (dropped from 34% to 28%) blames only Germans, a bit more, on the other hand, admits to their consciousness collaborations of Germans and Poles

(growth from 14% to 17%) and the exclusive blame of Poles (growth from 7–10%). Participation of Poles in the crime is pointed by over one-fourth of the respondents (growth from 21% in April to 27%).

It's possible that the official acts of expiation, the penance mass in Warsaw and the celebration of the anniversary in Jedwabne including the informational campaign which accompanied those events help some Poles to admit the difficult truth about the participation of their countrymen in this crime. Still, however, the society is disoriented. It can be seen on the example of blaming exclusively Germans by 28% but also through the fact that almost one-third of Poles (30%) do not have an opinion on this topic. If we add to it people who show as the perpetrators the members of other nations (5%) and those who never heard about the murder in Jedwabne (10%) it figures that still the vast majority of adult Poles (73% compared to 79% in April) do not realize what happened in Jedwabne sixty years ago.

### **Social Conditioning of the Views Considering the Perpetrators of Crime in Jedwabne**

The shape of consciousness in this area was clearly dependent upon the level of education, socio-vocational and material position; the higher the status of the respondents the more they expressed their conviction about the participation of Poles in the crime committed on Jews.

The collaboration of the exclusive guilt of countrymen was pointed by over half of the respondents with higher education, almost one-third of those with highschool education, almost one-fourth of people with basic vocational education and by almost one-seventh of those with primary education. It was visible that people having lower education (respectively 48%, 69%, 77%, and 86%) practically did not have any conscious knowledge about what had happened in Jedwabne in 1941 if accepting the lack of information, pointing exclusively Germans or other nations as the perpetrators as a criterion.

The views about this were strongly related to the socio-vocational position of the respondents and a bit less regularly to their material situation. The fact of pointing participation of Poles twice as often by the people living in the cities with over one hundred-thousand inhabitants then by the inhabitants rural areas was a consequence of the described dependencies.

This brings a question as to why social groups changed their views under the influence of the official acts of expiation from the site of the representatives of the state and church and the informational campaign related to this.

It can be derived from the comparison of the research conducted in April and August that the views of people with higher education changed clearly (a decrease in the percent of people who blame exclusively Germans from 35% to 19% and a increase in the percent of people who point the participation of Poles from 29% to 52%). Much smaller changes of opinion, although in the same direction, can be noted among the respondents with the highschool education and basic vocational education. On the other hand the views of people with primary education practically did not change.

The picture of change in those opinions gets more complicated when we considered the socio-vocational groups into which working people belong. It figured that the biggest change took place among the representatives of the directorial staff and *intelligentsia*. Since September the percentage of people pointing the participation of Poles in the crime grew by 32 points and the percentage of people blaming exclusively Germans decreased by 29 points. Much smaller changes were noted in the case of white-collar workers of lower level many of whom also have higher education. The changes in consciousness of qualified workers were also very clear. The percent of people in this group who noticed collaboration and /or exclusive participation in the crime of Poles grew by 15 points and the percentage of people pointing exclusively German occupants dropped by 21 points, the views of socio-vocational groups did not change.

Table 3

Social characteristics of respondents	People who think the perpetrators were:					
	Only Germans			Poles and/or Poles and Germans		
	Apr. 2001	Aug. 2001	Differences	Apr. 2001	Aug. 2001	Differences
	In percents					
Education						
Primary	30	32	+2	15	14	-1
Basic Vocational	36	28	+8	18	23	+5
Highschool	34	29	-5	25	31	+6
Higher	35	19	-16	29	52	+23
Socio-vocational group						
Directorial staff, inteligencja	43	14	-29	25	57	+32
White collar workers	30	20	-10	27	36	+7
Blue/white collar workers	22	24	+2	30	24	+6
Skilled workers	39	18	-21	11	26	+15
Unskilled workers*	25	30	+5	32	17	-15
Farmers	45	39	-6	13	17	+4
Working at their own business	24	23	-1	36	40	+4

\* We do not analyze the unskilled workers in the text, because of small number of respondents in this group.

#### Who Followed the Media News Concerning the Celebration in Jedwabne?

It seems that many Poles avoid being exposed to information which would point participation of their countrymen in crime. It can be seen on the example of researchers declarations considering their interests in the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the tragic death of Jedwabne's Jews. The media from this celebration was followed by almost two-fifths of Poles (38%). A majority of respondents did not show any interest in this event.

