

## REFLECTIONS ON DATA OF ORAL HISTORY COLLECTED BY THE SURVEYS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY FROM ORADEA

Anca OLTEAN\*

**Abstract.** *This is a paper based on my PhD thesis “The history of the Jews from Romania and Hungary (1945-1953) in the Romanian and Hungarian Historical Writings”. From the consultation of the edited bibliography that we put at the basis of the present study it results that we have studied of an appreciable literature dedicated to the study of Jewish phenomena after the Second World War, published in Romania and Hungary. Written by Romanian and Hungarian historians, some of Jewish origins, the edited bibliography reveals us a series of particularities of the evolution of Jewish community during communist period in Central Europe.*

*The sources of oral history allow us to give new insights on a community on fighting for the coming out from the tragedy of Holocaust, the adaptation to the newly political economical realities of the area, but also for the preservation of identity. Thus were questioned 8 members of the Jewish Community of Oradea, who either them or members of their family members were returned from deportation with the view of the early postwar years in Oradea and their welcoming back in the community near the Crisul Repede River.*

**Keywords:** *Jews, Holocaust, deportation, oral history, questionnaire, Romania, Hungary.*

An important historian who wrote about the situation of Romanian and Hungarian Jews, Randolph Braham in his article “*Romanian Nationalists and the Holocaust: The Drive to refurbish the Past*”<sup>1</sup> mentions the fact that during the leadership of communist president Nicolae Ceaușescu the historical truth was distorted concerning the anti-Jewish policy of Antonescu’s Romania during the years 1940-1944. The trend was not to mention in the history school books the Jewish deprivations of rights in the post-Trianon antonescian Romania, the Jews often remaining without means of living because of the fact that they could not practice certain jobs, deportations in Transnistria were ignored and not mentioned, and pogroms of Iassy and Bucharest were forgotten. Also, the communist historiography ignored the sufferences of Transylvanian Jews deported by Hungarian authorities in German concentration camps, considering that antifascist and communist Romanian inhabitants died there and not the particular group of the Jews. The publication of the journal of Eva Heyman<sup>2</sup>, a Jewish girl from Oradea, a niece in the family of a

\* Research assistance dr., Institute of Euroregional Studies, University of Oradea. olteananca@hotmail.com

<sup>1</sup> Randolph Braham, *Romanian Nationalists and the Holocaust: The Drive to Refurbish the Past*, in CEU Yearbook, 1996-1999), <http://web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies>, accessed in April 22, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Eva Heyman, *J’ai vécu si peu. Journal du ghetto d’ Oradea (Préface de Carol Iancu, traduit du Hongrois par Jean-Léon Muller)*, Editions des Syrtes, 2013.

farmacist, reveals the situation of the Jews in the Holocaust years in the city of Oradea. She talks about public robbery of Jewish assets and houses, about the fact that Jews were forced to leave their properties and to move to the ghetto, in the city, about feelings of hate and public violence against the Jews of the city and later on they were deported to German concentration camps.

After the end of the war, the Jews deported tried to return to their country of origin, Romania in our case, and it followed a state of independence of 2-3 years (but the situation of the country was precarious because of political struggle and instability), a state of independence in the sense that people could talk freely about the Holocaust, about the persecutions against the Jews, about Hungarian arbitrary dominance in Transylvania and also about the persecutions against the Jews during the war from Romania and Hungary. In 1953, the single remaining Jewish organization in the Jewish quarter was Jewish Democratic Committee, an organization considered by some as a communist one, but still trying in a practical way, to organize the Jewish community from Romania.

It is very easy to state that communists leaders of Jewish origin forgot the common sufferance of the Jews and built the communism disconsidering their community and origins. But, on the other hand, in present times, Jewish community tried to keep distance of these important former Jewish communists and to foster relations with Israel and to pursue the democratic ideas and local community development.

For instance there were cases of Jewish activists having important roles in the communist party who tried to help their Jewish fellows to emigrate in Israel.

