

POLIN
STUDIES IN POLISH JEWRY

VOLUME TWENTY-SIX

Jews and Ukrainians

Edited by

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and
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Published for

The Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies

and

The American Association for Polish–Jewish Studies

OFFPRINT

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Oxford · Portland, Oregon
The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization
2014

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Published in the United States and Canada by

The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

c/o ISBS, 920 NE 58th Avenue, Suite 300

Portland, Oregon 97213-3786

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data applied for

ISSN 0268 1056

ISBN 978-1-906764-19-7 (cloth)

ISBN 978-1-906764-20-3 (pbk)

Publishing co-ordinator: Janet Moth

Copy-editing: George Tulloch

Proof-reading: Tamar Berkowitz and Joyce Rappoport

Index: Bonnie Blackburn

Design: Pete Russell, Faringdon, Oxon.

Production: John Saunders

Typeset by: John Saunders Design & Production, Eastbourne

Printed in Great Britain on acid-free paper by

TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall

Articles appearing in this publication are abstracted and indexed in
Historical Abstracts and *America: History and Life*

Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and the Holocaust

JOHN-PAUL HIMKA

THERE ALREADY EXISTS a rich literature on the theme of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky's response to the Holocaust. Several studies stand out as particularly valuable. Hansjakob Stehle and Shimon Redlich both contributed pieces to the landmark collection on the Galician churchman, Paul R. Magocsi's *Morality and Reality* of 1989. The journalist Stehle's treatment of the subject benefited from his knowledge of the inner workings of the German occupation regime and from interviews with men who had served in it.¹ He was able to situate Sheptytsky's thought and actions in that important context. Redlich, a prominent specialist on the history of east European Jews in the twentieth century and himself a Holocaust survivor from Galicia, was able to interpret the metropolitan's activities against the background of the extermination of the Jewish population under the Nazi occupation.² Of great importance is the work of Andrii Krawchuk, who carefully analysed Sheptytsky's thinking about the Holocaust as expressed in his pastoral writings and correspondence.³

This chapter has grown out of research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada as well as the Pinchas and Mark Wisen Fellowship at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. I benefited greatly from the comments of readers of earlier drafts: Marco Carynnyk, Greg Eghghian, Father Peter Galadza, Liliana Hentosh, Taras Kurylo, Father Athanasius McVay, and Mykhailo Savaryn. See also the companion piece to this study: John-Paul Himka, 'Christianity and Radical Nationalism: Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky and the Bandera Movement', in C. Wanner (ed.), *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine* (Washington, DC, 2012), 93-116.

¹ H. Stehle, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the German Regime', in P. R. Magocsi (ed.), *Morality and Reality: The Life and Times of Andrei Sheptyts'kyi* (Edmonton, 1989), 125-44. This study is written in a tone favourable to the memory of the metropolitan. Another article by Stehle, in *Die Zeit*, the paper for which he was a correspondent, portrayed the metropolitan as a somewhat unrealistic adventurer: H. Stehle, 'Ein heiliger Abenteuerer', *Die Zeit*, 5 July 1985. The World Congress of Free Ukrainians denounced the *Die Zeit* article as 'not only a clear and tendentious blackening of the life and work of the metropolitan, but also a defamation of the Ukrainian people and its history': Sekretariat Svitovoho kongresu vil'nykh ukrayintsiv, 'Nimets'kyi chasopys vede kampaniyu proty beattyfikatsiyi mytropolyyta, kazhe SKVU', *Ukrayins'ki visti* (Edmonton), 5 Feb. 1986.

² S. Redlich, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the Jews during World War II', in Magocsi (ed.), *Morality and Reality*, 145-62. Later he published an updated version: S. Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi, Ukrainians and Jews during and after the Holocaust', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 5/1 (1990), 39-51.

³ A. Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine: The Legacy of Andrei Sheptytsky* (Edmonton, 1997), 194-248; see also pp. 264-7.

Numerous other works also touch upon this topic. Useful information appears, for example, in Zhanna Kovba's study of Galician Ukrainian reactions to the Holocaust, although the work is too chaotic and one-sided to match the studies cited above.⁴ Fr Adam Kubasik's study of Sheptytsky's vision of the Ukrainian nation, state, and church is marred by an uncritical approach to both sources and the Polish past, but is still worth reading.⁵ A polemical literature around Sheptytsky and the Holocaust also exists. Redlich has been in the forefront of a movement advocating that Sheptytsky be awarded the title of Righteous among the Nations by Yad Vashem.⁶ So far that movement has not been successful. The assessment of Sheptytsky's behaviour during the Holocaust has also been debated in Ukraine.⁷

It is not my purpose to address the assessment controversy. Instead I wish to explore the difficulties that the bishop faced in orienting himself and choosing how to act in the face of the unprecedented evil of the Holocaust. To what Stehle, Redlich, and Krawchuk have discovered, I can add some new sources that were not available to them as well as a different perspective. This is far from the definitive word on Sheptytsky and the Holocaust, however. Liliana Hentosh has been able to view some of the materials held by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches in the Vatican and by the beatification commission for the metropolitan; these will make rich additions to the source base and allow a more detailed examination of the issue. At present, however, these sources are not accessible to scholars. Other Vatican archival collections as well as Polish, Ukrainian, and German archives probably still preserve many illuminating documents that scholars have not yet made use of.⁸

⁴ Zh. Kovba, *Lyudyanyist' u bezodni pekla: Povedinka mistsevoho naselemnyia Skhidnoyi Halychyny v rokeri 'Ostatochnoho rozv'yazannia yevreis' koho pytannia'* (Kiev, 1998), 121–39.

⁵ A. Kubasik, *Arcebiskupa Andrzeja Szeptyckiego wizja ukraińskiego narodu, państwa i cerkwi* (Lviv and Kraków, 1999).

⁶ See e.g. S. Redlich, 'Sheptytsky and the Jews', *Jerusalem Post Magazine*, 13 Dec. 1985; S. Redlich, 'Nie bój się, dziecko', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 18 Nov. 2008: <<http://tygodnik.onet.pl/0,0,17360,1,artykul.html>>; N. C. Gross, 'Who Decides Who Was', *Jerusalem Report*, 6 Mar. 2006; Y. Melman and A. Carmel, 'Righteous Indignation', *Haaretz Magazine*, 7 Oct. 2005. See also T. Snyder, 'He Welcomed the Nazis and Saved Jews', *New York Review of Books Blog*, 21 Dec. 2009: <<http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2009/dec/21/he-welcomed-the-nazis-and-saved-jews/>>.

⁷ B. Dorfman, 'Delo no. 421 (O prisvoenii zvaniya "Pravednika mira" Mitropolitu A. Sheptitskomu)', in *Sed'mye Zaporozhskie evreiskie chteniya* (Zaporizhzhya, 2003), 97–100; R. Mirsky, 'Faktory tolerantnosti kak ob'ekt i sub'ekt v period Kholokosta v Ukraine: Mitropolit Andrei Sheptitskii i ego pravednost', in *Desyatye Zaporozhskie evreiskie chteniya, 11–12 maya 2006 g.* (Zaporizhzhya, 2006), 47–52; O. Naiman, 'Kholokost u L'vovi i A. Sheptyts'kyi', *ibid.* 53–7; Yu. Lyakhovitsky, 'Sheptitskii: Tochka nad "i"', *Muzeon beit a-shoa bat-yam / Institut izucheniya Katastrofy i politicheskoi istorii*: <<http://www.isrcaust.org/news/17/>>.

⁸ Personal communication from Liliana Hentosh to the author.

