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Noemi Stern Salamonovitz

Language: Spanish: parts 1-3

English: part 4

Born in Budapest, Hungary, on December 30, 1943.

Her biological parents were Edit Rivka Salamonovitz Holowitz and Abraham Silberberg Bernstein. She was their only child, and named Noemi Agnes. Her Jewish name was Sarah. When her mother died, she was adopted by her mother's sister, Ilona/Ilonka Salamonovitz, married with Moshe Stern Boxhorn. From her second family, she had a sister, Judith (Sarah) Nurko, who lives in Israel, a brother, Arturo (Abraham Shmuel Benjamin) Stern, who lives in Teaneck, NJ, and another sister, Yergi [PH] (Rachel), who lives in Mexico City. Her father and her adopted father both belonged to the organization "Tiferes Bachurim" and were friends. Moshe Stern was the president of the organization.

Her grandparents from her mothers' side lived in the town of Edelény, Hungary. Her grandfather, Joseph Salamonovitz (a Cohen), had several businesses: coalmines, a sawmill, a general store, and a bar. He had a brother who went to the US. Her grandmother, Julia Horowitz (a Levi), belonged to the family who later founded the Horowitz Margareten food company. They had 12 children:

- 1.) Jenó, who married Margrit Friedman and had four children. They were all killed; 2.) Malvina, married with (Jeano) [PH] Engel, had three children. They lived in Miskolc, 20km from Edelény, and had a kosher restaurant. Their older son, Zoltan (Zoli) Engel, was living in Huston, TX, at the time of the interview. Their daughter Erika was taken to Auschwitz with her mother Malvina and an aunt, Lili. They survived. They had another son, Moshe Otibe [PH] who was taken with his father to a camp. They both died. 3.) Regina – married name, Glatstein – married one of her relatives. They had four children: Ferenc, who worked as manager in a coalmine and was sent to a camp; two girls, one of them called Edith (called Zurika by her family), who died from an inflammation before they were sent to the ghetto; and a younger boy, Andy, who was sent to a camp, survived and went to Palestine first and after that to the US. Regina and her younger daughter were taken to a camp, where they died. 4.) Ignacio / Itzu, who went to Mexico in the 1920s, when he was in his 20s, and married Margaret Schonfeld. They had three children (two of them: Clarita Segal and Victor Salamonovitz). He became the patriarch of the family after the death of her grandfather. 5.) Her adopted mother Ilona. 6.) Herman, who lost his wife in a camp. He also went to a camp, but survived. After the war, he married Margaret Hollander, from a rich family, and lived in New York. 7.) Micha (Nicolas) and. 8.) Hern (Ernesto), both died. 9.) Desiderio, who went to Mexico before the war, and married Mina, whose family was from Belgium and was in the diamond business. Their sons ended working in NY in the Jewelry business. Desiderio lived close to Noemi in Mexico, in a high-class building called the "Acros," next to the Glorieta Insurgentes. 10.) Edit, her biological mother. 11.) Lili, who was sent to a camp and survived. She married Adalberto Reisman. They also immigrated to Mexico. 12.) Aladar/Ali. He was 16 when we asked Ignacio to send him a ticket to go Mexico because he didn't want to join the army.

Noemi's father, Abraham Silverberg Bernstein, born in 1911, was the oldest child in a family six siblings, two of them were killed and four went to Palestine. Her father's family lived in Budapest, but were from Transylvania. Her father worked as a textile engineer. Her grandfather, who died before the war, was a hazzan. Her grandmother survived the war and immigrated to Israel. Her father's siblings were: 1.) Helen, who immigrated to Israel, married before the holocaust with Ariel Klein and had three children. The oldest of her children is called Judith, but later called herself Rivka. 2.) Levi / Yaakov, whose older daughter is called Sima. 3.) Reiser, who was killed at the end of the war 4.) Clari, never married. 5.) Shani, who immigrated to Palestine before the war.

Her father was taken to a labor camp and worked in a German uniform factory during the war. On December 30, 1944, members of the Nilashock Party (Arrow Cross party, a Nazi party) accused Noemi's father and other nine Jewish men of spying for the Russians. The ten men were taken to the gym of a school, interrogated and tortured, and nine of them executed. The bodies were thrown into the Danube. One of the prisoners managed to escape. Her father was 33 when he was killed.

