

Holocaust Media Project  
Interview with Franka Faingold Sachter #52

Interviewer:  
Date: Place:  
Transcriber: Peg Hughes

Franka Faingold Sachter

232  
Q: Could you tell me your name please?

A: Franka Sachter. And my maiden name was Faingold.

Q: Where were you born?

A: In Warsaw.

Q: What year?

A: 1918.

Q: Tell me when you first, first experienced as a, as a child, a young woman, anti-Semitic, anti-Semitism or restrictions on the Jews.

A: Oh, we encountered quite a number of when I was in school. Especially when I attended Polish schools, of course. But didn't have any really... Didn't make any significant re— I mean, impression, because I always was very courageous and I— If they called me name, I called back.

Q: And what would they call you?

252A  
A: Oh, they called (like in Polish, you know. The easiest way to insult a Jew, a Jewish girl was [pásh·i·vásh·i·dōō·vah].

Q: And that means?

253A

A: That means in Yiddish, would be [krets·si·kah·ee·dish·māl], you know. [Kret·zi·schmool·sik], you know, [Tah·shi·vice·zō.] And I used to call them back [pāl·skāsh·vee·nah].

Q: What does that-- Tell me in English what that means.

A: [Pāl·skāsh·vee·nah]? It's [pāl·ish·kāsh·vine].

Q: Swine.

A: Swine.

Q: Pig.

259A

A: Yeh. Oh, sometimes I used to call them [kah·pu·shah·vah·nah·go·vah]--they didn't have their brains. They were not intelligent, you know. [Kah·pu·shah·vah·nah·go·vah].

It was very natural to me. I-- I-wasn't, you know-- To me was-- I wasn't afraid of them at all. Because when we were young, we were youngsters-- But this was very, very-- You could meet as everyday life.

Q: You were a young woman in the 1930s.

A: Of course.

Q: What do you remember before the Warsaw ghetto?

A: Oh, before the Warsaw ghetto? You mean, before the war?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Before the war? I loved Warsaw. Warsaw was my city.

I still-- My-- If I think of early in life when I was really extremely happy, this was my-- the most happiest years in my life. When I lived in Warsaw. And when I went to school.

Q: What did you study?

A: Gymnasium.

A: You know, gymnasium you don't-- And then in '39, the war broke out.

Q: Tell me, what do you remember from '39?

A: Thirty-nine. I was already in Kielce because our business was in Kielce.

Q: Your father.

A: Yeh.

Q: What did your father do?

A: We had a very-- quite a very, big lumber. Everything in our factory was made, whatever needed for buildings, everything from wood. We had quite a very, you know, big business and quite a lot of people were working. And Polish, Polish people. And also [hah·rōō·seem], what they wear on [hah·shah·rah]. They supposed to go to Israel. So they prepare them for work, physical work, all kind of-- Yeh. So.

Q: I don't understand what that reference-- Can you explain that to me?

A: [Hah·rōōts]? [Hah·shah·rah]?

Q: [Ko·shik]?

A: No, no, no. You see, before the war, the youth in Poland-- the Jewish youth, of course--were preparing themselves to go to Israel.

Q: To Palestine.

A: Yeh. To Palestine. Yeh.

Q: Okay.

A: That time was Palestine.

Q: Right. Okay.

A: So they had to go through a year or two years, you know, certain type of work.

Q: I see.

297A  
A: Yes. And this was called the [hah-shah-rah]. And people in that-- And this was-- They were so, in the suburbs of Kielce. So the Jewish population support them. You know, they had to live from something. In the country they wanted to learn a profession. A "profession" I wouldn't say...

Q: A trade.

A: A trade. So we took them in. And they were working in our factory. And they were very good workers. And we were quite supportive because, after all, you know, who else would support them? They had to live and--

Q: And the war broke out in '39.

A: Yes. And the war broke out. And this was in Septmeber, of course. September the first. But we-- Days before-- We-- we expected that it's going to be a war. Weeks before was absolutely-- We couldn't avoid this. We knew about it. And then the war broke out. And, of course, we were living in a very well-built house.

Q: In--

A: In Kielce.

Q: You moved from--

315 A  
 A: Yes. I was-- We moved from Kielce a few years before. But I still was in Warsaw with my aunt, you know, which was living [natch·oo·kah·pō·vay]. She had two lovely children and I, you know, was my father's sister, so I felt like at home.

