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The Aftermath and After: Memories of Child Survivors of the Holocaust

I am reflecting on what has stayed in my memory from the streets of the ghetto, apart from a generalized picture in which the streets form a labyrinthine web, into which stumbles not a lone wanderer, but a humiliated crowd, systematically deprived of all rights . . . Some fragments have also remained, details having only vague significance vis-à-vis general knowledge, but which for me are important as traces, pressed deeply in my consciousness, of those places and of those times.


—Michał Głowiński (b. 1934), *The Black Seasons*

INTRODUCTION

CHILD HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS, BORN IN OR AFTER 1929, ARE TODAY the last living witnesses to the Holocaust. Historians have only recently recognized their voice as worthy of historical attention and investigation. However, child survivors have for a long time been producing a tremendous amount of personal accounts in various forms: some contemporary Holocaust accounts and diaries, and postwar interviews; oral, written, audio, and videotaped testimonies. Some child survivors are also authors of a substantial body of imaginative literature about the Holocaust experience in poetry and prose. In this chapter I probe the role of non-literary, straightforward referential child survivor testimony in the historical investigation of Jewish childhood during the war. I focus on the shifts of memory presented from the perspective of child survivor as child, and from the later perspective of adulthood.

My goal is to demonstrate both the convergences and divergences in those earlier and later recollections of wartime experiences of child survivors. At the heart of my discussion are testimonies of child survivors who were placed in the Jewish Children's Home (Dom Dziecka) in Otwock, the first postwar Jewish children's home in central Poland, established under the auspices of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland (Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce).¹ The children and adult staff of this Dom Dziecka represent a microcosm of surviving Polish Jewry. I examine closely five written early postwar testimonies, and five videotaped later testimonies of the same five child survivors that were recorded in the 1990s and early 2000s. The videotaped oral testimonies are deposited at the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education based at the University of Southern California. In addition, I refer to other child survivors' testimonies and memoirs.

My central argument is that the essential episodes of child survivors' wartime biographies remain durable and almost intact in the child survivors' memories despite the passage of time. This is not to say that the recollected past events are exact reproductions of the initial experiences and that there is no significant difference in recollecting the past over the passage of time. But what is retained in child survivors' memories, and recollected again and again in their testimonies from different chronological periods, are a set of experiences of a highly emotional nature and personal significance. These experiences constitute the essence of the child survivors' wartime biographies and define who they became during the war. To the core group of these experiences belong those of a specifically shocking and traumatic nature such as separation from parents; witnessing the death of parents, relatives, and one's peers; being rescued under terrifying conditions; suffering cold and hunger; and being blackmailed or abused on the Aryan side. These experiences are, to cite William James, the pioneering American psychologist, "events so emotional as to leave a scar upon the cerebral tissue."² Other recollected experiences are of positive emotional valence. They might seem trivial, associated with quotidian activities such as experiencing the basic pleasures of eating and some vestiges of childhood such as reading a story, drawing a picture on a scrap of paper, or playing with an old toy, and being well looked after; being bathed, fed, and offered love and emotional support. However, in the minds of the child survivors these memories are filled with personal meaning, emotions, and vividness.

I begin with general reflections about the approaches toward child survivors' testimonies in the historiography of the Holocaust. New  in file

CHILD SURVIVORS' TESTIMONIES AND THE HISTORY OF THE HOLOCAUST

The early postwar child survivors' testimonies constitute a distinct subgroup of archival personal accounts. Among 7,300 personal testimonies collected by the members of the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland between 1944 and 1948, child survivors, born in or after 1929, authored 429 testimonies. Literary scholar Susan R. Suleiman calls child survivors like herself the "1.5 generation."³ This generation could not have an adult understanding of what had happened to them during the war and in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust. The inability of children to possess and articulate an adult understanding of the world was the main reason why the first collectors (*zamlers*) and interpreters of child survivors' testimonies in the early postwar period deemed these accounts of little value to historians. In their eyes, child survivors' testimonies could not be treated as historical evidence because children at their stage of cognitive development lack the capacity to transmit their lived experiences and general information accurately. This was the position advocated by Genia Silkes (Sylkes) (1914–1984), an active member of the Central Jewish Historical Commission (Tsentrale yiddishe historishe komisye), a body first established in Poland in August 1944, and transformed into the Żydowski Instytut Historyczny (Jewish Historical Institute, ZIH) in October 1947. Like many other active members of the Jewish Historical Commission, Silkes, a Holocaust survivor, was not a professional historian, but an amateur with no proper training in historical methodology.⁴ She had been a prewar teacher in the Borochov school system in Warsaw, and had continued as an educator in the clandestine children's canteens network in the Warsaw ghetto during the war.⁵

Given Silkes's background and wartime experience, she was a suitable individual to be appointed to work closely with child survivors. However, this same professional background in education no doubt influenced her approach toward and understanding of children's recollections of the war. In 1945, Silkes compiled the instructions for interviewing child survivors that then became the guidelines for the newly established Jewish Historical Commissions in Poland. Her com-

pilation and design was most likely based on her interview scripts with children in the Warsaw ghetto in 1941. According to the late historian Ruta Sakowska, Silkes conducted interviews in the Warsaw ghetto and most likely designed the interviews titled: “What changes happened to us during the war” (“Jakie zasłyły u nas zmiany podczas wojny”) that were carried out at the half-day care center at Nowolipki no. 25.⁶ In the guide, published in both Polish and Yiddish in Łódź, a major thriving city of Jewish life in post-1945 Poland, the children’s testimonies were considered valuable material for psychological and educational purposes rather than of value to historians:⁷ “When carrying out precise studies of children, we assume beforehand that they are less valuable than evidentiary material; however, they have a psychological value that can’t be reckoned with, which adults are not in the position to give us.”⁸

Somewhat contradictorily, Silkes, and other like-minded activists of the Jewish Historical Commissions, viewed the children’s testimonies as powerful emotional communications of resistance and heroic acts, demonstrating the young survivors’ courage (*mut*), practical survival skills (*lebns hokhme*), and the vigor of their resistance (*vidershtands-kraft*). They were also considered as revealing material on the effects of war on the psychological makeup of the child. Moreover, under the influence of views then current about children as pure and innocent, and their treatment as a barometer for the moral standing of the nation,⁹ the members of the Jewish Historical Commission regarded the testimonies as a repository of powerful stories that could persuade the free world that “it is necessary to mercilessly and utterly wipe out every vestige of fascism.”¹⁰ In their opinion, while the children’s testimonies were a most effective resource in communicating the depths of the Nazi insult on the most innocent members of human society, they were, at the same time, unworthy of the attention of historians. One explanation for such a position might be that the members of the Historical Commission had a sense of mapping out an entirely new field of research—“destruction research” (*khurban forshung*). Therefore, they felt compelled, for both historical and moral reasons, to concentrate on the “big picture” of the mechanism of the Nazi extermination of European Jewry, and on the political and ideological dimensions of the event, topics that dominated the historiography of the Holocaust until the 1990s.¹¹ Some also had a sense that they were collecting material to be analyzed later by historians from a greater distance from the catastrophe.¹²

The position on child survivors' testimonies advocated by early postwar *zamlers* like Genia Silkes had dominated the historiography of the Holocaust until recently. However, it has been challenged in "the era of the witness,"¹³ during which historians have gradually come to recognize personal testimonies as essential and not just auxiliary data for historical reconstruction of the past. There are multiple and interlinked developments responsible for this shift, the "rediscovery" and reevaluation of personal testimonies for historical writings. One is the recently acquired access to precious archival collections in Eastern Europe and the ensuing encounter with a bulk of personal testimonies of victims, eyewitnesses, and perpetrators in those archives, as well as with living eyewitnesses in the regions where the "Holocaust by bullets" had taken place.¹⁴ A second is the "tsunami" of published memoirs and archival collections of oral testimonies of Holocaust survivors and (other) eyewitnesses, which occurred almost without a halt between the 1980s and the early 2000s: between 1981 and 1995 the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University garnered 34,000 testimonies, while Steven Spielberg's Shoah Visual History Foundation collected 52,000 testimonies between 1994 and 2002.¹⁵ A third is the increasing interest in previously understudied topics, such as anti-Jewish violence of local populations, rescue of Jews, or in-depth historical studies of specific Jewish communities, topics that demand knowledge and use of oral histories and archival personal written testimonies. A fourth is the emergence of new salient general trends in Holocaust history writing advocated by leading historians in the field. Among these trends are the introduction of the concept of the integrative history of the Holocaust by the historians Saul Friedländer¹⁶ and Omer Bartov¹⁷ respectively, the recognition that some events would have never been brought to light if not for the personal testimonies of survivors underscored by Omer Bartov,¹⁸ Christopher Browning,¹⁹ and Jan T. Gross,²⁰ and the recognition that "personal testimonies provide very different perspectives of events known through conventional documents," advocated by Omer Bartov.²¹ Finally, fifth is an increasing new interest in the history of childhood, including the history of children during the Second World War.²² Debórah Dwork's *Children With A Jewish Star. Jewish Youth in Nazi Europe* and Nicholas Stargardt's *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis*, published in 2005 in England,²³ are the first studies demonstrating the merits of a history of children, written from a child's point of view, using sources

ranging from children's diaries, letters, and memoirs, to schoolwork. Dwork and Stargardt treat children as subjects of historical narrative rather than as objects, and places children's experiences within broader social and cultural contexts of the Second World War.

CHILD SURVIVORS' TESTIMONIES OF THE EARLY POSTWAR PERIOD AND OF THE 1990S AND EARLY 2000S: COMMON AND DISTINCT CHARACTERISTICS PAST AND PRESENT

In light of all these contemporary new historical developments and approaches, child survivors' early postwar and later testimonies deserve a fresh look and a reevaluation. The early postwar testimonies are written almost from within the Holocaust because of the closeness in time to the event, exposing the "raw" account of wartime events as they were perceived in the aftermath. Furthermore, they inform us of the impact of the recent past on the children at the moment during which they retold their wartime experiences.

The child survivors were not aware of the role the members of the Jewish Historical Commissions assigned them in their interviews. Most of the early postwar interviews were conducted at kibbutzim, Jewish schools and Jewish children's homes like the one in Otwock. Many testimonies had the uniform title "My Experiences During the War" ("Moje przeżycia w czasie wojny") or "What Games Did We Play During the War?" ("W jakie zabawy bawiliśmy się w czasie wojny?"). The idea of conducting personal interviews was not new, but had originated in prewar social history projects designed at the YIVO Institute in Vilnius.²⁴ Interviews based on this prewar YIVO model continued to be conducted with children and youths in ghettos during the war, in Jewish orphanages, day centers, and in canteens, under the auspices of the Central Organization for Orphan Care (Centos), originally established in 1924. After the war, special attention was paid to the children's emotional reliving of their wartime experiences during these interviews. When the child became overwhelmed by his or her emotions, the interview was usually stopped. In some instances, the child was unable to complete an interview. We learn about such cases from interviewers' notes, written in Polish or Yiddish, and attached to the children's testimonies.

The testimonies are generally descriptive, referential reports. Only a minuscule group is styled as fictionalized stories, having some literary qualities. The language, structure, and levels of reflection depend on

the age and the cognitive and linguistic abilities of the authors, as well as on their wartime experiences. The testimonies lack precise references to dates, geographical locations, and historical actors. In that respect, they are not dissimilar from the adult personal testimonies of the same period, though adult accounts on the whole offer more detailed information on localities, dates, and historical actors. But as in the case of children's testimonies, adult accounts can be easily criticized for their lack of competence and accuracy and for slips of memories and suggestibility.

Testimonies especially of older children who had reached adolescence during the war, like adult testimonies of that period, delineate basic life stories: chronicling in a logical sequence important episodes in their lives before the war, in the ghetto, and on the Aryan side. Younger children born in the second half of the 1930s typically begin their testimonies with a narrative of wartime episodes. What is characteristic about recollections made by many children less than eleven years of age is that they relate episodes concerning adults' attitudes and behavior toward them without being able to comprehend fully and reflect on them.

The theoretical literature on personal testimonies often underscores the problem of drifts in memory in survivors' testimonies and their lack of reliability and competence. In contrast, Yehuda Bauer argues that memory does not necessarily fade with age, but becomes "sharper." Moreover, he suggests that the passage of time does not make a testimony less "truthful," but on the contrary, it makes it more so by creating "detachment" from the traumatic events and their emotional impact.²⁵ The later videotaped testimonies are especially criticized for their lack of spontaneity.²⁶ Such criticism usually centers on the interviewee while ignoring the external contingencies of personal testimony, whether written and oral.²⁷ These external contingencies are the script that determines the contents, dynamics, and the outcome of the interview, what is included and excluded; cultural and linguistic connections; and the presence or absence of a shared mother tongue. Other important external contingencies are the extent of the interviewer's historical knowledge of the Holocaust and Eastern European history and the ability of the interviewer to "push" the subjects of the interview to reveal their painful past. The omission of external contingencies in any analysis of personal testimony leads to the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the material.

