Beyond the Underdog Mentality: Philo-Semitism amongst Protestant Rescuers in Wartime Ukraine

Raisa Ostapenko

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Raisa Ostapenko
Sorbonne University; Raisa.s.Ostapenko@gmail.com

◼ Abstract

In Ukraine, as was the case across occupied Europe, while most residents of any given locality divided into bystanders, collaborators, and accomplices during the Holocaust, a minority turned to rescue work. Faith-motivated rescue work by large institutions or individuals representing prominent branches of Christianity

* Note on transliteration: While the names of rescuers appear in Russian in Yad Vashem's online Righteous Database and many of the corresponding archival files cited in this article, I have chosen to transliterate rescuer names from both Russian and Ukrainian (whenever they differ) upon the first appearance of the name, and to transliterate from Russian subsequently. This decision is due in part to Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and the war crimes perpetrated against Ukrainian civilians, as well as to the following factors: Firstly, there is little academic literature on Ukrainian rescuers in the English language, and I believe it is important to present these individuals—some of whose stories are being told for the very first time—as many of them would likely refer to themselves today. Secondly, both Russian and Ukrainian have historically been spoken and continue to be spoken in Ukraine. Though all these rescuers considered themselves Ukrainian, I cannot say with certainty who amongst them was a native Russian speaker, a native Ukrainian speaker, or a speaker of *surzhyk*—a widespread mixture of Russian and Ukrainian. Thirdly, it is certain that many of these rescuers were fully bilingual and could readily transition from one language to another depending on the language of their interlocutor. Finally, Yad Vashem's archival files on Ukrainian rescuers are largely in Russian because that is the language in which many Jewish survivors described their rescuers after the war and likely interacted with them during the rescue operation (with exceptions). Nevertheless, I transliterate the names of all localities exclusively from Ukrainian, regardless of how they appear in any cited testimonies, because these localities are part of the sovereign state of Ukraine.

is well documented; its prevalence exemplifies the critical role that the altruism of individual members of the clergy, laity, and religious orders played in the survival of many Jews. However, rescuers from less prominent denominations of Christianity, amongst them Baptists, Evangelicals, Seventh-day Adventists, and Sabbatarians, are less spoken about, although these rescuers were often equally as motivated to rescue and more poorly resourced to do so due to disadvantageous political circumstances. Some scholars suggest that it was their "underdog" identity that made such groups empathize with persecuted Jews, but primary testimony offers an even more intriguing perspective: it was the philo-Semitic underpinnings of some members of the minority Protestant denominations in question that provided a broad theological basis for rescuing Jews, transcending the sociopolitical phenomenon of the common underdog mentality and even more widespread ecumenical obligations for being a good Christian.

◼ Keywords

Protestantism, Holocaust, rescuers, Righteous Among the Nations, Judeophilia, philo-Semitism, Second World War, Ukraine, Eastern Europe, World War II

◼ Introduction

Primary testimony provides ample evidence to suggest that Christian attitudes towards Jews, whether in clerical circles, broader congregations, or individual households, were pluralistic and complex under Nazi and broader Axis occupations across Europe, with sentiments ranging from violent anti-Semitism to celebratory Judeophilia.[1] This was true regardless of the Christian denomination, whether Roman or Greek Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant, though, from an institutional perspective, the views of any denomination could sometimes be tilted in any direction by a combination of political, socioeconomic, and regional factors.

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[1] The terms *Antisemitismus* and *Philosemitismus* were coined in Germany in the mid-19th century. "Anti-Semitic," popularized by German publicist Wilhelm Marr in 1879, was proudly employed as a self-descriptor by those who opposed Jews on a "racial" basis, i.e., those who were against Jews as an ethnic group speaking a Semitic, as opposed to a Romance or Germanic language; while "philo-Semitic" appeared as a pejorative term that anti-Semites used to describe those who stood against them. For this reason, the term "philo-Semitism" may be offensive to some readers. The terms "Judeophilia" and "philo-Semitism" both appear in academic literature, with the latter being more prevalent. I have chosen to use them interchangeably throughout this article to mean "respect for or appreciation of the Jewish people by a non-Jew," though I give preference to "philo-Semitism" due to its linguistic parallelism with "anti-Semitism." It must be noted that some scholars may distinguish between "Judeophilia" and "philo-Semitism," viewing the former as a regard for Judaism as a religion and, by extension, for the Jewish people as "beneficiaries" of that religion and the latter as a love for Jews as a "race." See Alan Edelstein, *An Unacknowledged Harmony: Philo-Semitism and the Survival of European Jewry* (Westport, CT.; London: Greenwood Press, 1982) 32–33. For more on Protestant sentiments towards Jews, see Yaakov Ariel, "The One and the Many: Unity and Diversity in Protestant Attitudes toward the Jews," *The Protestant-Jewish Conundrum* (ed. Jonathan Frankel and Ezra Mendelsohn; Studies in Contemporary Jewry 24; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) 15–45.

In Ukraine, as was the case across occupied Europe, while most residents of any given locality swiftly divided into bystanders, collaborators, and accomplices, a minority turned to rescue work. Faith-motivated rescue work, especially as part of large institutions or by individuals representing prominent branches of Christianity, is well documented in Ukraine in both primary testimony and secondary literature; its prevalence in the historical record exemplifies the critical role that the altruism of individual members of the clergy, laity, and religious orders played in the survival of many Jews.[2]

However, rescuers from less prominent denominations of Christianity, amongst them Baptists, Evangelicals, Seventh-day Adventists, and Sabbatarians (that is, groups that themselves were either persecuted or socially excluded in the Soviet Union), are less spoken about, although these rescuers were often equally as motivated to undertake their rescue operations for reasons of faith and more poorly resourced due to weak institutional cohesion resulting from disadvantageous political circumstances. Some scholars have suggested that it was precisely the "underdog" identity of such groups that made their members more likely to empathize with persecuted Jews.[3]

Nevertheless, as argued in this article, though the premise of the underdog mentality as the basis for rescuing is certainly a viable one, primary testimony offers an even more intriguing perspective: it was the philo-Semitic underpinnings of some members of the minority Protestant denominations in question that provided a broad theological basis for rescuing Jews, transcending the sociopolitical phenomenon of the common underdog mentality and even more widespread ecumenical obligations for being a good Christian, for example humanitarianism. This philo-Semitism was not restricted to a branch of minority Protestantism, nor can it be said with certainty that any branch was more disposed to such sentiments than any other, though several denominations, such as the Baptists, did have a clear statistical advantage with regard to the sheer incidence of philo-Semitic rescuers. Nevertheless, even then, philo-Semitism was certainly not universally espoused by all members of a particular denomination regardless of statistical ranking.

In this article, having first delineated important theological bases for historical anti-Semitic prejudices, such that may have hindered faith-motivated rescue work amongst Christian populations, I proceed, through the lens of primary testimony and secondary literature, to look specifically at how the religious education received

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[2] The term "faith-motivated rescuers" can be used interchangeably with the term "religious rescuers."

[3] See, for example, Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (London: Vintage, 2016) 290. Snyder maintains that "it was not the content of Protestantism, most likely, that made French Protestants more likely to aid Jews than French Catholics, but rather their own minority status and history of persecution." See also Robert Braun, *Protectors of Pluralism: Religious Minorities and the Rescue of Jews in the Low Countries during the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019) 25. Braun argues that minority status produced both feelings of empathy for outsiders and "isolated hubs" that could be "exploited for clandestine-movement building."

by certain members of minority Protestant groups cultivated a profound affinity for the Jewish people and a sense of obligation to rescue them from persecution. I also highlight how the exegetical focus of Protestantism better aligned the religion with Judaism in the minds of these particular rescuers, because to go directly to Scripture as a source of divine authority is in many cases to go to the Hebrew Bible.[4]

An important clarification: I make a point to distinguish between those Protestant rescuers whose desire to help stemmed exclusively from Judeophilia and those whose primary motivation was proselytical, that is, meant to convert Jews to Christianity to realize the conditions substantiated in the writings of Augustine of Hippo, which too are explored in this article. The case studies presented here depict rescue operations motivated by Judeophilia.[5]

◼ Inherited Anti-Semitic Prejudices

Under the Axis occupations of Ukraine, anti-Jewish sentiment in the Ukrainian Christian community could be attributed to factors that can largely be classified as either non-theological (economic and later political) or theological, though the two were not mutually exclusive.[6] While some manifestations of anti-Semitism may have

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[4] By "exegetical focus of Protestantism" I refer specifically to the tendency of Protestants to prioritize exegesis in their study of Scripture, i.e., the process of interpreting the Bible by means of precise textual analysis.

