

We were talking about your feelings about Israel.

Yes. My feeling is that every Jew must be interested in the survival of Israel. What is the best way of doing this. It's another thing to debate. But I have given that much to my children, at least to my second daughter and to my son, that they are very much interested in the fate of Israel.

My second daughter, by the way-- she was so enamored of Israel when we spent there a sabbatical year in 1964 to 1965 at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot that she came back to finish her high school diploma, and the day after that, she flew back to Israel.

And she studied there at the Hebrew University, and she stayed there when the six-day war came in 1966, although we have been strongly advised by my wife's father to save her to let her come out when it was time. Then it was too late even if he would have, and she was there. And she had her experiences there.

Her apartment-- in the basement apartment was the shelter for the whole house, the shelter there, and thank God the six-day war was successful. And she led a free life, and she came back to this country to study.

And in the meantime, we visited with her and with her Israel, and we visit also Israel-- no, with her and her husband we visited Israel, and I visited many times with my wife. So what else do you want to know? About--

--your experiences with Leo Baeck Institute.

Leo Baeck Institute-- yeah. No, not Leo Baeck Institute, with Leo Baeck. I knew Rabbi Leo Baeck in Munich. He was a good friend of my father and, even more though, of my father's sister, Aunt Clem, Clementine.

And we saw him at home, my father's home and my aunt's home. And we didn't see him frequently, but I knew him. And he was a wonderful man. He was deported to Theresienstadt, and he consoled my aunt, who was also in Theresienstadt. And he survived. My aunt did not.

And later on-- what else do I know? The son of my teacher in religious school way back in Munich-- he was deported to Poland.

Well, I don't know what else you want to know. Leo Baeck-- I am a member of the Leo Baeck Institute because I like to have their-- I think they do a good job by and large, and they also have collections of my family's painting-- my wife's-- my aunt, French aunt, and my uncle are both artists, and they collected in their-- they have in their collection paintings of theirs.

That has nothing to do with the immigration per se that has also-- my aunt has a portrait here, the Portrait Gallery in the Smithsonian Institution.

Is this your aunt, Clementina? Is this your aunt, Clementina?

No, that's my French aunt.

Oh. And what was her name?

Suzanne [? Carvalho ?] [? Schulen. ?] She is born [? Carvalho, ?] and that's of Jewish interest. Her great-grandfather, [? Carvalho, ?] was the founder of an organization, Alliance Israélite Universelle. It's a French organization. He's a Sephardic Jew from a old, long, very educated Sephardic family. And their daughter, his daughter, married my uncle from Munich.

Then when I knew the son of that founder-- we have in the-- in some catalogs you find the painting-- in the [? Philo-- ?] do you know the [? Philo ?] catalog? It was a catalog-- a Jewish lexicon. It probably doesn't exist anymore. I have an old

edition. And there are paintings of this founder of the Alliance IsraA©lite Universelle. Their daughter was, however, a daughter of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother, so she is half-Jewish.

Did you say you had told me that your brother had begun the Rashi Institute?

Yes, my father founded the Rashi Association. The Rashi Association is an association that my brother founded with the purpose of doing something to preserve Jewish historical monuments in Europe or in Near Eastern countries.

He was-- the Rashi Association was instrumental in having the old Worms Synagogue re--

--constructed?

--re-created. And this Rashi Association does, in itself, not have much money, but they support the-- urging local Jewish organizations in Europe, also in Italy, to give some money, and they urge the German government, the state governments, and the federal government in Germany, which is not Jewish, to contribute to that in their program for preservation of historical monuments.

And they got some help for not only the Worms Synagogue. They did a renewal of a lot of the Jewish Ghetto in Venice, Italy, and they are working-- hope to get some more money for the university-- for the synagogue in Pisa, I believe.

Well, if you are interested, I can give you the program-- yeah, I know-- of the Rashi Association. You want to give you some-- I can give you some-- the last survey or program.

Is there anything else that you wanted to mention about?

No, I don't think-- I think we are fairly much through. But I want to say, please come back to me with specific questions. I search them, and I give you an absolute correct answer. I can have made some mistakes this time.

Thank you very--

Bye-bye.

Thank you very much.

This has been Gail Schwartz interviewing Dr. Hans Cahnmann about his experiences as a survivor of the Nazi Holocaust. This interview will be included as a valuable contribution to the Oral History Library of the Oral History Project, Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington.