

Ticu Goldstein



This is me, Ticu Goldstein, at my first visit to the United States. I lived with some friends, at about 200 kilometers from New York City, in an almost deserted area. When I woke up in the morning, I would see deer passing by my window. The house in the background belongs to my friends. The photo was taken in 1992. That year, I celebrated my birthday in America. It was a dream I had never thought it would come true. Music, theater and books were actually a psychological refuge for many of us under the communist regime. This sort of suppression led to the implosion of the communist regime in our country, not to its explosion. We never had a samizdat literature in Romania, like the Russians did, for instance. They had a real opposition. We only had a few exceptions here. In all those wretched years of Ceausescu's dictatorship, I only saw one single manifest, and it was pretty mild too. Someone brought a flyer to the Institute; it condemned the regime for the 'poor quality bread'. I passed it on like a fool - I could have got in trouble, for people talked. I went to the head deputy of our lab and showed it to her. She said she wanted to show it to someone else, but, when I asked her to give it back, she told me she had thrown it in the toilet. The Russians had more courage. On the other hand, Ceausescu did attempt a form of pseudo-liberalism in the 1960s, but he ended up on the nationalist slope. Of course my life changed after 1989; so did the life of any other Romanian. We are able to travel and to speak freely and we have better prospects, although the situation is not very bright in the country. I worked (and I still work) a lot for the Hasefer Publishing House of the Jewish Community in Bucharest, founded in 1980. When it comes to politics, there are many things that can be said. Deep down inside, I think my admiration goes to the United States. For too many times, Europe proved itself cowardly and ready to repeat its mistakes a thousand times. It didn't learn anything from the lessons of the past and this disqualifies it, if I may say so. America is extraordinarily dynamic when it comes to Jews, colored people and other minority groups. Thanks to the fight led by the American civil society, many things changed for the better. On the contrary, in Europe, the monstrous coalition between the extreme Right and the extreme Left, both anti-Israeli, is more than surprising. I knew the extreme Right was anti-Semitic. But I see the extreme Left is anti-Semitic as well. Nevertheless, I enjoy staying in Romania. I am glad the Jewish life in Bucharest has intensified and I noticed there are

non-Jewish young people who are interested in Judaism. I have a very active contribution to the Jewish intellectual life through my articles and my translations. I go to the synagogue on the spring and autumn holidays, and I attend the meetings and conferences held by the Judaism centers in Bucharest and Cluj or the events organized by the Embassy of the State of Israel on various occasions.