Child survivors' testimonies are a necessary and irreplaceable source in historical investigations concerning the lived experiences of the young survivors. Though they cannot be viewed as the sole or self-sufficient evidence, they are nevertheless essential for the writings of *Alltagsgeschichte* (everyday history) of Jewish children both during and after the war. Regarding the application of these testimonies, we should draw on the French historian Marc Bloch's position which advocates that the problems and questions historians pose should determine the kinds of evidence they use.²⁸ Thus, early postwar children's testimonies should not be expected to deliver the same kind of information as official documents. Bearing this in mind, we should subjugate the testimonies to what Bloch calls "the proper questioning" of sources.²⁹ This is not to say that we should ignore the shortcomings of personal accounts, but rather than dismissing testimony because of such shortcomings, one should carefully evaluate their relevance in specific historical inquiries.

For a historian who wants to understand and reconstruct Jewish society on the level of the family unit as it emerged from extreme persecution, child survivors' testimonies are indispensable. Moreover, they are important data in the analysis of how individual self-perception and perceptions of the war and genocide change over age, time, and maturation. Thus, a comparative analysis of early postwar testimonies written from the perspective of a child, with the later videotaped testimonies articulated retrospectively from the perspective of adulthood, can provide answers to vexed questions about the dynamics of memory in survivors. Such comparative analysis can also elucidate how the age and the developmental state of the children at the time of their experiencing war influence their narratives of wartime and early postwar experiences in adulthood. Nor should we ignore the state of mind and levels of personal fulfillment and satisfaction exhibited by adult child survivors in these interviews, since these factors also influence the mode of the narrative and content of the interview: emphasizing particular experiences over others.

In spite of weaknesses in relating exact details of events, names, and places, and involuntary errors made in this respect, children's testimonies of both the early and late postwar periods should be viewed as rooted in truth—"hooked on truth"—rather than on pathological invention. In that sense, they can be viewed, to use the term of the French theoretician of diary and autobiography Phillippe Lejeune, as

“antifiction.”³⁰ The testimonies review wartime experiences from a particular moment of time and offer us a window into the child survivors’ reactions toward and understanding of that past in the moment of retelling it. The early postwar accounts sculpt life from a “raw” child’s perspective that gives us a unique access to the modes of thinking, feelings, and expressions of a child who has just emerged from the conditions of war and the Holocaust. Of course, we have to take into account how adults may have inevitably influenced the child authors of these testimonies regarding, for example, the language in which the children retell the events.³¹ Jewish children from middle-class urban families who spent the wartime years in hiding in the countryside inevitably internalized the specific peasants’ language to which they were exposed and in which they had to communicate. The children continued to express themselves in it immediately after the war, and their first early postwar testimonies record this wartime linguistic mimicry.³² Nonetheless, in spite of adult influence, we have to keep in mind the unique way in which children experience and interpret the world even as their language, thinking, and behavior are shaped by the adult world. Their testimonies are illustrative of that significant and meaningful difference.

Conversely, the adult authors reconstruct events of their wartime childhood through retrospective lenses, often exhibiting a great deal of self-reflection regarding their memories of the past. In videotaped interviews, they openly speak about information or explanation acquired after the war, differentiating between “what I remembered” and “what I know now” and between “what I remembered as a child” and “what I remember about my childhood right now with the knowledge acquired from relatives and books.” Some are also acutely aware of the limits of their memories: “You are asking me too much. After all I was only a small child.”³³

“In my memory some events have disappeared . . . I remember many events but I do not know how to connect them well. If I had been older my memory would have been better.”³⁴

“What I remember from that time, it is a memory of events which were described to me later, for example, the story about my mother’s sister studying in a Polish school . . . at that time I was not aware of these things, they were not clear to me.”³⁵

When asked, the adult child survivors often refer to the first “real memory” from their childhood:

“My first real memory, which is like a picture in my head, is a memory of a bomb that hit our house. My mother left the house with my sister and me, in her nightdress. It was for me an utmost horror.”³⁶

“My first memory: I was skipping on a street of Warsaw and a German soldier gave me a lolly [lollypop]. I was living then with a Polish woman whose name I do not know.”³⁷

Some child survivors have little or no memory of their prewar and wartime experiences and as such are left with painful gaps and riddles in their personal biographies. In trying to comprehend and resolve these riddles, they resort to searching for clues and tangible facts that might illuminate their life stories. They interview remaining adult family members, former rescuers, other eyewitnesses, and conduct archival research. In this group of child survivors, in particular, the unknown past is part of the present, which will never lessen its grip on their lives, in spite of all the efforts they have made to regain a normal life. This is manifested in a variety of ways, ranging from a noticeable taciturnity to strong emotional outbursts during interviews. Some child survivors eloquently articulate an awareness of the existential impossibility of pursuing life as everybody else: “I also realized how we, who had returned to life, could never live lives like others who were not where we had been.”³⁸

Some child survivors also feel compelled in their mature adulthood to search for the meaning of traumatic wartime episodes that they, as children, could not comprehend during the war and that have continued to represent a puzzle throughout many postwar years. Their search leads them to revisit localities where they had lived during the war and reestablish contact with former rescuers and rescuers’ descendants. The child survivors speak about these visits and encounters in their interviews, write about them in written testimonies, and even make documentary films about them.³⁹

RETELLING THE ESSENTIAL STORY IN THE EARLY AND LATE POSTWAR TESTIMONIES

Eric (Eryk) Holder was born in February 1937 in a Polish-Jewish-Ukrainian town that used to be called Stanisławów in the pre-1939 period when it belonged to Poland, but after the Second World War

when the Soviet Union incorporated this territory, the town was renamed Ivano-Frankivsk and now belongs to the independent state of Ukraine.⁴⁰ Eric Holder was interviewed for the first time in 1945 in one of the first Jewish children's homes, established on the Polish territories that the Red Army captured in the second half of 1944. The children's home was located in Przemyśl in southeastern Poland, a town to which Holder had been repatriated as a Polish Jewish orphan from the Soviet Union, with an accompanying Polish Jewish family named Hellman and their two children. The interview was conducted in Holder's mother tongue, Polish, and was published in the first postwar collection of children's testimonies, *Dzieci żydowskie oskarżają* (*The Children Accuse*), in 1946, in Poland.⁴¹ The monograph consists of fifty-five children's testimonies collected as early as 1945 along with fifteen adult testimonies.⁴² Zvi Kraniel conducted a videotaped interview with Eric fifty-three years later on January 21, 1998, in Holder's home in Kiryat Haim, Israel. The latter interview was conducted in Hebrew, his adopted language, and lasted one and a half hours.

Holder's early postwar testimony begins with a brief recollection of life before the war, which is confined to a couple of sentences: "Before the war my parents lived in their own house on Wysockiego Street in Stanisławów. My father worked and things were fine at home."⁴³ Such a laconic description of the prewar past is common to other children's testimonies. The prewar life is generally summarized as "steady, solid and not lacking in anything," regardless of the social background of the child survivor and the wealth of his or her family.

In the videotaped testimony of 1998, having been asked specific questions about his prewar family life, Holder also recollects his hometown and prewar family life, briefly but with a detectable sense of nostalgia for the lost world of his childhood. He states that he remembers "the main market, a beautiful town, a beautiful family home with a nice garden."⁴⁴ Holder saw these places for the last time when the Russian army reentered Stanisławów on July 27, 1944, a time which he recalls as a period of regaining a sense of personal freedom and painfully relearning to see the world in proper daylight. Prior to that time the boy was confined to a dark hideout for a year and a half. After having spent such a long time in a dim dugout, Holder was finally permitted in the summer of 1944 for the first time to live in the house of his rescuers and play with their children in the yard. Before he left for Poland, an unnamed adult took him on a tour to see what

remained of his prewar childhood, his family's house at Wysockiego Street, and his grandparents' home at Kazimierzowska Street. He found no one there as neither his parents nor grandparents survived the war. Holder recalls that his father Oskar Holder was an engineer working in a power station in Stanisławów and that his mother Lusia (Lucyna) Holder was a teacher at a local school, but admits that he does not know any details about his mother's family. He recalls a few details about his father, whom he remembers from Stanisławów. His grandfather, whose first name Eric does not remember, was the owner of a shop selling electric goods in the town.

The image of the family that emerges from his recollections is that of a typical middle-class Jewish family in which the grandparents' generation was more traditional than that of the parents. Holder's grandparents spoke Yiddish at home, whereas his parents spoke Polish. His father also knew German learned during studies in Germany.

Neither testimony relates specific dates in the Holder family life after the Germans invaded Stanisławów in late July 1941; on December 1 of the same year, the Germans established the ghetto in Stanisławów and officially sealed it on December 20, 1941. But both testimonies refer to a set of events that correspond to one of the most horrific events in the wartime history of the Jewish community of Stanisławów, known as "Bloody Sunday" (*Blutsonntag*). "Bloody Sunday" took place on October 11, 1941.⁴⁵ On that day the Germans rounded up the local Jews at the town market and marched them to the Jewish cemetery where they shot between 8,000 and 12,000 individuals: women, men, and children. In his testimony of 1945, Holder relates how his family was taken to the market and to the cemetery where he observed at first hand mass shootings of Jewish adults. He remembers Jewish children being thrown alive into the big collective grave. In addition, he recalls a dramatic moment when he was separated from his mother, who escaped death that day by pure luck.

I remember how one day the police took us from the flat and led us to the Jewish cemetery. When we got there, there were hundreds of Jews, and more and more of them kept arriving. At one place in the cemetery there was a huge grave. The people who were standing nearest the grave had to undress and walk up to it, and one of the Germans shot them from behind, I saw that with my own eyes. The children were not shot but were thrown into the grave alive. At the cemetery my mother somehow got lost in the crowd and

ended up at the front, close to where they were shooting people. So Mama was just about to get undressed to be killed, but since it was already late in the evening everybody who had not been shot was ordered to go home.⁴⁶

Holder relates that same episode in his interview of 1998. Interestingly, as an adult he does not seem to be aware of the historical significance of this event: his recollections seem based purely on his personal memories, and are not mediated by postwar readings about the destruction of the Jewish community of Stanisławów. As in his testimony of 1945, he concentrates on his individual and family's experiences. But he adds a new interlinked episode from his family life that constitutes an important prelude to the mass killings at the cemetery. Holder refers to this new episode as "the first thing that he remembers,"⁴⁷ as a formative event of his childhood. "The first thing I remember; we are sitting at my grandparents' house and the Germans are knocking at the door!"⁴⁸ The adults inside are terrified of the aggressive knocking at the doors and enter into a short squabble as to whether or not they should open the doors. For the first time in his life, Eric, who has always looked up to his father as a confident "tall and strong man," sees his father in a completely different light, as a man powerless against these strange German soldiers against whom he does not fight back, but quietly obeys.

In both testimonies, Holder recalls almost the exact same episodes of losing his loved ones: his mother's accident in the ghetto when she breaks one of her legs; her sudden disappearance in a transport; the shooting of his grandmother and the death of his grandfather. In both accounts, he also refers to the family's forced relocations to the ghetto in Stanisławów. In the testimony of 1998, he describes the moves with greater detail but does not provide any dates. He relates that his parents had to move from their apartment at Wysockiego because it was located outside of the ghetto, and that the first place to which he and his parents moved to was his grandparents' home located within the boundaries of the ghetto. In both testimonies, Eric talks about his last dwelling place in the ghetto, when only he and his father remain alive, at an unspecified apartment on Śnieżna Street where an unnamed Jewish woman looked after them. She did the laundry and cooked food that his father brought home. As an engineer, his father is needed by the Germans, and so still employed at the railway station.

However, this period of deceptively steady daily routine did not last long. Oskar Holder, no doubt, must have seen the increasing danger of remaining in the ghetto in the summer and autumn of 1942, as more *Aktions* were carried out and more transports were shipped to the death camp in Bełżec. Therefore he decided to save his son by finding him a shelter on the Aryan side. A Christian Pole, Mr. Łopatyński, a former coworker at the power station, agreed to have his colleague's son live with his family.

