

# Pavle Sosberger

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**Novi Sad**

**Serbia**

**Interviewer: Dina Sosberger**

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*Pavle Sosberger is a retired building contractor, but his whole life he worked on collecting information about Jews and their life in Vojvodina, a place where he spent most of his days. During WWII and troubling times it brought to everyone, he lost many members of his family. After the war Pavle realized that if he wanted to save the memory and legacy of everyone he lost, it was going to be a hard work. So, for many years he collected information about his family and is still, to this day, trying to find new date. It is his legacy to his son, grandchildren and great grandson.*

*He lives with his wife Agneza in her family flat in center of town. This part of the town used to be inhabited mainly with Jews but today it is the area where are situated main shops and cafés. We are sitting in their living room, which is full of Jewish ornaments, some of them belonged to his family and were found after Second World War.*

Schosberger family comes from Sharvar or Schlossberg [today Sastinske Straze, Slovakia]. We came to this region in XVII century after the notorious law of Carl the III 'Familietatengesetz' from 1726 [1](#). Our family is the ninth generation that has lived in Novi Sad, including my great-grandson Filip.

The first information about my family is about my great-great-grandfather Avram Schosberger who was born in 1779 in Racko Selo [today Novi Sad]. I don't know the names of his parents but I believe that they lived in Novi Sad too. In the census from 1808 Avram is registered as a small trader (Latin – sacarius) this is how they called peddlers at that time. Avram's wife was Fanny Feith from Bugyi [Hungary]. It is interesting that there were marriages between these families (Schosberger and Feith) for four generations. The children of Avram and Fanny are Moritz, Natan, Lazar and Cili.

During the bombing of Novi Sad on June, 12. 1849 [2](#), a bomb shell hit the building in which Avram lived and killed him. Since there were no conditions to bury Avram in the cemetery his family put him in trough for washing laundry and buried him in a shed for firewood. Then my great-great-grandmother Fanny flees with her family to her parents in Bugyi, and stays for about a year. After the family returned to Novi Sad the late Avram was exhumed and buried in the Jewish cemetery in Novi Sad. There is a pitcher on his tombstone as a symbol of belonging to the Leviticus tribe.

My great-grandfather, from my father's side, was called Schosberger Moritz (Mor, Mozes-Leb). He was born in 1822 (according to some other documentation he was born in 1828) in Novi Sad. After the death of his father (Avram), Moritz leaves for Bugyi, he stayed there for three years. Soon after his arrival to Bugyi he had met Rozalija Feith, who he married in May 1850. Upon his return to Novi Sad, Moritz was a trader and according to tax books from 1875-1880 I found out that he had been

paying taxes and surtaxes. He died in Novi Sad on November 10, 1896 and was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Novi Sad.

There is documentation that Rozalija Schosberger has borne a legitimate child, however, the name of the child was not listed but most likely her name was Rozalija, since she had been born in Bugyi in 1853. Their children are Regina, Rozalija (it is interesting that the daughter has the same name as her mother, that is not a custom for Jews) Adolf, Filip, Leopold, Flora and Gizela. They also had two stillborn children (1868 and 1869).

Moritz was active in Jewish circles that is in organizations. He was in the management of Chevra Kadisha from 1885-1888 when his name emerged among officials. I don't know how religious they were, Novi Sad was never that religious as some other places were, for example Backo Petrovo Selo or Backi Petrovac [located in Vojvodina, Serbia]; they were very religious places in this region. However they went to synagogues, they had their own places to sit and I believe that all Jewish holidays were marked. Their dressing was like at all others in Novi Sad, I know that my great-grandfather had beard but not side-curls.

Moritz had a brother Natan (about whom I only have more information), Lazar born in 1830 and a sister Cili, born in 1837.

My great-grandmother Rozalija Feith was born in 1829 in Bugyi. About her parents I don't have much information, except that her father was called Jozef Feith and that he was born around 1804. During a visit to his daughter Jozef had got sick; he had pneumonia and died in Novi Sad in 1874. He was then around 70. Rozalija died on March 11, 1904 in Novi Sad too. She had brothers, about whom I know very little. They lived in Bugyi. Filip was the eldest, born in 1831, Ignac was born in 1834, Markus in 1840 and Aron, the youngest brother, in 1844.

My Grandfather's brother (from father's side) Filip Schosberger was born in Novi Sad in 1859. He was handicapped, that is one of his legs was shorter; I remember he had a small stilt on his shoe. For this reason he enjoyed grandfather Adlof's protection and later on the support of the whole family. He learned for goldsmith's and watchmaker's trade. He lived and worked at number 5 Gajeva Street which is in center of the town, where mainly Jews were inhabited. This flat had four rooms, one of these rooms he used as working place where he was repairing clocks. He married in 1885 Janka Keler. Janka came from Conoplja [Serbia]. She was sickly by nature. They got a son Manojlo in 1905. Unfortunately Janka died early, in 1919; she was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Novi Sad. Filip remarried Regina Kon (who we called Aunt Fani). Fani was deported in 1944 to Auschwitz and didn't return.

Manojlo (Kis Marci) completed gymnasium and joined 'Adolf Schosberger' company. He was conscientious and a good young man. He was active in 'Juda Maccabi' [3](#) sports club where he became a general secretary. In 1937 he married Blanka Holender (born in 1915). Blanka was the daughter of Moric Holender, a veterinarian. A year later they got a daughter Judit. During the raid on January 23, 1942 they were all killed, except mama Holender. Mama Holender had been present at my wedding; later on she moved to her brother in America, where she died.

My grandfather from my father's side was called Adolf Schosberger; he was born in 1855 in Backa Palanka [located in Vojvodina, Serbia]. It is not clear to me why he was born there, probably in the

days after the bombing the life was difficult in Novi Sad, so the family had left to this nearby place for a short time and then returned again to Novi Sad.

Grandfather Adolf married Gizela Feith from Bugyi around 1880; it was the third generation of young men from Schosberger family that married girls from Feith family. They lived at number 28 Futoska Street, across the synagogue [today Jewish street, in the center of Novi Sad]. It was the house of Dr. Rudolf Grubi, he was very known Jewish doctor in Novi Sad. His house was a two-story house; he lived at first floor and we occupied the whole ground level on the right side, facing the street. We had plenty of rooms, I think 4 or 5. There was no bathroom; at that time Novi Sad did not have a water-supply, but there in the bedroom existed a kind of closet with a marble tile. On that tile there was a washbowl from porcelain with pitcher, and there we washed ourselves in the morning; the toilet was in the hall but it was a toilet without running water. There were servants in the house, there was a woman who was helping my grandmother and there were servants who worked in the warehouses of my grandfather's company. It is interesting that, although the mother tongue of my grandfather and my grandmother was Hungarian, all business books were kept in German, I don't know why but it was like this. But the spoken languages of people here were Serbian and Hungarian.

Grandfather Adolf like his ancestors was a businessman, but had started as an accountant. As alleged, he had his own office in 1896 on the Vilson's square [today, at the main post office], and in 1904 he founded his store that was called 'Adolf Sosberger Agency and Commission Store'. The company was located for a long time at number 28 Futoska Street; where they lived as well. As the children were finishing schools they would go to work at their father's company. Besides having his own store, Grandfather Adolf was also a partner in Goldsmith's and watchmaker store of his brother Filip and his brother-in-law Samuil Kraus (his sister's, Gizela, husband).

