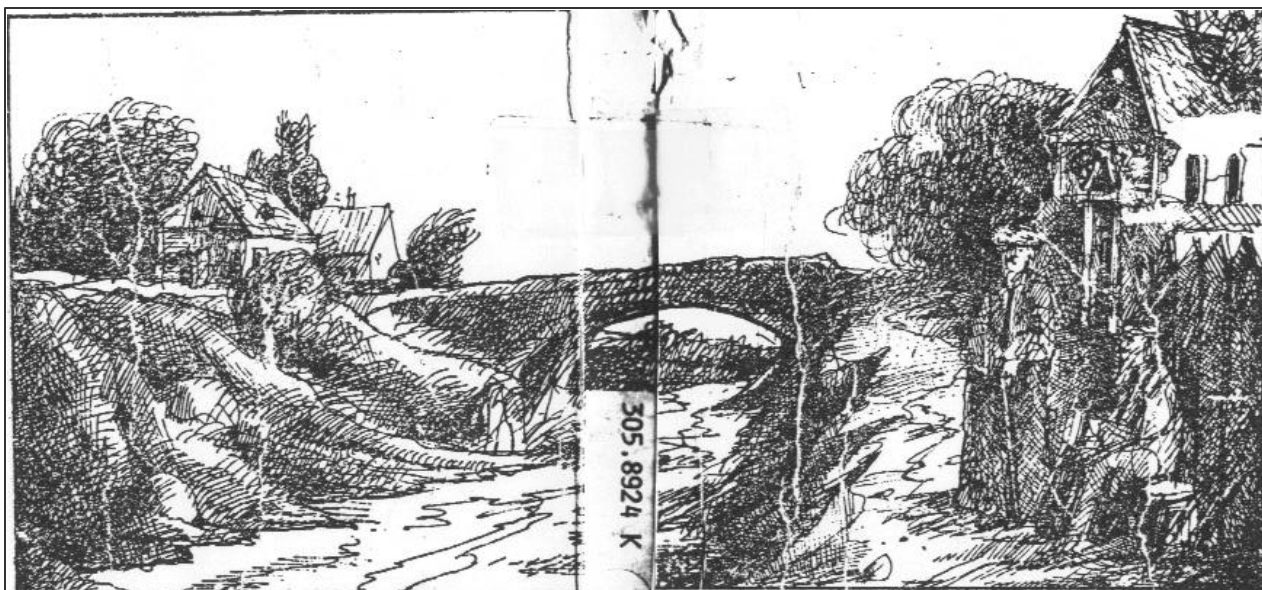


The Jewish Community in **PODU ILOAIEI**

Pages from the History of a Moldavian Shtetl

By Itzik Schwartz-Kara



English Edition

Translated, annotated and supplemented with additional material
by Nathan P. Abramowitz and associates.

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1 Preface by KM Elias, Aug/2006

Until five years ago I knew nothing about Podu Iloaiei, the Romanian town in which my great grandparents lived before coming to Canada in 1906. However my posting on JewishGen caught the attention of another JewishGener in NY, Catherine Richter. She later discovered a German book in the New York public library titled "Juden in Podu Iloaiei" (call# PXM 00-1458), which is the translation of an earlier Romanian book, titled "Obstea Evreiasca Din Podu Iloaiei" by Itic Svart Kara. I found the Romanian version in the central public library here in Toronto. (There are only about 30 books in the Romanian section and amongst them was this one, about a small Jewish shtetle in Moldavia. Imagine that!). Kara's book was originally published in Iasi in 1925 and republished in 1990 in Bucharest by Hasefer Publishing House.

The book contains a number of censuses, from which I gathered the following:

- ? The Jewish community dates back at least to the early 1800's.
- ? By 1898 there were 723 Jewish households in the town.
- ? In 1907 many left for America. (That year there were widespread anti-Jewish disturbances across Moldavia).
- ? By 1910 only 1,895 Jews remained, comprising 68% of the population.

To my amazement, the very first entry in the 1898 census was that of my great grandparents.

A few weeks later Catherine heard about another JewishGen member, Nat Abramowitz, who was working on a translation of the book. It turns out that Mr. Abramowitz (whose father came from Podu Iloaiei) had the book translated a few years earlier by a Romanian acquaintance.

Eventually through Nat and other sources on JewishGen, I learned a little about the author of the book. Itic Svart Kara was born in Podu Iloaiei circa 1906 and lived there until his twenties. He was a very educated man - he spoke some 7 languages and was well respected in the Romanian Academy of Sciences. He was considered the foremost authority on the history of Moldavian Jewry, having written dozens of books on a number of Yiddish Stetlach, one of them being Podu Iloaiei.

And to my surprise Mr. Kara, age 93, was still living in Iasi, near Podu Iloaiei. After writing a few letters that were not answered I called him in March 2001, but his poor hearing made communication impossible. A few weeks later a Romanian researcher interviewed Mr. Kara on my behalf and was able to obtain some more information on my family. He told me that Kara would have answered my letters had he not been confined to his apartment in a wheel chair, not being able to visit the post office to mail a letter. The researcher would not accept any payment for the service, explaining that he knew Mr. Kara for many years and it was a pleasure visiting with him and would not consider profiting from Kara's treasure of information!

At about the same time I came in contact with Toronto filmmaker, Simcha Jacobovici (Deadly Currents, The 12 Tribes, etc, etc), whose mother was born in Podu Iloaiei. It turns out that Simcha had been in Romania earlier that year doing work on a new documentary on the Struma and while there he interviewed Kara for a future project on the Jews of Romania.

A few weeks later we received some sad news from Romania that Mr. Kara had passed away on May 29, 2001, the 2nd day of Shavuot.

As it turns out Mr. Kara had a sister living here in Toronto and while visiting the Shiva house, I was shown the video of Simcha's interview with Mr. Kara. I was very surprised. Despite his age and frailty, Mr. Kara was still quite clear and lucid. So I felt quite bad that we were not able to communicate together on the phone a few months earlier.

And now back to the book on Podu Iloaiei... Having developed a very warm feeling for Mr. Kara, I wanted to see this book as well as his others published in English for everyone's benefit. Unfortunately the translation commissioned by Nat Abramowitz was difficult to read as Kara wrote in an academic style and referred to sources written in archaic Romanian which do not lend themselves to a literal translation.

So I persuaded Nat that we get the book translated over again. The plan was to make the book available on JewishGen as a free download, providing we could obtain permission from the original publishers in Romania. We hired a Romanian translator here in Toronto and Catherine did the editing. After working on this project for about a year the translation was completed in August 2002. Although Nat was very pleased to have it finished he was rather frustrated that permission from the publisher had still not been obtained. He made it very clear to me that the book should not be distributed to anyone unless the copyright issue is first resolved.

A few weeks later I received an email with some very sad news. Nat Abramowitz had passed away.

Recently Nat's wife Lucille contacted me, enquiring about the project. She was very surprised when told that the book had not yet made available to JewishGen because we did not have the publisher's permission. She was under the impression that permission had been obtained and a few days later she sent me a letter from Hasefer to that affect.

Now began the work of preparing the book for publication. My initial idea was to make it available as a PDF file on JewishGen, however I've since learned that the JewishGen standard is HTML. As such I've made a number of changes to the style in order to accommodate the JewishGen volunteers who have converted our MS Word document to HTML.

I have also made a number of additions and changes to the original book, which will be described in the next chapter.

I am most grateful to the following individuals who invested much time and effort in seeing this project through:

Nathan Abramowitz z"l	project sponser and organizer (see bio below)
Johanna Danciu	translation of Romanian
Dan Jumara	clarification of certain historical matters and Romanian words
Eugen Hriscu	translation of Romanian
Rosechelle Lipchitz	glossaries
Howard Markus	glossaries
Dana Melnic	translation of Romanian
Catherine Richter	Editor
Simcha Simchovitch ^[B-1]	translation of Yiddish poems

A number of books have been written about specific shtetlach in Eastern Europe. Most of these were written by Holocaust survivors and describe shtetl life during the first half of the 20th century.

This book is rather unusual in that it was written by a historian. It's an indepth study of the Jewish community and its origins. Kara uses original sources including government documents, court proceedings and census records from the 19th century.

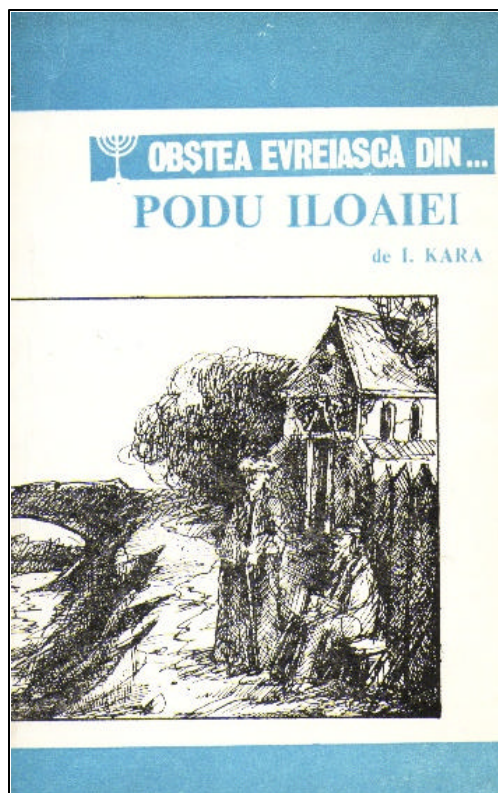
I hope that those with roots in Podu Iloaiei find delight in this book and that it will serve as an important resource for those studying the history of the Jewish communities of Moldavia.

KM Elias
Toronto, Canada
August, 2006

¹ [KME] Simcha Simchovitch is a well-known, Toronto-based Yiddish poet.

1.1 *Pictures of the Book*

1.1.1 Book Cover and Illustration of Bridge



The cover of the book bears an intriguing wood-cut drawing of a river with a small bridge. Standing nearby is an old Jew, beard and *shtramle*, together with a woman, presumably his wife, in front of what appears to be their home. This picture refers back to the very origins of Podu Iloaiei.

Kara tells us in the first chapter that “Podu Iloaiei” in Romanian means “Bridge of Iloaiei”. He explains that the town took its name from the local bridge that crosses the Bahlui River. According to tradition, the bridge was built by a Jewish women named Iloaia (meaning wife of Ilie), who lived in the area in the early 1800s. She supposedly built the bridge to connect the inn with the postal station on the other side of the Bahlui River. Presumably the picture depicts Ilie and his wife Iloaia in front of the inn beside the river. ^[B-2].

² [KME] This legend is fascinating to me in particular because there is a tradition in our family, the Ilies, that our ancestors were innkeepers in Podu Iloaiei. Perhaps we are descended from this Ilie and his wife Iloaia.

1.1.2 The First Page

HRONIC (1818-1968)

Toponimicul Podu Lelioaei, forma veche a actualului Podu Iloaiei, este mult mai vechi decât târgul, întemeiat în al doilea deceniu al veacului trecut. S-a stabilit chiar că o așezare fortificată a existat pe aici încă în sec. IX—XIV¹. Al. Graur presupune că numele locului ar proveni, în forma Podul Lelioaei, de la „soția unui Lalu, dar a fost înțeles ca Iloaia, soția unui Ile sau Ilie“².

Tradiția locală, încă vie la începutul veacului nostru, este reprodusă de C. Chiriță în 1888³: „Și-a luat numirea, se zice, de la podul făcut peste Bahlui de către o femeie evreică numită Iloaia, care, la începutul veacului trecut, viețuia în această localitate, unde nu se afla decât un han, construit la drumul mare, iar pe cealaltă parte, de-a stînga Bahluiului, erau cîteva bordeie pe locul unde staționa poșta veche. În interesul de a se putea lega mai bine comunicația între poșta și han, evreica Iloaia a construit un pod statornic peste apa Bahluiului, care și azi poartă numele ei...“⁴.

Podul exista însă cu mult înainte de veacul al XIX-lea. Un călător polonez relatează la 1700: „Poduleloi, pe riul Bahlui, peste care este aici un pod mic de zid. Sînt numai colibe mici“⁴. Nu este exclus ca podul să se fi stricat între timp. În 1653 „Vasilie Vodă încă ce au putut strînge oști, degrabă le-au luat și au ieșit înainte la Podul Lelioaei. Acolo lovindu-se oștile au biruit Gheorghe logofătul și au fugit Vasilie Vodă la cuscrul său Hmil, hatmanul cazac...“⁵. (E vorba de Bogdan Hmelnițki).

La începutul acestui veac era încă vie tradiția locală despre această luptă. Se afirma că soldații uciși ar fi fost îngropați pe dealul din fața bisericii. De copil căutam pe acolo comori rămase de la Vasile Lupu, dar fără prea

1.2 *In Memory of Itzik Schwartz-Kara (1906-2001)*

The following pictures were provided by Mr. Kara's sister, Chana Gelber.



Itzic Svartz-Kara and Family 1938

Clockwise: Itzic, Sister Basia, Golda, Ana, Brother Yosi,
Sister Miriam, Mother Ester, and First Wife Anna



Itzic Svartz-Kara 1975.
Wife Tzila on the left and,
Sister Golda on the right.



1.3 *In Memory of Nathan P. Abramowitz (1917-2002)*

Nathan, son of Max and Minna Abramowitz, was born and educated in N.Y. and later settled in Cherry Hill, N.J. He was an electrical engineer whose career included consulting, manufacturing and management services in United States as well as Europe.

Upon his retirement his endless curiosity and wanderlust, as well as his intelligence and good humor, led him to pursue his interest in genealogy. His interest in his grandfather's and father's hometown of Podu Iloaiei introduced him to Itzik Schwartz-Kara's book, "The Jewish Community in Podu Iloaiei".

Nathan had this book translated from Romanian to English to make it available to people interested in their Romanian-Jewish heritage and acquaint them with the detailed town history, community life, education, synagogues and rabbinate of Podu Iloaiei.

He is survived by his wife, Lucille, and two sons.

2 About the Aug/2006 Edition

A number of additions and changes are being introduced with this new edition of Kara's book.

2.1 Organization of Chapters

The arrangement of chapters has changed and new chapters have been added.

	Chapter	Old Chapter#	Comment
1	Preface by KM Elias, 2006		New
2	Modifications Appearing in this Edition, 2006		New
3	Preface by N. Abramowitz, 2002		New
4	Obituary for Itic-Svart Kara, 2001		New
5	Foreword by Dr. S. Cauffman, 1990	15	Formerly called "Afterword"
6	Introduction by I.Kara, 1990	1	
7	Chronicle (1818-1968)	2	
8	Economic Life	3	
9	Communal Life	4	
10	Private and Public Education	5	
11	Synagogues	6	
12	Rabbinate	7	
13	Hasidism	8	
14	Folklore and Ethnography	9	
15	Podu Iloaiei as Depicted in Literary Works	10	
16	Documentary Appendices	11	This edition does not include Appendix P, the 1898 census. Appendix P appears separately as a database in the JRI section of JewishGen. ???
17	At the Turn of the Century. Several Cumpulsory Additions	13	
18	I. Kara: History Studies. Selected Bibliography	14	
19	References	12	Formerly called "Notes" Now arranged by chapter.
20	Glossary of Terms		New
21	Glossary of Places		New
22	Glossary of People		New
23	Pictures	16	

2.2 *Footnotes*

In the Romanian edition of the book there's a chapter titled "Notes", which we are now calling "References". In this English edition the pointers in the body of the book appear in the format [A-1], [A-2], [A-3].

We've also added our own footnotes, indicated by the following prefixes:

? [Ed-Com] – these deal with words or concepts used in the book

? [KME] – these deal with the process of producing this book

In this English edition the pointers in the body of the book appear in the format [B-1], [B-2], [B-3].

2.3 *Glossaries*

During the course of editing this book, I've had a number of inquires from people with Podu Iloaie ancestry looking for information about their families. In a number of cases I've been able to find them pertinent information by doing keyword searches throughout the Word document.

As a result I came to realize the need for a glossary of people and places mentioned in the book. This will be very helpful for genealogists searching for specific names.

2.4 *Printing this Document*

This document was originally written as an MS Word Doc file and later converted to PDF format. It was also converted to HTML format for hosting at www.JewishGen.org.

Some people however may prefer reading a document of this size (over 100 pages) from a printed hardcopy rather than from the computer monitor. The PDF version is ideal for this purpose as it is more printer-friendly than HTML. To obtain a copy in PDF format, contact KM Elias.

3 Preface by Nathan Abramowitz, June/2002

Podu Iloaiei was the shtetl of my father and my ancestors. While doing family research, I came across and was able to obtain a copy of a book called *The Jewish Community in...Podu Iloaiei* by Itzik-Schwartz Kara. Originally published in Iasi in 1925, the book was republished in 1990 in Bucharest by Hasefer Publishing House. I received permission from Hasefer to publish an English language translation of the book.

The initial translation was done by Eugene Hriscu of Iasi, Romania. Although English is not his first language, I was amazed at the quality of his English translation from the original Romanian text. KM Elias of Toronto clarified the Hebrew and Yiddish expressions, and, with the assistance of Dana Melnic of Toronto, resolved some of the idiomatic questions that arose as the work progressed. Catherine Richter, a professional editor, did an excellent job of editing and preparing the translation for publication. It was truly an outstanding group of people, and I gratefully thank all involved – including my wife Lucile whose patience and understanding allowed me to devote a great deal of time to this project.

A note about Dr. Kara: I was directly in touch with him via Mr. Hriscu. He expressed delight about having the book translated into English and requested several copies to distribute among institutions and his colleagues. Unfortunately, Dr. Kara passed away in May 2001 at the age of 94. His obituary, as presented by Dr. Silviu Sanie, is reproduced at the end of the book^[B-3].

³ [KME] In this edition the obituary is printed at the beginning of the book on page 15.

4 Obituary for Itic-Svart Kara, May/2001

The following obituary was delivered by Prof. Dr. Silviu Sanie

The passing of Mr. Kara marks our separation from the representative of an elite generation that had among its last gone to join their ancestors from the Iasi community Dr. S. Kaufman and Prof. S. Friedenthal. It was a *heder* generation for which Yiddish was truly a maternal language. A generation for which life had prepared a road full of obstacles they were the actors and the witnesses of some great catastrophes for the Jewish community.

Itic Svart was born almost 95 years ago in Podu Iloaiei, in a large family where faith and customs were highly respected.

The Svart family gave three personalities to the Jewish culture – Simha, Iulian and Itic – a sculptor, a writer – actor and one who was to manifest interest in many fields.

I.Svart graduated from The Faculty of French Language, but has also been a professor of Yiddish language and he followed this second calling for a longer time and it brought him great satisfactions.

These are some of the Yiddishist's accomplishments:

In 1948, he published a Yiddish language grammar. Within the short period of time when Salom Alechem's language was allowed to affirm itself in schools, his work proved to be most useful.

As the literary secretary of the Jewish State Theatre of Iasi, he translated from several languages into Yiddish and worked hard to improve the quality of the Yiddish language spoken by the actors. He loved the theatre and this is maybe the only area where his brother Iulian had an advantage – he was also an actor.

However, Yiddish is the language of many of Mr. Kara's writings. Certainly, he could have said as Mircea Eliade did about the Romanian language that it is "the language of his dreams". In Cernauti, he found himself in the proximity of several poets like Itic Manger (who later came to Iasi) and Eliezer Steinberg, in the very core of the cultural life of the "small Vienna", in the period between the two WW. The writer brought to the public facts and events that he wrote about in the Yiddish papers in Vilna, Warsaw, New York, etc. He coordinated some volumes of the paper "Bucarester Shriftn". The prose writer wrote many stories, some of them with autobiographic content. He later gathered them in the 1976 printed volume "A Moldavis Ingl" ("A Boy from Moldavia") and, in 1987, "Iurn fon Hofmung" ("Hope Years").

The man who traveled the world all the way to the Soviet Far East where Svart became Kara, the French professor who also spoke Russian and English continued to be the same "Moldavis ingl", but accomplishing many. He received awards from the Israeli Yiddish specialists and FCER's "J. Pineles" award.

The man who started his journey from a *stetl* has also been a folklorist, carefully recording some of the things he felt would disappear together with the world that gave them birth. Proverbs, sayings, children's holiday wishings and many more.

He had a call for history. Like Jacob Psantir in the XIX-th century, I. Kara knew that he had to save for the history the documents and moments of the communities' lives; he also published different testimonies that some considered of minor importance, but he understood their significance. He permanently improved the method, the style as well as the critical apparatus of his works. His writings touched issues from the cultural and socio – economical life. Historiography will remember him as the author of the monographs on Bacau, Podu Iloaiei, that was also published in German by the great humanist E. R. Wiehn, and "Contributions to the History of the Jewish Community of Iasi". He published in museum and academic institutes' magazines.

He published, together with Dr. Stela Cheptea, "Medieval Hebrew Inscriptions (aprox. 300) in Iasi" which was awarded by the Romanian Academy. He was a bibliophile. A scholar.

An unostentatious believer, but possessing extensive knowledge from his childhood and adolescence years (as described in his books), Mr. Kara was one of the main counselors of the Iasi community. He discretely guided the cultural activities, he possessed the skill, the patience and the understanding needed to be a *malomad* and to prepare those who trained to put *tefilim*, he conducted the Seder on Pesach, etc.

He was at the same time one of the main men who attended the *sil*.

He could talk to people of all ages and professions. He also knew, together with the missed Mss. Tili, how to be a pleasant host.

He was a man with an ever strong will to gather knowledge, quickly to adapt to all kinds of situations and places – from Podu Iloaiei. Iasi and Cernauti to the Soviet Far East and Berlin, as a soldier, professor, literary secretary, librarian, community activist and, above all, a writer and a historian. A full life that spread over almost an entire century.

The man we are saying good – bye now to was a complex and important personality, a representative symbol of the Iasi community.

5 Foreword by Dr. S. Caufman, 1990

In the 1990 version of the book this section appeared at the back of the book as an “afterword”

As a good Moldavian Jew, and as the president of the Jewish community of Iasi, I have a special interest in the past, present, and future of the community of Iasi, without neglecting the other communities in the district and even those in the neighboring districts.

Since I was born and spent my childhood in a Moldavian “shtetl,” I am familiar with the way things used to be in those days of yore, in the Jewish borough, and I feel a part of the place, with its milieu, the concerns, the suffering and the joys, the strain and the victories of tens of thousands of Jews who lived in the towns and boroughs of Moldavia, its becoming a traditional, inextricable part of the Moldavian world, of the historic Moldavia.

As a matter of fact, the traditional culture in which I grew up and with which I have identified myself all through my life, and my interest for the life and culture of the Jewish population of Romania, make me totally capable of understanding and experiencing all that is depicted in I. Kara’s writings dedicated to his native borough, Podu Iloaiei, which is located only 21 kilometers from Iasi and in whose cemetery, unfortunately, many of the victims of the “death train” are buried.

Finally, the person who is writing these lines has one more advantage: He knows the author I. Kara, alias Itic Svart, very well, Ithac ben Avi who for more than two decades was a member of the community’s committee. Our relationship is not limited only to a long-lasting and close cooperation on the cultural and educational field. We are also familiar with his hard work and the results of his research in the field of the Jews’ history in Romania, studies that have been carried on for more than half a century. We also know about his permanent co-working with the Federation of the Jewish Communities of Romania. This is one more reason to expect the most from the present monograph, a one of a kind piece of work in the field of monographs on the small Jewish communities of Moldavia, written by a qualified historian, the author of more than a hundred works published since 1939 both in the country and in prestigious international magazines.

I first read I. Kara’s study as it was eight years ago, and I read it again with sympathy, curiosity, and exigency in its final form, and so I dare to make some observations.

The first chapter of this work is an incursion into the history of events of the Jewish community of Podu Iloaiei. The author has an open attitude when approaching the facts, placing them in the wider framework of the borough’s development, the life of all of its inhabitants, and the activity of the entire commune. Thus, it provides a clearer image of the reality in its diverse aspects, with all of its contradictions and concords.

Regarding the tragic events of the years 1941 to 1944, some of my own personal experiences confirm the author’s depictions.

The detailed presentation of the borough's economic life, based on novel, Hebrew sources, makes a chronological and synchronous analysis of the data at hand, confirming the general impression, that is not only mine, regarding the paramount role played by the Jewish population in the development of the town and the boroughs and even in the foundation of some of them.

In the chapter dedicated to the community life, the author resorted to considerable autobiographical data as well. This chapter is written more colorfully and sympathetically, with more emotional involvement, a style that the undersigned prefers to the author's sober tone that characterizes the other chapters. Reading the chapter on education, I felt a justified nostalgia. Fundamentally, many of the elements of the life and history of the Jewish community of Podu Iloaiei are common to most of the Moldavian towns in the 19th century and even in our century too, at least until 1940.

The chapter on folklore and ethnography was also quite meaningful to me. The author used to collect Yiddish folklore, ever since his high-school years, and has published it since 1933. He has pursued this "sin of the youth" until now. You do not have to be a historian to realize that the author has not used up all the available data in his monograph and that there is still money to be made in this field by future researchers.

I am particularly satisfied with the anthology of literary works dedicated to this town. The author offers translations of some Yiddish literary works. "The Rabbi of Podu Iloaiei" appeared in the volume *A Moldevish Inghl (A Boy from Moldavia)* by I. Kara, published in 1976 by Kriterion Publishing House in Bucharest. The great poet Itic Manger dedicated a wonderful ballad to this noble rabbinical figure. The anthology also includes a translation of the short story *Podu Iloaiei* by Simcha Schwartz (1900-1974), the author's older brother and a great playwright and famous sculptor recognized as such in France and Argentina. He is also the author of the delightful *Hotchpotch* and *Podeloier Times*, dated 1920. The funny character Dudl Consul was also portrayed in *A Boy from Moldova*.

I am sure that researchers will be very glad to find the numerous and substantial documentary appendices that include novel material gathered with much effort, meticulousness, and skill from archives and libraries. Qualified historians have made this last appreciation. How could I dare contradict them? Actually, this chapter is also written in a lively, fluent, convincing, and accessible style, without losing any of its strictly scientific value.

The Federation of the Jewish Communities should be praised for publishing this unique and highly valuable work. It can, of course, be improved upon and new material added, but it will surely set an example for others to write such valuable monographs for some of the country's other communities.

They will undoubtedly have the support of the communities and the Federation, which has published so many excellent historic works in the last years.

6 Introduction by I.Kara, 1990

While working on the essay "The History of the Jews in Romania until 1917" that was completed in 1976 and recently revised, I felt the need for such an incursion in the history of the Jewish community in my native borough. The first part, following the events until the year 1848, appeared in a short version in the Yiddish-written anthology "Bukarester sriftn", volumes I-VI (1978- 1983). The writing of a history of the Jewish population of Romania proved to be a difficult task considering the relatively limited amount of information that survived in the community archives, the insufficient material in the public and private archives, the small number of monographs dedicated to some communities and institutions, and the difficulties in consulting information, sources and studies.

Still, the historian Dr. M.A. Halevy has published in 1931 the monograph "The Jewish Communities of Iasi and Bucharest", volume I, (up to the year 1821), while "Iuliu Barasch History Society" supported (during 1886 - 1889) the elaboration of monographs of the Romanian Jewish communities. "The History the Ploiesti community "by Israel Sapira (1889) was the only one to be published; the monograph on the Bacau community by A.D. Birnberg remained in a draft form and I revised it in 1947; the monograph of the Botosani community by H. Ghinter could not be found.

In our century, there have been only several modest attempts to write monographs regarding our communities or some of their institutions. I mention here Nisim M. Derera's monograph (1906) and S. Semilian's (1931) regarding the Jews in Braila. The community in Craiova has been described in the works of Leon de Askenazi and M. Staureanu; short monographs were dedicated to the community in Roman by E. Schwarzfeld and I. Kaufman. Iosef Kaufman is the author of a two-volume work, "The Chronicle of The Jewish Communities of the Neamt District" (1928-1929), which includes a lot of valuable data and materials, but much insignificant detail as well. There are several incomplete monographs on the communities in Transylvania: Alba Iulia, Oradea, Timisoara signed by Dr. M. Eisler, E. Fleischer, Dr. I. Singer.

The articles that were once published by the press and even some of the articles that appeared in "The Magazine of the Mosaic Cult" have mainly a popularizing character; the original material that they sometimes bring can not replace the necessary scientifically-based monographs. The lack of information cannot be compensated even by the work of monumental proportions "Pinkas Hakehilot Romania", volume I (1970), volume II (1980) published by "Yad Vashem" Institute in Jerusalem or by the anthologies of occasional articles, memoirs, and memorial articles that appear in Israel and the U.S.A., in Hebrew, Yiddish, Romanian, English, German, Hungarian.

Putting together the comprehensive monographs regarding the Jewish communities that exist or existed in Romania between the two WWs remains an objective for historical research. For now, there are still to be collected materials and information from the people who spent their childhood in the towns and boroughs of the beginning of the century, as well as trying to find papers, documents, photos, objects that can prove useful

for the study of our history. The importance of these monographs has been repeatedly emphasized by a great personality as His Eminence Dr. Moses Rosen, Chief Rabbi of the Mosaic cult and the president of the Federation of the Romanian Jewish Communities.

It has been pointed out that the monograph of a certain community, no matter how small it is, clarifies some aspects of the life of other similar communities. In fact, most of the events, situations, structures, activities, and mentalities were almost the same within the small communities in Moldova. The study of one community could end up in the drawing of conclusions that remain valid for other communities as well.

Several annexes were added to the present text, presenting in extenso original sources, many of them unpublished before, together with an anthology of the literary works that depict the life of this modest Moldavian borough. Several photos and illustrations have also been added.

I express my gratitude to the Iasi and Bucharest State Archives, The Library of the Romanian Academy, The Library of the "Al. I. Cuza" University, Iasi, the library and the archives of the Federation of the Romanian Jewish Communities (FRJC) as well as to all the people who supplied me with materials and information, thus contributing to the writing of this monograph.

I want to thank especially the FRJC and His Eminence Dr. Moses Rosen who showed a special interest in the publishing of this work.

