

Interviewee:	<u>AWIN</u> , Ilse	Date:	October 19, 1991
Interviewer:	Ellen Rofman		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
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Restrictions:	None		

## SUMMARY

Ilse Awin, nee Mechlowitz, was born December 31, 1925 in Munich, Germany into a family who held Polish passports. She attended public school until 1935, when the Nuremberg Laws forced Jewish students to leave and go to Jewish schools. Her father lost his business and narrowly escaped a Nazi roundup after *Kristallnacht*. In August 1939, she emigrated to China with her parents.

Ilse shares her childhood memories of the journey to and arrival in Shanghai including the fear and anxiety of where they would live and how to survive. She details their living conditions in Kinshou Heime shelter in the Hongkew Ghetto district and briefly refers to Japanese occupation. She mentions assistance from the Joint Distribution Committee, Kadoorie family and other philanthropists. Ilse describes her curtailed schooling only attending school for one year at which point she left to apprentice in a hairdressing salon.

Ilse married Leo Awin, an Austrian refugee, in Shanghai in 1947 and they were evacuated in American planes in 1949, settling in Canada, where her husband worked as a craftsman.

See also Ilse Awin's second interview in 1999, #GC00032b and Leo Awin's 1991 testimony #GC00033.

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## SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War 1939-1945 – Germany

World War-1939-1945– Personal narrative, Jewish, Female

Germany - History - *Kristallnacht*, 1938

Shanghai (1939-1947)

Health conditions – in  
Jewish refugees - Shanghai

Jews, Polish

Zionists - youth groups

Immigration to Canada