

English Transcript of Sara Piatnica Testimonial (Part 3)

Interviewee: Sara Piatnica de Drebiner (91)

Interviewed by: Dr. Giovanna Urdangarain, Dr. Rona Kaufman, and student assistant Riley Dolan

Interview conducted at Hogar Israelita Nursing Home in Montevideo, Uruguay in January of 2019.

Sara: ...you had to go on schedule and come back on schedule, but nothing was forced. Nobody ran after us. That's how things were done. Because you lived there and you knew you had to comply.

Giovanna: Of course. Did they pay you as if you were working?

Sara: No. No.

Giovanna: No.

Sara: They would give us... Like a stub let's say, a little piece of paper.

Giovanna: And with that you could go and buy something to eat, for example.

Sara: No, right there. Everything was right there. They distributed the bread, they distributed... Everything that was given was distributed right there. Now the people, the Russians who lived there, they had another life. They had their pigs, their little lambs, their...

Giovanna: Their animals.

Sara: Exactly. Their chickens, their... It was something entirely different.

Giovanna: The Russian friend you were telling me about, the girl... Did you meet because you lived nearby?

Sara: Yes, yes. The father, along with a brother or two were in the war, on the frontlines.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: She was a little girl like me. She was with her mother. We became so close that the mother didn't want me to leave their house. She wanted me to eat with them. Because over there in

Russia, they sleep at night on the top of... How can I explain it to you? Right above the ovens...

Giovanna: Because it was warmer?

Sara: Up above there were hides, there are many skins, dry skins.

Giovanna: Of course. They keep you warm in the winter.

Sara: You kill it and all that.

Giovanna: The animal.

Sara: Those skins are used a lot. You put on a skin and you lay down, you cover yourself. I don't remember what type. And she would... How do I explain that? She would use round things to use less flour.

Giovanna: To give shape to the dough and the things she cooked?

Sara: The dough, yes. And then she'd stuff it with mashed potatoes. They would treat me. And they would give it to me to take home. The truth is...

Giovanna: Did you ever have a chance to connect with her again? Did you ever see her again?

Sara: No, no. Never again, no.

Giovanna: And were you about the same age?

Sara: With the little girl? Yes, more or less, yes. But they made me come over and sleep with them for warmth. And eat with them. They would treat me with a glass of milk. No, the truth is, in Russia, I especially got by very well, very well. I am not going to say that I was in a palace, but I did well.

Giovanna: I was telling Rona during lunch what we had been talking about earlier. Translating everything to English.

Sara: Yes, yes.

Giovanna: So when you were telling me about your experience with Spanish, the arrival and everything... Because the experiences of Jewish people who came to Uruguay were likely different depending on where they came from. Correct? You all stayed in contact with the Polish Jewish community, but did you have connections with Jewish people that came to Uruguay from elsewhere? How was

that experience?

Sara: No. When we came here, when one began to... There is a Kehila, and it's still here.

Giovanna: Yes. Yes.

Sara: On Canelones Street. There is a congregation of Ashkenazi Jews, Sephardic Jews, and... I don't know. Each group seeks its own. It's like that everywhere.

Giovanna: Yes, yes. Would you like me to get some water?

Sara: It will pass.

Giovanna: Are you sure?

Sara: Besides, there wasn't much time for relationships either.

Giovanna: You were working, long hours.

Sara: Work, housework, and finding food.... Like that, time went by.

Giovanna: Did the Jewish people that had come from Poland meet regularly? Did that ever happen?

Sara: Look, I don't remember that. Maybe the men. The women and the children were in the house. And I think the men... In my house there were no men. My mom and us. Always the same.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: I think the families that had men that were already grown, and had a head of the house...

Giovanna: Of course, the father.

Sara: I think it was a little bit different. That's what I think.

Giovanna: Of course. Because I was thinking about when you told me how you met your husband, you were telling me about the families that spoke to him, about you. Were those Polish Jewish families?

Sara: Yes, yes.

