

Victoria Niculescu And Melania Leinweber



This is our house in Bucharest, in the Balta Alba quarter, in 1975. From right to left: my daughter, Victoria Niculescu (nee Leinweber) and my wife, Melania Leinweber (nee Reischer). Victoria, my only child, was born in 1949. She went to the kindergarten on Zamfirescu St. She loved to dance. She went to elementary school on Mantuleasa St. and to high school on Mosilor Ave. She chose the Transportation Faculty, where she was among the top ten students. Her final average was over 9, and she got a 10 at the graduation exam. She was assigned as an intern in Brasov, to prepare her graduation exam. They were glad to have her there and treated her with respect, but she wouldn't stay. So the minister of light industry talked to the minister of transportation and the latter ordered the research institute on Grivitei Ave. to hire her. I'm not saying those people were anti-Semites,

maybe they were just bad - in any case, they didn't want her there. She had to pass another exam: she was given a railroad station in Brasov and she had to establish the quality of the terrain, the goods and the passenger traffic in Brasov - an economical analysis. In college, she had got a 10 on a similar topic. [Ed. note: In the Romanian grades system, the highest grade is 10, while the minimum grade required not to fail is 5.] But those guys gave her an 8 because she didn't know how the goods containers were fixed. I told her: 'No matter how high your grades were in college, no matter how skillful and competent you are, you have to be better than a man. Remember this, in order to be accepted as a woman, you must prove extraordinary qualities, that aren't required from a man!' She became a head of department at the financial division - markets and prices analysis. When she was sick, the manager called her home to ask her what to do - the people there didn't know, they had all been taught by her. She was a real expert. She also had research contracts with the ministry. She was very friendly, she was a good organizer, she was competent and took her position seriously. She rebelled against injustice, she was very outspoken. After she got married [in the 1980's, to a Christian], her name became Niculescu. She died from a pancreatic cancer on 30th December 1993. She is buried at the Giurgiului [Jewish cemetery] in Bucharest. I have a grandson, Daniel Niculescu, aged 21. Melania was born in Roman, in 1926. She went to high school and became an accountant. It was with difficulty that managed to have a child - she miscarried several times. She spent three months and a half in bed when she gave birth. She worked as an accountant for the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party until she had the baby, and then she moved to a food store. When I was in high school [evening classes], she used to translate book fragments from Latin or French into Romanian. She had a good reputation, so the Ministry of Light Industry appointed her head of a millinery department. Then she moved to the knitwear and ready-made clothes department, where she was in charge with all the centers countrywide. Knitwear contracting was her responsibility - she had become an expert. She retired in 1981. Melania died in 1990.