Father's mother, Gizela, was a quiet woman. She was born in Bugyi in 1868; her father was called Filip and her mother Pepi. After she had got married she came to live in Novi Sad. Here she wasn't employed but was a housewife and she took care of the house. I didn't know her brothers and sisters. Grandfather and grandmother had three sons Josip, Eugen and Martin and a daughter Paula. Grandmother Gizela and her daughter Paula were deported to Auschwitz on April 26, 1944; from where they didn't return.

On May 15, 1924 when the company worked in full swing grandfather entered his office while his employees were moving cabinets with archives. He wanted to help them to move a cabinet, as he started doing that so he dropped down dead on the floor. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Novi Sad in the family crypt. I was the only grandson at the funeral; then I was 4. I remember being taken by an employee from the company. He took me to the funeral with his coach. The funeral procession started from our house, there was a coach with a horse, the rabbi walked to the cemetery; to the same Jewish cemetery of these days. It is interesting that Aunt Paula's second husband, Jakob Hohberg who was in fact Kohen and since Kohens are not allowed to go to the cemeteries, part of the fence was brought down near the crypt so he observed the funeral through that hole.

After grandfather Adolf died his brothers took over the management of the company that was still on the same location. The company moved into the new building only in 1927 and it was on Karadzic Street. The house is still owned by the family today. There were new offices, a warehouse

and also apartments. My grandmother Gizela lived there till she died.

In Chevra Kadisha Adolf's name appears in 1891 as a member of the board of directors, and in the Jewish community he had been active from 1907 till his death. He last holds the position of the director of religion and the synagogue affairs. In 1923 he had to negotiate with cantor Bernard Griner from Szekesfehervar [Hungary] to ask him to come to Novi Sad and become the chief cantor. As my grandfather died suddenly in 1924 his successor didn't succeed to bring cantor Griner to Novi Sad, who then leaves for Zagreb. It is interesting that cantor Griner's granddaughter Mirjam married my son Josip and moved to Novi Sad in 1973. There is an inscription above the middle entrance into today's synagogue in Novi Sad that says 'Adolf and Gizela Schosberger' as the names of one of the donors for the construction of the synagogue.

I know that holidays were observed and that on Saturdays my grandmother would often gather all the grandchildren for cholent to our house on Karadzic Street. We would all sit in the backyard room; there was a big oval table, only Ivan Hohberg (son of my father's sister Paula and Jakob Hohberg) would not come for lunch, but only watch, since according to his father it was not kosher enough. For me 'cholent' was, baked goose with compote from quince as a salad and for desert some cakes.

Father's brother Eugen was born in 1891. He completed a business school. During World War I he was at the Italian front where he had contusions. He could not speak for some time, but he recovered and was sent to the Russian front. Here he received a war medal for courage. He had a rank of sergeant major. He was in captivity in Irkuck (Siberia).

After he had returned home he rejoined the company and married Lili Fuerst in 1922. Lili lived from 1903 to 1954. With her, he had daughters Mira and Vera.

Mira was born in 1923. She lives today in Paris. She has a daughter Clair and a grandson Julien. She has two Ph. D's, one from psychology and one from pedagogy; she is a pensioner today. Her sister Vera was born in 1927. She was a famous pianist in Novi Sad and a piano teacher. She never got married. She died in 1972.

Eugen ran the 'Adolf Schosberger' company; he was also a member of a mason family. During the occupation he moved to Pest together with his family, where he built a two story house. In the organization of the Kastner group [4](#) he had been taken with his family to Bergen-Belzen from where they went to Switzerland and survived the war. After the war he returned to Novi Sad and worked with different companies till his death.

The second brother of my father, Martin, was born in 1897. He was married to Hermina Levenber (1901). Martin too worked in the family company. He was a member of Bnei Brit [5](#). After World War II started, Martin had been taken to a forced labour camp where he perished in 1943 in Ukraine. His wife died from illness in Budapest in 1943. They had a son Egon, born in 1924 in Novi Sad. Egon immigrated to Israel in 1948 with his wife Vera Lacko. He worked in Israel at customs district and for some time in the American embassy. He has two children Eliezer and Ofra and five grandchildren. Egon died in Israel in 1995.

My father's sister Paula lived on Karadzic Street together with grandmother Gizela and her family. Paula's husband was called Jakob; we called him Uncle Jaksi. They had four children Djordje, Ivan,

Kornelija (Nusika) and Greta. Djordje died very young. He was in a visit at his relatives in Temerin and got scarlet fever and died. He was a very handsome young boy. Ivan didn't return from the Holocaust; Greta and Nusika lived in Budapest. Greta has died; Nusika still lives in Budapest. Aunt Paula and Jakob were killed in Auschwitz.

My grandfather from my mother's side was called Gabor. He was from Feith family. His family owned a lot of land in Bugyi but there were also a lot of children. My grandfather didn't want to be a burden to the family so he left for Budapest. He studied to become a building contractor. He was a very wealthy man; he had 37 houses a car, a coach and a horse-drawn vehicle that served for transportation of goods.

Grandfather Gabor was also the President of the Jewish community in Rakospalota [today part of Budapest] it was an Orthodox community. He built there a synagogue with his son Miska. The synagogue exists even today and is used as a library.

I loved very much to visit Grandfather Gabor. When I was a child he used to take me to visit his building sites. At the beginning he had taken me with his car; later on he sold it. I remember it was a big FIAT that had the transmission from outside. We would always come to the building site while his employees were having their breakfast. It was interesting to me and I always wanted to eat with them. I would sit with them and they would offer me food to eat. Later on my grandmother would fill a small traveling bag with bread, some kosher salami and cucumbers for me, and I also wanted bacon, but she didn't give me.

Grandfather Gabor's wife was called Sidonia. We called her Sidi. She comes from Weiner family. She used to help in the office with administrative type of jobs. While she was working in the office grandfather would look after other duties out of the office. They lived in a big house with 6 or 7 rooms. If I remember well there were two servants and coachmen. They also had employees in the store, therefore my grandmother didn't have to do anything else but overlooking the works in the kitchen since everything in their house was strictly kosher. Their children were Paul, Miska, Paula, Beska and Mancika.

I remember, from my childhood, Seder at my grandmother Sidi. We would always go to my grandfather and grandmother to Rakospalota. Usually I went there with my mother and brother. My father didn't always come with us. It was big house with six or seven rooms. In one of them there was a big cabinet where all Pesah dishes were held. Of course these dishes were used only during Pesah. Seder was held in a big room; it was a big dinning room and the whole family would always gather there together. Grandfather guided the Seder. They hid afikoman as well so we the children would look after it everywhere in the house. We finished with the song Hadgaja (about a goat). Usually I would say Ma nistanah and my brother Dodika and my nephew Jancika would look for afikoman.

Mother had a brother Paul; she told me he had been very smart. He was known for his skills to do crossword puzzles and solve enigmas and would always receive prizes. However, one day he got meningitis; it seemed he had a brain tumor, but I don't know about that. He died as a middle school student; he was 17 or 18. He was buried in the new cemetery in Rakospalota; I visited his grave many years ago. I got my name after him.

