

1 hour 40  
1 hour 30  
45 mins  
2 hours

### **Hank Shaffer Interview Transcription**

Z: Thank you for agreeing to speak to me. This is a project of settlement experiences of holocaust survivors who came to Montreal and they usually three parts. One, you'll probably have to share your parents' story about their life before the war, a little bit during the war, and the crux of the interview is what happens from the time the War ends, your decision to come to Canada and then life in Canada. Okay?

H: Alright

Z: So when were you born and where were you born and then we'll talk about your parents a little bit.

H: I was born in Warsaw Poland in 1939 on August the 23<sup>rd</sup> which was just eight days before the second World War started. And I'm told and I remember this, you know, I don't remember anything of course in that particular moment but there were stories that my mother has gone ahead and relayed to me in long-winded sort of terms and one of the things that came to mind is there was this film that we saw. The piano player I think it was called?

Z: Yeah, the Warsaw Ghetto.

H: the Warsaw Ghetto, it showed some middle class Jewish home and the bombs were starting to fall and you could see you know there was sides of the plaster down, but that's what it must have been like in the apartment that my parents lived in and that I came to when I was that old.

Z: What was your name, what were you named.

H: My name was Hanrick. And my mother was married and her name was Garner, her family came from Stanazlov which is part of the Ukraine the Western Ukraine very much in the news today. And it was called Stanazlov then, it's called Evanov francize\* something like that. And all of these borders of course it's the Ukraine but all these borders are so fluid, all of it changes so that what was the Ukraine was part of Poland so on, and she spoke Polish and that's the sort of the background that I know.

Z: So Schaffer your fathers name?

H: No, Schaffer is my adopted name. I became adopted after the war, I was about seven years old and my mother remarried. My father was shot in Stanazlov, where they went back to after the bombing. And my name was Ekhouse\*. Henry Eckhouse. And the German's were famous for

going ahead and giving Jews wonderful names like Barbara Streisand always talks about the fact that it's a grain of sand and Ekhouse is a corner of a house.

Z: So, talk to me about your parents a little bit, who where they where were they from.

H: My parents were well-established and so on. They were fairly affluent, and middle-class living in a sort of modernist apartment which could have been called a ball\* house type and so on. My father was a skin dealer, or a skin merchant, a fur merchant who in partnership with his brother was always travelling. In fact, one of the ironies of the fact that he could have gone ahead and survived the war was that when my mother was pregnant with me, he called my mother and said "you know what's happening" and he wanted to know what was going on, and she said to him.. uhm "that Norbert, you want to stay in London, don't come back to Poland it's not a good idea." "no no, I want to see the son, the birth of my son and I have to come back" and so he did. And unfortunately the rest of it was that he was killed a few years later. I mean, we escaped Warsaw almost immediately, one week after the War started. My father was not a great driver I think, so they had a car which was very unusual I think most people didn't have cars. But somehow they made it, we ended up in Stanaslov\*

Z: Before we get in to the war, I just want a little more background about your parents. You were the only child then?

H: I was the only child and if you want to know a bit of the background of my mother, my mother actually also, which was rather unusual, had finished and got her Baccalaureate in Hungary. Because there was a restriction as to the number of, no—Jews could not go to higher education in Poland and so her parents or her mother thought it would be important for her to get some sort of an education and so they sent her off and she went to Budapest and graduated there and came back.

Z: What was her degree in?

H: It was a liberal arts degree.

Z: Okay. So when was she born?

H: She was born [laughs] this is, you know she died in 2010 about four years ago. And according to the records that we have or she said she was born in 1912. But my cousin who claims that her brother was, who was his father, was either older or younger or something you know I never figured it out. But I figured that she was older than that. The woman lived, either according to the records, to 97 or 98 years or else she was close to 100.

Z: There is, I think I mentioned it to Rita, there is a database now there's a Census of the Polish Jewish population and you can actually find out all that information.

H: That would be interesting.

Z: So if you email me, I can pass that on so you can. It really is very, very interesting.

H: But you know, I think it's in a sense it's funny because a lot of these older people you know a lot of people of that generation that was always they were always trying to make themselves appear to be younger than they were. And they always fudged you know their date of birth and so on, or the year of birth and so on. My mother always said ahh, she's older than that.

Z: Was it a secular house? Was she?

H: very secular, yes indeed.

Z: They spoke Polish not Yiddish?

H: They spoke Polish, when my mother remarried, the man she remarried uhm came from a very religious home. Not secular at all. He knew and spoke Yiddish. I went in to the business, you know, we went in to business his business and I learned a little bit of Yiddish just by the conversations that he would have with some of his suppliers and so on and that's the Yiddish that I learned. But there was no Yiddish in our home, although my mother probably know, was quite good at languages and she was able to, she spoke German perfectly. And understood Yiddish well enough I think her mother must have spoken Yiddish.

Z: And your father also came from a secular home?

H: His, he was I think I believe that his family was more inclined to be sort of, was less secular than my mother's family and home I think. I think my father Norbert came from a very traditional, conservative Jewish home.

Z: Do you know if he spoke Yiddish?

H: I don't know, I wouldn't know, but I would imagine that he must have. And I imagine especially business people, you know, probably to talk to each other and so in in Yiddish. And that trade probably I'm sure there were many. Also I don't know how good his English was, but he must have known some English although Yiddish must have been the language of trade if he travelled to London and dealt with merchants there. I'm only speculating on these things I don't know for sure.

Z: So did your mother talk about what life was like before in Poland, in terms of culture or?

H: You know I've seen photographs and so on. They had a very, you know, easy and very comfortable life there. They would attend various concerts and operas and so on, whatever else was going on. I don't think, I always got the impression you know that it must have been a time where they were quite well accepted within their community and very happy to be there and so on. I don't think they had the foresight to see what was to come.

Z: so the war began, your father packed the car, and they took off East. Right?

H: We packed the car, and there was myself, my mother, there was a maid. A woman, obviously, who was more like a nanny or something. And we drove sometimes in to a ditch, sometimes not. But anyways they ended up in Stanislov. My father there, when the Germans finally arrived, because they Germans didn't arrive to Stanislov until 1941.

J: How far away is Stanislov?

H: It's about 600 kilometres.

J: So that wasn't part of the Russian zone or something?