318 A  
 And-- But when the war broke out, I was already in Kielce. And we were living in a very well-built house, so nothing happened to the house. But a lot of buildings were destroyed. And that's when it started. Immediately, weeks later, the Germans put a [hin·throo·hin·der] in our factory. And my father, my brother, my two brothers (the youngest one didn't work because he was only eight years old)-- And they occupied the factory and my father was only the worker.

That's all.

And, you know, we didn't escape because a lot of Jews from Poland, in the beginning, they were afraid that they will be, what is it call--

Q: Deported?

A: No, no, no. Escape mine... Hostages. The Germans immediately, the moment-- It took days and they came and they were-- Kielce is very close to Cracow, you know. They were before in Kielce, then they entered Warsaw. And they took Jews, you know, citizens for...as hostages. Whatever happened, the slightest thing, they killed them. The slightest thing of sabotage; they had those hostages and they killed them.

As a matter of fact, my uncle was taken as a hostage. You know, my father's brother. He was the partner in the business. And the moment they took him out-- He was also in the Bund. You know, they were--

Q: Was that why they took him hostage?

A: No, no, not the right reason why. Because he, they were well-known citizens in Kielce, you know. They-- they were quite well situated, I mean, well-to-do. They were owners of a big factory. So they picked up, they knew, you know-- So, and the moment they let him out--after two or three, two weeks, three weeks--we saw what was going on, the situation. So he picked up the oldest son and they went-- And they went east, to Russia.

Q: Your uncle and your cousin.

A: Yeh, my cousin. As a matter of fact, my cousin is here. He lives in New York and he's a very successful architect. Very successful. And so, so they were in Russia and my aunt-- you know, his wife, my uncle--with two other sons remained in Kielce. So that's how it started.

Q: So what happened to you?

A: To me? The reason why I survived on false papers as a Pole, as a Polish girl--

Q: You got false papers?

366A  
 A: Yeh. No. My papers-- Of course they were false to my identity-- You know, I attended a school where I had many Polish friends and I was very close with one girl, very close with her. Her name was Victori [Ku·chin·skah]. And she was killed during the bombardment. And I was so close that I visited them and I found out that she was killed. Even a-- So... And I knew exactly where she used to belong, to what congregation, I mean, to what-- And I went there to the-- And the reason why this-- I had the idea-- Because when in the beginning, right in the beginning when-- Before we were wearing these armbands--you know, what we had to wear with the [moo·ken·do·vit] as Jews to mark it down that we were Jews. So I was traveling from Kielce to Ostrowiecz because we had relatives in Ostrowiecz. And they were very well off-- And there was easy to get food, you know, okay. And I always were travelling by in the train and no one-- The Germans didn't, you know, they didn't do nothing to me. They didn't throw me out from the cars and things; where, on contraries, sometimes, you know, they just pushed out youngsters from-- And I-- And no ever said to me [Joo·doo·rah], Jew, or--

370A  
 Q: And what year are you referring to now?

A: This is still--

Q: In '39.

A: In '39. Yeh. And this was, yeh, before, before, already late in fall. Was already cold, you know. Poland by October is already cold. It's winter.

(END  
 SIDE A)



(SIDE B)

186 And-- and, you know-- And I felt very free. No one stopped me at the station, the [Bahn·hoff] station. Means where the-- where the trains stop because, you know, Jews, they-- Then it started already. So-- To such an extent that if they saw a Jew-- If the Poles--not the Germans, The Poles--saw a Jew on the station: oh, "[Jōō·day], [Jwee·day]," you know. And they show it to the Germans--"Here the [Yōō·dah], the [Yōō·dah]." Like that. So this was already, you know, a dangerous situation, But I didn't feel that.

206 Q: When did Jews have to start to wear armbands?

A: Oh. Yeh.

Q: Immediately?

296 A: Yeh. In '40. Right in-- in the winter, you know. Started-- They give out, you know-- That Jews have to be marked with armbands. Yeh, with armbands. [Unclear.] So... But I didn't.

I was traveling and I didn't put on the armband. And somehow--

Q: Did you look like-- Did you--

A: Oh, I--

Q: --Jewish girl?

A: No. You see, with me was-- First of all, I was blonde, light hair. And somehow-- No, now, now I have a lot of gray hair. I wonder... And I was always so sure of myself, you know, whatever I did-- It's something in me that I can-- You know, I'm not afraid. I don't scare easily. So--

And that's how it started. And also my Polish, the way I speak.

Very few Poles speak the way I speak.

