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## Polish-Jewish Relations, Anti-Semitism and National Identity

*Abstract:* The article presents the results of surveys done on anti-Semitism in Poland in 1992, which in part were compared to results from a 1996 survey. The group, under the author's direction researched anti-Semitism in the context of Poles' attitudes towards other nations, as well as in terms of their own national identity. Two types of anti-Semitic attitudes were observed: traditional, religiously grounded anti-Semitism, and anti-Semitism rooted in anti-Semitic political ideology, of the type that has developed since in the French Revolution. Traditional anti-Semitism occurs only among older people who are not well educated and live in rural areas; increased education results in the disappearance of this type of anti-Semitism. Modern anti-Semitism, on the other hand occurs among both the lowest and most highly educated groups in society. Moreover, from 1992 to 1996, the percentage of the respondents declaring anti-Semitism increased. At the same time, however, there was also a larger increase in the number of respondents declaring anti-anti-Semitic views, which has meant that there has been a clear polarization of attitudes. Having a university education makes a person more likely to be ill-disposed toward anti-Semitism.

Nevertheless, the attitude of Poles toward Jews cannot be described simply on the basis of anti-Semitic attitudes. The researchers noted that there was also an attitude of "not liking Jews", which was less engaged than the anti-Semitic views, and to a large extent a result of the content comprising Polish national identity. The model of Polishness assumes a Romantic-Messianic image of the Polish nation. According to this model, Poles see themselves as being distinguished by their noble fulfillment of obligations, even when it is to their own detriment, particularly with respect to symbolic Jews and Germans. Researchers also assumed that there was a particular kind of competition between Poles and Jews with respect to the moral superiority of their respective nations. The results from 1992 in part confirmed this hypothesis.

*Keywords:* Polish-Jewish relations, anti-Semitism, national identity, national stereotypes

### Research Assumptions and Aims of This Article

This article attempts to assess the current state of anti-Semitism in Poland, and to describe how Poles view Polish-Jewish relations in an everyday context. This article will refer to the results of two surveys. The basic survey was conducted by the team under my direction in 1992, and was titled "Poles, Jews, and Others."<sup>1</sup> In 1996, however CBOS [Social Opinion Research Centre] carried out its own survey on

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<sup>1</sup> This project was financed by the KBN [State Committee for Scientific Research] and implemented by the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. The research group consisted of Alina Cala, Helena Datner, Ewa Koźmińska-Frejłak, Andrzej Zbikowski, and Krzysztof Witkowski, who served in a technical capacity. Stanisław Szałba helped to write up the results. I would like to thank sincerely all those who participated in the preliminary phases of research.

Polish-Jewish relations, in which it repeated several questions from previous study in 1992.<sup>2</sup> This article will discuss both.

An analysis of the dynamics of social attitudes and opinions, made possible by a comparison of the results of these two surveys, will allow me to develop earlier theses further. In addition, I would also like to present a hypothesis regarding national identity as one of the co-determining factors of how Polish-Jewish relations are perceived, an aspect that has not yet been fully included in previous work on the subject.

In this study, the phenomenon of anti-Semitism was examined in the broader context of attitudes toward current ethnic minorities and other national groups, especially those bordering on Poland. The portrayal of Poles' historical relationship with those neighboring national groups was also considered. In keeping with the view of current scholarship, it has been assumed here that anti-Semitism whether of individuals or groups, is a specific phenomenon to be distinguished from other attitudes toward other groups or national stereotypes.<sup>3</sup>

The historical context of the 1990's, marked above all by the *transition to a democratic system*, has also been taken into account. The Carmelite convent adjacent to the Auschwitz camp was a pressing issue then, inciting the first wave of the anti-Polish campaign abroad. In Poland itself, on the other hand, many anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish slogans could be heard in public rhetoric, especially during the first democratic presidential and parliamentary elections in 1990. Ever since, the world has come to accept the negative stereotype of Poland and of Poles as "traditional anti-Semites", particularly in the United States. In 1998, the events in Oświęcim (Auschwitz) involving the crosses at the gravel pit next to the camp were vividly reminiscent of the situation just a few years before. Those events have prompted scholars to ask basic questions, such as: what kind of anti-Semitic attitudes are we dealing with in Poland, and which type of anti-Semitism can be identified as most common?

After 1989, in the United States the topic and slogan of "anti-Semitism without Jews," persistent in Poland despite the fact that today the Jewish community here is very small, has remained very much alive. Some would argue this suggests the existence of a special kind of anti-Semitism peculiar to Poland.<sup>4</sup> The question of "anti-Semitism without Jews" and the use of anti-Jewish "labels" in politics there has prompted us to search for explanations in categories founded in historical experience,

<sup>2</sup> *Żydzi i Polacy w opinii badanych* [Respondents' Views on Jews and Poles], Research report (Warsaw: CBOS, November 1996).

<sup>3</sup> This is illustrated well by the texts that are included in the first two volumes published in: *Current Research on Anti-Semitism*. Vol. 1, H. Fein (ed.), *The Persisting Question: Sociological Perspectives and Social Context of Modern Antisemitism*, New York: De Gruyter, 1987; Vol. 2, W. Bergmann (ed.), *Error without Trial: Psychological Research on Anti-Semitism*, New York: De Gruyter, 1988. In an older work, *Anti-Judaism: a Psychohistory*, Chicago: Perspective, 1975, E. A. Rappaport traces the historical development of anti-Jewish attitudes.

<sup>4</sup> In his discussion, for example, Abraham Brumberg considers the accusations made against anti-Semitic Poles very carefully, clearly going against the grain of American Jewish opinion. Cf. Abraham Brumberg, "Anti-Semitism and the Treatment of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Poland," in R. L. Braham, *Anti-Semitism and the Treatment of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, p. 143 ff.

and in national identity. The results of studies that have not been evaluated up to now will prove especially useful. Before embarking upon this subject, however, it is first necessary to define the terms "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Semitic attitude."

First, our team's research distinguished "anti-Semitic attitudes" from "anti-Semitic ideology," as well as from "anti-Semitic" ("anti-Judaic") theological beliefs. The ideological (political) content of anti-Semitism, and religious anti-Judaism manifested in the form of a worldview can both serve as the basis for—or at least as an intellectual explanation for—anti-Semitic stances.

Second, anti-Semitism is sometimes treated very broadly in research and interpretations. This is because the dangerous phenomenon of anti-Semitism—rightly blamed for the most horrific crime of twentieth century—could potentially be lurking behind any negative judgment of Jewish traits or behavior.<sup>5</sup> Our understanding, however, differed slightly: we assumed that Polish stereotypes of Jews and Jewish culture should be distinguished from anti-Semitism in the proper sense of that word. Anti-Semitic attitudes manifest themselves as an obsessive animosity and hostility towards Jews, requiring a certain mindset, which nevertheless always finds its representatives. These people find a universal justification for their "vigilant" stance, which becomes an essential component of their personality.

In this case, as Helena Datner has done, one can speak of "an individual's *cognitive patterns*," which are rooted in broader, coherent systems of religious and ideological beliefs.<sup>6</sup> Not every negative assessment of Jewish behavior or traits is an expression of anti-Semitism, however; it nevertheless can be, if we have ascertained that it has stemmed solely from a hostile attitude toward Jews that has been adopted regardless of a given situation.

Jewish stereotypes, which can also include negative features, are often distinguished from "anti-Semitism" in the strict sense. Alina Cała, who in no way can be accused of having nationalistic sympathies or being tolerant of anti-Semitism, has done so convincingly in her work on the representation of Jews in Polish folk culture.<sup>7</sup> Through national stereotypes, collective experience shows a group's positive features as well as the negative ones, though on the whole this is not done very fairly. The ideology of anti-Semitism lacks this dichotomy. In this way, we can immediately recognize that it differs from a national, or ethnic, stereotype of Jews. Therefore it should be stressed that not every negative opinion about Jews deserves to be deemed a symptom of anti-Semitism: it may simply be one facet of a stereotypical group representation describing Jewish characteristics as positive, negative, or morally neutral.

<sup>5</sup> Helen Fein's definition seems to be so broad and "morally" restrictive that each manifestation of negative Jewish stereotyping becomes a manifestation of "anti-Semitism", cf. H. Fein, "Dimensions of Anti-Semitism—Attitudes, Collective Accusations and Actions", in *The Persisting Question...*, op. cit., p. 67 ff.

<sup>6</sup> H. Datner-Śpiewak, "Struktura i wyznaczniki postaw antysemickich" [The Structure and Determinants of Antisemitic Attitudes], in I. Krzemiński (ed.), *Czy Polacy są antysemitami?* [Are Poles Anti-Semites?]. Warszawa: Oficyna Naukowa, 1996, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> Alina Cała, *Wizerunek Żyda w polskiej kulturze ludowej* [The Image of Jews in Polish Folk Culture]. Warszawa: Plus, 1988, pp. 101–102 and Summary.