Among the people interested in the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the tragic death of Jedwabne's Jews there were, first of all, people with higher education (54%) and also people being at least 55 years of age. The younger the respondents were the more rarely they declared that they followed the media reports from the

celebration. It has to be underlined that the lack of interest was especially visible among youth aging 18 to 24 (15%) and also among pupils and students (13%).

It is worth to notice that among the people who were interested in this event there were almost as many respondents with higher education (54%), representatives of the directorial staff, *inteligencja* (46%) and farmers (46%) although, it influenced mainly the opinions of best educated respondents and respondents with the highest social-vocational status. The opinions of farmers did not change.

There is a question whether or not the interest in the celebration in Jedwabne was reflected in the views of the researched population. Of course, those who were following the media reports from the celebration much more often heard about the crime than those who did not. They were pointing Jews as victims of the murder more often (80% compared to 64%). Besides that their opinions about the topics were better crystallized.

On the other hand there were no readable relations between the interest toward the celebration and respondents views about who was the perpetrator of the crime. The respondents who declared that they were carefully watching media reports more often than others pointed both the exclusive guilt of Germans as well as the exclusive guilt of Poles.

It proves that the decision to accept responsibility of Poles for the crime committed on Jews is difficult to accept for their countrymen. Even the interest in the course of the celebration of the anniversary of the tragedy, therefore, also listening to the President's speech about the event did not have in the case of most of the groups an influence on people's views on this issue. On this background, we can distinguish mainly the representatives of the directorial staff and *inteligencja* who not only were more interested news reports from Jedwabne but also, probably under their influence, they changed their views about the guilt of Poles. It is important that the similar reaction was observed among the qualified workers even though their interest in the celebration of the anniversary did not differ from the average. Farmers, on the other hand, inspite of the fact that they were following the course of the celebration more carefully, sustained their opinions not admitting to their consciousness the information about the disgraceful role of their countrymen.

#### **Will the Official Acts of Expiation Contribute to Tightening Polish-Jewish Relationships?<sup>4</sup>**

Social opinions on whether or not both the role of Poles in the tragedy that took place sixty years ago in Jedwabne and the official acts of penitence and apologies from the side of the representatives of the state and the church will contribute to tightening Polish-Jewish relationships was clearly divided.

Over one-third of respondents (36%) thought that the events would tighten these relations while over two-fifths (44%) were of the opposite opinion. Each of those opinions was clearly characterized by hesitation although the extremely negative views (16%) were much more frequent than the extremely positive (7%). Every fifth

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<sup>4</sup> Public opinion poll "omnibus" look: footnote no. 3.



respondent (20%) could not judge the role of those events in shaping the relation between Poles and Jews.

The opinion that the official acts of expiation will contribute to tightening Polish-Jewish relationships was shown much more often by the respondents with higher and highschool education, by young people in the age between 18 and 34, as well as by pupils and students and much less frequently by people aging 45–64. Undoubtedly, the greatest optimism about this issue was shown by the representatives of directorial staff and inteligencja among whom three-fifths (59%) relates those events with the hope that it will contribute to tightening Polish-Jewish relationships. The most pessimist about that were farmers and people working their own business outside of farming (respectively 59% and 51% of the respondents from those groups that those events would not contribute to better relations between the two nations). Opinions of the remaining groups are less uniform.

The fact that Polish society is divided in perceiving these issues is not surprising. The research conducted in April this year—before the official acts of expiation—had shown that only one-third of the respondents (30%) agreed that Poles should apologize to the Jewish nation for the crime in Jedwabne, and almost half (48%) were against it. Justifying their opinions, the opponents of apologizing, first of all, questioned the role of Poles in the crime and the fact of participation of their fellow countrymen in this murder and minimized and/or try to justify it as being done under pressure of occupants.

The proposition of a personal act of expiation (via signing a letter expressing grief and apologies in the name of Poles) was not accepted then, neither (34% of Poles would have signed such a letter and 53% would have not). This shape of social consciousness explains to a certain degree why almost half of Polish society thought that the official acts of expiation from the side of representatives of Church and the state will not contribute to tightening the relationships between Poles and Jews.

