

Le Chambon-sur-Lignon: 1979–2015

by Patrick Henry

À la mémoire d'Annik Flaud

SEATED IN HIS OFFICE at Wesleyan University late one night in the mid-1970s, in the throes of a quasi-suicidal depression brought on by an increasing sense of the human propensity for violence and cruelty, Philip Hallie happened upon an account of the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon during the Holocaust. This was the first time he had heard about nonviolent resistance against the Nazis: “I was seeing spontaneous love that had nothing to do with sheer, brute power. I was seeing a new reality, undergoing a revelation. Here was a place where help came from love, not from force” (*Tales* 25–26). Hallie experienced an “overwhelming joy” in this discovery. He became as fascinated by the mystery of goodness as he was horrified by the reality of evil. He went to Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, learned what he could about its people and what happened there during World War II, and in 1979 published the first major account of the rescue of Jews in that area of France. His book, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*, inspired hundreds of journal and newspaper articles that situated the area and the notion of rescue in the world’s moral conscience.¹

In 1989, Pierre Sauvage unveiled a 90-minute documentary, *Weapons of the Spirit*, on the rescue of Jews in this same area in France. Sauvage was born in 1944 in St. Agrève near Le Chambon-sur-Lignon where his Polish parents were in hiding. His personal story adds greatly to the poignancy of the film which focuses centrally on Le Chambon but wisely directs our vision to neighboring villages. Sauvage interviews rescuers, rescued children now adults, and other people living in the area, and tells their stories within the framework of France under the Occupation. We experience the history of anti-Semitism in Europe, the takeover of France by the Germans, the collaboration of the Vichy government, and this isolated population of mainly Protestant resisters who welcome the Jews and other refugees seeking shelter in their area. Sauvage also relates the history of the persecution of French Protestants, their close ties to the Hebrew Bible, and their tradition of giving sanctuary to all those in need. By presenting Madeleine Dreyfus,

a woman who placed over 100 Jewish children into non-Jewish homes, farms, and institutions before she was arrested and deported, Sauvage points to the fact that Jewish people were themselves rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. There was no mention of either Dreyfus, or the *Œuvre de secours aux enfants* (OSE) that she worked for, in Hallie's groundbreaking study. Nor did Hallie mention that Jewish refugees such as Pierre Fayol were leaders in the local armed resistance. With the additional inclusion of Catholic rescuers such as Marguerite Roussel, Sauvage's landmark film demonstrates that the rescue of Jews in France during the Holocaust constitutes the most successful ecumenical endeavor ever undertaken on French soil. *Weapons of the Spirit* remains the most compelling document we possess regarding the rescue of Jews in this area in south-central France. In addition to putting this rescue mission in its historical context, it introduces us to some of the rescuers and, as we look into their faces, we experience first-hand their peaceful demeanor, their modesty, simplicity, serenity, and, forty years after the events in question, their absolute astonishment that anyone could possibly consider what they did anything other than normal human behavior. No written account could ever have more convincingly passed this information on to future generations.²

In 1992, *Le plateau Vivarais-Lignon: accueil et résistance 1939–1944* was published, containing the papers given, the oral testimonies, and the debates recorded at the 12–14 Oct. 1990 colloquium held in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon. This edited volume (Bolle et al.) makes clear that what happened here was not just rescue but also violent resistance, and that "here" was not only the village of Le Chambon but the other eleven villages that cover the Plateau as well. We learn that in 1936 the village of Le Chambon was 95% Protestant (2,500 of its 2,721 inhabitants), while the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon was 38% Protestant, with 9,158 Protestants among its 24,058 inhabitants (François Boulet, "Quelques éléments statistiques" 287). The volume offers complete coverage of the activities of the Plateau's inhabitants during the Occupation. In addition to a detailed chronology of events, it contains reports from former pastors on the Plateau about their activities, articles on religious publications and sermons given from 1939–44, articles on Catholics, Darbyites, Quakers, la Cimade, Secours Suisse, OSE, and other rescue networks as well as the growing enrollment at the Collège Cévenol, the various children's homes, the manufacture and distribution of false papers, the importance of geography, the tradition of hospitality on this "terre d'asile," and the escape routes to Switzerland. We also discover the significant role that Jews played here: Madeleine Dreyfus, André Chouraqui in hiding children, Oscar Rosowsky as the main forger of false identity papers, and Pierre Fayol as a key resistance leader.

