

Milan (Menashe) Goldberger

Vukovar 1928 – Jerusalem 2023 · His testimony, in English

Yad Vashem video interview · Jerusalem, c. 2017 · Yad Vashem collections, document 13185157

About this transcript. Milan gave this interview to Yad Vashem in English, at about 88. The text below comes from the video's automatic captions and has not been corrected: the interviewer's questions and Milan's answers run together without speaker labels, and some words are mis-heard (marked [inaudible] where the captions gave up). Timestamps match the video, so any passage can be checked against his own words. The names of living family members are withheld. This is a family working copy; the video is the authoritative record, © Yad Vashem.

Summary

Family and birth [00:00–08:00]

Milan was born in **Vukovar** (then Yugoslavia) in **1928** and left as a baby. His father, **Eugene Jacob Goldberger**, came from a family of cantors in which the names alternated, “Menashe ben Yaakov, Yaakov ben Menashe”; Eugene was born when his own father was about 65, in a second marriage, and Milan never knew that side of the family, whom he believed “Hitler took.” His mother, **Hannah “Helen” née Berkovits** of Senica, was a gifted seamstress who sewed wedding gowns. Her brother **Gábor**, also a cantor, survived the war in hiding and was later brought to Montreal; an aunt Rosie once visited them in Copenhagen. His parents married about 1926. There were four boys: Milan, **Leo** (“the professor”), **Gustav** (“a lawyer in Washington”) and **Eric**, born in Copenhagen.

To Copenhagen [08:00–11:00]

After a cantor's post in Vukovar and then Czechoslovakia, Eugene saw a newspaper advertisement for a cantor in **Copenhagen**, applied, and was hired; a moving truck brought the family to Denmark around 1934, when Milan was about six. At home the parents spoke Hungarian to each other and German to the children, and the boys grew up speaking Danish.

Jewish life before the war [12:00–36:00]

They rented a modern apartment near the water; every morning **King Christian X** rode past on horseback. Milan describes a full Orthodox home: Shabbat with challah, gefilte fish, cholent and zemiroth; new clothes for the holidays; his father leading prayers through all of Yom Kippur; kapparot; a sukkah in the yard. He attended the Jewish community school (seven grades, taught in Danish, with a non-Jewish principal), played soccer at the Jewish sports club, and took piano lessons. His father worked constantly on his voice, gave voice lessons and loved opera. The family was not well off, renting a summer place by the beach. Before the war they met no antisemitism: “I felt at home ... I still do.”

Occupation, 1940–43 [39:00–47:00]

On the morning of 9 April 1940 he watched German planes fly over. His father was once taken in for questioning after being overheard talking about music, and released that evening; otherwise, until 1943

“the Germans didn't bother us.” Milan was studying at a business college when he saw an underground bombing across the street.

The escape, October 1943 [48:00–57:00]

On the night of the round-up the Germans came to the building with a truck. His father had the family hide silently in the bedroom while the Germans knocked, and someone told them the Goldbergers were away in the country. The next morning Milan slipped out through the cellar to check the street was clear, and the family fled to the countryside, where he and a brother stayed for some days with a **priest** who knew his father. Friends paid the fisherman, as his father had no money. At night, near the airport, they hid in the bushes until signalled, boarded a small fishing boat and pretended to fish while a German plane passed overhead, crossing to **Sweden**.

Refuge in Sweden, 1943–45 [57:00–1:04:00]

In **Gothenburg** the Jewish community found his father a cantor's post and an apartment. His brothers went to school; Milan was put to work, apparently for a furrier (the captions say “farrier”). He recalls no problems with Swedes or Swedish Jews.

After the war [1:04:00–1:11:00]

The family returned to its Copenhagen apartment. In 1946 his father took a better position in **Montreal** and brought the family over; Milan went instead to the **Ner Israel yeshiva in Baltimore** (1946–51), arriving with almost no English.

Marriage, family and work [1:11:00–1:16:00]

In 1949 he met **Shulamit (Sue) Lebovics** on the beach at Rockaway; they married in 1950 and had their first child in Baltimore, then settled in the Bronx; they had thirteen children. He worked as an oil-burner mechanic, about ten years in the fur trade (mink coats), in plastic slipcovers, cutting diamonds, and managing apartment houses in Harlem. For decades he did not return to Denmark; later he visited often.

Reflections [1:16:00–1:27:00]

He says he never dwelt on the war and was busy raising his family; asked whether surviving was luck, fate or a miracle, he answers “everything,” and says the Shoah did not shake his faith, though the murder of children is “hard to explain.” He made **aliyah in 1987** to help his ageing parents in Jerusalem, and at 88 still drove people to the airport. Of the Danes, he feels he owes them his life “in a way”, still speaks Danish, and “can't wait to go back.”

Photographs [1:28:00–end]

He shows his parents' wedding picture, his father as cantor in the Copenhagen synagogue, his class at the Jewish school, the four brothers together in New York, and family pictures.

Full transcript

00:00:00 Good

00:00:11 morning.

00:00:23 Milan.

00:00:32 Hi.

00:00:37 Good morning.

00:00:47 Where and when were you born?

00:00:50 When and where?

00:00:51 Yes. I was born in Vukovar. Yugoslavia.

00:00:54 When?

00:00:55 In 1928.

00:00:57 Okay. Where is Vukovar?

00:00:59 It's very close to the Hungarian border.

00:01:02 It's a.

00:01:04 But. I think it's called Croatia today.

00:01:07 Croatia. It's close to the Hungarian.

00:01:10 it was Hungarian oriented?

00:01:13 This I wouldn't know.

00:01:15 You were born there.

00:01:16 I was just born there. I was maybe there two years.

00:01:19 Did you visit it ever since?

00:01:21 I've never been there.

00:01:22 You've never been there since. No.

00:01:23 So. I want you to begin with the background of the family.

00:01:27 We'll begin with your father and his family as much as you know.

00:01:31 What was your father's name?

00:01:33 My father's name was Eugene Jacob Goldberger.

00:01:38 Where was he born? Do you know?

00:01:39 He was born in Bratislava.

00:01:43 In Bratislava. Slovakia.

00:01:44 I think it was Czechslovakia.

00:01:46 Slovakia. Do you know who his parents were?

00:01:51 No. They were all- I never seen them.

00:01:55 But you know their names perhaps? Your grandparents?

00:01:57 He had so many brothers but.

00:02:00 Did you know something about your.

00:02:02 I never know them. I think it was all they were gone by the time I was born.

00:02:06 No one know brother or sister of your father you never know? Your uncle?

00:02:09 Not really. No.

00:02:10 And do you know anything about your grandparents from your father's side?

00:02:15 Father's side. no.

00:02:16 Not their name.

00:02:17 Actually. he was born when his father was 65.

00:02:22 but it was his second marriage.

00:02:24 I think the first one must had died.

00:02:26 You don't know his name. of your grandfather?

00:02:29 My grandfather. my name is Menashe bin Jacob and he was Jacob bin Menashe.
00:02:39 It went back and forth.
00:02:40 Okay. Do you know what he did in Bratislava?
00:02:43 Think they were Hazzan Name.
00:02:46 Hazzan name?
00:02:47 Yeah.
00:02:47 So. so your father came from a very Orthodox family?
00:02:51 Yeah. and Hazzan's family.
00:02:53 He was also Hazzan?
00:02:54 Yeah.
00:02:55 That was his profession?
00:02:55 That was his profession.
00:02:56 Or he did it voluntarily?
00:02:59 Was his profession.
00:03:00 He was a Hazzan.
00:03:01 That's how we came to be Vukovar.
00:03:03 that was his first job as a Hazzan.
00:03:05 So he came to live in a big school in Vukovar and Okay.
00:03:10 But two years later he went to Czechoslovakia.
00:03:13 He was a Hazzan there.
00:03:15 Why did you not go to Czechoslovakia?
00:03:16 It's a good question. I think my.
00:03:21 In Bratislava?
00:03:23 Yeah. in that neighborhood.
00:03:25 In Slovakia?
00:03:26 Yeah.
00:03:26 Okay. Do you know if anybody from. like your grandfather.
00:03:32 no your father actually or his brothers anybody served in the first world war?
00:03:39 Took part?.
00:03:40 I wouldn't know anything about his brothers or sisters basically.
00:03:45 Or he himself? Did your father serve in the.
00:03:48 No. he.
00:03:49 Take part in first world war?
00:03:51 No no. I think it was before he got married so he
00:03:55 was about 91 years certainly I think so.
00:04:00 But a religious people.
00:04:01 So he went to Yeshiva in Slovakia?
00:04:05 I think. Yeah.
00:04:07 Okay. Anything else you know about the background of your father's family? Something?
00:04:13 I wouldn't know because it was long before.
00:04:17 He's the only one who came to Denmark from his side?
00:04:22 Basically. yeah.
00:04:23 You had no contact with.

00:04:25 More of my mother's.
00:04:27 We'll get to your mother's aside in a second.
00:04:28 But from your father's side.
00:04:30 He's the only one who got to Denmark.
00:04:33 Yeah. that's right.
00:04:34 There was no contact.
00:04:35 I think they were all- but Hitler took them all I think.
00:04:39 They all perished in the Holocaust?
00:04:40 I think so.
00:04:41 Okay. okay.
00:04:43 So. tell us please about your mother and her family. Okay. what was her name?
00:04:47 So. my mother was Hannah.
00:04:49 Her maiden name?
00:04:50 But we called her Hellen.
00:04:53 She was a Seamstress.
00:04:55 Okay. Her maiden name was?
00:04:57 Berkovitz.
00:04:58 Where was she born?
00:05:00 That was in also Czechoslovakia.
00:05:03 Actually. It was a town called Sennett.
00:05:07 Sennett in Czechoslovakia?
00:05:10 Yeah.
00:05:10 Okay. Do you know anything about her parents?.
00:05:13 Her parents?
00:05:15 Yeah.
00:05:15 Yeah. they were also.
00:05:19 What were their names do you know?
00:05:21 Your grandparents from your mother's side you said maybe Menashe also.
00:05:25 Could be? No?
00:05:27 No. That was to my father's side.
00:05:29 Do you know what your.
00:05:30 Her parents Bokovich I can
00:05:38 remember but I can't recall all of them.
00:05:48 Okay. you never met them either?.
00:05:50 I met my grandparents from her side.
00:05:55 You did meet?
00:05:55 I met.
00:05:56 Okay.
00:05:56 Actually we moved to Montreal after the war.
00:06:05 So they survived the war?
00:06:07 Yeah they survived.
00:06:08 But they were also in Denmark?
00:06:11 They were not.

00:06:12 Where were they?
00:06:13 They once came to visit us.
00:06:14 Her sister came to visit.
00:06:16 So. let's take it step-by-step.
00:06:18 Your mother had brothers and sisters that you knew?
00:06:21 Yeah some I knew yeah.
00:06:23 So. tell us about those that you knew their names if you know.
00:06:26 The Gábor Berkovitz.
00:06:29 He was a Hazzan also
00:06:31 In Sennett?
00:06:32 In Sennett. but when he got married I guess somewhere there.
00:06:37 Then when my father went to Montreal.
00:06:41 he got him to Montreal also.
00:06:43 From where? From Czechoslovakia?
00:06:45 Yeah.
00:06:46 So. they survived the war in Czechoslovakia?
00:06:48 They must survived.
00:06:50 Also your grandparents survived the war? Yeah.
00:06:52 Okay. But in Czechoslovakia not in Denmark?
00:06:57 No no nobody. they were not.
00:06:58 But you know how they survived?
00:07:01 They were hiding. they were camps.
00:07:04 Think they were hiding.
00:07:05 Okay. So. there was one brother Gabo?
00:07:09 Yeah.
00:07:10 Who else do you remember from you mother's side?
00:07:11 Some girls some girls Rosie.
00:07:14 The is few girls but right now they lived
00:07:20 in Israel even not far from Tel Aviv.
00:07:26 Okay. Your mother grew up in Sennett?
00:07:28 Yeah.
00:07:29 Okay. She was Seamstress there in Sennett?
00:07:34 She went to a bigger town but maybe in Bratislava somewhere.
00:07:41 Where did she meet your father?.
00:07:43 That's how she met my father.
00:07:44 In Bratislava. Okay. So. do you know what year they got married?
00:07:48 They got married two years before I was born I guess it's.
00:07:51 In 1926?
00:07:52 Something like that.
00:07:53 Okay. How many children were you?
00:07:56 You were four.
00:07:58 We were four boys.
00:07:59 You're the oldest?

