

Righteous Gentiles Among Nations: A Selected Annotated Bibliography

By Vladimir F. Wertsman

In my previous article on the Holocaust (MCR, December 2001), I focused on the six million Jews murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust years. Here, I present books on the non-Jews who risked their lives or made other sacrifices to help tens of thousands of Jews to escape the Holocaust machine. Such non-Jews are recognized and honored as Righteous Gentiles Among the Nations by the Yad Vashem Authority in Israel on the basis of an ancient Talmudic (Mishnah) principle, which reads, "Whoever saves one life, it is as if he saved the entire world." Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, himself a Holocaust survivor, commented on the Righteous Gentiles: "We must know these good people who helped Jews during the Holocaust, we must learn from them, and in gratitude and hope, we must remember them."

It is important to note that Righteous Gentiles, men and women, appeared in numerous countries. They were young and old, came from various social strata (royalty, nobility, diplomats, clergy, military men, workers, peasants, and others), belonged to many religious denominations (Catholic, Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, and Muslim), and held diverse political convictions, but were united by a common denominator, the desire to act without hesitation and help Jews survive the Holocaust.

According to statistics issued by Yad Vashem in January 2003 (www.yadvashem.org/righteous/righteous_table.html), about 20,000 Righteous Gentiles have been recorded in the following countries, arranged in descending order by the number of Righteous Gentiles:

Poland—5,733	Switzerland—38
Netherlands—4,513	Bosnia—34
France—2,262	Norway—20
Ukraine—1,881	Denmark—17
Belgium—1,357	Bulgaria—16
Hungary—617	Great Britain—13
Slovakia—428	Sweden—10
Lithuania—513	Macedonia—10
Belarus—512	Armenia—10
Germany—376	Slovenia—4
Italy—325	Spain—3
Greece—253	Estonia—2
Serbia—116	China—2
Czech Republic—104	Brazil—1
Croatia—93	Japan—1
Austria—84	Luxembourg—1
Latvia—83	Portugal—1
Russia—79	Turkey—1
Albania—61	United States—1
Moldova—53	
Romania—48	
	Total—19,706

However, these figures represent only those cases so far verified by Yad Vashem, and figures could be higher in the future. Also, these figures do not include thousands of Righteous Gentiles who were executed or who died in concentration camps together with Jews. The Danish Underground requested that all its members who participated in the rescue of the Jewish community not be listed individually but as one group.

The large number of Righteous Gentiles and the enormous literature in various languages will hopefully generate sometime in the future an encyclopedia or a comprehensive dictionary of this group to match existing encyclopedias of the Holocaust. In the meantime, this article offers a select, annotated list of nonfiction titles to serve adult researchers as a ready tool at the reference desk. All titles are in English, though some were originally published in other languages and translated into English.

Bacque, James. ***Just Raoul: The Private War Against Nazis of Raoul LaPorterie, Who Saved over 1,000 Lives in France***. Rocklin, Calif.: Prima Publications, 1992. 180 pp. Illus. with photos.

An extensive biography of a French resistance fighter during World War II, his activities, and his methods of helping Jews escape from Nazi terror.

Bauminger, Arieh L. ***The Righteous Among the Nations***. Israel: Am Oved, 1990. 203 pp. Illus. with photos.

Thirty-two biographical sketches of Righteous Gentiles from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia.

Block, Gay and Drucker, Malka. ***Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust***. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1992. 255 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Moving stories of 46 Righteous Gentiles from Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia.

Boem, Eric H. ***We Survived: Fourteen Histories of the Hidden and Hunted of Nazi Germany***. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1985. 308 pp.

Lives of Germans and Jews of various social strata with anti-Nazi convictions and accounts of assistance to Jews from Catholic and Protestant individuals and churches.

Eman, Diet and Schap, James. ***Things We Couldn't Say***. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994. 390 pp. Illus. with photos.