[5] Not all Judeophilic rescuers were Protestants who celebrated Jews for the reasons outlined in this article; for instance, some, such as the German activist and medic Armin Theophil Wegner, appreciated Jews for intellectual and cultural reasons. In her book *Conscience & Courage: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, the psychologist Eva Fogelman identifies "Judeophiles" as one of five distinct subdivisions of rescuers, defining "Judeo*phile* rescuers" as a broad category comprising people who loved individual Jews or the Jewish people as a whole. This affinity or feeling of closeness, she writes, "could come from many sources," including friendships or romantic relationships with Jews, warm childhood memories of experiences with Jews, suspicions of one's own Jewish ancestry, philo-Semitism in one's household, scholarly or intellectual engagement with Jews, and, lastly, for those she describes as "Fundamentalist Christians," growing up with biblical stories and the Hebrew Bible. Fogelman notes briefly that these Christians perceived a "religious connection to Jesus, a single Jew, or to those people the Hebrew Bible said were chosen by God" (Eva Fogelman, *Conscience and Courage: Rescuers of the Jews during the Holocaust* [London: Victor Gollancz, 1996] 181–92). While cursorily implying a connection between Fundamentalist Christians, the Hebrew Bible, and Judeophilia, Fogelman does not evaluate the theological origins of this connection or why it compelled certain non-Jews to risk their lives to rescue Jews, nor does she illustrate the intensity of this particular kind of Judeophilia and the full breadth of its manifestations. In his book *The Righteous*, historian Martin Gilbert cites powerful testimony that clearly identifies "the Bible" as the "very book that filled [the] hearts" of the Baptist rescuers of David Prital "with love for the Jews" (Martin Gilbert, *The Righteous: The Unsung Heroes of the Holocaust* [New York: Doubleday, 2002] 12). Nevertheless, Martin stops short of calling these rescuers from "religious sects" Judeophilic. In this article, I seek to comprehensively examine Ukrainian rescuers whose philo-Semitism derived from their Protestant (often fundamentalist) faith and demonstrate how the exegetical education they received highlighted the intrinsic links between Judaism and Protestantism, cultivating a transcendental affinity for the Jewish people that permeated those rescuers' lives, identities, and even habits and compelled them to rescue Jews.

[6] The lands that today constitute Ukraine were divided into several occupations during the

been transitory, that is, they appeared suddenly and without precedent in previously unprejudiced Ukrainians now seeking preferential treatment under the occupying regimes, most were the result of enduring, cumulative historical ideas.[7] Cultural disparities—from the different languages spoken within each community to dietary restrictions to modes of dress—historically also contributed to othering and created obstacles to social interaction, but these barriers weakened significantly over two decades of Jewish assimilation in the greater part of Soviet Ukraine. What is more, primary testimony, from oral history to memoires, provides numerous examples of non-Jews being invited to dine with Jews on religious holidays in the interwar period both in these areas and in the territories annexed from Poland in 1939.

Amongst non-theological factors contributing to anti-Semitism were inherited prejudices and discontent stemming from historical Jewish leaseholding, especially in the *latifundia* of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where Jews acted as financial middlemen between Polish magnates and poor Ukrainian peasants. Conspiracy theories claiming Jewish plans for economic domination also circulated as early as the Middle Ages, reaching an unprecedented height in the early twentieth century with the 1903 publication of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—a fabricated document purporting to be the minutes of a nineteenth-century meeting of Jewish leaders planning to gain control of the world's presses and economies. The idea of the corrupt, capitalist, money-loving Jew intent on inhibiting the social mobility of his non-Jewish neighbors stood in irrational contrast to another anti-Semitic myth—that of the socialist Jew out to destroy existing society from the inside out—a concept that was generously exploited by the Nazi propaganda machine.[8] At the time of Nazi occupation, belief in the Judeo-Bolshevik canard offered the strongest non-theological basis for anti-Jewish prejudice in Ukraine. This conspiracy theory maintained that Jews, occupying important positions in the Soviet administrative apparatus, were at the forefront of Communist movements across the world, and had engendered collectivization, dekulakization, and other acts of repression.

Second World War, including Nazi-occupied *Reichskommissariat Ukraine* and neighboring *Eastern Galicia* (the south-eastern district of Nazi-occupied Poland), the military administration (eastern lands along today's Chernigiv-Kharkiv-Donetsk route), the *Transnistrian Governorate* (Romanian occupation), and *Carpathian Ruthenia* (Hungarian occupation). The testimony in this article refers predominantly to events that occurred in *Reichskommissariat Ukraine*, where Protestants were most likely to be found.

[7] On the sudden "birth" of anti-Semitism in Ukrainians who never manifested it or maintained friendly relations with Jews before the war, see Philip Friedman, *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust* (ed. Ada June Friedman; New York and Philadelphia: Conference on Jewish Social Studies and Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980) 183.

[8] The myth of Jewish Bolshevism was a fundamental component of Nazi anti-Jewish propaganda, targeting both Germans within and outside of Germany (including Wehrmacht soldiers and the SS) and non-Jews in occupied territories. See Mordecai Paldiel, *Churches and the Holocaust: Unholy Teaching, Good Samaritans, and Reconciliation* (New York: KTAV, 2006) 240. For the effectiveness of Nazi indoctrination and propaganda on the Judeo-Bolshevik canard see Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1936–45: Nemesis* (London: Penguin, 2000) 467.

The most deep-seated anti-Semitic sentiments were, arguably, felt by non-Jewish Ukrainians who, like their counterparts across Europe, upheld any number of centuries-old theologically influenced beliefs, the most prominent being the early notion that Jews were responsible for the betrayal and death of Jesus Christ. This viewpoint solidified and gradually spread across Europe after Theodosius the Great's 380 CE Edict of Thessalonica established Christianity as the official state religion of the Roman Empire and, correspondingly, a need arose for a non-Roman scapegoat for the crucifixion of Christ, despite the very Roman nature of the punishment in question.

Subsequent theologically influenced beliefs included medieval accusations of host desecration, well poisoning, and the blood libel, the latter of which maintained that Jews were kidnapping and crucifying non-Jewish children to harvest Christian blood for ritual use. Furthermore, as was common across Christendom, many non-Jewish communities in Ukraine espoused supersessionist theological views that Christians had succeeded, or replaced, the Israelites as the holders of a covenant with God—a premise that could be traced back to the first century, and, particularly, to the New Testament's Hebrews 8, which is traditionally attributed to the apostle Paul.[9] Paul, unlike his predecessors, chose to spread the teachings of Christ not to Jewish populations, but to non-Jewish populations across the Mediterranean. In the first century, to be a Christian meant to be a member of a sect of Judaism that accepted Jesus as the prophesized messiah. Whether they were born Jewish or converted to Judaism, early Christians were practicing Jews, just as Jesus, whose teachings existed within the confines of Judaism, had lived and died as a Jew. Up until this point, it was largely a given that a non-Jew could not achieve salvation without first adopting Jewish law, a position that was even espoused by the apostle Peter. But this soon became a matter of debate. In his Epistle to the Galatians, Paul, though himself an observant Jew, spoke out against those who sought to impose adherence to Mosaic Law on non-Jews as a prerequisite for participation in the Church, which was emerging as a multiethnic entity across the Roman Empire during this period, arguing that the "new covenant" was based not in law but in faith in Christ.[10]

Finally, in certain communities, theologically derived anti-Jewish discontent was tied to the belief that the refusal of Jews to convert to Christianity had impeded the redemption of humanity pending, as maintained by Augustine of Hippo, conversion in the "last days before the judgment."[11] Augustine's writings, however, historically also offered an explanation as to why Jews were allowed to coexist with Christians,

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[9] See Heb 8:7–13, "In speaking of a new covenant, he has made the first one obsolete, and what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear" (Bible quotations in this article are from the NRSVUE).

[10] See 2 Cor 3:6 "who has made us qualified to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

[11] Augustine, Civ. 20.29 (Augustine, *The City of God* [trans. Marcus Dods; New York: Modern Library, 2000] 757–58, and esp. 757).

as it was he, in a slight departure from a longstanding tradition of defining Judaism as incompatible with Christianity, who reinterpreted the Jews as "witnesses" to the doctrine of the Church.[12] Referring to Ps 59:11 ("Do not kill them, or my people may forget; make them totter by your power and bring them down, O Lord, our shield.") in his homilies, Augustine depicted the Jewish people as the subjects of both "punitive wandering and of divine protection," observes historian Paula Fredriksen.[13] Certain Christian communities hoped that the conversion of these Jewish witnesses would catalyze the Second Coming.

Regardless of their origin or nature, theologically influenced anti-Jewish sentiments led some Ukrainian Christians, despite the compassionate doctrine of their faiths, to display anti-Semitic tendencies before and during the Second World War. Some Ukrainian Christians even collaborated with the Nazis as perpetrators of anti-Jewish violence. However, a minority of Ukrainians, just as a minority of their counterparts across occupied Europe, found the courage to rescue Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

Historian John-Paul Himka estimates that, on the eve of the war, of the 41.2 million people who constituted Ukraine's ethnically diverse, yet majority Ukrainian population, 2.5 million would have been considered Jewish by the Germans.[14] Of these, less than a million were evacuated east by the Soviets upon the German invasion in 1941 and about 1.5 million remained in occupied territories and were murdered in the Holocaust.[15] For a myriad of reasons, it is impossible to accurately determine the number of Jews who survived the Holocaust in Ukraine, though of those who did, the vast majority received at least marginal if not tangible (and substantial) assistance from the non-Jewish population.

◼ Faith-Motivated Rescue Work in Ukraine and Beyond

Primary testimony provides numerous examples of faith-motivated rescuers representing a wide breadth of religious experiences in Ukraine.[16] Some were publicly observant members of institutionalized congregations, while others chose to practice individually in the privacy of their homes; still others did both. Some were members of the clergy, while others did not partake in ritual acts of worship but, nevertheless, adhered strictly to the tenets and moral teachings of the Christian

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[12] Ibid. Also see the introduction to Paldiel's *Churches and the Holocaust*.

[13] Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010) 304.

[14] John-Paul Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Ukraine," in *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Post-Communist Europe* (ed. John-Paul Himka and Joanna Beata Michlic; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013) 628.