00:08:00 I am the eldest.

00:08:01 Okay. so you're the oldest born 1928?

00:08:04 Yeah.

00:08:04 Tell us about your brothers.

00:08:07 My brother.

00:08:08 After you.

00:08:09 comes Leo. the professor.

00:08:12 When was he born?

00:08:13 He was also born in Vukovar.

00:08:16 But what year?

00:08:17 A year later. year and a half later.

00:08:19 Okay. and after Leo?

00:08:21 Then we went away and we went back to Czechoslovakia and then

00:08:29 somehow in 35 around 35 he felt that something is happening.

00:08:38 In Europe.

00:08:39 In Europe.

00:08:40 Your father felt? But your other two brothers were born afterwards?

00:08:46 Afterwards. I Gustav he's a lawyer in Washington.

00:08:52 He was born in Czechoslovakia still.

00:08:57 What year do you remember?

00:08:58 1935 or something? Before?

00:09:02 Before that.

00:09:03 Then. he is he was he was looking for a job another job.

00:09:07 He saw an add in Kobenhavn some newspaper.

00:09:13 They wanted a Hazzan.

00:09:14 So. he went there to apply or he wrote them to apply.

00:09:19 They liked what they had.

00:09:26 Then they brought a moving track

00:09:29 to Czechoslovakia and they brought them to Denmark. Kobenhavn.

00:09:32 This is in 1935?

00:09:34 Roughly.

00:09:35 You were around what?

00:09:37 Seven when you moved to Kobenhavn?

00:09:41 Six.

00:09:41 Okay. Before we talk about your life and Kobenhavn and then

00:09:45 just to complete the fourth brother was born already in Kobenhavn.

00:09:49 Yeah.

00:09:50 What was his name?

00:09:51 Eric.

00:09:51 Eric.

00:09:52 His last name is a Danish name. Khaim I think.

00:09:56 Okay. Do you have any memories of your life in you Yugoslavia.

00:10:00 Czechoslovakia Bratislava. that area?

00:10:04 Do you have any memories?
00:10:06 Did you go to school?
00:10:07 Over there it was- I don't think so because I was trying too much.
00:10:14 I don't know. Not really.
00:10:17 You don't recall Kindergarten or.
00:10:19 That was later in Kobenhavn.
00:10:21 I remember being in the Kindergarten.
00:10:23 So you must have arrived before '35.
00:10:26 Fourty/thirty four may.
00:10:28 Because by that time you were already school age.
00:10:32 I can't remember.
00:10:34 I was in Kindergarten.
00:10:35 But any memories of Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia your life there?
00:10:39 What language did you speak at home?
00:10:42 I couldn't say.
00:10:44 My mother spoke German and her language.
00:10:47 Slovakian?
00:10:50 But I.
00:10:51 Your father. what did he speak?
00:10:53 Well. I think they spoke German too.
00:10:56 German or Yiddish?
00:10:58 Between themselves they spoke Hungarian.
00:10:59 Hungarian. because he came from Yugoslavia
00:11:01 the Hungarian side or Slovakia was also influenced of the.
00:11:06 Basically Hungarian.
00:11:07 It was the empire.
00:11:09 the Austro Hungarian empire those days.
00:11:11 That's what they say.
00:11:12 Okay. But what did they speak with you?
00:11:17 What was your mother tongue?
00:11:19 Well. in Denmark I spoke Danish.
00:11:23 Danish.
00:11:24 But they spoke German.
00:11:26 My mother spoke German to us.
00:11:27 So you spoke German?
00:11:28 So I could speak that also.
00:11:30 German. No Yiddish?
00:11:31 But Yiddish. I mean. this is.
00:11:33 more or less. it's a combination of Yiddish-German.
00:11:36 Did they know other languages?
00:11:39 My father knew Hungarian. He spoke Hungarian to each other.
00:11:43 Slovak maybe?
00:11:44 Yeah. They must have known that.

00:11:46 Did they know also French or English?

00:11:48 No. English?

00:11:50 My father had been in Montreal for 20 years. He speaks English now.

00:11:53 Okay. this is now. But when you were a child it was?

00:11:56 As a child. I wouldn't know really.

00:11:58 Okay. So. when you were a kid.

00:12:01 they moved to Denmark because your father got a position as a Hazzan in Kobenhavn.

00:12:08 The main community of course.

00:12:11 Exactly.

00:12:12 So. you moved to Kobenhavn and that's where your memories. more or less. begin.

00:12:17 Basically. yes.

00:12:18 Okay. I want to begin with Jewish life in your home because it was an orthodox.

00:12:25 That's an orthodox family.

00:12:26 So. I want your memories.

00:12:28 First of all. of course. the Cape Kosher.

00:12:30 Shabbat Shabbos.

00:12:31 So. I want you to describe how was Shabbos.

00:12:34 Your mother worked. You said she was?

00:12:37 She did some sewing at home.

00:12:40 Also in Kobenhavn?

00:12:42 For peer or her friends.

00:12:43 Also in Kobenhavn?

00:12:44 Wedding gowns and stuff. She was very good at it.

00:12:47 In Kobenhavn as well?

00:12:49 In Kobenhavn also.

00:12:49 Okay. Where did you live in Kobenhavn?

00:12:52 Where?

00:12:56 In a city in Kobenhavn that arrived very close to the shore.

00:12:59 Close to the shore. The community gave you an apartment or you had to rent or you bought?

00:13:06 No. we had to rent an apartment.

00:13:07 It was a rented apartment?

00:13:09 Yeah. It was all rented apartment.

00:13:10 Do you remember it? Was it a large apartment?

00:13:12 Yeah. It was a rather pretty good.

00:13:14 Modern. convenient.

00:13:15 Modern. yeah.

00:13:16 Okay. Did she have any help at all?

00:13:19 In fact. the Danish king I saw him.

00:13:21 We'll talk about it in a minute.

00:13:23 Driving over us everyday.

00:13:24 Okay. You're talking about Christian the 10th?

00:13:27 That's right.

00:13:28 We'll talk about it in a second. We'll get to that.

00:13:30 I just want to concentrate first about your family and Jewish life.

00:13:34 Did your mother have any help at her home?

00:13:38 Did you have a maid or someone to clean the house?

00:13:43 That we had.

00:13:44 Goyish?

00:13:46 Yeah. usually.

00:13:47 Did they live with you or just came?

00:13:50 No. They came in the morning.

00:13:52 Okay. So tell us about Shabbos.

00:13:55 How did they do Shabbos.

00:13:57 Your father would go every day to shul because he was a Hazzan.

00:14:01 So. every day. he was in shul.

00:14:03 Of course. to Shabbat.

00:14:04 Did the women go to shul as well?

00:14:07 Some did. yeah.

00:14:08 Your mother?

00:14:11 No. she was busy with the family.

00:14:15 I don't think you'd see her too often. Maybe Yontiv.

00:14:19 Yontiv. So what were the preparation for Shishi Shabbat?

00:14:22 You have to get ready.

00:14:24 What? Did she cook special thing?

00:14:27 She did all the cooking like whatever the people eat on Shabbat.

00:14:33 Okay. But you know Jews all over the world eat different things in Shabbat.

00:14:38 I'm not sure. There are chicken and chicken soup.

00:14:41 Did they have like the gefilte fish and things like that was also traditional?

00:14:46 Yes. exactly.

00:14:47 Cholent and all that. Did they bake challos?

00:14:50 They bake challos also.

00:14:51 Also for Shabbat?

00:14:52 Yeah.

00:14:52 Okay. So there must have been candle lighting. kiddush. everything?

00:14:57 They got it.

00:14:58 Were there Zmiros?

00:14:59 Also. certainly.

00:15:00 Yeah? You used to sing around the table?

00:15:03 Yeah.

00:15:03 Okay. Your memories from the holidays.

00:15:07 The holidays?

00:15:08 Yes. Let's begin with Rosh Hashanah.

00:15:10 Whatever everybody do.

00:15:12 Did they wear special things.

00:15:15 clothes for Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur?

00:15:18 Yeah. People usually bought new suits in Yontiv. yeah.

00:15:22 In East Europe at least and also even in North Africa.
00:15:27 Yom Kippur they used to wear white.
00:15:29 Everything was white in Yom Kippur.
00:15:31 Some do and some don't.
00:15:32 Your father?
00:15:35 My father probably had a white hat on instead of a black one.
00:15:41 Hat of the cantor.
00:15:42 Yeah.
00:15:43 Yeah. okay. Everybody fast during Yom Kippur?
00:15:47 Yeah. I mean. it's a very religious synagogue.
00:15:51 But there was not too many Shabbat Shabbos people. Limited.
00:15:57 Really? Most of the community was not religious in Copenhagen?
00:16:03 Not really. I don't think so.
00:16:04 Traditional. I suppose.
00:16:05 It's getting worse and worse.
00:16:06 Yeah. But I'm talking when you were a kid.
00:16:08 I mean. I didn't know that much.
00:16:16 People worked.
00:16:17 So traditional.
00:16:17 The young people. they sat on shul all day long.
00:16:21 Did you have the cust-?
00:16:22 My father knew how to say all these davening all through.
00:16:27 We don't have no two hour. what do you call that?
00:16:34 He was a professional.
00:16:36 He led the prayer.
00:16:38 Yeah. I know. But he have two hours or three hours vacation.
00:16:44 What do you call that? They go away for a while.
00:16:47 Intermission.
00:16:47 We went chant through whole of the davening through the whole day without stopping
00:16:54 Do they have the custom like they did in East Europe and they still do it in Israel.
00:16:58 really religious with the Kappores with the chicken?
00:17:01 Yes. they did that too.
00:17:03 They did that in Denmark?
00:17:04 Yeah.
00:17:04 Okay.
00:17:05 That's regular religious as usual.
00:17:08 What do you remember of Sukkots?
00:17:10 Sukkots. same thing.
00:17:11 We had a sukkah in our backyard.
00:17:14 Not only in the synagogue.
00:17:16 each family had one.
00:17:17 They had in shul and they had at home.
00:17:19 So yeah. We had.

00:17:20 Not everybody did, but religious people usually did.

00:17:24 Did have sukkahs.

00:17:26 They used to eat or sleep or it's too cold in Europe to sleep in the sukkah?

00:17:31 Yeah, but we ate there all the time.

00:17:34 Okay.

00:17:35 Yes, sleeping wasn't 100 percent. Sometimes we did.

00:17:39 It's cold.

00:17:40 Yeah.

00:17:41 What about Simchat Torah?

00:17:44 They gave candy in shul like they do everywhere I believe.

00:17:49 Hanukkah, do you remember?

00:17:52 Hanukkah is also like any Hanukkah.

00:17:55 We light the candles and we have parties.

00:17:58 Did you play with dreidels?

00:17:59 Dreidels, yes.

00:18:01 There's a lot of them.

00:18:02 Okay.

00:18:03 If you were religious, you would do the usual like everybody else does.

00:18:06 Yeah, but you know there are differences between

00:18:08 different Jewish communities in traditions and all kinds.

00:18:12 Not the same food always.

00:18:14 Not the same customs.

00:18:15 They might considered us as Ashkenazi.

00:18:19 The Ashkenazis.

00:18:21 Yekkish.

00:18:22 Yekkish, yeah.

00:18:23 What about Tu BiShvat?

00:18:25 Is that something you celebrated in Denmark?

00:18:27 Tu BiShvat also.

00:18:30 They celebrated all these.

00:18:33 Okay. What do you remember of Purim?

00:18:37 Purim, the same thing we do here.

00:18:40 You got into customs?

00:18:41 Also.

00:18:42 Yeah, and Mishloach manot, and things like that, everything.

00:18:48 Yeah.

00:18:48 Okay. Tell us more in detail about Pesach because

00:18:52 that's like the holiday, the Jewish holiday.

00:18:56 So tell us about Pesach.

00:18:57 What do you remember about the preparations for Pesach?

00:19:01 We had to clean the house.

00:19:03 Clean the house or turn it over?

00:19:06 Well, basically, it's like any Jewish home.