During the war, most men of her family were taken to labor camps. Her adopted father, Moshe Stern, whose family was in the diamonds and leather business, was first taken to Bergen-Belsen, and then died in a march to Berlin. Noemi and other members of her family were sent to the ghetto. She lived with her mother and paternal grandmother in the ghetto. After that, she was in safe houses, the last one owned by Raul Wallenberg, who was a Swedish diplomat in Budapest. After the war, most of the family went to Miskolc.

Her biological mother Edit remarried at the end of 1946 or the beginning of 1947 with Miklos/Nicholas Weis/Weiss/ Weisz. She was 24 or 25 at the time. Her husband Miklos had survived the camps, but his first wife and children didn't. Noemi's mother got pregnant and died in labor in September 1947. Noemi knows that Miklos Weiss later immigrated to Canada, but didn't have contact with him.

Noemi was adopted by one of her mother's sister, Ilona. The wife of one of her uncles falsified a birth certificate for her as Noemi Stern, the daughter of Ilona Salamonovitz and Moises Stern. Ilona decided to take her and her three other children to Mexico.

They went by train to Vienna and after that took another train to Paris. She and her family traveled in a small ship from France to England, and after that in a big ship, the Queen May, to New York. The member of her family who were with her in the trip to New York were: her uncle Herman and his wife; her aunt Malvina with Erika and Zoli; and her adopted mother Ilona with her three other children. In New York, a relative from the Horowitz Margareten family welcomed them. After that, the group separated. Her uncle Herman and his wife, and her aunt Malvina with Erika and Zoli went to Cuba. She and her mother Ilona and children took a train to Laredo and, after that, another train to Mexico City. They arrived to the US-Mexican border around her birthday, December 30, 1947. Her uncle Ali was waiting for them at the border.

Malvin and Zoli joined them later in Mexico. Erika, who was engaged to Uzi, a doctor, was smuggled into the US.

In Mexico City, they had an apartment in the "Acros" building, in the Glorieta Insurgentes. She does not remember much about her arrival to Mexico. She remembers one neighbor, Lehrer Goldberg, whose nickname was "El Chivito" because of his beard. He played the violin. Two months after that, in February 15, she was sent to Yavne school. She had a classmate called Rita Engler. Noemi forgot her past when she travelled to Mexico and did not remember that she had been adopted. She only knew about her past when she was 24 years old.

Her uncle Ignacio was a man of influence in Mexico and, in addition to bringing the family of Ilonka, he also brought to Mexico at least two other families from her grandfather's town: the Mogyoros and the Weinstein. Some members of the Weinstein family owned a supermarket, "Su mesa"; Ern Weinstein, who lived in Tuxpan St, in the "Colonia Roma", had an import business at his home.

Noemi got married when she was 19. She had known her husband Robert Stern since childhood because his family was also Hungarian. The whole family wanted her to marry him because they didn't want her to travel to Israel. She and her husband adopted two children:

1.) A boy, Gerry (Gerardo) Stern, who was 52 at the time of the interview and was adopted in 1969. At 16 ½ went to Israel and lived there for 21 years. At the beginning he lived with one of his uncles, Jacobo Shein. He was in the army, married Ronit, and had a son called Yonatan. He got divorced after four years and married Cathy in the US.

2.) A girl, Galia, 48 years old at the time of the interview. She was adopted from the city of Bath, England. She married an Israeli in LA when she was 21. They had three children: Ilana, and the twins, Ariela, who lives in Northern California and Esther who lives in Las Vegas. Galia divorced, remarried 13 ago, and had another daughter from her second marriage, Gaby. She lives in Idaho.

In 1969, Noemi went to Israel to visit her relatives from her biological father and from her adopted father. Both families were ultraorthodox. Her biological father's relatives lived in Bnei Brak, and the Sterns lived in Mea Shearim in Jerusalem. Her grandmother was still alive when she visited.

Noemi got divorced and, after her divorce, went to the Los Angeles because her cousin Erika lived there. She went to UCLA to get a certification as court interpreter. She was 45 years old. She met Barry and has been with him for 17 years.