

Maria Eva Feheri

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My family background

My paternal grandfather's name was Jozsef Antal. I think his father lived in Austria, and he was named something like Anton. But I don't know much about them, only that he was already Antal when, in the 1930s I knew him for a few years, because he died in 1938. I was so little, that when he died, I didn't understand why so many people were coming. I was just staring, 'Look how many guests there are!' and I started to laugh. And my mother told me, 'Shh, shh, this is because grandfather died'. After that, they hardly talked about him. Grandmother always cried, 'Poor papa!' He wasn't too old, he must have been about 60. As far as I know he was born in Budapest. I think he was a kind of trader. I'm sure he didn't have a shop here. He may have been an employee at some kind of company.

Whether my grandfather was religious, I don't know, but the two of them, my grandfather and grandmother, observed holidays, I think; at least, they kept the fast [on Yom Kippur]. Perhaps they even went to the synagogue, but I'm not sure about that. They didn't tell me about it because my father had converted to Christianity. It's certain that my father was already non-religious. My grandmother kept the fasts even after the war, and there were those kinds of meals at holidays. As far as I know, I knew matzah balls from there. When I grew older, after the war, I fasted with her in solidarity, despite the fact that we had already converted. And I think she was kosher at first, because it seemed as if she cooked things separately, but then she may have put up with the fact that it was not like that in our house.

Grandmother Ella Kohn was from Szekesfehervar. I think she might have met my grandfather there. My grandmother was a housewife. Two children were born: my father and his younger brother, and she raised them. After my grandfather's death, she moved to our place and lived with us until her death. She died at the beginning of the 1950s, and she was around 80 years old. Before the war she had a separate room, but she didn't have one afterwards, she had only a small vestibule because our flat had been bombed. As a doctor, my father got an official residence room in Rokus hospital. There we were, the four of us and grandmother in the vestibule on a divan-bed. It was pretty hard for all of us, living in the one-bedroom apartment. Obviously there was tension

because there wasn't a very good relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. My mother was terribly troubled by grandmother's having moved in, and that grandma always observed what she was doing, and what kind of company she kept.

My father's brother was Jeno Antal. I think he was two or three years younger than my father. He went to America in 1938. He was a violinist and he played in the Rock Quartet, which is said to have been a renowned quartet. He got married back when he was still at home, to Katalin Bant, daughter of Bant, who owned the bread factory, and they never had children. They wanted to bring us to the US. It was discussed back in 1941-42, but the Americans didn't want to let us in. Jeno Antal lived and worked up until the age of 80-82, then he died in America. Once he visited us here.

My maternal grandfather was Rezso Rasko. He died about the time I was born, and he must have been around 60 or 70 years old, because they said he died young here in Budapest, after having a tooth extracted. I think he was from Budapest, and I know he was a wood-agent. Grandmother Julia Altmann was from Transylvania. When they came to Budapest, I don't know. My mum was born in Kezdivasarhely, but if I'm correct, her sisters were not. I think they came to Budapest around World War I, or even before. My grandmother's father was Christian. Her mother, when she became a widow, already had a big daughter, and together with this Jewish girl, this Jewish woman got married to a very decent Christian farm manager. Because her mother was Jewish, my grandmother was Jewish, too. My grandmother believed in God and prayed. I remember a prayer book, in which she'd put a lock of my hair, as the first grandchild. But my grandparents couldn't have been very observant. Grandmother didn't work, she gave birth to five children, and brought them up. She was a wonderful grandmother, a real brood-hen; she was always talking about the five children, about how hard it was with that many girls. My mother and her brother were always fighting. There were big pillow fights and they played hide-and-seek in the dark. My mother also told me about it when I was sick and I really envied all those children; how good it must have been. Grandmother lived with her daughter Margit most of the time. She always came over to us, and looked after me and my younger brother. She was 81 or 82 years old, when she died, in or around 1958.

My grandmother had five children. The first daughter was my mother, Erzsebet Rasko, born in 1904. Two years later Margit was born. She worked for my grandfather's wood agency and she was a businesswoman until the end of her life. She got married to a man named Lajos Biro, who died in the war, in forced labor, I think. She has one son. In 1956 she went first to Austria, then she lived in London, and decided that from then on, they would keep it a secret that they were Jews. She died something like six or eight years ago.