[15] Ibid. This figure may change in the future with further research in archival collections formerly closed to the public.

[16] Many scholars use the term "religious rescuers" to describe the group in question (see, e.g., Eva Fogelman). Some use the term "Christian rescuers," as most religious rescuers were Christian; notwithstanding, there are numerous examples of religious rescuers of other faiths.

tradition. Despite exposure to Soviet atheization, most faith-motivated rescuers were, to varying degrees, devout and ritually observant, whether clandestinely or openly (often at risk of persecution, depending on the period and political regime), and all strongly attributed their rescue work to their belief in God, religious obligation, or ideological inclinations resulting from their faith (including Christian philo-Semitism).

In Ukraine, as was the case across Europe, most faith-motivated rescue work, whether the organized efforts of large institutions or that of individuals representing prominent branches of Christianity, was often attributed to an ecumenical Christian sense of duty to love one's neighbor as oneself and to act as good Samaritans. The same sense of Christian duty often also held true for faith-motivated rescuers from minority religious groups. Baptist rescuer Nikolay (Mykola) Kuchmiy, for instance, wrote in a letter to Yad Vashem that when Shmerko Sirota appeared on the Ukrainian's doorstep in the village of Teremkivtsi in what is today the Khmelnytsky oblast, the latter could not turn Sirota away, thinking to himself that "the Lord never sent away anyone who came to him for help."[17]

Some historians have suggested that members of the clergy, due to access to institutional facilities and resources, should have found it easier than laypeople to effectuate rescue operations during the Holocaust, because churches were, by their very function, accustomed to accommodating people in need and offered widespread networks through which to find hiding places and forge documents such as baptismal certificates.[18] Nevertheless, despite numerous examples of successful church-initiated humanitarian operations under occupation, institutional rescue was not always a given in practice. Amid the Holocaust by Bullets, though many non-anti-Semitic Ukrainian clergymen and laypeople did not engage in anti-Jewish violence, most remained bystanders in the face of Nazi atrocity. This was largely due to a lack of political influence, a sense of socioeconomic instability, or more pressing priorities related to their own survival under occupation.

Beyond the previously discussed notion of Christian humanitarianism, primary testimony provides ample evidence to suggest the validity of the underdog thesis as a motivating factor behind rescue operations led by minority religious groups or their individual members. As a general rule across Europe, argues historian Timothy Snyder in his book *Black Earth*, "church leaders and Christian believers who were used to a certain amount of tension with political authorities and with the surrounding population [before the war] tended to be more open to the possibility of

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[17] Yad Vashem, Archival file M.31.2/5877, Undated letter to Yad Vashem from Nikolai Kuchmiy. As per the testimony of Rakhil Polyakova (later Sirota), who too was sheltered by Kuchmiy, Sirota came upon his rescuer after being referred to him by the rescuer's brother Pavel, for whom Sirota had tailored a garment (despite being an accountant) in the days of the occupation when Sirota still felt comfortable travelling out in the open and living off tailoring assignments. For details, see Polyakova's letter to Yad Vashem in M.31.2/5877. Note: The word *oblast* is synonymous with the word region.

[18] Paldiel, *Churches and the Holocaust,* ix.

opposing German policies," including by means of engaging in rescue operations.[19] In a more specific context, the sociologist Robert Braun evaluates the plausibility of the minority hypothesis by mapping where 93 percent of all Dutch Jews lived against their geographic proximity to Catholic and Protestant churches and whether these Jews evaded deportation. Braun's spatial regression models "demonstrate a robust and positive correlation between . . . proximity to minority churches and evasion," where "proximity to Catholic churches increased evasion in dominantly Protestant regions" and "proximity to Protestant churches had the same effect in Catholic parts of the country."[20]

It can be argued that rescue work by members of Ukraine's Greek Catholic Church, which was regarded as lesser than the Roman Catholic Church in interwar Poland, was similarly motivated by the underdog mentality. Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Andrey Sheptytsky, for instance, saved some 150 Jews, mostly children, in occupied Poland with the participation of about 550 monks and nuns.[21] Sheptytsky is remembered by many as a noble rescuer today, though his position on the Nazi occupants is considered ambiguous by some historians due to his somewhat incompatible desires, on the one hand, to prevent anti-Jewish violence and, on the other, to help the Ukrainian people gain political independence by way of tolerating the occupation as a means to an end.[22]

Beyond feelings of empathy for the mistreated, reasons for the high frequency of rescue work amongst religious minorities may have been that these individuals were able to cultivate a sense of mutual allegiance and trust in the face of collective persecution and of open-mindedness as a result of regular, unorthodox discussions on faith in communal settings.[23]

Such inclinations could be observed in many French Huguenot (Calvinist) communities that had been persecuted by French Catholics from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century. In one case study, the Huguenot community of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, situated today in the region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, rescued 5,000 refugees during the war, about 3,500 of whom were Jewish men, women, and children.[24] Though not all families living in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon

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[19] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 289–90.

[20] Robert Braun, "Religious Minorities and Resistance to Genocide: The Collective Rescue of Jews in the Netherlands during the Holocaust," *American Political Science Review* 110.1 (2016) 127–47.

[21] Friedman, *Roads to Extinction*, 176–208. Note: I transliterate the monastic name Andrey Sheptytsky based on how it was adopted and appeared in the Metropolitan's pastoral letters: the first name, spelled in the Russian manner, is transliterated from Russian, while the last name, spelled in the Ukrainian manner, is transliterated from Ukrainian.

[22] Snyder, *Black Earth*, 289.

[23] Ibid., 290. Snyder writes that members of more alienated subdivisions of Christianity "were able to trust one another in times of stress" and were "accustomed to seeing their homes as embattled outposts of truth in a broken world."

[24] Michael Bess, "Introduction," in *Magda and André Trocmé: Resistance Figures* (ed. Pierre Boismorand; trans. Jo-Anne Elder; Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014) vii.

and the surrounding villages participated in the rescue efforts, not a single person ever informed against his or her neighbors, which suggests a high level of social trust.[25]

Indeed, their own experience of persecution and, correspondingly, their underdog mentality, predisposed these Protestant rescuers to empathize with persecuted Jews. Their spiritual leader, Pastor André Trocmé, himself an underdog throughout his life, historically stood in conflict with even wider Protestant doctrine in France, espousing a position of "uncompromising pacifism and non-violence" at a point when the church hierarchy upheld that all citizens had a duty to bear arms to protect their nation in belligerent times.[26] As a result of his individualism, Trocmé—who, from the very start of his career, openly informed church leaders that he would not refrain from sharing his pacifist beliefs with his parishioners—received assignments with delay and was only reluctantly permitted to serve "marginal parishes where his dissenting voice would not be widely heard," writes historian Michael Bess in his introduction to *Magda and André Trocmé: Resistance Figures*.[27]

Thankfully, the parishioners of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, where Trocmé was assigned in 1934, proved receptive to his ideas. These Protestants sheltered refugees in schools, farms, and personal homes; forged documents in support of false identities; and helped those who elected to do so traverse the border across the Rhône valley into Switzerland.[28] In addition to the underdog mentality, they were motivated by their esteem for the practical application of theoretical spiritual values, an outlook consistent with Trocmé's own social Christianity. The pastor believed not in "a naïve faith inhabited by angels, Christ-figures, [and] miraculous shows of divine intervention, but a faith in which action and free will play a large role," maintaining that he had no interest in that which could not "be translated into deeds and action."[29]

Trocmé urged his parishioners to "do the will of God, not of men" and advocated non-complaisance with any man-made laws that violated their Christian conscience, reminding them of their duty to offer shelter to the persecuted in cities of refuge, that

[25] Ibid., xi.

[26] Ibid., viii.

[27] Ibid., ix. See "Beginning," in *Magda and André Trocmé,* 17–18 for an exploration of Magda's "underdog" experiences as a Protestant in Catholic Italy. Magda, whose participation in the rescue operation in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon was crucial, had been baptized twice as a child—first by the Protestant Church and then by the Catholic Church, which insisted on baptizing her again because, as she recalled in her writings, the latter deemed her first baptism invalid, as "Protestant ministers baptize with water that is not pure, rosewater, even!" As an adult, Magda would call her second baptism a "ridiculous imposition." According to Kathryn J. Atwood, Magda was motivated by her passion for humanitarianism, the same passion that led her to study at the New York School of Social Work as a young woman (Kathryn J. Atwood, *Women Heroes of World War II: 26 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, and Rescue* [Chicago: Chicago Review, 2011] 83–84).

[28] Ibid., xi. Also see "Le Chambon-sur-Lignon," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/le-chambon-sur-lignon.