THE ANTI-JEWISH VIOLENCE OF JULY 1941

In an interview with the Shoah Foundation,⁹ the Jewish Holocaust survivor Mark Tukan related that when the German–Soviet war broke out in 1941, he was at his parents' farm in Podusiv, Peremyshlyany raion, Lviv oblast. He was then about 22 years old. When the Germans marched in, a Ukrainian neighbour brought him two leaflets in the Ukrainian language that were being distributed at that time. In one, he recalled, the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalist movement called upon the Ukrainian people to destroy (*znyshchytty*) Russians, Jews, Poles, Hungarians, and Romanians. The second leaflet was written by the head of the Greek Catholic Church, Metropolitan Sheptytsky, and it was completely different. Tukan could not recall the part of the leaflet that thanked God for liberating the Ukrainians from the Soviet Union. He knew it was there, but could not recall the exact words. He did remember, however, that Sheptytsky called on his flock to behave in a Christian way and not to harm anyone. At a time when the Germans occupied the land and a pogrom had broken out in Lviv, Tukan considered it courageous to publish such a statement. Sadly, he reflected, the majority listened to the leadership of the Ukrainian nationalists, and only a very small minority listened to the head of the church. The Ukrainian population, he felt, was more willing to kill the Jews than to let them live.¹⁰

Tukan refers here to two documents well known to historians. Both were issued on 1 July 1941, the day after Germany occupied Lviv and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Orhanizatsiya ukrayins'kykh natsionalistiv; OUN) proclaimed a Ukrainian state headed by Yaroslav Stetsko. The first document was a leaflet prepared by Ivan Klymiv, who was Supreme Commandant of the Ukrainian National Revolutionary Army (Ukrayins'ka natsional'na revolyutsiina armiya) associated with the Stetsko government. The leaflet was pasted around Lviv during the pogrom on 1 July. It contained a passage very similar to what Tukan remembered: 'People! Know this! Moscow, Poland, the Hungarians, Jewry—these are your enemies. Destroy them.'¹¹ In his pastoral letter of 1 July, Sheptytsky welcomed 'the victorious German army as the liberator from the enemy' and also recognized Stetsko as the head of the Ukrainian government. He added: 'From the government which he has summoned to life we expect wise, just leadership and measures that would take into consideration the needs and welfare of all citizens who inhabit our land, without regard to what faith, nationality, and social stratum they belong to.'¹²

⁹ The USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education, Los Angeles, conducted a series of videotaped interviews with Holocaust survivors in 1994–2002. The segments of the interviews are numbered to facilitate referencing particular statements.

¹⁰ USC Shoah Foundation, interview with Mark Tukan, 51758, 124–7.

¹¹ *Ukrayins'ke derzhavotvorennia: Akt 30 chervnya 1941. Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv*, ed. O. Dzyuban (Lviv and Kiev, 2001), 129.

¹² *Ibid.* 126.

A Jewish memoir from 1946, describing events in the city of Lviv, also highlighted the contrast between the OUN's and the metropolitan's leaflets: 'On the streets the appeals of Stepan Bandera, the leader of the Ukrainians, were pinned up, calling for murder and conflagration, and near them were those issued by Metropolitan Sheptytsky, calling for calm, opposing the lynching of neighbours and the loss of human feelings.'¹³ Another Jewish memoir contrasted the Ukrainian state proclaimed by the Bandera movement, 'a state in which the extermination of the Jews was declared to be the fundamental law and program', with the metropolitan's 'hope that its government would care for the needs of all citizens without discrimination as to religion and nationality'.¹⁴

Sheptytsky's support for the new state, which only enjoyed a brief, shadowy existence, had come about as the result of a meeting on 30 June 1941 with two OUN representatives, Stetsko and Father Ivan Hrynyokh, the chaplain of Nachtigall, a Ukrainian nationalist battalion in German service. The two nationalists kept important information from Sheptytsky, however, namely that the OUN had split and that the government being set up was under the control of only one of the factions, the Bandera faction. This deception soured Sheptytsky towards the new government.¹⁵ Stehle identified another reason as well for Sheptytsky's alienation: 'The anarchistic eruptions of hate and revenge that occurred in L'viv prior to and during the German entry dampened the Metropolitan's sympathy for OUN.'¹⁶ Stehle seems to be referring to the bloody pogrom unleashed in Lviv in the first days of July, in the immediate aftermath of the proclamation of Stetsko's government.

Sheptytsky was informed of the pogrom by the chief rabbi in Lviv, Dr Ezekiel (Jecheskiel) Lewin, who visited him on 1 July.¹⁷ What transpired at their meeting is not clear, and we have contradictory accounts of it. The rabbi's son Kurt wrote this account in the early 1990s:

He [Rabbi Lewin] was received immediately by the Metropolitan. My father reminded the Metropolitan of the many occasions in which he had declared friendship for Jews dwelling in his diocese. My father stressed that now in this hour of mortal danger he was appealing

¹³ K. I. Lewin, *Przeżyłem: Saga Świętego Jura spisana w roku 1946 przez syna rabina Lwowa* (Warsaw, 2006), 65.

¹⁴ J. Schoenfeld, *Holocaust Memoirs: Jews in the Lwów Ghetto, the Janowski Concentration Camp, and as Deportees in Siberia* (Hoboken, NJ, 1985), 46.

¹⁵ Stehle, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the German Regime', 127; Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 211 n. 55; M. Khomyak, 'Diyal'nist' Mytropolyta Kyr Andreyra pid nimets'koyu okupatsiyeyu', *Lohos*, 6/3 (July–Sept. 1955); 214–23, here p. 221; 6/4 (Oct.–Dec. 1955), 292–5; K. Pankivsky, *Vid derzhavy do komitetu* (New York and Toronto, 1957), 50.

¹⁶ Stehle, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the German Regime', 127.

¹⁷ According to D. Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, trans. J. Michalowicz (Amherst, Mass., 1990), 7, Rabbi Lewin went to Sheptytsky on the morning of Wednesday, 2 July. But this does not fit the chronology of the pogrom. Other sources indicate 1 July, e.g. Lewin, *Przeżyłem*, 57 (a particularly authoritative source, since this is Rabbi Lewin's son); Yad Vashem Archives, Jerusalem, T-32/50: Gold diary in 'Teki Lwowska', sketch 1, 4.

for assistance in the name of the Lord. The Metropolitan was shocked to learn about the atrocities committed by his people. He promised to intervene at once with the German authorities and to send priests and monks into the street to stop the pogrom. He invited my father to remain at the residence until the city returned to normal. My father replied that his place was with his community and left to return home.¹⁸

This account must be based on something Kurt Lewin was told afterwards, since the first version of his memoirs, written in 1946, makes it clear that he did not have an opportunity to talk to his father between his departure to St George's Cathedral and his murder later that day.¹⁹ Although I have found no evidence of full-scale intervention by clergy to stop the pogrom, there were definitely cases in which Greek Catholic priests intervened to protect Jews from pogromists. One case comes from an interview Zhanna Kovba conducted in the 1990s with Yu. Yunk. Ms Yunk related a story her father had told her about some angry men pushing and shoving three Jews and yelling, 'These are Jewish policemen! Murderers!' This was in the first days of July 1941 on Legionów Street in Lviv. Suddenly a priest came out of a Greek Catholic church and stopped the mob in the name of the cross. Meanwhile, the Jews slipped away.²⁰ Also, Adolf Folkman and his family were protected from the pogrom by the priest who served in the Ukrainian church next to their home.²¹

Sheptytsky's coadjutor, Iosyf Slipy, in a memoir written in the 1960s, also mentioned the visit of Rabbi Lewin: 'At that time there began persecutions of the Jews and all kinds of retaliations. I had taken Rabbi Lewin to the metropolitan, and, leaving the palace, he met me; he was very satisfied, and said that he would thank God if his children were saved, but he wanted to share the fate of his people.'²² The memoirs of Alfred Monaster put these words into Rabbi Lewin's mouth as he left the meeting with the metropolitan: 'If there is going to be a pogrom, then let me be the first victim.'²³ According to Rabbi David Kahane, Sheptytsky not only offered Rabbi Lewin a place to stay but promised to write 'a pastoral letter in which he

¹⁸ K. I. Lewin, *A Journey through Illusions* (Santa Barbara, Calif., 1994), 36.

¹⁹ Lewin, *Przeżyłem*, 57, 59.

²⁰ Kovba, *Ljudyanist' u bezodni pekla*, 131. Probably the priest came from the Greek Catholic Church of the Transfiguration, which is not far from Legionów Street, today's Prospekt Svobody. There are cases of Greek Catholic priests intervening to prevent pogroms elsewhere than Lviv. Several are listed in A. Weiss, 'Jewish-Ukrainian Relations in Western Ukraine during the Holocaust', in P. J. Potichnyj and H. Aster (eds.), *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective* (Edmonton, 1988), 414. See also Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 240, and O. Surmach, *Dni kryvavykh svastyk: Hreko-katolyts'ka tserkva v period nimets' koho okupatsiinoho rezhymu v Ukraini (1941-1944 rr.)* (Lviv, 2005), 102-3. The portion of Surmach's book dealing with Sheptytsky's efforts to rescue Jews is available online: O. Surmach, 'Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi u porjatunku yevreyiv pid chas nimets' koyi okupatsiyi', *Nezalezhnyi kul'turolohichnyi chasopys 'Yi'* (2005): <<http://www.ji-magazine.lviv.ua/seminary/2005/sem17-11/surmach.htm>>.

²¹ S. Szende, *Der letzte Jude aus Polen* (Zürich and New York, 1945), 179.

²² Bohdan Bociurkiw Memorial Library, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Edmonton: I. Slipy, 'Spomyny', typescript (Nettuno, Italy, 1963-4), 91.

²³ Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego, Warsaw, 302/58, Alfred Monaster, 10.

would warn the Ukrainians against committing murder and looting'.²⁴ If such a pastoral letter was indeed issued, it has not as yet come to light.

