

IMPORTANT

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Interview Transcript Title Page

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Interviewee Surname:	Keve
Forename:	Tom
Interviewee Sex:	Male
Interviewee DOB:	30 May 1944
Interviewee POB:	Budapest, Hungary

Date of Interview:	31 January 2018
Location of Interview:	London
Name of Interviewer:	Dr. Bea Lewkowicz
Total Duration (HH:MM):	3 hours



REFUGEE VOICES

Interview No. RV213
NAME: Tom Keve
DATE: 31st January 2018
LOCATION: London
INTERVIEWER: Dr. Bea Lewkowicz

[Part One]

[0:00:00]

*Today is the 31st of January 2018 and we are conducting an interview with Mr. Tom Keve.
And my name is Bea Lewkowicz and we are in London.*

Can you tell me your name please?

Tom Keve. My full name is Edward Thomas Keve. But - I'm called Tom.

And your name at birth?

Ödön Tamas Keve.

And when were you born please?

1944 May the 30th - in Budapest.

Thank you. Thank you, Tom, for agreeing to be interviewed for the Refugee Voices project.

You're welcome.

...Can you tell me a little bit about your family background?

...My family were Hungarian Jews from way back. I've got family trees going back five or six generations. My father is from Transylvania, or born in Transylvania, which is Hungary then and Romania now. And grew up around Szeged. My mother is from the Transdanubia area of Hungary towards... Austria. The two of them married in 1933, at which time my father was actually living in Bulgaria. So they lived in- as a married couple they lived in Bulgaria until about 1937, I think. And then came back- unfortunately came back to Hungary. I usually say my father made two mistakes. One was to emigrate to Bulgaria, and the second one was to come back from Bulgaria. And... we lived in Budapest. And that's where we were throughout the war. I was born during the war - 1944. We survived. Post-war, we had a very good life - probably the best time for my parents - for about three or four years, before a Communist takeover. Then they had a lot of problems. I had a- what I thought was a normal childhood. And in 1956, when I was twelve years old, we ... escaped- came across the border illegally, and managed to get to Britain. And that's when my normal life began.

[00:02:48]

Okay, so that's everything in a nutshell. So let's just- just let's go back a little bit. Tell us, how- do you know how your parents met?

I know exactly how they met. As I said, my father emigrated to Bulgaria around age twenty, which must have been 1919. My grandfather was a soldier in the First World War. He had a few village shops. And after the First World War, he went bankrupt. So the family were in financial trouble. My father left to make his fortune. After some years, he brought his family over, which included his sister- to Bulgaria, this is. And the sister wanted to marry at a certain point a Hungarian Jewish person, not easily found in Bulgaria. So she put an advertisement in a newspaper in Budapest. And a very nice- turned out very nice man wrote back. My father conducted the correspondence because of ... proprietary- propriety. Anyway, they got married. And at a certain point this new family member said to my father, "I have the girl for you." The girl is a daughter of his cousin back in Budapest. So they started corresponding. And the romance grew by letter. My father and grandmother came over to Budapest, to meet the family, et cetera. And in that two weeks, they got engaged. And

on the next visit to Budapest my parents were married. And certainly they were married in the Great Synagogue in Dohany Utcai which was still there and still very wonderful.

[00:04:48]

Mn-hm. And why did your aunt want to marry a Hungarian Jew? Why did she?

I never even thought of such a question. It's obvious, isn't it? If you're a Hungarian Jew, especially in the 1930s... you know.

She wanted to...

Yes.

So they had already lived in Budapest before they went to Bulgaria?

They- no, they didn't-

Where had they emigrated from?

Oh, they lived in Szeged...

Yes, and who...

Which is the second town of Budapest. They actually, my grandfather had shops in a village a few miles away from Szeged. But after my father went to school in Szeged and they all moved there after the First World War.

Okay. So she then- when they moved- wanted to marry somebody from home?

Yes. That's right. That's right.

And did your mother then move to Bulgaria?

Yes, she moved to Bulgaria. And my sister was born there. My sister Vera was born there in 1936.

And where in Bulgaria? Where did they live?

Plovdiv. Beautiful place. I've visited since; it's wonderful. Very ancient town.

And what- what did your father and your mother- what did they do in Bulgaria? Did they have shops, you said?

My mother had a- an embroidery shop where she sold fine linens. My father and his brother-in-law had a business of, teaching textile printing as a trade to people who wanted to learn and all over the Balkans. So they travelled also around, Greece and, Romania teaching.

Because Plovdiv is quite at the border. I mean, it's not that far from Greece.

It's not far from Greece. No, no. That's right.

And which languages? What did they speak?

Well, my father was very good, very fluent in Bulgarian. He- well he was there for fourteen years altogether. His brother-in-law would not have been able to speak Bulgarian. They spoke Bulg- Hungarian between them. So that the- the speaker was my father. My mother also learned Bulgarian by the time she left, but not as well as my father.

Mn-hm.

And they all, also spoke French, because that was the- in the Sephardi world was the educated peoples' tongue.

And they learnt some French?

Yes. Yes.

And did they- where did they...?

[00:07:20]

And of course my mother was fluent in German from childhood. She had German nannies. Austrian nannies, I should say. Because they- they were, you know, twenty miles from the Austrian border. And in her youth it was one, one.. emp- empire, whatever it's called- monarchy. So she spoke fluent German as well.

And, did they like it in Bulgaria? When they talked about it, what – what did they...?

They always talked about it positively. But I think that part of that is being young, married, you know, when everything is good in the world. I suspect that if things went all that well, they wouldn't have left.

The question was, why did they leave?

Well, I think that part of the idea was, was to come to the West. It was a two-stage process. They were very close these two families, my aunt and her husband and daughter and my parents. And they were also in business together. So, they all moved back to Budapest. And soon after that... my father's brother-in-law got a job in the U.K., in Macclesfield in textile business. And the idea was that they move first and see what the lay of the land is. And they would follow. Their following didn't occur until 1956.

So it was more like not going back to Hungary, but then going- leaving... that was the idea?

Yes- I have to say I didn't ever get a clear picture of- of why that was.

I mean, my question is, at that time, '36, were they worried about what was going on in Germany?

I- I don't think so. I don't think so. In general, Hungarian Jews were not worried. They thought this, you know, we're different. And they- I mean, there was a very right-wing anti-Semitic government, but not- not- but not murderous. And people in business, for instance,

were- were fine. They- they had a very good life. My mother talked about those times as a peaceful peace.

Until- '44, I mean...

Un- Yeah, until- until '39. Yeah, until the 40s, really.

Yes.

I'm talking about the 30s.

Right.

I don't think that was part of their... view. Just- Western Europe, UK or USA is just, you know, golden Medina, and that's where you go to make your fortune.

Yeah...

I think. Certainly it was never mentioned that that was the reason they- it was often said that we always intended to go to- try to go to England.

[00:10:32]

Yeah. And when they came back, were the grandparents- everyone was then in Budapest? Or were some people-?

My paternal grandparents died in Bulgaria. They're buried in Plovdiv. In the 30s. And my maternal grandparents were in Budapest. Through my grandfather's... connections. My father got a very good job straight away. He was a direct- technical director of a big textile firm.

This is in '36?

This is in '37, yes, in '37. And he was with that firm until they had to... sack him because of being, you know, that- the Jewish Laws meant they had to sack him.

So initially when they came back, they managed- they had an OK time, your parents?

Yes. Yes, I believe so. We lived in... a nice place. I mean, we lived there again after the war. So I know it well.

Which was?

In a part of Budapest called Romaifürdő, which means 'Roman baths'. It's north west corner, which was an ancient Roman camp. And that- going back to the time of Vespasian, it was a big Roman city there. So that's where we were. It was, like Hampstead, say and very sylvan and nice- nice place. Still is a nice place.

[00:12:07]

So your father got this job. And your mother, did she work?

I think she didn't. She then had a young- not young child, I mean, she- Vera was just over one when they came back. So she- I don't think she worked. No.

This is obviously all before you were born.

Yes, of course. Yes. But I always made it a business, my business to find out because I was always interested.

What else did they talk about in that time? Let's say the 30s and then the beginnings of the 40s, about their experiences?

Now Bulgarian ex- no, I'll put it differently. My father was a certain kind of heroic person. And he always- in every story that he told, he was the hero. So he very rarely spoke about very negative things. And if he did, then it was about how well he navigated the dangers. So always with a smile. So he didn't ever say, "We had a hard time." But he actually wrote his memoirs. And I know that some of the 1930s, he was having, financially, economically- he was having a difficult time. He came back to Budapest on a visit once in the 1930s, before

meeting my mother. And he felt that Budapest was glittering and wonderful and people were having a wonderful life. He felt that he is, out of, you know, out on left field, being in a small town in- in Bulgaria.

Ok, so he had some motivation to come back to-

So this might have been part of the motivation. Yes. Bulgaria- they talked mostly about how pleasant it was. People were very friendly towards Jews. Most of the Jews were Sephardi. And... usual kind of lack of understanding between Sephardis and Ashkenazis. They also talked a lot about family, because my grandparents lived there. My aunt lived there. And they were all quite close physically. I actually went back with my sister some years ago, and we found a flat that my parents lived in. Found the flat that my grandparents lived in. Very interesting. About the time that they came back, before the bad time started, they actually had very positive stories. They had a good life, I think is- is just the way to...

[00:15:06]

And what sort of circles did they have? What- what friends? Where did they mix?

They mixed with Jewish- secular Jewish people like themselves. Where we lived in Romaifürdő - I'm talking now post-war, but it was must been the same before - it was a very- it wasn't a Jewish neighbourhood. But there were maybe a dozen Jewish families or couples. And of course everybody not only knew each other, but- but socialised and went to tea with each other, et cetera. And the other part of socialising in those days is family visits every- every Sunday afternoon. We went- once I was alive, we went to grandparents. And beforehand, I know that they came out to us mostly on Sundays. So that was always part of the...scenery.

Yeah. You said secular Jewish. What? What does it mean? Let's say, pre-war? I mean in Plovdiv you said there was- probably was a Sephardi synagogue. Did they go there?

I have no idea what happened in Plovdiv. I really don't know. As I said, they got married in- in the Neolog- big, big shul in Budapest. My paternal grandparents, I think, were not religious. I don't even know if there was any kind of Shtiebel in the- where- where they lived

in the village. There were six- six Jewish families... and five of them were called Schwarz, unrelated. And one was called Krauss. My maternal side, my grandfather was quite religious. He was a shul-goer... and up to a certain time they kept kosher. But I know that by the Second World War they didn't. I don't know when that change occurred. Maybe when they moved to Budapest from the countryside. And going back further, everybody was, you know- I mean, there were none of them in ultra-orthodox sects, but everybody was religious. Also, don't forget, in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, everybody had to have an official religion.

Yeah.

And there were only three. Protestant, Catholic and- and Jewish. I don't know what they did in Muslims. And they, like my father, had to pass religious exams, which for me- meant Jewish for him, in order to matriculate. So...

Yes...

So... Re- religion was part of the life. But we were not- my family and their circle were not religious.

[00:17:55]

Yeah. Let's move on... to the war, how it was Budapest. Have you got- I have to ask you- you were born in 1944...

Yes.

...do you have any memories at all?

My first memory is from about 1947. I remember seeing my grandfather a couple of times. He died in 1947. But, suddenly. War time, of course, I wouldn't have any recollection... personal recollection.

So then tell us about your story, based on the stories told to you. What happened?

Okay, I'll try and tell you. So we lived in Romaifürdő. My father was working in this... textile factory. From about 1940 onwards, Jewish men were called up for forced labour - labour battalions. And... if you stayed in the country, if you were assigned to some unit in the country, then that wasn't too bad- at that time, in the '40- '40 or '42. Fortunately, my father was not sent abroad. Because the people who were sent abroad, ninety percent of them perished, one way or another. They went to salt mines in Bor [Serbia] or the front in Ukraine. And he was called up a number of times. But also they were discharged from whatever it is they had to do, and did, they were discharged. So he was called up in that- different places a number of times. Sometimes they got out of it through bribing somebody. Other times he served to the end. So he was sometime- what I'm trying to say is, sometimes he was with us and sometimes it wasn't. But physically, he was OK. They sacked him. You know, Jewish Laws meant they sacked him from his job because it was a public company. He started a business again-textiles. And that went OK. Jews weren't allowed to own businesses, so they all found a Christian to run it for them. I mean, no, to 'own' it for them, as it were. And I know who it was in my father's case, because he- he was- helped us later on. A man by the name of Lajos Balla. He was the nominal owner of my father's business. And then after the war, business partner.

[00:20:36]

How do you spell that, please?

