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Q: Sie beginnen einfach zu erzählen. Vielleicht könnten Sie uns - beginnend bei Ihren Eltern, wer waren Ihre Eltern, Ihre Mutter , Ihr Vater, wo wohnten Sie, woher kamen sie, wann wurden sie geboren, Geschwister - zu erzählen beginnen, und Ihre Lebensgeschichte dann, wie's weiterging

A: OK, ich habe alles vorbereitet, und werde auf Deutsch anfangen, und dann eigentlich fortsetzen, ich will nicht herumstottern, mir fehlen schon manche Worte und auf Englisch ist es mir bequemer. Mein Name ist Joseph Paul Weber und ich bin 80 Jahre alt. Hier ist mein Stammbaum, und es geht zurück zu 1750 in Prague. Für meine Vaterseite, hier sind wir Kinder, meine Schwester und ich und für meine Mutter habe ich meinen Stammbaum, aber ich kann etwas erzählen bis zu den Großeltern. Ich bin geboren am 16 März 1922 in Oberwart Burgenland, und meine Schwester ein Jahr später, Magdalene ist ihr Name, aber ich muss zum Englischen zurückgehen:

My father was born in 1891 in „Seback?“ a small village in Hungary, the youngest of 4 children. He had 2 older brothers Joseph and Paul who I'm named after, and an older sister, Hermine. Joseph had no children, Paul had a daughter who still lives in Belgrade , Yugoslavia, she's 2 years my junior, she's now 78, and the poor thing was in several concentration camps and made her home in Yugoslavia. She has a daughter and some granddaughters. In 1914 when world war 1 broke out, father and his brother were captured on the Russian front. My father was a corporal, „Feldweber“ in a machine gun company. My uncle Joseph was a lieutenant, which for a Jew in Hungary was quite an accomplishment. Here's a photograph. My father is here, the bearded gentleman, and here are all the bearded soldiers. Here's another photo of father. To be a prisoner of war in Siberia for 6 years is no picnic. The Russians treated them very badly as you can imagine. At one point they had the prisoners dig their own graves and had them all lined up and pointed their rifles at them, and at the last moment they didn't shoot them. So my father liked to talk a lot about that. That was 6 years of his life. It was an important time. He came out at the end with snow white hair even though he was still a young man. He always wore a lapel pin which said B.E.Ö.K. Bund Ehemalige Österreichische Kriegsgefangenen. He also had a newspaper „Pleny?“ which means war prisoner in Russian. Names like Omsk, Dromsk, Sibürsk, Irkutsk stay in my mind because he talked about them so often. In 1920? by the international red cross ? via the Trans Siberian railway. This is his soldiers patch, the original patch. Here are some photos of my jewellery and Chinese things. The ship in Vladivostock. Vostock means east in Russian. The paradox is this. The prisoners were shipped through Harbin, Shanghai in 1920 where 19 years later father ended up again, this time with his family as a refugee. Now when he came back he was married, it was an arranged marriage which was very common in those days. Her mother was born in 1900 in Kerza? Hungary. Her biggest adventure up that moment was, at the age of 14, that she travelled to Fiume? which is a port in the Adriatic. At that time it was Hungary, the mighty Austro-Hungarian monarchy, but of course Hungary was chopped up, but I'll come to that in a moment . Here's some pictures of graves of grandparents, this is grandmother on father's side, Betty Beifeld, and here are some family members that I remember very well and all the younger ones were killed by the Nazis eventually. There's no day that goes by when I don't think of them because I remember them as they were, small children, cousins, uncles, aunts. This is my birth certificate which shows where I was born at home. He came back in 1920 and was married in 1921, and father, Simon Weber and mother, Lanka or Helen Marschankska, born Marschanska, moved to a town in western Hungary called „Felsher?“ which is Oberwart. At that time they had no intention of leaving Hungary because they were Hungarians as were all their families, but through the Treaty in Versailles of? By the time I was born 1 year later it had become

Austria. Of course the Hungarians never forgot that; they lost a war, even though Austria also lost a war, but that part of western Hungary became Burgenland and we spent our vacations at the grandparents home in Hungary and I remember seeing all the farmhouses with little signs saying „Nem Nem Surha“ which means no, no never; they showed the way Hungary was before, and now. Rumania, Yugoslavia and the north is all chopped up and they were just very bitter about that. The first store was in the Oberdrun?. In those days Oberwart was 2 words, Ob, and Wart with an H., old fashioned. I don't remember much because we didn't live there that long. I do remember there was a gipsy village around the corner from us. I even learned a few gipsy words: Maros?, bread? Banchis?. But the first language I learned was Hungarian, because that's our mother tongue, that's what I heard at home, and then later on at school I learnt German. One day when my sister and I , I was about 4 she was 3, were attacked by our landlady who was not quite all there and my father took a whip „eine Peitsche“ which was a big mistake, and he had to travel to Vienna for the law suit, and we moved soon after to the current location that still exists, in „Drum ?“ Hauptstrasse 85.