H: it wasn't part of the Russian zone at the time it was part of greater Poland. So eventually when they did come and so on they of course they set up the ghettos and so on. And you know we were herded in to apartments sharing with many, many people and I must have been two or three years old so I don't remember any of that either. But I know that my father later became sort of one of the leaders of the community and so on. He was, I think what they call the "Judenrat" uhm I think when the Germans were thinking, the Nazis were thinking of getting rid of the thorn that bothered them the most, I think they wanted to get rid of the leaders. And so they marched my father and many, many, other men to some place. Or rather they drove them in a truck, gave them shovels, asked them to dig holes. And then they shot them. So they sort of had their own burial place.

Z: did someone tell your mother about this

H: someone told my mother about this yeah.

Z: So what happened to your mother? She had a baby, she was in the ghetto.

H: My mother, uhm quickly bundled me up I think and we escaped first in to the country side and eventually ended up back in Warsaw. And in to the Warsaw ghetto. Because she had this great ability to speak German, almost perfectly without an accent, she was given... she asked to work for the German war effort and did so by going ahead and sewing underwear or whatever it was and so on. Just menial work where she must have worked at least twelve hours a day if not more.

Z: So she was in the ghetto?

H: She was able to go ahead, what she was able to do, was the factory was not in the ghetto. The factory was outside and everyday she would go out, do her work, and come back late at night. I in the mean time was there with my grandmother. Oh my grandmother was also in the, my mother's mother, was in the car that drove us back from Warsaw to Stanislov. And my grandmother stayed with me, took care of me while my mother was working, and she was able to go ahead and provide enough food by going ahead and because she was earning a little extra by going ahead and doing this kind of work and so on. And so she was, outside she was able to trade.

Z: What was your mother's first name?

H: Verra Gerner.

Z: Vera Gerner.

H: Gerner was her maiden name. We ended up being in I think 1943 or 1944, the Germans were rounding up people in the ghetto and sending them off to concentration camps. My mother was working at the time during the days soldiers came, actually there were two so-called Axion?Action? (not sure of this word). One of them, mistakenly, and this is, share fortune, there was I think a number seven and a number nine or a such and such a street and I think they skipped one house. The soldiers ran up, grabbed everybody, brought them down. And you could see looking out the window, these hoards of people you know they were being taken to the train stations. And for some unbeknown reason, whatsoever, they forgot about this particular apartment block that we were living in. And so that was the one action\*, the second action\* we weren't so lucky. It was my grandmother and I and my mother was working at the time, and we were taken to the train station. My grandmother was at the time quite lame. She couldn't walk very well.

Z: Do you remember her at all?

H: I don't remember her. I was I think three years old.

Z: Is this your mother's mother or your father's?

H: My mother's mother. I'm fortunate that I'm here today but it's just again by miracle. Because I was supposed to be loaded on to that train with hoards of other people, taken to Auschwitz or wherever, and been one of the six million victims. But my Grandmother had sewn in her lapel a large diamond and a broach and there was a man who was probably a Ukrainian Kapo who was helping the Germans because, the Germans were not as numerous as everyone thinks they were. There weren't a lot of Germans but there were a lot of people who were you know, of Polish origin or Ukrainian and so were helping them. And this Kapo was given this large diamond and broach and my grandmother signed over, because they had real estate as well. They had a large apartment lock, and some other I don't know. They had some real estate and she signed over all the papers to him and he took me and saved me in fact.

Z: did she know him?

H: She didn't know him.

Z: So it was just blind leap of faith?

H: Or she must have, she had an instinct or a feeling about him. Or she might have known of him. I don't know. I only know that this man ended up with this, wealth, and I was saved and my mother came back, she had. What happened is that the night before she was so deadily tired in the factory that she didn't come back to the ghetto. She you know they just made a pallet on the

floor, laid herself down and slept there. The next morning she had heard about the trains and Jews being rounded back and so on, and she came running back and started screaming “where’s my child, where’s my child” and the man this Kapo gave me to her. She thanked him I think, and I think that’s where she signed over all of the properties or whatever it is we had. And for that moment on, what I do know is we escape from the ghetto in Stanislov and lived in the countryside in Poland. You know I remember as a child now, you know, a lot of things that had to do with people living on farms. Churning your own butter, or making, I remember cottage cheese and my mother would go ahead and so we were lucky what she did in order to survive because it was difficult is that she basically, she bought and sold things. You know she would travel great distances, leave me alone you know either with a neighbour or a friend or somebody to look after me, and she would travel certain distances in order to buy produce and then sell it and so on. You know, whatever it was all bartering it was mostly for cigarettes or whatever.

Z: So she had papers? She was passing, in hiding?

H: She was passing.

Z: So she had papers?

H: She had false papers.

Z: She was able to get them working at the factory.

H: She had false papers and she ingratiated her self very well with any Germans first of all because she, [laughing] thinking about this movie where the Gorilla is going ahead and says “you don’t look Jewish at all” and she didn’t look Jewish and so because of that and her ability to speak and so on. But she said [laughing] my mother she said, “you know the Germans had no inkling, they didn’t know but the Poles knew. They knew I was Jewish. They could always go ahead and sense you know that there was a difference”

Z: Someone else told me that.

R: Oh it’s common. It’s common.

Z: yeah someone else said that you know that in Warsaw they were in passing and people knew an threatened them.

R: She was blackmailed, she was threatened by poles. Germans with ladders would stand up on the bus and give her the seat and pat her little boy, nice little boy. Tell her the story when she left you alone and the Germans came to the house.

H: You know, talk to play the game, the theatre of it and so on. One day I remember being left along in the apartment, I must have been three or four years old I think at the time. And a German soldier, an officer barged in to the apartment and he said uh, he looked around, he walked around and he looked at me and he said, he saw there was a picture which my father had put a fake picture of a soldier you know. Very Arian looking and so on. “Who is that? Is that

your father?" I said mm, and he said "where's your father?" And I would go and look up to the sky and said he's in heaven.

Z: And then left you alone?

H: [laughing] poor little boy.

Z: So this was...

H: you know it's funny about these stories. Some of these I do remember but a lot of it, it's something, that's the thing about memory. It's very tricky. You never know what you actually remember or what is part of family lora that you were told. It's a very complex thing. But I do remember that particular incident.

Z: so do you remember the war ending?

