

RG-50.120 #096
Clara Ma'ayan

TAPE 1

- 1.00.59 Clara Minskberg Ma'ayan was born on December 7, 1915, in Poland [Czeczub-Resha?]. Father was a Hebraist, and educator. Children of the family learned in Polish schools, but had private instruction in Hebrew and Jewish history. Father became the principal of Tarbut, a school for learning Hebrew, and gave speeches in Hebrew [especially on the anniversaries of Herzl and Bialik, on the 21 of Tammuz.]
- 3.30 Mother was born in same city. Had to leave school [when her father died at a young age] and help her mother in the store. Later, a new principal in town persuaded the mother to send her gifted daughter back to school, in a special program.
- 4.17 Clara had 2 sisters and a brother.
- 5.21 Father encouraged her to participate in the activities of the Zionist youth movement: Hanoar Hatzioni.
- 7.11 Father was Zionist, and knew much about the land of Israel.
- 7.45 Father was prominent in social welfare in their town.
- 8.57 Clara's mother.
- 11.39 Anti-Semitism reigned in the city, and in the schools, where Jewish students were better achievers.
- 13.30 Father encouraged the establishment of a Jewish school, and center for all the youth movements.
- 15.50 The movement Hanoar Hatzioni in 1926-28, versus Hashomer Hatzair [leftist]. Activities in the group.
- 29.00 Outreach of youth groups to underprivileged children.
- 33.00 The youth groups extant then.
- 45.44 Isaac Steiger.
- 48.14 The children in Clara's family: siblings. Eldest sister, Ruzia, immigrated to Israel in 19138, with a certificate.

- 52.37 Younger sister, Mala. Register to study at the Hebrew University, but the war broke out, and stayed in Europe.
- 56.00 Younger brother, Chaim died in the war.
- 57.40 Family's plans were to emigrate to Israel.
- 58.14 Usage of Hebrew public speaking in the synagogue.
- 58.48 Important characters in the city, who played a role later. Rablais Levin, Pnuelis.
- 2.01.30 Clara's mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Mother's name Rozenwasser. Mother very observant.
- 09.30 Critical standards of Clara's father: does the person know Hebrew?
- 11.10 Parents were good looking.
- 12.00 Children used to go camping for a month.
- 13.53 Mother's status in the family, and in the city.
- 16.00 Clara finished her high school studies in 1934. Left for Warsaw to study psychology and pedagogy through the intervention of her youth movement.
- 16.51 Relations with local Poles. In that town, Jews were 50% of the population.
- 18.00 After Pilsusky's death, anti-semitism grew [1935-36].
- 18.50 Attacks on the Jews, with axes, came from Clara's own neighbours. They used to drink the monthly wages in one day. Although usually neighbors were 'neighbourly', they would join the attacks against the Jews when they came.
- 20.33 Clara's studies at Pilsusky University, in Warsaw, and at the Institute for Jewish studies, next to the Great Synagogue of Warsaw. [There were no 'numoves clauses' for the career Clara chose.]
- 21.12 Professor Tadeusz Koterminsky, taught Logic.
- 21.31 In second year of studies 'desks ghetto' was instituted. [Jews had to sit on the left side.] Jewish students decided to stand during classes, rather than sit, and Koterminsky stood with them. Once, a bottle of acid was thrown at his face, but missed.

- 23.07 Exams, Koterminsky administered at his home in Povishlek [?], by the Vistule. He managed to remove Jews from the ghetto later on. Received the distinction of 'righteous gentile'.
- 23.44 Professor Tatarkevich [Philosophy] Bitvisky [Psychology], Bali [Adolescent Psychology], the latter, instrumental in bringing Clara to Korczak's orphanage.
- 24.22 The Institue for Judaic Studies demanded its students to study also at the University. Professors Moshe Shor, Osterzetter, Zolier [?], Aramaic and Hderew Grammar, Weiss for Literature. Tartakover –History of Eretz Israel. Meir Balaban, historiographer of Polish Jewry.
- 26.00 Clara's research of her family's roots, the Minzbergs.
- 28.00 The Institute's credentials gave its students the possibility to teach Judaism in high schools, and to the male students who studied Homilectcs, to become rabbis: Orieh Bauminger, Tenne. Clara received her diploma of certified teacher, with a Master's degree.
- 30.18 Sent to do practicum at Janusz Korczak's orphanage.
- 30.00 About Korczak's methods.
- 32.00 Encounter with Korczak.
- 35.20 About Korczak and the orphanage [established in 1911] [1937-1939]
- 38.56 In 1939 Clara went to a summer camp, upon completion of her work with Korczak. Anti-semitism was growing. Hitler was already in power.
- 39.16 In August, 1939, the Ribentrop – Molotov pact was signed. However, despite the fear, the summer camps took place, followed by a camp for directors [in Zakopane].
- 41.17 On Sept. 1, 1939, all men received a mobilization order.
- 41.52 They were not allowed to board the train, for being Jewish.[Germans had already entered Czeckoslovakia].
- 42.18 Return by all means of transportation. Nazis did not get into Clara's town until Sept. 9.
- 43.24 Entrance of Nazis on motorcycles into town. The shock. Slogans on Nazi trucks 'The Russian Swine, the more one gives it, the more he wants' [this, after the pact with Molotov was signed].

