



Remembering Rădăuți

photographs by Laurence Salzman

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Looking through the photographs presented in Remembering Rădăuți brings back the memory of the people I knew when I lived there in the mid-seventies.

Fraulein Grün glass who asked with a twinkle in her eye, “do you know the meaning of life?” , Bubbi Thau who whenever he saw me called out: “der Schone Laurenz aus Florence,” and then laughed; Professor Jacob Kamiel who always said, “Puntlich, Puntlich, Laurenz,” “you must always be on time;” Rabbi Josif Tirnauer whose smile hid the pain and suffering of his deportation to Auschwitz and loss of his first family from Satu Mare; Mr Tessler who said, “Man müss Glück in der Arbeit haben,” “one must have luck in his work.” He was referring to his sentencing of 5 years by the Romanian communist to hard labor on the Danube Canal for some very minor infraction.

Recently I came across several boxes of 35mm Kodachrome and Ektachrome slides taken in and around Rădăuți from the time I lived there in the mid-seventies.

These color images seen for the first time in Remembering Rădăuți - a print on demand Blurb Book with a film of the same name, offer a different view of the place and its people than the more somber black and white photographs found in our Last Jews of Rădăuți book with its accompanying film Song of Rădăuți.

Color seems to mitigate the sadness and grayness of the black and white photographs and give another perspective to the place. The Jewish people I photographed in Rădăuți in the mid-seventies are all gone.

The last one, Dorin Frankel, who was about my age, died two years ago. He had kept me informed via e mails about the comings and goings of former Jewish residents of the town. In one dated 4/11/2009, he invited me to visit Rădăuți that summer to meet our mutual friend Isaac Kern who had bought a vacation house in nearby Suceavița . When I photographed in Rădăuți, I was a young man with a black bushy beard and a full head of hair. Now I am as old or older than the people I photographed back then. They live on like most departed people in the memories of their children and grandchildren. And, for me in the many photographs I made of them and their community during that short period of time in the mid-seventies when I had the good fortune to meet them and learn their life stories.

The stones in Rădăuți ‘s cemetery recalls all their familiar names. Yet, who will now have time to say a Kaddish for them between Rosh Ashana and Yom Kippur?

There is no more hearse with its Star of David to take the Last Jew of the town to its final resting place—that task was completed with the death of Dorin Frankel.

Laurence Salzman, 2022

The train left just before midnight from Bucuresti’s Gara de Nord train station. It arrived in Suceava the next morning. Rădăuți was still one hour further to the North.































































The Souvenir

The town where I was born, Radautz, in the country of Bukovina, threw me out when I was ten. On that day she forgot me, as if I had died, and I forgot her too. We were both satisfied with that.

Forty years later, all at once, she sent a souvenir. Like an unpleasant aunt whom you're supposed to love just because she is a blood relative. It was a new photograph, her latest winter portrait. A canopied wagon is waiting in the courtyard. The horse, turning its head, gazes affectionately at an elderly man who is busy closing some kind of gate. Ah, it's a funeral. There are just two members left in the Burial Society: the grave digger and the horse.

But it's a splendid funeral; all around in the strong wind, thousands of snowflakes are crowding, each one a crystal star with its own particular design. So there is still the same impulse to be special, still the same illusions. Since all snow-stars have just one pattern: six points, a star of David in fact. In a minute they will all start melting and turn into a mass of plain snow. In their midst my elderly town has prepared a grave for me, too.

Dan Pagis