[29] André Trocmé, "Memoires," in *Magda and André Trocmé*, 4.

is, sanctuary cities.[30] Trocmé's congregation is also known to have been especially universalist, espousing an egalitarian idea that all people, regardless of background, have the same fundamental worth, as evinced by its choice to refer to its charges not as Jews, but as French neighbors.[31] When the rescue activities in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon attracted the attention of the local Vichy police and Trocmé was asked to give up the names of the Jewish charges being helped by his congregation, the pastor refused, saying: "I do not know what a Jew is. I know only human beings."[32]

While the underdog status of both Trocmé and his parishioners is evident, as is the faith-based nature of their empathy and universalism, the community of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon may also have been driven to rescue by a sense of respect for the Jewish people—if not its own, then that of its leader. Vocal about the biblical heritage shared by Jews and Christians, Trocmé is known to have urged his congregants to shelter "the people of the Bible."[33]

While many individual Greek Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainian rescuers loom large in popular consciousness, the stories of rescuers from minority Protestant communities are seldom brought to light. Depending on the region and political regime, Protestant communities existed not as proper churches, but more as groups of "believers" in pre-war and wartime Ukraine, often holding baptisms in rivers and congregating informally in makeshift home-based "spaces" of worship. Even those communities that managed to establish "houses of prayer" did not always have access to them.[34] Such a setup may have made room for greater spiritual

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[30] Bess, "Introduction," in *Magda and André Trocmé*, x. Also see "André and Magda Trocmé, Daniel Trocmé," *Yad Vashem*, https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/trocme.html. Cities of refuge are mentioned in Deut 19:2–10, where the faithful are commanded to offer shelter to innocents guilty of accidentally committing manslaughter through negligence and unforeseen circumstances, i.e., those who kill "a neighbor unintentionally, without malice." Also see Josh 20:1–3 and Num 35:6–12.

[31] "André and Magda Trocmé, Daniel Trocmé," *Yad Vashem*. Also see Bess, "Introduction," in *Magda and André Trocmé*, ix–x: Bess writes that Trocmé believed in fostering international cooperation and brotherhood and, with his lifelong friend and assistant pastor Édouard Theis, established a school—École Nouvelle Cévenole (later Collège Cévenol)—for this precise mission.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] See, for instance, the World War II memoir of Ukrainian Evangelical Mykhailo Podvorniak (Mykhailo Podvorniak, *Viter z Volyni. Spohady* [Winnipeg: Tovarystvo Volyn, 1981] 9, 71, 136–138). Podvorniak writes that, in the interwar period, the evangelical community of the village of Poromiv (Volyn oblast) and the surrounding settlements worshipped at the home of spiritual leader Olian, whose small house stood behind a dam. A "house of prayer" was established only in 1939 during the twilight of the Second Polish Republic and survived into the Soviet occupation of 1939–1941 before being transformed into a second schoolhouse, after which meetings resumed at Olian's house but with reduced attendance, as some worshippers were afraid to attend church under the Bolsheviks. After the Nazi invasion, the Evangelicals restored their "house of prayer," but with restrictions— baptisms were now prohibited. As per the commandant of the Ukrainian police of the neighboring village: "Things will no longer be as they were. That's enough . . . these baptisms of yours, these services, and everything else that is unnecessary . . . Now we have [an independent] Ukraine and there should only be one faith . . . an Orthodox faith. All that was is now in the past, so go home and do not perform any baptism" (ibid., 137). Baptisms were resumed only later after the civilian Nazi administration issued an official document with "a swastika" and "a terrible German eagle"

intimacy or theological discussion between the faithful. As these discussions were often clandestine and unchronicled, it is difficult to verify the precise sentiments any one such community could have had towards the Jewish people and, therefore, impossible to come to any overarching conclusions about the extent to which philo-Semitism was a universal value.

Post-war testimonies of rescuers from Protestant groups in Ukraine certainly reveal the same patterns observed universally in faith-motivated rescuers, that is, a sense of Christian duty and, in minority religious groups, the underdog mentality. In *The Righteous*, historian Martin Gilbert quotes the testimony of the Baptist-rescued David Prital (formerly Prinzental), who suggested that the knowledge that other Christians were hiding Jews "undoubtedly encouraged" Christian rescuers by sufficiently assuaging their anxiety for their rescue work to continue.[35] Prital's conviction is especially plausible in the context of Protestant rescuers because, while most rescuing families across Ukraine sought to conceal their rescue work from neighbors, rescuers from non-dominant denominations of Christianity sometimes brought their charges before their entire congregations or encouraged said charges to seek out other members of the denomination in question for help. This "grapevine" rescuer recommendation system is well documented in the stories of Ukrainian Protestant rescuers and is illustrated many times later on in this article.[36]

A young Jewish girl called Hana Kvasha, for instance, sought refuge in the home of devout Evangelicals Mikhail and Aleksandra Gorupay (Mykhaylo and Oleksandra Horupay) after the Jews of Pykiv in the Vinnytsia oblast were massacred in May 1942. After several weeks, the Gorupays sent Hana to neighboring villages in search of other Evangelicals who could help her. Eventually, Hana's wanderings led her to the village of Yaniv (today Ivaniv), where she met the couple Matvey and Anna Bogachuk and their daughter Tatyana (Matviy, Hanna, and Tetyana Bohachuk), who too were Evangelicals. Hana presented herself as Gorupay's granddaughter, claiming to be a Ukrainian girl seeking to avoid being sent to Nazi Germany for labor. She was welcomed without question, and once the Bogachuks realized that she was actually a Jewish girl in hiding, they invited her to stay indefinitely. She remained with them almost continuously until liberation in March 1944.[37]

This tendency to turn inward towards one's community may be one of the reasons why minority Protestant rescuers were sometimes willing to legally

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(ibid., 138) allowing them. Even so, this community seems to have been relatively fortunate with regard to access to resources, especially compared to those that had lived in Soviet Ukraine for the two decades preceding the war.

[35] Gilbert, *The Righteous*, 10.

[36] The practice of recruiting trusted acquaintances to help with rescue operations was, nevertheless, not restricted to minority rescuers.

[37] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/9445. Note: While the Yad Vashem files maintain that the Bogachuk patriarch's name was Matvey, the Russian equivalent of Matthew, Hana's testimony consistently refers to her rescuer as Makhtey (Russian spelling: Махтей; Ukrainian equivalent: Махтій), a very rare, little-known form of this name.

integrate their charges into their families. Not only did evangelical couple Mikhail (Mykhaylo) Ponomaryov and Mariya Ponomaryova from Zhytomyr buy off their neighbor's silence during their rescue operation, Mikhail also obtained a false birth certificate for their charge, Nyusya, and registered her as the couple's daughter.[38] On one occasion, during an unexpected inspection of their home, aforementioned evangelical rescuers Matvey and Anna Bogachuk even bribed a Ukrainian policeman with what was most likely lard and money to prevent him from taking their charge, Hana, to the local police station when the girl could not produce documents verifying her false identity as Anna's niece from the village of Solomirka.[39] Sabbatarian nurse Nadezhda (Nadiya) Lutsenko procured Soviet identity papers for her Jewish charge Arkadiy Gertsberg in the name of her missing husband Vladimir (Volodymyr), who had been exiled to Siberia in the 1930s, though she was uncertain as to whether the latter was still alive.[40] Nevertheless, integrating charges into one's family was not exclusive to Protestant rescuers.

In summary, as was the case with Trocmé and other Protestant rescuers in countries where Protestantism was a minority religion, the underdog experience always went hand-in-hand with humanitarianism and a sense of basic Christian duty in faith-motivated rescue work in Ukraine. Nevertheless, as illustrated in the following pages, primary testimony reveals that individual rescuers within these Protestant communities sometimes felt a remarkable and profound sense of philo-Semitism that both derived directly from their faith and emerged as the primary motivating factor behind their rescue work.

◼ The Hebrew Bible and Philo-Semitism

Protestantism's abandonment of the priesthood as a mediating factor between God and the faithful established the Scriptures as a critical means of understanding the Creator.[41] Some denominations—particularly evangelical Protestants—adopted the doctrine of *prima* or *sola scriptura*, which placed canonized Scripture above all other sources of divine revelation and religious truth. Correspondingly, the exegetical tradition of low-church Protestantism entailed an intimate study of both the New Testament and the Hebrew Bible. In placing more emphasis on the Bible than did Catholics, writes historical theologian Yaakov Ariel, Protestants extended their interest to the "biblical narratives about the Israelites' trials and tribulations."[42]

For low-church Protestants, the Hebrew Bible served three fundamental purposes: first to offer insight into the Jewish covenant with God, that is, the

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[38] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/9833.

[39] Yad Vashem archival file M.31.2/9445.

[40] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/7372.

[41] Ariel, "The One and the Many," 6.

[42] Ibid.

covenant preceding that of Christianity; second to be a source of necessary scriptural legitimization of the Christian claim that Jesus was, indeed, the long-awaited messiah and that the new religion had, accordingly, fulfilled a Jewish prophecy; and third to offer a source of greater religious connection to Jesus—a Jew.[43]

If Martin Luther's Reformation in Germany was catalyzed by improvements to printing technology from the mid-fifteenth to the early sixteenth century, Protestant communities in Ukraine also benefited from "extensive publishing and education activities," despite a lack of institutional structure.[44] Furthermore, under the reign of Russian Tsar Alexander I, and specifically between 1813 and 1826, the Russian Bible Society printed and distributed over 500,000 copies of the New Testament and the Hebrew Bible in forty-one languages across Russia, including 40,000 copies of the former in Russian.[45] Much of southern Russia, which included substantial parts of present-day Ukraine, "experienced a religious ferment as a result of the sudden appearance of Bibles and an increase in people who would interpret and spread the Holy Scriptures," writes historian Nicholas Breyfogle.[46] The availability of printed materials made it easier for the faithful to devote time to reading or listening to Scripture in the privacy of their homes. It must be noted that a close study of the Hebrew Bible did not mean an acceptance of other Jewish texts (such as the Talmud or Kabbalistic writings) as sacred.[47] Nevertheless, many philo-Semitic Protestants felt such ardent fascination towards Jewish culture that they sometimes learned Hebrew and studied the aforementioned non-biblical Jewish texts for leisure and continue to do so to this day.

