

Magdolna Palmai On A Trip



Here you can see me when I was in my twenties. At the beginning of the 1940s we used to take trips in the mountains of Buda with young social democratic people. There might have been 20-30 of us. This picture was taken on the Frank mountain, where the Gazdagret Housing Estate was built. We didn't cook there, but we took the food with us in small pans. Formerly workers used to take food with them in pans like these. We spread the blanket and everyone put in the middle what they had brought. Because there were some who were well off, they brought more delicious food, and there were poorer people, too. So we shared the food so that everyone got from everything, and so that many wouldn't only eat bread and lard. When I came to Pest I made many new friends. I still have a girlfriend whom I met at that time, even though that's more than 60 years ago. I lived in Budapest from 1940 until 1945. I became a member of the youth department of the Social Democratic Party here. They organized literary evenings, as well as matinees for the workers, where they invited leftist actors to hold cultural performances. I heard Hilda Gobbi and Tamas Major there, who recited poems written by Attila Jozsef and Ady. This happened in 1941-1942, when many poems by Attila Jozsef were banned, like the one entitled 'Tell me what lies in store for a man' or 'Mother.' But there were also poems by Ady or Petofi that could not be recited, because they praised the working class. The programs had to be reported, but there were always some people from the police there, and when the actors started to recite the banned poems they intervened immediately. Many from among our company, the members of the social democratic youth movement, became leading politicians later. But at that time we listened to Anna Kethly at

the Vasas House, and often went to the theater, too, to the cheap performances for the workers. We saw 'The Diary of a Madman' with Varkonyi at that time, which was a miracle. We loved the way he acted.