Q: How-- How do you speak?

390 A: Fluently. [Unclear.] I really-- Because I majored in--

I was the best in class from--

Q: Wasn't it-- Wasn't it unusual for a woman, for a girl to be at the gymnasium?

A: No. Only-- What do you mean gym-- Gymnasium is not a gym.

Q: No, no. It's--

A: It's a--

Q: --education.

A: Yes.

Q: Were-- Were young girls getting--

A: Of course.

Q: They were.

A: Of course. Only were...for females and for boys. Yes.

Q: The boys would go the yeshiva?

A: No, no, no, no. I don't belong-- We were not the--

The yeshiva only went Jews, Hasidic Jews. You know. From background, religious--

Q: Orthodox.

A: Yeh. Religious background. None of my brothers went to yeshiva. None of my brothers.

Q: So you were secular Jews. You were--

498 A: Yeh. My father was a [yid-ish-ist]. He was a-- Yeh.

Yeh. It's-- Alright. They maybe have in the family--

I remember my father used to say that in the family, in the Faingolds, was once a rabbi, .Very well known. A rabbi.

But my father wasn't, you know-- We were very-- My father

530 was like-- Like they say in Yiddish, [fī·den·kah], you know--

He wasn't-- But my mother used to, you know, still consider my grandma, you know, she-- So... But we were very free

and I-- No. Gymnasium was absolutely--

Q: Modern girls went there--

498 A: Yes. Yes. Only, you know-- But most of the gymnasiums were private. Private gymnasium, You know. And mine brothers went to their first school was the [folk·schu·ler], the [Boon-dah·sheh]. Yeh. So. So.

Q: Folk school.

628 A: There was a-- Bashevis... Bashevis Singer writes about the shul, the school [on·kul·mah·nah·36]. You know. Was a good, well-known-- One of the best schools, one of the best. Yeh. Belonged to the [tsee·shō·shōō·lah], the [Boon·dah·sheh]. Bund was a very strong organization in Poland before the war. And even during the war in the ghetto. Oh, they did a lot for the, for-- Most of the fighters in the ghetto were from Bund.

Q: Tell me about 1940.

A: Yeh.

670

Q: --ghetto [unclear]...

A: Yes. So. I was free. I didn't wear the armband and I was free. And-- But in Kielce was still-- Where not-- Wasn't the ghetto. Was not ghetto. The ghetto I-- The-- Was probably in '41. The beginning of '41. But we-- I was still, you know-- I used to go to Ostrowiecz. From Ostrowiecz to Kielce. And I used to go to Warsaw. And-- But in Warsaw started very early the ghetto. So. And-- But when they made the ghetto in Kielce, I never returned to Kielce. This was the last time I saw my parents. But I was traveling from Ostrowiecz to Warsaw. And then in Warsaw I was staying with my aunt and they were already were in the ghetto. And also, when I went to school before the war, I had students, Jewish boys--[Nahss·mo·chay] uh [Er·litz·ah·smo·chah·strit]--where I prepared them-- You know. I was teaching them because they were dependent-- You know. They went to private school and they needed--

830

Q: Tutoring.

A: Tutoring. So I was-- And for this, I-- You know. I was staying with them. I had a room and I-- Just like-- And I did this. Very... I mean-- I did this because I liked the children and I-- Three boys, they were the [Shee·bah]-- They used to-- Their name was [Shee·bah]. So. And when I

890

went out, really, on false papers-- Yeh. How I got--

910

Q: [Unclear] false...your papers false.

A: Yeh. So. You know. In the beginning the Germans didn't bother the Polish people. They had these ID, Polish ID, which is called [dor·but·os·uh·beest·ay]. Personal ID. [Dor·but·os·uh·beest·ay.] But then came out an order that they had to change to German IDs, which is called [kent·kar·tah]. And to get out a [kent·kar·tah] you had to go, you know, to certain-- like the [rat] house. [Rat] house. It's a German saying.

950

The-- You know.

Q: Police.

A: No.

960

Q: [Unclear.]

A: No, no. Like the municipal-- Municipal..v.

Q: City Hall?

A: Yeh. The offices. And to get out-- So you have to have, you know, your birth certificate. Yes. And you have to have all the papers-- And you have to have witnesses, you know, who they know you. Things like this. And where you live. And you have to be reported in the precinct where you live. This did-- Germans all just were very, very strict. So.