As Breyfogle also noted, the appropriation of Jewish practices, for example the Sabbath, by certain Protestant groups, such as the Subbotniki—a subgroup of Sabbatarians in the Russian Empire—"serves as an important reminder . . . [that] Jews and Christians should be understood as forming part of a spectrum of religiosity with the hues and shades of faith and practice often blending with one another and influencing each other."[48] Breyfogle's assessment offers an important synopsis of the theological framework of particular Protestant groups that saw an intellectual and spiritual continuation between Judaism and Christianity, such that loosened the boundaries between them and provoked philo-Semitic tendencies.

With regard to supersessionism, "many, if not most Protestants agreed with Roman Catholics that Christianity had replaced Israel in its covenant with God,"

[43] Paldiel, *Churches and the Holocaust*, 12–13; see also Fogelman, *Conscience and Courage*, 191.
[44] "Protestantism in Ukraine," *Religious Information Service of Ukraine* (website run by Ukrainian Catholic University's Institute of Religion and Society), 13 December 2009, https://risu.org.ua/en/index/reference/major_religions/~Protestantism+in+Ukraine/33331/.
[45] Sergey Savinskiy, *Istoriya russko-ukrainskogo baptizma: Uchebnoe Posobie* (Odessa: Odesskaya Bogoslovskaya Seminariya "Bogomysliye," 1995).
[46] Nicholas Breyfogle, "The Religious World of Russian Sabbatarians (Subbotniks)," *Holy Dissent: Jewish and Christian Mystics in Eastern Europe* (ed. Glenn Dynner; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2011) 372.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 361.

writes Ariel. "Yet some Protestants took a different approach, expressing an appreciation of the Jews . . . as continued heirs to the covenant between God and Israel."[49] Adherence to a dual-covenant, or non-supersessionist, theological viewpoint lessened the probability of doctrine-based anti-Semitism and increased the probability of philo-Semitism by making room for God's covenant with both the Jewish people as descendants of the Israelites and with Christians.

Nevertheless, despite the great potential for philo-Semitism amongst members of these denominations, there remained a strong historical basis for anti-Jewish sentiment as a result of the theological factors delineated earlier in this article. This article, therefore, in no way serves to suggest that all minority Protestant denominations were inclined to rescue Jews from the Holocaust, nor does it ignore any anti-Semitism that Protestants may have been guilty of.[50] It serves only to highlight the activities of an important category of rescuers.

Ultimately, as suggested by Eva Fogelman's rescuer interview project, feelings of philo-Semitism in any individual rescuer were often informed by overall household attitudes towards Jews. Fogelman gives the example of the Ukrainian Zakhaykevich (Zakhaykevych) family, which had a tradition of Judeophilia passed down from one generation to another.[51] Suspicions of having some Jewish blood oneself often (though certainly not always) increased the incidence of Judeophilia, as did pre-existing relationships with Jews.[52]

Baptist Yevdokim Marinets (Yevdokym Marynets) worked on a construction site supervised by Jewish engineer and professor Israel Punkin before the war and afforded shelter to Punkin, his wife Tamara Lyubarskaya, and their two sons Vladimir and Iosef.[53] Baptists Anton and Pelageya (Pelaheya) Ozarchuk and their three daughters Nadezhda (Nadiya), Mariya, and Marta sheltered the family of Jewish grocer Yakov Zilberberg, whom Anton used to supply with surplus produce from the private *khutor*—an isolated farm—the Ukrainians owned near the town of Tuchyn in the Rivne oblast.[54] Similarly, Sabbatarians Gennadiy (Henadiy) Sobochev

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[49] Ariel, "The One and the Many," 16.

[50] A small minority of rescuers were paradoxically guilty of anti-Semitic prejudices themselves. For example, an elderly Seventh-day Adventist rescuer (referred to as a Pentecostal rescuer in certain sources) confessed to me during our August 2018 interview in Rivne that she read to her charges from the Bible while hiding them in the hopes of converting them to Christianity and that she believed at the time of our interview that the Holocaust was God's punishment against the Jews for the crime of deicide. It is unclear whether these confessions truly reflect the rescuer's wartime activities or beliefs or whether they arose in the decades after the war from the numerous pitfalls of memory and memory politics.

[51] Fogelman, *Conscience and Courage*, 187. Folgelman provides the Polish spelling of the rescuers' last name—Zahajkewycz.

[52] Sometimes, suspicions of having Jewish blood oneself did not encourage philo-Semitism, but, on the contrary, fueled anti-Semitism.

[53] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/7195.

[54] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/4952.

and Mariya Sobocheva from Velyka Zhmerynka in the oblast of Vinnytsia had many Jewish friends before the war, amongst them Olga Zektser and her children Klara and Leonid. Despite being in great financial difficulty, the couple welcomed the three charges in 1942 and always fed Olga's father Rabbi Zektser when he came to visit from the ghetto. Mariya also traveled once a week to a market 30 kilometers away in order to be able to sell possessions and purchase flour and grain without arousing her neighbors' suspicion.[55] Nevertheless, "friendship and love" as a motive for rescue were certainly not restricted to Protestant rescuers.

The Judeophilia exhibited by the Protestant rescuers singled out in this article was unique precisely because it emerged from their faith and their approach to theological study. While religious education in these households certainly served to strengthen any positive sentiments towards Jews that may have developed due to pre-existing relationships, it also had a remarkable capacity to produce profound feelings of appreciation even in those situations where Protestants had never even laid eyes on a Jew before the start of the rescue operation.

◼ Linguistic and Doctrinal Challenges

Primary testimonies from wartime Ukraine, including those in Yad Vashem's collection on the Righteous, do not always clearly distinguish between various groups described as Baptists, Evangelicals, Seventh-day Adventists, and Sabbatarians. In some testimony, the words Baptists and Sabbatarians or Seventh-day Adventists and Sabbatarians are used interchangeably, though in the latter case, the confusion is justifiable because Seventh-day Adventists, who observe the seventh-day Sabbath, are a subset of the more general category of Sabbatarians. Sometimes, the word Sabbatarians seems to refer to the Subbotniki of the Russian Empire, though there was a wide breadth of theological variation even amongst the Subbotniki, from those who considered themselves Christian but adopted Mosaic Law—even circumcision—due to their conviction that such practices would bring them closer to God and salvation, to those who considered themselves Jewish, learned Hebrew, and married Jews. Similarly, sometimes individuals referred to in one testimony as Baptists appear in another testimony as Stundists, an inconsistency that is only confounded by the fact that, as observed by historian Sergei Zhuk, people who live in Ukraine's central and southern oblasts tend to call all evangelicals Stundists.[56]

The historical record testifies to the existence of numerous proto-Protestant and Protestant trends in the lands that today constitute Ukraine and neighboring countries, which signifies that the groups that are the focus of this study on rescuers did not appear in a vacuum. The presence of Protestantism in the multiethnic,

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[55] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/6480.

[56] Sergei I. Zhuk, *Russia's Lost Reformation: Peasants and Radical Religious Sects in Southern Russia and the Ukraine, 1830-1905* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004) 5.

multilinguistic, and religiously diverse Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was made possible by a history of relative tolerance, both *de facto* and *de jure*, for centuries before the country's establishment in 1569.[57] This tradition ensured that even radical reformist groups, such as the Anabaptists, though still subjected to suspicion, were treated with far more consideration in Poland than they were in the countries they were fleeing.[58]

According to historian Janusz Tazbir, a group of 200 Anabaptist exiles appeared in Poland in August 1535. The staunchly Catholic King Sigismund I issued an edict forbidding *starostas* (local governors) from accommodating these refugees, an edict that was widely cited by the *starostas* of Kraśnik, who tried to prevent a second group of Anabaptists from Moravia from making its way through Poland. But, after a series of interventions, the reformers were released and some even found permanent refuge at a time when Anabaptists and antitrinitarians (or nontrinitarians—Christians who rejects the mainstream doctrine of the Trinity of God in three divine persons, that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, united as one) were ruthlessly being persecuted as heretics by Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists and subjected to execution, including by beheading and burning at the stake, in various parts of Western and Central Europe.[59] Part of this second group of Anabaptists, maintains Tazbir, created a commune in the city of Volodymyr (previously Volodymyr-Volynsky) the first radical reformist commune in what is today Ukraine.

This landscape also produced groups with an interest in Jewish doctrine, as well as Judaizing movements, such as, for example, the Ebionite current of the Polish Brethren. The current, whose name derived from the word *ebyonim* (English: "the poor ones"; Hebrew: אביונים), was led by the Belarusian Symon Budny; it was non-pacifist, followed Mosaic Law, and rejected the divinity of Jesus and the virgin birth while recognizing Jesus as the messiah.[60]

Between 1772 and 1795, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth fell to three partitioning powers—its neighbors, Austria, Prussia, and Russia; a major share, including most of what today constitutes Ukraine (save for the lands of the historical region of Galicia), was annexed into the Russian Empire. Considered the predecessor of a broad evangelical movement, Ukrainian Stundism emerged in the southern parts of the Russian Empire in the mid-to-late nineteenth century

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[57] Janusz Tazbir, *A State without Stakes: Polish Religions Toleration in the 16th and 17th Century* (trans. A. T. Jordan; Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1973) 31–32.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 40–41.

