

Rethinking Jewish Resisters' Attacks on German Targets in Kraków

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Abstract: This paper offers a broader look at the 22 December 1942 attacks against German targets in Kraków that was carried out by two Jewish underground groups, HeChalutz HaLochem (Combat Pioneer) and Iskra (Spark). The 22 December attacks were a unique operation both in terms of their timing and modus operandi. They took place while other Jewish groups were yet to be established or were even debating whether to focus on rescue or resistance. The attacks were the most significant assault against the Germans in Kraków, which otherwise was mostly quiet during the occupation years. This study addresses those attacks as an urban guerrilla operation which required special efforts to gain mobility and probably could not have happened without logistic support by Polish supporters. By attacking the Germans from the rear, the Jewish guerrilla commanders in Kraków displayed creative thinking, flexibility, surprise, and initiative.

Nowe spojrzenie na ataki żydowskich bojowników na cele niemieckie w Krakowie

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Abstrakt: Artykuł prezentuje szersze spojrzenie na kwestię ataków na cele niemieckie w Krakowie przeprowadzonych 22 grudnia 1942 roku przez dwie podziemne organizacje żydowskie: He-Chaluc ha-Lochem (Walczący Pionier, Organizacja Bojowa Żydowskiej Młodzieży Chalucowej) oraz Iskrę. Zamachy z 22 grudnia to operacja wyjątkowa zarówno pod względem terminu, jak i *modus operandi*. Miały one miejsce w momencie, gdy inne żydowskie grupy jeszcze się nie uformowały albo też debatowały nad tym, czy lepiej skupić się na ratowaniu życia, czy raczej stawić zbrojny opór. Ataki, o których mowa, to najważniejsze akcje zbrojne

na Niemców w Krakowie – mieście, w którym przez większość okupacji niemieckiej było dość spokojnie. W artykule tytułowe żydowskie ataki potraktowano jako przykład operacji miejskiej partyzantki, która wymagała podejmowania szczególnych wysiłków w celu zyskania mobilności i która prawdopodobnie nie mogłaby się wydarzyć bez logistycznego wsparcia polskich sprzymierzeńców. Atakując Niemców, dowódcy żydowskiej partyzantki w Krakowie wykazali się kreatywnym myśleniem, elastycznością oraz inicjatywą, wykorzystując element zaskoczenia.

Keywords: Holocaust, Jews, HeChalutz HaLochem, guerrilla, Kraków, Poland, Germany, PPR

Słowa kluczowe: Holokaust, Żydzi, He-Chaluc ha-Lochem, partyzantka, Kraków, Polska, Niemcy, PPR

Introduction¹

Jewish resistance during the Holocaust refers to both individual and collective acts by armed and unarmed people who rebelled against the Germans and their collaborators.² This paper aims to demonstrate that the study of Jewish armed resistance during the Holocaust benefits from

¹ I dedicate this work to the late Yael Jolanta Sternberg-Tarshis who helped my research in Poland and to the late Adam Gurbisz, owner of the house at 13 Józefińska St. I thank Dudi Carmel who helped me with the aerial images. Yitshal Berner helped me with German texts. Shirley Zauer invested a lot of work in copyediting this article. This research could not be done without the assistance of the National Archives in Kraków (especially Iwona Pilucik), the Museum of Kraków, the Jagiellonian Library and the Public Library in Rajska Street. Many thanks to Justyna Kubik from Institute of National Remembrance branch in Wieliczka. I am thankful to architect Marek Kamiński. I am grateful to John and Urszula Zielińska-Meissner for their long-time support of my work in Poland.

² Bauer Yehuda: "Jewish Resistance: A Myth or Reality." In: *Rethinking the Holocaust*. Yale University Press. New Haven and London 2001, pp. 119–142.

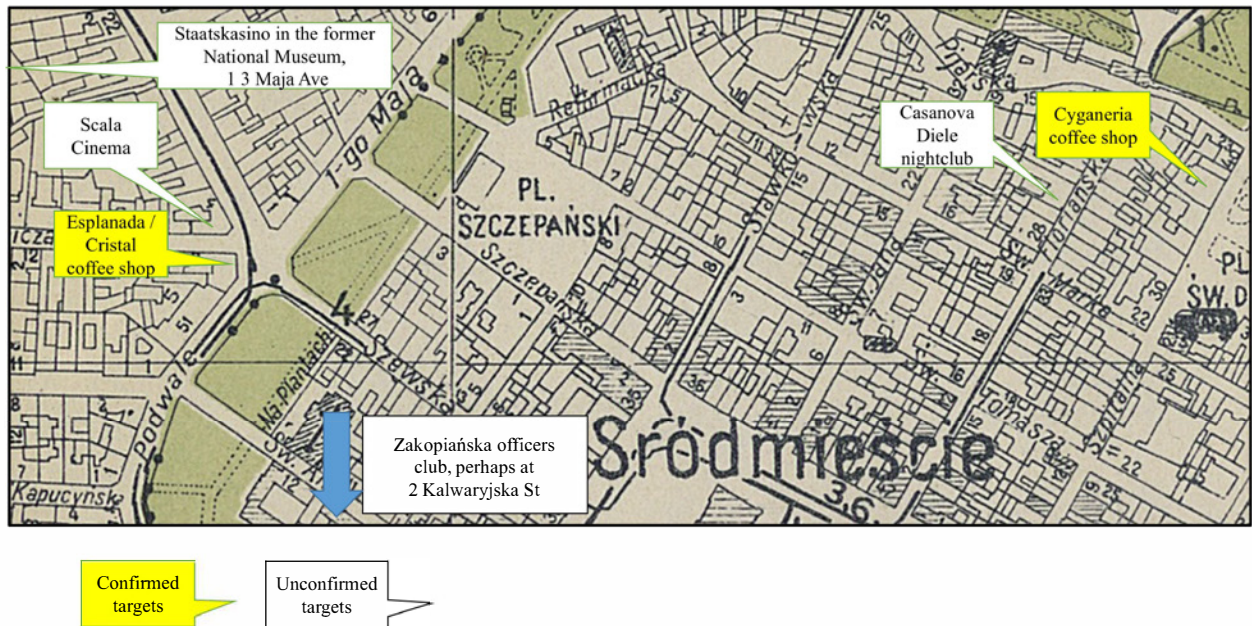


Fig. 1. HeChalutz HaLochem's attacks on German targets in Kraków, 22 December 1942. Kraków map, 1947, 1:10,000, public domain

classical guerrilla scholarship and themes of the geographies of resistance. To prove this argument, this paper analyses the attacks on German targets in the heart of occupied Kraków, the capital of the General Government, which were conducted by two Jewish underground groups, HeChalutz HaLochem (Organizacja Bojowa Młodzieży Chalucowej, The Combat Organisation of the Jewish Youth Pioneer) and Iskra (Spark).³ On 22 December 1942 HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra conducted these attacks in revenge for the German atrocities against the Jews and to encourage the Poles to revolt (see Fig. 1).⁴

In 1938, approximately 65,000 Jews lived in Kraków.⁵ In June 1942, the Germans deported approximately 6000 to 7000 Jews from the Kraków ghetto to the Bełżec death camp, and approximately 7000 in October 1942. In March 1943, the Germans liquidated the Kraków ghetto, murdering approximately 1000 Jews on the spot and 3000 in Auschwitz. The Germans sent at least 6000 Jews from the ghetto to the Płaszów labour camp.⁶

Previous articles by this author discussed the activities of HeChalutz HaLochem's remnants in the area of Nowy Wiśnicz.⁷ The present paper focuses on HeChalutz HaLochem's heroic operation in Kraków in 1942. The 22 December attacks, in which a few German security men were killed, were the result of a few months' planning and ad hoc cooperation between two resistance groups: HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra. HeChalutz HaLochem was established in August 1942 and was comprised of about 100 operatives from Zionist-Jewish youth groups in Kraków, primarily Akiba which cherished Jewish history, religion, and tradition, the socialist Dror youth movement, the religious HaShomer HaDati, and others.⁸

The second group, Iskra, was comprised of more than thirty activists from different Jewish groups, including the far-socialist HaShomer HaTzair, and operated under the guidance/control of the communist Polish's Workers

³ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem: Organ of the Chalutz Underground Movement in Occupied Cracow, August–October 1943*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Acco 2005, pp. 77, 80.

⁴ Iskra ("Spark"), a movement led by Zvi Hersch Bauminger aligned with the Polish Worker's Party (the PPR).

⁵ Mroczyk Ludwik: *Krakowianie. Szkice do portretu zbiorowego w dobie industrialnej transformacji 1890–1939* [Cracovians. Sketching the Collective Portrait in the time of Industrial Transformation 1890–1939]. Akademia Pedagogiczna im. Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Krakowie. Kraków 1999, p. 48; Rączy Elżbieta: *Zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie krakowskim w latach 1939–1945* [The mass murder of Jews in the Kraków district in the years 1939–1945]. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. Rzeszów 2014, pp. 68–69. Using different sources, Rączy recorded 60,132 Jews in Kraków in 1939.

⁶ Kotarba Ryszard: *Żydzi Krakowa w dobie zagłady (ZAL/KL*

Plaszow) [The Jews of Kraków in the era of extermination (Forced Labour Camp/Concentration Camp Plaszow)]. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. Kraków 2022, pp. 126, 140, 175, 190–191; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow 1939–1945: Resistance, Underground, Struggle*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Tel Aviv 1993, pp. 123, 274–275; Rączy Elżbieta: *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 282–289.

⁷ Zohar Eran: "Jewish Resistance Group in the Nowy Wiśnicz Area: A New Approach." *Holocaust Studies* 2024, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 248–289. DOI: 10.1080/17504902.2023.2203618.

⁸ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 29, pp. 58–61; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Acco 2005, p. 18; A.A.A. Akiba. Review of its history, Ideas and Actions in 1934. Massuah, International Institute for Holocaust Studies, cat. no. 13690, pp. 3–7; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 281.



Fig. 2a



Fig. 2b

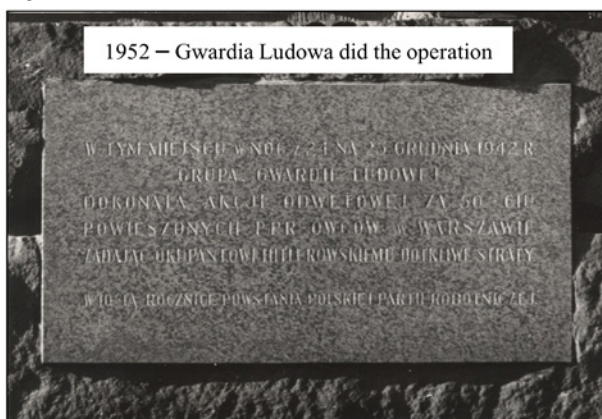


Fig. 2c

Fig. 2a. Commemorative plaques at 38 Szpitalna St, Kraków, photo by Eran Zohar, December 2022

Fig. 2b. Commemorative plaques at 38 Szpitalna St, Kraków, photo by Eran Zohar, September 2019

Fig. 2c. The 1952 commemorative plaque, courtesy of the Museum of Kraków, cat. no. MHK-Fs21036/IX/9, photo by Daniel Zawadzki

Party (Polska Partia Robotnicza, PPR).⁹ Prior to the 22 December attacks, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra ambushed German soldiers near the ghetto and captured their guns, while Iskra sabotaged German installations (see Fig. 2).¹⁰

Shortly after the 22 December attacks, and as a result of internal betrayal and operational weaknesses, the Gestapo captured and killed dozens of HeChalutz HaLochem operatives, including the commanders, Aharon Liebeskind and Avraham Leibowicz (Laban).¹¹ In February 1943, the Germans captured and killed Iskra operatives including its commanders, Hesiek Bauminger and Gola Mire.¹²

The 22 December attacks deserve our attention because they were the first significant organised operation by a Jewish armed group against the Germans.¹³ These attacks were the main resistance operation against the Germans in Kraków, which had remained relatively quiet during the occupation.¹⁴ The 22 December attacks featured sophisticated *modus operandi* ahead of their time, that is, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra's simultaneous assaults on Germans' civilian and military targets across Kraków. HeChalutz HaLochem attacked the Cyganeria coffee-bar at 38 Szpitalna St successfully, while the assault on the Esplanada coffee shop at 7 Podwale St

⁹ Shlomo Schein, Interview by Yael Peled, 2 May 1984. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 9 (188), pp. 3–7; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 282.

¹⁰ Yehuda Maimon, Interview by Yael Peled, July 1983. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 1 (188), p. 9; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin's Diary*, pp. 123, 131–132; Shalom Golberman, Interview by Yael Peled, 11 July 1982. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 6 (188), p. 3.

¹¹ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 29, pp. 58–61; Leibowicz Abraham (Laban), Liebeskind Dolek, and Tennenbaum Yehuda: "Report About the Capture of the

First [Fighters] and the Killing of the Others," 25 December 1942. Ghetto Fighters' House Archive (GFHA), cat. no. 100, pp. 2–4.

¹² Shlomo Schein, Letter to Arie Bauminger, 10 May 1959. Mas-suah, International Institute for Holocaust Studies, cat. no. 12894, p. 5; Yaari-Wald Moshe: "Gola Mire: Anti-Nazi Fighter." In: *Rzeszów Jews: Memorial Book*. Ed. Moshe Yaari-Wald. Rzeszower Societies in Israel and U.S.A. Tel Aviv 1967, p. 341.

¹³ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 30, pp. 75–79.

¹⁴ Rydiger Monika: "Usurping by the City Sky: Oppression by Design." In: *Unwanted Capital: Architecture and Urban Planning in Kraków During the German Occupation of 1939–1945*. Ed. Jacek Purchla. International Cultural Center in Kraków. Kraków 2022, pp. 14–18.

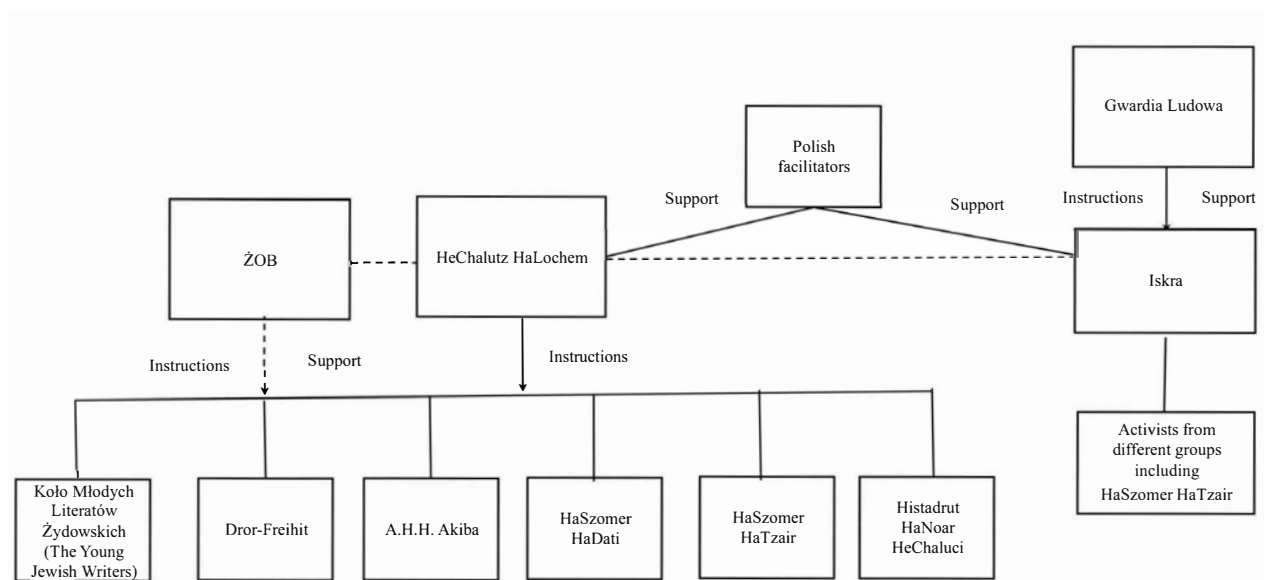


Fig. 3. HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra's structures

failed.¹⁵ Iskra's main operations were the attack against the German military's boat mooring on the River Vistula and the killing of a German officer.¹⁶ The 22 December attacks were a unique demonstration of urban guerrilla operations in the face of annihilation.