H: I remember the war ended, I remember the joy in knowing that the Russians were coming because the Russians, we were near the Russian border at the time and uhm we could hear to guns going off and we could hear you know the battle and so on. And we felt that the Germans are being driven away and this was, this was a very satisfying moment. At that time we were living again in a very small little house in the country. My mother had befriended this woman, a Jewish woman who had two children. One of them was a girl and one of them was a boy who was 13 who was dressed up to be a girl except that he had an oversized adam's apple that he spoke his voice broke, [laughing] but he looked absolutely... he had a kerchief on, he looked absolutely masculine and not feminine in the least bit. So, but uhm, he was a considerably older than I was but he was my friend and we were witness to all of these you know the Germans leaving and the Russians advancing and so on. I remember that very well.

Z: so what happened when the war ended where did you go with your mother?

H: What happened, my mother was able to communicate and get in touch with my father's family. There again it was a very complex thing but they ended up, we somehow ended up in Linz, Hitler's hometown.

Z: In Germany?

H: In Germany...in Austria.

R: Austria.

H: And that's where they had famous rallies and so on, anyways. And there we ended up as Rita's parents did, in the displaced person's camp called \_\_\*.[30:35]

Z: This was 45?

H: Yeah. But the funny story is, and one that my cousin actually writes about in a book that we have translated, is that I got lost. We were, we had united with them and they had, there was my aunt and my uncle, Aunka\* (31:00) and Victor. I was supposed to go with Victor and there were buses that were leaving from this particular place.

Z: So you were 6 years old?

H: I was about 6 years old. And I was supposed to go with Victor, and Victor was at that time, I don't know, fourteen or so. He was just a teenager. And was carrying a huge suitcase or something like that. I remember he had this particular large woolen lodencoat\* (31:57). I got on the bus and the bus was crowded, many people made lots of stops. I was very nervous and I was thinking that I saw somebody get off like he had exactly the same coat. And so I said "he's getting off here, so I better get up" and Victor wasn't paying attention to me at all. He wasn't even aware of the fact that I was there. He knew that he was responsible, but he was I guess in his own thoughts. And I got off, and all of a sudden I realized, and the bus takes off. And somewhere in that city. There were very few people around so one the bus stop is in the middle of the street and I look around and I see that I don't see Victor, I don't see my mother, I don't see anybody and I don't recognize anybody. And I start wailing and I'm crying and I go across the street and I'm walking, and someone goes ahead and takes pity. "oh poor child" you know, "who is he, what happened" and anyways they took me in, these people took me in.

Z: What did you speak? You spoke Polish at that time, did you speak German?

H: You know, I must have... I spoke a little bit of German. But I certainly, the one thing that I did not do and one of the things that's interesting about the fact you know when I came to Canada eventually, the English that I had learned. Or that I thought I knew, because I came to Montreal I thought it was an English city [laughing]. And so the English that I had learned was from Hollywood films. I loved film, I loved going, I had all these incredible oversized superstars that were deeply embedded in my psyche and so when we crossed the ocean we came up by boat and so on. I was the official translator for my parents.

Z: Because the movies.

H: But anyways, getting back to Linz and so on. So anyways, they stayed there and one of the things that I was taught from a very early age on was not to reveal yourself because I was circumcised and so on but one thing my mother told me not to... Here I was these people wanted to wash me down before they went to bed, but I wouldn't go and pull my pants down. And so they thought, okay this kid is definitely a Jewish kid you know. It so happened I was happy enough that these folks were a Jewish family.

Z: It was a Jewish family?

H: Yeah. It's an incredible thing, like all of these elements. Anyways, in the meantime my mother and my aunt and my uncle and my two cousins are there and my mother arrives and asks Victor where I am. And, he says "I don't know what happened to him, I lost him" and she starts shrieking saying "You mean I went through the whole war with all of the you know tragedy all



of that and so on and I have to lose him here, how could it be!!” Anyways to make a long story short they found me the following day. And we stayed there for about a year...no less than a year, might be a few months, 7 or 8 months.

Z: were you in school?

H: I was not in school. One of the things that my cousin was you know very upset was the fact that here I was, almost seven, you know I hadn't had any education whatsoever. I was you know completely illiterate. And you know, how could I possibly... he was ashamed, because he, to him a success in his life and later on he became he taught at MIT and was fairly accomplished. Anja was also a very well educated herself, she was my female [cousin?]. So we, but, I had no education. We stayed there for a little while, however, I developed this kind of rapport with this cousin Victor and we spent many hours, because it was it was very mountainous over there. We used to go ahead on these long excursions and so on, he would talk to me and tell me, and I would find out exactly what I was interested in. And he was very, I don't know if there was a sense of guilt because of what he had lacked in going ahead and taking care of me, but anyways I became very close with him and it was a lovely gesture and we ended up for this short while they took a small apartment in Vienna. We went, we stayed with them and then my mother had been communicating with this man who was from Levov\* [38:35] Poland.

Z: Was she working in Vienna?

H: No, no she wasn't doing anything at the time. We're talking about, expanding the time factor in terms of what it is that I am speaking, it was really a very short period of time. It must have been, all told maybe 8 months from the time to the end of the War until we left. So she was communicating with him.

Z: How did she know him?

H: she knew him from before the war. He had seen her, he had heard through friends, etcetera that she was a widow and uh perhaps there was an opportunity you know for them to know each other and so on. He in the mean time had been part of the Polish army contingent under the, a Polish division of the Russian army. And he ended up, he saw very little of the War because he ended up in Almatan\* [40:00] which is one of the Stans, somewhere in Northeast Asia. Anyways he ended up, after the War, managed to get himself to Antwerp\* [40:25] Belgium. Never actually, well eventually got a permit to work. He was a jewel smith, a jeweller, and he started to correspond with my mother.

Z: From Belgium?

H: From Belgium. And was able to go ahead and get false papers for her and I to come to Antwerp Belgium. I remember this trip very well, this was incredible. From Vienna we went to Prague, Czechoslovakia, and Prague in 1946 was probably at the height of the sort of the Russian Espionage. The beginning of the cold war and so on, and they were, it seemed to me like Pink Panther of guys running around with loops [laughing] stealing documents, anyway we ended up there. We were poor we had hardly any money. He did send us a little bit of money to travel but

it wasn't nearly enough. I remember being very hungry all the time and looking at all the shop windows, I think for some reason or another, Prague had never been bombed or invaded but they were seemed much more affluent than any other part. WE travelled from, eventually we stayed there for a while and after a week or so were able to get the papers we were promised and were able to travel through Germany, actually bypassing Berlin. I remember as a child, you know the hatred that you developed, and so I had this make-believe gun or something and I felt that I see Nazis everywhere and I remember pretending that I was going to go ahead and kill them. Anyways we ended up, at that point, skinny as a rake, I pulled in to the station with my mother and my, the man Simon Schaffer was my step father to be, met me. And we lived there for five years, four years.. four and a half years.