These essays allow us to follow the development of spiritual resistance on the Plateau. During the June 1940 to July 1942 period, when most of the inhabitants, but not all its pastors and fundamentalist Christians, supported Maréchal Pétain in his call for *rénovation* through work and family values, a minority of the Plateau's

people was engaged in hiding mostly Jewish refugees on farms and in boarding houses and otherwise aiding them. After the infamous 16–17 July 1942 *Rafle du Vél d'Hiv* in Paris, Vichy's plans for Jews living in France became clear and an *en masse* spiritual resistance quickly developed on the Plateau. Here we learn about the role of the pastors from all twelve villages in the rescuing of Jews on the Plateau, of the non-violence and pacifism associated with Pastors Trocmé and Theis and the Collège Cévenol, the history of Protestant persecution in Catholic France, and the deep-seated links between these Protestants and Jews.

The law of 16 Feb. 1943 required many Frenchmen to do a *Service du travail obligatoire* (STO), working in German factories, which meant not only that there would now be hundreds of *réfractaires au STO* hiding out on the Plateau but that various armed underground *maquis* units, including a *maquis chrétien*, would organize and, particularly after André Trocmé, now on the Gestapo list for arrest, went into hiding in Aug. 1943, would attract many local youth even among the theology students at the Collège Cévenol. This created a third stage of resistance on the Plateau only a few months after it passed in Nov. 1942 from part of the “free zone” to “occupied territory,” an organized and expanding violent resistance against the Germans, *la peste brune* and Vichy, *la peste grise*. Several of the papers at the colloquium investigate the history of this lesser-known form of active resistance on the Plateau: papers given by former *maquisards* describing their skirmishes with the *milice*, papers that investigate the different *maquis* working on the Plateau, papers by resistance leaders such as Pierre Fayol and by former *maquisards* that discuss blowing up trains, receiving paratroopers and weapons and, finally, combat against the Nazis in 1944.

The purpose of the 1990 Le Chambon colloquium was to separate fact from fiction, to destroy contemporary myths about the area, and to set the record straight half a century after the events in question. In this regard, Hallie's *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* came under heavy scrutiny. Among other things, it was criticized repeatedly throughout the colloquium and the debate following each day's presentations for factual errors, historical and geographical inaccuracies, and various lacunae within its narration. But Hallie was a philosopher of ethics, not an historian. Nor did he ever pretend to be an historian. He alerts his readers to this fact in his prelude: “I knew that I could not tell the story as thoroughly as a careful historian might tell it: I was neither trained nor inclined to report every detail I could find” (7). He was a moral philosopher trying to grasp the phenomenon of nonviolence and the ethics of rescue in Nazi-dominated France. By describing the ways in which goodness was present in the heart of evil, Hallie was doing pioneering work. In the mid-1970s, when he was doing his research, little was known about the extent of the rescue of Jews throughout Europe during the Holocaust. He was exploring relatively uncharted waters and his book drew the world's attention to the reality of nonviolent communal resistance against the Nazis. Since Hallie's book was

among the first Holocaust texts to deal squarely with the rescuers, it played an important role in the collective decision to grant a central place to nonviolent resistance in the Holocaust museums throughout the world. Regardless of what criticisms one might make of it, Hallie's book, along with *Weapons of the Spirit*, constitute the two major reasons why this rescue mission is known throughout the world.