His surname is B A L L A. And the first name is Lajos, which is Louis. Lajos. So this is how we got on to our- the beginning of our 1940 – sorry, '44. The- the war meant that the Russians were already advancing through to Russia westwards. And the Germans were getting ready, so- to fight them. So the German army came into Hungary - even though Hungary was an ally - uninvited. They came into Hungary, and then a lot of things changed. That's when- this was in March. I think in April they issued the yellow star- order. And all- lots of anti-Jewish laws came out almost daily. I should add, it's- it's a bit odd, but I was actually conceived in a labour camp. They- they had conjugal visits. And my father was- apparently convinced my mother [half laughing] that the war will end very soon now. And that's where I was conceived. That's how I came to be born in May 1944.

Yeah, because that's an interesting time to be born. And for your parents to...

[00:22:12]

Absolutely...

...take, you know...

Absolutely. So, we lived in a- in a very nice small flat in this... outer suburb. And...my father-my- my mother was feeling labour pains. She wanted to go to the- to the hospital. By that time, Jews weren't allowed cars. Weren't allowed to take taxis. And, gentiles were not allowed to give lifts to Jews. Because our- our doctor offered to take her to the hospital and she said, "No, no. You'll get into trouble." So... she left Vera with a neighbour. And she walked to the train and took the train and then walked from the train to the hospital. And- where I was born, there were- it was a hospital with nuns as nurses. And they were very kind. And, it- it was obvious that my mother was Jewish, I suppose. She was wearing a yellow star, anyway. But they were very- she always said they were wonderful to her. While she was in hospital, my father got call-up papers again. So he went off to a labour camp - again. My mother came back with me. And two weeks later we were told that we have to leave our flat and all our possessions. So there she was with eight-year-old daughter, three- four-week-old son. And, you know, turned out of her home... without her possessions. Fortunately, she had somewhere to go, which is my grandparents' house - sorry - apartment in a block in Budapest in the centre, near the area which- well, in a Jewish area. And their house, like many others in the street, were declared 'Yellow Star Houses', which meant only Jews were allowed to live there. And conversely, all Jews had to live in Yellow Star Houses. So if there were any gentiles in the building, they had to move out. And we were crammed in. But there was enough of us, that only family lived in this flat. We used to be just my grandparents. Now, was my aunt and cousin, my mother, my sister, me and the two husbands who were both in labour camp but might be coming, but...

So, but you- one aunt had already left to England?

[00:25:00]

No, that's a different aunt.

That's a different aunt.

That's my father's- that was my father's sister. And this aunt is my mother's sister.

Right. But your father's sister...

Oh, she was already in – in UK. And by that time, I think we- we couldn't correspond. I'm not sure how things were. So then we were there. During the summer, things got gradually more difficult. Curfew was imposed. You can only go out shopping certain hours, et cetera. And there were various episodes, one that I know of. They came to our block and they said, "All Jews between ages-" whatever it was, "twenty and fifty, come down." Only women because the men were all gone anyway. And both my aunt and my mother had to go down because of course they come and searched the flats afterwards. And they were taken away. And the story is that, I mean, they knew what happens to people like that. That my aunt somehow got hold of some cyanide and gave the capsules to her grandmother to give to the babies. My cousin is six months older than me, so- she is a girl. She would have been a year and... just about a year, actually. She lives in Sydney, Australia. And they were taken away. And they were taken to- I don't know why, but it's always a brick factory. And there they collected a whole lot of people. And the guards were of course Hungarian Nazis. But there were a few Wehrmacht- ordinary German soldiers amongst the guards as well. And after some time, my mother went up to one of the Germans - and as I said, her German was completely fluent. In fact, it was her first language - and said to him that, you know, we both have babies at home and the babies will die if we're kept here. And this obviously was a decent person. They swore at them and said, "Get out of my sight", et cetera. And- and they actually left. And the Hungarians didn't do anything, because it was a German who said it, so... Everybody who survived has a series of episodes like that, you know, by definition. So that was a very important one. The next-

[00:27:38]

And they came back?

They came back. Fortunately before the administration of the cyanide.

But - so the cyanide was given to your grandmother?

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

So they must have thought of that situation. They must have-

Well, my aunt thought of it. Yes. My mother was very angry with her for it. But that's...

She didn't agree?

I don't- she certainly didn't agree afterwards. Thought it was foolish. I don't know what happened at the time, whether she knew about it, or- you know, you're in total panic. You think it's the end. And I only know second-hand anyway. So...

Yeah - yeah.

I tell you how- how I heard it.

Yes-

Then there is a period when Wallenberg and Lutz were issuing these *Schutzpässe* [safety passes]. I could see the date on there- might be October. I don't know.

So Wallenberg for the Swedish...government.

Yes. And Lut- Carl Lutz- you have not heard of him?

Yes, I've heard of him. Yes. For the Swiss government.

Yes he is- he's not very well known, but he should be, because he- he did just as much as Wallenberg. And- he didn't pay with his life for it. But, when he went back to... Switzerland, he was sacked from government service because he overstepped his authority. And he lived in obscurity, really, until very late. But he's well recognised; there's actually a statue of him

in Hungary. And- as is there of Wallenberg. And I met his daughter who came to England. Yeah.

When? When did you meet her?

About ten years ago. She- she gave talks. She has Hungarian Jewish mother. Because while he was there, I think he married his secretary, who was a Jewish lady. And this daughter of Carl Lutz is instrumental in trying to get lots of information together to- to support the memory of her father. There are books written about him. And I'll just mention it because he deserves.

[00:29:57]

Has he been recognised as a Righteous Gentile?

Yes, yes, yes, yes. I mean, in- in the right circles he is very well known. But in the general public, compared to Wallenberg, he is not known at all.

So how does it relate to you?

Well, I know it took three days of queuing, before they could get this letter, which I have here. And it was a little bit of security. I mean, what it's worth, nobody knew at the time. But it seemed to be it's better to have one, than not to have one.

And what did it say on it? Schutzpass?

The *Schutzpass*- it really says that you are, are- you have your name. Your family is listed on a collective passport of the Swiss government to emigrate to Palestine after the war. When, when- when conditions permit. So basically, you were already an expatriate as it were. That's what it's trying to say. So it gives you some protection because you are, no longer supposed to be in Hungary anyway. It's only because of the circumstances of war that you haven't actually left.

To emigrate to...

Palestine.

To Palestine? Not to Switzerland?

No. The, the- the Palestinian- how I'll put it -Chargé d'Affaires. No. The Swiss were charged- charged with Palestinian affairs. The- the Swiss were the diplomatic representatives of, of, the- I don't know why it wasn't the- oh, I know why it wasn't the British. Because the British were- anyway. And the Swiss were neutral.

OK-

So the Swiss represented Palestine.

We'll look at the paper - later.

Yeah.

Yes. So they managed- so who was queuing? Your mother, or...?

I think my father might have been around at that time. I don't know. Maybe they took turns or they were both there. I don't know. At some point around there, my father was gone again. And as the war progressed, so the conditions in the labour camp became much more brutal. And, you know, people were murdered without... a second thought. And it was...

[Sound break]

So I was saying that the conditions in the labour camps in Hungary also became much more difficult. Of course, the front was started- I think it must have been inside of Hungary by that time in eastern part. The work was digging ditches and removing mines. But that wasn't the problem. The problem was the treatment of the... forced labourers. Lots were killed one way or another. Around that time again, there was an order which was that all Jews had to move into the ghetto. They created a ghetto. The building that we lived in was just outside. But in that area, near- near the Great Synagogue.

[00:33:07]

And you had to be in the ghetto by a certain date on pain of death. My grandparents moved in there. My great -grandmother was also alive. I should have mentioned her as well; she was also in the flat. And that was when my mother- I don't know how- managed to find this place for the children in a Red Cross protected children's home. They took me in as a baby and my sister, who was eight. And my mother also managed to get taken on as a- a, a worker there. But she had to keep secret the fact that our- her children were in the- in the home. And that home was not attacked during the time that we were there. So we could- we could survive- survive there. But we couldn't, for instance, go in the street. Well, certainly not with a yellow star, because you could be- you could be stopped and shot. You had to be in the ghetto on pain of death. So we were in there. Apparently, conditions were terrible. But as I said, I was just an incumbent- encumbrance rather than... certainly couldn't do anything. Meanwhile, at some point, my father thought that he wouldn't survive if he- if he stayed. And although trying to escape was very dangerous, he was a fatalist. He was telling us that he thought he was going to die anyway. ... And the episode is, they were being marched across a bridge from east to west to a railway station. And this is all the forced labourers- guarded by a number of Hungarian Nazis. And at a certain point, he decided he'd simply turned around and walked the opposite direction. And again, with the thought, you know, 'they're going to shoot me, but I'm going to die anyway.' And he wasn't shot. Then he was still in great danger, because you're a deserter. Formally you're- you're called a deserter. If you- if you escape from a forced labour battalion because it's part of a military organisation.

[00:35:51]

I don't know how the details, but obviously he had to get clothes somewhere. But I know that there was that person I mentioned – Balla, Lajos - was a great help. He was the one who acquired papers, false papers which were actually real. If you know what I mean. Real documents made out in false names. All cost money. But it's more- having the connections of trying to find out how to do it. So he was our- our saviour. And once he had papers and my father also got a- a certificate to show that he is a refugee from further east where the Soviets were already- Red Army was already there. So he's actually a refugee come to- to Budapest. And with those papers he- he got a job in a- in a munitions factory. And he rented a room.

And for two or three weeks he lived as a, you know, "Here I am, a refugee." And then at a certain point he said to people around, he's got good news. His family's managed to escape, and they're probably going to join him in a few days. And that's when he- He came... I should add- just go back because it's a peculiar episode, but it illustrates my father. When he first came to- in his new guise, he came to visit us in this home. He found it was terrible, but he- he took my sister. And took the yellow star off her. And they went out, they went to the cinema. Then went to a restaurant full of German soldiers and they had something to eat. And then they brought her back. And about a week later he came and actually collected us. And then we all went to this small... It- it was a room in a- in a small flat with other rooms being occupied by other people.

[00:37:56]

So what? He changed his name in this process?

Oh, sorry. Of course, the new documents were in a different name, of course. The name was 'Keve'. And the reason for that was, they wanted a name that my sister, eight years old, would remember without hesitation. So they chose the name of the street that we lived in. So we lived in Keve Street, and both my sister and I went to the Keve Street primary school and we are called Keve.

And why is it called-? What is Keve? What does it stand for?

Oh, it's an- it's a very Hungarian name, it's not very common. But it was the name of one of the tribal leaders back in- in the... [year] 900 or so, when Hungarian- the Magyars came from the Don region and occupied the base- Carpathian basin where they are. So it's a- yeah, it's a figure in Hungarian history. Is the name of a figure in Hungarian history.

Pronounced?

Ke-ve [Hungarian pronunciation – e is pronounced like a in cat] Ke-ve.

So that's what his name was.

Yeah. That's the name that- that we took. My father's papers gave a different place of birth according to this refugee position, and also a different date of birth. Because otherwise he would have been eligible for the Hungarian army. And by then he looked pretty terrible and had a big beard and... was acting the part that went along with his papers, of being older and a peasant from a certain area.

And do you know how they managed to get those papers? I mean, you said that Mr. Balla got them. How-?

He got them. He bribed the- the officials who issued these papers. That's- I don't know any more details on that. But I have some of them here. The papers. So while we were there, my father was working still, which had the advantage of being able to get food. By food, I mean, he got two loaves of bread a day and that's it. But that was wonderful. They also- one of the anecdotes relates to this- why we left.

[00:40:31]

There was a landlady and two younger women in- in different rooms. And these younger women had two- had a boyfriend each, who were SS men. They- they were Hungarian German-ethnic German Hungarians who were allowed to join. So every- every evening these two men came. And my father played cards with them every evening. They came for the girls, obviously. And he was always saying it was very difficult, you know, to just lose every evening without it looking like he was trying to. So that's what happened. Then we had Hungarian Nazis coming, knocking at the door and demanding if there are any Jews there. And my father being my father, he says, "Not unless one of you two is a Jew" so, that's... coming close.

But he was confident enough that they...

He was very confident-

...to pull it off.

Very, very much - unlike me. I'm not saying that I'm not confident, but just personalities. I wouldn't have survived because I would have calculated the odds. And, you know. No, I couldn't have done that. This was- he- that was his nature and that's what saved him, actually. I- I would almost call it foolhardy, but, he had a belief that he was going to survive. So he was able to do things like that. Whereas many people would think it was a silly thing to- you know, tempting fate, even. Where did I get to? So that was, moderately OK. Until- I mean, terrible things were going on outside. This- all the protected houses, for instance, were being emptied and Jews taken down to the Danube and shot. But our ...identity held.

[00:42:51]

And deportations? Also, I mean the deportations- that was earlier?