In both testimonies, Holder recollects almost the same details: his final leaving of the ghetto at an unspecified date, his father's instructions on how to behave thereafter, their final walk to the railway station where father and son separate, his departure with Mr. Łopatyński; and his stay at his first shelter at the home of Łopatyński's sister. In his 1945 interview, he recalls,

They began transporting Jews out of the ghetto again. It was at that time that my father took me with him one day as he left the ghetto on his way to work. He told me to walk a few steps behind him. When we were near the railway a man came up to me, took me by his hand and led me to my "aunt." I knew this man was Mr. Łopatyński, because my father told me at home that he would hide me. In the evening my father came to see my "aunt," who was Mr. Łopatyński's sister, and spent a few days with me. Father gave Mr. Łopatyński our things and our money and grandfather's, and showed him the place where he had buried some gold.⁴⁹

In both testimonies, Holder recalls two events, deeply embedded in his memory—hiding in a wardrobe in the "aunt's" apartment and her teaching him the Catholic prayers "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" so he could pass as a Christian Polish child. He describes his long-term shelter, a dugout in Łopatyński's yard with a wooden cot. He remembers Mr. and Mrs. Łopatyński visiting his shelter in the evenings, bringing him food. He also recalls bathing at their house approximately once a month, when the Łopatyński children were away. The testimony of 1998 refers to overheard conversations during the bathing sessions after his father's death, which most likely occurred during or after the liquidation of the Stanisławów ghetto on February 23, 1943. This episode, missing from the early postwar written account, throws light on Łopatyński's motives for rescue, his attitude toward the young Jewish fugitives, and his wife's opposite position toward rescue that

most likely saved Holder's life. Holder recalls the quarrels between the couple during his bathing sessions. It appears that Mr. Łopatyński contemplated getting rid of the boy, while his wife strongly objected on religious grounds to abandoning him. While bathing the boy, she shouts at her husband: "God watches us and if we would get rid of him, He would punish us."⁵⁰ At that time Łopatyński began to inquire whether the boy knew Łopatyński's name and address, and Holder recalls admitting that he did. After the war, Holder never managed to reestablish contact with the Łopatyński family. In the Jewish Children's Home in Otwock where he stayed from 1947 until its closure in late 1949, he wanted to get in touch with his former rescuers, but, as he states in his testimony of 1998, his Jewish guardians discouraged him from doing so.⁵¹ Despite this disturbing disclosure, Holder speaks with respect about his rescuers and does not seem to hold any grudges against Mr. Łopatyński.

His early postwar testimony includes a minute detail absent from the videotaped testimony: a brief retelling of the warm friendship between him and Rysio, the son of Mr. Łopatyński's sister. Holder describes Rysio as a child who played with him nicely and "did not wish him any harm."⁵² In other children's testimonies of that period, similar references are made to non-Jewish children, indicating that Jewish children were acutely aware that their non-Jewish peer group might exhibit a negative attitude and behavior toward them that, in turn, could lead to their denunciation and death. Most likely this brief episode, still vivid in Holder's early postwar memory when he was still a child, escaped his later memory during the videotaped interview in 1998. The fact that his interviewer did not ask Holder questions about his relations with non-Jewish children during the war might also be one of the reasons why he did not recall Rysio's friendly attitude toward him.

Common to both testimonies is Holder's recalling of images of his lonely childhood in the Łopatyński dugout. He vividly remembers that he had to be silent and motionless while Łopatyński's children played freely in the garden, as they did not know about the little fugitive living underneath, and how painful it was for him to not be able to join them in their games.

In the testimony of 1998, Holder recalls a terrible yearning for his parents while he was in the dugout and his childish lack of understanding as to why they were not coming to visit him and take him

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away.⁵³ This recollection suggests that as a child Holder was not able to comprehend the concept of death, despite having been told by Mr. Łopatyński that his father had been killed. The boy's simultaneous acknowledgment and denial of his parents' death continued for a certain time after the war. In the Children's Home in Otwock, Holder badly wanted his parents back and waited for them for a long time. In fact, he was oblivious of any attempts on the part of the Children's Home to find him loving adoptive parents. He was not responsive, he recalls, to a nice, friendly, middle-class Jewish couple who were keen on adopting him, and who regularly took him to their Warsaw home on Sundays and on other day trips. Other testimonies confirm similar attitudes among child survivors to the death of their parents, suggesting that children experience death differently from adults, and do not have a sense of its finality: "I heard and did not hear that my mother passed away."⁵⁴

Moreover, during and after the war, some children like Holder were confused, disappointed, and angry with parents who in their eyes had abandoned them for no reason. Only as adults could they grasp the enormity and sacrifice of their parents' decisions to entrust them to strangers, of their powerlessness, and their making of the "choiceless choice."⁵⁵ The memories of these painful episodes are recalled in the videotaped testimonies, and some child survivors "relive" them at the time of retelling.

The early postwar testimony of Lili Shop (Szynowłoga) speaks about her wartime experiences, which she retells on August 2, 1996, in her apartment in Tel Aviv.⁵⁶ The videotaped oral interview is two and a half hours long and is conducted in Hebrew. The interviewer corrects Shop's Hebrew from time to time by providing the proper Hebrew terms for words that she only remembers in Polish. These linguistic corrections interfere with her narrative, although she is amicably disposed toward those corrections and even, on occasions, asks for the appropriate word in Hebrew. Looking for an accurate Hebrew term is not an atypical feature of the late postwar testimonies conducted in Israel, where the interviewer often knows Polish and Yiddish well, and where the interviewee sometimes has difficulty in expressing some events in fluent Hebrew, with memories of events embedded in the mother tongue. This, unfortunately, sometimes has a fatal impact on the testimony, especially when the interviewer does not properly listen,

but instead implies that she or he knows the history better than the interviewee, and constantly interferes with the survivor's narrative.

As in the case of Eric Holder, there are no exact dates cited in either of Lili Shop's testimonies, and some episodes are elaborated or explained only in the testimony of 1996. Shop's early postwar testimony titled "Recollections of Lili Szynowłogi, 1934" ("Wspomnienia Lili Szynowłogi") is undated,⁵⁷ but states in the last sentence that it was taken in the Jewish Children's Home in Otwock. The testimony, two and a half pages long, is written in Polish.

Shop was among the first cohort of children admitted to the Jewish Dom Dziecka in Otwock. According to her 1996 recollections, in May 1945 her mother brought her to Otwock, where she stayed for a year and a half. Mrs. Szynowłoga then fetched her daughter and brought her to their new home in Łódź where they lived with Mrs. Szynowłoga's new husband until the newly reconstituted family emigrated together to Israel. New ¶
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Lili Szynowłoga (Shop) was born on August 1, 1934, in Warsaw, and grew up in a middle-class Jewish family in Pułtusk, near Warsaw. She was the first child and grandchild in the family and for that reason, as she recalls in 1996 with nostalgia, her relatives spoiled her excessively. Her early postwar testimony is written in a childish way, indicating, as in the case of other children, her mental and intellectual state after the war. The testimony contains expressions of simple Polish Christian peasants' speech that reveal the powerful influence of the environment in which Shop and her mother were in hiding during the war. The use of some prefixes in Polish verbs is also ungrammatical, suggesting that the girl grew up among Yiddish-language speakers and acquired Polish as a second language. Improper use of prefixes could have betrayed Shop's ethnicity if she had lived "on the surface" on the Aryan side. Some survivors who passed off as Christian Poles recall that even a small grammatical error, such as the wrong use of "dochodzić do telefonu" (to come to the phone) instead of "podchodzić do telefonu" (to pick up the phone) could betray their origins, leading to loss of safe shelter, the revelation of the adopted identity, or even denunciation and arrest.⁵⁸

Her early postwar testimony begins with a recollection of an escape from the Warsaw ghetto to the Aryan side after her mother realized that it was too dangerous for them to remain in their hiding place in

an unspecified German factory (*shop*) there. Thanks to an unnamed female relative, mother and daughter left the ghetto with a group of workers, the chief and most successful method of escaping the ghetto. On the Aryan side, the mother decided to find shelter with relatives who lived near Kielce in central Poland. However, they were not able to remain there safely because shortly after their arrival, the Germans began to liquidate the local Jewish communities of the Kielce region. This indicates that the mother and daughter must have left the Warsaw ghetto some time during the Great Deportation of July 22–August 28, 1942.⁵⁹

In the videotaped testimony of 1996, Shop speaks about her escape from the Warsaw ghetto in greater detail and names the small town of Chęciny near Kielce, where she and her mother tried to find their first refuge.⁶⁰ Both testimonies recall how she and her mother hid for a day or so at a time on various peasants' farms in the Chęciny region, and how finally one friendly Polish acquaintance advised them to search for a shelter with Mr. Kiciński. Kiciński was an impoverished widower and a caretaker of a local cemetery located at some distance from other homes. His dilapidated two-room house was based within the cemetery's borders. Shop recalls how she first stayed by herself with Mr. Kiciński at the cemetery, while her mother desperately and vainly tried to find a more comfortable long-term shelter.⁶¹ Her mother returned to Mr. Kiciński accompanied by their cousin Yitzhak. The adults decided that under the circumstances they would stay at Mr. Kiciński's, and began to build a dugout, made of gravestones, underneath Kiciński's primitive house. Shop and her mother remained in this shelter, which they called the "grave," for one and a half years until the Russians appeared in the area.

The mother and daughter and cousin slept in the "grave" at nighttime, but during the day, if it was safe, they would sometimes emerge and stay inside the house. From time to time the cousin would leave the shelter to fetch food and money from the family's Christian Polish acquaintances such as one unnamed noble woman with whom Mrs. Szynowłoga had deposited money and other property. However, Shop recollects that one day the cousin did not return. After a few days Mr. Kiciński learned that an unidentified member of the AK, the main anti-Communist Polish underground army, had killed their cousin. Shop recalls that her mother was terribly distraught by the news and cried for a long time.

In both testimonies, Shop speaks very warmly about Mr. Kiciński. As a child she refers to their rescuer as a decent man who treated her mother and her as though they were his own relatives; “whenever he received some cake from his visits during Christian holidays, he would bring it home and share with us.” In the early postwar testimony, Lili refers to him as “staruszek,” an affectionate Polish diminutive for an old man, and a decent human being (*uczciwy człowiek*),⁶² while in her testimony of 1996, she refers to him by his family name and as grandpa (*dziadek*), and also speaks about his crippled grown-up daughter Janina Kicińska, who lived with them all in the same home during the war.⁶³

Shop finished her early postwar testimony with a brief summary of events that took place after the Russians defeated the Germans in a battle that Lili describes as long, terrifying, and bloody. At last, mother and daughter were able to leave the “grave” under the Kiciński home. With the help of unnamed Russian soldiers, who knew that they were Jewish, they went to the center of Chęciny where the mother recovered some of her property, including a cow that she had deposited with the noblewoman. She sold the recovered cow immediately. With the newly earned funds, they traveled to Warsaw where they stayed with a friendly Christian Polish acquaintance of her mother, until the mother decided to take her daughter to the Children’s Home in Otwock. There Shop resumed study of her beloved music and slowly regained her childhood. Her testimony of 1996 provides more details about the first few months after emerging from the “grave.” For example, not only does she recall that they traveled to Warsaw with Russian soldiers, but that her mother bought her the first real gift—a cream cake. However, this was not simply a joyful time free of worries. Shop began to experience difficulty in walking soon after they arrived in the ruined capital, due to rickets, a disease common among hidden Jewish children confined to small dim places without regular exposure to daylight, physical exercise, and movement.⁶⁴ She had to undergo two operations on both her knees in order to walk properly again.⁶⁵

Moreover, Shop recalls, before moving in with her mother’s Polish acquaintance, they had an unpleasant encounter with a Polish woman at their first location in Warsaw. They rented a room in the neighborhood of Okęcie, but could not remain there because they became frightened of the apartment owner. Shop remembers, “I was washing myself and the owner was saying: Look at the little girl, she washes like a Jew. I was scared . . . I did not say anything. We paid her and

we left.”⁶⁶ In the videotaped testimonies, many child survivors report similar reprimands: “You wash like a Jew”; “You speak like a Jew”; “You swing your hips like a Jewess”; and “You walk like a Jew.” The authors of these critical remarks were invariably the children’s rescuers, wanting to ensure that the children would correct their behavior so no one could suspect that they had a Jewish child in their charge. But the children were puzzled by the scolding and did not understand that they had done anything wrong or visibly different from the rest of the Polish community. But later in adulthood they comprehended the underlying meaning of these rebukes: that in the eyes of Christian Poles, including their rescuers, the children were perceived as fundamentally different on some primordial biological level. These wartime rebukes or instructions, rooted in cultural stereotypes, are embedded in child survivors’ memories as expressions of their being perceived as outsiders. In the context of Shop’s story, the Polish woman’s rebuke was just such an expression of an openly anti-Jewish prejudice that continued to persist in Polish society in the aftermath of the war.

