Roseanu Oscar

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(Oszkar Rosenfeld)
Bucharest
Romania
Interviewer: Anca Ciuciu
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Mr. Roseanu is a former chemistry teacher currently retired, aged 82. He lives with his wife in an apartment house in Bucharest, close to the center of the city, in an area with houses. His face is brightened up by his grey hair. He is always kind and smiling. He spent his entire life working with children and thinks their affection is the most important thing. His teaching career is full of achievements, including patents for laboratory equipment. He is very proud of his two grandsons, whose photos surround him all over the apartment.

My family history

My paternal grandparents came from some place in Galicia and settled in Barul Mare [Baru], a village – well, a commune, if you wish to honor it – located between Petrosani and Hateg [in Hunedoara County]. My father became an orphan at an early age. My grandfather, David Rosenfeld, was a barkeeper. He was a religious man, had a prayer book and knew how to pray. He didn't wear traditional clothes – no one in the village did. They spoke Hungarian at home. I don't know anything about my grandfather's relatives. He died around 1921. I believe my grandmother – Etelka Rosenfeld – died before him.

Every year my father would take me to Barul Mare, to the tombs of my grandparents. Two years ago, my grandson and I were driving from Deva to Bucharest, and we made a stop in Barul Mare, to visit my grandparents' tomb. There were a lot of German names, many of which sounded Jewish too, but I couldn't find any familiar one. Some childhood friends in Petrosani told me the Jewish cemetery was right next to the cemetery of the German soldiers who died during the war [World War II]. When I was a child, that cemetery didn't exist, of course. I didn't manage to find the tomb. I spoke with the kids and I'll go there again this year.

My father had several siblings: Pepi Klein [nee Rosenfeld], Etus Baum [nee Rosenfeld], Bela Rosenfeld, and Benjamin Rosenfeld. They were all born in Barul Mare.

One of his sisters, Pepi Klein [nee Rosenfeld], lived in Uioara [Ed. note: The official name of the town is Ocna Mures.]. Her husband, David Klein, sold bicycles and sowing machines in his own store. She was a housewife. They were very religious – Pepi even wore a wig. At a certain point

[after World War II], they moved to Cluj; from there, they emigrated to Israel. Pepi died in Israel. David remarried; his new wife was a mutual acquaintance of ours who had lived in Lupeni. Pepi and David Klein had three boys and two girls: Jeno, Erno, a third boy, Hana and Erzsi. Two boys died in Transnistria 1 – witnesses claimed they had been blown up. Their names were Jeno and Erno. The third boy worked as a bus driver in Cluj for a long time, and then he left for Israel. He has children. He's still alive, but his wife died. I knew them closely. One of the girls, Hana, was a math teacher. She died in Israel. She had a girl and a boy who now live in Israel. The other girl, Erzsi, married the tailor of the National Theater in Satu-Mare. They left for Israel at a certain point. They had a boy, Matei. He was brilliant – he didn't need a tutor to succeed at the admission exam for the Electronics Faculty in Bucharest. They ended up in Israel, where the boy died during the Seven-Day War. Her husband hung himself; Erzsi could be found at the cemetery every day, mourning by a tomb that was empty, for her son had been virtually melted in a tank. Matei was married; he already had a child and his wife was pregnant. Her two children are now all grown-up. In order to keep her away from that tomb, they persuaded her to marry a man from Cluj whose wife had died at Auschwitz. They left for America. Meanwhile, her husband died, but she stayed there. She gives us a call from time to time. Erzsi comes to Romania at least twice a year.

Etus Baum [nee Rosenfeld], the prettier sister, married Sandor Baum, the owner of a food store in Brasov. She was a housewife. They lived close to the stone quarries. They had a cart with a horse. When I was on vacation, I used it to go to the city for supplies. They had two daughters. Etus was beautiful and so were the girls. The elder, Sonia, was 12 and the younger – whose name I don't know – was 8 when they died with their mother at Auschwitz. Her husband survived and remarried in Oradea.

One of the brothers, Bela Rosenfeld, used to live in Buhusi. I lost any track of him. He once came to Petrosani. I don't know what he did for a living.

The other brother, Benjamin Rosenfeld, also known as Dezso, was a shoemaker and lived in Petrosani. My father sort of provided for him, as he was rather needy. He married and left for Israel. He was devout and his wife wore a wig. Their children were pretty devout themselves. Dezso was once speaking on the phone and one of his daughters showed up and poured a cup of water on him because he dared use the phone on Saturday! Dezso had two girls. After he died, his wife and his daughters left for America. The girls are both married – one to a butcher and the other one to a small manufacturer of jeans.

My father, Martin Rosenfeld, was born in 1892 in Barul Mare. He commuted from Barul Mare to Petrosani to go to high school. After graduating, he settled in Petrosani, found a job at the coal mines and worked there for 46 years. He was a very special man, extremely earnest and moral; everyone who knew him looked up to him.

My mother, Frida Rosenfeld [nee Lustig], was born in 1901 and was 11 years younger than my father. She went to high school in Petrosani. In her youth, she worked as a cashier in a cosmetics store in Petrosani. I know my father experienced a 'coup de foudre' [love at first sight] when he met my mother. He married her in 1921 or so and they were very happy.

My maternal grandfather, Eugen Lustig, was born in Vienna. He was a tailor. A wisecracker, he knew all the small craftsmen and spent his entire day bowling and drinking beer with them. But he was a very good cutter for trousers; he was the one who did the tailoring. He had an apprentice

who did the rest of the work. He may have been out drinking most of the time – if you don't mind my saying that –, but he made some great clothes. Every time I went to him to have my pants fixed, he would say: 'Here comes my best customer!' He was a hell of a guy. His workshop was at his place; he had a special tailoring table in the kitchen. He had quite a reputation. Many people came to him to order clothes. He told stories from the time of World War I and bragged about how valiant he had been as a soldier [in the army of Austria-Hungary] 2.

My maternal grandmother, Irina Lustig, was born in Serbia and had relatives there. When I met her, her hair had already turned grey. They all spoke Hungarian in the region except for my grandmother, who spoke German fluently. She was a milliner and owned a women's hat store on the main street, where all the stores were located. It was the only store of its kind in Petrosani and its clientele consisted of the town's elite. I think she had an employee. My grandmother was the one who designed the hats. She shared the premises with Mrs. Benedek, the florist, with whom we were good friends. For my bar mitzvah, this lady offered me a volume of Petofi's poems in Hungarian; I still have it. My grandmother's store consisted of a long hall; at the back, there was a sort of stand where the hats were shaped. That was all. At a certain point, my grandmother also kept a section of toys. I was very excited about it, because, every week, she would let me have a toy from her store. There was a biker that circled around the house; there were toy cars, dolls and the likes. Every time I left the store, my grandmother waited until I got to the end of the street and called me: 'Osiii!' [Short, colloquial form for Oscar] I had to come back, as she had forgotten to give me a message for my mother! She did this every single time.

My grandfather was stout, while my grandmother was short, petite and lively. They never moved from Petrosani. They had 4 children: Willian Lustig, Imre Lustig, Rozalia Lustig, and Frida Rosenfeld [nee Lustig]. During the war, they stayed in Petrosani, because my grandfather was older than 50 – they only took those who were under 50. When the war ended, they didn't leave. My grandmother died in the 1960's. My grandfather died at the age of 96, in 1970.

William Lustig did his military service in Timisoara. He remained there and got married. He was an electrician. He installed the first elevator in the city at the German High School, the 'Baratium'. He was very proud every time he told us about that elevator. He was a man with technical intuition and was very good at his job. His wife, Betti [diminutive form of Betus], was a housewife. They had two daughters, Klari and Evi [Klara and Eva]. At a certain point, the entire family left for Israel, to Kiriat Yam. Klari still lives there; she is married to an electrical engineer who works at the Haifa power plant. Eva, the elder, went to West Germany and I don't know what became of her.

Imre Lustig never got married; he was a rather lonely character. He worked for CFR [Caile Ferate Romane – the Romanian Railroad Company]. There came a time when he and my father were the only ones in our family who still lived in Petrosani. When my father died, we figured we couldn't let Imre all alone in Petrosani. So I pulled some strings here [at the Jewish Community in Bucharest] and got him admitted at the '[Amalia and] Moses Rosen' [old age] home. He died there.

Rozalia Lustig died in 1951, in Petrosani. She wasn't married. The poor woman was ill and one might think she waited for me to come and see her one last time. She died in my presence.

We occupied a large house made of brick when we lived in the company mining town of Lonea. We stayed at 14 Nicolae Iorga St. The street began with the houses of the railroad employees and continued with the mining town until it reached the main street. We were the only Jews there. All

our neighbors were clerks or workers at the mine. Our best friends were the Szekely family, who lived opposite our house. She was a housewife and he was an apprentice at the company store. The miners paid at the end of the month – they brought in a receipt and the cost of their purchases was deducted from their monthly salary. They usually bought a sack of wheat flour, a sack of rye flour – as bread was baked at home back then –, a sack of corn flour, half a sack of sugar. This is what shopping meant there... That was the company town life.

My mother was a very good cook. Our house in the company town had a nice porch and a flower garden in front of it. At the back of the house, there was a vegetable garden. My wife remembers: 'I watched Mother go to the garden and pluck a carrot from the ground. She came back, chop-chop, and the food was almost ready. Then she remembered she also needed a parsnip.' She grew all the vegetables she needed in her garden; everything was neatly ordered. My father made her a box that allowed geese to stick out only their necks. She would force-feed them corn. She gave them salted water to make them even more thirsty and hungry. This is how she secured 12 fat geese for the winter. The meat was smoked in order to last through the winter. We bought the milk from a momarlanca [Ed. note: peasant woman from the Jiu Valley] who used a horse to carry the pails. They would put mamaliga [Ed note: food made of boiled corn flour] around the pail so as not to spill the milk and taste it on the spot. My mother negotiated with the momarlanca. It was funny to watch my mother speak Romanian. Nevertheless, she could make herself understood. We only used Hungarian at home. My mother was on good terms with all our neighbors. Everyone felt equal to everyone else and there was no discrimination whatsoever.