There are two other Jewish survivor accounts of the meeting in which the metropolitan is not portrayed as positively. However, it is not clear whence the survivors received the information they relate. Ryszard Ryndner remembered (his testimony was probably taken in 1945) that Rabbi Lewin went with the lawyer Dr Lajb Landau²⁵ to ask the archbishop to intervene with the Ukrainian authorities and the militia. 'Sheptytsky gave no grounds for great hopes', but offered to host the rabbi for a few days. The rabbi declined and said: 'I come with God, I go with God.'²⁶ Another survivor, Edmund Kessler, wrote:

The secular rabbi of the city [i.e. the rabbi of the Progressive synagogue, Lewin], feeling that something unfortunate was afoot, went early in the morning in his liturgical vestments to the head of the Ukrainian Church to ask for help and intervention. Received coolly, indifferently, although a personal acquaintance of the metropolitan, he left resigned to things. The metropolitan had no intention of intervening with the authorities on behalf of the Jews—the matter has an exclusively political character; the metropolitan does not see a moral side to it, nor a religious side. He also thinks there is no reason to calm the Ukrainian population, since that population knows how to maintain tact and moderation, and no one can be responsible for the behaviour of the dregs of society. Embittered and resigned, full of the blackest thoughts, the rabbi went home, meditating on the answer of the prince of the church.²⁷

After the audience, Rabbi Lewin returned home and was arrested that same day by Ukrainian militiamen. His son Kurt, who had also been arrested by the militia, witnessed Germans kill him at Brygidky prison. A few days later the rabbi's widow went to Sheptytsky, and returned in a good mood. The metropolitan told her he was searching for her husband and gave her false hope that he might still be alive. He was intervening, he told them, with the Gestapo and Ukrainian militia.²⁸ According to one well-informed Jewish memoirist, Sheptytsky was told that the Ukrainian clergy should not worry about the Jewish clergy.²⁹

What conclusions can we draw from these accounts? The only definite thing is that the metropolitan was informed about the pogrom raging in the city. If he intervened, it must have been orally, since no written trace has come down to us about a public intervention.

There are also indications that Sheptytsky was aware of and subsequently condemned the pogroms and executions that took place in smaller localities through-

²⁴ Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, 7.

²⁵ Lajb Landau was well known in Ukrainian legal circles in Lviv before the war and served as a liaison between the Judenrat and the Ukrainian National Council in Lviv until the latter was dissolved by the Germans in early March 1942: K. Pankivsky, *Roky nimets'koyi okupatsiyi* (New York and Toronto, 1965), 67.

²⁷ E. Kessler, *Przeżyć Holocaust we Lwowie* (Warsaw, 2007), 36.

²⁸ Lewin, *Przeżyłem*, 65.

²⁹ Yad Vashem Archives, T-32/50: Gold diary in 'Teki Lwowska', sketch 1, 4.

out western Ukraine. The clearest is a passage in his pastoral letter 'On Mercy': 'With a profound pain in my heart, with fear for the future of our people, I see how in many communities there live people whose souls and hands are stained with the unnecessarily spilled blood of their neighbours.'³⁰ This letter dates from June 1942. This was before the attacks on Poles began in the villages, so the murderers 'in many communities' could only have been killing Jews.

Late into 1941 the metropolitan maintained illusions that the Germans might still help the Christian and Ukrainian cause. In a letter to the papal nuncio in Budapest dated 30 August 1941 he expressed the hope that the Germans, who had liberated Galicia from the Bolshevik regime, would defeat atheistic communism once and for all.³¹ Late in the year Dr Ludwig Losacker, who headed the civil administration of Galicia, held several confidential meetings with the metropolitan. The metropolitan tried to revive German interest in splitting Russia into a number of independent states, including Ukraine. 'However, the Metropolitan's expectations were reduced drastically when he "heard the shootings from executions even next to his residence"'. Sheptytsky protested against the executions personally to Losacker and to the Galician district governor Karl Lasch when they paid the Metropolitan an official visit.³² Later Sheptytsky also protested to Lasch's successor, Otto von Wächter.³³ Sheptytsky was moving to a qualitatively different level of horror over what was happening to the Jews under German rule.

The pogroms themselves did not precipitate a public response from Sheptytsky, unlike, say, the conflict between the two OUN factions, which did. The active role played by the OUN Bandera faction in the violence of July 1941 may have influenced the metropolitan's assessment of the factional conflict, but if so, only on some level below the historically documentable surface. Sheptytsky's weak response indicates that he did not take the initial violence against the Jews as seriously as he might have if he had known all that was to follow. We can find an underestimation of the significance of the violence in the letter Sheptytsky wrote to the Budapest nuncio on 30 August 1941. There he mentions the mass murder of Soviet political prisoners perpetrated by the NKVD before the Red Army's retreat from Galicia,³⁴ but he omits to mention that after the Germans arrived they used the exposition of the corpses to provoke violent excesses against the Jewish population. This omission is typical of Ukrainian nationalist presentations of the national martyrology.

³⁰ A. Sheptytsky, *Pys' ma-poslannya Mytropolyta Andreya Sheptyts' koho, ChSVV, z chasiv nimets' koiy okupatsiyyi*, Biblioteka Lohosu 30 (Yorkton, Sask., 1969), 181.

³¹ *Actes et documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, iii: *Le Saint Siège et la situation religieuse en Pologne et dans les Pays Baltes, 1939-1945*, ed. P. Blet et al., 2 pts. (Vatican City, 1967), I. 440.

³² Stehle, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the German Regime', 131-2.

³³ Surmach, *Dni kryvavyykh svastyk*, 101.

³⁴ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/1. 439. On the NKVD murders, see J. T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton, 1988), 144-86, and O. Romaniv and I. Fedushchak, *Zakhidnoukrayyns'ka trahediya 1941* (Lviv and New York, 2002).

In that same letter he referred to 'the bad example' given to young people under communism by 'communist and Jewish youth who immigrated from Russia'.³⁵ This suggests that Sheptytsky, like the nationalists, and indeed like many Catholic churchmen in his time, associated Jews with communism, a suggestion reinforced by a conversation Sheptytsky had with the French collaborator René Martel (who used the pseudonym 'Dr Frédéric') in September 1943.³⁶ Sheptytsky at that time was outspoken in his condemnation of the murder of the Jews and mentioned the case of a young man who confessed to seventy-five murders. Martel replied that he knew that Ukrainians took part in the anti-Jewish actions of that time, but he justified it by saying that the NKVD had killed 18,000 people in the Lviv area and almost all of these NKVD men were Jews. According to Martel, Sheptytsky agreed but still considered the annihilation of the Jews impermissible.³⁷

It is also possible that Sheptytsky felt that the pogroms were something anomalous, perpetrated by hoodlums taking advantage of the fluid post-invasion situation to plunder and kill. This would be indicated by the remark reported by Edmund Kessler cited above, that the perpetrators were the dregs of society. This view was widespread both at the time and subsequently.³⁸

There were serious obstacles to Sheptytsky's acquiring an objective grasp of the rapidly changing situation in summer 1941. His declining health made it difficult for him to orient himself. His mobility was severely restricted, and he was dependent on his inner circle to keep him informed of events. Furthermore, he was in frequent, almost daily, contact with two German officials, Hans Koch and Alfred Bisanz, whom he regarded as personally trustworthy; they were important sources of information for him.³⁹

THE SYSTEMATIC MURDER OF JEWS, FEBRUARY/MARCH 1942–JUNE 1943

As late as mid-January 1942, Sheptytsky was protesting only actions of the German regime that affected Ukrainian national goals and was not mentioning the murder of Jews. On 14 January he co-signed a letter with various other Ukrainian leaders, including the head of one of the factions of the OUN, Andry Melnyk, that expressed the chief grievances of Ukrainian political circles: that the Germans would not establish a Ukrainian unit to fight the Bolsheviks, that they had separated the district of Galicia and the Odessa region (Transnistria) from the rest of Ukraine,

³⁵ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/1. 438.

³⁶ The identification of Dr Frédéric as the scholar René Martel was revealed in Pankivsky, *Roky nimets' koiy okupatsiyi*, 413. Martel had been publishing on Ukrainian issues since the mid-1930s.

³⁷ Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris, Musée, Centre de documentation juive contemporaine, CXLVa-60: Dr Frédéric, 'Abschrift, Übersetzung' of report of 19 Sept. 1943, 4.

³⁸ I. Khymska [J.-P. Himka], 'Dostovirnist' svidchennya: Relyatsiya Ruzi Vagner pro l'viv's'kyi pohrom vlitku 1941 r.', *Holokost i suchasnist'*, 2/4 (2008), 63.