Such images of other ethnic groups often serve as a mirror for one's own group. In light of the degree to which stereotyped images of other nationalities are prone to perpetuate fears and aggravate the unresolved problems of one's own group, we can use G. Langmuir's description of these stereotypes as being "xenophobic" and "non-xenophobic".<sup>8</sup> "Xenophobic stereotypes", however, are not products of the imagination, but from generalizations and, in particular, ungrounded generalizations based on specific individual and group experiences. These stereotypes can provide simple and convincing explanations for an ethnic group's own difficult and unresolved problems. Moreover, stereotypes help heal old wounds by promoting a positive image of one's own group, thereby reinforcing fundamental societal bonds by blaming "others" for "our" dilemmas (i.e. blaming a scapegoat).

However, says Langmuir, historical truths sometimes actually provide rational justification for ethnic stereotypes that perpetuate attitudes of distrust towards other ethnic groups: historical experience has shown that those nations (i.e. other nations) should be perceived as a potentially dangerous enemy of one's own group. Only historical research, free of those stereotypes, allows them to be evaluated properly.

Langmuir contrasts this with the presence in cultural experience of images unconfirmed by any real incident, albeit a single, isolated one, not even when the accusers themselves attempt to find empirical confirmation to back up their own charges. Langmuir calls this kind of stereotype content "chimerical": a significant portion of anti-Jewish accusations belongs to this mysterious set of wild, hostile images that are attributed to groups of "others". A special instance of this is the centuries-old ritual murder accusation against Jews, which at its very core is the charge that Jews need "blood for matzoth" a product of inimical *chimerical* fantasies.<sup>9</sup>

Langmuir's ideas and typology were one of the theoretical inspirations behind the 1992 study, inasmuch as we were looking for ways to distinguish the various forms of fears and hatred in inter-ethnic relations present in stereotypes. This was necessary in order to provide a detailed picture of Polish-Jewish relations. Moreover, we wanted to place Polish-Jewish relations in their historical context of Polish-German, Polish-Russian, and Polish-Ukrainian relations. In order to do so, we assumed hypothesis regarding the relevance of the content of ethnic identity for attitudes toward other nations, and that it would prove similarly significant in Polish-Jewish relations.

### Types of Anti-Semitism in Poland

Our first hypothesis assumed two different anti-Semitic attitudes, each having its own rationale.<sup>10</sup> Based on the classical definition of "attitude," one can say that in each

<sup>8</sup> Cf. G. I. Langmuir, "Toward a Definition of Anti-Semitism," in: *The Persisting Question*, op. cit. See also Gavin I. Langmuir, *History, Religion and Anti-Semitism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. G. I. Langmuir, "Toward a Definition of Anti-Semitism," in: *The Persisting Question*, op. cit. For a discussion of ritual murder accusations against Jews, and the official position of the Pope in this regard within the context of our current research, see I. Krzemiński, "Polacy i Żydzi w świetle badania socjologicznego" [Poles and Jews in Sociological Research], *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* no. 3 (1995): 104-105.

<sup>10</sup> Stefan Nowak, "Pojęcie postawy w teoriach i stosowanych badaniach społecznych," [Meaning of an Attitude in Theories and Applied Social Sciences] in: S. Nowak (ed.), *Teorie postaw* [Attitude Theories] (Warszawa: PWN, 1973).

case, different stereotype contents make up the cognitive content of each, defining and/or justifying an individual's attitude toward Jews.<sup>11</sup>

Helena Datner-Śpiwak, who analyzed this issue, formulated a typology of the two basic kinds of anti-Semitism:

1. Traditional anti-Semitism—based on religious beliefs
2. Modern anti-Semitism—based on an anti-Semitic political ideology, developed after the French Revolution, subsequently “stabilized” in the late nineteenth century thanks to numerous parties and mass political movements.<sup>12</sup>

We included questions in our survey that helped formulate indicators for both types of anti-Semitic attitudes.<sup>13</sup> What follows is a description of each, with specific reference to the 1996 CBOS survey.

**Indicator for modern anti-Semitism (i.e. “political”).** A factor analysis confirmed that the use of questions about the influence on a national and international level of Jews and individuals with a Jewish background was justified, eliminating other questions, as an indicator of modern anti-Semitic attitudes. In the 1992 survey, we asked, “Do Jews have too much influence in Poland on: a) politics; b) economics; c) the press, radio, and television.

We included these answers with those about whether “Jews have too much influence in the world.” Over half, 55% of those surveyed in 1992, agreed with the thesis that Jews have too much influence internationally (exactly, we’d used expression: “in the world”). Only 16% of those questioned disagreed with this, and approximately 3% of respondents strongly disagreed.

We took answers agreeing with the thesis that *Jews have too much influence* as sociological indicators of anti-Semitic attitudes: they were associated with a sinister anti-Semitic ideology and hostility. The stereotypical conviction that “Jews secretly rule the world” has nonetheless become a justification for one of the most terrible crimes in the history of mankind, known as the Shoah, or Holocaust.

The answers to specific questions were tabulated in 1992, and create a unified indicator for attitudes which can be considered to be ill-disposed toward Jews to a greater or lesser degree. Three possible kinds of answers were counted separately:

- a. answers agreeing with the question's thesis (*Jews have too much influence*), which we decided were indicators of an anti-Semitic attitude;
- b. answers disagreeing with the question's thesis (*not true that Jews have too much influence*), whose meaning is not completely clear;
- c. middle-of-the-road answers, or those which avoid giving a clear answer (*don't know, don't care, undecided, hard to say*).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. W. Bergmann, “Attitude Theory and Prejudice,” in: *Error without Trial*, op. cit., pp. 271–301.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Helena Datner-Śpiwak, “Struktura i wyznaczniki postaw antysemitycznych,” in *Czy Polacy są antysemitami?*, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> The statistical analysis of these indicators, as with all scales and calculations done on the basis of these indicators, was done by Jerzy Bartkowski. The empirical analysis corroborates the theoretical assumption that there are two types of anti-Semitism, which have either religious or ideological bases. A factor analysis determined the final choice regarding questions that would act as indicators of these attitudes, cf. H. Datner-Śpiwak, “Struktura i wyznaczniki...” [“Structure and Determinants”] in: *Czy Polacy są antysemitami*, op. cit., p. 60, Table 1.

Since there were four questions, the scale went from 0 to 4. We used only two scales: *anti-Semitism* (answers indicating anti-Semitism) and *anti-anti-Semitism* (disagreeing with the question about whether Jews are too influential). Helena Datner, who drew up the criteria for the scales, defined the latter as an indicator of a pro-Jewish attitude, i.e. *philosemitic*, as opposed to *anti-Semitism*. She decided on this criterion based on the fact that the respondents having less well-defined views or more ambivalent views had three different possibilities of expressing them. According to Datner, those who disagreed with the theses presented in the questions were more inclined to be positively disposed towards Jews than antagonistic towards them, or to be impartial observers, which is why she opted for the term *philosemitism*.

Although these two diametrically opposed answers have strong judgmental and emotional components, they are nevertheless not completely equivalent—in cognitive terms, either. Disagreeing with the statement that Jews have too much influence on the Polish media, or too much influence in the world in general, is not only a statement of fact. It is at the very least also a denial of those opinions about Jews suggesting that they in fact occupy these special positions. This is why such views can be considered *philosemitic*. Without denying the importance of this, my focus here will be instead on the scale of *anti-anti-Semitic* attitudes.

Technical considerations also influenced our decision to treat answers supporting and disagreeing with the theses separately: for example, the ability to conduct uniform statistical operations. This explains our decision to create two different scales for *anti-Semitism* and *anti-anti-Semitism*, measuring a complex issue from two angles. The starting point (zero on the scale) in the first case (the *anti-Semitism* scale) comprised all the answers not agreeing with the idea that Jews have too much influence; in the second case (*anti-anti-Semitism*), this included all the answers not disagreeing with the idea that Jews do wield special influence.

Each respondent was thus classified on a scale of *modern anti-Semitism* and *modern anti-anti-Semitism*, whose scale, as mentioned already, can be interpreted as an indicator of pro-Jewish attitudes.

Unfortunately, in the 1996 survey only the questions on Jewish influence in Polish politics were repeated verbatim, and it did not include a question on Jewish influence in the world, which was an important component in our “strong” indicator of anti-Semitic attitudes. While the comparison of attitudes across time is thus incomplete, it nevertheless remains worthwhile.

For the 1996 results, H. Datner developed an indicator analogous to that in the 1992 study, though simpler, which tabulates the positive and negative answers. Over half those surveyed in 1996 (56%) did not give any anti-Semitic answer; the three answers expressing agreement—strong anti-Semitism—were selected by a quarter of the respondents (24.2%). The number of pro-Jewish answers (*anti-anti-Semitic*) was also high: 23.4%. Sixty percent of those surveyed, however, did not give any pro-Jewish (*anti-anti-Semitic*) answer. In 1992, this kind of answer, though complemented by a question that was not repeated in the later survey, was given in 57% of the cases, somewhat less frequently.