My father was the head of the supply department of the coal mines in Lonea, a town located about 7 kilometers away from Petrosani. He commuted daily using a small local train. In winter, they used a godin [in Romanian, small cylindrical stove] to heat the cars. He left for work at 6 a.m. and came back at 6 p.m. He had lunch at the clerks' canteen in Lonea. Every evening I used to wait for him at the small station – it was for local trains only and was about 2 kilometers away from home. On the way back to town he would talk to his coworkers, not paying much attention to me – I was a sort of appendix, but he held my hand. He also had some work to do at home: he did accounting for the furniture factory in Farcas and for a tailor named Schwalb. Working for the furniture factory, he learnt carpentry. He built a gazebo in the courtyard that could shelter at least 10 people. I would spend a lot of my time there in summer. I did my homework there too. My father also made me swings and devices for exercise – it was a hobby of his.

Growing up

So my name is Oscar Roseanu [changed in 1947 from Oszkar Rosenfeld]. I was born in Petrosani, on 2nd May 1923. I had all kinds of friends of more than one faith and I played soccer in the meadows all day long, like any boy. My mother would yell: 'Osiii!' I think I was hundreds of meters away, separated by several rows of houses from my home, but I could still hear her call me for lunch. My childhood friends were: Dick Laci, the goalkeeper of our soccer team, Sporia, a momarlan's kid, Rubb Dudu, son of a clocksmith, Zuberetz, son of a shoemaker [Czech]. No kid ever asked any other kid about his ethnicity or faith. We often played in my courtyard, where we had rings and a swing. The entire neighborhood was there. We once saw a character named Alexander who was touring Petrosani and who danced on a wire. I wanted to do that too, so my father had to comply and provide me with something similar. I danced on a rope placed 1.5 meters away from the ground, with a friend standing by to catch me if I fell. We once built a small barrack

made of bricks to hide in it and it collapsed all over us. We would go fishing in the River Maleia [which crosses the town of Petrosani]; we would stand in the stream, catch fish empty-handed and put them in jars. We would ride our bikes to Barul Mare, about 20 kilometers away, and we would bathe in the mill's pond. Silly things like that.

I used to play tennis. There were about 7 courts in Petrosani, although there weren't too many inhabitants. I was very proud when I carried my racket around the town; I would often ride my bike to Lonea, 7 kilometers away from the town, where I played tennis with clerks, coworkers of my father's. The Clerks' Club had its own court. I would skate in winter. There were 3-4 skating rinks in Petrosani. My father and I would go skating every evening, while our mother watched as a spectator. I also skied. My classmates and I once built a jumping hill on the slope near the town; we could jump as far as 100 meters. We also had a bobsled; my father was the driver and I was the brakeman. The town had a bobsled track over 5 kilometers long. The ride was breathtaking. We once managed to persuade mother to ride with us. It was a one-time experience. It just so happened that we left the track and made a sudden stop; my mother fell over dad and this incident put an end to her sporting activity.

I took violin lessons and I went to the Conservatoire in Cluj for two years, on an optional attendance basis. I had a violin teacher who came by my place once a week. I played in the band in Petrila. I went there as often as twice a week and I walked my way back in the night, carrying my violin under my arm [Ed. note: Petrila is located 5 kilometers away from Lonea.]. I played in a semi-classical band. I also had an accordion and today I feel really sorry for our poor neighbors who had to listen to me play in the courtyard. The sound of my accordion could be heard in the entire neighborhood.

Petrosani is the town of my childhood. I feel tied to this town by my most beautiful memories. I read somewhere that the town had 18,000 inhabitants [in the interwar period]. Romanians, Hungarians, Jews, Germans, and Frenchmen lived together in harmony. Petrosani had a strong Jewish community and many notabilities were Jews: the town's notary, Bercovici, my father, Martin Rosenfeld, the head of the supply department of the Lonea coal mines, and many others. Once a year I try to go back there and visit my parents' tombs. A trip through the cemetery means remembering the whole past of this town by reading the names on the tombstones. Almost everyone who was buried here was my friend or my acquaintance.

There were many Jews in Petrosani. Let's take a look at the list of Jewish families who lived on the main street. Coming from Hateg, the first Jewish family one came across was the Fucs family; it was a carpenter's family. A few houses away lived Simenthal, the elite tailor. Anyone in Petrosani who wanted fancy clothes had them made by Simenthal. Next to him lived the Marek family, who owned the town's power plant; their house had two floors and an inner courtyard with a fountain. At a street corner there was a butcher's shop that belonged to the Horvath brothers. The Biber family had a clothes store on the main street too. The Weiss brothers ran a stately food store at another street corner. They lived in a large house with two floors situated above this store. They sold anything from confections to vegetables. It was called 'colonial goods store' or 'general store'. The Weiss family owned a jewelry store that focused particularly on silver. The husband was short and fat and the wife was taller and statelier than him – it was clear who wore the pants in the family. The Schretter brothers' clothes store came next. The father and all the sons worked in this store. In fact, the Schretter brothers remained the town's main tradesmen. The youngest of the

brothers became the mayor of Petrosani in 1996, running as an independent. The Hertz family owned a shoe store; there were two brothers. The Ranghewurtz family ran a drugstore; their son left for Israel. A second Biber family sold perfumes, photographic equipment, musical instruments and the likes. They left for Israel too. The Goldsteins' clothes store had a sign that everyone admired: it pictured eight men pulling the legs of a pair of pants in opposite directions, without managing to tear the pants off. This suggested how enduring their products were. The family of engineer Abraham also lived on the main street. They were the ones who organized the Ihud of Petrosani and the Keren Kayemet 3 branch. Another Jewish family who lived on the main street was the Hoffmann family. The husband was a bank manager.

On the shore of the River Maleia, there was a beautiful villa, home for two families: the Pick family (still to be found in Petrosani, one of the few Jewish families who remained in this town) and the family of counsel Halmos, who had a daughter and a son. The daughter was a renowned pianist. From what I heard, this family emigrated to India and was never heard of anymore. There was also the Vamos family: the father was an accountant and had a son, Ervin, and a daughter, Lili. Ervin and I went to college together, at the Physics and Chemistry Faculty in Bucharest. After 1960, they inherited a fortune from an uncle in France and they emigrated to Israel, where they led a prosperous life.

There are so many names that are worth mentioning! The Isac family owned a pub. I think they were the only Jewish barkeepers in town. There was another shoe store on the main street, owned by Deri Musen; I met him after the war, in Haifa, where he owned another shoe store. Feldman was an optician; he left for Israel with his family and opened a new optician's shop not far away from Deri Musen's shoe store. The Taub family ran a shoe store too. They emigrated to Israel and, interestingly enough, the father became a bank manager there. Mandel Zucker was a friend of mine. He and his brother left for Israel, but one of them couldn't adapt to the climate; he filed a request for repatriation, but was rejected. Paul Rotman, a housepainter, left with his sister for Israel before 1941. So did the Leb family (two brothers and two sisters) and the Schwalb family, a tailor's family.

The Kardos family owned a clothes store. I remember a funny thing about Mr. Kardos: he was the one who taught me to blow my nose in a handkerchief when I was 3-4 years old. I used to see him all the time standing in front of his store looking at the street. The next store belonged to Rubb the clocksmith. His elder son became a clocksmith too, while the younger became a physician in Cluj. Old Rubb was the town's humorist. He knew thousands of jokes. Anyone who passed in front of his store and stopped before the window had the opportunity to meet old Rubb, who came out and always found the time to tell a few jokes; he had them sorted by categories: with rabbis, with policemen, with priests and so on and so forth. The town's inhabitants were retelling many of the jokes; my father was no exception: whenever I went home, he would tell me the same old jokes and I would pretend I heard them for the first time, in order to humor him.

The next store was a drugstore owned by Reismann. There were two drugstores in Petrosani and both of them belonged to Jews. A hardware store came next. The Weiss family lived on the main street and owned a china and glassware store. They weren't related in any way to the other Weiss family that I mentioned above. They left for Israel too. The Nagy family lived in a neighboring house. The breadwinner was a shoemaker. They left for Israel before World War II. The next store was the millinery store of my grandmother, Lustig. She shared it with a florist. In the next house

lived doctor Weiss and two sisters who were single – spinsters. The whole town thought of them as a bit eccentric because they spent their entire day standing by the window, looking in the street and saying hello to everyone. The Banden family owned a colonial goods store; both their sons left for Israel after the war. Mrs. Banden used to go to 'Herkulesbad' every year. When I was a child, I used to think that Herkulesbud was at least in Austria. I later realized that it actually meant Baile Herculane [Ed. note: a Romanian spa located only 166 kilometers away from Petrosani].

There were Jews living in other parts of the town too, some of whom became rather well-known. For instance, Schwartz became a vice-president at the Ministry of Labor. Doctor Herman had two sons; one became a physician in Cluj and the other one became a chemical engineer at the Dermata factory in the same city. The Fischers owned a colonial goods store in the company mining town. The Vertes family owned a terracotta stoves factory. Their eldest son was with the communist underground movement and was arrested in Hungary. After he was set free, he returned to Romania and went to the Medical School and to the Faculty of Mathematics. He died of ulcer. His two brothers both left for Israel.

There was a lad, Tiberiu Horvath, who became the vice-president of the Investment Bank after the war. He and the young Hoffmann, the banker's son, were the 'figure skaters' of the town. Everyone skated near the borders of the skating rink, while the two of them were performing in the middle, admired by everybody. Their skates were attached to their boots with screws, which was something new at the time. They did skate beautifully, no arguing about that.

The Scheffers owned the only soda shop in town. They used a cart pulled by a horse to deliver soda bottles across the town. In winter the soda shop's ground was transformed into a skating rink. Their nephew went to medical school in Timisoara and emigrated to Israel, where he works as a physician at the Zvat hospital.

Not far from the railroad station lived the Grossmans, who owned a construction materials warehouse. He was the main supplier of the mines, providing timber and other items necessary for mining. Their son studied in France, fought for the Maquis 4, came back and changed his name to Marin Gaston [Ed. note: He was born in 1918. He graduated from the Polytechnic Institute in Grenoble, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Energy Science. Author of numerous scientific works and veteran of the French Army and French Resistance, he held important positions in the Ministry of Energy, the State Commission for Planning and the State Commission for Nuclear Energy between 1949 and 1962. He currently lives in Israel.] During the war, the Grossmans moved to Cluj together with a daughter. They were taken to Auschwitz and exterminated. When Marin Gaston returned to Romania he didn't find any family member.