Oh, absolutely. Well, let's- let's go back a bit. Deportations started in about May, June. They stopped at a certain point and then they started up again because there was discrepancy between Hungarian government and the Germans. Hungarians said, "These are our Jews, we decide..." and- anyway. Deportations, you know, hundreds of thousands were deported, but primarily from outside of Budapest. Basically, the countryside was emptied. And all my family who were living in the countryside, they all perished. I mean, my- my mother's family, I'm talking about really.

Yes, in Szeged?

No...

Or was nobody there left?

No, no. They were- they were. I don't quite know why, but we really don't know anything about my father's family. He didn't really keep very close touch with them beforehand. I don't know. On my mother's side, I know everything. I have a list of names who were perished. And that's just the people who I could work out who they are. That was the deportations. In the labour camp, for instance... When I said things very poor. My father found that somebody was following him around. And asked him, "Why- why are you following me around?" And he said, "I can see you are lucky... and I'm following you around because I

want to survive.” And he had two or three people following him around. And another little episode that I forgot to say is when my father was working in this factory under false identity at one time they found a- a lady to- to be Jewish. [phone rings- sound break]

So that this- there was a time when they found that lady to be Jewish in the factory and they decided that she has to go to the ghetto. Of course. And they actually got a Hungarian soldier to escort her so that she wouldn't be stopped and shot on the way. You know, as it were, to get safely into the ghetto. And they also said, “Will somebody from here go with them?”

[00:45:35]

And my father volunteered. And he volunteered because my grandparents and great-grandmother were in the ghetto. So he took some loaves of bread and went with them, with the armed guard and the woman inside the ghetto. And then he said to the armed guard, “We have to find- there are these rotten Jews that my wife used to work for. And she is such a good woman, my wife, that she even has a- a warm heart for Jews.” And they found them- my grandparents. And my father swore at them, and threw the bread at them and... came back. You know, I mean, unbelievable. When- so we're now in the cellar. No, we're not in the cellar. We're in- in a flat. In the flat. The Siege of Budapest lasted for six or eight weeks. Quite a long time. Both- unnecessarily- I don't know if you know any of this story, but both the Russian military said, “We won't- we just go around Budapest.” And the Germans said, “There's no need to defend Budapest.” But Hitler said, “You have to defend it.” You know, it's the last outpost before Vienna and Stalin said it's a matter of - so they had to- they fought over it, literally, street by street for weeks on end. And there was bombardment. And of course, everything stopped. And everybody went down into cellars. The city was a total wreck afterwards. So we lived in this cellar for quite... some weeks. And the problem there was lack of food. There was no food. There was no way to get food.

[00:47:39]

People were eating dead horses if we could find one. But basically there was no food. Some people had a little bit. Even in a cellar, we had to- we had to keep to ourselves because we were overheard saying- people saying, “That little girl looks Jewish to me.” You know, so you had to be careful who said what and you basically... kept apart. I know that some people

gave my mother potato peel and she made soup for me out of that. She had no, I should say, she had no milk... because she was also, you know, starving herself. ...My- again, you know, we were really at the- at the end of our tether. And then my father decided that he- he has to go and do something to get some food. So in the middle of this bombardment, he left. Didn't- at dawn. He didn't tell my mother because she wouldn't let her go, let him go. At a certain time- Balla was getting his false papers, so going back a few weeks now. He was hiding in a building which had been bombed and half of it was missing. And he and a couple of other people were hiding on the top floor. They had a ladder and they went up one floor at a time and pulled the ladder up after them. And they lived there for a few- I don't know how long. And my father left once he was able to. And he thought there might be some food left, that they had a stash there. So he- he went back there. But he was already so malnourished he could barely move. Anyway, he climbed up four flights with a ladder. And he found some jam and a couple of other things. And put them in a sack and threw them down four floors. He managed to get back alive. And my mother sifted the jam and to get the glass splinters out. And there was this other thing that she decided was a piece of mouldy cheese. But when they started- they started eating it, turned out to be a bar of soap. So this is also in the family archives.

[00:50:09]

So they were very hungry.

They were very hungry. Again, they came to the point that if- if they didn't get some food somewhere, they would die. So, again, they braved the conditions and they went with the bombardment going on, to this factory where my father used to work. My sister now regularly talks about this image she can't get rid of in her- in her head with...I was a bundle and I was tied up on a belt on my father's neck- round my father's neck. And so my mother, father and her were clambering- I mean, everything was rubble, so they were clambering across the rubble, et cetera. And he says, my father was thin as a stick, and he was crying. And she can't now- she is eighty-two years old, and she can't forget that. "It's the only time I've ever seen Dad cry." And this comes up - not only now, but - regularly. Regularly. You know, it's really- that's how deeply embedded it is. They made it to the... factory. And there was some food there, as I say, something- either lentils, or beans or something. There were also about twenty or twenty-five other people there who thought the same way. And they- I

don't know how long we were there. Probably just a few days. That's- the front moved all the time. When the Russians arrived, there was some defence in having some big group because, of course, they were known for raping all the women. And there were- you know, the way my father said is- he said all the men stood up and maybe the Russians thought that, you know, murdering fifty men was a bit much. So they left them alone. Luckily. There was also the fact that my father spoke- well, he was fluent in Bulgarian, but it's very close... [Excuse me] language. So he could speak to them, and...

[00:52:38]

Close to Russian.

Close to Russian. They understood each other. Yes. And we were back in that- we moved back to this flat, actually. Yes. And there- I mean, there's still a shortage of food. But when my father- when the officer realised that he spoke, he could be an interpreter. He became an unofficial interpreter for the Russians, which meant that he, he- he could get some food and bring it- bring it back. So the war in that sense was over at 15th of January for us. I remember that because it's my parents wedding anniversary. Also the day my father died. And soon after that, my grandparents managed to come back from the- from the ghetto and they actually go back to their apartment. My great-grandmother caught typhus in the ghetto, and she died within days. Actually liberated- died. And the next one that almost died was me. I had, it turned out afterwards I got TB and... pneumonia and whooping cough and malnutrition all at the same time. And this was, say, two or three weeks after the Russians, had... freed our part of the city. Because it went on for weeks, on the other side of the Danube. And they wanted to take me to a hospital. My sister says I- I looked skin and bone, you know, like the photos you see of the starved children, which I was. And... on the way there - this is the little things that matter - my father found a red star like that the Russian soldiers wore in their hat, on the ground, and he picked it up and put it on his lapel. And we go into this hospital and... they said, "Impossible." I mean, "We are full up. We have no medication. There's no power," you know, not taking anybody. And my father being my father made a big fuss and started shouting and wants to see the director. And the man actually came and noticed the red- red star in his lapel, and assumed that he was a big wig Communist. And he said, "Yes," - you know.

[00:55:22]

Tune changed. "Yes, of course. Yes, of course. But could you see your way to getting some supplies for us?" And my father said, "I'll see what I can do." You know, that- that's how he was. And they accepted me. But there was nothing. There were babies lying on, on ben- on, on, on boards, you know, next to each other. No medication. And my parents came to visit and it was a long way in the snow every day. Somebody actually gave some milk to my mother, again, a gentile lady who had a- recently had- a recent child. And she came with, you know, this much milk every day to give me. So I met the lady in my- when I was about five or six years old, actually. And they told my mother, don't expect me to survive. And, you know, it's a war. Everybody has to make sacrifices. And, lo and behold, without medication, I survived. And... slowly put on weight and became a relatively [half laughs] - relatively - normal, relatively healthy- healthy child.

Because it is amazing as a baby to go through...

Yes.

...long periods of starvation. I mean...

Yes. Yes, yes. And I mean, these are killer diseases as well, you know. And pneumonia without- without antibiotics. And...TB. Well, so everybody else- so, my immediate family all survived.

From the ghetto. They survived in the ghetto?

They survived in the ghetto, as I say, my great- grandmother, old lady, she caught typhus and she succumbed to it very quickly.

And was there the Red Cross building, that?

[00:57:30]

I don't know what happened. I don't know what happened. In general, and a large number of these buildings in their last days – I'm talking about the month of December - the Hungarian Nazis were- emptied them and shot the people. There- there was a change of government in November, because Hitler was very dissatisfied with this, not anti-Semitic enough government and the Nazi Party. There was a putsch and the Nazi Party was in government. So basically the Arrow Cross were- were the government. And they just did what they- whatever they wanted. So there's a good chance that then other people didn't survive. But I don't know. I don't know. I was saying that ninety percent of the people perished in the outside of Budapest and about fifty percent in Budapest. So, you had a chance of survival in Budapest. Basically- and then after some weeks you were able to move back to Romaifürdő, back to our flat. And... my childhood began really. I think we had, a very good three or four years. My father was in business very quickly... was very successful.

Did he stay with that- you said that man...?

Yes, yes, they- yes. He was a business partner. And they had a business employing about 100 people, treating textiles, textiles treatments, in- in some stage of manufacture.

What was it called? The business?

Hattyú – which is 'Swan'.

Hattyú?

Hattyú – yes. I know exactly where it was. I was- I went there a few times and I know that there was a little toy shop across the way. And my father took me there once and says, you know, "Have anything, have anything you want." And I picked up a little car or something, and he was so angry with me. You know, "I said have anything you want and you pick that?" You know - didn't like that. So we- we moved to a very large flat, still in Romaifürdő. We lived very well. My sister went to a private school. ... We had a car and driver. You know, middle class... heaven, really.

[01:00:18]

And how did your mother emerge from this...?

How did she emerge? My mother...is a very- was a very strong person. You wouldn't know it because everybody thought of her as, as, as a great lady because she also liked good manners and, and dress up nicely and, you know. She is certainly scarred. In this time when I say we lived very well, we had in the pantry there were sacks of toast. All the end of the bread, she toasted and put in these sacks. We had two enormous sacks of toast and big jars of jam. And I always asked why. And she said, "In case of war." So we were collecting toast, in case of war. And, and she was very- she was frightened... not of anything specific, but she was frightened that, you know, something bad will happen. My father was, you know, wanted to be grand and, and spend his money, et cetera. And- not on himself, ever. And my mother didn't like that. Yeah. Yeah. That's- they were quite different people. So that lasted three or four years. You want me to carry on? It's just. No, not- no longer war times. Coming to communist time.

Do you want to have a little break now?

[01:01:56]

No.

You happy to go on?

Yeah, I'm happy.

OK, go on.

So those years are the- the- my first memories. We moved from this Keve Street flat. I'd remember that flat. We moved- I don't know, three, four hundred yards away to a very beautiful, large apartment. And we lived there until- until 1953 I think. In '48 there was a takeover by the communists in Hungary. And from that time, it became a communist country. It took a while for the communism- communist system to get hold. And, what they did was they nationalised all businesses. So my father's business was taken away from him. The way

they- that is done is they first put in a manager to manage it. And you have to stay on and help them. And the manager, he told my father his job was to make sure he finds some reason to put my father in jail. But he seemed to be a decent person, and my father didn't go to jail. But he had a lot of problems because they took this away from him. He wasn't all- he was a 'class enemy'. That's what it's called.

Capitalist.

Capitalist. Employer of people. What's the word? Exploiter of the workers. Et cetera. So he was lucky not to be in jail or even- or also, they deported people. There, 'deportation' meant having to go and live in countryside... as a peasant. Many people that I knew had that happen to them. I mean it's nothing like the German deportations. He then basically couldn't make a living. We also had the pleasure of my father getting tax bills from the government and even- he said, "Well, how can I pay the tax bills if they take away my livelihood?" etcetera. I remember bailiffs coming, putting notices on the door. You're not, not, not- not allowed to take anything out of here. The other thing that happened is we had people allocated. Two other families were put into our flat with us. So three families lived where one had before. I think that only lasted about a year-and-a-half, two years, because by the time we left, we had all the flat back again.

[01:05:01]

And then my father decided to try and rehabilitate himself with the government. And he started a branch of what was known as the 'Hungarian-Soviet Friendship Society'. In our area, he started a 'Hungarian-Soviet Friendship Society'. He was the President. I remember the notepaper. And he went 'round trying to get people to join. And it was- the area, as I said, it was not a very Jewish area and it was most- you would more describe it as, as a reactionary Hungarian upper middle class area. So these people said to him, "Why? Why on earth would we want to do that?" You know. And he said- he says, "When- when the English come, we'll be all together. [laughs] So we have to organise ourselves." Anyway. He even got some prizes for having the most members, or whatever. And he used that after time to be able to- to get a job.

Did it help?