Table 1

## Jewish Influence in Different Areas of Life in Poland.

Data are given in %\*

In our country, Jews have too much influence on:		1992	1996
A.	Politics		
1.	Strongly agree, agree	35	39
2.	Strongly disagree, disagree	27	29
3.	Hard to say	37	31.5
B.	Economy		
1.	Strongly agree, agree	36	37
2.	Strongly disagree, disagree	25	32
3.	Hard to say	39	31
C.	Press, radio, television		
1.	Strongly agree, agree	21.5	28
2.	Strongly disagree, disagree	32	34
3.	Hard to say	42	36

\*Without the percentage of lack of answers.

Interesting conclusions can be reached by comparing the results of the two surveys. First, within the sphere being compared, we can see an increase in the number of answers indicating an anti-Semitic attitude. At the same time, there was also an increase in the frequency of anti-anti-Semitism (or hypothetical pro-Jewish attitudes). Second, the data from 1996 indicate a leveling-off in the percentages of anti- and pro-Jewish attitudes. Thus, the results indicate attitudes are becoming increasingly polarized, something confirmed by the significant decrease in the percentage of those answering "hard to say": (There was in particular a marked increase in the number of respondents who believed Jews did wield an influence on the Polish economy.)

**Indicator of traditional anti-Semitism (i.e. "religious").** In the 1992 survey, we also asked whether or not Jews' problems were God's punishment for their crucifixion of Christ, and whether or not Jews "are themselves to blame for what happens to them." The answers to both questions have turned out to be clear indicators of an anti-Semitism basing itself on religious arguments—*traditional anti-Semitism*. Factor analysis has confirmed this interconnection.

Just as with the previous indicator discussed here, each respondent's answers to both these questions was tallied, which determined the degree of traditional anti-Semitic attitude. As with the previous indicator, we obtained the indicator of traditional anti-anti-Semitism from the answers disagreeing with the theses of the questions (pro-Jewish attitudes).

Seventeen percent of those surveyed agreed with the opinion that "Jews' problems are the result of God's punishment", of which 8% strongly disagreed; 35% of those questioned agreed with the statement that Jews "are themselves to blame" (the same percent, however, said "no" in 1992).

Only the second of these questions was included in the 1996 survey, which resulted in fewer positive answers and more negative ones. 32.5% of those surveyed agreed with the opinion that "Jews are themselves to blame for what happens to them", and

45% disagreed with that statement (almost 10% more than in 1992). In 1996, the percentage of those answering "strongly disagree" was higher, but the percentage of those with no clear answer was also lower (7% fewer answered "hard to say")—indicating a tendency toward polarization of the issue.

From what has been said up to this point, we already can see that in Poland modern anti-Semitism is more common than traditional anti-Semitism (see Table 2).

Table 2

Anti-Semitism Indicators. Data are given in % for the 1992 survey

Modern anti-Semitism—anti-Jewish attitudes		
Anti-Jewish answers		Percent of total
No anti-Semitism	0	38
	1	23
	2	8
	3	14
Strong anti-Semitism	4	17
Traditional anti-Semitism—Anti-Jewish attitude		
Anti-Jewish answers		Percent of answers
No anti-Semitism	0	59
	1	29.5
Strong anti-Semitism	2	11.5

If we were to dichotomize the results above and assume that individuals who in both cases answered most antagonistically toward Jews were expressing a clearly anti-Semitic attitude, then in 1992, 17% of respondents would have been traditionally anti-Semitic, and 11.5% would have been traditionally anti-Semitic. It is worth pointing out, however, that nearly 60% of those questioned did not show any signs of traditional (religious) anti-Semitism at all, while 38% of those in the category of "modern anti-Semitism" were also traditionally anti-Semitic.

Based on the simplified and—for our purposes—incomplete indicators from the 1996 survey, the percentage of modern anti-Semites grew to 24%, while traditional anti-Semites, judged on the basis of just one question, however, remained at a similar level (increasing from 10.9% to 11.5%).

From a comparison of the modern and traditional anti-Semitism scales, we can see even more clearly the different degrees to which both kinds of anti-Semitism are present (see table 3).

Based on a simplified version of the 1996 indicators, the situation looks like this:

Since only one of the questions comprising the traditional anti-Semitism indicator was included in the 1996 questionnaire, those calculations could not be analogous to those in 1992. It is worth noting, however, that over 45% of the respondents either "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" with the statement that "Jews are themselves to blame."

Regarding our imperfect comparison of pro-Jewish attitudes according to the modern anti-Semitism indicator, we see that in 1996, the percentage of answers not supporting Jews grew by 3%, while at the same time the percentage of strongly



Table 3

## Anti-Anti-Semitism Indicators. Data in %, 1992

1. Modern anti-Semitism—pro-Jewish attitude		
	Number of pro-Jewish answers	% of respondents
No support (for Jews)	0	57
	1	16
	2	6
	3	13
Strong support (for Jews)	4	8
2. Traditional anti-Semitism—pro-Jewish attitude		
	Number of pro-Jewish answers	% of respondents
No support	0	37
	1	35
Strong support	2	29

Table 4

## Modern Anti-Anti-Semitism Indicators. Data given in %, 1996

Modern anti-Semitism—pro-Jewish attitude		
	Number of pro-Jewish answers	% of respondents
Lack of support for Jews	0	61
	1	9
	2	7
Strong support for Jews	3	23

pro-Jewish answers also grew, and did so significantly: from 8% in 1992, to 23% in 1996.

Interpreted within in the context of the first question and the research hypothesis on types of anti-Semitism in Poland, these results indicate clearly: anti-Semitism in Poland is for the most part of the modern, ideological kind, which is comprised of a characteristic group of views that are to be found not only all over Europe, but all over the world, as well. We do not find anything "typically Polish" in this respect.<sup>14</sup>

Traditional anti-Semitism, on the other hand, which has its roots in religion, could be treated as more specific for Poland, because is rather very rare in the other European countries: within it, one can find age-old arguments that are completely at odds with postwar Catholic theology, particularly post-Vatican II theology. In traditional anti-Semitism, the image of Jews is linked to the Catholic tradition in Poland. As a result, for traditional anti-Semites, no one born to a Jewish family

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that anti-Semitism has been observed recently in Japan. The United States, where public opinion is particularly prone to accuse Poles of "traditional anti-Semitism," has itself never been free of modern anti-Semitism, as the results of public opinion surveys show, cf. R. Wutnow, "Anti-Semitism and Stereotyping," in: *The Persisting Question*, H. Fein, op. cit. See also H. E. Quinley and C. Y. Glock, *Anti-Semitism in America*. New York: The Free Press, 1979; G. J. Selznick and S. Steinberg, *The Tenacity of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in Contemporary America*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969. Currently, anti-Semitism among African-Americans is becoming a serious issue for human rights advocates, cf. N. Perlmutter and R. A. Perlmutter, *The Real Anti-Semitism in America*. New York: Arbor House, 1982, the chapter titled "'Blacks' and 'Jews'":

could ever be a Pole, simply due to his or her "otherness." Apparently, "traditional Catholicism" can still be found among Poles today.

The data, however, indicate that traditional, religious arguments have primarily been preserved in the consciousness of a strictly defined category of people, specifically: among older people with limited educations, living in rural areas or smaller towns.

In 1992, religious faith, as an independent factor, did not help to explain dislike of Jews and anti-Jewish stereotypes in 1992. The most important factor, together with religiosity was education. Especially important in terms of accepting or strongly rejecting traditional anti-Semitism was the respondent's educational background. A respondent with more education was less likely to accept traditional anti-Semitism, and vice versa: less education meant he or she was less likely to have an anti-anti-Semitic (pro-Jewish) attitude.

Table 5  
Education, Religious Practices, and Traditional Anti-Anti-Semitism. 1992

Education/Religiosity	Practicing regularly	Practicing, not regularly	Sporadic	Not practicing
Elementary	0.6881	0.8174	1.2500	1.5000
Basic vocational	0.8041	0.9687	0.7600	1.3333
High school	0.8683	1.1053	1.3474	1.0226
Some college	1.4505	1.0450	1.1854	1.4255
University	1.2549	1.1562	1.333	1.2500

$p=0.0000$

Although results of the 1996 survey are not comparable, the percentage of people with university (holding a master's degree) or elementary school education accepting the statement that "Jews are to blame" was identical, whereas rejection of this statement increased along with educational level: 58% of university-educated respondents rejected the statement, compared to 38% of those with an elementary school education.