(Spricht über Fotos)

We had 2 uncles both named Joseph on my mother's side. She was the oldest of 5 children. Her uncle Joseph Marchanzka? was in the Italo-Hungarian Bank in Budapest in a very good position, and she had another brother in Lorzi? who was a butcher, and 2 sisters. My uncle Joseph on my father's side was very athletic, considered ...? his wife, his wife was christian. She had connections to the government even, she was of noble blood in a way, she was? athletic. Fotokommentar. OK das Kriegerdenkmal, yes, the Kriegerdenkmal at that time had the names of those fallen in WW1 and then when we returned much later in 81, it had many more names of those fallen in WW2, and I had some correspondance from an old class mate from the Real Gymnasium and he told me the names of the ones that had fallen / that had to go to?the Wehrmacht and I remembered some of those names of my classmates that died in the war. . This picture was the wedding of my mother's older sister Gisela, Gizy, about 1920, this is grandfather and grandmother on mother's side, Marchanzka is their name, and the bridegroom Jenna Maier?, they also had a child, they were all killed. Mother, father, myself and my sister Magdalena, Babdusch?, and Erjebeth?, Elisabeth the youngest sister, and Lotzi, the brother who was a butcher. And they had children and they were all massacred by the Nazis. I keep coming back to that but you know this is very painful for me, and it's important that it not be forgotten, you know the things that humans can do to other humans. . The grandparents on mother's side in Z....? where they had a restaurant, and there were 2 butcher's shops, one next to the other, one had to be Kosha and uncle Lotzi, he attended both of them, because the dietary laws are so strict. I'll back track now. In 33 when the Nazis and Hitler took over, which didn't mean much to me because I was only 11 years old, but something important happened to me, I got my first pair of skis. The skis were custom made by a farmer in Oberschützen; all those things were made by farmers, the farmers all had a 2nd occupation. My ski boots were made by another farmer right next to our shop. I was very proud of them. My school clothing was made by another farmer to whom we'll come to later, who lived round the corner from our shop. That was the custom, farmers went out to their fields, but they also did things on the side. In 34, the Nazis tried to (take over?) Austria, and massacred Engelbert Dolfuss, our chancellor. In 35 I was 13, and became a barbitzer?, which is a confirmation; in the Jewish faith a boy becomes a man, and is allowed, aged 13, to?, where 10 people are required for a /Quorum?, to have a religious service, otherwise they have to pray in silence. This was a big thing for me, and I got a pocket watch, in those days there were no wrist watches yet. But the most important gift I got was from uncle Joseph in Budapest, an encyclopedia in 3 volumes, called "Weltall und Menschheit". They were the most beautiful books I had ever seen, to this day. They were bound in brass, linen and leather, they were big heavy volumes. And since the furious time when we had to escape, I couldn't take them with me. To this day I have no library, because we had to start life over again 3 different times, living in 4 different countries, and in came to my mind that you can't really take anything with you, except what is up here. All the other things are meaningless. I do read a lot, I go the library a lot, I read about 4/5 hours every day, at this age I don't need so much sleep, so I read 2 hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon. That was very sad to have to leave those books behind, they really meant a lot to me. That's life!. We had a big adventure, my sister and I travelled to Budapest when I was 14, and she 13, by ourselves, because we spoke Hungarian of course, so that was no problem. We travelled alone by train to Budapest to visit our uncles; I stayed with uncle Joseph on our father's side, and M...? with the other uncle Joseph. It was fun because we sometimes we walked in the street and the 3 of us would walk ahead and behind us the aunts would say "Joshi ", and all 3 of us would turn around, because that's what we're all called. That was a wonderful time. It was a big city, very modern, and we rode in the subway. Budapest was the first major European metropolis that had a modern subway built around 1900, so we had our wealth of shows, and we were also interested in the Olympics, we watched the Racut..? which was the main business street in Budapest, where they carried a torch from Mount Olympus in Greece, to Berlin, quite nice. In 35, we made a theatre trip to Vienna. We saw "Wer dem der lügt" by Grillparzer, with the famous movie star Hermann Timick in the main role, and this was the first time I had been to a big city, and it was really exciting. The Burg Theater was fabulous, afterwards we went behind the scenes and saw the drums, how they make rain and wind and all that. Afterwards we went to the Prater, and we stayed in the Jugendherberge, and in the morning they served us with cocoa, and rolls and it was quite something. I went to grammar school in the Protestant Institute. I also had Jewish instruction from a Rabbi, which was free for everybody, except being Jewish, we had to pay the fees for the school. I had nothing but A's, straight A's, so I went to the Secondary School which was sort of across the street, and again I had all A's. Before that I went to Kindergarten, and that's the only time I had a female teacher. In those days there were no male teachers. With nothing but A's, my parents and teachers realised I was ready for something better, so I enrolled at the grammar school and didn't have to take the test because of those good grades. But that was not to last, the grades didn't stay good for very long. So I went to the Evangelical grammar school for 4 years, from the 2nd to the 5th grade, and I had 4 years of Latin, and in the last year I

