

Rina Nezer
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Summary

Rina wasn't a part of the underground activity, she moved to Israel in April 1939. In her interview she talks about her close friend Gusta Dawidson-Draenger, and shortly talks about Simek and Dolek.

Rina and Gusta were both born and raised in Krakow. Rina first heard of Gusta when she (Gusta) was 13. Everyone knew of Gusta; she was a member of Bnot Yaacov youth movement, a very religious movement located by the teacher's seminar of Israel's Association (Agudat Israel). Gusta always stood out; in her dramatic talents and appearance, she was the star of every party and every celebration. They became friends in 1930, when they were in high school.

The Jewish youth in Krakow divided into two, the secular youth and the religious youth. Before going to high school, they had a decision to make; either attend the government high school (6 days a week, including Saturdays) the other option was to attend the Hebrew high school which was very Zionist. The religious families refused to send their children to the government high school and desecrate the Sabbath, and the anti-zionists families refused to send their children to the Hebrew high school. This was a dilemma, but then a new school opened in Krakow, the School of Language and Education. Instead of Latin and Greece they taught European languages (English, Polish, French, German), instead of mathematics they taught bookkeeping and general education.

Gusta and Rina became friends when they attended the School of Language and Education. Rina was older than Gusta so they weren't in the same class. Gusta was still very religious and dressed in a religious manner. She was beautiful, eyes blue as the sky, beautiful light brown hair, she had a phenomenal feminine grace. Rina who was a guide in the Akiba movement wanted to get closer to Gusta and tell her about Akiba; she felt that Gusta with her great talents would be a great asset to them. Rina offered to walk Gusta home after school, which was located in the central square of Krakow (the square was called Rinek). They both lived in Kajimiesh, the Jewish neighborhood which was about a 30-minute walk from the school. Rina gradually started to tell Gusta about Akiba movement and Gusta, as stubborn as she was, agreed to listen.

After about 6 months of walking to school together Gusta agreed to come and visit Akiba's nest (their meeting place) for one night, she was curious and wanted to see for herself what it was all about. The only problem was that Gusta felt obligated to her

former youth group (Bnot Yaacov) and didn't want to visit Akiba behind their backs, even if it was only for one evening. She asked Rina to tell one of her guides that they are inviting Gusta to visit their nest. Rina agreed and spoke with Yehudit Bauminger who was a guide at Bnot Yaacov. Yehudit was in total shock, she was angry, yelled at Rina and asked her to leave right away. Rina told Gusta what had happened, and she decided to leave Bnot Yaacov movement.

Before Gusta's visit at Akiba's nest. Rina told everyone that she is coming, especially the boys in her age group. She told them that she is bringing a new friend, that she would be a great asset to them and asked them to do everything in their power to help her feel at home.

Gusta felt right at home. Not too long after she joined Akiba, she became a guide and also joined the editorial team (along with Shimshon Draenger) of their youth journal - Tze'irim (means young in Hebrew). The journal was published in Polish. Gusta and Shimon's love story started during that time. With time, the way Gusta dressed started to change; shorter sleeves, shorter socks, pants on field trips.

Rina finished high school and left Krakow, and Gusta staid and was an active member of Akiba movement.

A few words about Simek – Simek joined the Akiba movement when he was 13. He was a student in Tachkemoni elementary school, and continued to the Hebrew high school, he knew Hebrew. He is described as a smart boy, good at school but also in arts and graphics. Rina thinks that this trait helped him later on when he needed to forge papers. He did all the drawing of the Tze'irim journal and decorated Akiba's nest with things that he made. He was also a very talented editor, good analyzing skills, a little bit strict, not very worm. Simek and Gusta definitely were a good intellectual match.

A few words about Dolek – Dolek was a very positive person by all means. A wonderful friend that would do so much for his friends. Very active, athlete, had great, great persuasion skills, courageous, always in motion. He studied law, was an active member of Akiva. He was the head secretary of the movement before the war. Rina liked him very much, he was very likeable. Rina asked him why isn't he coming to Israel as well, his answer was that he wanted to give one more year to the movement.

Rina's brother (she doesn't say his name) - He was a member of Akiba. 6 years younger than Rina, he was in Vushka's group in Akiva. After Rina's mother and sister were sent to Belzec, her brother became an active member of the underground group. He was an introvert with a heart of gold. He knew how to operate machinery; this is why he was sent along with the 5 other people to the woods. He was supposed to kill a Gestapo man

in order to steal his weapon. Brother hit the trigger too early, got hurt and was taken to the apartment in 13 Josefinska st. Later on someone gave them to the Germans and the whole group was killed. Rina learned this only from Gusta's diary.