Shop’s later testimony of 1996 fills in the gaps of her first brief postwar account of life in the Warsaw ghetto, retelling personal and family wartime episodes that she herself directly remembers, as well as those transmitted to her by her mother, both verbally and in writing through her mother’s powerful wartime diary.⁶⁷ She recalls that prior to the Great Deportation her mother sold cigarettes to support them. They lived at Świętojańska 39 in an apartment that belonged to her mother’s friend whose husband was a Jewish policeman. Like other child survivors who escaped the Warsaw ghetto, she remembers well images of hungry and dying children on the streets of the ghetto. Characteristically, she acknowledges the contrast between the childhood of the poor children and her own relatively well off one prior to the Great Deportation.⁶⁸ She had private piano lessons and attended some clandestine private tuition *komplety* at Geşia Street. However, once she witnessed a Jewish child of her own age being killed by a German right in front of her, she became terribly afraid, and henceforth refused to leave the apartment.⁶⁹

Many child survivors from the Jewish Children’s Home in Otwock recall, as adults, similar images of children; children dying of hunger in the ghetto, children shot; these scenes affected them as children during the war. These disturbing images remind the child survivors about the gap between their relatively “sheltered” and “privileged”

childhood in the ghetto and the miserable childhood of less fortunate children from lower social classes and refugees from outside Warsaw. They also stand for painful memories of the deaths of their not so lucky siblings, schoolmates, and friends. These fearful memories are rooted in their first traumatic realization that death could befall someone of their own generation, a young person.

Jankiel Cieszyński's undated two-page early postwar testimony is a concise report of his life-threatening wartime adventures on the Aryan side. In contrast to Eric Holder and Lili Shop (and many other young residents of the Children's Home in Otwock), Cieszyński was in great measure responsible for his own survival. On occasion he relied on individual Christian Poles who took pity on a homeless begging boy, supported him in his performance passing as a Christian Polish child, and rescued him from immediate deadly danger. Cieszyński was born on August 9, 1928, in Siedlce. His mother, Chaya Leah Ozdoba, was a religious woman who divorced his father, Mr. Szhlechter, and remarried Hershel Cieszyński, a man without children, twenty years her senior. Hershel adopted Jankiel and the family moved to Otwock where it expanded when Jankiel's two half-brothers, Abraham and Ruven, were born in the 1930s.⁷⁰

Before the war Hershel Cieszyński worked as a shoemaker and brush-maker, and in wintertime as a peddler. In contrast to Jankiel's pious mother, he was a Communist, believing that only Communism could put an end to social injustice and antisemitism. Jankiel and his mother also peddled various goods to affluent middle-class Jews in prewar Otwock.⁷¹ Jankiel recalls that the family was so poor—the poorest of the poor—that a rich Jewish couple once offered to adopt him, but his mother vehemently refused.⁷² That informal type of adoption was not uncommon among East European Jews before the war and continued during wartime in the ghettos.

In his early postwar testimony, which does not contain any dates or geographical locations except for Otwock, Cieszyński refers to only one member of his family, his mother. He recollects that a month before the liquidation of the Otwock ghetto, he went over to the Aryan side to search for food, leaving his mother behind in the ghetto.⁷³ He presented himself as a Christian Polish child to one of the farmers in a nearby village and was offered a job as a farmhand. However, after the liquidation of the ghetto, the farmer realized that Cieszyński was Jewish and immediately chased him away.⁷⁴

Cieszyński briefly returned to the ghetto during its liquidation that began on August 19–20, 1942, to search for his mother, but she was nowhere to be found. Instead, he encountered two Jewish policemen who caught him and wanted to take him to the German gendarmerie. The boy insisted that he was not Jewish and managed to free himself and run away to the Aryan side. During his lonely, exhaustive, village-to-village search for a safe shelter on the Aryan side, he was chased away by farmers who assumed that he was Jewish. Eventually Cieszyński had to resort to hiding in the fields and eating stolen potatoes baked in a fire.

In his early postwar testimony, Cieszyński recalls that at one point he encountered a kind and compassionate Christian Polish woman who took him to a factory where she lived, and looked after him. But when people nearby began to spread the news that she was sheltering a Jewish boy, he had to leave. Yet the woman did not abandon him; she continued to help him by bringing him food and washing him in a secluded place near the railroad track, which became his new shelter. Unfortunately, a German found him there and took him to prison. Fortunately, two Polish acquaintances emerged at a critical time and stated that he was Polish, so he was released from prison. However, he could not return to his previous hiding place at the railroad track, so he decided to travel by train to a small town, Życzyn. There he was once again caught by the Germans but managed to escape. Finally, after the end of the war, Cieszyński found refuge in the Dom Dziecka in Otwock. He was devastated by the loss of his family and community. However, like many other children in the Dom Dziecka, he was clandestinely exposed to and internalized Zionist ideals that promised children like him a brighter future in their own homeland: “And now I am alone like a stone in this world.⁷⁵ For the time being I feel fine, because I am based at [a] home for orphaned children. I hope that I will be able to return to my homeland, to Palestine.”⁷⁶

In the videotaped interview of October 22, 1995, Jankiel Cieszyński, who became Jerry Shane in the United States, fills in the missing episodes of his wartime adventures on the Aryan side, which are absent in his short postwar testimony. What emerges from the two-hour testimony conducted in English is that he remembers Polish well, and is able to cite various phrases from the wartime past both in Polish and in Yiddish, his mother tongue. On occasions, he is overtaken by emotion when describing and reflecting on certain episodes from

his prewar, wartime, and postwar past, but he recovers quickly. He speaks of his own accord about differences between the child's and the adult's approach to and understanding of reality. He explains to the interviewer that as a boy on the Aryan side he was not afraid of anything but death. "I 'took punches' and 'did what I had to do'⁷⁷ without thinking about or reflecting on the consequences of his actions. Fear of death was the primary driving force pushing him to do anything to survive, including pretending to be a Polish boy who hated Jews. Adopting such an "anti-Semitic social and cultural code" as a strategy of survival among Jewish adults and children on the Aryan side was not rare;⁷⁸ it was a necessity. In the case of Cieszyński, the antisemitic code manifested itself, as he recalls, in one incident where he shouted "You dirty Jew" at an elderly Jewish man who, like him, was caught by a German gendarme in Otwock on the eve of Christmas after the liquidation of the Otwock ghetto. The German gendarme ordered the elderly man to speak to the boy in Yiddish to test whether he understood the language. However, Cieszyński did not drop his Polish Christian identity. Instead he acted convincingly as a young aggressive antisemite, angry at a Jew who had dared to speak to him. While recollecting the details of this episode, Cieszyński shows signs of embarrassment and shame, but is sincere. He is fully aware that this is an intricate part of his survival account.

Cieszyński was, no doubt, a smart streetwise youngster, grievously experienced during the war. He survived thanks to his various talents and skills, his adaptability to challenging circumstances, and to pure luck. In the Otwock ghetto, Cieszyński witnessed his father dying of hunger, and the death of many children, including his middle brother Abraham, who died of complications from untreated gangrene. But thanks to his wits, Cieszyński learned how to pass as a Christian Polish beggar, entertainer, and candy seller on trains.⁷⁹ He recollects an initial frustration when, after sneaking in and out of the ghetto through a hole in the barbed wire that he called "his own private gate," he did not know how to behave or what Christian greetings to say to the farmers, and was therefore easily recognized as a Jew. Nevertheless he quickly learned how to act by imitating professional beggars who were a common feature of the Polish wartime countryside. He found temporary shelters in barns and haystacks, and underneath a newspaper stand at the railway station in Otwock. Trains became Cieszyński's place of adventure, since as he recalls, they took him to many unknown towns

and villages. The train was also a workplace where he sold candies and sang his own composed songs about black marketeers. Such songs were popular among Poles and no doubt helped him to be identified as “one of us,” and to receive tips for his singing.

The wartime circumstances taught Cieszyński not to be afraid of stealing fruits, vegetables, or eggs, or of milking cows to satisfy his hunger, nor was he hesitant to trick a Polish boy, Jerzy Włodzimierz Matuszak, five years his senior, so he could steal his birth certificate, an essential document of proof of one’s Christian Polish background. He knew that the stolen birth certificate was not ideal because of the age difference, so he did not show it often but only when it was absolutely necessary. Despite the energetic, straightforward tone in which Cieszyński retells his wartime adventures, a sorrowful, reflexive undertone enters his voice as he speaks of the affinity with dogs that he began to feel during the war.⁸⁰

The videotaped testimony of 1996 does not mention the kind Polish woman who looked after him at the railway station referred to in the early postwar testimony, but instead recalls the Król family from Garwolin.⁸¹ The Król couple hid him in a shelter and wanted to adopt him, but their rescue activities were uncovered and denounced. As a result Cieszyński had to run away from their place. It is possible that Jankiel might be referring to the same person or couple as in the early postwar testimony, but only an additional interview could verify this.

As in his early postwar testimony, in his later testimony of 1996 Cieszyński recollects the scary episode of being caught by the Jewish policemen in the aftermath of the liquidation of the Otwock ghetto. But he adds another layer to this story. While in the Jewish Children’s Home in Otwock, Cieszyński recognized one of the former Jewish policemen whom he calls by his first name, Lolek. Dressed in the uniform of a Polish soldier, Lolek came with other soldiers stationed at the local hospital to see a performance staged by the Jewish children in the Dom Dziecka. Cieszyński spotted the man in the audience and afterward denounced him to the authorities.⁸² This shows that he was an alert young man who was critical of the Jewish police’s collaboration with the Germans and sought justice for the Nazi crimes.

Tamara Jarnicka’s early postwar testimony, written in the form of a curriculum vitae (*Życiorys*), is filled with important dates in her wartime biography.⁸³ She wrote it at an unknown date in the Children’s Home in Otwock. An adult, Jarnicka, who adopted the Hebrew name

Tamar Miran in Israel, her new homeland, retells the same episodes from her life in a one-and-half-hour videotaped interview.⁸⁴ The interview took place on December 25, 1996, and was conducted in Hebrew in her home at Rishon Letsion, Israel.

Tamara Jarnicka was born in Warsaw on May 17, 1934. In her early postwar testimony, she states that she was born on May 17, 1933. This might be a simple typographical error or a sign that the girl at that time had forgotten her exact age. Actual forgetting of one's date of birth was common among children born in the 1930s, for while they lived on the Aryan side, they were not allowed to possess any documents or family photos that might reveal their true identity or any details about their prewar lives. This was an essential safety measure. These children also needed to seem older than their years during the war to survive ghettos and labor camps or younger in the early postwar period to classify for particular immigration programs for young refugees of a certain age. Therefore they sometimes augmented their dates of birth depending on the specific situation. It was only after the war that some of these children were lucky enough to correct their dates of birth by accessing remaining documents or by garnering information from adult relatives, particularly those who lived in the West or in Palestine/Israel. Such relatives were frequently the only family members who could share with child survivors family's memorabilia such as letters, postcards, and photos of parents and grandparents, and of special family's occasions, including snapshots of the children's parents with them soon after birth. Conversely, children without relatives abroad relied on estimates of their birth dates by strangers. Jewish educators at Jewish children's homes usually based these estimates on the child's recollection of which Jewish holidays were celebrated close to his or her birth date. Some, like Chaim Bareket (Hayim Bursztyn), estimated their own birth date based on conversations with former residents of the towns where they were born. "The date of my birth that I have created is June 13, 1934, because I do not have any other information. The date has been created according to the memory of the people who lived near Tel Aviv and who remember me as a baby in Poland."⁸⁵

Another group of children never succeeded in finding out their real birth dates. For example, Barbara Gesundeheit, a child from the Warsaw ghetto who was in the care of the Dom Dziecka in Otwock almost until its closure in late 1949, states in her interview of October 29, 1996: "I do not know my date of birth. There are three

[potential] dates; May 14, 1938, 1939, or 1940, nobody knows.”⁸⁶ Among the so-called luggage children (*walizkowe dzieci*) thrown out by parents from trains en route to the death camps, many still do not know their birth date.

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Tamara Jarnicka’s early postwar testimony opens with a statement about her prewar life. Before the outbreak of the war she and her parents lived on Pańska Street 78 in Warsaw. Her father was a skilled carpenter with his own workshop and her mother made bed quilts.⁸⁷ In the testimony of 1996, we get to know Tamara’s parents by their first names, Arie Yudke and Shosha Bracha Jarnicki.⁸⁸ Jarnicka adds that the family spoke both Yiddish and Polish at home. In her early postwar testimony, the prewar period is summarized in one sentence: “I was very content before the war.”⁸⁹ Her recollections of the family’s life in the Warsaw ghetto are similarly brief and mention only Śliska 52, the first address to which the family had relocated after the establishment of the Warsaw ghetto in November 1940. Jarnicka stresses that the ghetto was terribly poor, and her family’s situation was relatively well off. Next, she retells her move to the Aryan side on March 21, 1943, when her father took her to one of his prewar Polish Christian acquaintances who accepted her without financial reward. Her early postwar recollections of life at her rescuers’ home are quite sketchy. They focus on two aspects: the attitudes of the Polish family toward her from the time she came to stay with them until the Warsaw Uprising of August 1, 1944 when they separated; and on Jarnicka’s deteriorating health. While at the home of her rescuers, Jarnicka began to suffer from rickets which, as in the case of Lili Shop, affected her walking ability. Jarnicka suffered from “knock-knees” (*iksy*), one of the common symptoms of the disease among older children. After the war she underwent a successful operation on her knees in Israel, whereas Lili Shop had undergone the same operation earlier in Poland, under close medical attention and her mother’s care.

