

**Justyna Ball from 2**

back in 1910. He used dead bugs. That's right... Live ones fell asleep whenever the stage lighting was on.

The producers of "Peter & Wolf" (a children's story with music by Prokofiev) sent the British director to live in Lodz for a year, and she did. The studio Se-Ma-For was Polish, and the whole hired crew was Polish as well. Yet at the ceremony, the British director experienced the moment of amnesia and forgot whom to thank. Oh well, us Poles are so used to it. It was like history repeating itself. The British took credit for Polish success. And Katyn was omitted so the rest of the world wouldn't hear about it for the next 60 years. Sounds familiar?

**In America, we know that sometimes timing is everything.**

In Poland, the news of the "Katyn" nomination came during the Polish promotion of Jan T. Gross' book "FEAR – Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz. An Essay in Historical Interpretation." In the Polish version, there was a footnote – "Historia moralnej zapasci" – The history of moral downfall??? ...Right.

**Gross already had several days of coverage by every major paper and TV channel.**

The book may have been new in Poland, another "revelation" by (revisionist) Gross, but in the US, we all know the book by now. It was also covered by every major newspaper. And several Holocaust books already refer to Gross' "analyses" of alleged "Polish anti-Semitic behavior."

I followed the "promotion" of the book. It started with the media's report on the popularity of "Fear" although there was never a video report of any bookstore frenzy with lines outside the building, you know, the Harry Potter kind of madness. Rather, we heard a voice over the picture of the book cover. As if the regular buyer did not want to be photographed... Gross traveled to Kielce, suggesting that the book tour organizers were probably hoping for some controversy in the form, of say, a demonstration or an attack? None occurred. Several of his supporters made appearances in the media. Mainly, as they said, because it ignites discussion and such a discussion is needed.

Supposedly... The "discussion" on the air, each time, looked pretty much the same. Gross' supporter accused the non-Jewish population (in general) of anti-Semitism, and the opponent (as if he was on trial!) could only produce one sentence, something about Poles having the most trees in Yad Vashem... And that's all that they came up with?

Whether that was a historian or some other expert, they all (except maybe for a couple) seemed to be unprepared. And oddly enough, going back to the war or post war times, they did not see Poles as co-victims. When the accusation fell on them, they accepted the "bystander" status... And they call themselves historians?

I have a suggestion: Start digging for some other arguments because that one is slipping away, and one day it may not be there. No Jewish or American media will at its own will, ever mention that the Poles had the greatest number of rescuers or that they were the most, as a nation, brutalized, no hope there.

For now, Poland's number stands at 6,066, and the Netherlands at 4,863, but keep looking, and you'll see that the numbers are changing and Jewish admiration of the Netherlands and Denmark is visible with the naked eye. See how Yad Vashem treats Poland, Denmark and Netherlands or even Germany in Yad Vashem's "Righteous Among the Nations" Statistics & Stories. See how many times the Polish "collaboration" or "Polish anti-Semitism" is mentioned among the one dozen of stories dedicated to Poles... and how

Danish resistance is applauded.

**Anyone with a donation? It all comes up to how rich the country is, and how much it donates.**

Every lecture I go to, the brave rescuers are always the Dutch. They are signing up in large numbers and one day that argument will be gone... and then what? Will you start looking for new ones? Start with this one: Poles WERE THE VICTIMS not bystanders. Learn the facts. Do not allow people like Gross to impose his sick version of the situation in post war Poland.

"I wrote this book as a Pole, feeling that the events that I mention are a stain on my Polish identity," said Gross about his book. It did not stop him to call every critic of his "masterpiece", an anti-Semite. Questions? Only on piece of paper, not by microphone, requested the author.

Where was Władysław Bartoszewski? Isn't he in charge of Polish-German-Jewish relations? We needed to hear his opinion. Well, he chose not to have one. Although, Janusz Kurtyka, president of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) spoke up.