- 46.10 The atmosphere in the family just prior to the Nazis entrance. Plans to escape and hide. The fear was actualized.
- 48.20 Clara's father's question: leave or hide?
- 49.37 Family members were taken to forced labor in menial works.
- 50.56 Yom Kippur, 1939. Nazis took the Jews out of the synagogues and drowned them in the river. Only their prayer shawls floated.
- 51.16 In Sept., Clara, her father and brother tried to escape to the Soviet side of the border. They were caught.
- 52.00 Hanoar Hatzioni continued meeting in private homes [in October] and planned how to cross the borders [which happened in November].
- 54.17 Decrees were already published to turn over all valuables.
- 57.00 Until November, Clara had to do laundry in cold water. Corporal punishment.
- 59.52 Period of the ghetto, and work there. Ghetto was not closed yet.
- 4.01.52 Ghetto was established and enclosed in Dec. 1939.
- 02.00 Community leaders before the war. Their involvement.
- 03.11 Judenrat: advocate Kleinman, had to respond to all the orders of the Nazis.
- 06.26 The transfer to the ghetto.
- TAPE 2
- 8.00 Germans enter Clara's town. The first edicts against the Jews.
- 9.29 The bombardment of the town, at the beginning of the war, carried out by the Germans with extreme force.
- 22.00 The Polish anti-semitism.
- 22.49 October, Judenrat was established. Kleinman was at its head, his deputy was Benno Kahane.
- 24.00 Forced labor.
- 25.00 Attempts to cross border, eastward, failed.
- 27.00 Aid from the youth movement to escape town.

- 30.00 The passage to San, to the Russian side.
- 33.51 Arrival in Lvov.
- 34.00 Artek Kveller [Ma'ayan], Clara's husband's life[?]. His endangerment in L'vov.
- 35.30 Arrival in L'vov on November 21. Reunion with other youth movement leaders from all over Poland.
- 37.00 Contact with Clara's family.
- 42.00 January 1940. Arrival in Vilna. Others who arrived: shimon Bergman, Moritz Skidelsky.
- 43.59 Aiding Clara's family from Vilna.
- 44.00 Clara's father died from dysentery.
- 45.18 False I.D. documents obtained from the Japanese ambassador stationed in Vilna, and the representative from Curacao.
- 46.00 A train of refugees departs Kovno for Palestine.
- 49.35 Return to L'vov. Beginning of persecutions of the youth.
- 51.21 Beginning of Communist indoctrination.
- 52.20 Search for opposers of Communist regime.
- 54.39 Possibility of receiving Soviet citizenship. Those had to move to smaller cities, though, and find employment there.
- 57.40 Clara's wedding.
- 59.29 June 29. Soviets came for Clara.
- 5.05.00 Working in L'vov.
- 10.34 News from Clara's town: Resha. Father's death. Ghetto was completely closed. Brother was taken and shot, and buried in a common grave.
- 19.53 22 June, 1941. Bombardment of L'vov by the Germans.
- 21.08 Russians escape the next day. June 28, Germans entered L'vov.