The volume *Raport Final/ Final Report*<sup>3</sup> elaborated by the International Commission for the study of Holocaust in Romania has a chapter entitled “*Distorsion, negation and minimalization of Holocaust in postwar Romania*”. The international Commission important historians such as Ioan Scurtu, Jean Ancel, Randolph Braham, Ladislau Gyemant, Andrei Pippidi, Liviu Rotman, Leon Volovici, Lya Benjamin who had important contributions in solutionning the Jewish chapter of Second World War in Romania. In spite of the rapid communist advance, in post-war Romania, at May 26, 1946, it took place the process of war criminals in Iași and Bucharest and these trials condemned the anti-Semite politics of Marshall Ion Antonescu. Many of the condemned leaders of the Antonescian bureaucracy will be later on rehabilitated and even included in the ranks of Romanian communist party. The authors point out the negative consequences of the pogrom of the Iassy with its numerous Jewish victims (approx. 10 000 of Jews) and the deportations of Transnistria acknowledged during the trial by Ion Antonescu (150 000 -170 000 of victims).

But not all the Romanians persecuted the Jews and were anti-Semites. There was also a benevolent category of Romanians who saved the Jews from certain death and received, in consequence, the distinction “Rights among the Peoples”. This aspect is revealed by *Raport Final (Final Report)* and also by Professor Antonio Faur<sup>4</sup> from the University of Oradea who, in his publications, that regard the fate of the Jews from the

<sup>3</sup> Friling, Tuvia; Ioanid, Radu; Ionescu, Mihai E., (eds.), *Raport Final (Final Report)*, Polirom, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> I quote here the book of Antonio Faur, *Implicarea diplomatului român dr. Mihai Marina în acțiunile de salvare a evreilor din Transilvania de Nord și Ungaria (1944) (The implication of the Romanian diplomat dr. Mihai Marina in the actions of salvation of the Jews from Northern Transylvania and Hungary (1944))*, Oradea, Editura Muzeului Țării Crișurilor, 2014, publication that reveals the role of the diplomat dr. Mihai Marina in the actions of crossing the border of the Jews from Nord-West of Transylvania in the Romanian Kingdom where life was still bearable for the Jews.

North-West of Transylvania under Hungarian and fascist dominance and occupation, underlines that although the fate of the Jews from the occupied Transylvania was far from good, them being deported in German concentration camps, there was a benevolent category of Romanians who helped the Jews under Hungarian occupation to cross illegally the border in the Romania where the political regime was not leading towards their total annihilation.

Making reference to the history of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe during the communist regimes, Bernard Wasserstein in his book *Vanishing Diaspora. The Jews in Europe since 1945*<sup>5</sup> provides the figures of remaining and returning Jews in Hungary as 145 000 of people and in Romania of 420 000 in the year 1946. During the last years of Stalinist leadership, in Soviet Union started a stalinist purge that reverberated in the communist block. The Jewish schools with teaching in Hebrew are closed in Romania and Hungary in 1948-1949.

In his book *Evreii în anii tranziției spre comunism (1944-1948) (The Jews in the years of transition to communism (1944-1948))*, Harry Kuller<sup>6</sup> speaks about the hopes of Romanian Jewry to be saved by Americans in the years when the communism was about to be installed: “The years 1945-1949 they were thus, years of expectations and confrontations- between organisms and organizations, between their leaders, seconded by larger or smaller groups. It was an open field for positions and oppositions, for diverse solutions and benign adversities. A state of democracy, some would say; paradoxically the general social-political current was not leading towards democracy. At horizon it was visible a socialism of Soviet type; they were Jews who wanted it, others who wanted to avoid it making themselves cousins of the evil until they passed the bridge, until emigration; last, but not least, not few decided to remain in the place where they were born in good or in worse times. None of the above mentioned categories of Jews did not “bring” the socialism in Romania”<sup>7</sup>. [transl.] The fact is that almost all the Jews of Romania emigrated after the setting of communism here, in Israel, proving that they were not as communist as some asserted about them.

The chief rabbi of Romania, Moses Rosen, confirms the existence of community life and religion during the whole communist years<sup>8</sup>. Although the activity of the synagogues and of the Jewish community was not as intensive as before the war, these institutions continued to exist, inclusively there were people involved in the assertion of the Judaic cult, which, at a certain moment, the rabbi stops them to emigrate because it was necessary that them to remain in the country. There many adherents of the Judaic cult which continued to go to the Synagogue, although the Security sent also here its sources of information because the “Jewish streets” must have been submitted to the communist regime.

