

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Oral History Program

Old China Hands Project

INTERVIEWEE: NADIA KATZ
INTERVIEWER: Rose Horowitz
DATE: February 21, 1990

RH: This is February 21, 1990. We are in the Jewish Home for the Aged in the Reseda district of Los Angeles, California. My name is Rose Horowitz and I am interviewing Mrs. Nadia Katz for the Oral History Project of the Old China Hands, with a copy to the Skirbal Museum.

Mrs. Katz, where you were born?

NK: I was born in Russia.

RH: Which city?

NK: Near Baku. It's called Timorkhanshura of the Dagistansky oblast.

RH: And what year was that?

NK: I was born in 1900.

RH: Right at the turn of the century?

NK: Yes.

RH: How old were you when you and your family left Baku?

NK: I was six years old.

RH: So you had not started school?

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NK: No.

RH: What did your parents do in Baku? Did your father have a business?

NK: No, he had a factory, a fruit factory. They were putting fruit in cans and that's what he was selling.

RH: Did you have any sisters and brothers who were born there, too?

NK: Yes, I had three brothers and a twin sister. And one was the oldest, he was ten years older than I am.

RH: And you all left in 1906 then?

NK: Right.

RH: Why did you leave in 1906?

NK: Well, as far as my father, I remember, told my mother, there were pogroms, they were killing Jews.

RH: Was there a pogrom right in Baku or were you afraid because the pogroms were near?

NK: Well, it was near and my father was scared because Cossacks were running on their horses and just beating up Jews with their . . . whatever they had.

RH: Whips?

NK: Yes. So he just gathered the family and decided to . . .

RH: But your parents, your brothers, sisters and you, none of you were actually in a pogrom itself? You got away before?

NK: No, right.

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RH: Very good. Now, how did you leave? Did you leave on a coach, on a train, on a boat? Baku is on the Caspian.

NK: We left on a train.

RH: You left on a train? Going which way?

NK: Well, we went straight to Manchuria. It's called Manchukuo now.

RH: You went on the Trans Siberian Railroad?

NK: Yes, right.

RH: All the way?

NK: Yes.

RH: But you didn't go on to Vladivostok. You got off the train in Manchuria, which was China.

NK: Yes, right.

RH: And what do you remember of Manchuria? What was so different? You were six years old, you must remember something.

NK: Well, yes, I do.

RH: What was different between that and Russia?

NK: Well, the difference was that the Chinese people were living there. And Russia occupied at that time China for a hundred years. Of course, there were Russian schools and they were still doing what they wanted to do but not exactly what they could do in Russia.

RH: The schools that you went to were in . . .

NK: A Russian school.

RH: A Russian school.

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NK: Right.

RH: Was it a Jewish school or a mixed Russian, Christian and Jewish?

NK: No, they were mixed, Russians, Christians and Jews.

RH: Did you use any other language there other than Russian? Did you speak, for instance, some Yiddish at home?

NK: Always. We always spoke Yiddish.

RH: At home?

NK: At home, right.

RH: And at school you learned to read and write in Russian?

NK: Right.

RH: And all your friends were either Jewish or Christian or . . . ?

NK: Mixed.

RH: Mixed, very nice. Did you finish your schooling in that city or did you move again?

NK: No, I finished in Manchuria and then we left. Why we left in 1917, because it was . . . came the revolution in Russia and we were worried about the Communists coming to Manchuria. Also, there were Mongols which were killing Jews in Mongolia, which was very near Manchuria. And we decided to leave for Harbin.

RH: What business did your father do first? And then, what did he do in Harbin?

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NK: In Manchuria he was working on the railway. I don't know exactly what he was doing there but I know on the railway. Then he opened a little store.

RH: Selling what?

NK: A grocery store.

RH: In Harbin?

NK: In Harbin. I was at that time fifteen or sixteen and I was helping in the store.

RH: After school or did you leave school?

NK: After school. Oh, no, after school.

RH: Now, in Harbin did you go to the same kind of mixed school that was . . .

NK: Well, in Harbin I didn't go to school at all.

RH: You just worked in the store?

NK: I just helped our parents as much as I could in the store.

RH: Did you learn any Chinese in Harbin or only Russian and Yiddish still?