The 22 December operation in Kraków also consisted of non-violent acts such as the hanging of Polish flags, placing flowers on Polish national heroes' graves, and disseminating anti-German leaflets.¹⁷ These actions manifested the special status of the Jewish armed groups in Kraków. In the face of the annihilation of the Jews, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra called on the Polish people to revolt while trying to defend the Kraków ghetto's population from liquidation.¹⁸

The 22 December attacks occurred while most of the Jewish resistance groups in occupied Poland were still

debating the right course of action and while their leaderships were planning to operate inside the ghettos.¹⁹ After the war, in both Israel and Poland, the 22 December attacks became a legend and the symbol of Jewish-Polish armed resistance.²⁰

Jewish resistance groups have been analysed mostly under the title of Holocaust studies.²¹ In recent decades, Holocaust studies have been invested in debating what constitutes resistance while definitions of resistance became more inclusive, referring also to resiliency and disobedience. Holocaust studies have been less interested in military analysis of Jewish armed groups, which are the foci of the present study.²²

The 22 December attacks are well documented, but the long-time debate about the perpetrators of the Cyganeria coffee-bar operation highlights the need for critical reading of old testimonies and memoirs alongside the use of

¹⁵ Yehuda (Poldek) Maimon (Wasserman), Oral History Interview, October 1987. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C., cat. no. 1994. A.0051.4; Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Abraham Leibowicz (Laban), 13 February 1980. GFHA, cat. no. 00289.9.1; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 218; Kawiarnia Cyganeria 1949–1950, Spółdzielnia Pracy i Użytkowników Gastronom w Krakowie [Cyganeria café 1949–1950, Gastronom workers and users cooperative in Kraków]. Archiwum Narodowe w Krakowie (ANK), cat. no. 29/802/0/1/SGKr 16.

¹⁶ Shalom Globerman, Interview by Yael Peled, 11 July 1982. The Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 6 (188), p. 6.

¹⁷ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 206.

¹⁸ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 30, pp. 77, 80.

¹⁹ Kovner Abba: *A Missive to HaShomer HaTzair Partisans*. Moreshet. Tel Aviv 2002, p. XXI; Tenenbaum-Tamaroff Mordechai: *Pages from the Fire*. Hakibbutz Hameuchad. Yerushalayim 1985, p. 61.

²⁰ Commemorating Forty Years to the Cyganeria Operation. Meeting of the Kraków Ghetto Fighters, December 1982. GFHA, cat. no. 188-4.2, pp. 1–33; Dränger Beni: "The Struggle of the Jewish Underground's Fighters as a Role Model for Our Struggle to Establish the State" (Speech, Netanya, 31 August 2015); author's visits to 38 Szpitalna St in December 2022; The 1952 commemorative plaque at 38 Szpitalna St, cat. no. MHK-Fs21036/IX/9; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 221; Warszawski Pasia: "Testimony on the Underground in Kraków," 1980s. Moreshet, cat. no. A.1999, p. 5. Sources have alleged that using the last bullets in their guns, both commanders of Iskra and HeChalutz HaLochem killed themselves so the Germans would not capture them. It is unclear if that really happened.

²¹ Bauer Yehuda: "Jewish Resistance," p. 9.

²² Tec Nechama: "Jewish Resistance: Facts, Omissions, and Distortions." In: *Jewish Resistance Against the Nazis*. Ed. Patrick Henry. Catholic University of America Press. Washington D.C. 2014, p. 70; Michman Dan: "Jewish Fighting During the Holocaust." *Dapim* 1995, Vol. 12, pp. 12–13.

		Gwardia Ludowa operation in Warsaw	HeChalutz HaLochem's and Iskra's operation in Kraków
1.	Date	24/10/42	22/12/42
2.	Time	19:00	19:00
3.	Number of operatives	14	Around 20
4.	Operatives per squad	3–6	3
4.	Targeted venues	Two coffee shops and a restaurant	Two coffee shops, boat mooring, German officer
5.	Non-violent actions (posters, Polish flags)	–	+
5.	Weapons	Multiple hand grenades, guns	Hand grenades, very few guns
6.	Targets that were hit	2	1
7.	German casualties	A few dozen were killed and injured	A few were killed and injured
8.	Fate of perpetrators	Fled safely. In March 1943, the Germans killed GL senior commander, Jan Strzeszewski.	Germans captured and killed most of them.

Table 1. Urban guerrilla operations in Warsaw and Kraków, 1942

classical guerrilla texts (see Fig. 3).²³ Yael Peled, for instance, suggests that HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra formed joint squadrons that conducted the attacks against German targets.²⁴ However, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra had only established an ad hoc command a few weeks before the operation and there is no information about joint training, and HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra's survivors did not record joint teams. Operatives from both organisations launched the 22 December attacks from different sites.²⁵ In his 1959 letter to Arieh Bauminger, Shlomo Schein, a former Iskra senior operative, claimed that Iskra attacked Cyganeria, but failed to provide specific details.²⁶ Edyta Gawron argued that in Autumn 1942 HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra established the Jewish Combatant Organisation (Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa, ŻOB) in Kraków which was formally subordinated to the ŻOB in Warsaw. However, the PPR's affiliate Iskra in Kraków did not take orders

from Warsaw and had its own organisational preferences. No organisation called ŻOB was formed in Kraków, only an ad hoc loose command.²⁷

Invested in proving the Jewish character of the perpetrators of the 22 December attacks, previous authors understated the important role of Polish facilitators. Authors did not engage with the fact that on 24 October 1942, a month before the Cyganeria attack, the People's Guard (Gwardia Ludowa, GL), the military wing of the PPR, commanded by Bolesław Kowalski, executed a very similar guerrilla operation against German soft targets in Warsaw. In 1942, this course of action was rare. Table 1 demonstrates the great similarity in tactics between both operations, simultaneous assaults on venues that served German soldiers in the cities' centres. HeChalutz HaLochem leaders might have been influenced by the GL attacks in Warsaw.²⁸

²³ For instance, Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, pp. 153–225; Baruch Yechieli: *Akiva, The Growth and Development of a General Zionist Youth Movement and Fighting During the Years of the Holocaust*. Hakibbutz Hameuchad. Tel Aviv 1988, pp. 247–274; Bednarek Monika, Gawron Edyta, Jeżowski Grzegorz, Zbroja Barbara, Zimmerer Katarzyna: *Kraków – czas okupacji 1939–1945* [Kraków under Nazi occupation 1939–1945]. Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa. Kraków 2012, pp. 319–331; Zimmerer Katarzyna: *Kronika zamordowanego świata. Żydzi w Krakowie w czasie okupacji niemieckiej* [A chronicle of the murdered world. Jews in Kraków under Nazi German occupation]. Wydawnictwo Literackie. Kraków 2017, pp. 433–483.

²⁴ Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 205.

²⁵ Shalom Globerman, Interview, p. 6; Szymon Lustgarten, Interview by Yael Peled. 2 July 1981. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 2 (188), p. 5; Elsa Lustgarten

and Yehuda Maimon, Interview by Yael Peled, 4 July 1981. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 3 (188), p. 10.

²⁶ Shlomo Schein, Letter to Arieh Bauminger, p. 4.

²⁷ Gawron Edyta: "Zagłada (1939–1945)" [The Holocaust (1939–1945)]. In: *Not Only Kroke: The History of the Jews of Kraków*. Eds. Edyta Gawron, Michał Galas. Wydawnictwo Literackie. Kraków 2022, pp. 363–364; Shalev Ziva: *Tosia. Tosia Altman Leader of Hashomer Hatzair Movement and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*. Moreshet. Tel Aviv 1992, pp. 166–167; Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980.

²⁸ Aksamitowski Andrzej: *Polski wysiłek zbrojny: jesień 1939 – wiosna 1942 = Polish military effort: autumn 1939 – spring 1943*. Departament Systemu Obronnego Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, Wojskowy Instytut Historyczny Akademii Obrony Narodowej. Warszawa 2003, p. 108; Korcuć Maciej: "Trudne warunki i silny

Other authors have argued that the GL was responsible for both operations in Warsaw and Kraków in retaliation for the Germans' execution of fifty Polish prisoners in Warsaw on the night of 15 October 1942. These authors did not discuss HeChalutz HaLochem.²⁹ Specifically, authors used the memoirs of Józef Zajac (*Toczyły się boje*), the commander of the GL's western sub-district in Kraków in 1942, who alleged that he commanded the 22 December operation which was undertaken by a group of Jewish and Polish fighters.³⁰ Yet, it is known that the 22 December operation was conducted only by Jewish operatives, including Idek Liber, a member of Akiba and then HeChalutz HaLochem, who threw hand grenades at Cyganeria, and Hesiek Izraelewicz and Menachem (family name unknown), who attacked the Esplanada coffee shop.³¹

Zajac argues that on 18 December 1942, the PPR and ŻOB held a joint meeting and decided on the attack plan. But it would not be logical to have held such a meeting only a few days before such an operation.³² HeChalutz HaLochem survivors recorded that Leibowicz instructed them before the operation rather than the GL.³³ In fact, by late 1942 the GL was inactive in Kraków and had no role in HeChalutz HaLochem attacks. Following failed operational cooperation between HeChalutz HaLochem and the PPR in September 1942, the HeChalutz HaLochem leadership rejected any PPR direction.³⁴ While calling for Jewish-Polish cooperation against the Germans, HeChalutz HaLochem emphasized its Jewish identity.³⁵

At the same time, the 22 December attacks have been overlooked by the literature on armed resistance in World War Two.³⁶ Walter Laqueur, for instance, argues in his book *Guerrilla Warfare* that numerous resistance groups operated in occupied Europe against the Germans and their collaborators and in support of the Allies. They had no military impact and their contribution to the war efforts against the Axis forces was very modest until the final stages of World War Two when the Allies' victory was at hand. Laqueur did not discuss Jewish resistance.³⁷

In her comprehensive scholarship about anti-German activities, Halik Kochanski dedicates a chapter to the Jewish armed resistance, but does not discuss HeChalutz HaLochem and the 22 December attacks.³⁸ Guerrilla scholars have also overlooked the military writing of Szimzion Dränger, one of HeChalutz HaLochem's commanders, which is a major source for the current work.³⁹

This paper acknowledges that Jewish armed groups, including those in Kraków, had a special character regarding their goals, roots, and strategic background.⁴⁰ But classical guerrilla writing can help to obtain a more comprehensive and accurate picture about the 22 December attacks which were urban guerrilla operations. Looking at Jewish resistance, such as in Kraków, through the guerrilla lens offers a more comprehensive and realistic view and highlights issues that were underrated (for example, the advantage of attacking the Germans from the rear, the effort to gain mobility, and the importance of Polish facilitators). Therefore, this study discusses the 22 December attacks with reference to Mao

nacisk niemiecki" [Harsh conditions and heavy pressure from the Germans]. In: *Polska Partia Robotnicza, Gwardia Ludowa / Armia Ludowa na ziemiach polskich 1942–1944/1945* [Polish Workers Party, People's Guard / People's Army in Poland in the years 1942–1944/1945]. Eds. Krzysztof Kaczmarek and Mariusz Krzysztofński. Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. Rzeszów 2013, p. 77; Kirby Dick: *IRA Terror on Britain's Streets 1939–1940: The Wartime Bombing Campaign and Hitler Connection*. Pen & Sword. Yorkshire–Philadelphia 2021, pp. 74, 231. Only the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which fought for North Ireland's unification with the Irish Free State, utilized similar tactics during its fifteen-month bombing campaign in mainland England (1939–1940).

²⁹ Korcuć Maciej: "Trudne warunki i silny nacisk niemiecki" [Harsh conditions and heavy pressure from the Germans], p. 77; Kochanski Halik: *Resistance: The Underground War Against Hitler, 1939–1945*. Liveright. New York 2022, pp. 91, 294.

³⁰ Zajac Józef: *Toczyły się boje* [Battles were being fought]. Czytelnik. Warszawa 1965, s. 60–64; idem: KW PZPR w Krakowie, Relacje i wspomnienia [The Voivodship Committee of Polish United Workers' Party in Kraków, Accounts and recollections], July 1947. ANK, cat. no. 29/1312/2439, pp. 203, 709; Gästehaus der Regierung zu Krakau, 1940. ANK, Zbiór kartograficzny [Cartographic collection], cat. no. 29/663/6759, p. 3.

³¹ Elsa Lustgarten, Oral History Interview, October 1987. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C., cat. no. 50.308.0005, p. 10; Menachem Bigelman, Member of Dror and the Jewish Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto, 1990s. GFHA, cat. no. 1064, p. 1064;

Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradeti MiHem*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Tel Aviv 1997, pp. 98–100; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 183. Peled argues that ŻOB operative Menachem Bigelman participated in the 22 December attacks and was captured by the Germans. But Bigelman participated in the Warsaw ghetto uprising and died in May 1943 in Warsaw. See, for example, Carmi Aharon, Frimmer Haim: *From That Blaze: Testimonies of Members of ZZB*. Hakibbutz Hameuchad. Tel Aviv 1961, p. 203.

³² Zajac Józef: *Toczyły się boje*, pp. 58–64.

³³ Shoshana Cohen-Klinberg, Interview by Yael Peled, 12 July 1982. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 5 (188), pp. 16–17; Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradeti MiHem*, p. 98.

³⁴ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin's Diary*, pp. 77–78; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 30, p. 80; no. 35, p. 189.

³⁵ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 31, p. 99.

³⁶ For example, Kochanski Halik: *Resistance*, pp. 294–320; Laqueur Walter: *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study*. Little Brown. Boston 1976, pp. 202–238; Asprey Robert B.: *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History*. Doubleday. New York 1975, pp. 417–425.

³⁷ Laqueur Walter: *Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 202–238.

³⁸ Kochanski Halik: *Resistance*, pp. 294–320.

³⁹ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 34, pp. 163–172.

⁴⁰ Michman Dan: "Jewish Fighting During the Holocaust," pp. 12–13, 24.

Tse-Tung (mainly, his 1937 publication, *On Guerrilla Warfare*⁴¹) and Carlos Marighella's *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla* in 1968. Mao's writings refer to general guerrilla warfare, whereas Marighella focus on urban guerrilla warfare.⁴²

In order to better understand the 22 December operation, and believing that events are places and vice versa, the author conducted a field study in Kraków and in Kopaliny (near Bochnia) between 2019 and 2023.⁴³ The second part of the paper introduces the results of this field study: a review of the main locations that served HeChalutz HaLochem for its force build-up and operational planning (this study does not discuss locations used by Iskra).

Framing the 22 December operation in spatial terms, this historical study has been influenced by human geographers such as Paul Jaskot and Tim Cole, who argue that the Holocaust was a fundamentally geographical phenomenon. Their analysis of spatial questions such as location, spaces, and places offers insight and a better understanding of the Holocaust, including challenging established narratives on the Holocaust.⁴⁴

The Holocaust was an extreme example of Carsell's claim that space is often used to control people and things.⁴⁵ The present study reveals how HeChalutz HaLochem resisted the Germans' control over space and racial boundaries. HeChalutz HaLochem partly lived and acted outside the Kraków ghetto, reflecting resistance against the Germans' segregation of the Jews and the "Final Solution."⁴⁶

Cole and Alberto Giordano note that geographical scholarship on the Jewish Holocaust focuses on the perpetrators – geographies of persecution – while they highlight the victims, addressing the geographies of survival. The current work deals with the Jewish victims as an organised armed resistance.⁴⁷ Therefore, this research is a case study of the geographies of resistance which, according to Julie Cupples, discusses efforts to "oppose, challenge, or undermine dominant workings of power or the normative production of space."⁴⁸

Richard Carter-White analyses organised resistance in the Sobibor death camp via spatiality, whereas this study

explores guerrilla operations in the heart of Kraków through spatial perspectives. Both studies highlight the concept of mobility which is a prerequisite for coordinated resistance.⁴⁹

The Holocaust is not a typical subject of the geographies of resistance (for example, resistance to development and to global neoliberalism, and abuse of minority groups). Yet, the analysis of HeChalutz HaLochem's main locations and its efforts to gain mobility may benefit from Michel de Certeau's concept regarding marginalized people who have some power to remake the landscape in which they live.⁵⁰

This study believes that De Certeau's distinction between strategies and tactics well manifests HeChalutz HaLochem's efforts to resist the Germans' segregation policy and to plan urban guerrilla operations in "Aryan" Kraków.⁵¹ De Certeau argues that strategies are a "calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power can be isolated."⁵² Strategies are able to produce, tabulate, and impose spaces when those operations take place, whereas tactics are "calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus."⁵³ Tactics can only use, manipulate, and divert these spaces.⁵³

Steve Pile and Michael Keith argue that resistance could be mapped partially because it seems to have visible expressions and partly because it always takes place.⁵⁴ This study will show how HeChalutz HaLochem manipulated the Germans and acquired some autonomy – necessary for organising a guerrilla group.