Some of the Jewish girls-- Well, they had their very good-- You know. They looked like more like Aryan types, like Polish girls. They paid money for it-- But I knew her, my friend.

117g

She was killed. And I knew what church she attended. So I went to that chapel. This was on the other side of Warsaw. It's called [Prah·gah]. On the other side. In the section of that city was called [Broo·deh·no]. And I went into the [Broo·deh·no], to the chapel there. And I took out-- I said I am-- The clerk in the chapel didn't know who, you know-- He didn't know everyone personal, especially young girls. So I said, I am Victoria [Moo·chin·skah] and I want my [dô·tô·si]. Mine birth certificate. So he got me out and that's it. He asked me how ol-- You know. There was mother. Because when Polish girls are born, they are--

Q: Baptised.

116g

A: Baptised. Yeh. Okay. I had that. Birth certificate. Fine.

122g I went to a small town, to [Wō·bōl·meen], not far from Warsaw. [Wōl·bōl·meen]--it's on the line where you go from Warsaw to Treblinka. This is the line, the this. But it's far from [Bōl·ō·meen] to Treblinka, you know. [Vōl·vō·meen·toosh·tu.] I know that line very well. And I went-- Because why did I go to [Vōl·vō·meen]? It's a small town and I didn't, you know--- I just wanted-- In a small town they didn't have the suspicion. Because in Warsaw was already going round that Jews are getting false papers, false [ken·kar·tahz]. And then in a small town, they didn't have the slightest idea.

And I went there. And I melded myself there, you know. That I work here and here. I got a temporary job, I remember,

1316

in a little-- Was a something like, you know, the electric things-- He was fixing-- An old man. You know. So I said I-- You know. I know the family. [Petrosky]...[unclear]... So I said I can stay a few hours because-- And I can help you out and things-- And I said I live here and here. And I work part-- I mean-- They didn't pay me. Just because I knew the daughter. And I got out and I melded myself that I lived here. Fine. Then you have to be at least, I remember, two or three months, till you could get out that [ken·kar·tah], to work out. And I worked out my [ken kar·tah]. And once I had my [kent·kar·tah], I was free. I went to Warsaw. And I established myself independently. But I still had contact with my relatives in Ostrowiecz. Kielce already was in the-- had the ghetto. And I said-- But in Ostrowiecz wasn't yet the ghetto. I still-- You know, you could go in-- Even they had already police, Jewish police, in-- in the sections where the Jews were living.

Q: Tell me what was happening in Warsaw then.

A: In Warsaw...

Q: And what you did there.

1500

A: I got a job in [ko·tel·gōnk, ko·tel·gōnk], which was [kō·nah·plahts·i·nō·pil·i·ō·nah·en·tsee·ōts·nee] street, you know. I got that job. Why did I get that job?

Q: What did you do? I don't--

1530

A: Yes. I was the [kat.i.gōn], you know, a night clerk. You know. Very elegant clerk. With music, orchestra. Gypsy orchestra. I was the one-- I was buying, you know, in the morning-- I went on the bazaar and buy all the vegetables and meat and everything, you know. And I was giving to the porter, the manager of the-- You know. I-- I-- And also in the kitchen-- If they started when it started, when they opened the evening for the-- Most of the [kōnk] who attended that time, Poles couldn't afford. Only the Germans, only the Germans, the SS, Gestapo. You know, the orchestra was gypsies, gypsy. And among those gypsies were Jews.

160B

If I would tell you, the episode what I have-- It's something unbelievable.

Q: Tell me.

A: Yes. And-- Alright. And I-- Why did I have this? I will tell you why. The reason why I took that job was because we were afraid-- Let's say, when I took a room somewhere, I had to immediately report to the precinct, to the police that here and here on [shee.skōt] 28 lived Frank-- Vi-- Vic-- Victoria [Ku.chin.skah]. And the moment they received that, you know-- The administrator from the building got my-- You know, I filled out a [blayn.ket], sent this to the precinct. And the Gestapo

170B



176B was continuously, continuously-- Not only the Gestapo, the--  
 From the police were special agents, the [gen·darm·mah·ree·nee],  
 what they checked on the people, what they moved in, to certain--  
 You know. They came at night. They blockaded. They made a  
 [blōo·tah·dah], one block, two blocks. And they checked on  
 those people--who they are, what they are...

Q: Non-Jews. Gentiles.