00:19:10 Okay. what about mats?

00:19:11 They bought. they made. everyone made?

00:19:15 They got it from somewhere or they make it.

00:19:21 Round or square?

00:19:23 The hand mats. it's usually round and the other ones sometimes square.

00:19:30 When it comes from a machine. it comes square.

00:19:31 So everything was organized through the community?

00:19:34 Yeah. exactly.

00:19:35 Do you remember the Seder?

00:19:37 Tell us a little bit your memories of the Seder.

00:19:40 It was only your family or you had relatives.

00:19:44 friends coming for the Seder?

00:19:45 We had. but I can't remember how many we had.

00:19:48 but it's the same.

00:19:51 You actually didn't have family in Kobenhavn.

00:19:54 Basically. no.

00:19:55 It was only your nuclear family.

00:19:57 Except once I think of my mother's sister came.

00:20:02 What was her name?

00:20:03 I think it was Rosie.

00:20:06 They came to live in Denmark?

00:20:07 No. She came over to visit I believe.

00:20:10 She didn't stay. She didn't remain?

00:20:12 Didn't stay. no.

00:20:13 Okay. So you were the only.

00:20:14 I think they went to Israel afterwards I believe.

00:20:17 I see. So what do you remember from the Seder?

00:20:19 You used to read the Haggadah in L'chaim in lashon kodesh. in Hebrew?

00:20:24 In the way the goddess says.

00:20:28 Or in translation to German?

00:20:30 No. We read it in the way it's in the suits.

00:20:31 Everything in lashon kodesh.

00:20:33 Yeah. exactly.

00:20:34 Okay. Did you have two sdarim?

00:20:36 Like the custom in chutz la aretz?

00:20:42 Yeah.

00:20:42 Okay.

00:20:43 All these was changed over here.

00:20:44 Yeah. when you came to Israel. No two Seders.

00:20:48 That's right.

00:20:48 Okay.

00:20:49 That's why we are not leaving.

00:20:52 You say it's nicer to have one?

00:20:55 It's a lot of work for the women.
00:20:57 It's easier.
00:20:58 It's easier than two. Just imagine for the women to prepare two.
00:21:02 Okay. so we continue with Lag BaOmer. Shovuos.
00:21:07 There's no difference.
00:21:09 It's a religious shul.
00:21:12 Okay.
00:21:13 At that time. there was a rabbi Fridiger.
00:21:18 They caught him and they took him to Germany.
00:21:20 but he came back.
00:21:21 But he could still come back.
00:21:24 But he was a real religious hero.
00:21:27 Long beard and all.
00:21:28 He was the chief rabbi?
00:21:30 At that time. yes.
00:21:31 When did Malkiel become?
00:21:33 Afterwards.
00:21:36 It was after the war or before the war?
00:21:39 Also before and after. he came back.
00:21:43 So. in 45. I have a picture where they made like a papaya fest in the shul.
00:21:52 In the shul. yeah.
00:21:53 He was there with [inaudible]. Another car. there were two cars on them.
00:21:58 They'd switch every week.
00:21:59 Is that the first that the king came?
00:22:01 There was some kind of an event that the king.
00:22:03 Yeah. but he was 100 years old.
00:22:06 it's a very old shul.
00:22:08 Yes. yes. Okay.
00:22:09 They came to visit.
00:22:10 I want to ask you about the Jewish.
00:22:13 before the war. the Jewish community.
00:22:16 As you said. your family was very involved because your father had his role.
00:22:22 Did they have other?
00:22:24 I wasn't involved.
00:22:25 Yeah. you were a kid.
00:22:26 I was a kid.
00:22:26 But besides the shul.
00:22:29 did they have other institute?
00:22:32 Like was there a Jewish club where they met or?
00:22:36 I recall I had something...
00:22:38 So there were sports organization like kwok. Were you involved?
00:22:43 I was involved..
00:22:44 What did you do in the kwok?

00:22:45 I played football, soccer as you called it. Yeah.
00:22:48 Soccer in the kwok.
00:22:49 But this is before the war even?
00:22:51 From school, we learned.
00:22:53 we went to a place where there was soccer.
00:22:56 There was one shul right in Kobenhavn?
00:23:00 There was one big shul.
00:23:01 The other one, years ago.
00:23:03 they were probably together.
00:23:04 but then the more religious people they went together on prayers.
00:23:08 Right. The Ashkenazis, the Haredin.
00:23:11 There were more Haredin, right?
00:23:13 Yeah.
00:23:13 Hasidic, Haredin, right? They had their own.
00:23:16 They're called Mahasida Hadas.
00:23:18 It was in a different neighborhood.
00:23:20 They still have it, but they don't have a minyan and Shabbos.
00:23:22 And was there any connection between the two communities or they're?
00:23:25 I mean, they knew each other.
00:23:26 but they weren't friends.
00:23:28 There was not a boycott or anything?
00:23:31 No, I don't know.
00:23:33 My father was supposedly he belongs to the big shul.
00:23:35 So, he couldn't go there the others place all.
00:23:39 but they were all friendly though to him.
00:23:41 Okay. So, the community had.
00:23:44 But he had to be a diplomat.
00:23:45 So, your synagogue was
00:23:48 the big synagogue and most of the community went to your synagogue.
00:23:52 Yeah. Yeah.
00:23:52 Of course, they were the minority.
00:23:54 Did they have a mikveh? Did they have-?
00:23:56 They had a mikveh.
00:23:58 We had a mikveh also in a different place.
00:24:02 Okay. And there was a pray there.
00:24:05 was there a shiva? When you go to school.
00:24:09 We went to the Jewish shul school.
00:24:11 Okay. You went to a Jewish school.
00:24:12 And there they had a Jewish class and bible whatever.
00:24:20 And did you also study Hebrew?
00:24:22 No, that we didn't have.
00:24:24 You didn't have. So, the school was for boys and girls together or?
00:24:28 No. The girl had another school somewhere else.

00:24:31 So. it was separated.
00:24:32 But today it has changed.
00:24:34 Now. there it's together somewhere else.
00:24:35 Okay. But the language that you studied in school.
00:24:38 and you went to school until the war. until you escaped?
00:24:43 Yeah. but I finished this seventh grade.
00:24:47 Yeah. The Jewish school was seven or also high school?
00:24:51 How many grades were there in the Jewish school?
00:24:54 I think it's seven.
00:24:55 Seven.
00:24:55 Yeah.
00:24:56 And then you would go to a high school?
00:24:57 I went to a business school later.
00:25:01 Okay. we'll talk about that.
00:25:02 But let's talk about your Jewish school.
00:25:04 The Jewish school was seven years I believe.
00:25:06 And what language?
00:25:08 In Danish.
00:25:09 In Danish?
00:25:10 Yeah. yeah.
00:25:10 The teachers were all Jews or they're also-?
00:25:13 No. It's a mix.
00:25:14 They're mix. But the students were all Jews. of course?
00:25:17 The guy in the Bible.
00:25:18 he was the valkyrie from the shul.
00:25:21 He was there also.
00:25:22 But all the students obviously were Jews of course.
00:25:25 And all your friends were from school?
00:25:27 But the main guy.
00:25:32 the principal. he wasn't Jewish.
00:25:34 He wasn't Jewish?
00:25:35 No.
00:25:36 Okay.
00:25:36 His name was Piola.
00:25:38 But he was a nice guy otherwise.
00:25:40 But you studied all the secular subjects as well.
00:25:44 Yeah. Yeah.
00:25:44 Okay. What kind of a student were you?
00:25:48 I wasn't too bright. I don't think.
00:25:51 You didn't like going to school?
00:25:53 Yeah. I guess I did.
00:25:54 but in math and stuff.
00:25:57 I wasn't too bright.

00:25:59 I don't think, but then I went to business school afterwards.

00:26:02 Okay. So, we'll talk about later.

00:26:03 But I never finished it because then, I had to run away.

00:26:06 Okay we'll talk about that. Okay. So, your friends.

00:26:10 were all Jews or did you have also Danish?

00:26:13 In school, all people are Jewish.

00:26:14 No. But in the neighborhood, in the street.

00:26:16 The neighborhood was anybody.

00:26:18 Did you have a gentile friends there?

00:26:20 Yeah basically. I guess I had few friends from school basically I believe.

00:26:29 Okay. What did you do besides Akoah.

00:26:31 What did you do after school?

00:26:33 What kind of games did you play as a kid?

00:26:35 After school, we're looking for girls. I don't know.

00:26:37 That's when you were a teenager.

00:26:39 but when you were young.

00:26:41 Games? Do you remember games you played?

00:26:44 I must have.

00:26:45 Well, I must have gone out when I'm a kid with other school guys.

00:26:50 and we had a bike.

00:26:52 And so, we drove around or something.

00:26:54 You drove around. Okay. I want to talk about the atmosphere at your home.

00:27:01 First of all, your parents came in the 30's.

00:27:04 There were two kinds of Jewish Danes.

00:27:07 There were the old Yekkes who came centuries before.

00:27:11 They came from, Russian mostly.

00:27:13 Also Russians who came after the revolution.

00:27:17 But even before the Russians.

00:27:19 there were the Yekkes, the German Jews who came centuries before.

00:27:23 And you came actually as immigrants in the 30's.

00:27:27 That's right.

00:27:28 Could you tell the difference within

00:27:30 the Jewish community and the attitude from those who were-?

00:27:34 I don't think. I was a kid, still a kid.

00:27:36 You weren't aware of it?

00:27:37 No. I wasn't aware of all these things.

00:27:38 You think your father was aware of the.

00:27:40 He must have been. Yeah.

00:27:42 Did they look down at the Jewish immigrant?

00:27:45 Yeah, they do that.

00:27:47 They called them old student or something like that?

00:27:49 Exactly. So, you know more than I do.

00:27:51 No, I'm asking if you felt it. If you felt.

00:27:53 Me. I don't feel it.
00:27:55 I don't. I was a kid.
00:27:56 I mean I didn't.
00:27:58 You know sometimes kids can feel it between the kids.
00:28:00 I'm not. I wasn't developed the way people are today.
00:28:03 I understand.
00:28:03 The boys. they know much more than I.
00:28:06 You weren't aware. But sometimes kids are aware of it even within
00:28:10 kids because some kids come from more aristocratic families.
00:28:16 But personally. I wasn't so deep in
00:28:19 things like my brother were probably especially the other.
00:28:24 Okay. Your home in Kobenhavn.
00:28:26 Before. we're talking still before the war.
00:28:29 You had a radio.
00:28:30 you had a phonograph.
00:28:32 Yeah.
00:28:33 Piano?
00:28:34 Piano.
00:28:35 Who played the piano?
00:28:36 My father needed it.
00:28:38 and I took piano lessons from some lady.
00:28:43 widow lady or something.
00:28:45 What kind of music did they listen to?
00:28:47 It was classical. all classical stuff.
00:28:49 Classical. And Hazzanut as well?
00:28:51 No. not then.
00:28:51 Not Hazzanut? Because your father was a Hazzan.
00:28:53 Yeah. I know. but that's because she had all kinds of pupils.
00:28:57 He was teaching also?
00:28:59 And twice a year.
00:29:02 she made a party for everybody.
00:29:03 They all came together. everybody had to show off.
00:29:06 It was murder.
00:29:07 I was scared stiff.
00:29:09 Your father was teaching Hazzanut as well?
00:29:12 He was. yeah. People liked him.
00:29:14 everybody liked him and some who were interested. they came.
00:29:19 He gave them voice lessons and stuff because my father worked on his voice all the time.
00:29:25 He had a very good voice.
00:29:26 Yeah. And he kept improving all the time.
00:29:30 He knew people from the opera.
00:29:33 That's what I wanted to ask. Did he go to the opera?
00:29:35 He. I didn't.