Mihaly, the other brother of my mother, or Uncle Miska, as I called him, attended gymnasium and completed three faculties, school of civil engineering, school of architecture and school of economics. He was a triple engineer. He had an illegitimate daughter, Ela. Ela's mother was a nurse, who Uncle Miska met during World War I. When grandmother learned about the birth of this baby, she took her from the woman, brought her home and gave her to a relative of hers, a teacher, since they couldn't have children. They raised Ela. When Ela had grown she learned that Uncle Miska was her real father. Ela later got married and lived in Spain.

Uncle Miska got married later. His wife was called Antonia, but we called her Aunt Toni. Just when I was in a visit in Budapest in 1956 Toni died. Later cika Miska remarried Aunt Toni's friend who was called Ana. Soon after she fell sick and had to stay in the bed for the rest of her life. Uncle Miska died in 1975. He was 85 when he died.

My mother's sister Beska married a banker; his name was Rudolf Lukac. He owned a bank and they lived a care free life. They lived in Budapest in a big apartment. Aunt Beska perished in Auschwitz; her husband had died of cancer before the war began. They had two sons Pista and Jancika. Pista was present at my son's Josip wedding; he died later. Jancika, he is in Canada, I don't know what is going on with him, he doesn't write.

The other sister, Mancika, she was the least attractive among the sisters. Otherwise she studied medicine; she would faint during anatomy classes and so she left studies. She had no education. She married Ervin Hajnal, who was a fine gentleman. He was very religious; he would put tefillin every morning. Besides technical books he read only religious books. Ervin was cultural-technical engineer that is a civil engineer. He worked on the construction of railroads. During the war he was all the time at the railroads, they didn't imprison nor intern him. Aunt Mancika had no children. They both survived World War II; Uncle Ervin died from cancer in 1956. Mancika died a few years after her brother Uncle Miska.

There was a story. In their apartment they had an official phone line since he worked as an adviser in the Ministry of the Railroad Transportation. One day he called to inform that he was not coming home for a few days. Aunt Mancika didn't know what to do. When after a few days he had returned home she asked him 'so where were you?' he replied 'don't ask I was in Berlin driving Regent Horthy's train to Berlin. Three engineers operated the train with him; there was a police inspector and a mechanical engineer.

Mother's family was religious. For Shabbat candles were lighted, for the holidays they went to synagogue, and they had kosher kitchen. My grandfather wasn't wearing kippah on street, just at home, Jewish community or synagogue. All the children in the family had Jewish weddings. In that time weddings weren't held inside of synagogues, but were usually outside in the backyard of synagogue or of their homes, under Chuppah [bridal canopy]. Only later it became popular to make weddings inside of synagogue.

My father was called Josip (Jicak); everyone called him Joka. He was born in 1889 in Novi Sad. He was the eldest son. He attended the Jewish elementary school and then the Hungarian gymnasium that was in Novi Sad. Besides Hungarian as his mother tongue he spoke Serbian and German language. He completed the 4 years of gymnasium and two years of commercial school.



After the graduation he went to Bosnia to learn lumber trade. There he worked in the woods with 'baraberi' as they called them [they were workers that were coming from different regions to work and look for better livelihood]. Here they cut woods and lumber with power saws (it is a mechanical motor saw). When they put a log inside it the saw would cut it into boards.

While he was working there a doctor from that district would visit them once a week. Since many of them were sick and injured, he thought my father to use the first-aid kit so he could treat the workers. As he didn't speak much Latin, therefore the doctor wrote under every Latin name of the medicaments their Hungarian or Serbian names. That way he knew what to do when someone had a cut; he even treated the wounds from syphilis. He had his own method. He would take a long stick, put a piece of cotton and dipped it in iodine. That iodine would burn the syphilis caused wounds and they would dry out. After that he would throw the cotton out; but of course this method didn't treat the syphilis itself.

My father has served the army; he has been ordered to a cavalry regiment. Up until then he had seen a horse only with a coach. Here he had to groom, take care, and saddle the horse and to learn to ride it. The cavalry was dressed in red pants and blue shirts. Corporal in charge for military training had it in for my father. As the soldiers were riding the horses he would often 'accidentally' hit my father with the horsewhip in his leg; since his pants were of red color one could not see him bleeding. Once, during the grooming of the horses, the Corporal took that thing for grooming and hit my father in the chest. During an exercise, because of the Corporal, my father's horse hit a fence and my father broke his leg. After he had recovered he went in for riding and became the best horseman in the whole regiment. My father was a very strong man, he was educated, he had a nice handwriting and he very quickly became a clerk in the regiment. He received his first star, then the second one and the third one, while the Corporal remained with only two stars and could not mistreat my father anymore.

He spent three years in the army. During this time he was able to celebrate all Jewish holidays, he wasn't praying everyday, but he used to go to Synagogue. Just as he had left the military service the war [World War I] broke out and he had to return to his regiment. First he had gone to Galician front and later to the Italian front. He was at that time with the regiment as ordnance and received many war medals, two for the courage, merits, and Karl's cross. All together he had seven war medals.

In 1918 the Italian front had faded away, the revolution broke out [6](#) and the army left the front and returned home. Soldiers posted white chrysanthemums to their hats, they called it chrysanthemum's revolution; and then the Hungarian army started their retreat to Hungary. My father went to Budapest together with the army. There Horthy's soldiers were singing 'erger, berger, sosberger minden zsidó gazember' which meant that every Jew was a rowdy. Then he decided to leave the military.

Mother Paula was born in 1895 in Ujpest. She first completed the Jewish elementary school and then attended the famous Veres Palne advanced girls' school. Later she completed an advanced technical school for civil engineering. In secret she also completed Montessori academy for extracurricular education. When she returned to Novi Sad she was the first person to have education for educating kids in extracurricular activities. It was the Montessori Method she used, which is even today attractive.

She was very skillful. She would make anything and everything, for example, she drew, did handwork, made different decorations from wood, Goblins, made and worked on vases. I loved to help her; I would, for example, by a plain vase and then we would color it in black and drew figures in some other colors. After that we would lacquer it and get a very nice thing.

My parents knew each other since they were relatives. After my father had left the military he visited his relatives, the Feith family. His relatives held him up, they wanted him to stay longer because they liked to have a male person around and because their son had not returned from the military. Here he associated with Feith's daughters. Here somehow Paula and Joka fell in love. My mother told her parents that she had wanted to marry Joka.

The wedding took place in Budapest; since it was a war time my father's family was unable to attend the wedding. They married in 1919; it was a religious and a civil wedding. They lived for some time in Budapest, where my father ran a café bar that was the property of Grandfather Gabor. After, I believe 4 years, the grandfather from Novi Sad ordered Joka to return home.

I was born in Budapest, in the Jewish hospital 'szeretetkórház'. I was born on Yom Kippur on September 21, 1920. My grandfather Gabor lived 10 kilometers away from the hospital and on the second day after my birth (it was still Yom Kippur) he had walked to the hospital to see me.

We didn't live in Budapest for long. To Novi Sad my mother and I came with the ship 'Franc Jozef', it was the first voyage that I remember. We traveled for a long time from Pest to Novi Sad, but it was fun. When we arrived, my father was waiting for us and waving. My father had come to Novi Sad before we did in order to prepare everything for our arrival. We went with a coach to our house. I think I was 3 or 4 years old.