Giovanna: Yes. So, even though you didn't connect with them, you all knew that

there were other families?

Sara: Where I lived...

Giovanna: Yes. And that was over by Libertad, like you told me, where Pocitos is now.

Sara: Yes. Where I lived, before we moved to the other side, there was a family... This family knew both of our families. They happened to talk about the same person.

Giovanna: Ah, I see.

Sara: And that's how things are.

Giovanna: One aspect that Rona asked me about was religion. I think you said that your husband's family was a religious family.

Sara: Very religious, yes.

Giovanna: And yours?

Sara: Us too. Well, in my house there were no men. My brother went to Shul on Saturdays. Friday nights and Saturdays. And we went to listen. At Yavne, there on Cavia Street.

Giovanna: Yes.

Sara: That is all.

Giovanna: And then, as the years went by, did you continue to practice the religion with your family or only on certain dates?

Sara: No, no. Well, we're not fanatics. We're not Lubavitch. No. We are... All the holy days, we respect... When we have to go to synagogue, we go. When we have to go to listen, we go. When there was [unknown], and all that... I never missed it, my siblings neither. We always went. To the Kehila. To the NCI, which is now nearby.

Giovanna: Yes. Yes.

Sara: Over by Bohemios.

Sara: We lived normally. Nobody did anything that they didn't feel like doing.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: Everyone had their own way of being.

Giovanna: And thinking about this, that you already arrived when you were about 20 years old, right? You learned the language and everything. When you arrived in Uruguay and afterwards... Did you feel you had to decide between one identity or another? Do you still define yourself as Jewish more than Uruguayan? Do you still define yourself as Polish? What is your identity? How do you define yourself?

Sara: I am Jewish. Jewish, Jewish. Born Jewish, I uphold Judaism. Look, my dear daughter... As my husband always said, if you scratch the surface a little bit, anti-Semitism appears. Everyone is a good friend, but the Jew is the Jew. Do you understand? All of them. I live in a building now with only goyim. Do you know what goyim means?

Giovanna: Yes.

Sara: Do you know?

Giovanna: Yes. All very well. But the envy is strong, very strong. They can have enough to throw out the window. But the envy of the Jew is very strong. In that building, there were a few Jewish families that are now dead. The children sold them, and now non-Jewish people live there. "The Jews." Many times, without wanting to... With me there: "The Jews." Listen to this, my dear... It's like that everywhere, not only here. Sara: In North America too, I believe. That's it.

Giovanna: Yes, yes. Rona is originally from the city of Pittsburgh, where there was an attack a few months ago.

Sara: There it is. Exactly. Yes, yes, yes.

Giovanna: It's the synagogue that her parents go to.

Sara: The name that you just said...

Giovanna: Pittsburgh.

Sara: I read it in the newspaper, or I heard it on TV or something. There's no fooling yourself. My husband used to teach me about that because he was very smart, as I told you. A lot of times when we were alone in the house on Saturday afternoons, he would be there reading and all of a sudden I was on the other side. He would call me, "Come here, come here, come here, you're going to find this interesting." And he would explain things to me. He said, "For as long as the world has existed, the Jew was always the Jew. People would always point to the Jew." And to me... When we were already married, over there in the other neighborhood... We had very good friends. I remember that a Mr. León... We were very good friends with the lady and everything. The kids played together. But León once asked me, "Sara, I want to ask you something. Don't get mad at me." "No, León, ask me anything you want." "Why..." This is exactly what I'm talking about.

"Why did the Nazis kill the Jews? Why do they hate them? Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?"

Giovanna: León wasn't Jewish?

Sara: No, that's why. He was a "Criollo, Criollo!" (non-Jewish) Born here, a truck driver. He carried the crates of beer from the factory to the warehouses. Way back then.

Giovanna: Of course. To the distributor.