NK: Well, in Harbin most of the Chinese spoke Russian.

RH: So you could function in Russian.

NK: Absolutely.

RH: Then you left Harbin in 1922 for Shanghai.

NK: Right.

RH: Why?

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NK: Well, my father thought . . . They had their friends and my father thought that I would meet somebody there, because he didn't like the young men I met in Harbin. (chuckling)

RH: So he took the whole family because of you?

NK: No, no, he only sent me there to visit my friends.

RH: In Shanghai?

NK: In Shanghai. When I came there I met my husband, who was a wonderful, nice young man, and we fell in love. Three months later we were married. Of course, my father came to see whether he would approve. That was the old times. We would listen to our parents. And he was very happy.

RH: Good. Can we stop for just a minute?

NK: Yes.

(tape turned off)

RH: Mrs. Katz, could you now tell me a little something about your husband? Was he from Russia, too? How did he come to Shanghai? What was he doing there? Tell us about him, please.

NK: Yes, my husband came from Minsk and his father was a very religious man. He decided to go . . . I don't remember exactly the place he went to sell tallesim [Jewish prayer shawls]. I think it was in Bombay, now, I remember. There he got cholera and he died a young man. So my husband and his brother and . . .

RH: Their mother?

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NK: My mother-in-law, they lived together, of course, and my husband started to work very young, when he was seventeen years old. Then he joined Imperial Chemical [Industries, Ltd.], in those days, ICI, and he was very happy then. They were happy with him, as a matter of fact.

RH: Was this in India still or in China?

NK: No, that was in China.

RH: When did he come to China? Oh, his father died in China?

NK: No, he came from Russia to Japan. He went to Japan first. And from Japan, when he was about seven or eight years old, they went to China.

RH: Then he went to school in China?

NK: He went to school in China.

RH: I would like to stop and say that I remember the stories about that because my mother told me she was at school with your husband.

NK: Right.

RH: So it's very nice that we know. Now, when he finished school, then he went to work for ICI, which was a British company in China.

NK: Right.

RH: Which meant your husband went to school in English, not in Russian?

NK: Yes, English. No, not in Russian. No, he didn't speak Russian.

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RH: So, now, you came to Shanghai, you married him, you were speaking Russian and he knew Russian because his family came from Minsk. When and where did you . . .

NK: He spoke English. He didn't speak Russian.

RH: He didn't speak Russian at all?

NK: No, he didn't speak Russian. We had to speak Yiddish.

RH: So when and where did you learn English?

NK: In that time right there in Shanghai.

RH: It came, it just naturally . . .

NK: It just came naturally.

RH: Okay, now where did you live in Shanghai? First, when you were married.

NK: When we were married, that was in Hongkew.

RH: Okay, which part of Hongkew?

NK: No, not Hongkew. No, we never lived in Hongkew. That was where?

RH: In French Town?

NK: No, no, not French Town. Just a minute, I can't remember exactly the street.

(tape turned off)

RH: You can't remember the street?

NK: I can't remember the street.

RH: But you remember the kind of house. Was it an apartment, a house?

NK: It was a big house, a very big house.

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RH: In an alley, like the courtyards they had in Shanghai, the terraces?

NK: Behind us lived the doctor--I've forgotten his name. Oh, for goodness sakes.

RH: It doesn't matter. Well, anyway, _____.

NK: I can't remember the street now. [Dixwell Road]

RH: You can't remember the street, but you started speaking English to neighbors and friends and you picked up English in Shanghai.

NK: I picked it up in no time, yes.

RH: You had to learn to read and write English? The writing is different from Russian.

NK: Well, but I'm writing English just as Russian.

RH: Yes, it just came?

NK: It just came, right, yes.

RH: Very good. Now you had three children?

NK: I had three children.

RH: Could you tell us their names, the oldest, the middle and the youngest?

NK: The oldest is Moses.

RH: Your son.

NK: And he is a civil engineer and he is doing very well now. He was working for the city until he was sixty. He retired and he got his check and now he's got a business with about seven people working for him.

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RH: Very nice, and your second?

NK: That's my son. My daughter, Reeva, which you know, my second is Reeva.

RH: Yes.

NK: And my third one is Mary.

