



התאחדות יוצאי מחוז צ'נסטוהוב (דור ההמשך ער) בישראל  
Association of Częstochowa District Jews in Israel  
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February 2018

## The Jewish Organisation Fighting (ŻOB) Monument

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This monument is also a war grave. It is located in Complex I of the cemetery, on the right side of the main pathway, approximately 2/3 along its length. It is in the form of an *aedicula*, so often found in this cemetery<sup>1</sup>.

It consists, however, of heavy, concrete blocks. Its entirety is set on a low pedestal. The central section consists of a massive plaque, with protrusions which make the centre recessed. The panel is made into a central inscription plate, with highlighted colour and made of black granite. On both sides, there are bas-reliefs of stylised menorahs containing burning candles. Two pairs of low columns are placed above the protrusions, between them is a horizontal plaque containing the main monument inscription. The peak is in the form of a flattened prism set on a massive horizontal beam. A Star of David sits above it all. Two lower panels, containing inscriptions, have been added to both sides of the *aediculus*. In front of the monument is an open frame outlining the area of the grave. The frame contains posts, originally finished with stylised burning torches. Metal chains have been hung between the posts.

The current form is the result of a renovation carried out by the City Council in 2012, during which the central plaque was lost. Monument elements were reconstructed and grey granite

<sup>1</sup> Aedicula- a composition consisting of two pillars, columns or pilasters which support the entablature with a pediment (outpost).



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inscription tablets were created using the pattern of the original and containing inscriptions which had faded from the original.

The main inscription on the monument, in Yiddish and in Polish, expresses the intentions of the authors:

***Glory to those heroes who died  
 in the armed struggle with the occupiers  
 04.01.1943***

Only surnames with first names follow:

Zylberberg Mojtek	Glanc Rywka	Fajner Icchok	Fiszlewicz Mendel	Fiszlewicz Mendel
Abramowicz Sumek	Potaszewicz Harry	Pejsak Heniek	Tencer Heniek	Szczekacz Pola
Szczekacz Dusia	Rozenberg Mojsze	Frajman Hersz	Frajman Rywka	Blechsztajn Ojzer
Bram Bela	Blank Lolek	Berkensztadt Mojsze	Berkensztadt Rajzele	Eksztejn
Fajgenblat Mojsze	Gliksztajn Jehuda	Gliksztajn Lutek	Goldberg	Najman Hipek
Hirsz Pola	Haftka	Jakubowicz Szymzia	Kopiński Władek	Kantor Josek
Kaplan Abram	Mass Jadzia	Rypsztajn Kuba	Rozencwajg Marysia	Rząsiński Izidor
Rodał Mojsze	Radoszycki	Samsonowicz Pinek	Szuldman Wigdor	Szymanowicz Izrael
Szydłowski Lejzor	Sielcer Dawid	Sztull	Szajn Joachim	Szajn Perla
Tuchmajer Mojsze	Trembacki	dr Wolberg Adam	Windman Icchak	Wojdzisławska Lunia
Wajskopf Michał	Wajntraub Mietek	Wiernik	Wigodzki	Zarnowiecki Zukon
Zylberszac Mojsze	Zborowska Bela	Zajde Abram	Lubling Mojsze	Rozyne Jakub
Rozyne Estera	Asz Mendel	Birencwajg Machel	Birencwajg Hdasa	Blumenkranc Fiszel
Rozensztejn Natan	Lewensztajn Mojsze	Kalka Berek	Kalka Józef	Lichter Kopel
Brzuska Zelig	Brzuska Lipman	Brzuska Mordchaj	Kusznir Chaim	Wilinger Mendel
Tenebaum Lejb	Brener Chana	Brener Chaim	Brener Machcia	Brener Nelli
Berliner Basia	Berliner Icchak Hersz	Berliner Natan	Doński Lejb	Dońska Liba
Dońska Dwojra	Dońska Saba	Fizel Abram kantor	Frank Lejbuś	Frank Hela
Frank Oleś	Gewercman Dow	Goldminc Abram Icek	Goldminc Cypra	Goldminc Natan
Goldminc Genia	Goldminc Lolek	Horończyk Idesa	Horończyk Henoch	Krauze Grojnen
Krauze Telca	Krauze Wolf Aron	Krauze Chana	Krauze Dana	Krauze Jakub
Wajchman Kuba	Krakauer Szmul	Krakauer Iśka	Krakauer Rózka	Krakauer Gitla
Krakauer Zyskind	Krakauer Frandla	Krakauer Wolf Aron	Krakauer Abram	Krakauer Josek
Krakauer Sala	Konieczpolski Eli	Konieczpolska Gitla	Józef	
		Wachtel Henryk	Niemrowski Szmul	Wajchman Bala

The key to reading the monument is a description of the historical event.