Coverage of Dutch Resistance during the Nazi occupation and the substantial help Jewish families received from Resistance fighters.

Fensch, Thomas, ed. ***Oskar Schindler and His List: The Man, the Book, the Film, the Holocaust, and Its Survivors***. Forest Dale, Vt.: Paul Erikson, 1995. 270 pp. Illus. with photos.

The saga of Oskar Schindler, a businessman who cooperated with Nazis but saved 1,200 Jews, whom he utilized in his factory. Some essays in this collection also examine his depiction in the popular film *Schindler's List*.

Fogelman, Eva. ***Conscience & Courage: Rescuers of the Jews During the Holocaust***. New York: Anchor Books, 1994. 393 pp. Bibliography.

Profiles of Righteous Gentiles from Belgium, Belarus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, and Ukraine.

Friedensohn, Joseph. ***Heroine of Rescue: The Incredible Story of Recha Sternbuch, Who Saved Thousands from the Holocaust***. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Mesorah Publications, 1984. 320 pp. Illus. with photos.

The story of an outstanding religious Jewish woman, originally from Poland, who enlisted the help of diplomats, the Papal Nuncio, and Latin American contacts to help Jews from Austria and Germany illegally cross the border and find protection in Switzerland.

Friedman, Henry. ***I'm No Hero: Journeys of a Holocaust Survivor***. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1999. 177 pp. Illus. with photos.

Moving story of how the author and his family were hidden by Ukrainians, including a priest, during Nazi occupation.

Friedman, Philip. ***Their Brother's Keepers***. New York: Holocaust Library, 1978. 224 pp.

Underground resistance against Nazi occupation and assistance to Jews by Catholic and Protestant leaders in Baltic countries, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia.

Geier, Arnold. ***Heroes of the Holocaust***. New York: Berkeley, 1998. 280 pp. Illus. with photos and maps. Bibliography.

Interviews with 28 Holocaust survivors, featuring their stories of how Righteous Gentiles helped them in Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, and Romania.

Gies, Miep and Gold, Alison. ***Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family***. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1988. 361 pp. Illus. with photos.

Details regarding the life of Anne Frank and her family in hiding during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands.

Goldenberg, Sam. ***Whispers in the Darkness***. New York:

Shengold Publishers, 1988. 141 pp. Illus. with photos.

Details the survival of a Jewish family hidden by a Czech widow in a bunker for 15 months during the war.

Gross, Leonard. ***The Last Jews of Berlin***. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982. 349 pp. Illus. with maps.

Describes how 4,000 Jews from Berlin were hidden from the Nazis by German friends and even strangers in secret rooms, apartments, houses, shacks, offices, and stores.

Gushee, David P. ***The Righteous Gentiles of the Holocaust: A Christian Interpretation***. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994. 258 pp. Bibliography.

A Christian minister presents the ethical background of Righteous Gentiles, religious motivations for rescue, and various quests for and paths toward righteousness. The book includes a biographical list of 84 rescuers from various countries.

Hallie, Philip Paul. ***Lest Innocent Blood Shed: The Story of the Village of Le Cahmbon and How Goodness Happened There***. New York: Harper Colophon, 1980. 303 pp. Illus. with photos.

A French Protestant pastor, André Tocmé, and his family and friends save Jews during the Nazi occupation by hiding them in his home and presbytery.

Hellman, Peter. ***When Courage Was Stronger Than Fear: Remarkable Stories of Christians Who Saved Jews from the Holocaust***. New York: Marlow, Balliett, and Fitzgerald, 1999. Illus. with photos.

Six essays describing Christian families and individuals from Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, France, and Poland, who helped Jews to hide and survive the Holocaust.

Huneke, Douglas K. ***The Moses of Rovno: The Stirring Story of Fritz Graebe, a German Christian Who Risked His Life to Lead Hundreds of Jews to Safety During the Holocaust***. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1985. 208 pp. Illus. with photos.