The Author

7 Chronicle (1818-1968)

The place-name Podu Lelioaiei—the old form of today’s Podu Iloaiei—is much older than the borough itself, which was founded in the second decade of the 19th century. In fact, a fortified settlement existed there from the 9th to 14th century.^[A-1] According to Alexandru Graur, the name Podu Lelioaiei is probably derived from the “name of the wife of someone called Lalu, who was known as Iloaia, the wife of someone called Ile or Ilie.”^[A-2]

In 1883, C. Chirita depicted the local tradition that was still alive at the beginning of the 20th century: “It is said that [Podu Lelioaiei] took its name from the bridge that crosses the Bahlui River. The bridge was built by a Jewish woman named Iloaia, who lived in Podu Lelioaiei at the beginning of the 19th century. There was an inn, and on the other side of the river, the left side, there were several cottages where the old post-carriage station had been. Wanting to link the inn with the postal route, the Jewish woman Iloaia built a permanent bridge over the waters of the Bahlui River. The bridge still bears her name today.”^[A-3]

Actually, a bridge existed there long before the 19th century. In 1700, a Polish traveler related: “In Poduleloi, on the shore of the Bahlui River over which there is a small brick bridge, there are only small cottages.”^[A-4] It is possible that the old bridge was destroyed in the meantime. In 1653, “Ruler Vasilie and his army, which he had gathered in a hurry, camped at Podul Lelioaiei. The battle was fought there, and Gheorghe the chancellor won. Vasilie then fled to his father-in-law Hmil, the Cossack ruler.”^[A-5] (Hmil is Bogdan Chmelnitzki [1593-1657])

At the beginning of the 20th century, this battle was still mentioned in the local stories. It was told that the dead soldiers had been buried under the hill in front of the church. I remember myself as a child searching for buried treasures from the time of Vasile Lupu, but without much success. Some used to say that they found helmets, weapons, mail, skeletons, and other objects, while digging.

On June 10, 1655, Gheorghe Stefan, the ruler of Moldova, sent a letter from Podu Iloaiei to Gheorghe Rakoczi II, the ruler of Transylvania. Miron Costin related that Gheorghe Stefan’s carts were robbed at Podu Iloaiei in 1655.^[A-6]

In 1664, 1665, and 1673, the village of Podu Lelioae was mentioned.^[A-7] A Dowry Act from January 15, 1664 stated: “my part of land from Podul-ii-leloe, which will be taken from that shared with my brothers ... and a neighbor Ilia and his sons, who live in Podul-ii-leloe.”^[A-8]

Neculce’s chronicle mentioned that under the rule of Constantin Cantemir (1685-1692) “troops of mercenaries were camped at Podu Iloae.”^[A-9] ^[A-10] In 1700, a Polish traveler found here “only a few cottages and a shortage of food and fodder. We spent the night outside in the cold.”^[A-11] After 1703, Mihai Racovita kept guards in Podu Iloaiei.^[A-12]

The Swedish officer Weissmantel (1709-1714) mentioned the stone bridge in Podu Iloaiei.^[A-13] The settlement was also mentioned in 1715.^[A-14] Manuscript No. 1846 of the Iasi State Archives contains calculations for the income of the bar in Podu Iloaiei for the years 1800 to 1806.

As mentioned in the *Great Geographic Dictionary*, in 1810 “a certain number of Jews requested permission from the owner of the Totoesti estate to settle here and raise a borough. In 1818, as stipulated in ruler Calimah’s document, the borough was founded near the bridge, taking the name Podul Iloaiei. Because the borough was located where the borders of several estates intersected, each owner granted permission for the foundation of a town on their property.”^[A-15]

This favorable geographic position — on the route from Iasi to Targu Frumos — explains why the founders of the town chose it, of course, at the invitation of the owner of the Totoesti estate. But how did some Polish Jews learn about the intentions of the Moldavian landlord? The borough was established at the confluence of the rivers Bahlui and Bahluiet.^[A-16-A]

The founding of the borough of Podu Iloaiei was not an isolated event, but rather a part of a larger process of establishing new settlements. At the end of the 18th century and during the first half of the 19th century, 61 such settlements were established in Moldova, which at that time was of significant economic and social importance. “These small, semi-urban settlements promoted the most dynamic forms of socioeconomic life. Each settlement developed and enhanced the connection between the village and the city, their presence reviving the entire region. Economically, they were centers where raw materials were collected, and products were manufactured from these regional materials. They were also markets for products produced in the cities and abroad.”^[A-16-B]

The updated chronicle of the borough of Vladeni (later named Mihaileni) from November 16, 1826 stated in paragraph six that “the tax for selling spirits will be cashed by the owner of the estate as decided by the 1816 act issued for the borough of Podu Lelioaia and the 1823 act issued for the borough located on the Scobalteni estate.”^[A-17] If no mistake was made by the clerk, the preceding statement refers to the agreement between the future inhabitants of the borough and the owner of the estate, since the oldest document known to refer to our town is the one from 1816 (see Appendix A). In a letter to C. Palade, the owner of the estate, it was mentioned that the inn at Podu Iloaiei must be rebuilt.^[A-18]

The act issued in 1818 by Scarlat Callimachi to the landlord C. Palade, regarding the establishment of the borough of Podu Iloaiei on the Totoesti estate that was owned by the latter, was not upheld. However in 1823, Stefan Roset, the guardian of Palade’s estates after his death, managed to obtain from Ionita Sandu Sturza the renewal of the first act. It seemed that, owing to the current events, the settlement developed very slowly since it was not mentioned in the 1820 census. However, because the census was of a fiscal nature regarding taxes, the “absence” of the inhabitants of the new settlement could be explained by the tax exemption that was applied for several years, as was the case for other new settlements.^[A-19] On May 25, 1823, the former first court official, Serban Negel who had been loyal to Ionita Sandu Sturza during the difficult first years of his rule, also

obtained an act for the founding of a borough near Podu Iloaiei. Subsequently, the two settlements formed a single administrative entity.

On March 21, 1821, the villagers of Scobalteni were worried about the “carts and chariots that passed by Podu Iloaiei and up hill.”^[A-20] In fact, Beldiman wrote in *Tragodia*: “The road to Podul Iloaiei going up the hill / For the woods were close and the town defended still.”

The activities of the Eterists^[B-4] diminished the population of the developing borough of Podu Iloaiei. In 1822, Gheorghe Sion came to the Moldavian districts to appoint new chiefs of the administration. “All of the remaining inhabitants of Podu Iloaiei came to greet us here, where at that time there was only a post office, a tavern, and General Constantin Palade’s great inn, then unplastered. And from among all the townspeople we met, we have chosen Constantin Drosul, who has little knowledge of reading and writing, and Neculai Mantu, the administrator of the Braesti estate, to administrate the Carligatura district.”^[A-21] The 1818 act that was renewed on July 25, 1823 and issued for “Podul-Leloea” on the estate of the deceased general C. Palade reestablished the 16 paragraphs of the agreement between the landlord and the future townspeople:

- 1) The tax on the sale of spirits “in all the town’s streets and suburbs” will be 40 parale per measure^[B-5]. Any smuggled alcohol will be confiscated and a fee will be paid.
- 2) The tax for wine is 30 parale. The wine will be measured on the outskirts of the borough by the administrator of the estate. The same rules apply for smuggling as above.
- 3) The tax for fuel oil and axle ointment is 10 parale per measure. The same rules as above apply for smuggling.
- 4) Jews who own a butchery will pay the landlord 2 parale per lamb, 4 parale per sheep, 6 parale per calf, 10 parale per weanling or young bull, 20 parale per cow, and 30 parale per ox.
- 5) Jews are allowed to bake their own bread and pretzels for home use only.
- 6) Candles made for personal use are tax-free. A tax will be paid for selling them.
- 7) Each person may keep up to three cows in the grazing field tax-free.
- 8) The sale of hay and barley is tax-free.
- 9) An annual tax for place of residence or shop will be paid: 2 lei per length measure^[B-6]; the depth will be 18 measures long; with the agreement of the owner who has the first right to buy if the house should be for sale.
- 10) Homemade beer and hydromel can be sold tax-free; industrial production requires the owner’s accord.
- 11) Two synagogues, two slaughter houses^[B-7] “near the school” and the cemetery are exempt from taxation.

⁴ [Ed-Com] The Eteria movement fought for the independence of Greece.

⁵ [Ed-Com] A measure is 10 liters.

⁶ [Ed-Com] A length measure is between 1.96 and 2.23 meters.

⁷ [Ed-Com] ??? The word “hahami” is used here for ritual slaughter. It’s from the Hebrew word “chachma”. The “shochet”, Hebrew for ritual slaughterer, is usually a rabbi or one who is well versed in the laws of ritual slaughter.

- 12) The day of the fair or the marketplace will be established on the developing main street that passes by the inn all the way to the main road.
- 13) Anyone may display his merchandise in front of his house; if done at the corner of the street or in the center of town, a tax must be paid to the owner.
- 14) A tax is also paid for an orchard, garden, or vineyard.
- 15) The owner's agreement is necessary for the construction of a factory.
- 16) If one does not build a home within a year of signing this contract, one loses the right to build one.^[A-22]

The conditions imposed by Serban Negel for the founding of a borough on his estate Scobalteni were tougher and did not stimulate the borough's development. He asked 24 bani for each adult cattle slaughtered. The landlord had the right to build houses and stores without paying the tax, which was 10% of the rent for the rest of the townspeople. The right to sell spirits, fuel oil, bread, and meat, and the tax for weighing was cashed by the landlord exclusively. He also had a right for tax exemption for 30 men, whom he would bring from abroad "to maintain the security of the town."

The landlord also appointed the mayor of the town and the masters of the trade and manufacturing associations. The tradesmen from abroad were tax exempt for five years. Monday was fair day, and there would be eight more annual fairs. The inhabitants of Scobalteni and Podu Iloaiei could freely visit each other on the fair days.^[A-23] But success did not come as expected, and Negel gave the Jews of Podu Iloaiei a lot of trouble.^[A-24] Not until June 17, 1824, did 10 Jews manage to sign a more favorable settlement contract with Negel, although it contained "architectural" terms.^[A-25] They had to pay a 4 lei tax per length measure for a 10 measure house. The houses had to be built one next to the other with board or shingle roofs, and with a space between them for the street. The selling of the houses had to have the accord of the landlord, and he had the right to make the first offer. The stores could not sell bread or wine to the Christians. Kosher meat could only be sold with the landlord's agreement. Jewish taverns could only host Jewish patrons. The 10 Jews could not resort to their rights as Sudits if they had a conflict with the landlord. Anyone who did not build a house within a year lost the right to settle. Each inhabitant of the borough had the right to free grazing for up to four cattle; a tax was collected for more cattle. The cemetery (50 square measures), the synagogue (25 square measures), and the public bath (15 square measures) were tax-free.^[A-26]

The population was made up of Moldavians, Jews, Lippovans, Armenians, Greeks, and Gypsies. The 1824 census mentioned 4 Jewish Sudits (See Appendix B). The Sudits were "foreign citizens or natives who enjoyed foreign protection while living on Romanian territory, as stipulated by the terms of the treaties signed by the Western powers and the Turkish Empire."^[A-27] Sura Herscovici was born in this town in 1826; she died in January 1935 at the age of 109.^[A-28] On March 24, 1826, Iaakov, son of Smuel, sold a piece of land to the Lippovan Iacov, for which he had "a property document issued at the establishment of the borough" (see Appendix C). A receipt, issued in Scobalteni and dated April 18, 1828, was given to a small nobleman for 172 lei of merchandise that he purchased here from Haim and Itic.^[A-29] The year 1827 was a dry one, and the occupation armies ate the few cereals that were left.^[A-30]

According to information that I received in 1935 from the shochet Burah Svart, in 1828 there was a Chevra Kadisha, a burial society that was also functioning as a social assistance service for the poor. The register was lost during World War I.

In 1839, the foreign affairs minister Neculai Canta bought the estate and borough of Scobalteni for 200,000 lei from the guardians of the property of the deceased village chief Negel.^[A-31]

In 1982, the Jewish cemetery in Podu Iloaiei still had some gravestones from 1829 and 1830. One of them was for Haim sin Meer, who died on 1 Adar 5589 (Wednesday February 18, 1829); another one belonged to Avram sin Moise, and was dated June 1829; a third certified that Iehuda ben Iaakov died on July 28, 1829. The gravestones of Efraim — son of Iehuda Leib from Tismenita — and Haim Moise sin Hers are dated 1830.^[A-32]

A contract from 1830 offers information about the income of the owner of the borough. It stipulated an agreement for leasing the borough to Moise Juster and Herscu a Mendeloai for 12,000 lei per year.^[A-33] The inn had to be properly maintained and returned in good condition. The landlord, at the recommendation of the tenants, appointed the captain of the borough. The military were allowed to keep their “feeding lands,” but had to pay tax on them. The landlord’s Gypsies also had to pay “the tax of the land.” The borough’s cattle could graze for free on the grazing field. The tenants received ten measures of land^[B-8], a place for a garden, and the right to use the waters from the Bahlui Mill upstream. They were also granted tax-free milling of 10 measures of wheat and corn. The garbage from the inn had to be deposited outside of the borough. All the buildings that were to be built remained in the possession of the landlord for three years after the termination of the contract. In 1831, Palade demanded the cancellation of the contract because Jews were not allowed to have “possessions.” Herscu refused to return the advance payment of 6,000 lei. In fact, both the Jewish and Christian inhabitants of the borough were against Herscu, who was a dishonest tenant (see Appendix D).^[A-34]

During the first years, the founders of the town were also the leaders of the Jewish community. Aspects of the modest day-to-day life are depicted in *The Official Paper of the Moldavian Principality*. In 1832, there was a lawsuit between Leiba “Rozil” and the townspeople “for refusing to pay the required taxes.” Rozil was, of course, the tenant of the borough’s income. That same year, another lawsuit was recorded between the Jews Richter and Barbalata, who had a dispute over “an iron hoop.” A beautifully trimmed “matseva” in the style of the Jewish stone carvers was found at the grave of a Dov ben Samuel, who died in 1831.

It is noteworthy that the administration system of the town involved clerks, who were appointed by the owner of the estate, and thus defended the owner’s interests. The first “captain of the borough of Poduleloaiei” was Manolache, who issued a register for the alcohol trade on May 11, 1828.^[A-35] Another captain, Tudorache Popovici, was dismissed by the tenant Herscu Juster, who then took over as captain. The divan, however, reinstated Tudorache in his former function.^[A-36] The activity and abuses committed by the town’s captain will be discussed in more detail later on.

⁸ [Ed-Com] Measure refers to a falca which equals 14,322 square miles.

The Organic Rule mentioned the cancellation of the tax system that had been applied to the Jewish population based on the tax on kosher meat. This tax served primarily to pay the rabbi, the shochet, and the rest of the community's clerks, as well as to cover the needs of the school, Talmud Torah, the asylum, hekdesch, etc. In the 18th century, the treasury noticed that its weak tax collecting system was not efficient with the Jews and decided to impose a common tax on the community. The leaders of the "Jewish guild" arranged the total amount of the tax with the treasury, and included the tax in the community's budget.^[A-37] In 1831, the treasury tried to collect the taxes directly from each Jew, as stipulated by the Organic Rule, but "the trial proved that only the old system could efficiently collect the taxes from the Jews"^[A-38] (see Appendix F).

The system of foreign protection for Sudits offered an advantage against abusive clerks. Here is a typical case from 1833: Iosef Coter, Moise Barbalata, Grinbaum, and Iancu Amoki, who would lease from the landowner the town's income in 1836, were arrested, beaten, and taken to Targu Frumos under the suspicion of insulting the subprefect of Carligatura County. The Prussian consul explained to the Russian general Mitcovici, who was president of Moldova's divan, that these men were Prussian subjects and asked for their release. On December 23, 1833, the French consul intervened in favor of the French subject Iosef Coter. The State's Secretary showed that the arrested men were born in this country and had their homes in Podu Iloaiei.

The tombstone of Slomo Iosef Leib - son of David, who died in Iasi in 1834, still exists today. The year 1835 was inscribed on the tombstone of Manili, the daughter of Mose Mirkis from Iasi, who was buried in Podu Iloaiei.^[A-39] On February 12, 1853, "the assembly of the Jewish community from the boroughs of Podulelioiaia and Scobalteni in Carligatura county" complained to the treasury that "not only had they endured poverty and lack of bread," but they also could not pay the Sudits' taxes. So they made up a common tax, which they offered for leasing. Some of the leaders who were Sudits railed against this tax. After voting, 32 Jews were for the tax and 36 Sudits and tenants were against it.

In 1835, 134 new households were built in Podu Iloaiei.^[A-40] In 1835 and 1836, Moscul Barlacu and Iancu Mikioaia leased the town's income. Subsequently, they had disputes with Tudorache Radovici, the owner's head man. The conflict ended in 1846.^[A-41]

The inhabitants of the town complained about the Jewish land administrator and obtained his dismissal on the grounds that he had no right to lease.^[A-42]

We do not know the nature of the transaction that led to a lawsuit between Grigore Peris and several townspeople from Podu Iloaiei.^[A-43] A conflict between Gavrilas, the administrator of the royal vineyards, and Froim seemed to build between 1835 and 1836. The same Gavrilas, no doubt the captain of the town, ordered his men to beat up a certain Jew named Solomon. Iancu Belcester, likely the chief of the local Jewish community, went with several tradesmen to demand an explanation from Gavrilas. Gavrilas accused them of coming to beat him up (see Appendix C).^[A-44] It is possible that the conflict with

Herscu a Mendeloaie^[B-9], the administrator of the town's income, caused the disputes.^[A-45]

Because of the town's position on the main road, the central authorities were particularly concerned about its status. Thus in 1837, the bridge "on the road of the stagecoach" was repaired; its maintenance cost 3,279 lei.^[A-46] In 1836, "all the Jews, locals, and Sudits" from the borough of Podu Iloaiei gathered to argue that some of those registered in the census were here only for short periods of time, had fled elsewhere or died, or had paid 4 galbeni as tax and the town pays for them. Some of those who did not pay the taxes were beaten and carried barefoot through the town. They asked for lower taxes and the right to implement their own taxes. The proposal was signed by Moise Berlescu, Solomon sin Herscu, Iosef Coter, Iancu from Targu Frumos, David Casap, Marcu Leizer Casap, Simha from Targu Frumos, and Solomon Richter. A three-year contract was signed with the collective tax collector for 5,200 lei per year.

The economic development of the borough was hindered by the 1823 act that was issued for the Scobalteni estate. On November 28, 1838, a new contract was signed with the new owner, Neculai Canta. Taxes for the sale of spirits and fuel oil were established. The tax was increased to 3 lei and 72 parale for each stanjen of a household 10 stanjeni long. The houses were to be built one next to the other and covered with board or shingle. The sale of meat, bread, and candles, the barbershop, kitchen, and scales were to remain the property of the owner. The church, cemetery, school, and public bath were tax exempt. A free grazing place was given for 90 cattle. According to the agreement, Toma Gavrilovici, Izrail sin Isar, and Avram Leiba had to pay the owner 37,350 lei (see Appendix H). The reinforcement act was dated May 2, 1839. On July 5, 1839, the captain of the town sent the list with those who were guarantors for the Jews: the community chief Moscu Berl and the Christian Gheorghe sin Vasile Velciul. The Armenian and Lippovan guilds also asked to have the right to appoint a community chief and to have an overall community tax as stipulated in a document found at the Iasi branch of the State Archives ^[B-10].

The economic life of the town followed its "usual" course. In 1839, Herscu called I. Ponici to trial for a debt of 100 galbeni.^{[A-47] [A-48]} The year 1840 was marked on the beautifully carved tombstone of the elder Eliahu ben Dov Ber. That same year, the poet Costache Conachi bought from the fair several Gypsy workers: carvers, shoe and boot makers, and beer makers.^[A-49] The Austrian agency appointed a guardian to manage the estate of Iosup sin Lupu Casapu, an Austrian subject.^[A-50]

The value of all the shops in the borough in 1841 was 80 galbeni, 4,000 lei.^[A-51] A property document for one of the town's buildings was dated the same year (see Appendix I).

The conflicts with the tenant of the town's income seemed never-ending. In 1841, 19 of the townspeople complained about Herscu Lesner, who had lent them money and grain in 1832 but was now being accused of forging the accounts.^[A-52] To prove his innocence, the tenant obtained testimony from several other inhabitants that the leasing of the town's

⁹ [Ed-Com] Herscu a Mendeloaie = Herscu son of Mendel's sister.

¹⁰ [Ed-Com] 1759, opis 2008, file 30, f. 30, 35

income had been done correctly.^[A-53] But the leasing partners were in conflict once again in 1842. Moise from Berlesti and Iancu Macioaiei argued that Tudorache, their partner, erected buildings using the employees and materials of the association. Owing to his carelessness, the wheat harvest was ruined. They also brought Christian witnesses.^[A-54]

The leasing act was published in *Bulletin, Official Paper* and in *The Rural Paper*. In 1841, the townspeople regained the right to appoint the town's captain and to organize three seven-day fairs each year. The act was reconfirmed in 1848. A list of tradesmen from 1842 included 91 Christians, living mostly in the suburbs, and 66 Jews (see Appendix J). Here is an anecdote that is representative of the town's customs: Reiza Iosupovici, the wife of the runaway Samsa who had unpaid debts, asked the Justice for her dowry list to be given first priority.^[A-55]

The town's food supply was leased in 1844, and the following prices were established: 16 parale for an oca of bread, 26 parale for beef, 24 parale for lamb, and 3 lei, 16 parale for an oca of candles.^[A-56]

The trade papers, house selling acts, and other transactions that were done among the Jews had to be confirmed by the rabbi and then in court. In 1845, the rabbi Mose from Podu Iloaiei confirmed an act for the sale of a house for 1,676 lei (see Appendix K).

The privileges of the Sudits were decreasing. Many of them gave up their allegiance to the foreign power, as was the case for Leib Ihil and his wife Susie Hatul (Etl?) from Podu Iloaiei.^[A-57] The Austrian agency dealt with the sale of the properties of the deceased Elias Berkenthal. Rabbi Mose confirmed that act in 1845. As guardians of Iosup's orphans, the same rabbi and Marcu sin Pascal sold an inn in town to the shochet Herscu Strulovici for 6,000 lei.^[A-58]

In the beginning, a captain appointed by the landlord administered the town. Later on, the captain was appointed by the Treasury and was paid from the town's taxes. In 1841, the landlord-appointed captain received 100 lei per month, while the captain in Mihaileni was paid 200 lei and the captains in Stefanesti and Lespezi were paid 150 lei each.^[A-59] The captain often abused his authority. In 1843, the Christian inhabitants of the town complained about the captain, "the man of the police," because he was enforcing hard punishments for small offences. Therefore, they asked for an inquiry.^[A-60] Another request to appoint someone to replace this Tudorache Radovici was made on May 24, 1844 by "the community of Christians and Jews in the borough of Podu Lelioaiei." Several Christians and Jews signed the petition (see Appendix O). They brought testimonies from four Lippovans, three Romanians, and five Jews, who maintained that Tudorache was persecuting the bartender Toader Bamaruca, an honest man.^[A-61]

The new administrative code stipulated for Podu Iloaiei one captain and two foot soldiers paid by the State.^[A-62] The position of captain lasted until 1864, when a radical change took place in the administration system of small towns. But in 1846, the captain supervised the sale of bread and candles in the town.^[A-63] In the same year, the tax collectors complained that they were not given enough kosher meat, and asked for the tax to be raised to 6 parale per oca like in Targu Frumos.^[A-64] This complaint was repeated in 1847, but since the administration felt that there were not enough Christians living in

town to buy the non-kosher meat, the town was not granted the right to have more cattle. ^[A-65] At this time, the leader of the Jews was Alter sin Strule.

An act of “everlasting property” was issued by N. Cantacuzino, the owner of the town, to Moise Itic for a place of 6 x 20 stanjeni on which Moise amongst others had shops and for which he paid tax and other contributions. ^[A-66] A similar act was issued to the Lippovan Stefan for a place of 2 x 16 stanjeni, on which he had shops. At that time the economic life of the borough was very much dependent on the days of the weekly fair.

We have no information on how the revolution of 1848 influenced the life of the town; however, we learned about the many victims of the cholera epidemic, most of who were poor.

In 1851, the tax that covered the needs of the community was 20 parale for each oca of beef.

The value of the buildings in town increased as the town developed. In 1852, Mendel Cat received 4,000 lei from Zamvel sin Bercu for a 2 x 15 stanjeni street shop located close to the bridge. .

The Cernauti-Botosani-Iasi road passed through Podu Iloaiei, while the salt road passed through Scheia and Targu Frumos. The work on the Iasi-Podu Iloaiei road was still in progress in 1854, and in 1860. Podu Iloaiei was mentioned in a list of towns inhabited by more than 100 families. In 1855, the price of regular bread was 24 parale for an oca. In 1856, an oca of good bread was 1 lei, an oca of meat was 1 lei and 8 parale, and an oca of candles was 4 lei, 12 parale. The semi-urban character of the town was becoming more and more apparent.

During the Russian occupation, grain was requisitioned from the population. Strul Avram Ringhelescu asked that the requisitioned goods be paid back. During that year, the consular privileges were still in place. The Austrian subject Samson sin Naftule obtained, with the support of the consulate, full rights over the property of his deceased brother Moise Itic, a Moldavian subject.

The tax was leased in 1858 to Aga Vasile Bosie. In 1859, the tenant was Copil Dulberger, who paid 27,500 lei per year. That year, several places in the proximity of the church and close to the grazing place were sold. In 1858, Haim sin Herscu, the delegate of the Great Synagogue, sold for 100 galbeni several houses that had been donated by Huda, the daughter of Hers.

In 1862, the community appeared to be well established. For example, “the representatives of the Jewish community” Herscu sin Moisa, Iancu Popescu (from Popesti), and Alter Strul confirmed the death of David sin Lupu, a third-degree tradesman; the death certificate was made official with an oval stamp that read: “The United Principalities. The Commission of the Borough Podul Iloaiei, 1859.”

On the front of the Great Synagogue (which was seriously damaged between 1941 and 1945, and demolished in 1967) was inscribed the date of its inauguration: 5622^[B-11],

¹¹ [Ed-Com] 5622 on the Jewish calendar which starts from Creation

corresponding to 1862. In 1865, they were still working on the road that passed through the town. During the same year, Mihail Kuhirsky opened a pharmacy. ^[A-67] Several letters published by K. Lippe in the Jewish magazine *Libanon* (April 1, 1868, No. 205) from Paris described the good relations between the Jews and the Christians living in the town, but also mentioned that the new policeman persecuted the Jews, shutting down their shops and forbidding them to wear their traditional clothing.

When civil status documents were introduced, the Jews began to register their newborn children at the town hall. One birth certificate from 1869 was signed by Lupu sin Herscu, a 36-year-old fiddler, and by Avram Marcusor, a tradesman. Vasile Petrovici, president of the ad-interim commission, was in charge of the “Civil Status Office.” In 1870, the town hall leased to Isac Vecsler the right to collect taxes from the butcher shops in town. ^[A-68]

The Topographical Dictionary by Frunzescu (Bucharest, 1872) mentioned that 2,715 people were living in the borough of Podu Iloaiei, where the offices of the subprefecture, a telegraph, and a railway station were located. It also noted that the place was famous for “its huge, delicious melons.” In 1873, the Jewish physician Ancel Hart, a 30-year-old Moldavian subject, settled in the town. He was still practicing there in 1898. His daughters were Sofia, Tereza, and Iuliana. In 1873, a huge fire destroyed all the houses made of wood. Only the church and 20 brick houses were saved. The losses amounted to 100,000 galbeni, but the insurance only covered 80,000 galbeni. The insurance companies were quick to cover the losses and as such on October 16, 1874, Nuhem sin Mendel, S. B. Morgenstern, Ilie Marcu, Marcu Ghetel, Elie Itic sin Bercu, Ghersin Margulies, Faivel Candel, Moise sin Iosef, Francisca Botez, Moise Iacob Hahane, and Baruch Smilovici expressed their gratitude. ^[A-69]

One shochet, a long-time resident of the town, slaughtered chickens without following the rules, wanted to eliminate the tax, and didn’t listen to anyone. He was dismissed in 1877 by Rabbi Taubes from Iasi ^[A-70], thus putting an end to this type of abuse, which was quite frequent in some Moldavian communities at the time.

We have no clear information on the participation of the Jewish population of Podu Iloaiei in the independence war. It is known, however, that at the beginning of the 20th century, seven “righteous” Jews lived in the town, most of whom were descendents of veterans of the 1877-1878 war. They owned bars or tax collection offices, and had the right to vote in the elections for the town’s counsel and parliament. There is a Yiddish saying about this war: “mit im vesti nisht annemen Plevne.” It means “you won’t conquer Plevna with his support” and refers to a man who is not too smart or too diligent. There is also a Yiddish anecdote: A mother was saying good-bye to her son, who was leaving to join the army. She advises him not to wear himself out: “fis a terk in ri dich up,” which means “if you shoot a Turkish soldier then you rest a bit.” The son asks: “What if the Turk shoots me?” The mother laments: “Oh my, what possibly could the Turk have against my boy?”

Fires were quite frequent, just like in other Moldavian settlements. At the initiative of mayor Gheorghiu, fire extinguishers were purchased, and proved to be of great help in fighting the fire of 1880. The mayor, together with Xenofon Vlaste and Moise Wechsler, collected money on the day of the fire to help the victims. ^[A-71]

The legal status of the Jews who were born and brought up in this country and who enjoyed no foreign protection was quite precarious. In 1881, eight Jews, who were living in town and had four years of army service, were declared “foreigners.”^[A-72] Jews were still unjustly banished from their villages. In November 1881, Volf Avram was driven away from Obrojeni to Podu Iloaiei. He left behind a household, 20 cows, cornstalks, and other belongings. ^[A-73]

Particularly important was the campaign to obtain the title of urban commune for the settlement, which was the wish of most of the inhabitants. In 1881, the communal counsel, which had no Jews among its members, declared that “the interest of a small town is to be inhabited by various craftsmen and tradesmen no matter what their religion or ethnicity.” They then emphasized that the townspeople had ancient rights and that restrictive laws (against Jews) would only hinder the development of the town, which if it became an urban commune would have a secondary school, a better hospital and pharmacy, a veterinarian, etc. It was also pointed out that the town was an important grain export center, which needs warehouses, better communication systems, etc. The prefecture was asked to intervene to the Minister of Internal Affairs in favor of ranking Podu Iloaiei as an urban commune. The request was rejected on January 20, 1882 following a demand from 14 non-Jewish tradesmen, who claimed that the borough should remain a rural commune so that they could protect themselves from Jewish competition. In fact the commune’s counsel insisted on their request, but the Parliament rejected it. ^[A-74] Also in 1882, the state issued laws encouraging Jewish emigration, but no one from town emigrated that year. ^[A-75]

The November 26, 1882 issue of the magazine *The Brotherhood* published on page 7 information about the community of Podu Iloaiei, which was made up of approximately 150 families. The community taxes covered the needs of the rabbi and the two shochets, as well as the sponsorship of the Talmud Torah. There was a Hasidic court^[B-12], and the tzadik enjoyed a good reputation in the town and in other communities. The Great Synagogue had been restored in 1876. Several confessional asylums^[B-13] were in operation. There was a “heder” and a private tutor. Social assistance was provided on Pesach for “maot chittim”. The community bath collected 100 galbeni annually. There was a “brotherhood fund” for helping the sick. Thirty students attended Talmud Torah.

