

Stefania Rubinger With Her Mother And Sisters-In-Law



The photo was taken in Bucharest, in the 1960s, at my sister's house. From the left this is my mother, Estera Wechsler, my wife, Cheli Streja (nee Weisbuch), my sister-in-law, Lola Sebastian (nee Gottfried) and my sister, Stefania Rubinger (nee Wechsler). Estera Wechsler [nee Letzler], my mother, was born in 1888, in Ploiesti. My mother's culture was rather rich. She spoke foreign languages and she read literature in Romanian and in other languages too. She interrupted her studies and had to get married at an early age. My parents had three children: Stefania, Sebastian and me, Aristide Wechsler. Cheli Streja [nee Weisbuch], my wife, was born in 1927, in Braila, in a Jewish family. She was still very young when her family moved to Bucharest - she must have been 2-3 years old. She first went to a Romanian school. After being kicked out, she went to a Jewish high school, and then she attended a commerce school. She was a qualified accountant. After the war, as she was a high school graduate, she was hired by the State Commission for Planning, at the administrative department, which planned the supplies, administered the building and so on and so forth. My wife wasn't a Party member, she wasn't Romanian, and she had relatives abroad, in America and Israel, so they sacked her. [Ed. note: The people who had relatives abroad could have problems at work at any time.] She was hired again - she had several offers. She chose the Central Organization of the Textile Industry, which administered several factories. Lola Sebastian [nee Gottfried] came from a well-off family - her grandfather had a shoe store on Victoriei Ave. Back then, the shoes sold by the luxury stores on Victoriei Ave. had the name of the store imprinted on them. It was a famous store in Bucharest and her grandfather was very rich. He had a block of flats built at 36 C. A. Rosetti St. which is still there today. At the time, it was a very modern building, heated with terracotta stoves. He had three children and, when he died, they inherited these apartments. My brother and my sister-in-law emigrated to France around 1960 and settled in Paris. My brother was employed as an architect - he didn't have his own workshop. Thanks to his wife's entrepreneurial skills, they later opened a decorations and clocks store on a central street in Paris. Stefania Rubinger [nee Wechsler], my sister, was born in 1914, in Bucharest. Her story is hard to

tell. She was married when World War II came. Her husband, Rubinger, was a painter. They were relatively poor, but they married for love. They lived in Bucharest until the 1970's, when they emigrated to Germany. It was a time when Germany accepted German-speaking immigrants of German descent. He had been born in Cernauti and spoke German; my sister spoke German too. They settled in the town of Dusseldorf and stayed there. My sister now lives there by herself, as my brother-in-law died two years ago [in 2002]. He was run over by a car on a pedestrian crossing, at the age of 92. My sister is about 90 now. The two of them have two extraordinary children: Irina Rubinger and Adrian Rubinger. They both grew up in Bucharest. They currently live in Paris.