This is not to say, however, that it was not regrettable that Hallie limited his scope to Le Chambon. By focusing his study on one village and a few important people therein (André Trocmé, Edouard Theis, Magda Trocmé, Daniel Trocmé), he unwittingly gave the false impression that there were not many other people, other pastors, and other villages equally at the heart of the rescue mission on the Plateau. All this emerges clearly from the colloquium's proceedings (Bolle et al.), which insist that the entire Plateau took part in aiding refugees during the Occupation: at least 15 pastors from all 12 villages, educators, policemen, farmers, city people, field workers, storekeepers, businessmen and women, social workers and people belonging to all economic classes took an active part in different ways in the sheltering of refugees in boarding houses, dormitories, private homes, and farms until the end of the war in 1945. No other effort on this scale occurred for this length of time anywhere else in Occupied Europe.

The Jewish children who were hidden here recognized this diversity and the various religious backgrounds (Protestant, Catholic, atheistic, agnostic) of those who sheltered them in the inscription on the plaque they placed in 1979 on the wall in the square across the street from the Protestant church in Le Chambon: "Hommage à la communauté protestante de cette terre cévenole et à tous ceux entraînés par son exemple, croyants de toutes confessions et non-croyants qui pendant la guerre 1939–45, faisant bloc contre les crimes nazis, ont au péril de leur vie sous l'Occupation caché, protégé, sauvé par milliers tous les persécutés." The plaque is signed: "Les juifs réfugiés au Chambon-sur-Lignon et dans les communes avoisinantes." Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, also recognized the collective character of rescue by awarding the medal with the title of "Righteous" not only to roughly 80 inhabitants of the Plateau but, exceptionally, to the Plateau itself.³ Situated in a small garden, the Yad Vashem plaque reads: "Ils sont tous des justes de ton peuple. Isaïe 60: 21. Aux habitants du Chambon-sur-Lignon et des communes voisines qui ont sauvé la vie de nombreux juifs."

Unfortunately, then, Hallie's book contributed significantly to what is now referred to as the "Chambonization" of the phenomenon of rescue on the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon, which gives the false impression that 5,000 refugees were hidden in and around the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon rather than throughout the entire Plateau. But everything in Hallie's account indicates that this was a collective venture. Even though he focuses on Trocmé and Theis, Hallie insists on the

importance of the houses of refuge, the *pensions*, the surrounding farms where children were hidden, and all those who worked in them. He mentions explicitly that “it is misleading to think about Trocmé as an isolated leader” (98) and he elucidates all the help Trocmé received and needed from the Quakers, the American Congregationalists, the YMCA, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and those who made false papers. Hallie remarks that Trocmé could do nothing “without the presbyterial council” (167) and a parish that supported that council.

There was also much debate at the colloquium regarding the German commander-in-chief in Le Puy, Major Schmähling, and what role he might have played in keeping the Gestapo out of Le Chambon and deadly raids on the Plateau at a minimum. Once again, Hallie is on the carpet for raising the issue of “the good Nazi” and specifically for claiming that Schmähling tried to save the life of Doctor Le Forestier, who was later murdered along with dozens of other prisoners by the Gestapo in Saint-Genis-Laval. Hallie bases this claim on a postwar 1960s visit of Magda and André Trocmé to Schmähling in Munich where the major confided that he had commuted the sentence of Le Forestier from death to work in Germany and that Le Forestier was murdered after he had released him. Auguste Rivet finds errors and exaggerations in what Hallie writes about Schmähling and judges that the major “avait la volonté d’éviter le mal, mais pas beaucoup de pouvoir de faire le bien” (“Relations des autorités d’occupation avec la population” 282). On this point, Oscar Rosowsky goes much further in his condemnation of Trocmé, Hallie, and Sauvage, who has a short clip in his film that simply asks the question whether Schmähling might have on occasion looked the other way and prevented raids on the Plateau’s villages (“Les faux papiers d’identité au Chambon-sur-Lignon 1942–1944” 232–61). In the debates, Lucien Volle relates Schmähling’s dutiful work against *la Résistance* (565) and Jacques Pujol concludes: “Il faut donc écarter à priori l’idée d’une indulgence allemande quelconque pour le plateau Vivarais-Lignon” (“Les victimes” 647). In response to Rosowsky, who pushed to have Sauvage’s film boycotted and the filmmaker charged with “révisionisme” for its “30-second segment” in a 90-minute film, Elie Ben-Gal, the former Pierre Bloch who was sheltered in Le Chambon along with his parents and brother by Mme Roussel and who, without more evidence, would not subscribe to the pro-Schmähling view, insisted that Rosowsky’s proposals were “véritablement hors de proportion, absurde[s] et même diffamatoire[s]” (570). The question of Schmähling typifies the real value of the colloquium’s proceedings: questions are explored, a multiplicity of voices are heard, and the issues remain open, including all the chronological and statistical issues at stake regarding the number and nature of the different refugees aided on the Plateau. The colloquium’s proceedings lay out the major questions: all the rest is commentary.