Sara: The woman didn't work. Mirta took care of the house. We were neighbors. She made me pizzas, she made me cake. I don't know how to do that all. I didn't learn because I was always busy doing something else. And León asked me. We were sitting there, at the table. He said, "Sara, don't be offended, I'm going to ask you something. Because at work, well, there's always talk." I was the one he asked because I was the Jew that never denied it, and always defended it well. "Of what I know..." I told him. And I told him, "Too bad Ramoncito isn't here." My husband had passed. "What a pity that Ramoncito..." I told you about him before, do you remember?

Giovanna: Yes.

Sara: "What a pity he isn't here. Because if he were here, he would explain it much better than I can." Because he spoke Spanish much better. He had an entirely different education. I didn't do everything he did, not even now. Because I was in another world, we'll say. He wanted to know out of curiosity. He loved us very much. The woman too, of course. We were good friends. She made Torta Frita. You know what that is, right? The Torta Frita.

Giovanna: Yes, yes

Sara: She brought me a piece like that. "Mirta, why so much? With two or three to try..."

Giovanna: With the little hole in the center, yes.

Sara: You already know.

Giovanna: My dad made delicious ones.

Sara: She would make pizzas, the cakes when I had the kids' birthdays. She, she would make me... But it wasn't free, I know that. I'd give her a set of sheets. A set of towels. Nothing is free. You can treat people. But she knew the kids' birthdays because we were friends. We were friends.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: She lived on Venezuela street. And I lived on Nicaragua and Minas, a block away.

Giovanna: Sara, now you're saying "the Uruguayans." I already asked you about the "Criollo." You came at about 20 years old. So 70 years ago, more or less.

Sara: What?

Giovanna: You have been living in Uruguay for about 70 years.

Sara: Of course.

Giovanna: But you don't consider yourself Uruguayan?

Sara: No, no.

Giovanna: No.

Sara: I have citizenship, I have papers, I'm a citizen.

Giovanna: Of course, yes.

Sara: I have a passport, but I'm not Uruguayan. No, no, I am Jewish.

Giovanna: At least at some point, did you consider yourself a refugee? Was that the image that you had? No.

Sara: No. Not that. No.

Giovanna: Holocaust survivor?

Sara: I survived in a way. I was not in the concentration camp, but I survived in a way.

Giovanna: Now that we're talking about this, I was serious when I said that you have more energy than the three of us combined. Are there many people like you? 90 years old or older, who are healthy, eager to keep learning about life and all that. To what do you attribute that strength, that ability to reach your age with this energy and this eagerness to live after what happened to you?

Sara: Yes, but I think that just comes from within the person. My mother was a hard worker all her life, but in the last years she declined a lot. She was sick, she lost a lot of weight. I remember. She lived with my older sister. And she died

there, in my sister's house. And my sisters, more or less, we are all the same.

Giovanna: Did your brother and sisters ever consider themselves Uruguayan?

Sara: No, they didn't either. Just like me.

Giovanna: They all consider themselves Jewish?

Sara: Just like me.

Giovanna: What about your children?

Sara: The same, the same.

Giovanna: Even though they were born here?

Sara: Of course.

Giovanna: Do they consider themselves both? Jewish and Uruguayan? Or do they consider themselves Jews?

Sara: They are Uruguayan Jews.

Giovanna: But they incorporate that idea of being Uruguayan. Sara: I do too. I've

been here for so many years now...

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: What do my neighbors say? "You've been here for so many years, you're not from there anymore. You have to do the math."

Giovanna: More time spent here, yes.

Sara: "You're more from here than from there." That doesn't have...

Giovanna: Importance?

Sara: Importance. It's not important, no, no. Because just like the non-Jewish people, the church by where I live, the church over there by Tamborini. Do you remember?

Giovanna: I know the street, yes.

Sara: Masini, around the corner.

Giovanna: Ah, yes, yes.

Sara: The church is there. And who goes to church? No one.

Giovanna: Almost no one.