On 4th January 1943, early in the morning (around 5:00am), Hauptmann Paul Degenhardt's deputy, Lieutenant Rohn, arrived at the Rynek Warszawski (today known as "Plac Bochatarów Getta").<sup>2</sup> At his orders, all the groups of people emerging from the "Small Ghetto" were tightly guarded in order to prevent those who were unemployed avoiding being sent to the labour camp and then hiding from the German police. Later, all was calm, however the residents noticed that the whole area was surrounded by police and that they were being watched attentively.

<sup>2</sup> This reconstruction is based on the memoirs of Ada Ofir (a copy of the article is in the author's possession), a report by Sara Gutgold-Edelist (a copy is in the author's collection); the book: B. Arenstein, *Churban Czenstochow*, [bmw] 1948, p. 197; L. Brener, *Widersztand un umkum in czenstochower geto*, p. 95 and pp' 118–121; Sz. Waga, *Churbn Czenstochow*, Buenos Aires 1949, pp. 197–203.



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At 10:00am, Rohn told all the people living in the “Small Ghetto” to enter the Rynek Warszawski, these included all those working in the *Judenrat* and its office, kitchen and workshops. This operation was clearly aimed at those employed with the *Judenrat* office apparatus, as well as those who had evaded work (for ideological reasons, some of the youth in the Jewish Fighting Organisation (ŻOB) did not want to work for the Germans). During the course of the selection conducted by Lieutenants Rohn and Sapparta, groups of several hundred physically weak and elderly people were placed under arrest in the German guard-post. Also taken into custody was a whole group of young people who had originally been barracked in a house at ulica Nadrzeczna 66, forming a branch of ŻOB (known as the “66” from the address). This was the “penalty” for coming late to the selection.

Later, Jewish policemen were ordered to search for hidden children. Because, at first, they did not find anyone, Rohn gathered them together and declared that each of them had to find at least two children and was responsible for carrying at the order at the risk of their own head. Now, the police began to act with total ruthlessness, breaking into apartments, pulling children out from under beds, from basements and from attics.

The children were loaded onto carts which had been used for waste disposal and sent to the Polish police station at ul. Piłsudskiego 21. Then it was the turn of those under arrest. The Germans did not expect any difficulties. However, the “66” group, led by Mendel Fiszlewicz (an escapee from the camp in Treblinka), decided that they would not allow themselves to be passively placed onto a transport. The sound of shots was to be the signal for escape. Fiszlewicz and his friend Izaak Feiner put up armed resistance. Fiszlewicz shot at Rohn, wounding him. But the pistol jammed and so he could not fire again. Feiner only had a knife which he used to slightly wound Sapparta. Stunned for a moment, the German police fired at the rebels, killing Fiszlewicz and fatally wounding Feiner. Only two girls managed to take advantage of the confusion. They were from another youth group – “Kibbutz”. Unnoticed, they joined those who had not been selected.

All the Jews in the Square were forced to raise their hands and to step back behind barbed wire. Out of the group standing nearest to the incident, the police selected every tenth person – twenty six individuals. Each of them was sentenced to death. Among them was the Commander of the Jewish Police and *Judenrat* member, Maurycy Galster. Until then, people prominent in the ghetto had avoided any repressions. Greatly concerned, the Chairman of the *Judenrat*, Leon Kopiński, succeeded in having Galster freed. The remainder were escorted past the fence and were shot against the wall of the nearest building.