Next was Laszlo, he was born in 1909. I believe he was employed in the wood trade. He had a wife and a daughter. Laszlo died in the war. He tried to run away from forced labor and was shot by an Arrow Cross man. His family survived, his wife remarried, and in 1956 they emigrated to America.

After him came Rene. She was born in 1910 and she is still alive and lives in London. She got married to a man named Vadasz before the war. This Vadasz family was taken away by the Germans, despite the fact that they gave lots of money to the Gestapo, because it was a rich family. She also went to London with Margit in 1956, and she learnt physiotherapy there. She has one child.

The last one was Katalin, or Kato, she was born in 1915 or 1916. She had a high school diploma, then after the war, she worked at the Red Cross and she made aliyah in 1949. It was a terrible thing that her husband, who was half Jewish, was shot dead by the Arrow Cross [1](#) men because he was 'disguised' in military uniform. Then the Russians came, and one of them caught her and raped her. Then she said she'd had enough of this country and she left in 1949. She got married to a Transylvanian Jewish boy. They lived in Eilat [Israel], then, after the death of her husband, she went into a kibbutz. She has two daughters, Judit and Hanna. Judit is a teacher of handicapped children and she has three children. Hanna still works in the kibbutz now. She also has five children. Kato died recently.

My father Pal Antal was born in Budapest in 1898. First he was an internal specialist, and when they began to dismiss or displace Jewish doctors he learnt pathology, and he was a pathologist until he died. My mother graduated from the Szilagyi high school, and then she studied something to do with horticulture, and she worked in that field. She learnt to tailor and to sew just as a hobby. But she didn't really have a profession; she was a housewife, and was at home. Later, after the war, she worked in public health as a hospital caretaker, and she completed courses. So she was skilled in hospital management. First she was in the Rokus hospital, then she was the manager of the Bakats Square hospital. My parents had their wedding in 1929, but it was only a civil ceremony.

Growing up

I was born in 1930, my brother Istvan seven years later. I believe they hadn't planned another child because my mother told me that they went hiking in the Bakony mountain, and it was very cold, and she snuggled up to my father, and she didn't have pessary on her. They were very happy though that it was a boy and he ate well – because I didn't eat well – and he was very talented musically. I was very motherly with my brother, but being 14 I didn't know what to do with a seven-year-old boy. And then, when I was 27 and he was 20, we started to get along very well. We could discuss everything, though we met very rarely. He went to the Academy of Music, and then he played the viola in an orchestra. He had a family and children, too. He died in 1985. He was still very young.

During my childhood we lived in Klotild Street. The apartment was very nice, with three rooms and a hall, and it had a servant's room; I got the servant's room later, so that I could have a separate room. We had a very pretty maidservant, named Ami, she did everything: cleaned, washed, cooked and served. Then in 1938, when dad was dismissed, my mother let her go. Then mum cooked and served. We had a big library at home. Dad was very serious, and he let me read everything. He had all kinds of books, including the classics. If he started reading a book and he felt from its style that this wasn't real literature, he put it down instantly; he had such delicate tastes. Besides all this, he was a good mathematician. My father was on night duty in the old Madach theatre, and he took me there sometimes, and it was free. Mother didn't go because my brother was small then. They took us to the children's theatre – Uncle Lakner's Children's theatre – once or twice, and to the cinema, once or twice. My parents' friends were mostly doctors and doctors who played music, and sometimes, in the evening, they performed chamber music at our place.

My father worked as a pharmaceutical advertiser for a German company for a while in 1938. In the 1930s one could foresee that Jews weren't going to be allowed to stay. That was a very good position. That was one point. The other one was that he used to go out to the counties to tell the

medical officers which medicine was good for what. Then he would stay with them for a few days at a time, and it would come out who-and-what he was, when, on Sundays, he didn't go to church with them. He wasn't that religious, for him it didn't mean anything, I think, that he converted to Christianity only because he could support his family better this way. We didn't talk about this much, unfortunately, and that's all I know about it.