Sara: Who goes? I went in once, there was a wedding, the bride came and I went in to see the nice church and all that. But nobody asked me anything about who I was. I went in, looked at everything and left. And that was the end of it. And the bride and groom came in. People arrived with beautiful cars. Thinking to myself, I said, "See, they aren't Jews, they're non-Jews! Look at the luxury!" Nobody criticizes them, but when there's a Jewish wedding, and it looks like that, "Look at the Jews, look at the Jews." One woman, who is Galician, she came from Spain when she was very young with her Galician parents and all that. There in the neighborhood near Venezuela Street, around the corner from the church, The Church of the Aguada.

Giovanna: Yes, over there, yes.

Sara: She said to me once, "Sara, do you know that you Jews took all the money out of the banks?" That's what she said to me. At that time she already had two washing machines. I didn't have them yet, and I didn't know what it was like.

Giovanna: She said that the Jews took the money out of the banks of Europe when they had left?

Sara: No, no, no.

Giovanna: What did she mean?

Sara: She was trying to say that Uruguay had become impoverished...

Giovanna: Ah, with the arrival of...

Sara: No, not with the arrival. Because the Jews took the loans out of the banks. Of course they did. Because you took out loans for that money. You bought a property. Exactly.

Giovanna: Or started a business.

Sara: And then you paid it back, but you made a lot of money.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: And I once told my husband, "We have credit, let's take out a loan at the Banco Commercial, the Bank of Brazil. We'll get a nice apartment in Pocitos. We'll rent it and we'll pay." "No, I'm afraid we won't be able to pay for it." That was the difference between my husband and me.

Giovanna: And from your personality, what is it that has made you reach 92 with this energy? Because you were saying it's a matter of personality.

Sara: Yes.

Giovanna: Having seen your mom be such a hard worker, as you said...

Sara: Everyone is just the way that they are. You can't... My husband's entire family was like that, fearful. The father? Don't even get me started. He wouldn't take a peso... No, not a peso, a step. He was afraid it would be a mistake, we'll say. The older brother too, and all that. The first few years, I more or less accepted it. But later, when the children were grown up, I became more energetic and said "No. We're going to stay living in..." What is it? What do you call that? A canvas thing.

Giovanna: A tent?

Sara: A tent. "We're going to live in a tent?" "Enough, enough, enough, enough, enough!" "We have to be frugal. We have to start saving money, put it in the bank. The interests are high so when the time comes, we will be able to buy it." That's all.

Giovanna: Sara, now that we're talking about the differences between other groups of Jewish people that came to Uruguay... When you arrived in Uruguay, did you find the Uruguayan culture difficult?

Sara: Who was thinking of that?

Giovanna: You didn't think about that.

Sara: Who thought about that?

Giovanna: There wasn't time to?

Sara: There were other things to think about. Who thought about that?

Giovanna: But you had to, let's say, move and live in a different culture.

Sara: That was done. You just did it.

Giovanna: You just did it.

Sara: Those who could go to the movies, they went every week. The people who couldn't, never went to the movies. A life like anywhere else. People traveled, people gathered in the pastry shops. We never went to those places, we never went to eat out. No, I did not allow that, because that was the way to save money to get ahead. Once my daughter complained, when she was still a little girl, because we bought her shoes that were too big. So that they lasted two years.

Cotton goes in the toe so that they would last the year of school, and another year after that.

That's the way it is. Because I didn't expect my mother to leave me an inheritance. My father, no. Everything we worked for, everything we saved, was ours.

Giovanna: Sara, when you all came over, you had those three uncles here.

Sara: What?

Giovanna: When you came, you told me that you had three uncles here.

Sara: Yes.

Giovanna: Did you maintain any contact with family in Poland? Were you able to... No, nothing.

Sara: Nothing. There was no one in Poland. There was nobody. I went to the Polish embassy, which is there on España Boulevard. To get my birth certificate. And I got it. They did birth certificates and they charged me. And quite a lot. I told them, "Why are you charging me so much?" They took me and there were magistrates there. Do you know what I mean?

Giovanna: Yes.