It was very much accredited the idea that the Jews brought the communism and this system was implemented with the massive participation of Jewish community members. Radu Ioanid shows that it is wrong to consider that the number of Jewish communists in Romania was big, showing that in 1933, from a total of 1655 of communist

<sup>5</sup> Bernard Wasserstein, *Vanishing Diaspora. The Jews in Europe since 1945*, Hamish Hamilton Ltd., London, 1996, p. 1-158.

<sup>6</sup> Harry Kuller, “Evreii în anii tranziției spre comunism (1944-1948) (“The Jews in the years of transition to communism”) în Acad. Nicolae Cajal, dr. Hary Kuller, *Contribuția evreilor din România la cultură și civilizație (The contribution of the Jews of Romania to culture and civilisation)*, Editura Hasefer, București, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 155.

<sup>8</sup> Moses Rosen, *Primejdii, încercări, miracole. Povestea șef-rabinului Moses Rosen*, p. 16-340.

members, only 364 were Jews which represented 22,6%. Also, Ioanid shows that in February 1946, the Jews represented only 5,3% from the party members<sup>9</sup>.

As in Hungary, the Jews had particular reasons to adhere to communism. In 1945 the option for communism, meant a strong attitude against the fascism, of which they were fear the most. More of them could not feel animosity towards the Soviet army or towards the Russians because these were the factors which liberated them from the Antonescian regime. Several Jews, traumatized by the horrors of Holocaust, became important personalities of the communist party, or, much more, they involved in the Romanian Security, terrorizing themselves the political opponents of the communism.

In 1949, the Romanian communists started a brutal campaign against the Zionist leaders. What was interesting was the fact that although in the period that we study a number of Jews emigrated in Israel, the Zionist leaders tried to convince the Jewish population in the view of emigration and to accelerate the rythm of emigration, were imprisoned, enquetted and tortured starting with the year 1949<sup>10</sup>. From 1949 to 1959 they were enquetted and sentenced and judged around 250 of persons. The campaign was restarted in 1954, although Stalin died in 1953.

The faith of the Jews from Romania was far from good. With the exception of a minority, they were rather victims of the communism rather than beneficiaries. The Jews from Romania emigrated to a greater extent than the Jews of Hungary, while in Hungary assimilated more of them. We can conclude that, in Romania, the communist regime was more permissive with the Jews.

Regarding the situation of the Jews from Oradea after their return from Holocaust, I succeeded to question on the issue of Jewish postwar life in Romania a few Jews, survivors of the Holocaust, who were deported or who escaped from arrest being hidden by generous persons.

The questionnaire that I have achieved took into account a few classical works written by consecrated historians on the basis of questionnaires. Gidó Attila and Sólyom Zsuzsa, in the study *The surviving Jewish inhabitants of Cluj, Carei and Oradea. The survey of World Jewish Congress in 1946*<sup>11</sup> draws by the intermediation of questionnaires analysis a painting of Jewish community during the war and in the months which followed to the liberation. The authors describes the situation existent in Romania in interwar period by mentionning the fact that most Romanian Jews were deprived by citizenship both in 1924, but also during the governance of Octavian Goga in 1938 making a comparison with Hungary were the second anti-Jewish law brought restrictions in the sense that the Jews could not obtain the citizenship in any way. On the basis of questionnaires, the authors fill in this picture with a painting of the situation existent in Cluj, Carei and Oradea in the period of Hungarian administration. Thus, in the first months of occupation of Transilvania was organised a military administration, replaced later on with a civil one. They were taken measures against the Jewry by the interdiction of the Jewish publications, of sportive clubs and non-religious associations. Starting with

<sup>9</sup> Radu Ioanid, *Răscumpărarea evreilor. Istoria acordurilor secrete dintre România și Israel (The ransom of the Jews. The secret bargaining between Romania and Israel)*, București, Polirom, 2005, p. 76.

<sup>10</sup> Teodor Wexler, "Procesele sioniștilor" în Romulus Rusan (ed.), *Anii 1954-1960. Fluxurile și refluxurile stalinismului*, p. 380.

<sup>11</sup> Gido Attila, Solyom Zsuzsa, *The surviving Jewish inhabitants of Cluj, Carei and Oradea. The survey of World Jewish Congress in 1946*, Cluj-Napoca, ISPMN Working Papers, nr. 35/2010, <http://www.ispmn.gov.ro/uploads/35%20pt%20web%20final.pdf>, accessed in February, 2011.