Kurtyka confirmed that the theory that Poles felt antipathy toward Jews, because they somehow benefited from the Holocaust is untrue. And he also disagrees with the statement that the major problem after the war was anti-Semitism. During the war, death became an everyday occurrence and because of it, morale was low, there was lack of law and the crime rate was high despite the ethnicity. The aversion was fanned by the fact that Jews were seen as those who benefited from the Sovietisation of Poland.

Gross admits that he has different versions of his book; one for Americans, and another for the Polish readers but his explanation why, is rather murky.

**James R. Thompson (Catholic Insight, October issue) had a great review of the "Fear."**

He points out that Gross brushes off the accusation of (imagined) collaboration of Polish Jews and the Soviets. According to popular Polish historian Andrzej Paczkowski, former head of IPN, the estimated percentage of Jews on "the central decision making level in the Soviet controlled security apparatus was 30 %." If so, at the time the number of Polish Catholics was 25 million and Polish Jews 250,000 (that included the Jews who arrived from the USSR), "the proportion of Jews," Thomson writes, "who opted to join the UB was 42 times that of Catholics."

Gross in his book gives an interesting explanation to this phenomenon: "But the MBP did not look specifically for Jews to fill the available positions. There was an overall shortage of qualified personnel; people were being pulled every which way to take jobs all over the new administration and what one ended up doing was very often a matter of pure coincidence." Gross does not deny the fact that many Jews enthusiastically welcomed the Russians, even giving several accounts... "The Jews were rejoicing over the occupation of eastern Poland by the Russians. To Polish Catholics, this was simply treason, analogous to the occasional warm receptions in western Poland of the Germans by some Volksdeutsche."

"Now, it is undeniable that in the German-occupied portion of Poland, where the situation of the Jews was worse than that of the Catholics, many Polish families hid Jews from the Nazi occupiers. It is a matter of record that Poles are listed at Yad Vashem numerically first amongst the righteous Gentiles for risking their lives and those of their families for sheltering Jews from the Nazis. So, it is fair to ask the question, 'When did Jews use their favored position in Soviet-occupied eastern Poland to shelter Polish Catholics from the NKVD?' This reviewer regrets to say that he cannot

find any instances of such assistance." That was from Thomson's.

I have the book "After the Holocaust" from 2003, by Prof. Marek Chodakiewicz (PhD in history from Columbia University), and I believe that this book in Poland was published by IPN.

On the back cover, Chodakiewicz expresses his hopes that his book will provoke a heated debate. It did not. Why? Because in the core of the debate, the Jewish communism had to be brought up. Nobody in Poland would dare to start up such a debate. Let's hear from Prof. Marek Chodakiewicz his opinion on "Fear."

Chodakiewicz (who appeared on Polish TVN24) accused Gross of "logical error," and called his book "publicystyka nie nauka" (publicity not a historical lesson). According to Prof. Chodakiewicz, "Fear" is based on the stereotype of a Pole as an anti-Semite, and this book further deepens such a stereotype.

In "After the Holocaust," Chodakiewicz quotes Stanisław Krajewski, one of the popular present Jewish leaders in Poland. "I disagree that the Jewish role in the 'Communist past was quite marginal. The number and influence of Jewish communists in post war Poland was so important that their role was far more than marginal. The challenge for Jews is to accept the fact that in the middle of this century Jews in central and Eastern Europe were not only among the victims but also among the victimizers. In my view, the number and the quasi-religious character of some Jewish communists, for whom Stalin was the messiah, generate a Jewish share of moral responsibility.'" Chodakiewicz underlines that it was "anti-Communism not anti-Semitism that led to a tragic climate of distrust" and it had nothing to do with the Holocaust.