The family who sheltered her was not attentive to her medical condition.

At the beginning I felt very good at this family. Of course, I did not go outside at all and spent all days sitting in a room. During the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto, mummy and daddy were in the ghetto, while I started to feel unwell. After some months of sitting in the room, I could not run or jump. I felt numbness in my legs. But they did not pay attention to my problem and I was continu-

ously deteriorating. And that's how a year has passed. When the Warsaw Uprising broke out, I began to go out. But outside I could not run or jump; it seemed to me that I forgot how to do that. When the uprising came to the end, the family simply left and did not return. The same day the Germans ordered everybody to leave their homes and to go to the Dworzec Zachodni [West Station]. The next day, though I did not want to, I had to leave home by myself without much clothes and without food. The family must have secretly taken all the food with them. After four hours of slow walking finally I reached the Dworzec Zachodni.⁹⁰

In Jarnicka's videotaped testimony of 1996, we learn the name of her rescuers, Mr. and Mrs. Polny, and the first name of their daughter Hanka, who was slightly older than Tamara and played with her. The later testimony also throws light on circumstances that had contributed to her developing rickets. She recalls that when she first arrived at the Polnys' home, she was given a false ID under the name Zosia Sznurowska and, like other Jewish children in her situation, was taught Christian prayers.⁹¹ Since she possessed what was regarded as "a good look"—blond hair and green eyes—her rescuers decided that she could live "on the surface," without any restrictions. They introduced her to the neighbors as a daughter of their relatives from the countryside. In the 1996 testimony, Tamara explains that her own behavior led to her confinement inside the apartment and subsequent lack of exposure to sunlight. In contrast to Polish children in the neighborhood, she was easily frightened and panicked in front of passing German soldiers. Moreover, she was afraid of playing with the Polish children in the courtyard. To protect her and themselves, the Polny couple announced that the young visitor from the countryside had left them. From that moment, Jarnicka was forced to hide in a back room of the apartment. There her major daily activity was praying to a picture of the Virgin Mary, which hung above her bed. That religious ritual, repeated daily in the mornings and in the evenings, brought her internal peace and tranquillity, a psychological phenomenon common among many hidden children, not only in Nazi-occupied Poland but elsewhere.

In both testimonies, Jarnicka recalls her next major wartime adventure, a three-day journey on a train with Warsaw civilians who, like her, had been expelled from the capital after the defeated Warsaw Uprising of August 1, 1944. She concentrates on retelling what hap-

pened to her after the train arrived on the third day, on October 10, 1944, in Łazy in Lower Silesia. Members of the local population welcomed the refugees at the railway station. There, Jarnicka came across a man with whose family she subsequently lived until her uncle found her and took her away to the Jewish Children's Home in Otwock. She carefully reconstructs the circumstances of the encounter with the strange man. When the train stopped, the man approached her and asked her if she wanted to go with him. In her videotaped testimony the interviewer asks Jarnicka if she was not afraid of leaving her Polish woman acquaintance from the train with a total stranger. She replies that as a child she felt that she made the right decision. She utters a similar statement about that decision in her early postwar testimony: "Passing as a Polish girl, I went to get coffee. I had a hard time leaving the train because my legs were in pain. When I got off the train one man asked me where I was from. I told him that I was from Warsaw and then he asked me if I wanted to go with him. Of course I agreed to that with great joy."⁹²

At first, Jarnicka was content living with her new guardian and his wife. They all moved as a family unit to the town of Sosnowiec. The couple was childless and looked after her very well, and she was a helping hand in the house. However, after a while they began to suspect that she was Jewish and subjected her to tough interrogations. Once she admitted that she was Jewish their attitude and behavior toward her changed drastically. We learn only from her testimony of 1996 the detail that led to the exposure of her Jewish background: she could not recite a special prayer for the Holy Communion rite that she claimed to have celebrated.⁹³ The couple was poor, uneducated, and extremely religious. Their names are not mentioned in either the early postwar or the later videotaped accounts.⁹⁴ But the former testimony reveals how distraught the girl became after her guardians began to abuse her because of her Jewishness, and what remained of the impact of that experience on her at the time of writing her first postwar testimony. "After a while, when they learned that I was Jewish they wanted to denounce me to the Germans, but were afraid that they might be killed themselves [for keeping a Jew], so at the end they did not denounce me. But hence my tragedy began again. They shouted at me during daytime and nighttime and abused me because I was Jewish. I struggled until the end of the war."⁹⁵

What her early postwar account does not reveal is that once she

was “uncovered” as Jewish, she adopted the antisemitic code out of fear of losing the roof over her head and stability. In contrast to Jankiel Cieszyński, however, this code was not merely a strategy of survival. As she admits in her testimony of 1996, she internalized the code. She began to announce to her “benefactors” that she did not wish to remain Jewish, that in fact she hated Jews and that Jews were a horrible people.⁹⁶ In order to get rid of any vestiges of Jewishness, young Jarnicka proclaimed that she would like to become a nun after the war. Thus her social identity, in the antisemitic environment in which she had lived, began to undergo a major transformation. She dissociated herself completely from her Jewish roots and fully internalized the negative stereotypes about Jews.⁹⁷

Jarnicka’s behavior was not unusual. In fact, many pre-adolescent and adolescent children who lived in anti-Jewish social environments in Nazi-occupied Europe underwent similar shifts of identity. This was, perhaps, the most common feature of the Jewish children’s experience during the war, though some did not completely lose the sense of their background. No doubt, there was a thin line between the use of anti-Jewish prejudice as a strategy of survival and a full identification with the non-Jewish identity that the children had to perform under pressure. In his personal memoirs, *When Memory Comes*, the eminent Israeli-American Holocaust historian Saul Friedländer, two years Jarnicka’s senior, recounts a similar transformation that he underwent as a boy in hiding: “I nevertheless felt at ease within a community of those who had nothing but scorn for Jews, and I incidentally helped stir up this scorn. I had the feeling, never put into words but nonetheless obvious, of having passed over to the compact, invincible majority, of no longer belonging to the camp of the persecuted, but, potentially at least, to that of the persecutors.”⁹⁸

The Polish-American sociologist Nechama Tec, born in 1931 in Lublin, retells similar shifts in her cultural identity, while passing as a Christian Polish teenage girl living on the Aryan side with her parents: “There were times when I believed myself to be truly Stefa’s niece, as Polish as any of her blood relations. It was not that I really forgot who I was, only that I became able to push my true self into the background. I liked my new name. Feeling and believing myself to be Krysia Bloch made life easier, and I felt less threatened when Jews were mentioned. I could listen to antisemitic stories indifferently, and even laugh heartily with everyone else about some Jewish misfortune.

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I knew that they were abusing my people, but part of me was like them.”⁹⁹ From the perspective of an adult, Friedländer refers to the wartime adoption of anti-Jewish codes and to the transformation of his identity as a painful and shameful memory, whereas Tamara Jarnicka speaks about her transformation matter of factly: this is “what I was and how I behaved.”¹⁰⁰ Jarnicka did not refer to her identity crisis in her first postwar account that she wrote as a child. Typically, in early postwar testimonies, children could neither comprehend nor reflect on what had happened to them and their social identities as a result of their long term passing as another. Moreover, many were still bonded to their Christian Polish identity and struggled with the idea of returning to Jewishness. Notes by the children’s interviewers reiterate this. For example, in the recording of the interview of Marysia Szpigiel (born Elżbieta Haberger), interviewer B. Mosiężnik summarizes the personal daily practices that demonstrate Marysia’s confused sense of identity in the Jewish Children’s Home at Narutowicza Street 18 in Łódź: “Marysia Szpigiel still continues to say Catholic prayers. She prays in the evenings and listens to Catholic mass on Sunday, which is played on the radio. She wears a chain with a cross on her neck and does not eat meat on Friday. Under her pillow we find two books: one Hebrew [not identified] and the other a Roman Catholic prayer book. Marysia insists that her nationality is Jewish and wants to go to Israel to join the Hagana movement.”¹⁰¹

Tamara Jarnicka recovered a sense of Jewish identity in the Children’s Home in Otwock through socializing with the children and adults there, and through Jewish education and holidays. There she experienced a second transformation of identity that she called “moving from one extreme to another.”¹⁰² From a child who hated Jews, she became an ardent Zionist who left Otwock with other children for Palestine/Israel via France. In the Jewish children’s home in France, out of Zionist convictions, she denounced her young cousin Jakub Buchman to the Jewish leadership because he planned to go to Canada instead of Israel.

Israel (Srul) Buchman, Jarnicka’s uncle, and father of her cousin Jakub, was responsible for recovering the girl from her guardians Mr. and Mrs. Szustak in Sosnowiec and bringing her to the Children’s Home in Otwock. It took him four visits to convince Tamara to leave Sosnowiec and travel with him to Warsaw.¹⁰³ At the time Jarnicka continued to insist on wanting to become a nun. Her uncle did not

voice objections but instead convinced her that she needed to become stronger and healthier before joining a convent. He paid off her benefactors, who insisted on receiving some reward for looking after a Jewish girl, and took Jarnicka to Warsaw, where he told her about the death of her parents. In the aftermath of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of April 19, 1943, Buchman was on the same train to a death camp as Jarnicka's father, but unlike her father he managed to jump from the train. Tamara's mother was killed in the ghetto during the uprising. Those details are all Jarnicka ever learned about what happened to her parents.

In her testimony of 1996, she recalls her uncle warmly, and speaks with shame about the denunciation of her cousin Jakub to the Zionist leadership in France. She also mentions her cousin Tamara Buchman, Jakub's sister. Israel Buchman placed both his children in the Children's Home in Otwock soon after the end of the war. Tamara Jarnicka was admitted to the same advanced group, the so-called *starszaki*, as Jakub and Tamara Buchman, even though she was two and four years younger than they, respectively. This pedagogical strategy of placing children with their young relatives was typically carried out to encourage children to quickly forge strong social bonds rather than feeling isolated among strange children.

Like Tamara Jarnicka, her cousin Tamara Buchman also produced two testimonies of her wartime experiences: the first one in the Children's Home in Otwock, and the second on December 12, 1995, in her home in Toronto, Canada. In addition, I interviewed her in her home in Toronto on December 15, 2007. As a teenager in Otwock, Tamara Buchman was a prolific and talented young writer. She contributed many articles to the famous *Gazetka scienna*, children's newsletter, of the Dom Dziecka. Some of her essays on her wartime experiences and life in the Children's Home were written in a literary, fictionalized form. One of the stories bearing her signature, "Nasz Dom" ("Our Home"), is narrated anthropomorphically from the perspective of the orphanage.¹⁰⁴ But Buchman's undated early postwar five-page personal testimony was a simple, non-literary account.¹⁰⁵

Buchman begins the testimony with a description of life with her immediate family in the Warsaw ghetto prior to the summer of 1942. Like her cousin, she considers this period "happy memories" of a privileged existence: "We lived in a spacious apartment at Gęsia Street no. 49. We led a good life. We did not suffer from hunger like many other

children did. My brother and I studied: I attended a ‘gymnasium’ and my brother was in the fifth grade in a school. In other words, we did not suffer poverty.”¹⁰⁶ The Great Deportation that began on July 22, 1942, put an end to what Tamara remembered as a relatively peaceful and stable existence in the ghetto. Fortuitously, during the deadly destruction of Warsaw Jewry, no one from her immediate family was deported from the *Umschlagplatz* to Treblinka. Tamara’s parents succeeded in becoming officially employed in one of the German factories operating in the remaining small ghetto. Possessing a work permit was a temporary ticket to staying alive, but Tamara’s parents soon understood that the Germans could not be trusted. Therefore they decided to move to the Aryan side. Tamara recounts her departure from the ghetto on November 11, 1942, in considerable detail. She and her mother left the ghetto separately, on the same day, and met on the Aryan side. The reunion itself is not recounted in Tamara Buchman’s early postwar testimony.¹⁰⁷