00:29:37 I'm talking about my father was all in all of the big singers.
00:29:44 Today. I mean I like singing also. I mean.
00:29:48 but I never got into it but.
00:29:51 Did they read newspapers as well?
00:29:53 Yeah.
00:29:54 In Danish?
00:29:55 Yeah. In Danish.
00:29:56 In Danish. Yeah. Okay.
00:29:57 And so, there're some Jews to be paid also.
00:30:00 They had some. I didn't but.
00:30:03 You mentioned the opera.
00:30:05 Did they also go out like to the-?
00:30:07 My father anything with a good singer. he would go.
00:30:11 But he was a piano-ling and all these guys.
00:30:13 Yeah. I'm sure he went.
00:30:15 I didn't. but I'm just saying.
00:30:17 Did they go to the theater. to the cinema?
00:30:20 Did you go as a kid to the cinema?
00:30:21 Yeah. once in a while. we went to the movies. yeah.
00:30:23 What did you see? Do you remember those days?
00:30:25 Are you kidding?
00:30:28 The old [inaudible] Those old pictures.
00:30:31 Okay. yeah. Okay.
00:30:32 But we didn't have money to go. I mean. I didn't.
00:30:37 What was your economic situation before the war?
00:30:40 The family situation.
00:30:41 Well. before I wouldn't know.
00:30:44 My father. he got salary.
00:30:47 but I don't think it was the best. That's why.
00:30:50 You weren't rich to put it bluntly?
00:30:53 No. That's why when he came to America.
00:30:55 he came as a student.
00:30:57 So. he used to ask his friends in Kobenhavn.
00:31:00 "What if I get a better job?
00:31:02 Should I stay?"
00:31:03 You know he was one of those people.
00:31:06 And they'll say. "You're crazy if you'll stay."
00:31:09 If you got some double salary or something.
00:31:12 you must be. Okay.
00:31:15 Was there such a thing as a vacation?
00:31:18 Yeah. In summer. we went on a summer house.
00:31:21 You had a summer house?
00:31:22 Near the beach. I mean. he didn't have it.

00:31:23 He rented as summer place all these different places.
00:31:27 In Denmark?
00:31:28 Near the beach. Yeah.
00:31:29 Okay. Not abroad or anything?
00:31:32 No. No.
00:31:33 They left Europe in early 1930s.
00:31:38 I assume. your parents?
00:31:39 Yeah.
00:31:40 Your family. your father.
00:31:43 his whole family was in Europe.
00:31:45 Your mother. part of the family I understand was still in Europe.
00:31:48 Yeah.
00:31:49 Were they still in contact until the war?
00:31:53 I think they did. but I wouldn't know.
00:31:55 It was not in my mind those things.
00:31:58 They never went for a visit?
00:32:00 Visit to Denmark?
00:32:02 Since they came to Kobenhavn.
00:32:03 they never visited their family in Bratislava or in Sinich or-?
00:32:08 I don't think so if you ask me. but I'm not sure.
00:32:11 And no one came to visit you except that aunt that you mentioned?
00:32:15 Well. maybe some other Yudelach came when I was [inaudible] bachelors. old bachelors.
00:32:25 But they spoke Hungarian.
00:32:27 so they were busy with my parents.
00:32:31 What kind of life in home was there?
00:32:39 How were you brought up?
00:32:41 Was there discipline?
00:32:43 What was the atmosphere at home when you grew up as a kid?
00:32:46 There was disciplne?
00:32:48 No. It's regular.
00:32:50 Nothing extraordinary.
00:32:52 We could do about this what we wanted.
00:32:55 But we knew that we were Jews. and so basically.
00:33:02 Yeah. Okay. So. if we're talking about that you knew that you were Jews.
00:33:07 Yeah.
00:33:08 The surrounding was all Danish.
00:33:11 Yeah.
00:33:12 So. before the war.
00:33:15 what was the relationship with the Danes. with the Gentiles?
00:33:19 We had no problems whatsoever.
00:33:21 No anti-semitism?
00:33:22 No.
00:33:22 You never encountered before the war any anti-semitism?

00:33:26 Before. no.
00:33:27 No one called you dirty Jew?
00:33:29 No.
00:33:31 Your father is a Jewish cantor.
00:33:35 Did he have Danish friends? Your father for instance.
00:33:38 He must have. yes. He had.
00:33:40 Because when we ran away. yes. he had friends.
00:33:43 They helped you?
00:33:44 Yeah.
00:33:44 Yeah. we'll get to that. But the Danes are Christians?
00:33:50 Yeah.
00:33:51 Did you know?
00:33:52 Protestants. I mean.
00:33:53 Right. Protestants. Did you know about their habits.
00:33:58 their customs. their holidays like Christmas or Easter?
00:34:04 Well. that too. you see that.
00:34:07 But did you visit friends at their homes?
00:34:10 Or. you were quite separated?
00:34:13 We were not far on purpose.
00:34:16 Yes.
00:34:17 I had my Jewish friends but that was not because I hated anybody or anything.
00:34:23 Yeah. So there were good relations.
00:34:25 Yes. good relations. Yes.
00:34:26 You even mention that you-
00:34:27 Even neighbors and stuff. we had never made problems with anybody.
00:34:30 Okay. You had mentioned the king.
00:34:33 Yes.
00:34:34 Christian the 10th.
00:34:36 Yes. I saw him every morning.
00:34:38 So. he was very-
00:34:39 He was passing by that apartment that we lived in.
00:34:41 The apartment buildings that we lived in.
00:34:44 Yes. How was he passing?
00:34:44 He was right next to a.
00:34:46 not beach. water very far at the camp I know.
00:34:53 Okay.
00:34:55 What do you call them? I don't know.
00:34:58 And he was a harbor or something?
00:35:00 Like in the winter with all the ice.
00:35:03 Freeze?
00:35:03 We went through the hole.
00:35:05 You went ice skating?
00:35:07 That also. but you can go through it. It's shorter to go there.

00:35:10 You can walk on it?

00:35:11 Yeah. It was shorter to go to school.

00:35:14 And so the king he rode on a horse or what?

00:35:17 On a horse. He was passing by

00:35:20 So, he was very popular.

00:35:22 Yeah, he was.

00:35:24 And did you ever speak-

00:35:25 In fact after the war.

00:35:26 my father sent them a letter and he got an answer from the royal camp.

00:35:31 Okay, we'll get to that.

00:35:33 I have that. I still have that.

00:35:35 Okay. So, what else do you remember life before the war?

00:35:42 Your childhood.

00:35:47 Any special events that you remember in the family?

00:35:53 Event. I don't know.

00:35:55 Comfortable life, right?

00:35:57 Yes.

00:35:58 Very secure.

00:35:59 Even as a Jewish community you felt Danish?

00:36:02 Yes.

00:36:03 As well Jewish but Danish?

00:36:05 I mean, I spoke the language so.

00:36:08 But you felt at home?

00:36:09 I felt at home, yes.

00:36:11 In Kobenhavn.

00:36:12 Yes. I still do.

00:36:15 Okay.

00:36:16 I still speak it and I can't wait to go back.

00:36:20 Yeah.

00:36:21 That's a sickness of mind.

00:36:22 I can't help it.

00:36:24 So let's talk about the political events in the '30s, okay?

00:36:29 So in 1933, you were about five years old

00:36:34 and I suspect that that's the time that you moved to Denmark perhaps.

00:36:41 Thirty-three, 34.

00:36:43 Okay.

00:36:44 From what you're saying, I assume.

00:36:45 because you said you went to kindergarten.

00:36:48 Yes.

00:36:49 So you must have been five years old when you went to kindergarten, right?

00:36:52 Yes.

00:36:53 Something like that. Well, I'm mentioning that year.

00:36:57 because that's the year that Hitler and the Nazis came to power in Germany.

00:37:03 So you were a kid.
00:37:04 you probably weren't aware.
00:37:06 I assume that you mentioned that perhaps your father was aware of what was going on.
00:37:11 Yes, he must have.
00:37:11 Okay. But during '39.
00:37:15 first of all, during the '30s.
00:37:18 as you were growing up. some Jews-
00:37:21 In the '40s.
00:37:23 I'm talking before that.
00:37:25 I'm talking in the '30s. late '30s.
00:37:27 when things became rough for German Jews.
00:37:30 Yeah.
00:37:31 Some of them tried to flee to Denmark.
00:37:34 Denmark didn't exactly opened its gates.
00:37:38 No.
00:37:38 In those days. There was a big issue. a big debate.
00:37:40 about taking in those refugees or not.
00:37:44 Yes, I know.
00:37:44 But do you remember Jewish refugees coming before the war to Kobenhavn?
00:37:50 I don't know.
00:37:51 You don't remember. In your school and children?
00:37:55 My mind wasn't.
00:37:56 You weren't aware?
00:37:57 Yeah.
00:37:58 Were you aware at all what was going on
00:38:01 with Nazi Germany that they were persecuting the Jews there?
00:38:05 Were you aware of those politics?
00:38:07 We're talking before the war.
00:38:08 Not really.
00:38:09 Did they talk about it at home?
00:38:11 No. I don't recall anymore.
00:38:13 Okay. first of September.
00:38:16 the Germans invade Poland and formally.
00:38:22 second World War begins.
00:38:24 We'll talk about Denmark in a second.
00:38:26 Yes.
00:38:26 Do you recall hearing about the World War breaking out?
00:38:32 Do you remember people talking about it?
00:38:34 I don't recall.
00:38:35 You don't recall?
00:38:35 No.
00:38:36 Because by then you were like 11.
00:38:38 Something like 11 years old.

00:38:41 but you were concentrated on your own child.
00:38:44 Yes. exactly.
00:38:45 I understand. but I'm just-
00:38:47 I was not.
00:38:47 Wondering if you heard in the news-
00:38:48 Not developed the way other people are today.
00:38:50 Do you remember if they heard Hitler's speeches like on the radio?
00:38:55 No. I have heard them now.
00:38:58 So. I'm not sure whether I heard it then.
00:39:00 Do you remember your parents talking about what's going on?
00:39:03 I don't recall.
00:39:05 But they felt at ease because they felt safe in Denmark in those days?
00:39:09 More or less. I think so.
00:39:11 Okay. So. '39 the war began.
00:39:14 April 40. the Germans conquer Denmark.
00:39:19 This is quite a surprise because Denmark wanted to be neutral.
00:39:23 I was not a sleeper so in the morning I got up early.
00:39:27 I play games by the window and stuff.
00:39:31 All of a sudden. you see a bunch of planes coming and so I knew that.
00:39:35 Were they bombing?
00:39:36 Not that day.
00:39:38 Okay. So how did-
00:39:40 That's when-
00:39:41 They took over.
00:39:42 They took over the place.
00:39:42 Okay. So what's the next thing?
00:39:44 And then king gave up right away it seems.
00:39:46 Okay. So once the Germans are in.
00:39:49 do you see German's troops marching into Kobenhavn?
00:39:53 No. but the soldiers were all over more or less. Yes.
00:39:56 Okay. Did you have any contact with the German soldiers?
00:39:59 Me. no. My father.
00:40:01 they took him in once.
00:40:03 The Germans?
00:40:04 He was talking music with some other Jew so they took him in. I don't know.
00:40:11 They must have thought they were talking politics or something.
00:40:14 But then in the evening.
00:40:17 they come out of the police station.
00:40:19 Okay. Once the Germans-
00:40:22 But the first until '43 the Jews didn't bother us.
00:40:26 You mean the Germans?
00:40:27 The Germans didn't bother us.
00:40:30 Okay. That's a very special thing about Denmark.

00:40:32 Yes.

00:40:33 The Germans conquered.

00:40:35 They needed us.

00:40:36 Okay.

00:40:36 For the butter and cheese.

00:40:37 We'll talk about it in a minute.

00:40:39 The Germans conquered other countries.

00:40:41 Yes.

00:40:42 And then after Denmark and.

00:40:44 Norway they conquered Belgium and Holland

00:40:47 Yes.

00:40:47 And in there they were persecuting the Jews until they sent them to the camps.

00:40:54 In Denmark. it was a totally different situation. Very unique-

00:40:58 Yes.

00:40:58 Because there was a kind of an agreement-

00:41:00 Yes.

00:41:00 Between the Danish government.

00:41:03 Yes.

00:41:03 And the Germans that they don't touch the Jews.

00:41:07 That the Danes protected the Jews and there was a kind of

00:41:10 a status quo we would call it that they didn't rescue.

00:41:14 They had. as you said.

00:41:15 we know they needed Denmark

00:41:17 Yes.

00:41:17 They needed supplies.

00:41:19 Yes.

00:41:19 Food. Mainly food supplies from Denmark.

00:41:22 So there is no any measures taken by the Germans against the Jews?