In Novi Sad we first lived at my grandmother's place. In 1927 we moved into our house. It was located near a public bathhouse and a catholic cemetery. It is even today one of the nicest houses. There were 5 rooms and down there in the basement there were a couple of rooms. In that house we had a bathroom, the most modern bathroom with our own plumbing; we had this automatic tank that could fill up automatically. The water had to be warmed up using fire wood, since there was no boiler. In the bathroom we had a bidet and a sink. In that house there was also a central heating that is floor heating on coke; we also had a phone line, radio, it was an equipped house of today's grade. There were servants, there was a woman who cooked, a young girl who helped with cleaning the rooms and we had, for some time, a nurse while my brother was little but she left later on. We had a gardener and a janitress who washed and ironed the laundry.

We grew roses and some other flowers. I was a well-intentioned boy and would always bring home some flowers. On Futoska Street near the Jewish school there was a store with seeds; there I would buy different seeds day and night, violets and sometimes radishes. So I had my own garden where I grew my flowers and radishes.

While we lived in the house, my friends were Vermes Tibor, Iric Mandika, Lemberger's children, they all lived close by. We all went together to Jewish primary school. Most of our time was spent playing ping-pong less playing football. And we socialized in the school and at home in the afternoons. Later on I associated with Miki Berkovic. His parents had a big factory 'Prva Jugoslovenska Kemicka fabrika', they manufactured soaps, cologne, shoe cream 'Idol' and I don't



know what else. Together with him I used to go to the school dances, movies and theaters. For some time I was in love with Miki's sister. However, my first love was Bjanka in the first grade of elementary school. She danced ballet nicely and my whole class was in love with her. Today Bjanka lives in Israel in Ashkelon and she is 83 years old.

We had friends besides the family but I don't remember them. Mainly we associated with our relatives. We often got together with our relatives who were in Novi Sad, with Hereds, the other Schosbergers, grandfather's brother-in-laws, Kraus, Rozencweigs; they were all married to Schosberger's girls.

While we lived on Futoska Street we had in the neighborhood our seller 'Najbauer i sin' [the name of the shop 'Najbauer and son']. He was German. He had a variety store and we used to buy there. We had a book where it was recorded everything we bought and at the end of the month we would be paying. We were on good terms with him. This Najbauer had a son.

Once I bought some candies, found a kind of number in them. I asked him 'what is this?' he told me to hold on to this number because I could get a watch. Since then I have started buying these candies and collecting the numbers and at the end, we had all the numbers. He went to the factory's main office that manufactured these candies and I received a pocket watch. It was a pocket watch, quiet thick and I was very proud of it.

After we moved to the house we would always go to 'Jelisaveta Marberger' store. As alleged this Jelisaveta was a distant relative of ours. She had a husband Aladar. This store was located on today's Zeleznicka Street. We didn't go there to buy, but we ordered over the phone what we needed and their man would bring the merchandise on the bicycle. On Postanska Street there was a kosher butcher store ran by Marer, grandfather of our friend Evika Marer. We used to buy meat there. There also used to be shacter office (a poultry slaughterhouse) in the backyard of synagogue. The main shochet Simon Fleishman was also teaching and preparing kids for Bar Mitzvah.

My brother was called Adolf Armand Schosberger, Adolf after my grandfather, and Armand, my mother found, so it would not be only Adolf. We didn't call him Adolf nor Arman but Dodi or Dodika, even in school they called him by his nickname only now and then by his full name. He was born in 1926 in Novi Sad.

I was 5 years old when I started the beginner's class and I had already known Serbian. My mother tongue was Hungarian and German, I don't know which one I began to talk first. Serbian I learned here. I had taught my mother Serbian before she took private classes with a professor. She had to give an exam from Serbian, history and geography in order to validate her teachers' diploma.

Dodika was like me attending the Jewish elementary school, then gymnasium; after he had completed it he began to go to a technical school but he didn't complete the 3rd grade because the war had started. I don't remember I had not been here when the war started, but I think one could attend schools then, but he was killed in the raid in 1942. He was 16 then.

Once there was an interesting problem with the name of my brother. We worked every summer in my grandfather's office. I started arranging the archives, I had to read every letter, to put them in files where they belong and the same thing Dodika had to do later. After I grew up, I advanced and

when there were no lectures I would work in the company. I would do everything, I went to the bank to cash cheques, and I would even pay customs. When I stopped working in the company Dodika became the incomer for my duties. Once he has gone to the bank, the clerk asked him to put his signature. He signed as 'Adolf Schosberger' – the clerk told him 'don't sign the company but your name', 'but my name is Adolf Sosberger' he says.

At least once a year we had to go to Budapest to our family; otherwise Dodika, my mother and I went once together to the seaside to Crkvenica. No more we had traveled together, but I went to camp sites. They were not Jewish camp sites. I used to go to a boarding school at Bled [in Slovenia]; it was run by middle school teacher Legetic. There we didn't have any special program. We have associated, swum in the lake; I have been there several times.

As we moved to Novi Sad, my mother would take care of me and my brother Dodi only. When Dodi grew up, she engaged in public works. She was one of the most active women in the Jewish community, in the women's section [then it was called women's organization], in the Maccabi, in WIZO. She took care of the whole organization of the cultural and public Jewish life. She organized concerts, balls, dances, tea parties. I still have here a newspaper where is written 'our famous Paula Schosberger was in charge for the organization'.

My Bar Mitzvah was in 1933. Hazan Simon Fleishman prepared me for Bar Mitzvah. It was in the month of September. My whole family was present, even the grandfather from Budapest came. First Kohen was asked to step to Torah, it was Uncle Jaksi Hohberg, on the left was my father, then uncles Eugen and Martin, and I was maftir. I had a new suit, I was very nervous but in spite of that I sang nicely my part of the prayer. After that rabbi Dr. Henrih Kis held a speech, blessed me and congratulated me. With it the official part was over and when I climbed down the stage I was welcomed by relatives and friends who congratulated me. My mother and my aunts were all the time on the balcony. At home we had a formal lunch and in the afternoon my friends of the same age came for a visit. I received many presents.

I attended the Jewish elementary school, then the gymnasium Kralj Aleksandar. It was a classical state male gymnasium (4 grades of gymnasium). Here I was studying Latin and French. I loved to study languages. My French teacher would always praise me to be the best student of his.

I went for two years to Fridman's institute. Almost every day I would go there after school. It was private institute and students had to pay for attending classes. It had two buildings, one was used as dormitory for out of town students and in the other there were classrooms where we studied. Not all of the students were Jewish, and there were no Jewish subjects. We had classes about general education and they were in German or French language. They were taught by Dr. Fridman and his wife. These classes were famous; he would say 'today we are going to Italy through Novi Sad by train'. We needed to know what places we pass through, what money is in what country etc.

After gymnasium I attended a technical high school, section for construction. Here my father helped me a lot. He knew to draw nicely and whenever there was a drawing to be done with ink, he would do that instead of me. He bought for me all possible gadgets, I had two boards with legs, one big board was in the school the other one I had at home. I had a drawing desk and a ruler and the same things in the school. I loved descriptive geometry, specialistic subjects and knew to draw nicely, however ink drawing my father knew better.