Beginning in 1885, the town hall no longer leased the town’s income. A relevant, unusual incident: the mayor - Nicolae Gheorghiu- a baptized Jew, was killed by a Greek named Procopie Dimitriu on August 18, 1888, even though another Jew had tried to stop the killer. ^[A-76] The victim had founded the town’s church.

¹² [Ed-Com] Hasidic court is the Hasidic rabbi, his synagogue and his followers.

¹³ [Ed-Com] Confessional asylums: probably religious institutions such as schools, charities, hospitals, etc.

Numerous attempts to support the town's development by having it ranked as an urban commune were all rejected by Parliament in 1892. In 1894, the tenant S. Schwartz sponsored the rural hospital. Emil Florescu and then H. Grigoriu were the practicing physicians; there were also a subsurgeon and 10 assistants. In 1895, Leopold Ferderber managed the pharmacy, and later became a communal counselor. That same year, a police station was founded, some of the sidewalks were repaired,^[A-77] and the new building of the State school was opened; at this time, the mayor was D. Lupu.^[A-78] Several fountains were also restored. In 1896, there was an attempt to close down the slaughterhouse that had been found to be unsanitary and the brick factory that had been managed for 25 years by Avram Cahane. The space for the marketplace was reduced by the shacks constructed by some people.^[A-79]

The townspeople read newspapers. In 1897, L. Fruchtman was selling *The Opinion*, which was edited in Iasi. The Yiddish and Hebrew press were distributed by subscription. In the same year, 1,200 pieces of clothing were collected for the victims in Stefanesti. The community budget, managed by Zeida Rotenberg, was insufficient. Besides paying the rabbi, four shochets and three synagogue janitors, the wages of 10 day-time guards also had to be paid.^[A-80] However, thieves continued to attack unhindered.

The economic crisis of 1898-1899 and the leaving of the Jews on foot from the country had a serious impact on Podu Iloaiei (see the chapter "The Economic Life"). In 1902, the commune's budget was insufficient again. The anti-Semitic mayor Lupu and the tax collector Ghedale Haimovici raised the tax on kosher meat. A committee of seven people was elected to ensure support for the community's primary school.^[A-81] The community could not pay Dr. Hart.

In the communal elections of 1902, seven of the 156 voters were Jews. The commune (including two villages) was inhabited by 2,883 people. The above mentioned D. Lupu, an office attendant with five years of high school training, was reelected mayor. Of the eight counselors, only three knew how to sign their name.^[A-82] From 1902 to 1903, and again in 1916, the monthly magazine *The Public Notary* was edited in Podu Iloaiei by D. Cassian, the commune's notary.

Marcu Ghetel, a wealthy estate tenant moneylender, and tradesman plays an important role in the life of the borough. In 1903, he brought laborers from Bucovina to work the land on his estate.

During the same year, a public garden was opened and visited by Minister Spiru Haret. In 1904, the new slaughterhouse was ready to be opened and a new Romanian popular bank called "Good News" was opened. From 1903 to 1908, the town's police proved ineffective against the large number of burglaries and attacks. One serious event was the fire at Vlaste's mill on June 10, 1904 that resulted in 200,000 lei in losses. The same year, Gheorghe Botez, who was later elected mayor a number of times, was appointed communal inspector of the Podu Iloaiei region. In 1905, the iron bridge over the Bahlui River was opened. In 1906, I. Sneer became the principal of the community's school, replacing Iancu Horodniceanu, who continued to work for several decades at the school. I, myself, studied at this school between 1914 and 1918, and later taught along with my former teachers during the school year of 1928/1929. At the beginning of 1907, the town

hall requested that the town be supplied with water from the Timisesti River — the same source of water used by Iasi—based on a project that was later completed. ^[A-83]

During the violent spring of 1907, the peasant uprisings affected Podu Iloaiei to the same degree that they affected the rest of the country.

It is known, that from the beginning, there was an attempt to direct the focus of the North Moldavian villagers' complaints towards the Jews. Approximately 300 peasants came to Podu Iloaiei; the army was unable to stop the revolt. Tenant Druckman's house, among others, was destroyed, in addition to the shops in town (almost 50); merchandise was thrown in the mud. On the second day, the military squads from Harlau arrived and fired shots into the air. Twenty people were arrested. The March 3rd, 1907 edition of *The Opinion* of Iasi reported that the initiators of the revolt included the institutor Brudariu, Tita Pavelescu, and the gardener Ionescu.

According to *The Universe* (March 3, 1907; vol. 25, no. 60), "on March 1, 1907, almost 800 peasants came to town and committed indescribable acts of violence, devastating most of the houses and shops of the Jewish inhabitants, throwing merchandise into the street, and shattering and destroying everything that stood in their way. The following tradesmen were seriously injured: Zeida Schwartz, Itic Moscovici, Aba Blumenfeld, Iancu Merovici, and many others whose names are unknown. The windows of all synagogues and Jewish schools were broken as were the windows of the 'miracle-maker' rabbi's house, and those of the other rabbis."

In Iasi, a committee was established to help those whose households had been destroyed. On March 14, 1907, 3,000 lei were sent to Podu Iloaiei and distributed by A. Magder and M. Solomon. On March 17, Marcu Ghetel, Elias Solomon, and Saia Sternberg launched a campaign to help the poor who were living in the town.

One of the consequences of the uprising was the emigration of Jews to the United States. In June 1907, some families left. The devastation and the anti-Jewish regulations issued after the uprising led to a decay of the economic situation of the town, which was already precarious at that time. On April 1, 1908, the communal counsel was dissolved and in August was replaced with another one. The new counsel was led by Pavel Botez who contributed to the development of the commune and ensured a supply of drinkable water. One of the counselors was Xenofon Vlaste, the owner of the mechanic mill.

In 1909, there was a dispute regarding the issue of buying back from its two owners the land on which the town was situated. Matei Gane's heirs were asking for 150,000 lei; it was unknown how much Lucia Cantacuzino-Pascanu was asking for her part. An agreement was never reached. In 1909 a flood caused great losses to the town's Jews. However, a deal was signed with the engineer B. Diamant from Iasi regarding the use of the Timisesti source for the town's water supply. The town hall was to pay 43,000 lei.

The physician in the rural hospital was Carol Vitner, one of the few Jewish doctors paid by the State. As proof of his especially good reputation stands the fact that he was sent to Germany to specialize in bacteriology.

In 1910, a general economic crisis struck, affecting mostly the small tradesmen and craftsmen in the town. The epidemics of cholera and typhoid fever brought great concern, considering the poor hygienic conditions in town. In 1911, the floods from the Bahlui River caused serious damages.

As was the case in other towns, various forms of community assistance were established for those in need. As reported by the May 27, 1911 edition of *The Equality*, at the initiative of Aron Rosenthal, a society called Mata-Baseiter was founded to help the poor in case they became sick. The directing committee was made up of Moses Bucmann, president; Moses Schneier, vice president; Herscu Schwartz, cashier; and others.

New communal elections took place in Podu Iloaiei at the end of 1912. Const. Benuce was elected mayor.

The opening of the railway line between Podu Iloaiei and Harlau increased the importance of the local station, which became a railway junction. An advertisement that was printed in the newspaper by the person who restored the station, M. Vasilescu, described the restaurant as “first and second class” and promised to bring delicatessen and pates “from abroad.” A few years later, M. Vasilescu declared bankruptcy after borrowing embezzled money from the station’s cashier.

The outbreak of the 1913 war brought new examples of Jewish patriotism. In February and March, Jews gave money to the National Navy and Air Force. Jews from Podu Iloaiei were drafted for the campaign in Bulgaria; one of them died in service. The committee that was established to help the families of those fighting in the war consisted of the mayor, the priest, the postmaster, the chief of the station, the principal of the primary school, as well as three representatives of the Jews. The Jews also gave money to the Red Cross, in sums ranging from 1 to 20 lei. The victory of the Romanian troops raised hope that the problem of the Jews’ citizenship would be resolved. In September, the families of those who were killed in the war, including the Jewish families, received help from the prefect.

Let’s end the chronicle for the year 1913 by relating a dramatic event. Alexandru Ferderber, the son of a pharmacist and probably a baptized Jew, fell in love with a Jewish girl. The parents opposed the marriage, and the young couple attempted to commit suicide in the Jewish cemetery. They were taken to the hospital, from which they escaped. Several years later, the young man killed himself; it was his third attempt. In the meantime, the cholera epidemic that had ravaged the region during that year’s campaign ceased.

The year 1914 brought to this modest town too the signs of the outbreak of a global war. Food was more expensive. Reservists were mobilized, and this raised the popular concern. A committee was formed in Podu Iloaiei to help those in need. The crisis resulted in bankruptcies. Several families immigrated to America with the help of the I.C.A. organization in Iasi. After the outbreak of World War I, living costs increased .

Between August 1914 and August 1916, the people of the town experienced worry and hope, joy and grief, and concern and cheer. Periodically, men under 40 years of age were drafted, making everyone think that there was going to be a war. On the other hand,

Romania's neutrality enabled Germany to make large acquisitions of food and raw material from Romania, and some tradesmen, noblemen, and wealthy peasants made good deals. Thus passed the years 1914, 1915, and the first half of 1916.

The Jewish population of the town realized with fear that the cataclysm was nearing, but there was still hope that those who had the right to citizenship would finally receive it. To avoid further confusions, The Native Jews' Union organized civil marriage services for the Jewish couples who had been married only religiously. My father Hers Svart was especially involved in this project. On March 23, 1916, the Jewish community in Podu Iloaiei organized a banquet in honor of the mayor Teodor Cazacu and the notary D. Cassian, who had attended the civil marriage ceremonies of more than 100 Jewish couples, giving legal support to the couples' family life, their right to succession, and the possibility that their children would receive citizenship.

In August 1916, Romania entered the war that, for the price of extreme sacrifices and suffering, was to bring territorial completion, a goal that had the full support of the Jewish population, particularly those living in Moldova. "Wives, sons, brothers, relatives, and friends are called under arms. Wives and children, mothers, sisters, fiancées, and relatives cry their heart out, while fathers discretely wipe off their tears."^[A-84]

On August 21, 1916, a decree was issued, forbidding the use of any language other than Romanian. The ladies of the Romanian elite continued to "chirp out" in French, while strict regulations were enforced against Yiddish. The September 23, 1916 issues of *The Opinion* clearly stated that the issue at stake was the use of Yiddish: "In Podu Iloaiei, Jewish men and women are beaten on a legal basis [the famous 25 strikes to the ...] for using their native language."

Despite all the hardships, no Jew from Podu Iloaiei took advantage of the November 1916 decree that was issued for the Jews who wanted to emigrate. The democratic press was outraged, and pointed out that Jews should be given citizenship and not driven away.

After the first rough months of war, Podu Iloaiei became an important military and medical center. Many refugees settled here, coming from the occupied territories. The Jewish school and the synagogues were transformed into hospitals. Most of the Jewish families who had members, who had been called to fight in the war, were poor and did not get enough out of the modest help offered by the authorities. Jews were accused of racketeering, espionage, and many other sins. Nobody was spared the brutality of the police (major Schipor), not even women. However, the vast majority of the Jewish population endured the same sufferings as the rest of the population, lacking food, fuel, and soap and confronting a raging epidemic of typhus. Several military doctors died in duty. Among them was Siegfried Rosenthal, a young physician from Iasi, who died while taking care of the ill in the hospitals of Podu Iloaiei. In April, shacks were built outside of the town for the patients with typhus. The communal counsel was dissolved on May 12, 1917.

To prevent a shortage of vegetables, special areas were designated and students worked the land. On September 22, 1917, the general secretary of the Internal Affairs Ministry visited Podu Iloaiei and the vegetable garden of the Jewish school, which was supervised by Adolf Magder, the principal of the school. In October, the State school and the Jewish

school began operating by taking turns in the building of the Jewish-Romanian primary school.

The war was still going on. The Bucharest peace treaty, the recommencing of the military maneuvers until the defeat of Wilhelmian Germany and its allies, was reflected in the town's life. In January 1919, the town became the center of one of eight areas used for the repatriation of the Russian troops. ^[A-85]

Jews, who were promised during the war that their sacrifices would earn them citizenship, were disappointed by the decree-law that granted naturalization based on complicated formalities. These formalities were even harder to fulfill because of the wickedness of the clerks. In September 1919, The Native Jews' Union opened a legal assistance office for the local Jews who were requesting naturalization. But public opinion was drawn to more pressing issues in the years 1918-1920: assistance for war orphans, social integration of the veterans, and rehabilitation of the invalids. Thus, the Native Jews' Union closed its offices, waiting for more just and efficient laws.

The reverberations of the Russian revolution raised hopes for a more democratic political life in the reunified Romania, including a solution to the Jewish demands. Meanwhile, the townspeople lacked food for their animals so the prefecture allowed the acquisition of a two months stock.

The new naturalization decree brought less complicated formalities, and thus the political parties became interested in the Jews' votes. The Jews joined Averescu's party ("di avereskeiner"), the party of the liberals and the peasants. Even N. Iorga published electoral leaflets in Yiddish. Beginning in 1921, the mayor's assistant was a Jew (Michel Sor and then Lupu Buchman).

The community elections also aroused disputes. On April 27, 1919, the old leaders (the traditionalists) lost the elections to the Zionist wing. The voting took place in the presence of the region's administrator D. Cassian and the mayor Popovici. Moise Buchman, Volf Fisler, Haim Orenstein, Moise Haim Anciu, Aron Ianculovici, M. Schor, V. Iosupovici, D. H. Hahamovici, Lipsa Maizner, and T. Herscoviciare were elected. The majority of the population, however, remained faithful to the old customs. A subscription list for the yeshiva in Buhusi was signed by 125 people, who donated various sums of money ranging from 1 to 20 lei. A bond with the past may have explained the new community elections in 1920 that were supervised by Adolf Magder. Some of the resigning members of the former committee were reelected. After only one year, new elections brought success to the Zionists. Michel Sor obtained for the commune a grant for the Jewish-Romanian primary school; he had argued that the enrollment of Jewish pupils in the communal school would cost much more (classrooms, teaching staff). In 1922, new community elections were held.

Personal ambitions and interests caused a climate of instability that also reflected the confusion created by the complex post-war circumstances. Indeed, the development of the economy in the unified country and the social-political unrest caused by the increase in anti-Semitism were the new issues that the Jewish towns in Moldova had to face. The more active Jews joined political parties and became assistants to mayors like Michel Sor and Sanielevici. Others in the community continued the old "machloket," disputes and

conflicts on unimportant issues that had obvious negative consequences. For example, a group led by Simcha the tinker, who owned an oil deposit and a soda factory, hired one more shochet in 1923 and 1924, thus overcharging the community's budget. A candidate for the position of rabbi was brought in from Maramures^[B-14]. The commission asserted that, although he was a good Talmudist, he could not speak modern Hebrew and thus could not be a rabbi here. After the death of Elie Rosental, Burah Svart remained as dayan.

The rising prices, the monetary crisis, and other economic hardships caused serious concern among the local people. The new law regarding the organization of cults stipulated the establishment of a community leadership. The new project, made up of 32 articles, was voted on by the general assembly on May 3, 1925 and published in a booklet (see Appendix R). The committee had 16 members. The community's moral and legal status became official on Oct 12, 1925.

The year 1926 was marked by political unrest and anti-Semitism. The united opposition won the communal elections with 603 votes in April 1926, but the newly elected communal counsel was dissolved. Rota, the principal of the public primary school, chaired the ad-interim commission, although he was accused of opportunism for joining in turn the liberal party, Cuza's party, and now Averescu's. The monument dedicated to the 1916-1918 war, which was built over several years from public donations, was inaugurated in September 1926.

The chronicle for 1927 opened with the community banquet organized by I. Rotental, an old Hebrew institutor. In February, the Zionist organization elected a new committee. The craftsmen protested against the increase in taxes that was imposed by the corporation.

The cultural society Iavne was renamed Achad Ha'am, while the Shalom Aleichem society celebrated two years of existence. In March, the Ceres mill was destroyed by a fire; the losses amounted to 8 million lei. The Jewish school obtained good results on the exam at the end of the school year. In September, The United Society presented the play *Manasse* by Ronetti-Roman.

The year 1928 was marked by economic difficulties. A banquet was organized to raise funds for the kindergarden that had begun functioning in October of the previous year. On Purim, the children presented a play in Yiddish that was prepared by their teacher Haia Derbandiner. A. A. Policman was the community leader and Rubin Epstein was the school principal. The community was confronted with the financial demands of the landowner Lucia Cantacuzino-Pascanu who owned the land on which the new school was built. The committee resigned on May 30.

The ad-interim commission, made up of six people, was not able to finish the restoration of the public bath because of a lack of money in the impoverished population.^[A-86] Heroes' day was celebrated at the Great Synagogue.

¹⁴ [Ed-Com] Maramures: the Western region of the country.

A large amount of money (800,000 lei) was discovered missing from the town hall. On August 2, 1928, a storm followed by heavy rain caused great damage to the town. In December, an ad-interim commission was established at the town hall with Moise Solomon as vice president. Insufficient drinking water became a problem. The traditional annual banquet organized by the community was held on February 7 and R. Epstein gave a speech. In 1929, the banquet was held in November.

The years 1929 and 1930 were marked by escalating crisis and anti-Semitism. It is true though that Maccabi and the charity society continued their activities. The ad-interim commission of the commune could not be legally established, since three of its members were not present at the oath-taking ceremony. These members were later accused of being against King Carol.

This was the community budget for 1930:

REVENUES: Tax on kosher meat 528,456 lei; subventions 78,909 lei; school taxes 46,740 lei; public bath 13,800 lei; other revenues 27,444 lei; and burials 12,890 lei.

EXPENSES: Overall expenses 141,892 lei; salaries 505,120 lei; 1929 deficit 137,318 lei; and 1930 deficit 77,091 lei. The total sum was quite impressive for a modest community, but the deficits represented a serious warning of the economic situation of the Jews living in the small town. ^[A-87]

Economic crisis and political unrest also marked the following year, 1931. In May, the communal counsel was dissolved and Pavel Botez and the former gendarmes' lieutenant Doroftei chaired the ad-interim commission. Here is an example of a political event that occurred that year: The eight sergeants in town, who were members of the Peasants' party, were replaced with members of the ruling party. In July, the bakers in town, who were waiting for an increase in the price of bread, went on strike causing a shortage of bread. A trial began against the cashiers who embezzled 800,000 lei that belonged to the town hall; so did a trial against the former mayor Tudorache, who probably was the chief of the "sergeants of the town" before the war.

On October 11, 1931, the three-year term of the community's committee came to an end. An ad-interim commission prepared the elections. The only list included M.H. Schor, Litman Vigder, Z. Anciu, Solomon Marcovici, Dr. S. Iancu, Herman Barat, Aron Aronovici, Iosef Blumenfeld, and Sender Cojocar. A small Hebrew play was presented at the Hanukkah celebration. The teachers Etila Marcovici, Eti Credinciosu, and Fani Buium were honored.

The years 1932 and 1933 were dominated by the country's economic and political crisis. Yet even under these harsh conditions, solidarity among the people remained strong. A list of the donations for the Jewish hospital in Iasi included 30 Jews from Podu Iloaiei, who annually donated sums up to 300 lei. ^[A-88] In the same year, 65,080 lei of equipment belonging to the Jewish-Romanian primary school in town was deposited in the safe at the Iasi hospital.

The creation of the Romanian-Jewish party by Dr. Th. Pischer did not have much of an impact. On the other hand, the local Jews, as well as the rest of their coreligionists,

reacted promptly to the news of the racist measures adopted against the Jews in Hitler's Germany. On April 27, 1933, a meeting was held at the Great Synagogue to protest Hitler's excessive measures. It was, in fact, an anti-fascist meeting.

But let us not anticipate, and instead follow the events of 1932 in their chronological order. On February 25, Maccabi celebrated 10 years of existence, and the short play *Der Geht* by Shalom Aleichem was performed. On March 26, a local group of pilgrims left for Eretz Yisrael. At the farewell party, the play *The Way to The Inner Self*, written by a local militant A. A. Policman, was performed in Yiddish.

The local police proved to be ineffective; four smoke shops were robbed in three weeks.

The community's committee had resigned in December 1931, but it was not until May 24, 1932 that an electoral bureau was formed to monitor the elections on June 5. The only list to be voted on had Dr. S. Iancu in the first position.

Changes were also taking place at the town hall. An ad-interim commission chaired by Tudose was appointed. With the elections coming, Goga's followers won the support of the lawyer G. Fisler, while the Peasants' party requested and obtained the support of the Jewish population. After their victory in the elections, they donated 200,000 lei to help the town's victims. In August there were debated issues such as the installment of electricity in the town and the building of a dyke in the Bahlui River to prevent floods and damage. In December, Maccabi performed *The Jackpot* by Shalom Aleichem in Yiddish, of course.

The assassination of I. G. Duca was considered to be a bad sign by the local Jews. The democratic parties were asking for the Jewish votes. Avram Orenstein was nominated for the position of mayor's assistant. In January 1934, the town was damaged by a terrible snowstorm, but it did not suffer any consequences from the earthquake in March 1934. In the communal elections, the government obtained seven counselor seats, while the national-peasants' opposition obtained only three.

The society of the Jewish craftsmen elected a new committee on May 16, 1934. Due to rising difficulties, the community's committee resigned in October 1934; some of its members were accused of embezzlement. Also in October, the issue of installing electricity was discussed again. The poor economic situation led Mayor Dr. Popescu to request and to obtain a cancellation of the tax on the household's value that had been established by the Peasants' Party.

The crisis and the ever-rising prices were still an issue in 1935. However, thanks to several millers from Iasi, however, the price of bread was reduced by 1 leu per kilo and as such Podu Iloaiei is exemplified by the press media. With respect to cultural activities, nothing of particular interest occurred in 1935.

The chronicle for 1935 mentioned a robbery attempt at the Ceres mill that was owned by two Jews. The bakers raised the price of bread, but Lupu Buchman, the mayor's assistant, negotiated with them and a compromise was reached. In February, the 25th anniversary of the Jewish school was celebrated. The committee included Moise Iancu Sor, president; Michel Sor, president of the school's committee; and Solomon Elias, the elder of the

town. In April, one year later, Dr. Tenenbaum's death was commemorated, since everyone in town loved him, regardless of their religion. The town hall named a street after this popular physician. In July 1935, the grain market opened, causing serious problems for the small tradesmen in the grain business. A second pharmacy also opened.

On September 27, 1935, Moise Buchman died at the age of 73. He had been one of the community's leaders, and his sons, Ghetel the engineer and Lupu Buchman, played an important role in the community's life. Lupu Buchman was still alive in 1981.

In March 1937, the town hall reduced the tax paid by the bar tenants, thus reducing by 80,000 lei the State schools' income, which were subsidized from this fund. In fact, the entire communal budget was insufficient.

Dictatorial behavior could also be found among the Jews. The mayor's assistant appointed the community's leaders without calling elections, a decision that displeased a segment of the Jewish population. A new shochet was brought in without the committee's approval. The shochet was arrested on September 10. At the shochet's request, some Jews came to give him a "minyn" in his prison cell. He was released and then arrested again.

The year 1938 began with the sinister and tragic farce of the Goga-Cuza government that deeply affected the life of the town. How could the Jews not to be affected by the revision of their citizenship that conditioned their presence in economic life and by the various offensive measures that had been taken? This episode was a warning sign to the Jews, a prelude to the racist laws that were to come.

It is true, that by April 1938, the mayor P. Rusovici had accomplished a series of improvements: paving the main road; increasing threefold the revenues from the fairs; ensuring that the town was clean; and hiring eight street sergeants instead of the two "guards." The reopening of the grain market, controlled by I. Daderlat who forbade any deal of more than 100 kilos of grain, still threatened the existence of the small grain tradesmen. In only a few months, more than 4,300,000 kilos of grain were sold in this market.

In the spring of 1938 (13 Nisan 5698), Volf Fisler died. He was an erudite, enlightened bartender with a sarcastic personality, a specialist in Hebrew, and a former friend of the well-known Velvl Zbarjer. He had been a constant presence in the community's life ever since 1897. His sons proved to be just as active; they were interested in culture, as well as serving in the bar.

The community life continued. On December 3, 1938, the new leaders of the community took an oath in the presence of the rabbi Burah Svart, who was actually a dayan. The new leaders were Simon Lupu, B. Mayer, S. Friedman, Haim Spiegler, Iekel Blumenfeld, M. H. Goldenberg, Leizer User, M. Eintraub, Bercu Ioina, A. Aronovici, Ghedele Rabinovici, A. Mendelovici, and David H. Nusen.

In 1940, the process of forced integration into Romanian society began, along with the reexamination of the rights to Romanian citizenship (which had serious economic consequences for those who were denied citizenship), the drafting of Jewish reservists to

serve in work battalions, and the restrictions imposed on cultural freedom. All of these caused tension and concern among the townspeople. The community carried on its activities despite the most difficult circumstances.

In 1940 and 1941, the situation of the Jews became noticeably worse. Yet the traditions were generally maintained in Podu Iloaiei: The shops were closed on Saturdays and the ritual laws were fulfilled according to the circumstances.

After Romania joined the war in 1941, the situation became even worse. The Jews were forced to do “community work” in conditions that are well known. Many families with missing men lived in poor conditions. The pogrom that took place in Iasi in June 1941 had a terrible ending in Podu Iloaiei.

The “death train” stopped at the station. More than 1,200 bodies were taken out of the wagons and buried in a common grave in the Jewish cemetery. After the war, the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania erected a monument at the martyrs’ common tomb with an inscription in both Yiddish and Romanian: “Here are buried the victims of the savage massacres against the Jewish population.”

The 800 survivors were led off the train. They were first hosted in the synagogues and then in the houses of the local Jews who took care of them the best that they could, thus showing a brotherly solidarity. ^[A-89]

Actually, the Jewish population in Podu Iloaiei knew that they could be evacuated from the town. This was to happen in 1941, but a postponement was obtained.

The late Moise Sor told me about an interesting event: When the order arrived to evacuate all the local Jews to Iasi, the communal council held a special meeting. The mayor was Dr. Ionescu, who was the physician at the local hospital and a good-hearted man. Both he and the chief of the police, as well as the teacher D. Dumitriu from Erbiceni, objected to the evacuation of the Jews, which would economically ruin the commune. The mayor interceded in the Jews’ favor at the prefecture, but the prefect Adam, a member of Cuza’s party, ordered the evacuation to be completed within 48 hours. A two-week postponement of the order was obtained with many sacrifices, and so the Jews were able to sell their belongings under less pressing conditions.

S. Cristian related on April 14, 1942: “This Saturday almost a thousand Jews from Podu Iloaiei arrived in Iasi, leaving behind their belongings and their shops, which had been temporarily closed. The evacuated Jews were left in the yard of the community building with no roof over their heads. Another 400 Jews were waiting to be evacuated from Podu Iloaiei. The evacuation order had been suspended last fall because of a lack of houses and the high cost of living. A landslide had just occurred in Ticau, and the Christian population there also had to be evacuated. The Jewish community in Iasi did not have the means to help the Jews in Podu Iloaiei. Dr. Gingold made no attempt to stop the evacuation.”^[A-90]

According to other sources, the community of Podu Iloaiei maintained a certain amount of autonomy in Iasi, having Lebel Ionas as its president. All that was necessary for living in this city had been purchased, and the community was still active.

After August 23, 1944, some of the local Jews, whose houses had not been affected by the fight that had taken place here, and some small grain tradesmen returned to the town, but they could never go back to living the same community life they had before.. There was even a shochet, Iosef Rosental, who had been a teacher of Hebrew at the community's school for many decades. The Census Statistics for 1947 estimated that the Jewish population of Podu Iloaiei was 300.

However, these individuals also moved soon to other cities and countries, such that in 1965, only a few old men were still living in the town. One of them, the smith Avram, used to go every Saturday to say the prayers all alone in the synagogue, which had been destroyed by bombs during the war. The community in Iasi sent a shochet each week to slaughter a bird for him. Soon these elders died, the last Mohicans of a community that had existed for 150 years.

Epilogue : I started to gather material for this monograph in May 1946. I came back to the town to find it seriously damaged by the war. The few Jews that remained did not realize that they were the last representatives of a many centuries old way of living in Eastern Europe—a world that was soon to end—and that new economic, political, and social life forms were being established in these realms. The borough, “dus shtetl,” was passing from the harsh light of reality to an aura of legends and poetry. However, the borough left deep marks not only in people's souls, but also in the historical development of all Jews and the countries they lived in.

I have tried to depict here the history of a Jewish community in Moldova as seen through the eyes of a son of the community. I have tried to be objective and to exclude passion and bias from my writing. I have tried to present the events and the way of living, thinking, and feeling as a fragment of Eastern European Judaism in the context of the Romanian society.

This monograph remains, however, a Kaddish, a requiem for a disappeared way of life that has not been spared history's hardships. We have only love and understanding for the values that were created by the shtetl; this means a lot more than nostalgia and idealization.

8 Economic Life

The 1831 census offers the first comprehensive information about the population of the borough of Podu Iloaiei. Some of the data come from an act issued in April 1830. According to this source, the town consisted of 131 households with 13 Christian tradesmen who were tax-exempt and 85 Jews, locals, and Sudits; among them were three who were tax-exempt, three who were paying tax, 13 who were servants and were tax exempt, 15 who were bachelors and widows, and nine who were Gypsies. Assuming that there were five people in each family that would make a total of 905 people, which is an overestimate since another contemporary source indicated only 420 individuals.

The censuses, especially the ones done in 1831, 1838, and 1845 that are kept in the archives in Iasi and Bucharest, are considered to be of documentary importance. The Jewish population —“Judaeus” or “Ebrews” — had a special status in the census, and the

references contain valuable information on different aspects of the community life. Although there have been many differences in the making of the questionnaire or the census, with many unjustified omissions and additions, in general the censuses offer a true image of reality.

The work on the first census began in 1831 and was completed the following year. In the book *Roumanie et les Juifs*, Verax (Radu D. Rosetti) compared the data from the 1831 census with the partial data from 1803 (the register of the peasants) and 1820 to emphasize the Jewish “invasion.” This malicious interpretation of the data revealed his judeophobia and his “ardent” comments diminished the value of his work.^[A-91] Referring to the 1831 census, Verax wrote that in Podu Iloaiei there were 281 local Jewish natives, 281 Christians, and 8 Sudits; a total of 570 people in 164 families. On page 44, he mentioned only 284 Jews. In a 1970 report, the researcher E. Negruzzi mentioned 109 Jewish children, estimating the total population at 560 people of whom 281 are Jews (see Appendix E).

Particularly important for the economic life of the town were the weekly fair days and the annual markets. Although the 1818 act allowed seven fair days per year, the owner of the estate neglected their organization, which led to a financial loss for him and the townspeople. The loss became more obvious after 1829, when the Adrianopol treaty stipulated the freedom of foreign trade for the Romanian Principalities. Meanwhile, the price of agricultural products had increased, as well as the demand for these products. An important grain trade was done at the fairs. The peasants used the money they obtained from selling their products to buy necessary items. The peasants, tradesmen, and craftsmen were making profits, though the profits were far greater for the owners or the tenants of the estates or towns, since they were collecting the taxes from the fairs.