Every holiday found us at the synagogue – we didn't miss one. On Yom Kippur, we would spend 12 hours there. We ate in the evening and fasted until the evening of the following day. On every holiday, my parents invited our relatives to eat at our place, because we baked bread. There was an oven in the street and people took turns to use it. Our turn came on Friday. My mother also brought the laundry of the old folks [the grandparents], who used to wash at our place; we were a very united family. Every Sunday morning, my father and I retired in the living room to pray. This was the Sunday morning ritual. My father taught me how to wear the tallit and the tefillin. I knew how to put on the tefillin – one on the arm and one on the forehead; it had to be strapped on 7 times.

I prepared for the bar mitzvah with a bocher for several months. This teacher taught me what to say and do. My bar mitzvah was held in the prayer house in Petrosani. I read from the Torah and carried it around the hall so that everyone present may kiss it. The tradition was observed in every detail. A table was laid in the evening. All my family attended – grandparents, uncles, aunts. Like I said, we were a very united family.

Petrosani had a synagogue and a prayer house. The synagogue is still there today. The rabbi's name was Muller. He was known to be very learned. His son, Pinki [Pinkhas] Muller, grew up to become a rabbi too and signed up for emigrating to Israel after 1944. [Ed. note: He was arrested on grounds of urging the Jewish population of Hunedoara County to emigrate and spent several years in prison because of that. After his release, he emigrated to Israel and became the chief-rabbi of Northern Israel.]

The holidays felt like a fashion parade. All the ladies were showing off their new hats that my grandmother, the milliner, had made. You can imagine the display of elegance. The Jewish community strictly observed the traditional holidays: Yom Kippur, Pesach, Rosh Hashanah, Chanukkah. Harmony reigned in our family. I never heard my parents raise their voice. We didn't miss one holiday. My parents invited my grandparents, my uncles, and my aunts; all the family would gather at our place and we would celebrate. Passover was like it was supposed to be: we would have matzah for 8 days. My father was a man who observed all the traditions. People knew he was Jewish and no one had a problem with that. I remember, for instance, the Pesach evening [Seder], when the entire family gathered before a meal that included everything that the tradition required: 'kos shel Eliyahu' [Eliyahu's Cup], the wine drops being taken out of the glasses with words like 'dam [the plague of blood], tsefardeah [frogs]' or my asking my father the mah nishtannah questions: 'Mah nishtannah ha-lahylah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-layloht?' and so on. On holidays, our community filled up the synagogue and the prayer house. Today, less than 10 families are still there – not even enough people for a minyan.

In the Maleia company town lived a group of Jews who observed the Galician traditions. They wore caftans, fur hats, and beards. They had a synagogue. At the first floor of the building that sheltered the synagogue, there were two halls for the Talmud-Torah study. Most of the Jews living there had occupations related to the Jewish traditions: one of them was a Talmud-Torah teacher, another one was a hakham etc. There was also a tailor who lived there; his name was **Ovici** and his daughter still lives in Petrosani today.

Things were quiet in Petrosani; there were no anti-Semitic outbursts – these only appeared after the Communists came to power [after World War II]. On Sunday, the town's streets were flooded with the people who came out from the stadium – everybody was a 'Jiul' fan, as you can imagine. As soon as the match ended, you could see waves of fans coming downtown. There were no cars and the main avenue filled with people. They would walk to the other end of the town – and that was pretty much their promenade circuit. There must have been over 100 Jewish families in Petrosani. They formed a large community – after all, the main street had only Jewish stores and, come to think of it, only Jewish houses. The town had a workers' casino with a very good cinema; it had a very large hallway where people came out to have a drink during the breaks of the films. They also held balls in there. People danced the mazurka back then and my father – one of the town's Jews – led the dance. I remember him say: 'Messieurs, changez les dames!' [French for 'Gentlemen, change your partners!'] This happened around 1937. Everyone knew everyone. No

one cared if someone was a Jew.

In 1939, the Goga-Cuza cabinet 5 closed down all the high schools in working-class towns. This brought about the end of the high school in Petrosani and of the secondary school in Lupeni. Children were thus indirectly forced to register in vocational schools and arts and crafts schools; their curriculum included internships in companies, which secured, in fact, free labor for the government. I was in the 6th grade and I was in danger of not being able to continue my studies. So my father started sending letters to Targu Jiu, Timisoara, Deva or Sibiu, trying to find a school that would accept me. The answer came from Sibiu. My father was so excited, that he came home by taxi, not by train; for one time, he didn't care that was beyond our means.

After a while, during a religion class, the principal found me in the corridor – being a Jew, I didn't attend that class. 'What are you doing here?' – 'Don't you know? I'm a Jew.' – 'Where are you from?' – 'Petrosani' – 'Who signed you up for this school?' – 'Well, my application was approved by the deputy principal!' The principal had been on vacation and had no idea about this. It was his deputy's responsibility to deal with such issues, but he hadn't realized what my situation was either. The principal was mad at his deputy, who had dared take me in... But one month and a half had already passed and there was little he could do about it. So he let me stay. This is how I remained in Sibiu.

The high school had a band of 350 pupils. It was conducted by one of the teachers, Mr. Belu, a music enthusiast. One day he came in all the classrooms and announced: 'We're setting up a band; who wants to join in?' I already had my own gang there. And I devised a plan to get us rid of the band assignment without making them realize we meant that. 'Sir, we would like to be signed up for the saxophone', I said, knowing for sure they lacked this particular instrument. Little did I know that the man had got enough money from the Ministry of Education to order a set of 350 instruments from Vienna! So one day he came to our classroom and said: 'All those who signed up for the band follow me!' He didn't care about interrupting classes or anything – and bear in mind that our Romanian teacher was also the prefect of Sibiu County. But he couldn't care less about the prefect! We went with him, still hoping there wouldn't be any instruments for us to play. We were surprised to find out there were four saxophones! Fancy that! The practicing sessions were held in the basement, but you can imagine how seriously we took them. However, we did learn to play the saxophone under the guidance of some lads from the army band. We marched through the town with our band and we couldn't have felt any prouder! I played the saxophone for several years after that.

After I was kicked out from that high school [in 1940, because of the anti-Jewish laws in Romania] 6 , I went to the Israelite high school for a year, in 8th grade. I was in the same class with rabbi [Ernest] Neumann. [Ed. note: prime rabbi dr. in Timisoara, the last Romanian-born rabbi in Romania. He passed away in 2004.]

During the war

On 6 August 1941 the drum started beating in various places of the town – this is how they used to communicate the mayor's orders back then. The drummer announced that all Jews were to report to the Army Headquarters in Deva the following morning, in order to be assigned to labor detachments. In 1941, all the Jewish men aged 16-50 in Petrosani were taken to forced labor: first to the Deva-Brad railroad track, then to the Matca-Paulis Canal, and finally to Moldavia, where they

dug ditches to install cables between pillboxes. Meanwhile, the Jewish women of Petrosani were evacuated to a castle in Paclisa, near Hateg, then to Deva, where they remained until the war was over.

My father was working in the coal mines – he was the head of the supply department of the Lonea mines. The entire region was under military control. He was ordered to maintain his employment, but he wasn't allowed to leave Petrosani. Despite that, he accompanied me because he wanted to see where I would be taken. He was planning to return using the pass that proved he was employed at the mines. But once we got to Deva, he wasn't allowed to go back to Petrosani anymore, so he had to start walking with me and the others. All the Jews in the Jiu Valley – from Lupeni, Vulcan, Aninoasa, Petrosani, Petrila, and Lonea – formed a column which moved on foot for about 20 kilometers. Most of the Jews were taken to the commune of Craciunesti; my father and I, plus 18 others, got separated from the rest and ended up in the commune of Fizesti, where we were accommodated in a chicken farm. The stench was terrible. They laid mattresses next to the walls and we lived there until November. We had to go to the construction site every day. They were building the Deva-Brad railroad track; rocks and stones had to be removed, carriages had to be pushed, the location for the future track had to be cleared. During all that time the men in Deva were assigned to the Baia de Arama quarry, located on a hill near Deva. We had to carry large stones for about 6 kilometers. Each of us had a load of two stones tied together and placed on the shoulders. We had to take them to Deva, where they were used for paving some street. Then we went back to the quarry and started all over again. Not one single stone was carried using trucks or tractors. They only used us.

My father managed to phone his general manager in Petrosani and told him what had happened to him; but the man couldn't do anything to bring him back. One day, my father gathered the guts to get on a truck and go to Deva. He went to the Army Headquarters and reported for a sort of review – 'biography', he called it. But the colonel had him incarcerated, accusing him of being a deserter. After spending 7 days in prison, he came back to the construction site. I remember I was on a hill with other Jews, guarded by soldiers; I noticed someone coming up the hill. He approached me and gave me a hug. At first, I couldn't tell who that man was! When I took a second look, I realized it was my father. While in prison, he had lost a lot of weight and had got a kidney condition. I used to bring him hot water at night to put it on his back and soothe his kidney pain. Because everyone looked up to him, they appointed him apagiu [Ed. note: slang term derived from the Romanian 'apa' meaning 'water'] – he carried water in a bucket and let the others drink using a cup.

In November, we were moved to another village. The construction site was abandoned. Eventually, we got back to Deva. Meanwhile, my father had turned 50; he was released, but wasn't allowed to return to Petrosani, so he stayed in Deva. It was with great efforts that he managed to bring my mother to Deva too; she and other Jewish women from Petrosani had been taken to an abandoned castle in Paclisa, near Hateg, where she stayed for a long time. Many years later, I regretted not having asked my mother to tell me in detail what it had felt like to live in that castle for such a long time.

In the spring of 1942, we were all taken near Arad to work on a canal called Matca-Paulis. Initially, they accommodated us in Minis; we were later moved to Siria, then to Paulis – villages located along that canal. We were about 20 people in one room, in the hunting cabin of an agronomical engineer. They were digging a canal that would connect the Cris River to the Mures River and they

were going to use it for irrigations. Every morning we had to walk several kilometers from our quarters to the canal. The canal got as deep as 2-3 meters. We shoveled earth and, when it rained, we shoveled mud. Sometimes we worked in the company of toads. We weren't allowed to return until the soldiers guarding us got soaking wet.

At a certain point, in order to ease our work, we hid the shovels and the pickaxes in a hole dug in the ground, so that we wouldn't have to carry them to the work site and back every day. One day the colonel made an inspection and noticed we weren't carrying shovels. They had us all lying on the ground and each of us was struck with a belt 25 times; there were 50-60 of us. Of course, our buttocks were naked and we were lying in the mud; occasionally, the soldier's belt touched the ground before coming into contact with our skin. Whenever one of the soldiers dared a milder stroke, the colonel threatened him: 'I'll have you lying on the ground and I'll have one of these jidani [Romanian offensive word for Jew] beat you too!' So the punishment was carried out according to the instructions.