Therefore, the present research discusses two questions: What does guerrilla scholarship teach us about the 22 December attacks; and what are the main locations that served the participants during the 22 December operation?

All the commanders of HeChalutz HaLochem were killed, and using testimonies by junior activists is necessary but risky due to memory problems and bias.⁵⁵ Therefore this paper utilizes archival materials and contemporary premier sources as much as possible.⁵⁶ Furthermore, the paper employs a ground survey, which is an effective method

⁴¹ Tse-tung Mao: *On Guerrilla Warfare*. Trans. Samuel B. Griffith. University of Illinois Press. Champaign 2000.

⁴² Marighella Carlos: "From the 'Minimanual.'" In: *The Guerrilla Reader: A Historical Anthology*. Ed. Walter Laqueur. Temple University Press. Philadelphia 1977; idem: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*. Foreign Languages Press. Utrecht 2016.

⁴³ Ethington Philip J.: "Placing the Past: 'Groundwork' for a Spatial Theory of History, Rethinking History." *Journal of Theory and Practice* 2027, Vol. 11, No. 4, p. 483.

⁴⁴ Jaskot Paul B., Cole Tim: "Afterword". In: *Geographies of the Holocaust*. Eds. Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano. Indiana University Press. Bloomington 2014, p. 311.

⁴⁵ Cresswell Tim: "Place Out of Place. Geography, Ideology and Transgression". PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison. Madison 1992, p. 401.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 407.

⁴⁷ Cole Tim, Giordano Alberto: "Geographies of Holocaust Rescue: Spatial Patterns and Social Geographies of Jewish Rescue in Budapest, 1944." *Journal of Historical Geography* 2021, No. 7, p. 51.

⁴⁸ Cupples Julie: "Resistance." in: *International Encyclopedia of Geography*. Vol. 1. Eds. Rob Kitchin, Nigel Thrift. Elsevier. Amsterdam 2009, p. 370.

⁴⁹ Carter-White Richard: "Towards a Spatial Historiography of the Holocaust: Resistance, Film, and the Prisoner Uprising at Sobibor Death Camp." *Political Geography* 2013, Vol. 33, p. 26.

⁵⁰ Cupples Julie: "Resistance," p. 371; De Certeau Michel: *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press. Berkeley 1984, p. 26.

⁵¹ De Certeau Michel: *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp. 51–54.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 53.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, pp. 53–54.

⁵⁴ Pile Steve, Keith Michael: "Introduction." In: eidem (eds.): *Geographies of Resistance*. Routledge. London 1997, p. 2.

⁵⁵ See Yael Peled collection of interviews with HeChalutz HaLochem veterans (188). Institute of Contemporary Jewry.

⁵⁶ Such as Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, and Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*.

to obtain a broader and more accurate picture about the 22 December attacks, which have largely been considered via the assessment of written sources. Gawron, for example, recorded that HeChalutz HaLochem's "bunker" in the Jewish hospital was in an underground basement. This study argues that the Jewish operatives used a simple barrack that was not a bunker.⁵⁷

In order to better comprehend HeChalutz HaLochem's (and Iskra's) challenges, the current study visualizes the 22 December attacks beyond the written word.⁵⁸ Charles Withers argues that cartography and mapping embrace spatial location and interpretation.⁵⁹ This study utilizes cartographic materials (aerial images, maps, drawings, and old photos), as well as a critical reading of old testimonies.⁶⁰ According to Giordano and Kelley, the cartographic sources are essential for interrogating and representing the space and places of the Holocaust.⁶¹

The 22 December Attacks in Light of Guerrilla Writings

This section addresses HeChalutz HaLochem's and Iskra's modus operandi, strengths, and weaknesses in light of the classical guerrilla writings of Mao and Marighella. The strategies of HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra and non-Jewish contemporaneous armed groups were very different. Non-Jewish armed groups were involved in guerrilla warfare to exhaust and destabilize the German and Japanese occupation regimes in order to help the Allied armies defeat the Axis powers. Especially in the final stages of the war, the activities of resistance groups, such as in China, Poland, and Greece, were intended to serve a political goal: to seize power after the war.⁶² For instance, the Polish GL allegedly combined struggle for national liberation with the struggle for social liberation. It sought to build a "new people's democratic Poland," under the patronage of the Soviet Union. The Jewish HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra lacked such political goals.⁶³

The 22 December attacks occurred in the face of the total annihilation of European Jewry. Gusta Dränger-Dawidson, a member of Akiba and courier for HeChalutz HaLochem, quotes Aharon Liebeskind, leader of Akiba and commander of HeChalutz HaLochem (late 1942): "We are on a journey of no return. The road we have chosen is the road to death... We are going out to face the angel of death, but we will face him as bold idealists."⁶⁴ A few months later, Szimshon Dränger, senior commander of HeChalutz HaLochem, stated: "We do not want to die as slaves."⁶⁵ HeChalutz HaLochem members viewed guerrilla warfare as an honourable and useful path to leave this world. They fought in order that European Jews would be remembered as those who perished with courage.⁶⁶

Confronting the strategic differences between Jewish and non-Jewish resistance groups, Dan Michman argues that Jewish armed groups should be analysed on a different spectrum as they did not aspire to topple the Nazi regime and to defeat the German army.⁶⁷ He believes that the categorization of Jewish armed groups as guerrilla forces that operated against foreign occupants ignored the facts of their extreme conditions.⁶⁸ Still, this study argues that on the tactical level HeChalutz HaLochem's and Iskra's activities can be evaluated as guerrilla operations. HeChalutz HaLochem commanders manifested guerrilla thinking both in writing and in action. They viewed Josip Tito's partisan movement as a role model for all nations under German occupation and wanted to help Tito's campaign.⁶⁹

Marighella defines urban guerrillas as people who fight an abusive regime with weapons in the cities, and use unconventional methods "to distract, to demoralize the military regime and its repressive forces." Using Marighella's terminology, the present study regards HeChalutz HaLochem as an urban guerrilla group because of its course of action that took place in Kraków.⁷⁰

Mao describes guerrilla warfare as "a weapon that a nation inferior in arms and military equipment may employ against a more powerful aggressor nation."⁷¹ Guerrilla

⁵⁷ Gawron Edyta: "Zagłada (1939–1945)," p. 366.

⁵⁸ Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 350; Sturdy Colls Caroline: *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions*. Springer. London 2015, pp. 5, 103, 188.

⁵⁹ Withers Charles J.: "Place and the Spatial Turn in Geography and in History." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 2009, Vol. 70, No. 4, p. 648.

⁶⁰ GX-08565-7, 40/SD. 1:12,000, 20 February 1945. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); GX-16533, SK-89, 1:35,000, September 1944. NARA.

⁶¹ Giordano Alberto, Kelly Knowles Anne: "Geographies of the Holocaust." In: *Geographies of the Holocaust*, p. 23; Sturdy Colls Caroline: "Uncovering a Painful Past: Archeology and the Holocaust." *Conservation and MGMT of Archeological Sites* 2015, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 48.

⁶² Tse-tung Mao: *On Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 43–44; Kochanski Halik: *Resistance*, pp. 161, 182; Laqueur Walter: *Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 383.

⁶³ Matusak Piotr: "The Resistant Movement in Poland." In: *Polish Resistance Movement in Poland and Abroad 1939–1945*. Ed. Stanisław Okęcki. PWN. Warszawa 1987, pp. 106–107; Przygoński Antoni: *Akcje zbrojne GL – Warszawa 1942* [Armed actions of the People's Guard – Warsaw 1942]. Książka i Wiedza. Warszawa 1976, pp. 78–102.

⁶⁴ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin's Diary*, p. 129.

⁶⁵ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 35, p. 188.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 29, 66.

⁶⁷ Michman Dan: "Jewish Fighting During the Holocaust," pp. 26–27.

⁶⁸ Laqueur Walter: *Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 395.

⁶⁹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin's Diary*, p. 45; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 34, pp. 163–172.

⁷⁰ Marighella Carlos: "From the 'Minimanual.'" p. 219.

⁷¹ Tse-tung Mao: *On Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 42.

warfare employs the tactics of avoiding strength and striking at the weaknesses of the enemy, of flitting about and having no fixed position, and subduing the enemy according to circumstances.⁷² HeChalutz HaLochem's and Iskra's leaders advocated for urban guerrilla, which was viewed as an efficient method to damage the Germans while possessing limited weapons and personnel (HeChalutz HaLochem acquired a few guns and ammunition by disarming German soldiers and from Polish sources affiliated with the PPR).⁷³

Mao addresses surprise attack as a precondition for a successful operation.⁷⁴ HeChalutz HaLochem's commanders acknowledged the psychological effect caused by surprise attacks in the heart of the enemy's stronghold: "In the city, an incident staged by one person or a two-[man] team could raise havoc with the authorities. It would do much more than stir up a bit of anxiety. They had to shake the self-confidence of those in charge."⁷⁵

The surprise element allowed urban guerrilla groups such as HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra to determine the time and place of the attack, fix the duration, and establish its objectives.⁷⁶ Marighella argues that "Without initiative there is no urban guerrilla warfare... The urban guerrilla must possess initiative, mobility, and flexibility, as well as versatility and a command of any situation."⁷⁷ Operating outside the Kraków ghetto, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra operatives had freedom of movement, anonymity and, most importantly, better access to German targets.⁷⁸

Mao instructs guerrilla fighters to "strike at a time when the enemy's warning system is not very alert."⁷⁹ HeChalutz HaLochem attacked Germans soldiers in coffee shops before Christmas. They used the more lethal hand grenades rather than guns. The Germans were surprised and could not return fire immediately, while the attackers had more time to flee the scene.⁸⁰

Marighella argues that "the urban guerrilla must know how to live among the people, and must be careful not to appear strange and separated from ordinary city life."⁸¹ Because of the Nazis' racist ideology, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra, being Jewish, faced greater risks than non-Jewish guerrilla groups in Poland. They had to hide their ethnicity

and adopt an "Aryan look."⁸² Dränger-Dawidson explains that "other underground fighters had to conceal their resistance activities and everything related to them, but the Jewish fighters had to mask every part of themselves—their origins, appearance, customs, mentalities, ideas, even their Jewish souls."⁸³

HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra couriers, who were mainly young women, smuggled activists, weapons, forged documents, and delivered instructions and information between Kraków and numerous Jewish communities in the Kraków District and in Warsaw. Being constantly mobile, the couriers' security challenges were the greatest.⁸⁴ The 22 December attacks happened, among other things, because members of HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra operated successfully among the non-Jews.⁸⁵

The discussion of revolutionary guerrilla writers about the strong link between the resisters and the people highlights the accomplishments of the Jewish fighters in Kraków. The secret of the success of any operation, simple or complex, is to rely on determined persons.⁸⁶ Commanders of the Jewish armed groups in Kraków had highly committed young operatives. However, that was not enough for conducting a long-term struggle. Mao regarded the general population as a source of manpower, food, money, medical help, transportation, and intelligence. Without mobilization of the population, a long-running war could not be conducted, and success could not be guaranteed.⁸⁷ Mao called for mobilization of the masses for the liberation campaign against the Japanese occupation because of the limited resources of the guerrilla movement and because Mao regarded the political goal and the guerrilla action as inseparable.⁸⁸ Popular support compensates for the great material weaknesses of guerrilla movements. But the Jewish people in the ghetto and the Polish population in "Aryan" Kraków were mostly indifferent and hostile to HeChalutz HaLochem's call for armed resistance.⁸⁹

Sustainable guerrilla groups operate among the people who support the struggle. Marighella discusses urban guerrillas who were engaged in "revolutionary action" for the people, and with the people's participation, seeking to liberate the country.⁹⁰ In the face of the ruthless German enemy,

⁷² Idem: *Basic Tactics*. Trans. Stuart R. Schram. Frederick Praeger. New York 1966, p. 54.

⁷³ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 132, 134; Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Tel Aviv 1990, p. 57.

⁷⁴ Zedong (Tse-Tung) Mao: *Collected Writings of Chairman Mao*. Vol. 1. *Politics and Tactics*. Norte Press. El Paso 2009, p. 41.

⁷⁵ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 111; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 34, pp. 171–172.

⁷⁶ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 32.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

⁷⁸ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 30, p. 77; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 109, 111.

⁷⁹ Zedong (Tse-Tung) Mao: *Collected Writings*, p. 41.

⁸⁰ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 206.

⁸¹ Marighella Carlos: "From the 'Minimanual,'" p. 221.

⁸² Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 40–41.

⁸³ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁴ Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*, pp. 49–59, 67–68, 75–87; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 38–39.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 38–39, 89, 94–95, 100, 113.

⁸⁶ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 43; Zedong (Tse-Tung) Mao: *Collected Writings*, pp. 3, 8–15.

⁸⁷ Tse-tung Mao: *On Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 43, 72, 111.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁹ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 34, pp. 163–164; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 112–115.

⁹⁰ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 92.

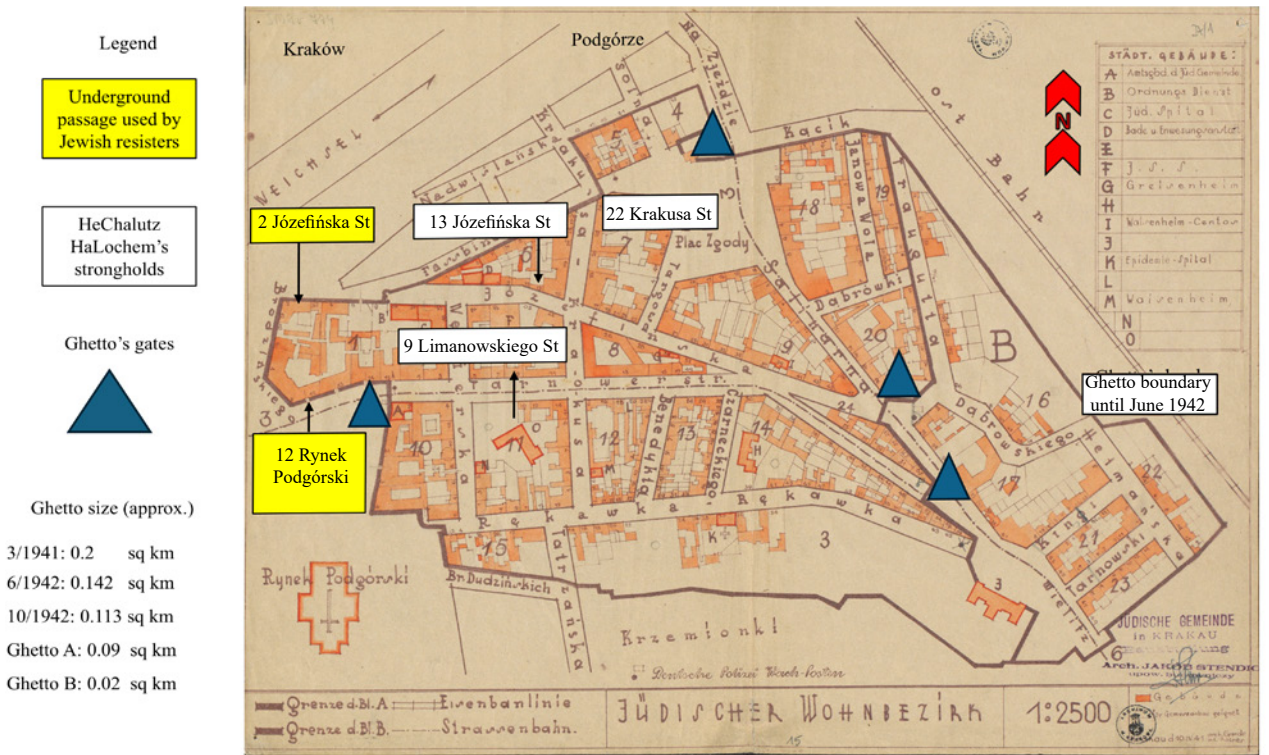


Fig. 4. HeChalutz HaLochem's key places marked on the map of the Jewish ghetto in Kraków, 10 April 1941, 1:2,500, courtesy of the National Archives in Kraków, cat. no. 29/33/SMKr 774

the murder of Jews and discouraged Poles, discourse about people who supported HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra is mostly not relevant.⁹¹

Mao argues that a base “is an area strategically located, in which the guerrilla can carry out their duties of training, self-preservation and development.”⁹² He explains that for the establishment of a base good cooperation must exist between the armed guerilla band and the people.⁹³ Because Jews were imprisoned in ghettos and concentration camps, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra did not enjoy a base area where they could build up their forces and improve their operational readiness away from enemy eyes.⁹⁴

The operatives planned the 22 December attacks both inside the ghetto (making bombs, conducting operational meetings) and in “Aryan” Kraków (command, arms storage, outposts, forging documents). As this study reveals, while

the Jewish resisters did not enjoy sanctuary in Kraków,⁹⁵ at least three Polish families that were linked to the PPR (and had pre-war private acquaintances with Jewish members) offered HeChalutz HaLochem places that were critical for planning and executing the 22 December attacks.⁹⁶ During 1942, HeChalutz HaLochem couriers who pretended to be non-Jewish Poles rented rooms and homes outside Kraków from Polish owners which HeChalutz HaLochem utilized for operational activity.⁹⁷

The Kraków ghetto was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and a three-meter-high wall. Being small, densely populated (0.2 sq km, 17,000 residents in March 1942), full of Gestapo agents, and under the control of the hostile Jewish police force, it was not attractive for urban guerrillas who sought open spaces and mobility (see Fig. 4).⁹⁸ Following the mass deportations in June and October 1942, the

⁹¹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 112–118; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 31, p. 80.

