The Polish Underground and the Jews, 1939–1945

The Polish Underground and the Jews, 1939–1945 examines one of the central problems in the history of Polish-Jewish relations: the attitude and the behavior of the Polish Underground – the resistance organization loyal to the Polish government-in-exile – toward the Jews during World War II. Using a variety of archival documents, testimonies, and memoirs, Joshua D. Zimmerman offers a careful, dispassionate narrative, arguing that the reaction of the Polish Underground to the catastrophe that befell European Jewry was immensely varied, ranging from aggressive aid to acts of murder. By analyzing the military, civilian, and political wings of the Polish Underground and offering portraits of the organization’s main leaders, this book is the first full-length scholarly monograph in any language to provide a thorough examination of the Polish Underground’s attitude and behavior toward the Jews during the entire period of World War II.

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The Polish Underground and the Jews,
1939–1945

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To my wife, Anna, for her warmth, 
generosity, and grace 

And in loving memory of her mother, 
Ruth Feigenbaum Gross (1930–1994), a Holocaust 
survivor from Poland
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Abbreviations and Terms

AAN  Archive of New Records, Warsaw – Archiwum Akt Nowych
AK   Home Army (successor to ZWZ) – Armia Krajowa
AL   People’s Army of the PPR (1944–1945; successor to GL) – Armia Ludowa
Antyk Anti-Communist Division, Home Army (1943–1945) – Społeczny Komitet Antykomunistyczny
APwK State Archives in Kraków – Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie
BIP  Bureau of Information and Propaganda, Home Army – Biuro Informacji i Propagandy
BUW  Warsaw University Library
CAW  Central Military Archives, Warsaw – Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe
Delegate Delegate of the Polish Republic in occupied Poland
Delegate’s Bureau Office of the Polish Republic’s Delegate in occupied Poland – Delegatura Rządu na Kraj
FOP  Front for Reborn Poland (underground Catholic organization) – Front Odrodzenia Polski
GFH  Ghetto Fighter’s House Kibbutz, Israel
GL   People’s Guard of the PPR (1942–1945; became AL in January 1944) – Gwardia Ludowa
HIA  Hoover Institute Archives, Stanford University
IH PAN Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw – Instytut Historii Polskiej Akademii Nauk
IPN  Institute of National Memory, Warsaw – Instytut Pamięci Narodowej
Kedyw Directorate of Subversion, the Home Army’s elite combat units – Kierownictwo Dywersji Komendy Głównej Armii Krajowej
KWC  Directorate of Civil Resistance (1941–July 1943), Delegate’s Bureau – Kierownictwo Walki Cywilnej
KWK  Directorate of Conspiratorial Struggle (1941–July 1943), Home Army – Kierownictwo Walki Konspiracyjnej
KWP  Directorate of Underground Struggle (July 1943–1945), Delegate’s Bureau and Home Army – Kierownictwo Walki Podziemnej
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List of Abbreviations and Terms

MBP Ministry of Public Security in Communist Poland – Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego
NOW National Military Organization (SN’s underground militia) – Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa
NSZ National Armed Forces, right-wing Polish underground (1942–1945); splits in March 1944 with one part joining the Home Army – Narodowe Siły Zbrojne
ONR National-Radical Camp (1934; 1937–1945) – Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny
Operation Tempest Home Army’s code name for the general uprising
OZON Camp of National Unity (coalition government, 1937–1939) – Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego
PAL PAL Polish People’s Army (1943–1945) – Polska Armia Ludowa
PKP Political Advisory Committee of the Polish Underground, 1940–1944 (became the RJN in March 1944) – Polityczny Komitet Porozumiewawczy
PKWN Polish Committee of National Liberation (formed in July 1944) – Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego
PPR Polish Worker’s Party (Polish communists, established January 1941) – Polska Partia Robotnicza
PPS Polish Socialist Party – Polska Partia Socjalistyczna
PPS-WRN PPS–Freedom-Equality-Independence (wartime PPS faction) – PPS Wolność, Równość, Niepodległość
PSB Polski Słownik Biograficzny (Polish Biographical Dictionary)
RJN Council of National Unity, 1944–1945 (successor to the PKP) – Rada Jedności Narodowej
SD Democratic Party – Stronnictwo Demokratyczne
SIA Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum Archives, London
SL Peasant Party – Stronnictwo Ludowe
SN National Party (formerly Endecja, or National Democratic Party) – Stronnictwo Narodowe
SP Party of Labor – Stronnictwo Pracy
SPP Polish Underground Movement Study Trust, London
Szmalcownik A Polish blackmailer of Jews
SZP Service for the Victory of Poland, 1939–1940 (renamed ZWZ in 1940) – Służba Zwycięstwa Polski
UBK Cadre Strike Battalion – Confederation of the Nation’s military wing under Bolesław Piasecki (1942–1943). Joined Home Army in August 1943 – Uderzeniowe Bataliony Kadrowe
USHMM United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC
WBBH Military Bureau of Historical Research, Warsaw
WBH Military Historical Bureau, Home Army – Wojskowe Biuro Historyczne
YVA Yad Vashem Archives, Jerusalem
ZIH Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw – Żydowski Instytut Historyczny
ŽKK Jewish Coordinating Committee – political arm of the Jewish Combat Organization (ZOB) in the Warsaw Ghetto – Żydowski Komitet Koordynacyjny
ŽKN Jewish National Committee – political representation of Zionist groups in the Warsaw ghetto – Żydowski Komitet Narodowy
### List of Abbreviations and Terms

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>ŻOB</td>
<td>Jewish Combat Organization (founded July 1942) – Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZPP</td>
<td>Union of Polish Patriots (Soviet Russia, 1943–) – Związek Patriotów Polskich</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZWZ</td>
<td>Union of Armed Struggle (1939–1942); successor to SZP; renamed Home Army in February 1942 – Związek Zbrojnej Walki Polskiej</td>
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<tr>
<td>Żydokomuna</td>
<td>Lit. “Judeo-Communism”</td>
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<td>ZZW</td>
<td>Jewish Military Union, Warsaw ghetto – Żydowski Związek Wojskowy</td>
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Acknowledgments

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Note on Terms and Figures

In the present study, the term “Polish Underground” in uppercase refers to the legal underground organizations in occupied Poland recognized by, and swearing allegiance to, the Polish government-in-exile. Use of the generic term “Polish underground” in lowercase, on the other hand, refers to all Polish underground organizations in the occupied homeland, including communists and ultra-nationalists who neither swore allegiance to nor were recognized by the Polish government-in-exile. Note also that the term “Warsaw Uprising” refers to the Polish armed rising in August–September 1944, while the term “Warsaw ghetto uprising” refers to the Jewish armed revolt of April–May 1943.

The selection of fifteen images in this volume consists of photographs for which copyright permission could be obtained or for which there is no known copyright holder. Photographs intended to be added but were not, because copyright permission could not be obtained, include those of Home Army members who are documented to have committed crimes against Jews and whose stories are discussed in detail in the present volume.
The Provinces of Poland on the Eve of World War II

Derived from Polonsky, Politics in Independent Poland, 1921–1939, 47
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MAP 1. Poland on the eve of World War II