

1 INTERVIEW WITH : Rene Molho
2 INTERVIEWER : Elliott Eisenberg
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7 Q This is my first question.

8 A Yes.

9 Q Tell me as best you can your experience of a situation
10 in which you were aware of evil.

11 A It was in Auschwitz, in Germany, and one night the
12 Germans came in the barracks where we were sleeping and
13 woke everybody up, and they said they wanted to select a
14 few people -- among which they selected my brother. He
15 was sent to... I didn't know at the time, but what the
16 Germans were doing was trying to castrate people by -- they
17 said they had invented some type of ray that will kill or
18 neutralize the sperm -- the men's sperm. And in order to
19 prove their findings they were sent after the radiation --
20 he was sent to the hospital and they extracted first one,
21 then his second testicle. And that of course killed him.
22 He had become weaker and weaker, until he was completely
23 killed. And he was one among several -- at least twenty-
24 five or thirty men. But there were just as many we may
25 not know of, with that operation being performed. Now, I

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1 know that -- in my small circle I only know about fifty or
2 sixty, but that has been done to thousands and thousands
3 of people, and maybe only five or ten survive today to
4 tell of the experience. There was not only German doctors
5 doing that, but Polish doctors. And as we're hunting them,
6 the most famous is Dr. Mengele -- which we are still trying
7 to find out, and I don't know where he is hiding.

8 Now, would you like another instance?

9 Q Well, let me just stay with that one for a minute.

10 A Yes. Sure.

11 Q Now, what I would like you to do is just describe that
12 in more detail -- in the sense, first, I would like to know
13 what is the basis of your knowledge about how they were
14 experimenting with your brother? Obviously you weren't at
15 the hospital.

16 A No, but other people I know were at the hospital.

17 Q Right. So they would tell you about what they did --

18 A Yes.

19 Q -- what they did to your brother?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And did you ever have any communication with your
22 brother --

23 A Yes.

24 Q -- after they took him away?

25 A Yes, I did. See, after they took his first testicle

1 he came back in camp, and we stayed together for about a
2 month.

3 Q Uh-huh.

4 A Then they took him. He was almost -- he
5 was very weak and very -- he lost a lot of weight. My
6 brother -- if you knew him -- was an athlete.

7 Q Uh-huh.

8 A Then he was taken for the second time, and I've never
9 seen him again.

10 Q Right.

11 A That was in Auschwitz. He died in December of 1944.

12 Q Uh-huh.

13 A So he told me he was taken to that camp and that he
14 was radiated six or seven times. After that they took him
15 in the hospital and they extracted one of his testicles --
16 without any anesthesia, I believe.

17 Q Uh-huh.

18 A And after that he was sent to camp. He probably
19 could survive that, if he wasn't taken again in order to
20 extract the second testicle.

21 Q Uh-huh. So what these people were doing was just
22 cruelly using human subjects --

23 A Yes.

24 Q -- for their --

25 A When they could very well have their experiments



1 in vitro -- which means that they could have taken the
2 sperm and examined the sperm -- examined to see if there
3 was any live sperms left. They would just extract the
4 whole testicle -- which there was no reason for that -- no
5 medical basis, anyway.

6 Q Right. And I guess my...

7 What I think maybe we could do is have you mention
8 some other experience, and then maybe I could, you know,
9 come back to this one too.

10 A Sure. Another time I was working for the Canadicle
11 matters. Canada is a funny name. But when the transports
12 used to come from all over Europe -- in Auschwitz --
13 actually between Auschwitz and Buchenwald -- the train
14 would stop, and the people -- everybody would be taken out.
15 They would select the people to go to the ovens right away,
16 and the ones who were going to the camp. And their luggage
17 would stay there on the train. Our job -- under the super-
18 vision of the Germans -- was to take that luggage and
19 select -- like all the shirts together, all the shoes
20 together, all the pants together, and all the baby car-
21 riages together -- because that's something that stays
22 very vividly in my mind. And they would be put in other
23 trains and sent back to Germany so the German people can
24 use them. Of course, it was called Canada because Canada
25 was a rich country to our mind, and we could find food



