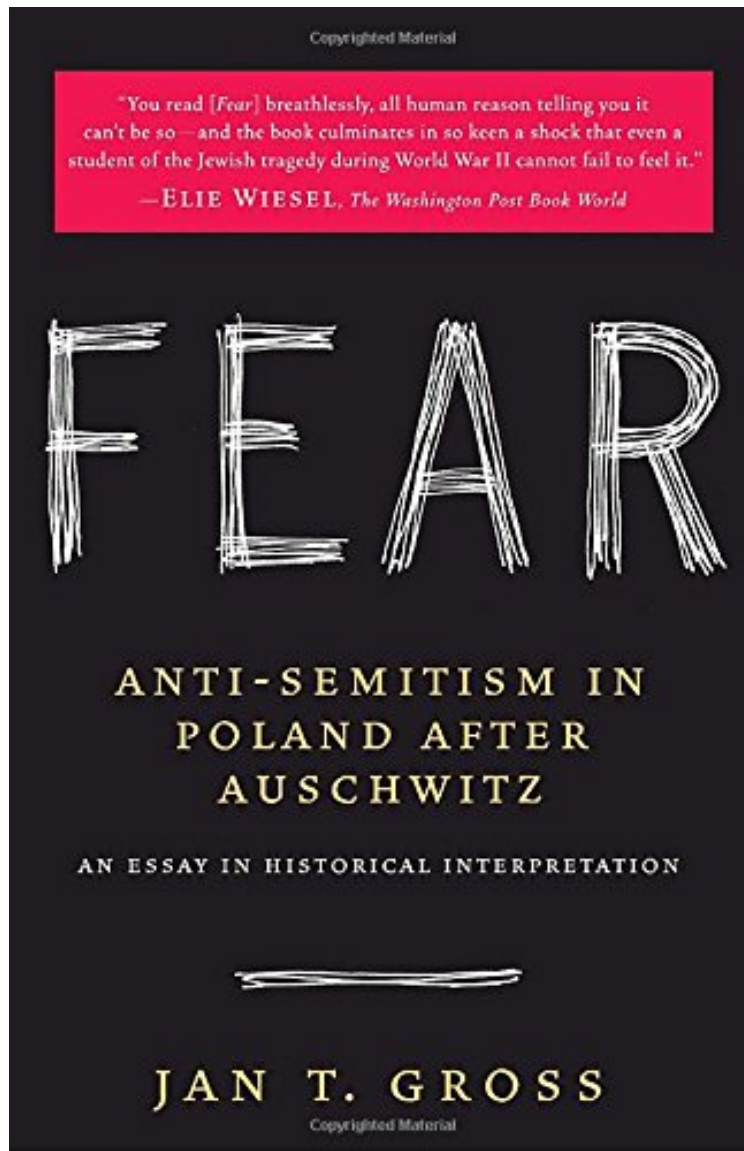


## Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz

Jan Gross

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#891740 in Books Jan Gross 2007-08-14 2007-08-14 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .70 x 5.301, .58 #File Name: 0812967461336 pages Fear Anti Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz | File size: 57.Mb

**Jan Gross : Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GreatBy DeniseHusband loved it 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Devastating IndictmentBy Magda Denes There have been a number of reviews both accepting and dismissing of Mr. Gross' book, FEAR. Do beware these low-star reviews which, for the most part, are by revisionist Polish Nationalists who have an antisemitic agenda to deny Polish involvement and rewrite history. They want to be