Z: In Antwerp. So did you speak French or what was?

H: I went, Antwerp, that's where I started my education. The first year my parents thought that my French wasn't good enough to go ahead and keep up with the other children so they sent me to a boarding school in Brussels. It was a terrible experience for me, I had never been away from my mother at the time and I also felt a kind of fish out of water because in a sense I began to realize that there was, I began to realize that I was Jewish and here I was being sent to this boarding house which was predominately Christian. And so when these kids would go ahead on Sundays they would go to mass, whatever and so on, I was the only one who was excused and who could stay behind. So I felt kind of you know, ostracized. Like an outsider, exactly. My mother came to see me there, my father did too at the time. They had already, I think a week or so after we came to Antwerp they got married. My mother and father came to see me and saw me in this desperate situation, my nose was running, my hair I hadn't washed and I looked awful. So they thought there's no way they could go ahead and abide by this so they brought me back to Belgium. My education in Antwerp was French. But we learned French, and what I didn't know was that the country at the time was very much on the cusp of being very much like Quebec is today. The Flemmes, the Ballons\* [46:250, there was this tremendous divide. In fact Rita and I were in Florida a few years ago, and we were sitting in a restaurant and these two young guys are sitting next to us. And Rita says "are you from Belgium? My husband is from Belgium, speak to them in French!" and I said if you stick a knife in me I would be happier.

R: They were \*?? [47:00].

H: They were actually, well our story of coming to Canada was my father...

Z: So one second, hold on. So you went to school, were you put back?

H: I was put back, but then I skipped grade four because you know I was advanced enough to be able to go ahead and continue with kids my own age and so on but the first three years yes I was one year behind. And then I caught up by going ahead and skipping that particular grade. I must say it was very interesting, as a student in Belgium I was very dedicated and very driven to do very good work, and I did. I was near the top of my class, not first or second, but you know I was doing fairly well. And when I got, when I came here, I was so disappointed by the education system so on that I fell back. I don't know if it was a combination of someone who, the adolescent stage that kids go through, but I remember distinctly was that I would say to my self

“How could they be going ahead and being taught such stupidity, this is something that we learned three years ago, they’re so far behind” so I was bored.

Z: So did your mother have another child?

H: No my mother never had a second.

Z: So why did they want to, Simon was doing very well in Belgium I assume?

H: He was doing very well in Belgium and so on, but Belgium is a very difficult to get your Belgian citizenship. Its not like Canada which is quite open to immigration who allows people to come and after a short period of time you can say that you’re Canadian but in Belgium I think, my father was partners with two other people and they had a factory they were employing 50 people at one point. It wasn’t a small enterprise it was a fairly large, he was always proud of the fact that they were going ahead so much materials that they were going through weekly and so on and he would give me all the statistics on that. And finally he applied for his citizenship and they denied him.

Z: What year was this?

H: it was 1950. We had been there four years now. And they said no, you have to be living in this country for 25 years before you get citizenship. So he was very angry and my mother in the mean time, my mother was very uncomfortable with the idea of staying in Europe. She felt that perhaps we should be coming to Canada or another country you know where the immediate ramification of going ahead and being in Europe would be something that we could avoid. She thought that the Korean War was going to escalate in to something bigger and so we had the option of going to three countries: Australia, and by the way when they applied for their citizenship for immigration to Australia we were accepted immediately because they were more hard up probably. My father wanted very much to go to the United states because he had friends in new York and he knew that he would be very successful there. But in the end they had inscription in the US and they thought I would have to go to the army and so on and that was the last thing they wanted. As you can see all of my life I’ve been very protected and very lucky. Anyways, so we ended up...

Z: So how did they

H: There was a representative from the province of Quebec in Antwerp and said, Montreal is a French-speaking city I’m sure you’ll adapt well, easily, and we are looking for immigrants. And so we were given papers, and were able to come to Canada. In 1951.

Z: So no one sponsored you?

H: No one sponsored us, no.

R: Because you came with money.

H: Yes.

Z: Did you fly over?

H: Did I what?

Z: Fly.

H: We didn't fly. We came by boat. We came with the Empress of France, which was a Canadian Pacific Boat run by the Canadian Pacific Company. CPR or whatever it's called. Which sunk a few years later, it's no longer in existence.

Z: So do you know when you left? Do you remember leaving?

H: I remember distinctly. You know travelling from Antwerp to London, England where we had some relatives who I think must have been on my late father's side. And very orthodox people and so on, very British living in these little town houses and so on. We stayed there for a little while, funny incident was what I remember. We got to London, we stayed in a hotel and I don't know if you know what high tea is like but high tea is a very important ceremony in England and so on and we were hungry so we ordered it, and they came wheeling in our room this huge thing [laughing] and we looked and there were three little sandwiches with cucumber [laughing]. Anybody who'd lived sort of the Francophile life and so on would see quite an amazing difference actually between what was being offered there. We left England and travelled six days I believe on this boat in very comfortable surroundings and so on.

Z: So you went first class?

H: Yeah, we went first class and we ended up first in Quebec city just being able to go ahead and explore and see what it was like.

Z: What was it like when you got off the ship? Do you remember?

H: you know, I always wanted to come to America. I always thought this was the greatest place in the world and so on and I thought that I would be safe, and I think like the Pope I came off that boat and I kissed the ground. As I got here, this was you know very monumental.

Z: Why was it so big for you?

H: because I think Canada was very close to the United States and the United States, the cultural influences of Hollywood movies is pervasive, and so when you go..

J: So you had seen films in like, Antwerp?

R: oh yeah

H: yeah, yeah you could see, because it didn't have the kind of restricted laws that exist in Quebec where there was a fire in the 1930s and so on. Here I was disappointed because I had to be a certain age, and we arrived when I was 11 years old.

J: well Zelda, said, was saying tonight we drove by the Theatre

Z: The Regent theatre. You had to be 16

R: The Regent, is that the one near Laurier?

H: oh that's the Regent.

R: We were going crazy last week we couldn't remember the name, it was driving us nuts! He saw movies every week. He knew, he was going ot movies every week

H: yeah.

Z: This was in Antwerp?

H: Yeah yeah.

Z: Were you called Henrick or were you called Henrey? Or did you

H: Uh, well that's the irony. When I came to Canada and so on, I wanted to be more American and so they called me Hank.