³⁹ Personal communication from Liliana Hentosh to the author.

that Ukrainian culture was not being developed in the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, and that the Germans had dissolved the Ukrainian National Council (Ukrayins'ka natsional'na Rada) in Kiev.⁴⁰

Before long, however, the Holocaust became a major issue in the metropolitan's thought and activities. The following documents bear this out:

1. Letter to Himmler of February 1942.⁴¹ (The letter is not extant.)
2. Letter to the clergy and faithful of 27 March 1942 on murder.⁴²
3. Letter to Pope Pius XII of 28 March 1942.⁴³ (The letter seems never to have been sent.⁴⁴)
4. Pastoral letter 'Mary–Mother' of 14–15 April 1942.⁴⁵
5. Pastoral letter 'The Episcopal Jubilee of the Pope' of 17 April 1942.⁴⁶
6. Pastoral letter 'On Mercy' of June 1942.⁴⁷
7. Letter to Pope Pius XII of 29–31 August 1942.⁴⁸
8. Letter to Cardinal Eugène Tisserant of September 1942.⁴⁹
9. Pastoral letter 'Thou Shalt Not Kill' of 21 November 1942.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ Original German text in G. Prokoptschuk, *Metropolit Andreas Graf Scheptyckyj: Leben und Wirken des grossen Förderers der Kirchenunion* (Munich, 1967), 272–4. For the dating, see *Ukrayins'ka suspil'no-politychna dumka v 20 stolitti: Dokumenty i materialy*, ed. T. Hunchak [Hunczak] and R. Solchanyk, 3 vols. (n.p., 1983), iii, 47. The Polish ambassador to the Vatican sent a copy to the head of the Oriental Congregation, Cardinal Eugène Tisserant, who thought it was a forgery intended to discredit Sheptytsky: Stehle, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the German Regime', 133.

⁴¹ Pankivsky, *Roky nimets'koyi okupatsiyi*, 29–30; Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 233–4; R. Torzecki, *Polacy i Ukraińcy: Sprawa ukraińska w czasie II wojny światowej na terenie Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw, 1993), 136; Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi', 45. According to the Polish underground state's Eastern Bureau, Sheptytsky sent a letter to Hitler in February 1942 protesting the murder of the Jews: *Ziemie Wschodnie: Raporty Biura Wschodniego Delegatury Rządu na Kraj, 1943–1944*, ed. M. Adamczyk, J. Gmitruk, and A. Koseski (Warsaw and Pułtusk, 2005), 53. This probably conflates the protest to Himmler, which did indeed concern the murder of the Jews, with the earlier protest to Hitler of 14 January 1942, usually misdated in the literature to February 1942. Soviet intelligence was also aware of Sheptytsky's letter to Himmler; they thought that the letter resulted in the Germans putting the metropolitan under house arrest: *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi u dokumentakh radyans'kykh orhaniv derzhavnoyi bezpeky (1939–1944 rr.)*, ed. S. Bohunov et al. (Kiev, 2005), 263.

⁴² *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi: Dokumenty i materialy, 1941–1944*, ed. Zh. Kovba (Kiev, 2003), 68.

⁴³ Rebecca Erbelding, an archivist at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC (hereafter USHMM), provided me with a copy. The original is housed in the Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy, Lviv, f. 201, op. 18, spr. 90, fos. 25–6.

⁴⁴ It is not included in *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al. Sheptytsky's later letter to the pope of 29–31 August 1942 states that hitherto he had refrained from writing to the Holy See lest his letter fall into the wrong hands. In the later letter he repeats content that had already appeared in the letter of 28 March. To my knowledge the letter of 28 March has not been discussed in the scholarship on Sheptytsky.

⁴⁵ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 92–100.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 90–2.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 165–82.

⁴⁸ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 625–9.

⁴⁹ Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi', 46.

⁵⁰ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 222–31.

10. 'Rules on the Decree "Concerning the Fifth Commandment"' of late November/early December 1942.⁵¹
11. Letter to the clergy of 'Peace in the Lord and Blessing' of 26 February 1943.⁵²
12. Speech probably of May 1943 at the opening of the Archeparchial Sobor of 1943.⁵³
13. Letter to Cardinal Luigi Maglione of 12 June 1943.⁵⁴
14. Conversation with René Martel as reported in the Dr Frédéric memorandum of 19 September 1943.⁵⁵

What accounted for the escalation of Sheptytsky's concern? According to Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog, the chief rabbi of Palestine, cited by Sheptytsky's biographer Gregor Prokoptschuk, the protest to Himmler was a response to 'a pogrom against the Jews in Rohatyn that the Germans allowed to happen'. Herzog's testimony went on to say that after this protest 'the entire Ukrainian population . . . helped the persecuted Jews in every possible way',⁵⁶ a generalization that is not confirmed in other Jewish survivor testimonies. A Ukrainian newspaper article in 1947 also linked the letter to Himmler with events in Rohatyn.⁵⁷ Although what happened in Rohatyn has not been well clarified by historians of the Holocaust in Galicia,⁵⁸ it emerges from the content of Sheptytsky's letter that the Germans made use of Ukrainian auxiliary police in an anti-Jewish action.

The documents of late March 1942 appeared in the last stages of the 'March Action' in the Lviv ghetto. At this time about 15,000 Jews were rounded up and deported to death camps. It was also the first action in Lviv in which Ukrainian auxiliary police were directly involved in the round-ups.⁵⁹ Sheptytsky's impassioned letter to the pope of August 1942 followed hard on the heels of the 'August Action' in Lviv, in which 40,000 Jews were sent to their death, again with the active participation of the Ukrainian auxiliary police.⁶⁰ In June 1943 thousands of the last Lviv Jews were shot by German police units,⁶¹ which would explain why the metropolitan then sent his letter to Cardinal Maglione; the letter informed the cardinal, and

⁵¹ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 257–8.

⁵² Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, Michael Chomiak papers, acc. 85.191, item 53: A. Sheptytsky, 'Myr o Hospodi i blahoslovenstvo', *L'vivs'ki Arkhiyeparkhial'ni Vidomosti*, 6/3–4 (Mar.–Apr. 1943), typescript, fos. 1–2.

⁵³ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 393–7. I have been unable to date the speech exactly.

⁵⁴ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 811.

⁵⁵ Frédéric, 'Abschrift, Übersetzung', 1–5.

⁵⁶ Prokoptschuk, *Metropolit Andreas Graf Scheptyckyj*, 288. On Rabbi Herzog, see M. R. Marrus, 'The Vatican and the Custody of Jewish Child Survivors after the Holocaust', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 21/3 (2007), 390. Rabbi Herzog's papers are preserved in the Heichal Shlomo Archive, Jerusalem.

⁵⁷ 'Ukrayintsi i zhydy', *Ukrayins'ka trybuna* (Munich), 1 May 1947.

⁵⁸ D. Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien, 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens*, 2nd edn. (Munich, 1997), 147 n. 46; Ya. S. Khonigsmann, *Katastrofa evreivsta Zapadnoi Ukrainy: Evrei Vostochnoi Galitsii, Zapadnoi Volyni, Bukoviny i Zakarpal'ya v 1933–1945 gg.* (Lviv, 1998), 181.

⁵⁹ Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien*, 185–8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 216–22.

ultimately the Holy See, that the murders were still continuing. It is therefore clear that Sheptytsky turned his attention to the Holocaust as a response to the escalation of the 'Final Solution' in Galicia, particularly in his own city.

The Metropolitan's Statements

Now I turn to an analysis of the content of the documents listed above. The analysis will proceed chronologically, except that as a particular theme appears in the documents I shall follow it also through later documents.

The lost letter to Himmler was read by Kost Pankivsky, a Ukrainian official collaborating with the German authorities. Alfred Kolf, an official with the Sicherheitsdienst (security service), brought it to Pankivsky. Here is Pankivsky's account of what it said:

Written in a reserved, diplomatic style, in elegant words, the letter was yet extraordinarily sharp in content. The metropolitan wrote that, although he did not make bold to interfere in matters which are conducted by and are the responsibility of the German state administration, as a priest he could not but be pained by the behaviour of the German armed forces and German police with regard to the inhabitants of the land, and primarily with regard to the Jews, and by the maltreatment and execution of people without trial. Therefore he was permitting himself to call attention to this, because he did not know whether these things were actually known in Berlin. Thus, as the head of the Church and the spiritual leader of his faithful, he considered it his obligation to ask that the Ukrainian police, which is composed exclusively of his faithful, not be used in action against the Jews.⁶²

The letter was also read by Rabbi David Kahane when he was in hiding at the metropolitan's palace and he also recalled that Sheptytsky asked Himmler to remove Ukrainian policemen from all extermination operations carried out against the Jews.⁶³ Three other sources also raise the theme of the participation of the Ukrainian police in the massacres. Sheptytsky wrote in both his letters to Pope Pius XII that he tried to prevent Ukrainian youth from joining the police or other organizations in which their souls could be exposed to danger.⁶⁴ In his letter to Cardinal Tisserant of September 1942 he also expressed his displeasure at the Germans' use of Ukrainian policemen for 'perverted purposes'. In the course of his conversation with Martel, he stated that he himself had heard the confession of a young man who had killed seventy-five Jews in Lviv in one night.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Ibid. 258.