The town of Novi Sad was a very nice town, as it is today, it is located near Danube, but it was much smaller then today. In my time it had a tram that was introduced in 1911, it was a tram on tracks, electricity; it had been in function till 1958 when it was discontinued. Before that, there was a tram pulled by two horses like an omnibus. Later on came coaches and even cars. We had parks that exist even today Dunavski and Futoski and the so called Artejski Park. The streets were mainly paved with yellow clinker bricks, but there were also streets paved with asphalt and those that were not paved with asphalt. The center was always nicely arranged.

As there were no water-supply in Novi Sad in houses, usually the adults would go to bath in the public bathhouse; we the children would bath at home in a small bath from sheet metal in which you could sit but your legs would be sticking out from it. Father and mother had been going to the bathhouse so long as the house was completed, in which there was a water-supply. In Novi Sad there used to be Mikveh, in the backyard of synagogue but my parents weren't so religious so they weren't going there.

The Jewish community was a Neology type [7](#). In Novi Sad, then, there were about 65 000 inhabitants and maybe even more. From them, the biggest Jewish population had been just before World War II, around 4300. Here were included different emigrants from Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. They came to escape from Hitler's regime. There was a big synagogue that was built in 1909. It is today's synagogue the fifth in order. It was very nice, it had organs and mixed choir. It is interesting since only in 1888 it was permitted the use of mixed choir in synagogues and only in neology ones that were a bit more liberal.

The main rabbi was Dr. Henrih Kis. He completed the rabbinical seminar in Budapest [8](#) and he was a Doctor of philosophy. In the 1930s came to Novi Sad another rabbi Dr. Mordehaj Zilber. He was Polish and a Doctor of philosophy too. He was well educated and spoke many languages, mostly he helped the main rabbi and kept Hebrew and history classes for kids. The Jewish community had seven clerks for religion. The main prayer was chazzan Fleishman Simon, there were a few assistants to the prayer and a shammash he was called Kaufman, he wore a half cylinder. There were two servants who cleaned and took care of the synagogue they were not Jewish. One of them blew the organs (before the electrification). He would use his legs to blow air in the organs.

Officials, the President of the Jewish Community and Chevra Kaddisha had their place in the Synagogue. They were sitting to the left of the rabbi, in separate honorary places. To the right two gabbai would sit, they were well known inhabitants of Novi Sad). They all had during the religious service cylinders on their head while the rabbi and the main Cantor as well as all the religious personnel had talar from silk or velvet (they were dressed in a very decorative manner).

In Novi Sad there was also a Jewish kindergarten. My mother founded it at the beginning of 1930, at her expense. It was the first and only Jewish kindergarten in Novi Sad. After the opening of the Jewish cultural home in 1935, the kindergarten had moved into the cultural house and then the Jewish Community takes it over. But my mother was still in charge and running the kindergarten; Hana Simerling, after coming back from Palestine (I think in 1937 or 1938, because she got malaria), helped my mother in work with kids. There was one more girl, additional staff, she would take kids to toilet, helped them to wash their hands etc.

It was a well-known kindergarten, beside Jewish kids there were non Jewish too. There they would draw, learn Jewish songs, make sculptures from modeling clay. Whole kindergarten was adapted for young kids with small tables, chairs, and even small sinks and toilet sits. All the kids had uniforms, white frocks with blue edges and blue Magen David on the left side, the name of each child was written on the frock's pocket. The kids often prepared shows for holidays, for Hanukkah, Purim and they were presented in front of the Community members. I remember the names of some performances 'Adriatic night', 'Children's conference' and 'Forest dream'. These were all very simple theatre performances made so that even the youngest of kids could participate. My brother and I would also take a part in them from time to time.

We also had a Jewish elementary school, it was the best school in the town, with excellent teachers and a very modern building, for example, no school in the town except ours, had English toilet and water. It was founded in 1801. It was built next to the synagogue and was here all the time. [Today in that building is a ballet school]. The school director was Boros Mihajlo who taught religious instruction. In the beginning almost all the teachers were Jewish. Later on there were only few Jewish teachers and were employed non Jewish teachers.

It was the only Jewish school in Novi Sad, it was not Yeshiva, we had a specialty; on Saturdays the school was not open but there was a religious service for kids every Saturday in the second grade class. In that class there was a small Aron kodesh, and there was a parokhet on it. On Saturdays Aron kodesh would be opened and a smaller Torah taken out. Meil would take off the clothing and a silky tape in what Torah was wrapped, he would put it on the table where it was read. The religious service was led by Mihajlo Boros. He would read Torah and first was invited Kohen, Levi, Shlisi, Revii, Hamishi, Shishi and Maftir; all who would come to Torah were kids. After the end of the religious service Torah would be wrapped back, hagber would hold it again and galila dressed Torah and put it back in Aron kodesh.

My family was religious but not orthodox. In my home we had kosher kitchen and my mother was very strict about its rules, all Jewish festivals were celebrated and we went to synagogue as well. For Shabbat my mother would light the candles, and at Saturday I always went with my father to the morning service. For Yom Kippur all the family was fasting and during the day we were at service in synagogue.

Ghettos existed in Novi Sad for only a short time somewhere around 1748. When Novi Sad became a free Royal city with it came its right to create a Jewish ghetto. The Jewish Street was proclaimed a ghetto and all the Jews who had had houses in other parts had to sell and buy houses in this part of the town, but that didn't last for long. That street would be locked with chains at 6 p.m. But already in 1800s Jews were residing all around Novi Sad although their stores were mainly on Jevrejska Street [Today it is still called the same meaning Jewish street, it is located in the very center of Novi Sad].

After World War I a new Kingdom of SHS was created [Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians], Jews too had accepted the new state except a few that had not accepted the new government and left Novi Sad for Hungary. We didn't meddle much into politics, only Bodo Kovac, who was the president of the Hungarian party. At that time one could sense the strengthening of Zionist organizations and later in 1930s the revisionists too. We were all mainly in Hashomer Hacair [9](#), Tehelet lavan [10](#) and Kadima [11](#) organizations. It was a Zionist center left orientated.

I remember the military parades, every year there was one parade in the town. On September 6, the birthday of the crown-prince Petar, the Yugoslav army paraded with military music. It would begin on Dunavska Street [Main Street in Novi Sad] then pass by the headquarters of the first army, here the army commander would welcome the parade, and to me it was very interesting to watch. There were military music, few military transports with soldiers, artillery, trucks and there were no tanks.

I remember the King's visit to Novi Sad. We, the middle school students, had stood in the first row, it was in 1934 in the spring and in the fall he was killed. I was next to him, there were no soldiers only isolated policemen in front and we the children. I stood at the movie theater 'Apolo' [today's Apolo center, at the main square], immediately as the king was arriving with an open Packard and with protective glass. Near him was sitting the governor of the Danube regional unit and at the front was the adjutant. While he was coming he was waving his hands to us and greeted us in a military way, and we would shout 'long live the king, long live the king', we also had some flags that we waved with. Then the King entered the City hall, for a meeting, and after that he sanctified the business youth's building. He came out on the balcony, there were a lot of people down there and we applauded and shouted 'long live the king'!