1 while we were working -- maybe steal a little food without
2 the Germans catching us. That's the reason it was called
3 Canada. One time there was about two hundred babies --
4 Jewish babies -- that came, and instead of sending them to
5 the crematoria regularly and being gassed they had been
6 picked up and transported to Mengele. They was for Mengele.
7 And there was about five hundred thousand Jews that were
8 gassed and burned in less than a month, so they were very
9 busy -- the oven and pit. Shallow -- it wasn't very deep --
10 I don't think it was five feet deep. And there was a bon-
11 fire in there, and they started throwing the little children
12 alive in there. And the smell was horrible. And of course
13 the crying, and the -- I had to take my eyes off. That
14 was very vivid.

15 Q So you were a witness to that?

16 A Yes. Yes.

17 Q And what I gather from what you're saying, that this
18 was really an unusual policy, in the sense that --

19 A Yes, yes, it was unusual, because usually people would
20 be sent to the gas chamber. It was in order for things
21 to go smooth for the Germans. Because if everyone knew
22 they were going to die right away there would be some kind
23 of resistance. and some kind of... And they wanted things
24 to be smooth, so the people thought all the time they were
25 going to get -- to go to the bathhouse. The whole thing



1 was meant to look like a bathhouse. So that was an unusual
2 circumstance. And of course the children could not resist
3 it.

4 Q And what did you feel as you were seeing this? What
5 was your feeling as you were seeing these babies burned?

6 A I was horrified. I was -- I thought I was crazy. I
7 couldn't believe it. I couldn't -- I really couldn't
8 believe my eyes.

9 Q Did you --

10 A It's very hard to believe.

11 Q And what did you feel the people doing it were feeling?
12 Do you think that they were --

13 A I think they were numb.

14 Q Uh-huh.

15 A I think they were. I think they actually enjoyed it.

16 Q Uh-huh. Well, that's two different answers.

17 A Yeah. But I think most of them enjoyed that. You
18 see, I think that killing is like going to -- hunting; I
19 think people get a certain pleasure -- after they take a
20 life I think they get a certain -- I don't know what to
21 call it -- a -- they get high on a drug, and I think you
22 can get high on killing too. My experience is people like
23 it. Because the same people that were killing -- you're
24 talking about being evil -- the same people that went that
25 night into the barracks -- and I'm a witness to that too --

1 would play the tune, and raise little birds in cages, and
2 raise flowers, and be very, very good fathers, very -- how
3 would I say it? -- very responsive to their own children,
4 and actually very cuddly to their own children. And the
5 same people would go out and maybe...

6 Another experience which I would like to relate to
7 being very evil is we were working one day, and of course
8 we were guarded by dogs -- on top of the guards was also
9 dogs. And they would -- for fun they would... Those dogs
10 would kill. They would just -- they tore a woman in pieces
11 in front of my eyes -- just for the pleasure.

12 Q In other words, the German soldier held a dog --

13 A That was an SS.

14 Q SS?

15 A That's a difference. See, not every... It takes
16 a certain breed of people to become an SS -- and the guards
17 in the concentration camp. Not everybody would do that.
18 I would think either you would go insane or start liking it.