1940 the insults, the evacuations, arrestments and expulsions of the Jews became frequent. The authors allocate a separate chapter to the anti-Jewish existent legislation in Northern Transylvania found under the occupation of Hungary. Thus the first anti-Jewish law (The Law XV -1938) reduced the number of Jewish intellectuals or free professionists at 20% from the total number of Jewish citizens. The second anti-Jewish law from May 5, 1939, during the governance of the count of Teleki Pál, considered as Jews the ones that were members of Jewish religious community and if one of the parents or two grandparents were Jews. The proportion of 20% of Jewish intellectuals or free professionists was limited to 6%. The law introduced several anti-Jewish measures among whom the law numerus clausus who limited the number of Jewish students to 6%. The limit of 6% of Jews was introduced also in the house of lawyers, doctors and engineers for the Press Chamber and Chamber of actors. The law was limited the right to the Jews to buy agricultural and forestry properties and made possible the expropriation of Jewish properties. Several Jews lost their jobs and several Jewish shops were closed. In practice the number of their closed shops and stores confiscated was more numerous than the one acknowledged by the law.

The third anti-Jewish law was the law no. XV/1941 and its prevariations were applied also on Northern Transylvania. The Law forbidden the marriage between Jews and non-Jews and imposed penalties for the Jews who had sexual relations with non-Jewish women.

Another anti-Jewish law was the Law XV/ 1942 by which the Jews lost the right to buy more properties.

On the basis of the questionnaires made up by World Jewish Congress in 1946, the authors are offering informations also about forced labour. Established by several decrees, the forced labour entered into vigour at July 1, 1939 and stay valid until April 1941. The Jews who made forced labour were not required to make military service. The ones who made forced labour could not wear weapons. The Jews had to make in turn a hard physical work, to endure cruel punishments and and inhuman treatment, including insufficient portions of food.

The questionnaires offered also informations on the deportation that started after March 19, 1944. At the end of March, 1944, the Germans arrived in Northern Transylvania, and from April 5, the Jews were obligated to wear a yellow star as a distinctive sign of their origin. The goods of the Jews were blocked. First of all the authorities sequestrated the children and older population but also the young ones who were not recruited for forced labour. It existed ghettos in the cities of Cluj, Gherla, Dej, Șimleul Silvaniei, Satu Mare, Baia Mare, Bistrița-Năsăud, Oradea, Târgu Mureș, Reghin, Sfântu Gheorghe. The most deportees were sent into the concentration camps from Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, Grossrosen, Günskirchen, Mathausen, Neungamme or Ravensbrück.

In 1946, 7 200 of the Jews were still living in Northern Transylvania, among whom 200 of Jews from Bihor, 1500 of Jews from Cluj, 800 of Jews in Maramureș, 700 of Jews in Satu Mare, 650 of Jews in the Someș county, 500 Jews from Sălaj and Năsăud.

The authors present the themes and the problems to which have referred the questionnaires.

Thus the respondents were asked about the legal and financial status and about the atrocities they had suffered. They were required to write about the consequences of the assignments and ammendaments connected with the issue of marriage. The questionnaires were made out of questions concerning the evets that hapenned under

Hungarian administration. The respondents could make details with regard to any prejudice, to report the material losses they had to suffer such as the expropriation of private investments, the restrictions imposed in the business world, the confiscated objects, the conditions of living, the incomes. Besides these data, the questionnaires put questions about deportations with the mentioning of the date of deportation, of the place of deportation and concentration camps through they passed through.

Robert Eaglestone in his book *The Holocaust and the Postmodern*<sup>12</sup> tells an assertion of Maurice Blanchot<sup>13</sup> who wrote that the survivors of the Holocaust are not read as other usual books. Elie Wiesel<sup>14</sup> consider that a new type of literature was invented together with the Holocaust, namely the one of oral testimony which refers to personal experiences. The experience of the Holocaust implies subjective relations coming from the survivors.