00:41:28 You don't feel anything? There's not a curfew?

00:41:31 Nothing for the Jews. We had nothing.

00:41:35 Your life goes on as usual?

00:41:37 As usual.

00:41:37 You can go to school?

00:41:39 Yes.

00:41:39 The Jewish school still is-

00:41:43 Yes.

00:41:44 You can go to synagogue?

00:41:46 Yes.

00:41:46 You can work.

00:41:48 There's no limitations.

00:41:50 Yes.

00:41:50 You weren't even put with the Jewish star. Nothing is-

00:41:55 Nothing.

00:41:55 You're just like the Danes.

00:41:56 Yes.

00:41:57 Right? Besides that incidents when they took your father.

00:42:02 were there other incidents?

00:42:04 Yeah. like there there was few attacks.

00:42:06 Were you afraid of the Germans?

00:42:08 I don't think so.

00:42:09 When you saw as a kid a German soldier in the street.

00:42:13 did it impress you or were you frightened for him?

00:42:17 Because sometimes we hear from some kids that they were impressed by the Germans.

00:42:20 No.

00:42:22 Were you frightened of them?

00:42:24 I was not. no.

00:42:26 You weren't?

00:42:27 No.

00:42:27 Nothing? Okay. So life went on as usual.

00:42:31 but let's talk about what's going on in the world.

00:42:35 Germany. as I said.

00:42:36 conquered already a few counts.

00:42:38 A world war is going on.

00:42:40 '41 begins the war.

00:42:43 middle of '41 begins the war between Germany and the Russians.

00:42:48 Yeah.

00:42:48 Okay? Forty-two. we have fights in North Africa. okay?

00:42:54 Do you have still the radio.

00:42:57 you still hear the news.

00:42:58 do you know what's going on in this war?

00:42:59 They had it. but it wasn't.

00:43:03 Were your parents aware?

00:43:05 I wasn't.

00:43:05 You were a kid? You're with the girls?

00:43:08 That's all.

00:43:08 You were [inaudible] with the foot. with the soccer?

00:43:12 To make homework and that's all.

00:43:14 Right. But at home. they didn't talk about what was going on in the war?

00:43:17 No.

00:43:18 You don't remember?

00:43:19 I don't.

00:43:20 You think they were aware of what was going on?

00:43:22 I'm sure the parents are aware of it but not us.

00:43:25 But they felt safe?

00:43:28 Yeah.

00:43:28 Okay. The reason I'm asking is because by '43.

00:43:34 most of the Jews were already in Europe rounded in ghettos.
00:43:39 There were concentration camps.
00:43:41 Yeah. I know.
00:43:41 They were in extermination camps.
00:43:43 Yeah.
00:43:43 Auschwitz. Treblinka. Majdanek. all of these were working full blow.
00:43:48 You had gas chambers.
00:43:52 Did you hear anything that they're killing the Jews in Europe?
00:43:56 Or are there any rumors that we're only talking about it?
00:43:59 There must have been. but I don't recall.
00:44:01 Okay. I talked about Jewish immigrants coming to Denmark.
00:44:08 Yeah.
00:44:08 There was a special group of immigrants that were Zionists use Hasbara. okay?
00:44:16 Or. Zionist Hasbara in Danish agricultural farms.
00:44:20 Yeah. I know. But they weren't interested.
00:44:22 After. but were still there in Denmark during the war.
00:44:25 They were.
00:44:27 They were from the Hahalutz. okay?
00:44:31 Did your family host them?
00:44:33 Did the youngsters came to your home?
00:44:35 I don't think.
00:44:35 Or your father had any contact with the-?
00:44:37 I don't think so.
00:44:38 These are people of a Halutz. [inaudible].
00:44:39 I know.
00:44:40 They were in Denmark.
00:44:43 And Shabbos. the Melfius.
00:44:48 Yeah?
00:44:48 The two Melfius when they were young.
00:44:50 they got us together and I think they like the Shabbos.
00:44:55 So they spoke about it.
00:45:00 my mind was not in this.
00:45:03 Okay. There was also a Nazi Danish.
00:45:07 local Danish Nazi party.
00:45:09 Yeah.
00:45:10 In Denmark.
00:45:11 In fact. there was an office near where we lived.
00:45:14 Did you feel anything?
00:45:15 Did they do anything against you? What would they do?
00:45:18 Were they marching or did they have any activities against the Jews?
00:45:25 There were but nothing that I really saw.
00:45:28 You didn't encounter?
00:45:29 No. no.

00:45:30 No one hit you or beat you or anything of that sort?

00:45:35 Okay. So until 1943.

00:45:40 everything is more or less.

00:45:42 And do you recall of anyone thought of leaving Denmark before '43?

00:45:49 Oh. that. I wouldn't know either.

00:45:51 And either. okay.

00:45:54 So before we talk about '43.

00:45:58 we have to talk about the Danish underground.

00:46:01 I think there was.

00:46:03 Of course. there was a big Danish underground.

00:46:06 They were very active.

00:46:07 Do you know. you didn't know then probably.

00:46:11 but do you know today?

00:46:12 Did you have any friends or relatives of your family that were part of the underground?

00:46:17 Family. no.

00:46:18 That took part in the underground?

00:46:20 Friends. not family.

00:46:22 But you know it now or you know it also as a kid?

00:46:25 Did you know about the underground as a kid? Let's see.

00:46:29 By '43. how old were you?

00:46:31 You were ready 15. right?

00:46:33 Already 15. yeah.

00:46:33 Did you know anything about the underground?

00:46:35 I told you. I wasn't developed at-

00:46:37 You weren't involved. I understand.

00:46:39 Not involved.

00:46:40 You weren't aware.

00:46:41 Yeah.

00:46:41 You weren't aware of the things.

00:46:42 but do you remember people talking about the underworld?

00:46:45 No. Now. I know.

00:46:49 I would say. yeah. But I'm not sure then.

00:46:52 That you were aware of it?

00:46:53 Yeah.

00:46:53 Of their activities? Okay. The beginning of '43.

00:46:58 there was the famous battle in Stalingrad.

00:47:01 Yeah.

00:47:02 It's a major battle because it's also one of

00:47:05 the most important turning point in

00:47:08 the war because the Germans are beginning to withdraw.

00:47:12 Yeah.

00:47:12 And the Russians are advancing.

00:47:15 and it gave in certain places.

00:47:20 some kind of optimism.
00:47:22 A little because it was in Denmark.
00:47:26 it gave the Danish underground also a lot of power.
00:47:31 They were becoming much more active.
00:47:35 And it annoyed the Germans very much.
00:47:40 I know. That I recall. yeah.
00:47:41 And that's why the Germans then.
00:47:43 when they were starting to withdraw and feeling.
00:47:45 they decide to deal with the Jews all of a sudden.
00:47:49 How did you hear about the change?
00:47:52 There was a plan to take the Jews.
00:47:55 And what do you remember?
00:47:58 How did you learn about this plan?
00:48:00 What happened once they decide that they're going to
00:48:03 gather the Jews and send them as well?
00:48:06 First of all. after school.
00:48:10 I went to this business college of the Brock's.
00:48:16 They're still around today.
00:48:19 It's a Danish non-Jewish?
00:48:21 Non-Jewish.
00:48:22 The general school of-
00:48:24 Yeah. For business college.
00:48:25 For business?
00:48:25 [inaudible]
00:48:28 What year did you go there?
00:48:29 During the war already you were studying there?
00:48:32 No. before '43.
00:48:34 Yeah.
00:48:34 Fort-two. that is.
00:48:37 So. I was standing in one of the offices.
00:48:41 across the street was a big forum.
00:48:44 Forum is a big house that the youth.
00:48:49 [inaudible] and you know that they have things like next to the business.
00:48:56 the bus station across the street and a big-
00:49:02 Big analma?
00:49:03 Big analma. such a place.
00:49:04 Yeah. All right.
00:49:05 So. I was standing in the office.
00:49:08 all of a sudden. we hear. bang!
00:49:10 And like the windows were going like this.
00:49:14 They were bombing?
00:49:15 They blew up.
00:49:16 It was the underground.

00:49:17 The underground blew up?
00:49:18 Yeah.
00:49:18 Okay.
00:49:19 And so, that's all I know.
00:49:20 But that, I've seen it by myself.
00:49:27 And what happened?
00:49:31 No. You got scared.
00:49:35 But that's the only thing basically.
00:49:37 And then, it was close through that October anyway.
00:49:40 Okay. So, let's talk about what happened in October.
00:49:43 You have to unwind.
00:49:43 As I said-
00:49:44 Oh, yeah. So the night.
00:49:46 they wanted to take everybody.
00:49:48 They had all their all addresses.
00:49:49 So, they came to the house in a big truck.
00:49:53 The Germans?
00:49:54 Yeah, the Germans, and they wanted to take us.
00:49:57 So my father looked out the window.
00:50:00 he told us to come to the bedroom.
00:50:02 and we hid, and they started knocking like crazy.
00:50:06 Where did you hide?
00:50:08 I know, in the apartment, in the bedroom.
00:50:12 You're were just enclosed in the bedroom?
00:50:14 Yeah.
00:50:14 Not in an attic?
00:50:15 No, no.
00:50:15 Or basement?
00:50:17 No.
00:50:17 Okay.
00:50:18 So we hid there.
00:50:20 and then and were very quiet.
00:50:22 We looked till eventually.
00:50:28 they left because their first night.
00:50:31 So, after that, my father asked me to go down.
00:50:35 You can go through the cellar and come to the other corner.
00:50:39 So I did that, see everything is clear.
00:50:42 and then we took off to the country.
00:50:45 Okay. Let me just explain one thing to people who will listen to the testimony.
00:50:52 We know today, I don't know if you are aware.
00:50:55 your father must have been aware because he was part of the community.
00:50:59 The plan was to take the Jews.
00:51:01 There was a military naval attache.

00:51:04 German. right?

00:51:06 Djokovitz. right?

00:51:07 So. he gave out.

00:51:08 Right. He gave the information to

00:51:11 the Danish head of socialist party who warned the Jews. the Jewish community.

00:51:16 So the Jewish community knew in advance.

00:51:20 Yeah.

00:51:20 Perhaps a few days before that this was the plan.

00:51:23 And then. I think the whole of Denmark got themselves to help the Jews to escape.

00:51:29 Yeah.

00:51:29 So. this is like the Jewish community. other Danish.

00:51:34 non-Jewish communities are helping the Jews to hide.

00:51:40 to escape. to get around.

00:51:42 Yeah. okay.

00:51:43 Did you know. as a teenager.

00:51:45 did you know about Djokovitz and the fact that he warned the Jews. the rabbi?

00:51:51 Then. I didn't know.

00:51:52 Today. you know it? But your father must have known it.

00:51:57 Yeah.

00:51:57 Because the chief rabbi gathered all-

00:51:59 The rabbis told us not to come to shore.

00:52:01 Right. The rabbi instructed all the Jews what was going on?

00:52:04 Yeah. Don't come to shore.

00:52:05 Okay. So the family.

00:52:06 this is your mother.

00:52:08 your father and four boys.

00:52:10 Yeah.

00:52:11 You all escaped through the cellar from the house?

00:52:15 At that night. no.

00:52:16 In the morning. after I went to check out.

00:52:20 Yeah.

00:52:22 I didn't understand how the Germans were looking for you.

00:52:26 and you were locked in and they didn't break in?

00:52:29 The first night they didn't do that.

00:52:31 They were just.

00:52:32 The next night they would have done it.

00:52:33 They would have broke in?

00:52:34 Yeah.

00:52:35 Okay. So you managed.

00:52:36 They asked. "Where are the Goldbergers?"

00:52:37 They told them I'm in the country or something like that.

00:52:40 So they didn't break in?

00:52:41 Yeah.

00:52:42 So, you had a chance that night after that to escape?

00:52:45 Yeah, that's what happened.

00:52:46 Okay. So how did you escape?

00:52:48 By foot, you took a car.

00:52:50 someone came to take you?

00:52:51 Even that, I don't remember.

00:52:53 We went to the country, usually.

00:52:55 there's the train that goes wherever we went.

00:52:58 You have mentioned that there were

00:53:00 Danish acquaintances of your father who helped you, who were they?

00:53:05 Actually, there's a Gala-

00:53:07 Yeah.