⁹² Tse-tung Mao: *On Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 107.

⁹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 43, 72.

⁹⁴ Yehuda Maimon, Oral History Interview, 1987; Shalom Globerman, Interview, pp. 2–5; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 30, p. 77.

⁹⁵ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 112–118; Tse-tung Mao: *On Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 107.

⁹⁶ Author's meeting with Piotr Machał, 4 and 8 May 2023; Kękuś-Pietrzak Krystyna: *Historia mojej rodziny z ostatniego roku*

przed wywiezieniem moich rodziców do obozu koncentracyjnego w Oświęcimiu [The story of my family from the last year before my parents' deportation to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp], 19 October 1987, courtesy of Jerzy Kękuś, pp. 1–2.

⁹⁷ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 74, 97–101; Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*, pp. 63–66.

⁹⁸ Bieberstein Aleksander: *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie* [The mass murder of Jews in Kraków]. Wydawnictwo Literackie. 2nd ed. Kraków 2001, p. 57. In his memoirs, Bieberstein, who was the director of the Jewish Hospital in the Kraków Ghetto, offered a detailed account of the ghetto (Bieberstein Aleksander: *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 44–94). See, also, *Kraków Ghetto's Map (March 1941–*

Germans reduced the ghetto size by more than a half and in early December 1942 they divided the ghetto into Ghetto A (for working people) and Ghetto B (for people who did not work, including children, the elderly and physically disabled people). These repeated territorial changes created further obstacles for Jewish resistance in the Kraków ghetto.⁹⁹ Also, guerrilla groups benefit from supportive political parties and HeChalutz HaLochem lacked such support.¹⁰⁰ They could hardly use the Jewish masses in the Kraków ghetto who were undergoing the process of annihilation, had no resources, and were unsupportive of armed resistance. In order to protect the ghetto's population from the Germans' revenge, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra used Polish identities and conducted operations outside the ghetto, away from the people they sought to support.¹⁰¹

HeChalutz HaLochem's shortage of sanctuaries and modest operational skills explains its rapid collapse following its tactical success. Marighella underlines the post-operation behaviour of the urban guerrilla. He argues that the withdrawal is equally or more important than the operation itself, to the point that it must be carefully planned.¹⁰² HeChalutz HaLochem's employment of non-local ŻOB (Dror) operatives had disastrous results. Not only did they miss their target (Esplanade), but the Germans captured them, probably because they lost their way. After the attacks, HeChalutz HaLochem operatives and commanders returned to their home-bases, becoming easy targets for the Gestapo.¹⁰³

In light of the huge military imbalance between the Germans and the Jews, HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra best-reflected Mao's emphasis on the human spirit which compensated for military and economic weaknesses. Mao believed that the human factor rather than technology dictated the outcomes of war: war is more than a contest between machines.¹⁰⁴ HeChalutz HaLochem's deputy commander, Dränger, believed that guerrilla warfare was capable

of challenging modern military technology.¹⁰⁵ The 22 December attacks were a one-time demonstration of that idea.

Guerrilla scholars have highlighted "iron military discipline" and political indoctrination as key factors for the establishment of a resilient guerrilla force.¹⁰⁶ The formation of HeChalutz HaLochem and its resiliency were facilitated by pre-war organisational links and group solidarity which compensated for HeChalutz HaLochem's lack of resources.¹⁰⁷

The 22 December attacks were deeply rooted in the ideology of the pre-war Akiba youth group. HeChalutz HaLochem operatives swore to sacrifice their lives if needed.¹⁰⁸ Commanders of HeChalutz HaLochem were the students of Akiba's charismatic spiritual leader, Yoel Dreibblatt, who expected Akiba members to follow the example of Bar Kokhba's soldiers who rose up against the mighty Roman army (second century CE). Dreibblatt argued that regardless of the lack of resources, and the lack of support from the Jewish leadership, Bar Kokhba's soldiers fought the Romans until the end.¹⁰⁹ Still, according to Eliezer Shavid HeChalutz HaLochem's call for armed resistance did not reflect idealism, but rather a moral decision and a realistic view of the Jews' possible courses of action. The young activists did not favour death over rescue, but wanted to die with dignity, as free persons.¹¹⁰

Dränger criticized Polish underground groups, probably the Home Army (AK), which allegedly preferred inaction against the Germans in 1942. At the same time, Dränger found strong links between pre-war Akiba, which focused on self-fulfilment and action, and the contemporary HeChalutz HaLochem which was committed to fighting the Germans as soon as possible.¹¹¹

To avoid strategic failures, guerrilla leaders have to find the right path between decisive action and caution. Marighella argues that "before any action, the urban guerrilla must think of the methods and the personnel at his disposal to carry out the mission."¹¹² Due to the ongoing annihilation

March 1943). Galicia Jewish Museum. Kraków 2013; Kraków, J.S.S., March 25, 1942. Yad Vashem Archive, The Weichert Collection, Jewish Social Self-Help in the General Gouvernement, cat. no. 0.21, p. 29; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 30, p. 77; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 111. The ghetto in Częstochowa, for example, 0.44 sq km in size and the one in Białystok was 1 sq km.

⁹⁹ Bieberstein Aleksander: *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 44–80; *Kraków Ghetto's Map*; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, pp. 96–97.

¹⁰⁰ Laqueur Walter: *Guerrilla Warfare*, p. 400.

¹⁰¹ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 31, p. 80; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 111.

¹⁰² Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 80.

¹⁰³ Zuckerman Yitzhak (Antek): *Those Seven Days, 1939–1946*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Tel Aviv 1990, p. 201; Yitzhak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980; Shoshana Cohen-Klinberg, Interview, p. 19.

¹⁰⁴ Tovy Tal: *Guerrilla and the War Against It: The Military Heritage of Mao*. Carmel. Jerusalem 2010, p. 35 [Hebrew]; Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 34, p. 169; Van

Creveland Martin: *Technology and War: From 2000 B.C. to the Present*. The Free Press. New York 1989, p. 225.

¹⁰⁵ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 34, p. 166.

¹⁰⁶ Zedong (Tse-Tung) Mao: *Collected Writings*, p. 70.

¹⁰⁷ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 111; Perlis Rywka: *The Pioneering Zionist Youth Movement in Nazi-Occupied Poland*. Ghetto Fighters' House. Tel Aviv 1987, pp. 212–215.

¹⁰⁸ Oath of ŻOB's New Members in Kraków and Bochnia, 1942/1943. GFHA, cat. no. 5250, p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ Dreibblatt Yoel: "Lag BaOmer: Yoel Dreibblatt Speech in Lag BaOmer in Hadera in 1936." In: *HaTnua HaChalutzit BeAgudat HaNoar Halwri Akiba*. Ed. Moshe Zinger. Beit Yehoshua. Tel Aviv 1939, p. 123.

¹¹⁰ Shavid Eliezer: "The Moral and Existential Dilemmas of the Armed Resistance in the Ghetto." In: *Shimshon Dranger's HeChalutz HaLochem*. Ed. Michal Oppenheimer. Ghetto Fighters' House. Acco 2006, p. 304.

¹¹¹ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 31, p. 99.

¹¹² Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 49.

of their people, Jewish commanders in Kraków had to make compromises.

Marighella, for example, records that the worst enemy of the urban guerrilla is the infiltration into the organisation by a spy or informer. Enthusiastic to attack the Germans, HeChalutz HaLochem was not careful enough in selecting personnel.¹¹³ Nathan Weisman and Julian Appel, both HeChalutz HaLochem members, denounced many of their comrades. These agents helped the Gestapo to dismantle HeChalutz HaLochem in a few weeks after the 22 December attacks.¹¹⁴ Marighella argues that the “security of the urban guerrilla is to be strict and cautious in recruiting,” noting that “the urban guerrilla must not evade the duty – once he knows who the spy or informer is – of physically wiping him out.”¹¹⁵

Nevertheless, HeChalutz HaLochem veterans recalled that in late 1942 the Gestapo arrested Weisman and Appel after one of HeChalutz HaLochem’s operations and surprisingly released them, allegedly in return for their cooperation. Yet HeChalutz HaLochem commanders still allowed Weisman and Appel to stay in the group.¹¹⁶ By early 1943, Appel was known as a Gestapo informant in the Kraków ghetto. However, following the crackdown on HeChalutz HaLochem’s command, the leaderless operatives asked Weisman and Appel to participate in an operational meeting in which they discussed future plans.¹¹⁷ It was only in March 1943, when many of them were in Monteluppi prison and in Auschwitz, that HeChalutz HaLochem members acknowledged Weisman’s and Appel’s betrayal.¹¹⁸

Weisman and Appel reflected HeChalutz HaLochem’s broader security problem, which stemmed from HeChalutz HaLochem’s social culture and limited resources. The organisation’s transformation from a youth movement that cherished collectivism and sociability to an underground group that was committed to secrecy was only partial. It lacked counter-espionage capability.¹¹⁹ Therefore, Dawidson-Dränger noted that her comrades “did not know how to be a military organisation.”¹²⁰

Main Sites that Served HeChalutz HaLochem for the 22 December Attacks

The previous section shows that the 22 December attacks reflected guerrilla thinking. The present section discusses the spatial meaning of that thinking, primarily the effort to gain mobility. Ethington argues that “the past can only be known by placing it, and the way of knowing places is to map them.”¹²¹ Marighella believes that “the ideal guerrilla is one who operates in his own city and thoroughly knows its streets, its neighbourhoods, its transit problems, and its other peculiarities.”¹²² Utilizing its familiarity with Kraków, and exploiting cracks in the Germans’ control over the urban space, HeChalutz HaLochem planned and executed a complex operation.

Jaskot and Cole believe that the Holocaust produced new spaces and places as a result of brutal acts.¹²³ This study found seven locations that became such places because Akiba and HeChalutz HaLochem occupied and utilized them in order to shelter their members, consolidate the ranks, build up their forces, and plan the 22 December attacks.¹²⁴ The seven places demonstrate tactics of deception. They were determined by the absence of power, just as the Germans’ control was organised by the postulation of power. These places interacted with one another via their role in the establishment of HeChalutz HaLochem, thus telling the story of the rise and quick fall of Jewish armed resistance in Kraków.¹²⁵

Five of the seven places were found in the urban landscape. Guerrilla movements usually prefer regions that are not easily accessible, in which they are difficult to locate, such as partisans who found sanctuary in the grand forests in eastern Poland and Belarus during World War Two.¹²⁶ The city is mostly less attractive for guerrilla campaigns due to its limited size, while the stronger enemy can more easily monitor and punish the city’s residents.¹²⁷

Cole argues that ghettoization involved an attempt to demarcate and then control Jewish space and thus

¹¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 79, 84.

¹¹⁴ Jarkowska-Natkaniec Alicja: *Wymuszona współpraca czy zdrada? Wokół przypadków kolaboracji Żydów w okupowanym Krakowie* [Enforced cooperation or betrayal? Discussing cases of Jews’ collaboration with the Germans in Kraków under Nazi occupation]. Kraków 2018, pp. 292–304; Zimmerer Katarzyna: *Zamordowany świat. Losy Żydów w Krakowie 1939–1945* [The murdered world. The fate of Jews in Kraków in the years 1939–1945]. Wydawnictwo Literackie. Kraków 2004, pp. 178–179; Bauminger Arieh: *The Fighters of the Cracow (Kraków) Ghetto*. Keter. Jerusalem 1986, p. 74; Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 231.

¹¹⁵ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 84.

¹¹⁶ Rivka Kuper, Interview by Bolek, 1980s. Massuah, International Institute for Holocaust Studies, cat. no. 9524, p. 20; Elsa Lustgarten and Yehuda Maimon, Interview, pp. 18–22.

¹¹⁷ Yaakov Lieberman, Interview by Yael Peled, 6 November 1983. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 17 (188); Elsa Lustgarten and Yehuda Maimon, Interview,

pp. 18–22; Sprawa ewidencyjno-obszernyjna dot. Juliana Appel, 1948–1960 [Registry and observation case-file of Julian Appel, 1948–1960]. IPN, cat. no. Kr 010/6680, pp. 7–12, 21–27, 39–40.

¹¹⁸ Elsa Lustgarten and Yehuda Maimon, Interview, pp. 18–22; Yaakov Lieberman, Interview, pp. 6–10.

¹¹⁹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin’s Diary*, p. 48.

¹²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 51, 132; Sprawa ewidencyjno-obszernyjna dot. Juliana Appel, pp. 7–12, 21–27, 39–40.

¹²¹ Ethington Philip J.: “Placing the Past,” p. 487.

¹²² Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 33.

¹²³ Jaskot Paul B., Cole Tim: “Afterword,” p. 302.

¹²⁴ Author’s visits to Kraków, September 2019, October 2020, December 2022.

¹²⁵ Boyle Mark: *Human Geography: A Concise Introduction*. John Wiley and Sons. Chichester 2015, p. 5.

¹²⁶ Bauer Yehuda: “Jewish Resistance,” pp. 9–10.