On 11 November, my mother and I moved to the “Polish side” and went to a Polish acquaintance who had told my mother that we could come to him and stay in his place. This was a man to whom my parents had given many possessions, and because of that, he had prospered. We entered his home in the evening. He welcomed us in a friendly manner. However, the next day his apprentice told us to go away and the man pretended that he was sick. Before our departure we heard both of them laughing at us in his kitchen. We had to leave his place the same day, and they took all of the belongings that we had brought with us.¹⁰⁸

Yet thanks to a sudden fortuitous encounter on the street with a different Christian Polish acquaintance, the mother and daughter found a safe shelter for the night. Subsequently, the mother found two long-term shelters located in close proximity to each other: one for Tamara, and one for herself and her younger son, Jakub, who had joined her. Tamara stayed with a family for whom she worked as a servant for two years. She worked hard there, and as she states, she did not complain about the harsh and unpleasant conditions. “Luckily my mother met another acquaintance that allowed us to sleep in his place. Later I was placed with one man for whom I worked as a servant. This was very hard work and, in addition, I also had to help his girl in her stud-

ies. This girl was unpleasant and nagging, but I did not complain. I thanked God that I could stay with them.”¹⁰⁹

Her early postwar testimony does not contain references to dates and names. However, in her interviews of 1995 and 2007,¹¹⁰ Buchman recounts details such as the name of the street where she lived on the Aryan side, her Aryan name, the names of the Christian Polish rescuers and the nature of the arrangement between them and Tamara’s mother. She lived under the name of Ela Jabłońska in the house of the Chojnacki family on Towarowa Street in Warsaw, and her mother paid them 1,500 zlotys a month for sheltering her. Buchman’s mother lived on the same street under the Aryan name of Weronika Jabłońska along with her younger brother, whose Aryan name was Jerzy Jabłoński.¹¹¹

As in other children’s testimonies, Buchman’s early postwar testimony contains references to specific times, but they are measured not by dates but by association with important events in their own lives: the beginning of the war, relocation to the ghetto, the move to the Aryan side, and the Russian army’s appearance. Depending on their age and circumstances, children who lived in wartime Warsaw temporally situated events that had happened to them with reference to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of April 19, 1943 or the Warsaw Uprising of August 1, 1944.

In the aftermath of the Warsaw Uprising of August 1944, Tamara Buchman was reunited with her mother and brother and also with her father. Srul Buchman had been hiding in different locations on the Aryan side after escaping from a moving train headed for Treblinka. The reunited family left Warsaw in the autumn of 1944 after the end of the Warsaw Uprising, when the Germans forced the civilian population to leave the capital. However, their time together in the small ruined and abandoned village of *Szcześliwice*, near Warsaw did not last long and did not make them happy as the name of the village suggests in Polish. Her mother took ill and soon after passed away, ending Buchman’s dream that the entire family would survive the war. Her mother’s death overshadowed the joy of freedom. Although Tamara was free and well cared for in the *Otwock Children’s Home*, in her early postwar testimony she sounded unsure and disoriented about her future life. She conveyed her grief for her mother: “That’s the end, but we had to carry on living. We had to fight on, and now I am by myself in the Children’s Home. My mother paid with her life

for our freedom. These are the trajectories of my life. And now I do not know what awaits me next. I cannot believe that I am free, that my mother, who so badly wanted to be free, did not survive to see this moment.”¹¹²

In her later interviews of 1995 and 2007, Buchman recalls almost exactly the same events after the family was reunited in August 1944.¹¹³ As in the early postwar testimony, she dwells on the death of her mother and the circumstances that led to her death on January 11, 1945, just six days before the Soviet army captured the Polish capital and freed it from the German occupation. But she adds to her own recollections her father’s perspective on her mother’s death, something Tamara learned only after the war. Srul Buchman believed that the nuns who ran the hospital at Okęcie, a suburb of Warsaw where Tamara’s mother was admitted with a severe inflammation of joints might have deliberately poisoned her. Many Jewish fugitives suffered from painful inflammation of joints that sometimes was accompanied by high temperature and fever. Delirious, Tamara’s mother was speaking loudly in Yiddish. Srul Buchman suspected that the nuns might have feared that the Germans would kill all staff and patients had they discovered a Jew in the hospital, and under such threatening circumstances, the nun themselves decided to end her life. While Srul Buchman’s conjecture can never be verified, it reveals how the difficult climate of Polish-Jewish relations during the war and in the early postwar period have colored individual survivors’ interpretations of painful, traumatic events. We know, for example, that in the aftermath of the Kielce pogrom of July 4, 1946, survivors were generally afraid to be admitted to hospitals and to be treated by Polish doctors. At that time the remnants of Polish Jewry were in a state of fear, rooted in reality not imagination.¹¹⁴ Such fear could also have led to understandable far-fetched interpretations of personal misfortunes at the hands of Poles. Without a doubt, her mother’s premature death has been a major tragedy throughout Tamara Buchman’s life. Even as an adult she had a hard time coming to terms with the irony that the mother who saved her children and herself on the Aryan side for almost two years perished so close to the end of the war. But as an adult, Buchman, a mother and a grandmother herself, recalls this painful event, fully composed and emotionally calm. The passage of time had a tranquil influence on the ways she narrates this tragedy.

As in other cases, the videotaped testimony of Linka (Halina)

Sztarkman, conducted at her home in Ramat Aviv in Israel on February 16, 1996, complements her early postwar written testimony from the Children's Home in Otwock.¹¹⁵ Halina Sztarkman (now Lina Kornblum) was born on January 30, 1933, into a large upper-middle-class Jewish family in Warsaw. Born at home on Nalewski Street, when she was a young child her parents moved to a large apartment at Grzybowska Street no. 16 where she had her own room. Sztarkman survived the war with her mother. The two went into hiding on the Aryan side, first in Warsaw, and then outside of the capital. Sztarkman met her future husband, Władek Kornblum, in the Children's Home in Otwock and almost instantly became his sweetheart. Unlike Władek, she did not leave the Dom Dziecka with the group of children who emigrated to Palestine via France in 1947 as part of the Bricha movement. She remained in Poland until 1950 with her mother, who insisted that Linka graduate from high school before leaving the country. In April 1950, seventeen-year-old Sztarkman made *aliyah* with her mother to Israel, where she was reunited with Władek in Kibbutz Amir, the first home in Israel for many children from the Children's Home in Otwock.

In her early postwar testimony, Sztarkman recounts in a sketchy manner her wartime experiences in the Warsaw ghetto and on the Aryan side. Interestingly, her testimony begins with a strikingly precocious reflection: "In comparison to other children, my experiences are rather less interesting. In spite of this I will describe them."¹¹⁶ This type of evaluation of one's own wartime experience is rare in early postwar testimonies but common in memoirs and audio and videotaped testimonies of the 1990s and 2000s. Sztarkman's earlier reflection suggests that some child survivors were quite mature, able to engage in a process of comparison of their wartime experiences, and aware of differences in patterns of survival. These children were capable of differentiating between the relatively more and less devastating experiences, and of conceiving of a hierarchy of experiences: "standard," "normal/boring," "horrible," and "the most horrible and embarrassing," such as sexual abuse, the latter only disclosed to closest friends.

The first events recollected in Sztarkman's early postwar testimony are the loss of her father on July 22, 1942, the first day of the Great Deportation, and the subsequent loss of her family's apartment on Grzybowska Street in the Warsaw ghetto. Next she briefly recounts how she and her mother searched for a safe home in the ghetto among

her many aunts, and how the family in the Warsaw ghetto was systematically diminishing in front of her eyes as a result of the murderous Nazi policies. She recounts the date that she and her mother left the ghetto for the Aryan side—February 12 [in fact this was February 9], 1943¹¹⁷—and their first hiding place in an apartment on Obozowa Street in Koło, a working-class suburb of Warsaw. Soon the mother and daughter were joined in the apartment by Linka's uncle, the uncle's business partner, his wife, and two children.

After a while mother and daughter moved to a less comfortable apartment on Ciepła Street which, according to Sztarkman's early postwar testimony, had a special hiding place in the cellar. This shelter, accessible through a wooden door in the apartment's floor, was the primary reason they moved there. Four other Jews were also hiding there. Sztarkman describes the group's everyday existence:

We were six people all together, but had to pretend that the apartment was empty. Our host worked in a factory and therefore the apartment was locked during daytime. Someone always stood guard: peeped through the lock in the front doors and warned us if anybody was coming down or climbing the stairs. We had to whisper and to move without making any noise. We had to bend down to pass by the window so we would not be visible from the outside and could not walk freely in the apartment's hall without a reason. If someone was knocking at the door and our host was at home we had to run to the cellar underneath the apartment.¹¹⁸

Sztarkman's early postwar testimony next recollects the summer of 1944, when mother and daughter left Warsaw. In June they went by foot to Nowe Górcze, a small village near the larger village of Jelonki, not far from Warsaw.¹¹⁹ There they remained with an unnamed acquaintance through the entire fall and early winter. By then, people were already talking about the Russians' imminent arrival. Mother and daughter stared at the sky every day searching for Russian military planes. Time passed quickly, and finally, after learning that the Germans had been defeated, the two left the area.

The 1996 videotaped testimony fills in some gaps in Sztarkman's early postwar account of her life in the Warsaw ghetto and on the Aryan side. These later recollections focus on dramatic episodes, important to Linka's personal wartime biography.¹²⁰ However, they are not retold in precise chronological order. Like other child survivors,

Sztarkman recalls hungry children in the Warsaw ghetto. She remembers a child who once stole a sandwich out of her hands on the street. She stresses that she herself did not suffer from hunger in the ghetto.¹²¹ Moreover, her favorite aunt Halina was in charge of tutoring her in different subjects. This was the first learning experience in her life, as she was prevented from going to school by the outbreak of war on September 1, 1939.

Sztarkman pays particular attention to a miraculous escape on the way to the *Umschlagplatz*, an infamous place from which Warsaw Jews were shipped to Treblinka.¹²² She herself did not remember the event from her childhood, but her mother had told her about it many times, and it turned into a salient episode in her personal wartime account. According to the story, mother and daughter were already on a cart headed for the *Umschlagplatz* when a woman in her forties stopped the German guard and volunteered to go to the *Umschlagplatz* in their place. The German apparently agreed to this request and Linka and her mother swapped places with the anonymous woman. The veracity of this implausible story can never be established, but it demonstrates the need of the human imagination to explain surviving, against the odds, the daily selection at the *Umschlagplatz*, and the need, under the conditions of demoralization and degradation, for heroic accounts filled with brave and altruistic individuals.

In her recollection of her life in the Warsaw ghetto, Sztarkman mentions her aunt Halina on several occasions. Halina was a member of Ha-Shomer ha-Za'ir, the underground Zionist youth movement in the ghetto.¹²³ She greatly helped Linka and her mother, assisting them in obtaining false Aryan identity cards under the names Jadwiga Zduńczyk (Linka) and Halina Kucharska (Linka's mother). The aunt arranged their first shelter on the Aryan side of Warsaw, on Obozowa Street, in the Koło neighborhood. The apartment belonged to a Polish widower, Mr. Brzozowski, who was paid for supplying it. Halina and an unnamed uncle stayed with them from time to time, returning to the Warsaw ghetto in April 1943 just a few days before the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Linka and her mother never saw either of them again.

One of the most elaborated episodes in her 1996 videotaped interview is Sztarkman's adventures while in hiding in Nowe Górcze.¹²⁴ In her early postwar testimony, Sztarkman refers only very briefly to this episode and speaks only about nearby Jelonki and not Nowe Górcze. We learn from the 1996 interview that Linka and her mother were part

of a group of thirteen Jews hidden in a big house with a garden that belonged to a Pole, Mr. Chanula. Once the Warsaw Uprising broke out, Mr. Chanula left for Warsaw, and Linka, with the good “Aryan look,” was put in charge of bringing food to the rest of the fugitives. She states that for two months “she was like a little soldier,”¹²⁵ buying loaves of bread in a local bakery and stealing cabbage from nearby fields. She also went to a local doctor to buy medicine for one of the adults suffering from dysentery. In one particularly dangerous situation, she recalls being surrounded by local children who suspected she was Jewish, and demanded that she take them to her home. Luckily, a neighbor, Mr. Perzyna, who knew about the Jewish fugitives, helped extricate her from the children’s aggressive interrogation.

Unlike many other children, Sztarkman did not finish her early postwar testimony with reflections about what the Otwock Children’s Home meant to her. Yet in both the 1996 videotaped interview and the 2006 interview with the author of this article, in her Tel Aviv apartment, she utters a similarly moving statement, which resembles other children’s brief evaluations from the early postwar period: “For me the Dom Dziecka meant a return to life. This was the most important period in my life.”¹²⁶ In Otwock she regained a sense of childhood and passion for learning and life, forged meaningful and lasting friendships, and met her future husband. The classmates from her group shared similar wartime and postwar experiences and as a result treated each other as if they were a close and loving family.