RH: I know Mary.

NK: Yes, she is also happily married and they have a . . .

RH: So you had three children.

NK: Three children, right.

RH: In Shanghai.

NK: In Shanghai.

RH: And they are all now in the Los Angeles area, so you see your children and your grandchildren nearby.

NK: Absolutely, it's wonderful.

RH: That is a wonderful thing.

NK: Yes, and I see them two or three times a week.

RH: That is beautiful. Now, tell us what living was like in Shanghai. Did you have servants?

NK: In Shanghai we had five servants. Now, there is another thing that I want to tell you. After I got married, I was very bored, you know, just to be with the children, so I joined . . . At that time, I started to work for Kadima [Jewish welfare organization]. Kadima was _____.

RH: Okay.

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NK: That I got from them when we went around the world trip for eight months.

RH: All right, now, to come back to one thing I forgot to ask you. How did you come from Harbin to Shanghai? Did you come by train?

NK: The train.

RH: All the way?

NK: Yes, all the way, train, yes.

RH: All the way by train, very nice. And where did you move from that first place you stayed? Were all your children born there?

NK: All my children were born there, yes.

RH: And they went to school in Shanghai?

NK: They went to school in Shanghai, yes.

RH: Your daughter told me once that one of the places you lived was actually in the Bridge House Apartment. Can you tell me about that?

NK: Bridge House, that was the second house.

RH: That was the second house.

NK: Yes.

RH: Very good. Do you remember roughly what year you moved in and what it was like? This is important.

NK: Bridge House we moved in when it started . . . the war.

RH: In 1932 or 1937 or which one?

NK: It would have been . . . I think it was . . .

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RH: How old were the children?

NK: In 1937, I believe.

RH: The 1937 war?

NK: Yes.

RH: And you stayed in Bridge House. Did you have a big apartment?

NK: A very big apartment.

RH: Which floor?

NK: Not only an apartment, but a big . . . what do you call, tennis court.

RH: For yourselves?

NK: No, for all the people there. It was a tremendous building.

RH: Describe the building, because it is an important one in the Shanghai story.

NK: It was a very big building, not far from the post office.

RH: On the other side of the creek? On the north side of the creek?

NK: I can't remember exactly where it was. But, anyway, it was a tremendous building with a tennis court. And during the war, the Japanese kicked out everybody and they took over the place.

RH: Is that when you had to move from Bridge House?

NK: Yes.

RH: Is that when you moved to Tifeng Road, to the Yue Tuck Apartments?

NK: Right, the Yue Tuck Apartments.

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RH: That was very convenient because the schools were nearby for the children.

NK: Right.

RH: Now, tell me how you felt . . . You were involved with Kadima. What other organizations were you and your husband involved with? Either Jewish or non-Jewish.

NK: I'll tell you, everything was Jewish. I was involved in the Shanghai . . . What do they call it? Oh, God, why didn't I bring the cup? The Jewish community, it would help people that used to come from Russia.

RH: The Benevolent Society?

NK: It's the Benevolent Society. _____.

RH: Yes. What about HIAS [Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society]? Were you involved with HIAS?

NK: No, not in HIAS but in Kadima. In Kadima we were collecting money for Israel.

RH: That's right. And was your husband involved with B'nai B'rith?

NK: No, not B'nai B'rith. B'nai B'rith at that time I don't remember.

RH: What about the polyclinic or the shelter house? Were you involved with any of those?

NK: Well, I used to go and visit all the sick people. They used to come in our . . . Yes, the Shanghai Hebrew Relief Society . . .

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RH: That's right, the Ladies Benevolent . . . right.

NK: Yes, that's right, that's where I belonged.

RH: That's where you belonged and you were involved.

NK: Yes, and Kadima, that was two. They used to come in a group from Russia and everywhere and we used to help them.

RH: Now, in 1937, when the Japanese invaded for the second time . . .

NK: Yes?

RH: In 1932 they first came. Then they went back a little bit and they came back in 1937. What happened to you and your family?

NK: Well, my husband lost his job because ICI . . . you know, they closed the British firm and they moved out. And then whatever [savings] we had, we were living on it.

RH: This was in 1937?

NK: That was already . . . What time was that?