From the colloquium onward, three French historians have consistently published significant materials essential to our inquiry. François Boulet is the foremost

historian of the Plateau. At the 1990 colloquium, Boulet presented four papers that studied: 1) the essential statistics (286–98) regarding, among many other categories, the number and nature of the refugees on the Plateau as well as its inhabitants, village by village; 2) the local “journaux religieux” (341–50) in which he traces the evolution of *L’Écho de la Montagne*, a monthly newspaper which pursued the trend of early respect for the authority of Pétain followed, above all as of the summer of 1942, by “l’esprit de résistance” 3); the sermons given by the Plateau’s pastors (356–73), which also evolved from the early theme of “Humilions-nous” and respect for Pétain’s program of “travail et famille” to a call for spiritual resistance and an “accueil en masse” of refugees: “Le Maréchal sort de l’univers des protestants du Plateau, le Juif y rentre” (Boulet 370); and 4) the general spiritual attitude of the local Protestants toward the Jewish refugees (401–28). In 2008, Boulet published *Histoire de la montagne-refuge*, which constitutes a compendium of the Plateau’s geography, religion, and history from medieval times to the twenty-first century, highlighting la Réforme, the wars of religion, l’Édit de Nantes (1598) and its revocation (1685), the period known as le Désert (1683–1787), and what he refers to as “La montagne des protestants et des catholiques” (1787–1940). The book’s third and fourth parts (147–286) deal in depth with “notre gibier,” and include Boulet’s earlier articles mentioned above as well as information regarding the help that Préfet Bach and the local *gendarmes* gave the area by offering advance warnings of Vichy raids and roundups. In addition, Boulet underscores the “sécurité matérielle” (177) on the Plateau during the Occupation, especially in the area of Le Chambon and Tence where some wealthy Jewish refugees spent lots of money for hotels and lodging. In addition, tourism continued during World War II and OSE paid a small sum to help individual farmers sustain the Jewish children and families they were housing, some of whom became part of the workforce on the farms. It was, as Boulet puts it in “Préfets et gendarmes...”: “une réussite économique et morale des gens de la terre [...] vraiment inespérée” (Cabanel et Gervereau 203–04). Boulet also emphasizes the importance of the *maquis* on the Plateau: he lists the major attacks, studies the liberation of the area, and insists that the *maquis* consistently avoided areas where the highest concentration of rescue was situated so as to preclude the possibility of mass retaliation against the civilian population. He ends by quoting the inscription on the stone monument, dedicated to the memory of the *passeur*, Pierre Piton, at the entrance to the village of Villelonge: “Ici chaque ferme a caché au moins un Juif, un réfractaire au STO ou un Résistant” (319). No wonder President Chirac, during his 2004 visit, referred to the Plateau as “l’âme de la nation [...] la conscience de notre pays” (312).