I think he had converted to Christianity earlier, before my birth. Still, as my mother is Jewish, at the time of my birth I was registered as an Israelite. And in 1937 he had me convert. My brother was already born a Christian, and he wasn't circumcised.

My school years

I went to elementary school in Szemere Street. I knew I was of Jewish origin and that we wanted to go to America because of this, and perhaps the schoolmistress knew as well, because when it was a Jewish holiday she said to me, 'You can also stay at home if you want'. She didn't understand that my father didn't insist on me being half-Jewish. The schoolmistress took it that we were doing it to save our lives, but that we surely wanted to keep the holidays.

School was in the morning, I had lunch at home, and so did my father. After lunch I did homework and went to skate, and sometimes to my girlfriend's to play. My father began to give violin lessons because he was a great musician, although that wasn't what he had studied, and he tried to teach me, but I think it didn't go well. I would have liked to play the piano very much, but buying a piano was out of the question.

I think I made friends mostly with Jewish girls in school. But it wasn't just because they were Jews, but because the social classes were very sharply divided: most of the Christian girls were wretched little proles. I had a very good girlfriend who was Christian; her family was very decent and they even made friends with my parents. It didn't bother me that I didn't go to Jewish religion classes, while my Jewish girlfriends did. This wasn't a matter of discussion between the children. I remember instead that it was unpleasant that they were always wealthier because dad had already lost his [good] job, he could already only be an assistant doctor. But merchants and lawyers somehow earned more in the 1930s, and I always had lesser things: I wasn't bought a bicycle, I didn't have such good dresses at parties. I think there wasn't a children's party at our apartment during my school years because my mother was always afraid that we wouldn't have enough money.

My auntie Rene regularly invited us to her villa because she had a rich husband and they had a villa in Balatonszeplak [near Lake Balaton]. Grandmother organized it so that she would look after each set of grandchildren for two weeks at a time. In Lepence there was a guesthouse where we went with acquaintances. But we never went abroad.

We had Christmas, but without keeping any of the Christian rites, such as presents, surprises, or a Christmas tree. You could see that my mother wanted to assimilate in this respect. She wasn't religious either. We didn't keep any other holidays as far as I know. I don't remember any Easter, and we didn't celebrate name days, only birthdays and Christmas. There was never a word about religion, right up until I was admitted to the state high school. Then I was taken to the nuns because the Catholic school admitted Jewish children, even if both parents weren't Catholics, and the state school didn't.

When I entered the school of the Ursula order, I had to take part in all kinds of things. In addition to this there was First Communion even in the elementary school. For one or two years I got giddy about how nice a thing the nun's profession was, because I read about the life of small saints and I decided that I would be like them. I became a very good child then and my mother was surprised. And my father didn't mind me going to communion in the morning, which had to be attended without breakfast. I think he looked on kindly at these things.

We prayed before and after every lesson, and we put on a veil on Sunday, and it was a great thing to serve at mass, but they only let me do it once. However, it was a problem being a Jew there, and we knew who was and who wasn't. There was a kind of unspoken acknowledgement there. I was very afraid of the anti-Semite girls. But the class-mistress, Ms. Eva, who was secular, said that if she heard any child discriminating against other children, she would have that child expelled. Once, just as a joke, in order to make the others believe I wasn't a Jew, I said, 'Look, this girl has a nose like a Jew', and to this, the girl said that she would tell Ms. Eva about it. I thought that would be such a scandal. But eventually it came out, after I won a school swimming competition, and the physical education instructor said that I should go along and join KISOP, which was a youth sports club. My mother told me that I shouldn't go because they ask for the certificate of baptism of four grandparents - because that was in 1943 - and then I had to go to Ms. Emi and tell her that I couldn't go because not all four of my grandparents were Christian. I was very nervous and I couldn't sleep at night, for fear of what Ms. Emi was going to say about it. She said, 'Antal, are you Jewish?' And that was that. But I couldn't go swimming any more.