- 23.09 Collaboration between Ukrainians and Germans.
- 24.00 Kidnapping of Jews by Ukrainians.
- 26.40 Kidnapping of Rabbi Yechezkel Levin, of L'vor, brother of Rabbi Aharon Levin of Resha, who was also taken when he came to intercede for the Jews.
- 28.10 Ukrainians came for Clara and her husband. She manages to save him.
- 31.30 Petlura Day. Pogrom.
- 33.00 Germans stood aside; didn't get their hands dirty, but encouraged the attacks.
- 33.40 The Judenraat. Or-Parnas, Hoch, Landesberg. Most were forced to become a tool for the Germans.
- 35.48 March 1942. The yellow badges.
- 36.00 The murders in June-July, 1942.
- 37.34 Ghetto was not closed at the beginning.
- 38.00 People sent to their deaths with the use of lists of the community.
- 42.00 The big 'action' of August 1942. More than 50,000 are murdered.
- 43.15 Clara was taken to a forced labor camp with her husband, to Shevartakuf [?] for 3 months.
- 47.47 Contact with her mother and sister in Rsha, just before they were taken out of the village.
- 53.54 August 1942, the huge 'actions'. Transfer to another ghetto. Mass murder at the registration station. Murder of Jewish police and ghetto Judenraat leaders, through hanging. It happened on Loketka Street. Engel and Vebke committed the hangings.
- 6.05.08 Clara and her husband hide, and survive. Renewed motivation to flee L'vor.
- 5.44 About Yanovsky camp.
- 8.00 Cooperation between youth Zionist groups.
- 10.00 Search of way out.
- 12.00 Clara's in-laws go to their death.

- 19.00 Oberlander helps Clara's family. Works in a textile plant to produce silk. Raises silk-worms. Clara helps with that.
- 22.40 Clara leaves ghetto with false I.D. She lives with a Polish woman, as a Pole. Intention to prepare the escape.
- 25.07 In ghetto, at same time, typhus was rampant. Preparations to leave L'vov, on the direction of Warsaw, include bringing Clara's mother and sister to them.
- 31.05 First leaves Clara's husband, Artek.
- 32.20 Arrival of Artek in Warsaw, suffering from typhus.
- 37.20 Clara leaves L'vov to Warsaw.
- 41.24 Clara's sister arrives to L'vov, accompanied by a Polish woman up to Pshamish. [Czerniska]
- 51.00 Clara's arrival in Warsaw. Later, her sister's too.
- 7.00.00 Life in Warsaw.
- 9.53 Arrival of Clara's mother. Her mother's Jewish observances.
- 6.29 Warsaw ghetto uprising. Clara and her family lived outside of it. Eyewitnesses.
- 10.10 Clara visits Korczak's orphanage. [Later she says she made a mistake.]
- 11.44 Clara and family are turned in as Jews. They are saved.
- 15.00 Clara visits the ghetto.
- 34.40 Need to leave the house.
- 41.26 New home. The family made a living by trading and knitting.
- 42.00 Neighbor was a Polish police officer who used to visit the ghetto. Clara's family had to leave this last place also, in the middle of the night.
- 45.00 Information gathered 40 years later.
- 52.25 New living accommodations. Situation in Warsaw. 1942-43 was worsening.
- 54.52 Contact with a professional in Skolimuv [?], near Warsaw. Moved there.

- 57.46 August 1, 1944, Polish uprising against the Germans. On that day, Clara's family was in Warsaw for some errands. They witnessed the carnage.
- 58.56 Return to Skolimuv by train.
- 8.00.00 Fate of Leon Lustig, a close friend.
- 4.21 Army Akraiova. People were pro the uprising.
- 6.24 When Soviets came, they didn't rush to help the Polish rebels.
- 8.37 The family felt that salvation was close, though. Germans became softer. Jan. 17, 1945, early morning, they saw the Germans fleeing and leaving weapons and valuables behind.
- 12.31 A Polish unit arrived in Sholimuv, to join the Soviet army.
- 13.53 Family wanted to return to Warsaw. They did. Found a 'slick' of paper [which they could sell]. Soviets detained them in the border. They fled, and were shot at.
- 18.20 Warsaw was in ruins. They went to a neighbouring city [name?] Woch [?]
- 20.22 They joined the 'Escape' movement to Israel [through Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania].
- 21.39 Arrival to village in Resha. [Remains of father were brought to Israel in 1962.]
- 25.00 May 9th, bells ringing in Czechoslovakia, announcing end of the war.
- 30.00 The Zionist activity in Romania – working there with the leaders of the Warsaw ghetto uprising: Zivie Lubetkin, and Antek Zuckerman. Also, work with Abba Kovner. The effort to unify all the different Zionist youth movements.
- 43.43 The trip to Israel, in October, on the ship Transylvania.
- 45.24 The arrival in Haifa.
- 49.00 The relationship with the Israelis on the subject of the Holocaust. The survivors' silence.
- 52.15 Education and defense until the establishment of the State of Israel.
- 54.00 Clara's family in Israel.
- 55.00 The generation after.

56.45 Improtance of survivors' testimony in the light of Holocaust denial attempts.

58.00 Clara's conclusions and beliefs.