Sara: This one was still standing. It didn't burn because it was made of bricks.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: And from there came the birth certificate, I have it, and after that I got the citizenship card and the ID card that I have. It's for life, what is that called? Help me out.

Giovanna: Now I don't remember the word, but it doesn't have an expiration date.

Sara: That's right.

Giovanna: It's permanent. Have you ever gone back to Poland?

Sara: No.

Giovanna: No. Would you have wanted to go back?

Sara: No. Neither Poland nor Germany. I would go there to travel, and I would go to Israel, yes. To see it again. I was there a few times.

Giovanna: You told me, yes. And you were in Germany too? Sara: No, no, never. I went through on the train.

Giovanna: Sure.

Sara: When they took us to France.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: I would go somewhere else, but never...

Giovanna: Did anyone in your family from younger generations ever go to Poland?

Sara: No. No.

Giovanna: No.

Sara: All of our possessions were burned. What are we going to go for? And still while we were there in Lodz before we left, when we came directly from Russia, it was said that the Jews coming and going to the city... Poland is small. Here's Warsaw, and they lived here. They were going to Warsaw, and they were killed. The Poles killed them. Because, I don't know. They seemed to think that they were going to go and reclaim what was theirs. My mother, while my mother was with us she never allowed anyone to go back. My brother, the only boy, never. And us, as little girls, even less.

Giovanna: And your children or nieces or nephews or grandchildren, they never wanted to go to Poland?

Sara: Never. No, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Giovanna: Or it simply did not happen.

Sara: No. Not that it didn't happen. You have to study. Study and then have a good job and not think about Poland, because there is nothing there. I remember that there was a trend here, among our grandchildren, let's say. They wanted to get papers.

Giovanna: Yes. To have citizenship in Europe?

Sara: Yes. In the end, nothing came of it.

Giovanna: No?

Sara: I remember that Deborah asked me. I told her to get a photocopy and all that. It never came to anything, it never came to anything.

Giovanna: I was thinking about when you came here at about 20 years old, you started to work right away.

Sara: Yes.

Giovanna: Did any of your younger sisters have to finish school here? Elementary school? Or did you all work?

Sara: No one. Everyone went to work. Everyone. One week more, one week less. Everyone worked.

Giovanna: Personally, I didn't know much about the history of these programs, but apparently in Uruguay there was an aid program for Jewish people who came as refugees.

Sara: In Uruguay?

Giovanna: No, in Latin America. I am not sure. Do you know anything...? No. Did you receive anything from the state? Was there any help from Uruguay, from the Uruguayan State?

Sara: No. The Kehila, there were people that were much older. They couldn't work and they didn't have... Just like now actually. And they have no place to live, The Kehila, they help them. Lubavitch, the Kehila, and others. All of them. For Yontif, they send them baskets. Anyways, more or less.

Giovanna: Yes. But not the Uruguayan state. No.

Sara: The Uruguayan state? No.

Giovanna: It was just open to come? Because I asked you today, 'why Uruguay'? Why did you come to Uruguay?

Sara: Yes, I remember.

Giovanna: They accepted your arrival?

Sara: Yes.

Giovanna: Were you well received?

Sara: Yes, yes, yes.

Giovanna: But there was no special help.

Sara: No. Right after arriving here, I remember, we went to get ID cards. I still have the ID card. Right away, without any problem.

Giovanna: Sara, after you arrived, because you arrived here very young...

Sara: Yes.

Giovanna: Did you feel that something changed in your identity after you came to Uruguay? Did something change in your way of being because you came here?

Sara: No. We regreted that we came here. Why didn't we go to the United States? I said that from the beginning, and I stand by it. We regreted that, it was bad luck.

Giovanna: When your son left...

Sara: My son left young, he was 21 years old.

Giovanna: You told me, yes.

Sara: And do you know what his father said? Because here, to stay here at that time.

Giovanna: What year would that be?

Sara: It was... What was it?