### **Jews—Our Older Brothers in Faith?**

#### **Changes of Social Consciousness in the Years 1996–2001**

Our research suggests that an important role in shaping Polish relations towards Jews can be played by diffusing to their social consciousness an idea of common roots of Christianity and Judaism. John Paul II had shown it very clearly in April 1986 during his historical visit in Roma's synagogue when he described Jews as "our older brothers in faith." Ten years after this event, in August 1996, immediately after the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Kielce pogrom,<sup>5</sup> for the first time we asked Poles whether they accepted the idea of religious closeness with Jews. Then, two-fifths of our respondents agreed with the presented opinion accepting religious

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<sup>5</sup> Pogrom of Jews in Kielce in 1946, 42 Jews were killed, 40 injured. See: B. Szaynok, *Pogrom Żydów w Kielcach* [Pogrom of Jews in Kielce]. Warszawa: Bellona 1992.



Table 4

Do you agree that Jews are our older brothers in faith?	Respondents opinions according to the date of opinion poll							
	April 1996		May 200		April 2001		August 2001	
	In percents							
Strongly agree	9	40	15	52	14	44	12	39
Rather agree	31		37		30		27	
Rather disagree	23	39	19	26	21	37	18	39
Strongly disagree	16		7		16		21	
Difficult to say	21	21	22	22	19	19	22	22

ties connecting Poles with Jews and almost the same percentage of people negated the common roots.<sup>6</sup>

The second opinion poll, performed in May 2000, two months after the pilgrimage of John Paul II to the Holy Land, during which the Pope repented Christian sins against Jews and gave his personal statement of a common relation with them, has shown a clear growth of social approval for the idea of Jews being our older brothers in faith. At that time, over half of Poles accepted the idea of religious brotherhood and only one-fourth negated it. The Pope's attitude clearly contributed to awaking in Poles a feeling of closest with Jews. Besides that, it turned up that idea of common roots was related to the negation of feelings of unwillingness/hostility toward Jews. Over half of Polish society underlined then the meaning of the Pope's pilgrimage for tightening the relationship between Poles and Jews.<sup>7</sup>

The next research was conducted in April 2001 after the start of an investigation by the Institute of National Memory which also considered the crime committed in 1941 on Jewish inhabitants of Jedwabne. During the course of broad discussions about the role Poles played in this tragedy, the research showed that the feeling of common religious roots with Jews had weakened in Polish society. While, compared to the research from May 2000 the percent of people accepting the idea that Jews are older brothers in faith dropped by 8 points and the percentage of those who negated these ties grew by 11 points. The opinions of respondents were divided again: over two-fifths (44%) accepted the religious closeness with Jews and over one-third (37%) negated their common roots.<sup>8</sup> Strengthening of the feeling of religious brotherhood with Jews which was noted immediately after Pope's pilgrimage to the Holy Land turned up to be unstable. The most recent study supports this thesis.

Presently, the opinions about this topic are divided almost equally. If we sum up extreme answers and the answers showing hesitation it turns up that two-fifths of the respondents (39%) perceives Jews as older brothers in faith and the same percentage (39%) do not agree with this description.

However, it must be underlined that, as of August 1996, the extreme negative opinions were almost twice as frequent than extremely positive (21% compared to 12%). Meanwhile in April this year, the extreme opinions were equal and a year

<sup>6</sup> CBOS report: Jews and Poles in society's opinions, January 1997, prepared by Helena Datner.

<sup>7</sup> Compare: CBOS "Poles and Jews," July 2000, prepared by Bogna Wciorka.

<sup>8</sup> See: CBOS report "Poles' opinions about the crime in Jedwabne," April 2001, prepared by Bogna Wciorka.

ago the situation was opposite to the present one; in which twice as many people strongly agreed with the description that Jews are our older brothers in faith then strongly disagreed. It shows a good illustration of a change of views of Poles on the ties connecting us with Jews.

In the years, 1996–2000 we registered an awakening in our society the feeling of religious closeness with Jews. It was very strongly related to the Pope's pilgrimage to the Holy Land. However, already, a year later, after revealing the tragedy in Jedwabne we observed gradual weakening of this feeling. The consciousness in this area came back to the same point, which we noted in August 1996 after the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Kielce Pogrom. Worth of attention is the fact that during this time the percentage of people who did not have opinion about the ties relating Poles to Jews did not change.