That is why the inhabitants sent a note of complaint to the heirs of C. Palade, arguing that if the fair was cancelled they “would have no food” and be forced to “go back where each of them had come from.” On October 20, the owner requested that the treasury renew the right to seven annual fairs, which it did, and then he made the usual announcements in the village papers and in *The Official Bulletin*.^[A-92]

In 1842, these fairs were neglected once again by the owner of the town or by its tenant.

Industry began to develop in the town. On October 10, 1832, the brothers Boan from Bucovina, who owned a “plate factory” for 10 years, complained that taxes were demanded from them even though they were Sudits and the law also exempted them from paying tax because they were “manufacturers.”^[A-93] Referring to the pottery made in Podu Iloaiei, an industry that continued to exist in the 20th century, Dr. Slatineanu wrote that the ornaments were “made with a horn-like instrument or brush. The motifs are geometric or floral, pale or dark green, but rarely blue on a white background.” The style of the local manufacturers seemed to have been influenced by that of the pottery makers living in the villages around Roman. (Could this have been the influence of the popular art of Csango?)

In 1836, there was a rudimentary spirit distiller with a six-bucket capacity that was valued at 1,490 lei. It belonged to the Jew Iancu from Carazeni.

The treasury inspector Ion Teodoru considered the numbers in 1831 census to be too small. On June 30, 1834, he found 23 “profit-makers,” who he included among the taxpayers or patent payers. Ten of them had their own shops. The “profit-makers” practiced the following professions: one peddler, one grocer, one shoemaker, two butchers, two bar tenants, three teachers, four tailors, and five alcoholic beverage makers. The townspeople argued that not all of the “profit makers” were able to pay tax. A reexamination was done. Declarations were taken in the presence of the town’s captain Colonel Constandin, the representatives of the Jewish community, and the former captain Tudorache. The result was that only seven “were worthy to pay tax.” Of the others, two were Sudits, two were new arrivals to the town, two were underage, two were “free of settlement obligations,” six “in all were poor and weak,” and two family heads could take up a third-grade patent. The thorough observations revealed the poverty and low social position of the Jewish population that resulted from the repressive measures taken against the Jews as stipulated in The Organic Regulation (see Appendix L).

Jews were not included in the 1838 census. Using data from a taxpayer register from 1839, Verax estimated that there were 120 Jewish taxpaying family heads, to which he added 20% invalids, poor, and widows, for a total of 480 Jews. ^[A-94]

A complaint signed by the Jews in Podu Iloaiei and dated September 1845 indicated that there were 102 peasants in 1838. The old table referred to only 97 peasants, 68 of whom lived on Lascarache Cantacuzino’s part of the estate and 29 on Nicolae Cantacuzino’s part. ^[A-95]

The inauspicious economic status of the town was reflected in a request to the treasury, pointing out that “the Jewish ethnicity from the villages of Stefanesti, Hirlau, Burdujeni, Podul Lelioarei, and other similar boroughs” could not pay the annual tax of 60 lei, which was to be paid by each family head, because “commerce and their trades in these boroughs could not be compared to that practiced in the bigger towns.” The commissions enforced taxes on shochemists, some invalids, and some people who were underage. Some were registered twice and Sudits were also included. In the small towns, commerce was limited to trade. They asked that the tax be reduced to 40 lei for each head of family. ^[A-96]

Some of the relatives of the townspeople lived abroad. In 1842, Strule Moscovici and a servant Solomon, both native Moldavian Jews, passed through Galati on their way from Constantinople to visit the shop Strule had left in Podul Iloaiei. ^[A-97] The structure of the Jewish population in town in 1842 is best reflected by a “tax-money list” that was included in the “possession” register. At the “main road,” there were 43 houses inhabited by Christians (Romanians, Lippovans, Bulgarians, Serbs and one Armenian) and 58 houses inhabited by Jews. In the suburbs, there were 40 houses inhabited by Christians and 15 by Jews (see Appendix M).

In 1845, the census showed the following structure of the Christian population ^[A-98]: On Lascar Cantacuzino’s part of the estate, there were two tradesmen of second state, 14 of third state, and three apprentices, consisting of five Moldavians, one Serb, one baptized Armenian, one former German, five Lippovans, and six individuals with no mentioned nationality but who, no doubt, were Moldavian shepherds or cheese makers. On Neculai Cantacuzino’s part, there were four third-state tradesmen, all Moldavians. The Christian

craftsmen on Lascar's part consisted of nine third-state masters and nine apprentices, six of whom were Moldavians. On Neculai's part, there were four masters and two apprentices, all Christians. In terms of the practiced professions, there were one furrier, one cook, seven shoemakers, three fur coat makers, four tailors, two stone hewers, one rope maker, one woodcutter, one Polish wood carver, one joiner/adzer, and one carpenter. The structure of the Jews' professions was as follows: one small merchandise seller, one silversmith, three grocers, five intermediary tradesmen, one cotton dealer, one pail maker, one wagoner, four butchers, one synagogue janitor, one shoemaker, one sieve maker, two barkeepers, seven tailors, one grain dealer, one fur cap maker, two teachers, one torch carrier, one flour dealer, one horse merchant, one shochet, one carter, eight tradesmen at Lipsca, three bar tenants, two bakers, two merchants, 74 alcoholic beverage makers, two glaziers, two carpenters, one soles maker, one tax collector, one tobacco seller, two wine sellers, seven with no profession indicated, and three with no occupation.

The large number of alcoholic beverage makers can be explained by the fact that many Jews had been driven away from the villages and had settled in town. Indeed, the census mentioned 35 Jews who came from the villages, among whom only four were craftsmen. Some of them owned a house in town, while others lived in rented houses. Sixty-three Jews had their own houses, even the old rabbi Moise who, forced by poverty, rented a part of his house. One cannot be wrong in assuming that all the others lived in rented houses, as was the case for 61 tax-paying Jews and 23 newly married couples, elders, or poor who did not own a house.

The economic situation of the town was made difficult by the large number of Jews who had been driven away from their villages and had settled in small towns without the possibility of quickly finding an occupation, because of the limited range of economic activities that the modest settlement could offer. This economic-social process was not restricted to Podul Iloaiei. It could be generalized to all of Moldova, and had serious repercussions on the country's budget. Actually, in a letter dated December 20, 1845, "the entire community of Jewish tradesmen from Podu Iloaiei" complained that now they had to pay the tax for 181 people, compared to 102 in 1838. The document also mentioned that since "the first writing," that is since the drawing of the census, six taxpayers had died and 10 had moved "no one knows where" and could not be found "because our little town is surrounded by woods." At the end of "the table" indicating the part of the town on N. Canta's estate, it was mentioned that 27 people "have come from somewhere else." This explains the sudden growth of the Jewish population in town.

A comparison of the data regarding the situation of the town's population is of interest: 20 tradesmen with two apprentices, 13 craftsmen with 11 apprentices, Moldavians, Lippovans, Serbs, Armenians, one German, and one Pole. The rest of the Christian population lived in the suburbs and were engaged in agricultural activities. Professor Gh. Platon estimated that in 1845 there were 240 Jewish taxpayers and 143 Christian taxpayers, for a total of 1,815 people. Among the Christians were 21 tradesmen, 23 craftsmen, 63 taxpayers, 13 widows, and 23 elderly and invalids. Among the Jews, there were 129 tradesmen, 40 craftsmen, two apprentices, six of other professions, 18 with no specified profession, 31 elderly and invalids, and 14 widows. ^[A-99]

A complaint dated December 20, 1845 was signed by the following individuals: Simha from Targu Frumos, Moise from Berlesti, Iancu from Popesti, Moise sin Iancu Leib from Targu Frumos, Zisu Tvi son of Iosef, Tvi son of Iaakov, another Iaakov from Targu Frumos, David Casap, and Iaakov Leib.^[A-100]

Appendix N includes a complete list of the Jews in Podu Iloaiei as stipulated in the 1845 census. Of interest are the specifications regarding the name days, places of origin, professions, and social status.

Around 1848, the fair and market days had a considerable impact on the economic life of the settlement. In 1847, Palade's heirs tried to forcefully bring "the people" to the fair, which was held each Sunday in Podu Iloaiei. Nicolae Cantacuzino complained on June 3, 1847 that for 20 years the fair had been held each Sunday in Scobalteni and asked that "the townspeople and tradesmen be allowed to make their trade on both sides of the Bahlui River."^[A-101] On June 14, 1847, the State's Secretariat demanded from the Finance Department that the days of the fair be Sunday in Podu Iloaiei and Monday in Scobalteni.^[A-102] During that year, a French mission found the population of the town to be 1,250 people.^[A-103]

In 1848, cholera ravaged the town. An incomplete official report indicated that 39 Jewish and 6 Christian heads of family had died. However, professor Gh. Platon showed that 237 Jews and Christians died of cholera in Podu Iloaiei.^[A-104] The French mission ranked the town as a village because of its rural style of life. The mission pointed out that the poor condition of the roads hindered economic activity, particularly cattle breeding. Podu Iloaiei and Targu Frumos were becoming profitable cattle markets. To obtain a better deal for his products, V. Bosie the owner of the Sarca estate formed a partnership with a Jew from Podu Iloaiei.

Of special significance was an address from July 27, 1853 that ordered Dumitru Buliu from Targu Frumos to come to Podu Iloaiei and make 15,000 bricks, for which he had already received money from Moise Lozneanu; the same was true for Constandin, also from Targu Frumos, who had received money two months before to make 8,000 bricks. The administrator of the Iasi district asked the police in Targu Frumos to comply with Moise Lozneanu's complaint.

Of special importance to the economic development of the town was the notification in 1854 that there were 20 steam mills in the Bahlui region; at least one of them was in Podu Iloaiei, of course.^[A-105]

The statistics for 1859 indicated 996 Jewish and 881 Christian inhabitants in Podu Iloaiei, with no mention of their occupation.^[A-106] The statistics for Moldova in 1859 showed for Podu Iloaiei: heads of family - 216 men and 39 women, with 473 men and 516 women, for a total of 989 Jews, to which are added 888 Christians.

In town, there was a factory that made vinegar from water and alcohol with the help of a machine. In 1859, Moise Rat, the owner of the factory, had a stock of 100 vedre of vinegar and another amount already in the process of being made.^[A-107]

We have no statistics or special data on the economic development of the town in the following decades. Its progress was hindered by its status as a rural settlement, which placed it under ever-increasing restrictions—legal or not—regarding the Jewish population. However, the building of the Great Synagogue, the hiring of a physician, the increasing number of inhabitants, the development of the grain trade, and the rising of the cultural level indicate the efforts made by the Jewish population to build a proper community in the vicinity of Iasi. A document issued at the end of the 19th century fully reflects the structure, situation, and dynamics of the Jewish population (see Appendix P).

The list of “the foreigners” drawn up in 1898 reflects the abnormal situation of the Jews in Romania during those years. The overwhelming majority of the Jews in town, who were born and brought up in this country (as were most of their parents) with no foreign protection and who had performed their military service, had no political rights and were forbidden many civil rights as well. Due to administrative stipulations, they were the victims of the arbitrariness of the police and of all the local authorities in general. The maintenance of the status of the boroughs as communes had negative repercussions on the national economy, although it satisfied the egotistical interests of those who wanted to restrain possible competition by making use of extra economic measures.

Summing up the data in the table, we obtained the following results: heads of family- 490 men and 53 widows; family members (under age 21) - 536 males and 829 females; of these 17 were not Jews with 11 children. Only 25 of the Jews were subjects of other states. There were also several “righteous” Jews, former combatants in the 1877/1878 Independence War or their descendents, or coming from Dobrogea.

The professions of the Jews in Podu Iloaiei were as follows: four barbers who also applied leeches; eight cabmen who were transporting people to and from the railway station and also to Iasi and Targu Frumos; six waggoners who transported goods inside and outside the town; three substitute teachers who were hired to help the four “melamdin,” the heder teachers officially named the “the confessional asylum.” The only furrier in town competed with 13 other fur coat makers who made thick coats, fur coats, and fur caps. The peasants who wanted their wool dyed solicited the help of three dyers. No receipts were used, but inscriptions were made on a wooden tally that was “attached” to the hank of wool to be dyed. The only braga maker in town was assisted by two confectioners; all three were Turks. Three Jewish bakers, assisted by two pretzel makers, were baking according to the Mosaic rules^[B-15]. The coopers made keys, bathtubs, and vats. There was also a coffee shop, a brick factory, two kosher butchers, four synagogue janitors, two shoe makers, 12 boot makers who - like the fur coat makers - were also working for the surrounding villages, and 28 tailors and 8 dressmakers who worked only for the townspeople with modest incomes, since the dresses for the wealthy women were ordered in Iasi or a deluxe dressmaker was brought from Iasi. The only accountant in town worked for the rich man Marcu Ghetel, whose fortune was said to be worth 1 million gold francs.

To the 203 tradesmen of all kinds, we have to add the 30 merchants and the four “fisherman,” who traded fish caught predominantly from the pond in Scobalteni. Eleven

¹⁵ [Ed-Com] Mosaic rules: Jewish laws as outlined in the Torah (Moses).

Jewish blacksmiths and smiths and two wheelwrights also worked in the town. The presence of three teachers at the primary school, which was founded in 1892, was a sign of the modernization of the Jewish educational system. The four shochets, the rabbi, and the Hasidic court are discussed in another chapter. The only innkeeper in town took care of the inn. The three “business men” were probably wholesale tradesmen or private clerks. In addition to the Romanian physician who worked at the regional hospital, there was a Jewish physician who owned a private practice but also paid visits to the members of the mutual assistance association and the poor in the community. The presence of five midwives, one of whom was over 90 years old, indicates that the birth rate was high. Seventy-five Jewish workers helped to load and unload grain and other agricultural products, and worked at the oil press, at the wood warehouse, and as assistants in shops.

In the construction business, there were three masons, six carpenters, and a tinker. There were also a saddle maker, a carpet maker, and three water carriers. Only 12 people were listed as servants. I believe that some of those who were mentioned as “workers” did chores in other men’s households. There was also an “animal doctor,” who was famous in the neighboring villages. It is possible that the family men who were listed as “having no profession” were intermediaries or craftsmen without a shop or workshop of their own, and thus were not included in the fiscal records. In fact, the unmarried young people, who were listed as having “no profession,” usually worked in their parents’ workshop or shop.

Several observations: all unmarried young people over age 21 are considered heads of family, even though they continued to live and work in their parents’ house (32 men and 60 women). Women who only had a religious marriage ceremony were considered heads of family, just like their husbands. There was a great number of old people and widows (85 widows, 14 elders between age 60 and 70, and nine elders between age 70 and 90). Actually, only 21 heads of family had no profession (see Appendix P).

The poor harvest and the economic crisis at the beginning of the 20th century had repercussions on the town’s economy. In August and September 1897, three bankruptcies took place. The consequences of the crisis became more serious in 1899-1900 and later, especially for the craftsmen, leading to the famous mass emigration on foot that took place in 1900-1901 under dramatic conditions. On May 31, 1900, 100 people from Podu Iloaiei were about to emigrate. On July 16, 400 of the town’s Jews left for America. Sraier, the representative of the local Jews, asked Auerbach, the ICA’s delegate, to facilitate the emigration of the craftsmen, particularly the women whose husbands had emigrated the year before.^[A-108] Auerbach promised to help. In July 1902, another 25 families of Jewish craftsmen from Podu Iloaiei prepared to emigrate. They had a 4,000 lei fund and asked for help from the committee in Iasi. The emigration continued over the next years, although at a slower rate. On July 20, 1907, more families from Podu Iloaiei left for America.

In 1910, 1,895 Jews lived in Podu Iloaiei, comprising approximately 68% of the town’s total population. The decline in the Jewish population—there had been 1,962 Jews in 1899—was due to the emigration that took place during the years 1900-1901 and 1905-1906. Considering the occupations of those who had left, there were now 187 tradesmen, 15 tailors, 20 boot makers, eight smiths, three carpenters, and 175 people with other

occupations such as coopers, tinkers, cabmen, wagoners, haircutters, bakers, coffee sellers, dyers, clerks, porters, day laborers, and intermediaries. In 1914, more families in town emigrated.

The years 1923-1924 were marked by price increases, especially for food, and by an acute monetary crisis.

The fair in Podu Iloaiei was no longer held after 1924. One time, the producers returned from the fair in Targu Frumos with all their merchandise unsold because the merchants did not have money to buy the merchandise. As usual, there were brutal, irresponsible, anti-Semitic forces that seized the popular discontent. In March 1924, the organization of the Sunday fair and the market day in Podu Iloaiei was terminated. An increase in taxes followed, and the tradesmen became worried. A committee called The Tradesmen's Council was elected; it was made up of nine Jews and one Christian (C. Ioan).

In 1925, the Small Credit Bank opened with the help of the Joint ^[B-16]. The short-term loans offered by the bank helped the small tradesmen and craftsmen to maintain their businesses and confront the various forms of discrimination. After a short period of stabilization, we were informed that, in 1928, the peasants and merchants in Podu Iloaiei had become impoverished. In the past, the town had exported 3,000 to 4,000 wagons of grain; however in 1928, nothing was exported and the local needs could not be satisfied. The cattle starved because of a lack of fodder. Some peasants left to find work elsewhere. Excessive taxes and bankruptcies hindered commerce. The new harvest was better, and on August 1, the grain market was opened. ^[A-109]

In 1926, The Commerce Bank opened, managed by Haim Orenstein. For several years, the Jewish craftsmen had been organized in a mutual assistance society that remained active until the Jews were evacuated in 1942. In 1929, and for many years thereafter, the president of the society was Avram Herman. At the general assembly held on May 1928 at the Tailors synagogue, the project of an independent office was launched.

The Ceres mill, estimated to be worth 8 million lei, was destroyed by a fire. It was rebuilt, and opened on February 22, 1928. On July 28, 1928, the grain market opened; one of the managers was Iancu Sneier. The Small Credit Bank expanded. In June, Israel Fisler, Strul Moscovici, and Litman Vigder were elected auditors.

The setting up of the grain market, on which taxes were imposed, brought losses to the small tradesmen. Due to a policy that stipulated an imposed compulsory price, the peasants preferred to go to other markets. A commission of 10 tradesmen presented their case to the Commerce Chamber in Iasi and offered a sum equal to that brought in by the taxes in exchange for the closing of the market.

The 1930 census indicated 1,601 Jewish inhabitants in Podu Iloaiei, who made up 40.4% of the total population. The decline in the population since 1910 was, of course, due in part to the exodus of the Jews to the larger cities. To a smaller degree, it was also due to emigration and the death rate during the war, which was particularly high because of the epidemics.

¹⁶ [Ed-Com] The Joint refers to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The various anti-Jewish actions in the 1930s deeply affected the economic situation of the local Jews. The process of impoverishment, Proletarian-ization, and social differentiation increased, and many intellectuals and qualified workers left the town. Thus, it was no surprise in 1941 that the Jewish community consisted of only 1,454 individuals, 37% of the total population.

After World War II, the economic role played by the Jewish borough was a thing of the past. The history of the Jewish community in Podu Iloaiei thus came to an end, one and a half centuries after its founding. It was a closed chapter.

9 Communal Life

The oldest Jewish community organization in Podu Iloaiei was Chevra Chedosha, the burial brotherhood that took care of the burials, the cemetery, and sometimes the poor who fell ill. The organization was established soon after the founding of the borough, but its records were lost during World War I. There were also other organizations such as Chevra Tehillim, which was set up for reading the psalms together, and other groups for the study of the Mishna or the entire Talmud. Their records were not saved, however.

The oldest documented society is the branch of the Israelite Alliance, which was founded at the initiative of the head office in Paris for the purpose of defending at least the civil rights of Jews in Romania. The committee in Podu Iloaiei was made up of Aron Goldental, president; Abraham Dov Katz, vice president; Solomon ben Haim, cashier; Dov ben Itchak, secretary; and Moise Gang and Ghedalie Horenstein, members.

In 1882, the existence of a brotherhood mutual assistance society was announced, providing a physician and free medication.^[A-110] In 1889, Tomhei Ani'im was a well-established society that provided clothes for poor children. It was chaired by I. Lazar and Saie Steinberg, the latter was involved in community life until after World War I.^[A-111] In 1894, Achim, a youth organization, was established to help the poor. The committee included Leon Landman, Herman Wechsler, H. Spirt, and Isidor Lazar. In 1895, Achim donated several items of furniture to the community's school. The traditional ladies' charity activities were formally organized some years later.

The Zionist organization played an important role in the community life of the Jewish population in Podu Iloaiei. The first section of Hovevei Zion^[B-17] was set up in 1891 and was still active in 1894, when it sent its delegate Saie Steinberg to the congress in Galati.^[A-112] Subsequently, its activities diminished, and, at the end of 1901, the society Carmel was reopened at the initiative of Ghersen Cohn.^[A-113] Carmel had 35 members. In April 1902, the Maccabea branch was established, and was chaired by Iosef Solomon. The medical student Albert Spirt lectured. Sometime later, the Zionist society Dr. Herzl's Youngsters was established. It had 40 members, a reading group, and a committee led by Elias Reisch. At the congress in Bucharest in 1903, the young men Michel Sor and Iosef Rosental were delegated. The societies Carmel and Dr. Herzl sent delegates from other

¹⁷ [Ed-Com] Hovevei Zion: The original modern Zionist organization established in the late 19th century.

towns to the congress in Basel. Dr. Herzl was still active in 1912 with a reading group and a library containing books in Romanian, Yiddish, Hebrew, and German. The president was the teacher I. Rosental. Literary meetings were organized quite frequently with readings in Yiddish and lectures on Jewish history. There are some data from 1914 on this society's activities. In 1915, the Zionist society Bnai Zion, Dr. Theodor Herzl merged with the group "The Light" in order to form a 150-member society. The leader was the future engineer Ghetel Buchman. The committee also included Vigder Iosupovici who later became president of the community; Adolf Kern who died during the war in 1917; Iancu Elias; the bookseller Jean Meirovici, Moise Solomon who later became the mayor's assistant; David Hers Hahamovici the self-educated tinker; Leon Sor who was still alive in 1978; Lupu Buchman who also was still alive in 1978; and Samuel Wechsler. In 1916, a Hebrew course was taught by Rubin Epstein, who was active in town until 1942 and lived to be 80 years old.

Between 1916 and 1918, any Jewish cultural activity was forbidden, and the library was closed. It was not until 1919, when the old Zionist section was reopened with six members, that the traditional celebration of Hanukkah was held, and a Hebrew course was attended by 30 students. I too, attended this course, which was held by I. Rosental. Literary meetings were also arranged at which Lupu Buchman and Simha Schwartz performed readings. The influence of the Zionists was also increasing in the community's committee. In 1922, a new committee of the organization was elected. The collection of funds and the Hebrew transformation of the school intensified. A kindergarten was set up and a sustained Zionist propaganda was carried on until the outbreak of World War II.

After a sports society was established, another one called Maccabi was founded in 1922 and remained more or less active for many years, organizing literary-artistic festivals, among other events. Moise Sor took part in the national leading committee of the Maccabi society. In 1924, Bention Nahman initiated and led a Mizrah^[B-18] youth organization that presented the play *Tzezeit in Tzeshpreit* by Shalom Aleichem. In 1933, there was also a Gordonia society.

The socialist movement had followers in Podu Iloaiei, where Petre Taranu - an activist in this movement, died during the war, together with a Jewish socialist, under mysterious circumstances. In 1919, there was a socialist society in town. Two Jewish delegates, who were born in town, took part in the congress in 1921. Moise Elias remained with the Social Democrats, while Itic Mendelovici (later known as Jack Podoleanu) voted for the "Third International" party.

The followers of the leftist movement, who had Yiddish inclinations, founded in 1924 the cultural society Shalom Aleichem. They performed in Yiddish *The Siege of Tulcin* and plays by P. Hirsbein. Their tutors were Gedale Westler (1906-1978) and Itic Svart (later known as I. Kara). The committee also included Moise Sor (1908-1968), Ioel and Sulim Finchelstein, Bianca Lozner, Ana Zaharovici, and Ghizela Solomon. The society also had a library and organized literary meetings. In 1927, after two years of existence, Shalom Aleichem merged with the society Achad Ha'am and prepared a show with the play *Manasse* by Ronetti-Roman.

¹⁸ [Ed-Com] Mizrahi: A religious Zionist organization established in the early 20th century.

In August 1926, the club Iavne opened, led by L. Buchman. There was also a chess club there. In March, the club took the name Achad Ha'am, and a new committee was elected.

There also existed in town several charity societies such as Ida Strauss, a society for the assistance of poor lying-in (confined) women. It was founded in 1912 and chaired by Ghizela Langberg. In 1919, Lupu Buchman established a philanthropic society called Baroness Clara de Hirsch for mature and young ladies. Between the two World Wars, a mutual assistance society of Jewish craftsmen, called "The Brotherhood" was also active.

The Native Jews' Union had existed in town ever since 1910. It intensified its activities around 1914, but especially after 1917, when the issue of granting citizenship to the Jews was at stake. The first decree legislating citizenship requested complicated formalities, which led the Native Jews' Union to organize a juridical office. After 1922, the importance of the Native Jews' Union diminished significantly because the Zionists supported the National Jewish Party and many Jews were registered in different political parties and thus their votes were dispersed. The elections for the leadership of the community were also an occasion for different political views and personal interests to be revealed.

Information on the various economic and professional associations is presented in other chapters.

In general, the community life of the town was never stagnant, even though there had been times—apart from the periods of maximum activity—when the activity was less intense. The fact that several local Jews asserted themselves in community, literary, or artistic life offered proof of the intense cultural and community climate.

We present biographical data on some of the most noteworthy representatives of the Jewish community in Podu Iloaiei:

GHETEL BUCHMAN: son of the leader Moise Buchman, an engineer, played an important role in the community life in Iasi.

LUPU BUCHMAN: brother of Ghetel Buchman, very influential, the author of many initiatives but only in his native town, has lived in Israel since 1981.

GHERSEN COHN: born in 1868, in his youth he was active in the press as the editor of *Di Yiddisher Tzukunft* (1899).

ELIEZER FRENKEL: born in 1920, made an early debut. His published work: *Naie Yiddisher Dichtung* (1935; co-author with I. Paner); *The Jewish Problem* (1946); *Dus Yiddisher Vort* (1947); and essays and literary criticisms.

BENTION ISCOVICI: see the chapter "The Hasidism."

I. KARA: born in 1906, historian, literary and theater critic, writer of prose. His published work: *Naie Yiddisher Dichtung* (1935; anthology); *Centuries Old Testimonies* (1947); *O Iur Yiddisher Literatur* (1947); *Yiddisher Gramatik* (1948); *A Moldevisher Yingle* (1976); and *Inghe Iurn* (1980).

IRA LANDMAN: see the chapter "The Rabbinate."

ADOLF MAGDER: principal of the community's school, URA activist. His published work since 1903: *Alia* (1913); *Great Errors* (1923); and *Wonder of Wonders* (1924).

SOLOMON PODOLEANU: publicist and historian. His published work: *The History of the Jewish Press in Romania* (1935); *Sixty Romanian Writers of Jewish Origin* (1935); and others.

ELIE ROSENTAL: see the chapter "The Rabbinat."

IULIAN SCHWARTZ (1910-1977): actor, cultural activist, and writer. His published work: *Der farkishefter shraiber* (1947); *10 Yiddisher folk sliden* (1947); *Literarische dermonungen* (1975); and *Portret in eseien* (1979).

SIMCHA SCHWARTZ (1890-1974): actor, writer, and sculptor. His published work: *Baudelaire, Verlaine*. The artistic group Cameleon (Cernauti 1931-1934). Plays: *The Theater Hakl Bakl* (Paris 1945-1956).

ITIC SVART: see I. Kara.

LITMAN VIGDER (1901-1972): community activist and writer. His published work: *Translations of Arghezi's poems in Yiddish* (1965).

GHEDALE WESTLER (1906-1978): cultural activist, reciter, and man of the theater.

10 Private and Public Education

One of the first concerns of the Jews who founded the borough was to ensure their children's education and religious training. "Melamdim" teachers were brought to town. In 1834, there were three of them—Avram, Aron, and Moise. In 1845, there were six—Meer sin Fisel, Itic sin Bercu from Iasi, Strule from Todireni, Simon sin Lupu (who owned a house), Hoisie sin Liebu, Itic sin Moise, and Moise sin Mendel (who was old and ill). In 1882, the magazine *The Brotherhood* (page 361) noted that a Talmud Torah course was taught in town for the children of the poor. Although there were several confessional schools and a modern private teacher, some of the Jewish children attended the public primary school. The 1898 statistics indicated that there were four teachers and four assistants (belfer) living in town. There were also two private teachers who taught Romanian, Yiddish, German or French, and a little Hebrew, in addition to calligraphy and arithmetic. These teachers were Ihil Glanter and Leon Cramer. The latter was qualified to work as a teacher at the newly opened primary school. The traditional education system continued to function well after the opening of the Jewish-Romanian primary school, where at least two hours a day were spent on Jewish-related topics. In 1904, there were five confessional asylums (see Appendix S).

In the commune, public education began in 1862 for boys and in 1865 for girls; but it started to function properly only after 1867. Jewish students were also accepted. However, the boys had to have their head uncovered and attend the school on Saturdays, although they did not have to write. Most of the Jews in town had difficulty accepting these rules. Despite this, in 1884, the public primary school in Podu Iloaiei had 33 boys

enrolled in the first grade, 17 of whom were Jews. There were 8 Jews and 5 Christians in the second grade, and 9 Jews and 5 Christians in the third grade. For the girls, there were 13 Jews and 13 Christians in the first grade, 12 Jews and 1 Christian in the second grade, 7 Jews and 6 Christians in the third grade, and 9 Jews and 1 Christian in the fourth grade. A school report showed that 15 of the 58 girls attending the primary school were Christian. The Jewish girls did not speak Romanian well, and they did not attend school on Saturdays and Jewish holidays.^[A-114] In the fourth grade, there were no Christian students. The girls were not taught how to sew at school, and instead of the traditional national costume, they wore “long dresses that swept the street.” The female teachers were paid poorly.

The number of Jewish students — especially the girls — remained high over the next years. In fact, in the girls’ schools the Jewish students formed the majority. The Christian girls rarely graduated from the fourth grade. Here is the situation for the boys in 1886¹⁵: first grade, 27 Christians and 6 Jews; second grade, 9 Christians and 9 Jews; third grade, 8 Christians and 6 Jews; and fourth grade, 8 Christians and 4 Jews. The situation for the girls: first grade, 12 Christians and 11 Jews; second grade, 8 Christians and 7 Jews; third grade, 2 Christians and 10 Jews; fourth grade, 1 Christian and 5 Jews. In 1891, the winners of the scholar prizes were^[A-116]: first grade, Dumitru Draganescu and Nathan Schonhaus; second grade, Haim Rotenberg and Dumitru Dumitras; third grade, Avram Zalman and Itic Leibel; and fourth grade, Vasiliu Haralamb and Gh. Cretulescu.