00:53:08 That I stayed, I think the two of us stayed by some Gala in the country.

00:53:13 Gala, you mean, priests?

00:53:14 A priest.

00:53:15 A Christian priest.

00:53:16 Zelbazakh, Yeah.

00:53:17 The Zelbazakh, Yeah.

00:53:18 Okay. So your father knew them?

00:53:23 Yeah. He must have told them to take us in for a few days.

00:53:27 You hid there in the country side.

00:53:30 Yeah.

00:53:30 You remember what was it called?

00:53:32 It was a village, is a farm?

00:53:33 No, it's in the country, a country house.

00:53:36 But I don't remember.

00:53:37 When you were there, you hid actually?

00:53:39 You didn't go out? You were hiding?

00:53:41 That, I don't remember either.

00:53:43 I remember eating something.

00:53:46 Do you remember what you-?

00:53:47 I forgot how many days we were there.

00:53:49 Yeah. Did you?

00:53:50 Later on, it became you know the-

00:53:54 You think he paid them?

00:53:56 Or they did it voluntarily?

00:53:58 No, I don't think. In fact, my father didn't have money for the fisherman.

00:54:01 That's what I want to ask.

00:54:02 I think somebody paid for him. Friends of his.

00:54:05 When you left your home.

00:54:07 you just locked the door behind you?

00:54:10 Did you take things with you?

00:54:11 I think that the maidress took over the pay apartment.

00:54:16 Did you take anything from home?
00:54:19 My mother took certain thing.
00:54:21 I don't think I'd take anything.
00:54:23 My mother took certain thing.
00:54:25 Clothes and things like that?
00:54:27 Very little. Very little.
00:54:29 Because we had to walk into the border.
00:54:30 Did you understand?
00:54:32 For the boat was outside. we didn't come over in.
00:54:34 Okay. But when you left home. you fled actually?
00:54:38 Yeah.
00:54:39 Can you remember what you felt. were you afraid?
00:54:43 Did you feel this as a matter of life or death?
00:54:47 I must have been.
00:54:47 You felt that?
00:54:48 I think so.
00:54:50 Can you recall what was the feeling?
00:54:52 Directly. no.
00:54:53 No. Okay.
00:54:54 But I must have been scared.
00:54:55 but I did certain things.
00:54:57 Yeah. Okay. So you stay in the village a few days and then someone organizes.
00:55:03 But that took few days also because later on they stopped looking I believe.
00:55:10 Eventually-
00:55:12 You get on the boat.
00:55:13 We got into a boat.
00:55:14 On the fishermen.
00:55:15 Yeah.
00:55:16 How was this done. at night?
00:55:17 Well. it was at night.
00:55:18 Okay.
00:55:19 It was near the airport.
00:55:21 We were hiding and being in the bushes until somebody gave us an okay.
00:55:27 they will the cross the street and go this way towards the boat.
00:55:32 In the boat. it was only your family or other families?
00:55:35 I just learned that Zilver.
00:55:37 who lives where you were yesterday.
00:55:39 he was on that boat.
00:55:42 Also.
00:55:42 I wrote him an email.
00:55:43 he never answered me.
00:55:45 I don't recall seeing him.
00:55:47 There were a few families.

00:55:49 Jewish families on the boat?
00:55:50 It must have been. Yeah.
00:55:51 How many of the fishermen. 1. 2?
00:55:53 Do you remember the fisherman who were taking you?
00:55:56 The guy? No. I don't remember.
00:55:58 Okay. So this is at night.
00:56:00 It was a small boat. they're downstairs.
00:56:03 And then. boom. boom boom. boom. boom. boom.
00:56:05 and you have to show that I'm fishing.
00:56:08 So how long?
00:56:09 There was the German plane on top there. but think we're fishing.
00:56:12 Okay. So how long did you sail?
00:56:16 Roughly. I don't recall that either.
00:56:19 but it must have been a couple of hours.
00:56:21 There's places we go with less.
00:56:24 Rough?
00:56:25 No. Where it's.
00:56:26 Where you can get closer to the shore.
00:56:27 Closer. yeah.
00:56:28 But the closer you are.
00:56:29 the more that there are more Germans there. So you try to go little further.
00:56:32 The water was rough those days?
00:56:35 Because I think maybe.
00:56:41 It wasn't as that like when I came to America.
00:56:43 Yeah. Because one or two or three people did drown.
00:56:46 We do know of very few people that did drown.
00:56:49 that the boat turned over or things like that.
00:56:52 Not that night.
00:56:54 Most of the Jews were safe.
00:56:56 So. what do you remember.
00:56:58 where did you land?
00:57:00 I don't even remember where I landed. I don't really recall.
00:57:04 You don't remember where you landed. Okay.
00:57:07 But we've lived in Goteborg.
00:57:09 Okay. So when you landed.
00:57:10 It must have been close to that.
00:57:12 It was already in the morning?
00:57:14 Not too early morning.
00:57:17 Yeah. Do you your member who helps you. who receives you?
00:57:20 Did you go to a camp?
00:57:23 Let's explain.
00:57:30 Sweden was neutral and Sweden was willing to accept the refugees.
00:57:35 all that escaped which is you are lucky because you

00:57:38 couldn't escape to many other countries in those days.
00:57:42 I see these guys today.
00:57:44 those Muslims. I can't understand them.
00:57:47 They come to a strange country.
00:57:50 you are guest and you get out and they tell you get out.
00:57:54 Let's go back to Europe.
00:57:56 I can't believe this.
00:57:57 Let's go back to your memories as a kid. as a refugee.
00:58:02 Do you remember. were you in a camp or anything?
00:58:05 No. I don't remember that.
00:58:06 Because they did set a camp in the beginning for
00:58:10 a Jewish refugees in Malmo and places like that.
00:58:15 So you came to Goteborg. and who?
00:58:20 My father. they arranged all these things.
00:58:22 I know he got a job as a Khazn and-
00:58:25 In Goteborg?
00:58:28 He got an apartment.
00:58:30 Okay.
00:58:30 Normal apartment. That's all I remember.
00:58:31 Okay. So the Jewish community. the Swede-
00:58:36 Without them. I wouldn't know.
00:58:37 The Swedes. everyone is helping the Jewish refugees.
00:58:41 and your father has an important profession.
00:58:44 he's a khazan so he got work as a khazan.
00:58:47 What about you. you go to school there?
00:58:50 He made me work.
00:58:54 He got me a job as a farrier.
00:58:56 With Jews?
00:59:01 I don't think they were Jews.
00:59:02 I don't remember.
00:59:04 So you don't go to school anymore?
00:59:05 No.
00:59:06 You go to work.
00:59:07 My brothers went to school.
00:59:09 It was a Swedish school?
00:59:11 Harvey Ruben went to school.
00:59:12 It was a Swedish school or it was a special Danish for the refugees?
00:59:16 I think-
00:59:16 Because I think they established a Danish special school for some of you.
00:59:21 Maybe it was that I'm not sure.
00:59:23 Okay. So you went to work with the farrier?
00:59:26 Yeah.
00:59:27 The whole time you worked there till you left?

00:59:30 I think so.

00:59:31 Okay. The Swedish people.

00:59:34 I mean. first of all the Jewish community there.

00:59:37 you became part of it?

00:59:39 You went to shul there and they were.

00:59:42 how did they treat you?

00:59:43 No problem for us.

00:59:45 You didn't feel any difference.

00:59:47 You had friends from the Jewish community there. you?

00:59:50 I had certain friends.

00:59:55 What about the non-Jews. the Swede?

00:59:59 How did they treat all these.

01:00:02 They never had any problems.

01:00:03 No problems?

01:00:04 I had no problems.

01:00:05 No antisemitism either in Sweden?

01:00:08 So. you could live quite relatively comfortable.

01:00:13 normal life even as refugees under these circumstances?

01:00:17 Because we behaved.

01:00:19 Yeah. Okay. Because you were lucky also. Yeah.

01:00:23 If I had been a Muslim.

01:00:24 I would have been a Danish citizen.

01:00:26 I was not even a citizen then.

01:00:28 Your parents didn't have a Danish citizen.

01:00:31 [inaudible] You got to be there 15 years or something.

01:00:34 Yeah.

01:00:34 But if you're Muslim.

01:00:35 you get it after four or five years. Nuts.

01:00:37 Okay. So let's get back to Sweden.

01:00:40 What else do you remember during those?

01:00:42 You were there a year and a half. two years.

01:00:45 Yeah. Almost two.

01:00:47 The war ended May.

01:00:51 '45. so until then.

01:00:52 Do you remember anything else?

01:00:54 I don't remember how I came back. That's strange.

01:00:56 Okay. I want to ask you another question about the Swedish. about the Swede.

01:01:04 During. I think it was on '44. first of all.

01:01:10 did you know about Raoul Wallenberg.

01:01:12 who went to Hungary and helped save the Jews.

01:01:15 I don't know then but now I know. for years I know.

01:01:16 Now. you know. They didn't talk about him then?

01:01:18 About Raoul Wallenberg. who went to Hungary to save Jews.

01:01:22 Not then. That means that I don't know.
01:01:25 He disappeared then with Russian.
01:01:28 My mind was only on girls. I can't help it.
01:01:30 The Swedish girls?
01:01:34 I'm sick.
01:01:35 Okay. Did you go to in Sweden?
01:01:39 Was there a Yeshiva also there in Goteborg?
01:01:42 Did you go to-?
01:01:44 Real Yeshiva. no.
01:01:45 No. Jewish studies or anything of that sort?
01:01:48 Okay. The other thing I was going to ask you was about Bernadotte.
01:01:52 Prince Bernadotte. who was also in mission of the Swedish Red Cross.
01:01:58 He had a deal with Himmler to get some prisoners out of Ravensbruck.
01:02:03 Where they ride buses and something.
01:02:04 Ride buses. Exactly. Exactly. You know about it today.
01:02:08 Yeah.
01:02:09 But you weren't aware of it then.
01:02:11 There were some deal with Himmler where they would get some mainly women.
01:02:19 prisoners. Jews. and mainly from Ravensbruck not only.
01:02:22 but who they've managed to bring but you didn't.
01:02:26 Mrs. Jakobsen [inaudible] She had a school for girls.
01:02:30 Who came from the camps. they came from-
01:02:33 Well. look. Jakobsen herself.
01:02:35 I don't think she was.
01:02:38 I don't know.
01:02:39 But there were a Jewish survivors.
01:02:43 Holocaust survivors. who came to Sweden a
01:02:46 lot after the war as well. but you weren't there.
01:02:49 But even before the war ended.
01:02:51 they were in that '44.
01:02:53 When you are in Sweden.
01:02:54 you are more aware of what's going on in
01:02:57 this war after you're a refugee. You weren't aware?
01:03:00 No. I don't think so.
01:03:00 Because by 1944. the Russians were really advancing.
01:03:04 The Allies were advancing.
01:03:06 In '44. we have June. '44.
01:03:09 At that time. I don't think I knew all of these things.
01:03:11 D-Day. they were already in.
01:03:13 I wasn't into politics. I wasn't into anything.
01:03:16 Okay. So. do you remember hearing about the war ending in May. '45?
01:03:23 I must have. but today I can't remember.
01:03:27 They didn't celebrate?

01:03:30 I don't remember that.

01:03:32 No celebrations or?

01:03:34 Because a lot of places they went out celebrating the victory.

01:03:39 the defeat of the Nazis.

01:03:41 I don't know.

01:03:42 You don't remember any celebrations in Goteborg when the war ended?

01:03:48 I can't remember.

01:03:48 When people were celebrating the fact that they are free.

01:03:53 Ask Leo.

01:03:54 Okay.

01:04:08 So, the war as we said has ended. 1945.

01:04:14 You immediately returned to Kobenhavn after the war?

01:04:19 Those things I don't even remember but I must have.

01:04:22 Your whole family?

01:04:24 I don't even know how.

01:04:25 You don't remember coming back to Kobenhavn?

01:04:28 No.

01:04:28 You came to the same apartment.

01:04:31 Yeah.

01:04:32 Or they had to look for a new apartment?

01:04:33 No. I have the same apartment.

01:04:35 Okay.

01:04:35 I know we had to probably get in the back.

01:04:39 Someone took it over.