The described changes had almost the same course in all social groups. The most important exception was only the respondents with higher education among whom the feeling of religious ties with Jews had been strengthening for the last five years: the percentage of people perceiving Jews as our older brothers in faith grew systematically from 53% in 1996 through 61% in May 2000, 65% in April 2001 up to 68% in August 2001.

Strengthening of the feeling of ties with Jews took place also among the directorial staff and inteligencja (by 16 points), people working in their own business outside of agriculture (by 15 points) and in the group of people aging between 35 and 44 (by 11 points).

The opposite tendency, it means a clear weakening of the religious closeness, we observed among the youth aging 18 to 24 and a bit older between 25 and 34 years old (a drop by 19 and 11 percentage points) as well as in the group of pupils and students (a drop by 13 points). It has to be noted that among the youngest respondents both five years ago and a year ago they were more people who were convinced to the religious closeness of Jews than those who negated these ties. Presently, on the other hand, the latter dominate.

Weakening of the religious brotherhood was visible also among blue and white-collar workers (a drop by 12 percentage point) and also although to the lesser degree among farmers, people with basic vocational education, those who live in poor material conditions and unemployed. It was symptomatic that the drop of those feeling could be noted among the inhabitants of small towns up to twenty thousand people among which Jedwabne was included. In the remaining social groups the views considering the common religious roots with Jews are presently very similar to those which were noted in April 1996.

### **Social Demographical Conditioning of the Feeling of the Religious Ties with Jews**

The Feeling of religious ties with Jews was strongly related with a socio-economic condition of the respondents. The higher the education of the respondents their vocational position their income per capita in family and their own judgment of their material conditions the more often they perceived Jews as older brothers in faith. The

religious brotherhood was most often pointed by the people with higher education (68%) and the representatives of directorial staff and inteligencja (59%) the only groups in which we could note the visible dominance of extremely positive opinions over the extremely negative. The closeness with Jews was pointed more often than by others also by the white collar workers and those who work in their own business (46% in each group), the respondents who were in better economic situations and people more satisfied from the conditions they live in (51% in each group).

The least frequent advocates of Jews as older brothers in faith were the respondents who were in the worse social location—bad off (27%), unemployed (27%), having only primary education (31%) and the basic vocational education (31%). Among the socio-vocational groups there were blue-white collar workers (32%) qualified workers (37%) and farmers (33%). The feeling of ties was weaker in a rural and small town environment than in big cities and large urban areas. Besides that, there was an interesting fact, not noted in the earlier research, that young people in the age ranging from 18 to 24 were among those who rarely admit that Jews were their older brothers in faith (28%). The pupils and students could be clearly distinguished as those who did not have crystallized opinions on this topic.

The religiosity of the respondents hardly differentiates their opinions about the topic. Presently, the religious brotherhood with Jews is accepted as often by people who participate in religious services at least once a week as by those who do not practice at all. It is rarely accepted by people who practice irregularly and sporadically. The sources of the religious ties with Jews can be therefore various. Some are rooted in church's teachings and some in people's secular views. It can also be visible on the example of the declarations of respondents who represent different political views. The feeling of religious brotherhood is more often met among people oriented toward right-wing parties (52%) or to a smaller degree toward left-wing parties (43%) then center parties (35%) and the weakest is among people who do not have clear political views (26%).

### **Feeling of Religious Ties with Jews and Opinions about Tragedy in Jedwabne**

According to the research conducted in April this year it appeared that the feeling of religious ties with Jews is related to the perception of the tragedy in Jedwabne and especially to the role, which was played there by Poles. Also, the most recent study shows this relationship.

The feeling of religious ties with Jews influenced people's interest in the tragedy in Jedwabne. The respondents who perceive Jews as our older brothers in faith heard about Jedwabne more often than others and also they were interested more often than others in the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the tragic events in Jedwabne.

The feeling of religious closeness is very strongly related to the consciousness that Jews were the victims of the crime in Jedwabne. The martyrology exclusively by Jews is shown by over three quarters who agree with the statement that Jews are our older brothers in faith (77%) and two-thirds of those who do not admit the common religious roots (66%).

