

Interviewee:	<u>AWIN</u> , Ilse	Date:	October 14, 1999
Interviewer:	Inge Karo		
Audio tapes:	1 English	Transcript:	1 vol. (unpaged) English
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Restrictions:	None		

## SUMMARY

This is a second interview with Ilse Awin, nee Mechlowitz, eight years after the original - both at a ‘Rickshaw Reunion’ of Shanghai survivors in Philadelphia. Ilse Awin was born December 31, 1925 in Munich, Germany to a family who held Polish passports. She describes her early education, the effect of the Nuremberg laws on her family and also details her family’s experiences during roundups after *Kristallnacht*. Ilse describes her childhood memories of the journey to Shanghai and details their living conditions in the Hongkew Ghetto as well as her education and need to work. Ilse married Leo Awin, an Austrian refugee, in Shanghai in 1947 and together they emigrated to Canada in 1949.<sup>1</sup>

The two interviews share the same essential details, with the following additional information:

Ilse describes an incident after *Kristallnacht* when she was jailed overnight at 12 years old during a roundup of Jews with Polish passports. A Jewish organization intervened to secure her release, but other Polish families were deported, including some of her aunts and uncles.

She describes their Polish passports enabling them to disembark and visit ports during their voyage to Shanghai.

While attending the Kadoorie school for refugees in the Hongkew Ghetto, Ilse joined a Zionist youth group, preparing for *aliyah*.

Both of her parents died of dysentery in the ghetto and she was also ill and hospitalized.

See also her 1991 interview #GC00032a and her husband, Leo Awin’s testimony #GC00033.

<sup>1</sup>In her first interview, Ilse describes the precipitous nature of their leaving, managing to get out on one of the last few planes.

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## SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War 1939-1945 – Germany

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

Jews, Polish

*Kristallnacht*, 1938

Shanghai (1939-1947)

Health conditions – in  
Jewish refugees - Shanghai

Zionists - youth groups

Emigration to Canada