Gérard Bollon has also been a significant contributor since the 1990 colloquium where he presented two papers: “La tradition d’accueil avant la guerre” (151–60) records the history of sanctuary offered on the Plateau by all its various

religious communities; “La résistance armée et la libération du plateau Vivarais-Lignon” (453–66) relates the evolution of armed resistance from individual initiatives (1940–41) to collective endeavors (fall of 1942 onward) which resulted in the ultimate acquisition of heavy weapons and the struggle for liberation against the *milice* and the Germans from May to Sept. 1944. His later “Des réfractaires aux maquis, chroniques des jours de résistance” (Cabanel et al. 225–43) completes his earlier study and includes an original section about women—Mireille Philip, Dorcas Robert, Dora Rivière, Virginia Hall—working for the *maquis* on the Plateau. What characterizes Bollon’s scholarship is an admirable self-effacement and a clear desire, as he wrote to me in an email (6 Oct. 2014), “de transmettre la mémoire quotidienne, très simple et humaine, des habitants du Chambon. Il s’agit de mon village, de nos anciens; j’ai pu les rencontrer pratiquement tous depuis le début (de 1971 à aujourd’hui).” We find this in “Des figures de sauveteurs” (Cabanel et al. 143–54) where he scans the various rescuers on the Plateau: pastors such as Roland Leenhardt, the pastor of Tence; heroic women such as Simone Mairesse, a Protestant working in a Jewish network, “le Service André,” and later with a Jewish *maquis*; a teacher, Roger Darcissac, and simple, ordinary people, like Lucie and Albert Pradier of Saint-Agrève, who spontaneously sheltered Jews from Marseille. In his three slim volumes, Bollon also introduces us to the people on the Plateau during the Occupation. *Les villages sur la montagne* presents a concise narrative and pictorial history of the people who populate these mountain villages, their history of religious persecution, and their social and political views. It depicts how the area became a vacation haven for children and an “îlot d’humanité pour bien des déshérités et des persécutés” (5) with an emphasis on the children hidden here during World War II. *Paroles de réfugiés* (co-authored with Annik Flaud) introduces more than 15 hidden children who most often give their own accounts of their time on the Plateau, several of the *Justes* including lesser-known figures such as Hans Ruedi, Hélène Guth, and Hermine Orsini, and a few resisters, including Pierre and Marianne Fayol. Finally, *Les séjours d’Albert Camus sur le plateau Vellave* records the novelist’s periods of residence on the Plateau, especially his roughly 14-month stay from Aug. 1942 until Oct. or Nov. 1943 when he lived in Mazet-Saint-Voy and wrote the first draft of *La peste*. Bollon mentions the friends that Camus had there and includes all the references in his *Carnets* to the area.

Patrick Cabanel is, above all, a cultural historian of Protestantism and its historical roots to Judaism. In *Juifs et protestants en France*, he establishes four types of affinities between French Protestants and Jews: theological and cultural (Hebrew Bible), historical (memory of persecution), and sociological (persecuted minorities). Cabanel claims that French Protestants, inspired by Calvin (not Luther), were more quickly able to break free of traditional Christian anti-Semitism. The long, shared

Protestant and Jewish history of persecution and exile on French soil (revocation of l'Édit de Nantes and l'Affaire Calas; l'Affaire Dreyfus and the Statut des Juifs), with its accompanying scapegoating, social solitude, and dispersion, along with the fact that both groups were granted citizenship at the same time (1789–91) and clung to their common sacred text, the Hebrew Bible, historically bound together these two tiny religious minorities (at 800,000, Protestants were roughly 2% of the population in 1940, while Jews, at 330,000, represented 0.8% of the population). These insights are at the heart of Cabanel's illuminating commentaries which appear in several of the collections cited here.⁴ In *Histoire des Justes en France*, Cabanel indicates that, while Protestants were 2% of the population, they constituted 10.4% of the acknowledged "rescuers" as of Dec. 2011 (90). He also mentions in "Protestantismes minoritaires..." that the only other village recognized as "righteous" by Yad Vashem, Nieuwlande in Holland, also has a majority Calvinist Reformed Church population (Semelin et al. 453–56).