¹²⁷ Harkabi Yehoshafat (ed.): *On Guerrilla Warfare*. The Ministry of Defence. Tel Aviv 1971, p. 49.

demarcate and control Jews. Through these seven places, HeChalutz HaLochem, which mostly operated outside the Kraków ghetto, resisted the racial segregation of the Jews and constructed its own space.¹²⁸ However, De Certeau emphasizes that tactics do not refer to isolated guerrilla bases. HeChalutz HaLochem's hiding places were in areas under German control, and the Jewish operatives manoeuvred within the Germans' "field of vision".¹²⁹

The first two places (in the Kopaliny manor and in the Kraków ghetto) apply to an interval stage during which the Akiba youth movement transformed itself into an underground group while maintaining some past practices. In Kopaliny and the kibbutz apartment inside the Kraków ghetto, operatives created virtual spaces, displaying resistance that had its own distinct spatialities.¹³⁰

Pile and Keith argue that resistance is based on discontinuous spaces. Resistance moves across and under the noses of the enemy, seeking to create new meanings out of imposed meanings.¹³¹ HeChalutz HaLochem was able to utilize a few places outside the ghetto because, as Chwalba explains, the Germans controlled the public space in Kraków, but they were still planning to evict the Polish residents from the centre and to resettle them in Podgórze. The majority of housing remained in Polish hands and HeChalutz HaLochem exploited these discontinuous spaces to run guerrilla operations.¹³² These places highlight the crucial role of a few Polish facilitators who lost their lives because they supported the Jewish resistance in Kraków.¹³³

At the same time, these places reflected HeChalutz HaLochem's great weakness. Marighella argues that defensive action meant death for the urban guerrilla who could not defend him- or herself against any offensive by the stronger enemy. Once the Gestapo uncovered HeChalutz HaLochem's secret places outside the ghetto there was no way to avoid death.¹³⁴

50 Kopaliny

The Jewish agricultural training commune in Kopaliny played an initial role in the process that led to the 22 December attacks. Akiba leaders, like Jewish youth groups in other Polish towns, wanted to rescue their comrades and to avoid German labour camps.¹³⁵ Kopaliny was the mechanism of the group's consolidation and resocialization which facilitated Akiba's transformation into a guerrilla group.¹³⁶ Between December 1941 and July 1942, Akiba conducted agricultural courses at the Macuziński manor in Kopaliny (built in the late nineteenth-century and located northwest of Nowy Wiśnicz and south of Bochnia). Dozens of Akiba graduates worked in Kopaliny and in nearby estates such as in the Ledóchowski manor in Lipnica Dolna.¹³⁷

The Jewish Self-Help Organisation (Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna, ŻSS) sponsored the Kopaliny agricultural commune via its employee (from December 1940), Dolek Liebeskind, who was responsible for the retraining of Jews in the Kraków District.¹³⁸ Szymshon Dränger was the manager of the agricultural workers, assisted by his wife, Gusta, alongside a group of lecturers.¹³⁹ Kopaliny featured the youth group's guides and trainees as before, but the circumstances and the goals had changed dramatically.¹⁴⁰

Wulf, a teacher in Kopaliny and an associate of Akiba's leaders, highlights the way events played out: the Gestapo, which controlled the fate of the Jews and their living space, had allowed Akiba to reclaim some autonomy, which was a prerequisite for commencing the conspiracy.¹⁴¹ Under the cover of training activity, the educational, social, and ideological work in Kopaliny paved the way for the establishment of armed resistance.¹⁴² The young activists (twenty-one in April 1942) learned Hebrew and the history of the Jewish people. Leaders discussed the Germans' atrocities and addressed the need to resist using leaflets and orders that they printed secretly

¹²⁸ Cole Tim: "Geographies of Ghettoization; Absences, Presences, and Boundaries." In: *Hitler's Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich*. Eds. Paolo Giaccaria, Claudio Minca. Chicago University Press. Chicago 2016, p. 276.

¹²⁹ De Certeau Michel: *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 54.

¹³⁰ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin's Diary*, pp. 19, 114–118.

¹³¹ Pile Steve, Keith Michael: "Introduction," p. 16.

¹³² Chwalba Andrzej: "A Divided City". In: *Unwanted Capital. Architecture and Urban Planning in Kraków During the German Occupation of 1939–1945*. Kraków 2022, p. 50.

¹³³ Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*, pp. 84, 86.

¹³⁴ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 29.

¹³⁵ Perlis Rywka: *The Pioneering Zionist Youth Movement*, pp. 118–125; Swałtek-Niewińska Dagmara: "Powiat Bocheński" [Bochnia county]. In: *Dalej jest noc. Losy Żydów w wybranych powiatach okupowanej Polski* [Night Without End: The Fate of Jews in German-Occupied Poland]. Eds. Barbara Engelking, Jan Grabowski. Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów. Warszawa 2018, pp. 597–599.

¹³⁶ Rivka Kuper, Testimony of Hanoar Hatzioni and Akiba Members, 1959, Moreshet, cat. no. A.354, pp. 4–5.

¹³⁷ Wajs Josef: "Keta MeParshiot HaShoah (Portion of the Holocaust Episodes)." *Haboker* 1947, 22 August [Hebrew], p. 4; Wulf Josef: "The Jewish Resistance Movement in Kraków," 28 January 1974. GFHA, cat. no. 3252, p. 1; Nowak Anna: "Mieszkanie w 'leśnym' pałacu." [Living in a 'woodland' palace] *Renowacje* 1999, August, pp. 90–92; Aharon Liebeskind and Szimszon Dranger, Letter to Hechalutz Leaders, 20 January 1942. GFHA, cat. no. 26658, pp. 13–15; author's visits to Kopaliny in 2022 and to the former Ledóchowski manor in August 2021.

¹³⁸ Anstehlung, Dolek Liebeskind, 6 December 1940. Jagiellonian Library, Weichert Collection, cat. no. 198/57; Dienstreise des Mgr. Liebeskind, 4 April 1942. The National Library, Jerusalem, The Weichert Collection, cat. no. 371 11 104, p. 5.

¹³⁹ Wajs Josef: "Keta MeParshiot HaShoah," p. 4; Legitymacje pracowników według ich instrukcji [Staff members' cards according to their instructions], no. VI, 6 April 1942. Jagiellonian Library, Weichert Collection, cat. no. 198/57, p. 178.

¹⁴⁰ Gutman Israel: "Youth and Resistance Movements in Historical Perspective" (Israel Gutman Talks to Daniel Blatman). *Yad Vashem Studies* 1993, No. 23, p. 7.

¹⁴¹ Wulf Josef: "The Jewish Resistance."

¹⁴² Perlis Rywka: *The Pioneering Zionist Youth Movement*, p. 125.

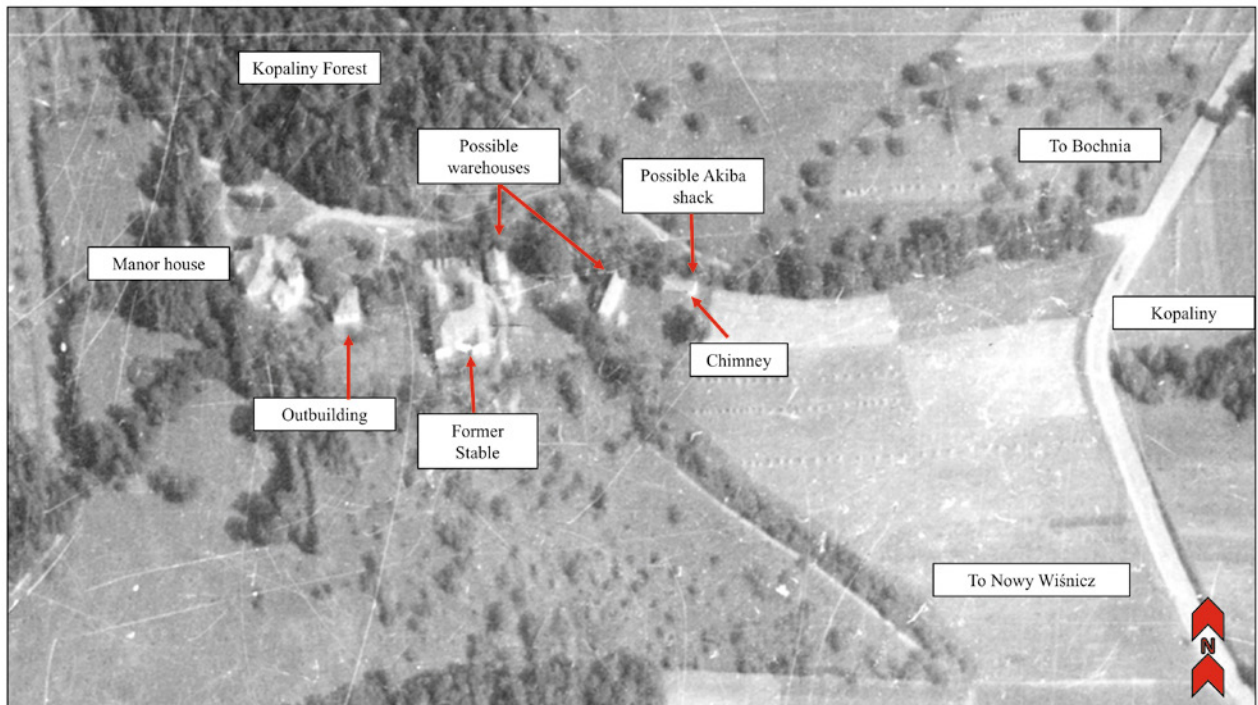


Fig. 5. The alleged Akiba shack at 50 Kopaliny, M34077-1955-20000-005-4593, 24 August 1955. 1:9,500, courtesy of Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne [Military Historical Bureau]



Fig. 6. Location of the alleged Akiba shack in Kopaliny on Google map N49.934701, E20.442520

¹⁴³ Wulf Josef: "The Jewish Resistance," pp. 1–2; W pracy rolnej [At agricultural work], 22 April 1942. Żydowski Instytut Historyczny [ŻIH, Jewish Historical Institute], Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna [Jewish Social Self-Help Organisation], cat. no. 211/1005, p. 33.

¹⁴⁴ Rivka Kuper, Oral History Interview, October 1987. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C., cat. no. A.0051.1.

in Kopaliny and disseminated to other towns.¹⁴³ Rivka Kuper recorded that the group's first revolver arrived in Kopaliny for training (probably dry training).¹⁴⁴

The Macudziński estate was located at the northeast end of the village of Kopaliny, on the road from Nowy Wiśnicz to Bochnia. Surrounded by the Kopaliny forest from three sides, the manor was a good place for Akiba's initial conspiracy. Figures 5 and 6 reveal that, unlike today, the manor's main building bordered orchards and wheat fields where

the young activists worked. Up to seven outbuildings, including a stable and some warehouses, were situated to the south and east of the manor house.¹⁴⁵

Figure 5 reveals that the Akiba shack was probably at the northeastern end of the Macudziński manor because of its location away from the main manor house (about 165 m east of the main building and 155 m west of the main road) and the similarity between this shack and an old photo of the alleged Akiba shack. As Figures 5 and 6 demonstrate, the Akiba shack, which does not exist today, was around 14.5 m long and up to 5 m wide.¹⁴⁶ This shack was relatively isolated and, at the same time, was near the main road connecting Bochnia and Nowy Wiśnicz, allowing Liebeskind, Dränger, and other activists who enjoyed JSS cover, easy access to nearby towns.¹⁴⁷ Following the first deportation of Jews from the ghetto in Kraków to the Bełżec death camp, in late July 1942 Akiba was forced to close the Jewish agricultural commune and escalated its operational planning.¹⁴⁸ As Liebeskind said, "The Kopaliny farm was a dream we had to wake up from."¹⁴⁹

The 'Kibbutz' at 13 Józefińska St and the Liebeskind home at 9 Limanowskiego St

According to Cole, the construction of ghettos was both an act of creating spaces of Jewish absence and an act of creating spaces of Jewish presence within towns and cities that varied from place to place.¹⁵⁰ In contrast to the isolated, peaceful Kopaliny, the house at 13 Józefińska St, which was inside the ghetto, introduced greater security challenges for the evolving underground group, while the youth group's old habits became risky.¹⁵¹ Still, the place at 13 Józefińska St well-exemplified that under Germans' imposed space, marginalized people managed to subvert the Germans' authority by escaping and starting planning for the 22 December attacks.¹⁵²

The parents of HeChalutz HaLochem operatives Szymon and Romek Lustgarten lived in an apartment on the ground floor of the house at 13 Józefińska St, built in 1885, in the ghetto until June 1942 when they were deported to a death camp.¹⁵³ The Akiba group utilized it between June and November 1942.¹⁵⁴

The place at 13 Józefińska St demonstrates the transformation of a youth group into an underground group. The small apartment facilitated social cohesion and consolidation, featuring both social activity (for example, welcoming the Sabbath) and the growing conspiracy,¹⁵⁵ and served as a shelter for a few dozen homeless Akiba members who had lost their families and those who arrived from other ghettos. Occupants shared clothes, food, furniture, and money. To bring in some income, they sold used clothes. Elsa Lapa and Szymon Lustgarten operated the kibbutz.¹⁵⁶

HeChalutz HaLochem used the venue for operational activity, which included gun shooting lessons, and activists launched attacks from 13 Józefińska St against German soldiers and Jews who collaborated with the Germans.¹⁵⁷ Rivka Kuper called it the "centre of the underground".¹⁵⁸ Leaders of the group visited the house at 13 Józefińska St and Szimzion Dränger used the apartment to forge documents.¹⁵⁹ However, the kibbutz was an unguarded place, noisy and well-known among the ghetto residents and the hostile German-controlled Jewish police.¹⁶⁰

In spite of the strategy of racial segregation through ghettoization, HeChalutz HaLochem exploited the isolated ghetto to operate a dynamic collective that featured some autonomy and even intimacy. Gusta's description of the house at 13 Józefińska St reflects a sense of place:

The soul of the movement was concentrated in the apartment, and everyone in the movement who came to Kraków would try to get into the ghetto at any price just to get a look at the place... It is difficult to understand how

¹⁴⁵ TUGX866, SK-168, 1:45,000, date unknown. NARA; M34077-1955-20000-005-4593, 24 August 1955. 1:20,000. Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne [Military Historical Bureau]; Manor house in Kopaliny, June 1993, Urząd Ochrony Zabytków w Krakowie, Delegatura w Tarnowie, Karta ewidencyjna zabytków architektury i Budownictwa [Monuments Preservation Office in Kraków, Tarnów Branch, Record card of architectural and construction monuments], cat. no. 0283, pp. 1–15; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 19–27. Author's visits to Kopaliny, October 2019, January 2020; Wajs Josef: "Keta MeParshiot HaShoah," p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ TUGX866, SK-168; M34077-1955-20000-005-4593; dom, w którym w latach okupacji prowadził działalność ŻOB [the house where ŻOB's activity took place during Nazi German occupation] – Nowy Wiśnicz, date unknown. Museum in Bochnia, cat. no. MB-Fot/1431/2.

¹⁴⁷ TUGX866, SK-168; M34077-1953; Bescheinigung, 23 April 1942. Jagiellonian Library, Weichert Collection, cat. no. 198/57.

¹⁴⁸ Note, 27 July 1942. ŻIH, Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna [Jewish Social Self-Help Organisation], cat. no. 301/1104, p. 41.

¹⁴⁹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 49.

¹⁵⁰ Cole Tim: "Geographies of Ghettoization," p. 271.

¹⁵¹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 115–117, 127.

¹⁵² Cupples Julie: "Resistance," p. 371.

¹⁵³ Kraków, 13 Józefińska St, 6 September 1890, Konserwatorska karta inwentaryzacyjna zabudowy zabytkowej XIX–XX w. [Conservation inventory card of historical buildings from the 19th and the 20th cent.]. ANK, cat. no. 29/1405/1199, pp. 1–2.

¹⁵⁴ Szymon Lustgarten, Interview, 3.

¹⁵⁵ Rivka Kuper, Interview by Yael Peled, 20 July 1982. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary History, Oral History Division, cat. no. 4 (188), p. 21; Yehuda Maimon, Interview, pp. 8–9.

¹⁵⁶ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 115–120; Elsa Lustgarten, Oral Interview, p. 5.

¹⁵⁷ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 119; Yehuda Maimon, Interview, p. 10.

¹⁵⁸ Rivka Kuper, Interview, 1982, pp. 15–17.

¹⁵⁹ Yehuda Maimon, Interview, p. 11.

¹⁶⁰ Rivka Kuper, Interview, 1980s, pp. 15–17; Shalom Globberman, Interview, p. 5.

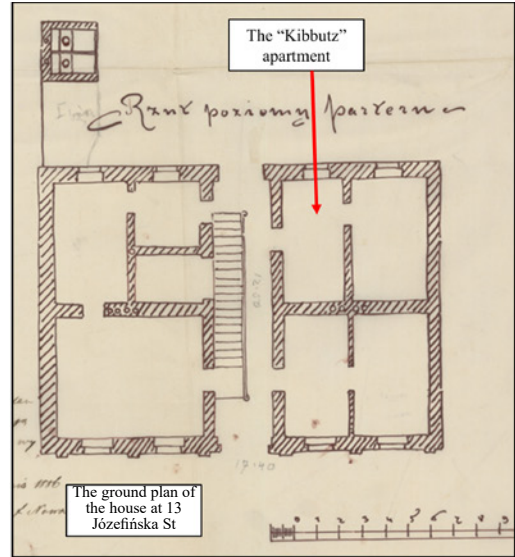


Fig. 7. Location of the former “Kibbutz” in the Kraków ghetto, photo by Eran Zohar, September 2019

Fig. 8. A 1885 drawing of apartment 1 at 13 Józefińska St which served the Akiba group and HeChalutz HaLochem in 1942. The National Archives in Kraków, cat. no. 29/1405/1199, 339

people who were so oppressed could still experience such joy.¹⁶¹

Recent visits to Józefińska St reveal post-war architectural changes. The entrance to the former kibbutz apartment is blocked and the flat has become part of the main apartment on the first floor. The kibbutz kitchen is now a living room. The total size of the original apartment, thirty two square meters, remains as before and visitors can view the overcrowded kibbutz (see figs. 7 and 8).¹⁶²

At 9/18 Limanowskiego St, Aharon and Rywka Liebeskind shared a two-room apartment with Rywka’s parents and another family. Aharon and Rywka had a very small space with a bed. Illustrating Pile and Keith’s argument that resistance might have its own distinct spatiality, that bed was more than a piece of furniture. It was a meeting place for HeChalutz HaLochem’s leadership, and it was on this bed that operatives held HeChalutz HaLochem’s first gun which had been smuggled from Warsaw.¹⁶³

As Figures 9 and 10 reveal, flat 18, which was occupied by Aharon and Rywka Liebeskind, is situated behind 9 Limanowskiego St and its location (currently on the second floor of the house) offered Liebeskind a good view of the



Fig. 9. Aharon and Rywka Liebeskind’s apartment in the Kraków ghetto, photo by Eran Zohar, 24 June 2023

¹⁶¹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin’s Diary*, pp. 118–119.