RH: Or 1941?

NK: No, that was in 1937 when the Japanese invaded.

RH: Yes, the Japanese invaded at that time. And there was the bombing. Did it affect you?

NK: Right. No, it didn't affect us. But the Japanese, we were scared of them, and I'll never forget all the _____. And they said if anybody has money they were going to take it away or put you in jail. And I had some American dollars _____ know how much. And I went and put everything in the toilet. _____. I was scared of the Japanese.

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RH: You flushed it down the toilet?

NK: I flushed it down, all the few dollars we had, a thousand or less or more, I don't know. I don't remember the amount, too many years. And I flushed it all in the toilet. _____.

RH: When did you go around the world?

NK: I'll tell you that exactly. That was in 1929. I had at that time Reeva and my son, two children, and we were entitled to get six months because we got a little later. So they gave us eight months to travel around the world. We went via America and we went to England, France, Italy, Switzerland and to Palestine. We were there a couple of weeks in Palestine.

RH: And then you came back to China?

NK: Then we came back via the Suez Canal to China.

RH: So you went right around the world.

NK: Yes, absolutely, eight months.

RH: Did you think then that you would move and live in some of these other cities?

NK: Well, China was very free after that and it was nice, so we didn't think about it, no.

RH: Okay. Now, in 1941 when the big war started and there was no longer a settlement, what happened to you and your family?

NK: Well, _____ that my son was going to college. He could still go to school. And the children . . . But it was very frightening. Once, when we went around the world trip, my husband got through the office a French passport. They didn't

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want us to travel with a Russian passport. And with this passport, when we came back they told us, because my husband wasn't in the military in France, so they took away the passport, they stamped it, but they gave it back. And that was lucky.

RH: In other words, you had French traveling papers and you had full nationality.

NK: Yes, but it was like a passport. In any case, they gave it back and I was keeping it. When this happened, when the Japanese came, on the streets when you walked they stopped you and wanted to see who you are.

RH: Right.

NK: So, of course, I took out my British passport and they didn't understand from A to Z how to read. They saw French, they were bowing to me, because . . . you understand.

RH: Very nice. Now, just before that . . .

NK: That was lucky.

RH: Just before that, you had a lot of German, Austrian, Czechoslovakian and Polish Jews come, running away from Hitler. Do you remember anything about that?

NK: I remember a lot.

RH: Could you tell me what you remember?

NK: Yes, I'll tell you. They used to come to my house. I had an open house, I could say. Then the school was not far. Their children couldn't go sometimes because it was closed. They

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used to come to my house, which was always an open house. And I'll never forget, there was another little woman _____ make my children remember. And she said it's her birthday. So we decided, the families, to make it a birthday. Two days later she came, she said again, "It's my birthday today." So we realized that something was wrong with her head. A lot of them were so depressed and so sick, so we helped as much as we could. I used to go to see them and help them.

(tape turned off)

RH: Now, there was something you wanted to tell me, a story, also?

NK: Well, I'll tell you. There was a family that came and they had three children.

RH: Just like you?

NK: Yes, and they didn't have enough . . . where to put them and look after them. So there was a little girl, she was three years old. I was keeping her a whole year in my house.

RH: At your own expense?

NK: At my expense. Of course, I kept her in my house, dressed her up and everything. And then there was a girl of sixteen years, she was a couple months at my place. And what happened to the little girl? You'll never guess what happened. One day, when we were in the United States here, when I came in 1951, one day, the bell rings. I opened the door and I thought, oh, my, and I called her by the name and she said, "No, that's me." She came from San Francisco, that girl. She

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had a little girl of her own and she came with her to see me. She heard about it from her mother. They lived in San Francisco. That was the biggest thing that could happen to me, you know?

RH: That's beautiful, very beautiful.

NK: I just couldn't believe my own eyes. And that's what I _____.

RH: Did you have any difficulty speaking to them or did you use Yiddish again? When the refugees first came.

NK: Well, I spoke to them. They spoke a little of this and that and I spoke to them in Yiddish, of course.

RH: You spoke to them in Yiddish.

NK: Yes.

RH: Did you speak to your children in Yiddish?

NK: Well, my mother was living with me, and, of course, I spoke Yiddish and Russian.