19 Q So the SS trooper, in this case, commanded the dog --

20 A Yes.

21 Q -- to attack the woman?

22 A Yes. Yes.

23 Q Were you a witness to this?

24 A Yes. Yes. Yes. That's another one. I'm just
25 remembering back.

1 Q Now, what did you feel the German soldier was feeling
2 at that point?
3 A Oh, especially the one with the dog, he was very
4 pleased.
5 Q Uh-huh.
6 A He did that for the... There were several of them
7 that would also stop us and just beat us to a pulp, for
8 the pleasure of it. It just gave them a sense of power.
9 And, as I said, they were kind of sadists. That's another
10 form of sadism.
11 Q Yeah. In other words, they -- would you say that what
12 you mean by sadism is they enjoyed doing evil for evil's
13 sake, or --
14 A No, they enjoyed performing pain -- giving pain, or
15 death to somebody -- or even death to somebody. That's
16 sadism. Sadism mainly is giving pain to someone.
17 Q Uh-huh. So that would give them much pleasure -- the
18 more pain they created?
19 A Yes, the more pleasure they get; that's correct.
20 Q Were you ever the recipient --
21 A Yes.
22 Q -- of sadistic actions?
23 A Yes, yes, yes. Very serious beatings.
24 Q Uh-huh.
25 A Very, very serious beatings. I almost did not survive.

1 I was lucky I did survive.

2 Q And were these beatings given for any reason? or just
3 because of this person?

4 A Not really. They don't really need a reason. They
5 could always find an excuse, but there was no reason
6 really -- no real reason.

7 Q And you felt when they were beating you in this
8 case -- did he enjoy it also?

9 A Oh, yes, yes. Well, actually he wouldn't even beat
10 me himself. It was another inmate who beat me, so he could
11 stay and enjoy it better. This beating was an effort.

12 Would you like more instances?

13 Q Sure, if you have anything more to give.

14 A Well, I can go on all night.

15 Q Well --

16 A The fact that we were... See, they used to count
17 us, every morning and every night -- every night, and
18 every morning before we -- when we work up in the camp.
19 And for instance, if there was an escape -- no one
20 actually escaped, but if somebody tried to escape then
21 they caught him and they killed him usually. But if there
22 was somebody missing -- or somebody, just for the punish-
23 ment. You know, in Poland, where the concentration
24 camps -- I said Germany first, but actually it's Poland --
25 Auschwitz and Buchenwald are in Poland -- and winter is



1 very, very cold, and of course we had no clothes to speak
2 of. And we couldn't even have our blankets when we stood
3 outside, standing where they could count us. It was not
4 uncommon for us to stand three hours -- either morning or
5 at night -- freezing to death outside. And of course we
6 were undernourished. And going into the barracks, the
7 sleep was precious to us, because it was our source of
8 strength -- the next morning we had to go to work.

9 Q You said that you couldn't even sleep for three hours?
10 Or --

11 A No. I said we were standing outside in the cold --

12 Q I see. Standing for three hours.

13 A -- for three hours. That was very, very... A lot of
14 people just would collapse and die right there.

15 Q Now, I would also like to ask you about that one
16 incident that you mentioned before, where you met one of
17 the SS people after the war.

18 A Yes. Yes.

19 Q Could you describe what happened in that incident?

20 A Well, after the war -- after I was able to work -- I
21 was working for the Commission on War Crimes. And we were
22 going around trying to find all the SS and bring them to
23 trial. Because I have seen so many, and I could speak
24 English, I could probably help the American Army. I was
25 working with the American Army then. And I found a guy

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1 who actually had performed the operation on my brother.
2 And I was going to kill him, and the Americans first tried
3 to stop me. When they knew what he did they just -- when
4 I told them the story they just left it alone. And I hit
5 him with a chair, and blood was coming, and I couldn't
6 finish him off, but I tried.

7 Q And at the moment you hit him with the chair you were
8 feeling great hate?

9 A Yes, very great, of course.

10 Q And what is it, do you think, that prevented you
11 from killing him?

12 A I don't know how you can -- I don't think you can
13 kill a man in cold blood.

14 Q Well, all these people in --

15 A But they were not human. You see, I don't think a
16 human person can kill somebody else in cold blood. You
17 can kill in fear; you can kill in anger. But then it has
18 to be fear of a gun. That's why I'm so much against guns.
19 It's very easy to pull the trigger. When it comes to a
20 manual thing, it's very hard to do. If you have a knife,
21 maybe it would be easier -- I don't know.

22 Q Now, looking at all those stories, I wonder if you
23 could pinpoint what you see made those experiences evil?
24 I mean, what was the central factor that made those things
25 evil?