At a much more smaller case, we questioned a few persons from the Jewish Community from Oradea who were survivors of the Holocaust, no matter that their relatives completed the questionnaires in the name of the parents already disappeared from life. The questionnaires asked data connected of:

1. Name and surname
2. Date of birth
3. Place of birth
4. The locality of residence
5. Occupation
6. Nationality
7. Were you deported during the Holocaust?
8. How were the Jews received after their return from deportation? But you personally?
9. When you returned you succeeded to recuperate your old properties (mobiles and imobiles)? If yes, to what extent?
10. Did you participate to the life of Jewish community during the years 1945-1953 and to what extent?
11. Did you received aids especially for the Jews during the years 1945-1953?
12. You were members of some Jewish organisations after the war? Can you mention in which organisations?
13. You never thought to emigrate in Israel or in other states of the free world?
14. Were you member in Romanian Communist Party (PCR)? Which was the motif for which you entered in the party? Did you believed indeed in the ideals of egalitarianism?
15. Did you had relatives abroad? To what extent you succeeded to maintain connections?
16. It was possible to talk openly about emigration during 1945-1953?
17. Did you have ties with the Zionist movement? Did you know of the existence of Zionist organisations?
18. Which were the reasons for which some Jews emigrated in Israel (political persecutions, etc.)?
19. How do you motivate the fact that you did not emigrate?

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Eaglestone, *The Holocaust and the postmodern*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 15.

Thus, **Hommonai Maria**, born in November 30, 1947, in Oradea, is Jew and pensionner. She filled in the questionnaire in the name of her parents Schwartz Iosif and Schwartz Ileana (born Krausz) who were deported, father at forced labour in Russia and mother in the concentration camps from Auschwitz Birkenau. At the question how were received the Jews after their return from deportation? What about her parents personally? the daughter Hommonai Maria answered: „I have no knowledge about their welcoming back from the side of the official authorities, only from the neighbors or relatives who returned sooner or, in different circumstances, they escaped from deportation. They were received back with friendship and feelings of sorry.” Their property had a lot to suffer while they were deported.”Father found his house, where I actually live with the family which was terrible ravaged and was functionning as a warehouse for Soviet troops who were the masters of the city, the house of my father was a household for the horses. Mother, at her return from Sweden, where she arrived after her liberation by the Danish Red Cross, found her personal things at a family of friends who gave notice that they succeeded to enter in the possession of their goods, after she was brought in the ghetto from Oradea”. In the period 1945-1953, Schwartz Iosif and Schwartz Ileana did not participate to the life of Jewish Community, did not received aids designed especially to the Jews, were not members of Zionist organisations after the war, did not emigrate, them being at the second marriage and being exhausted physically and emotionally after the deportation. They were not members of Romanian Communist Party and did not have relatives abroad. Schwartz Iosif and Schwartz Ileana did not have ties with the Zionist movement. Hommonai Maria, their daughter, thinks that the Jews who emigrated in Israel wished that the history not be repeated again. Her parents did not emigrate because „They did not have the power and the necessary strenght to start a new way in life, they were concerned with the re-making of their normal lives in the conditions known before their deportation”.

**Braun Vioara** was born at 30.09.1926 at Marghita. She is actually retired. Survivor of the Holocaust, she was deported together with her parents and two brothers who died at Auschwitz. At the question how were the Jews received after their return from Holocaust and particularly herself, Braun Vioara answered: „Differently. Some with curiosity, with hidden enmity, with distrust, with simpaty, etc. I arrived home in September 1945 when it was formed a community of Jews from the survivors who returned sooner at home and from whom she received help”. She did not succeed to recuperate her property, mentions that she found the empty house, she participated to the life of Jewish community during 1945-1953 by spectacles, in front of the youth. She was member of the Democratic Group of the Jews from Marghita, and did not think to emigrate. She believed in the ideals of the communism because of her wish that the things she has passed through will not be repeated again. She had an older brother who emigrated in the USA, returned later to see her and whom she had visited too. She did not have ties with the Zionist movement. Among the reasons that the Jews had to emigrate in Israel she remembers the distrust, uncertainty and „the hope that they will be treated as equal citizens in their country”. She did not emigrate because of the fact that she had born two kids and she was ill very often.