The story of a German civilian contractor in Ukraine and how he enlisted hundreds of Jews as workers of his company to save them from pogroms and deportation to death camps.

Jeruchim, Simon. ***Hidden in France: A Boy's Journey Under Nazi Occupation***. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Fithian Pres, 2001. 240 pp. Illus. with photos and maps.

The author's autobiography of survival during the Holocaust, with the help of Righteous Gentiles.

Kahana, David. ***Lvov Ghetto Diary***. Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1990. 162 pp.

Describes life in an urban ghetto in Ukraine, the heroic protest of Eastern Orthodox cleric Metropolitan Sheptytski—via a pastoral letter against genocide—and how Jews were saved by monks and nuns under his leadership.

Kranzler, David. ***The Man Who Stopped the Trains to Auschwitz: George Mantello, El Salvador, and Switzerland's Finest Hours***. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2000. 341 pp. Illus. with photos.

Documents the activities of Mantello, a Salvadoran consul in Switzerland, a successful businessman and financier who issued exit papers to many Jews to save them from deportation and enlisted diplomats, clergy, intelligence officers, and others to protest against deportations to Auschwitz.

Laqueur, Walter and Breitman, Richard. ***Breaking the Silence***. Hanover, N.H.: Univ. Press of New England/Brandeis Univ. Press, 1994. 312 pp. Illus. with photos.

The story of Eduard Schulte, an anti-Nazi German industrialist, who exposed in 1942 the Nazi's Final Solution (extermination of Jews) and helped Jewish families to escape from Germany.

Leboucher, Fernande. ***Incredible Mission***. New York: Doubleday, 1969. 165 pp.

The story of a French priest, Marie-Benoit, who together with other courageous people helped French and Italian Jews from Marseilles escape to freedom during the Nazi occupation of France.

Levine, Hillel. ***In Search of Sugihara: The Elusive Japanese Diplomat Who Risked His Life to Rescue 10,000 Jews from the Holocaust***. New York: Free Press, 1991. 323 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Heroic activities of a Japanese consul in Lithuania who issued exit visas to thousands of Jews and non-Jews, allowing them to flee Nazi-occupied Lithuania during the war.

Lewin, Kurt I. ***A Journey Through Illusions***. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Fithian Press, 1994. 461 pp. Illus. with photos.

An account of a Holocaust survivor's life under Nazi occupation, highlighting the assistance he received from Poles and Ukrainians, including false identification documents.

Lovenheim, Barbara. ***Survival in the Shadows: Seven Hidden Jews in Hitler's Berlin***. London, U.K.: Peter Owen, 2002. 231 pp. Illus. with photos.

Describes how Germans helped Jews with hiding places (in this case, a loft factory), food ration cards, and employment in various capacities.

Marchione, Margherita. ***Yours Is a Precious Witness: Memoirs of Jews and Catholics in Wartime Italy***. New York: Paulist Press, 1997. 259 pp. Illus. with photos.

Features Italian Catholic rescuers of Jews during World War II, including the Vatican's policies against the Jews and how Catholic monks and nuns sheltered Jews in monasteries. Contains an appendix with official Vatican documents.

Marino, Andy. ***A Quiet American: The Secret War of Varian Fry***. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. 403 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Biography of Varian Fry, a Harvard-educated journalist, editor, and teacher from the United States, who rescued hundreds of Jews (including many leading intellectuals) from Nazi-controlled France by using fake passports.

Opdyke, Irene Gut. ***In My Hands: Memories of a Holocaust Rescuer***. New York: Knopf, 1999. 276 pp. Illus. with photos.

Autobiography of a Polish woman who saved the lives of 12 Jews by hiding them in the basement of a German officer's villa, where she was employed as a housekeeper.

Paldiel, Mordecai. ***The Path of the Righteous: Gentile Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust***. Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav, 1993. 401 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Translated from Hebrew, this work describes numerous Righteous Gentiles and how they saved Jews under Nazi occupation in Belarus, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, and Yugoslavia. The author, director of the Department of the Righteous at Yad Vashem, has written several other books in Hebrew on the same subject.