1 A Well, the fact that the man is killing somebody else
2 for the pleasure of it -- for no apparent reason. I can't
3 think of anything more evil than that.

4 Q Yeah.

5 A Stealing is evil, and maybe lying is evil, but the fact
6 that beating and...

7 Q And would you say also the fact that they had no feel-
8 ings at all while doing this?

9 A Well, actually they had feelings, because they were
10 enjoying themselves.

11 Q Right. So that made it even more --

12 A Yeah. Evil. I mean, the vilest.

13 Q How do you feel that this experience of being in
14 Auschwitz -- for three years, was it? --

15 A Well, '43, '45. A little over two years.

16 Q A little over two years. How did this change your
17 life? How did this --

18 A What do you mean -- how did it change my life?

19 Q Well, not physically. I understand that your brother
20 died. But I mean did it --

21 A Well, mentally, in dreams. You see, you are not an
22 individual; you are nothing for two and a half years;
23 people keep on telling you that you are, you know, sub-
24 human. You are angry; they can beat you any time they
25 want; you have got pain; you cannot do anything you like;

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1 you can't read; you can't sleep; you can only do very heavy
2 manual work; and you are the messiest of some animals --
3 so you are sub-human. It is very hard to survive. But of
4 course all the survivors I think have a very tough adapta-
5 tion -- to adapt themselves. But when you get out of there
6 of course you get dreams -- you are never normal again.
7 You get dreams, you are highly nervous. And of course time
8 will atone all those things, but still they all are there.

9 Q So you still feel the effects today?

10 A Of course. Everybody does. So do the people who
11 live with you. You never get over it.

12 Q Would you say you still feel hate at this moment?

13 A No, it's not hate. Oh, no. You cannot live with
14 hate. You don't have hate, but your nervous system and
15 your nerves are shot. And you being a psychiatrist you
16 know that it's very, very --

17 Q I'm not a psychiatrist.

18 A It's very hard following this to come back to normal,
19 and for the mind to go back to normal. And even if it
20 does go back to normal for a long time, you get lapses --
21 you get depressions, you get -- every time you run a
22 temperature you get depressions reviving -- I mean dreams
23 and so on.

24 Q Would you say that you've forgiven these people that
25 did --

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1 A No.

2 Q -- these terrible things?

3 A No, no, no. I have not forgiven, but I don't hate

4 them.

5 Q So what is your attitude towards them?

6 A My attitude is that the world should never forget

7 what happened -- and should never let it happen again. Now,

8 as far as I am concerned they are out of my mind; to me

9 they are all dead. I don't feel that the younger German

10 generation -- I cannot say that they are responsible,

11 because then I would be just as bad as they are. For a

12 long time I hated them, but now they are out of my mind.

13 I mean, I just -- I'm there.

14 Q Right.

15 A Otherwise I won't be able to live. You cannot live

16 with hate; can you?

17 Q Yeah, it's hard.

18 A Yeah, it's really hard; it takes a lot out of you.

19 Q Do you remember being told anything about good and

20 evil as a child?

21 A Of course.

22 Q What were you told?

23 A Well, that I had to be good, I had to do good things --

24 I mean let's say I shouldn't lie; I should study. What do

25 you mean by good and evil?

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1 Q What did they say -- in terms of religion -- about
2 good and evil? I mean, was there a teaching about how the
3 relationship, let's say, to God -- I mean, you know, about
4 how God --

5 A Yes. Well, maybe not from my parents, but from my
6 grandfather quite a bit. I used to hear with my grand-
7 father that, you know, God really... But we always have
8 that feeling in Greece -- that Jews were persecuted and we
9 should lay low -- as we say in American slang -- lay low
10 so we shouldn't make waves -- and, you know, we were second-
11 class citizens. Or at least we had that feeling.

12 Q I think what I'm getting at is did your faith in God
13 change because of an experience like this?

14 A No, I don't think so. I don't think so. Well, for a
15 long time, yes, said "How can there be a God when those
16 things happen?" And we lost our son a few months ago.
17 Again I said "There can't be a God if these things happen."
18 But then it's happening all over. So I have no answer.