**B. ZS.** was born in Oradea, at 20.04.1944. She was pensioneer and of Hungarian ethnicity. She speaks on behalf of the Jewish acquaintances who were deported. In what she is concerned she mentions: „I've been refugiated to Arad (Romania). My acquaintances enjoyed the coming of the escaped prizoners from deportations. Our former housemade offered accomodation, clothes, disinfected, fed the ones in need”. She heard about the

loose of goods, of Jewish immobles. She did not participated to the life of Jewish community during 1945-1953, did not receive special aids designed for the Jews, was not member of the Jewish organizations after the war, had a brother who emigrated, but for her it was too late. She was not member of Romanian Communist Party (PCR), had ties in Israel with whom she keep in touch. In her opinion it can not be talked openly about emigration, she did have ties with the Zionist movement. The reasons for which some Jews emigrated in Israel were concerned by the fact that „They believed in a country of their own where they could be Jews without persecutions”. She motivates the fact that she did not emigrate by the fact that she was loyal to the state who offered a peaceful living for her and her child.

**Steier Elisabeta** was born at October 24, 1917 at Boiu (Bihor), after which she lived in Oradea. She is retired, of Jewish origines. She mentions only that after August 23, 1944 she was liberated. Partially she succeeded to recuperate the properties. In the period 1945-1953, she did activities of volunteer work in the favor of Jewish community, received aids designed to the Jews (cloths), was not member of some Jewish organisations after the war, did not think to emigrate in Israel or in other states of the free world. She was member of Romanian Communist Party (PCR) and, as other sympathizers believed in the ideals of egalitarism. She had relatives abroad with whom she maintained connection by posts and visits. Her husband had ties with the Zionist movement. The motivation of the fact that some Jews emigrated in Israel were the political persecutions. She did not emigrate from medical reasons.

**Bone Gabriela** was born in March 28, 1928 in Târgu Mureş and lived in Oradea. She was deported during the Holocaust, is pensionneer and Jew. At the question how were received back the Jews after their return from Holocaust, especially herself, Gabriela Bone says: “From the deportation—from the concentration camp Bergen Belsen I arrived home in Târgu Mureş, str. Octavian Goga 18—we were welcomed by the Jewish Community with a lot of joy, we installed in a former hospital, we received clothes, a chamber having all necessary things”. The properties were nationalized and by processes were recuperated to a great extent. During the years 1945-1953, she was member of Jewish Community in Târgu Mureş and Reghin, received material aids designed particularly to the Jews. She was a member of an Jewish organization after the war, the organisation (Ha)şomer Haţair. She did not think to emigrate because she got married. She was member of Romanian Communist Party (PCR) and thought that the things will improve after the installation of communism. She did not have relatives abroad and remembers that it was possible to openly discuss the issue of emigration in the years 1945-1953. She had not ties with the Zionist movement. The emigration in Israel she sees as an ideal appeared after the Holocaust in order that the Jews to have a country which to defend them and not to exist an Auschwitz anymore. She did not emigrate because she got married.

**Kincses Ecaterina** was born in May 11, 1940 in the locality of Cluj Napoca and then lived in Oradea. She is pensioneer and of Jewish nationality. She filled in this questionnaire in the name of her grandmother who was deported. The name of deported grandmother was Diamantstein Yolanda. Ecaterina and her mother escaped from deportations because her mother was married with a German ethnic. However in the period of Holocaust, they stayed more hidden. The brother of her mother was deported too, Diamantstein Ivan. Him and their grandmother were deported to Auschwitz. Besides uncle Ivan, nobody from the family returned from deportation. They had only mobile goods, not imobiles. After the liberation, they recuperated some of them. She does not remember that her parents to be involved in the life of Jewish community, immediately



after the war. They were helped, but very less. During the years 1945-1953 they received helps designed especially to the Jews as clothes and boxes of ailments. It was not member of certain Jewish organization after the war. She did not think to emigrate in Israel, mother was against the fact that also other Jews think to emigrate. Mrs. Kincses believed in the communist ideals. She motivates that mother, father and step father believed in the communist ideals. "Mother cried at the Stalin's death and did not know it will be further on". During 1945-1953 they did not have relatives abroad. In 1978 emigrated an aunt with whom they succeeded to keep in touch by telephone and packages. How the packages arrived was something terrifying, opened, thrown up. The parents, mother and step father did not want to emigrate. Her family had nothing to do with the Zionist movement. The reasons for which certain Jews choose to emigrate were the political persecutions, considers Mrs Kincses. She motivates the fact that she did not emigrate by the explanation that "I can not imagine life in another way. In Israel, there are problems with Arabians".