¹⁶² Author’s visit to the house at 13 Józefińska St, meetings with the owner, the late Adam Gurbisz, in September 2019; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin’s Diary*, p. 60.

¹⁶³ Pile Steve, Keith Michael: “Introduction,” p. 2; Kuper Rivka; *Resisi Zichronot*. Massua. Degania B 2004, pp. 23, 35, 41.

¹⁶⁴ Author’s visit to 9 Limanowskiego St in January 2023.

¹⁶⁵ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justin’s Diary*, pp. 134–144; Rivka Kuper, Interview, 1982.

¹⁶⁶ Elsa Lustgarten, Oral Interview, p. 9; Yehuda Maimon, Interview, p. 12.

kibbutz at 13 Józefińska St (there is a 83 m distance between the two sites).¹⁶⁴

In late November 1942, members of HeChalutz HaLochem fled the ghetto. Following attacks against German soldiers, the Jewish police searched for HeChalutz HaLochem operatives, primarily for Aharon Liebeskind, who managed to escape arrest.¹⁶⁵ While a few activists remained in the ghetto, most of them prepared for the 22 December attacks from other locations in “Aryan” Kraków.¹⁶⁶



Fig. 10. View of the kibbutz flat from Aharon and Rywka Liebeskind's apartment in the Kraków ghetto, photo by Eran Zohar, 24 June 2023

Paper factory at 10–12 Oboźna St and operational apartment at 26 Wielopole St

Carter-White argues that the concept of mobility reflects opposition to the drives of power or a territorial tactic in an actual instance of resistance.¹⁶⁷ The paper factory at 10–12 Oboźna St and the operational apartment at 26 Wielopole St were outside the Kraków ghetto and facilitated HeChalutz HaLochem's mobility. Marighella mentions that a guerrilla fighter is obliged to falsify documents in order to live within a society "he seeks to destroy".¹⁶⁸ In order to rescue activists, acquire resources, and build offensive capabilities, HeChalutz HaLochem required a constant supply of different types of documents, and could not plan an attack on German targets in

"Aryan" Kraków without the mobility offered by the forged documents.¹⁶⁹

Established in 1889 and purchased completely in 1929 by Bernard Steigbügel, "Jutrzenka" was a factory that produced paper and paper products for parties, e.g., napkins and trays (Fabryka Artykułów Karnawałowych oraz Serwetek i Tacek).¹⁷⁰ The single-floor paper factory at 10 Oboźna St was l-shaped and comprised warehouses (see figs. 11, 12). There were additional warehouses in the adjacent building (12 Oboźna St). A ground survey confirms that the two buildings survive today. The factory offices and the wholesale store were located at 32 Main Market Square.¹⁷¹ In 1938, this business had up to twenty-five employees, including Max Steigbügel, the operational manager, Marcus and Chana Tennenbaum

¹⁶⁷ Carter-White Richard: "Towards a Spatial Historiography of the Holocaust", p. 26.

¹⁶⁸ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ Elsa Lustgarten, Oral Interview, 1987; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 52, 64.

¹⁷⁰ *Rocznik Polskiego Przemysłu i Handlu = Directory of Manufacturers & Merchants of Poland*. 6th ed. Polska Spółka Wydawnictw Informacyjnych. Warszawa 1938, p. 13020; Jutrzenka, Kraków,

10 Oboźna St, 20 June 1935. ANK, Izba Przemysłowo-Handlowa [Chamber of Commerce and Industry], cat. no. IPHKr 29/318/154, pp. 1237–1242; Jutrzenka, 1929. ANK, Izba Przemysłowo-Handlowa w Krakowie [Kraków Chamber of Commerce and Industry], cat. no. 29/731/503, pp. 3–9.

¹⁷¹ GX-08565-6, 40/SD, 1:12,000, 20 February 1945. NARA; author's visit to 10 Oboźna St, June 2022; Jutrzenka, Kraków, 10 Oboźna St, p. 37.

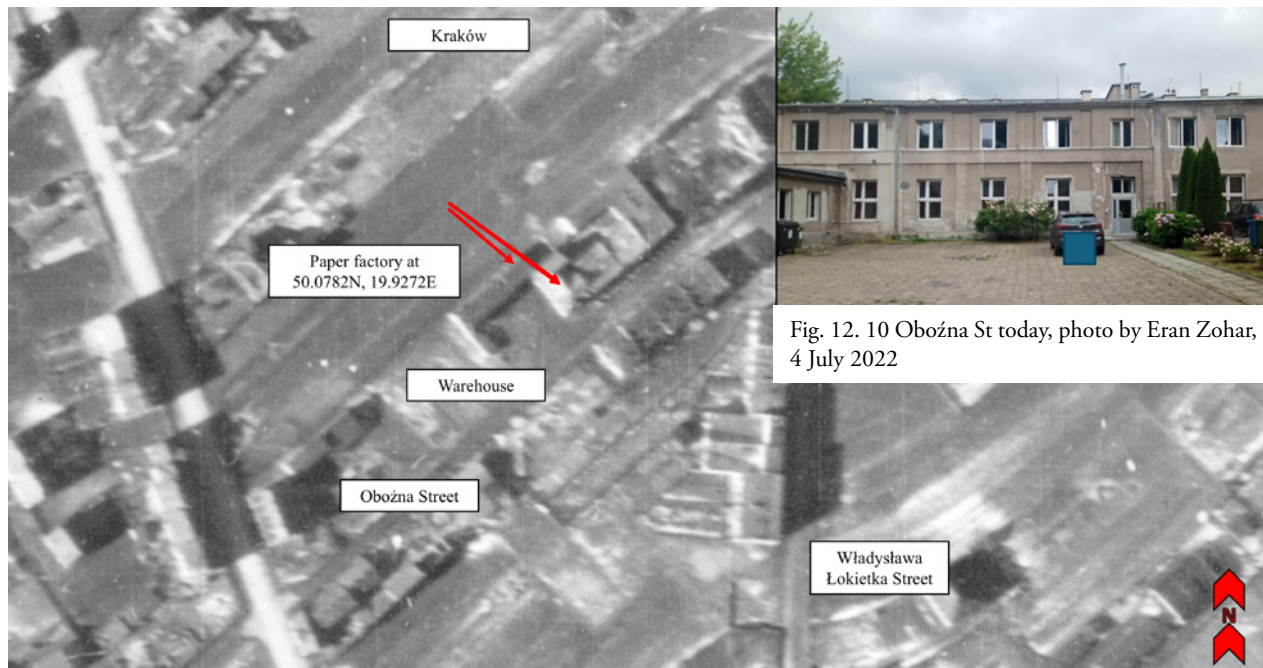


Fig. 12. 10 Oboźna St today, photo by Eran Zohar, 4 July 2022

Fig. 11. Jutrzenka Paper Factory at 10 and 12 Oboźna St which was used by HeChalutz HaLochem, 20 February 1945. NARA, GX-08565-6, 1:12,000, public domain

and their son Juda (Bernard Steigbügel was Juda's grandfather).¹⁷²

Having expropriated Jutrzenka in May 1941, the Germans replaced the first trustee of the factory, who was apparently a failure, with Hans Horn. Acknowledging their skills, the Germans allowed four Jewish staff members to continue working in the factory, including Juda Tennenbaum, who was member of Akiba and HeChalutz HaLochem (see Fig. 13).¹⁷³ The factory manufactured official documents (*Papierwaren Grosshandl*), such



Fig. 13. Juda Tennenbaum

¹⁷² Chana Marcus and Juda Tennenbaum, 22 February 1941. ANK, *Kwestionariusze na wydawanie dowodów osobistych (Kennkarten) dla Żydów załatwione pozytywnie* [Identity card application forms for Jews – approved], cat. no. 29/33/560, pp. 863–864, 913–914, 1005–1015; Jutrzenka, Kraków, 10 Oboźna St, pp. 1237–1242; *Fragebogen der Gruppe Handel, Grupa Główna "Gospodarka Przemysłowa i Ruch" w Izbie Okręgowej dla Gospodarki Ogólnej w Krakowie* [Main Group 'Industrial Economy and Traffic' at the District Chamber for General Economy in Kraków], 12 June 1943. ANK, cat. no. 29/319/SPKr 569, p. 83.

¹⁷³ Jutrzenka, Kraków, pp. 1227–1241; *Akta Fabryki Jutrzenka, Fabryka Wyrobów Papierowych i Artykułów Karnawałowych B. Steigbügel* [Jutrzenka Factory Files, B. Steigbügel's Manufactory of Paper and Party Wares], 1941. ANK, cat. no. 29/1989/19422, pp. 51, 71.

¹⁷⁴ Steigbügel Max: "Events in Cracow in the Days of Holocaust." *Massuah. A Yearbook on the Holocaust and Heroism* 1983, No. 11, pp. 147–151.

¹⁷⁵ Pile Steve, Keith Michael: "Introduction," p. 14.

¹⁷⁶ Steigbügel Max: "Events in Cracow," p. 150; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, pp. 52–55; Irena Yohans, Interview by Rivka Perlis, 24 August 1975. GFHA, cat. no. 23347, pp. 7, 10.

as *Kennkarten* (identity cards), work certification, food cards, and permission to enter the ghetto for the German occupation authorities.¹⁷⁴

Pile and Keith note that spaces of resistance are partially connected to, and partially dislocated from, spaces of domination.¹⁷⁵ Juda Tennenbaum demonstrated such a complicated situation. He worked for the German authorities that controlled Kraków space and monitored the movement of the people. Tennenbaum exploited his good relations with German security personnel and smuggled German engravings, stamps, and formal papers to Szimzion Dränger who perfectly forged German documents (Dränger wrote the names of the document holders, affixed their photos and fingerprints, and a graphic artist would paint the stamps).¹⁷⁶

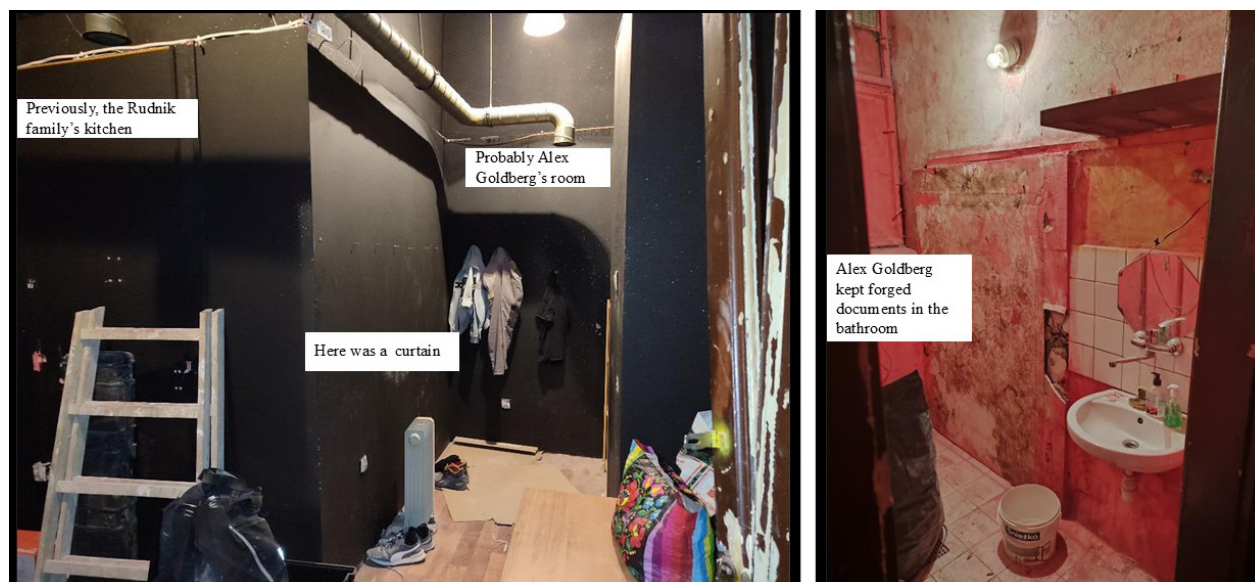


Fig. 14. HeChalutz HaLochem operational point at the Rudnik family's apartment at 26 Wielopole St, Kraków, photo by Eran Zohar, 8 June 2024

The current study reveals that the paper factory had several locations in Kraków and Juda Tennenbaum probably worked at 10 Oboźna St, the factory site which offered a greater supply of documents, whereas the offices in central Kraków were smaller and more supervised.¹⁷⁷ Max Steigbügel apparently turned a blind eye to the activities of his nephew, Juda. Max recalled that Abik Sznep, a long-time worker, supplied Juda with German stamps.¹⁷⁸ Following the 22 December attacks, the Germans arrested Sznep and murdered him in Auschwitz in 1944.¹⁷⁹

The forged documents were connected to HeChalutz HaLochem's operational apartment at 26 Wielopole St in the centre of Kraków. Wojciech Rudnik, the caretaker of this building, and his wife Zofia, hosted Alexander Goldberg, HeChalutz HaLochem's operative, who lived in a small room.¹⁸⁰ Goldberg supplied forged documents such as certificates to enter the ghetto, and work certificates that saved operatives from being deported to a death camp. Letters for HeChalutz HaLochem activists were sent to the address at 26 Wielopole St which was a temporary sanctuary for members, facilitating their mobility, and HeChalutz HaLochem's leadership conducted meetings and interviewed candidates in Goldberg's small room.¹⁸¹

Yoel Wolf, a HaShomer HaDati activist, knew Wojciech Rudnik because his family used to live in a nearby building. He and his brother Moshe traded clothes for food with Sophie Rudnik. They convinced the Rudnik



Fig. 15. Entrance to HeChalutz HaLochem's operational point at the Rudnik family's apartment, photo by Eran Zohar, 8 June 2024

family to host Goldberg. Wolf recalled seeing blank German documents in Goldberg's room (The Rudnik family also hid a Jewish girl).¹⁸² The location of Goldberg's room (2.89 sq m) near the family kitchen and the possibility that Goldberg hid forged documents in the family bathroom symbolized the mutual trust that existed between the Jewish resistance and the Rudnik family, who took enormous risks (see figs. 14, 15).¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ Fragebogen der Gruppe Handel, pp. 73, 75.

¹⁷⁸ Steigbügel Max: "Events in Cracow," p. 150.

¹⁷⁹ Piper Franciszek, Strzelecka Irena (eds.) *Księga pamięci. Transporty Polaków do KL Auschwitz z Krakowa i innych miejscowości Polski południowej. 1940–1944* [Book of memory. Transports of Poles from Kraków and other towns in southern Poland sent to Auschwitz Concentration Camp]. Vol. 3. Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau [The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau]. Warszawa 2002, p. 1864.

¹⁸⁰ Wolf Yoel: *And Resin for Hotra: A Prophecy Fulfilled*. Private Press. Jerusalem 2005, p. 40; Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 105.

¹⁸¹ Dränger-Dawidson Gusta: *Justina's Diary*, p. 105; Yehuda Maimon, Interview, pp. 12–13; Rivka Kuper, Interview, 1980s, p. 24.

¹⁸² Wolf Yoel: *And Resin for Hotra*, pp. 40, 43.

¹⁸³ *Ibidem*; author's visit to 26 Wielopole St, 8 June 2024.