01:04:40 They must have paid something at least.

01:04:43 gave her the piano or something.

01:04:46 Okay.

01:04:47 I was told.

01:04:48 So, you go back to Denmark.

01:04:50 and the Danes we have to say really it's one of

01:04:56 the exceptional cases where a whole nation helped save the Jews.

01:05:02 because it's even the police.

01:05:03 everyone was involved in saving and we do have to mention that not

01:05:08 many but a few of the Danes who were caught were sent to Theresienstadt.

01:05:14 We didn't mention that but did you know anybody from your relatives?

01:05:19 The Rabi was caught.

01:05:20 Who?.

01:05:21 The Rabi [inaudible] was caught.

01:05:24 Yeah.

01:05:24 But who else? I don't know.

01:05:26 You didn't have other relatives who were caught there?

01:05:29 No, really no.

01:05:29 At the time, did you know that there were Danish Jews in Theresienstadt?

01:05:34 Were you aware of that that those who were caught were sent?
01:05:37 If I was aware they were there. I don't recall.
01:05:40 Okay. We have to say that even those who were in Theresienstadt.
01:05:45 most of them survived because the Danish government even made a point.
01:05:52 I'm taking care of those who were in Theresienstadt which is unusual.
01:05:56 really very very exceptional.
01:05:58 Yeah.
01:05:58 I think the Danish people really accepted the Jews as part of them.
01:06:03 that's how I interpret it.
01:06:05 Yeah, you're right.
01:06:06 Because otherwise, how can you understand that?
01:06:08 So, when you got back.
01:06:11 first of all I want to ask.
01:06:13 you were already like 15.16.
01:06:14 and you said that you felt still as a kid.
01:06:18 You were more interested in your own life.
01:06:21 you weren't aware of what was going on in the war.
01:06:24 when did you really understand what had happened?
01:06:28 That there was a second world war that millions of people were killed.
01:06:34 that millions of Jews perished.
01:06:37 were murdered by the Nazis.
01:06:38 in gas chambers and fires?
01:06:41 That day I wouldn't know.
01:06:42 No, I was not saying day.
01:06:44 what I mean is when you got back to Denmark after the war.
01:06:49 were you are already more aware of what had happened?
01:06:55 I can't remember how my mind was when we went back.
01:06:59 Okay. Did you meet some of the survivors who came from the camps?
01:07:04 From the camps?
01:07:06 Like from Theresienstadt?
01:07:08 No, because it was not an immediate family anything I would know.
01:07:12 You don't recall meeting or talking to someone
01:07:14 that came back from Theresienstadt or other camps.
01:07:18 other Jewish refugees. I mean survivors who came to Denmark after the war?
01:07:24 Do you remember any Jews that survived the Holocaust in camps.
01:07:29 in hiding and came to Denmark?
01:07:32 I think it was.
01:07:33 because I'm among the first ones who left for America.
01:07:40 So, you were just like a year after you came?
01:07:43 Yeah.
01:07:43 Okay.
01:07:44 Closely.
01:07:45 Okay. That's another interesting question.

01:07:49 a lot of Jews after the war.

01:07:52 I'm talking about Europe where they were in camps. they were in hiding.

01:07:57 I'm talking about those who survived the Holocaust and decided that after the war.

01:08:02 they do not want to remain in Europe.

01:08:05 Some of them couldn't even go back in Poland to where they were born or lived.

01:08:09 and some just didn't want to go back.

01:08:12 A lot of them wanted to come to Palestine and it's Israel.

01:08:16 others wanted to emigrate to the United States.

01:08:19 to other countries. Australia.

01:08:21 South Africa. it wasn't so easy.

01:08:23 Yeah.

01:08:24 I think a lot of the Danish Jews who came back

01:08:28 to Denmark wanted to remain in Denmark because for them.

01:08:32 Denmark was a good place. they saved them.

01:08:34 But your family decided to leave after a year?

01:08:41 My father. actually when he left.

01:08:44 I don't think that he meant to stay.

01:08:49 In Denmark?

01:08:50 But it just happened.

01:08:51 Because he had a good offer. that's the reason?

01:08:55 That's what I see.

01:08:56 Okay. So he left.

01:08:58 the whole family left?

01:09:00 They'd to ran. He brought the rest over but it took maybe a year before.

01:09:05 Okay. So. you live in 46.

01:09:07 I went to Yeshiva.

01:09:09 Where?

01:09:10 Baltimore. I thought you know.

01:09:12 Okay. So. you go to the States?

01:09:14 Yeah. and my father.

01:09:17 He went to Montreal?

01:09:18 Yeah.

01:09:19 Okay.

01:09:19 But it just happened. then I said [FOREIGN]

01:09:23 And your brothers went to Montreal.

01:09:26 Then slowly he got his wife and the other kids back. also I came.

01:09:33 All came to Montreal?

01:09:34 Yeah. they came to Montreal.

01:09:35 But you're the only one who went to Baltimore?

01:09:37 Yeah.

01:09:37 Okay. To Yeshiva?

01:09:39 Yeah.

01:09:39 How did they receive you there?

01:09:41 Did you know English?
01:09:44 I had papers for the place.
01:09:46 Did you know English when you came to the state?
01:09:47 I don't think I knew anything.
01:09:49 I don't know the year this year. I don't know English.
01:09:51 So, how did you manage there?
01:09:52 I went to Ulpan. I didn't go to Ulpan for heaven's sake.
01:09:56 That's why I thought I learn in Britain by itself. that doesn't go.
01:10:01 The studies in Baltimore.
01:10:02 what language was it?
01:10:04 Lesean kurkish?
01:10:06 It was in Kurdish. but now it's in English translated it into English.
01:10:11 The [inaudible] into English.
01:10:14 Were there other survivors there?
01:10:17 They come. One. Harry came later and a couple more of people.
01:10:22 Not only from Denmark or from other places in New York?
01:10:25 Also from other places too.
01:10:28 Have you been in L.A.
01:10:30 Yes.
01:10:31 There's a guy Friedman.
01:10:32 a billionaire. you didn't interview him?
01:10:36 No. we don't interview.
01:10:37 Rich people? What do you mean?
01:10:39 No. we interview rich people.
01:10:40 but in Israel not abroad.
01:10:42 Okay.
01:10:43 If he'll come to Israel we can interview him.
01:10:46 Now. say he must have come from other guy.
01:10:48 He came from somewhere.
01:10:49 Yes. but what I'm asking is.
01:10:51 did they speak about the war?
01:10:53 Did people talk about the war.
01:10:55 I mean the Second World War?
01:10:56 Like when you were in Yeshiva.
01:10:58 the guys who went through the war.
01:11:00 did they speak about it?
01:11:01 Do you recall talks about the war?
01:11:05 I don't think so.
01:11:07 Did you have contact with non-Jews in Baltimore?
01:11:11 No. where the Yesheva guys have us-
01:11:14 Only Yesheva? No contact with the Americans?
01:11:16 It was 80 or 100 kids in the school. I don't know.
01:11:19 But no contact with the Americans.

01:11:22 I'd rarely know.
01:11:23 How many years were you in Baltimore?
01:11:25 From '46 till '51.
01:11:29 Five years? Okay. In those years.
01:11:33 In between I went home for Yontiv.
01:11:36 To Montreal?
01:11:37 Yeah.
01:11:38 Okay.
01:11:39 And then '49. I looked for a girl or something.
01:11:45 I fell over this girl on the beach in Rockaway.
01:11:49 Okay. and then?
01:11:50 And then we got married in '50.
01:11:52 In 1950. and what's the full name of your wife?
01:11:55 And we still went back to Baltimore.
01:11:57 Okay. What's the name of-
01:11:58 We had the first baby there. that's it.
01:12:00 Okay. So. first tell us the name of your wife. full name.
01:12:05 Schull Amit.
01:12:07 And what was your maiden name?
01:12:08 I call her Schullamy.
01:12:09 I mean Schull Amit.
01:12:10 Okay. What was your maiden name?
01:12:12 Lebovitz.
01:12:14 Okay. She was born in the States?
01:12:16 Yeah.
01:12:17 Okay.
01:12:19 But she speaks Hungarian because she went to visit before the war.
01:12:23 and then they told her.
01:12:25 why don't you get back because the road voy is coming?
01:12:28 Okay.
01:12:29 So. she came back to America.
01:12:31 And your first child. was?
01:12:33 Was a girl.
01:12:35 Was a girl. what's her name?
01:12:36 *[name withheld]*. she has 15 kids.
01:12:41 she does know what to do.
01:12:42 Okay. tell us the rest of your children. who are they?
01:12:49 After *[name withheld]*. can you tell us?
01:12:53 *[name withheld]* is the next guy.
01:12:56 And then? Just tell us the names of your kids. that's okay.
01:13:00 I cant remember all of them in one shot.
01:13:03 Not even in order. it doesn't matter.
01:13:04 Just tell us their names.

01:13:05 [name withheld]. [name withheld]. [name withheld].
01:13:17 [name withheld]. [name withheld]. and then the.
01:13:22 Girls?
01:13:23 And then they got the girls. it's [name withheld]. and [name withheld].
01:13:26 and [name withheld]. and [name withheld]. [name withheld]. what else?
01:13:40 I don't know. We got to 13?
01:13:42 I don't remember.
01:13:43 So. what did you do after you finish?
01:13:48 You got married. you finished the Yeshiva.
01:13:49 what did you work in the States.
01:13:51 you remained in the States or left for Montreal?
01:13:54 I did a lot of work.
01:13:55 Where did you live in Baltimore?
01:13:58 For the first year in Baltimore.
01:14:00 but there I was learning.
01:14:02 And afterwards. when you had already a family?
01:14:04 Afterwards then we went back to New York in the Bronx.
01:14:06 In the Bronx?
01:14:07 Yeah. and I got a job in the oil burner business. a burner mechanic.
01:14:16 Shabbos was out. so it didn't work out.
01:14:19 I was
01:14:24 That shows?
01:14:29 Okay.
01:14:33 I did a lot of things.
01:14:36 I was in Ferio for 10 years.
01:14:42 Really?
01:14:43 Ladies' mink coats. I used to nail them.
01:14:47 And I was in plastics. plastic slipcovers.
01:14:53 Okay. Many jobs.
01:14:55 I was in the Diamonds. slicing Diamonds.
01:14:59 Okay. When you went to.
01:15:01 And I was managing apartment houses in Harlem.
01:15:04 Okay.
01:15:04 That's the end.
01:15:06 When you went to study in Baltimore.
01:15:09 the State of Israel was born.
01:15:13 48. I'm talking about Antwerp. do you remember that?
01:15:16 48. yeah.
01:15:18 Did they celebrate it there?
01:15:19 I don't recall that.
01:15:21 Were you active in the Jewish community?
01:15:23 No. I wasn't active.
01:15:27 No. and afterwards. were you active

01:15:30 in some kind of Zionist movement in the United States?

01:15:33 No. I don't know if I knew the language yet.

01:15:36 I don't recall when and how long it took.

01:15:38 After you immigrated to the states.

01:15:40 would you go back and visit Denmark. the Kobenhavn?

01:15:45 For first 50 years.

01:15:47 I didn't go anywhere. Much later.

01:15:49 You went back?

01:15:50 I start. yeah. I used to go with Harry.

01:15:52 the Rabbi Harry. because he still has two sisters there.

01:15:58 Did you have Danish friends or you didn't keep in touch?

01:16:01 Yeah. I have emailed.

01:16:03 certainly. a couple of guys.

01:16:04 Also non-Jews? Danish?

01:16:06 Non-Jews. Well. I meet sometimes people here. in Israel.

01:16:11 some Sheikhs or whatever and they'll send me letters. I answer back.

01:16:16 But that wasn't nothing special.

01:16:19 Okay. So. how much of what you went through. the war.

01:16:26 the times that the Germans were there.

01:16:28 the fact that you had to escape.

01:16:30 how much of it remained with you in the States?

01:16:33 Is it something that you just put aside.

01:16:35 you said this is part of childhood.

01:16:38 it happened in the past?

01:16:39 Oh. in the States?

01:16:39 Yeah. was it part of your life?

01:16:41 Is it something you thought about.

01:16:43 you had dreams about it?

01:16:45 Did you dream about your past in Sweden and being a refugee?