had 1 year of French, and I wish they had taught English instead. The French teacher's name was Englisch, but I had to learn English without a teacher, but I seem to have a natural talent, I seem to pick up things very easily. The treatment got worse and worse, the kids would beat me up, "Saujude" was a very common name, and they would hit me, and my grades suffered accordingly, they got worse and worse.

(Spricht über ungarische Reise u Fotos).

There's mother's cousin, who was also killed, sadly. In 1937 I went to a youth camp in Lower Carinthia. I went with the Zionist Youth group, called?. There were about 200 Viennese children, who seemed all very sophisticated to me, and to them and seemed very naïve, which I was, a country boy you know, 15 years old. It was an exciting adventure for me. Kärnten is very beautiful, it was in the shade of the Dolomites. This is a picture of the Zionist group. One thing that stays in my mind in particular, was when a group of us were hiking in the woods in Kärnten, and suddenly we hear drums coming closer and closer, and we were walking out of the woods onto a sunlit meadow, a little distance away another group of young boys, the ones with the drums, marched out, with white shirts and black shirts, and on their hips they had a dagger with a Swastika, the leader had a "Hakenkreuzfahne", and the drums had leather on, you know the Hitlerjugend used those long drums, and we just looked at other and marched off in different directions. But even then in 37, they were half in the open and half hidden, but that left an impression, I thought, oh, oh, this doesn't look good, there was the feeling that something was going to happen, and it did soon enough. Redet über Fotos. This shows the Pinka that used to be a flour mill in the old days, and they diverted the Pinka to create an island. That island was our private paradise, the other country boys and girls also swam in the Pinka, where it was wide, but they didn't come onto the island, that was our personal resort. It was a wonderful life, in the summer we swam, and in the winter it was all ice, for skating. Fotos... This is my landlady, and her husband, you see the little shiny thing on his lapel, that's a Swastika; after march 12, all of sudden everybody had to wear them, and this street car conductor for the city of Vienna, said to me apologetically, "I'm sorry but I have to wear this", I understood. In 36 the treatment at the hands of my schoolmates became intolerable, I just couldn't stand it any more, so father wrote to Vienna, he found a school where there were no such problems, so I enrolled at the School for Maschinenbau and Elektrotechnik. The lady where I had lodgings was from Oberwart, a farmer's daughter, so we went to this farmhouse and discussed room and board, and agreed to a certain amount of money, so in Sept 1937 father and I travelled with our suitcase to Vienna, and I took lodgings as an Untermieter in a "Kabinett", which means it had no window, it was a very small room, it had a ventilator over the door, but the room smelled of cigarette smoke. There used be a young blond lady there who was a heavy smoker. So I went to school there and it was wonderful. It was a very large school, it was so big that the first grade was divided into 8 different classes. The 1B was the traditionally Jewish class, all my classmates were all Jewish and I made some good friends, some of whom turned up in Shanghai later on. There was one boy, Rudi Korn, whose parents had a candy factory, and on a Sunday, when everything else was closed, he took me there, and I stuffed myself with candy. His father was a dentist, came to Shanghai, and became a champion ping pong player. Pauli Riceman who also went to that school and also ended up in Shanghai. There was one boy who was a class ahead of me - of course I had lost one year, because the fifth class of Gymnasium was not necessary, I could have gone with 4, so I was 1 year older - he was called Ernst Schickler, who changed his name when he came to this country, he became Ernst Carter, because Schickler sounded too much like Schickelgruber, which is a connection to Hitler. He was a big guy who became a mountain climber and a ski patrol man - he also went to that school, and because he went to that school, he got a job in Silicone Valley at Stanstead University, with varying associates as an engineer; my training was only half a year. I entertained myself by going to the Schweizergarten, which was nearby, this was at Wiednergürtel 48/28, near the Südbahnhof., where I lived, and then go and walk along the Kärntnerstr., Rotenturmstr, and go to Schönbrunn and up to the Gloriette and so on, it was nice. Vienna is beautiful and I enjoyed myself. A few days before March 12 there were already rumours that something is happening, and sure enough on the 12th March, hundreds of German war planes flew overhead and they dropped thousands of leaflets, I picked one up and it said: "Das National Sozialistische Deutschland grüßt sein National Sozialistisches Österreich" mit dem Nazi Gruß Heil Hitler!", and that was the end of our care-free existence. My 16th birthday was 4 days later, so I went back to school with our other classmates, and a new teacher came in the door and said "Heil Hitler!" and we said "this is a Jewish class", so he turned around and went out, and they sent us home, and that was the end of my former schooling, which means that I only had 9 1/2 years of schooling, which is one thing where I will never forgive the Nazis for what they did to me; later on I found that to be a big obstacle for my career, because you always have to have a Diploma, something to show that you've completed school, even though I had skills that were as good as anything. So I travelled home. Ah yes we had a club, and the boys picked me as