Z: In Belgium you were

H: In Belgium I was Henrey, and to my parents, Polish Henrick.

Z: What did you speak to your parents?

H: I spoke to them in Polish. They spoke Polish, I spoke Polish, my mother spoke a little French not too bad. My father was very, My stepfather was very poor in languages, he wasn't very good. But he eventually learned to speak English here but at a much later age.

Z: So you land in Quebec, you kiss the ground?

H: No when I land in Montreal I didt hat. I remember the Pope going ahead and doing the same thing.

Z: So do you remember

J: You learned from

Z: how you were welcomed in Quebec?

H: I remember it was you know a strange city, with hills and so on, we had to climb and go down. It was the middle of summer, was very hot.

Z: But when you got off the ship.

H: When we got off the ship, we ended up in, we had some friends of my parents

Z: But before that, just the experience of getting off the ship, going through immigration do you remember that process at all what that was like?

H: the immigration and all of that I think we were guided in Quebec city, so we didn't go through the immigration process and so on. It went through, we did that when we came to Montreal that's where there were you know, officers of the Crown and so on who were there.

Z: Oh the ship continued to Montreal?

H: The trip continued from Quebec city to Montreal

Z: oh okay. So what was that immigration process like for you and your family?

H: I think it probably was more difficult for my parents. I was an eleven year old kid who had just gotten in to trouble up by going ahead and climbing through the smoke stacks in the ship Because I want to explore the bowels and find out exactly what it was like and this wonderful white suit that I had that I turned all black and so I think made my father furious. So to me it was like coming to that part of it was I don't know, I didn't, what I do remember distinctly afterwards was being driven to some friends or distant relatives I don't believe we had relatives here but I think we had some distant friends that my father knew. And we stayed in their house and it was in ?? [1:01:19] At that time in the early fifties, very little of it had been built up. In fact, I looked out and said "What kind of a strange place is this" I walked outside there were you know a few houses and so on, and the rest of it was fields. There were just miles and miles of fields and I thought to myself is this a city, what is this? So I was quite disappointed. We stayed there for a few months and so on and then eventually my parents, my father founded a business here and my parents started looking for an apartment. So we went to, we went within the area and that area was already built up a little bit it was called Stewart Avenue and it was near \*\*\*\*? [1:02:10]

R: It continued in to ???\* [1:02:37]

Z: Okay

H: It's predominately a south Asian community now. But you know Montreal is like that, it changes, just think about \*\* 1:02: 55 which was Jewish at a certain point then it became Greek and now it's another ethnic minority. So it was funny so there was this woman who owned, who had this duplex, and she was showing it to my mother and my father and I, my stepfather and I, and she turns to her husband and says to him in Hungarian "I don't want to rent to them, I don't like French people." You know you have to be careful how you speak in this country because

there are some people who understand exactly what it is you're standing, and we are not French. Anyways.

Z: what were they? They were just jews?

H: No they were not Jews they were Hungarians who immigrated here.

Z: So they got the place?

H: They got the place. This is the first home that I remember. Our home in Montreal.

Z: And then you went to school?

H: And then I went to a school called Barkley school which was about three or four blocks down in barkley center. So I became very disappointed in the standard of education. But, I liked being in Canada because Canada was not really that far from the United States to me at that point in time I couldn't tell the difference. I wanted the American life.

Z: so did your parents want you to be educated in French or English?

H: We came here before Law 101. Bill 101 which is not really a bill because it's already been passed as law. So as a Jew we could go to Protestant schools and so I went to Barkley school and then [ ]\* 1:05:25 high and these were all institutions that were under a Protestant school board.

R: and English.

H: and English.

Z: So you had no choice?

H: It's hard to say. I think we had some choice I think probably could have gone to a French school but chose not to because somehow or another we felt you know America, the culture, the language was English and so on. So in spite of the fact, but it was you know it was well before the awakening of the cultural revolution and what happened in Quebec in the 60s. It was well before that.

Z: so what was your first impression the first day at school, do you remember that?

H: My impression of the school? I was under the impression that the majority of the teachers and class were not nearly as advanced as they should be. I was very disappointed in the level of learning. To go back, actually, in order to be able to communicate in English fairly well, that summer we arrived in July. That summer, I was sent away to a camp and I had a sort of an ability of going ahead and learning languages fairly quickly. I think it was Henry ?? [1:07:40] who famously said that if you come here before the age of thirteen, you don't necessarily retain the accent that you had, but if you come here at a later age you can. You know.

Z: It's true, there's something about puberty, about language and memory and language formation.

H: Exactly. So I was able to learn English well enough, and I'm a quiet type of person anyway, I'm not the exuberant type I'm not the one who is going to jump up all the time because I have the answer to a question. So I didn't say all that much, and whatever I did say was well spoken and it was without apparent signs of being foreign. So you know, my English was good enough, it was as good as any of the other kids in the class.

Z: so was your class largely immigrant?

H: Yes, I believe that at least half of them were immigrants at the time. And the other half were kids who you know whose families had been here for several generations. Part of the structure and fabric of..

Z: Did your mother work?

H: My mother never worked. You know but then the difference between what my kids are going through and sort of the economics of today and what it was like in the fifties, is night and day. It's an era where a man could work, earn enough money to support a family, send his children, and his wife could stay home. Which is the same, I mean for feminists there was the belief that staying at home and looking after the house and stuff, it is the work that, that should be looked on dignity and is certainly enough of, enough there to keep people going.

Z: So what was it like for your mother being here those early years?

H: My mother devoted herself. She was never, she was very funny in certain ways. She never got to drive a car. She had learned to, before the war, they had servants and she lived very comfortable and so on. It was only in Belgium that she learned how to cook and this was a new exploration and a new beginning for her. She knew that, "you know if I take this bus and I go there and there and I end up, there is a wonderful butcher there" so that's what she was doing. She was travelling from one place to another and of course I'm making light of it but actually you know

R: She was very active in [??ADASA?] 1:11:37.

H: what's that?

R: She was part of the [ADASA] group, and charity group.

H: but that was later on. I'm talking about the beginning

R: the beginning

H: when I was still in school and so on and was living at home. Her ADAS came at a point when I left home and she became appointed



Z: who were her friends those early years?

H: All of her friends were people, other immigrants and other Polish speaking people who had similar experiences or you know she was able to relate to. It was mostly, most of the friends were from, if they were not from Stanislov\* they were from Warsaw or other towns. Newly arrived immigrants, people who were like her. Fairly comfortable.

Z: was she happy here?