⁶² Pankivsky, *Roky nimets'koyi okupatsiyi*, 30.

⁶³ Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, 139.

⁶⁴ For the second letter, see *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 628.

⁶⁵ Frédéric, 'Abschrift, Übersetzung', 4. The young man was probably a member of the militia or police. It is important to make a distinction between the militias that were formed by the OUN at the end of June 1941 and that remained active into August 1941 and the Ukrainian auxiliary police under direct German supervision that subsequently replaced them. Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi', 45, writes that the murders committed by the young man must have taken place during the pogrom of early July. I agree with July 1941 as the most likely time for a young Ukrainian to have been able to kill so many Jews in the course of a single night; but it could also have occurred later in the

According to Rabbi Kahane, the letter to Himmler also speculated on the psychological consequences for Ukrainians involved in these murders. In the rabbi's words: 'The ordinary Ukrainian is crude and in the future he would likely do to his countrymen, his brethren, what he had done to the Jews. He becomes inured to murder and it would be difficult for him to unlearn it.'⁶⁶ The metropolitan drew a psychological portrait of such a perpetrator in his pastoral letter 'Thou Shalt Not Kill':

The sight of spilt blood calls forth in a person's soul a sensual desire, bound up with cruelty, which seeks satisfaction in dealing out suffering and death to its victims. The thirst for blood can become an uncontrollable passion, which finds the greatest delight in torturing and killing people . . . Crime becomes a necessary daily nourishment, without which [the killer] suffers torment, as though he suffered from some sickness of thirst and hunger which must be quenched.⁶⁷

Earlier, in his letter to the pope of 29–31 August 1942, he had written that the executioners were now habituated to the massacre of Jews, to the murder of thousands of innocent people, to the flow of blood, and to blood lust.⁶⁸

Sheptytsky's text of 27 March 1942 concerned the sin of murder, a leitmotif of his writings in those years. He made it a sin reserved to the ordinary, i.e. to the bishop, in the Lviv archeparchy, a decision he reiterated in his pastoral letter of 21 November 1942, 'Thou Shalt Not Kill',⁶⁹ and in his 'Rules on the Decree "Concerning the Fifth Commandment"'. He also mentioned the reservation in his letter to Pius XII of 29–31 August 1942.⁷⁰ It may be significant that an earlier condemnation of murder, issued in connection with the factional violence in the OUN, did not yet include the reservation of the sin. It seems likely that the metropolitan felt that more severe measures were now called for. The reservation meant that parish priests did not have the authority to absolve the sin of murder in confession; only Sheptytsky could. Of course, the other effect of reserving the sin of murder was that the bishop would get a much clearer picture of the extent of murder being

month, during the so-called Petlyura days (around 25–26 July). That Sheptytsky himself heard the confession suggests that the confession took place after murder was made a reserved sin on 27 March 1942. The confession could easily have taken place eight or nine months after the crimes were committed, since it was the custom to confess during the Lenten period rather than more frequently. Ivan Patrylyak has expressed doubt that the information about confession was true, as he feels that this would have violated the sacramental seal: I. K. Patrylyak, *Viiś kova diyal'nist' OUN (B) u 1940–1942 rokakh* (Kiev, 2004), 357. I give credence to Martel's account. For one thing, it was quite common for Catholic clergy at that time to use the generalities of confession to evaluate the state of morality in particular parishes or dioceses. Also, matters discussed in Martel's report can often be corroborated from other sources, even obscure details, for example the Chinese consideration with reference to SS 'Galizien' discussed below.

⁶⁶ Kahane, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, 139.

⁶⁷ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 226. I have read 'proklyatoyi' (damned) as a typo for 'prolytoy' (spilt). Rabbi Kahane read the letter to Himmler at the same time as he read 'Thou Shalt Not Kill', so it is quite possible that he transposed content from the latter to the former.

⁶⁸ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 628.

⁶⁹ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 226.

⁷⁰ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 627–8.

committed by the faithful entrusted to his jurisdiction. This undoubtedly was one of the reasons why Sheptytsky reserved that particular sin.

In his text of 27 March 1942, Sheptytsky also called upon the faithful to shun people whom they knew for certain to be murderers. Although he admitted that this was not canonically required, Sheptytsky urged his flock to show murderers 'the disgust and disgrace they deserve' in the hope that this would lead the offending individuals to repentance, to rid themselves of the mark of Cain. He instructed confessors to impose on murderers a penance so onerous that they would recall for the rest of their lives that they had shed innocent human blood. In his pastoral letter 'On Mercy' Sheptytsky wrote that the repetition of the crime of Cain, that is murder, 'must call forth indignation and disgust, and these feelings should be manifested in order to lead the fallen sinner to come to his senses'.⁷¹ In 'Thou Shalt Not Kill' he called upon pastors and faithful to help the unfortunate sinner repent by rebuking him:

By their entire behaviour, through repeated reminders, by avoiding social intercourse with them, by decisively refraining from family ties with them, let them make the murderers understand that they consider them a pestilence and danger for the village. When no one in the village will greet the criminal, and no one will allow him into their house, and no family will marry into a relationship with him, when even in church Christians will not stand next to him, when they will avoid meeting him on the road, when no one will sell him anything or buy anything from him, perhaps then he will have a change of heart and will begin a life of repentance as well as the labour of correction.⁷²

In the 'Rules on the Decree "Concerning the Fifth Commandment"' issued shortly after 'Thou Shalt Not Kill' he also encouraged the faithful to avoid murderers in order to lead them to repentance. In his speech of May 1943 at the opening of the Archeparchial Sobor of 1943, Sheptytsky returned to this theme and enriched it by reflections on how people have felt repugnance even for those official executioners who have merely carried out the just laws of the land:

But now we find ourselves in the situation that in many villages we perhaps have people who relate how they have killed their neighbours, and we even meet those who brag that they have no greater pleasure than shedding blood. How do we convert such people and how do we restore health to their human nature?! How do we restrain that cry of spilt blood that cries to heaven for vengeance?!⁷³

On 28 March 1942 Sheptytsky wrote a letter to Pope Pius XII about the situation in Galicia under German occupation. Although never sent, it provides further insight into what Sheptytsky was thinking at that time. He informed the Holy Father about the incredible extent of the murders, estimating that up to 130,000 Jews had been killed in Kiev. In his letter to the pope of 29–31 August 1942 he was able to provide more exact information about the Holocaust in Ukraine. He said that the Jews were the Germans' primary victims. Over 200,000 had been killed 'in

⁷¹ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 180.

⁷² *Ibid.* 226.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 396–7.

our little land', i.e. Galicia. There were more victims as the German army moved east. In Kiev, he said, over 30,000 Jews—men, women, and children—were killed in the space of a few days.⁷⁴ Such murders had been going on for a year. In his conversation with Martel a year later, he also provided information on the extent of the Holocaust, estimating that 100,000 Jews had been killed in Lviv alone and millions across Ukraine.⁷⁵

An interesting point raised in both letters to the pope is that the Germans were deliberately trying to shift the blame for their murders onto the Ukrainian militias/police. In the letter of 28 March 1942 he wrote that recently the Germans had been trying to displace the responsibility for their murders: they ordered the police to execute hundreds of Jews and then photographed these executions. In Lviv they executed as many as 15,000 Jews, according to the statistics of the Jewish council ('Commune Israélite'). They then forced the authorities of the Jewish council to provide them with official statements that it was the Ukrainians who had massacred the Jews. He included similar information in his letter of 29–31 August. At first, he said, the German authorities were ashamed of their inhuman injustice and tried to get documents that showed that the local inhabitants and the militiamen were responsible for the deaths. But later they began to kill the Jews in full view of the public.⁷⁶

The Holocaust was obviously very much on Sheptytsky's mind in mid-April 1942. In 'Mary–Mother' he wrote how wartime had brought many misfortunes on the people, including hunger and disease. 'But the most terrible of all these plagues', he said, 'is the plague of crimes voluntarily committed by our people.' We stand before God's altar 'with shame and a sense of our own guilt'. A particularly difficult burden for him was consciousness of the 'crimes committed by our faithful'. 'Among our children', he wrote, 'there have been found people who are so foolish and conscienceless that they summon upon the whole nation even heavier divine punishments.' Only the Most Holy Mother of God can help stay God's anger and intercede on behalf of 'those whose hands are stained with blood' that they be granted 'mercy and the grace of repentance'.⁷⁷ In 'On Mercy' Sheptytsky wrote of children who had once been a source of pride for their parents, but who had now become 'a heavy cross and a painful source of shame'. 'What a pain for a father to see his son, stained with shedding innocent blood, a son from whom all neighbours and acquaintances turn away in disgust.'⁷⁸

In his pastoral letter 'The Episcopal Jubilee of the Pope' he stressed the importance of love of neighbour, 'all neighbours, all people'. The Christian cannot treat neighbours like Cain treated his brother. 'Christ teaches us to embrace with love all of humanity, including our enemies and those who have injured or injure us.' This love must be 'like the love of Christ—to the point of giving up our life for them,

⁷⁴ This refers to the murder of Jews at Baby Yar in September 1941.

