

Interviewee: LIPETZ, Jacques
Interviewer: Nora Levin
Number of Audio tapes: 2 English
Transcript: 1 v. (unpaged)

Date: July 21, 1988
Restrictions: Reserves the
right to publish his material

SUMMARY

Jacques Lipetz was born in Antwerp, Belgium, 1932. He was educated at Takhemoni, a Jewish school. He relates many childhood memories. He vividly describes his family's flight through France to Marseille in May 1940. Jacques, his mother and two brothers went to Lisbon via Spain, his father via Morocco. An interesting vignette explains how he managed to join his family.

Jacques and his family sailed to New York City in 1941 but could not stay because their quota number had not come up yet. They booked passage to the Philippines and landed in Manila in May or June 1941. He describes their life as Belgian subjects under Japanese occupation. Jacques attended a private school run by the Christian Brothers, and describes his religious education as a Sephardic Jew in a congregation dominated by Ashkenazic German Jews, as well as antisemitic persecution by Filipino students. He gives an interesting account of Japanese cultural attitudes and their treatment of foreigners and natives. The Japanese brought civilian Jewish internees to High Holiday services. He tells a charming story of how a Japanese officer helped his brother get his scooter back from a German Nazi family. Jacques describes conditions in Manila towards the end of the war and liberation by Americans. Jewish chaplains held a Passover Seder for the Jewish community at the Manila racetrack. The Lipetz family left Manila for America in late 1945 and received a permanent visa five years later.

Historical endnotes by Dr. Michael Steinlauf are in the transcript.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War, 1939 – 1945 – Personal narrative Belgian Jew
World War, 1939 – 1945 - Japanese occupation – Manila
Antisemitism
Emigration and immigration – USA (problems)