A: Gentiles. Yes. I was already a gentile. Yes. I already  
 lived under-- So they checked on those people. Who they are,  
 what-- Because they are a lot-- Most of them were working in  
 the underground. And they were try-- And who do you think--  
 Not only-- There were Polish agents, what they call--, operated  
 with the Gestapo, with the SS. They helped the Gestapo and the  
 186B SS, the German [gen·darm·mah·ree] to...get these people--

Q: [Unclear] underground.

A: Yes, yes. So. Yes. So. And there, the [kōnk]-- First of  
 all, when I was working in the restaurant-- And it was attended  
 190B by Gestapo and SS-- More-- You immediately got the [low·bō·niss]--  
 It means you put-- You get a paper that you can-- There was--  
 We were only allowed to walk till nine o'clock in the evening.  
 But if you got a-- this from the Gestapo, you could walk late  
 at night. You know. Because look, the [kaff·berry] was open till  
 late at night and twelve o'clock. And there was, you know, was

1963

one big [ro.co.co]-- Beautiful couch, elegant table. And the other one was, like imitation. You know. Had to imitate [fish], like [fish]-- Where, you know, [unclear]...

Q: [Unclear.]

A: You know. Like small lamps and such a simple tables and things like this... You know. Was a very elegant place, really. You know who used to own this before? Before the war? No. During the war. The-- Was called the [kah.vee.ah.no.ar.tist.oh]. All the-- What they-- Artists, you know, stayed at our-- After and things-- They couldn't perform during the war. There was no program to perform. Who can afford? Polish people couldn't afford to go to theatre. So they owned [kah.sah.ess]-- One was on this [Swah.ter] Street, [Swah.ter] seven. And the one was the [gōnk], belonged to [unclear]. And then the restaurant, I remember, [ko.hahn]-- Yes, famous [Ark.ti.flik.ah.bool.vay.moo.shah], you know, famous comedian. All those famous actors... They owned this and they lived from this, you know. So there was a room and so at night, when everything quiet down, I always had the pretext that I have to make the, you know, the-- what I spent, you know, all the bookkeeping, everything, you know. I had to-- I have work to do to prepare for tomo-- in the morning, things. And there we had in the back, there was where we kept this store for all kind of coals and things. You know. Was already-- Like you say... Oy,

2013

escaped my memory. You know, like...well, we kept all kind of things. So there we had a--

Q: Pantry?

222B

A: Yes, yes. No. Bigger. Bigger room like the [bd·ig·bo·svay]. So we had a blanket, a pillow. Because I was working with my cousin Bella. She's now in Israel. She lives in Israel.

Q: And what were you doing?

A: She was on the expresso, working the mocha expresso coffee. She was working, you know. And she helped me too, because she-- She was real pro-- This was my cousin, you know. The closest. Because her father and my mother were brother and sister. And I-- I took her-- But this was how I took her to-- How I got her out from the-- from Ostrowiecz. It's something unbelievable. She-- What she went through then by--

230B

Q: But first, tell me what you and she were doing and [unclear]...

A: Yes. So we were there, you know. We were working. And we never went to sleep where we were supposed to live, you know. We had a room-- And I always-- When-- When I went sometimes-- You know, the cafe opened in the afternoon. So, in the mornings sometimes, when I went shopping to buy meat, things, food, I always dropped in, you know. And I said, "Oh, I was so busy, you know. I was working late and I couldn't come to sleep." And she didn't mind. She--

245B

Q: [Unclear.]

A: I paid her. Yeh. She was only a woman. I paid her.

So she didn't mind. Okay. So... And we slept there at night. if everything close. I will tell you why. Because we-- Coals were so scarce, you couldn't get coals. Hot water-- There we had a lot of coals because they had, you know, the permit. The Germans gave them. Was war and so we-- And the same things, you know. They were big, big pot. So we warmed up the water. And we could wash ourselves. And we could wash the things what we-- You know. And for us, was a-- And besides, we had to, you know. They-- Some of the food what was left over there-- So-- We--

257B The reason why-- why we were trying to work in places where-- Because we couldn't actually, you know-- [Which pot] was-- Because we had to stay alive, you know. You exposed yourself. And this was very dangerous. Very... So we tried to avoid it. Once we worked as a maid in a house or in a restaurant. So we were saved. At least we had something to eat. This was very, very helpful for us.

Now I would like to bring out the-- Which this is very important to me-- When was--

Q: Yeh. What do you wa-- Do you want to add something?