⁷⁵ Frédéric, 'Abschrift, Übersetzung', 4.

⁷⁶ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 625.

⁷⁷ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 92–3.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 167.

of shedding our blood'.⁷⁹ It is difficult not to interpret these words as an encouragement to offer shelter to the persecuted Jewish people in spite of the capital punishment that could result from such an act. This theme found expansion in Sheptytsky's pastoral letter 'On Mercy' of June 1942. 'All the books of the Old and New Testaments tell us about God's mercy towards all of humanity and for individual people.' Every Christian, he wrote, had the obligation to show mercy.⁸⁰ Love of neighbour should encompass 'all neighbours'.⁸¹ The following passage undoubtedly refers to the situation of Jews seeking food and shelter from Christians, which was becoming a widespread phenomenon after the liquidation actions began:

The obligation for almsgiving grows with the need of one's neighbour. When this need grows to the extreme, when it's a matter of the life of the neighbour, the Christian is obliged to help him, and not only out of that which is necessary for him to preserve his wellbeing relative to his position. At that time the obligation of love becomes an important obligation, that is, an obligation conditioned by grave sin and the obligation of justice. Whoever finds himself in extreme trouble has a right to seek rescue even from someone else's property, even without the permission of the owner.⁸²

He reminded the faithful that the highest level of love is to lay down one's life for another. There are times, Sheptytsky said, when Christians absolutely must carry this out in its literal sense. But all love of neighbour should incorporate that readiness for self-sacrifice.

The Christian's love of neighbour stands in great contrast to 'that true abyss of evil and hatred which is the crime of murder!' Murder is the repetition of the crime of Cain, 'because every neighbour is a brother—is a member of that same human family which grew out of the family of the first man'. Murder is the crime that most distances a person from the Christian love of neighbour and from the Christian conception of life.⁸³ Murder is the greatest crime, the greatest contradiction of human nature, because death is the greatest evil one human being can inflict upon another. Murder calls for punishment from heaven.⁸⁴

There are a few points in the letter to the pope of 29–31 August that I have still not discussed. One is that Sheptytsky now felt that the Nazis were worse than the Bolsheviks, that their regime was almost diabolical.⁸⁵ (He later also told Martel that 'Germany is worse than Bolshevism'.⁸⁶) The Germans had set up a system of lies, deceit, injustice, and pillage, a caricature of all notions of civilization and order. Their egoism had grown to absurd proportions and their national chauvinism had reached a completely insane level. They hated all that was good and beautiful. Where was all this to lead the unfortunate German people?⁸⁷ Another point he raised was how helpless he felt in the face of such evil. He had issued pastoral letters against murder, he had made murder a reserved sin, he had tried to discourage

⁷⁹ Ibid. 91.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 165.

⁸¹ Ibid. 168.

⁸² Ibid. 173–4.

⁸³ Ibid. 179.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 180.

⁸⁵ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 625.

⁸⁶ Frédéric, 'Abschrift, Übersetzung', 3; translation from Stehle, 'Sheptyts'kyi and the German Regime', 138.

⁸⁷ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 628–9.

youth from entering the militia, and he had protested directly to Himmler. Yet, he said, this was absolutely nothing in comparison with the ever-mounting waves of moral filth engulfing the whole land. A third point reiterated how deeply disturbed he was by the moral collapse in his archeparchy: much blood must be voluntarily shed to expiate the blood shed in the course of these crimes.⁸⁸

Sheptytsky's most celebrated intervention was his pastoral letter 'Thou Shalt Not Kill' of 21 November 1942. Sometimes doubts have been expressed whether this letter was really referring to the mass murder of the Jewish population. As we have seen, however, it continued and elaborated the discourse about murder that appeared in the wake of the March and August actions. Furthermore, although the timing of its release was not directly connected with specific incidents in the unfolding of the Holocaust, it must be remembered that it went through several earlier drafts; hence it should be linked with his responses to the 'August Action'. Redlich has pointed out that the fact that Sheptytsky gave a copy of this letter to Rabbi Kahane to read also indicates that he considered this 'a Jewish-related appeal'.⁸⁹ Although Sheptytsky did not (and could not) mention the Jews explicitly, Krawchuk points out that he 'reminded his readers, "real love includes all one's neighbors"', and the manifestation of fraternal love in opposition to homicide was a duty that extended "to every person by virtue of their human nature".⁹⁰

Soon after issuing that pastoral letter, Sheptytsky issued his 'Rules on the Decree "Concerning the Fifth Commandment"'. This gave guidelines on how to deal with the 'numerous facts of murder which our faithful have committed'. He recommended missions and retreats as well as preaching against murder. 'Only the work in solidarity of the entire community can save it from the misfortune of living with criminals.' He followed up with a letter to the clergy, 'Peace in the Lord and Blessing', which stated that these rules he proposed seemed to him to be 'simply nothing in comparison to that which should be proposed'.⁹¹

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In exploring these writings of Metropolitan Andrey, I have been particularly interested in them as expressions of what he was thinking. His ability to distribute his texts, and thus make his concerns known to the clergy and faithful of his archeparchy, was severely limited by the German authorities. They censored some of his texts in part, others *in toto*. In his letter to Pope Pius XII, Sheptytsky reported

⁸⁸ *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 629. As early as 1908 Sheptytsky was close to despair over a political murder, the assassination of the viceroy of Galicia by a Ukrainian student. He was quoted as saying: 'I see that my hand has been too weak. There is nothing else that remains for me to do, except to resign my pastoral dignity, and retreat into a monastery.' L. Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture* (Stanford, Calif., 2010), 342.

⁸⁹ Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi', 46. See also Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 242 n. 170.

⁹⁰ Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 242, citing Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 224–5.

⁹¹ Sheptytsky, *Pys'ma-poslannya*, 257–8.

that the authorities had, of course, confiscated his pastoral letters on homicide, but he had been able to relate their contents to the assembled clergy four or five times.⁹² Sheptytsky's opposition to murder in general and to the murder of the Jews in particular was widely known in Ukrainian political circles, the Polish underground, and the German administration.

In addition to thinking and writing about the Holocaust, Sheptytsky also himself engaged in the rescue of Jews. After Rabbi Lewin was murdered, Sheptytsky arranged for his two sons, Kurt (Isaac) and Nathan, to stay in Greek Catholic monasteries and in the St George Cathedral complex until Lviv was retaken by the Soviets. He also gave shelter to Rabbi Kahane from May 1943. Altogether, Sheptytsky was directly responsible for saving about a hundred and fifty Jews, mainly children.⁹³ He also helped Jews obtain 'Aryan' papers. A Jewish survivor, Edward Harvitt, remembers that his mother made an appointment with the metropolitan and was admitted to an audience. Sheptytsky offered to place her son in a convent, but Edward's mother did not want to be separated from him. So instead Sheptytsky arranged for her to obtain papers that improved the small family's chances of survival.⁹⁴ Sheptytsky's rescue activities were also relatively well known⁹⁵ and served as an example to his clergy and faithful, sometimes inspiring others to help with rescue.⁹⁶ One of his priests, Father Emylyan Kovch of Peremyshlyany, was particularly outstanding for his aid to Jews. When Father Kovch was arrested by the Gestapo at the end of 1942, Sheptytsky intervened, albeit unsuccessfully, on his behalf. He died in Majdanek and was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2001.⁹⁷ Father Kovch had been in direct contact with Sheptytsky.⁹⁸

Sheptytsky also sought to engage the Ukrainian Central Committee (Ukrayins'kyi tsentral'nyi komitet) in saving Jewish individuals who had done some service to the Ukrainian people.⁹⁹

ANTI-JEWISH COMPONENTS OF SHEPTYTSKY'S WORLD VIEW

It may come as a surprise that for all his condemnation of the Holocaust and efforts to help the Jewish population, he was still to some extent the prisoner of Christian

⁹² *Actes et documents*, ed. Blet et al., iii/2. 627.