In 1934 in October the King was killed. My mother had a habit, when she would hear something new she would say 'Is it possible, is it really possible?' Exactly then my brother and I heard mother when she started 'what are you saying?' and we 'is it possible. Is it possible?' However, we saw at her that there had been something really serious, she said 'children it is not a joke, they killed the King!' We were scared about what could happen. But Dodika and I were not aware of the situation. All the night soldiers were marching in front of the house. From all the barracks in Novi Sad soldiers were going to the central barracks on Mileticeva Street. There they gave oath to the new king. The following morning when we went out, there was everywhere military police with rifles and bayonets. They guarded everything, the City hall; the financial institution was guarded by the 'financi' (financial guard) in green uniforms, while the military buildings were guarded by the soldiers. This is how it had been until the funeral, that took place about two weeks later in Belgrade and then in Topola.

I attended the gymnasium 'Kralj Aleksandar' and we too wore black bands on our arms, but then we changed our minds. But we had our school sign 'A1' on our hats with the crown of king Aleksandar on it, and we took transparent black tulle and so wrapped that badge.

While I was in gymnasium I had a very bad teacher, his name was Bozidar Prvanovic, and he taught Serbian language. Before I completed the final exam this guy had tormented me. In the 4th grade of gymnasium, for Christmas break he dictated a list of school readings to us that needed to be read. After I had arrived home and told that to my father and my mother, mother grabbed my hands and took me to 'Matica Srpska' [a Serbian cultural institution that is engaged in scientific and publishing activities], there we were helped by, I think his name was Cosic, to find all the books. Everything that was expected I have read. I have done nothing else during that break but read.

At my father it was a must that everything I read or write in the school, I had to copy into hard bound notebooks and it was like a Holy Letter. So after I had read all the books from my school readings, I had them written all on the paper. At the first class after the break came that Prvanovic

and immediately asked me if I had read anything during the break. Immediately I started reading all the names from the list; of course he didn't believe me that I read it all. He asked me to read the report. What ever he wanted, I had the report written in my notebook. He gave me mark 3 and didn't want to give me a better mark although I knew everything he asked. I think he was anti-Semitic but I'm not sure how he was behaving with other Jewish kids. He taught me German too. I spoke German fluently, but even here I always had mark 3 very rarely 4. He wasn't like that with the other students. I remember when we would go on a picnic he would ask me to contribute more money for the picnic and he would say 'You Schosbergers are rich'. Except this teacher I had nobody else problems with.

All the middle school-kids were joined members of the school organization. And we participated in all school rallies. The rallies took place at today's stadium, then, it was 'Karadjordje' athletic field. It was the property of 'Vojvodina' and 'Juda Makabi' sports clubs. Here falcon parades took place with falcon music [Falcon was Yugoslavian national sporting organization]. We would march through the town, we had stylish uniforms with red shirts, school hats with a feather, and the younger ones wore short pants, red shirts, sajaka [type of Yugoslav soldier's cap] with red lining while the little ones had the same uniforms but instead of sajaka they wore round caps with black and red in the middle. After that we did some group exercises, floor exercises and then that with rings and with batons mainly exercised girls and younger boys.

I collected stamps, played the piano, loved to ski, and played tennis. I was active in the 'Juda Makabi' sports club. Here I first learned to fence, later on I joined the section for gymnastics. In the evenings we would go to parties, makabi balls, and Zionist performances.

Besides Miki Berkovic, my great friend was Fredik Ernst. His parents ran a retail company for postage stamps and philately stamps. Almost every day I would visit them, we would go out together. First we would go to dances that took place in the male and female middle school (gymnasium), after that we would go to cafe bars, bars and night clubs.

During 1933 we moved to Mileticeva street because my father had financial problems and the house where we lived was sold. The building was erected on the location of the former 'Kamila' café bar that was a well known meeting place for writers and bohemians in Novi Sad. The building was built by Cocek Nandor a building contractor from Novi Sad, after the projects of Mihaly Feith, architect, who had come to Novi Sad for that reason. He lived with us at that time and sometimes he ate at grandmother Gizela on Karadziceva Street.

In that building except us lived some other our relatives, Kelers, (today they live in Rehovot), Kalmans, Dr. Santo with his family, Sosberger Mano (Kis Marci) with the family. There were more residents here but I don't remember them.

My family moved in a 4 room apartment on the ground level; from the entrance you got directly in the dinning room that was furnished with the same dinning room furniture that we had in the house, it was a furniture in so called 'new German style' that my mother had received from her father as a dowry. From that room you entered the living room. In the living room the furniture was made from mahogany in a secessionist style, we had a big library there was also my father's desk and in the middle of the room there was a round table with 4 armchairs. On the floor there was a Persian rug. In that room was also a piano made by 'Lauberger and Gross'. We received it from



Budapest, and the rest of the furniture was bought at 'Eduard Kraus'.

Dodika and I shared the room together; it was all in green furniture. I had a green iron bed and Dodika slept in a green couch. In the room we had a tile stove. Beside the window there were two worktables – it was a green color bench. Later on I had my drawing table there. In the apartment there was also my parent's bedroom, and a bathroom but the toilet was separately. From the dining room we could go to the hallway that led to the kitchen and the pantry. Also in the house there was a girl's room but it had a separate entrance, from the hallway of the building. It was a small room and in it you could fit a bed and a closet.

In our house there was a lot of books, a part of it my mother had brought from the family library, but also quite a lot of books we bought. There were foreign writers, Hungarian writers, encyclopedias, different historiography books. I read the most a thick book about women anatomy. When I was small my mother took the book for herself, but I have stolen it and always read it.

With Hitler's arrival to power, there were no big changes here. I remember that local Germans would get together, that building exists even today. On the eve of the war they withdrew into that building, they were armed. Here inside they had a radio station. Sometimes we would see them, but very rarely. Once they marched, here where the Slovakian church is today [Masarikova Street], before the church there is a one story residential house. Here their youth would meet. They were dressed in black short pants, white blouse and white socks.

When I had completed the school I got employed. Then I was 19 years old. My first job was with 'Soman i Bauer' company that manufactured artificial stones, there I learned the trade, I worked on the production of artificial stones, façade and around things connected with construction. After that I joined engineer Rajh. Here I worked in the office, drew and drew up plans, and climbed buildings. Later on I got employed in Belgrade with a quite big planning office. Here we worked for the royal court and ministers. It was a very favorable opportunity; I started to get to know the profession and the people. However on March 27 in 1941, there had been a coup d'état in Yugoslavia and my chief told me that it would be better to return home because there was going to be a war. I went home immediately and joined the civil defense. On April the 6th World War II started in Yugoslavia when Germany attacked Yugoslavia.

In Novi Sad I never felt anti-Semitism nor did I ever have conflicts on the job for being a Jew. However with the arrival of the occupier big troubles for us Jews have started everywhere and at all places. There were a lot of laws that restricted us The first law was that Jews could not buy any real estate, second that they were not permitted to trade with any goods, third they could not attend schools, fourth they could not work in their desired field mainly they had no jobs at all. Then my mother formed small group in Jewish Cultural center, they had telephone there. Our members who stayed without job would apply to her and then she was trying to find them some kind of job. Also Serbs were coming to look for workers. I became bricklayer and I worked together with my friend Ervin Haim who was by profession printer. We were repairing houses. Everybody worked what ever job was found. But this didn't last for too long, very soon started the call ups for work services that are forced labor.