Alarmed by the poor attendance of the Christian students, the government came up with “the miraculous solution”: the extreme limitation of the number of Jewish students! The 1883 law for public education, which was revised in 1896, stipulated that “the foreigners [of whom 99% were Jews — author’s note] who enjoy no foreign protection will be accepted according to the school vacancies and will pay school taxes.” Actually, the increase in anti-Semitism could be felt in the schools as well. The Jews decided to open their own primary school, following the example of the school set up in Iasi. In 1898, a year marked by a serious economic crisis, and two years before the mass emigration “on foot” in 1900, the teacher Pincu Svart founded the mixed Jewish-Romanian primary school. The school continued to function without him, in its own building on Garii (Railway) Street from 1902. I also attended primary classes at this school. When the school became too small for the increasing number of students, a new building was opened in 1914, where it continues to function today. The institution was supported financially by a committee. . The funds came from school taxes, the revenues of the annual banquet, and donations. A letter published in *The Israelite Courier* (November 1, 1903, page 3) noted that “the Jewish-Romanian school in our little town functions very well. The teaching staff is made up of: A. Magder, principal; I. Horodniceanu, teacher of Romanian language; I. Rosental, I Doroscanu, and S. Finchelman, teacher of Hebrew. For the excellent situation of the school, we have to thank the gentlemen in the school’s committee and especially Mr. Z. Schor. A special thanks is owed to Mr. M. Ghetel, a rich man who donates a 1,200 lei subvention to the school each year. The committee decided to organize a banquet on October 7 in the school’s benefit.”

In August 1906, a new committee was elected, chaired by Saie Steinberg. The school functioned independently from the community, which was insufficiently organized and dealt only with cultural issues. *The Israelite Chronicle* from July 27, 1907 announced that

the school needed a principal, who could teach Romanian; it also needed a Hebrew teacher. The president of the school's committee was the engineer Leon Brill. The frequent changes in the structure of the teaching staff were due to both poor pay for teachers and the committee's ambitions. In the beginning, Barad was appointed principal, then Adolf Magder in 1903, and Grinberg in 1906/1907. In June 1909, the school's committee and the school, chaired by the popular Dr. Margosches, were looking for a teacher of Romanian and German for the first and second grades, as well as a teacher of Hebrew for the third and fourth grades. A source of funds was the traditional banquet (held on January 25, 1909). At the banquet on January 20, 1912, the students presented a show in which they recited in Romanian and Hebrew.

Even after the opening of the Jewish-Romanian primary school, some Jewish children continued to attend the courses at the public school in the hopes of avoiding the difficult graduation exam at the end of the primary cycle. The exam took place in the public school with teachers, some of whom manifested chauvinistic beliefs. However, the Jewish children studied hard. As a result, they were better trained than most of the other students. During the school year of 1911/1912, the Jewish-Romanian primary school in Podu Iloaiei had 91 boys and 56 girls.

In 1913, a committee was formed to resolve the problem of erecting a new school building. Its representative, I. Astruc promised substantial help from the I.C.A. in Paris. The central hall was planned to be large enough to serve as a place where students could spend their free time during cold and rainy days and as a room for wedding ceremonies or banquets. The school's principal, the lawyer Adolf Magder who had been the author of some much appreciated initiatives, played a special role. In 1913, he wrote about the visit paid to the school by the minister Spiru Haret who, among others, had been extremely impressed by the students' work in the vegetable garden of the Jewish-Romanian primary school. ^[A-117]

A 30-page booklet, entitled *A Celebration: The Festivity of Laying the Foundation Stone of the New Building of the Jewish-Romanian Primary School in Podu Iloaiei*, was printed in Iasi on May 11, 1914. The booklet mentioned the choir that was conducted by the Hebrew teacher Iosef Rosental. After the religious ceremony performed by the old rabbi Ira Landman, the following people spoke: S. Steinberg, Rabbi Thenen from Iasi, Moritz Wachtel, Petre Constatinescu (a member of The Students' Center in Iasi who later became an academician; he died in November 1978), Aron Rosenthal, Moses Duff, Dr. Carol Vittner, Ghizela Wechsler, H. Gerner (a lawyer who was killed in the 1941 pogrom), Ioan P. Dumitriu (a school teacher from Iasi), Adolf Magder (the school's principal and initiator of the new building), and N. Ionescu (the school inspector). Funds had been collected since 1911. The vice president of the community was Iosef Svart, my grandfather. The author of the booklet was Flodam (Adolf Magder).

The inauguration took place on January 25, 1915. *The Israelite Courier* reported on February 7: "The administrative authorities were present, as were many guests from Iasi. The festivity opened with the royal anthem and Hebrew songs performed by the school's choir. A religious ceremony followed. The following people gave speeches: Schaia Steinberg (the president of the community), Rabbi Dr. Mayer Thenen from Iasi, Mrs. Ghizela Vexler (president of the former committee for the school's building), Ghetel

Buchman (on behalf of the Zionist section), Zalman Simon (a student), Dimitri (principal of the Medie school), Gerner, Dr. Vitner (the physician at the local hospital), Ms. Clara Herscovici (principal of the Steaua - Star school), Mrs. Roza Sufrin, Dr. Fany Brandman, and Adolf Magder (the founder of the building). D. Ionescu, the delegate from the Education Ministry, concluded the series of speeches. The schoolgirls from the professional school Steaua (The Star) in Iasi and the pupils from the school Dr. Adolf Stern performed brilliantly in a play. Then, the schoolgirls from Junimea (The Youth) No. 2, The Union of the Israelite Women, and the primary school Steaua, as well as the schoolboys from the local school, recited poetry. The festivity closed with a violin concerto played by Cerbu Solomon, Wiess Vainstein, and Osias Branchfeld, the delegates from the Lyra society in Iasi. At nine o'clock that night, a banquet in the school's benefit was held in the large hall of the new building. Owing to the work of Ms. Debora Aron and Mr. Lupu Buchman, the elegant bazaar, which was tastefully arranged, surpassed all expectations. The profit, which amounted to about 1,600 lei, was mostly owing to Mr. Steinberg and Mr. Magder's contributions. Many others donated money during the banquet."

During the war years (1916-1918), the school building was used as a military hospital; the courses were held in the old building. The students participated in the work in the vegetable garden, which was located on a lot that was given to the school outside the town. After the war, the Hebrew education system was modernized; even post-school courses were taught. Following Barad, Grinberg, and Magder, the next principal was Iancu Horodniceanu. He was followed by Abis Mendelovici in 1927-1928 and then by the excellent Hebrew specialist R. Epstein. In 1921, Michel Sor, as the mayor's assistant, obtained a subvention for the school from the mayoralty. He had argued that if the Jewish children enrolled in the public school—a right they were entitled to as Romanian citizens—another school would have to be built with an enlarged teaching staff. In 1933, the school prepared 110 students for the exam. At that time, the principal was Rubin Epstein and the teachers were Etlia Marcovici and Tania Rotenstein.

In 1936, the 25th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone for the school building was celebrated. M. I. Schor was the president of the community, Michel Schor was the president of the school's committee, and Lupu Buchman was the mayor's assistant. Solomon Elias, the veteran of the committee, was also present. The school operated until 1942 when the Jews in town were evacuated to Iasi for racist reasons. The last secretary of the school was Velvl Candel, who still possessed a portion of the community's archives in the 1950s.

11 Synagogues

The documents legislating the foundation of the borough in 1823 granted tax-free land for the construction of three synagogues: two on Palade's estate, which became the center of the town of Podu Iloaiei, and one on the Scobalteni estate. These synagogues must have been made of wood, just like in most of the other new boroughs, where the owner of the estate sometimes offered free of charge wood for construction of the synagogues.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Jewish funeral processions that passed through the town stopped at a certain place on the road to the cemetery to say an “El mulei rachamin,” because at this place a synagogue had once stood. The synagogue was probably the first one to be built after the founding of the borough. Not far from this place, but closer to the Iasi-Targu Frumos highway, there was Aziels Beth Midrash, the second oldest house of prayer. You could get there by following a narrow street that emerged from the highway at one end of the main road (a kind of Moldavian “Main Street”). It is known that a synagogue’s floor must fall below the level of the street to respect psalm 130: “From deepening have I called on thee, my Lord.” But this establishment was even deeper below the ground level, so that you had to descend several stairs. According to oral tradition, this was the oldest synagogue in town. All kinds of terrifying stories were told based on the belief that at midnight, the dead left their tombs and came to pray at the synagogue. In the past, diligent students stayed at the synagogue from dawn till dark to study the Talmud. During the summer, when the synagogue’s windows were open, the students’ thoughts were sometimes diverted from their study by the voices of the young dressmakers in the neighborhood who were singing and working hard for the women in the town and the villages. Love stories were sometimes born—silent, barely recognizable, and not exactly part of the study schedule.

There was also a story about a practical joke that ended tragically: one winter night, a young Talmudist had fallen asleep over his book. Two of his colleagues, practical jokers, blocked both doors and dressed themselves in sheets. They then knocked at the window, grievously singsonging. The young man woke up and tried the front door and then the back door, but everywhere he confronted “the ghosts.” He suffered a nervous breakdown which marked him for the rest of his life.

The synagogue was destroyed during World War II.

A beautiful synagogue—named Scobalteni Sill till 1917, later renamed Iavne — was built on the place where the first synagogue in this part of the town had existed before. It was also probably made of wood and then rebuilt with bricks. Among its congregation were some of the town’s important figures, such as Moise Buchman who could read beautifully from the Torah and David Leib Davidovici.

On the same street as the Great Synagogue, was the Hahnusas Orhim synagogue, that in the beginning probably belonged to a brotherhood with the same name. Some members of its congregation were also important personalities, for example Zelman Schor. On the same street, parallel with the main street, was the Tailors’ Synagogue where the congregation consisted mainly of the craftsmen in town. There was also another house of prayer in the house of the Hasidic Rabbi Bention Iscovici.

But the most impressive synagogue both in terms of architecture and interior decoration was the Great Synagogue, which was built in 1876. An 1892 report of the Prefecture of the county of Iasi mentioned the existence in town of this synagogue and of five other houses of prayer. The Great Synagogue impressed its visitors with the quality of its traditional motifs: The Zodiac, the twelve tribes, the wailing wall, Rachel’s tomb, the illustration of the psalm “By the river of Babylon, there I sat and wept,” as well as some images of the Holy Land painted by a popular master. The wood sculpturing around the

ark and the shrine were also remarkable, rich in floral elements but also zoomorphic, symbolic, and allegorical. There were griffins, two-headed eagles, lions, and stags. The items of the creed, which were made of silver or silver-plated, were the works of the Jewish master brass smiths, silversmiths, and lace makers who were renowned in the country for their skill and talent.

The synagogue was associated with many legends, such as: the deceased members of the congregation came to pray at midnight; the synagogue being dug up already built from under the clay hill that towered over it. The latter legend was identical to that of the Great Synagogue in Iasi, which I wrote about in 1938 in Vilna in the volume *Yiddisher Folklor* (number 34, page 151; published by YIVO^[B-19]). During World War I, the synagogues in town were transformed into military hospitals. The Great Synagogue was damaged during the years of persecution and had to be demolished in 1973. The last Jewish inhabitant of Podu Iloaiei, Avram - the smith, used to go to the Great Synagogue each Friday and pray by himself.

After the demolition of the synagogues, the holy scrolls and objects of the creed were brought to Iasi. Let's not forget that during their existence the synagogues were not only "Bait Tefilah," houses of prayer, but also "Bait Medrash," houses of study. Here the Talmud and the commentaries were studied, the Bible was popularized for the adults who had not studied it thoroughly in childhood, and the children were given elements of religious training and education at the heder, the confessional school. The synagogue was also a place of gathering for debating community issues, a "Bait Knesset."

The end of the synagogues' activity in Podu Iloaiei was also due to the rapid outflow of the Jewish population. Thus, the existence of the synagogues became useless. Their remembrance will not die within the souls of those who attended them, and will continue to live perhaps in some literary depictions (see the chapter "Podu Iloaiei as Reflected in Literature").

12 Rabbinate

The creation of the rabbinate of Podu Iloaiei seemed to correspond chronologically with the founding of the borough. The 1823 document exempted two shochet houses from paying tax. One of these houses, no doubt, belonged to the rabbi, since some time during that decade the town's rabbi was invited to a wedding by the famous rabbi of Iasi named Apter Rav. ^[A-118]

I believe that this was Rabbi Moise sin Leizer, who was registered in Podu Iloaiei in the 1831 census. He was also mentioned in a Hebrew act from 1834, and the 1835 census included him at No. 63 as "Moise the rabbi, the weak old man," meaning that he was ill. We do not know how long he led his community or who followed him, but between 1868 and 1878, the position was occupied by a famous rabbinical personality: Ghedalia Aharaon, son of Itahak Zoil from Lint, son-in-law of the rabbi Smuel Aba Sapira from the well-known Hasidic and typographical center of Slavuta, and nephew of the famous

¹⁹ [Ed-Com] YIVO: A organization established in Vilna which documented European life.

Hasidic leader Pinchas from Korzec. He was born in 1814 and died in Podu Iloaiei on 15 Tevet 5638 (1878). His biblical exegesis *Chen Aharon* was printed and published by Elie Rosental in 1910 in Iasi (Progress Typography, 60 pages). The editor remembered that as a young man he had had the wonderful opportunity to listen to this appreciated rabbi's lectures and to take notes. Four decades later, he looked over the notes and published them. Elie Rosental was the author of the work *Sefer Iore Dea* (Seini 1925, 52 pages).

Uri Landman (1838-1916; also see the chapter "Podu Iloaiei as Reflected in Literature") followed in Rabbi Ghedalia's chair. He was the son of Rabbi Tvi Hirs from Strelitk and Kutu, and the nephew of Rabbi Ithak from Vijnita. According to some documents from 1892 and 1898, Uri Landman was born in Mihaileni and confirmed as rabbi by the rabbinical authorities from Lvov and Brody. He was a noble, erudite, and wise man. He also studied and wrote a lot. The writer Litman Vigder (1901-1972), who had been Landman's neighbor, told me that the common attic of their home was filled with the rabbi's manuscripts. Only one work from Landman's youth was published, a triple obituary, *Dismet Shlish* (Cernauti, 1885), dedicated to the memory of the rabbis Avraham Iaakov Fridman from Sadagura, Chanoch Henich from Alesk, and Mendel from Vijnita.

After Landman's death, no other rabbi was hired. Instead, the shochet Elie Rosental became dayan. In 1923, a group of faithful people tried to bring in a rabbi from Maramures. The candidate was an erudite Talmudist, but was less trained in the study of the Bible and modern Hebrew, and could not be accepted by the scholars in town. After Elie Rosental's death, the shochet Burah Svart became dayan. He was the last shepherd of the Jewish community in Podu Iloaiei.

The evacuation of the Jewish population from the town in 1942, and the events that followed, greatly diminished the Jewish presence in the area. The creed was being served by a shochet from Iasi, who also served Targu Frumos.

But let us return to the history of the shochets in Podu Iloaiei. The censuses from the 19th century mentioned some of their names. Let's not forget that they were the teachers of the Talmud and also the readers in the synagogue. A source from 1834 mentioned the name of Herscu the shochet, who was probably the shochet mentioned in the 1823 act. The 1845 census mentioned the shochets Marcus and Haim sin Iosup; the latter died of cholera in 1848. The 1898 foreigner's list mentioned the shochets Iosub, Elie, Haim, and Burah; Beiris was mentioned as a teacher.

During the first decade of the 20th century, several shochets, who I met as a child, worked in Podu Iloaiei. For example, Reb Beiris, a feeble and sickly old man, lived on a hill behind the Great Synagogue. He was appreciated for his devoutness, as well as his gentleness.

Elie Rosental was a tall, intelligent, ambitious, and erudite man, who was also very active and was eager to play a leading role in the community's life. He was a good Talmud and Hebrew specialist, and he also knew algebra. His sons were scholars: Iosub was, for several decades, an excellent Hebrew teacher at the Jewish school in the town, while his brother, Aron, worked in Hebrew journalism; Itoc Ioil, the third son was a tradesman, who also had good knowledge of the traditional culture. Elie Rosental dreamed of becoming a rabbi after he was elected dayan.

Moise Sor (1901-1977), a fine intellectual and a friend of mine since childhood, told me about an event that occurred around 1923-1924 when a classic machloket (conflict) began on a minor issue, but had serious implications. As a rival of Michel Sor, who was the former mayor's assistant and president of the community, Elie Rosental declared "treif" a bird that Michel had cut on a Thursday without thorough examination. My friend's father took notice and sent the chicken to the shochet Burah, who examined it carefully and declared it kosher without knowing the previous verdict. For his dishonest act, Elie was about to be dismissed. He maintained his position, however, by giving up the issue of the mikvah (the ritual bath) on which, until then, he had had an excessively strict position.

Burah Svart a very pious and good Talmudist (my brother Simcha studied with him) was a small, sickly man with a house full of children. He was appreciated for his honesty, gentleness, skill, and kindness. He became the dayan of the community after Elie Rosental's death. The shochet Heim was renowned for his intransigence on ritual issues. He would pray for a long time and was always busy with the study of the Talmud.

The youngest shochet, Moise, was a handsome man with a nice voice and a house full of children. His wife used to wear a hat over her wig (a concession to modern times), but it did not suit her for she was not that beautiful.

The evolution of the social life between the two World Wars raised many difficult problems for the religious leaders in town. Some merchants would keep their shops open on Saturdays and others would eat pork sausages in public. In general, the numerous and severe rules of the Mosaic ritual were no longer strictly respected.

Among the young people as well, controversies on acute issues were beginning to take shape. In the end, the mizrahist (religious) orientation did not prevail.

13 Hasidism

Within the general framework of traditional Jewish life in Podu Iloaiei, the Hasidism occupied an important place. In town, there were followers of different Hasidic rabbis (tzadikim), but they did not get into serious conflicts, as happened in other places. It was known that the famous tzadik David Toluer visited the town several times.^[A-119] The rabbi Ghedalia Aharaon was considered a Hasidic. Later, Rabbi Alter Aharov Arie settled in Podu Iloaiei. He was the son of the rabbi in Sulita and the nephew of the rabbi from Zloczow and the famous tzadik reb Meirl Premislaner. According to data in a report from 1892,^[A-120] the rabbi Alter Iscovici was born in 1840 in Galicia and "inherited the title of rabbi from his father."

The magazine *The Brotherhood* published a letter by Moses Schwarzfeld in 1882 (page 361) that told of a "ghiter id" in town who was visited by followers from other towns. In 1958, Heim Strulovici, the old leader of the community who settled in Podu Iloaiei in 1897, told me that primarily poor women and simple men consulted reb Alter. The rich people were the followers of the rabbis in Stefanesti, Pascani, or Buhusi.

In 1964, I obtained some information from Ruhel Klinger, an 86-year-old woman living in town. She remembered that her father had been a passionate follower of the rabbi

Ghedalia Aharov, who had died without leaving any descendents. Rabbi Alter came from Suceava around 1800. It was known that establishing a Hasidic court in a town could have favorable economic consequences; there would be followers who would come into town and who had to be hosted; businesses and marriages would be arranged, and the prestige of the place would increase. A typical example was the town of Sadagura.

After the death of the founder of the rabbinical dynasty on 7 Elul 5670 (August 1910), his son Bention, who was born in 1878, took his place. He was a strong and handsome man, but he lacked charisma. He and his entire family were killed during a bomb attack in Iasi in August 1944. They were buried in the cemetery in Pacurari (Iasi). Thus, the destiny of the Hasidic court in Podu Iloaiei tragically ended.

The rabbi's secretary was a red-bearded Jew. He was a smart man but was rather cynical and skeptical of his boss and, just like many other gabaim de tzadikim. It was known that the butlers and secretaries of important people tended to notice more the flaws than the qualities of their masters.

Itikl, the son and successor of the rabbi Bention, was 38 years old when he was killed by a bomb. As children, we had been colleagues in the study of the Talmud. We had been taught by a melamed from Lithuania, a severe but good teacher who lived at the rabbinical court. Unfortunately, his teaching qualities could not change the insufficient zeal that I had as a scholar. This was by no means a deficiency of the Hasidism in Podu Iloaiei.

To render complete the image of the religious life in Podu Iloaiei, we need to mention those erudite Talmudist merchants who contributed to the shaping of the cultural profile of the town at the beginning of the 20th century. Their presence promoted the subsequent development, even though it did so in a different way than expected and took another direction.

14 Folklore and Ethnography

The Jewish folklore in Podu Iloaiei was, of course, of Yiddish expression, although naturally, forms and influences of the Romanian local folklore can be seen.

When a child was born, the mother and the baby were defended against the evil spirits by a knife placed under the lying-in woman's pillow and by "kimpeturnbrivl," sheets of paper containing magic formulas that were pinned to the curtains, the door and the sheets that made up the canopy above the lying-in women's bed. If the newborn was a boy, on the seventh evening after his birth, just before the circumcision, the melamed came with his students to say the prayer "Shma Yisrael"^[B-20] at the lying-in woman's bed. While entering, they sang in unison "Ghitn uvnt, mozl tov" (Good evening, mazel tov) and continued with the prayer. As they left, each child received a piece of "leicheh," rhombic-shaped gingerbread. Some of the children would ask for one more piece for a small brother at home. And so would end the ceremony of "Krismeleinen."

²⁰ [Ed-Com] Shma Yisrael: A prayer recited in times of great personal danger

The child was growing, and if he fell ill, he would be treated with “upshprehn,” an exorcism, with embers extinguished in water, melted lead poured in water, and other Jewish and Romanian medicines and exorcisms. When the child was healthy, the mother would put him to sleep singing: “Inter deim kinds veighola / shteit a goldn tzighiola / Dus tzighiola iz ghefurn hondlen / rojinkes mit mondlen.” (Under the child’s carriage / Stands a golden goat / The goat is selling / Raisins and almonds / The child will learn / This is the best merchandise.) or “Dus kind vet lernen / Dus iz di beste shoire / Toire vesti lernen / Sfurim vesti shrabn / A ghiter, frimer id vesti, mirtzeshem, blabn.” (Torah he will learn / Books he will write / A good, religious Jew he will / God willing remain.)

Every pious mother’s dream was to have her boy become a rabbi. “To ire zolsti lernen / zan mit oel males / in noch tzi der chaene / vesti posken shales.” (You shall learn Torah / It should be with all good character traits / And then with the countenance / You will render legal decisions.)

There was a different song for the girls, just as their lives would be different. The mother put her baby girl to sleep singing: “Di vest lernen biholeh / Di vest shtrikn tiholeh / In groisn zal / vet zan a bal / Mit di kleidoleh vesti mahn a vint / Sluf man kind, gezind / Sluf shion in dan ri / Mah di eighioleh tzi / Mah zei tzi in ofn / Ver ghezinterheit antshlufn.” (You will learn books / You will knit kerchiefs / In a big hall / You will have a husband / With the dresses you will make a breeze / Sleep my child, healthy / Sleep restfully / Close your eyes / Close them, then open them / Go to sleep in health.)

If the child did not fall asleep, the mother would tell the story of the grandmother: “Amul, amul iz ghevein a bobitze, hot zi ghehat asa, asah kinderleh.” (Once upon a time there was a grandmother, who had many, many children.) It is a story similar to that of “The Goat with Three Kids,” a common motif in Slavic folklore. The grandmother leaves for town, ordering the children not to open the door for anyone. The children hide under the bed, under the table, behind the oven, under the trough, and in the closet. The bear comes and asks to be let in. The children refuse. The bear breaks down the door, enters, and eats the children, except for the one who hid behind the oven. When the grandmother comes back and finds out what has happened she goes into the woods and invites the bear, promising him a bath. The bear refuses twice, but cannot resist the third invitation. He comes and agrees to be given a bath. The grandmother strikes him with an ax, cuts open his belly, and saves her unharmed children, whom she bathes, changes their clothes, feeds them milk-boiled semolina, and puts them on a shovel and says: “Hait, in heider aran” (Hurry up to school).

When the child was three to four years old, he was taken to school for the first time, wrapped in a “tales,” a prayer shawl and carried in his parents’ arms. The teacher showed him the ancient Hebrew letters, hiding gingerbread letters between the pages.

The child grew and played in the field while singing an absurd little song: “Pantofl, pantofl / Der himl iz ofn / panti, panti / der himl is tzi / Der goisher got zitzt ofn feld / Eir hot a make, nisht kein ghelt.” (Pantofl, pantofl / The heaven is open / Panti, panti / The heaven is shut / The Goishe god sits in the field [cemetery] / He has a sore [blemish] / No money.) The song is perhaps an irony to the spirits of the field. As a matter of fact, many children’s songs in many languages contain expressions that mean nothing to us today.

This was the case for the counting game, which was a century old in Podu Iloaiei: “Endza, denza, dicha-dacha, pona knicha, shirl-pirl, tirl troosk / Eih hob deih arushelozt.” (The second line means I let you out.) When the last word was said, the indicated child had to run while the rest tried to catch him.

As the child grew even older, he would play “serjont-ganuv,” meaning “the thieves and the cops.” He would listen to and shiver when ghost stories were told. He would also cheer up with this absurd song: “A zin mit a reign / Di kole iz gheleign / Vus hot zi ghehat? / A inghiol / Vi hot eir gheheian? / Mendole / Hot men im bagrubn in a kendole.” (A sun with a rain / The bride is having a baby / What did she have? / A little boy / What was he called? / Mendele / Who was buried in a pail.) Because of rhyming necessities, “a coffin” was replaced with “a pail” so that it would rhyme with “Mendole.” Actually, there were happy songs for almost every name, for example: Moisole, koisole lompampir / Tontzn di vontzn hinter der tir ... Kimt di bobbe, leigt a lobe / Kimt der zeide, leigt er beide,” (Moishe ... / Insects are dancing under the door / Comes the grandmother and smacks them with a big hand / Comes the grandfather and smacks them both.) or “Itzik, spitzik nudleteshl ...” (Yitschak, pointy one, bag of noodles ...)

The girls played with dolls, usually made of rags. Their ears were pierced and they would wear a red wool thread until they got their first pair of earrings. Most of them did not go to heder, which was a type of crèche. At the Jewish-Romanian primary school, they studied in the same rooms with the boys but at separate desks. They learned to read Hebrew prayers and gained some knowledge of Hebrew. During break, the boys played “sheli sheloh, sheloh sheli.” In this game, two rows of boys face each other. One of them runs quickly toward the opposite row trying to break the chain. If the boy succeeds, he can bring back with him a “prisoner” to strengthen his team. If he does not succeed in breaking the chain, he becomes a “prisoner” himself. Then someone from the other team makes his attempt, and the game goes on until the bell rings that it is time for classes. The girls played a game with Romanian words and an anti-monarchy message! One girl sits on a stone, while the others make a circle around her and sing: “Maria sits on a stone (ter) and brushes her fair hair. Suddenly her brother Carol appears (ter).” Carol makes a rude gesture, and the girls conclude: “Maria’s a sweet angel, while Carol is a cheat.”

The children, as well as the adults, looked forward to the Jewish holidays as major events in the monotonous life of the town. The month of Tishri, the month of the autumn festivities, kept everybody in a special tension and emotion. Rosh Hashana, the confession of the sins, the penitence, and the promise to respect during the next year all 613 godly commandments and all the interdictions, prepared everybody for the day of Yom Kippur. The fast, the tears, the prayers, and the whole apocalyptic atmosphere that lasted for 24 hours marked everybody for the rest of their lives. They were relieved when the nine days of “Sikes” (Sukkot) were coming, when they could sit in the “sike” (sukka), or the “cages” as the other co inhabitants called them. But they especially looked forward to the children’s games with nuts, “hakafot”, the procession with the rolls of the Torah, the calling to the Torah of all the boys on Simchat Torah, the nuts, the apples, the grape juice, and the little flags with an apple and a candle on top that symbolized the abundance of autumn.

The game with nuts was played in three ways: “in the pit,” “ciccecode,” and “in breitl.” In the first scenario, you are supposed to throw from a distance a handful of eight nuts into a hole. Those that fall outside of the hole are taken by your game partner who throws next, and you wait to take the nuts that do not end up in the hole. In the second scenario, several nuts are placed on the ground at a distance, just like the skittles. The players try to hit them with a nut, and pick up those that they hit. For the third version called “on the board,” a board is propped up against a wall and a nut is left to slide along the board. The nuts that are hit become the possession of the thrower. Nuts were much appreciated by the children, who made up this riddle: “What is taller than a house, smaller than a mouse, sweet as sugar, and bitter as gall?” Answer: The nut tree, the nut, its core, and finally the green skin of the nut.

A fierce rivalry took place among the owners of the small flags that were made of cut, colored paper with an apple and a candle at the top of the pole. Shalom Aleichem immortalized this tradition in his story *The Little Flag*.

Hanukkah was impatiently awaited not only for the story of the Maccabei’s heroism, the cheering little candles, and the tasty food, but also for the Hanukkah gelt, the money offered as a present to the children by their parents, relatives, neighbors, and friends. The children would then buy pictures, marbles, toys, or even a small sleigh.

It would be futile to try to describe the cheer during Purim—the groups of masked people going from house to house sometimes accompanied by fiddlers performing folkloric plays on biblical subjects.

“Purim-shpiler,” the amateur artists of Purim, were not only boys but also poor adults for whom the money they obtained from performing on Purim made up an important “capital.” Among them “Ieruel the barefooted,” nicknamed “the little horse,” was outstanding. His nickname came from his Purim activities. In his Purim-shpil band, he played the part of Haman riding a horse that was symbolized by a broomstick. The “company” was made up of family members: sons, nephews, and sons-in-law. Locally, the tradition was maintained until the outbreak of World War II.

Also in honor of Purim there was a one-man show. The “artist” was Haim “parah,” the bald, who was helped by his protean hat. As a “civilian,” he was a poor, silent, and sad man, but on Purim he would juggle with his old, overworn, floppy hat. He would call it a cap, parodying a Jew from the country, or he would imagine it to be a straw hat and introduce us to a knave. At the end of his show, he would pretend it was an officer’s cap and recite: Bin ich mir ghevorn a maiur / zei ech mer us vi a Shvartz iur.” (Poor me, I became a major / and I look like hell). Also on Purim, Gypsy music bands and fiddlers stopped by the houses playing the fiddle, the flute, and the kobza. At each house, the Gypsies would receive some money, sweets, or a glass of wine. The Christians in town named the day of Purim “Haman,” and took great pleasure in tasting the delicious “hamantashen”, and exchanging the recipe for that of the famous Easter cakes.