H: She thought Canada was wonderful. She was very happy to be living in this country which has little discrimination where she could live without fear, where she could, I mean we're talking about secular to a point you know. We did go to synagogue, there were I guess they were sort of celebration of Judaism at it's minimum where you go ahead and you go for the high holidays or you have meals on Passover and so on but not a lot more than that. I on the other hand, when I was in Belgium I must tell you that I went through the experience, I had, when my parents were very concerned because I had developed a cough and they thought it was a kind of pneumonia. Went to the doctor and the doctor said that the only way this young man is going to go ahead and eradicate this disease is if he goes to the mountains he needs fresh air and the mountain air will go ahead and clear him out. I think I was 8 or 9 years old at the time.

Z: The doctor did he think you had TB or?

H: Yea. And so they said you know, no one else...Switzerland would be a good place for you to go to. And there, no one, you know who was running any kind of an organization of any sorts and so on was willing to. My father was so embroiled in his work and so on that he would come home and he was dead tired probably late in the evening, he would get up at six o'clock in the morning and he was at his workshop. And my mother wasn't comfortable enough to feel that she could accompany me somewhere. But there was a Hasidic family, a Hasidic man, who was willing to travel from simowitz\* [1:15:49] to Antwerp and come and get me, and to bring me there. And I spent, what to me was the most interesting and educational two weeks that I've ever had in my life, where I learned what a Hasidic Jew lives like. And I had to go ahead and go through all the rituals and so on. And [laughing] I remember being so incredibly in a sense, "what kind of hygiene is this, this is cold water, he dips his hands in the water.. and this is what he calls cleaning himself?" I didn't understand that it was a ritual. I learned about the ways and means of going ahead and what it is to be a fundamentally very grounded and and very involved, very religious Jew.

R: Until they went in to ..[??] 1:17:18

J: But you walked the walk, for a few weeks

H: And you know it was interesting because I mean I liked it, how else are you going to go ahead, I mean you're thrown in to this situation and so on, you learn a great deal, and you begin to understand later on in your life what it's all about. And I like that, it was, but at the same time, I always played whatever role I had to play I played it as best as I could. When I was a child in the war in Poland, we passed as Christian. I remember you know, I remember the ceremonies, I

remember what it was like, when I had to go ahead and pretend to be a choir boy or something akin to that. So I chose later on, as I began to think about it more clearly, that I believed in the secular life more so than I believed in a religious one.

Z: The relationship between the established Jewish community and the immigrants, I've repeatedly heard there was none. Would you say that was true for your family those early years?

H: I'm sorry?

Z: Would you say that's true for your family in the early years of being here?

H: I don't know, it's hard for me to understand and to know exactly. I know that my parents never swayed outside of the circle of people that they were in contact with socially and so on and I think that a lot of these people were like minded and so on

Z: Why do you think that is?

H: I think it's lack of confidence, lack of...it's probably, you know Montreal in that era somehow or another it's like the great divide that exists even today between the Francophones and Anglophones and so on. People stay within their own community and relate to each other and so on.

Z: That's what was interesting, because they were all Jewish. There was the immigrant Jews and the non-immigrant Jews, and there were like they call them the two silos, living side by side but really having no..

H: Well I remember as a kid, you know, all of my friends were Jewish. I don't think there was one non Jew. Particularly that area was, you know, peopled with immigrants, Jewish immigrants who were living there. And as young kids you go ahead and you form some groups and so on, and there was always fear, the French are coming or something. There was always that antagonism that existed, you know, I never understood it. But I was also, I think I was angry at the fact that here were these people, who some of them were well-established and so on and there's a saying in French: "it doesn't matter what you say as long as you pronounce it properly" [laughing]. So I was saying how is it possible, you know they've evolved so much, and they're still speaking at a dialect that was prevalent at the 17<sup>th</sup> century in French. Why is it that Quebecers persist you know and there's a pride that they feel in retaining the manner of speech that they have and so on. To me that was always troublesome. There was always, there is a fear to some degree, or I don't know if you can call it a fear, but there is sort of a sense that they were the other and we were in opposition to them and we had to go ahead...and I don't know I was never the leader of a group like this but I was one of the followers probably and so on, and began to realize how stupid that is, as I became more mature and began to see things in a different light.

Z: Did people ever ask you about your background?

H: Never. Hardly ever.

Z: teachers? Did they ask you?

H: Well you know, it's a funny thing. As I said, you know, one of the or one of my problems was that I never accomplished what I should have in school. And so my mother would go ahead and come to my defense, I remember there was this one Latin teacher that I absolutely Adored, Mr. Logan

Z: in high school?

H: In high school. He was wonderful, had a great voice, it was a British accent. As a matter of fact I think he worked for the CBC at the time and the CBC's requirements at the time were that you speak in a particular way. I liked him, and anyway one particular exam, he gave me a mark which was quite lower than I would have expected and so on. And my mother ran to him and started pleading with him, can't you go ahead and you know upgrade my son, you know he's an immigrant and so on and she played that card, you know which I disliked. But the reason that I didn't do well in that particular exam or that subject at that time is because I hadn't studied it, I hadn't looked at a book. So I felt that she wasn't justified in going ahead and doing it. I on the other hand sort of felt that if I got this less than passing grade, for this particular, on this particular subject for this particular exam it was because I deserved it, you know. But my mother always played that card.

R: the immigrant card.

H: the immigrant card, yeah.

R: to advocate on your behalf.

Z: So was your grade changed?

H: yup [laugh].

Z: So she was effective. How did your mother learn English?

H: I guess probably the way most immigrants learn.. No she actually went to, they had, there were classes. For English, I think that she attended. But also it's by listening to, watching television, listening to the radio. That was probably the best way of going ahead and..

Z: And did you speak Polish to her?

H: I spoke Polish and eventually I got tired of it and I wanted to express myself better, because my vocabulary in Polish was not as extensive, so I spoke to her in English and forced her to learn to speak English and so on.

Z: So how long did they live in Stewart?

H: We lived there until 1957, or 50.. yeah 1957.

Z: And then what?

H: And then we moved. My parents bought a duplex on the corner of Barkley and Divinly\* [1:27:49] and Rita and I met just about the same time, maybe a year or two later, and so on. By the time that we got married, they decided that they wanted to sell this house. They didn't like it because that area had an influx of Hasidic\*, my father was very much in opposition to these people. He didn't like them, he was like Rita's father who would go ahead and you know Rita's father was kind of an exaggeration of what a lot of people felt like doing, but who carried through what other people wanted to do but never do, because these people were ringing the doorbell and collecting money for one charity or another.