For the most part, the results of both surveys confirmed the fact that the younger the respondent, the lower the level of anti-Semitism, and the more likely he or she is to have a pro-Jewish attitude. This includes both very strong traditional and modern anti-Semitism.

Table 6  
Age and Average Level of Pro-Jewish Attitudes—Traditional Anti-Semitism Indicator. 1992  
(maximum indicator value = 2)

Age (years)	$r$ (average)
18-24	1.5020
25-39	1.0171
40-59	0.8734
59+	0.7755
$N=1013$	0.9271

$p=0.0000$

In the 1992 survey, we saw certain anomalies in the tendencies determining traditional and modern anti-Semitism levels. Most importantly, whereas increased education was a decisive factor in the diminishing of traditional anti-Semitic attitudes and declaration of pro-Jewish attitudes (at least in the areas covered by our questions), the tendency towards modern anti-Semitism turns out to remain uninfluenced by education. Anti-Semitism was found both among respondents with limited educations as well as those who were highly educated. For example, the percentage of respondents answering "Jews have too much influence on politics in Poland" was almost the same in both the low-educated and highly-educated groups: 36% of individuals with an elementary education, and 38% of university-educated respondents. We thus discovered, however, that education has a very clear impact on the development of anti-anti-Semitic attitudes (pro-Jewish).

Table 7

Educational Level and Average Level of Pro-Jewish Attitudes. 1992 (maximum indicator value = 4)

	<i>r</i> (averages)	<i>N</i> (number)
some elementary	0.8148	40
elementary	0.7799	316
basic vocational	1.0179	251
some high school	0.6136	66
high school	1.0872	97
post-secondary (vocational)	1.4194	42
some college	1.5000	27
college	1.5288	70
Total	0.9873	$p=0.0000$

The 1996 study confirmed this tendency (see table 8).

Table 8

Education and Average Values of Anti-Semitic and Anti-Anti-Semitic Attitudes (pro-Jewish)—Modern Anti-Semitism. 1996 (Maximum indicator value = 3)

Education/Average	Anti-Semitic views	Pro-Jewish views	Total
Elementary	0.97	0.62	376
Basic vocational	0.88	1.17	289
High school	1.21	1.10	346
College	1.22	1.23	80

Not only does this table demonstrate that anti-anti-Semitic (pro-Jewish) views become more common as the level of education increases, it also shows the group of university-educated respondents is more polarized on this issue. In 1996, this group's value for a simplified version of the indicator for modern anti-Semitic attitudes was the highest, although at the same time the average for anti-anti-Semitic (pro-Jewish) attitudes also was at its highest.

Thus it is quite clear that increase in anti-Semitic attitudes (modern anti-Semitism) in the late 1990's also holds true among intellectuals. At the same time, here one can



also see an increase in the numbers of those who are not prone to anti-Semitic attitudes, and who are more positively inclined toward Jews. The growth of anti-Semitic attitudes among intellectuals is, however, a disturbing tendency, since well-educated individuals determine the tone of cultural changes, and this kind of polarization of attitudes among the intellectuals—who after all help mold public opinion—indicates that attitudes in broader social groups have undergone petrification. In addition, the views of some leaders help to perpetuate these old attitudes.

The following anomaly is related to the effect of the age factor. In general, the younger the age of the respondent, the lower the anti-Semitism indicator, and, for the most part, vice versa: the older the respondent, the more likely he or she was to have anti-Jewish attitudes. Already in 1992, however, we discovered an anomaly in this rather simple dependency: it has turned out—in relation to both traditional and modern anti-Semitism—that the oldest respondents, 65 years old or older, are less anti-Semitic than younger age groups. This pattern was confirmed later in the 1996 study as well: “individuals from the oldest age cohort (65 years old or older) are less anti-Semitic and more philosemitic than individuals from the second oldest age group (55–64 years old).”<sup>15</sup>

Finally, from the 1996 study we can see that respondents' church attendance patterns have a clear effect on their level of anti-Semitism, whose dependency—not taking into account educational level—was not important in the study done in the early 1990's (see Table 9 below).

Helena Datner-Spiewak, who elaborated the CBOS results, points out that individuals who do not attend church demonstrate the lowest level of anti-Semitism and the highest level of anti-anti-Semitism, i.e. of pro-Jewish attitudes.

Table 9

Church Attendance and Average Level of Anti-Semitism. 1996. Simplified Modern Anti-Semitism Indicator. Maximum value = 3

Church attendance:	R (average)	N (number)
Several times a week	1.16	49
Once a week	1.01	609
Several times a year	1.12	316
Does not attend	0.91	115

The CBOS study also made it possible to examine the dependency between general political orientation and the level of anti-Semitism and pro-Jewish attitudes. As it turned out, those on the political right demonstrate the highest level of anti-Semitism and lowest level of pro-Jewish attitudes. Those on the left, on the other hand, demonstrate high levels of both anti-Semitism and anti-anti-Semitism. Supporters of the left are thus clearly divided into two groups: anti-Semites and anti-anti-Semites.

Among those who in 1995 voted for the current Polish president, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, a left-wing politician, 66% did not display anti-Semitic attitudes, and

<sup>15</sup> *Żydzi i Polacy w opinii badanych* [Respondents' Views on Jews and Poles], Research report (Warsaw: CBOS, November 1996), p. 19.

46% showed the highest level of anti-Semitism. Among the more right-wing supporters of Lech Wałęsa, on the other hand, the proportions were reversed: 34% and 54%, respectively.

This data lends strong support to our thesis that the polarization among intellectuals is unusually strong, since it is individuals with the highest educational levels who most often declare their political beliefs and participate in elections.

The significant role that church attendance played in the late 1990's in the formation of anti-Jewish views clearly suggests that the Catholic Church has had a negative influence on attitude formation. In 1992, it seemed that post-Vatican II trends were having a positive effect on the Polish Church. After analyzing the results of the 1996 study, however, this view must be modified: the atmosphere has clearly changed. Religiosity seems to encourage negative feelings and anti-Semitism, albeit in its modern, political form. In the early 1990's, it seemed that despite the presence of anti-Semitic priests, church attendance did not have much influence on anti-Semitism. Andrzej Zbikowski, analyzing methods of socialization that give rise to anti-Semitism, clearly showed that in 1992, the Catholic Church was not active in trying to convey and perpetuate anti-Semitic attitudes.<sup>16</sup>

Currently more care needs to be taken in formulating such optimistic conclusions: support for anti-Semitic ideology can be found among some of the Polish clergy, including bishops. It must also be pointed out, however, that over the last two years, the Polish Episcopate has approved important documents condemning anti-Semitism and calling for an ecumenical attitude towards their "elder brothers in faith." This expression, coined by the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz, has been used, following the example of the Pope himself, who has been using this phrase recently, such as during his pilgrimage to Israel in March 2000. The bishops also apologized in the name of the Church for anti-Semitism during the Jubilee celebrations in 2000, all of which suggests a polarization of attitudes and views may be present within the Church itself.

### The Poles' National Identity, Views, and Attitudes toward Jews

The next question we shall discuss here is an intriguing one. Demonstrating that the most common variety of anti-Semitism in Poland is not the traditional, religiously-inspired one, but rather the modern, ideological variety, whose concepts are the same in Poland as they are anywhere else in the world, proved rather easy. In the studies we reviewed before embarking on our own project, we were struck by to what degree Poles kept their emotional distance from the subject, and by their tendency to declare their "dislike of Jews." We were left with the problem of how to explain this. The following views constitute the framework of *anti-Semitic ideology*: 1) "Jews have most of world finance in their hands"; 2) "Jews always support each other" (with the understanding that this is to the detriment of those among whom they are living); and

<sup>16</sup> A. Zbikowski, "Źródła wiedzy Polaków o Żydach: socjalizacja postaw," [Poles' Sources of Knowledge about Jews: The Socialization of Attitudes] in *Czy Polacy są antysemitami...*, op. cit., p. 65 ff. Cf. also I. Krzemiński, "Polacy i Żydzi w świetle badania socjologicznego," ["Poles and Jews in Sociological Research"] *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* no. 3 (1995): 103, Table 1.

3) "Jews secretly strive to rule" (in any situation, but with the tacit understanding that they want to rule the world). These elements were very clearly present in the 1992 study, confirming the sense of modern antisemitic attitudes. The questions on this subject were not repeated in 1996, but we can assume that the content of antisemitic beliefs did not change significantly. Regardless of whether or not the individual tended to believe the above statements or not, he or she could express a "dislike" of Jews.

In 1992, we asked respondents about this directly, and received the following answers: 46% of respondents agreed with the statement "Poles do not like Jews," whereas only 25% disagreed with the statement. Thus, there must be an entire group of attitudes which nevertheless can be described as "dislike" although they do not deserve to be called "anti-Semitic" in the strong sense of that term adopted in our study: they are manifestations of rather negative feelings toward Jews, or suspicion of them. Using Langmuir's terminology, this "dislike of Jews" would be linked to a xenophobic stereotype connected with them. The hypothesis that we have formulated in order to explain this phenomenon is a rather complex one.