[60] In January 1556, a general synod of the Reformed, specifically Calvinist, churches of Poland took place in the village of Secemin in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. There, a Polish scholar called Piotr of Goniądz spoke out against trinitarianism, which started a sequence of events that led to a schism within the Polish Calvinist Church. Piotr's followers, called the Polish Brethren (also known as the *Ecclesia Minor* or the *Minor Reformed Church of Poland*), based their synod in the town of Brzeziny. By the 1570s, the Polish Brethren had split into further currents along differences in interpretation regarding the divinity of Christ and questions of pacifism versus non-pacifism.

amongst emancipated ethnic Ukrainian and Russian peasants who worked for and participated in the religious gatherings of Pietistic German and German Mennonite colonists, two groups that were respectively undergoing a religious awakening and a religious revival at the time.[61] These ethnic Germans were amongst the more than 139,000 foreigners who came to the Russian Empire by 1850 in the decades following Catherine the Great's Manifesto of 22 July 1763, which was signed shortly after the Seven Year's War—a conflict that left much of Western Europe in socioeconomic turmoil.[62] The Manifesto, advertised generously in German-speaking lands, offered foreigners the opportunity to enter Russia and settle in the province of their choice while enjoying a wide range of rights and benefits, including freedom of religion; tax breaks; land and assistance in setting up farms, manufactories, and factories; paid travel expenses; and exemption from military service, amongst others.[63] The earliest Mennonites relocated to southern Russia from Prussia in 1789–1790 to avoid mandatory military service.[64]

German Lutheran pietists from the historical territory of Württemberg settled in Russia's Kherson gubernia (province) in 1817 in the colony of Rohrbach, bringing with them a new religious practice of studying and discussing the Bible in private houses during the hours (*Stunde*) following church worship.[65] From the 1840s through the 1860s, this movement coincided with the religious revivals of the German colonists in the Nazareth sect of Bessarabia and the Mennonites of the Ekaterinoslav and Tavrida provinces, notes Zhuk, and, under the influence of German missionaries preaching the Western European Baptist faith, these converging phenomena produced a popular radical "reformation"—the Ukrainian Stundist movement—amongst peasants who adopted these ideas.[66] The movement grew from several hundred followers in the 1830s to 400,000 followers in 1883, engaging over three-fourths of the rural population of the Kherson gubernia and entire villages in the Kiev gubernia in the 1880s and 1890s.[67] "Like the Western Protestants," writes Zhuk, "the new sects denied the universal authority of the established church hierarchies (of the Pope or of the Russian Orthodox hierarchy) and affirmed the Reformation principles of justification by faith alone, the priesthood of all believers, and the primacy of the Bible as the source of revealed truth."[68]

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[61] Zhuk, *Russia's Lost Reformation*, 11–12, 17.

[62] Ibid., 40.

[63] For details of Catherine the Great's Manifesto, see Fred C. Koch, *The Volga Germans in Russia and the Americas, from 1763 to the Present* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978) 13–18.

[64] Serhii Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (London: Penguin Books, 2016) 141.

[65] Zhuk, *Russia's Lost Reformation*, 8.

[66] Ibid., 8–9.

[67] Ibid., 7, 9. I write the Kiev gubernia (and not the Kyiv gubernia), because I am referring specifically to an administrative unit of the Russian Empire.

[68] Ibid., 9.

The Baptist movement is considered to have spread to Ukrainian peasants on 11 June 1869.[69] On this day, Efim Tsymbal, a Stundist peasant from the village of Karlivka (previously the German settlement of Alt Danzig) in what is today the Kirovohrad oblast, was baptized by a Baptist minister alongside 30 German colonists; later that year, Tsymbal baptized Ivan Riaboshka who, in turn, baptized a religious community of 49 people in 1871.[70] These newly baptized leaders then "introduced elements of Baptist theology and ritual into the Ukrainian Stundist communities," writes Zhuk, becoming its first ministers—an innovation that some Stundist peasants rejected. These developments eventually split Ukrainian Stundism into two groups: the conservative Stundo-Baptists and the more radical "New" or "Young" Stundists who stressed "unmediated spiritual communication" with God.[71]

The 1870s saw the start of a steady stream of Ukrainian emigration from both the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire to North America. Amongst these émigrés were Ukrainians seeking financial stability and about 15,000 German Mennonites hoping to escape military service after Tsar Alexander II's 1874 revocation of the exemption accorded by Catherine the Great.[72] Some of these individuals, amongst them Greek Catholic Ukrainians from Galicia, joined the Presbyterian Church in the United States; others joined evangelical Protestant communities, such as the Seventh-day Adventists.[73] As early as the 1880s, evangelical "papers and tracts," including pamphlets on Sabbath-keeping, were making their way across the Atlantic to relatives and friends of converted immigrants—a phenomenon that facilitated the work of missionaries seeking to spread the gospel and establish churches on the ground, which, in turn, resulted in a significant growth in evangelical communities.[74]

In this way, the earliest formal congregation of Seventh-day Adventists in what is today Ukraine was founded in 1886 by the missionary Ludwig R. Conradi in the Crimean town of Berdebulat. Conradi wrote that year:

> We drove forty miles north to Berdebulat, where our brethren and sisters from different places had appointed to meet because there was sufficient water here for baptism. After we had fully set before them the rules and regulations of the church, as found in God's word, nineteen covenanted together to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, thereby laying the foundation for the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Russia.[75]

[69] Ibid., 173.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Gerd Stricker, *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas: Rußland* (Munich: Siedler Verlage, 1997) 377.

[73] See, for example, Ludwig R. Conradi, "A Visit to Russia," in *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Basle: Imprimerie Polyglotte, 1886) 250. Conradi mentions that immigrants to the United States from the Russian Empire received "the precious truth for the last days."

[74] Ibid., 256.

[75] Ibid., 256–67.

Upon the fall of the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the late 1910s and the rise of a short-lived independent Ukraine, some Ukrainian émigrés returned to their homeland; many brought reformist thought with them.[76] Sometimes individuals educated in particular traditions in the United States joined communities formed in slightly different traditions in Ukraine, thereby mixing doctrines in a way that makes labelling any particular evangelical community with precision problematic. Furthermore, because many of these congregations were geographically distant, it is reasonable to assume that there was some confusion or adaptation as knowledge of traditions quietly made its way to new communities.

According to primary testimony, Baptists, Evangelicals, Seventh-day Adventists, and Sabbatarians each produced rescuers in occupied Ukraine. The linguistic uncertainty surrounding these designations, however, makes it possible that certain rescuers who self-identified as adhering to one denomination should actually, in light of precise doctrine and spiritual practices, be categorized as adhering to another. For this reason, it is difficult to trace the origins of any particular community mentioned in the testimony or determine which elements of their doctrine may have contributed to Judeophilia.

It is also unclear whether any of these movements subscribed to Calvinist notions of predestation. Though the Russian Union of Baptists is said to have adhered to the Calvinist doctrine of salvation in the early twentieth century, by the end of the 1990s, most evangelical Christians in Ukraine adhered to the Arminianist model of salvation, which establishes the human being's free will to accept God's salvation.[77] The evolution of the latter doctrine in Ukraine and corresponding changes in perceptions of predestation in society may have contributed to a greater sense of theological affinity with the Jewish people, as "a basic principle of Judaism is that man can gain God's favor by his own conduct."[78]

These are all distinctions that could, even if slightly, have affected the principles and values by which any particular denomination lived as a collective, as well as each individual rescuer's motivations for wartime humanitarianism.

■ Case studies of Philo-Semitism from Primary Testimony

Of the 2,659 Ukrainian rescuers recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem as of January 2020, 165 were members of minority Protestant groups during the war; 103 of these rescuers were Baptists, 30 were either Seventh-day Adventists or Sabbatarians, 27 were Evangelicals, and 1 was a Jehovah's Witness. In terms of geographic distribution, over 64.8% (107 rescuers) lived in the lands that today constitute Ukraine's Rivne oblast and Volyn oblast, with 77 rescuers and 30 rescuers respectively; over 84.4% (65 individuals) of minority Protestant

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[76] Hans-Christian Diedrich and Gerd Stricker, "Reformaty Na Territorii Rossii, Ukrainy, Belorussii i Litvy," *Reformatskiy Vzglyad*, 12 May 2011, www.reformed.org.ua/2/609/Stricker.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Paldiel, *Churches and the Holocaust*, 11.

rescuers living in the Rivne oblast were Baptists. According to preliminary estimates, at least 31.5% (52 individuals) of Protestant rescuers in Ukraine had strong Judeophilic tendencies, though this figure is likely to increase with further examination of testimony.[79]

Those Protestants whom I identify with certainty as being philo-Semitic are those who directly expressed admiration for their Jewish charges or the Jewish people as a whole specifically because of the "Jewishness" of the people in question. The nature of this expression was diverse, ranging from prayer, to song, to general words of encouragement, to ardent Judeophilic declarations before entire congregations.