My father taught me to do sports and not be afraid; he let me swim in the cold Danube and took me walking in the forest. We went on hikes with friends on Sundays. There was a steady group of friends. And I know that before we were broke, my father had a motor boat and we went to Szentendre [holiday village in the Curb of the Danube]. Dad bought some kind of land once in Monor before the war and we never saw it again because we didn't go after it. It was never built on. It was only an investment that he made with the compensation that I believe he got for being dismissed from his work advertising pharmaceuticals.

In high school, I wanted to try what it was like to be a half-boarder. I had a great herd instinct in me and I was very sorry that in the 1940s, when my wealthier girlfriends could afford to go to a children's holiday resort, my parents couldn't afford it. Then I tried this half-board status and I ate with them for a few weeks and I studied in the study room in the afternoons. Then I got bored of it, or my mother got bored of it, because they asked for both money and ration tickets.

We had a uniform, like a sailor blouse with stripes and black stockings. Every day we had to wear that. Later when textiles were sold for points, we said that we couldn't get black stockings, only drab or only knee-stockings. They told us to pull them up so that our knees couldn't be seen.

I went there until the spring of 1944. I studied hard there. When the yellow star [yellow star in Hungary] [2](#) came, I decided that I shouldn't go any more because you couldn't go to school wearing it. It was March and I didn't go any more. After the war I went to the Raskai high school and graduated from there in 1949.

During the war

During the war my father was fired from his German company, then from the university hospital, then from Janos hospital – there, too, he was a pathologist, but he worked for free. And then he stopped going in when a decree was issued that Jewish doctors couldn't enter the hospital area [which was part of the anti-Jewish laws in Hungary] [3](#). In 1944 he was taken to forced labor. He was in Pocsmegyer for a short while. The Russian troops were already close then and they brought them back home to Pest [Budapest] and took them to the ghetto.

The house that we lived in on Klotild Street became a yellow-star house [4](#) because there were a lot of Jews there. In October 1944, when the Jews had already been deported from the countryside, the Arrow Cross men went into the yellow-star houses and said that everybody had to come out and they would take us to work. First the men, then a few weeks later the women were taken. And when they wanted to take my mother, too, she lay down on the bed as if she was sick and couldn't go. A policeman, who looked like he was the father of a family himself, came and told her to get up right then. And she started pretending that she was sick, she couldn't breathe, so the policeman brought a glass of water. But when she said that she couldn't get up, he held up his gun and said, 'Get up or I'll shoot you right now!' And at that very moment my grandmother entered and started screaming, 'My daughter Bozsi what's happening to you here?' In the meantime the Arrow Cross man shouted to the policeman to come and he said, 'This one here is having convulsions'. To this the Arrow Cross man said, 'Leave her to hell, let's go!' And he left with the group. At that very moment my mother got up, she grabbed my brother and me and said that we wouldn't stay here. She ran away with us.

A few days later my mother found a Swedish protected hospital and children's home at 26 Erzsebet Boulevard and she took us there. It was a two-bedroom apartment, where about sixty children slept and we got along quite well. She said that she was a nurse and her husband was a doctor, and that she worked there on the ground floor with the sick old Jews. She placed us children there.

I was fourteen years old then, and I had a report book from the nuns. I said that I would find out about dad – see whether he had gone home. The caretaker was a very decent man and he said that dad had been there and left a message that he was at 30 Akacfa Street, in the ghetto. I did all this without a yellow star. I went in, as at the time, the entrance to the ghetto was still open. I went up and dad was lying on a straw mattress with fifteen others. My father said, 'Come on in, let's stay together. I'm a doctor and I'll get a servant's room for the four of us'. And then we were there in the ghetto in a small servant's room that faced the courtyard, and we didn't even go down to the cellar – right up until the Soviet troops came in.

After graduation, I got married right away. At the banquet I was already married because Tamas, or Tomi, Weisz was to be sent to the Soviet Union to study right away. I said that we should get married because I had been dating him for years. Around 1943, I frequently went out to Marguerite Island with girlfriends, and boys always went there with us. He was one of them. And then he disappeared in the war. He was hiding with his mum in parks, everywhere. He was taken to a brickyard, and he escaped. And then he and his mum somehow always came and went to and from parks. They went home at night, then into a yellow-star house in Ujlipotvaros [a bourgeois part of Budapest, where a lot of middle-class Jewish families used to live].