I don't know. He got a job. He got a job as a manual labourer in a factory where he was the Director. And, there's another story- when he used to arrive, the guard used to say, "Good morning, *Herr Direktor*." And they had- had to say, "No, you mustn't say that." You know. "We will both get into trouble." But he- he worked there, for several years. I went to school. I had a very normal childhood in the sense that it was the same as everybody else. In Communist times religion was non-existent. I remember, as I say, going to synagogue three times. Once in Buda and twice in the Great Synagogue. This is, oh, until age twelve.

But you knew you were Jewish?

[01:07:12]

I knew that I was Jewish. I wasn't quite sure what it meant. I knew. I mean, for instance, a friend of mine- this is very funny. I had a group of friends. And they were all Jewish. I didn't know they were all Jewish. You know, it's only afterwards that I... Maybe. I mean, I don't know. I don't know. But my friends were Jewish. Anyway, one of my friends unfortunately lost his mother. I mean, we were eleven, ten. She must have been in her thirties. And he said to me that he goes every morning to say Kaddish. And I had no idea what he- Kaddish was, or where he goes. But I- I remember that. Again, as I said, my friends, my parent's friends were all-all Jewish.

At that time did they talk at all about what happened during the war?

Yes, my father- these stories that I told you, he would- he would, he would tell them. And they were always- there were never stories of horror. They were always stories of, 'How I outsmarted them'. You know? We knew- I knew that many people had died. Family members. But they didn't dwell on it. You know. It just came up in conversation. I know much more from- from when I was adult and asked questions. And - you know. When you're a child, you know, you accept everything. It's amazing. I remember a very strong memory of my mother coming up the staircase on a day when I thought that she would be working. It was in the afternoon. And I asked, "Where were you, Mum?" She said, "I went to the synagogue." "Why?" It's not something that happened often. She said, "It's ten years since Liberation," So it was in '54. "and there was a service to honour the Red Army." Now, I was

shocked because Russians and Soviet were always, you know, in private, talked down and rubbish, et cetera. But obviously that there is a debt to- to the Red Army for saving us. So I, I, I don't forget. I never forget that. I went to school. I did very well. Had some political issues. There were times when I got the school prize and other times when they told my parents they can't possibly give me the prize because I'm not- I don't have the right background. My parents worked very hard.

Your mother also worked?

[01:10:00]

My mother also worked from about 1950 onwards. Yes, she had to work.

What did she do?

There were cooperatives. Everything was owned by the state. There were cooperatives. And she worked- worked in a textile, I think clothes making- tailoring, or some kind of co-operative like that. She was always a seamstress. I told you about embroidery before. My father also then from- from this factory- no. I should say, they moved in 1953, moved house. And we moved to the flat of my grand...parents. It was only my grandmother who was alive by then. Because my parents wanted my sister to be more central for social life, to be in a more- more Jewish area, really. So they moved- moved there, which meant I moved schools also. My own life, as I say, was childhood. We didn't- didn't have anything. Played in the street and nobody else had anything. It was okay. My parents worked very hard. They joined a different, different cooperative which was electronics, electrical- electronic business. And then when it became possible to have a - I think about '53, '54 it became possible to have a - a private business. As long as you didn't employ anybody. And then my father started... not manufacturing, but making pattern textiles, like sprayed textiles - hand sprayed. And my mother worked with him, and then my sister worked with him, and they had a Jewish man partner and somebody was selling this at the markets. So they had a- a business in addition. Then my aunt came to visit us from London. First time she came was in 1948, which was in the good times. And the second time, she actually came in 1956. And... So she was- she was encouraging us all the time to come, come, come. But I mean, it wasn't possible. But we did

actually get some British papers back then. We actually I think had permits to enter the UK, but we didn't have a permit to leave Hungary.

Yeah.

[01:12:41]

So, we had some papers which we used once we got the Vienna. I come to the revolution. I was in... seventh grade. During that year, there was a lot of political manoeuvring, especially by the writers' club. I wasn't- I wasn't aware of any of this, really, because it went beyond my- above my head. And one evening there was a parents' meeting at school. They went to- my parents went there. It was 23rd of October 1956. And they sent my sister to collect me. I was at the fencing classes. She came to collect me because they were going to be tr- troubles in the street. And that was the day that the revolution broke out. And there was shooting and a lot of problems, which... we weren't involved in it. But from the day after, really, we were stuck at home because there was fighting in the street. I didn't go to school in Hungary ever again, after that. So I thought it was wonderful. No school. We- we didn't have too many personal problems. There was fighting in the street, as I said. And after three weeks, the Russians left. And three weeks later, they came back again with- with different- different troops and put down the rebellion. And there was a lack of government, really. Nobody knew who was in charge, and people started leaving illegally. And they were crossing the border... which was possible because it was a- it had been mined. About three months earlier for some reason of detente kind of thing; they removed the minefields. So people were just simply walked across the border if they could manage. We didn't know this at the time, but the border guards, again, they didn't- they didn't know if they were themselves going to be held responsible for something or, you know, nobody knew who was in charge. Russians were there and there was no authority other than the Russian Army, really.

[01:15:18]

Some weeks later, we decided- well, my parents decided, to come again. There was some to-do there; my mother wanted to leave immediately. My father wanted to get back what they took away from him, thinking that, you know- and then, then, there was- there were thoughts of sending me with somebody else, so I could get out. Anyway. At a certain point, my father

organised us- for us to leave. He somehow again got- got hold of a paper, which I have, which said that he has been charged with getting food for the capital. You know, with big stamps, from the certain region. And we had a big truck. And he was sitting in the front with the driver, these papers. And we were, my immediate family and six or eight others - our neighbours - were in the back of the truck behind boxes and things. And we drove to the border. We were stopped by the Russian roadblocks two or three times. A couple of times they looked in the- in the back. I mean, they- they weren't really interested, is the truth. You know?

Yes.

And we got to the border, not the border. We got to a town about twenty miles from the border, where pre-arranged - I don't know how - two guides to- to take us across the border. And we started walking - midwinter. It was very cold. I thought it was fantastic. You know, adventure. Twelve year old, you know, out walking at night across the street with my dad- across the fields with my dad. We, we- we walked for five or six hours. The guides wanted to turn back many times. They- then they were given more money. There was a- a girl there, another girl, who pretended to get friendly with one of them and, coax them to, you know, take us further. There were ditches to cross. We had a grandma with us - not my grandma. She was in her seventies. And there's ice cold water, so we were drenched with water and it was cold, et cetera.

[01:17:56]

And the guards, the- the guides had turned back by then. And we kept on walking in the same direction. And we saw a light ahead, and the general consensus was that we have to, you know, whoever it is, we have to give ourselves up because we can't carry on. And my father and I, being the fittest, went ahead. And went up to this farmhouse where there was a light and looked inside and there was actually a soldier inside. It was an Austrian guard. So we were in Austria. And went inside. My father had some German. I- I can't remember how he communicated. Anyway, they, they- they sent out a few people to pick up the rest of them. And they were actually collecting refugees. We weren't the only ones making this trip. Sorry. And then the same night they took us to a- a camp, collection camp, where we were given hot cocoa. I remember very well. You see? That's what children remember. And it was like a

Red Cross... institution. And there were, what I remember very well, there was a room with a mountain of shoes. Used second-hand shoes. You know, reminiscent of, of- of the films, Auschwitz films, where they have these- mountain of shoes. But completely different context, of course. And they said, "Take anything that you- that fits you." I should say that what we had with us were a backpack each. We had nothing of value. My mother's- most- the thing that was important for her is that we should all have soap and towels and toothpaste and toothbrush. My father took all the Hungarian money could lay his hands on. But the- the exchange rate went down to one percent of what it was two weeks earlier. So that wasn't of any use. And personal jewellery. That's all we had.

[01:20:12]

And those letters and documents?

Yes. I, I, I- I don't even know if they- we got them then, or what happened is the rest of the family, grandmother and aunt and uncle and cousin, they came to England about a year-and-a-half later. Legally. So they brought quite a lot of things. For instance, that picture on the wall we owned beforehand. I remember it from childhood and they brought it with them.

But you had just a bag.

We had just a bag with basically nothing in it. You know, change of underwear.

And you, do you remember what you brought?

Sorry?

What was in your bag? You remember?

Underwear. Toothpaste, toothbrush. I can't remember what else. Maybe we had- we had a sandwich or two. Must have had something for such a long time. I don't recall. But what I do recall now is after being in this camp, we had three pairs of shoes hanging on the back of each of our- our bags. So again, my father said, "We're not staying here. This is a camp." All the money he had was- was a good exchange for enough to get a bus ticket to Vienna. So we-

I think we walked to a bus stop. I don't know. We got on this bus, and by the morning we were in Vienna. We got off at the Opera with this, you know, looking like refugees, basically. And we had an address. The reason we had an address was, a cousin of my mother- what is it... There were two brothers, and one of them emigrated straight after the war, went to the United States and very quickly became an extremely rich man. And his older brother who was in Hungary, was... crippled. So this American cousin of my mother, hired a soldier of fortune in Vienna, to drive in the middle of all this - to drive to Budapest, pick up his brother and sister-in-law.

[01:22:38]

And there was talk of me going with them. That's what- but I didn't. And bring them to Vienna. And the phones were working, so we-we had, we knew where they were staying, which hotel they were staying in, which was, I remember it very well, very close to the Opera again. We went there. They expected us. The other cousin had gone back to... America, but he left sufficient money for, you know, to be getting on with. And then my father phoned his sister in London, said, "We're here. Send money." And they managed. So we had the money, but it was- the city was full, you know, chock-a-block full. And we managed to get two rooms in a pension. Not next to each other, but somewhere for us- somewhere decent to stay. And then, I spent my time. Oh, I found a school classmate in this first hotel where the cousin was living. So he and I were roaming Vienna, you know, like two urchins, while my parents were arranging with the British Consulate that we would be accepted in England. It wasn't difficult. There was a quota. I think 20,000 they were- Parliament decided to accept. Plus, we had these papers already issued. So we were- very quickly we were... ready to come. We were taken in a bus from the British Consulate to the airport, where we waited and waited. And some- that- then we were told to come out onto the tarmac. And then we were told to stand in a group. And what happened was, Richard Nixon had just arrived to- to assess the situation with the Hungarian refugees. And they wanted a photo of him with some Hungarian refugees. After the photo was taken, we were taken back to Vienna, because we were only there for the photo. And the next morning we were on the front pages. And then we were taken again to the airport, to fly to England. And we got into a DC-3 and we landed.

[01:25:06]

And to our surprise, we were in Germany. We were in Frankfurt am Main. I still don't know why. We were taken to a hostel, we were there overnight, and the next morning we were put back on the plane. Arrived in England. In Tidworth we went to an- were taken to an army camp where, you know- registration and documents. And- all the soldiers were in Suez. So it was empty. And, you know, this was England. So things were different. And, and we simply said, there is such and such family member. They phoned Auntie. They gave us a pass for the train - free pass. And we came up to Waterloo, and met our family there. And life in Britain began.

[01:26:03]

Tell me where- you didn't say where did you cross in- Hungary into Austria? Where?

Well, not far from Andau, which became a- a- fairly famous because somebody wrote a book called '*The Bridge at Andau*', near- near Mosonmagyaróvár, I mean, I don't know how to- it- the western part of Hungary.

And the village in Austria? Do you know?

No, I don't remember. I don't know. I don't know. I mean, it was middle of nowhere. We were taken on by a tractor trailer. I mean, I don't mean a truck, but a real tractor, with a- an open trailer. Made half-an-hour, three-quarters way, to this camp, which was also middle of nowhere. It wasn't-it wasn't really a camp. Maybe it was a- a communal hall or something. It wasn't a camp. And from there, a bus stop, I think, must have been quite small. A short- short distance. So it must have been in a village.

And why do you think your parents decided to leave then?

Why then?

Yeah.

Well, we were, we were- we were getting daily frantic telephone calls from Auntie saying, "Why are you still there? Because so-and-so has come and so-and-so has arrived. And why

are you still there?" So this was as soon as the family got their act together, really. At first, they weren't- weren't sure whether they should be leaving. They weren't sure how safe it was. Then, as I said, my father had the idea of, you know, let's not go yet. But we came at a good time. And that- that night and the previous night, and the night after tens of thousands crossed the border. It was- happened to be the peak time. And then, as the government took control of the reins, you know, it became much more difficult and impossible in a short time. There was a period, about four weeks, when people could cross the border. Lots of people were stopped. But all that seemed to happen to them is they were sent back and then they tried again the next day. I know some people tried three times before they succeeded. But there are very- I don't really know personally of anybody who was shot or, or did more than spend the night in jail or something like that. But you didn't know that... beforehand.

[01:28:40]

And what- how was your sister feeling? Did- everyone wanted to leave, or? Did you want to go?

Oh, yes, adventure. I mean, it started by not having to go to school. I definitely- I wanted to go. And, you know, you had this image that West is heaven and everybody's rich and you drive big cars and you know... No, no- it sound- sounded great. My sister was less keen on leaving because she had relationships that she didn't want to break. But, my father was very forceful and talked her into it.