In my own book, *We Only Know Men*, in light of the 1990 colloquium, I wanted simply to return to Le Chambon, to separate fact from fiction, and to ascertain what we could now legitimately posit about that village's role in the rescue of persecuted people during the Holocaust. Among other goals, I wanted to leave an objective image of André Trocmé and his role as catalyst and three other portraits: of Daniel Trocmé, a young Protestant rescuer who would die in the gas chamber; Madeleine Dreyfus, a Jewish mother of three and a rescuer who would be deported but survive Bergen-Belsen; and Albert Camus, who was writing *La peste* on the Plateau. Two other authors have returned to the dynamic Trocmé couple and have produced dual biographies of them. Pierre Boismorand simultaneously presents two chronological autoportraits of Magda and André—autoportraits since the book is constructed almost exclusively of texts drawn from the Trocmé archives (letters, manifestos, autobiographies, sermons), all written by the two protagonists. We witness their individual childhoods, their coming together, their early marriage and the war years, and their humanitarian lives of pacifism and commitment to the wretched of the earth in Europe, the United States, Israel, Algeria, and elsewhere. Richard Unsworth's *A Portrait of Pacifists* is a biography of two of the prime movers in a major rescue operation in France during the Holocaust. Unsworth probes into the psyche of these two very different, independent internationalists who shared a passionate commitment to social justice. He studies their early years and shows how they both rejected the bourgeois lifestyles of their families and worked together in a partnership of equals as peace activists and proponents of nonviolent social change. When they served as co-secretaries of the European International Fellowship of Reconciliation (in Versailles from 1950–1960), for example, they did peace-building work in eighteen different countries. From Unsworth's study also emerges a detailed history of nonviolence, conscientious objection, and pacifism

in the twentieth century, one that identifies the many religious and political complexities therein and clearly delineates the place of Magda and André Trocmé within it.

In 2014, Caroline Moorehead, the author of the fascinating *A Train in Winter* (2011), published *Village of Secrets*, her account of what took place in the area of Le Chambon during World War II. Despite the jacket cover's ludicrous claim—"Just why and how Le Chambon and its outlying villages came to save so many people has never been fully told"—nothing here is new. Moorehead trashes Hallie's book and Sauvage's film and shows little evidence of having read the books listed in her bibliography. Regretfully, her text is also riddled with dozens of factual mistakes.⁵ Peter Grose's *The Greatest Escape*, on the other hand, is an important new book.⁶ The author points out that, on the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon during World War II, there were nonviolent *and* violent factions resisting both the Nazis and Vichy. He explains that, because of the early emphasis in Hallie's *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* (1979) and in Sauvage's *Weapons of the Spirit* (1989), and numerous more recent studies, the area became primarily known for its nonviolent resistance. This is perhaps as it should be, since such an extraordinary nonviolent communal effort took place there. As many as 5,000 refugees may have been helped, including 3,500 Jews and large numbers of *réfractaires* avoiding the STO, Spanish Republicans, and non-Fascist Germans. The twelve villages' postwar reputation for nonviolent resistance and rescue has eclipsed the violent resistance that took place here during the Occupation. This is highly unusual, because in France since 1945 there has been massive recognition of violent resistance but little recognition of rescue. Marianne Fayol remarked that her husband, Pierre Fayol, a resistance leader in the area, wrote *Le Chambon-sur-Lignon sous l'Occupation* to depict what had been forgotten: "[L]'on connaissait Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, ce village qui a sauvé 5,000 Juifs, et on a complètement oublié Le Chambon-sur-Lignon résistant" (Barnett). The strength of Grose's study is to have made both rescue and armed resistance the subject of his inquiry. Grose paints an accurate picture of rescue activities on the Plateau. He covers all the high points: the leading pastors, the forgers of false papers, the internment camps, the guest houses, the hospitality of the farmers, the roundups, the escape routes to Switzerland. We are especially grateful to him for his close chronological recording of events, his scrupulous attention to numbers and dates, and for highlighting people not normally singled out: Charles Guillon, Pastors Daniel Curtet, Roland Leenhardt, and André Bettex, Oscar Rosowsky, Pierre Piton, Pierrot Galland, Catherine Cambessédès, Abbé Glasberg, André and Mireille Philip. Grose weighs in on the still-disputed topics regarding this rescue mission and includes appendices that cover Huguenot history and the famous spiritual resistance sermon given by Pastors Trocmé and Theis on 23 June 1940. While most earlier studies of this rescue mission mention the presence of violent