After the war Tomi graduated from the College of Theatre and Film Arts. His father, Lajos Weisz, was a dry goods agent, but he died of a disease in 1943. His mother was a dressmaker and she supported Tamas as long as he needed. After college, Tomi found a position at the Hungarian Film Newsreel Co.

When we got married we didn't know where to live. We went to my mother-in-law's for two days, but she was married by then, and her husband said that this wasn't the reason he had gotten married: to share the place with us. Then my aunt Rene, who had also got married again, put us up in the rear quarter of her villa. My other aunt put us up for a few months. Slowly a year passed and Tamas got a single-bedroom union apartment at the Newsreel for his good work. We lived there for a while, until we came here in the spring of 1956. Tomi was still working at the Newsreel, and later it became the Newsreel Documentary Film Studio. There were always bonuses at the Newsreel. So we bought a car in 1960.

When a placard appeared in the streets in 1945 that said, 'Hungarian Youth! Come on, do sports, have fun, dance!', I said that this time I was like everyone else. And I joined MADISZ [Hungarian Democratic Youth Alliance] [5](#) so that I could dance and do sports. And they told me to stay: there would be work, there would be dances, and I'd see that everybody was the same from now on. And I liked it very much and I took the ideology for granted as well. I couldn't believe what some of my other girlfriends told me about the Soviet Union. I was a believer with all my heart. I could argue even in tramways if somebody scorned it. Then there were still religion classes at school and our priest disparaged MADISZ a great deal. And then there was an argument between classmates and MADISZ members.

There were many Jews in the fifth district MADISZ organization. I think that the Jews I knew there believed that it was a new world and that the old one had been awful because we and our parents had been taken and had yellow stars put on and been spat on. And there shouldn't be any more of this and the Communist Party and MADISZ was the best way to avoid it. And the others were proles who felt that they could become somebody, that we could finally study.

My father once talked with a friend who told him, 'Pal you belong here, you have principles that are Marxist, join!' And then my father joined and my mother joined, too. And when the resettlements [resettlement in Hungary] [6](#) came, a very decent, not-at-all-capitalist retailer-friend of ours, who had even brought food to us in the ghetto, was resettled, despite the fact that he had diabetes, and my father wrote to Rakosi [Rakosi regime] [7](#) about it. He was extraordinarily naive. In 1944 he had thought that if we did what the Germans wanted, there wouldn't be any problems. And here he thought that if he wrote to Rakosi, they would bring back poor Gyula Marczis. Instead, they convened a party meeting in the Rokus hospital and he was expelled from the Party in 1952.

In 1956 [Revolution of 1956] [8](#) I would have liked to have left but my father said that in spite of the terrible things that had happened to him, because of his expulsion from the Party, we didn't have to go away from here; the situation would become calmer now. And Tamas didn't want to go because he said that he had a machine on loan to him from the Ministry of Light Industry and they would say that he was trying to steal it. Also, Gyuri, my son, was just three years old.

When I got married, I went to work at the Motion Picture Co. in the youth-organizing department where the pioneers were organized for Soviet films – in the largest possible numbers, and for Sunday mornings if possible, so that they couldn't go to church.

In 1952 when my father was expelled from the Party I was already working at the Culture Department of the Pioneer Center as film organizer and I went in to the cadre official to say that my father had been expelled. He said he was sure that he could clear his case, but they relocated me to a district administrative position. In the meantime in the youth party school one of my girlfriends said to me, 'Mari, we should study something, let's go to the teacher training college'. What I had been interested in all my life was sports, physical education, but there was Hungarian language and literature here in the evening course and I graduated from that. At the time I was already known in the pioneer center in Obuda because I was an district chief secretary and I was still going to college and there was a position there. I taught in an elementary school, paid by the hour. I taught in several schools, then I got a real contract at Vorosvari Street. I worked there for many, many years.