The testimony of Holocaust survivor David Prital, for instance, as cited by Martin Gilbert, related the following philo-Semitic episode:

> Suddenly, I saw a figure of a Ukrainian peasant walking peacefully in the fields. . . . He approached me and immediately understood who I was. With tears in his eyes, he comforted me and he invited me to his house. . . . "God brought an important guest to our house," he said to his wife. "We should thank God for this blessing." They kneeled down and I heard a wonderful prayer coming out of their pure and simple hearts, not written in a single prayer book. I heard a song addressed to God, thanking God for the opportunity to meet a son of Israel in these crazy days. . . . They stopped praying and we sat down at the table for a meal. Before the meal, the master of the house read a chapter from the Bible. . . . It is this very book that filled their hearts with love for the Jews. . . . After the meal, I started to talk to them. "Look, I, too, am a Jew," he said [. . .] "I am a Jew in spirit," he continued. "This encounter with you gives me more food for more thought and confirms the words of the prophets that the remnants of the Jews will be saved."[80]

This Baptist rescuer was called Ivan Yatsuk. Along with his wife Serafima (Serafyma), Yatsuk offered Prital shelter in his home in the village of Pidhaitsi in the Volyn oblast. Though it is unclear whether, in saying "the remnants of the Jews will be saved," Yatsuk presented an Augustinian idea of imminent Jewish conversion or a non-supersessionist idea that Jews too, on par with Christians, would achieve salvation, his general commentary reveals an ardent philo-Semitism.[81] In claiming that he too was a Jew in "spirit," Yatsuk evoked a Jewish-Christian understanding of Christianity, that is, one in which Mosaic Law and, by extension, Judaism had not yet become redundant—an idea that is reflected in the stories of several other Judeophilic rescuers.

"Baptists were a minority in [Pidhaitsi], which was mostly Russian Orthodox and antagonistic towards the Baptists," reads the corresponding Yad Vashem account, revealing that this particular community was, indeed, at a disadvantage

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[79] This preliminary data is the subject of ongoing research by this author.

[80] Gilbert, *The Righteous*, 11–12.

[81] "The remnants of the Jews will be saved" could also refer to Jews being rescued during the Holocaust.

in its locality.[82] "[Prital] occasionally stayed with the Yatsuks for short periods," continues the account, "but through them he met other Baptist families in and around the village that were willing to help him."[83] When Yatsuk sent Prital over to a Baptist neighbor for refuge, the neighbor, concerned that his Jewish guest was sad, said: "'I will sing you a song that may help raise your spirits.' The peasant then started to sing from the Psalms: 'When God returned the Jews to Zion'—and sang, Prital noted, 'in Hebrew!'"[84]

An appreciation of Hebrew Scripture, culture, and language remained important for some aging Protestant rescuers to their dying days. In August 2017, when I interviewed Valentin (Valentyn) Cheremukha, a now deceased, once Rivne-based Baptist rescuer, the Ukrainian showed me his Hebrew Scriptures and sang several songs to demonstrate his deep philo-Semitism.[85] One of these songs was Israeli folksong *Hava Nagila*. Valentin's home, clothing, and use of language all suggested a sincere sense of Judeophilia. The rescuer wore a shirt that bore a pattern slightly resembling interlacing Stars of David and relied on Yiddish to explain that his eldest sister had passed away or, to use his words, had *geshtorbn* (English: Died; Yiddish: געשטאָרבן).[86]

During German occupation, Valentin, his parents Andrey (Andriy) and Anastasiya, and his two siblings lived on a *khutor* near the village of Kharaluh in the Rivne oblast. One day in autumn 1942, the family was paid a visit by their Jewish acquaintance Haya Tessler from the Mezhyrichi ghetto over 14 kilometers away.[87] The local *Judenrat* had allowed Haya to leave the ghetto briefly on condition that her brother Israel and their nephew Mordecai Tennenbaum remain as collateral were she to not return.[88] The risk was great, but the young lady was desperate—there were rumors that the Germans intended to launch a second *Aktion* to coincide with the Jewish festival of Sukkot, which was several days away.[89] Haya's parents and

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[82] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/2656.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Gilbert, *The Righteous*, 13.

[85] Interview with Valentin Cheremukha by this author, August 2017.

[86] Cheremuka mispronounced the Yiddish word *geshtorbn* as *geshtunk* (as far as I could hear it), which has no meaning in Yiddish.

[87] Today, this town is called Velyki Mezhyrichi.

[88] The *Judenrat* was a local council representing the Jewish community in German-occupied territories. Yad Vashem's online summary of this story (composed by Yad Vashem staff on the basis of accounts submitted by survivors and their rescuers) states that Haya Tessler had sent a letter to the Cheremukhas requesting help—a claim that is inconsistent with Cheremukha's account during our interview, where he clearly spoke of Haya coming to his family to ask for help in person.

[89] The term *Aktion* refers to an episode of mass murder of Jews in occupied territories, often by gunfire over pits. Whenever the opportunity presented itself, the Nazis sought to have *Aktionen* (plural of *Aktion*) coincide with Jewish festivals to worsen the psychological sting of the massacre. The first *Aktion* in Mezhyrichi, which took place on 22 May 1942 (or 6 Sivan 5702, according to the Hebrew calendar), fell on the Jewish harvest festival of *Shavuot* (the *Feast of Weeks* in English or the *Pentecost* in Ancient Greek).

husband had been killed in the first *Aktion*, that of 22 May 1942, so she came to the Cheremukhas and asked for help fleeing the ghetto with her remaining family. "Save our souls," she said to them.

The Cheremukhas spent the night devising a plan and, in the morning, Anastasiya and Valentin journeyed to the town by horse-drawn cart on the pretense that Anastasiya was ill and wished to consult a ghetto doctor called Horokhovich.[90] Their intention was to bribe the *Judenrat* with food and drink, pull the charges out of the ghetto one by one, disguise them as Ukrainian peasants, and transport them to the Cheremukhas' home. But rescuing was fraught with challenges and there was little guarantee that the escape would go as smoothly as the Cheremukhas had planned. "As mama was leaving . . . she asked me to bend down because she was already on the ground and I was [sitting] atop the [cart]," Valentin told me in an emotional interview.

> I bent down. She kissed me and her tears dripped down [onto my neck]. . . . I remember it to this day. What if our plan would fail and mama would never come back? And she said "My son, if twilight sets in and I haven't yet re- turned, don't wait for me. Go home alone." But mama prayed ardently; her tears [continued to] fall onto my neck. . . . I remember it to this day. . . . I can't forget it . . . but [in the end] everything worked out successfully. Our common God, *Tsevaot*, arranged for everything and we [then] rescued for nine months.[91]

The charges settled in a small hideaway beneath the floorboards, heated from above by a nearby stove.[92] They were permitted to surface at night to stretch their limbs and earned their keep by knitting goods that the Baptists then exchanged for food. Valentin voluntarily shared a bed and ate with the family's charges, he said in our interview. Throughout his life, he attributed his family's commitment to the rescue operation to their fervently philo-Semitic faith and upbringing.

Haya and her relatives remained in the Cheremukhas' hideout for nine months before being relocated to a granary in one of the family's fields. The move made the logistics of rescuing especially difficult, so the charges moved on, eventually joining the Soviet partisans. Though he survived the war, Andrey Cheremukha, who started working for the Soviet authorities after the Germans retreated, was killed by Ukrainian nationalists while conducting a census in the neighboring village of Koloverty just short of a year after liberation. It is likely that this rescuer was executed not for being a Baptist or for having rescued, but for cooperating with the Soviets.

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[90] Transliteration from Ukrainian, as pronounced by interviewee.

[91] The original Russian of what I translated as "mama prayed ardently," was "Мама очень молилась крепко."

[92] "Andrey and Anastasiya Cheremukha, and Their Son – Valentin," *Yad Vashem*, https://www. yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/cheremukha.html.

Judeophilic rescuers believed that rescuing Jews was an honor. Aforementioned Baptist rescuer Nikolai Kuchmiy, who, along with his wife Olga (Olha), rescued three Jews in the village of Teremkivtsi both in their own home and the home of trusted neighbors, reflected on this sentiment decades after the war in another letter to Yad Vashem, this one addressed to Dr. Mordecai Paldiel, the former Director of the Department of the Righteous:

> I am very surprised that there exists, in fact, a people that considers every human life to be of such great value. Decades have passed since the war; my friend, whom we sheltered, has already died, yet [people] have not forgotten the mercy shown to him and want to know how it all transpired.
>
> Remember, I do not need anything. I have lived my life honestly and await the day that my Lord summons me. And I thank the Lord that [h]e gave me the opportunity and protected me so that I might hide a person. What difference does it make who he is? The Jews are a people chosen by God, and, indeed, we see biblical [S]cripture coming to fruition. [God said:] "I scattered Israel and will assemble it anew."[93]

Minority Protestants often spoke to their charges about the Scriptures, a propensity perhaps best evinced in the story of twenty-year-old Fanya Rozenfeld from Rafalivka, also near Rivne. In August 1942, the adolescent escaped the liquidation of the ghetto in her native town and ran towards a Baptist community in search of food. By September, she came upon Filip and Teklya Kotsubaylo (nicknamed Konyukh, presumably because either Filip himself or his ancestors had, at one time, cared for horses), Baptist farmers in Mulchytsi (Rivne oblast), who believed rescuing to be a blessing from God.

One night, Fanya had a dream in which she saw herself holding a Russian-language Bible for the very first time yet somehow knew the precise location of a particular passage. Upon awakening, she found the Bible and began searching for the passage, and when Filip entered the room, she told him of her dream. Knowing the Scriptures well, the impressed rescuer immediately located the passage in the Book of Isaiah and, that very evening, took his charge to a Baptist meeting in the nearby village of Mlynok. There, Fanya read a sermon before the entire congregation, which felt moved to save her life.[94] Fanya was treated like family in the Kotsubaylos' home and nicknamed "Saint Feodosiya" by the congregants, who considered her holy.