Nevertheless, in this period, we were able to organize a small band. There were also people from Arad and Timisoara among us (not just from Hunedoara). One of them was Nunu Bercovici, an accordionist at the Moulin Rouge in Arad. He was an extraordinary accordionist. Apart from the accordion that he had brought along, we also had a violin and the flute of a good friend of mine. All we had to do was hire a 'conductor'. Sometimes the locals asked our colonel to allow us to play at the balls that were held on Saturday evening. This secured us a better meal from time to time. Of course, we were guarded by a soldier. My friend with the flute couldn't actually play the flute, but he held it by his mouth and pretended to play. Once the soldier got closer and noticed the man wasn't playing at all; he told him: 'Mr. Vamos, you need more practice!' We were once invited to play at the wedding of a student in theology from Arad who lived in Siria. The colonel approved, so we got on a cart, escorted by two soldiers, and went to Siria. There were about 20 students at that wedding. When they realized we weren't hillbillies ourselves, they told us to put our instruments aside and join them at the table. You can imagine what a pleasant evening that was.

Some inmates tried to escape and go to Arad. Occasionally they succeeded. The men dressed in clothes borrowed from us, trying to look as natural as possible. They were helped by the sasoaice [Ed. note: Romanian term designating a female descendant of the German population that colonized some parts of Transylvania in the 12th and 13th centuries.] who carried milk to Arad in cans; the women hid them under their large skirts, so that the train conductor wouldn't spot them.

One day they put us on a train and took us to Moldavia under military escort; we worked there until the end of the war. The train went through Deva and those of us who had managed to let their parents know were able to see them through the windows of the freight cars. When we finally got to Moldavia, we were assigned to the villages of Vatinesti, Ciuslea, and Doaga. The miserable souls who lived there only ate onions and mamaliga. They had us digging ditches that connected the pillboxes aligned along the Siret River. I can't remember how I ended up a carpenter. The carpentry workshop was located in a schoolyard. One day, on 23rd August 1944 [7], the school principal got out and yelled: 'Truce! The war is over. King Michael [8] has signed the truce!' That very moment, the colonel, who was nearby, got on a gig and off he went! I rushed to the work site and told the people who were digging: 'Folks, put down your shovels and pickaxes. The war is over!' An armed soldier behind me shouted: 'How dare you? I'll shoot you!' – 'Follow me to the school to see for yourself!' He came with me, then we both went back and he confirmed the news to the others. Yet

none of the inmates dared lay down his shovel; none of them could believe the war was really over.

What were we supposed to do under the new circumstances? The Germans hadn't withdrawn yet, while the Russians hadn't arrived yet; so we were caught between two frontlines. When the Germans pulled out towards Transylvania, we were finally able to leave. I was impressed by several things. For instance, one of the first Russians we saw was a colonel on horseback. He asked us who we were. We told him we were Jews and we had been set free. I remember his first words were: 'Remember you are Jews before being Communists!' We were impressed to hear a Soviet colonel say that. We saw a Russian riding in a cart pulled by two horses. One of the wheels was missing and the axle was rubbing the ground. We asked him where he was going and he replied proudly: 'Berlin!'

One day we saw a gig with a Russian soldier and a boy about 12 years old dressed in a Russian uniform and armed with a machine gun. They stopped in front of a pillbox. Some Germans who had hid there surrendered. They got out with their hands above their heads only to get machine gunned by the kid. We asked the soldier what could possibly explain that ferocity in a 12-year-old. The man told us that the Germans had killed the kid's parents and he had begged the Russians to take him with them so he could avenge his family.

We set off for our homes. There were four of us in our group. At a certain point, the Russians stopped us and had us working to widen the railroad track; this was needed because the gauge in the Soviet Union is wider than in Romania. We worked for two days and two nights by the light of some burning archives and guarded by Soviet soldiers. We slowly began our journey back home. Of course, we had to walk. The road was dusty. There were ordinary trucks and tank trucks running in all directions, but none would pick us up. We saw a truck parked near the road. Some Russian soldiers had got off and were eating; next to them were ammunition crates and two or three large baskets of tomatoes. We asked the Jews who were with the soldiers if there was any way we could persuade them to give us a lift to Ramnicu Sarat. We were told to promise we would give them some wine in exchange for the ride. It worked! They told us to hop in. When we reached our destination and we wanted to get off, an armed Russian came to us and demanded the wine we had promised. He handed us some cans and we began to walk through the town begging everyone for some wine. Eventually, a merciful man who understood the position we were in filled our cans. We took them back to the Russians and they let us go.

We went to the railroad station. There was a long freight train overcrowded with people who were calmly waiting for the departure. We got on, hoping the train would take us to Ploiesti [Ed. note: 60 kilometers north of Bucharest]. The train finally left. We asked the others how long the train had been waiting in that station and they told us it had been there for a week. We congratulated ourselves for our luck: the train left immediately after we had boarded. In Ploiesti, we got on a train for Deva [Ed. note: the second largest town in Hunedoara County, Transylvania]. Because of the bombings, none of the train's windows was intact. In Sibiu [Ed. note: important city in southern Transylvania, capital of Sibiu County], we got caught by a German bombing and we took shelter under the cars. Fortunately, no one got hurt. In Simeria [10 kilometers away from Deva], we said goodbye to two of the friends we were traveling with; they headed for Subcetate to get to Hateg. We later found out that they both died in a German bombing which caught them in Subcetate. After three years of hardships and pain, when everything finally seemed to be over and they were just a few steps away from home!

When things settled down in the region a little and the Germans had withdrawn to Arad [Ed. note: city located in the western extremity of Transylvania], a friend of mine and I decided to take our high school graduation exam in Arad. We ended up in a private Jewish high school. Although I wrote about 30 pages about the Latinity of the Romanian language, I failed. I had to go to Bucharest, where I took the exam at the Cultura High School 9. I passed. When it was over, I returned to Deva, where I had to spend the night before I could take the train for Petrosani. In the station, a Russian soldier threatened me with a gun and took my watch, my wallet, and my suitcase, in which I carried a suit and a French compendium of math problems. I was actually glad he didn't shoot me! The following morning I was in the train for Petrosani, explaining the conductor I didn't have a ticket because it was in the wallet that the Russian soldier had stolen from me. A week later, my parents received a telegram of condolence from a family in Deva, who had found out about my… death. The cause of the misunderstanding was the fact that my suitcase had been found under a bridge, where the Russian had thrown it; since the compendium had my name on it, people assumed that whoever had stolen my suitcase had also killed me.

After the war

At the beginning of September 1944, my entire family managed to return home, in Petrosani. Of course, the place looked devastated, as no one had taken care of it while we had been away. My father was immediately employed by the General Department of Mines in Petrosani. He worked there until he retired. After he did, he became the secretary of the Jewish Community in Petrosani. We received another house, with 3 rooms. We got our dining room furniture back and my father spent many evenings working to modernize it. We had some great furniture: a desk with sculpted bear feet, a table for 12 persons, armchairs. Back then, they didn't use vinyl; everything was upholstered in leather. Here's something that says a lot about the Jewish mentality: as soon as we got the place, my father had it plumbed. We were the only ones in the company town who had tap water and a bathroom; the rest of our neighbors carried water from the well in the street.

An interesting thing is that, in 1944, when I came back to Petrosani, the Jews were fewer than before. Some had left. The Jewish community tried to regain its daily routine. And it felt as if the Jewish youth had got more united – we all joined the Ihud [the Zionist Social-Democratic Party]. We organized a club and we even had a band… Our drummer, Tiberiu, later became the national vice-president of the Investment Bank. I played the accordion, another fellow played the violin, and this was our little band. On every Sunday night of the month of January, there was a ball: the Firemen's Ball, the Small Craftsmen's Ball, the Physicians' Ball, and the Jewish Tradesmen's Ball. The most popular was the Jewish Tradesmen's Ball; the entire town's elite was there and everyone struggled to get tickets for that ball, not just the Jews. This tradition went on until 1948, when the 'ethnic problem' was 'duly addressed' and things fell apart. The nationalizations 10 and the mass emigration 11 of the Jews in our town began. For instance, the fabric store of the Schweber brothers was given to a worker; it took him only one week to destroy everything. Business in Petrosani had a lot to lose.

Still, a number of Jews remained. We formed a small community whose chairman was Marci Schretter; my father, Martin Rosenfeld, was the secretary-accountant and Mrs. Meiszter was the cashier. My father held this position from 1946 until the last day of his life, in 1979. At a certain point, the entire central part of Petrosani was demolished 12. All those places I told you about so far don't exist anymore; they were completely wiped out. At the time, this raised a debate,

because there were coal mines underneath the town and people wondered if the ground would hold. The town is still there, but it's a whole different town from the one I used to know! The central area and the company mining town were demolished. The houses were replaced by 10-story high apartment houses. People who used to have a vegetable garden found themselves with nothing at all. My parents were given the possibility to move to a place near the airport – it's actually an airfield for gliders. It was a relatively new neighborhood and my mother was afraid it was too far from the marketplace. So they chose to move in a 1-story apartment house located closer to downtown, near the stadium. Few of the Jews who had remained in the towns in the Jiu Valley – Petrila, Lupeni, Lonea – attended the service in the synagogue in Petrosani.

I went to college in Bucharest and started a new life. I graduated from the Faculty of Physics and Chemistry of the University of Bucharest. In 1947, I changed my name. There were two reasons. The comrades at the County Committee of the Communist Party suggested me to change it; they told me it would be better if I did, that they had plans with me and that the moment was still right… This was the first reason. The second one is related to an incident involving my physics professor, academician T. H. Ionescu, whom we all considered a major reactionary [Ed. note: The term 'reactionary' designated an opponent of the communist regime at its beginnings.]. One day he had to give a lecture about the pendulum. Before he began, he asked us 'Isn't there anyone with davai ceas here?' [Ed. note: 'Davai ceas' is Russian for 'Give me your watch.' It is said that the Soviet soldiers quartered in Romania at the end of World War II seemed to be fascinated by watches and 'requisitioned' any watch they could find from the Romanian civilians (along with many other belongings). This phenomenon was very widespread and the 'davai ceas' expression came to symbolize Soviet abuse in everyone's mind.] We were 700 students in that class; we had been to concentration camps or labor detachments and had been deprived of our right to study, so we were all fierce revolutionaries at that time. We were required to give a written statement about that professor's conduct. You can imagine we all rushed to expose his anti-Soviet attitude! The professor had access to our statements and knew our names. None of us passed his exam. I remember I took the physics exam 7 times and I failed 7 times. But, as soon as I changed my name, I took the exam again and I passed, because he didn't recognize me under my new name.

