

Transcript of Claude Lanzmann's Interview with Ada Lichtman, Shoah: The Four Sisters.

Except taken from original transcript scan:

Ada Lichtman

Film | Accession Number: 1996.166 | RG Number: RG-60.5023 | Film ID: 3270, 3271, 3272, 3273,  
3274, 3275, 3276, 3277

Edited by Hannah Wilson

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Lichtman 12

Interview with Ada L: several cases earlier, transports with children.

The children had with them beautiful dolls, arrived.  
and the Germans did... sometimes they practically tore them out of the  
hands of the children, sometimes it was already when the children were..  
.. they had already been dragged and were dead. So they brought in to  
us. . The SS men, the Germans brought th4 dolls to our laundry, our  
ironing room.

Lanzmann: There were many dolls?

Ada: Very many dolls, different ones, beautiful and big ones, broken ones and  
different.

Lanzmann: New? there were also new ones?

Ada: Very new and fresh, beautifully dressed and also dirty ones the way  
a doll is dirty. And they always said with great joy: well, please make  
something for us.. . .

it should be 80 that we can take it home. We are going on leave, So we took  
the dolls, cleaned and washed them, then we dressed each doll, sewed  
different clothes for her. And they at vas always with great boy that they  
put it in their luggage to take with them among other things.

Lanzmann: What does it mean? The Germans took the dolls of the

At the time the Germans Jewish children...  
arrived, and ~~several times~~ in

Ada: took them for themselves.. .

Lanzmann: . for their own children?

Ada: . . .for their own children to enjoy, after all, they did not take only dolls,  
they took other toys as well.

Wagner for example took a basket of a child, of a new born child, and a blanket, <sup>H</sup>e brought it to be , cleaned for taking home. And really prepared it

- 53 -

Lichtman 1 2

beautifully for him, I cleaned it.

Lanzmann: But this was your work, to dress dolls?

Ada: It was. And then I dressed the dolls, made beautiful dresses and hats for them. Not only me, the girls who worked with me. <sup>W</sup>hat I can say is that there were many young girls who also....who were with us, Jewish ones, and among them was a small girl.

I think she was perhaps 10 years old — Ilugchka Ritter — or Helter — her name was something like this. <sup>S</sup>he was small but very beautiful. She, she looked herself like a doll with beautiful black hair. <sup>S</sup>he was always the first one to take the dolls and she played with them. She took them in her arms and played with them the way a child plays with a doll. • •

<sup>'</sup>he was perhaps 10 years old?

Lanzmann: And she survived? Was she in the camp?

Ada: No, she was in the camp. <sup>D</sup>he was there for a long time, till the revolt. After that I don't know.

Lanzmann: She was not killed?

Ada: <sup>A</sup>fter that we do not know, because when we fled with the revolt, everyone dispersed. One does not know what happened. <sup>L</sup>he whole battalion of workers....

Q: Yes.

was almost killed. Only few people survived' they fell at the gate, at the mines and in the. . . and they have these.. ..

undressed all the dolls, this one, she always said: you should dress this one with something nice. and we always did something. But first of all she played with it. herself. With the dolls?

with the dolls, yes. And we. we made dresses for the dolls, dressed them or...and them. . . Once we had the idea one should. we did it with big heart ache. It lay heavy on our hearts, that the

German children would play with the toys of  
- 34 - of the Jewish children... and going to have fun.

So once we an SS man. We always worked and

did some thing. Also the shirts which the Jews wore . . . one should there were beautiful nightgowns of the women, so they were...

Lanzmann: Night gowns?

Ada: Yee, night gowns in one colour. So this was worked into shirts for the day for the men, for our SS men, for the officers, not such. . .

Lanzmann: Please make it on the table. But this is very difficult to dregs a doll, nor

Ada: so difficult. Une has to cut and do it. The Germans made huge parcels with children's! clothes.

Lanzmann: ♣ But these beautiful dolls came with the transports from the west'

Ada: From also. •L hey came from Austria, from Germany, from doll and, different areas. And I think also from the Polish ones. After all there were many rich Jews and children have always played. and always they took for the trip the, they bought the most beautiful things for the children, so that they have fun. They knew that they. think many people knew where they were going and what happened on the way.

Lanzmann: Yes, but many didn't know.

Ada: Many did not know — like me. I didn't know for many days what... what was happening there. never could imagine. Only when I knew what was being done with the things and heard what was told, I did learn of it.