⁹³ Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi', 46–7, 51 n. 50. According to Rabbi Kahane, two hundred Jewish children were saved in one major rescue operation: L. Heiman, 'They Saved Jews: Ukrainian Patriots Defied Nazis', *Ukrainian Quarterly*, 17/4 (1961), 328. Kurt Lewin put together a collection of affidavits of Jews rescued by Metropolitan Sheptytsky. It can be found in USHMM, RG 204.609.

⁹⁴ USC Shoah Foundation, interview with Edward Harvitt, 44068, 17.

⁹⁵ According to 'Ukrayintsi i zhydy', Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians talked about Sheptytsky's protest to Himmler.

⁹⁶ Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 242–5.

⁹⁷ A. M. Kowcz-Baran, *For God's Truth and Human Rights*, trans. E. and A. Baran (Ottawa, 2006), 55–81, 93–4; Kovba, *Lyudyanyist' u bezodni pekla*, 137.

⁹⁸ Kowcz-Baran, *For God's Truth*, 58.

⁹⁹ Surmach, *Dni kryvavyykh svastyk*, 102. The Ukrainian Central Committee, headed by Professor Volodymyr Kubiiiovych, was the only officially sanctioned Ukrainian community organization in

anti-Judaism and antisemitism. He felt that the Holocaust was God's will, perhaps punishment for the killing of Jesus Christ. I quote the well-known passage from Rabbi Kahane's memoir:

The metropolitan fell silent for a moment and continued: 'Have you ever thought about it and asked yourself, what is the source of the hatred and savage persecution of the Jewish people from ancient times until the present? What is their origin?' He pointed at the bookshelves, asked me to find the New Testament in Hebrew translation and locate chapter 27, verse 25 in the Gospel according to Matthew: 'It says there "And the whole people answered and said His blood will be on us and on our children." . . .'

At noon the next day Father Hrtzai¹⁰⁰ informed me that the metropolitan wished to see me again that evening . . . The metropolitan motioned to me with his half-paralyzed hand to draw near him and sit in the chair next to him.

'Our conversation yesterday did not let me sleep. I am remorseful and sorry about the content of our conversation. I shouldn't have spoken as I did. In the ongoing ordeal, when the Jewish people bleed to death and sacrifice hundreds of thousands of innocent victims, I should have known better than to touch upon this subject. I knew that such a conversation aggrieved you greatly. I ask you to forgive me. After all I am mortal and for a moment I let myself be distracted.'¹⁰¹

Something like this view was shared by many of Sheptytsky's flock. Ukrainians noted the passivity of many Jews in the face of their destruction and ascribed it to their recognition of God's will.¹⁰²

In his letter to the pope of 29–31 August 1942, which condemned so strongly the Nazi persecution of the Jews, the metropolitan also included the following passage:

The only consolation one can have in these terrible times is that nothing comes to us without the will of our Heavenly Father. I think that among the massacred Jews there are many souls who converted to God, because never through the centuries have they been placed in a situation as they are in the present, facing for months on end the possibility of a violent death.¹⁰³

By 'converted to God' it is not necessary to understand conversion to Christianity, although that is one possible interpretation. It seems more likely that Sheptytsky had in mind that secularized Jews were turning to God in the face of death.

In the course of his conversation with Sheptytsky, Martel said that Jews dominated the Soviet secret police and that they were the sworn enemies of Christianity.

Galicia and the rest of German-occupied Poland. It was the primary liaison organization between the Ukrainians and the Germans.

¹⁰⁰ Father Volodymyr Hrytsai was Sheptytsky's secretary.

¹⁰¹ Kahane, *Lviv Ghetto Diary*, 141–2. There is also an account of this conversation in Heiman, 'They Saved Jews', 330–1.

¹⁰² E. Himka and J.-P. Himka, 'Interviews with Elderly Nationalists in Lviv', paper presented at the Fifth Annual Danyliw Research Seminar on Contemporary Ukrainian Studies, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Ottawa, 29–31 October 2009; see especially the interview with Dariya Polyuha. O. Bartov, 'Eastern Europe as the Site of Genocide', *Journal of Modern History*, 80 (2008), 580.

¹⁰³ As translated in Redlich, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi', 47.

According to Martel, Sheptytsky agreed with him, but still refused to agree with their destruction.¹⁰⁴

CO-OPERATION WITH THE GERMANS, 1943–1944: THE WAFFEN-SS DIVISION ‘GALIZIEN’

Andrii Krawchuk wrote that the ‘process of ethical discernment took Metropolitan Sheptytsky from a position of qualified accommodation [to the German regime] to outright opposition’.¹⁰⁵ This statement is hard to square with the metropolitan’s support for the establishment of a Ukrainian Waffen-SS division. Krawchuk attempted to resolve the apparent contradiction by stating ‘it is difficult to establish definitively what he thought of the Division’ and pointing out that ‘there is no indication that he ever issued an official statement unequivocally supporting the formation of the unit’.¹⁰⁶ However, the weight of the evidence is that the metropolitan offered low-key support for the division. His coadjutor, Iosyf Slipy, left this account:

When the ‘Halychyna’ Division was being formed, I had to serve a Divine Liturgy for the recruits, taking the place of the metropolitan. Governor Wächter was there, and Father [Vasy] Laba delivered the sermon. After the service Wächter came and thanked me, saying that the Divine Liturgy ‘was an experience for me’. They invited me to the dignitaries’ tribune for the parade, but I didn’t go. But it mattered very much to Wächter that I be there, and therefore he asked about me, but people made some excuse on my behalf. I did not go to the reception either. Already during the organization of the Division and at other events I indicated to the late metropolitan not to engage the Church in Hitlerite pageants, because they [the Hitlerites] would clear out, and later we would have to bear the responsibility, especially since the Bolshevik offensive was moving at a fast rate.¹⁰⁷

A number of those who have studied this issue have speculated that Sheptytsky’s support for the division was based on his preference for a regular army unit over nationalist partisan formations.¹⁰⁸ An NKGB informer quoted Sheptytsky as telling him exactly that in the summer of 1944: ‘I condemn the actions of the UPA [the Ukrainian Insurgent Army] and the Banderites [the leading faction of the OUN]; I exculpate the Melnykites [the other OUN faction] and the people serving in the division SS “Galizien”’.¹⁰⁹ Sheptytsky told Martel: ‘If the German defeats continue, and there is a period of anarchy and chaos, we will be very happy to have a national army to maintain order and to counteract the worst outrages until regular Soviet troops arrive.’¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Frédéric, ‘Abschrift, Übersetzung’, 4.

¹⁰⁵ Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 247. ¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 265. ¹⁰⁷ Slipy, ‘Spomyny’, 97.

¹⁰⁸ Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine*, 267. A. A. Zięba (interviewed by P. Zychowicz), ‘Dwie twarze abp. Szeptyckiego’, *Rzeczpospolita*, 29 Nov. 2009; <<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/399004.html>>.

¹⁰⁹ *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts’kyi*, ed. Bohunov et al., 264.

¹¹⁰ Frédéric, ‘Abschrift, Übersetzung’, 3; translation from Stehle, ‘Sheptyts’kyi and the German Regime’, 138.

Moreover, the metropolitan appointed chaplains to the division, to provide it with Christian guidance.¹¹¹

But other considerations undoubtedly influenced his stance as well. Together with other Ukrainian leaders, he had early on lobbied the Germans to form a Ukrainian unit to fight the Soviets. In the future, it was hoped, the soldiers in German service would form the nucleus of a national army. This thinking induced many Galician Ukrainians to join SS 'Galizien' in 1943 and earlier had led the Bandera movement to urge members to join the Germans' Ukrainian auxiliary police. Although Sheptytsky was opposed to Germany in 1943, even declaring the Soviets to be better, the idea of training a Ukrainian army probably still appealed to the metropolitan, who had himself served in the Austrian cavalry. Also, wild rumours circulated about what the Soviets would do when they reconquered Galicia. The Ukrainian writer Arkady Lyubchenko, himself a racist and antisemite, recorded in his diary on 24 March 1943 the following statement by the metropolitan: 'I have . . . information that the Bolsheviks want to bring the Chinese to fight in their ranks against Europe. If England and America help with military materiel . . . it would not take a special effort for them to send immediately some fifty million people against the Germans. That would be terrible! God only knows how this can end.'¹¹² This concern with the Chinese also makes its appearance in Sheptytsky's conversation with Martel, in which Sheptytsky expressed the view that the Bolsheviks would rule the world: 'They possess inexhaustible reserves of men, thanks to Asia and the Chinese.'¹¹³ It seems as if Sheptytsky was thinking in stereotypical terms of Europe and Asia.

