

RG-50.120*0299

Raviv, Natan – 3 Tapes

Tape I

- 1:00 Natan was born in January of 1928 in Sölec. The population was 5000, and half were Jews. He describes his family. He had a younger sister. His father was a locksmith. The family was traditional but not very religious. He went to a cheder and then to a regular school. They talked Hungarian at home.
- 1:03 In 1938 he started high school in Bereska, but returned home when the threat of war was imminent and went to school there for two years.
- 1:07 Describes the village, his life as a child, his extended family. Shows photos.
- 1:18 Describes social life, Zionist activities and other Jewish organizations.
- 1:23 Describes relations with the non Jewish population. There was no anti-Semitism.
- 2:00 Continues to describe village life, food, climate and work conditions.
- 2:18 Describes the school, and student life. Talks about what they knew about Palestine. His aunt immigrated to Palestine.
- 2:26 More about agriculture in the area.
- 3:00 Talks about his mother and grandmother.
- 3:10 Talks about winter in the village.
- 3:13 Talks about what he read as a child.
- 3:15 In 1942 he went to Mukacheve to high school. He stayed with the Schwartz family from 1942 through 1944. He describes his life there. He attended a Jewish Zionist High School.
- 3:21 In March 1939, Hungarian soldiers who had a pact with the Germans, entered the village. Describes the Hungarian anti-Semites.
- 3:26 From 1939 through 1944 they were under Hungarian rule, until the Germans entered and anti Jewish laws were enforced and he had to leave his high school.
- 4:00 From fourth to sixth grade he went to high school with a Zionist orientation. He studied in Hebrew and Hungarian. The Rabbi of Mukacheve was anti-Zionist. He learned about Israel, its songs, and literature. Describes life at the school. They did not know what was happening in Poland.

- 4:14 He went back home in the summer. His sister contracted Polio. As a child he was not aware of the political situation. Hungarian Jews hoped that the war would not affect them.
- 4:20 Talks about the Schwartz family who he lived with while going to the Zionist High School and his happy life with them in Mukacheve.
- 5:00 Talks about what he knew about Hitler and Germany.
- 5:12 Social life as adolescent and the trauma of his sisters' illness.
- 5:18 In March 1944 the Germans entered Hungary. The high school was closed and he returned to his village, Sölec.
- 5:24 The family house was in the ghetto area. Other families joined them in the house. Describes the ghetto.
- 6:00 Describes more of the ghetto. The psychological effect of living in the ghetto and the Hungarian police and their functions. They stayed only six weeks in the ghetto.
- 6:13 In May the evacuation of the ghetto was announced. Describes his state of mind and that of his parents.
- 6:21 Describes the march to the train the reaction of their non Jewish neighbors. They gave their valuables to their maid, who sent them to Israel after the war.

Tape II

- 7:00 In June of 1944 they received orders to prepare for the transport. They were led to the train by Hungarian gendarmes.
- 7:09 Describes the terrible conditions on the cattle train.
- 7:25 They arrived at Auschwitz after three days. Describes the selection made by Josef Mengele.
- 8:00 His mother and sister were sent to death. Describes his state of mind.
- 8:08 He and his father were taken to Birkenau. Describes the disinfection, shaving, clothing, and number tattoos.
- 8:13 They were marched back to Auschwitz I and, taken to block 16A. Describes the conditions there.
- 8:19 Describes the population of the block that included Polish Jews. Talks about the Block Alteste. Describes his state of mind.
- 8:23 There was a selection by trade. His father declared that he was a locksmith and that his son was his apprentice.