The several hundred Jews in the Warszawski Rynek were surrounded by German police and led to the police station on Piłsudskiego. The Germans continued to search the camp grounds. One of them noticed two women, a mother and daughter, who were coming out of their apartment and were trying to cross over to the “Aryan side”. They were carrying money and valuables. He shot at them, but missed. However, one of them stopped. He ordered them to hand over all that they had and then told them to go. As they left, he shot, killing both of them on the spot.

It was now that groups were returning to the camp from their workplaces. Many could not find their family members – those who had been shot or who had been led away to the police station. They saw the twenty seven bodies lying in the street. Among them, they recognised friends and



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family members. It was already after dark when the bodies of the twenty-seven men were buried in two mass graves, next to the bodies of the mother and daughter. For a long time, people stood by the graves. They only dispersed when ordered to do so.

On the following day, *Judenrat* Chairman Leon Kopyński tried to have freed those who had been imprisoned on ul. Piłsudskiego. He claimed that some of them were vital to the work which the *Judenrat* had been ordered to carry out. Lieutenant Rohn declared that they would be released if the Jewish Police would provide the same number of children and adults of lesser “value”. The Jewish Police again the hunt for hidden children. The exchange took place on the square of the police station. Later, two hundred children and several hundred adults were transported to Radomsko. From there, together with other Jews from that town, they were transported to the extermination camp at Treblinka.

In January 1946, the Częstochowa Jewish Committee (chaired, at the time, by Liber Brener) organised the exhumation of the bodies of those executed on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1943. The local Jewish community took part in the event. The exhumed bodies were moved to the Jewish Cemetery and buried in a common grave/ On one of the photographs, one can see a temporary wooden plaque, bearing inscriptions in Polish and Yiddish, which was placed onto the grave:



*In honour of those, of blessed memory, victims of Nazi bestiality  
who died in the Częstochowa ghetto on 4th January 1943.*

Fajner Izak	Amsterdam	Fiszlewicz	Iszajewicz Dow	Hafka Jojne
Hammer	Wiernik	Wajdenbaum Moszek	Wygodzki Szmul	Zilberszac Abram
Trębacki Lejzor (?)	Eksztajn	Frajman Hersz	Potaszewicz	Rodał Moszek
Rozensztajn Natan	Rychter Jakób	Szelcer Dawid	Sztal Boruch	Goldberg Gedalia

Twenty men are named on it.



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It was only three years later, when the temporary plaque no longer existed or was already illegible, that a monument with a completely different inscription was placed there.

The difference in the sound of the Yiddish and Polish inscriptions is distinctive. The first is precisely: *Eternal glory to the heroes who fell during the first armed attack against the German executioners*. It can be seen that the monument has been dedicated not to the victims, but to the heroes. The group of those honoured had been broadened. To the names of those killed in the incident on 4th January 1943, which had been reviewed (which is evidenced by significant differences such as spelling mistakes and the omission of names of individuals), have been added the names of many others.



Thirteen names have been engraved on the central plaque, which is distinguished by its colour (probably made of black granite): ŻOB Commander “Mojtka” Zylberberg, Rywka Glanc, Feiner and Fiszlewicz, four partisans known from other armed operations, the young Szczekacz sisters who had formed the “66” group, not mentioned in the accounts and memoirs of Mojsze Rozenberga and the Frajman couple. Hersz Frajman was one of the execution victims and, from 1905, was also a known Bund activist. His wife, Rywka, was also a respected Bund activist and instructor. In 1906, she had been seriously injured. On 4th January 1943, on hearing the news of her husband’s death, she had a mental breakdown. She took up her grandchild and volunteered to go on the transport, knowing that this would mean death. That order of events determined a certain hierarchy and became almost symbolic. At the same time, such a set of names contradicted the inscription – especially in the Polish wording.



