

JEWISH REALITY

OPENESS, AVAILABILITY, EVOLUTION

Interview with
AUREL VAINER,
Ph.D., president
of F.J.C.R

During a very short period (June 10th- 15th, 2007), Aurel Vainer, Ph.D., president of F.J.C.R., participated to: ● the *Simha* ceremony (receiving the rabbi title) of Shlomo (Sorin) Rosen, who graduated "Hovevei Torah" Yeshiva, a prestigious rabbinical school in New York; ● the bringing of 192 Torah Scrolls from Romania in Israel; ● the awarding of "Haim and Sarah Ianculovici" Prizes at the Cultural Center in Haifa. There were moments of high emotional intensity that were re-lived during the interview to the *Jewish Reality*. He also spoke about the meaning of each common project of the Federation, of the authorities, of the Romanian civil society, about the interest shown by the mass media for the bringing of the Torah Scrolls from Romania to Israel, about the rich cultural life of the Romanian *Allyiah*.



BRASOV AND BARLAD – COMMUNITIES OF 200 AND 300 YEARS

In this edition we are publishing two feature reports dedicated to Jewish communities that celebrate three and respectively two hundred years of documented attestation of their existence: the Jewish communities from Barlad and Brasov. The community from Barlad, counting 30 members regenerates due to the fact that half of them are young and middle-aged persons. Before the Second World War in Barlad lived 4,000 Jews, amongst a population of 28,000. The community had 12 synagogues, two schools, two elderly people homes, a ritual slaughter house, a small matzos factory, etc. At present there is only one synagogue left. In order to organize the celebration of the three-centennial on high standards, the leaders are making great efforts. Valuable wall paintings are at risk of decay due to the dampness. The community owns three cemeteries, from which one a historical monument from the 18th century, and in custody the Jewish cemeteries from Ploiesti, Plopana, Murgeni. The Jewish organizations of the natives from Romania, the Jews from Barlad who live in Israel or anywhere in the world are asked to make donations for the survival of these religious sites of their ancestors.

On June 29th – July 1st the Jewish community from Brasov will celebrate 200 years from its foundation. The leadership of the community is in the preparation fever. They wait for 300 guests from Romania, Israel, and other countries of the world. We are looking forward for exhibitions, symposiums, book releases, for a Jewish folklore festival, for some of the Jewish Theater and of the Yahad group of the Jewish community from Brasov performances. The Brasov Temple was built in 1901 and restored in 2001. If before the war the community counted some thousands of members, at present the Jewish population of Brasov and Covasna counts 274 persons.



THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE YOUNG JEWS FROM THE BALKANS

The most important manifestation of the young Jews from the Balkans and Black Sea region took place on May 17-21, 2007 in Struga in Macedonia. *Gesher* was founded 6 years ago, as an initiative of the Department for Community Development of JDC (Joint), with the support of the "Harry and Jeanette Weinberg" Foundation, with the objective of creating a bridge between the young Jews from the region. With the Joint support, more than 350 participants enjoyed a program including religion, arts, theater, film, history. Between the organizers were: Adrian Gueron, Dalia Golda, Erwin Shimshensohn, Dana Vereanu, Anda Dumitru and Gabriela Bucatica from Romania. Vice-president Paul Schwartz and eng. Rudy Marcovici, chief of the president's cabinet, represented the Federation of the Jewish Communities from Romania. After the interesting debates led by Jorge Diener, regional director of Joint, all the representatives of the Jewish communities from the Balkan and the Black Sea region decided to intensify the collaboration in the Jewish programs.



The deportation of the Jews from North Transylvania to Auschwitz 63 years ago was commemorated this year too in Cluj, Oradea, Satu Mare. "And the world kept silent" wrote Elie Wiesel from Sighet in his first book dedicated to the

memory of those disappeared in smoke: six million European Jews. Why are we commemorating year after year? Why the subject is still in actuality? Because of the fact that nowadays the attitude towards the Holocaust became a test on the democracy. This was the common theme of the speeches held in Cluj by Dr. Nicolae Kallos, president of the community, professor Vasile Nussbaum, Andreea Ghita. The rejection of any form of intolerance was the central theme of the

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DEPORTATIONS FROM NORTH TRANSYLVANIA

speeches held in Oradea by eng. Felix Koppelman, president of the community, His Holiness Sofronie Drincec, bishop of Oradea, Bihor and Salaj, Stefan Neagoe, brigade general, Todor Albert, vice-prefect. Eng. Albert Kupferberg, general secretary of F.J.C.R., emphasized the negative influence of those stating there was no Holocaust in Romania, particularly upon the young people. In Oradea, Satu Mare and Tg. Mures pilgrimages to the monuments dedicated to the Holocaust victims took place.

THE BOOKFAIR "BOOKFEST" 2007

The "Bookfest" 2007 organized on June 6-10, at ROMEXPO, opened with the press conference of Grigore Arsene, president of the Romanian Editors' Association, who appreciated with lucidity the book present situation in Romania and expressed his support for the Foundation "We are reading" aiming to discover new methods for reading stimulation. The success of the "Hasefer" Publishing House at the book fair was determined by its book offer, by its specificity, by the quality of its new editorial apparitions, object of its releases: "Valorizations (essays, chronicles, studies)", by Henri Zalis, important literary historian and critic; "The Brain and Its Universe", by professor Jean Ashkenasy (born in Bulgaria, educated in Romania, living in Israel); "From the *Journal Years*", a scenic synthesis written by Dumitru Solomon – one of the series of volumes published by "Hasefer" for the Centennial Mihail Sebastian, for which publication the publishing house keeps the merit; "55 Women Who Amazed the World", by Debora Felder and Diana Rosen. Between the 190 events organized during the five days – book releases, symposiums, music and poetry performances, competitions, prize-winnings, etc, through the creativity and the good taste of the organizers, the present edition became a pact with the Good and the Beauty signed by the visitors and by the buyers.



EURO-JUDAICA 2007

Under the title we are publishing in this edition the program of the "Euro-Judaica" Festival that will take place on June 24th – 27th, in Sibiu, European cultural capital in 2007. During the three days we are looking forward for: exhibitions, book fairs with Jewish thematic, conferences, debates, and panels dedicated to Judaism topics, philately with Jewish themes, the celebration of the centennial Mihail Sebastian, etc. The festival expects the participation of prestigious personalities from Romania and from other countries, of the leaders of F.J.C.R. Our review correspondents will be present and will report in the future edition this event-premiere in Romania.

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