

Interviewee: ANONYMOUS, K.R.                      Date:                      October 1, 1985  
Interviewer:                      Ellen Rofman

Audio tapes:                      2 English                      Transcript:                      1 vol. (unpaged) English  
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Restrictions:                      Name listed as K.R. only.

### SUMMARY

K. R. was born in Tarnopol, Poland, March 31, 1922. Her father was a businessman and her family was greatly influenced by Viennese culture. She briefly describes the start of overt antisemitism in her schools. She was a member of *Hanoar Hatzioni* and active in Zionist youth groups in Tarnopol and L'vov.

In 1940, under Russian Occupation, she and a group of *Hanoar Hatzioni* members were caught by some Ukrainian villagers—as they tried to cross the border illegally—and delivered to police. K. R. was sent to prison and later transferred to a labor camp near the North Pole. She describes the harsh conditions in the camp and why some of her fellow prisoners did not survive. She was released because she was Polish but given Soviet citizenship and sent by train to another part of Russia. Many strangers helped her during this time. She worked as a bookkeeper at a collective farm (*kolkhoz*) near the Russian village Devochki Gorki on the Volga River. When the German Army advanced, she was deported to Kazakhstan by train. She describes the conditions under which she lived. She worked as a bookkeeper in Kustanay. After the NKVD tried to recruit her as a spy, she fled to Alma Ata using documents she forged.

In 1945, after the war, she returned to Tarnopol and found it almost completely destroyed. She joined a *kibbutz* in Lodz and worked with *Hashomer Hatzair* to prepare young Russian refugees for life in Palestine. She also organized and led illegal border crossings to get them there. During this time she met and married her husband. They went to Palestine, from Cyprus, on a ship called *The State of Israel* in 1948, escorting a group of young Jewish children who had been hidden in monasteries or by Polish families. K. R. then reflects about how her experiences have shaped her outlook on life and her views about human behavior.