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In other places on the monument, the names of the “66” group are mentioned abundantly. When the ghetto was liquidated, many people were included, but the core was formed by:

Izio Feiner, Mietek Ferleger, Mendel Fiszlewicz, Lolek Frankenberg, Harry Gerszonowicz, Rysia Gutgeld, Lusja Gutgold, Sara Gutgold, Hipek Heiman, Pola Hirsz, Jadzia Mass, Awiw Rozyner, Marysia Rozenchwajg, Saba Rypstajn, Kuba Rypstajn, Maniek Rozenchwajg, Dosia Szczekacz, Pola Szczekacz, Mietek Wajntraub, Lunia Wojdzisławska, Icek Windman, Zborowska, Samsonowicz, Wojdzisławski, Frankenberg and Benclowicz.<sup>3</sup>

Who were the other heroes of the monument? Among them was Machel Michał Birencwajg, who is named along with his wife Hanka Hadasa. During his school days, Michał was active in the Zionist movement, but he later moved to a communist organisation. During the occupation, he was employed as an upholsterer and soon became the Jewish director of the furniture plant, namely, the *Moebellager*. During the mass deportations of September and October 1942, he saved hundreds of lives, helping escapees from blockaded streets and hiding people in the *Moebellager*. He would later smuggle them into the “Small Ghetto”. He formed the underground movement quite early, during the period of selections and blockades, during the most horrible terror. He enjoyed a position of the greatest authority among his companions. On 8th June 1943, Michał avoided being caught by the police. However, on that day, his mother died. His wife was detained and, two days later, was shot. Michał had “Aryan papers”, but he did not try to save himself by fleeing from Częstochowa. Robbed by the Poles who were hiding him, he was handed over to the Germans, who killed him, at the Jewish Cemetery on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1943, along with a group of sixty Jews.<sup>4</sup>

Dr Adam Wolberg is also named on the monument. He was a dermatologist and a professional officer, a captain in the Częstochowa Regiment. He fought in 1939 and became a prisoner-of-war. After returning from imprisonment, he worked as a doctor for the Society for the Protection of the Jewish Population (TOZ). He was one of the organisers and directors of the activities of the underground. In particular, he fought fiercely with the “Judenrat”. He favoured armed resistance against the Germans and, at the end of 1942, in discussions with various Jewish parties and organisations, he represented the Bund. He was nominated by the Bund as the military commander. In unknown circumstances, the leadership of ŻOB was taken over by a young group of Zionist activists. However they lacked preparation for any armed underground activity. Adam Wolberg was exposed. He was caught in a German round-up and, on 19th March 1943, he was shot. He deserved a more prominent place on the monument. However, in 1949, it was not possible to include his Polish Army.

Mojsze Lubling was one of the most active members of the *Arbeter Rat* collective, which actively defended the interests of Jewish forced labourers in 1941 and 1942. He was transported to Treblinka and worked there as a commando member. He was one of the organisers and leaders of the uprising, in which he perished, in August 1943. He was not present in Częstochowa in January 1943, but he was already considered among the heroes. That paved the way for him to be included on the monument.

<sup>3</sup> The account of Sara Gutgold-Edelist.

<sup>4</sup> L. Brener, *Widersztand...*, pp. 105–106.



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A surprise is the inclusion, on the monument, of Cantor Abram Fiszel of the New Synagogue. He was born in 1885 in Sosnowiec. He was a singing teacher and cantor and, according to the reports of various people, he perished on 22nd September 1942 on the streets of Częstochowa, as one of the first victims of deportation. His body was probably buried in the grave on ul. Kawia. His wife and three daughters perished in Treblinka. Only one daughter survived - Laja Danziger, who his in Łódź under “Aryan papers”.<sup>5</sup>

Noteworthy is the omission of the two women killed on the same day (only one author mentions them - Szlomo Waga), even though the exhumation of the graves should have revealed them lying side by side.<sup>6</sup>

Families named on the monument in Brener, Doński, Frank, Goldminc, Krauz and Krakauer. The first of these named families is a typical example. Chana, Chaim and Machze Brener are the mother, brother and sister-in-law of the chairman of the Częstochowa Jewish Committee. They came from the small town of Turzysk in Wołyn. The son, Liber, took in his widowed mother probably before the War. In 1942, Chana was deported to Treblinka and was murdered there. The brother and his wife continued to live in Turzysk and perished there in 1942.<sup>7</sup> Named, along with them in Nelli, probably their daughter

As can be seen, this monument became a place of remembrance of various people and events. It was formally dedicated to the participants and heroes of the first attempt at armed resistance on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1943 – two weeks before that which occurred in the Warsaw Ghetto where the Germans were attacked on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1943. Częstochowa residents claimed this as an historial “first”. Because the participants were members of the ŻOB fighting group, the entire group was commemorated on this monument, including the names of its leaders and many of its members. The founders and managers of *Arbeter Rat* are also names, as are later prisoners in Treblinka and participants in the uprising there.