cashier because from the coming from the country they thought this boy must be honest, and wouldn't steal money. So I had the problem of giving back all the duties, the fees to all these boys, I found them eventually and gave them back all their money, so after a few days I travelled home with my suitcase in the train and I looked out the window, and all the farmhouses had those red flags with the Swastika and the white circle, and I got more and more apprehensive, and thought this is not a good sign. Back home, life was more or less normal. Our neighbours told us, you don't have to worry, nothing is going to happen to you, but what did they know. In May, 3 men walked into our store and "arisier" our business. My father had made notes of everything, he was a very pedantic man, and they made an inventory of about 18,000,-öS, which is 12000,-DM, with Arisingszahl and everything, post-dates? etc. Now I'll have to jump back and forth.

(Spricht etwas durcheinander)

Father had some life insurance, I only mention this because we lost everything, we had to give everything to the state. Here's some names and addresses of consulates in Vienna, Argentina, Brazilian, England, Ungarn etc. Inventory from 7.5.1938. There was an SA man "auch dabei" The Arisierung, I kind of dismiss it casually, although it wasn't that casual a thing, it was a horrible thing to do, somebody that's been a good merchant, established and respected, suddenly "arisier", and we'd lost our income, our livelihood, the meaning of our lives. Father cared. There were many customers on the books, all farmers, and he extended credit for them, but they never paid us. One of these people that owed us money was a retired school teacher, named Biriz Barchi?, and he liked to drink wine, and he got deeper and deeper into debt, and it kept mounting up, what can one do, how can one get the money back. So my parents sent me to take violin lessons (with him?), I was 9 years old, and I learnt for 3 years. I had a half violin as I was just 9 years old. So I learnt for 3 years, and my sister the piano. He had a piano, but I had to provide the violin. The violin was in black wooden case which looked like a children's coffin. I was very ashamed of it, it wasn't a smart nice modern thing, so I hurried to the class, because I didn't want the other children to see it. Town crier – Burgenland in those days, had something left over from the middle ages, in the distance I would hear the drum, bom bom bom bom-bom, coming closer, then the man with the uniform, the same as for the post office, he would beat the drum, and all the neighbours and the children gathered, and they would say "Es wird kundgemacht!" He would read all the news from a list in German, and then in Hungarian, because that was spoken by everybody in those days, more Hungarian than German. My parents never lost their accent. They had a very strong Hungarian accent all their lives. That was one of the charming things about Oberwart. There are other things, the gypsies would come around every year around my birthday, or Joseph's Tag, which was 3 days later on 19th March, and they would play the violin, and father would go out with a handful of 10 Groschen coins and would give all these gypsies 10 Groschen, there were a whole bunch of them. Another thing that happened each year was that a capuchin monk, with a brown Kittel (cloak) with a hood and the rope around the waist and the sandals, would come begging for alms, and father would always give him something. We had a good relationship with the Christians, and when they killed a pig they would always bring the sausages and the "Blutwurst" etc. and when we had a holiday like Passover, Easter, we would also give them baked things. My mother was a very good Hungarian cook, and she made wonderful apple strudel. So we had a good time, more or less. Redet über Fotos. By the fifth grade I had „sehr gut for Religion and "Kurzschrift", and that was significant because later on in Bolivia I applied the Deutscheeinheitskurzschrift in the phonetic way so that when I heard English or Spanish or German, I could write it down. I was grateful for this, this was an option, a "Freigegenstand", I didn't have to do it but I'm glad I took it. So when it got that bad, I went to Vienna, and you'll see that my grades got much better. I have a friend, who was an English Professor at San Francisco State College, named Bernhard Lumberg, he liked to travel to Europe, he was a bachelor.. In Köln he met Anton Wöber, who was my classmate. They got to talking, and somehow my name came up, and I had the address so I wrote to Anton, and he wrote back. He became "Gesandter" in Budapest, he seems to be a language genius, because he spoke Hungarian and he mentioned a whole lot of other languages that he learned. He was in "Oberschützen, Unterschützen, some of the names were from the same class, and some of the ones he mentioned had fallen or were killed in the war. There was another classmate, Joseph Bertha, sitting next to me in the Gymnasium, he became "Gemeindeoberamtsrat". I also had correspondence with him. These 2 classmates are ones that I remember with joy, but a lot of others hit me and called me "Saujude" so those I don't want to think about too much. This is Clary, she was a ballerina at the Wiener Staatsoper am Ring. They lived in Eisenstadt. Her father was an animal doctor, Dr. Siegesmund. He had another daughter Juji? and they moved to Bolivia, and they helped us get to Bolivia. In 1938/39, our 2 uncles Joseph visited us from Budapest. Father, mother, myself, Magda, and her Stern and his wife. When I travelled on my bicycle to Oberschützen in the summer time, in the winter time I used the train, there was a mysterious house right by Bad Tatzmannsdorf, right by the railway tracks, and I always wondered all these years what is