19 Q Well, I would like for you just to tell me a little
20 bit about your own background, in the sense that you... I
21 gather from your story you were born in Greece.

22 A Uh-huh.

23 Q In Salonica?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Of a Jewish family?

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1 A A Jewish family, yes. And went to school, I went to
2 college. I went to French school; I went to French college,
3 and I would go to the University of Athens too. I was a
4 dentist. I couldn't practice dentistry when I came over
5 here.

6 Q Well, my own feeling is that you have made a very
7 clear statement of what your experience was in the sense
8 that --

9 A You know, I would not be able to talk to you like that
10 even ten years ago. It takes a long time until you can talk
11 about those things.

12 Q What I also understand from the way you talk is there's
13 a depth of feeling in the way you express yourself. I mean,
14 I can see that you have gone through something that few men
15 on this planet have been able to survive.

16 A Right.

17 Q And I feel an admiration for you.

18 A Well, I was lucky.

19 Q That's all I think of for the moment.

20 Do you have anything else that you feel... I think
21 that you've stated what you had to state really clearly,
22 in a way I don't feel I have any more questions.

23 A Well, that's fine.

24 Q OK. Let's just hear how it came out.

25 (Pause.)



1 A When we first came to concentration camp, my brother
2 and I, we were shaved, they took all our clothes away, and
3 they gave us these crazy striped suits -- if you want to,
4 call them pajamas. And then I looked at him and he looked
5 at me and that was a very strange feeling, to see us
6 dressed like inmates. And then we were looking for Father
7 and Mother. Then they told us they were gassed right away.
8 And we couldn't -- our minds could not conceive that they
9 would gas them -- it's impossible. And there was a woman's
10 camp -- oh, about maybe a couple of miles, and you could
11 see the women through the wires. And my brother and me
12 were sure we were looking at our father and mother, and we
13 were waving at them, for months -- although we could smell
14 the smell of burning. And that dream used to reoccur and
15 reoccur again and again and again and again. That's one
16 of the dreams.

17 Q Could you describe that dream again? You would be
18 looking over at the other camp --

19 A Yes.

20 Q -- and you would be seeing the wires?

21 A Through the wires I was seeing my father and mother.
22 There were people there.

23 Q You would see them?

24 A Yeah. There were people there.

25 Q Right.

1 A And I was seeing my father and mother. They were
2 definitely. Both me and my brother were just waving at
3 them and everything. Of course, the people who waved back,
4 they didn't know who they were waving at -- I guess.

5 Q I see. So this wasn't in a dream?

6 A No. But I used to dream that. In my nightmares I
7 used to see that scene again.

8 Q I see. You --

9 A Waving at my father and mother through the --

10 Q I see.

11 A Another time, they wanted to kill me -- the Germans.
12 And at the last minute they changed their mind. They hit me
13 very badly, and they -- I even dug my own grave. And they
14 hit me very badly and I was going to be put in the grave.
15 That was in 1944. It was not in Auschwitz anymore. We
16 really were in Germany, in Dachau -- in Landsberg, in
17 another camp. At the last minute -- I don't know why --
18 they changed their mind. So that dream would reoccur
19 to me several times.

20 Q That they had you open --

21 A Yes, the pits. Not only me, but four or five of us.
22 We opened the pits; we were going to be dead. And they
23 started beating us. We were all bleeding.

24 Q And that actually never happened specifically for
25 you. You never actually --

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1 A Yes, it did.

2 Q You actually --

3 A Yes, I did, I actually lived that. But then that
4 dream would reoccur and reoccur and reoccur.

5 Q And at Dachau you said they actually made you dig a
6 pit?

7 A Yes, yes, actually dig the pit. And see, we stole
8 some bread -- that was the idea -- about four or five of
9 us. And they hit us very badly; we were all full of blood.
10 And they were going to kill us, but at the last minute
11 they didn't.