First, it assumes the view presented in the first part of this article that not every manifestation of dislike and criticism of Jews deserves to be called "anti-Semitism" (we based ourselves on G. I. Langmuir, cited above). This inclined us to construct a hypothesis linking attitudes toward Jews with the content of national identity.

Formulating one of our study's main hypotheses, I assumed that Poles consider Jews to be an ethnic group, or rather nation, and as such are defined in both cultural and religious terms. Something that may be termed the "deep structure" of Polish national identity, and thus as the "core" of Poles' own understanding of themselves and of the Polish experience, is based on opposition to the image of the Jews, and an opposition of who they are and what they are like. I assumed this opposition was not the only one essential to defining this "core" of national identity, and that an opposition to the Germans also played an important role, but that the opposition to Jews has had a more fundamental significance.

The hypothesis also assumed that the opposition to the Russians, though especially significant in the definition of "Polishness," setting its Western European, Roman Catholicism against Russia's Orthodox Christianity, did not translate into a day to day comparison of Poles and Russians. In everyday terms—except of course for situations during wartime and political opposition—such as during the 1980's, for example—the attitude toward Russians has not so important in terms of defining "Polishness" as the 1992 survey seems to suggest. Emotions associated with the Russian stereotype turn out to be much weaker than we had expected, and weaker than those associated with the German and Jewish stereotypes.

Coming back to the definition of a national identity: in short, we may assume scholars investigating the question of identity distinguish for the most part between its two levels. One of these is more incontestable and unchanging, whereas the second one continues to change. For example, Paweł Boski, in his study of the changes in national identity among émigrés, distinguishes between a clear, unchanging level of "criterial identity" and "correlative identity," with respect to both "individual iden-

tity" and "social identity."<sup>17</sup> Our "core" of Polishness would correspond to "criterial identity," or would be its determinant.

From our perspective, Paweł Boski's research on national identity had interesting results: he found that the content of Poles' national correlative identity has been established on the basis of an opposition of certain *value categories*. Positive features have been attributed to the "good Poles," and the negative features to the "bad Poles," as well as to representatives of other nationalities (in Boski's research, these were Americans and Canadians).<sup>18</sup> Without delving into the content of those images just yet, I would like to note that the image of one's own national identity was established by those interviewed through axiological oppositions that define a scale of values, confirmed for the most part by our intuition, as expressed in the hypothesis.

Our hypothesis assumed that the definition of "Polishness" is not something openly declared; rather, it falls into the realm of the unconscious as understood by Freud, or that of Jung's "collective subconscious." Moreover, "Polishness" is in part defined by competition with Jews to be "better," or morally and culturally "superior," as a people. This would be the sense of taking the "core of identity" to be self-definition in relation to others. In anthropology, research on ethnic identity, and thus on national identity, has assumed that a group's own identity is defined in opposition to others, as in Frederic Barth's classic work.<sup>19</sup> Zbigniew Bokszański cites Eisenstadt and Giesen,<sup>20</sup> who argue that collective identity is understood as something created through the construction of borders or divisions,<sup>21</sup> an idea very similar to our description here. Important is that the categories of opposition in Boski's research describing one's own identity in contrast to the "Other" clearly contained a moral component, which also is in keeping with the assumption of our hypothesis.

Here, however, my concept differs slightly from that of Boski. Basing himself on Antonina Kłoskowska's theoretical reflections, he sees criterial identity as an effect of *culturalization*, built upon indisputable knowledge about cultural symbols. This would mean example, taking the Wawel castle, the Marian shrine at Jasna Góra, or the holidays of November 1<sup>st</sup> (All Saints' Day) and 11<sup>th</sup> (Poland's Independence Day) as symbols of Polishness.<sup>22</sup> In other words, our "core of Polishness" would not be an

<sup>17</sup> Paweł Boski, "O byciu Polakiem w ojczyźnie i o zmianach tożsamości kulturowo-narodowej na obczyźnie," [On Being a Pole in Poland and On the Changes in Cultural and National Identity among Émigrés] in P. Boski, M. Jarymowicz, and H. Malewska-Peyre, *Tożsamość a odmiennosc kulturowa* [Identity and Cultural Otherness]. Warszawa: 1992. Description of this issue on pp. 92-93, 98-101, and 101-102. Cf. also P. Boski, "Remaining a Pole or Becoming a Canadian: National Self-identity among Polish Immigrants to Canada," in *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 21, no. 1 (1991): 41-77.

<sup>18</sup> P. Boski, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-141, 143.

<sup>19</sup> F. Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964.

<sup>20</sup> S. Eisenstadt and B. Giesen, *The Construction of Collective Identity*, cited by Zbigniew Bokszański, "Tożsamość aktora społecznego a zmiana społeczna" [The Identity of Social Actors and Social Change], in: J. Kurczewska, ed., *Zmiana społeczna: teoria i doświadczenie polskie* [Social Change: Theory and the Polish Experience] Warszawa: Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii PAN, 1999.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>22</sup> A. Kłoskowska, "Kultury narodowe i narodowa identyfikacja: dwoistość funkcji," [National Cultures and National Identification] in: A. Kłoskowska, (ed.), *Oblicza polskości* [Aspects of Polishness]. Warszawa: University of Warsaw, 1990.

image of our own group with *moral content*, but rather a *representation* in individual consciousness of symbols having an unquestionably national character.

Correlative identity would be subject to the process of *socialization*, on the other hand—and it is that identity which is founded on what [Boski] calls “hidden normative assumptions,” basing himself on J. Reykowski. These are understood in the form of opposition, which, once again, is in keeping with our concept here. Boski, without referring to psychoanalytical concepts, understands the normative content of correlative national identity as for the most part *unconscious*, and not even subject to reflection, or a conscious, intellectual “treatment.”<sup>23</sup>

In such an understanding, the indisputable, unchanging symbols of national identity represent something highly intellectual, a subject of reflection and careful consideration. The content of correlative identity, on the other hand, has a normative character, and is thus morally “charged,” having been created on the basis of experience. Thus, by definition it is subject to change and external influence. Why, however, would correlative identity represent such an inherent part of a person that only in exceptional situations would it be subject to reflection and conscious intellectual “treatment”? Such a supposedly fundamental difference in these two types of identity is difficult to accept, which is why at this point our concepts clearly diverge from Boski’s.

My assumption is that the “core of Polishness,” corresponding to *criteria identity*, is comprised of *normative assumptions* that are not entirely conscious ones. These determine the evaluative, emotional character of the content that constitutes Polish identity. The moral, evaluative, and emotional components of one’s sense of identity hamper intellectual attempts to understand it. At the same time, the more “external” layer of identity, subject to change (for example national stereotypes that might be voices, as well as the Polish auto-stereotype) is not only easier to consider, but is to a significant extent modified on a day to day basis—here Boski argues the opposite. Upon reflection, people may reconsider the elements of this layer of identity, making the symbols chosen as the unquestionable signs of one’s own nation subject to change.

Our main hypothesis, based on theoretical intuition, linked Polish-Jewish competition—and Poles’ resultant self-definition in opposition to Jews—to the Romantic vision of Poland as the “Christ of nations.” By “intuition,” I hoped to express the difficulty of a clear operationalization (to put it in sociological terms) of the perceived contents of national identity, despite the fact that people somehow succeed in communicating it to each other. Paweł Boski also notes this difficulty, recognizing his reconstruction of the content of national identity as being rather arbitrary, though not entirely. Boski writes: “The simplest answer to the question of how we came up with the test [measuring correlative national identity—I.K.] is: ‘from our own observations and experiences, complemented by suggestions from other émigrés’ (...).”<sup>24</sup> Other authors, such as Marcin Frybès and Patrick Michel, have attempted ground their reconstruction of Polish national identity in Romantic and

<sup>23</sup> P. Boski, op. cit., p. 102, and his later discussion there on the content of national identity.

<sup>24</sup> P. Boski, op. cit., p. 119. Also P. Boski, *Remaining a Pole...*, op. cit.



Neo-Romantic nineteenth-century literature. In their opinion, this literature contributed to the framework by which "Polishness" is experienced and understood, and whose relevance persists today, even when people are not aware of the significance of in how they construe their own experiences. Their analysis is basically in agreement with the one presented here, although they used a somewhat different terminology: they take the Romantic myth of the Polish nation as the basis for national identity (which we call the "core of Polishness").<sup>25</sup>

Historical experience, fundamental to a nation's survival and its various "traits," would thus be included in this mishmash that is auto-definition, something which cannot be fully expressed. This would provide the basic content for national identity's "core." It would assume an image depicting Poles as having lofty morals, and *selfless* in their most essential motives: *without regard for their own interest* and pressures of a given situation, they are *true to their professed values* (fighting "for your freedom and ours"), and *to the vows that they have made*. Categories of opposition immediately come to mind: Poles are not like Jews—they are always loyal, but *only to their own people*. They are also unlike Germans or Jews, who know how to *take advantage of the situation for their own benefit*, and thus to put their own interest above vows they might have made.