The feeling of these ties shapes also people's opinion about the perpetrators of the crime. The respondents who perceive Jews as our older brothers in faith have the consciousness of the role of Poles in the crime much more often than the others. Collaboration of the exclusive guilt of Poles is shown by one-third of the respondents from this group (35%). A smaller percentage blames only Germans (27%) on the other hand, in the group of people who do not admit the close religious ties with Jews almost one-fourth (23%) show the participation of Poles and one-third (34%) are convinced that only Germans did it.

On the end, it is worth to refer to the results of the research which show the personal reaction of Poles for the news about the crime in Jedwabne.<sup>9</sup> At this time the reaction of people who had the consciousness of Jews being our older brothers in faith were different from the reaction from those people who did not accept the common religious roots or did not have an opinion about this topic.

Table 5

Modern Poles show various reactions to the information about the crime in Jedwabne, what kind of feelings does this crime awake in you? From the descriptions below choose three which are the best in describing your personal reaction to the information about this crime	Do you agree that Jews are our older brothers in faith?		
	Yes	No	Difficult to say
	In percents		
I felt grief that people prepared such a burden to other people	55	43	48
I felt a compassion for Jews- victims of the crime and their families	36	27	35
I had doubts whether or not Poles really participated in this crime	33	42	18
I condemn the perpetrators of this crime	31	29	31
Independently from what happened I condemn all expressions of anti-Semitism	25	11	14
I am surprised. I did not know that Poles murdered Jews during the war	19	19	16
I am angry at those who spread such information before the end of investigation	15	22	15
As a Pole I am ashamed of this crime	12	10	9
I feel sorry for the inhabitants of Jedwabne today	12	13	10
It scares me that people who believe in God could have committed such a crime	11	11	7
I am angry at those who try to disgrace the good name of Poland and Poles	10	14	8
I am sorry for the Poles who participated in this crime	8	7	9
I become interested in this crime	8	11	5
I do not care	5	9	13
As a Pole I feel guilty, too.	2	2	3
Unwillingness to all Jews felt independently from the events which happened in Jedwabne	1	9	1

The respondents who had a feeling of religious closeness with Jews felt much greater grief that people prepared such a burden to other people than those who did not accept those ties (55% compared to 43%) and also compassion for Jews—victims of the crime and their families (36% compared to 27%) there were more often condemning all expressions of anti-Semitism (25% compared to 11%). On the

<sup>9</sup> See CBOS report "Poles' opinions about the crime in Jedwabne".

other hand, more rarely they had doubts whether or not Poles really participated in this crime (33% compared to 42%) and also were angry with those who spread such information before the end of the investigation by the Institute of National Memory (15% compared to 22%). Even more rare, also they were declaring ambivalence (5% compared to 9%) and unwillingness to all Jews felt independently from the events which happened in Jedwabne (1% compared to 9%). The rest of the reactions of both groups were similar. It is worth to notice that practically the same percent of respondents from both of those groups were condemning the perpetrators of the crime committed on Jews (approximately 30%).

Compared groups were different in their views about the moral responsibility and the need of expiation. The respondents admitting Jews as the older brothers in faith were admitting more often that Poles feel the moral responsibility for the crime in Jedwabne (18% compared to 10%) for existing in Poland in the past expressions of anti-Semitism (20% compared to 11%) and for today's anti-Semitism of Poles (19% compared to 12%). First of all however, they were much more often underlining that Poles should repent and apologize to Jews for the crime in Jedwabne (40% compared to 21%) and the declared their readiness to sign a letter which would be an act of expiation from the side of Poles (45% compared to 24%).

This research shows that Poles who admit a common roots of Christianity and Judaism, feel that Jews are our older brothers in faith, react with a greater sensitivity to the reports about the crime in Jedwabne are also more open for information about this tragedy and more often admit to their consciousness the difficult truth about participation of Poles in this event.

Defusing to social consciousness the idea of common roots of Christianity and Judaism, strengthening the feeling of religious ties which connect these two nations should play a positive in the process of shaping Poles attitudes toward Jews. It seems that it depends upon the Polish church whether or not this idea will strengthen in the consciousness of believers and help clearing the memory and conscious in the relation with a tragic lot of Polish Jews and will contribute to better relations between Poles and Jews.