CONCLUSIONS

The American psychologist Henry Greenspan was perhaps the first scholar to posit the lack of significant difference in early postwar testimonies and later testimonies in their recounting of the wartime past.¹²⁷ In *Collected Memoirs*, historian Christopher Browning similarly, for the first time, asserts the lack of difference in the retelling of the past in survivors’ testimonies of differing times, calling this the “firm core of shared memory.”¹²⁸ My comparative analysis of child survivors’ testimonies¹²⁹ demonstrates that the essential episodes of their wartime autobiographies remain almost intact despite the passage of time. Diverse experiences constitute the essence of their wartime biographies and define who they were during the war. These experiences are the most formative in both positive and negative senses. They might seem

trivial, associated with daily activities such as waiting for food, eating, and being well looked after or being reprimanded by adults, but in the minds of the children they are filled with personal meaning. The “core events” belonging to essential wartime recollections are those of a shocking and traumatic nature: separation from parents; witnessing death; stealing food; being rescued under terrifying conditions. This is not to say that with the passage of time, some elements of the essential wartime biographies are not sometimes retold differently. But this also depends on external contingencies that I mentioned previously such as the script, the interviewer’s skills and his or her historical knowledge; and the use of the mother tongue corresponding to the one in wartime. These factors must be considered, along with the age, articulateness, emotional mood, and memories of the interviewees themselves at the time of their retelling their pasts.

The videotaped adult testimonies generally complement the earlier ones by conveying fundamental wartime episodes with a comprehension and self-reflection absent in the early postwar testimony. Some episodes, vivid in the children’s testimonies in the early postwar period, are omitted in the videotaped testimonies, but the majority are recalled in a similar manner. Mixed emotions of fear, nostalgia, loss, and sorrow surround the retelling of wartime autobiographies. These emotions are recalled and relived during the recollection of particular episodes in “flashbulbs of memories,” a process captured in the videotaped oral interviews, but difficult to detect in the early postwar written testimonies. The early postwar child survivors’ testimonies illuminate the specific ways in which children recall their childhoods, and reveal that children experience and retell reality in different ways from adults. In their minds, for example, the death of one or both parents does not possess the same quality of finality, and its consequences may be unclear to them.

Overall, child survivor testimony is a necessary and irreplaceable source in historical investigations concerning the lived experiences of “the 1.5 generation.” Although it cannot be viewed as the sole or self-sufficient evidence, it is essential in the writings of the *Alltagsgeschichte* of Jewish children and childhood both during and after the war. It is indispensable in painting the portrait of that entire generation, and greatly elucidates our understanding, both of the Holocaust itself and its short-term and long-term impact on individuals. The challenge for historians remains how to make out of the child Holocaust survivors’

personal testimonies an objective history, and to acknowledge that “subjectivity, in all its depths, is also a part of history.”¹³⁰

NOTES

The chapter epigraph is from Michał Głowiński, *The Black Seasons* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 8.

1. On the Jewish Children’s Home in Otwock, see Joanna B. Michlic, “The Raw Memory of War: Early Postwar Testimonies of Children in Dom Dziecka in Otwock,” *Yad Vashem Studies*, 37, no. 1, 11–52.

2. William James wrote this statement in “The Principles of Psychology” in 1890. His main argument was that although memory is not always perfect, sometimes a memory can accurately preserve a moment in time. Cited in Elizabeth A. Kensinger, “Remembering the Details: Effects of Emotions,” *Emotion Review* 1, no. 2 (2009): 99.

3. Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Crises of Memory and the Second World War* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006). Suleiman voices this position, for the first time, in her article “The 1.5 Generation: Thinking About Child Survivors and the Holocaust,” *American Imago* 59, no. 3 (2002): 277–95.

4. For discussion of the makeup of the Jewish Historical Commissions, see Laura Jockusch, “Khurbn Forshung—Jewish Historical Commissions in Europe, 1943–1949,” in *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, no. 6 (2007), 441–73.

5. On activities of Genia Silkes in the Warsaw ghetto, see Ruta Sakowska, ed., *Archiwum Ringelbluma Vol. 2 Dzieci—tajne nauczanie w getcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny IN-B, 2000), 3; Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?: Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); and Susan M. Kardos, “‘Not Bread Alone’: Clandestine Schooling and Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto During the Holocaust,” *Harvard Educational Review* 72, no. 1 (Spring 2002).

6. Thirty-four children’s testimonies written down at this half-day center survived in the archives of Oneg Shabbat; 25 testimonies out of these 34 personal accounts were written on September 2, 1941. For the interviews, see Sakowska, ed. *Archiwum Ringelbluma Vol. 2 Dzieci—tajne nauczanie w getcie warszawskim*, 3–60.

7. *Instrukcje dla badania przeżyć dzieci żydowskich w okresie okupacji niemieckiej*, seria 2. Prace Metodologiczne, vol. 3 (Łódź: Centralny Komitet Żydów Polskich, Komisja Historyczna, 1945), 1–16; and *Metodologiczne onweyzungen tsum dem khurbn fun poylishn yidntum*, no. 5, Łódź, 31–47. For

an analysis of the *Instrukcje*, see Joanna B. Michlic, “*The Children Accuse, 1946: Between Exclusion From and Inclusion Into the Holocaust Canon*,” in *Zwischen Zwangsarbeit, Holocaust und Vertreibung: Polnische, jüdische und deutsche Kindheiten im besetzten Polen*, ed. Krzysztof Ruchniewicz and Jürgen Zinnecker (Munich, 2007); and *Newsletter of the Society for the History of Children and Youth, H-Childhood*, no. 9, February 2007, <http://www.history.vt.edu/Jones/SHCY/Newsletter9/michlic.html>.

8. *Metodologiczne omówienia zsum dem khurbn fun poylishn yidntum*, no. 5, 35

9. On the attitudes toward children and childhood in modern Europe, see, for example, Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times* (London: Polity, 2001).

10. *Metodologiczne omówienia zsum dem khurbn fun poylishn yidntum*, no. 5, 32.

11. Though Philip Friedman, a leading member of the Historical Commission in Poland and professional historian, envisaged, as early as 1946, writing a synthetic history which would integrate both official sources of the Germans and their collaborators, as well as Jewish sources from during and after the war. See Philip Friedman, “Zagłada Żydów polskich 1939–1945,” *Biuletyn Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce*, vol. 1 (1946): 163–208.

12. See Jockusch, “Khurbn Forshung—Jewish Historical Commissions in Europe, 1943–1949,” 461.

13. I borrowed this term from the French historian Annette Wieviorka; see Annette Wieviorka, *L'ère du témoin* (Paris: PLON, 1998) (translated into English as *The Era of the Witness* [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006]).

14. I borrowed this term from Father Patrick Desbois's personal investigation, *The Holocaust by Bullets: A Priest's Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

15. For the discussion of the revival of interest in the testimony of the Holocaust survivors, see Geoffrey Hartman, *The Longest Shadow: In the Aftermath of the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996); see also Wieviorka, *The Era of Witness*, 107–18.

16. Saul Friedländer, *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939–1945* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007). Friedländer uses a rich mosaic of personal testimonies “from the event” that he privileges over postwar personal testimonies.

17. Omer Bartov, *From the Holocaust in Galicia to Contemporary Genocide: Common Ground—Historical Differences*, Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Annual Lecture (Washington, D.C.: United States Memorial Holocaust Museum, 2003).

18. Omer Bartov, "Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies: Jewish-Christian Relations in Buczacz, 1939–1944," *East European Politics and Societies* 25, no. 3 (2011): 486–511.

19. Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003); and Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010).

20. Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (London: Penguin Books, 2002).

21. Omer Bartov, "Testimony and History: Setting the Record Straight," *Pastforward* (Spring 2011): 24. See also Omer Bartov, "Interethnic Relations in the Holocaust: Postwar Testimonies from Buczacz in East Galicia, 1941–1944," *Zmanim: A Historical Quarterly* 98 (Spring 2007): 82–91 (in Hebrew).

22. See, for example, Nicola Tyrer, *Stolen Childhoods: The Untold Story of the Children Interned by the Japanese in the Second World War* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2011).

23. Debórah Dwork, *Children With A Jewish Star. Jewish Youth in Nazi Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991) and Nicholas Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives Under the Nazis* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005).

24. On this subject, see Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?* 39–42.

25. Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001). 24. Bauer's observations are confirmed by scientific research by psychologists, investigating the nuances of memories of emotional events, particularly of negative valence, in older adults. See Kensinger, "Remembering the Details: Effects of Emotions," and the same author, "How Emotion Affects Older Adults' Memories for Event Details," *Memory* 17, no.2 (2009): 208–19.

26. For a critique of oral testimonies as inauthentic and heavily mediated, see, for example, Sidney M. Bolkosky, *Searching for Meaning in the Holocaust* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2002); and Trevor Lummis, *Listening to History: The Authenticity of Oral Evidence* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987). For a positive evaluation of oral testimony as an expression of the immediate, intimate voice of memory, see Lawrence Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), 57.

27. In this respect a notable exception is a new study of external contingencies edited by Jürgen Matthäus, *Holocaust Testimony and Its Transformations: Approaching an Auschwitz Survivor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

28. Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (New York: Vintage Books, 1953),

62–69. On Bloch's approaches to social history and evidence, see Daniel Chirot, "The Social and Historical Landscape of Marc Bloch," in *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*, ed. Theda Skocpol (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 22–46.

29. Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, 64.

30. See Philippe Lejeune, *On Diary* (Manoa: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), especially the chapter "The Diary as Antifiction," 201–12.

31. On the influence of adults on children, see Heywood, *A History of Childhood*, 7.

32. Some adult Jewish fugitives in hiding alone in the countryside also imitated and inevitably internalized the particular peasant language spoken in the region where they hid; see, for example, the wartime diary of a young, intelligent Jewish woman named Maria Koper, brought to light by Henryk Grynberg, *Pamiętnik Marii Koper* (Cracow: Znak, 1993).

33. Testimony of Tirtsah Puter, file no. 51079, July 10, 2000, interviewer Chava Colodner, Kfar Saba, Israel, Shoah Foundation Institute (hereafter SFI), Tape 3 (Hebrew).

34. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, February 16, 1996, Ramat Aviv, Israel, interviewer Miriam Thau, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

35. Testimony of Lina, (Linka) Kornblum, (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, Tape 1, SFI (Hebrew).

36. Testimony of Aleksander Blum, file no. 46201, September 24, 1998, Seattle, Wash., interviewer Janice Englehart, SFI, Tape 2 (English).

37. Testimony of Barbara Gesundheit, file no. 21539, October 29, 1996, Melbourne, Australia, interviewer Pamela Freeman, SFI, Tape 1 (English).

38. Irene Eber, *The Choice: Poland, 1939–1945* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), 157.

39. For example, Mira Reym Binford, a child survivor from Będziny, poignantly delineates this search in her documentary film *Diamonds in the Snow* (2005).

40. On the contemporary destruction of the remnants of material culture of the multicultural Ukraine, see Omer Bartov, *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007).

41. Maria Hochberg-Mariańska and Noe Grüss, eds., *Dzieci żydowskie oskarżają* (Kraków: Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Krakowie, 1946). Maria Hochberg-Mariańska, who was one of the child survivors' interviewers, wrote short stories based on the children's testimonies, including "Dzieci," in *W 3–cią rocznicę Zagłady Ghetta w Krakowie (13. March 1943–13. March 1946)* (Kraków: Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Krakowie, 1946), 146–57. She is also a coauthor with her husband Mordecai Peleg of the

wartime autobiography *Witnesses: Life in Occupied Kraków* (London: Routledge, 1991).

42. For an English translation of the book, see Maria Hochberg-Mariańska and Noe Grüss, eds. *The Children Accuse*, trans. Bill Johnston (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1996).

43. Testimony of Eric Holder, in *The Children Accuse*, 117. This testimony was originally filed as no. 889 at the Archives of the Central Jewish Historical Commission, (CJHC). Dr. David Haupt interviewed Eric Holder in Przemyśl.

44. Testimony of Eric (Eryk in Polish) Holder, file no. 40103, January 21, 1998, Kiryat Haim, Israel, interviewer Zvi Karniel, SFI, Tape 1 (Hebrew).

45. Dieter Pohl, *Von der "Judenpolitik" zum Judenmord: Der Distrikt Lublin des Generalgouvernements 1939–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993); and Thomas Sandkühler, *Endlösung in Galizien: Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Dietz, 1996). Dieter Pohl also published an article mainly focused on the Nazi crimes in Stanisławów: "Hans Krüger and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanisławów Region (Galicia)," in *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1997): 239–64.

46. Testimony of Eric Holder, in *The Children Accuse*, 117.

47. Testimony of Eric Holder, file no. 40103, SFI, Tape 1.

48. *Ibid.*, Tape 1.