resistance and the importance of containing that resistance to avoid massive retaliations that would have eliminated the possibilities for rescue, rarely do they examine violent resistance in depth. With Pétain's popularity waning, the Germans took over the entire country in Nov. 1942 and established the STO in Feb. 1943. The spirit of violent resistance intensified everywhere. Grose traces the first "uncertain moves" towards armed resistance on the Plateau to Jean Bonnisol in Yssingaux. Soon thereafter Fayol became head of armed resistance in Le Chambon. Grose follows these resistance groups, their training, arming through parachute drops, skirmishes, setbacks, and acts of sabotage until "the real military operations began" in June 1944.

Where do we go from here? As regards the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon, we need to give the same level of critical scrutiny previously devoted to Le Chambon to the other eleven villages of the Plateau. Historians must study the pastors in those villages who are rarely examined in depth and their role in the rescue activities along with the organizations active in those areas. Since 95% of the native inhabitants of Le Chambon during World War II were Protestant, we have had many significant studies of Protestants on the Plateau but 62% of the people living on the Plateau were Catholic. We must learn more about their contribution to the rescue efforts. Did they contribute individually or collectively? Who led them? Did they have organizations in place that helped out or did they work only through already established Protestant and Jewish channels?

We must also study in much greater detail the activities of the Jewish people in the area. Four we have mentioned, Madeleine Dreyfus, André Chouraqui, Oscar Rosowski, and Pierre Fayol, demonstrate that Jews were involved in the rescue of children, the making of false papers, and armed resistance. How many other Jews participated in these dangerous and punishable activities? We would also benefit from a much clearer picture of the evolution of rescue activities on the Plateau. Just what was already taking place and who and how many were involved before the 16–17 July 1942 *Rafle du Vél d'Hiv* in Paris? How and why did things evolve so quickly and massively afterward? Finally, we must continue to teach the rescuers along with the perpetrators, victims, and bystanders. While our students can name two or three mass murderers of Jews on the first day of class, they are hard-pressed to name a single non-Jewish rescuer, much less a Jewish rescuer of Jews. Finally, when I asked Bollon in an email what he would suggest, he responded (6 Oct. 2014): "Il faut magnifier la banalité du bien [...] montrer l'amitié entre les Juifs et les habitants."

More generally, what new trends or ideas should we incorporate into our analysis to enrich our perspective and to understand more fully the phenomenon of rescue? First of all, as the editors of *La résistance aux génocides* make clear (Semelin, "De l'aide au sauvetage" 19–32), there are fundamental problems of vocabulary that confront social scientists interested in our subject. The term "Righteous"

(*les Justes*), for example, is basically a religious term conferred upon non-Jews who rescued Jews during the Holocaust without seeking any compensation. We can immediately see why this term cannot be used as a synonym for “rescuers,” since many rescuers did seek money and because, by definition, it excludes Jewish rescuers of Jews. Also, except for the area of Le Chambon and Nieuwlande, “Righteous” is conferred on a specific individual and does not recognize collective efforts or organizations. The word “rescue” itself implies a not-always-accurate passivity on the Jewish person in question who often was actively engaged in his or her own “rescue” and that of others. We have already seen that “aid” or “help” would be more applicable to what happened on the Plateau Vivarais-Lignon where as many as 5,000 people may have been “helped” (given false papers and sent on their way) but certainly not “rescued” there. We have also understood the importance of studying organizations and networks such as OSE, La Cimade, the Quakers, Secours Suisse, and the Service André for the “rescuer” rarely acts alone. As Jacques Semelin points out in *Persécutions et entraides dans la France occupée*, it was important to have an environment or social context conducive to rescue, as on the Plateau, with a history too, a tradition, that favored sanctuary for the oppressed. Geography also played a role in “rescue.” It was no accident that the Plateau was a thinly-populated rural area with plenty of place to hide. Semelin points out that 62% of the Justes français were “fermiers, agriculteurs et ouvriers” (*Persécutions* 540).