Okay. I think let's take a break now.

[01:29:22]

Yes. So we got to England. Can you tell me your first impressions?

Very first impressions of London- was the underground. We arrived late in the evening and I seem to remember a long ride. But it wasn't very long from Victoria to Golders Green. Then... my aunt lived in Pennine Drive just off the Hendon Way and in a- in a semi. And that was very unlike my expectation of what England would be like. I mean, that is really England, if you see what I mean. I expected something much more like New York, being a

twelve-year-old. I remember being very impressed with the double-decker buses. Otherwise, I don't think- and the first impressions were just accepting everything as, as, as it is. I was interested in everything and excited and... conscious that I couldn't speak the language. Although I had been going to English classes in Hungary. But you know, when you're in- it's worth nothing. We stayed with my aunt, mattresses on the floor, for the four of us. We were there for six weeks. And in that six weeks, my parents and my sister all found jobs. My sister was twenty at the time. And I was inscribed into local school. And then once they had jobs, we actually rented our own home. And everybody worked very hard, except for me. I had the task of going to school and learning English. And you know...

And where did you settle in?

Where? Also same area of Golders Green. Very close to where my aunt was. I think it was called Cumbrian Gardens. And we lived there for a number of years. I went to school, walking distance to Whitefield School, which is now opposite Brent Cross. Brent- the Brent Cross shopping centre was just a green hillside at the time. And...

Did your parents have English? Did they speak English before you came?

No- again, my mother had taken lessons for quite a long time. They- they learned moderately quickly, especially my mother. My father, less quickly. I was the family interpreter. I was taken to anywhere that they needed to communicate. Officials- with officials or anything of that sort.

[01:32:43]

So your English was the best in the family?

Yes. Well, you know, at that age, it's very quick. Very quick. You're in school. I- by the end of that... summer, I did quite well in class. But some things I couldn't do. I mean, like maths, I was top of the class, day one. And no, the remark I wanted to make, again, all my friends turned out to be Jewish boys. And, it was different. There were quite a lot of Jewish boys in that class. Maybe thirty, forty percent. And I'm still friendly with the ones who are still alive - now. [clears throat] So I made friends quickly. Got into the, the ways and means of the

school fairly quickly. I would say two or three months. And- yeah, I had English suburban childhood. My parents worked very hard. My mother was- suffered from depression quite badly. She took the whole thing I think very- very badly, in the beginning. She missed her family, although they joined us within a year-and-a-half. She just felt...out of- out of her environment, which was the case. My father was on top of the world. He felt, you know, "I'm free at last." And he didn't mind how- he used to get up to catch the first train, because he worked in Maidenhead of all places.

What did he do?

Again, textile printing. He- he found a job advertised in the Evening Standard, I think, and went to work there for a Czech man. And they got well paid for- for those times. And as I say, all three of them were working. My sister gave everything to the family that she was earning, so we could rent a- a house. And of course, my parents were trying to save as much as possible. Always thinking of a rainy day. I mean, we had literally nothing. We had a debt because we owed my aunt money. We had nothing. And my father was in his fifties already. So, it was hard. But as I say, he was very happy, my father. And, he felt, you know, that he's achieved- he achieved his life's objective. He brought his family to England. Yeah.

[01:35:39]

You said your mother suffered depression. How did it manifest itself?

I was hardly aware of it at the time, but we talked about it later. And I can see on photographs how very depressed she was. She worked very hard. Again, she worked in... a dressmaking... workshop, factory, a salon - whatever you want to call it. And she- she brought work home as well in the evening. So remember in the evenings she was- she was still working in the evenings. I remember being sent to the Express Dairy on I think one day a week, with a pound. And the pound was for the week's shopping. Non- meat, everything else for a pound, and got some change afterwards. And... took a while, but I think my- my mother- my mother got over it. I mean, ultimately, she was extremely happy and contented to be- to be in England. It- it all- it all went away, but it took- actually, now I think back on it, it's also a menopausal time. So something like that didn't occur to me at the time, you know. So it all came together like that.

But your aunt was already established here?

My Auntie was established. She had her own business. She was a milliner... in the days that people- ladies wore hats.

What was her shop? What did she have- ?

She had- she had a salon in- in Mayfair.

What was it called?

I don't know what it was called. She had a- two- is it two, or three - other Jewish lady partners. And they had a- a nice clientele. And then she stopped doing that, and she concentrated on selling models to the Luton hat makers. She used to go to Paris to all the shows and then come back and based on that, make... They make like hats out of- like hessian.

[01:38:03]

You know, which is the shape of the hat. So basically you're selling the design. And she would- she would sell these - that was her business - to hat manufacturers in, in Luton. She lost her husband very young. As I said, they had emigrated. They went to Macclesfield.

[sound interruption]

So my- my aunt's story is, she was very close to her husband. She had the one child, a daughter, who used to be a member of our shul – and- passed away now. They were working- he was working up in Macclesfield. They were living there as the war broke out. And some time during the war, he died. He had cancer. He died. And then she was left in a- my aunt was left in a strange country, on her own, with a daughter to bring up. So she had a very hard time, but she succeeded. And as I say, by the time we came to England, she- she owned a house and she had a business and was coping. Yeah. Where did I get to?

Yes, back to you. So school, you said it was... you adapted?

Yeah. [coughs] Excuse me. School was straightforward. I did well in school. I had my friends. I went round to them. They came around to, to me. My sister being of that age, socialised and at a certain point met my brother-in-law. I could tell you, cause it's quite a nice anecdote, of how they met. The- the aunt that I talked about, her name is Frida - was. She was on the underground. I think it was between Farringdon and the next stop. It's quite a long stop. And she heard two boys talking Hungarian amongst the - the two of them. And in that time, she went up to them and she said, "I have a niece." This is the same aunt who got my parents together.

Yeah.

[01:40:29]

"I have a niece, and here is my phone number." And Peter phoned the following weekend and went around with a bunch of flowers to my aunt's house. As I said, they were quite close. And my aunt said to her-him, "Thank you so much for the flowers." And took the flowers, and then brought him over to our house. And my sister said, "I'm not- I'm not going to be treated like this. Introduced to the men- boys." And she said to me that "I'm taking you to the cinema in Cricklewood." And it's family- everybody knows it was '*Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*' that was on in Cricklewood. And then she said, "Well, let's just wait so I can- I can take a look at him. When, you know, when he arrives. But we're not staying." And they came in through the back gate, because that was closest to aunt's house. And she didn't want to go to the cinema when she saw him come up the garden path. So she never took me to '*Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*'. But that- they got married in 1959. Two children, and grandchildren.

And lived where?

They now live in Mill Hill. Most of their married life, they lived in Northwood, where my brother-in-law was a GP. Yeah. Just trying to catch my school.

Yeah. When you finished school, what happened?

Okay.

What you did...

[01:42:09]

Well, I had to change schools because the Whitefield School was a secondary modern. And although I could do O-levels there, that's as far as it went. So I took O-levels. I was in the local paper because I got so many in one sitting. And then at that time also we had moved to Belsize Park. Parents had moved to Belsize Park, around the corner, in Gilling Court. So the local authority assigned me to Quintin School, which is in St. John's Wood and it's walking distance to here. It's now Kynaston, Quintin Kynaston, Kynaston Quintin – whatever it's called - where I went to sixth form. Contrary to the other- I had a very close non-Jewish friend, but all the others in our circle were Jewish. So he had a- he had Jewish friends. Sorry?

Can I ask you, did your parents- did they join any synagogues or any...?

No synagogues. They did join- there was a Federation of Hungarian Jews in Great Britain, and that was quite active at the time. It was founded for the 1939 - crop. So the pre-war crop who were really running it. And then people like us joined in. And my aunt was already a member, and active.

And what did they organise?

Mostly bazaars. There was a bazaar every year. And there were- there were talks. I remember a [Ödön] Mikecz talk and... I don't think they organised English classes, but somebody did. We went to English classes somewhere in Finchley Road. I think they also organised help and compensation claims. But, I, I- I don't recall, really. I think that's the only one that they- that they joined.

Where was it based? Where was the organisation?

I think it was on Finchley Road.

OK- Sorry.

Compayne Gardens or somewhere like that. Around here – you know.

Yeah.

It was the days of "The Cosmo"...

Yeah.

...which is full of the likes of us, except not my age group.

Do you remember it?

I remember "The Cosmo", yes. My father went occasionally, and my uncle, the ones who followed us a year-and-a-half later. He was there every free moment. That was- that was the one place he felt at home.

The restaurant or the café?

I think the café. I think in the café. I mean, nobody could afford the restaurant, although he might have gone to restaurant a few times. He liked to eat out. But it was basically- it was the company and the talk and not the coffee or the food.

[01:45:02]

Yeah.

Yeah.

So when you lived in Gilling Court, there must have been also other refugees probably, there?

We had a friend- Hungary lady of the same vintage in the next-door building in Holmefield. I- I mean, we knew a number of Hungarian refugee families, but they weren't particularly in, in- you know, really local. More of them around Finchley Road.

And do you remember what- did you have any dealings with British Jews or with-?

Only- only my school friends. I mean, my school friends were British Jews. I met their families. That was it. Later, and when I was old enough, I was hoping that some Jewish girl will want to go out with me.

And were you- at that point, how did you relate to your Hungarian origin? Were you proud of it or did you try to be English, or did you? How – do you see? – how did you negotiate your identity?

Very interesting. I never thought of myself as English. I mean, Jewish is what comes to mind immediately. I- stopped saying that I was Hungarian a long, long time ago. I only ever say that I was born in Hungary. For myself, I'm not a Hungarian, but I'm a Hungarian Jew, which is a separate category. ...Our- my nephew and niece were born here and think of themselves as English. I always find it very interesting that if we talk about, "Oh, so-and-so is Hungarian." The next question is, "Jewish?" And they say, well, if somebody introduces me to an English person, I don't immediately ask, are they Jewish. But in- in our culture, it's chalk and cheese. You know?

Yes.

It's the- the, the most important question that- that there is. I thought of myself as- as an outsider who was accepted. I didn't feel strange, but I didn't feel one of the others either. For a long time, if, if, if, if not ever. You know?

[01:47:35]

Yeah.

I was going to say something, but it's gone.

Just need to. [sound break]

We were talking about identity and feeling an outsider.

Yes, I- I- I never say I'm English because I don't feel that I'm English. I mean, I'm very proud and very happy to be in this country. Wonderful, wonderful place. But I'm certainly not English. British – yes, I'm at home here. Nowhere else. Jewish, yes, not Jewish for, you know, the Charedis would not consider me Jewish. But I go by the Hitler definition. Yeah, I think it even it has impact- impacted my career also. I- when I joined the company that I worked for, for twenty-five years, I was quite conscious- it was Philips, a Dutch company. And I really thought, rightly or wrongly, that I wouldn't fit in very well in, in UK, in London in- I don't know what- that I any grounds for feeling that, but... we went to I- I worked for Philips in the UK actually for six or seven years, and then we moved to Holland. And we moved around. We also lived in France for four years, and then back to Holland, back to England. So in our married life, lived in four different countries.

But you're saying, so maybe you chose a sort of continental company...?

Yes, I think that that – yes. It was a question of- comes back to identity. I've probably felt more comfortable in- always being from somewhere else. Everywhere. I mean, you know, in Holland, I was considered English. And in France, I was considered Dutch. And so it goes, you know.

[01:49:53]

Yeah. So when you finished school, what did you want to do? What options did you have?

Well, I- I studied physics. And my main objective after I finished my PhD was to go to the United States. So what I did was what would take me there. And through help of my supervisor, I got a very prestigious job in New Jersey with Bell Labs. And very highly paid also. Not by their standards, but by our standards. So we were newly married. We got married in 1966. I graduated PhD in '68. And we went and lived in the US. We were there for two years. I was doing research in a very prestigious place. Lots of- I published lots of

papers and did pretty well. But we wanted to move. We wanted to be in England- didn't-well, it's different because Gillian was born here and she is English. If you care to use that term. And we decided we didn't want to bring up our children in the States. Didn't want to have American children. And our price for that is we have American grandchildren. But that's another story. So we came back to England. Again, I continued in research. I earned a little less than one third of what I'd earned before. But in those two years, we managed to get enough money together to buy a house. And we had two boys. Once we were here, we lived south of the river. We had one neighbour who was Jewish and Hungarian, but we were the only Jewish people for miles around. We occasionally went to synagogue in- it's not Croydon. Where is that synagogue? I'll have to think of it. I'll have to tell you. Maybe Gillian remembers.

Richmond?

