

Samuel Izsak's Graduation Photo



I graduated from high-school in Temesvar in 1936. On this graduation photo I'm in the lower left corner, surrounded by my classmates and teachers. In the fall of 1926 we moved to Temesvar. The owner of our flat was a Christian. At the same time I entered the Jewish high-school in Temesvar. Following its establishment in 1919, it operated for a while as a Hungarian school. The public education law then transformed it into a Romanian school. Until I entered high-school I only read literature in Hungarian. There I respected the high-school curriculum and read in foreign languages, as well. There were many Romanian books we had to read. Every year the required reading got more and more demanding, and we complied with the requirements. I loved the atmosphere in the Jewish high-school. Every school has its pros and cons. This is true for any school, not only for the confessional ones. Not every teacher was a good pedagogue, not everyone could keep his temper under control. But the school as a whole was a very civilized, forward school. There were some outstanding teachers, who excelled not only as high-school teachers, but also as scientists. I would like to mention Dr. Viktor Deznai (second from the left in the top row), who taught us French. He was an excellent teacher of French and French culture and literature. He said, 'Close your books because you'll only need them for the high-school graduation, but now I will talk about French literature and culture.' He was very helpful and showed us the cultural perspective of things. Otherwise, by profession he was an urbanist. He published some articles in Temesvar, but more were published by the Sorbonne in Paris. In other words, he was a well known urbanist expert and scientist in Europe. I hold him in my memory with great respect because I learnt a lot from him. I used to go to his place, and I even drew city-planning maps from time to time, following his directions. I borrowed some books from him, so he played an important role in the development of my cultural life and culture. We also liked our hygiene teacher very much, a very likeable, very skilled doctor. He taught us, youngsters, many things, including the intimate matters of life. I loved natural history, but I had no feeling for mathematics. Mathematics and geometry were my weak

side. I also liked history a lot, and my interest for it is still alive. As for foreign languages, besides French we learned German and Ivrit. The school quite often took us to the museum of Temesvar, which had a department of paintings that I liked very much. I remember we had to write essays about these visits, and one time my essay was the best in class. I didn't manage to graduate from high-school on my first try. I graduated in the fall of 1936. I had to enter exams of Latin, Romanian language and literature, natural science and French, I think.