worse victims than the Jews they helped murder.. The author has thoroughly researched the incidents and typical daily life in Poland experienced by Polish Jews after the war (and centuries earlier). Murderous prejudice is all too evident in a country (Poland) where there is not a very real, effective, and enforced rule of law. We do honor to these victims, remembering them by reading and telling their story and standing firm in pointing the accusatory finger at their murderers. It's been a long time since I've read FEAR. Now after reading it again, it is so violent, so gruesome, so heart-rending, frightening--one can only ask the question how could supposedly ordinary people commit mass murder? Because in these Polish minds, it was! justice, proven and sanctioned as evidenced by the militia, policemen, boy scouts, prison guards, who all joined in with the mob gathered around the building housing the Jews, all of whom participated in the slaughter of Polish Jews in Kielce. If you want truth in history, in Poland after! WWII, read Mr. Gross very painful telling of how a mob of Polish citizens, police, militia and boy scouts murdered their fellow citizens who were Jewish and had managed to survive the Holocaust. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Important research on Poland after the Holocaust By yona e eckstein My first reading of this book was in Polish. Was very impressed by the thorough research of documents, events and facts. Was angered by the response of Polish church to evidence presented . It is a must book in any library on the holocaust.

Poland suffered an exceedingly brutal Nazi occupation during the Second World War. Close to five million Polish citizens lost their lives as a result. More than half the casualties were Polish Jews. Thus, the second largest Jewish community in the world—only American Jewry numbered more than the three and a half million Polish Jews at the time—was wiped out. Over 90 percent of its members were killed in the Holocaust. And yet, despite this unprecedented calamity that affected both Jews and non-Jews, Jewish Holocaust survivors returning to their hometowns in Poland after the war experienced widespread hostility, including murder, at the hands of their neighbors. The bloodiest peacetime pogrom in twentieth-century Europe took place in the Polish town of Kielce one year after the war ended, on July 4, 1946. Jan Gross's *Fear* attempts to answer a perplexing question: How was anti-Semitism possible in Poland after the war? At the center of his investigation is a detailed reconstruction of the Kielce pogrom and the reactions it evoked in various milieus of Polish society. How did the Polish Catholic Church, Communist party workers, and intellectuals respond to the spectacle of Jews being murdered by their fellow citizens in a country that had just been liberated from a five-year Nazi occupation? Gross argues that the anti-Semitism displayed in Poland in the war's aftermath cannot be understood simply as a continuation of prewar attitudes. Rather, it developed in the context of the Holocaust and the Communist takeover: Anti-Semitism eventually became a common currency between the Communist regime and a society in which many had joined in the Nazi campaign of plunder and murder—and for whom the Jewish survivors were a standing reproach. Jews did not bring communism to Poland as some believe; in fact, they were finally driven out of Poland under the Communist regime as a matter of political expediency. In the words of the Nobel Prize—winning poet Czeslaw Milosz, Poland's Communist rulers fulfilled the dream of Polish nationalists by bringing into existence an ethnically pure state. For more than half a century, what happened to the Jewish Holocaust survivors in Poland has been cloaked in guilt and shame. Writing with passion, brilliance, and fierce clarity, Jan T. Gross at last brings the truth to light. Praise for *Fear* “You read [*Fear*] breathlessly, all human reason telling you it can't be so—and the book culminates in so keen a shock that even a student of the Jewish tragedy during World War II cannot fail to feel it.”—Elie Wiesel, *The Washington Post Book World* “Bone-chilling . . . [*Fear*] is illuminating and searing, a moral indictment delivered with cool, lawyerly efficiency that pounds away at the conscience with the sledgehammer of a verdict. . . . *Fear* takes on an entire nation, forever depriving Poland of any false claims to the smug, easy virtue of an innocent bystander to Nazi atrocities. . . . Gross' *Fear* should inspire a national reflection on why there are scarcely any Jews left in Poland. It's never too late to mourn. The soul of the country depends on it.”—Thane Rosenbaum, *Los Angeles Times Book Review* “Provocative . . . powerful and necessary . . . One can only hope that this important book will make a difference.”—Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Boston Globe* “Imaginative, urgent, and unorthodox . . . The ‘fear’ of Mr. Gross's title . . . is not just the fear suffered by Jews in a Poland that wished they had never come back alive. It is also the fear of the Poles themselves, who saw in those survivors a reminder of their own wartime crimes. Even beyond Mr. Gross's exemplary historical research and analysis, it is this lesson that makes *Fear* such an important book.”—*The New York Sun* “After all the millions dead, after the Nazi terror, a good many Poles still found it acceptable to hate the Jews among them. . . . The sorrows of history multiply: a necessary book.”—Kirkus (starred review) “Gross illustrates with eloquence and shocking detail that the bloodletting did not cease when the war ended. . . . This is a masterful work that sheds necessary light on a tragic and often-ignored aspect of postwar history.”—Booklist (starred review) “[*Fear*] tells a wartime horror story that should force Poles to confront an untold—and profoundly terrifying—aspect of their history.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review) From the Hardcover edition.