270B A: Why was, you know, in Kielce started-- They started to-- Kielce was the [unclear] first almost went in fire there in-- This was 1942. [Unclear] July or August, anyway in the summer,

when they started to send the Jews to Treblinka. Yes, in '42. Before Warsaw. Before. And I was thinking-- Prepared something for my sister, to save her. I had a sister. She was only a year and a half older from me. And unfortunately when I had the papers ready for her and I came to Kielce, was already the whole action was going on.

2808  
The transports were going to Treblinka. And there were bodies lying already there in that [plahtz], in that place where they gather, where, you know-- And I managed to see my younger brother, which is now-- He survived Auschwitz. He was taken to Auschwitz when he was 14 years old. And he lives now in San Francisco, very happily married, and has two lovely children. And so I managed-- I went to the factory in-- To our factory, he was working-- They left him over-- Where my father, mother, sister, and youngest little brother... When they were staying-- From what my brother told me-- When they were staying on that [plahtz], place-- on that-- where they selected him. The selection... My little brother--which was eight or nine years old--was holding his hand so strong, so with all his-- that he left him mark from his nails, that he didn't want to be separated from him. This I will never forget...when my brother told me this. When I saw him after the liberation, when he was liberated. When we met, when he told me, I thought I will just...be out of my mind.

And my oldest brother--the oldest one was very athletic, he was playing soccer, you know, on one of the best teams--he was three weeks living in Treblinka. Because they picked up the youngest, the strongest ones to select the clothes from the ones what they took off what they went to the...

Q: Gas chamber.

A: Gas chamber. You know. They told them they going to shower. And they never came out. Yes. So... He was three weeks.

There's one survivor from Treblinka. He lives in Philadelphia.

309e He was the witness, testified in that trial in [Fran·tō·del·my].

So he told him that he was-- He told me that he was with him for three weeks. And then they finished them out to [or·too].

So this was mine escape. When I saw-- When I saw mine brother-- that-- He said, "Franka, move out from here. Don't stay any longer. This is the most dangerous-- This is fire, this now. Move out."

318g In fact, when I went back to the station where they-- to take a train to go to Ostrowiecz, because I couldn't go to Warsaw, because the closest train from Kielce was to [Skal·jitz·go]. From [Skal·jitz·go] I had to change the train to Ostrowiecz. This was the first-- So, [May·beh] know me--a young man who knew me, you know, from [Sōm·bay], is it? [Sō·tee·too·maw·dish], a Pole, Pole, Pollock. But he-- He-- So I said I came to-- He thought that I escaped from the-- He didn't know that I was

in, you know, without--

Q: Passing as a Gentile.

A: The-- Yes. Yes. So he thought that I escaped from that place when they get everything.

329b

Q: [Unclear.]

A: So I said, "Please," I said, "I am not feeling well and I can't stay with you to talk. Please let me..." And-- And I [grapped]-- I-- I--just went in the train. The train was ooooooh, ooooooh, ooooooh--it's going away. And I [sted] I don't care where I'm going. Fortunatley, the train went to [Skal-jitz-go]. And from [Skal-jitz-go] this is the right direction to Ostrowiecz. They stopped for the night because the trains were only stopped that time because they needed the-- the lines for the wagons for Treblinka.

339b

And that night I went into a-- such a rooming house, you would say... First-- And I had a [kru-suk] from this, from the things what I saw. And I was, you know-- Means I-- I was terribly sick, terribly, you know; I menstruated, was just--

And I had a quarter from this. And I just wanted to stay over the night. And then in the morning I would be able to take a train to Ostrovwiecz. And so happened, fortunately, you know. I paid a few zlotys for that night and I went to Ostrowiecz. And I came to Ostrowiecz.

3510 I told my relatives, my uncle (my mother's brother) what was-- And they already knew. The-- The-- You know, the news went-- spread immediately, very quick, very fast. And then I said to my cousin [unclear] that this was-- I said, "Do, people, whatever you can."

3550 "Fela," I said, "You must get papers, you must. Let it be false papers, but you must. I will do everything to get you out." And I was already in Warsaw. And then another girl-- She lives on her [dī·reh·mee] Israel. She-- We were three of us. And we were together ... What I am trying to--

Q: Your sister.

A: My--

Q: You and your friend.

A: No. My sister was in Treblinka. She was killed in Treblinka. She went with my mother there.