**Varadi Judith** was born at 09.01. 1926 in Cluj-Napoca, then she lived in Oradea. She is pensioner of Jewish ethnics. She was deported during the Holocaust, mentioning the places through which she passed through: "Between 1944, May 3, in ghetto in Dej, Auschwitz, the concentration camps C, B,...Buchenwald Commando "Tauscha", the march of death until May, 5-6 1945, at the return to hospitals sanatoriums-repatriation 1946 march". At the question how were the Jews received after their return from deportation, what about herself personally, Varadi Judith answers: "Left alone alive, me personally I did not return to the locality from which I was deported, but in Timișoara, to an uncle from the side of my mother, who perished in Holocaust, together with my brother. Shortly, I got hired and I started a qualification". The house in which she had lived before the Holocaust was demolished. She participated to the life of Jewish Community after her return to Oradea in 1948 and was a contributor member of Jewish community together with the husband. She did not received helps designed especially to the Jews, she was not member of some Zionist organizations, she did not think to emigrate in Israel or in other part. She was a member of Romanian Communist Party (PCR) and believed in the ideals of egalitarianism. She had relatives abroad with whom she corresponded and kept in touch. During communist period it was possible to emigrate only with difficulty, considers Varadi Judith: "There was campaigns in order to renounce to emigration then for a while it was impossible to emigrate, after several years of solicitation, the majority did not receive favourable recommendation, it was open a new possibility after 1970". She did not have ties with the Zionist movement. In her opinion, the Jews emigrated because they were not promoted to their working place and because they were hearing the call of Israel.

She did not emigrate because she returned ill from Holocaust and because she did not succeed physical and psychical resources to start a new life in another country.

**Somogyi Livia** completed the questionnaire in the name of the deceased father, Somogyi Laszlo, born in 1892 at Beiuș, of profession pharmacist, who lived later on in Oradea. At the question how they were the Jews received after their return from deportation, Somogyi Livia relates that she came back with the hope that she will find her family and she will receive the immobles that she previously had. Unfortunately, she did not receive back neither the mobile goods, neither immobles. Somogyi László participated to the religious celebrations at the synagogue and led the chorus of the community. She did not receive the help designed especially to the Jews, she was not member of some Jewish organizations after the war, she did not think to emigrate in Israel, motivating that it was too old to start everything from 0. They had relatives abroad,

exchanging letters. She was member of Romanian Communist Party, believing in the ideals propagated by the communists. In the opinion of Somogyi Livia it was impossible to speak openly about the emigration only with the risk to lose your job. They did not have ties with the Zionist movement. Some Jews emigrated in Israel in order to “be Jews in their country and for an easier lifetime”.

We see thus the difficult life conditions the Jewish community had to bear even after their return to their places of origin. The interviewed Jews were Jews that still reside in Romania and this fact explains why the majority of them were not Zionists in the aftermath of the war, why they did not emigrate in Israel. Some of them said that Romanians and Hungarians from Transylvania had compassion for them after their return from deportation, other say that they confronted with the hostility of the local ethnics after their return from deportation. Almost all are discontented with the way in which they received back their goods, as the communism was advancing in Romania and Eastern Europe, and also the Jewish community had to obey to the new master. The ones who kept ties with Israel and relatives from Israel, did this under the surveillance of the Security, in difficult and risky conditions. One deported Jew says that the packages from Israel arrived ravaged at his destination. It is impossible that after these months of deportation, not to have been created a breach between the local population and the returned Jews. The communism spoke about equality but these fissures could not be overcome always and this explains in part, why the majority of Jews emigrated in Israel during the communist years and did not identify with the newly created communist order.

From the consultation of the edited bibliography that we put at the basis of the present study it results that we have studied of an appreciable literature dedicated to the study of Jewish phenomena after the Second World War, published in Romania and Hungary. Written by Romanian and Hungarian historians, some of Jewish origins, the edited bibliography reveals us a series of particularities of the evolution of Jewish community during communist period in Central Europe.

The sources of oral history allow us to give new insights on a community on fighting for the coming out from the tragedy of Holocaust, the adaptation to the newly political economical realities of the area, but also for the preservation of identity.

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