Z: So where did they move?

R: To another ghetto.

H: They moved to Hampstead.

Z: So your father had his own jewelry?

H: Yes, we had, I joined the firm almost at the same time as Rita and I got married. It was a factory that manufactured jewellery and they called themselves Watch case, which they also made watch cases, but whatever equipment they had for making watch cases was left behind in Antwerp. So the only watch cases that they made were sort of they finished them. They would buy them from people who had, who had equipment in New York and so on and we would finish it here and sell it to various stores and so on. The jewelry became part of that and eventually the company when I joined spread it's wing and we sold jewelry from coast to coast in Canada to various jewelry stores.

Z: So Hampstead. Hampstead is an interesting case to study because in the early 50s there were no Jews around

H: Yeah, but this was the 60s now.

R: No she knows that, exactly yeah. In fact what's interesting about Hampstead, someone was explaining to me when there was the fear of the PQ getting in. And real estate, everybody was like, Jewish people were in a panic, even I was like oh my god there's no way I'm staying here if this comes through. And a realtor explained to me "you'll always be able to sell your house and you'll always get a certain value for it, but weren't you smart not to buy a house in Hampstead. In Hampstead and \*\*\* [1:31:24] they can't give them away." Because that reputation of being predominately Jewish was making it undesirable.

H: yeah but Westmount is supposedly now supposed to be..

R: Yeah but there's plenty of Jews in Westmount. There's plenty of French in Westmount.

H: It's an Anglophone community but they did a Census probably 50/50.

Z: really?

R: Yeah probably, but it's the connotation.. it's the connotation the impression about it. I was shocked I mean.

Z: The image, yeah.

R: Yeah

Z: Hm

R: I think his story is different right, because they came with money.

Z: They came with money.

R: It's a whole different, yeah it's interesting.

Z: But it was still a story of immigrants, you know

R: Oh absolutely.

J: Where was the firm, the jewelry firm?

H: IT was on..

R: oh for years..

H: Bleury and St. Catherine's. No Bleury and, it was on

R: The Gordon Brown building, it was a famous building. For years

H: which was I think we were the only, we were one of the few jewelry firms in there and the rest of them were manufacturing

R: Furriers

H: yes furriers. My father, my stepfather, loved to tell his story because for a certain time they think, and going back before the war, he went in to the fur business. He was just fed up with jewelry for some reason, I don't know. Didn't last for very long. So later on he had the saying, he says you know "the best jeweller amongst the furriers and the best furrier amongst the jewellers."

Z: Did he hire a lot of people?

H: We had, not, it wasn't nearly as big because I think.. I'm trying to go ahead and look at it from the point of view of economics. In the post-war era and the 50s and so on, late 40s, there was a tremendous demand for product because everything, production had stopped for all kinds of consumer goods. So everybody who was manufacturing or doing anything was doing extremely well. And that continued through until actually the late 70s or the early 80s. In the 60s when we were here, sort of at the optimum time, the company had about 25 people working including people who worked in the office and sale staff and so on.

R: They were mostly immigrants.

H: And they were mostly immigrants.

Z: so was that true in the 50s too?

R: yup

H: No in the 50s they had a much larger, they were producing a tremendous amount.

R: In Belgium?

H: In Belgium, yes.

R: But in Montreal

H: oh in Montreal, no, they start small. It was a company, it started out, my father was actually a craftsman himself and he employed about four or five other people at the time to make whatever it was that they were going ahead and doing. But by the end of the 60s and so on we had, you know as we had gone ahead and spread out and were selling across Canada, a little bit of export not all that much, we had about 25 people.

Z: Do you self-identify as a Holocaust survivor?

H: No.. Uh Yes! You know, it's.. I identify myself as a lucky guy. I am, I identify myself as someone who has been on the brink of extinction and somehow or rather through a miracle was able to go ahead and survive, and lives on.

Z: Do you identify your mother as a holocaust survivor?

H: Yes, absolutely.

Z: So what's the difference between you and her?

H: The difference between she and I, is that I'm the.. she is the one who takes care of me and I am just you know taken wherever it is. So I am, a survivor is someone who fights through. My mother had strength of character. She was able to go ahead and probably step over dead bodies without an inkling. I, you know, I'm too sensitive. I could not possibly do that.

Z: But you were able to confront someone who came in to your room and play that your father is in heaven.

H: I was taught that you know. I was, you know. Yeah.

R: Hank is, has greater denial capacities than some people because of what I think he's been through.

H: yeah, but really in truth I mean, you know someone who has the strength and fortitude and the ability that my mother had of going ahead and surviving and doing all the things that she did in order to live that, is someone who has to be celebrated and venerated and so on. And I'm just like the, you know when you see a child with a little rag doll, walking around. The child that takes that rag doll around the house. I'm the rag doll.

Z: Or the raison d'être.

H: Pardon?

Z: raison d'être

H: Yup.

R: She saved, him I guess that's..

Z: But you could also make the point that the act of saving gave her strength to continue.

R: But also I don't think Hank is acknowledging what a wise child he must have been to know the rules of the game

Z: That's what I'm getting at

R: He could have blown it a hundred times over, there were many times she wasn't there and he could have given, I mean there were lots of children they weren't saved. Not because the parents didn't want to save them, you know.

Z: do you self-identify as an immigrant?

H: No, not really. I see myself as, I see myself as someone living, working, and contributing to this society. I am Canadian, Quebecer. I don't see myself.. this is my home, these are my.. My roots are not here but I've founded roots here. We've given birth, we have children and grandchildren who are Canadian, who live on this soil. I don't identify myself as an immigrant. I don't think I did from the time that I was a teenager, until today. Maybe when I was younger when I first arrived, obviously, you know I saw myself as an immigrant. But I see myself more as very Canadian. Very much part of the fabric of the country.

Z: Do you see yourself as an immigrant Rita?

R: Both, both. It depends on the, it depends on what I'm feeling, when I'm feeling vulnerable I remember some of that feeling of being an immigrant, an outsider, after we had that long discussion I was thinking about that a lot. Most of the time, we were very assimilated, our children are married to non-Jewish people. Our kids are raising their kids with, they know they come from Jewish families. We celebrate the holidays, but it's a very secular identification. And, I think for Hank and I both, there was also a need not to not to create the neurosis of victimization of you know, we wanted our children to feel empowered and equal to anybody here. And so uhm, it's both. I think it's both.