Pesach was preceded by “Shabbat Hagadol,” which was related to a most peculiar tradition (see the short story *Dudl Consul* in the annexed anthology).

The most anticipated segment of the Seder on Pesach was that with the “afikoimen,” the piece of unleavened bread hidden at the beginning of the ceremony. Whoever found it received a present.

The trips on “Leckboimer” (Lag BaOmer) to the Holmului hill—the arch target shooting, the fights in the grass, and the meal served in common—were a joy. On Shavuot (Shvies), the children were charmed by “Akdumes,” the festive recitation, the milk-based foods, and the permission to take a bath in the Bahlui River.

On Tisha be Av, the boys felt obligated to throw thistles in the girls’ hair and the men’s beards. It would bring tears to your eyes if you tried to pull out the thistles—real vegetal hatch hogs.

As the children grew up, they started singing love songs: “A libe, a libe iz ghit tzi shpiln / Mit a mentshn, nisht mit dir.” (A love, a love is good to play / With a good person, not with you.) Others would sing more serious songs: “Mu adabru, mu asapru, oidchu, oidchu, tam-ta-ra-dei-ram / Ver ken zugn in dersheiln, vus der eins batat.” (What can we say, what can we tell, more, more / Who can tell and retell what means one.) They also sang a version of “Ehad mi iodea?” from the night of Pesach. It goes like this: One is the only God; two - the tables of the laws; three - the patriarchs; four - their wives; five - the Pentateuch; six - the sections of the Talmud; seven - the days of the week; eight - the circumcision term; nine - the pregnancy; 10 - the Decalogue; 11 - the stars in Iosef’s dream; and 12 - the zodiac.

Popular creativity also cultivated humor and satire, especially against the injustices, abuses, and lack of knowledge. The bar tenants were satirized because they did not have much in common with the knowledge of books. For example, a bar tenant says before Yom Kippur that he does not remember whether the prayer starts with “kol” or “bol”, but is sure that the second word is “ghidre.” The bar tender is referring to “Kol nidre,” but he cannot tell the difference between two letters that look similar in Hebrew: K and B, and G and N. Another anecdote tells of a lecture held on Yom Kippur by a rich bar tenant in front of the minian he has organized at his house together with the bar tenants from the neighbouring villages: “Brothers! Hant iz aza groiser tug, bold vi <<ziua crucii (the day of the Cross)>>; vet ir zan evlavios, vet dumnezeu zan bucuros, az nishte, tu-va-n dumnezeii mamii voastre ^[B-21] ... in zugts <<Lamnateiah>>. A rival shouts: “There is no need of <<Lamnateiah>>.”

From among the proverbs and sayings, I have mentioned: “Eine baklugt zic, az dus steirtichl iz ir shiter, di andere-az di momelighe iz ir biter” (One woman complains / That the kerchief is not woven thick / The other that her cornmeal is bitter.) or “Veir’shot pares, deir tontzt zares” or the complaint of the daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law: “Ghei ech pavole / Zugt zi az ich-bin moale, ghei ich gich / ras ich di shich.” (When I walk slowly / She says I am small / When I walk fast / I tear the shoes.)

Here are several examples of the local Yiddish folklore as it was before World War I. The choreographic folklore included “nohbe-tontz,” “vulehl,” “serbl,” and broighes-tontz,” while the musical folklore had “nigunim”, especially the Hasidic one. The

²¹ [Ed-Com] Romanian for I obscenity in your mother’s gods

ethnographic “arsenal” included the “dreidl,” the Hanukkah spinning top made of lead; the beautiful “Tfilin-zekl” and “Tales-zekl,” the bags for carrying the phylacteries and the prayer shawl that a fiancée would embroider just before marriage; as well as other ritual embroideries for the Sabbath, Pesach, and other holidays. We have to mention the calligraphers, who made the ritual “graphics” (such as mizrah and kevisi), the stone and wood carvers, the lace makers, the silversmiths and others, all of whom were masters of the Jewish popular art. The musical art practiced by the choristers was much appreciated as it carried on a many centuries old tradition.

Let us not forget about the “badhen,” the popular troubadour who, at weddings and family parties sang satirical or moralizing songs, made up flattering verse, and at the beginning of the 20th century, was the one to order the quadrille paces: “avansei, balansei, aine dame for ...”

The specific culinary art included the cakes for the Sabbath and other holidays (especially Purim), hamantashen, kiholeh, petzea, ciulnt, all kinds of cornflower pastries, leventze, gingerbread, and other traditional cakes, which were representative of the ethnographic nature of the Jews in Podu Iloaiei.

A sociological curiosity was the way in which the children addressed their parents. The most frequent names were “Tote” and “Mome,” that is Granpa and Granma. In more modern families, the names were “Fater” and “Muter,” that is Papa and Mama. The native language was Yiddish, which was spoken even by the Christian employees. All Jews spoke Romanian, and often used the Moldavian dialect. Most of them read newspapers and wrote in Romanian. Only the “up-town” fiancés would write a short letter to their fiancées (and vice versa) in a sui generis German or French, which was often the creation of the teacher who tutored these young men and women. Anyhow, we were connected to the European cultural trends. ... The public library that was endowed with books in Yiddish, Romanian, Hebrew, and later German and French existed in Podu Iloaiei from the beginning of the 20th century. This being told, I feel that I have digressed from the theme of this chapter, which was dedicated to folklore and ethnography.

15 Podu Iloaiei as Depicted in Literary Works

The small town of Podu Iloaiei has not often been described in the Romanian literature, and its image is far from complete. Sometime around 1840, C. Negruzzi described a rather negative image of the place.

For M. Kogalniceanu (*The Physiology of the Provincial*) in 1844, “women between the ages of 15 and 40 should live at least in Sulitoae or Odobesti, in Herta or Agiud, in Memornita or Podul Eloaie (Pont d’Aloia as it was said in an inspired or transpired translation). It’s like they are born in Iasi, which means they are just as good to be loved.” Vasile Alecsandri visited in 1846: “Millo’s house in Podul Iloaiei ...”

At the beginning of the 20th century, the humorist Gh. Braescu wrote in his story *The Lucky Man* (*Selected Works*, volume 1, Bucharest, 1967, pages 103-107): “The new

cabinet minister for tolerance visited his native town, Podul Iloaiei (the Moldavians call it Podliloaiei), and asked the people ‘What are your concerns? What do you need?’ He was asked for nails, an iron plate, a secondary school, glass, and the Jewish glass seller kept on insisting on windows.”

Beno Solomon published a story *The Raaiaei Town* in 1934 in the magazine *Adam* (No. 67, 68, and 69) about his childhood memories of the small town of “Podeloi” (the Yiddish name for Podu Iloaiei).

Naturally, the Yiddish literature has been more generous with this particular shtetl, which was mentioned by Adolf Magder in his work *Alia*, published in Romanian in 1912.

The dramatist Isac Abramovici wrote *The Cheated Father-In-Law*, a Yiddish comedy inspired by A. Goldfaden’s *The Two Kune-Leml*. The plot and characters are set in Podu Iloaiei, but nothing specifically links the comedy with this place. The manuscript was kept in the archive of the writer Iulian Schwartz, who mentioned the manuscript on page 22 of his book *Literarische dermonungen* (Bucharest, 1975).

An accomplished satirical description of day-to-day life in the town in 1919 was given in a revue show conceived by Ghetel Buchman (who was killed in 1941 during the pogrom in Iasi), Lupu Buchman, and the engineer I. Kern. Simcha Schwartz (1900-1974), who was well known in the theater world and was also a writer and sculptor, published several excerpts of the novel *Podeloi* in Yiddish papers. The famous poet Itic Manger wrote *The Ballad of the Rabbi of Podu Iloaiei*. I. Kara depicted the life of the town in his works *A Moldevisher Yingle (A Boy From Moldova)*; Bucharest, Kriterion Publishing House, 1976) and *Inghe Iurn In ... Veiniker Inghe (Young Years and Older Years)*; Bucharest, Kriterion Publishing House, 1980). We mention the following stories: *A Boy From Moldova*, *Calman the Medicine Man*, *Dudl Consul*, along with an excerpt from the novel *The Spring of 1917* which was published by Iulian Schwartz (1910-1977) in the anthology *Bukareshter Shriftn*, I, 1978, pages 76-82.

Interesting memories about Podu Iloaiei and Hirtau were published in Israel by M. Landau (1894-1976). More recently, the musician Iehosua Gurevici published *Steitleh Mit Idn* in Yiddish (Tel Aviv, 1975), and later a shorter Romanian version under the title *From Podul Iloaie to Vacaresti Street*^[B-22].

The image of the town is completed by the local folklore discovered and published by I. Kara in *Czernowitzer Bleter*, *Oifgang*, and *Yivo-Sriftn*, and by Iulian Schwartz in *Bucharest Writings* in Yiddish (volume IV, 1981).

For a comparison of Podu Iloaiei with other small towns in Moldova, Maramures, and Bukovina^[B-23], we recommend the works of the poets Iacob Groper (1890-1966), Leon Bertis (1900-1980), and Samsn Ferst (1886-1968), and the works of the writers Luta Enghelberg (1878-1948), David Rubin (1893-1977), I. Vaidenfeld (1884-1966), H. Goldenstein, M. Held, D. Ionas, and V. Tamburu.

²² [Ed-Com] Vacaresti: a famous street in Bucharest.

²³ [Ed-Com] Moldova, Maramures, and Bukovina are some of the historical provinces of Romania.

There are, of course, other works to be mentioned that were written either in Romanian or Yiddish and were published in Israel but were not available to us. It is possible that other works concerning Podu Iloaiei may still come up.

15.1 *The Ballad of the Rabbi of Podu Iloaiei*

By Itic Manger

The old rabbi from the town of Lelioaiei
 His forehead wrinkled with worry, says promptly:
 “The night has covered every lawn
 What have I done since it was dawn?”
 His silent hands light a candle
 His tired face reflects a light that’s even greater
 Weak, his fingers move attentively to all
 The shadows quiver strangely on the wall:
 “I’ve prayed, I’ve saddened, and I’ve wept
 Comfort to me the psalms forever kept”
 He murmurs, his heart throbs with pain:
 “On this week’s day, my sadness brought shame”
 He puts on the clothes he keeps for days of joy
 And slowly walks along the way.
 He sees the stars above as embers smoldering
 To him, small silver flowers flickering:
 “A miracle beyond compare, that has never been;
 Praised be, my Lord, for this day and night have not
 Been tainted with the shame my sadness brought!”
 But look, the street lamp trembles in the night
 Playing with shadows of whispers hiding from the light,
 And see the servant take to the black well
 A horse. When suddenly a distant trill
 Comes in his ears, listens carefully,
 A rustle of wings, an endless tune may be.
 The old rabbi from the town of Lelioaiei
 His forehead wrinkled with worry, says promptly:
 “It feels so good to walk on ground
 Each step is a pray, each move is a sound”
 He walks and his beard is waving in the wind
 ... Of grief, drained has become his eyes’ light spring
 The old man is blind; but his heart bold
 And light finds ways across the world,
 Blue paths, from ancient, sacred times.
 The woods enclose him; the springs call out high,
 His steps are each a prayer to the skies.
 Watching, the trees stand up as magic swords
 To the beautiful paths, they’re humble guards.

The woods enclose him even more and stronger
The old man feels weak and death can wait no longer
He lies as grass cut in the glades
As golden wheat is devoured by hungry sickles' blades.
The thoughtful midnight now comes down
Over the old man who has fallen on the ground:
- What whisper thee, old man? - I sing as once.
- Thy face is pale. - My heart is light.
- You're shivering with cold. - I do not feel,
Sweet, holy spirit soothes all my pain.
- Confess thee, brother. - I cannot, poor me
My past is grief and tears. I sit here silently.
For tears taint the face of earth
And the grace of this day's light diminishes.
The old rabbi from Lelioaiei town
To the night responds in a wise voice.
So dies the old man; the moon grows paler,
And with a smile, whispers in secret:
"Only the right and kind are worthy
of such a death, oh heavenly father!"

—Translated from Yiddish to Romanian by I. Kara

15.2 *The Rabbi of Podu Iloaiei*

by I. Kara

An old man of medium height, broad-shouldered, with a snow-white beard, a sharp, intelligent look underneath his long, silvery, rich eyebrows, and a strong, pleasant voice, dressed in modest, clean clothes, as is proper for a learned man. This is how I saw him 60 years ago.

On the eve of Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement, just before the Kol Nidre prayer, said for the absolution of the faithful from punishment for their disregarded oaths, he was standing humbly in front of the altar in the large synagogue. He was dressed in white from head to heels, his tales for prayer embroidered with silver thread though stained yellow because of long time use, murmuring passionately “Tefilah zaka,” the introduction prayer that shakes the souls of the faithful with emotion. Silently, in his inner self with tears and prayers and a high sense of responsibility for the mission he chose to assume, he was defending his flock on the terrible day of the final judgement.

Rabbi Ira (Uri) Landman, grandson of the tzadik of Strelite, was born in that Galician town on 24 Iyar 5598, meaning the spring of 1838. Having a sharp mind and inclined to study, he devoted himself to knowledge since his early youth. His ingenious commentaries were written in a capricious handwriting on long sheets of paper, which, to the end of his life, amassed in huge piles in the attic of his modest home. A small part of his works, written when he was young, was published in Cernauti in 1885 under the title *Salom's Tears*, a three-part necrology of some famous Hasidic rabbis. In town, where several other learned men were living, the rumor went that he could conceive a thousand interpretations concerning only the first word in the Bible, “Bereshit”.

Although he led quite a secluded life, the world was no stranger to him. Since he was known to be a peace lover, he was often called on to mediate when delicate issues were at stake. In his older years, he was no longer an adept of the Hasidic law; though the rabbis from Pascani and Buhusi appealed to him on a dispute concerning a possible in-law relation between them.

His opposition to the Hasidic law was discrete but constant. The tzadiks from Pascani and Stefanesti had many adepts in town. Actually, a real Hasidic dynasty descending from Rabbi Meir from Premislean was established here. After 1860, Reb Alter founded this Hasidic center. He was followed by his son Ben Zion, who was killed with his entire family during the 1944 bombing.

At nightfall, on the Saturday of “sales-sides,” the learned of the town would come to see Rabbi Ira and discuss his commentaries at that week’s pericopa. He was also known for his intelligent, subtle humor, as well as for his morality. Even in his youth, he was greatly appreciated: “The Moldavian Jews recognize but three rabbi figures - Moshe Rabenu, Sifsei Hahamim (also known as Sabetai Bas from Prague who was a famous popularizer), and Reb Meir Premislaner.” As an elder, he was asked to see a stubborn man who refused to divorce his wife with whom he no longer lived. The wise, old man answered by

adapting an old popular saying: “Er heirt mich vi dem ruv” (meaning he follows my advice as the rabbi’s, which could also be interpreted as he follows my advice as the cat’s). Mocking his poor living conditions, he once said: “If you want to say that a house is in good wealth with plenty of food and clothes, you may say ‘There is some extra for the rabbi, but it will probably never get to the rabbi.’”

Talking about a local moneylender, Avram from the huts, he used to say: “Now, his money keeps on multiplying even when he sleeps; in exchange, at the final judgement, he will sleep and above him the grass will keep on growing” (meaning he will not reach eternal life). His satirical remarks remained in the memory of the local people. Thus, in town, the story went about one time when the rabbi had to go to Iasi. He had agreed with the wagoner not to take along the women who were going to sell chickens to the market in Iasi. The wagoner did not keep his word. In the morning when the wagon stopped in front of the rabbi’s house, it was crowded, which upset the rabbi. Then, a bold woman asked him: “Why don’t you like to travel with us, Mr. Rabbi? Is it that you hate us so much?” “On the contrary,” the rabbi sharply said and got up in the wagon. Another time, a woman came to him to complain that the boiling milk had spilled and got into the meat pot. The rabbi answered with a play on words in Yiddish: “If you had not hurried to the neighbors, the milk would not have spilled, either.”

One more of his quips: The prefect of Iasi heard that a wise rabbi lives in Podu Iloaiei. One time, when he was inspecting the town, he called on the president of the community and asked him to arrange a meeting with the rabbi. The president chose the Hasidic rabbi who owned a better house. The discussion with this rabbi did not impress the prefect who expressed his disappointment on his way back. The president of the community told him that there is one more rabbi in town, and they went to the Rabbi Ira. The discussion, which was led by a translator, impressed the prefect who expressed his consternation that the first rabbi, whom he thought wasn’t too great, lives so comfortably while the wise Rabbi Ira does not enjoy the same conditions. Rabbi Ira Landman answered: “The other rabbi makes his living from the Jews’ troubles, while my life depends on their joys.” The prefect was delighted with the answer.

Rabbi Ira used to say: “A community rabbi is like a headache, a Hasidic rabbi is like a stomachache; if your stomach aches, you don’t know exactly what it is, while with the headache you know exactly what and where it hurts.”

During the last years of his life, Rabbi Ira was sick for long periods of time. He became blind and someone had to take him by the hand to the synagogue, but he did not lose his sense of humor. Once, a child who did not enjoy studying was brought to him, and, as proof, the child could not answer even the most elementary questions about the Bible. So the rabbi exclaimed: “The rabbi of Podu Iloaiei cannot leave his congregation at this time, for this boy is not able to replace him.” The first months of the 1916 war brought many troubles to Rabbi Ira. When his end was near, his son-in-law Iosl Schapira, the great grandson of the famous Rabbi Levi Itzac of Berdicev, was standing next to him. Iosl asked his father-in-law to give him his blessing. The old man answered: “You should give me your blessing, for our Heavenly Father listens to you more.” Then, he took his son-in-law’s hand, kissed it, and then passed away. A biblical expression could describe this as “death through a kiss.”

15.3 *Podu Iloaiei*

by Simcha Schwartz

In town, nobody knows how many years old Zeida a Babii is. Since they can remember, he has had a white, curly beard and rosy, skinny cheeks almost like a baby's. Still, Marcu Ghetel is the only one who knows Zeida from his youth, from the time when they were partners in taking care of the town's taxes—a job they took over from the old Greek—and collecting the tax for passage on the bridge over the Bahlui river.

How many years ago did this happen? Mr. Marcu pretends not to remember. And the mystery of their old age haunts the imagination of the townspeople. Mr. Zeida has no idea how old Marcu is, and Mr. Marcu takes his revenge by saying: "I don't remember well."

But Kiva, the janitor of the synagogue, tells a story from which it becomes clear that "the old rotter," meaning Zeida, is almost 90. He heard the story from his grandfather, blessed be his name: It was sometime in the year 1859, when King Cuza took the throne. One day, the king passed through the town. It was the fast day of Tisha B'Av. It was incredibly hot, and the Jews, with their beards all tangled and wearing long coats and striped cloaks, were standing idly around the market tables and talking endlessly, so that the fast day would pass easily. Suddenly a beautiful carriage stopped right in the middle of the marketplace, and a young nobleman stepped down, wearing polished boots, a long mantle, and a small, black beard, as the French fashion dictated. He said in a loud voice: "Who's the boss in this town?" The people didn't realize what was really happening, and the "nobleman" continued angrily: "Why, masters, do you still use forged weights?"^{xx} (text mentions Turkish Oka, which is a measurement tool that was adopted from the Turkish people, but which later was forged, in the sense that it was lighter than it indicated, being carved in its interior, thus fooling people into thinking they were getting more product than they actually were). Why do you sit here, around the tables, doing nothing instead of working your lazy bones? I shall give you land, as to the peasants. I shall see that you will be given land to work, you lazy ones!" While saying this, he took a small notebook from his pocket, wrote something in it, said goodbye, and went back to Iasi.

At first, they all thought he was some unknown, local nobleman, and they were merely surprised. But when they finally realized that it was the new king, the whole town started to worry: "My Lord, what a misfortune, what a calamity." They all ran to Mr. Zeida who, as a "friend" of the Greek who had much influence in the royal court, could give them advice.

Back then, Zeida was a man passed the age of 40, and his oldest son, Duvid Leib, was already married. Kiva makes all sorts of calculations, and he is very close to finding out Zeida's exact age. Just then, Dudl Consul opposes, contesting Kiva's calculations. The

dispute is ready to begin. Dudl argues that 1869 is the year that Cuza ^[B-24] took the throne. This infuriates Kiva who looks straight at Dudl, plays nervously with his beard, and tells his opponent that “his head is full of manure” and that all he says is rubbish. “How could Cuza become king in ’69, when he was forced to abdicate by Bratianu in 1960 and King Carol was brought to the throne in ’66.”

Dudl would have had something to say against the year ’66, with which Kiva would have contradicted him in front of the other people. But he felt that they would not agree with him. Kiva was right, since 40 years of King Carol’s rule was being celebrated right then.

So Kiva should be attacked from his weak side. Dudl attacks: “Let’s leave the calculations. Anyway, Zeida remains the most honorable man in town.” This time, Dudl didn’t fail. Kiva’s large beard moves with indignation: “Why? Maybe because, since I’ve known him, he has never given a nickel to the synagogue? Or to the poor?” Dudl answers back: “The town would not be the same without Zeida. Who managed to save the old public bath from demolition? I believe it was Zeida! Who talked the prefect into granting us a new place for the cemetery? He resolved many of our problems with his tears. Who brought forgiveness from King Cuza for giving us land? Wasn’t it Zeida? He went to the palace in Iasi. He threw himself at the king’s feet, he cried, ripped his beard, he persuaded the king to leave our town in peace.”

“Really! Big deal! And now that the Jews from Bivolari have land, is their life worse than ours is? Stupid cows! You think that fighting for a bargain with the peasants, for a weight of salt or a box of fuel oil is a better thing than working the land?”

So the fight went on, and the people forgot about calculating Zeida’s age, which remained an unsearched, blessed treasure.

—Translated from Yiddish to Romanian by I. Kara

Yiddish Translator’s Note

I bring here some extra information about the real heroes of this story. The writer Litman Vigder (1901-1972) told me about some episodes characteristic of Zeida a Babii. The news of Theodor Herzl’s death was much discussed by the townspeople. Surprised, the old Zeida asked: “Was he an important man? How much money did he leave?”

Zeida’s wife was deaf and even stingier than he was. If someone entered their home and asked her for a loan (she was also a moneylender), she would think that the person is a beggar and yell to Zeida from the kitchen: “Zeida, don’t give away a thing!”

After World War I, the old man deteriorated. It was a sad thing to see the physical and psychic degradation of a man whom, hardhearted as he was, used to be one of the community’s leaders.

²⁴ [Ed-Com] Cuza – Alexandru Ioan Cuza was the first Romanian king to rule the newly united counties of “The Romanian County” and Moldova, known since 1862 as Romania. He ruled from 1859 until 1866, when he was forced to abdicate.

Regarding the millionaire (in gold lei) Marcu Ghetel's spirit of economy, I remember the following story from 1919. To increase the number of riders on the railroads, fourth-class carriages were introduced on local routes; the carriages were actually trucks with wooden banks barely holding, and it was hard to climb in. Marcu Ghetel, almost 100 years old, had some business in Iasi. Following his eagerness to save money, he bought himself a fourth class ticket. When asked why, he answered: "Because there's no fifth class." It's true! Still, he donated a considerable sum of money to the primary Jewish-Romanian school in town that now bears his name.

When the news of Herzl's death was heard, Jan Meirovici, book seller and "printer" of the town (he printed "business cards"), member of the committee, and candidate to the position of community leader, displayed in his shop window a large portrait of this great personality draped in black. An employee of the town hall saw the portrait and discretely asked whom it represented. Meirovici informed him: "There used to be one Theodor who died, and this is his photo." This Meirovici was the first to publish illustrated postal cards depicting the primary Jewish school and the main streets of the town.

15.4 "Podeloier Times" ("Podu Iloaiei Hotchpotch")

World War I and the great changes it brought in Europe, especially the reunification of Romania, had among its consequences a remarkable increase in the Jewish population — both in quantity and quality — which strongly influenced the "local" Jews' cultural life, including the amateur theater. The amateur theater troupes, who had been performing since the end of the 19th century, were no longer satisfied with the old repertoire. They were looking for modern plays dealing with that time's reality — plays written in a more alert style, taking as a model the Romanian revue shows or, after 1919, the shows performed by the couple I.Sternberg-I.Botosanski who came from the other side of the Prut River ^[B-25] in 1914 and led a remarkable cultural activity.

Young intellectuals from small towns like Podu Iloaiei, Buhusi, Moinesti, and later Falticeni, Botosani, and other places, imagined revue shows on themes of local interest and with a marked satirical-social message. Several young people from Podu Iloaiei — the student Ghetel Buchman who was murdered in 1941 during the Iasi pogrom, the engineer Iancu Kern who died in the United States at an old age, and Simcha Schwartz (1900-1974) who later became a famous sculptor — wrote together the text and music, did the scene painting (with the help of Hamburger, the excellent makeup specialist from Iasi), found "actors" like A. Mendelovici (now a retired physician in Iasi), Levi Leibovici, Aron Iosupovici, and Velvl Buchman, and performed in the revue show "Podu Iloaiei Hotchpotch," twice in Podu Iloaiei and once in Tirgu Frumos.

It was the winter of 1919/1920, and the public impatiently awaited the premiere of the show to be presented in the local Yiddish dialect. The literary value of Sim Schwartz's prologue was higher than that of the parts written by the other two co-authors who used

²⁵ [Ed-Com] The other side of the Prut River means the part of Moldavia which was taken by the Russians in 1878, reunited with Romania in 1918, but taken once more in 1940 – old Basarabia – presently, the Republic of Moldova.

the pseudonyms Leteg and Bokai (Ghetel and Iakob, respectively). The author himself performed the prologue, and the text became known in Bucharest and Cernauti, and then in Paris, Buenos Aires, Holland, Eretz Israel, and elsewhere. None of the co-authors—nor their relatives or friends—was spared from the satire’s sting. The following is the Romanian version of this prologue, which was sung on the motif from the “Hakdumot” prayers recited on Shavuot:

“Akdumois milin”
Before I start babbling, my beloved brothers,
Insistently I ask you, don’t become upset.
We shall start right now with a serious matter
And later end with a lunch prayer
Here, we shall serve dishes that are special
By choice or fix menu, all at reduced prices.
The hotchpotch is boiled in butter and honey
Still, we couldn’t leave apart just a bit of venom
The cooks put in lots and lots of salt
They do not know much; it is not their fault.
When one cook is deaf, the other is blind
And one who knows music cries out “Ghevalt”
The first one wants profit, but loses it all
With empty words, another fills the whole world,
The first one studies the undead and ghosts
The other, from the Bible all the verses quotes.
The first one, when sees something
Falls to its feet, declaring his love
The other likes old papers, I say,
And reads them all as the calf eats hay.
They cooked this hotchpotch, since
It’s said in the book “with raw beans.”
Reb Eli served us with ritual water
Mr. Hers Swars—some boiled gizzard.
Zeilig Moser gave us kosher meat
As the saying goes “like Usar’s girl” ^[B-26]
Moise Buchman readily sold us wood for fire
While Arn Rosental put some gas on fire ^[B-27]
Iancu Leibovici rings the bell if danger
Ianculovici, Iosupovici bring a fire engine
David Leib Davidovici has good intentions.
The hotchpotch is ready thanks to all this help
So the good old tradition requires

²⁶ [Ed-Com] This is a play on words. Kosher in Romanian is spelled cusar and the Hebrew name Asher is spelled Usar. (The Romanian S is pronounced as an English SH). In Hebrew, Kasher can be read as K-Asher, meaning “Like Asher”.

²⁷ [Ed-Com] Putting gas on fire means to be lazy.

*And, please, don't give up just now.
Do not frown, come one, we're even
And the hotchpotch will be served in just a minute.*

It would be too much to translate the whole text, which is composed of innuendoes that were familiar only to the local audience. It made a list of the small, local habits. Most of the people mentioned in the text were actually flattered to be at the center of “public attention.” The rest showed “bonne mine au mauvais jeu,” meaning good face for nasty jokes, while those who threatened to sue for defamation only increased the humor, success, and efficiency of the show, beyond its theatrical scope.

Dr. A. Mendelovici (1902-1980) who helped me reconstitute some of the verses, told me how much enthusiasm was put into the rehearsal and performance of this show, which, as a fact, had a short life on stage. The young artists went their separate ways and chose more “serious” careers. Still, the taste of the “Hotchpotch” remains on the lips of those who tasted it, back in those days.

15.5 A Boy from Moldova

by I. Kara

If the angel of life had forgot to hit a fillip under my nose, so I forgot everything that happened up in the heavens before I was born, I could have told you all about my genealogy. I could have told you about my father's grandpa, his father's father, Nuham sin Hers, also known as the “cheese man,” since he traded “products” like fresh and processed cheese, lambs, wool, and skins. I stumbled upon his name in the 1849 census for Podu Iloaiei, my native town. The town was founded around 1816 in the Iasi district, in the vicinity of a small inn and bridge that were in the custody of a woman named Leia or Lelioaia, and so the name of the town became Podu Lelioaiei. The bridge over the Bahlui River is still standing, although it has been rebuilt.

Maybe I could have mentioned my father's grandma, his mother's mother, Motl, a short, agile old lady who would not let our parents spank us, telling them “don't hit the child” in Romanian so we would not understand. And they would listen to her. I was only three years old when she passed away, and I can only see her image as in a hazy dream.

I remember my great grandmother Basie much better—a tall, clever lady but moody and fastidious. If she were offered a seat among the older ladies at a wedding, she would be upset that they had put her among the “hags,” and if her place was with the younger women, she would complain that they had placed her with the “teenagers”. Yes, it was hard to satisfy great grandma.

I shall spare you my nostalgic memories about all my uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives from several generations. I won't go and describe my little town—all hidden among the hills, covered by forests, and close to the swamps of the Bahlui riverbed. The mosquitoes, malaria, and frog concerts are no source of inspiration.

I don't really remember any particular event before my fifth birthday. When I passed thirteen and, since I did not show a great deal of enthusiasm for my morning prayers, old Hana, the cook, would reproach me about my indifference and recall the time when I was less than three years old and would wear a towel instead of a "tales" and go visit the neighbors singing the Friday night prayer "Lecha N'Ranana" to everybody's amusement. "But now....- she used to say, and then let the sentence unfinished...." "Now it's different; my mind should no longer be as a three-year-old's," I would answer her silently in my thoughts.

From the time of "heder," our modest confessionnal school, I shall evoke only several moments. Iosl "belfer," the teacher's substitute, would come home in the morning, recite the prayer together with the kids, and then take them to school. He carried a basket with the children's lunch on his back. During the rainy and muddy days in autumn, he would carry us on his back too. Each period with its own means of transportation.....

The "restrooms" at the heder were "natural." During the breaks, the kids would line up on the bank of the Bahlui River, and relieve nature with the open sky above their heads. If one considered that he was too close to the kid next to him, he would remember a local tradition and start shouting: "Your mother will give birth to cats!" And, since no one would have liked his mother to give birth to kittens, the person would move away without paying attention to what he trampled on. After the break, the air in the class didn't exactly smell like roses.

