

JEWISH REALITY



PURIM 5768 in Bucharest and in the Country

Purimspiel 5768 represented a *tour de force* for Harry Eliad, director of the Jewish State Theater (TES), who put on stage 35 Purim shows, for the talented actors of the theater, for the enthusiastic young people and for the children who sang and danced for the public joy in the three performances: at the Great Synagogue, JCC and TES. Our Purimspiel is also a matter of „practice”, as Rabbi Shlomo Sorin Rosen would say. Only the practice the speaker referred to was related

to the power of resistance that led to our victory against the Hamans, from the beginnings to the present. „Hamans there were, and Hamans there still are”, said Dr. Aurel Vainer, president of F.J.C.R., in the particular Jewish spirit of the „laughter-tears”, only today not only Esther, but the Jewish people who learnt the self-defense lesson from the heroes of Meghilat Esther, will win over the descendants of Haman: either the one where the Meghilah took place, in Iran, either in any place where there is a manifestation of the classical or modern anti-Semitism, anti-Israelism. We heard the reading of Meghilat Esther made by Great Rabbi Menachem Hacohen, we admired the vitality of a community reduced in number, but capable to get together literary, musical, acting talents to attest its quality, we applauded the songs and the dances of the „young” and the „older” from Talmud Torah, „Lauder-Reut”, „Bim-Bam”, the performances of the choral and instrumental groups. Leaders of F.J.C.R. of the Jewish Community from Bucharest, B'nei B'rith, of the Association of the Romanian Jews Victims of the Holocaust, representatives of the authorities, of the religious cults, cultural personalities left no empty space in the three festive evenings. In all the communities the Purim was celebrated as it should be. The big communities organized enjoyable performances to the public. „And we are living!” is a conclusion – verse from „Purim, evening of Purim”, the traditional song of our holiday celebrations.

JCC BUCHAREST a space for Diversity

The Jewish Community Center Bucharest – JCC became through its activity during the last months a synergic space in the Jewish life from the capital. JCC represents the space dedicated to diversity, where

you can feel at home, no matter the age, the religiosity or the profession. The programs for the Purim and the Pessah that bring together children, young people and golden-age members, are prepared in detail by the center team. There are also new activities and projects, between them the project „Bereshit” is already a success. The salsa and martial arts courses, the English, Hebrew and Romanian lessons for the foreigners, are attractive too. The Center offers a bridge between generations that can find a proper interaction framework for the development of the community life.

The Jewish Community from Oradea and JCC ORADEA an exceptional partnership

The Jewish Community from Oradea and JCC Oradea collaborate in an exceptional manner in order to attract the Jews from Oradea, and other city habitants who are preoccupied by Jewish culture and civilization. Not only the warm community center, equipped at high standards, but even the synagogue life are more and more animated. The president of the community, Eng. Felix Koppelman spoke to us about two essential events in the community life, Purim and Pessah, celebrated in a festive space by all the generations together. On April 22nd the inauguration of the center is planned. The main donors for this aim, Etti and Claude Arnall from U.S.A. will be near the community they helped in the achievement of the first Community Center in the country.

„Meetings dedicated to the Jewish way of life“

Dr. Aurel Vainer, member of the Parliament and president of F.J.C.R., a honor guest at the International Symposium „The Art and Architecture of the Romanian Synagogues” (February 24th – 28th, 2008), organized by the Bar-Ilan University and the Romanian Cultural Institute from Tel Aviv, at the commemoration of the „Struma” victims at the Museum and Synagogue with the same name from Beer-Sheva, in visit at the Rabbinical Court from Buhusi, located in B'nei Brak, at the „Rav Zvi Guttman” Synagogue from Tel Aviv (March 12th -16th, 2008), shared his participant impressions to these academic