RH: And the children picked it up from her?

NK: The children picked it up, yes. They speak Russian, they speak Jewish and English and French.

RH: And Chinese?

NK: And Chinese, yes. Of course, I didn't learn Chinese because I couldn't, you know, absorb it because the servants all spoke English. So I couldn't absorb so much the Chinese. I knew a little.

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RH: So you never really spoke in Chinese, just a few words here and there.

NK: Yes, just a few words.

RH: Okay, when you went out, how did you go? Did you go out by rickshaw, by pedicab, by bus, by tram? Which way did you go out?

NK: I was terribly upset when I came to Shanghai when I saw the rickshaws. I couldn't believe that I would sit and somebody would run and carry me, but you get used to it. I used to do it, I used to sit in the rickshaw and go wherever I went. Of course, then we had buses. We used to go by bus, also.

RH: Okay, now, after the war ended, do you remember how . . . the day it started, Pearl Harbor Day, and the day it ended? Can you tell me what you remember of those two days?

NK: Well, it was a terrible shock. All of a sudden bombs were flying and rickshaws were running, a couple of people were killed and we were terribly, terribly upset. Then, of course, the Japanese came in. There wasn't a person that was not upset and not worried about what was going to happen with them.

RH: I remember.

NK: It was a terrible thing, it was awful. You know that, you have been there.

RH: Right. Now, what was your feeling when the war was finally over? Oh, before that, let me ask you, a lot of the Russian

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Jews like you and a lot of the White Russian refugees went and got Soviet papers. Did you ever do that or did you even consider it?

NK: That is a very interesting question. I went and I got a _____. When I went to Israel, they told me to take a Soviet passport. They gave me it and I signed it and I took a Soviet passport and went to Israel. I have a sister in Israel, I don't know whether she is alive, she is my twin, and I came to the consulate once and asked, and I said, "I would like to know where is my sister." Because she told me many years ago don't write, I had problems.

RH: What happened to your sister? She stayed in Harbin?

NK: She was in Harbin.

RH: And then what happened?

NK: She got married and she went to Russia.

RH: She went back to Russia after the Soviets came in?

NK: After the Soviets came in, yes.

RH: So you didn't know what happened to her?

NK: At that time, everything was all right and then it started to be the Russians became very strict and they didn't want we should correspond. So she wrote to me, "Don't write to me, don't send me packages," and that was that. Anyway, when I told them . . . Why do you want it? What can I tell them why I wanted to know where my sister is? I kept quiet and I went away. But a very interesting thing happened. When we had to

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go from Israel and I think they told me there, "Give your passport away." The Israeli consulate told me, "Give your passport away and we'll give you a laissez passer, they were called. So I went to the consulate.

RH: This was the Russian consulate in Shanghai or in Tel Aviv?

NK: No, no, in Tel Aviv. So when we had to come to America in 1951, so he says, "Why do you want to give your passport back?" I said, "Well, I didn't want to when we were going to America and they told me not to tell." The Israeli consulate told me not to say anything. I said, "Well, because my husband is waiting for me there and we want to be Israelis." So what is he, a spy? And I kept my mouth shut. He tore the passport and that was it. I went and I got a laissez passer.

RH: From the Israelis?

NK: From the Israeli _____. So what happened when I came to the States, I found out another couple of ladies had the same thing. They came to the Russian consulate and the consulate asked them why did you want to give away the passport and go to America. I didn't say I'm going to America. _____ going to America. Why do you want to give away your passport? So she says, "Well, the consulate told me." So that Russian consul called up the American consulate and gave him hell.

RH: _____ in Israel.

NK: And do you know, in Israel two people could not come here for years because of that.

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RH: Because of their papers?

NK: So sometimes I think maybe _____ and I didn't tell him that.

RH: All right, let me ask you, Mrs. Katz, you said all these years you never saw your sister again.

NK: No.

RH: Not until today, no contact, nothing?

NK: No.

RH: What about the other brothers and sisters? Did any of them come to Shanghai, too? One came, I know for sure.

NK: Yes, _____ came, the one that's this, and the other brother died in Australia.

RH: He went to Australia?

NK: Yes, and the other brother died in Russia.