Strul melamed, my first teacher, was a good-looking man, broad-shouldered with a black beard and brown eyes. He had a good heart and, as a teacher, fulfilled his duties quite well. Soon, we moved to a more modern confessionnal school, with desks in rows and a blackboard, just like in the primary school. Here we studied the Pentateuch and even modern Hebrew using S. A. Gold's schoolbook printed by Samitca at Craiova. I still have one of those schoolbooks from 1912; I don't remember which edition. Even before I registered in the primary "Jewish-Romanian" school in town, our mother had taught us to read in Romanian and "a bit of French." During the Balkan war in 1913, I was able to read the headlines in the papers. The first grade of the primary school was no problem for me. Our mother, Ester, was an intelligent and beautiful woman, and she could adapt to all sorts of changes in life. She was born in Tirgu Ocna, in a family where the father was a ritual chicken slaughterer. She was the youngest among four brothers; she became an orphan at a very young age and married young. I don't know when or how she managed to learn French satisfactorily, in the company of the rich girls educated by Mademoiselle Petavain, or when she "picked up" German from the illuminist Professor Feldbau. She even learned the Bible in Hebrew and some of the Talmud, simply by listening. If needed, she could give some help to a less smart student of the Talmud. She helped her children with their first, most difficult steps in school. Mother learned Romanian at random, but she gained solid knowledge of the language and even learned Russian, around 1940, in Cernauti. She showed much understanding for her children's advanced ideas. Since she became a widow in 1928, she had to face heroically a harsh fate. Those close to her used to say as a joke that her children address her as "miss mamma!"

Our father, Hersl, dedicated his childhood and teenage years to the traditional study of the Bible, the commentaries, and the Talmud. He married at age 20 and quickly wasted the

dowry money. Quite early, he showed the real side of his personality: energetic, persevering, driven to initiative and exploration, and displaying an optimism that wasn't always justified. He died at age 51, "a victim of the commercial honesty," consumed by disease in several days.

A curious thing: A social hierarchy was established by the way in which children addressed their parents. In modest families, "father" and "mother" were used. Other children more linked to the rural way of life used "granpa" and "grandma." In the "enlightened" families, children called their parents "vater" and "mutter" (German); in other houses, including our own, "papa" and "mam" (French) were used. Everywhere in town, the language to be heard was a Moldavian Yiddish, but you could also hear Romanian. An old nanny, Aunt Maria, could repeat the Hebrew prayers with the children and was familiar with the complicated Jewish ritual, even though she was a good Christian Orthodox.

When the 1913 war was over, and tens of Jewish soldiers returned, the only one missing was a poor widow's only son who had died in battle. This was a prelude to the world war that was drawing near. Between July 1914 and August 1916, the period when Romania maintained its neutrality, commercial life flourished. The Germans bought massive amounts of raw materials, cereals and food, and paid good money for them. Some merchants even made some fortune and started dreaming about extending their business to a larger city.

The mobilization on August 15, 1916 opened a page of crucial importance in history. A world was fading and with it the first years of the childhood of a boy from Moldova.

15.6 *Calman the Medicine Man*

by I. Kara

On Friday afternoon, Vasile the bath-house attendant hasn't even finished walking through town, ringing the bell and calling "Idara budara!" (To the bath, fellows!), when there they are, rushing to the community's bath with basin, oak broom, and clean clothes in their hands. Three of them were regular customers of the bath; they open and close the "party" of the weekly bath. After spending the first "session" of steam on the highest step in the room, they descend and solemnly take their seats on the large benches covered with mats in the room where they left their clothes before the bath. They talk about the quality of that day's steam and forecast the taste of the traditional goulash with hot corn flour, their Friday lunch.

The oldest of the three "musketeers" is Meir Kolomeier, an old man of long, lanky stature. He is a sales agent, a man trusted by the landlords who has seen many villages and towns. The second is Calman, the medicine man for cows. He is of medium stature, a little overweight with a rare, pointed, goat-like beard just like Meir's. The youngest is David, the sieve maker, who walks around the villages carrying his huge sieve on his back. He works for both landlords and peasants, winnowing their wheat. All three men wear rustic shirts and broad, red girdles over their thick cloth pants. Their entire life is

linked more to the villages than to their little town. The bath is the place where they rest and recall the old times.

In their youth, the poor Jews of the town used to wear tight trousers, peasant shirt, girdles, and fur caps. You could distinguish them from the other peasants only by their mantle and their beard and side whiskers. They complain that the prices are high (it is 1912!) and remember the prices of the times before: three nickels for a measure of good wine^[B-28], ten for a quarter kilo of smoked meat, and bread cost almost nothing. They mention with a sigh the buxom, hardworking, and daring bartender woman and many other things from their past youth, which they now see through pink glasses.

In the meantime, the people of the town rush to take their bath and return quickly to their homes. The three old men are lost in times of yore and are preoccupied with their repeated steam baths and cold baths; they do not realize that the time passes. They keep on talking and do not go home until the bath attendant comes in to tell them that the women have come to take their bath.

On the main street of the town, all of the houses' rooms that face the street are dedicated to some kind of business: stores, manufacturing, warehouse, bureau, butcher store, café, or candy store. This is the "commercial street." In the yard, there are warehouses, barns, stables, chicken coops, the summer kitchen, and sometimes a small garden. At Calman's house, everything takes place in the part of the house that faces the yard; in summertime, on the porch, and in winter, in the kitchen. He doesn't stay much at home. He lives his life mostly in the country, where there are stables, grasslands, sheepfolds, and winter camps. If someone needs him for some sick animal, he enters through the back door.

It's Saturday morning, on a day in September. At the open windows, the devoted Jews slowly recite that week's pericope from the Bible. Since dawn, Calman has sat on the porch bench, watching the people. On his head, he has his black fur cap, which he always wears; on his back, his old vest that he never leaves without. The red girdle is at its place as always, "keeping him in health." Suddenly, at the door, appears old Gheorghe, who is the shepherd at the sheepfold that belongs to Miss Pascanita, the owner of the Scobalteni estate. After saying "Good morning!" to each other, Gheorghe readily announces to Calman that there's no need to worry. There's no case of disease. He came to town with an "interest" at the local Court of Justice, and stopped by to visit his friend. Calman moves over so that the man can sit next to him, and together they go on recalling the old times. On their lips, the same sweet, soft, calm, and mild Moldavian dialect blooms.

"Do you remember, Calman, that summer night when you saved Ion Cutan's red cow and its calf from death?" And there go the praises to the unique breeding cow, nice and of good breed just like a maiden, even if the cow and generations of its cubs had passed away into eternity long ago with the butcher's kind help.

Calman rests his eyes on his six-blade pocketknife, with which he has saved so many cows from death. They remember a snow-stormed, moonless winter night when they

²⁸ [Ed-Com] a measure is about three pints.

rushed in a sleigh to a sheepfold, where the wolves had massacred sheep and lambs. Only Gheorghe's skill and cold-bloodedness in handling the horses saved them from being eaten by the wolves, for the pack was chasing them and roaring terribly. They also remember the village parties at which Calman never ate meat. But he was as skillful a dancer as anyone else in his large boots. As well, he was anyone's equal in drinking wine.

In town, Calman is considered too much of a "peasant," but they all respect him for his skill and hard work. He has saved many animals from disease or death: someone's cow or goat that provides food for the family, someone else's horse that is used to make a living. He even cured, with his herbs and medicines, the town's breeding ox that had an injured leg from jumping over a fence. Lost in memories, Calman doesn't realize that by now the people have filled the synagogue he also attends, and that the sermon has already begun. Fortunately, old Gheorghe remembers his "interest" that brought him to town. The old man drinks to the bottom his glass of strong brandy, takes a bite of the white bread that the lady of the house brought, says goodbye, and heads toward the Courthouse. Calman quickly grabs his Saturday "tales" and goes to the Aziel synagogue, the oldest in town, in which his father, grandfather, and great grandfather, one of the founders of the town, prayed.

The entire town is discussing the news that the postman has brought Calman a letter, together with two boat tickets for him and his wife, from his only son who immigrated to America many years ago. Calman is overwhelmed. It's true that the Balkan war and the Great War of 1914-1918, and the events that followed, produced radical changes in Calman's old world. His two friends died, many things changed in the village and in town, and nothing is as it used to be. "My, world, world ..."

Calman understands that he will have to leave behind all that has made up his life until now. He wishes to know where he is going, and he finds out. New York is a big city with as many inhabitants as Romania's entire population before the war; the houses have many floors ("They surpass the clouds," Calman says to himself) and people of different origins live there. Calman cannot imagine a city larger than Iasi. He was there several times, and the crowds of people, the tramway, the houses with two or three floors, the noise, and the motion left him perplexed. He came home and felt sick for a couple of days. And America is so far away. You go by train and by boat, and the journey never ends.

Calman is walking through the rooms of his home, feeling like a stranger since his wife sold or gave away everything and packed their bags. He only took his "tales" for prayer, his stamp collection, his coat, cap, and boots. His friends in town and from the villages accompanied him to the station. Calman looked like an oak tree that has been uprooted from its land in the woods of Arama (Cooper) and taken to be transplanted in America.

In New York, Calman lived for one more year, a plentiful life but a lonely one. Then the news came that the old man had died. His longing for his town, the field, the woods, the shepherds and the sheep, and the places that had made up his life for over 70 years had consumed him quietly.

Good people, the end of my story is sad. But this world's wheel never stops spinning, and it is in vain to cry over past times. The times are changing and so are we.

15.7 *Dudl Consul*

by I. Kara

In the small towns of Moldavia, “Shabbat Hagadol”—the Saturday before the celebration of Pesach—was considered the day of those who were bald or had some kind of scars on their heads, “kareches” the bald men. This was of course in memory of one of the ten plagues, with which Iehova struck the Egyptians. It was said that on that day, these people were supposed to go to Mitzraim. The practical jokers had already made up the list of all those with “bare heads,” and they would display the list in front of the synagogue. Above the list, a bowl with cabbage juice was hung, supposedly a cure against baldness, as well as a damaged comb as a hint to those who, as children, would not bathe. In time, the “kareches” would receive some kind of citation order at their home, indicating the exact date and place to embark for Mitzraim. The town had fun on this subject, except of course those implicated, and the joke would last until the day of Pesach as a prolongation of the carnival-like Purim.

In my native town, the “shiny heads” had a diplomatic representative nicknamed “Dudl Consul.” Otherwise, he was an interesting, picturesque character. He was descended from a notoriously poor family and had many jobs but little progress. Mainly he worked as a “stone hewer,” a mason, but since few people built brick houses, he wasn’t too busy. An incredible thirst for knowledge and science devoured this poor workman—the craving to become better and do extraordinary things, impulsive dreams about traveling to exotic countries. He was the double version of “Benjamin the third,” Moldavian version, model 1900.

I don’t believe Dudl ever attended the primary school, but he could read Romanian quite well, and he was one of the few in town who subscribed to the magazine *Sanatatea*. He read and carefully studied the articles in the magazine and tried to cure the sick ones in his large family by following the advice and prescriptions given in the pages. He was always ready to discuss medical subjects, and for him *Sanatatea* was almost a Bible.

One time, someone took him seriously and asked for the magazine to verify the arguments brought up in a discussion. The joker pretended to look over the articles. Seeing an ad for a medicine against hair loss, he showed it to Dudl who couldn’t give an answer, for this was his weak spot.

Dudl passionately read *Popular Science and Travels Paper*. When the number of “students” in town (meaning high school boys) increased, Dudl tried to engage in discussions with them on physics and technique. During the students’ vacation, he used to borrow their schoolbooks, and, in time, he became a passionate searcher for the much sought after “perpetuum mobile.”

He lived in the basement of a miserable building, at one of our neighbors. Each year, the rivers Bahlui and Bahluiet “took pride in their waters” and flooded the field along with

the suburbs of the town, the camps and huts of the Gypsies and poor Jews, and sometimes even the yards of the up-town houses. One spring, Dudl's yard became a pool. His imagination grew wild: He was feeling the call to navigate. He took an old bathtub from the cellar. For a mast, he used a no-longer-used shovel that he took from the neighboring bakery. He tied to the shovel the all-patched and only sheet in his home and proudly set out to explore the world. Fortunately, the "ship" stumbled upon the yard's fence, and our hero took only a cold bath in the muddy waters of the overflown Bahlui River. If he had somehow managed to leave the "harbor," the town would have counted one more poor widow and a household of orphans.

Dudl survived "the flood" and then tried to grow a coffee tree right in his backyard. The soil was just clay, covered with bricks, ash, and pieces of glass, among which weeds and thistles were growing. He remembered a picture from *Popular Science and Travels Paper*. With his family's last savings, he bought coffee beans and planted them in the clay that the flood had left behind. While waiting for the harvest, he and his family had at breakfast a cup of chicory^[B-29] without milk and a slice of black bread with jam. The dream of a cup of genuine coffee with milk and cream and some fresh rolls was still far from reality. Such is life.....

After World War I—which for Dudl meant starvation, disease, and all kinds of miseries—new houses were built in town. Dudl could not "keep up" with the developments of science that reached the level of Einstein's works, but instead he had plenty of work as a bricklayer. He even had enough money to build a bakery oven on which he put the following message in capital letters: "Raised by David Pietraru in the year 1918."

Now he could peacefully pass away.

And he didn't have to wait for long.

(*A Boy from Moldova* by I. Kara, Bucharest, Kriterion Publishing House, 1976, p. 44-46)

²⁹ [Ed-Com] Chicory is a substance extracted from the flower of the chicory plant; it is used to make a drink that resembles coffee.

“Not far from the famous city of Iasi, there is the well-known, little town of Podu Iloaiei that became famous through the Svart family, which included four art creators; and not far away from the town there is a village very much the same as all the other nearby villages with good-looking houses covered with iron plate and poor people’s huts covered with straw.” (p. 75)

“And this is the story of the Velvl clan. His background was in Podu Iloaiei. Here, his great-great-grandfather Iancu Moise found a place to settle and founded a “dynasty” of shoemakers. He “ruled” for 30 years and had three sons, all shoemakers, of whom two had no offspring. The second son, Velvl’s great-grandfather, had two sons and three daughters. He was able to earn the first place in the family, but not the money to make a living. One must be extremely clever to see his three daughters married, especially in Podu Iloaiei. Velvl’s grandfather also proved to be a “clever” man. He married his daughters to his apprentices.” (p. 49)

(Haim Goldenstein: *A Century of Silence*, a novel written in Yiddish, Bucharest, Kriterion, 1979). Translated by I. Kara.

16 Documentary Appendices

16.1 *Appendix A: The Right to Sell Liquor, 1826*

Iasi State Archives (ISA)^[B-30], letter M, 509, f. 289-292

The council of the town of Vladeni or Tirgu Nou from November 16, 1826 addresses to the King a report establishing that the right to sell liquors is given "... only to those who will receive the acceptance from the landlord as was communicated in the act issued in 1816 by King Scarlat Calimah VV, blessed be his name, and concerning the town of Podu Leloiaia as part of the Scobalteni estate to which Your Majesty issued the 1823 act ..."

16.2 *Appendix B: Census of 1824*

ISA, transport 166, op.184, no. 23
Sudits' census of 1824, Podu Iloaiei

1. Russian Sudit, Moscu Iticovici: born in Berdicev, settled for 20 years, 45 years old, Jewish clothes, married to a native. He has a shop of his own in the borough Podul Leloiaiei in Carligatura county ...
2. K. K. Sudit (Austrian – original note), Berl Leizer: born in Cernauti, settled for 22 years, Jewish clothes, married to a native. House of his own in Podul Lelioaiei, where he lives. Trades horses and rents bars. He is 26 years old.
3. K. K. Sudit, Moise Maer: born in Cernauti, settled for 12 years, 25 years old, Jewish clothes. House and shop of his own in Iasi. Rented shop in Podul Lelioaiei where he sells things of small value. Married in Cernauti.

16.3 *Appendix C: Sale of Land, 1826*

ISA Fond I. Kara. Agreement Act

I, undersigning in Hebrew, give my written agreement to Mr. Iacov Lipovean^[B-31] that I know to have sold him a piece of land, which I have lawfully owned since the foundation of this town. The place has the following size: From the wall of Lipovean Marin's shop to the bridge over the Bahlui River owned by Serban Negel, mayor, including the piers that stand on this land. The land was sold for 60 lei and I received the total sum. He

³⁰ [KME] Iasi State Archives... In the Romanian edition it is referred to as Arh. St. Iasi (ASI)

³¹ [Ed-Com] Lipoveans – Originally referred to people of Russian origin, who settled in the region of the Danube River and the Black Sea. Later it was used to describe all those coming from Russia.

should hold this place as his own forever, and whatever he wishes to do with it he should do, since the land is rightfully his. I engage to obtain for this written agreement the approval of His Excellency General Constantin Palade, the forever owner of the estate to which this town belongs, so that the agreement should be recognized and the owner can use the land without anyone bothering him. And for these, I alone signed in Hebrew. March 24, 1826. I, Iaakov, son of Smuel.

This sale agreement, which I also received, validates the act.

General Constantin Palade

16.4 Appendix D: Income Sharing Agreement, 1830

ISA, letter P, 811, f. 23-24/1830, December 22, Iasi

The income made by the borough Podu Leloaiei, including the inn and the landlord's wine cellar which is rightfully owned by His Excellency General Constantin Palade, through the power given by the contract signed with General Palade, I sell the income to Mr. Moise Iuster and Mr. Herscu a Mendiloaiei for a three-year term starting on October 26, 1831, under the following terms:

- 1) Each year, I have to give him 12,000 lei, meaning exactly 12,000 lei to be paid in the following manner: 6,000 lei now at the conclusion of the deal and 6,000 lei on April 1, 1832 at the end of the first-year debt, and again 6,000 lei on October 1, 1832 and 6,000 lei on April 1, 1833, and so on without delay until all the agreed money is paid.
- 2) I am entitled to a share of the town's income from all sources as the contract stipulates, but not a penny more.
- 3) They are to keep the inn in the best state during this time, hiring a Moldavian innkeeper and trusting him to be capable of satisfying all the clients who may stay at the inn, no matter what their status. At the end of the period for this contract, they should give back the inn in clean, good condition, just as they received it.
- 4) All the townspeople, inhabitants, and visitors, no matter what business they are in, are to help them as much as possible, preventing any mistreatment from anyone. If a situation cannot be resolved, they are to let me know.
- 5) The captain of the town is to be nominated by the landlord's authority. Whoever they find fit for the job is to look after the merchants, both those living in town and those visiting. If the opposite happens, the captain will be dismissed at the proprietor's order. No one should claim anything from me, but only if one can arrange to have acceptance ... ^[B-32]
- 6) All soldiers living in town who are under the military rule are not to be bothered in any way about working their land for their food as they have done until now,

³² [Ed-Com] Probably unfinished text.

but they only have to pay the usual tithe in products or in any other way they find fit.

- 7) The Gypsies, who live in town and are owned by His Excellency the General, will be allowed to pay the tax wherever they are taken, except one man whose duty will be to guard the road and the bridge from which they are not to take any tax.
- 8) The cattle belonging to the town's merchants and soldiers may graze on the field that has been used until now, but their number is limited as stipulated in the contract.
- 9) Apart from the tithe on the town, I also have to pay with 20 measures ^[B-33] of grass field and ten measures of land from the Popesti estate, the part in the vicinity of Sirca, and land for a garden at the entry in Totoesti, which belonged to Andrei the gardener.
- 10) As until now, they are allowed to use the waters from the Bahluet mill upwards.
- 11) They will be given permission to grind at the Podu Lelioaiei mill 40 measures of wheat or corn per year tax-free.
- 12) As in the former contract, regarding the land given to Iancu the carpenter, no one should give him any trouble in raising his building.
- 13) The trash resulting from the inn is to be taken out of the town and in no way to be deposited close to the inn, not even for a short time.
- 14) Any kind of building or annex raised on the estate or any kind of trade that does not have the acceptance of the forever owner will become part of the estate at the end of these years with no payment in exchange.
- 15) If they do not pay at the agreed upon time, I shall be free to sell the town's income and all the rest to any merchant I can find, and I shall be entitled to recover my debt from them without any opposition.

In the above-mentioned terms, I sold the income of the borough Podu Lelioaiei. If all terms are complied with they should have no trouble collecting the town's income until the end of the mentioned period of time. For this purpose, two similar contracts were made for each part and given legal power by my signature. December 22, 1830. Signed: Costache Pelin, moneylender.

On page 38, there is an added request from "the guardians of the deceased General C. Palade" dated November 9, 1831. It is agreed in the contract that the guardians may appoint the captain of the town who becomes the administrator. Tudorache Popovici who was appointed on April 15, 1830 was rejected by Herscu, who then took possession of the Totoesti estate. And it is known that the vice-president of the Divan made a decision

³³ [Ed-Com] a measure equals 14, 322 square meters

forbidding the Jews to lease land. The reconfirmation of the captain's appointment is requested.

On page 11 and 12, it is added the decision of the Divan that Herscu should get his money back and reconstitute the contract. C. Pelin offered the money, but Herscu refuses to accept it.

16.5 Appendix E: Statistics

In *La Roumanie et les Juifs* (Bucharest 1903, p. 14), Verax estimated the population of Podu Iloaiei in 1831 to be: 281 local Jews; 281 Christians; and eight Sudits of whom three are Jews (I.K.). In all, 570 people in 164 families. In a report from 1970, Dr. Ecaterina Negruzzi offered the following estimates: 281 Jews, of whom 109 are children, and 560 people in the whole population. The official census indicates that on Palade's estate there were 49 tribute-paying persons, each paying 30 lei per year, and five nontribute-payers. Among the tribute payers, we find the Jews Leiba sin Simon (baker), Moisa sin Iosap (undertaker), Iosap sin Leiba, Moise sin Leizer (brandy maker or seller), Itic sin Strul, Herscu sin Froim, Meier sin Leiba (janitor of the synagogue), Iosap sin Avram (undertaker), Smil sin Leiba (undertaker), and Herscu sin Fisel (undertaker). Living on Neculai Cantacuzino's estate, there were 15 Christian tribute-payers and the Jew Iancu sin Mendel, a ritual chicken slaughterer.

The final documents mention 57 tribute-payers on Palade's estate of whom 14 were Jews: Rabbi Moise sin Leizer, five undertakers, five with no profession mentioned, one butcher, one bath-house attendant, and one wagoner. On N. Canta's estate, there were 12 Christian tribute-payers, four tribute-exempted, and one Jew. The names of six Jewish Sudits were kept: Iosef Leibovici, Moise Ensiberg, Iancu Smil, David Kaufman, Haim Bekir (baker), and Laiba Margulies who did not appear in any of the previous lists (I.S.A., Moldova's State Secretariate, no. 68, 1832, f. 13). The other Jews not mentioned here by name were probably tribute-payers, widows, old, or handicapped. Actually, material published in the magazine *Albina Romaneasca*^[B-34] in the supplement to issue no. 117 on February 23, 1831 lists the shops in Podu Iloaiei: 25 first class, 23 second class, and 14 third class. Another source points out that 70 Jews and eight Christians died from cholera in Podu Iloaiei in 1831.

16.6 Appendix F: Taxes, 1833

Albina Romaneasca, no. 28, April 20, 1833. Taxes

The Treasury of the Principality of Moldova. No. 2649. The law for ensuring the collection of the taxes from the Jewish ethnicity.

Although article 47 from annex Z of chapter 3 of the Organic Regulation establishes the taxes paid by the Jewish ethnicity to be patents equally applied to all, as is the case for the other inhabitants, it has been found that it would be best to collect the taxes from the

³⁴ [Ed-Com] *Albina Romaneasca* means Romanian Bee

Jews in another way. Since the Jewish ethnicity from Esi ^[B-35] found this other way to be the only easy means of collecting the taxes to be paid by the Jews, it is established and brought to the public's knowledge the tax to be paid by the Jewish ethnics from both Esi and the other towns of the Principality, wherever the Jews will solicit, estimating the prices according to the tax for the meat to be sold and for chicken slaughtering in such a way that the taxes for the Jews will always be collected together with what is still to be paid as past debts. The payment of the tax should be done in the Jewish synagogue in the presence of a representative of the local administration and of the elders from all Jewish professions.

The law concerning the taxes to be paid by the fraternities of merchants and craftsmen through their leaders is published in *Albina Romaneasca* no. 34.

16.7 Appendix G: Deposition, 1836

I.S.A., Letter P., 646, No. 41, Podu Lelioaiei, February 16, 1836.

Deposition.

I, who shall afterward sign Jewishly, trust this deposition of mine in the hands of the merchants who are in judicial conflict with Mr. Gavrilas, administrator of the royal vineyards, maintaining that I know about their case, since at that time I happened to be on the street and saw the policemen pulling the man, Solomon, by his whiskers and beating him. So, I went to the house of the administrator Grigoras and asked him why Solomon was being beaten by the police. Other merchants had already arrived at the administrator's house. Grigoras rose immediately and shouted to the merchants: "Why have you come to beat me up?" The merchants said: "We have come to ask you why the policemen do such a thing, beating merchants in the streets?" This is what I have seen happening in my presence, for the merchants said nothing else to the administrator.

This is what I also stated in front of the commission, and I testify the same now in fear of God. And I signed in faith, February 16, 1836, Iancu Leib from Belcesti.

(Round stamp: Podul Iloaiei administration)

16.8 Appendix H: Agreement with Owner of Estate, 1838

I.S.A., Moldova State Secretariate, no. 552, f. 2, 1838.

Copy of the agreement signed between the inhabitants of Podu Iloaiei and the owner of the Scobalteni estate.

We the townsmen, Christians, Jews, and those in the suburbs of the borough of Podu Iloaiei on the Scobalteni estate owned by His Excellency Chancellor Neculai Canta, since we are forbidden to sell any alcoholic beverages as stipulated in the settlement contract,

³⁵ [Ed-Com] Esi = Iasi

this being the exclusive right of the owner of the estate, made a request to the forever master, agreeing to the following:

1. Whoever intends to sell beverages should pay 1 lei and 42 bani for every 12 liters of brandy, 108 bani for 12 liters of rum, 81 bani for 10 liters of wine, and 54 bani for 15 liters of fuel oil or petroleum, following this payment arrangement for the entire time he keeps his business.
2. For each measure of land ^[B-36] that is given to us for our shops and is situated on the side of the street, we should pay a long-term rent that is established forever at 3 lei and 72 bani per year, no more or no less, during the time that we maintain our business. We shall be given ten more measures of land rent-free for the yard of each shop, no matter the breadth of the building. But the buildings that are to be built should have no space between them, not even the size of a palm, unless a street is planned to pass across. The roof of all the buildings will not be of any other material than board or shingle.
3. Butchery, bakery, candle making, barbershops, cooking, (balance) weighing, *mortasapie* ^[B-37] remain in the custody of the owner and we, the townsmen, shall have nothing to do with these, with the condition that the butcher is obligated to always have kosher meat and sell it at the price established on the other side of the town, on the estate of the deceased general Costaki Paladi; the same condition holds for candle selling.
4. If any of us, the merchants, is proven to have dared to bring alcohol in secretly, without the knowledge of the owner and without paying as agreed, all the alcohol will be confiscated, and the merchant will be banished from the town and his shop will remain in the possession of the owner of the estate, without any possibility of forgiveness, for this is what we agreed upon.
5. We shall be allowed to build a church on the place of the cemetery at no cost to us. We will also be given land for the school and the public bath at no cost.
6. Any building built from now on will respect the plan of the town, without narrowing the space between shops.
7. Besides the conditions mentioned above, any merchant is allowed to run a business in his house or shop without any payment to the forever owner.
8. We, all townsmen present today and all those who settle in the future, are allowed to bring a herd of 60 cattle to graze in the field of the Scobalteni village at no cost. If there are more cattle, we shall buy a new place from His Excellency if he agrees to sell it to us.
9. His Excellency sold this agreement for the exact price of 37,350 lei, thirty seven thousand, three hundred, and fifty lei, to us who sign below: Toma Gavrilovici, Izrail sin Isar, and Avram Leiba. We are to pay in four rates of eight months each, paying the first rate on January 1 of the next year (1839) and the other three rates every eight month until the end of the two years.

³⁶ [Ed-Com] this measure varies from 1.96 to 2.23 meters.

³⁷ [KME] *Mortasapie*: This word was not translated. Nothing was found by searching with Google. I thought it may mean funeral undertaker or mortician (from Latin "mort", death). After consulting with a number of our Romanian friends, I was eventually told that "a sapa" means to dig. So *mortasapie* probably means a grave digger.

10. We shall keep this agreement, and those who settle in this town in the future will respect the old rules. So, until the completion of the formalities, we give to the forever owner for his assurance the contract that we signed and receive in exchange his copy.

November 28, 1838

(Two Jews and one Christian are signing.) (Similar to the original: Iordache Gavrilovici, baker.)

16.9 Appendix I: Rental Agreement, 1841

I.S.A., I. Kara fun d. November 25, 1841. Podu Iloaiei

Document to the peace-loving administration

For the piece of land of six measures in breadth and twenty measures in length that the merchant Moisa Itic possesses in the borough Podu Iloaiei, property of the undersigned, and on which he has his shops, he will pay rent and other taxes as established in the property contract, and I shall give him no trouble in using the land. This document addressed to the peace-loving administration was given to him with my signature and seal. In accord with the property contract, November 25, 1841, Ghika Ceacuz (?).

(The act comes from the I. Klingher family from Podu Iloaiei who gave it to me in 1966).

16.10 Appendix J: Occupations, 1842

I.S.A., package 10, no. 41.

Podu Iloaiei rent-payers list for 1842, from which I established the occupations of the Jewish rent-payers: 1 baker, 1 barrel maker, 5 butchers, 10 tailors, 2 lengths-measuring men, 2 shoemakers, 2 synagogue janitors, 1 fur cap maker, 3 teachers, 1 wheat flour seller, 1 candle carrier, 1 shochet, 1 stone mason, 2 brandy makers, 1 glass seller, 1 joiner, 1 tax collector, and 1 money lender.

16.11 Appendix K: Sale of House, 1845

I. Kara collection (Podu Iloaiei, January 8, 1845)

Certificate (translated from Hebrew)

Intended to be proof in the hands of Mr. Slomo, son of Avraham, and Mr. Mose Itchak, son of Naftali, who bought the house that was left here by the deceased Eliahu from his uncle Iaakov with the acceptance of the rabbi who assisted and Mr. Iaakov who assisted, as they received a letter from the rabbi of Sneatin. The mentioned house was sold for 1,676 lei, one thousand, six hundred, and seventy six lei, with the condition that the money be paid at the moment of delivering the papers to the authority, both the papers

from the rabbi and the Court on our expense. The above-mentioned associates will give Mr. Iaakov 1,000 lei and for the remaining 676 lei write a note to be paid on the day of Saint George (1845) at the latest. Mr. Iaakov took 20 galbeni in advance with the condition that, once the associates arrive in Iasi, no one should give them any trouble with the papers (signed) at the rabbi of Sneatin or at the Chancellor's office, though they must pay the whole sum they owe.