It is not limited to naming members of Jewish families just from Częstochowa. Others have been included who perished at various times and in various places.

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<sup>5</sup> *Czenstochower Yidn*, Nowy Jork 1947, p. 216; Arenstein, *Churban Czenstochow*, p. 92, as well as his daughter’s account provided in 1970 to the Yad Vashem Institute.

<sup>6</sup> Sara Niemirowska and Bronisława Markowicz rest in another part of the Cemetery in grave No. 1159/4113.

<sup>7</sup> Based upon statements by family members made at the Yad Vashem Institute; accessed in The Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names, [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org) (accessed 03/10/2011).

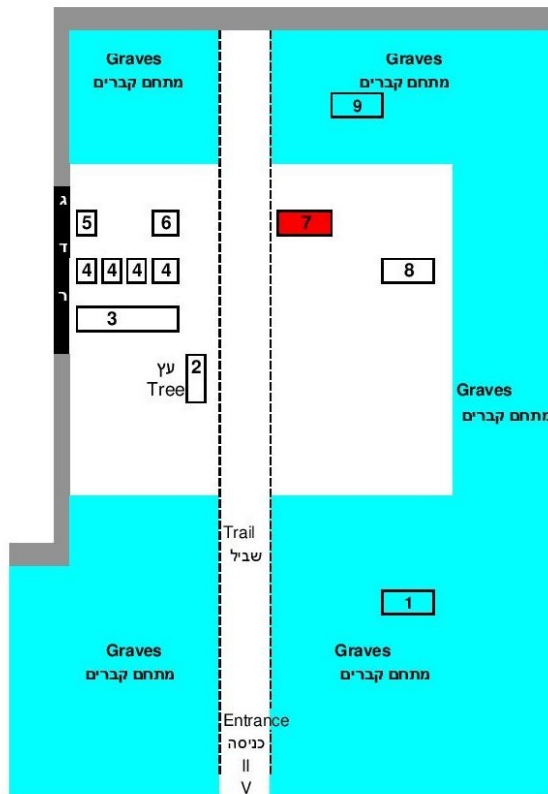


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### מתחם קברי אחים - בית העלמין היהודי בצ'נסטוהובה Mass Graves complex - the Jewish cemetery in Czestochowa

15.5.2018



ארגון יוצאי צ'נסטוהוב בישראל  
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- 1 קבר האדמו"ר מפילץ - הרב יוסטמן  
Rabbi Justman Grave
- 2 קבר הרב נחום אש  
Rabbi Nachum Asz Grave
- 3 קבר אחים קורבנות האסאג והגייטו הקטן - 20.7.43  
Mass Grave of Hasag & Small Ghetto victims - 20.7.43
- 4 קברי אחים אינטליגנציה - 20.3.43  
Mass Graves of Intelligence - 20.3.43
- 5 קבר אחים 6 הפרטיזנים - 19.3.43  
Mass Grave the 6 Partisans - 19.3.43
- 6 קבר אחים תוקפי הרכבת - 22.4.43  
Mass Grave - Ostbahn Operation Victims - 22.4.43
- 7 קבר אחים אי"ל - ארגון יהודי לוחם - 4.1.43  
Mass Grave ŻOB - Jewish Fighting Organization - 4.1.43
- 8 קבר אחים אי"ל - לוחמי הבונקר - 26.7.43  
Mass Grave - ŻOB, Bunker victims - 26.7.43
- 9 קבר קורבנות הפוגרום בקיילצה - גרושקה ורמבק - 4.7.46  
The Kielce Pogrom victims 4.7.46 - Gruszka & Rembak

הגדר בעורף הקברים 5,4,3 ששמה כמקום הוצאה להורג  
 The fence at the back of Mass Graves 3,4,5 served as an execution wall

מגרש חניה - Parking Lot





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**Mojtek Zylberberg**



**Machel Birencwajg**



**Rywka Glanc**