

Born on August 20, 1922, the Polish journalist and libertarian Bernard Konrad 'Kondek' Świerczyński, aka 'Aniela', was an important figure during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. His father Konrad Świerczyński (1888-1956), aka 'Wicek', a bookseller, poet and leading light of the inter-war Polish anarchist movement through his membership of the Anarchistycznej Federacji Polski, decided that Kondek would be home-schooled as a way of avoiding any religious indoctrination. Kondek, in turn, developed a great admiration for his anarchist father, and was inspired by his commitment. From the beginning of the German occupation, Kondek helped the Jewish friends and neighbours that he had grown up with. So, when the Ghetto was established, he went on to play a key role, liaising between the inside and outside of the Ghetto, and organising and directly participating in the smuggling of food, clothing and letters in. Located near the Ghetto, the Świerczyński's house at 115 Leszno Street also served as a shelter and transit point for those who Konrad helped escape, including the anarchist Jan Paweł Rogalski and his family, hiding the escapees in one room whilst his mother, bedridden and suffering from bone tuberculosis, lived in the other. He also found extra accommodation for them, passes on the financial support and false documents, and arranged medical assistance. Kondek also sheltered a number of other Jews who had found their way to him through word of mouth or, like the anarchist Paweł Lew Marek and his family, were old acquaintances and had sought him out after escaping from elsewhere. During the liquidation of the Ghetto and the Uprising itself, he fought alongside his father Wicek as a member of the Syndicalist Brigade (104 Kompania Związku Syndykalistów Polskich) and, following the defeat of the Uprising, he took part in building a bunker to shelter forty other escaped Jews.

Kondek's mother was killed by the Germans during the Warsaw Uprising and, after the war, he married his neighbour Halina Goldberg, who he had also rescued during one of the mass deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto. On January 30, 1972, Bernard Konrad Świerczyński was awarded the title of the Righteous Among the Nations. Kondek died on October 31, 2002, in Warsaw.