this, it's a farmhouse, and I never found out, and it then turned out that Herr and Frau Stern ran that farmhouse, and later on in Vienna, we became acquainted. Now we get to Vienna, and the "Lehranstalt für Maschinenbau und Elektrotechnik". You see many "sehr gut" only one "genügend", gut, so I did much better once the pressure was gone, but then I had a half year which didn't do me much good. Plus I'm not really that mechanical minded. I really wanted to become a doctor. I went to the Gymnasium where I was hoping for the Matura, which didn't happen. I like to draw, and I became a draughtsman later on in Shanghai, Bauzeichner. But mechanics is not my best talent. I'm more artistic. Plaudert. Amerikanische Generalkonsulat Wien Deutschland.

Oktober 11 38. This was the first time I registered to come to the United States at the Vienna Consulate, and it took me 14 years to make it, so that didn't help much, but they took my number anyway. In May day they took our store away from us, and in a month or 2, the Jews were called, were told to assemble in one of these empty stores by the park, in one of those former "Löwy" stores. We assembled, and there were 2 tall young Gestapo agents from Germany, with a very strong accent, they were sitting at the desk and interviewing everybody, actually it wasn't interviewing it was more like interrogating. These were lousy Jews after all you know, you don't have to be too polite. The 4 of us stood before this tall young Gestapo agent with a very strong German accent, and showed our documents, "Heimatschein" usw., and my father tried to be smart and said "We're not Austrians, we're Hungarians, which in a sense was true, but then the Gestapo agent said "Ah, You're Hungarians, I'll give you 4 days to leave the country or your whole family will end up in a concentration camp", I think he mentioned "Dach" I'm not sure. That was frightening news, so we went home. But by that time we'd already sold some of our furniture because we knew that we couldn't stay. We sold whatever was left very cheap to the neighbours. They took advantage you know. We hired an open truck and put our "Umzugsgut" in the truck and travelled to Vienna where we found a flat in Untermiete. While we were in Vienna, we lived there for about a year, our relatives in Hungary sent us food packages, and father made lists page after page, with all dates: "Leber, Speck, Salami, Bäckerei, Panniertes, Butter, usw. Just about every day something came from all the different relatives. On the left side is all the letters, and on the right side is all the food they sent us. I get a little emotional, they were so affectionate, so loving, so concerned about us. The cruel paradox is that they're the ones that got killed, and we're the ones that got away with our lives, and I feel kind of guilty, they really tried to help us, they came to visit us several times, with pictures, and well, when it happens to many others, but when it happens to oneself it becomes very personal, and you always carry it with you. As I said, not a day goes by when I don't think of them. While we were in Vienna, we spent our time every day, as all the other Jews did, standing in front of all the consulates, I mean we never got as far as the front door, the list was very long, the queues were very long, I mean they wouldn't have let us in anyway. We finally ended up in China, then we got a visa. Somehow we got in touch with somebody in Argentina, in Buenos Aires, colonisation. We heard that Argentina was letting farmers go out into the Pampas and colonise. Those were farmers that would till the land and have cows and sheep and whatever, and we had correspondence with one of these colonisation, and he wanted 45 English pounds. Crystallnacht, I nearly forgot about that.

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