After graduation, I taught mathematics at first. One year later, I was finally able to switch to teaching physics in Petrosani. When the State of Israel was founded, I was invited to give a conference on this major historic event. The hall in Petrosani was overcrowded. It was the year 1948… I was considered to have a bit of oratorical talent – I had delivered various science popularization conferences.

One day I was teaching a physics class in Petrosani; I remember exactly what it was about: the way in which sound is inserted into the magnetic tape of a film. The principal entered the classroom and said: 'Comrade Inspector, you're needed in Deva right away!' I didn't realize whom he was calling 'inspector'. 'You have been appointed inspector! You have to go to Deva immediately'. It was 9 o'clock and the train was leaving in an hour. I didn't have time to change my clothes; all I could do was send a pupil to my house to bring me an overcoat. It was only six months later that I managed to come back to Petrosani and pick up some of my stuff. I had become a county inspector for education. This happened in October 1948. I spent one year and a half in Deva.

In 1949, I was summoned at the Ministry of Education and I was sent to the Danube-Black Sea Canal [Ed. note: The work at the canal began in 1949 and many of the workers were political

prisoners from the communist jails. The work was interrupted in 1955 and wasn't resumed until 1975. The canal, completed in 1984, begins south of Cernavoda and ends in Agigea, south of Constanta, connecting the Danube to the Black Sea and thus shortening the waterway to Constanta with almost 400 kilometers.]. My job was to organize the education along the canal. I was the head of the public education section. The minister of education, Dorian Popescu, was a cultivated and earnest man. He summoned the head of the [Constanta] county education section and told him: 'All the towns located along the canal [Cernavoda, Medgidia, Ovidiu, Poarta Alba, Capul Midia etc.] are to be transferred under the jurisdiction of the Education Section of the Canal, and Mr. Roseanu here will be the head of this section.' – 'Comrade Minister,' he said, 'I will transfer all the existing teachers and I will bring much better ones to replace them; this is the Canal and, you know…' To which I reacted: 'But why should all these teachers and schoolmasters be sent somewhere else? If they're not good enough, you should simply fire them; but, if this is not the case, let them stay here. What's the point in transferring them?' I later found out the man was terrorizing everyone; teachers got moved from one place to another all the time and the beginning of each academic year made everyone nervous. 'What if some of them were Legionaries 13?' he said. 'Look, Mister, I'm asking you a simple question: do we want them out of the education system?' – 'No!' – 'Then a Legionary is as good in one place as he is in the next. All I'm interested in is that he does his job well!' This infuriated the man. He left and the minister approved of my idea. All the teachers were kept at the canal in their current employment. When I went on inspection tours, they couldn't thank me enough.

I endowed all the schools along the Canal with all the equipment that was available: overhead projectors, 8 mm film projectors, chemical substances, castings for the biology classes etc. I set up weekly kindergartens, because the canal workers were busy and their children had to spend the entire week in kindergarten. I was once called to Navodari to see some improvements the parents had made to a kindergarten. They had brought soil and had planted flowers – it was an extraordinary thing. I always tried to get all the necessary equipment for my schools. Sometimes I got it, sometimes I didn't. I once went to Leonte Rautu [Ed. note: Key figure of the regime, ideologist and head of the communist propaganda.]: 'I need some equipment and these are the people who are refusing to give it to me!' – 'There must be some sort of shortage.' – 'Comrade Rautu, clearly you don't understand the importance of the Canal!' This remark got me everything I needed. I didn't know they were using political prisoners at the Canal. All I knew was that there were some inmates working somewhere, but I later found out they were political prisoners.

I had a boss, like everyone else. One day he told me: 'Comrade Roseanu, we must nominate some people for being decorated with the Work Medal. Could you think of a few of your teachers who are doing a great job here at the canal?' I made up a list of 11 teachers. He handed me an envelope and told me: 'You're going to Bucharest to submit this envelope; it contains 12 names!' – 'What do you mean 12, Comrade? I only nominated 11 and, with all due respect, I am the head of the education section. What goes on here is my responsibility and I doubt that you have the right to nominate someone without informing me first!' He told me that he actually had that right and it occurred to me it was pointless to argue with him. I got to the ministry and the clerk from the personnel department opened the envelope and said: 'Did you know that you have been nominated for the Work Medal?' How was I supposed to know? The truth is that only seven or eight teachers were decorated countrywide. I was awarded the Work Medal in 1950 or so. Academician [dr. Constantin I.] Parhon [Ed. note: (1874-1969), head of the State (1947-1952); president of the

Provisional Presidium of the People's Republic of Romania (1947-1948); president of the Presidium of the People's Republic of Romania (1948-1952)] personally shook my hand. In 1950, I was transferred from the Canal to the Ministry of Education; I became a general inspector with the minister's office [Dorian Popescu was the minister of education at the time of Mr. Roeanu's appointment].

There's a story behind everything. I received a vacation ticket to Sovata [Ed. note: Spa located in the center of Romania, in Mures County, opened all year round. It is renowned for its lakes with salted mineral water that generates heliothermal effects.]. I came across a former fellow-student; he was there with his wife and with a young lady who was to become my wife. Initially, the girl had registered at the faculty where I studied too – that's how she had met my former colleague. I hadn't noticed her in college because there were 600 of us in the freshman year. So I was introduced to her for the first time in Sovata. We were planning to go on a trip to Borsec in an open bus – it was a delight to ride in one of those things [Ed. note: Borsec is a spa located in northeastern Romania, in Harghita County. Open all year round, it has numerous springs containing carbonated waters or waters rich in calcium or magnesium.] My future wife was being courted by an accountant from the Ministry of Light Industry. He didn't let her out of his sight and he invited her to join us in the trip to Borsec. When we got on the bus, I sat next to her; there wasn't any room left for the dear accountant, so he had to sit at the back… We began to talk and we hit it off. During the trip, we were together all the time and the accountant was left aside. I invited my mother to spend a few days in Borsec with me. I introduced the girl to her and my mother liked her from the start. I told her that I would be delighted if she would make a stop in Petrosani on her way to Craiova, so that my father could meet her too. Then it was her turn to ask me to make a stop in Craiova on my way to Bucharest, so that she could introduce me to her family. Things went very fast. When she came to Bucharest, I picked her up from the station. We got on a taxi and this is where I proposed to her.

We got married in 1951, in Bucharest. My wife, Rodica Roseanu [nee Teodoru] was born in Craiova, in 1926. She graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Bucharest. She was already my wife and had a child when she went to college. Rodica worked in education her entire life. In 1955 she was assigned to the Academy of Economic Sciences, where she worked at the Marxism-Leninism department, but not for long. She was a tutor, then a university assistant, but they fired her in 1957, on racial grounds. They got rid of all the Jews – it was their way of 'duly addressing' the 'ethnic problem'. Of course, they didn't say it, but that was the hidden meaning. She worked at School no.64, then at some other school, and then she got transferred to the 'Mihai Viteazul' High School, where she worked until she retired, in 1983.

Rodica has a brother, Mihai Teodoru, a physician specialized in phthisiology who was the manager of the tuberculosis treatment facility on Dorobanti Ave. His wife was a doctor too and her name was Rodica Teodoru; she died a long time ago, some 22 years ago. Mihai died last year [2004] on the Yom Kippur evening. They had a boy, Serban, who graduated from the Faculty of History. They wanted to assign him to Tulcea or Sulina, so he left for America. He took an exam at Columbia and he placed third. He graduated from Business International, then he worked for Moody's [Ed. note: Corporation that establishes a country's credit rating, which greatly influences the level of trust for that country's external loans.] He used to come to Romania from time to time. In his turn, he has two children.

After we got married, we led a modest life. My wife was still a student when we got married. Our child must have been 2 years old or so when Rodica took the admission exam at the Faculty of Philosophy; the kid was walking in the halls of the faculty that day. We spent each vacation in Petrosani, at my parents'. They filled our backpacks with food and we went hiking. We went to Straja, near Lupeni, and to Surieni. We once walked for 9 hours – we made long trips. We went to Parang many times – I lost count. Both my wife and I enjoyed hiking in the mountains. It was a true hobby.

My boy was born in 1952, in Bucharest. When he was little, we took him to the weekly nursery. I had a bicycle with a seat in front, where he sat. In the morning, I took him to Dumbrava Rosie St., in the vicinity of Icoanei Garden [park in downtown Bucharest], where the nursery was located. He enjoyed the ride until we entered that street and he realized where we were going. He began to sob and there was nothing I could do about it. Saturday at noon, I went to take him home. He held me tight and he wouldn't let go of me. Then he went to the kindergarten. He ate there and we took him home every evening. It took him some time to realize we were coming for him every day – in the beginning, he was afraid we would let him stay there for an entire week again. After a while, he began to like it in there. When my mother-in-law died, we invited our father-in-law to live with us. He was a great expert in stamps; he was the chairman of the district philatelic association. He was really into that. He held his grandson between his legs and they sorted stamps together.

I taught Marxism-Leninism in higher education for 10 years. The head of the Marxist-Leninist department of the Veterinary School – Boico was her name – came to check on me. It was her right to do that and I thought I had nothing to fear: I knew my subject by heart and my courses finished with applauses. I was a very good agitator because I believed in the Marxist-Leninist ideology with all my heart! You can imagine how easy it was for me to teach dialectical materialism with my physics and chemistry teacher background! Yet Mrs. Boico went tot the ministry and reported I wasn't reading the courses, but I was telling them by heart, which could lead to ideological confusions. And she requested that I be fired from that department! She was actually as mad as hell – I don't know how to put this more elegantly – because she saw the students applaud at the end of my courses.

I could never get over the first thing I heard from that Russian colonel at the end of the war: 'Remember you are Jews before being Communists!' 11 years after 1945, I was reprimanded in a Party meeting for having been a member of the Ihud. Somewhere in my records they found that I had been a member of the Ihud 11 years earlier. I may have been a fervent Communist, a Party member and a university lecturer teaching Marxism-Leninist, but none of these mattered. My being a Jew was more important. It haunted me my entire life.