RH: So two went back to Russian then; your twin sister and one brother went back to Russia.

NK: Yes, and died there.

RH: So, as far as your sisters and brothers, you were spread around the world.

NK: My older sister I know died and she told me she did find my sister. She sent me a picture but I couldn't correspond with them, and then I heard she died, my elder sister. The other one I don't know.

RH: Yes, your eldest sister died. Okay, and you left Shanghai in 1949?

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NK: In 1949, yes.

RH: You went to Israel for about two years?

NK: Two years, right.

RH: And then you got your permit to come in to the United States?

NK: Right.

RH: And then you came here. How did you come here? Oh, tell me how you went to Israel because you said you went across

. . .

NK: We went to Israel by boat.

RH: From Shanghai directly?

NK: Directly, through America.

RH: In other words, you came to America?

NK: Yes.

RH: And then how did you cross America?

NK: Well, we were in Ellis Island.

RH: You went on a sealed train across . . .

NK: We went to Ellis Island, we were there, on a train, and then after that, waiting for awhile, we went on a boat to Israel.

RH: Okay, now, to come back from Israel, did you come on a boat?

NK: Coming back we came on a boat also, yes.

RH: All the way to New York?

NK: Yes.

RH: And then you came across on a train?

NK: Then we came on a train, right.

RH: So you didn't go by plane?

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NK: No, that time we didn't fly.

RH: You didn't fly much?

NK: No.

RH: So when you came here, you finally settled here. Were all your children here already?

NK: Well, only Reeva was here because Reeva did not go to Israel. She went to study. You know, when all the boys and girls in Shanghai wanted to go and study here, and she said, "Well, they are going, I would like to go." "Go," I said, "go ahead." At that time she already had some kind of a degree and she came here.

RH: She had gone to Saint John's first in Shanghai?

NK: Saint John's, right.

RH: And then she came here to Berkeley?

NK: Yes, she was a brilliant student.

RH: She came to UC Berkeley or UCLA?

NK: UCLA, right.

RH: She came to UCLA.

NK: Right.

RH: And Reeva is a musician, a very talented musician.

NK: She teaches about twenty or thirty children, Chinese, Koreans

. . .

RH: To play music.

NK: Yes.

RH: She's a music teacher.

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NK: Yes, but she graduated in something else. She was a biologist, she worked here in a hospital.

RH: And then she decided to teach music.

NK: To be home with her children.

RH: Now, Reeva is interested in music. You told me once that your son had a hearing problem. How was the transposition between one who was so gifted with music and the other one who really couldn't hear? Did you have any problems there?

NK: I'll tell you, my child was born deaf, and I didn't know it at . . .

RH: Totally deaf?

NK: Well, he couldn't hear, yes. That's what he's doing now, by the way.

RH: Yes, I know what he's doing and I think you can be very proud of both of them.

NK: Yes, I'm very proud. So what happened actually, in school the headmistress told me one day, she said, "Take your child away because the children are beating him up because he can't hear." I said no.

RH: Now which school was this, the public school?

NK: This was the public school.

RH: The northern school?

NK: The public school.

RH: The one in Hongkew, the northern school, or the other one?

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NK: No, not in Hongkew. Here in the public school. It was on .

. .

RH: On Tifeng Road?

NK: Tifeng Road, yes. So, anyway, I told her, "Look, I want him to be with children and don't worry about it. I'll make peace between the children." I went and bought them chocolate cake, whatever it is, I bribed them all. They became friends with my son, you see? Then, also, he had a lot of help. As a matter of fact, there was one teacher and he was . . .

RH: Do you remember the name of the teacher?

NK: From Israel, I remember very well.

RH: What was the name?

NK: His name was Sefardi. He was an Israeli, he came from Israel here to teach, and I found out and I took him to help my son. He used to go out with him on the streets and tell him this is a car, this is this, this is that, and this way he helped him. You know, I had in my house teachers. One came in, the other came out, a Chinese teacher, a French teacher, _____.

RH: All to work with your son, to teach him to speak?

NK: With my son, with my other children. Reeva had a French teacher, a Chinese teacher.

RH: Yes, I remember that.

NK: I was teaching them as much as I could.