Ramati, Alexander. ***The Assisi Underground: The Priests Who Rescued Jews***. New York: Stein & Day, 1978. 181 pp. Illus. with maps.

Captivating story of how a group of priests, including Bishop Nicolini, and nuns saved Jews during the Nazi occupation of northern Italy by sheltering them in convents.

Rautkallio, Hannu. ***Finland and the Holocaust: The Rescue of Finland's Jews***. New York: Holocaust Library, 1987. 268 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Translated from Finnish, this work shows how Finland's political leaders saved the Finnish Jewish community and Austrian Jewish refugees from deportation despite Finland's alliance with Nazi Germany during World War II.

Rittner, Carol and Myers, Sandra, eds. ***Courage to Care: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust***. New York: New York Univ. Press, 1968. 157 pp. Illus. with photos.

Essays on Righteous Gentiles who saved Jews in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, and Poland. Introduction by Elie Wiesel.

Riza, Adrian. ***Networks of Goodness***. Bucharest: Public Information Department, 1995. 195 pp. Illus. with photos.

Numerous examples of how Romanian townspeople, peasants, priests, military officers, lawyers, and others rescued Jews from Northern Transylvania (at that time under Hungarian fascist occupation) by helping them to cross the border to Romania and thus avoid being deported to Nazi concentration camps.

Rosenfeld, Harvey. ***Raoul Wallenberg***. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1995. 265 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Biography of an outstanding and courageous Swedish

diplomat in Hungary during World War II who saved thousands of Jews by granting them exit papers. He was arrested by Soviet authorities at the end of the war and mysteriously disappeared in a Gulag camp. The book includes primary documents and statistical tables.

Rotenberg, Alexander. ***Emissaries: A Memoir of the Riviera, Haute-Savoie, Switzerland, and World War II***. Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1987. 321 pp. Illus. with photos.

Memoir of a Holocaust survivor in the United States that features details on how individual Swiss helped French Jews cross the border from Nazi-occupied France into Switzerland.

Sarner, Harvey. ***Rescue in Albania: One Hundred Percent of Jews in Albania Rescued from the Holocaust***. Cathedral City, Calif.: Brunswick Press, 1997. 106 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Describes how Albania's Muslim (70 percent) and Christian (30 percent) population protected the country's Jews by hiding them and providing them with false identity papers, actions motivated by traditional Albanian moral principles.

Shaw, Stanford. ***Turkey and the Holocaust: Turkey's Role in Rescuing Turkish and European Jewry from Nazi Persecution, 1933-1945***. New York: Macmillan, 1993. 423 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

A comprehensive study of the Jewish Sephardic community in Turkey and how Turkish diplomats intervened in France and Greece to save hundreds of Turkish and other Jews from deportation by the Nazis.

Silver, Eric. ***The Book of the Just: The Silent Heroes Who Saved Jews from Hitler***. London, U.K.: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1992. 175 pp. Illus. with photos.

Engrossing stories of how Righteous Gentiles saved thousands of Jews in Albania, Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Turkey, and Yugoslavia.

Skoglund, Elizabeth. ***A Quiet Courage: Per Anger, Wallenberg's Co-Liberator of Hungarian Jews***. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1997. 187 pp. Illus. with photos.

Describes a Swedish career diplomat's activities in Hungary during World War II; together with Raoul Wallenberg, Anger saved thousands of Jews from deportation.

Smith, Michael. ***Foley: The Spy Who Saved 10,000 Jews***. London, U.K.: Hodder & Stoughton Trade, 1999. 358 pp. Illus. with photos.

Fascinating story of a British spy in Germany who saved thousands of Jews by hiding them and providing them with

passports to emigrate to Palestine.