One day the minister of education was summoned at the Politburo. Someone had 'told on me' and had depicted me in positive terms, so the minister was ordered to find me a position with the State control. I worked at the State Control Commission for 8 years, until 1960. That was a repressive mechanism. All our reports began with: 'The school's management failed to…' No good words there. I was in charge with inspecting high schools and universities. I reported to the minister in matters concerning the higher education and to the deputy minister in matters concerning the high school education. There was a hierarchy that had to be followed.

There was a furniture factory in Arad. They made some extraordinary pieces of sculpted furniture! 11 general managers from the ministry had placed an order there. One of my teams was making an inspection in Arad and they called me: ‘Could you come over here? There’s something you should see!’ The managers had only paid the production costs, claiming the furniture had been manufactured by some school. They had some pupils and teachers from the vocational school accompany the furniture as it traveled to Bucharest by train. Then they had them assemble the furniture at their places, without offering them a glass of water. I informed the management of the ministry – Murgulescu was the minister at the time. He was summoned by the State Control Commission and was asked to dismiss all the 11 managers. He did that. One of them was transferred to the University; another went to some other place and so on. I personally knew one of them; his name was Borca and he had been the head of the education section in Timisoara, while I was at the Canal. He said: ‘I will pursue this Roseanu guy for as long as I live! I won’t let him get away with it!’ Meanwhile the State Control was dissolved. They sought to provide honorable positions for us. I was appointed deputy manager of the Education Section of the Capital; I worked there from 1961 until 1964. Well, guess who became vice-president of the Capital’s Party Committee! None other than my old friend Borca!

At the education section, my responsibilities included endowing the existing schools and establishing the locations for the new schools. It is with pleasure that I remember how I used to organize school camps. As long as I worked there, I organized all the camps around Bucharest, including a large camp in Snagov. It was a real adventure. At the opposite end of the lake, towards Gruiu [Ed. note: a commune near Bucharest], lay the former CFR pool; the place was deserted, but I can’t remember why. We chose it for our location! There were still some shower cabins and a sort of terrace. We turned the cabins into dormitories that could accommodate 3-4 kids in each room. But who had heard of a camp without tents? We needed some tents to make the place look like a real camp! But where could we find tents? We first went to the Ministry of Agriculture; they had tents, but they needed them for agricultural works through the entire summer. We found out that the Securitate 14 had military tents. Where’s that? In Constanta. We got on a small truck and went to Constanta. They had border tents. ‘And how do you plan to carry them?’ – ‘We came in a small truck!’ – ‘You must be kidding. One single tent weighs 80 kilograms!’ The tents were huge; they had windows, doors, and scaffolding. We found some trucks at the public transportation company, but they wouldn’t let us go all the way to Bucharest. Eventually, we persuaded them. The axles had a hard time coping with the iron structures. When we tried to install the tents we realized no one knew how. Teachers and foremen just stood there and didn’t know what to do. I phoned to Constanta. ‘If you want us to show you how to do it, you have to come over here!’ So I went to Constanta again and the guy drew a diagram. Before handing it to me, he asked: ‘But what’s in it for me?’ This is how things went. I had to give him wine and things like that to make him show me the diagram. I came back to Bucharest and had my people work for I don’t know how long. I arranged with a scene decorator from the Opera to have some large drawings with scenes from ‘Capra cu trei iezi’ [Ed. note: ‘The goat with three cubs’, a famous Romanian tale written by Ion Creanga.] and ‘The Sleeping Beauty’ installed in the woods, attached to the trees. The children walked in the forest and came across the goat and its three cubs. A whole story!

In 1964, Borca called me to his office and told me: ‘You’ve always wanted to go back to teaching. So where will it be?’ – ‘Look, I want to make sure you’re not setting me up first. I want to hear the head of personnel read me the evaluation that sends me back to teaching and then I’ll talk to you!’

He accused me of having a hostile and dictatorial attitude towards my subordinates and of things like that; of not having consulted with the staff, of having established the location for a school in a place where no school was needed. Still, one year later, that school had three series of pupils. 'Well, if this is it, I'll go back to teaching! I was accused of discouraging certain teaching bodies with my negative attitude towards them… Give me some examples.' – 'Such an attitude was reported by the 'Eminescu' High School or by the 'Spiru Haret' [High School]!' – 'Then I want you to transfer me to one of these high schools, to face the wolf pack!' The heads of the education sections of the two high schools were summoned and asked if they wanted Roseanu. They both did. I chose the 'Spiru Haret', because I lived nearby and because it was a very good high school. I went to another vice-president who was in charge of personnel and I asked him: 'Between us, can you tell me the real reason why I'm being fired from here?' – 'Comrade Roseanu, don't you realize? It's because you're a Jew! There's also a Jewish secretary and a Jewish math inspector… There are just too many of you…' Well, at least he told me the truth. Such a blow could have made me go insane.

Can you imagine the face of the principal [from the 'Spiru Haret' High School] when she saw me? She was shaking like a leaf because I had been the head of the education section. I told her: 'Relax! I'm just your colleague now!' She showed me all the classrooms and introduced me to everyone; she was making efforts to please me. I stayed there as a chemistry teacher until the day of my retirement, in 1986. I shot two full-length school films there: 'The Chemical Compounds' and 'How to Solve Chemistry Problems', which reviewed 14 types of problems. The films featured pupils of the high school. The furniture I designed and made for the chemistry lab became a prototype that was used by several schools in the Capital and in Ilfov County. We had a special chemistry lab with front works; each pupil had his own chemical substances. We had 90 photos from all the branches of the chemical industry in Romania; I put them on a rack that I placed on the teacher's desk and the whole class could see what the machinery in the chemical industry looked like. We had 3D maps built by the students in evening school that featured the '14 branches of the chemical industry' using small light bulbs. A push of a button displayed the oil industry; another push displayed the salt industry and so on and so forth. But there came a time when we had to send the entire lab to Cuba, because Misses Ceausescu [the wife of Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu] 15 had promised to equip a chemistry lab in Havana. I have three patents for teaching equipment. They all refer to modeling chemical phenomena. Today everything is computer-based. But back then, it meant something.

When I was hired by the 'Spiru Haret' High School, the Romanian teacher who was in charge with the school magazine, 'Vlastarul' ['The Scion'] retired. I took over the magazine and I became a sort of editor-in-chief. It was the pupils' magazine and it had been founded by Mircea Eliade [Ed. note: (1907-1986), prose writer and essayist marked by the spirituality of the Far East; renowned expert in the history of religions.], who had been among our students. The magazine had also been led by Alexandru Paleologu [Ed. note: (1909-2005), famous essayist and literary critic. He was imprisoned on political charges (1959-1964).], Constantin Noica [Ed. note: (1909-1987), philosopher and essayist. He was placed under house arrest in Campulung Muscel (1949-1958), then he was sentenced to prison for political charges (1958-1964) following a large-scale trial that the communist regime set up for a large number of elite intellectuals.] etc. I established a new section in the magazine that was dedicated to the alumni. They could write about their high school memories. I coordinated the magazine until 1964, the year of my retirement. Even after 1990 I still

received phone calls from time to time: ‘Hello, is this the editor of «The Scion» magazine?’ Andrei Plesu [Ed. note: born in 1948; philosopher, art critic and essayist.] was one of my students; he wrote the articles in the cycle ‘The eternal student of the «Spiru Haret» High School’. An entire chapter of the magazine was written by these former students, the high school’s elite, who told stories from their youth. They took their ‘assignment’ very seriously.

Do you think I had an easy time? Every magazine had to submit the articles that were to be published to a series of authorities. The first on that ladder was the County Committee of the Union of the Communist Youth. Those comrades were happy our county had such a fine magazine and okayed my articles immediately. Then I had to go the County Committee of the Communist Party. Their approval wasn’t hard to get either. But the City Committee of the Communist Party was another story. Comrade Croitoru, the propaganda official, the one who authorized any publication, examined my magazine thoroughly and went: ‘I see there’s a pupil named Popescu in here; what do you know about his parents?’ – ‘Comrade Croitoru, he only wrote an article on mathematics; does it really matter what his parents do? It’s a school magazine. Instead of being proud our Capital has such a magazine, I see you’re making things more difficult for me.’ – ‘My daughter studies at the «Balcescu» High School, but they’re not publishing a magazine over there; they can’t afford that.’ What really annoyed him was that his daughter didn’t have a school magazine! ‘I beg of you, Comrade, authorize at least ten copies!’ I went to the printing shop of the father of one of our former students and we actually printed 1,500 copies. No one found out, as they were distributed to our students. I went to the Library of the Academy. The general manager was academician Sahini, a former fellow-student of mine. I asked him to give me a copy of all the issues of ‘The Scion’. He told me: ‘I can’t take out so many items from the library at one time! Besides, some of the issues feature King Michael on the cover. Do you solemnly promise me that you’ll get rid of this photo? I wouldn’t want to get in trouble.’ He gave me 10, then he gave me another 10, until I got all of them. I went to the Institute for Medical Research, where I knew someone. They multiplied 18 volumes – all the issues of ‘The Scion’ from its beginnings to our days. On the first page there is my name alongside the names of two other teachers. The workers were so excited at what they saw, that they spent several days binding them – the 18 volumes are still in the high school library.

I organized camps during every vacation. Pupils stood in line to sign up for them two months in advance. They liked to go with me because I used to take them hiking in the mountains all day long. We were once in the Ceahlau Mountains and we got to a waterfall with a staircase next to it. We wanted to eat, but there was nowhere we could sit. ‘We’ll sit on the stairs!’ And the entire group lay down on the stairs. They loved it and their vacations were indeed very pleasant. In my teaching career I managed to make my pupils understand an essential thing: ‘Work hard, play hard!’ I may have told jokes in class and played badminton during the breaks, but that didn’t prevent me from taking my job very seriously; when it came to teaching my students, I made no compromise.

I had a camera ever since I was a little boy. My first camera was an Agfa with bellows. As a teacher, I founded a club for the photo enthusiasts in the high school. You wouldn’t believe how many students joined that club. We even held photographic exhibitions with works of our students. One day the principal called me to her office and told me that one of the pupils had made himself an amateur photo lab at home; he developed photos and sold them to his schoolmates. The principal

made me responsible for this unacceptable conduct. At a certain point, I had one of my eyes operated and wasn't allowed to work in the dark anymore. So I gave my trays and substances to a former student whom I had tutored for medical school and who had shown a lot of interest in my equipment.