01:16:52 I don't think so because I was busy with making pianos.

01:16:56 I believe. with the kids.

01:16:58 And the whole subject of the Shoah. of the Holocaust.

01:17:03 was it something you read about.

01:17:04 you went to see movies.

01:17:06 is it something that you took interest in?

01:17:11 All right? Not on purpose.

01:17:14 Not on purpose.

01:17:15 You watch television. you see something.

01:17:18 When did you understand that you're actually a survivor?

01:17:24 And it's not as we say in Hebrew.

01:17:30 The Germans were there.

01:17:32 they could have sent you just as they sent millions of people who they murdered.

01:17:39 When did you understand that you're a survivor. actually?

01:17:43 Well that. my best history I know about.
01:17:49 I don't go into details.
01:17:51 Okay. But when you think about it today?
01:17:54 Today?
01:17:55 Yes. if you think retrospectively.
01:17:57 I mean. I should be thankful to.
01:18:00 That's what I want to ask you.
01:18:02 But I want to ask you. do you see.
01:18:03 It goes without saying.
01:18:04 Okay. Not necessarily. because I'll explain to you what I mean.
01:18:09 How do you see your rescue.
01:18:13 the fact that you're a survivor.
01:18:14 is it just by luck. destiny.
01:18:18 chance or do you see it as a miracle from God?
01:18:22 Everything.
01:18:23 Okay. So. I want to ask you a very delicate question about that.
01:18:26 You're a religious man. you're a believer.
01:18:30 and I want to ask about faith.
01:18:32 not about religion but faith. okay?
01:18:35 We know that there are Holocaust survivors who came from
01:18:40 very orthodox families and they survived
01:18:44 the Holocaust but something with their belief was undermined.
01:18:50 I don't have to even resonate the cliché.
01:18:54 where was God and things like that.
01:18:56 On the other hand. we know of Holocaust survivors who after the war
01:19:03 became even more religious and it strengthened their belief. their faith.
01:19:09 Yeah.
01:19:10 Did it have in any way.
01:19:12 any effect on your faith. the Shoah?
01:19:15 Did it undermine. did it strengthen or it had no effect on you?
01:19:19 I'm challenging you now.
01:19:22 Yeah. I know.
01:19:23 You don't have to answer it if you don't want to.
01:19:25 I don't know what to say.
01:19:26 What do you think? Or it had no effect. you think?
01:19:30 No. because to me everything is so.
01:19:33 But how do you explain? Can you explain what happened?
01:19:36 Children who were murdered?
01:19:38 That is hard to explain.
01:19:41 But for you. it's all.
01:19:44 Yes. it's hard to understand.
01:19:48 Okay. But it didn't undermine.
01:19:50 it didn't change anything?

01:19:52 No.

01:19:54 Okay. I want to mention two other things and you were in the States.

01:19:59 But in the early 50's in Israel.

01:20:09 there was a very harsh debate among the Israeli society about compensation money.

01:20:18 what we call from Germany.

01:20:21 Yeah.

01:20:22 Were you aware of this argument against. for.

01:20:26 I thought they got. everybody got.

01:20:32 Yes. but there was a big debate.

01:20:34 There were a lot of people that were against it.

01:20:36 Bergen was against it.

01:20:37 He thought. "We don't do deals with Satan."|

01:20:40 Because he doesn't need it.

01:20:41 No. not because of that.

01:20:43 Because he said. "We can't buy.

01:20:45 the Germans. they can't buy our blood with money.

01:20:49 Oh. that's what he meant.

01:20:51 That's what he said. "We don't deal with the Satan. okay?"

01:20:56 With the devil. for him.

01:20:57 But Ben Gurion was for it.

01:20:59 and a lot of the compensation money that the country received. they built the country.

01:21:05 But people were for and against.

01:21:07 but you weren't aware of it.

01:21:08 I didn't know that. no.

01:21:09 Okay. The other thing that I want to ask you.

01:21:11 you're still in the States.

01:21:13 early 60's. State of Israel caught Adolf Eichmann.

01:21:20 There was a famous. hear in Jerusalem.

01:21:22 was the famous trial of Eichmann.

01:21:25 Do you remember that?

01:21:27 I believe I did.

01:21:28 Did you watch anything?

01:21:30 Did you follow that?

01:21:32 Sort of. It's long time ago. I don't know.

01:21:36 Yeah. it was in the 60's because it was a big thing in Israel.

01:21:40 Yeah. I have seen.

01:21:43 recently I saw some.

01:21:44 It also signified a lot of change in

01:21:46 the attitude of Israeli society towards the Holocaust.

01:21:50 talking about the Holocaust and accepting survivors. and not judging.

01:21:54 It opened the whole issue more than before.

01:21:58 But you don't remember much of that?

01:22:01 Okay. Or the Nuremberg trials after the war.

01:22:04 you weren't aware of that?

01:22:05 I knew there was something, but.

01:22:07 Okay. So in 1987, you make aliyah.

01:22:14 What brought the change?

01:22:17 That's basically my parents.

01:22:19 My mother is getting forgetful and my father needed help.

01:22:23 He told me to come and help him.

01:22:25 So they made aliyah before?

01:22:26 Yeah, they were here before.

01:22:27 They came to Israel before from Montreal?

01:22:30 Yeah, they even before before.

01:22:33 They once came to.

01:22:38 years before they made aliyah.

01:22:40 Yeah.

01:22:40 After he retired.

01:22:42 Yeah, from Montreal?

01:22:43 Yeah. He went to and he bought

01:22:46 an apartment and he lived there for a couple of years and then he got homesick for us.

01:22:52 his kids, so he came back.

01:22:59 Later on, he came back to America.

01:23:06 He was a cousin in San Diego, in Los Angeles.

01:23:10 all over the place, where he went.

01:23:11 And then.

01:23:15 Yeah. He even lived with us in Long Beach.

01:23:19 Then all of a sudden, he went back to Israel.

01:23:21 So, you came in '87?

01:23:26 That's before. And then.

01:23:28 in the '87, he asked me to come and help him.

01:23:30 Okay. And you came to Jerusalem?

01:23:33 Yeah. Well, it been, yeah.

01:23:35 You still worked here or you were already retired?

01:23:37 No, I was still around 60.

01:23:39 my father says, "You're going to take care of this and that."

01:23:41 So, you met Aliya?

01:23:44 Yeah.

01:23:44 And some of your kids are here.

01:23:46 some of your kids are in the States?

01:23:48 Yeah, I got more there than here.

01:23:49 I see. Okay.

01:23:51 My girls are Hasidish, except for one.

01:23:54 Which Hasidut?

01:23:55 Vizhnitz.

01:23:56 Vizhnitz, okay.

01:23:57 So, they ain't going to come here.
01:23:59 but they come for like Burma.
01:24:00 they come only to visit.
01:24:02 Like Burma.
01:24:03 Yeah, every like Burma.
01:24:04 two and three girls come.
01:24:06 Are you also Hasidic today?
01:24:07 No. Do I like the-
01:24:10 But I don't know. Maybe you are associated.
01:24:12 He's Hasidic. Look at his spear and stuff but no.
01:24:17 Okay. So, since the '87, you're in Israel?.
01:24:20 Yeah.
01:24:20 And you visited Denmark?
01:24:23 That's where I make a living so I drop people to the airport.
01:24:26 Really?
01:24:27 I'm cheaper than a taxi.
01:24:29 but now the [inaudible] cab man took my business away.
01:24:35 You can take a [inaudible] for 16 Scotland.
01:24:39 go to the airport with a beautiful bus.
01:24:42 What about [inaudible].
01:24:44 And [inaudible] they killed him also.
01:24:46 Okay.
01:24:47 Every hour and the hour, they go now.
01:24:50 So, you still work?
01:24:51 Yeah, well if they call me I go.
01:24:53 You are 80?
01:24:54 I'm only-
01:24:56 You're only 89?
01:24:58 Whatever, yeah.
01:24:59 Or something like that.
01:25:00 Eighty-eight, 89.
01:25:01 Eighty-eight and you're still working?
01:25:02 Well, you call that work because I drive a couple of times to the airport?
01:25:07 I don't know so many people who are 89 years or 88 that are still driving,
01:25:12 to tell you the truth.
01:25:14 Right. Good for you.
01:25:17 Okay.
01:25:19 I want one last note in this interview.
01:25:23 Yeah.
01:25:23 About the Danish people.
01:25:26 Why don't you come with me to Denmark? I'll be your tour guide.
01:25:30 So, you still have some warm feelings in your heart towards the Danish people.
01:25:36 Would you see them as those who saved you, your life?

01:25:43 Do you see the Danish people?
01:25:45 The Danish people?
01:25:46 Yes.
01:25:47 Yeah. I don't know them personally.
01:25:50 But do you feel that you owe your life to them?
01:25:54 In a way. yeah. We can say that. yeah.
01:25:56 They are very special and the fact also that.
01:26:00 I think they're the only nation.
01:26:01 I think maybe the only or two or maybe those-
01:26:06 There's Nazis. and then. there are my girls also.
01:26:08 Of course. but what I'm saying that they received the righteous of nations.
01:26:15 [inaudible] as a nation not as a person.
01:26:17 as a whole nation because what they did to save their Jews during the Second World War.
01:26:25 But you see how things are changing all of sudden because of the Muslim?
01:26:28 You know that outsider?
01:26:29 Okay. but that's a different issue.
01:26:30 We're talking about what you remember of Denmark.
01:26:33 Okay. They were not there then.
01:26:35 Okay. So. we learn any other thing.
01:26:38 we are coming to an end.
01:26:41 Any other memories of something that you remember and you still want to
01:26:45 tell us that comes up to your mind now before we end?
01:26:48 Would you like to share anything else?
01:26:50 Off hand.
01:26:51 Okay.
01:26:52 I enjoyed your visit.
01:26:53 Thank you. We did too.
01:26:55 I would like you to end.
01:26:57 if you can by saying a few words to your-
01:27:00 A little bit.
01:27:01 I'll explain. To your family.
01:27:03 children. grandchildren. great grandchildren.
01:27:08 Based on your life experience.
01:27:11 what would you like to say to them?
01:27:13 What would you want to wish them?
01:27:16 Say something to them ending and-
01:27:18 You see. I talk through my lawyer.
01:27:21 But now. talk to the camera.
01:27:22 I don't know what to say.
01:27:24 Say something to them.
01:27:26 Okay. What would you like to wish all of them?
01:27:29 What do I wish them?
01:27:33 Based on your experience in life.

01:27:36 what would you like to tell them?
01:27:37 That's local to everybody.
01:27:38 I don't know what to say.
01:27:40 Amen? Okay? I want to thank you very much.
01:27:43 You're welcome.
01:27:43 On behalf of myself and on behalf of Yad Vashem.
01:27:46 and to wish you and your wife good health.
01:27:49 and [inaudible] from your big family to [inaudible]
01:27:53 Thanks a lot. This is
01:27:59 my dear Father.
01:28:05 Their great cousin Eugene Goldberger.
01:28:09 and his wife. my mother. Hannah Helen Goldberger.
01:28:16 When they got married.
01:28:19 I guess in Bratislava somewhere Czechoslovakia.
01:28:30 This is my father in the center.
01:28:34 Hasid Goldberger in the Danish synagogue in Kobenhavn.
01:28:40 Pope Christelle here. he's the Hasid
01:28:46 there for 15 years at least.
01:28:55 This is a picture of my Danish School in Kobenhavn.
01:29:00 Jewish school?
01:29:01 Jewish school in Kobenhavn.
01:29:03 I'm on the end of the right.
01:29:11 This is Puttin Servais.
01:29:19 the Jewish school.
01:29:26 This is for my four brothers.
01:29:29 One there to your right. you have Eric.
01:29:34 I'm sorry. I have Leo.
01:29:36 Eric and myself and Gus Goldberger
01:29:41 all in New York.
01:29:52 This picture is myself and my wife plus my daughters in the background.
01:29:58 Can you say their names?
01:29:59 Okay.
01:30:03 You've got
01:30:07 *[name withheld]* and *[name withheld]*.
01:30:19 Okay.
01:30:23 Whatever.
01:30:25 This is only part of my family.
01:30:29 Children, grandchildren?
01:30:30 Children, grand children. and so forth.
01:30:34 You better stop.