

witness affirmed “quod ducatus et terra Pomoranie . . . ad ipsum regnum [Poloniam] pertinent. . .” With the twentieth-century fulfillment of this claim, Polish scholars have provided in this volume the beginning of both an authoritative treatment of the region itself and a major contribution to the provincial history of Poland.

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RIGHTEOUS AMONG NATIONS: HOW POLES HELPED THE JEWS, 1939–1945. Edited by *Władysław Bartoszewski* and *Zofia Lewin*. London: Earls Court Publications Ltd., 1969. lxxxvii, 834 pp.

It is ironic that *Righteous Among Nations* appeared at a time when Poland was in the throes of one of its worst anti-Semitic episodes, the result of which was to leave its cultural and political life *Judenrein*. (The original Polish edition with a different title and with less documentary material had been published in 1967 by the “Znak” Social Publishing Institute of Cracow, which is affiliated with the liberal Catholic weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*.) For the volume is a compilation of documents describing, often in poignant terms, the assistance rendered by Poles from various walks of life and under the most difficult circumstances of the Nazi occupation to a doomed Jewish community. Those Jews who survived the holocaust—estimates range from 50,000 to 100,000 of a total of 3,500,000—were indebted to Poles for whom a quotation from the Talmud is appropriately dedicated on the flyleaf: “Whoever saves one life is as though he has preserved the existence of the entire world.”

The documents, mostly narratives written by the rescued, are not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, their purpose is to be representational—that is, to illustrate the various types of assistance, motivations, and circumstances. The assistance varied from the organized effort of the Polish resistance movement, particularly the Council for Aid to Jews (which operated under the cryptonym “Zegota”), to initiatives undertaken by individuals from various strata of society. Of special interest is the description of the aid given by segments of the Polish underground to the heroic uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto in September 1942. An introductory essay by Bartoszewski gives this subject a considerable, if distorted, focus.

Some of the narratives have been published earlier, in books by Philip Friedman and Kurt Grossman and in the posthumous diary of Emanuel Ringelblum. But many others are new—accumulated, in a somewhat haphazard manner, by Bartoszewski. A certain amount of fresh documentation that was made available to the editors concerning the aid given by the clergy and religious orders is also included.

Neither in the documents nor in the introductory essay is there any meaningful discussion of Polish anti-Semitism, a factor bearing upon the indifference or even the collaboration of various segments of the population with the Nazi persecutors. Bartoszewski either offers the rather lame argument that, given the harsh conditions prevailing in Poland, “the overwhelming number of Poles had no possibility whatever of giving material assistance to refugees from the ghettos,” or advances the dubious proposition that Polish collaborators were really “outside their own society.” Such tendentiousness can in no way minimize the heroism and humanism of those Polish rescuers whose exploits fill the pages of this book.

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