Sheptytsky was able to work with the Germans, the occupation authorities understood, because he was used to functioning under numerous different regimes. Indeed, Sheptytsky had become metropolitan in Franz Joseph's empire; he was arrested under tsarist Russian occupation during the First World War; when he returned to Galicia afterwards it had become Poland; not two decades passed before he was functioning under the Soviet system; and after just two years he had to deal with the Nazis. This variegated experience had, from the Germans' point of view, its pluses and minuses. Wächter, the head of the Galician occupation government wrote: 'The metropolitan can therefore not be described as either pro-German or anti-German.' Although Wächter considered Sheptytsky unwilling to embrace 'the German sense' of opposition to Bolshevism (i.e. to link it with the Jews), this did not mean he had Bolshevik leanings. He had never called for an uprising against Germany. He neither unequivocally sides with Germany against its enemies nor publicly opposes Germany. In conversations he objects to some 'details', such as 'the form of the Jewish resettlement' (i.e. the murder of the Jews). But 'these petty

¹¹¹ The chaplains are examined in A. Silecky, 'Fathers in Uniform: The Greek Catholic Chaplains of the 14th SS Galicia Division (1943–1947)', MA paper (Univ. of Alberta, 2006).

¹¹² *Shchodennyk Arkadiya Lyubchenka*, ed. Yu. Lutsky (Lviv, 1999), 130. I am grateful to Taras Kurylo for finding this passage.

¹¹³ Frédéric, 'Abschrift, Übersetzung', 3.

disagreements' are more than compensated for by the metropolitan's help in winning over the Ukrainian populace. He and his clergy, Wächter wrote, had been very helpful. They had supported the SS unit, and they pray for the Führer in the liturgy.¹¹⁴

CONCLUSION

On a few points this study has been able to add little new to the existing literature on Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and the Holocaust. One is the actual rescue operations organized by Sheptytsky and his closest associates. It has relied on what, to date, is the primary scholarly account, that of Shimon Redlich, a rather brief survey. Sheptytsky's rescue efforts require much more scholarly attention, and the whole issue of whether or not he deserves recognition as a Righteous among the Nations needs to be put aside for the work to be fruitful. There is a need for a more systematic analysis, deeper and more imaginative research in archival and testimonial sources, and comparison with similar rescue operations conducted by Roman Catholic and Armenian Catholic clergy and religious in the same and neighbouring regions.¹¹⁵

Another point on which this chapter has made no new contribution is on the anti-Jewish components in Sheptytsky's world view. It has not brought to light any statements that have not already been referred to in the literature. Here too, though, there is need for additional research. In particular, it would be useful to examine how his views during the Holocaust compare to views he expressed earlier. It seems that before the Holocaust Sheptytsky did not write anything about Jewish responsibility for the crucifixion of Christ,¹¹⁶ suggesting that this train of thought emerged because of what he was witnessing and interpreting as a visitation of punishment of cosmic proportions. It would be useful for the contextualization of Sheptytsky's Holocaust thinking to examine such statements as he did make in reference to theological issues around Jews and Judaism. It would also be useful to study Sheptytsky's political thinking about Jews, in particular to gauge how deep his identification of Jews with communists was. As far back as the early twentieth century Sheptytsky identified socialism with Jews,¹¹⁷ but he refrained from mentioning Jews in his major pastoral letter against communism of 1936. (By contrast,

¹¹⁴ USHMM, RG 1995.A.1086, reel 5: letter of [Otto von Wächter] Chef des Amtes, General-gouvernement, Gouverneur des Distrikts Galizien to Botschaftsrat Dr. Schumburg, 31 May 1944; original in Derzhavnyi arkhiv L'viv's'koyi oblasti, Lviv, f. R-35, op. 1, spr. 45, fos. 1-2.

¹¹⁵ On Armenian Catholic rescue activities, see S. Azizyan, 'Vyprovuvannya viry: Ryatuvannya yevreyiv ukrayins'kymy ta virmens'kymy dushpastyryamy pid chas Druhoyi svitovoyi viiny', *RISU*, 25 Aug. 2009: <http://www.risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies_of_religions/26377/>.

¹¹⁶ For his 2004 monograph on Sheptytsky's theology, Father Peter Galadza sifted through his theological writings and found nothing on the order of what he said to Rabbi Kahane. Personal communication from Father Peter Galadza to the author.

¹¹⁷ J.-P. Himka, 'Metropolita Szeptycki wobec zagadnień reformy wyborczej, 1905-1914', in A. A. Zięba (ed.), *Metropolita Andrzej Szeptycki: Studia i materiały* (Kraków, 1994), 147.

in that same year the Polish primate, Cardinal August Hlond, issued a notorious pastoral letter that accused Jews of manifold evils, including leading the communist vanguard.) What was the general attitude towards Jews in the Greek Catholic Church during Sheptytsky's reign as metropolitan? This is a question that has not been researched either. At the one end of the spectrum we have Bishop Ivan Buchko's condemnation of antisemitism in 1936;¹¹⁸ at the other, Father Irynei Nazarko's article of 1930, a compendium of antisemitic accusations, including even a strong defence of blood libel.¹¹⁹ In short, what is needed is research into context.

On other points this study has made use of additional sources that confirm or elaborate judgements already well established in the literature. Among these is the fact that early in 1942 Sheptytsky began to protest sharply the Germans' murder of the Jews, protesting directly to the Germans as well as to the highest officials of the Catholic Church. He was particularly concerned about how Ukrainians were being drawn into the destruction process. He came to the conclusion by the summer of 1942 that the Nazis were even worse than the Bolsheviks. He was still able to cooperate with them when it was a matter of the lesser evil (a Waffen-SS division as opposed to unrestrained bands of nationalist youth). He was deeply appalled by murder and feared mightily for the salvation of the flock under his care. Although this study concludes nothing on this theme that differs from Andrii Krawchuk's earlier analysis, it has deliberately quoted Sheptytsky's messages extensively to show more ramifications of his thinking and, indeed, emotions.

One new thing the study has done has been to pay more attention to Sheptytsky's thinking over time, as it responded to phases in the unfolding of the Holocaust and other wartime violence. The Lviv pogrom and other violence in the immediate aftermath of the German invasion caught Sheptytsky by surprise, although instinctively he included in his first pronouncement a call for the new authorities, and in the first place Stetsko's Ukrainian government, to respect the rights of all citizens, regardless of religion and nationality. Called upon to intervene during the Lviv pogrom, Sheptytsky was unable to produce an adequate response, at least not one that has left any trace. He may have thought that the violence was just an outburst provoked by anger at Jewish complicity in Bolshevik crimes and hoped that things would return to normal once the Germans established order.

It is not unusual that he clung to that hope of normalcy for many months in spite of mounting evidence to the contrary. As anyone who has read Jewish testimonies and memoirs of the period can attest, the Jews themselves were hoping the Germans would restore order after the first wave of violence in July. As the Germans engaged in more systematic violence, surviving Jews still kept hoping that each 'action' was the last. So the metropolitan was not the only one who found the Germans' intention to kill all the Jews incredible. But the executions which he

¹¹⁸ S. Redlich, 'Jewish-Ukrainian Relations in Inter-War Poland as Reflected in Some Ukrainian Publications', *Polin*, 11 (1998), 244 n. 54.

¹¹⁹ Ir. Nazarko, 'Piznaimo zhydiv!', *Kalyendar Misionarya*, 27 (1930), 54-60.

could hear from his own palace disturbed his peace and his hopes. He complained to German officials who visited him. As his hopes waned, he protested also in writing to Himmler in February 1942. The employment of Ukrainian policemen in the Germans' murderous actions, in Rohatyn and then in the major action in Lviv in March, precipitated a remarkable and unmistakable recognition of and engagement with the Holocaust by the metropolitan. During the March action he drafted a letter to the Vatican and made murder a reserved sin. From this time on, his pastoral letters and other occasional writings returned again and again to the theme of murder. It weighed heavily on his mind; he seemed almost obsessed with it.

As the murder of the Jews progressed, his thinking on murder also grew more ramified. New ideas occurred to him, such as the repugnance shown even to legal executioners. He assiduously gathered information on the murder of the Jews. The letter he sent to the Vatican in August 1942 was much better informed about the Holocaust than the original draft of March 1942. His appreciation of the enormity of the Holocaust was such that he tried to make sense of it as a divine intervention, a punishment of the Jews. Thinking along these same lines appeared also among rabbis during the Holocaust, although they did not link the Jews' transgressions with anything in the Christian narrative.

Among the most frightening things that students of the Holocaust have to confront in their research is the readiness of so many ordinary people to commit monstrous crimes against their fellow human beings as well as the indifference to and even acceptance of this by so many bystanders. It is all too rare to find in the gentile population expressions of such desperate horror at the murder of the Jews as we find in the texts that Sheptytsky produced. Too rarely do we encounter individuals who were doing everything in their power to protest against and stop the orgy of murder. He was a man, and he had his failings and prejudices like all men, but he was a man with a strong conscience, principles, and courage.