The Germans captured Goldberg after he hung a Polish flag on a church and murdered him in Montelupi prison.¹⁸⁴ A few hours after the 22 December attacks, the Gestapo raided the house at 26 Wielopole St, arrested Wojciech Rudnik and his son Tadeusz, and later arrested Sophie Rudnik.¹⁸⁵ All three were murdered in Auschwitz and Mauthausen. In 2011, Yad Vashem recognized Zofia and Wojciech Rudnik and their son Tadeusz as Righteous Among the Nations.¹⁸⁶

HeChalutz HaLochem command at 5 Żuławskiego St

The growing insecurity inside the Kraków ghetto and the demand for a shelter with good access to the centre of Kraków encouraged HeChalutz HaLochem to look for operational apartments in “Aryan” Kraków. Months before the 22 December attacks, HeChalutz HaLochem occupied a basement at 5 Żuławskiego St in Kraków which served as a command centre (see Fig. 16).¹⁸⁷ Serving the conspiracy, this basement had a separate exit to the street.¹⁸⁸ According to a Gestapo report, employees of the train company lived in this three-story house.¹⁸⁹

The house at 5 Żuławskiego St is evidence that a guerrilla group requires logistical infrastructure and facilitators to conduct complicated operations, especially in light of its limited mobility. This house is a case study of Polish caretakers Antoni and Maria Pietrzak, who offered great support to the Jewish resisters.¹⁹⁰ Using a fake identity, Abraham Leibowicz, co-commander of HeChalutz HaLochem and officer-in-charge of the 22 December attack, lived in one of the basements at 5 Żuławskiego St, and so did Minka Brener who pretended to be the nephew of the caretaker and the cleaner. HeChalutz HaLochem stored weapons, typed and printed posters, and listened to the radio in one

of the ten basements in this house. For security reasons, junior activists did not visit the stronghold at 5 Żuławskiego St.¹⁹¹ Zuckerman visited the basement hours before the 22 December attacks. He recalled that although the basement had coal storage, the room looked like an apartment with furniture and an oven.¹⁹²

Using an old plan of the house at 5 Żuławskiego St, the present study assumes that HeChalutz HaLochem’s command centre might have been located at the stoker’s (Jan Pietrzak’s) apartment, which had a kitchen, toilet, and an exit to the courtyard from the adjacent room. Another option is that the command centre was in the coal storehouse that was connected to the boiler room (see figs. 17, 18). These basements boasted an exit to the street and quick access to the gatekeeper’s apartment which was on the ground floor. Located at the rear of the building, the stoker’s apartment offered more secrecy.¹⁹³

Krystyna Kękuś-Pietrzak, the eldest daughter of the caretaker, recorded that “Czesiu” (probably Juda Tennenbaum) lived with her family and pretended to be Maria’s cousin. Krystyna discussed the senior operative known as Józef, who stayed with them long term; she was probably referring to Leibowicz.¹⁹⁴ It is likely that, based on previous acquaintance, Tennenbaum made the contact between HeChalutz HaLochem and Antoni Pietrzak, who was the caretaker from 1940.¹⁹⁵ Yehuda Ohrenstein, one of Akiba’s founders and a relative of Tennenbaum, recorded that HeChalutz HaLochem used an apartment that his family owned in that house. Reviewing the registration book of the building at 5 Żuławskiego St, the current research cannot confirm this claim.¹⁹⁶ Krystyna recorded that her father, who was an electrician, helped HeChalutz HaLochem members to operate the radio in the basement. Krystyna delivered forged documents and letters to secret flats that served the Jewish underground in Kraków.¹⁹⁷

¹⁸⁴ Akty zgonów więźniów [Death certificates of prisoners], Tadeusz Rudnik, 1943. The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim, 356; Akty zgonów więźniów [Death certificates of prisoners], Zofia Rudnik. The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim, 335; Kartoteki więźniów zmarłych w KL Mauthausen [The files of prisoners who died at the Mauthausen Concentration Camp], Wojciech Rudnik. The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim, 283; Wolf Yoel: *And Resin for Hotra*, p. 44.

¹⁸⁵ Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, p. 100; Wolf Yoel: *And Resin for Hotra*, p. 42; author’s visit to Teresa Rudnik’s flat in Oświęcim, 28 June 2022.

¹⁸⁶ Akty zgonów więźniów [Death certificates of prisoners], Tadeusz Rudnik, 356; Akty zgonów więźniów [Death certificates of prisoners], Zofia Rudnik, 335; Kartoteki więźniów zmarłych w KL Mauthausen [The files of prisoners who died at the Mauthausen Concentration Camp], Wojciech Rudnik, 20 September 1944. The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim, 283; Righteous Among the Nations Database, Zofia, Wojciech, and Tadeusz Rudnik, 9 March 2010: https://righteous.yadvashem.org/?search=RUDNIK&searchType=righteous_only&language=en&itemId=7771375&ind=0.

¹⁸⁷ Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980.

¹⁸⁸ Kękuś-Pietrzak Krystyna: *Historia mojej rodziny*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ Leibowicz (Laban), Liebeskind, Tennenbaum, 25 December 1942; Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980.

¹⁹⁰ Kękuś-Pietrzak Krystyna: *Historia mojej rodziny*, p. 1.

¹⁹¹ Leibowicz (Laban), Liebeskind, Tennenbaum, 25 December, 1942, pp. 2–4; Yehuda Maimon, Interview, 16–17; Elsa Lustgarten, Oral Interview, 1987.

¹⁹² Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980; author’s visits to the house at 5 Żuławskiego St, October 2019, March 2020.

¹⁹³ Ul. Żuławskiego 5, 1937. ANK, Archiwum Planów Budownictwa Miejskiego w Krakowie [Archive of Municipal Construction Plans in Kraków], cat. no. 29/1410, f. 1048, pl. 3.

¹⁹⁴ Kękuś-Pietrzak Krystyna: *Historia mojej rodziny*, p. 1.

¹⁹⁵ Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980; Żuławskiego 5, Domowa książka meldunkowa Kraków, 1937–1950 [Register of residents of the house at 5 Żuławskiego St in Kraków, 1937–1950], spis 4374, teczka 1286. ANK, p. 1.

¹⁹⁶ Albeh Chawa (ed.): *Dr. Jehuda Ohrenstein (Idek): His Zionist Vision and Activity*. Private Press. Kiryat Arba 2001, p. 285 [Hebrew]; Żuławskiego 5, spis 4374, p. 1.

¹⁹⁷ Kękuś-Pietrzak Krystyna: *Historia mojej rodziny*, p. 2.

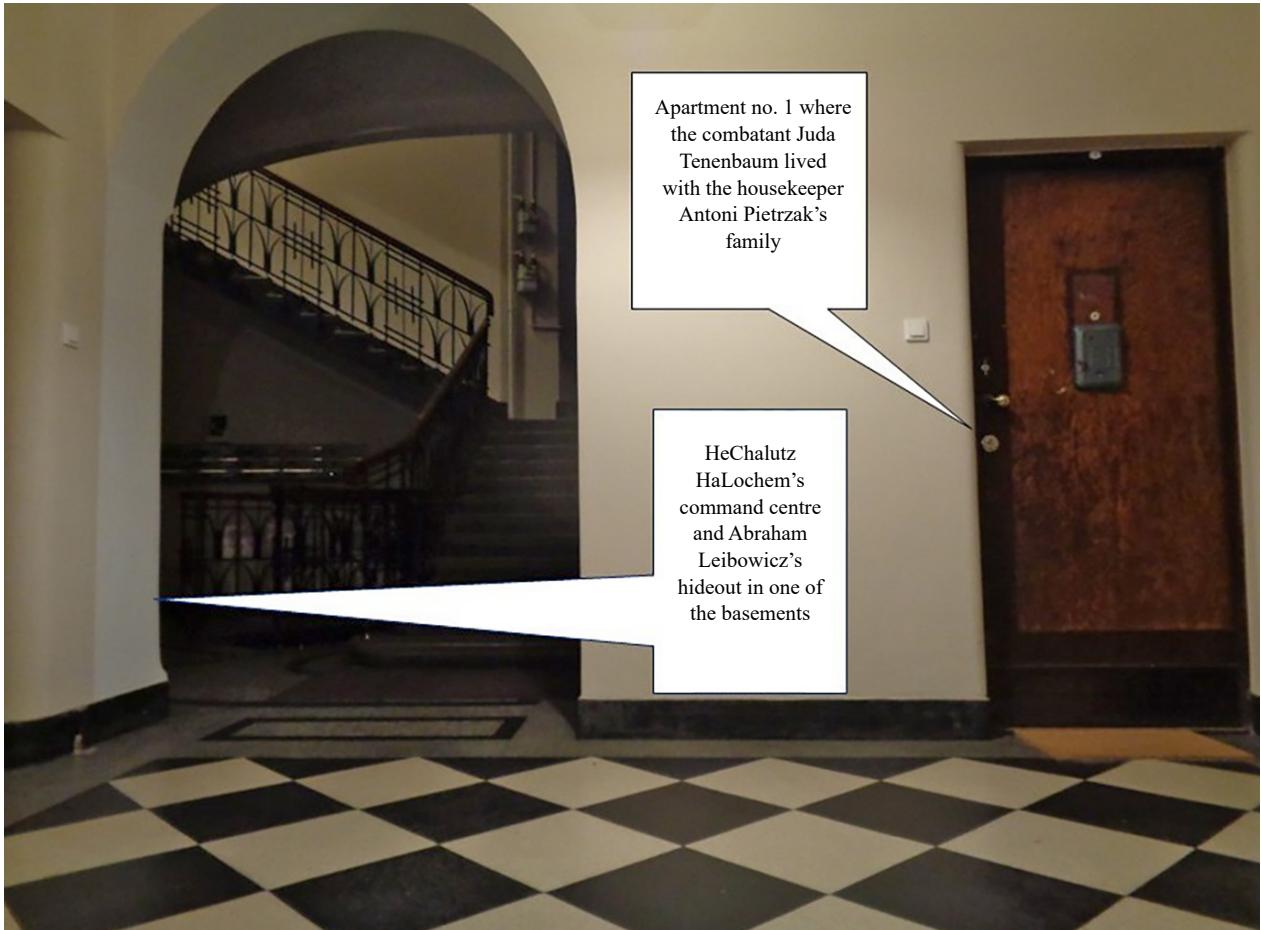


Fig. 16. HeChalutz HaLochem's command centre at 5 Żuławskiego St, Kraków, photo by Eran Zohar, 18 January 2020



Fig. 17. Possible location of HeChalutz HaLochem's command centre in a basement at 5 Żuławskiego St in 1942, photos by Eran Zohar, September 2024

According to Zuckerman, hours before the 22 December operation he helped Leibowicz to carry guns and hand grenades from 5 Żuławskiego St to HeChalutz HaLochem's hiding place at 8 Skawińska St. Dur-

ing the attack, Zuckerman, Leibowicz, and Liebeskind stayed at 5 Żuławskiego St. The Germans captured Leibowicz in the afternoon of 23 December 1942, when Leibowicz and Zuckerman entered the house at

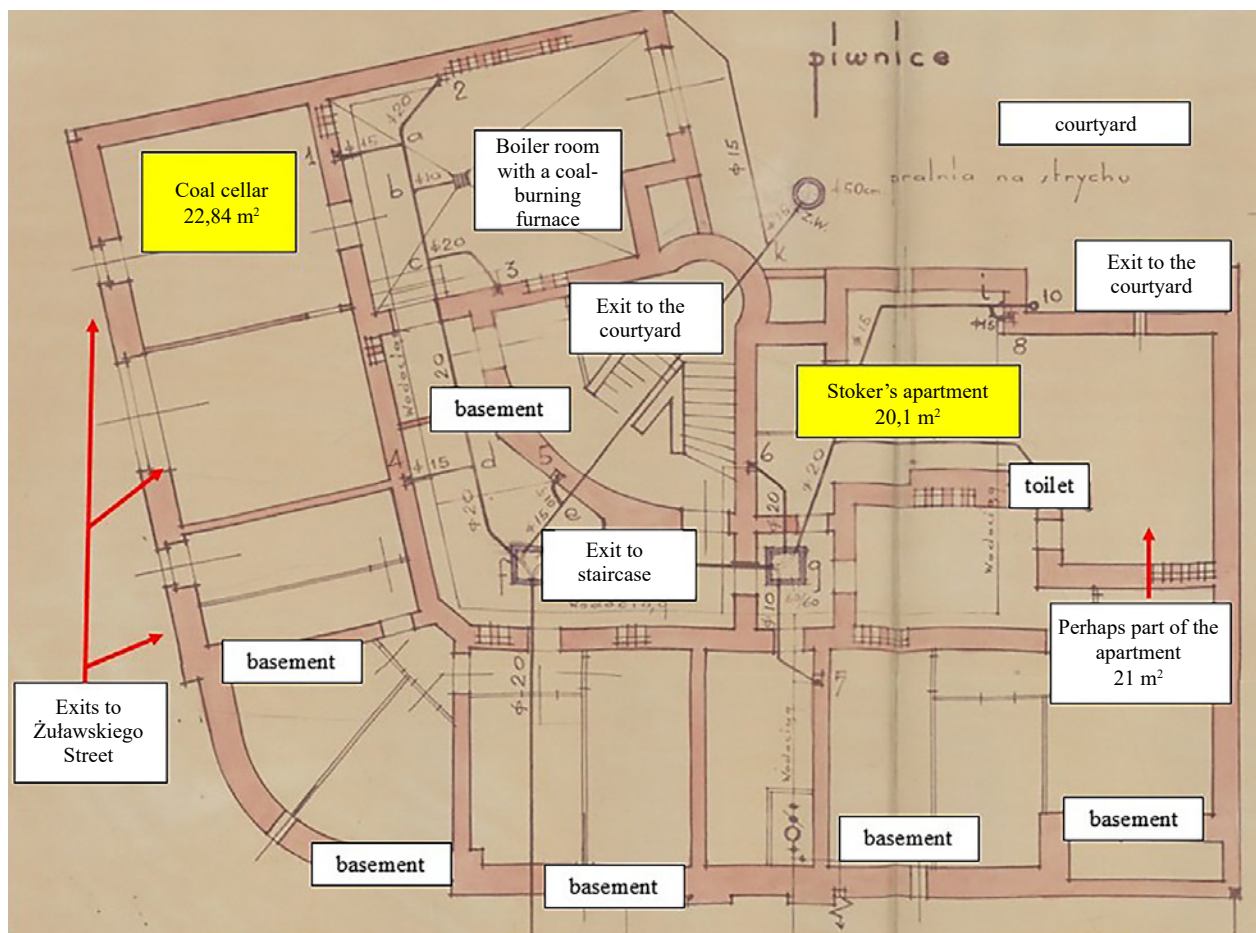


Fig. 18. Possible locations of HeChalutz HaLochem's former command centre at 5 Żuławskiego St marked on a 1937 floor plan. The National Archives in Kraków, cat. no. 29/1410, f. 1048, pl. 3

8 Skawińska St.¹⁹⁸ The Germans found Leibowicz's kennkarte with the address 5 Żuławskiego St. On 24 December 1942, the Germans raided that building, killing Liebeskind and Tennenbaum after a fire and wounding Antoni Pietrzak (see figs. 19, 20).¹⁹⁹ The Gestapo arrested Minka Berner and she was later murdered in Auschwitz.²⁰⁰

The Germans arrested Antoni Pietrzak and his wife Maria, sent them to the Montelupi prison, and executed them in Auschwitz in March 1943, leaving behind five young children.²⁰¹

The Jewish Hospital at 8 Skawińska St

The Jewish hospital (*Szpital Izraelitów*), which was established in 1870, best manifests the short rise and fall



Fig. 19. Rywka and Dolek Liebeskind in 1938, courtesy of the Ghetto Fighters' House Archive, cat. no. 5274

¹⁹⁸ Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980.

¹⁹⁹ Leibowicz (Laban), Liebeskind, Tennenbaum, 25 December 1942, pp. 2–4; Yehuda Friedman, Yosef Halperstein, and Marcel Eintracht, Oral History Interview, 9 October 1987. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C., cat. no. A.0051.13; Kękuś-Pietrzak Krystyna: Historia mojej rodziny, p. 2.

²⁰⁰ Dränger Shimshon [Szymshon]: *HeChalutz HaLochem*, no. 29, p. 60.

²⁰¹ Żuławskiego 5, spis 4374, p. 1; Spisy zapotrzebowań więźniów z Montelupich [Lists of prisoners' needs from Montelupi prison], 1943. ANK, cat. no. 29/553/174, p. 487; Akty zgonów więźniów [Death certificates of prisoners], Antoni Pietrzak, Maria Pietrzak, 1943. The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim, 210; Akty zgonów więźniów [Death certificates of prisoners], Maria Pietrzak, 1943. The State Museum, Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oświęcim, Maria Pietrzak, 1391.