**Interview with
Dr. AUREL VAINER,
president of F.J.C.R.**

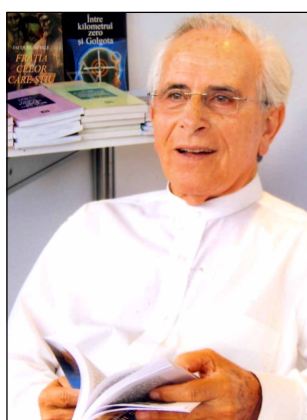
celebrations and remembering. He spoke about the photography exhibition, about the symposium and its final conclusions that underlined in the first place the need to continue the project „Synagogues in Romania”. He highly appreciated the planning and the organization of the commemoration from Beer-Sheva, as well as the visits at the Rabbinical Court from Buhusi and at the Synagogue „Rav Zvi Guttman”, the discussions with the spiritual leaders of these religious institutions. „There were meetings dedicated to the Jewish way of life”, he concluded.

Future projects of the Educational and Recreational Center from Cristian

The Educational and Recreational Center from Cristian represented on March 7th -9th an excellent environment that brought together representatives of the middle-aged generation from the Jewish communities from the country. The participants who belong to the busy age segment, with daily existential preoccupations, decided they must meet in order to

examine the future of their activities. Eng. Paul Schwartz, vice-president of F.J.C.R., prepared in detail the program of a week-end of debates, study, and the ladies, celebrated on March 8th, received a special attention. The program, organized with the support of Joint, was elaborated in collaboration with the director of the Joint programs for Romania, *Israel Sabag*.

THE AUDIO LIBRARY OF THE „JEWISH REALITY”



JEAN ASKENASY

„The neurosciences cannot be practiced without basic philosophical and general cultural knowledge”

A prestigious personality in the Israeli medical world, Professor Jean Askenasy spoke to our audio library about the memories he took with him in his memory luggage when he made Allyiah, about his neurological mythology; he evoked his teachers, as well as his friends from Romania. Recently he arrived in Romania to participate at the release of his last volume „The Sleep Enigmas” in the Aula of the Romanian Academy Library.

The Decrease of the Jewish Communities through Assimilation

A whole page of our review is dedicated to this subject: the influence of the emigration and of the assimilation on the evolution of the Jewish communities. Liviu Beris, the delegate of F.J.C.R. at the „Euro-Asia” Jewish Congress and at the Congress of the main Jewish organizations from U.S.A. presidents in Tbilisi, makes a synthesis of the Jews’ situation in Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In the same editorial space we are publishing a review of the volume „The Small Forces behind Tomorrow’s Big Changes”, by Mark Penn and Kinney Zalesne, dealing with the provocation of the integration in the American nation and the growing assimilation tendencies, for the American Jews.



The cultural Romanian mass media announced that Norman Manea, writer and laureate of several American and European prestigious prizes will arrive in Romania in the second half of April and he will be

distinguished with the „Doctor Honoris Causa” title of the Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca Universities. On the occasion our review dedicates three pages of opinions, quotations and others. Born in 1936, Norman Manea knew the deportation nightmare as a child. He wrote several prose volumes, and in 1986 emigrated after the restrictions imposed on him, by the communist regime. In 1987 he arrived in U.S.A. where he lived and continued to write in Romanian. He participated twice in Jerusalem Bookfair, to which he dedicated a beautiful poem, „Speaking to the Stone”. Philip Roth, Heinrich Boll, Octavio Paz, Orhan Pamuk expressed their admiration for Norman Manea’s work.

The retrospective Margareta Sterian in Timisoara – a homage to 60 years to the State of Israel

The Art Museum of Timisoara dedicated the year event to a retrospective of the work of Margareta Sterian. With the support of the Timis County Council the organizers wished the event will celebrate 60 years from the foundation of the State of Israel. Dr. Marcel Tolcea, director of the Art Museum in Timisoara, brought together media partners, sponsors, and representatives of the Israel Embassy and of F.J.C.R. Dr. Aurel Vainer, president of F.J.C.R. and a partner in the initiative, honored the press conference that anticipated the event, and the opening of the exhibition in the imposing halls of the Baroque Palace of Timisoara.

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