We must adamantly affirm that 3,853 *Justes français* (as of Jan. 2015) cannot account for the fact that 250,000 Jews living in France escaped deportation. Many complicated and nuanced factors made it possible that “only” 25% of Jews living in France were murdered by the Nazis, a relatively small percentage when compared, for example, to Belgium (45%), Hungary (50%), Greece (80%), Holland (78%), and Poland (90%). The “rescuers” played their important and courageous part and the number of recognized *Justes* is probably only a fraction of those who actually helped Jews during the *Shoah* in France. In addition to the “rescuers,” we must acknowledge the silent and anonymous multitudes of those who looked the other way, did not speak about what they knew was going on, turned in no one, and thereby enabled organizations and individuals to shelter Jews throughout the country. It is precisely one of Semelin’s major theses that, after the *Rafle du Vél d’Hiv*, when what was in store for France’s Jews became abundantly clear, the attitude of the French people evolved “d’une relative indifférence envers la persécution des juifs à l’expression d’une véritable compassion en leur faveur” (*Persécutions* 477). After July 1942, Semelin discovers vast layers of silent solidarity, “petits gestes” (451), a spontaneous and constantly improvised “réactivité sociale” (811) that slowed down Vichy, reduced deportations and protected France’s Jews.

Finally, even if we concede to Semelin and his generation of social scientists that, in explaining “rescue,” “le contexte tend à l’emporter sur la personnalité”

(817), the context never completely annihilates the personality of the “rescuer.” It is always an individual who decides to join the network or the organization. Therefore studies such as those by Nechama Tec, Eva Fogelman, Pearl and Samuel Oliner, and Kristen Monroe that record the motivations of the “Righteous” throughout Europe as told to them by the “rescued” and the “Righteous” themselves will always be helpful in trying to understand why individuals decided to risk their lives to help Jews during the Holocaust.

WHITMAN COLLEGE (WA)

Notes

¹The following year, Hallie’s book appeared in French as *Le sang des innocents*.

²The Chambon Foundation recently released a 25th-anniversary edition of *Weapons of the Spirit*: <www.chambon.org>.

³Only one other place is so designated, the Dutch village of Nieuwlande. See Semelin et al.: Cabanel, “Protestantismes minoritaires, affinités judéo-protestantes et sauvetage des Juifs” (445–56); Fabrèguet, “Nieuwlande, pays sauveteur (1941/1942–1945)” (457–73).

⁴For a counterview that studies theological, economic, and cultural diversity on the Plateau and rejects French Protestant exceptionalism, see Robins, who sees rescue on the Plateau as resulting from “a unique convergence of means, individual and institutional convictions, and cultural habits” (321). She sometimes exaggerates the claims of the people she is arguing against and simplifies their position. No one stressing the importance of Protestantism in the rescue of Jews on the Plateau, for example, would negate that “Individuals of all convictions, including Catholics and non-believers sheltered refugees in their homes or hotels” (324) or that “organized institutions exterior to the Plateau constituted essential actors” (326). This is already clear in Sauvage’s film, one of Robins’s favorite targets. Robins argues more convincingly that “the blanket claim that Jews and Protestants shared strong affinities obscures the social diversity of the population on the Plateau” (350) and maintains that “regardless of its belief system” (350), “the majority” of the Plateau’s Protestants “was not exceptional” (332). They reacted after Vél d’Hiv like the rest of the country, even if their Protestant leaders and organizations were already actively working with refugees, the majority of whom were Jewish (332).

⁵For a more detailed account of Moorehead’s book, see my review (*FR* 88.4).

⁶His forthcoming American edition will be entitled *A Good Place to Hide*. Both titles, however, by suggesting “one French community,” give the lie to the book which, correctly, focuses on the entire Plateau.

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