Fig. 20. Antoni and Maria Pietrzak and their children in Słowackiego Avenue, Kraków, 1942, courtesy of Jerzy Kękuś

of HeChalutz HaLochem. 8 Skawińska St was the main outpost of the 22 December attacks, and it was at the same address that the Gestapo began the crackdown on HeChalutz HaLochem.²⁰² In March 1941, the German occupation closed down the Jewish hospital that had moved into the Jewish ghetto at 14 Józefińska St, and the abandoned building became a storage warehouse centre for Jewish confiscated furniture.²⁰³

Some weeks before the 22 December attacks, HeChalutz HaLochem rented from the hospital's Polish caretaker Bogdan Koczan one of the three shacks that were located behind the Jewish hospital and used to serve as a medical centre (see figs. 21, 22). Helea Rufeisen-Schipper approached Koczan via her former classmate, Zofia Bugajska (who had been adopted as a young woman by Koczan and his wife Władysława Koczan Augustynek). Koczan allowed HeChalutz HaLochem to occupy that shack, probably for money.²⁰⁴ Previously, the leadership of the Akiba group exploited the fact that one of Akiba's members was a nurse, and they conducted a meeting in the Jewish hospital.²⁰⁵ Old aerial photographs confirm testimonies about a garden that was on the west side of the hospital, both at the front and the rear, leading to the shacks. The dense vegetation helped to cover up the secret activity.²⁰⁶

Figure 21 demonstrates the isolated location of the shacks near the River Vistula at the rear of the hospital. At the same time, a German police headquarters across the hospital wall created a security challenge for HeChalutz HaLochem operatives.²⁰⁷ Old photos confirm that the hospital shacks were used by the Austrian Army during World War One.²⁰⁸ A single shack (24 m long by 7 m wide) stood behind the eastern wing of the hospital, parallel to the residential house at 10 Skawińska St. West of this shack was an H-shaped structure, probably two shacks (43 m long by 13 m wide) which were connected by a passage.²⁰⁹ Unlike today, a direct route allowed access from Skawińska Street to the rear of the hospital.²¹⁰

This study believes that HeChalutz HaLochem's hiding place was the second shack of the medical centre near the hospital wall (see Fig. 21). Operatives who visited this place recalled a long corridor leading to a room. They recorded that the shack's windows were in front of the German security building.²¹¹ Post-war aerial photos reveal that the Polish authorities demolished the shacks behind the hospital.²¹²

²⁰² Bieberstein Aleksander: *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 177–179; Skotnicki Aleksander B.: *Szpital Gminy Wyznaniowej Żydowskiej w Krakowie 1866–1941* [The hospital of the Jewish Religious Community in Kraków in the years 1866–1941]. Stradomskie Centrum Dialogu. Kraków 2013, pp. 39–42.

²⁰³ Kopie nakazów wysiedleńczych dla Żydów wydane przez Chef des Distrikts Krakau – Aussiedlungsstelle, S–Z, 1941 [Copies of relocation orders issued for Jews by the Chief of District Kraków]. ANK, cat. no. 29/33/SMKr 908, p. 65; Bieberstein Aleksander: *Zagłada Żydów*, pp. 180–181.

²⁰⁴ Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*, p. 84; Cohen-Klinberg Shoshana: “About Abraham Liebowicz.” In: *I am a Jew. Abraham Liebowicz. Laban: A Ghetto Fighter in Cracow*. Ed. Yechazkel Raban. Ghetto Fighters' House. Tel Aviv 1985, p. 82; *Urzędowy spis: lekarzy, lekarzy dentyistów, felczerów, pielęgniarów, położnych, uprawnionych i samodzielnych techników dentyistycznych oraz wykazy: aptek, szpitali, ubezpieczalni społecz., ośrodków zdrowia, przychodni samodzielnych, oraz centrali i filii Państwowego Zakładu Higieny* [Official register of: physicians, dentists, paramedics, nurses, midwives, certified and independent dental technicians, as well as registers of: pharmacies, hospitals, social insurance offices, health centres, independent clinics, as well as the head office

and branches of the National Institute of Hygiene]. Ministerstwo Opieki Społecznej [Ministry of Welfare]. Warszawa 1939, p. 69; Listeüberausgegebene Personalausweise, 1941. ANK, cat. no. 29/1578/449, p. 94.

²⁰⁵ Rivka Kuper, Oral Interview, 1987.

²⁰⁶ M34064-1954-1000-028-1847, 1954, 1:10,000. Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne [Military Historical Bureau].

²⁰⁷ GX-08565-6, February 1945; Schwartzbart A.: “The Jewish Hospital in Kraków.” In: *Sefer Kraka* [Book of Kraków]. Eds. Aryeh Bauminger, Meir Busak, and Natan M. Gelber. Mercar Harav Kook. Jerusalem 1959, pp. 324–325.

²⁰⁸ Kraków – The Jewish Hospital, 1915. The Museum of Kraków cat. no. MHK-Fs13946/IX/21, MHK-Fs13946/IX/22, MHK-Fs13946/IX/142.

²⁰⁹ Schwartzbart A.: “Jewish Hospital in Kraków,” p. 325.

²¹⁰ Author's visits to 8 Skawińska St in October 2019, July 2022; GX-08565-6, February 1945; Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*, p. 84.

²¹¹ Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, p. 98; Shoshana Cohen-Klingberg, Interview, pp. 11–12; Yitzak Zuckerman, Interview about Laban, 1980; GX-08565-6, February 1945.

²¹² M34064-1954.



Fig. 21. The Jewish hospital and the shack that served HeChalutz HaLochem in December 1942, NARA, GX-08565-7, 1:12,000 20 February 1945, public domain

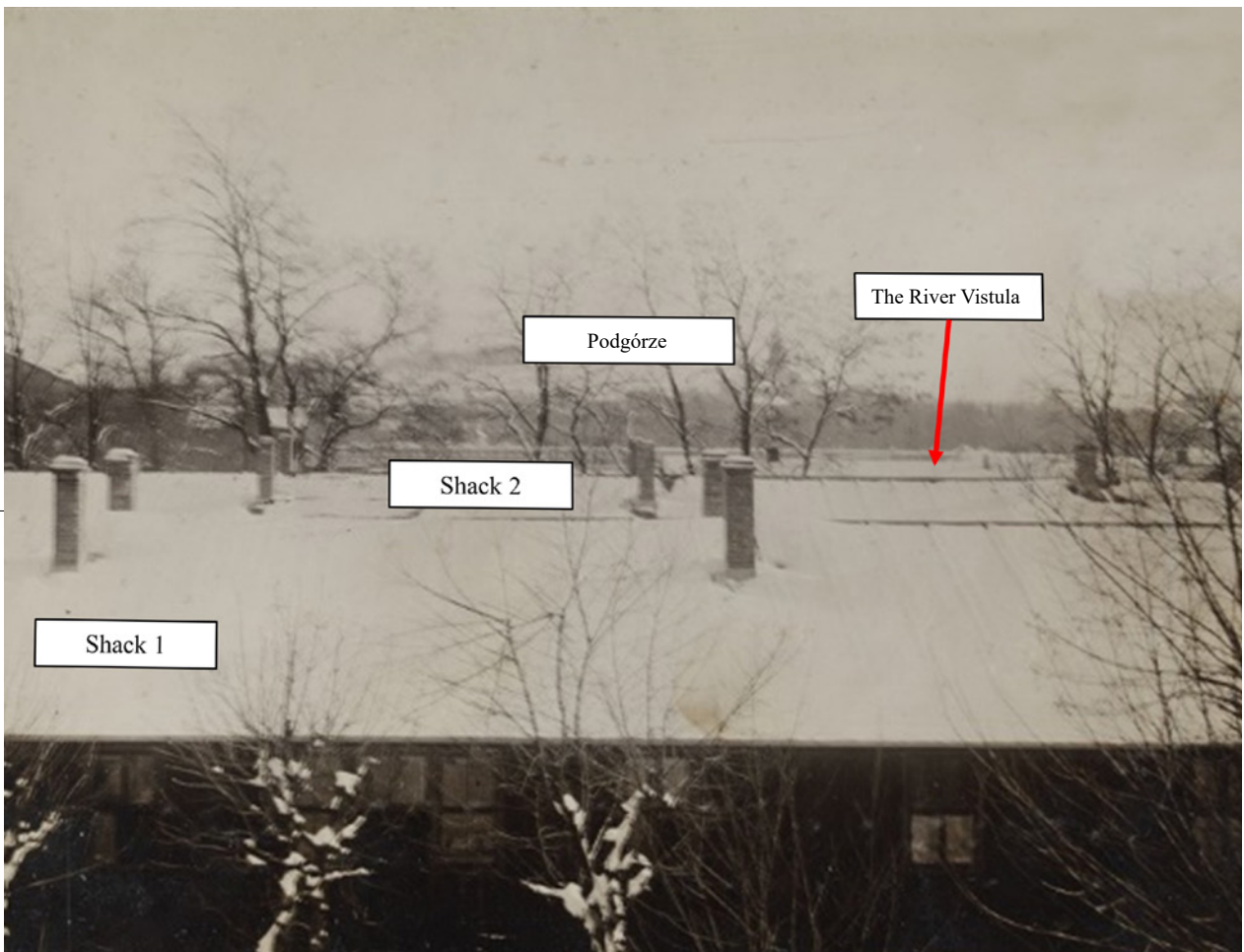


Fig. 22. Shacks at the rear of the Jewish Hospital, 1915, courtesy of the Museum of Kraków, cat. no. MHK-Fs13946/IX/22



Fig. 23. Władysława Koczan, Zofia Bugajska and Bogdan Koczan in the late 1930s, courtesy of Piotr Machał

The shack at 8 Skawińska St housed more than ten operatives who did not have accommodation, as well as those who came from Warsaw and Częstochowa (Menachem, Naftali Zimak, and Yitzhak Symplak). For security reasons, Shoshana Cohen-Klingberg, Leibowicz's courier, brought them food. On 22 December, at 6:00 pm, after Leibowicz instructed HeChalutz HaLochem operatives how to use the weapons and where to go, they left the house at 8 Skawińska St on their way to the targets. Operatives who were assigned to attack the German coffee shops, such as Idek Liber, who did not stay at 8 Skawińska St, probably attended that meeting and received their instructions and weapons.²¹³

From 8 Skawińska St the armed operatives had to walk up to 2 km before reaching their targets. The cold weather allowed them to hide their weapons under their coats.²¹⁴ Other activists were sent out to hang anti-German posters in public places. At around 7:00 pm, HeChalutz

HaLochem operatives returned to the shack, except for Menachem and perhaps a second ŻOB operative, who might have lost their way and were captured by the Germans.²¹⁵ Marighella warned that the “guerrilla outsider,” unfamiliar with the city's streets, would jeopardize the mission.²¹⁶

Mao teaches that any guerrilla unit must be prepared for battle at all times. Apparently, HeChalutz HaLochem's commanders had not instructed the operatives to guard the shack.²¹⁷ According to Havkah Folman-Raban, at 10 pm the Germans raided the hospital, surprising the occupants. There was no resistance, and the Gestapo took the Jewish fighters and their Polish facilitators to the Gestapo headquarters at 2 Pomorska St where they were interrogated.²¹⁸ Peled assumes that the Germans followed Menachem and discovered the hideout at 8 Skawińska St. However, on that night the Gestapo also captured operatives who were staying at other locations. We may assume, therefore, that the Gestapo agents Appel and Weisman might have surrendered their comrades, including those at 8 Skawińska St.²¹⁹

This study did not track down Bogdan Koczan in Montelupi prison and in Auschwitz. His family records that the Germans murdered him in Auschwitz (see Fig. 23).²²⁰

Conclusion

This study uses classical guerrilla writings and a few themes from the geographies of resistance in order to take a broader and deeper look at the 22 December attacks on German targets in Kraków, which was a major act of Jewish resistance. The Holocaust is an extreme and exceptional event, but scholars should not avoid the use of research and analysis tools from other disciplines. Marighella's and Mao's doctrines highlight HeChalutz HaLochem's and Iskra's operational challenges, strengths, and weaknesses. These classical guerrilla writings address the similarities and differences between Jewish armed groups and non-Jewish armed groups.

Jewish armed resistance in Kraków did not challenge the Germans' plan to exterminate the Jews, however, they recorded a tactical achievement. While Jewish armed groups that were stationed inside the ghettos (such as in Częstochowa, Vilnius, and Będzin) were surprised by the Germans who had the initiative, in Kraków HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra took the initiative, surprised the Germans, and hit them effectively. Using Mao's terminology, both groups avoided positional warfare and frontal

²¹³ Shoshana Cohen-Klingberg Interview, pp. 11–12; Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, p. 98.

²¹⁴ GX-08565-6, February 1945; Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, p. 98; Shoshana Cohen-Klingberg, Interview, pp. 11–12; Zedong (Tse-Tung) Mao: *Collected Writings*, p. 60.

²¹⁵ Cohen-Klingberg Shoshana: “On Abraham Leibowitz,” p. 82; Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, pp. 98–99.

²¹⁶ Marighella Carlos: *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, p. 34.

²¹⁷ GX-08565-6, February 1945; Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, p. 98; Shoshana Cohen-Klingberg Interview,

pp. 11–12; Zedong (Tse-Tung) Mao: *Collected Writings*, p. 60.

²¹⁸ Shoshana Cohen-Klingberg, Interview, pp. 22–23; Folman-Raban Havkah: *Lo Nifradti MeHem*, p. 98.

²¹⁹ Peled Yael: *Jewish Cracow*, p. 220; Cohen-Klingberg Shoshana: “On Abraham Leibowitz,” p. 85.

²²⁰ Spis (indeks) akuszererek, położnych i porodów 1910–1941 [List (index) of midwives and childbirths in the years 1910–1941]. ANK, cat. no. 29/83/8, pp. 94–97; Rufeisen-Schipper Helea: *Farewell to Mila 18*, pp. 24–25, 84, 86; author's meetings with Piotr Machał, 4 and 8 May 2023.

engagements. Causing the enemy confusion, they attacked the Germans in several places at the same time.

However, HeChalutz HaLochem's weaknesses prevented it from fully exploiting the initial advantages it had over the Germans. HeChalutz HaLochem was a guerrilla group that conducted a single largescale operation. Apparently, it did not prepare additional assaults in Kraków and did not instruct branches in other cities to execute similar actions. Its fighters were not professional and lacked sustainability, which made it easier for the Germans to dismantle HeChalutz HaLochem and Iskra within a short period of time. Guerrilla commanders highlighted efforts to save and conserve their forces. HeChalutz HaLochem's commanders did not have the resources, the skills and, perhaps, the will to avoid final defeat.

This study illuminates the contribution of geographies of resistance to the research on Jewish armed resistance during the Holocaust. De Certeau's model of tactics and strategies, and control over spaces versus the effort to exploit weaknesses within that control, has been useful in understanding HeChalutz HaLochem's efforts to achieve mobility and autonomy, necessary to organise urban guerrilla operations.

Against the background of what Cole calls Jews' "identification and isolation through imaginative, institutional, and spatial separation," this study reviews HeChalutz HaLochem's tremendous efforts to maintain mobility and autonomy by relocating and the forging of documents.²²¹ Not only the victimization of Jews during the Holocaust should be understood spatially, but armed resistance too. This study shows that HeChalutz HaLochem created new spaces and places in order to resurrect pre-war youth groups, to develop operational skills, and to plan attacks against the Germans.

Specifically, this study shows that HeChalutz HaLochem utilized a few places that enabled the 22 December attacks. HeChalutz HaLochem transformed a basement in a Polish residential house, an empty shack at the Jewish hospital, a factory storage room, and an empty flat inside the ghetto into active, meaningful locations. Through these sites HeChalutz HaLochem created spatialities which were alternative to those defined through German oppression and exploitation.²²²

Historians are criticized for focusing on documents, but neglecting the sites to which they refer, while a major part of this work has been field study.²²³ By employing ground surveys and cartographic materials, this study offers immediacy and concreteness rather than abstract discussion about resistance. HeChalutz HaLochem's story becomes visual and real. Therefore, this study demonstrates that historical tactical geographical research can improve our knowledge about Jewish armed groups that operated during the Holocaust.

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