49. Testimony of Eric Holder, in *The Children Accuse*, 118.

50. Testimony of Eric Holder, file no. 40103, SFI, Tape 1.

51. Testimony of Eric Holder, file no. 40103, SFI, Tape 3.

52. Testimony of Eric Holder, in *The Children Accuse*, 119.

53. Testimony of Eric Holder, file no. 40103, SFI, Tape 3.

54. Testimony of Teresa Korner, file no. 19794, September 8, 1996, Neve Monoson, Israel, interviewer Miriam Thau, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

55. Lawrence Langer, *Versions of Survival: The Holocaust and the Human Spirit* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982).

56. Testimony of Lili Shop (Szynowłoga), file no. 13119, August 2, 1996, Tel Aviv, Israel, interviewer Miriam Thau, SFI, two-and-a-half-hour videotaped oral interview in Hebrew.

57. Wspomnienia Lili Szynowłogi, 1934, file no. 301/5521, Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw (hereafter Archives of ZIH).

58. Interview with Irena Talmon, M.D., Jerusalem, March 22, 2008.

59. It is estimated that approximately 402,000 Jews lived in Warsaw alone by the end of 1940. There is a relatively large body of literature on the history of the Jewish community of Warsaw and Warsaw Province during World War II. See, for example, Israel Gutman, *Resistance: The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994); Ruta Sakowska, *Ludzie z*

dzielnicy zamkniętej, 2nd exp. ed. (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1993); Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *Getto warszawskie: Przewodnik po nieistniejącym mieście* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS, 2001); and the salient work about the underground Jewish archives Oyneg Shabes (Oneg Shabbat) by Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*

60. Testimony of Lili Shop (Szynowłoga), file no. 13119, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

61. Wspomnienia Lili Shop, file no. 301/5521, 1, 3, Archives of ZIH.

62. Ibid. 1, 3.

63. Testimony of Lili Shop (Szynowłoga), file no. 13119, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

64. Rickets was already endemic among children in the ghettos during the war.

65. Testimony of Lili Shop (Szynowłoga), file no. 13119, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

66. Ibid., Tape 3.

67. See Guta Szynowłoga-Trokenheim, *Życie w grobowcu* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo YPSYLON, 2002).

68. Testimony of Lili Shop (Szynowłoga), file no. 13119, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

69. Ibid. 3.

70. Testimony of Jerry Shane (Jankiel Cieszyński), file no. 7860, SFI, Tape 1 (English). The videotaped interview took place on October 22, 1995, in Morton Grove, Illinois, interviewer Doris Lazarus.

71. For the history of pre-1939 Otwock, see K. Kubiak, *Zarys dziejów Otwocka* (Otwock: Wydawnictwo Moja Ziemia, 1996).

72. Testimony of Jerry Shane (Jankiel Cieszyński), file no. 7860, SFI, Tape 1 (English).

73. Testimony of Jankiel Cieszyński, file no. 301/5514, 1, Archives of ZIH; see also the same testimony, “Z przeżyć Jankla Cieszyńskiego,” in *Księga Wspomnień*, ed. Franciszka Oliwa, p. 11. *Księga Wspomnień* comprises early postwar testimonies and memoirs of twenty-two children in the Otwock Children’s Home, which Oliwa, an educator in the Children’s Home herself, compiled. The Yad Vashem Archives in Jerusalem houses Franciszka Oliwa’s entire personal archives. See also Franciszka Oliwa, “Dom ocalonych dzieci w Otwocku 1945–1949: Wspomnienia (Memoirs),” file no. 302/289, 1–4, Archives of ZIH.

74. On the history of the Otwock Jewish community during World War II, see Sylwia Szymańska, *Ludność Żydowska w Otwocku podczas drugiej wojny światowej* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2002). See also the memoirs of two child survivors, Marian Domański (Dawniej Finkelman), *Moje drogi dzieciństwa 1939–1945* (Otwock: Wydawnictwo Moja

Ziemia, 2005), English expanded edition: *Against All Odds: A Memoir by Marian Domański* (Toronto: self-published, 2007); and Symcha Symchowicz, *Stepchild on the Vistula* (Toronto: self-published, 1994) (originally written in Yiddish), Polish translation: *Pasierb nad Wisłą* (Warsaw: Więź, 2005).

75. The expression “I am alone like a stone in this world” (*Elent vi a shteyn*) is a popular Yiddish saying, found in many traditional Yiddish songs. The testimony of Jankiel Cieszyński, file no. 301/5514, 1, Archives of ZIH

76. Testimony of Jankiel Cieszyński, file no. 301/5514, 1, Archives of ZIH.

77. Testimony of Jerry Shane (Jankiel Cieszyński), file no. 7860, SFI, Tape 3.

78. On the problem of adopting an antisemitic social and cultural code among adults and children, see Małgorzata Melchior, *Zagłada a Tożsamość: Polscy Żydzi ocaleni na “aryjskich papierach”: Analiza doświadczenia biograficznego* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiŚ PAN, 2004). For a general discussion of survival strategies among Jewish adults and (also children) in Warsaw, and the Warsaw district, see Małgorzata Melchior, “Uciekinierzy z getta po “stronie aryjskiej” na prowincji dystryktu warszawskiego-sposoby przetrwania,” in *Prowincja noc: Życie i zagłada w dystrykcie warszawskim*, ed. Jacek Leociak, Barbara Engelking and Dariusz Libionka (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiŚ PAN, 2007), 321–72; and Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikow, *Strategie przetrwania: Żydzi po aryjskiej stronie Warszawy* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiŚ PAN, 2004). (The latter book is based on the author’s M.A. thesis.)

79. Testimony of Jerry Shane (Jankiel Cieszyński), file no. 7860, SFI, Tapes 2 and 3 (English).

80. Testimony of Jerry Shane (Jankiel Cieszyński) file no. 7860, SFI, Tape 2 (English).

81. Testimony of Jerry Shane (Jankiel Cieszyński) file no. 7860, SFI, Tape 3 (English).

82. *Ibid.*, Tape 3.

83. Życiorys Tamary Jarnickiej, file no. 4248, Archives of the Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta-ot.

84. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, December 25, 1996, Rishon Letsion, Israel, interviewer Uriel Reingold, SFI (Hebrew).

85. Interview with Chaim Bareket, file no. 44001, May 7, 1998, Haifa, Israel, interviewer Leah Bar-Zohar, SFI, Tape 1 (Hebrew).

86. Testimony of Barbara Gesundeheit (Tasma), file no. 21539, SFI, Tape 1 (English).

87. Życiorys Tamary Jarnickiej, file no. 4248, 1, Archives of the Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta-ot.

88. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

89. *Życiorys Tamary Jarnickiej*, file no. 4248, 1, Archives of the Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta-ot.

90. *Życiorys Tamary Jarnickiej*, file no. 4248, 1–2, Archives of the Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta-ot.

91. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

92. *Życiorys Tamary Jarnickiej*, file no. 4248, 3, Archives of the Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta-ot.

93. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

94. We learn the names of the couple Leon and Felicja Szustak from the letters written by Mr. Szustak to the Jewish Committee in Sosnowiec, requesting financial rewards and warm clothes for saving a Jewish girl. In the note of April 17, 1947, written by the chairman of the Jewish Community in Sosnowiec, Mr. Kozak, and in Szustak's letter of March 3, 1947, it is stated that the Szustak family looked after Tamara (Zofia) Jarnicka between October 10, 1944, and May 9, 1945. See the letter of Leon Szustak to the Jewish Committee in Sosnowiec, March 20, 1947, Archives of ZIH, file no. 303/VIII/239, 124–25 and the note of Mr. Kozak, chairman of the Jewish Committee in Sosnowiec, April 4, 1947, Archives of ZIH, file no. 303/VIII/239, 126. Interestingly, in Szustak's earlier letter of September 4, 1945, the man states that his family looked after Tamara between September 1944 and June 20, 1945, which most likely is incorrect. In the same letter Szustak allegedly claims that Tamara's uncle did not pay him any sum of money when he had come to collect Tamara in May 1945. The information is incorrect according to Tamara's account of events related in the videotaped testimony.

95. *Życiorys Tamary Jarnickiej*, file no. 4248, 3–4, Archives of the Kibbutz Lohamei ha-Getta-ot.

96. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

97. On the problem of the internalization of anti-Jewish prejudice and the transformation of individual identity among Polish-Jewish children, see, for example, Joanna B. Michlic, "‘Who Am I?’ The Identity of Jewish Children in Poland, 1945–1949," in *Polin. Focusing on Memorialization of the Holocaust*, vol. 20 (2007).

98. Saul Friedländer, *When Memory Comes* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1979), 121.

99. Nechama Tec, *Dry Tears: The Story of a Lost Childhood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 145.

100. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).
101. Statement of B. Mosiężnik, signed on the cover page attached to the testimony of Marysia Szpigiel, Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce, file no. 301/3345, Archives of ZIH.
102. Testimony of Tamar Miran (Tamara Jarnicka), file no. 26166, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).
103. *Ibid.*, Tape 2.
104. See “Nasz Dom” in Oliwa, ed., *Księga Wspomnień*. This story is featured as a separate handwritten document.
105. See Tamara Buchman, “Z przeżyć Tamary Buchman,” file no. 301/5509, 1–5, Archives of ZIH; and Tamara Buchman, “Z przeżyć Tamary Buchman,” in Oliwa, ed., *Księga Wspomnień*, 5–8.
106. Buchman, “Z przeżyć Tamary Buchman,” file no. 301/5509, 3, Archives of ZIH. Tamara refers to the clandestine private lessons she and her brother had in the ghetto, as there were no high schools operating there. The clandestine tutorial sessions, so-called *komplety*, were conducted in small groups.
107. Buchman, “Z przeżyć Tamary Buchman,” file no. 301/5509, 3, Archives of ZIH.
108. In my interview with Tamara Weinreich (Buchman) in her home in Toronto on December 15, 2007, she did not recall the reunion but elaborated on other details of her everyday life on the Aryan side, which were not mentioned in her early postwar testimony.
109. Buchman, “Z przeżyć Tamary Buchman,” file no. 301/5509, 3, Archives of ZIH
110. Testimony of Tamara Weinreich (Buchman), file no. 10010, SFI, Toronto, Canada, Tapes 2 and 3 (English).
111. The author’s interview with Tamara Weinreich (Buchman), December 15, 2007, Toronto, Canada.
112. Buchman, “Z przeżyć Tamary Buchman,” file no. 301/5509, 5, Archives of ZIH.
113. Testimony of Tamara Weinreich (Buchman), file no. 10010, SFI, Toronto, Canada, Tapes 3–4 (English).
114. On the experience of fear in the Jewish community after the war, see, for example, Jan T. Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz: An Essay in Historical Interpretation* (New York: Random House, 2006).
115. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tape 1.
116. Linka Sztarkman, “Z przeżyć Liny Sztarkman,” in Oliwa, ed., *Księga Wspomnień*, 22.
117. In the telephone conversation of July 31, 2008, with the author

of this article, Lina Kornblum stated that the actual date of her mother's and her departure from the Warsaw ghetto was not February 12, 1943, but February 9, the same year.

118. Sztarkman, "Z przeżyć Liny Sztarkman," in Oliwa, ed., *Księga Wspomnień*, 23.

119. In the early postwar testimony, the village Nowe Górcze is not mentioned, only Jelonki. In the telephone conversation of July 31, 2008, Lina Kornblum stated that the actual village where they were in hiding after they left Warsaw, in the summer of 1944, was Nowe Górcze, near Jelonki.

120. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tapes 2 and 3 (Hebrew).

121. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

122. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

123. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tape 2 (Hebrew).

124. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tape 3 (Hebrew).

125. *Ibid.*, Tape 3.

126. The author's interview with Lina Kornblum, July 2006, Tel Aviv. Testimony of Lina Kornblum (Halina Sztarkman), file no. 9719, SFI, Tape 4 (Hebrew).

127. Henry Greenspan *The Awakening of Memory: Survivor Testimonies in the First Years After the Holocaust and Today* (Washington, D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Monna and Otto Weinmann Lectures Series, 2000), 6–9.

128. Browning, *Collected Memories*. 48. See also his latest book, *Remembering Survival*, in which he reiterates and elaborates this position. Browning, *Remembering Survival*, 9.

129. For comparison, conducted for educational purposes, between the early postwar testimony of a child survivor and the late videotaped testimony of the same person as an adult, see "Telling an Unfinished Story" www.college.usc.edu/news/2008/04/sfi.html.

130. Samuel Moyn, "Ordinary Memory," review of *Remembering Survival: Inside A Nazi Slave-Labor Camp* by Christopher Browning, *Jewish Review of Books*, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 37.