In 1952 I had a premature delivery, Andras: he died quite soon after. Then came Gyuri in 1953, and in 1965 there was Gabor, who later died at the age of 19. He had just started university. He was a Hungarian-English major. It came suddenly, it's called sarcoma. If it caught a young man, it killed him within months. Gyuri graduated from Eotvos Lorand University, majoring in Hungarian and Aesthetics. When it turned out that kidney disease is treated better elsewhere than here, he left. First he went with a scholarship, then in Berlin he made contacts in the Hungarian House [Hungarian cultural institution in Berlin], and he has worked there since. He's a program manager there.

The children knew that they were Jews, we didn't hide that, but we didn't raise them to be religious because we already didn't believe, either. When, in 1956 my son asked about little Jesus [traditionally, Christmas presents are said to be brought by little Jesus, rather than Santa Claus], when he was three years old, my husband said to him, 'Gyuri, there is no little Jesus, but you don't have to tell that to others because it hurts people'. It happened once, in a shop, that somebody asked, 'Son, what has little Jesus brought you?' He said to the man that there was no little Jesus and that, '[his] father told me that one doesn't have to talk about this'. So Gyuri knew, and Gabor knew as well. And our close friends knew. Somehow our circle of friends formed in a way that they were all Jews, with one exception.

I didn't really read newspapers, despite the fact that, as a party member, I should have, but I wasn't interested in them. I didn't know anything about Israel, except that Kato, my mother's sister, was there and that it was not advised to correspond with her because that was not taken well here, and then I wouldn't get a passport to go to the West as a tourist. For a long time we didn't correspond with Margit, nor with Rene, who lived in London, but then, in the 1960s, we could even go there to visit them. And then we did. But I didn't know anything about Israel. I knew about the establishment of the State of Israel and about the problems, when I read the book entitled 'Exodus' in the 1960s. I thought a little bit about how good it must be to live there where everybody is Jewish. I was there for the first time in 1985 and then I saw that perhaps not everything was so good there.

Of course my sense of being Jewish strengthened in me after the change of regime, because anti-Semitism began. And then, if you read things like that, it gets into your mind. That never came to my mind in the party state, because this was not a matter for discussion. Or rather, it seems it was - only it was done very much under cover, those who were Jewish hid the fact. And I didn't know about the trials against Jews in the Soviet Union [the Doctors' Plot [9](#)].

Today I don't go to any kind of temple, because that is my childhood. It's like when somebody says it was a wonderful world because that was his youth. In the meantime my cousin from Israel started to come here and send presents; then I went to Israel. So now, I belong more. But it's one thing to belong to the Jews and another that I can't believe that there is a God who demands me to keep certain traditions. I can't imagine that children have to wear payes, and girls have to wear long, warm dresses, or that it's a problem if you eat noodles with cottage cheese. Would a God care about these things? I regard these things as absolutely childish and naive.

Glossary

1 Arrow Cross Party

The most extreme of the Hungarian fascist movements in the mid-1930s. The party consisted of several groups, though the name is now commonly associated with the faction organized by Ferenc Szalasi and Kalman Hubay in 1938. Following the Nazi pattern, the party promised not only the establishment of a fascist-type system including social reforms, but also the 'solution of the Jewish question'. The party's uniform consisted of a green shirt and a badge with a set of crossed arrows, a Hungarian version of the swastika, on it. On 15th October 1944, when governor Horthy announced Hungary's withdrawal from the war, the Arrow Cross seized power with military help from the Germans. The Arrow Cross government ordered general mobilization and enforced a regime of terror which, though directed chiefly against the Jews, also inflicted heavy suffering upon the Hungarians. It was responsible for the deportation and death of tens of thousands of Jews. After the Soviet army liberated the whole of Hungary by early April 1945, Szalasi and his Arrow Cross ministers were brought to trial and executed.

2 Yellow star in Hungary

Yellow star in Romania: On 8th July 1941, Hitler decided that all Jews from the age of 6 from the Eastern territories had to wear the Star of David, made of yellow cloth and sewed onto the left side of their clothes. In Hungary it was introduced by the Sztojay government along with a number of other anti-Jewish decrees on 5th April 1944, two weeks after the German army occupied Hungary.