As soon as the occupiers had come we were asked to pay a huge compensation to Hungarian army, I don't know why. Novi Sad's Jews all together had to collect 50 million golden dinars, of

course there was no such money. When my uncle Eugen heard about this, he said 'in Novi Sad there is no so much money', and that was the Truth. I was the youngest member of group that collected money. From members of Jewish community we collected 37 millions, part in money, houses, bonds and part in bank accounts. The main thing is that we paid 37 million dinars in order to avoid being thrown out from Novi Sad over the Danube, to Ustashi. To be killed by Ustashi.

When they had called us up for forced labor, the first group worked 6 Weeks in Novi Sad. Every day from 6 to 4 o'clock in the afternoon we did physical work at jobs like navy, airport, unloading at the Danube, demolition and clean up of terrain. And besides all, soldiers and officers would all the time tease and mistreat us. For example, soldiers would catch a person and condemn him to be hanged for two hours. His hands would be tied behind his back and his legs would barely touch the ground. After 15 minutes the most, he would faint. Soldiers would then put him down on the ground, splash him with water, and after he regained consciousness, they would start all over from the begging. They would never beat us.

When I had finished with forced labor, I would go the office to my father to work on something but since some people started mistreating me, some former employees who didn't know me, probably mistreated everyone. Some of my acquaintances advised me that it would be better to leave for Pest. I obtained some documents which helped me to get to Pest. There I stayed at my uncle Miska. In Pest it was still possible to work, so I worked in the morning on construction sites, and in the evening I stayed with my relatives Pista and Jancika, we would go everywhere, had fun as much as it was possible.

My family was surviving here in Novi Sad for some time; they could not go out and were not appearing in the society. It was very difficult and obviously a bad situation. My mother stayed home, she could not run the kindergarten that is she worked and she didn't, the thing is that it was rescinded at the end.

In October I received a call up to report to military officials. As soon as I reported they assigned me to the 5th workers' battalion in Hodmezovasarhely [south of Hungary] and since that period from October 13th, 1941 till the end of the war I have been in labor camps. I was in different camps across Hungary, in Transylvania and Russian Carpathian, northern Hungary, occupied former Czechoslovakia. In June 1943 we were transported by ships to Serbia in Bor mine, here I stayed till the end of the war, about a year and a half. The camp was run by Germans and our guards were Hungarian soldiers. There I stayed the longest at one place. I worked in the German working organization 'TODT', there were around 7000 Jews from Hungary and from all the territories that Hungarians occupied.

The communication with my family existed till they were alive [January 1942]. We had those pink cards that we could mail once twice a month, if you had whom to mail. At the beginning when I was in Hungary and my parents were still alive we stayed in touch. My parents and the brother were killed on January 23, 1942 in Novi Sad during the Raid [11](#).

The Raid in Novi Sad lasted three days. From our house, during the Raid all its residents were killed and that in front of the house. Only two little babies were saved, Aleksandar Kerenji and Djurika Goldstajn. Servants hid them in pillows and so saved. Later, relatives took them. Djurika has gone to relatives in Novi Sad and then to Budapest to my uncle Miska. Here he had lived till 1956 when

he moved to America. There he got sick and died, I don't know what year.

During those three days of Raid in Novi Sad any kind of gathering, in public or in houses, was forbidden. All shops were closed; there was no traffic in the city, telephone lines were cut off and it was forbidden to listen to radio. During first two days around twenty people were killed. Unfortunately, the number of victims wasn't high enough for the Hungarian authorities and they ordered a new approach. So on the last day, Raid started from Mileticeva Street, street where we lived. My whole family was killed just outside the house where we lived as well as all the inhabitants of that street. After killing people on the streets, Hungarian soldiers took bodies and through them to Danube river. That day it was -30°C in Novi Sad and the Danube was frozen. Most of the people were taken away from their homes and killed at beach 'Strand' on the Danube. They had to stand in rows of four: men, women and children. There were ordered to take their clothes off, and then forced to come to the big whole made in the ice by Hungarians soldiers. Then, they were shot and their bodies thrown under the ice. Today, there are 828 known Jewish victims of Raid in Novi Sad.

In Novi Sad from our closer relatives 14 were killed (9 of them were killed during the Raid in Novi Sad), and 20 from our other relatives. That is 34 persons from my family that were killed during the World War II.

After the Raid in Novi Sad I had nobody to write among my relatives. I only wrote to my uncle Miska and to my grandmother in Pest. Grandmother had stayed in Pest till April 1944, when she was taken with her daughter to Auschwitz. Uncle Miska and his sister Mancika had stayed in Pest in some Spanish houses that were under protection of Spanish embassy; Spanish embassy would rent a house for the people that had Spanish documents. My uncle, his family and my aunt got them somehow that way they were not taken away. The people from the embassy would look after them so they were not going out very often. This way lot of Jews was saved.

I remember the liberation day that was on October 3rd, 1944 in the Bor mine. Because I was working there as manager of construction, from Germans I received a license to move outside the camp. It was sort of ID. At the end of September camp was in big disorder because the first group of the soldiers had left the camp. One day when it occurred to me that I won't be allowed to leave the camp anymore, I took all my possessions from the office, where I worked, my fake documents and IDs. While I was entering the camp, the guard stopped me, searched me, and found those documents. I was closed in an army court. Fortunately, the army judge was no longer there, he had already left to Hungary. The soldiers from the army court treated me 'normally'. The last day, I was transferred to Gail that was situated in the camp.

My friend Juda Farkas together with some Italian people that were also sent to work at this camp, they broke the door with axes and release me. Then, I was hidden in Juda's barrack; friends hid me in one of the beds. After the army had left Bor mine, together with my camp inmates I took over the command over the camp. The camp was on fire; we managed to escape from the fire and dispersed over the city. I reported to the first partisan unit that I came across, since I had few friends and partisans, they set me in a partisan unit where I immediately became a partisan and a few days later they summoned me to the staff of the partisan unit. Since then I have stayed at the staff and worked on different jobs. In the army I was an officer and stayed there for another 10 years.

Juda Farkas and his brother Mendi were very good friends of mine. To all the camps where I was sent for work, they were sent, too. The two of them were born in Ada [located in Vojvodina, Serbia], in the same town from where my wife is. Juda was also with me at partisan unit. Today, Juda is my relative because he married my wife's nephew, and they live in Israel.

The first time I came to Novi Sad after the war, I remember I immediately wanted to go back to Belgrade in the army. In Novi Sad I came with a military jeep. Unexpectedly I ran across a friend of mine from the camp. I stayed at him a couple of days. A little by little we found a few acquaintances but nobody from my relatives. Our apartment was looted; other people had lived in it.

People from Novi Sad were well-behaved towards me, they invited me to the city hall, and here they offered me a house or an apartment. I was with my employment tied to Serbia so I could not go back nor I could accept anyone else's house or apartment because I had my own. Later on when I had got transferred to Novi Sad I succeeded as a military man to recover our house and that first only part of the house, and then more and more, at the end I recovered the whole house. That is the house on Karadzic Street, if I had not been a military man I doubt I would have got it back. Nothing from the family property I could find. Everything was looted, a small part of the furniture I found, but not the rugs, pianos, nothing like that.

After the war my friends were mainly Jews and those who had returned to the Jewish Community but also I had very good friends that were not Jewish. I met them mainly at the job, even today I get along with them. Mostly we associated within the Jewish Community; here we celebrated all the Jewish holidays and from non Jewish holidays only the New Year. We had also our private friends who we would visit or who would visit us, or we would go to concerts, movie theaters, theaters and shows.