It is worth noting here that Jewish movements may have adopted religious and national Messianism in Polish areas even earlier than Poles.<sup>26</sup> These Polish and Jewish Messianic aspirations (and also demands) were clearly in competition—but, after all, there cannot be *two* Messiah-nations. "National Messianism" linked national identity with universal religious content, taken from the Western European Judeo-Christian tradition, such an important element of nationalistic ideology before the Second World War. Hence the "otherness" of Russia as the "external foe," on the one hand, and, on the other, the "otherness" of Jews, who were even more dangerous in that they were a kind of "internal foe." At the same time, their shared Biblical tradition, though dramatically divided and reinterpreted by Christianity, made it possible for both ethnic groups to vie for "moral superiority." Our hypothesis thus stated that the higher an individual's identification with the contents of national identity, as expressed by the Romantic-Messianic meaning of Polishness, the more distrustful, distanced, and competitive his or her attitude toward Jews will be. The hypothesis actually went even further by suggesting that a strong national identification may encourage people to accept anti-Semitic ideology and anti-Semitic attitudes.

By formulating our hypothesis in this way, we can explain the phenomenon of accusations of Polish "anti-Semitism without Jews" quite simply and clearly. Most

<sup>25</sup> Marcin Frybes and Patrick Michel, *Après le communisme: Mythes et légendes de la Pologne contemporaine*. Paris: Bayard, 1996, ch. III.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Jan Doktor, *Śladami Mesjasza—Apostaty: Żydowskie ruchy mesjańskie w XVII i XVIII wieku a problem konwersji* [In the Messiah's Footsteps—Apostates: Jewish Messianic Movements of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries and the Problem of Conversion.] Wrocław: Leopoldinum, 1998; "Frankizm jako odpowiedź na kryzys osiemnastowiecznego żydostwa polskiego" ["Frankism as an Answer to the Crisis of Eighteenth Century Polish Jewry"], *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* (158) no. II (1991); and *Jakub Frank i jego nauka* [Jakub Frank and his Teachings]. Warszawa: Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii PAN, 1991. Some of this author's theses may also be found in articles published in Germany.

important for this kind of attitude is an image of the world in which there are symbolic Jews, and not real, live Jews whom we actually encounter—or do not encounter—on a daily basis. The everyday absence of real Jews perpetuates a symbolic, stereotypical image of them. We can interpret the “vigilance” and the search for “covert Jews,” pretending to be Polish, as an attempt to obtain “empirical” evidence of this worldview, and also as a disturbing sign of the anti-Jewish tone present in Polish politics.

In addition, however, though the hypothesis went somewhat against the accusations engendered by this worldview, it has had surprising consequences. The most important has been the supposition that within the image of these relations, it should also be possible to find signs of respect for “fair play.” In other words, this means “respect for the enemy.” This implies that there is a need to take into account the context in which the respective achievements—both one’s own, and those of the enemy—are being compared. If this vying for moral and cultural superiority is an ulterior aspect of Polish-Jewish relations, generating constant tension between them, then one could expect that Poles would tend to respect Jewish achievements and evaluate their historical situation equitably, in the interest of “fair play.” Nevertheless, a player cannot speak of having won fair and square if one does not admit that, for example, the opponent was at a disadvantage, or that he himself has broken the rules.

By means of several very simple questions well suited to the task at hand, we have operationalized this complex theoretical construction, which I have tried to present here as concisely as possible.<sup>27</sup>

First, we asked not only whether Poles liked or disliked Jews (mentioned above), but, analogously, also whether Jews liked Poles or not. We assumed that the respondents could use the answer to that last question as justification for Poles’ apparent dislike of Jews.

This however did not turn out to be the case. Although almost 31% did admit that “Jews do not like Poles,” the same number said that the question was difficult to answer because they did not know Jews’ attitudes towards Poles. Nearly 25% disagreed with the statement (similar, thus, to the previous question), but 14% said that it is not possible to answer a question formulated in that way. If we add to this the percent answering “hard to say,” this makes a total of 45%! Thus, it is difficult to argue that those surveyed used the answer to the question about the attitude of Jews towards Poles as justification for Poles’ rather widely declared dislike of Jews (46% gave this answer)!

Second, the sense of national identity tied to the Messianic and Romantic understanding and experience of Polishness was examined with the following questions: “Can Poles feel proud of their history because they acted more nobly than other nations?” (the answers: “more nobly,” “less nobly,” and “neither more nor less nobly”); “Was the Polish nation wronged more frequently during its history than other nations were?” (answers ranging from “much more frequently” to “much less frequently,”

<sup>27</sup> The study’s hypotheses were formulated much earlier than the analysis of its results, and were described in Ireneusz Krzemiński, “Polski antysemityzm” [Polish Anti-Semitism], *Spoleczeństwo Otwarte* no. 11 (1992), and I. Krzemiński, “Anti-Semitism in Today’s Poland,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 27, no. 1 (1993), p. 127–135.

with "neither more nor less frequently" at the center). At the same time, we asked direct questions about national sentiments that can be described as having a "nationalistic" tone: "Do Poles have more positive traits than other peoples?" (possible answers were "more positive traits," "fewer positive traits," "they are not any different than other peoples"). We also asked an analogical question about Jews as a people: "Do Jews have more positive traits than other peoples?" (the possible answers were identical to those for the question regarding Polish traits).

In the 1992 survey, 45% of those surveyed said that Poles behaved more nobly than other nations, and only 3.5% said that their behavior was less noble; 40% said that Poles were neither more nor less noble than other nations. These data can be compared with the following results: 17% of those surveyed believed that Poles have more positive traits than other peoples, 7% that they have fewer such traits, and 66% stated that Poles are no different than other peoples in this respect. Thus, it is difficult to speak of a heightening of nationalistic sentiment, at least of the sort implying a megalomaniacal pride of one's own people.

The answers about Jewish traits were practically the same: 15% said that Jews have more positive traits than other peoples, 8% that they had fewer (thus 1% more than in the analogous question regarding Poles), and 53.5% said that Jews are no different in this respect from other peoples. The percentage of those answering "I have no opinion on this subject" was more than double what it was in the analogous question regarding Polish traits. These results once again show that the respondents did not use answers to this question as a means of expressing their own negative or positive opinion of Jews. Rather, they answered in line with their own real experience and knowledge, which had been gained, for the most part, in the absence of any direct contact with Jews: only 30% of those surveyed had personal contact with Jews.

The percentage of those stating that the Polish nation had historically been the victim of injustice more frequently than other nations was significantly higher: 78% of those questioned said that this had indeed been the case. "Neither more nor less frequently" was chosen by 15% of those surveyed, and only 1.5% of those interviewed actually were brave enough to venture that Poles suffered less frequently than other nations. I use the word "brave" here because it is quite clear that we can speak of a general agreement in the country as far as the image of the "suffering Pole" in history is concerned. Although the answer agreeing with the idea that the Polish nation had some especially noble quality in history was not so frequent, these cases comprise a clear agglomeration which we believe confirms the assumption that the most common sign of "Polishness" has its roots in the Romantic Messianic vision of the nation. It is not surprising, then, that such a high value should be placed on suffering.

This vision—or myth—of Polishness proposed by Frybes and Michel appears elsewhere, too, particularly in the national auto-stereotype. Although respondents actually suggested there were more negative than positive features in the image of Poles, this changed when we asked about the traits of the "nation" as such: in the image of the *Polish nation*, the percentage of positive traits grew. Psychological tests prompted us to pose this kind of double question regarding the stereotype of one's

own nation. According to Mirosław Kofta, we can speak of two different kinds of group stereotyping. People attribute certain character traits to representatives of a given group in two ways: either the group stereotype becomes a generalization of the most frequent traits exhibited by individuals of a certain group ("exemplary stereotype"), or assumes that a group "as such" deserves certain traits, in which case anyone recognized as a member of the group must possess those traits (whether he or she wants to or not). Kofta speaks of these traits as the traits of "the collective soul."<sup>28</sup> This is why we first asked about the traits of Poles, and then about the traits of the Polish nation. The fact that we received different answers confirms the psychologists' assumption. Although the respondents believed that the "average Pole" has more negative traits, the "Polish nation" was seen in a much more positive light.

On the other hand, correlative analyses indicate that the nationalistic conviction that "Poles historically acted more nobly" depends on education: the lower the level of education, the more frequent this conviction is, while this becomes a minority view among the college-educated group. Nevertheless, all groups recognize the nation's suffering in history: over 60% of those with a university education chose the "suffering" interpretation of history, while among those with an elementary school education, this figure was 90%.