12 Q And did these dreams continue many years after the
13 war?

14 A Oh, yes, yes, yes.

15 Q Do you still have these dreams now?

16 A Not so quite a bit. You see, those dreams would come
17 with cold sweat, and sometimes I even screamed. But that
18 didn't occur after a few years.

19 Q And each of these dreams would recur several times?

20 A Yes, the same dream would reoccur. There was no
21 change in the dream.

22 Q Did you ever have dreams with your brother?

23 A Yes. Well, the first dream, I was with my brother,
24 when I was going to --

25 Q Right. Even though he was dead at the time you were

1 having the dream?

2 A Oh, yes, yes, yes.

3 Do you believe in reincarnation?

4 Q This is your interview. Do you believe in reincarna-
5 tion?

6 A No.

7 Q How do you understand these dreams? Just the tremen-
8 dous shock that you went through?

9 A I think so, yes. I think so, yes. Well, some things
10 are more vivid in your mind than other things, and they are
11 still with you. Like maybe I have a thousand experiences
12 and I've just told you the ones that are more vivid. Some
13 things are more impressive than other things.

14 Q Right.

15 A I hope no human being will ever, ever go through that
16 again.

17 Q Uh-huh.

18 A That was the worst experience in human history that
19 ever happened.

20 Q Yes. And it seems that you suffered more in those
21 two years than most people do in their entire lives.

22 A Oh, certainly. It was concentrated suffering.

23 Q Well, I think that --

24 A There's also another worst thing that I want to add.
25 Excuse me.

1 Q OK.

2 A There is no hope. None of us would ever hope that
3 we would come out of there alive. You see, it's worse
4 when there is no hope. Like you suffer -- if anybody
5 suffers when there is some hope they say "Well, the hope
6 makes people stronger." But when you know there is no
7 hope it's just like...

8 Q So when there's no hope you get --

9 A You suffer more, actually.

10 Q Right. You live in a state of depression?

11 A Well, no, because you... I was more depressed after
12 the concentration camp than during concentration. You
13 are in a state of -- I won't call it excitement -- I don't
14 know how to call it -- when you are always nervous, trying
15 to -- scared, nervous, trying to survive. It's in a state
16 of constant --

17 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Anguish.

18 A If you want to call it anguish. But the depression
19 comes after, when you are liberated and you are free,
20 then the depression comes -- you have no fear anymore.

21 Q It almost sounds that while you were in the concen-
22 tration camp your feelings were cut off. I mean there was
23 so much --

24 A Yes, yes, yes. Well, not only that, but I had no
25 dreams in concentration camp.

1 Q No dreams while you were in there?

2 A I had no bad dreams over there. It was just like if
3 you take a string and you tense, tense, tense it when you
4 let it down -- when you let it out -- then when you see
5 where it's cut.

6 Q So all these dreams you were describing happened after
7 you were let out?

8 A Oh, yes. Definitely. Definitely.

9 Q And you actually stopped dreaming totally while you
10 were in the camp?

11 A Well, I have no recollection of a dream now. Oh,
12 yeah. No, that's not true. I used to dream of food --
13 that's true. I used to dream of food, several times. Now
14 that you talk about it I just recollect it. Several nights
15 I used to dream of food.

16 Q Do you remember which food you used to dream of?

17 A Not really. But I used to dream of food.

18 Q Right. Instead of eating it.

19 A Right. I had forgotten that, but now that you --
20 it just came back to me.

21 Q Have you ever read the book of Job?

22 A No.

23 Q The book of Job is about someone that's given all
24 this huge amount of suffering. You know, he has everything,
25 and everything is taken away.

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Q And what does he do?

A Well, he questions God.

Q Yeah. That's the beauty of the Jewish religion, really. I study whatever religion in the world -- a little bit -- not enough in depth. But the Jewish religion is the only religion where you've got questions. You ask -- you know, if you remember the Fiddler on the Roof -- I mean -- you know. With any other religion you can't, because then you have to have the faith; you've got to accept the faith.

(Conclusion of interview.)