Not Rich- not Richmond. Further south and further east like Bexhill or- I don't know where the synagogue is exactly. Not far from Croydon, anyway.

[01:52:30]

And how- how did you meet Gillian?

Ah, good one. In those days, there were dances advertised in the *JC* [*'Jewish Chronicle'*]. Not that I ever looked in the *JC*, but I suppose my friends did. And... we went to some of these. And there was one in Belsize Park, of all places, in the clubhouse of the tennis club. And went there one time with a friend of mine and asked a girl to dance. And the short version of the story is we've been married fifty-one years. There's a longer version, but I won't go into that. [laughs]

OK.

So we left as young marrieds first of all in the US, without children. And we had a great time because we had plenty of money and there were no responsibilities. Gillian was working also and with a good salary for a drug company, doing statistics. And when we came back, it was very funny. We could afford this nice big house, but in terms of cash flow, couldn't afford to

live there. So when the boys needed new shoes, that was a big, you know, problem. Then we did a little better financially, because we actually had a little maisonette that we lived in previously, which we hadn't sold. And there was an enormous inflation at that time. And we were able to sell it for quite a lot more than we bought it for – we had a little money. And I wasn't happy doing what I was doing. And I was looking for ways of doing something else. An advantage, at least back then, of a big international firm is that you could move around. And... I changed functions very much. I was offered a job in Holland. More of a commercial job. And I took that and we moved there. And that was- I had a twenty-five year career with a company doing all kinds of different jobs, managerial jobs in different countries.

For Philips?

For Philips.

Yes?

[01:55:11]

We loved living in Holland. We lived in a beautiful little village where Van Gogh lived for two years and his father was the village priest. At least he was the Reform Church priest.

What's the name? Where was it?

Nuenen. He – Van Gogh - has a Nuenen period. A Nuenen- very dark paintings before, before he went to France. And it's a wonderful place to bring up children. It's safe. People have the right values. It's not materialistic. The people we found were philo-Semitic, very, very pro-English and very pro-Jewish. And, you know, the kids could get on their bikes and go to visit their friends without any problem. We had a- we had a reasonably good time there. We a very good time there. And then we moved to France, again, with the company. That was a lovely time. I had a job that I really enjoyed. The children went to private school, British school, and we lived in the suburbs. Excellent. Then we came back to Holland. So, yeah- so we came back to Holland. And then I- I had a problem. I- I really I suffered from nervous breakdown. Which... I suppose was a... bit of baggage that I carried from- from

childhood, from wartime, although I'm never sure that that is the case. And it was pretty bad. I, I, had to stop working.

In Holland?

In Holland, yes. And, that's the process in which I became a writer. But that was a very hard time for the family. And, it coincided with the boys being old enough to go off to university. I think Rob was already both in England, in Bristol, and just about the same time Al came and he came to Manchester University.

And was it- was it triggered by anything specific at the time or was it, for you, sort of sudden?

[01:57:40]

No, it wasn't sudden. I've- I've- I had periods of depression before, but not- not the same kind of thing. This was just different- a different thing altogether. It seemed to be- obviously wasn't, with hindsight. Seemed to be about problems in work. But I had absolutely no problems in work. I was, you know, making a lot of money. I was appreciated. I wasn't happy in it. But, no. It had a lot to do with transition in life. Developmental, you know, asking- children growing up, asking fundamental questions. What it- what's it all about? I think all kinds of things. I mean, there are theories that you're very prone to depression if you're badly nourished in the first year of life, which, you know, I totally fit into. On the other hand, as I told you, my mother also suffered from depression. So it's also possibly genetic. Who knows these things?

And do you think it was related to your early experiences?

I didn't- I definitely didn't think so at the time.

Aha...

I think very much so. I think very much so. But also, it's a combination. You know, some things make you perhaps more prone. And another thing- you know, these- these things add up.

And what helped you to go- go through it? Or what- what help were you looking for?

Well, I was in therapy. I took medication. I had very good help with it. Even so, it took a very long time to get over it. And part of it was the writing was- was therapy. Self-imposed therapy, but still.

And what did you start writing about?

Oh, I was- the first thing I wrote was about my condition at the- at the time, and the thoughts in my head and... All kinds- all kinds of things. Yes. Yes. It's not - unpublished, but still-

For yourself?

[02:00:01]

Oh, I always really only write for myself. I never know whether it would help anybody else to read it. I mean, anybody who had problems. But I, I- I- in time, is the great healer. You know? Time is the great healer. I- I am- I'm very sympathetic to anybody who has got similar problems. And the three things that matter in getting better is medication, talking therapy and time. And the best thing is to have all three. But you know, which? And what, and to what degree? I am also very analytical, you know, scientific and which- again, which is part of the problem. But it's also part of the solution. So I was always very aware in what was happening to, of what was happening to me. And I was also- I was interested in the, in the, in the depths of depression, when I wasn't even interested in my family. I was interested in what was happening to me. All very odd- basically, when I- when I got over that, we moved to England. And that's approximately twenty years ago.

Because at that point, the children were in England?

The children were already in England. They had no intention of coming back to Holland and we didn't want to- we were visitors in Holland. You know, that's the way that we felt there. And they were obviously settling down... in England. They both got jobs after university. And we decided to come back. I mean, we went basically went to Holland for a job and, didn't particularly want to grow old there. We had family here. Both our mothers were alive, my sister, et cetera. Nephews, nieces, lots of friends. But we keep very close touch with our friends in Holland. We go quite often. We speak to them. We had two circles of friends, really. One is, all the Jewish people. There's a small Jewish community, which we're a part of in that- members of that synagogue. They've all moved away now toward- to Amsterdam, because that's where people go once they are not working anymore. They're not tied. And the other group is- is really ex-neighbours. Obviously non-Jewish Dutch people, who- wonderful people in two- lived in two different locations. And we're very friendly with- very close to both neighbours.

[02:03:02]

And did you go back to work or to...?

No, no.

No.

No. I just wrote. Yeah, no I-

So it opened a whole different world to you, or...?

That's right. Before I started writing, I started painting. And I was painting for- every day, all day. And there was a certain particular occasion when I started writing. And when I finished one, I started writing a different one, again for a completely different reason. So I have written a number of books, but only- only one is properly published. I think that another two are on Kindle.

You self-published them, or...?

The- the- yes, but the- the one that I say properly published. ISAF publish them in England. But then an Italian publisher bought the rights and it came out in Italian. And after that, a French publisher bought the rights. And they did- it did very well in France under a different title.

Can you tell us the title please, of that book?

In English, the title is 'TRIAD:'. Subtitle is '*the physicist, the analysts, the kabbalists*'.

And in French?

In French it's '*Trois explications du monde*' - which is the three things that were in the Triad. The three-ness comes back. And I came in the last eight of the 2010 European Book Prize with this- with the French version of the book.

Was it a surprise to you, or...?

Yes. I mean, the book prize was a surprise because I didn't submit. I mean, it's the publisher that submits. ...It was and it wasn't. I, I know from my self-publishing, I know a little bit about the book trade now. And I know what a difference it makes if you- if your book comes out self-published or if it comes out from a reputable large publisher. The publisher automatically sends the books out to all the bookstores and they will send them back if they can't sell them. So you're, you know, and they have the machinery for publicity. They got me a 45-minute interview on French radio. No, so, it's a different story. And I still haven't got a- a 'real' publisher in England or US.

[02:05:40]

And what was the book about?

Ah, the book- I'll tell you what it was about. And I'll tell you how it started. When I was in therapy- I told you I was always interested in it. And my therapist was very much Jung-oriented. And he- he mentioned to me, because he thought that being a physicist, a scientist, also part of my problem.

I.e. Too rational?

Too, too- too rational.

Yeah.

Too hard on myself, you know, too much expecting firm answers to things. And that, you know, the usual stuff, that your other side is fighting and - you know, you... Anyway. And he was telling me that one of my scientific heroes, Pauli, Wolfgang Pauli, was very close friends of Carl Jung. And this interested me very much. And I started reading about it. And the third thing that happened- well, second thing maybe, is, he asked me also, do I- "Do you get any help from your community?" You know, like he meant, he said, in the Jewish community. Is there, you know, like, I know that the priest would be [there to help]. And I said, but the answer to that was 'no', because we didn't even have a rabbi in that community. Just hired them in for High days and holidays. And...and somehow the word- the Kabbalah came up. And I thought, I know nothing about this. So I started reading about Kabbalah and also about Jung and Pauli at the same time. And I was telling my oldest son all this. And he's- about my interest in psychoanalysis and in quantum physics and in... Kabbalah. And he said to me, "I bet you can't write a book about all three."

[02:07:43]

So that's- but not because of the bet, but set me thinking and I decided I would try and write a book about all three. And ...I decided that these characters, two brothers, cause I was always interested - I don't have a brother. I was always interested- but I have two sons. The relationship of brothers. There would be two brothers and one would be a psychoanalyst and one would be a...a physicist. And somehow you know, they will move around in circles like this. And I started reading up about... people in this- individuals in this environment. And... as the thing went along, I totally rejected these two brothers and only wrote about real people. Because the reality was exactly what I wanted to- I found that was exactly what I always wanted to write about. So it's a historical novel with real people and real events. And it's about... in the 1900s to 1939, really. About the development of these... sciences, but about the people involved in them and their close personal relationships. And their ancestry,

which is where the Kabbalists come in. Because they were all sort of one or two generation out of the *shtetl*. Wanting to be at the forefront of knowledge. And in my view, asking the same questions as the religious people, but different language and different- different answers. So that's what the book is. It's a history, but it's a novel.

And who comes out- it's maybe not- who comes out the winner? It's a stupid question, but who - for you? Who?

There is- there is no winner. There is no winner.

Is it complementary- or...?

They- they are really facets of the same thing. Now- no, I don't really want to go too deep into this now, but- unless you want me to.

I am intrigued now...

But, no, read the book; I'll give you a copy.

Okay. In English.

In English? Yes. In English.

Yeah. Not in French.

Yes. I mean these- it's about the people, as I say. It's not very deep in- in the physics or psy- it's about the people. But in these people and their writings, also letters, they are forming the connections - themselves. In their thoughts and in their ideas and... the way they approach problems.

[02:10:36]

Interesting.

Yeah.

Interesting. So, when did you write this book?

I think it was 2000. It was published in 2000. So I wrote it- I wrote it while I was in therapy. ...Yeah. And I published it in 2000.

Yeah, I mean, there's a whole interesting debate about mental health and Judaism and how- I mean, I don't know whether you feel- but we don't have to go into it at the moment. Tell me, when you- so when you came back, where did you settle in England?

Here in this- in this flat.

In this? Here in Belsize Park.

We, we- we came here, yes. Straight to-

And why did you come? Why Belsize Park?

Well actually, I wanted to go to Hampstead. Belsize Park, to me, after all those years away was the Belsize Park that I had lived in when I was sixteen. And we used to drive through Hampstead and, and always loved it. Also, our son lived in Hampstead. The older son. So every time we visited, we were staying with him. And, Gillian and I used to drive through Hampstead. And right at the top there are some...very narrow, tall houses on the right as you come down from the pond. And I think one of them with a balcony. And we used to say in the 1960s, "One- one day we'll live there." So we were looking for a place in Hampstead and actually looked at that house. But, you know, it was a house which was very tall and very narrow and pointless. We were actually looking at houses, and very few flats. And then at a certain point, we looked at a house in Vane Close, which is very much like a Dutch house terraced, and- and we said, you know, "We're going to do this and that to it." And then we realised that we're trying to knock houses down instead of what we really want is the same floor area, but we don't actually need a lot of rooms. And then we looked at a flat just like this in Belsize Park.

[02:12:51]

And then I went to an agent, asked specifically, do you have any ground floor flats in this in one of these, stucco buildings? And he had- There were two on the market, this one and the other one. And in the end we settled for this one. And we've been happy ever since. We joined Belsize - sorry - we joined South Hampstead [synagogue]. I found them very welcoming and very open. Again, I don't feel the average shul member. But I feel at home there, so... That's where we are.

So you came- yes, you said there were two synagogues- a couple of synagogues around here.

Yes. Well, we were going to look at Belsize Square, especially as it was more my kind of people that, you know, the refugees, European refugee kind of people, especially.

Yeah.

It was twenty years ago, even more so. But the first one we went to was South Hampstead. And I remember very well. I went with- my oldest son was there. Gillian went to the ladies gallery. And Baruch- Baruch Levin, who was then Assistant Rabbi, walked up to us in his typical way, and he says, "Hi, guys. Are you new?" So we said, "Yes." So- as we walked in and we moved down and he told people, "Move up, move up." And- and we sat down. And- and that was really how it was. You know? I'd been to new- new- a new person in synagogues before. And you're- everybody looking at you and you feel like the total outsider. And this is absolutely not the case here. So, yeah, I'm not religious, but I do enjoy being part of the community.