- 8:26 Natan and his father were assigned to a work commando at the Schmiede Laudwirtschaft. Describes his work there.
- 9:00 Describes his life in Auschwitz between June 1944 and January 1945. The daily routine, the Appel, the electric fences and suicides. The block Alteste was a Czech sadist.
- 9:10 Describes a block of Jewish women who served as prostitutes.
- 9:12 Describes his work station. His father made luxury items for the camp commander.
- 9:15 Describes the food in the camp, the hunger and how it took over all of their thoughts.
- 10:00 Describes his relationship with other prisoners and his own close relationship with his father.
- 10:05 He saw people commit suicide on the electric fence and had thoughts of doing the same.
- 10:09 Describes punitive hangings.
- 10:10 Describes Block II, the hospital.
- 10:16 Describes religious holidays in the camp.
- 10:19 The psychological changes in people in camp.
- 10:22 Talks about rumors on the underground that he heard.
- 10:24 Describes the functions of the Appels to count and select out the sick to be killed.
- 11:00 There were rumors of the approaching front and the evacuation of the camp on January 18, 1945. Describes the march in sever winter to Gross Rosen and from there through Bavaria to Dachau.
- 11:11 He arrived in Dachau in the spring of 1945. Describes life in the camp, in Block 30. Nobody worked. The SS were gone and the guards were either old or very young.
- 11:16 Describes dysentery in the camp and many died. His father became sick and died.
- 11:21 On April 26, 1945 the American Army liberated them. Describes distribution of food and clothes. They were organized in groups according to country of origin.
- 11:25 In May of 1945 he went by train to his village, which was in the Russian zone, hoping to find family members. He was taken in by an old family friend.
- 12:00 His aunt who was a doctor had survived Auschwitz and lived in Mukacheve. He joined her there but wanted to go to Israel. He went to Budapest and was taken by the Jewish Brigade to a school where others prepared to go to Israel.

- 12:05 From Budapest he went to Austria to Judenburg in the British zone. They were taken by train to Milan and then with the Shomer Hazair group to a villa near Rome. They were well taken care of by the United States Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRA) and remained there for a couple of months.
- 12:09 Describes life in the villa. At the time he was seventeen years old. Later they found out that the British would not allow them into Israel.
- 12:15 The camps were about to be closed by UNRA and they were given Brazilian papers. In 1946 his group of 48 went by boat to Brazil. When they got to Rio after 30 days, they were not allowed to disembark because their papers had become invalid.
- 12:18 Natan refused to go to Cyprus and be in another camp. Instead he continued by boat to Buenos Aires. Perons' private doctor was Jewish and convinced Peron to accept them.
- 12:23 The Jewish community accepted them well and he lived there until 1947. Describes his life and his work.
- 12:26 He kept in touch with Ha-Shomer Hazair and after one year, in 1948 he went with a small group to Israel.

Tape III

- 13:00 Talks at length about his feelings during the Holocaust and in the present. The long lasting effect of his traumatic experiences and his struggle to come to terms with them. His continuing doubts whether it had been worth while to stay alive. His period of deep depression and of not belonging.
- 13:12 He studied at the Hebrew University, got a Masters of Arts and became a history teacher.
- 13:17 Describes again the march out of Auschwitz on January 18, 1945 and the conflict between wanting to give up and wanting to survive.
- 13:20 On the day of liberation, he saw his fathers' corpse thrown on a heap of corpses. He felt guilty about surviving and could not rejoice.
- 13:25 The religious people in the camp prayed, but he could not believe in God. For him God died in Auschwitz.
- 14:00 Talks about the frequent nightmares he has to this date and gives reasons for not talking about his feelings.
- 14:07 In 1988 he went by himself to Auschwitz and relived his time in the camp.
- 14:17 He visited two more times and describes his experiences.
- 14:22 He went to Dachau with 25 students of his high school class. Describes his experience.

- 15:00 Continues about his visits in Auschwitz and Dachau. Natan had difficulty in sharing his feelings even with his children.
- 15:05 In August 1948 he arrived in Israel and went to kibbutz Negba. Describes arriving in Haifa and then going with his group from Argentina to Negba. He fought in the War of Independence joined Zahal. He was 20 at the time.
- 15:11 Describes meeting and staying with his aunt in Herzlia.
- 15:15 Describes Negba and his group of 15 from Argentina. Describes Negba under siege during the war. After the war ended he and his group moved to kibbutz Eilon for one year and then built a new kibbutz named Gesher.
- 15:24 Describes his work in the kibbutz, where he remained for nine years. He married in 1953, left the kibbutz and had a son and daughter.
- 16:00 Describes his new life and his thought and feelings about his past experiences. He feels that one ought to be strong in all ways and acknowledge the right of others to exist side by side.