After the World War II, the chief rabbi of Novi Sad was Dr. Kis. When the war started he run away to Budapest. For some time, he stayed in Novi Sad. Afterwards, he went back to Budapest where his daughter was living, and he died there. Since then we didn't have rabbi here, but services were held for festivals and Shabbats by members that knew to lead them. After the war, a great number of Jews from Novi Sad immigrated to Israel. Then services were moved to the great hall of our Jewish community, since there were not many people interested.

Today we celebrate festivals in the Jewish community; we invite Chazzan from Belgrade or Subotica [north of Vojvodina, Serbia], sometimes rabbi that works in Belgrade comes and sometimes we celebrate them in simple traditional way. Usually the children from children's club prepare play suitable for that particular occasion or we celebrate it by giving a lecture about festival.

My wife is called Agneza Sosberger, or Agika as her nickname is. She was born in Ada [located in Vojvodina, Serbia] in 1926. She comes from Neuberger family. Agika's father was called Miksa Neuberger and her mother Berta Brandajs (maiden name). Miksa was a glassware and porcelain trader.

Her family was an orthodox Jewish family. They kept kosher and were quite religious; they would go often to the synagogue. They observed all holidays, they lit candles on Friday evenings, had barhes, also they would close their store on Sabbath.

When the war [World War II] started she completed the middle school. During the war she was in a camp in Czechoslovakia. We met after the war. While doing the military service at the army headquarters in Nis (Serbia), I met Jelena Viculin, nee Hofman. She was a daughter of Ada's rabbi and a friend of my Agika. And she arranged that we meet. The first time we met was in Belgrade in 'Moskva' hotel. We had got immediately friendly, soon she had invited me to Ada, and not long after we got engaged.

We got married in 1948 in Ada. During the morning we had married in the city hall, and just before lunch we had a religious wedding (in the backyard of their house) under Huppah. A prayer led the ritual, at the wedding there were a lot of acquaintances who had known me even before World War II and there were new acquaintances and friends. It was rather a big wedding.

Agika was a housewife all her life, in 1950 our son Josip was born and then she was engaged with him.

Some of my friends immigrated to Israel. My wife Agika and I had thoughts about that. We even registered, but I didn't get the permission from the military so I could not immigrate. After I left the military, somehow the time has passed for that, I don't know but I feel very sorry for not moving to Israel. Besides Agika's mother, her aunt and uncle lived with us; they were elderly and didn't want to leave Novi Sad, Ada, and Becej.

All the time we were in touch with our friends in Israel and visited them often. I and my wife were going to Israel every few years, depending on whether we were able to find accommodation and finances. In 1990 I was invited to museum Yad Vashem, where I received an award, the Golden Menorah for my work during the last couple of years. What I did was collecting the data about Jews from Vojvodina who got killed during the Holocaust and about Jewish life in this part of Serbia. There were about 19000 Jews killed in Vojvodina and by 1989 I had the data about 15000 of them. Today this list is even longer. For me that was the biggest prize for the Jewish work. One more prize I received for my work on saving the data about Jewish life in Vojvodina in 2001. Award is from city of Novi Sad and was presented to me by the mayor.

The first time I visited Israel was in 1972. It was an official delegation of Vojvodina's Jews. The motive for the visit was the 30th anniversary of the Raid in Novi Sad and Vojvodina. It was very formal, we were received by the President of the State of Israel, and then we visited Knesset too.

Last time when we were in Israel it was in 1993, then my grandchildren Eli and Dina were in Israel for year, and we went to visit them. We have been on good terms with the consulate and later on with the Israeli embassy in Yugoslavia. They would come to me to a private visit and they visited the Jewish Community.

The political orientation of Yugoslavia during the wars in Israel was negative and that towards all conducts of Israel. We (the leadership of the Federation of the Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia; I was a member too) tried to somewhat improve that. Often Nahum Goldman would come, he had good contacts with Marshal Tito [12](#), and through him we tried to accomplish better relations with Israel. It had been permanently promised but never carried out; the anti Israeli position of Yugoslavia lasted till Tito was alive. However the break up of diplomatic relations alone with Israel didn't effected us, we continued to work normally, only we didn't have an ambassador in Belgrade

but in Budapest and Vienna, we could get visas in Belgium or Israeli embassy in Budapest.

After the war I remained in the military for another 10 years. I worked on military projects, I built military installations. After that period in the army I worked in the construction company 'Neimar' in Novi Sad for 5 years. Here I was the manager of a construction site. It was a quite good position. Later on I was asked to work for Novi Sad post office (PTT) as a manager of the construction department. In PTT I had been a manager of the construction department for 24 years before I retired.

Everyone in my family was religious like me. Father had his place in the synagogue, parallel to and above his was my mother's; I would sit next to him. Mostly I would go to the synagogue on big holidays, sometimes on Fridays evening but very rarely on Saturdays. So, even later, I was active and probably one of the most active members in the Jewish Community in Novi Sad. For 10 years I was the president of the Jewish Community; from 1964 to 1975 and for 40 years a member of the leadership of the Federation of the Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia.

I was never a member of any party and was never involved in politics. In that period under communism I had problems for being a Jew. I was supposed to be dismissed from my job in the post office because I was the president of the Jewish Community at the same time. I filed a complaint then and they hushed it up. I kept on as the president of the Jewish Community and had my job.

When the changes began I had been already retired. In 1981 I became a pensioner. My pension was the same as before. In the meantime I wrote several books that the government subsidized and helped with their publishing. I wrote about the history of the Jewish people in this region and the town of Novi Sad. I wrote also about the synagogues in Vojvodina. All my books were printed here and published; I had got approval for all that.

Unfortunately, the fall of communism was at us very problematic. In 1989 an authoritarian government came that was no better and maybe just worse than the one before. Before 2000 the situation had been very uncomfortable. Many call ups for the army, there were departures to the fronts, senseless wars were led, people were losing lives and properties, but we again got along.

The Jewish Organization worked around the clock, we received different assistance and sometimes we could also help others. It was quite uncomfortable, difficult, very often people would flee from Yugoslavia, they didn't want to go to war because they didn't know why do they fight, it was bad. Unfortunately in this kind of uproar there is always someone with anti Semite ideas. Anti Semite programs appeared on television. Against that we all (including myself) fought. Later they had become less frequent and disappeared, but not completely. That way there was more anti Semitism here for the last 12 years than it was for the last 50 years. For example, not long ago there were anti-Semitic television shows; still in bookstores you can find anti-Semitic books... During Tito's regime there was anti Israelism but there was no anti Semitism, although anti Israelism is the same thing as anti Semitism but in a different shape.

After the fall of communism many Jews returned to the Community. I personally never hesitated to declare myself as a Jew. During the war, in the camps, after the war, during and after the communism I have always been a Jew and an active member of the Jewish Community.



While I was the president of the Jewish Community we had 300 members, today we have over 600. Today Jewish life in Novi Sad is much more active than it was before. That is because new generation of young people has grown up; they took over the initiatives from us. I am content with them because they work in a positive sense and for the maintenance of the identity of Jewish people. Unfortunately we don't have much possibility for their education in the religious sense regardless of one being religious or not, we don't have a religious teacher and we have only one rabbi for the whole country.