From *Publishers Weekly* Starred . [Signature] ed by Deborah E. Lipstadt Rarely does a small book force a country to confront some of the more sordid aspects of its history. Jan T. Gross's *Neighbors* did precisely that. Gross exposed how in 1941 half the Polish inhabitants of the town of Jedwabne brutally clubbed, burned and dismembered the town's

1,600 Jews, killing all but seven. The book was greeted with a terrible outcry in Poland. A government commission determined that not only did Gross get the story right but that many other cities had done precisely the same thing. Now Gross has written *Fear*, an even more substantial study of postwar Polish anti-Semitism. This book tells a wartime horror story that should force Poles to confront an untold—and profoundly terrifying—aspect of their history. *Fear* relates, in compelling detail, how Poles from virtually all segments of society persecuted the poor, emaciated and traumatized Holocaust survivors. Those who did not actually participate in the persecution, e.g., Church leaders and Communist officials, refused to use their influence to stop the pogroms, massacres and plundering of the Jews. The Communists used the anti-Semitism to consolidate their rule. Church leaders justified the blood libel charges. Even Polish historians have either ignored or tried to justify this anti-Semitism. Gross builds a meticulous case. He argues that this postwar persecution is "a smoking gun," which proves that during the war Poles not only acquiesced but, in many cases, actively assisted the Nazis in their persecution of the Jews. Had they been appalled by Germany's policies toward the Jews or tried to help the victims, Poles could never have engaged in such virulent anti-Semitism in the postwar period. Gross notes that when the Germans were trying to put down the Warsaw ghetto uprising, Poles—including children—not only cheered as Jewish snipers were spotted and killed but gleefully showed the Germans where Jews were hiding. Those Poles who helped Jews were often persecuted or even killed by their neighbors. I am troubled by references to "Polish death camps." They were not Polish death camps but camps the Germans placed in Poland. I have taken even stronger issue with the opinion voiced by many Jews that the "Poles were as bad as—and maybe worse than—the Germans." I argue that while there was a strong tradition of anti-Semitism in Poland, Poles never tried to murder Jews in a systematic fashion. After reading *Fear*, the next time I hear someone say the Poles were as bad as the Germans, I will probably still challenge that charge—after all the damage wrought by the Germans cannot be compared to what the Poles did—but my challenge will be far less forceful. I may even keep silent.