Giovanna: In the '70s?

Sara: Yes, yes. '70s.

Giovanna: During the dictatorship, more or less, around there?

Sara: There it is. Yes. So my husband said, "He could stay here and do poorly, or he could be there and do well. He's going to call on the phone and we'll get used to it." Because for me it was horrible. And well...

Giovanna: Is he younger than your daughter or older?

Sara: No, younger than my daughter.

Giovanna: Younger.

Sara: Yes. But he's great, a very good son.

Giovanna: Does he feel American, Jewish, Uruguayan?

Sara: American Jew. Not Uruguayan.

Giovanna: Because he also left very young. He left almost at the same age that you came to Uruguay.

Sara: At the age of 21, he left here. Yes.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: No, no, they don't want anything to do with Uruguay. We were talking just this last time, because they didn't renew their ID cards, and this and that. No, nothing.

Giovanna: Did your granddaughters come and get to know Uruguay?

Sara: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. With their husbands, they came. They know Uruguay and they like it. When they come, the first thing they do is go to the barbecue at the harbor.

Giovanna: To the market at the harbor.

Sara: To the market, first thing.

Giovanna: They like Uruguayan beef.

Sara: They love it. They love it. My son's son-in-law... What's his name? I don't remember now.

Giovanna: Did your granddaughters also marry Jewish people in the United States?

Sara: Yes, yes, yes.

Giovanna: And your daughter stayed here.

Sara: Yes, my daughter is here.

Giovanna: And how many grandchildren are from your daughter's side?

Sara: Three.

Giovanna: Three.

Sara: Two boys, and then the girl.

Giovanna: Deborah is the youngest?

Sara: The youngest. Alejandro is an engineer living in Haifa.

Giovanna: Ah, he lives in Israel.

Sara: Yes, he has five children.

Giovanna: He is the one with the most children in the family.

Sara: Yes, very religious.

Giovanna: I see.

Sara: They go with the Tzitzit. Gabriel has four.

Giovanna: Does he live there too? Both males are in Israel?

Sara: Gabriel lived in Israel, he worked hard, he saved a lot but his health didn't cooperate. So my daughter said, "You come here. When you get better, when you are well, you will go back. For now you come here." And he went.

Giovanna: Your grandson, the one you tell me is very religious, did he become more religious when he went to Israel or was he already more religious in Uruguay?

Sara: Yes. He was religious here and then even more over there. He goes to Shul early in the morning, and at night too.

Giovanna: Is he an orthodox Jew?

Sara: No, no.

Giovanna: But it's more religious.

Sara: Yes. He goes to Shul on Saturdays. I was there, I was there a whole Saturday. I saw how they cook. You have this hot thing. You don't turn anything on. You don't turn anything off. Shabbos. Shabbos, shabbos. (Sabbath) The kids have their clothes to wear. They're very mindful.

Giovanna: When was the last time you were in Israel?

Sara: The date?

Giovanna: No, more or less. You were in Miami in like '98, you told me.

Sara: Yes, yes.

Giovanna: And was Israel before or after?

Sara: I do not remember.

Giovanna: No worries. So your son is there, and your sister is there too. And your nephews and nieces, in Israel. Your younger sister, you told me she's in Israel, correct?

Sara: No.

Giovanna: No? Where does your younger sister live?

Sara: Ah, my younger sister? Yes.

Giovanna: Yes. So does she live in the same city as your grandson?

Sara: No, no, no.

Giovanna: No, in different parts.

Sara: She is in Ramat Gan.

Giovanna: Would you have lived in Israel? Would you have moved?

Sara: Everyone asks me that same question, why? I have my daughter here.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: I have my granddaughter here, who is special to me. And I have my house here. What am I going to do in Israel, with no language, with nothing? I have my house here, I have my savings, I know the people, I know where to go, I know where not to go. I say no, I will stay in Uruguay.

Giovanna: Do you go to synagogue, here in Uruguay, now, still?