I'm standing in front of a bookshelf at Borders. Quite a collection of Irish history to the left, several volumes on Serbia to the right, and a whole bookshelf dedicated to Hitler above, Russia in front, two books devoted to Poland Zamoyski's "The Polish way" and "Last Mazurka" by Andrew Tarnowski, no books representing Polish history by let's say Norman Davies.. books about Russia's gulags, Poles are in many of them, but no books dedicated to them exclusively. Hungarians, yes, even Czechs. The salespeople will tell you that they can order something for you.... Could this be that so many customers ask for books on Russian Stalinism? Really? Serbs may be popular now (since they rejected Kosovo's independence), but they've been on that shelf for years. In the Holocaust section, both Gross' books, do not need to ask.

My aunt, after hearing the news of Katyn's losing to some Austrian movie, shrugged her shoulders. It wasn't probably that good anyway, she said. No, auntie, you missed the point. Two weeks after the Oscars, and the Boston Globe still prints articles about the movie that won that category. And this film gets even more attention there than the American-made movie by the Cohen brothers (the major winner). In the Leisure section "The Counterfeiters" got the whole cover page. Within minutes from the ceremony, it was covered news on Reuter's news online. That's advertising. And it's free.

So Poles in Poland must understand that the Oscars, what it is, above anything else, it's a business. There will be "The Counterfeiters" (not "Katyn") interviews, books and DVDs. The media will make sure that everyone has heard the story.

A recipe for success, "Katyn-turnover", exchanges Polish officers with Jewish, then Russians with Polish, put Gross in charge of the screenplay, the Oscar guaranteed.

Our tormented compatriot Gross is cashing in on the popular subject, and his mission has nothing to do with genuine history. According to Norman Davies, an expert on Poland's history, Gross' books are unreliable and he shares Prof. Andrzej

Paczkowski's opinion that Gross thinks that his life mission is to make sure that the Poles acknowledge the dark side of their past. Even if he, at the beginning of his American career, cared about Polish misery, as he claims ("I'm absorbed by violence and suffering"), relations on Eastern borders, suffering of Polish children... WHO CARES?

Jewish victims, Polish "involvement" in Jewish destruction, that is a different story! "J.T. Gross is not a historian," said Janusz Kurtyka "he is a sociologist, and he is not even a good one." And added that "Fear" is about the author himself.

So, I guess, when Gross, during the presentation in Kielce (January 21, 2008) said, "There were also scoundrels among Jews" that comment must have been... "biographical." □

**Polish Profiles from 2**

Lerman's face was for all of us but mostly for Miles Lerman unforgettable. Whenever Miles and I met after that, he always mentioned that moment. He was truly my friend - a Jew who never forgot his Polish roots. □

**Legal from 3****Fifth Category: Investors**

If applicants meet the criteria for these categories of green cards, they become permanent residents and obtain the indefinite right to live and work in the United States, as long as they do not commit any offense that would render them deportable.

Business immigrants usually are sponsored by a U.S. employer based on a demonstrated need. Some business immigrants may self-petition if they meet statutory criteria for "extraordinary ability" in their field, or if their entry would be in the "national interest."

Most business immigrant cases require Department of Labor certification that no U.S. workers are able, qualified or willing to take the position offered to the foreign national and that admitting the immigrant will not negatively impact the wages and working conditions of similarly situated U.S. workers. The only categories exempt from this requirement are those for individuals who are extraordinary or outstanding in their field or whose presence is in the "national interest." □

**Janek's Corner from 4**

that one is required to be fluent in Finnish or Hungarian if one chooses to go to these countries. This is due to the fact that English is the official language of the program and this is the most probable language of teaching at foreign universities (although lectures are given in other world languages and those popular in Europe, e.g. German, French, Spanish, Italian, too.)

The stay at the host university usually takes as long as one whole year. The student is exposed to the host country's learning techniques and life at that university. It may seem difficult to imagine how much university lifestyles vary from country to country.

This fabulous experience is granted to top students who think of Europe as a place of intercultural and mind-opened sphere that accompanies both, a strong footing for academic development and personal success.

I wish the idea of intercultural exchange was developed in transatlantic relationships also! □