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RH: Very good. So, in the end, everybody worked out fine. Now, you and your husband lived very comfortably here in Los Angeles, until you lost him.

NK: Absolutely.

RH: Some years later, you decided to move into this home and settle here.

NK: Yes.

RH: Are you comfortable and happy now?

NK: I'll tell you, I'm very happy. Because happy means you know what? It's how you think what you want. Like people here complain about the food and I don't find it bad. They don't like this, they give you something else. And besides, this is not the most important thing in my life. You see, that part of it I can go around. I can walk, which I love to walk, and nobody is going to throw me down and take my purse or do something to me and I like it.

RH: In other words, you feel safe and secure here.

NK: Absolutely. And my children were stunned, they didn't want to hear. I love my children too much and I wouldn't want to be with them, if they should baby me, you know. After all, they have their own lives.

RH: So you came here and make your own life here.

NK: Absolutely.

KATZ

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RH: Mrs. Katz, this has been a real delight. I want to thank you very, very much. This is something that will stay with all of us for a great number of years and we thank you.

NK: The street, I know where I lived. Dixwell Road.

RH: Good for you! You remembered. Now that was on the Hongkew side.

NK: Dixwell Road, yes.

RH: You stayed in Dixwell Road.

NK: Right.

RH: Then you went to Bridge House?

NK: Right.

RH: And then you came to Tifeng Road, which was very close to where we lived in Shanghai, so we used to see you there.

NK: Right. That's right.

RH: And my mother recognized you because she knew your husband from school.

NK: Right. _____.

RH: But even here in Los Angeles, you were involved with Jewish _____.

NK: _____. Oh, yes, I worked all the time. I'm still. I belong here to four groups.

RH: Tell me about them. We have a few more minutes on the tape, tell me about them.

NK: I belong to Hadassah, I belong to Na'amat, which I'm a life member, and I belong to Mitzva Club.

KATZ

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RH: Good.

NK: And I belong to the place called Kaplan, I forget the first name, which money goes all to the home.

RH: This home?

NK: Yes.

RH: That's beautiful. So you were connected to the home before you came here.

NK: Absolutely. Well, no, to the home I wasn't connected. I became a member here. But all this, the others . . .

RH: The other three you were [involved in] for a great number of years here in Los Angeles.

NK: Yes, right.

RH: And you had no difficulty living here without servants and you had no difficulty finding your way around?

NK: Oh, no.

RH: You adjusted.

NK: I adjusted because I used to love to come in the kitchen and see what they were doing, sometimes help them with something.

RH: So you did your own things.

NK: Absolutely.

RH: And were happy about it.

NK: I started from Israel, because they were there when I came.

RH: It was difficult.

NK: You had to cook them a little meal, you know, _____.

RH: _____.

KATZ

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NK: Yes. Anyhow, life has been good to me. I had a marvelous husband.

RH: I think you're a marvelous person.

NK: And good children.

RH: And you have a wonderful family. Thank you for sharing your lives with us.

NK: It was my pleasure.

(taped turned off)

RH: You are telling me a story about your first apartment on Dixwell Road and it's so interesting, I would like you to go back and tell me again about the rickshaw.

NK: Yes, I went with the rickshaw and my husband explained to the cook who told them, "Tell him to go to such and such a place." It was where he lived, to come at five o'clock. So he told them in Chinese to the rickshaw and I was listening and I remember very well the way he told them. "Ih-pah-sseh-zuh-loh," is in Chinese.

RH: One hundred and sixty-four.

NK: Dixwell _____. So he was traveling all around, he couldn't find the place. An Englishman was standing and I said, "Would you please tell me . . ." and I repeated it exactly the way the Chinaman said. "Ih-pah-sseh-zuh-loh, Dixwell _____." I remembered later that I was talking in Chinese, but the Englishman did not laugh and he told them exactly where to go.

RH: He understood the Chinese?

KATZ

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NK: He understood. But the funniest thing, when I came and I told my husband, he laughed so much. He said, "You know, you told him in Chinese, not in English." (laughter)

RH: What difference does it make if you got there? So you were very happy about it.

NK: Yes, I was really happy that I could get there.

RH: That's beautiful. Thank you for sharing it with us.

END OF INTERVIEW