Sara: Of course I do. I go, yes. I go when there's Shofar, or something special.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: I don't go every day. I'm not there all the time. Besides, to go to the synagogue, it's so uncomfortable to go from my house, it's all like this. Do you see?

Giovanna: All uphill.

Sara: Then, to return, it's all downhill. But to go, it's like this.

Giovanna: Yes.

Sara: It's a bit difficult. And for the most part, that's why I don't go.

Giovanna: Of course. Sara, we've essentially talked about your whole life, I hope we didn't tire you too much. But I wanted to ask you, what do you want other

people to know about your experience as a Jewish person who came to Uruguay all those years ago?

Sara: I'll tell you, but without any further explanation. It is worthless. Everyone has their own experience. Each house is its own world and no one can communicate what one grew up with. What one got used to. And how one lives. I cannot tell you to live as I live, as I am accustomed to living. No way. If they say that, they're lying to you. And I don't lie, I'll tell you the truth. And I don't lie, I'll tell you the truth. It cannot be communicated. It is the experience of the child, because every house is a world, that's why they say that. You can't... When you grow up, you can't be what you never had, what you never were. It is not possible. That's it. Short and understood.

Giovanna: Yes. I'll ask Rona, I have no more questions to share with you. I'll ask Rona, I have no more questions to share with you. And I thank you so much for everything you have told us. I am going to ask Rona to see if there is anything she wants to ask you. Or also if you want to ask her something as a Jew coming from the United States.

Sara: What am I going to ask?

Giovanna: I don't know.

Sara: And again the same thing.

Giovanna: Yes. It depends on the person?

Sara: Everyone has their own life, my dear. Everyone. My children, they have their own life. I can't command them to do what I want. They have their life and I have to accept how they live. Whether I like it or not. They are my children.

Giovanna: Of course.

Sara: Otherwise you are a strange person.

Giovanna: Sure.

Sara: It's crazy. They say that they command their children, or that the children are, well, stupid. The parents do everything for them, and control them. They have to comply. But the child who knows how to sustain themselves independently is going to do what the mother wants? The mother doesn't even have the right to ask for that. No. Besides, I am the type of person that does not interfere in anyone's life. If they ask me, I will gladly explain to them that not everything has to be spent. You have to save because up to 50 or 60 years old, you work a certain way. And after that you work totally differently. It's the age that one reaches, the age they want to reach, and then everything falls apart. You don't provide as much anymore. So that's what's useful and the rest is useless. So

that's what's useful and the rest is useless.

Giovanna: Do you think that the history related to families like yours, that survived the war, who emigrated, does that need to be transmitted or told or shared?

Sara: They want to know. But they already know everything about me. They already know everything. It was repeated a thousand times. When they went to school...

Giovanna: Ah, your children. You always told them about your experience.

Sara: Yes.

Giovanna: I mean people who don't know about the experience.

Sara: They are not interested either. They are not interested, my dear. There is no need to fool yourself. Nobody. Even more now, in the times we live in, nobody is interested. They are only interested in the envy. To tell me, "Look how they got here. Look how they got here, they had nothing. And look at where they live now and everything they have. The cars they have, all that." Nothing more. Do you understand? Nothing more. I'll even tell you that there are families that are jealous of each other. Big families. And they have multiple children. And one knew how to go up and the other one stays down. And the parents have problems with that, too. Look, I believe that there are no miracles in life, there are no miracles. Whoever tells you that there are miracles is a liar. Everyone has his own life and everyone manages. And there's envy. The same between siblings, but my dear, between siblings, they are from the same mother, father, education... But one has one mind and the other has another mind. And one absorbs better than the other. And one is luckier than the other, because things go hand in hand. And one is luckier than the other, because things go hand in hand.

Giovanna: What has been the biggest achievement of your life? What do you think has been the most important thing you have accomplished in your life?

Sara: For me, that I'm still alive. That I'm still here, fighting.

Thank you to Sara Piatnica de Drebiner and Hogar Israelita