

-TITLE- SAM GOETZ
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This is a 90 minute tape of good visual and auditory quality. Brief abstract: Samuel Goetz, 55 years of age at the time of the interview, presents a sequential account of his Holocaust experiences which began as an 11-year old boy in Tarnow (Southern Poland, near Cracow) and ranged from ghetto life and separation from parents through increasingly horrendous events in various camps (Plaszow, Gross Rosen) and eventual liberation from Mauthausen. S.G. obviously wants to "share" his experiences with us --as he says, for educational-historical reasons-- yet his orderly and controlled personality prevents him from exposing himself too much. His stance towards his experiences is that of a rather indignant observer (as if alligning himself with the viewer?) whose descriptive account and memory glimpses imply but do not even begin to express or reveal the profound sense of shame, humiliation, fear, despair and loss that he must have experienced as he lived the experiences. His single departure from his fixed mien --a forced, pleasant smile?-- was in his spontaneous joy in recollecting his camp-inmate friend, "Willie from Budapest". His experiences on the march and subsequent train ride to Mauthausen --and liberation day-- which occur near the end of the tape and take up about 10 minutes--are descriptively vivid and, from an audience viewpoint, quite effective.

Sequence of themes and times (in minutes):

01-05 -Introduction; Did not talk about Holocaust experiences until age 31/32 but was mobilized to share his feelings as

historical revisionism began to emerge; helped initiate the UCLA Archival Project.

06:00 -Starts unfolding his story; 1939 as an 11-year-old living in a midsize community of Tarnow; comfortable, secure family. (Father a fur import/export dealer; High holydays observed and a Jewish identity but seemingly acculturated into Polish society). Jews could not attend school; parents band together and hire private teachers.

08:00 Anniversary of Kristallnacht. First dramatic encounter with the Germans; banging on the door; civilian Germans with armbands shouting "Juden Raus!"; Jews rounded up in Square; German pokes revolver at his temple; felt no fear!; flames on the horizon of synagogue aflame--"This was how the Germans commemorated the 1st anniversary of Kristallnacht". From then on armbands with Star of David had to be worn; felt targeted.

13:00 - A moment. Walking with father from grandmother's house to own house a few minutes before curfew time. A restless German policeman, eyeing them menacingly as if intent to beat them up; was deflected from this course of action when father took his hat off. "You are a lucky Jew!", said the German.

15:00 -Separation of brother from family; Disintegration of family. His only sibling, a seven-year older brother (sickly and closely attached to mother) had fled East to Lvov (Soviet part of Poland) when the Germans came. Now mother wants him back, but he's caught crossing the border and jailed in border town (Przemysl ?) by the Russians. Mother in desperation takes train, without armband) to prison town hoping to see son. (Story left incomplete.) Family tension.

21:00 -Ghetto life. By mid to late 1940 life for Jews increasingly restricted; father no longer in business, sells off hidden furs on black market; family moves to Jewish quarter of town, an open ghetto.

26:00 - A Moment. Ordered by a German officer to come along. Taken to a barracks and forced to scrub the floors and clean the latrines till late in the night. Still only 12/13, wondered, "What will my parents think, not knowing where I am?"

27:00 - A moment. Preparing for Bar Mitzvah. June 21, 1941. Recalls gifts: two books, one in German called "MOSES"; the other a pictorial book of the Grand Canyon, Arizona, the latter evoking a sense of unreality, "that there could be such a place of such beauty".

** (Next 30 minutes: Deals with a series of events in the ghetto; round-ups; mandatory registration; issuance of ID card with stamps having different significance; narrow escapes; moves to work place; father arrested, escaped; the murder of all the members of the Jewish Council; (50') parents hiding in cellar; house search, arrest of parents and last glimpse of parents as they were transported to rail station. (He learned that they were taken to Belzec--where they died.) Felt all alone!

(Reel 14)

01:00 - Survival-- Impromptu action: Amidst rumors of another roundup, ID cards were taken and later returned--BUT NOT TO HIM. Desperate but apparently calm he sneaks into the Jewish administration building and randomly takes an ID card, which by sheer luck has the right stamp on it. This impromptu action led to his survival.

12:00 - After a brief escape from the Ghetto, hiding in a small room in his old wet nurse's home, he returns to work in the Ghetto until the Ghetto is liquidated and he, along with the others, are transported to Cracow -Plaszow concentration camp. Felt abandoned, friendless. Then comes a 4-day train ride to Germany (Gross Rosen).

(LG'g comments: Where Schindler's factory was; See Gilbert's The HOLOCAUST for chronology and description of Plaszow and move to Gross Rosen, German camp, p. 754; cross reference to text & additional bibliographic references. maps, photos)

15:00 --Describes arrival at Gross Rosen; Greeted by band playing Viennese waltzes; terrible camp; weird people, rumors of gas chambers, thirst; put to work digging tunnels for some 8 months;

20:00 -- Friendship. Meets "Willie from Budapest", become friends

(recalls this with joyful, genuine affection). Never even knew his last name!

21:00 -- Two week march plus train ride to Mauthausen; 1 month before liberation; volunteers to carry dead bodies in return for soup; starving, eats charcoal; mention of cannibalism.

25:00 --Vividly describes last week in camp and liberation by Americans!
.END.