I didn't want to join the aliyah. My father wouldn't even consider it, and neither did my father-in-law, who lived with us. We went on a visit to Israel… We enjoyed our stay, but we were only tourists. It's a very interesting country. But it upset me to see that Christianity is well represented from the point of view of the historical sites – the fourteen Stations of the Cross, Via Dolorosa –, while the Jewish sites are neglected. It simply hurt me to see that.

I went to Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Poland with the Society of Physics and Chemistry. I also went to the Soviet Union – to Sankt Petersburg, Moscow, and Tbilisi – with an official delegation of the Ministry of Education. My first trip to the West happened in 1967; we traveled by coach and all of us were teachers. I was a good friend of the manager of the National Tourism Office, who had been my co-worker at the State Control Commission. This is how people get around… We went on an 18-day trip to Italy. All the people we were with did was focus on shopping. For us, Romanians, it was a delight to shop from stands in the street, because we had never seen anything like that at home. One of the teachers came back with 4-5 blankets. In order to avoid any problems at the customs, she gave each blanket to some of us. Hillbilly conduct, what can I say? At least in most of the cases… As for me, I wasn't interested in petty trade; we were in Italy after all. I remember Venice, with the gondolas afloat all night long and with many Americans and Englishmen… The gondoliers would ask 'Con musica o senza musica?' [Italian for 'With or without music?'] They played the accordion… They all sounded like opera singers; they were great! They spent the entire night singing and walking – no one slept in Venice. We took long walks and admired them every night… We left Venice and went to Padua, then to Verona, then Bologna, Siena, Florence, and Rome. Splendid! We developed a taste for these trips, so we filed for permission to go to Italy again, then to France.

After we filed our requests, I received a phone call from a man who was the chairman of the PTA in my class. I had no idea where he worked, as I didn't care for those things. 'You want to take a trip to Europe, right?' he asked me. 'How do you know?' – 'I handle the passport-related issued at the Central Committee. Your passport and your wife's passport arrived on my desk. Don't you want to take your boy with you too?' – 'Please, don't try to set me up. What do you take me for? I wouldn't want to give you reasons to believe that I'm not planning to return.' – 'Comrade Roseanu, listen to me: have your boy apply for a visa too [16]!' The man was right. One month later the three of us left for Europe by train. We crossed Hungary and Austria and we got to Italy. My son was in 11th grade and he enjoyed this trip a lot.

We were in Rome that night when Armstrong landed on the Moon. As you can imagine, we stayed tuned all night long. When he got off and took the first step, we were completely flabbergasted. It was an event impossible to forget. We went to Nice, then Marseilles, then Paris, where we spent a few days. We went window shopping and we were amazed by the comparisons that we made. For instance, we asked for a pair of shoes made of canvas, so they would be as cheap as possible – about 10 francs. Well, I think the shop-assistant spent no less than half an hour in the warehouse, looking for what we wanted. Not to mention the fact that they agreed to replace a pair of shoes someone back home had given us, asking us to try to have them replaced. It was a whole different

world! And we began to wonder why we hadn't been born in that world. But we came back. There were no second thoughts about that.

My son went to the 'Mihai Viteazul' High School, then to the Faculty of Chemistry. He was the first in his graduation year countrywide. He was on very good terms with his professors and he attended the science circles. He had always wanted to pursue a teaching career. But there was no position for him in education. 'I'm going to Giurgiu' he told me. 'There's a vacant position there.' – 'And commute every day? No way!' At a certain point, he was requested by a biology lab in Eforie Sud, and also by some school in Brasov – he had made quite a name for himself. Eventually there were 5 vacant positions here in Bucharest and he was employed by IOR [Intreprinderea Optica Romana – the Romanian Optical Enterprise]. He founded the electroforming section and led it for 25 years. After various sectors were privatized, the Solaris factory needed his services; he managed their refining section for a few years. He has been restless ever since he retired. He is interested in inventions, is the superintendent of his apartment house and keeps the inventory for an auto repair shop – he's busy from dawn till dusk. I have two grandsons. The elder is 28 and studies for a PhD in archaeology. He owns an IT company. I hope you know what this IT stands for, because I surely don't! He also has a part-time job at the Institute of History and Archaeology of the Academy. He's an 'yiddishe kid'… He drops by to see how we are from time to time. He doesn't linger more than 5 minutes. A very affectionate kid. The younger is 27 years old. He graduated from the Academy of Economic Sciences. He works for a company which tracks through satellite all the coaches of the companies who are their customers. He is the head of that section.

In the eve of the earthquake [4th March 1977], we were walking down Olari St. with the Ionescu family, two very good friends of ours, both math teachers. When we got in front of the County Party Committee, we were shocked to see the sidewalk was curling; we thought it would break in two and we would be engulfed by the earth. It looked like sea waves… The balconies of the County Committee began to fall. In front of us, on Mosilor Ave., stood a 10-story high apartment house. Suddenly we saw the moon and we realized that huge building had collapsed and was no longer blocking our view. People started screaming and crying. You can imagine the despair that reigned over us. My son and my daughter-in-law, who was pregnant in the ninth month, were home, in a 7-story apartment house. When we got near the building, we found them in the street; they had taken the elevator. She was wearing her nightgown and my son was wearing a pair of shorts. Seeing the apartment house was still standing calmed us down a bit. Then we learnt they could have been caught between stories, because the plaster inside the elevator shaft had fallen during the earthquake. We got hysterical. We found out the apartment house in Rosetti Sq. had collapsed. A well-known teacher of Romanian lived in that building, a personality. She died there, the poor soul. We got news about people who had disappeared. And you can imagine what the only topic of conversation was in school the following day. One had lost a sister, one had lost a brother, one had lost a grandmother, and so on… Tragedy came in various shapes and sizes. Eventually Ceausescu issued an order: it was forbidden to discuss the earthquake and its consequences. The following day there was quiet in all the institutions.

I still haven't figured out where Ceausescu 15 found enough money to rebuild the whole avenue. [Ed. note: Victoria Socialismului Ave., today Unirii Ave. On Ceausescu's order, an area 4.5 kilometers long in the historic center of Bucharest was demolished so that the view from the House of People – the second largest building in the world after the Pentagon – may be monumental.

Ironically enough, this avenue shelters today the headquarters of a large number of banks and capitalist corporations.]. I have no idea how he managed to raise that money and how he managed to put people to work! Today we strive to erect one single apartment house and it's just not working. Then there's the traffic problem in Bucharest: it's almost impossible to solve because this city is old and completely outdated. Here's an interesting thing: although I have been living here since 1950, I still feel a stranger to this city, I still feel as if I were on a business trip here.

When I retired from the education system, in 1985, they prepared a solemn festivity for me. I'm a rather sensitive type, so emotional moments get me every time. When the math teacher stood up and delivered a speech in my honor, I almost fainted. I couldn't believe he was telling me goodbye. The teaching body had looked up to me and I had enjoyed working there. The ending was very appropriate. I still keep in touch with some of my former pupils, even 30 years after some of them graduated from high school. I get an occasional phone call and they visit me sometimes.

I used to contribute education-related articles to 'Scanteia' [Ed. note: 'The Spark', mouthpiece of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. It was published in Bucharest between 1931 and 1940 and between 1944 and 1989.] and 'Contemporanul' [Ed. note: Weekly edited by the Council of Socialist Culture and Education, published in Bucharest between 1946 and 1989.] I doubt there was any book published in Bucharest that we didn't buy. We had the entire 'Secolul XX' collection ['The 20th Century', collection of universal literature published by the Univers Publishing House]. The Hachette bookstore, located on Lipscani St., had a shop-assistant who was a good friend of mine – Solomon. He brought me a full French collection – 'Les Livres d'Art'. Do you know how many copies had arrived in Romania? 10. Well, one of them was mine. People could wait in line for ages to get their hands on a good book. It was the Central Committee that decided what works of the Western literature were translated. My grandson occasionally sent me books in French. But I read in Romanian most of the time.

In 1989, Ceausescu gathered his people, hoping he would be able to persuade them to be on his side. It started as a rally. A voice was heard on the platform: 'Nicule, throw in an extra hundred lei, an extra hundred!' [It was the voice of Elena Ceausescu, the Dictator's wife.] This clearly showed how much he despised the entire population. Of all the people gathered below, one dared yell: 'Down with communism!' That's all it took. The snowflake effect took over. Ceausescu and his wife left the platform and Caramitru soon appeared. You know what followed next. Iliescu was the manager of the Technical Publishing House and was waiting for the right time in his slippers – you do realize the KGB had a lot to do with this business, no matter how hard they deny it. [Ed. note: The KGB or Committee for State Security was the main Soviet external security and intelligence agency, as well as the main secret police agency from 1954 to 1991.] My son showed up: 'We were sent to defend the Radio Broadcasting Company, for they're in danger…' There was heavy shooting at the Radio headquarters. We watched everything on TV, of course; we were too old to go out.

After the revolution, the West moved in and everything changed dramatically. Now the people are arguing that 'It's worse than before because we don't have enough money.' But let's ask them what they could do with the money they had under the communist regime. Buy soy salami? From this point of view, I'm not a nostalgic. And I don't regret anything. You must be blind not to see that so many things have changed. The fact that some of these things have taken a turn for the worse is yet another problem.

I didn't keep in touch with the Jewish community in Bucharest. My father was the accountant of the Petrosani community until the day he died. I think I became a member of the community again right after 1990, if not even before. We pay a yearly fee, get matzah, and obey some of the traditions. I used to go to conferences. When my brother-in-law was still alive, he would pick us up in his car every Sunday, and we would go [to the community center on Popa Soare St.]. We used to listen to many interesting conferences. There are other Jews living in this apartment house and we sometimes talk about our traditions.

I think there are less than 10 Jews living in Petrosani today – not even enough for a minyan. There is a sort of chairman of the community – his name is Rosenfeld, but he is in no way related to our family. Interestingly enough, the town's mayor is a Jew; his name is [Carol] Schreter. He ran as an independent and got elected twice. He was my pupil in 6th grade. He became a mining engineer and was the manager of the Aninoasa mines for many years. Then he moved to Petrosani and became a mayor. He still is.