And looking back on your own experiences, how- what impact do you think? Did your early experience, the war experience, have on you?

[02:15:07]

I think the strongest thing that I have taken with me is that I'm lucky to be alive, like I have no right to be alive. So everything is a bonus. Unfortunately, when I was going through depression, I forgot that obvious- or- or it didn't mean- didn't have the meaning to me. But it

does- I do feel that every day. And it puts everything into a different context. You know the- the problems that we all call problems- I mean, we live well, as you can see, but they're so trivial. The- I can't remember where it was, I think a Jewish Book Week talk or somewhere, or maybe it was Limmud. I don't know. They were talking about anti-Semitism and... about England- anti-Semitism in England. And I- I stood up and I said, "I'm afraid you people don't know what anti-Semitism is." I said, "All- all I'll tell you about- yes. Yes. There are some people who say nasty things or even do nasty things." But at the time- and I said, I said, "We just had a leader of the Tory Party who is a Jew -at the time. We have a leader of the Labour Party who is a Jew. I don't want to vote for him, but I am proud that he can be a... a leader of the party. And people dislike him not because he's a Jew, but because they don't agree with what he says! That's wonderful!" So, yes, it colours everything. Even things like... When JW3 was being built, there was big sign up saying - I can't remember what it said exactly. 'A new Jewish home' - or something like that. And me and people of my ilk all felt uncomfortable with that.

Yes.

I am not a fan- I've donated, but I'm not a fan of the new building. Of the shul. I think- I feel that it's hubris.

South Hampstead...

South Hampstead is building a shul for a very large amount of money, and I, I, I don't think it's right. I'm quite happy to spend lots of money on the- I mean, you know - appropriate amount of money on the building that was there and...

[02:17:43]

It's not necessary.

No. It's certainly not necessary. And as- as I say, it's hubris. It's- it's, it's showing... People are divided. You know, people who are born here and feel themselves British and are proud and feel safe say, "Isn't it wonderful?" With me, with my background, that's not the way I

perceive it. But as I say, I- I donate because I'm part of that community. But I would be happier if we didn't do it.

But do you feel that...? I think what happened in- whether its Hungarian or Slovak or anyone who stayed in a communist country...

Yes.

In a way it's a double- so first of all, it's because of the war, but then also because of communism. So again, Jewish - it was... difficult. So in a way, this sort of private, that one doesn't want to be too public about being Jewish.

Umm...

It's to do with two- two things.

I don't know if the- the communist part plays differently. Let's talk about the- the Jewish-

What part does it play? Yeah.

Well, the communist part is I- when I first came to Britain, or when I was a young man, Labour Party, Socialist Party to me felt very... antagonistic.

Yes.

Because I associated socialism with communism and communism with tyranny, et cetera. When I was in my twenties, I had a different view of socialism. But- but that is a sort of a learning process. And now, of course, we're back again with people calling themselves Marxist and they make me shiver. You know, this is the thing about communism. If by communism, you mean kibbutzim in Israel, that's wonderful for people who like that life. If you mean the- the kind of repression and dictatorship that we lived under, then... this is the opposite extreme. So it colours one's- one's view. The Jewish element is- it's really that what I told you. It's... you feel at home with other secular Jews. Okay? I mean, Gillian is a lot

more observant than- I'm not observant. She is more or less observant. We have a kosher home. She goes to shul every Shabbat.

[02:20:32]

We have one son who keeps a kosher home and one son who keeps a- a 'no pork and shellfish' home. But not- you know. So we all, we all do our-our own- our own thing. But I don't feel too comf- no... In one of my books I wrote that character says, a Jewish man says, "I feel a real outsider when I'm in a room full of Jews." And then says, "What if you're with goyim?" "It's worse."

[laughing] Yeah.

Just to return to- one of the- cause you mentioned about going- the- the- going through the Nazi business and then the Communists business.

Yeah?

How many times my father lost everything. First time was in 1919, 1920, when his father went bankrupt. Second time was 1944 when, you know, we have the documents. Everything was taken away and you were very lucky if you kept your life. And then in 1956, he left everything behind.

Yeah.

So no wonder that when he- he got to England, he really felt very happy. I mean, when they bought a- they bought a house in- a semi in Colindale. And, you know, he felt he was the Lord of the castle. 'I've got my own house and no- nobody can tell me what to do.' And he was- he, he became active politically for the Liberals. He went and put leaflets in people's doors, you know, exercising his freedom.

Yeah. Cause he had lost. Yeah, he had experienced it.

Yes, yes. Yes.

In that time.

Yes.

[02:22:39]

And what sort of identity did you want to give to your children?

I- very much a cosmopolitan, a, a, a- British cosmopolitan. I would put it that way. And of course, Jewish... but certainly Jewish in the way I didn't really care whether religious or not. Gillian may have done more so. I wanted them to feel at home anywhere in the world. But keep the best of British - Britishness. And that's what they are. I mean, they're multilingual. They have lived in a number of countries. They have friends of other nationalities. My younger son did study law in Manchester. And he said two thirds of his year are Asians and one third are Jews. And that you don't find any sort of standard Englishman there at all. So his- he's got a number of Muslim friends. Very nice guys who say- happy to come, cause they can eat in a kosher house cause it's halal, by definition. Yeah. Open to the world. My oldest son married an American girl. So that's- they live in the US now. Five healthy grandchildren. It's good. Trying to grow old gracefully now is my next target.

What is for you- it's a slightly different question for the same topic. From your background, from your Hungarian Jewish background, what do you think is the most important part of that? Of your heritage - Hungarian Jewish heritage?

[02:24:42]

I think culture - culture. Interest in, in, music and theatre and, literature. I mean, it's obviously not exclusive. But the Budapest middle-class upbringing was, every- every child had to play the piano. There was piano in every household. And, the other- the other sibling would be playing the violin. I- I used to go to the theatre as a twelve-year-old by myself. There was a theatre in our street and it cost the same as a cinema ticket. I just used to go to matinees. I went to the opera. Twelve-year-old. I'm just trying to think if I went by myself; I think I

might have gone by myself once. In walking distance to where we lived. And, and a sort of cosmopolitan-ness, again, this sort of open to the world.

Yeah. And you are involved in culture? You got to- now?

Oh, yes, yes. Yeah, I mean, my, my wife is a theatre fiend. We got at least twice a week, sometimes three times a week. We've- we've been known to go twice in a day. Yes. And I'm of course mad about books and reading. Cinema. What else can you do? Opera occasionally.

And you said that- so- before- where is your home? Where would you consider your home?

London is my home. Yes. And no doubt about that.

I feel total stranger if I go to- it's very odd to go to Hungary. I haven't been now for seven or eight years because I have a *broyges* [dispute] with the present government, which is very right-wing. But we used to go. It's- it's very strange because the physical, the environment you recognise and you kind of feel at home, although, of course over the- it's a long time now and a lot of things changed. But for instance, when I saw Romaifürdő, where we lived, it hasn't changed a lot. The, the, the swimming pool I can go to, it's pretty much the same. The buildings we lived in are the same. The school building, I've been inside, is unchanged. Yet it's different and it's strange. If I speak to people, they immediately can tell that I'm from abroad. I don't know if it's an accent or the word that- words that you use, the language is, you know, sixty years out of date. And I love it for the first forty-eight hours. And then I can't get away fast enough because, because of the people.

[02:27:47]

When did you go back to Hungary for the first time?

Quite late. I mean, compared with other people in my family who'd been back. Let me just work it out. I think it was about 1980. 1980, I went with my children. I mean, Gillian and the children. And then for a while, in the 80s and 90s, we went quite often. It was always a good holiday for the kids. Gillian loves being there. Likes the food. Likes the culture. The kids

loved it too, so we- we went quite often for- for holidays. And then, in the 90s- well, maybe once in two or three years. Yeah- we stopped going.

Now, you don't feel...?

Well, Gillian wants to go very much, especially as we have family members who don't, you know, like daughter-in-law, the younger daughter-in-law has never been. We've taken the older daughter-in-law, but that was maybe... fourteen years ago, fifteen years ago. And she's promised a number of people that will take them, but I just don't feel very comfortable about...[coughs]

What's going on at the moment.

Yeah, absolutely. But it doesn't look like it will change very soon. I don't- I don't have any family there. I do have a second cousin who, more- more as a friend I- we keep in touch. They've been a couple of times to visit us and if- if we are in Hungary we always visit them. And we exchange phone calls every couple of months. But I don't have anything... There are graves to visit. Yes. My grandparents, really. That's all. And then their parents.

[02:29:45]

Yeah.

Et cetera.

You said that you're a member of the Child Survivors [Child Survivors Association of Great Britain- AJR]

Yes.

When did you join it, or when...?

Either two years ago or three years ago or something. Fairly recently. Yes. Fairly recently.

So my question is also- has the past become more important, becoming older? Has it...?

I think so. Definitely, I mean, there was a period when it was totally unimportant... going back to teens and maybe even twenties. And then, you know, when you're too busy bringing up children and making a living and you know, you have other things on your mind. And it seems very much in the past. And as you get older, the past comes... back. I think being a grandfather also is very important because I do think about how, you know, what will my grandchildren, who live in such a different world- I mean, my children already live in a different world, but they're close to the stories. So my motivation for writing about my childhood is- I think of it as writing for my grandchildren. Not that I would- wouldn't mind it published if it's ever finished. But that's the- that's the way I think about it. And yes, it's a lot- plays a lot bigger role in my life than it used to.

And do you find you have things in common when you meet other child survivors, or... when you go to the meetings?

Well, I'm very naughty. I don't go to meetings. They are very nice. And they often phone and say, you know, the next one is- is such and- and I say, yes, I'll try and come. But again, I don't- you know, I don't feel part of the group.

Okay.

I have a very good friend, a lady. Just trying to think if- you haven't interviewed her? No. No, no. That's right. But she is in the- Agnes Grunwald has written a book about- I think it's just coming out. Launches next month. Or this month.

Agnes Kory?

No. Anyway, this- this lady is French.

Yes?

And so she is a child survivor. But so- and very good friend. But such a different story. She was basically, as a baby, was handed over the- the fence by my- her mother to a gentle

woman. Mother was taken away and killed. And she was brought up by this family who we know. And she only found out she was Jewish when she was in her late teens.

[02:32:41]

Yeah, that's different to you...

Yeah. ... Yeah. So sometimes we talk about it, but not- it- it's a totally different- very interesting, but a- a different- a different story. Would make a good one for you.

And the AJR. Are you a member of the AJR as well?

Yes. Yes. Again, I, I haven't been to any meetings.

Well, you came last week.

Yeah, that's true. That's true. That's true. Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

But were your parents members? Did you take out membership...?

No, no, they were- they would- they wouldn't- just that Hungarian business that I told you about.

Yes.

AJR I came close to actually because of Ricci. You know. Ricci left everything to- Ricci is the neighbour of ours, who left all her property to AJR. And I was an executor of her will.

Yes, Ricci Horenstein.

Ricci Horenstein, yes, the pianist. Yeah.

She was a member of the AJR.

Yes. Yes. Yes. But because she- she donated everything to AJR, I became in contact with the AJR about-

Ah, before that, you didn't know about them?

I knew about them. I knew- I knew they existed, but I wasn't involved with them. I considered- I didn't have the impetus to, to- to join. And then I thought, this is silly. This- it's there so that people like me join. And we are fewer in number...

Yes.

...all the time, so... Yeah.

And how- how do you see the future? Let's say both of the AJR and the Child Survivors Association. How- how do you see...?

Well, I think they will peter out. Unless they change... Well, I assume that there won't be another wave of Jewish refugees in the near future. But who can tell? But if there isn't, unless they- they either change to- to refugees in general or they close shop. I don't see that there's a need for it to go on forever. I mean, there is. I'll- I'll, I'll be one of the last. Right?

[02:35:06]

Yeah...

So, there isn't- there isn't much future in it. I thought you were going to ask me a different question, actually...

Go on...

... which is, the future for secular Jews. There was a long- at the last Limmud, there was a long- there was a session on this subject. And... I spoke. And everybody- about thirty people there and twenty-nine were against me.

Aha?

And I said that if you're not in Israel, or an Israeli, let's say, and you're not- have- you don't have any religious affiliation, and you live in a country or a society where there is no discrimination, there is no future.

Yes?

It will disappear. Everybody said, "Oh! Terrible..." Then we went to- I don't know if you were there- [Natan] Sharansky was at JW3-

Yes- yes.

'Said exactly the same thing.

That's-

...Because- because again, it's a- European experience is that it is persecution that keeps us together.

Correct. So that secular Judaism in a way, let's say, in Eastern Europe survived because...

Oh, yes.