The fact that 40% of those surveyed chose not to answer, which could suggest that they identify with the Romantic model of Polishness, nevertheless does not disprove the thesis that this can be regarded as the prevailing "deep structure" of national identification. This is because it has turned out that there is no other clear rival model of Polishness competing with the Romantic-Messianic one. Even those who try to refute this model of Polishness in fact yield to it, at least in part, when selecting several of its elements in specific situations.

Moreover, from correlative analyses we see that the "syndrome" of national identification is comprised of both affirmative and critical attitudes toward one's own nation. Only some of those who deny any kind of special national characteristics agree that nations do differ with any consistency, but they are nevertheless unable to come up with a uniform basis for assessing those differences.

In his work cited above, Paweł Boski attempted to provide a precise definition of the content of Polish national identity. From our point of view, it is interesting that the basic framework for positive national identification consisted of a group of convictions according to which Poles or the Polish nation are especially attached to humanistic and social values. As Boski has written: "The basis for the correlative Polish identity is the world of humanistic values (interpersonal, social, cultural) and a rejection of the business world. *The prototype (and perhaps even archetype) of the ideal Pole is, however, unsurpassed for "I" in matters of altruistic engagement on behalf*

<sup>28</sup> M. Kofta and G. Sędek, "Struktura poznawcza stereotypu etnicznego, bliskość wyborów parlamentarnych a przejawy antysemityzmu" [The Cognitive Structure of Ethnic Stereotypes, The Proximity of Parliamentary Elections, and Manifestations of Anti-Semitism] *Kolokwia Psychologiczne* no. 1, 1992. The content of national stereotypes, on the other hand, was analyzed in the 1992 study by Alina Cala in "Autostereotyp i stereotypy narodowe" [Autostereotype and National Stereotypes], in I. Krzemiński (ed.), *Czy Polacy są antysemitami?* [Are Poles Anti-Semites?], op. cit.

*of social causes* [my emphasis, I.K.]”<sup>29</sup> Although this formulation is rather general, I refer to it because by providing a description using a completely different symbolic language, it points to elements of Polishness that are completely analogical to our Romantic-Messianic model. Boski’s description fits both the conviction that Poles have been especially noble in history (doing what they should, even to the detriment of their own interests), as well as their taking up the fight “for our freedom and yours,” and the belief that Poles are especially hospitable and open. One could say that it should be no surprise that they had their share of suffering in history... Especially since the defense of Western moral and religious values not only meant that Poles had to wage battles against the enemies of these values, as Frybes and Michel argue, but also that they had to strive to base their own national, independent existence on those same values by taking them as the basis for their own social and political order. For this reason, Boski’s description of national identity is interesting in yet one more way: it juxtaposes the altruism of Poles and the selfishness of people of other ethnic groups, as well as that of bad Poles.

In Boski’s studies, Americans represented the world of “self-serving business,” but it is that juxtaposition of altruism and dedication to one’s own interest and to pragmatism is one of the most important in the opposition of Pole-German and Pole-Jew. Most often, Jews are described in symbolic representations as an exploiter of Poles—and in their very own country, it should be added.

The results of the 1996 study confirmed this. The questionnaire contained an open-ended question on what kinds of associations the words “the Jewish nation” called to mind. Descriptions connected with trade were very common, with 11% of respondents mentioning neutral descriptions (traders, etc.), while 9% of those surveying citing negative opinions (swindlers, exploiters). To this must be added the 2% who mentioned the saying “your streets, our buildings” [*wasze ulice, nasze kamienice*], which was one of the slogans (supposedly a saying popular with arrogant, rich Jews) from an interwar anti-Semitic campaign in Poland. The image of Jews as swindlers or exploiters stems from the belief that Jews always act in the interest of their own national group, in stark contrast to the altruistic Poles, who subordinate their own activities to values common to all humanity, basing themselves on the teachings of the Catholic West.

In order to test our hypothesis, at least partially, we decided to ask a series of questions on the respondents’ knowledge about the Holocaust. We assumed that if our hypothesis was correct, a strong identification with Polishness should influence the opinions and assessments regarding the past that we asked about in the questionnaire. The data related to this question will now be presented.

First, we asked who suffered most during the war as a nation, Poles or Jews. Second, we asked to assess Poles’ behavior during the occupation: whether Poles could have saved more Jews, and whether Poles have any reason to feel guilty for their behavior during the occupation. (The question appeared in the survey twice, in different formulations and positions.)

<sup>29</sup> Pawel Boski, *O byciu Polakiem...* [On Being a Pole...], op. cit., p. 143.

The question about the suffering of Poles and Jews during the German occupation was ideally suited for our aim, making it possible to test our main hypothesis. We expected that the element of "giving credit where it is due" (i.e. "justice") would be present in assessments of the past. The position of Jews and Poles relative to the occupier, however, differed significantly.

The results of the survey were very interesting. By far the most frequent answer (46% in the 1992 survey) was that Jews suffered more during the war. Only (?) 6% of those questioned said that Poles had suffered more, and one-third—33%—believed both nations had suffered "equally".

This question was repeated in the 1996 survey. Here is a comparison of the results:

Table 10  
Suffering of Both Nations (Polish and Jewish) During the War. Data in % (rounded)

Nations' suffering	1992	1996
Jewish nation suffered more than the Polish nation	46	39
Jewish nation suffered less than the Polish nation	6	4.5
Both suffered equally	32	47
Hard to compare	12	5.5
Hard to say	4	4

Shifting the answer in the direction of what could be called a "mechanically just" opinion, by dividing the wartime suffering between Poles and Jews equally, gives an interesting insight into the dynamics of these attitudes. I believe that this tendency can be explained as the result of a clearly confrontational attitude toward Jews, accepted by a large group of those surveyed in the assessment of past sufferings of both nations. The spread of the belief that both nations suffered "equally," it would seem, is in itself a kind of reaction—an answer to the image of the special suffering of the Jewish nation during the occupation, which currently has a strong place in world opinion. Many Poles believe that this is an unfair image of the wartime years, because it overlooks the suffering of Poles and the Polish nation. Many comments in the press during 1998–1999 expressed this opinion, instructing people to resist the view often presented in the media (especially the American media) that Jews' suffering was of a special kind, and to protest the "lack of appreciation" of Poles' suffering. This is particularly apparent, for example, in the discussion that took place from July to September 1998 in the Warsaw daily *Życie*.<sup>30</sup>

In 1992, 45% of those surveyed said that Poles could not have saved more Jews, while 20% said that they could have; the same percentage said it was "hard to say." Slightly fewer respondents, fifteen percent, said that they could not answer that question. This last possibility was not an option in the 1996 question, but the percentage of answers "hard to say"—corresponding to two categories of the question in 1992—decreased by 10%. The percent of those who believe that Poles could not save more Jews did not change much—it was slightly more than 46%, whereas the

<sup>30</sup> Specific examples may be found in the discussion that took place in the Warsaw daily *Życie* from July to September 1998. The article had been written before the case of Jedwabne and Jan T. Gross' *Neighbors*.

percent of those critical towards the Poles answering that Poles could indeed have saved more Jews, grew to 27%.

The vast majority of those questioned in 1992—eighty-seven percent—believed that Poles helped Jews during the war “as much as they could.” Twelve percent, however, were of the opinion that “they could have done more.” The percentage stating that Poles had reasons to feel guilty was 10%, and just a slightly higher percentage, twelve percent, said that it was not possible to answer the question, while 68% of those surveyed were certain that Poles have no reason to feel guilty. Since this question was not repeated in 1996, we can only state that the Poles’ increased criticism towards their fellow Poles in 1996 was at the same time accompanied by an increase in the popularity of the opinion that Poles suffered no less than Jews did during the war. This confirms our first thesis about the distinct polarization of attitudes and views on matters of Polish-Jewish relations.

The results of the correlative analyses, however, proved most interesting. The link between strong national identification and attitudes toward the Holocaust, and assessments of Poles’ behavior in conjunction with it, turned out to be less obvious than we thought. We also tested whether the declared level of anti-Semitic attitude influences one’s image of the Holocaust (see tables 11 and 12).

