

The Pescaru Family



My mother's relatives from Piatra Neamt, the Pescaru family. The boy sitting on the chair was named Felix; this is the name I gave to my son too. The photo was taken at the Ditgartz photo cabinet in Piatra Neamt, around 1935. The clothes and postures of these cousins of my mother's show they were rather prosperous. Unfortunately, all I know about my mother's side of the family is that they were better off than my father's family. The cousins of hers from Piatra Neamt named Pescaru (my grandfather's nephews) owned some restaurants in that Moldavian town. There were also some lawyers, journalists and artists in my mother's family. When I was a kid, I would spend my vacations at our relatives in Moldavia, in my brother's company most of the time. Before the break of the war, in 1940, we would go to Bacau and Piatra Neamt every summer. The landscapes

there were truly magnificent. A lot of Jews used to inhabit these towns back then, many of whom were intellectuals. Vacations were always a time of indulgence for us, as the material situation of our relatives was far better than ours. Everything was ritualized in their house, even the preparation of the coffee. It was roasted in the kitchen and its ravishing smell spread across the entire house. Every time I smell roasted coffee I remember the vacations of my childhood. In Piatra Neamt I discovered an extraordinary, unique dessert: the seven-layered sherbet - with cocoa, vanilla, orange, lemon, raspberry, strawberry and rum. I had a long teaspoon and I always tried to reach the last layer. Our relatives offered us trips and picturesque parties, in the middle of nature. We went sightseeing or fishing. There was a Chinese man in Piatra Neamt who looked after the plants of an absolutely superb garden, while his son played the violin and I climbed the trees, picking up apples and pears.