It was because-

As long as the others say you're a Jew, you're a Jew. You know. If you go to a synagogue, then you're a Jew because that's your religion. If you're Israeli, you're Israeli. And I'm not saying that it changed me, but in generations... it, it's, it's- its meaning. I mean, people say, "Oh, yeah, we used to be Jewish" or - you know.

Well, I guess you could say in America. That's what's partly going on.

Yes, yes, yes, yes, absolutely. And to the degree that there is anti-Semitism, actually, helps keep us together.

So then I wanted to ask you- you came to Britain as a refugee.

Yes.

Do you still see yourself as a refugee?

Yes. Yes. It doesn't play very strongly. But yes, I, I, I do see myself as a refugee. Interestingly, that's a word that is not used anymore. I don't know why it has become a- not-not-to-be-used word. It's not derogatory. But you don't have refugees anymore. You have migrants and you have, asylum seekers.

[02:37:55]

And what do you think about Britain's contemporary refugee policy? Do you...?

I'm on the side of the Syrian young people who are- try to- fighting to make a better life for themselves. Because I, I identify with that, you know. They simply want- the ones who want to live somewhere where you can work and you get paid and you're free to- to prosper. I have every sympathy for them. I mean, I know all the business that that terrorists will be infiltrating them. And, and yeah, that's- that's the downside. But basically I have sympathy because of my background for all the people who- who seek any means to- to better their lives. I can understand that there is a limit to amount of immigration that can be accepted. But in the case of this current crop, that limit is set ridiculously low. So my personal view is we could easily and should accept more. How much more is, you know, up to the consensus. But yeah, I sympathise with them. Everybody's got the right to try and make the best of themselves.

Yeah. And lastly, do you feel...bitter is not the right word... Do you feel more could have been done to stop the deportation of the Jews from Hungary? Because, you know...that is quite complex- at that time... There was knowledge about what...

Yes... No- I understand that question very, very well-

Yeah.

Well, the answer is 'yes'. But before elaborating on that. Part of the problem lied- was with ourselves. My grandfather had a very fashionable linen shop in the centre of Budapest and that ran until '39 or '40. Sorry. Yes. '43 - say '43. And one of his customers was Frau - I think - Veessenmayer, who Veessenmayer was the most senior German official, non-military civil official in Hungary. And his wife used to come to the shop all the time. And at one point, he said, "Mr. Rosenberger, I advise that you take your family and you leave the country."

[02:40:53]

And of course, that was disregarded. Not because- I don't think they ever got to the point that in practical terms it wasn't possible, but it was much more of, you know, 'it can't happen here' kind of thing. And I- I know many others where people didn't take the opportunity because they just- to leave- because they thought that this is not- not like other countries. At the same time, I don't know. I know more- sorry. I don't know any more than you do. I mean, just from reading books. But, yes. Train- the train lines could have been bombed. More, I think even spreading the news might have helped. You never know how many Germans back home would have objected if they had explicitly known what was going on. I have a friend. It's another story, but- a very close friend, who is a German... Protestant non-religious. Anyway, not Jewish is the point. A little bit, although he was, say, seven or eight, during the war. And we had a lot of difficult conversations when we first got to know one another. And he said that he had asked, and nobody would talk about it. He'd lived in a village. And nobody would talk about the wartime except such-and-such died in Stalingrad. You know, in the army. And everybody claimed to- to know nothing. And I'm sure this is correct. Whether they did know nothing or not is a different issue. But nobody wanted to admit that they, they knew anything. And if the Allies had made it - this is my theory - made it really public knowledge in Germany, I hope there would have been enough decent people to at least have a voice of protest, or have something.

[02:43:13]

This is, of course, one of the most difficult problems: as are the Germans the most evil people in the world? Or are we all like that except- or is the truth somewhere in between, you know? It was very difficult to make a close friend of a German, because I looked on him as a German, as opposed to the person that he is. But that's also a learning process.

Yeah. You know, because to me, what's so amazing that, you know, the proximity of Hungary let's say, to Slovakia...

Yes.

Where, you know, people were deported and, I mean,

Yes, yes.

Much earlier. So that... in that proximity, you know that... that happened what had happened in a way that... anyway, it's a different story...

But, you know, Jews from Slovakia came to Hungary because they felt safe!

Yes. Correct. Yeah.

You know? So-

And also, at that point, where could the Hungarian Jews go? You know, you said in 1943- by then, where could they have gone?

Of course. Of course. Of course.

You know. So it's...

Yes, of course.

Almost impossible at that point.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I don't know when exactly it became impossible, but.

Yeah. But it's- if they had stayed in Bulgaria, they would have been fine.

That's right.

In Bulgaria.

That's right. That's right. That- the one- the one safe haven.

Yeah. Yeah. But that's in hindsight.

Yes. Yes.

OK. Is there anything else I haven't asked you that you'd like to add or share?

No, I don't think so.

No. So in that case, I'd like to ask you, have you got a message for anyone who might watch this interview in the future?

[02:45:09]

Well, I think my message would be, when you have difficulties, keep it in context. And remember that people like ourselves were in much greater difficulties- in considerably recent past. And, enjoy life!

OK, on that note, thank you very much for sharing your- your life history with us and we're going to look at some of your documents and photographs.

Okay.

Thank you.

[End of interview]

[02:46:02]

[02:46:06]

[Photographs and documents]

Photo 1

This photograph was taken at the golden wedding of the old couple in the centre. I think it must have been around 1900. The sitting lady second from the left- youngish woman- is my grandmother. Ella Rosenberger, maiden name was Rosenfeld. Next to her is her mother, Camilla. And next to Camilla are her parents. Their surname was Denes. I'd have to look up what their names were. Everybody in this photograph is a descendant of the old couple. So most of the people in the background are siblings of my great-grandmother and their spouses. And the boys at the front are siblings of my grandmother.

And when was it taken?

[When?] Around- around 1900, 1901, 1902 - something like that. [Where?] It would have been in Kapuvár, a smallish town in western Hungary where this- the couple, the old couple lived.

Photo 2

This picture was taken about 1934. My mum and dad at their engagement - in Budapest. It was taken in Budapest.

Photo 3

This picture was taken in Budapest either 1946 or '47. I suspect '47. It's myself and my mother. I judge that I'm three years old there. It's at the local swimming pool, open-air pool where we used to go in the area that we lived in Romaifürdő. Roman baths. And it also coincides with my first memory. I really remember being there on summer days with my parents. My mum is about thirty-seven, and as I say, I'm about three.

Photo 4

This picture is also from 1946 or '47 with my- picture of my dad and myself. He is still very thin, post-war, but looks like he is in very good health, as am I. It's outside the building that we lived in. Again, in Romaifürdő.

[02:48:54]

Photo 5

This is a studio, a portrait. My sister Vera and myself. I would have been five, say, 1949 and she would have been thirteen.

Photo 6

This photograph was taken in Belsize Park in London. So, after- obviously after we came to London in 1956. It's actually from 1961. I can see I'm wearing a sixth form uniform. It's a picture of my mother and my grandmother. Taken on my camera. And I was interested in photography, so I did the developing and printing myself.

What's the name of your grandmother? And mother?

Ella Rosenberger is my grandmother and Rozsa Keve is my mum.

Photo 7

This photograph was taken in 1961. My parents, sitting on a bench in Belsize Park. My father, Steven, was sixty years old and my mother was in her early fifties.

Photo 8

This picture was taken on March 13th, 1966. Our wedding. Gillian was nineteen and I was twenty-one.

Photo 9

This is a family photo from 2006 when our eldest son Rob got married. Sitting in the front is my mother Rose. Going from left to right there is myself, Gillian, then the bridegroom Rob, his new wife, Leslie. Best man and our youngest son Alexander. My sister Vera. And my brother-in-law, Peter.

Photo 10

This photograph was taken in 2010 of our immediate family at the time. Not present on it are two lovely grandchildren who hadn't been born yet. Leo and Evan. But on the photograph back row, is our son Rob, myself and our son Alexander. Rob is holding his eldest son, Josh, and in front of Josh is his mum Leslie, and his brother Dylan. Gillian is in the middle, and on the right is our daughter-in-law Paula with a little girl called Ruby, who is our only granddaughter.

[02:51:52]

Document 1

Okay, so this this is an I.D. card. It's dated September the 5th, 1944 for my father in the name of Istvan Krausz. And it's a permit to be outdoors during curfew hours in order to carry out his profession. He still looks in a very good shape.

Document 2

This is an I.D. card for forced labour. The date isn't on it, but I can tell that it was around October of 1944, and my father already looks very worn and unhealthy. Still in the Krausz, Istvan name.

Document 3

This is again an I.D. card on my father, issued on December the 5th, 1944. He escaped from forced labour and in the month of November he was able to get false papers, false I.D. papers through intervention of a non-Jewish friend of his. And he changed his name to Keve in order not to have a Jewish sounding name. So this I.D. is issued in the name of Istvan Keve. The birth date has been altered in order to make sure that he is not eligible for the draft, and also the place of the birth has been altered. Otherwise, it's a certificate that he is employed on essential war related work.

[02:53:43]

Document 4

This document is also an I.D. card for Krausz Istvan - my father. And remarkable thing about it is the big Z-sh [Tom sounds out the letters] in Hungarian, which stands for *zsidó*, or Jew.

Document 5

Soon after I was born, the area where we lived in Romaifürdő, was made free of Jews. And we were forced to move into the city into one of the houses with a yellow star on it where Jews were supposed to live. This is the document of the transfer of address from one to the other, and it's issued by the Union of Hungarian Jews who were carrying this out on behalf of the authorities.

Document 6

This document is an inventory of the contents of our flat in Romaifürdő. It was taken in June of 1944 when local committee officials came to take over our flat, as we had to- were forced to move out, including all the contents of the flat. So they made their- an exhaustive list of everything and gave us a receipt. Of course, we didn't see anything ever again. But it goes down into details like 'three tea towels' and 'a child's raincoat', as well as bigger items like table and chairs, et cetera..

But the Keve is written differently with the...

No, it's just the somebody's peculiar handwriting. Yes, I think it's just Keve.

[02:56:00]

Document 7

This document was issued by the Ministry of Interior in Budapest and it's dated December 1, 1944, and it's a certificate that the person named, Istvan Keve, is a refugee from a part of the country which had already fallen to the Red Army. So a false place of birth is given.

Document 8

This document is what is known as a *Schutzpass*. It was issued by the Swiss legation or consulate in Budapest, which was run by a man named Carl Lutz, who, through issuing such

documents, saved the lives of tens of thousands of Jews. It's issued to my father and mother Krausz, Istvan and Rosenberger, Rozsa, and says that we- our family is part of a collective passport. It doesn't say the word 'Palestine', but that's what is meant, because the Swiss were representing Palestine being themselves a neutral country.

[02:57:34]

Document 9

So in about April 1944, there was a regulation that all Jews above a certain age - I think it was six or seven - had to wear Star of David. My sister had one because she was eight years old. I, of course, didn't need one because I was a baby. This particular one was on the overcoat of my grandfather. And after the war, my mother saved this one for, for the memory.

Document 10

This is a book cover featuring a Star of David. At the same time, it's featuring two triangles in slightly different colour, say, shades of blue, to try and refer at the same time to Jewishness and three-ness, the three being the title of the book *The Triad*. The triad being the physicist, the analysts and the Kabbalists. I wrote this book around the- 2000 and it has been reasonably successful, especially in French and Italian translations.

Document 11

I wrote this document in - at the request of the daughter of the Swiss Consul, Carl Lutz, who saved so many of us in Budapest in 1944. And it ends as follows: Through a series of lucky chance events, the help of numerous Righteous Hungarian gentiles and of Swiss Consul Carl Lutz, and much courage on behalf of my parents, we survived. The following did not: from my father's family, actually, I have no information at all. From my mother's family there are my mother's uncles and aunts, Béla Rosenberger, Ergeibet Rosenberger, Antonia Geiger, Zsiga Geiger, Imre Ratz. Rozie Ratz. My mother's cousins. Irene Geiger. Djuri Ratz, Hannah Ratz. Miklosz Ratz. Magda Rosenberger, Kato Rosenberger and Kato's new-born baby, who was born and died in a cattle truck on the way to Auschwitz. Also my grandmother, Ella's uncles Zsiga Deutsch and Armin Deutsch, and my grandmother's cousins, Ella's cousins, Andor Deutsch, Olga Deutsch, Lottie Deutsch, Suszi Deutsch. Her son and daughter: names I

don't know. And Imre Izidor Denes, as well as my grandmother's cousin's daughter Kato Wenzel.

Tom, thank you very, very much again for sharing your story, and your documents and your photographs.

Yeah... You're welcome. Welcome.

[03:00:37]

[End of photographs and documents]