Table 11

The Level of Anti-Semitism and National Suffering, 1992. Figures in %

Level of anti-Semitism		Suffered more during the war:				
		Jews	Poles	both suffered the same	hard to compare	hard to say
None	0	41	3.5	30	19.5	6
Weak	1	57	6	27	9.5	0.5
	2	40	8	40	10	2
	3	38	12	37	9	4
Strong	4	50	6	39	5	0

( $p=0.0000$ )

Table 12

Modern Anti-Semitism and Poles’ Sense of Guilt, 1992. Figures in %

anti-Semitism		Do Poles have reason to feel guilty:			
		yes	no	hard to say	not possible to answer
None	0	9.5	62	12.5	16
Weak	1	12	70	10	8
	2	14	68	9	9
	3	7.5	75	8.5	9
Strong	4	7	73	11	9

( $p=0.05$ )

As the data in the tables clearly shows, antisemitic attitudes constitute a factor not dependent on one's national affirmation, since the content of national identity can provide the inspiration for both philosemitic and anti-Semitic attitudes. "Pro-Polish" attitudes, which affirm the national interpretation of the past, are not necessarily linked at all to strong anti-Semitism—i.e. the manifestation of anti-Semitic attitudes in the strict sense. Moreover, rather paradoxically, those who answered in an anti-Jewish manner to our indicator questions, and can thus be justifiably called "partial anti-Semites," most often said that they believed Poles had reason to feel guilty toward the Jews (second of the tables included here). On the other hand, not surprisingly, strong anti-Semitism increased respondents' certainty that Poles do not have any reason to feel guilty.

Anti-Semites, however, were more likely to say that Jews suffered more during the war than people who did not give any anti-Jewish answers, which is the first piece of empirical evidence supporting our hypothesis regarding Polish-Jewish "moral" competition. In this respect, regardless of any anti-Jewish attitude, these respondents "gave credit where credit was due."

The data presented in the following tables (Tables 13, 14, 15) illustrate the direct dependency between views on the Holocaust and a sense of national identification.

Some of the results can be understood with no further explanation. They confirm the self-evident assumption that among those who affirm their own nation by asserting it exhibits more positive traits than other nations, and that it has been the victim more often in history than other nations, there are more people who believe that the suffering of the Polish people during the German occupation was greater than that of the Jewish people. Analogously, individuals critical of their own nation (who accept the view that "Poles acted less nobly") more often than others surveyed believed that their compatriots could in fact have saved more Jews during the occupation.

Table 13

**Polish National Traits and the Suffering of the Polish and Jewish Nations During the Second World War, 1992**

Polish traits		Suffered more during the war:				
		Jewish nation	Polish nation	Both suffered equally	Hard to compare	Hard to say
Poles have positive traits	<i>N</i>	92	22	46	9	3
	%	53	13	27	5	2
Fewer than other	<i>N</i>	32	3	18	8	2
	%	50.5	5	28.5	13	3
No different than others	<i>N</i>	290	32	239	86	14
	%	44	5	36	13	2
No opinion	<i>N</i>	43	3	23	22	13
	%	41.5	3	22	21	12.5
Total	<i>N</i> =1000	457	60	326	125	32
	%	46	6	32.5	12.5	3

$p=0.0000$ .



Table 14

Poles as Victims of Injustice in History, and the Suffering of Poles and Jews  
During the Second World War. 1992

Poles in history		Suffered more during the war:				
Were the victims of injustice		Jewish nation	Polish nation	Both suffered equally	Difficult to compare	Hard to say
More often than others	<i>N</i> %	362 46	54 7	262 33.5	84 11	19 2.5
Neither more nor less often	<i>N</i> %	74 48.5	3 2	48 31.5	23 15	5 3
Less often than others	<i>N</i> %	5 38.5	— 0	5 38.5	3 23	— 0
Hard to say	<i>N</i> %	18 31	3 5	13 22.5	16 27.5	8 14
Total	<i>N</i> =1005 %=100	459 46	60 6	328 33	126 12	32 3

$p = 0.00001.$

Table 15

Poles' Conduct in History and the Rescuing of Jews. 1992

Poles' conduct		Could Poles have rescued more Jews			
Historically, Poles have behaved		Yes	No	Hard to say	Cannot give an answer
More nobly than others	<i>N</i> %	85 19	241 53	75 17	50 11
Less nobly than others	<i>N</i> %	9 26	20 59	— 0	5 15
Neither more nor less nobly than others	<i>N</i> %	93 23	160 39	94 23	60 15
Difficult to say	<i>N</i> %	17 15	35 30	33 28	31 27
Total	<i>N</i> =1008 %=100	204 20	456 45	202 20	146 15

$p = 0.0000.$

Many more surprising elements emerged: for example, those critical of their own nation most often said that it had not been possible to save more Jews during the war (Table 15), which was also more often than those affirming their own nation (Table 15). At the same time, those who were very much convinced of Poles' unusually positive traits admitted more often than any other group that the Jews in fact had suffered more than the Poles (Table 13), which can be seen as conforming to the actual historical truth in this case. Of course, individuals affirming the Polish nation could say that historical truth actually shows that Poles during the war did not suffer less than the Jews. This was the point of view expressed in *Życie*. Thus it should be said that although the German occupier strove to exterminate certain groups of Poles,

Jews were undeniably the ones who had been doomed for extermination according to Nazi plans, which is why the word "Holocaust" is written with a capital "H".

Thus we can speak of a certain pattern: those who are critical and those who express approbation of their own nation often express similar opinions, as if despite their differing assessments of their own nation's behavior, an interest in defending their country's good name produces similar results.

The lack of coherence in the tables has, however, proved more interesting: in places, the data refute the simplest hypothetical conclusion—that the strongest national identification should be clearly reflected in the choice of pro-Polish assessments of the wartime situation. Meanwhile, the incongruities in the tables can be interpreted in light of our main hypothesis on Polish-Jewish competition. Despite the fact that the differences in percentages are not very large, they comprise a uniform model and can be interpreted in a manner surprisingly in keeping with the consequences of the hypothesis. As mentioned already, we basically expected the answers on respondents' awareness of the Holocaust and their assessment of Poles' comportment during the war to be conditioned by a strong national identification and by their acceptance of the content of Polish identity. Our hypothesis assumed, however, as described above, that the "fair-play" attitude (i.e. admitting in the interest of one's own honor that the opponent has won fair and square when that is in fact the case) would have an impact. We treated this consequence of the main hypothesis regarding Polish-Jewish competition more as a purely theoretical possibility, not really expecting in the least that we would actually be able to see evidence of this in the correlation tables.

As it turns out, at least some of the results, especially the incongruities and incoherence apparent in the tables, can most easily be interpreted if viewed in terms of this hypothesis. Similarly, individuals having a critical attitude toward the Polish nation (*Poles historically have behaved less nobly than other nations*) were not more prone to believe that Poles have reason to feel guilty for their behavior—in fact, of all groups, they are least likely to hold this belief (compare Table 16).

Table 16

Poles' Behavior in History and Guilt for Their Wartime Behavior. 1992. Figures in %

Poles in history	Do Poles have cause to feel guilty			
	Yes	No	Hard to say	Not possible to answer
Acted comparably to others				
More nobly	8	72	11.5	8.5
Less nobly	6	76	14	4
Neither more nor less nobly	12	67	11	10
Hard to say	10	50	19	21

$N=1005; p=0.00045.$

Individuals within that same category, it will be recalled, were the ones who most frequently stated that Poles could not have saved more Jews during the period of the occupation (Table 15). Meanwhile, those most critical of their own nation's behavior during the Second World War were those who most obviously distanced themselves

from the Romantic-Messianic content of Polish national identity. They also were most likely to select assessments and views treating Jews and Poles *equally* (data in Table 13), thus defusing the tension between the Polish and Jewish interpretations of wartime history.

Although this question requires further analysis and a more thorough investigation of the partial dependencies, we nevertheless have clear clues here suggesting the consequences of the hypothesis regarding the competitive character of national identity would be confirmed.

In closing, we can underscore the significance of the hypothesis regarding Poles' "dislike" of Jews, manifested primarily in the fact that Poles keep their distance from Jews emotionally speaking, and in their competitive attitude toward them. In addition, this "dislike" can also be seen in the way that Poles remember the war, and in the image they have of both nations, as well as in their lack of knowledge about the Jewish Holocaust. This competition also reveals itself in the way that the wartime years and occupation are interpreted, which means there is good cause to speak of separate "Polish" and "Jewish" interpretations of wartime history.

Our study did not, on the other hand, confirm our assumption that a strong national identification makes people more inclined to associate themselves with anti-Semitic attitudes, particularly with modern anti-Semitism. Our results make it possible for us to speak of anti-Semitic attitudes developing independently of feelings of national identity, appearing, when they do, most probably in situations involving historical assessments.

A certain class of attitudes should, however, be singled out, which albeit rather unfriendly toward Jews are not anti-Semitic in the strict sense. These attitudes may make use of elements taken from antisemitic ideology, it is true, but their content has been shaped more by the content of national identity, a process that is not always entirely a conscious one. Paradoxical as it may seem, one can say that if anti-Semitism exists today in Poland, it manifests itself as an attitude that is based on modern, universal anti-Semitic ideology. This is nothing unusual. At the same time, however, there is a particular kind of attitude toward Jews based on simplistic views of Poland's complicated history, as well as the complex issue of Polish-Jewish relations. This kind of attitude is in fact quite distinctive to Poles, and would constitute a useful basis for further, more thorough studies.