Glossary:

1 Transnistria
Area situated between the Bug and Dniester rivers and the Black Sea. The term is derived from the Romanian name for the Dniester (Nistru) and was coined after the occupation of the area by German and Romanian troops in World War II. After its occupation Transnistria became a place for deported Romanian Jews. Systematic deportations began in September 1941. In the course of the next two months, all surviving Jews of Bessarabia and Bukovina and a small part of the Jewish population of Old Romania were dispatched across the Dniester. This first wave of deportations reached almost 120,000 by mid-November 1941 when it was halted by Ion Antonescu, the Romanian dictator, upon intervention of the Council of Romanian Jewish Communities. Deportations resumed at the beginning of the summer of 1942, affecting close to 5,000 Jews. A third series of deportations from Old Romania took place in July 1942, affecting Jews who had evaded forced labor decrees, as well as their families, communist sympathizers and Bessarabian Jews who had been in Old Romania and Transylvania during the Soviet occupation. The most feared Transnistrian camps were Vapniarka, Ribnita, Berezovka, Tulcin and Iampol. Most of the Jews deported to camps in Transnistria died between 1941-1943 because of horrible living conditions, diseases and lack of food.

2 KuK (Kaiserlich und Koeniglich) army
The name 'Imperial and Royal' was used for the army of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, as well as for other state institutions of the Monarchy originated from the dual political system. Following the Compromise of 1867, which established the Dual Monarchy, Austrian emperor and Hungarian King Franz Joseph was the head of the state and also commander-in-chief of the army. Hence the name 'Imperial and Royal'.

3 Keren Kayemet Leisrael (K
K.L.): Jewish National Fund (JNF) founded in 1901 at the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel. From its inception, the JNF was charged with the task of fundraising in Jewish communities for the purpose

of purchasing land in the Land of Israel to create a homeland for the Jewish people. After 1948 the fund was used to improve and afforest the territories gained. Every Jewish family that wished to help the cause had a JNF money box, called the ‘blue box’. They threw in at least one lei each day, while on Sabbath and high holidays they threw in as many lei as candles they lit for that holiday. This is how they partly used to collect the necessary funds. Now these boxes are known worldwide as a symbol of Zionism.

4 Maquis

Undeground resistance movement in German-occupied France and Belgium from 1940-1945. It posed a real threat to the Germans and the French collaborators by blowing up bridges, cutting telephone wires and derailing Nazi trains. The British Government supported the French Resistance with arms and secret agents.

5 Goga-Cuza government

Anti-Jewish and chauvinist government established in 1937, led by Octavian Goga, poet and Romanian nationalist, and Alexandru C. Cuza, professor of the University of Iasi, and well known for its radical anti-Semitic view. Goga and Cuza were the leaders of the National Christian Party, an extremist right-wing organization founded in 1935. After the elections of 1937 the Romanian king, Carol II, appointed the National Christian Party to form a minority government. The Goga-Cuza government had radically limited the rights of the Jewish population during their short rule; they barred Jews from the civil service and army and forbade them to buy property and practice certain professions. In February 1938 King Carol established a royal dictatorship. He suspended the Constitution of 1923 and introduced a new constitution that concentrated all legislative and executive powers in his hands, gave him total control over the judicial system and the press, and introduced a one-party system

6 Anti-Jewish laws in Romania

The first anti-Jewish laws were introduced in 1938 by the Goga-Cuza government. Further anti-Jewish laws followed in 1940 and 1941, and the situation was getting gradually worse between 1941-1944 under the Antonescu regime. According to these laws all Jews aged 18-40 living in villages were to be evacuated and concentrated in the capital town of each county. Jews from the region between the Siret and Prut Rivers were transported by wagons to the camps of Targu Jiu, Slobozia, Craiova etc. where they lived and died in misery. More than 40,000 Jews were moved. All rural Jewish property, as well as houses owned by Jews in the city, were confiscated by the state, as part of the ‘Romanisation campaign’. Marriages between Jews and Romanians were forbidden from August 1940, Jews were not allowed to have Romanian names, own rural properties, be public employees, lawyers, editors or janitors in public institutions, have a career in the army, own liquor stores, etc. Jewish employees of commercial and industrial enterprises were fired, Jewish doctors could no longer practice and Jews were not allowed to own chemist shops. Jewish students were forbidden to study in Romanian schools.

7 23 August 1944

On that day the Romanian Army switched sides and changed its World War II alliances, which

resulted in the state of war against the German Third Reich. The Royal head of the Romanian state, King Michael I, arrested the head of government, Marshal Ion Antonescu, who was unwilling to accept an unconditional surrender to the Allies.

8 King Michael (b

1921): Son of King Carol II, King of Romania from 1927-1930 under regency and from 1940-1947. When Carol II abdicated in 1940 Michael became king again but he only had a formal role in state affairs during Antonescu's dictatorial regime, which he overthrew in 1944. Michael turned Romania against fascist Germany and concluded an armistice with the Allied Powers. King Michael opposed the "sovietization" of Romania after World War II. When a communist regime was established in Romania in 1947, he was overthrown and exiled, and he was stripped from his Romanian citizenship a year later. Since the collapse of the communist rule in Romania in 1989, he has visited the country several times and his citizenship was restored in 1997.

9 Cultura Jewish High School in Bucharest

The Cultura School was founded in Bucharest in 1898, with the support of philanthropist Max Aziel. It operated until 1948, when education reform dissolved all Jewish schools and forced the Jewish students to attend public schools. It was originally an elementary school that taught the national curriculum plus some classes in Hebrew and German. Around 1910, the Cultura Commercial High School and Intermediate School were founded. They ranked among the best educational institutions in Bucharest. Apart from Jewish children from the quarters Dudesti, Vacaresti, Mosilor or Grivita, non-Jewish students also attended these schools because of the institutions' good reputation.

10 Nationalization in Romania

The nationalization of industry and natural resources in Romania was laid down by the law of 11th June 1948. It was correlated with the forced collectivization of agriculture and the introduction of planned economy.

11 Mass emigration from Romania after World War II

After World War II the number of Jewish people emigrating from Romania to Israel was much higher than in earlier periods. This was urged not only by the establishment in 1948 of Israel, and thus by the embodiment of an own state, but also by the general disillusionment caused by the attitude of the receiving country and nation during World War II. Between 1919 and 1948 a number of 41,000 Jews from Romania left for Israel, while between May 1948 (the establishment of Israel) and 1995 this number increased to 272,300. The emigration flow was significantly influenced after 1948 by the current attitude of the communist regime towards the aliyah issue, and by its diplomatic relations with Israel. The main emigration flows were between 1948-1951 (116,500 persons), 1958-1966 (106,200 persons) and 1969-1974 (17,800 persons).

12 Systematic demolitions

The passing of the Law for the Systematization of Towns and Villages in 1974 incited a large-scale

demolition of Romanian towns and villages. The great earthquake of 4th March 1977 damaged many buildings and was seen as a justification for the demolition of many monuments. By the end of 1989, the time of the fall of the Ceausescu regime, at least 29 towns had been completely restructured, 37 were in the process of being restructured, and the rural systematization had claimed its first toll: some demolished villages north of Bucharest. Between 1977 and 1989, Bucharest was at the mercy of the dictator, whose mere gestures were interpreted as direct orders and could lead to the immediate disappearance of certain houses or certain areas. Old houses and quarters, the so-called imperialist-capitalist architecture, had to vanish in order to make room for the great urban achievements of Socialism as it competed with the USSR and North Korea.

13 Legionary

Member of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, also known as the Legionary Movement, founded in 1927 by C. Z. Codreanu. This extremist, nationalist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic movement aimed at excluding those whose views on political and racial matters were different from theirs. The Legion was organized in so-called nests, and it practiced mystical rituals, which were regarded as the way to a national spiritual regeneration by the members of the movement. These rituals were based on Romanian folklore and historical traditions. The Legionaries founded the Iron Guard as a terror organization, which carried out terrorist activities and political murders. The political twin of the Legionary Movement was the Totul pentru Tara (Everything for the Fatherland) that represented the movement in parliamentary elections. The followers of the Legionary Movement were recruited from young intellectuals, students, Orthodox clericals, peasants. The movement was banned by King Carol II in 1938.

14 Securitate (in Romanian

DGSP - Directia generala a Securitatii Poporului): General Board of the People’s Security. Its structure was established in 1948 with direct participation of Soviet advisors named by the NKVD. The primary purpose was to ‘defend all democratic accomplishments and to ensure the security of the Romanian Popular Republic against plots of both domestic and foreign enemies’. Its leader was Pantelimon Bondarenko, later known as Gheorghe Pintilie, a former NKVD agent. It carried out the arrests, physical torture and brutal imprisonment of people who became undesirable for the leaders of the Romanian Communist Party, and also kept the life of ordinary civilians under strict observation.

15 Ceausescu, Nicolae (1918-1989)

Communist head of Romania between 1965 and 1989. He followed a policy of nationalism and non-intervention into the internal affairs of other countries. The internal political, economic and social situation was marked by the cult of his personality, as well as by terror, institutionalized by the Securitate, the Romanian political police. The Ceausescu regime was marked by disastrous economic schemes and became increasingly repressive and corrupt. There were frequent food shortages, lack of electricity and heating, which made everyday life unbearable. In December 1989 a popular uprising, joined by the army, led to the arrest and execution of both Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, who had been deputy Prime Minister since 1980.

16 Travel into and out of Romania (Romanian citizens abroad, and foreigners into Romania)

The regulations made it extremely difficult for Romanian citizens to travel into non-socialist countries. One could apply for a passport every second year; however, the police could refuse its issue without offering any explanation. One had to attach to the application for a passport a certificate from work, school or university proving the proper behavior of the applicant, and an invitation letter from a relative or an acquaintance had to be enclosed too. If a whole family solicited for passports, the authorities usually refused to issue a passport for one member of the family, thus forcing the traveler to return. The law controlled very severely the travel of foreigners into Romania. No matter if they were tourists or visited their family, foreign citizens had to report when entering the country the number of days they intended to stay, and had to exchange a certain amount of money defined by the law for every day they intended to spend in Romania. Furthermore a foreign citizen could stay only in a hotel. Any individual Romanian citizen could get a significant fine if it turned out that they secured accommodation for a foreigner. The only exception were first degree relatives, but they also had to be reported to the police, indicating the number of days they would spend at the person accommodating them.