3630 You know, when I spoke to some Poles, what they worked with in-- in the depot where the trains are coming and going out. We happened to know them. Of course he didn't know who I am [dur·eh·ro]; by chance I met those people. They said a lot of those transports were already-- The people were dead before they arrived to Treblinka. Because there was full of pesti-- The [klors], you know. Such a poison. They put it in that it shouldn't spread any epidemic or sickness. Because they never opened those-- those cars. These were the closed cars. People were, you know, making, you



know, sitting-- It took days, you know, and so-- And it was very hot. This was summer. Was all July or August. Very hot. So, this.

So that time I said this is it. And I said, "If someone would come and cut off my head, I am not anymore Jewish. I don't know nothing about Judaism. This is it. Oh, I will-- This is the-- the role I have to play. If I-- It's up to me. Not to God. Not to miracles. I don't believe. I have to see. This is my strength and my philosophy." And the zest for living was so strong in me. If I said, "If I will survive... the whole world must know what the Poles did to us. And the Germans."

And in fact, I very quietly, I fetched all those things. You know, after every ghetto, what they liquidated, after what they cleaned out from the Jews-- The Poles were delighted. They robbed. They-- They-- Whatever they could. Day and night. You, you know-- But I happen to know a very intelligent woman. And she really helped-- She had three Jewish people. This was in the war zone--

Q: Just one second.

A: Yes.

###

## Notes

### Regarding tape:

Tape begins side A, counter number 237. It ends at 392.  
B side begins at counter number 17. It ends at 166.

(Side A, 0-237 is blank. From 392 on is blank as well.  
Side B, 0-17 is a piece of an interview with other people.)

While the tape ends (side B, no. 166), there are indications that the interview did not.

### Regarding transcription:

The accompanying "phonetic glossary" is a list of words I didn't know. It's alphabetized by phonetic spelling and gives location in text and on tape.

It's transcribed as said, with no "corrections" for grammar. Dashes generally indicate abrupt changes in speech (interruptions, sentences left incompletd, detours, etc.).

I assumed that what sounded like Kel.sah refers to Kielce. If wrong, see glossary for the frequent mentions of this town.

The phonetic spellings are a rough rendering. Not knowing the languages involved, my guesses might be way off.

Phonetic Glossary  
Pronunciation Guide

ä as in "ah"  
ah as in "ah"

ay as in "play"

ee as in "meet"  
eh as in "elf"

i as in "it"  
ī as in "ice"

ō as in "go"  
ô as in "or"

ōō as in "tool"  
oo as in "look"

u as in "cut"

(from Webster's Dictionary)

## Phonetic Glossary

Ark-ti.flik.ah.bool.vay.moo.shah  
(Comedian's name? 1939-42. Warsaw?)  
p. 17 B 207

Bahn.hoff  
p. 8 B 18

bd.ig.bo.svay  
(Large storage room)  
p. 18 B 222

blayn.ket  
(document form)  
p. 15 B 171

blö.tah.dah  
(blockade)  
p. 16 B 176

Boon.dah.sheh  
p. 16 (2x) B 59

Broo.deh.no  
(section of Warsaw?)  
p. 17 (2x) B 112

dī.reh.mee  
(place in Israel)  
p. 23 B 355

dor.but.os.uh.beest.ay  
(Polish ID)  
p. 12 (2x) B 95

dô.tô.si  
(document?)  
p. 13 B 116

dur.eh.ro  
p. 23 B 363

(Page number refers to location in the transcribed text.  
The other number gives approximate location on tape by counter number;  
A and B refer to tape sides.)

Er·litz·ah·smo·cha·strit

(name?)

p. 18 B 83

Faingold

(Spelled on tape this way. Pronounced Fin·gold)

pp. 1, 10 A 237, B 52

Fela

(relative's name)

p. 23 B 353

fi·den·kah

(secular?)

p. 10 B 53

fish

(regarding decor)

p. 17 B 196

folk·schu·ler

(folk school)

p. 10 B 59

Fran·tō·del·my

(place name?)

p. 29 B 309

gen·darm·mah·ree

(gendarmarie?)

p. 16 B 186

gen·darm·mah·ree·nee

(police)

p. 16 B 176

gōnk

(See konk. Same thing? Restaurant name?)

p. 17 B 207

grapped

(grabbed?)