3 Anti-Jewish laws in Hungary

Following similar legislation in Nazi Germany, Hungary enacted three Jewish laws in 1938, 1939 and 1941. The first law restricted the number of Jews in industrial and commercial enterprises, banks and in certain occupations, such as legal, medical and engineering professions, and journalism to 20% of the total number. This law defined Jews on the basis of their religion, so those who converted before the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919, as well as those who fought in World War I, and their widows and orphans were exempted from the law. The second Jewish law introduced further restrictions, limiting the number of Jews in the above fields to 6%, prohibiting the employment of Jews completely in certain professions such as high school and university teaching, civil and municipal services, etc. It also forbade Jews to buy or sell land and so forth. This law already defined Jews on more racial grounds in that it regarded baptized children that had at least one non-converted Jewish parent as Jewish. The third Jewish law prohibited intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews, and defined anyone who had at least one Jewish grandparent as Jewish.

4 Yellow star houses

The system of exclusively Jewish houses, which acted as a form of hostage taking, was introduced by Hungarian authorities in Budapest in June 1944. The authorities believed that if they concentrated all the Jews of Budapest in the ghetto, the Allies would not attack it, but if they placed such houses all over Budapest, especially near important public buildings it was a kind of guarantee. Jews were only allowed to leave such houses for two hours a day to buy supplies and such.

5 MADISZ [Hungarian Democratic Youth Alliance]

Mass organization assembling young people between the ages of 15 and 24 who were not members of the Communist Party. It was set up in 1944, on the initiative of the Hungarian Communist Party and it was under direct communist control from 1945. It merged with the SZIT, the Trade Union Movement of Young Workers and Apprentices in 1948.

6 Resettlement in Hungary

After 1945, based on a decision by the Great Powers, some 200,000 Hungarians of German ethnicity were resettled outside the borders of Hungary and likewise, about 70,000 Hungarians from the Slovak part of Czechoslovakia were expelled from their home country and resettled in Hungary. After the communist takeover in 1948, the Hungarian Ministry of Internal Affairs ordered the resettlement from Budapest of what they called 'former exploiters' to the countryside. This decree was applied to all people that the communist power regarded as its enemy: to the officials of the prewar state apparatus, soldiers, policemen, kulaks, members of the aristocracy, etc. At least 12,000 people were forced to leave their domicile and were taken to small, god-forsaken villages under very hard living conditions. Resettlement was stopped in 1953.

7 Rakosi regime

Matyas Rakosi was a Stalinist Hungarian leader between 1948-1956. He introduced an absolute communist terror, established a Stalinist type cult for himself and was responsible for the show trials of the early 1950s. After the Revolution of 1956, he went to the Soviet Union and died there.

8 Revolution of 1956

Starting on 23rd October 1956, this uprising was against Soviet rule and the communists in Hungary. It was started by student and worker demonstrations in Budapest during which Stalin's gigantic statue was destroyed. Moderate communist leader Imre Nagy was appointed as prime minister and he promised reform and democratization. The Soviet Union withdrew its troops which had been stationed in Hungary since the end of World War II, but they returned after Nagy's announcement that Hungary would pull out of the Warsaw Pact to pursue a policy of neutrality. The Soviet army put an end to the rising on 4th November and mass repression and arrests started. About 200,000 Hungarians fled from the country. Nagy and a number of his supporters were executed. Until 1989, the fall of the communist regime, the Revolution of 1956 was officially considered a counter-revolution.

9 Doctors' Plot

The Doctors' Plot was an alleged conspiracy of a group of Moscow doctors to murder leading government and party officials. In January 1953, the Soviet press reported that nine doctors, six of whom were Jewish, had been arrested and confessed their guilt. As Stalin died in March 1953, the trial never took place. The official paper of the Party, the Pravda, later announced that the charges against the doctors were false and their confessions obtained by torture. This case was one of the worst anti-Semitic incidents during Stalin's reign. In his secret speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 Khrushchev stated that Stalin wanted to use the Plot to purge the top Soviet leadership.