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[93] Yad Vashem, Archival file M.31.2/5877. Undated letter from Nikolai Kuchmiy to Dr. Mordecai Paldiel, the former Director of Yad Vashem's Department of the Righteous. Kuchmiy's biblical paraphrase, "I scattered Israel and will assemble it anew," is likely a reference to the promise of restoration in Ezek 11:17, which reads: "Thus says the Lord God: 'I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.'"

[94] "Filipp i Teklya Konyukh i ikh synov'ya Aleksandr i Andrey," *Yad Vashem*, https://www.yadvashem.org/ru/righteous/stories/konyukh-kaluta-kuyava.html.

Through Fanya, the Baptist community extended its help to other Jews hiding in the forest, including eleven-year-old Masha Dreizen (later Wolfstahl), from the town of Kamin-Kashyrskyi, whom Fanya found lying alone in the woods at the end of 1943 after the child's family had been murdered in an *Aktion*. Dreizen would recall in a post-war interview:

> Suddenly I looked up and saw a woman standing over me, a beautiful woman with blue eyes. . . . She was very popular amongst the Baptists, very. . . . She picked me up and carried me, put me under her coat and walked with me. . . . If I said before that I always prayed to my grandmother, who always watched over me, then at that moment I couldn't believe it was true, it was like something from Heaven. At that moment, [Fanya] was like something from Heaven, like an angel. I thought she was absolutely beautiful. . . . She brought me to a certain village to a gentile, a Baptist, and she told them to take care of me. Now, everything she said was as if from God himself. They took her very seriously. She was like God's daughter.[95]

The Kotsubaylo family also sheltered Sender Appelboim and his father Shlomo, who had escaped from the Volodymyrets ghetto.[96] Inspired by local Baptist spiritual leader Konon Kalyuta, whose sermons spoke of the importance of rescuing Jews, Filip told the Appelboims: "God sent you to me, and I consider it an honor to save Jews."[97]

In late 1942, the search for Jews and partisans intensified in the surrounding area and it became necessary for the charges to leave the Kotsubaylo home. Fanya would spend the next year hiding in the village of Mlynok at the home of preacher Kalyuta, his second wife Anna (Hanna), their four children, as well as his two daughters from his first marriage—Anna (Hanna) and Mariya.[98] With the arrival of anti-Semitic Ukrainian nationalists to the area in the second half of 1943, Fanya was forced to move again, this time to the home of Baptist leader Andrey (Andriy) Kuyava, his wife Yarina (Yaryna), and their son Nikolay (Mykola) in the nearby village of Sudche (Volyn oblast).

Judeophilic rescuers often occupied themselves with their charges' emotional and psychological wellbeing in addition to meeting their physical needs of sustenance

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[95] "Rescued by Righteous Among the Nations: Masha Wolfstal's Story" (interview with Masha Wolfstal, Yad Vashem/The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, 2010), www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgB28qd3vic. According to Dreizen's interview, Fanya subsequently adopted the Baptist faith, which Dreizen herself rejected.

[96] "The Konyuk, The Kalutas and The Kuyavas," *Yad Vashem*, https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/konyuk-kaluta-kuyava.html. Also see "Kak Ukrainskiye Baptisty Spasali Yevreyev Vo Vremya Kholokosta," *Assotsiatsiya Yevreyskikh Organizatsiy I Obshchin Ukrainy*, http://vaadua.org/news/kak-ukrainskie-baptisty-spasali-evreev-vo-vremya-holokosta.

[97] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/6498.

[98] Several months after Rozenfeld's arrival, in early 1943, Kalyuta welcomed yet another charge, thirteen-year-old Rivka Bass, to his home. After liberation, Rozenfeld would marry Yakov Bass, Rivka's father, who had spent the war hiding in a nearby forest with his son David.

and shelter. Aforementioned evangelical rescuer Tatyana Bogachuk used to lend literature to her family's charge Hana Kvasha to help her pass the time. Hana wrote in her post-war testimony:

> Tanya was the same age as I. . . . I sat either in the attic or in the pantry, in dark places. Tanya looked after me to help me remain calm. She used to bring me the Bible and the Book of Psalms. I loved to read and devoured everything. [The Bible] intrigued me and I began to pray, asking God to keep me alive and to protect the family [that was rescuing me] from evil.[99]

Baptist rescuer Mefodiy Logatskiy (Lohatskyy) lived on a *khutor* with his wife Kseniya and their children Darya and Fyodor (Fedir) near the village of Dovhovolya (Rivne oblast) not far from Volodymyrets. While working for a wealthy Jew in Volodymyrets before the war, Logatskiy met many Jewish locals. Just before the 28 August 1942 liquidation of the Volodymyrets ghetto, Logatskiy offered shelter to his Jewish friends, of whom four, Abraham and Reuven Susel and two young women, accepted his offer. In late 1942, Shlomo and Sender Appelboim (previously housed by the Kotsubaylos) also relocated to Logatskiy's home, and two other Jews—Lyova and Srulik—eventually did so too.

As devout Baptists, Logatskiy and his wife felt it was their duty to rescue Jews, whom they too believed were God's Chosen People.[100] "During periods of depression and despair, Logatskiy encouraged the Jews hidden in his home and shared his belief with them that they would later reach the Holy Land," reads an account of the rescue on Yad Vashem's website, suggesting that the rescuer was conscious of and empathetic towards Zionism and his charges' hopes for Aliyah—another indication of his Judeophilia.

By spring 1943, most of the guests had moved on, but Lyova and Srulik remained, only to be found by German soldiers and instantly killed. During his interrogation, Logatskiy was asked whether he knew that rescuing was punishable by death, to which he replied: "You can take my body, but not my soul." The Germans executed Logatskiy, burned down his house, and stole his livestock. Kseniya and her children were left homeless and themselves went into hiding until the liberation.[101]

As suggested previously, some Judeophilic Christian rescuers espoused Jewish-Christian views of Christianity or adhered to Mosaic Law to varying degrees. Amongst such rescuers were Sabbatarians, that is, those who observed the Sabbath. Adopting Mosaic Law gave these rescuers a sense of closeness to God and a corresponding confidence that God would deliver them from any challenges that they encountered because of the purity of their faith and spiritual practices.

Nadezhda Lutsenko (mentioned earlier) and her husband Vladimir were such Sabbatarians from Kyiv. Vladimir was exiled to Siberia in the 1930s during the

[99] Yad Vashem, Archival file M.31.2/9445.

[100] See Deut 7:6.

[101] "Mefodiy and Kseniya Logatzky and Daughter Darya," *Yad Vashem*, https://www.yadvashem. org/righteous/stories/logatzky.html.

era of Stalin's repressions and Nadezhda never heard from him again. Amongst Lutsenko's Jewish acquaintances were the three Gertsberg brothers, the eldest of whom were married to her two friends and serving in the Red Army since the start of the war. The youngest brother, Arkadiy, did not enlist and was spared *Aktion* at Babyn Yar because he tried to escape to the east.[102] But his train was bombed by the Germans and he was unable to flee. Though at first Arkadiy sought refuge with one of his sisters-in-law, he eventually turned to Lutsenko for help.

In her testimony to Yad Vashem, Lutsenko wrote: "I had faith that God would save both me and him, because I adhered to the commandments that God conveyed onto Moses and Abraham and knew that [h]e protected his righteous servants."[103]

Lutsenko gave Arkadiy her husband's birth certificate and, when she learned that her charge would be unable to obtain German identity papers without first presenting his Soviet papers, "placed a notice in the local newspaper declaring the loss of identity papers in the name of Vladimir Lutsenko," reads Yad Vashem's online account.[104] Gertsberg, who hid in Lutsenko's basement while awaiting Vladimir's new papers, left shortly after receiving them, found a job, and started renting his own home on the city's outskirts. But fearing that his real identity would be discovered, he returned to Lutsenko in autumn 1943 and remained hidden for the remainder of the occupation. The pair married within six months of liberation and lived together for half a century thereafter.

While many faith-motivated rescuers were vocal about their faith and God throughout their testimony, marginalized Protestant rescuers, especially Judeophilic rescuers, consistently revealed both a sense of ardent gratitude to God for the opportunity to rescue and a profound awareness of God's constant presence in their lives. This was likely the result of both genuine gratitude and a habitual outspokenness about their faith born of a constant need to defend their spiritual beliefs in the face of persecution, before, during, and even after the war in the Soviet Union.

◼ Conclusions

Throughout occupied Europe, both theological and non-theological anti-Semitic prejudices often prevented bystanders from becoming rescuers. Some Christians, however, were motivated to rescue by their faith. Most of these faith-motivated rescuers acted out of both general humanitarianism and Christian duty. Those faith-motivated rescuers who came from minority religious groups often also acted out of the underdog mentality. Yet a small but significant group of faith-motivated rescuers acted out of a sense of profound appreciation of the Jewish people. In

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[102] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/7372.

[103] Yad Vashem, Archival file M.31.2/7372.

[104] Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database online summary of archival file M.31.2/7372.

Ukraine, such rescuers could be found amongst certain Protestant communities whose principal motivation for rescuing, as suggested by primary testimony, transcended the common underdog mentality despite their minority status and rested, instead, in their Judeophilia.

The philo-Semitism of these rescuers derived from the particularities of their Protestant faith, namely its exegetical tradition—that is, the practice of closely studying the Bible to understand God and his commandments without the need for priests as mediating factors. This religious education, as well as a pronounced awareness of the Judaic origins of Christianity, cultivated both a great love for the Jewish people and a sense of obligation to rescue them from persecution.