p. 22 B 330

hah·rōō·seem

p. 24 (2x) A 285

hah.roots

p. 3 A 287

hah.shah.rah

(youths' apprenticeship for work in Israel)

pp. 3, 4 A 285

hin.thrōō.hin.der

(confiscator, overseer)

p. 5 A 318

Jōō.day

p. 8 B 19

Jōō.doo.rah

p. 7 A 375

Jwēē.day

p. 8 B 19

kaff.berry

(cafe)

p. 16 B 192

kah.pu.shah.vah.nah.gō.vah

p. 2 (2x) A 259

(epithet: no brains)

kah.sa.ess

(cafe name?)

p. 17 B 207

kah.vee.ah.nō.ar.tist.oh

(artist's cafe?)

p. 17 B 200

kat.i.gōn

(night clerk)

p. 15 B 153

ken.kar.tahz or kent.kar.tah

(German ID required of Poles)

pp. 13, 12, 14 B 125, B 96

Kielce

(assuming this is what is meant by Kel.sah)

pp. 2 (2x), 4 (2x), 5 (3x), 6 (2x), 7, 11 (3x), 14, 19, 20, 21

klors  
(regarding chlor-- ?)

p. 23 B 363

kō·hahn  
(place or person's name?)

p. 17 B 207

ko·nah·plahts·i·nō·pil·i·ō·nah·en·tsee·ots·nee  
(place name or names)

p. 14 B 150

kōnk

pp. 15, 16 B 160, B 188

kō·shik

p. 3 A 290

kō·tel·gōnk

(restaurant name?)

p. 17 (2x) B 150

Ku·chin·skah

(Name. Twice pronounced this way. Once pronounced Moo·chin·skah)

p. 4 A 366

krets·si·kah·ee·dish·māl

(epithet)

p. 2 A 252

kret·zi·schmool·sik

(epithet)

p. 2 A 253

kru·suk

(cramps or illness)

p. 22 B 339

lōw·bō·miss

(curfew exemption permit)

p. 16 B 190

May·beh

(person's name?)

p. 27 B 320

Moo·chin·skah  
 (see Kuchin skah)  
 p. 13 B 116

moo·ken·do·vit  
 (clothing?)  
 p. 7 A 370

Nahss·mō·chay  
 (name?)  
 p. 14 B 83

nā'tch·ōō·kah·pō·vay  
 p. 5 A 315

on·kul·mah·nah 36  
 (name of school)  
 p. 10 B 62

or·too  
 p. 24 B 310

Ostrowiecz  
 (correct spelling?)  
 pp. 7 (2x), 10 (3x), 13 (2x) 17, 20 (2x), 21 (4x)

pāl·ish·kāsh·vine  
 (epithet)  
 p. 2 A 256

pāl·skāsh·vee·nah  
 (epithet)  
 p. 2 (2x) A 254

pāsh·i·vāsh·i·dōō·vah  
 p. 1 A 252  
 (epithet)

Petrosky  
 (name)  
 p. 14 B 131

plahtz  
 (plaza)  
 p. 10 (2x) B 280, 290



Prah.gah  
 (name of chapel in Warsaw?)  
 p. 13 B 112

rat  
 (city offices)  
 p. 12 B 97

rō.cō.cō  
 (pronunciation was more extended than this, but rococo might  
 have been what was meant)  
 p. 17 B 196

Shee.bah  
 (family name)  
 p. 14 B 88

shee.skôt  
 (place name)  
 p. 15 B 170

Skal.jitz.gō  
 (town in Poland between Kielce and Ostrowiecz)  
 p. 21 (2x), 22 (2x) B 318, 330

Sōm.bay  
 (place name?)  
 p. 21 B 320

Sō.tee.too.maw.dish  
 p. 21 B 318

sted  
 (said?)  
 p. 22 B 330

Swahater  
 (Street name. In Warsaw?)  
 p. 17 (2x) B 207

tah.shi.vice  
 (epithet?)  
 p. 2 A 253

tsee.shō.shō.lah  
 (a type of school?)  
 p. 10 B 62

unclear

p. 8 B29; 9 B39; 11 B67; 12 B91; 12 B99; 16 B187;  
17 (2x) B197; 17 B207; 18 B230, B245; 19 B270; 20 B329

Vōl.vō.meen.tcosh.tu

(Railroad line? See Wōl bōl meen)

p. 13 B 122

which.pōot

p. 19 B 257

Wōl.bōl.meen Bōl.ō.meen Vōl.vō.meen

(town near Warsaw)

p. 13 (4x) B 122

yid.ish.ist

p. 10 B 49

Yōo.dah

p. 8 (2x) B 20

Zō

(So?)

p. 2 A 252