

## **A gift for Anita: the story of one immigration to Brazil**

My name is Galina Lochekhina. For the last few years I have been living in Krakow, Poland. It remains as glorious as it had been ruled by kings and queens, soaked in history and closely connected with the life of the Jewish population, which was 60,000 people until 1939. I would like to share a story of one girl, one of those 60,000 who, unlike many others, returned to Krakow in 2017 from São Paulo, Brazil after 87 years of exile living in another continent.

Anita Haubenstock was born in Krakow on September 1, 1930 to a family of lawyers of Jewish origins. Every year the whole family went on vacation by car: Austria, Yugoslavia, France... In August 1939 Haubenstocks decided to go for a summer vacation to France, this time by train. Thus, on August 13th 1939, having packed enough for 2 weeks and leaving the family, money, jewelry and a black cocker spaniel, Johnny, in Krakow, the Haubenstock family left the town in the direction of a spa resort in Juan-les-Pins. Anita recalls: *"Mom said not to bring anything that could call attention. At that time, I had beautiful leather gloves. It was a gift. I was told to leave the gloves in Krakow."*

According to the original plan, on Anita's birthday, September 1, they were to return to Warsaw, which she had never seen before. A few days in the capital were to be a gift for her tenth birthday. *"I remember being in a cafe when we heard that the first bombs had been dropped,"* says Anita. - *Father went straight to call his mother asking to pack her belongings and leave Poland urgently. He got the answer that everything was fine, it wouldn't last long and would be over soon."*

The vacation in France lasted for eleven months. After Juan-les-Pins, the Haubenstocks drove as far as Vichy and settled in a boarding house. Among the guests were their acquaintances from Katowice, a small industrial town near Krakow, who also managed to escape the war with their two daughters. One of them taught Anita how to knit a hook. And now Anita sells her knitwear on Facebook.

After Vichy, they went to Rouen, then to Paris. Fluent in French, German and English, Emil Haubenstock, Anita's father, was helping Jews, who had fled Poland, with the documents necessary to obtain visas. In June 1940, German troops entered Paris. In the first days of the month, the Haubenstock family packed their bags and ran south to cross the border into Spain during the night.

*"I don't remember much about these wanderings, I have no trauma left. A child can turn a lot into a game."* From Spain, the Haubenstock family took the train to Portugal. *"I remember on the train a soldier gave me a piece of bread and some candy. I must have looked very hungry". But I was very well dressed: a beige*

*dress with embroidery on my chest and a blue coat over it."* This is the dress she was trying to impress staff in the embassies so they could get a visa.

The family received temporary visas to Brazil for 180 days on July 1, 1940. At the same moment, Anita Adolfini Haubenstein became Anita Dolly Haubenstein. In August 1940, after borrowing 250 dollars for three second class tickets from Elena Rubenstein, who by that time had behaved as a rich relative, the whole family climbed aboard the ship "Serpa Pinto" and landed at the port of Rio de Janeiro on August 28, 1940. That's how a new life began for Anita and her family on the other side of the Atlantic. But in her soul, Anita remained European.

After graduating from the University of Brazil, she developed a brilliant career in biochemistry, having published more than 140 scientific papers. Anita devoted her entire life to the study of yeast sugar, achieving international recognition. Later, on the basis of her research, a liquid to maintain organs before a transplantation was created, which is still in use today.

The Anita story cannot be found in the video collections of archival records or in the list of testimonies at Yad Vashem. Publications about her fate are represented by several printed publications in the Polish language, but were never published in English. I managed to get to know Anita personally and hear the story firsthand. Overshadowed by the events of the Holocaust, many of such stories remain unheard, forgotten or lost. I am grateful for the opportunity to tell you the story of this amazing woman.