Spared Lives: The Actions of Three Portuguese Diplomats in World War II: Documentary Exhibition/Catalogue, September 2000. Lisbon: Ministry of External Affairs, 2000. 266 pp. Illus. with photos. Bilingual (Portuguese-English) text.

Presents the work of one diplomat in Marseilles, France, and two in Budapest, Hungary, who saved over 1,000 Jews by granting them exit papers from Nazi-controlled territories, in the process sidestepping the official rules of their government.

Stein, Andre. ***Hidden Children: Forgotten Survivors of the Holocaust***. New York: Penguin, 1994. 273 pp.

Moving stories of 10 Jewish children who were hidden by Christians during the Nazi occupations of France, Hungary, Lithuania, Netherlands, and Poland. Includes psychological aspects of the hidden. The author, a Holocaust survivor, wrote *Broken Silence*, a classic Holocaust memoir.

Tec, Nechama. ***When Light Pierced the Darkness: Christian Rescue of Jews in Nazi-Occupied Poland***. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986. 262 pp. Illus. with photos.

Comprehensive study that examines various forms of assistance to Jews, including psychological dimensions, and the attitude of the Catholic Church.

Tomaszewski, Irene. ***Zegota: Council of Aid to Jews in Occupied Poland, 1942-45***. Montreal: Price-Patterson, 1999. 166 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Polish-Jewish relations in Nazi-occupied Poland and how Zegota—a branch of the underground resistance—helped Jews by hiding them in abandoned houses, placing children in orphanages and convents, or finding homes for them with Polish families.

Wagner, Meir and Fischer, Andreas. ***Righteous of Switzerland: Heroes of the Holocaust***. Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav Publications, 2000. 269 pp. Illus. with photos. Bibliography.

Accounts of Swiss people—diplomats, Red Cross workers, clergymen, nuns, and others—who helped Jewish refugees to escape from Nazi-occupied territories and find shelter in Switzerland. The first author is a Holocaust survivor, originally from Romania.

Weinstein, Frida S. ***A Hidden Childhood: A Jewish Girl's Sanctuary in a French Convent, 1942-1945***. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1985. 151 pp.


The author's autobiography, detailing her life in a French Catholic convent.

Yalil, Leni. ***The Rescue of Danish Jewry: Test of Democracy***. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1969. 536

pp. Bibliography.

A comprehensive study, translated from Hebrew, on the Danish Jewish community before World War II and under Nazi rule and how the Danish people rescued all the Jews and transported them to Sweden.

Additional information about the Righteous Gentiles and forthcoming research and writing on the subject may be found at Righteous Among the Nations, Yad Vashem, POB 3477, Jerusalem, Israel 91034; phone: 972-2-6443521; fax:

972-2-6443443; e-mail: righteous.nations@yadvashem.org.il.
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Righteous of the World

By Chaim Chefer

I hear this title and it makes me think
About the people who saved me.
I ask and ask, Oh, my dear God,
Could I have done the same thing?
In a sea of hate stood by home,
Could I shelter a foreign son in my home?
Would I be willing along with my family
Constantly be threatened by certain evil?
Sleepless dark nights watching out for noise
Hearing footsteps of certain evil.
Would I be able to understand every sign,
Would I be ready for this, could I walk like this
Among those who would betray
Not one day, not one week, but so many years!

There is a suspicious neighbor, there a look,
and here a sound—
For that one—warm—brotherly clasp of my hand...
Not having any pension—not having anything for this.
Because a person to person must be a people.
Because a people comes at this time through—
So I ask you and ask you once more—
Could I have done the same if I was in their place?

It was they who went to war every day.
It was they who made the world a place for me.
It was they, the pillars, the Righteous brothers,
Who this day this world is founded by.

For your courage, and for your warm extended hand
In front of you the Righteous I bow.

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Chaim Chefer is a Holocaust survivor and a noted Israeli songwriter.
His poem is available at the Yad Vashem web site: www.yadvashem.org.il.