8 pages of photos. (July 4) Lipstadt is director of the Rabbi Donald Tam Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory University and the author of *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving*. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Professor Gross' widely acclaimed *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (2001) described the slaughter of Polish Jews by their fellow Poles as the Nazis watched approvingly. Now Gross illustrates with eloquence and shocking detail that the bloodletting did not cease when the war ended. Contrary to most expectations, many Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust wished to remain in Poland. After all, Jewish and Gentile Poles had generally coexisted peacefully, if not harmoniously, before the war, and many Polish Jews viewed themselves as staunch patriots. But when Jews attempted to return to their hometowns and to reclaim their property, tensions reached the boiling point; the explosion came in the town of Kielce, when the disappearance of an eight-year-old boy sparked the old blood libel of ritual murder. As the slaughter of Jews began, police and military officials either joined in the outrages or refused to intervene. In succeeding years, with the complicity of Communist authorities, the position of the remaining Polish Jews continued to deteriorate. By 1949, the goal of the Nazis had been achieved: Poland was essentially free of Jews. This is a masterful work that sheds necessary light on a tragic and often-ignored aspect of postwar history. Jay Freeman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "Bone-chilling . . . [*Fear*] is illuminating and searing, a moral indictment delivered with cool, lawyerly efficiency that pounds away at the conscience with the sledgehammer of a verdict. . . . *Fear* takes on an entire nation, forever depriving Poland of any false claims to the smug, easy virtue of an innocent bystander to Nazi atrocities. . . . Gross' *Fear* should inspire a national reflection on why there are scarcely any Jews left in Poland. It's never too late to mourn. The soul of the country depends on it."--Thane Rosenbaum, *Los Angeles Times Book* "Ultimately, what's far more important than the 'why' of this story is the 'that': that a civilized nation could have descended so low, and that such behavior must be documented, remembered, discussed. This Gross does, intelligently and exhaustively."--David Margolick, *New York Times Book* "This book tells a wartime horror story that should force Poles to confront an untold--and profoundly terrifying--aspect of their history. *Fear* relates, in compelling detail, how Poles from virtually all segments of society persecuted the poor, emaciated and traumatized Holocaust survivors. . . . After reading *Fear*, the next time I hear someone say the Poles were as bad as the Germans, I will probably still challenge that charge . . . but my challenge will be far less forceful."--*Publishers Weekly* (starred review) "This is a brilliantly-written history that combines narrative power with analytical depth. Gross treats his readers with respect, offering every possible interpretation of the evidence before offering his own (often withering) judgment. The word 'genius' is carelessly thrown around these days, but with *Fear*, Gross genuinely deserves the accolade."--David Cesarani, *Jewish Chronicle* "You read [*Fear*] breathlessly, all human reason telling you it can't be so--and the book culminates in so keen a shock that even a student of the Jewish tragedy during World War II cannot fail to feel it."--Elie Wiesel, *Washington Post Book World* "Provocative . . . powerful and necessary . . . One can only hope that this important book will make a difference."--Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Boston Globe* "Imaginative, urgent, and unorthodox . . . The 'fear' of Mr. Gross's title . . . is not just the fear suffered by Jews in a Poland that wished they had never come back alive. It is also the fear of the Poles themselves, who saw in those survivors a reminder of their own wartime crimes. Even beyond Mr. Gross's exemplary historical research and analysis, it is this lesson that makes *Fear* such an important book."--*New York Sun* "After all the millions dead, after

the Nazi terror, a good many Poles still found it acceptable to hate the Jews among them. . . . The sorrows of history multiply: a necessary book."--Kirkus (starred review)"Gross illustrates with eloquence and shocking detail that the bloodletting did not cease when the war ended. . . . This is a masterful work that sheds necessary light on a tragic and often-ignored aspect of postwar history."--Booklist (starred review)"This is an extraordinary book which, almost accidentally, demonstrates that in Poland (and, almost certainly, throughout central Europe) there was such a deep anti-Semitism that not even a recognition of the horrors of Auschwitz could modify or expunge it. This book, rather distressingly, demonstrates that racism transcends politics and morality and lives deep in the heart."--Bruce Elder, Sydney Morning Herald"Gross's Fear carries us to post-war Poland, establishing and examining in sedulous depth the plundering slaughter of Jews across 1945 and 1946. . . . Fear's anguishing exposé is brilliantly scholarly, analytical, sober, yet compellingly readable."--Jack Hibberd, The Australian"Competing conceptions of victimhood are thrust into a dynamic that oscillates between denationalization and re-nationalization. . . . Gross's book maneuvers beautifully between those poles while at the same time restoring the lost and last memory of Polish Jewry, who continue to haunt Polish society as ghosts of the past."--Natan Sznajder, H-Genocide"In addition to Gross' thoughtful and thorough analysis, the reader finds a wealth of information--both historiography and analysis--that makes this book a rich resource for further study of Polish anti-Semitism."--Gabrielle Weinberger, European Legacy