Z: Have you told your story to the various

H: What I did, is actually write my story because I wanted my grandchildren to be aware of where it is and how it is that their Grandfather came here and what his experiences were in his life and so on. So I have sort of a two part series, two part story which is one part I talk about the war and my experiences and some of the things that I've told you. And the other part is about sort of you know the new Canadian coming here and so on and what happened.

R: it's very well written actually.

Z: Did you go to university?

H: No.

Z: Was that hard for your mother?

H: It's hard to say.

R: Really? She was devastated. They wanted you to be a doctor.

H: no, no. My mother's ambition for me, was obviously for me to be a professional of some sort, lawyer, doctor, dentist. My mother wanted me to be a pharmacist and I can't imagine what my life would be like. I remember once there was a man who came to apply to a job, he was a pharmacist so I said to him. I'm sitting back at my desk and say, tell me, why is it that you would like to be in the jewellery business I mean we have an aging population there's going to be tremendous growth in this field, why would you come? He said I'm so tired of talking to sick people all the time and handing out pills, I hate it. He said I want to bring joy in to their life. I think he had a false illusion of exactly what the jewellery business was all about.

Z: Do you have any regrets about that?

H: Do I have regrets about my not going to university? You know I've always found that it was difficult for me to go ahead, and I've noticed for the last couple of years also. In school, I hate being challenged, and I think that's what happens when you go to school you take certain courses and you have to answer to fact and have knowledge about that and so on. I always hated



that competitiveness and so on, I didn't like it. I thought one of the joys of going ahead and being three quarters retired which is what I am, is this kind of, of course the brain doesn't work in the same manner as it did when I was 17 or 18 years old. But I like the idea of going ahead and learning things and educating myself.

Z: So like walking with Victor in the mountains.

H: Yup.

R: Hank is a very informed guy who reads a lot ,goes out with writers and has interesting conversations. What you didn't talk about in a way that you have with your kids is that coming here and becoming Hank, and getting on your bicycle and just riding and being free was so much more fun than school and toy in the line in a certain kind of way. And you became quite rebellious, not rebellious in your actions but if your parents wanted something you would perhaps choose not to.

H: I think as a product of someone who lived such a sheltered protected life and who was so guided with everything and sort of the idea when I reached puberty and beyond I felt that I understood the constraints that I had gone ahead and lived with and so on. And so I wanted to throw off all of these shackles, or what I felt were shackles and so on.

Z: It's interesting because we interviewed a number of young men who were part of the orphans program who came over in 47, 48,349 and they were 18 and that's pretty much what they say.

R: Really, eh.

Z: "We were free, we were free. We never knew what this freedom meant"

H: exactly yeah.

R: the range of people you've spoken to is amazing. So many stories, I envy you actually I think it must be fascinating

Z: It is fascinating. And sort of the latter part of this, has been that in between generation, your generation where you don't really identify as survivor but you are a survivor.

R: exactly

Z: and you know sort of the identity within the family of roles, and sort of hurt and feelings, and emotion right. The notion of freedom, for many of the people who were born anywhere between 35 and 39 that early part of the childhood was almost erased, right. And they come to Canada at 10, 11, 12, 14, 15. How do you begin over? Where do you begin over and the lack of recognition of..

H: True but you know, the thing is, I sense.. I felt that freedom a little bit you know immediately after the war when we lived in Belgium you see. Because although, and what I liked particularly

and what became very important to me was to be a good student and to work hard and yet, to have that kind of freedom but the real freedom, the you know the sort of point where you go wild only came later on. In my early adulthood.

Z: I mean you're particularly interesting because there aren't or there weren't many people who survived who were born in 39.

H: No

Z: Right so, even when you can to Canada. Not that many immigrants..

H: No, it's funny. I was watching this stand up comedian Louis CK on HBO and he has this line and he talks about he says you know and sort of, he's expressing himself and this is an exaggeration but he goes ahead and says "don't you like living on earth, look go beyond a million miles up. What is there? No water, no oxygen, there's no food. What is there, you know I'm glad I live on earth because you know.." And so when I think about it, I'm laughing, kind of the irony and humor in that because I am thinking to myself how lucky I am to have gone ahead and survived this horrible period in life at this early age and now living in this country and this freedom it's an experience which is very difficult to translate and so on. And on the worst days I often tell Rita, and she knows it, I may be angry about one thing or another because I've become old in certain ways, but still inside I feel this joy really to have gone ahead and been able to experience the things that I have experienced in my life and to have lived in this country and to have lived to this age. But it's always relating to you know sort of the fire and brimstone and all the hard things that went on at that period in my life and where I am now.

R: that's a survivor talking.

Z: That's absolutely a survivor talking.

R: I think Hank should be, I've been telling Hank he should be, the survivors are ding you know the ones who have the whole big story and people like Hank almost have a responsibility to go out there and talk to young people.

Z: it certainly would be a different perspective, you know you don't have an accent. You're a child with fractured memory, but with memory. And there's also vicarious memory. And your mother's story. Can I ask sort of a personal question, although it's all been personal. Are you getting reparation money from the Germans?

H: I was very angry about that. My mother was getting reparation money and when she passed away they sent me a letter asking me if I wanted, and I said "screw that".

R: he's never been willing to.

H: I never wanted to.

Z: And now?

H: I'm sorry, money is money, but I'd rather not. I'm happy not to, and so on. And my house in the days of the 80s and so on and I kick myself for it, I drove a German car.

R: He had his BMW.

Z: You had your beamer. I did, we did interview someone two weeks ago who ended up in Russia during the way and they're fling now for reparations.

R: really? From the Russians?

Z: no from the Germans

H: from the Germans.

Z: Because they were forced to exile.

R: okay, interesting. By the way there has been a polish film festival, Martin Scorsese has put together, he received a great honor in Poland, so he put together a series of films that were put together at the cinema Quebecois. We went to see ne, it was amazing.

H: we saw two

R: the second one was set in Warsaw, during the second uprising. And you see, I mean I was surprised at Hank, it was like getting to see stories that Hank and his mother would have lived, visualized. It was very well done, it was a filmmaker Monk, who was a compatriot of VIDA and he died at 41, very young, this was done in 57. In one of them Roman Polanski was like 17 years old, you can literally see the skinny kid who was sneaking out of the ghetto you know based on his story.

H: Can you see the pervert?

R: no, no pervert.. Hank!

Z: Do you have any questions, John? We can take it off film. Just to chat.

[end]