It also has been stipulated that we shall leave the things that are in the house, the windows, the barn, as well as the debt from the builders of the house who pawned their tools until the termination. Thus, we sign today, Wednesday the 29th of Tevet 5605, here, Podu Iloaiei, Iaakov, son of Zeiev (Lupu) Segal.

(Signed: Moise, the rabbi of this place.)

16.12 Appendix L: List of Taxpayers, 1834

I.S.A., tr. 644, op. 708, no. 502, f. 22-25.

Regarding the proposals made by the treasury's inspector Ion Teodoru on June 30, 1834 concerning "the good tax-payers," the representatives of the community and the former chief policeman of the town, Todorachi, made a statement in front of the actual captain of the town, Colonel Constandin. The commission establishes the following individuals:

- 1) Smil sin Itic, orphan of father, 17 years old, works as a porter, poor.
- 2) Avram, brother of Iosip the lengths measurer, 20 years old, poor, works for his brother.
- 3) Moisa the tailor, old, ran away from the town.
- 4) Itic the tailor, old, lives from charity.
- 5) Itic, brat David, 17 years old, orphan, poor.
- 6) Sloim, his brother, 20 years old, same situation as Itic.
- 7) Ghidale, son of Iancu Belcescu, 17 years old, married, helps his father in the trade business.
- 8) Sulim, butcher, pays the tax in Iasi.
- 9) Lupu, old, lived in the villages, poor.
- 10) Avram, teacher, came for six months from Iasi.
- 11) Moisa, teacher, same situation as Avram.
- 12) Avram, teacher, old, his wife owns a hut, poor.
- 13) Avram, tailor, 18 years old, from Tirgu Frumos, settled temporarily
- 14) Froim, bar owner, from Vaslui, rented a bar in Scobalteni for six months, Austrian subject, left Podu Iloaiei four years ago.
- 15) Solomon Herscu, business in Negresti, pays tax.
- 16) Leiba Meilich, opened a shop in town, not registered as a taxpayer.
- 17) Moisa Leiba, married for one year, a Sudit's son.
- 18) Saim, furrier, came from Suceava, taxpayer.
- 19) Moisa, bar owner, married, wants to rent a bar in the country.
- 20) Smil, bar owner, shoemaker in the suburbs, can pay tax.
- 21) Calman Ber, married, shop, can pay tax.

The conclusion of the administrator of Carligatura county (page 32): seven can pay tax, two are Sudits, two are new arrivals, two are not of age, two are not restricted by the settlement agreement, six are poor and helpless in all ways, and two can pay the third class tax.

16.13 Appendix M: List of Rent Payers, 1842

I.S.A., Manuscripts, no. 1842

A report on the money collected from the rent payers of Podu Iloaiei in 1842, following the official possession catalog. At the street, there are 43 houses inhabited by Christians (Romanians, Russians, Serbs, Armenians, and Bulgarians) and 58 houses inhabited by 54 Jews. In the suburbs of the town, there are 40 houses inhabited by Christians and 17 houses inhabited by 16 working Jews. Below are the names of the Jewish inhabitants in the order that they appear in the list: 1) Leiba Doroscanu; 2) Iosap Crestinu; 3) Smule from Tirgu Frumos; 4) Izrail sin Iosap; 4a) Tij Izrail; 5) Herscu Hahamul from Tirgu Frumos; 5a) Izrail sin Iosap; 6) David Casap; 7) Marcu Casap; 8) Smile Chioru; 9) Haim Croitoriu ^[B-38]; 10) Munas; 11) Smil sin Ilie; 12) Sruli Popa; 13) Ilie Croitoriu; 14) Nusam sin Avram; 15) Marcu sin Avram; 16) Herscu Dascalu; 17) Avram sin Leibis; 18) Iosup Cotariul (deceased) ^[B-39]; 19) Ghiza Seinova; 20) David sin Avram; 21) Smil sin Haim; 22) Zeilic sin Haim; 23) Marcu Berlescu; 24) Leiba Chitar; 25) Leiba from Totoesti; 26) Mahal Bujor; 27) Altar Rabinovici; 28) Lazar Barbalata; 29) Iancu sin Ghedale; 30) Froim Barbalata; 31) Moisa Barbalata; 32) Iancu Steclaritii; 33) Iancu Belcescu; 34) Leiba Zaraf; 35) Solomon Taxieru; 36) Lupu Fainariu; 37) David sin Iosup; 38) David Cotar, (deceased); 39) Sulim sin Marcu; 40) Zisu Faclier; 41) Marcu Osap; 42) Filal Rachieriu; 43) Sender Croitoriu; 44) barren place of Leiba Zaraf; 45) barren place of Haim Ber; 46) Iancu Mochioaiei; 47) Leiba sin Iancu; 48) Izrail Casap's sister; 49) Lupu Volf; 50) Haim from Popesti; 51) Meer Croitor; 52) Iancu Stoleriu; 53) Marcu Croitoriu; and 54) Moisa Ciobotariu.

In the suburbs: 1) Meer Ceaus; 2) Cos Butnar; 3) Smile Dascal ^[B-40]; 4) Smile Croitor; 5) Herscu Pagu; 6) Altar Croitoru; 7) Avram Croitoriu; 8) Nusan Croitoriu; 9) David Croitoriu; 10) Smil Leib Ceaus; 11) Avram Rachieriu ^[B-41]; 12) Marcu Berlescu; 12) Marcu of Barbalata; 13) Herscu from the bar of Neculachi; 14) Golda Jidauca; 15) Iuchel Ciobotar ^[B-42]; 16) Iosap Chettrar; and 17) Idel Dascalu

The list contains the rent payers from one part of the town, which had two owners. I think it is Neculai Cantacuzino's part.

³⁸ [Ed-Com] Croitoru means tailor. In the 19th century it was common for people to use their trade as their last name.

³⁹ [Ed-Com] Cotariul means evaluator.

⁴⁰ [Ed-Com] Dascal means teacher.

⁴¹ [Ed-Com] Rachieriu means a person who makes "rachiu" – an alcoholic drink made by distilling fruit or natural juices, sometimes adding some water and sugar, similar to brandy.

⁴² [Ed-Com] Ciobotar means shoe, boot maker.

16.14 Appendix N: List of Renters, Year??^[B-43]

I.S.A., tr. 1423, op. 1619, dossier 1025, Report.

The Jews from the Borough Podul Iloae Living on His Excellency Mayor Lascaras Cantacuzino's Estate.^[B-44]

Columns (only those filled in): 1) Number of houses and shops; 2) Name and nickname; 3) Professions; 4) Authority; 5) Sudits; 5b) Helpless old people; 6) Widows; and 7) Notes.

No. 3. Herscu sin Iancu, bar owner, subject of the High Porte^[B-45] from Glodurile village, lives with rent at a Christian's house.

No. 5. Moisa sin Herscu, tax collector, subject of the High Porte from Madarjaca Fetii, lives with rent at Herscu Croitor

No. 6. Pascal sin David, also a subject of the High Porte, old taxpayer, lives with rent at Herscu Avram sin Strule.

No. 7. Avram sin Strul, also a subject of the High Porte, old taxpayer, his own house.

No. 8. Mois sin Itic Lozneanu, also a subject of the High Porte, from Poenile Oancii, his own house.

No. 9. Itic sin Herscu, lime maker, subject of the High Porte, from Borseni in Neamt district, lives with rent at Moise Itic.

No. 10. Herscu Badiu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Stornesti, lives with rent at Ioan Rosan.

No. 11. Mihail sin Aizic, also a subject of the High Porte, from Drancea in Iasi district, lives in the same house.

No. 13. Ioina sin Pascal, also a subject of the High Porte, from Esi, lives with rent at Avram sin Strule.

No. 14. Nisal sin Avram, also a subject of the High Porte, old taxpayer, lives in the house of Solomon sin Iancu, no business, helpless old man.

No. 15. Marcu Esanu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house, unregistered in the previous census.

⁴³ [KME] Kara's book does not give a date for this list.

⁴⁴ [KME] In Kara's book the entries go from 1 to 229, however for some unknown reason there are a lot of gaps. Perhaps they were missing from the source documents or they could not be deciphered. The following entries are missing: 1-2, 4, 12, 21-24, 29, 39-40, 42-43, 48, 79-81, 91-94, 97, 100, 102, 105, 118-119, 121, 143-144, 146, 151-162, 164-171, 173-179, 181-189, 191-194, 197-227

⁴⁵ [KME] A subject of the "High Porte" means a subject of the Ottoman Empire. See glossary of terms.

Herscu sin Lupu, also a subject of the High Porte, lives in the same house, just married, Esanu's partner.

No. 16. Moisa sin Aron, also a subject of the High Porte, from Malaesti village in this district, lives with rent at widow Bruha's own house.

No. 17. Avram sin Leibu, wagoner, helpless old man, poor eyesight, lives from charity.

No. 18. Nuta sin Lupu, trades things of small value, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent in Avram sin Leiba's house.

No. 19. Gaina sin Froim, also named Herscu Gaina ^[B-46] no business, helpless old man, poor and in all vicious.

Iancu sin Haim, moneylender, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Munis from Tirgu Frumos.

No. 20. Haim sin Croitoru, tailor, subject of the High Porte, his own house.

Falic sin Herscu, butcher, subject of the High Porte, in that house in Tirgu Frumos.

Leiba Cazacu, cattle trading, helpless old man, also living in that house.

No. 25. Strule sin Itic, also named bartender, brandy maker, helpless old man.

No. 26. Marcu sin Pascal, also a subject of the High Porte, his own house.

No. 27. Bercu sin Strule, also a subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at David Grosul.

No. 28. David sin Ancel, butcher, subject of the High Porte, his own house.

No. 30. Herscu sin Smil, brandy maker, from Tirgu Frumos, lives in his inn.

No. 31. Zelic Caldarariu brandy maker ^[B-47], subject of the High Porte, also lives in this inn and also is from Tirgu Frumos.

No. 32. Izdrail sin Iosap, also a subject of the High Porte, his own house.

No. 33. Smil Baetul, also named Burlacu ^[B-48], also a subject of the High Porte, rented house.

No. 34. Avram Leiba sin Aron, also a subject of the High Porte, his own house.

No. 35. Iosap sin Bercu, also named Ursul ^[B-49], also a subject of the High Porte, his own house.

No. 36. Avram, son of Haim Lungu, also a subject of the High Porte, from Cristesti.

No. 37. Avram sin Lupu.

No. 37. Leiba Hanovici, also a subject of the High Porte, from Doroscani, his own house.

⁴⁶ [Ed-Com] Gaina means hen and is used as a nickname for old people.

⁴⁷ [Ed-Com] Caldarariu is a name derived from caldare, meaning bucket used for making brandy.

⁴⁸ [Ed-Com] Burlacu: Romanian for bachelor

⁴⁹ [Ed-Com] Ursul: Romanian for bear.

- Alter, his son, no business, subject of the High Porte, lives in Hanovici's house.
- No. 41. Aron sin Herscu, tailor, subject of the High Porte, from Esi, his own house.
David sin Aron, horse trading, subject of the High Porte, from Botosani.
- No. 44. Meer sin Faibis, brandy maker and grocer, subject of the High Porte, from Sirca, lives with rent at Danila sin Iosif Cotar.
- No. 45. Danila sin Iosap Cotar, huckster, subject of the High Porte, lives in his own house.
- No. 46. Ghita(l) Saina, widow.
- No. 47. Solomon sin Avram, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Cosateni, his own house.
- No. 49. Solomon sin Haim, also a subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 50. Zelic sin Haim, also a subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 51. Avram Bercu, grocer, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent in Zeilic's house.
- No. 52. Nuham sin Pascal, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent in Moise Barlic's house.
- No. 53. Marcu, shochet, subject of the High Porte.
- No. 54. Moscu Barlic or Moise sin David, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house
- No. 55. Marcu, shochet, subject of the High Porte.
- No. 56. Leiba sin Simon Chitariul, baker, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 57. Ancel sin Strule, brandy maker, lives with rent in Moise sin Leiba's house.
- No. 58. Moise sin Leiba, subject of the High Porte, from Totoesti, his own house.
- No. 59. Iancu Leibu Teodorescu, subject of the High Porte, bar owner, has his house in Catesti.
- No. 60. Haim Nuham sin Avram, wagoner, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Leibu.
- No. 61. Mehal sin Pascal Bujor named Pisahovici, grocer and glass seller, lives with rent at Neculai Codrescu.
- No. 62. Marcu sin Avram, brandy maker and grocer, lives with rent at the rabbi's.
- No. 63. Moise Rabinu, rabbi, helpless old man.
- No. 64. Mazar sin Moise Barbalata, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, old.
- No. 65. Faibis sin Herscu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Sirca.

- No. 66. Ghidale sin Iancu Belcescu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, old.
- No. 67. Froim sin Moise Barbalata, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, old.
- No. 68. Moise sin Herscu Barbalata, no business, helpless old man.
- No. 69. Iancu sin David, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 70. Moise sin Iancu Belcescu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent in his father's house.
- No. 71. Iancu sin Nisim Belcescu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 72. Avram sin Calman, no business, helpless old man, disabled.
- No. 73. Solomon Tacsieru, brandy maker and grocer, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 74. Froim sin Marcu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at widow from Roman.
- No. 75. Mendel sin Avram, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Sinesti, lives in the same place.
- No. 76. Sulim sin ..., brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Itic from Roman.
- No. 77. Calman Ber sin Moisa, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Sinesti, his own house.
- No. 78. Itic sin Leiba Moscu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 82. Marcu sin Leiba, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Trofin.
- No. 83. Itic sin Moisa, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 84. Zamvel sin Bercu, also a subject of the High Porte.
- No. 85. Itic sin Haim Fisel, the same, from Sulita, lives with rent at butcher Marcu.
- No. 86. Iancu sin Calman, joiner, subject of the High Porte, from Popesti, his own house.
- No. 87. Moisa sin Iancu Calman, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 88. Fisel sin Iancu, no business, helpless old man.
- No. 89. Aba Labu named Zeilic, cattle trading, subject of the High Porte, from Zahorna, lives with rent at Fisel's daughter.

- No. 90. Lupu sin Strule, also named Padurariul ^[B-50], flour seller, subject of the High Porte, has his own house.
- No. 95. Zeilic sin Iancu, sells wine and brandy, subject of the High Porte, from Harpagesti, lives with rent.
- No. 96. Avram sin Aizic, no business, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Luca Barnovi.
Solomon sin Leiba, no business, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Stefan the widow's son.
- No. 98. Isac sin Avram, no business, helpless old man, lives in Balcani.
- No. 99. Meer sin Fisil, teacher, subject of the High Porte, from Iasi, has his own house.
- No. 101. Ili sin Avram, ... and cotton seller, subject of the High Porte, from Iasi.
- No. 103. Zisu sin Iosap, procession candle carrier, subject of the High Porte, from Erghiceni village.
- No. 104. Danila sin Avram, ... and things of small value, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Izdrail.
- No. 106. Leiba Zaraf, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own shop.
- No. 107. Strul Avram sin Iosup, also a subject of the High Porte, from Sulita, lives with rent in the house of the widow from Piatra.
- No. 108. Herscu sin Moisa Barbalata, also a subject of the High Porte, from Darajeni.
- No. 109. Romascanita the widow.
- No. 110. Mendel Surdu, no business, helpless old man, from Malaesti, has one crippled arm and is deaf.
- No. 111. Haim Herscu sin Moisa, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, his own shop.
- No. 112. Iancu sin Leibu, silver lines metallic objects, subject of the High Porte, from Esi, lives with rent at widow Haita.
Widow Haita, husband left her.
- No. 113. Iancu a Muchioaiei sin Marcu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, has his own house.
- No. 114. Haniel sin Aron, Iancu's nephew, also a subject of the High Porte, lives with rent.
- No. 115. Aron David sin Haim, also a subject of the High Porte, from Bulbucani, lives with rent in Lipova.

⁵⁰ [Ed-Com] Padurariul: Romanian for forester.

- No. 116. Pascal sin Bentin, cattle trading business, subject of the High Porte, from Esi, lives with rent at the Russian.
- No. 117. Moscu sin Mendel, brandy and wine maker, subject of the High Porte.
- No. 120. Sender sin Irimia Croitoriu, tailor, subject of the High Porte, has his own house. Smerl sin Rivel, fur cap maker, subject of the High Porte, lives with his father-in-law.
- No. 122. Marcu sin Iancu, tailor, subject of the High Porte, his own house. Aron sin Mendel, also a subject of the High Porte, lives in the house of Marcu sin Iancu.
- No. 123. Moisa sin Pascal, shoemaker, subject of the High Porte, his own house, from Esi.
- No. 124. Smil Leiba, janitor of the synagogue, janitor of the school, subject of the High Porte, from Esi.
- No. 125. Avram sin Nisim, tailor, subject of the High Porte, from Esi.
- No. 126. Avram sin Itic, no business, helpless old man, his right arm is crippled.
- No. 127. Altar sin Strule, leader of the Jews, subject of the High Porte, has his own house.
- No. 128. Malca the widow.
- No. 129. Avram sin Copil, butcher, subject of the High Porte, from Esi, lives with rent.
- No. 130. Iosap sin Leiba, barber, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 131. Itic sin Bercu, teacher, subject of the High Porte, from Esi.
- No. 132. Strule sin Iosap Chetrariu, tailor, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 133. Strule sin Toderos, teacher, subject of the High Porte.
- No. 134. Altar sin Meer, owns an alcohol-making machine, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Sruli.
- No. 135. Simon sin Lupu, teacher, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 136. Itic Zamvel sin Solomon, tailor, subject of the High Porte.
- No. 137. Ilie's widow Haia.
- No. 138. Avram sin Dascal, no business, subject of the High Porte, infirm and deaf old man.
- No. 139. David sin Solomon, tailor, subject of the High Porte, his own house.
- No. 140. Hoisie sin Leiba Dascal, teacher, subject of the High Porte.
- No. 141. Buium sin Simon, water carrier, subject of the High Porte.

No. 142. Smil sin Iodos, no profession, old and blind.

No. 145. Osap Chetrariu, the same, old.

No. 147. Bercu sin Avram, bald and vicious old man, so nobody hires him.

No. 148. Iosap sin Iosap, shoemaker, subject of the High Porte.

No. 149. Ilie Croitoriu's widow Golda.

No. 150. Strule sin Mihailovici, wagoner, subject of the High Porte, lives in Tanase's house.

Leiba sin Simon, no business, old and insane.

No. 163. Lupu sin Haim, also old, infirm.

No. 172. Herscu sin Bercu, old tailor, insane.

Leiba a Iarmuchioaiei, trades things of small value, subject of the High Porte, his own little house.

No. 180. Meer sin Iancu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Albesti, lives with rent.

No. 190. Usar Iancu sin Smil, tailor, subject of the High Porte, lives with rent at Vornic Ioan.

No. 195. Rafail sin Usar, bar owner, subject of the High Porte, from Mircesti, lives with rent.

No. 196. Herscu sin Iancu, tailor, subject of the High Porte, has his own house.

No. 228. Moisa sin David, no business, old and sick.

No. 229. Lupu sin Smil Herscu, wagoner, has his own house.

Solomon sin Smil, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Romanesti.

Aron Iancu, brandy maker, subject of the High Porte, from Bogoila, no house.

A. Ilie, bar owner, also a subject of the High Porte, from Basceaus, no house.

Strule sin David, no business, old.

Strule sin Iancu, no business, old, crippled leg.

In all, 121 inhabitants are subjects of the High Porte, 23 are elders, and seven are widows. (Jewish signatures: Lazar from Iasi, Zelic sin Haim, Simha from Tirgu Frumos, tax collector, Moisa Birlescu, Iancu Leib, Leib Ghitman.)

(After this, there is a sum of those who figured in the census): 68 tax-paying Jews were mentioned in the settlement act, of whom 47 were third-class merchants, six were third-class craftsmen, and 15 were elders. Four were dead, four moved to Jerusalem, Codresti, Bucharest, or Focsani, eight went nobody knows where, and 10 are listed as helpless.

The Jews from the Borough Podu Iloaiei Living On His Excellency Mayor Neculai Cantacuzino's Estate (61816). (All locals except those indicated as Sudits.)^[B-51]

- 1) Herscu sin Iancu, horse seller, his own house.
Meer from Larga, brandy maker, came from Larga.
- 2) Zambel sin Nuhim, soles maker, his own shop.
- 3) Lupu Lipscanu.
- 4) Altar sin Strule, brandy maker.
- 5) Mendel sin Strule, brandy maker.
- 6) Leiba sin Ida, tobacco seller, lives at Alter.
- 7) Smil Raizic, merchant, his own house.
- 8) Moisa sin Aron, merchant, lives with rent.
- 9) Gher sin Nuham, merchant, lives with rent.
- 10) Heilek sin Naftule, merchant, his own house.
- 11) Solomon sin Marcu, merchant, his own house.
- 12) Malca Reiza, widow.
- 13) Aron sin Lupu, brandy maker, came from Esi, his own house.
- 14) Leiba Grosul, also named Godal, brandy maker, his own house.
- 15) Heim sin Oizer, brandy maker, came from Zahorna.
- 16) Smil Itic sin Lupu, brandy maker.
- 17) Pinhas sin Iancu, brandy maker.
- 18) Moisa Haim sin David, brandy maker.
- 19) Leiba Sfart, brandy maker, from Boidinesti, his own house.
Haim sin Itic, soles maker, lives with Sfart.
- 20) Itic sin Danila, brandy maker, from Tirgu Frumos, lives with rent.
- 21) Nuham sin Gersin, brandy maker, his own house.
- 22) Froim sin Ioise, brandy maker, rented house.
- 23) Leiba sin Herscu, brandy maker; he also lives with rent at Moise Bercescu.
- 24) Zamvel sin Marcu, brandy maker, his own house.
- 25) Strule sin Sulin, glass seller.
- 26) Ilie sin Nusam, merchant, trades cattle.
- 27) Faibis sin Marcu Froim, no business, old.
- 28) Iancu sin Smil, huckster, from Esi, lives with rent.
- 30) Itic sin Moisa, teacher, his own house.
- 31) Haim sin Iosap, shochet, lives with rent.
- 32) Simon Casap, butcher, his own house.
- 34) Mendel sin Leiba, brandy maker, lives with rent.
- 51) Leizer sin Solomon, brandy maker, his own house.
- 52) Mehal Obrejan, brandy maker, from Obresti, his own house.
- 53) Zeilic zet Faibis^[B-52], brandy maker, lives with rent.
- 54) Iosap sin Herscu, brandy maker, from Lungani.
- 55) Avram sin Leiba, ..., lives with rent.

⁵¹ [KME] In Kara's book the entries go from 1 to 98, however for some unknown reason there are a lot of gaps. Perhaps they were missing from the source documents or they could not be deciphered. The following entries are missing: 29, 33, 35-50, 57-59, 64-65, 69-72, 86-88, 91-94

⁵² [Ed-Com] Zet is the letter "Z" in Romanian. Its meaning in entries 53 and 56 is unknown.

- 56) Saia Leiba sin Iosap, no business, old, both legs crippled.
Herscu sin Strule, zet Iosap, brandy maker, his own house.
- 60) Moisa Iancu, brandy maker, lives with rent.
- 61) Iosap sin Itic, the same, from ?iganesti, lives with rent.
- 62) Herscu sin Avram, brandy maker, came from Hoisesti.
- 63) Leibu Itic sin Bercu, brandy maker, from Butuliac.
- 66) Mihail sin Iosap, sieve man, from Esi.
- 67) Marcu sin David, fur cap maker, from Lazareni.
- 68) David sin Mer, brandy maker, from Hanaseni, his own house.
- 73) Haim Sulim sin Iosap, brandy maker, lives with rent at Timofte, the winter coat maker.
- 74) Haim sin Marcu, brandy maker, from Popesti, his own house.
- 75) Iosap sin Smil, fur cap maker, his own house.
- 76) Strule sin Marcu Iosap, wagoner, lives with rent at Avram Leiba.
- 77) Ester the widow.
- 78) Herscu Croitoriu, tailor, lives with rent.
- 79) Izdrail sin Moisa, trades cattle, from Zahorna.
- 80) Mendel sin Solomon, huckster, from Sculeni.
- 81) Huna sin Rubin, butcher, from Tirgu Frumos.
- 82) Ilie Cusmariu, fur cap maker, from Tirgu Frumos.
- 83) Avram sin Iosap, joiner, bachelor, lives with rent at Leiba Zaraf.
- 84) Hescu sin Itic Saper, trades cattle, his own house.
- 85) Malca, widow.
- 89) Solomon Aparu, no business, old, sick, poor.
- 90) Moisa sin Mendel, teacher, old, poor, likes his condition.
- 95) Haim sin Herscu Lupu, brandy maker, lives with rent.
- 96) Leiba sin Itic, brandy maker, his own house.
- 97) Itic sin Haimovici, baker, from Esi.
- 98) Sosia Vadana.
Rahmil Leib, horse seller, lives where he can.

(Total: 63 locals, five helpless elders, and four widows. Signed by the same persons: Leib Ghitman, Eliezer from Esi, Zeilic sin Haim, Simcha from Tirgu Frumos, tax collector, Iaakov from Tirgu Frumos, Moisa Barlescu, and Iaacov Leib). “29 Jews were mentioned in the settlement act: seven merchants of the third category, three craftsmen of the third category, one apprentice, and six tribute-payers. Subtract: three deceased, two moved to Esi and Tirgu Frumos, and three left for nobody knows where. Add: 12 married people, 27 who came from other places, and the inhabitants who were listed in the census for 1838” (A total of 70 Jews).

16.15 Appendix O: A Complaint by the Community, 1844

I.S.A., tr. 1772, op. 2020, dos. 3705, f. 15, May 24, 1844.

To the honorable Department of Internal Affairs, the community of Christian and Jewish inhabitants of the borough Podu Iloaiei complains.

It has been brought to the attention of the Honorable Department the unbearable consequences of Captain Tudorache Radovici's acts, who, living in this town, has so many times as a commissar brought us much misery. So now, in secret ... so as the named commissar was appointed. As in all humble subjects, we pray for mercy and for getting rid of this pest, so that another one can be appointed, whoever may be found appropriate, except for the one mentioned above. For we are confident that one will find enough information by consulting the archives with the former commissars who brought us much trouble and misery.

(Signed: Tanase baker, Constandin Munteanu, Gligore community leader, Toma Popa, Timofte Cojocar, Ion Svat..., Vasile Bucur, Vasile Velciu, Lazar sin Sasului, Constantin Bodescu, Gheorghe sin Nedelcu, Ion Ungurianul, Nica Ceausul, Gheorghe al lui ^[B-53] Iacob, Ion Bejanu, Ion Recleanu, Andrei Morariul, Costachi a Mosneagului, Ion a lui Iacob, Toader Raileanu, Lazar Micu, Vasile Carlateanu, Vasile d... Ion Cosiganul, Petre a Stalei, Gheorghe's nephew from Toma, Vartolomeu Costache, street lighting attendant, Axinte Ciobanu, Grigore Muntianu, Toma a... Gheorghe Ciubotar, Gheorghe Melencus, Vasile Tincu.

(Jewish signatures: Mose Sfarlester, Iaacov from Tirgu Frumos, Iehuda Leib, Faibis ben m... Pesach Barad, David Coda..., Israel ben Ancel, Mordechai..., Simcha from Tirgu Frumos, David ben Avraham, Ancel Iehuda ben Israel, Haim Tvi ben Mose, Tvi from Botosani, Daniel ben Iosef, Avraham ben Iehuda, Nachum ben Pesach, Eliezer Efraim, Mose Itchac, Mordechai Itchac, Mordehai ben Avraham, Dob ben Israel, Efraim from Tirgu Frumos, Itchac Leib ben Mose, Alter ben Meir, Salom Iaacov from Tirgu Frumos, Henich ben Froim Itchac, Zisu Hellir, Azriel ben Iosif from Tirgu Frumos, Iosif ben Dov from Roman, Menase from Totoesti, Tvi ben Iaacov, Lectel ben Iaacov, Iaacov Leib, Rachmiel Leib, Iechiel Michel ben Pesach Nisan, Dov ben Israel, Natan Avraham ben Israel).

⁵³ [Ed-Com] Al lui: Romanian for "son of".

16.16 Appendix P: Census, 1898

I.S.A., Fond Iasi District Administration, No. 71, 1898

1898 Census of the Jewish Population Living in Podu Iloaiei

Note from KME ... The census appearing in Kara's book is a list of 722 Jewish households, showing the following information: Record#, Head of Family, Age, Occupation, How long in Podu Iloaiei, Spouse's Name & Age, and #of Children. It is not being reproduced in this edition because it is already available as part of the JewishGen Romania Database at

<http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Romania/PoduIloaieiCensus1898.htm>.

Here is the first page as it appears in the book.

120								
TABLOU								
de străinii stabiliți definitiv în comuna trg Podu Iloaiei, plasa Bahlui, județul Iași								
Nr. crt.	Capul de familie	Etatea sa	Meseria	De când este în comună	Numele soției	Etatea ei	Copiii	Observații
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Mendel Ilie	34 ani	muncitor	6 ani	Toba Ilie	33 ani	5 copii	văduvă
2	Sura Ilie	56 ani	—	6 ani	—	—	—	—
3	Bercu Solomon	49 ani	muncitor	20 ani	Dvoira S.	46 ani	4 copii	văduvă
4	Beila Șmil Lupu	41 ani	—	5 ani	—	—	7 copii	—
5	Avram Moscovici	38 ani	comerciant	15 ani	Rica	33 ani	1 copil	—
6	Vigder Goldinștain	39 ani	fierar	16 ani	Haia	33 ani	5 copii	—
7	Simon Ițic	31 ani	fierar	născut P.I.	—	—	—	—
8	Seindle Solomon	28 ani	—	născut P.I.	—	—	2 copii	—
9	Toba Iitman	54 ani	moașă	5 ani	—	—	—	—
10	Haiașin Nuhăm	38 ani	croitoreasă	născut P.I.	—	—	—	—
11	Solomon șin Moise	67 ani	precupeț	născut P.I.	—	47 ani	5 copii	necăsătorit
12	Moise șin M. Solomon	23 ani	muncitor	născut P.I.	—	—	—	necăsătorit
13	Michel Solomon	21 ani	muncitor	—	—	—	—	—
14	Chitla Altăr	31 ani	—	—	—	—	1 copil	—
15	Copel șin Moise	48 ani	comerciant	5 ani	Haia Chitla	45 ani	3 copii	necăsătorit
16	Bercu șin Moise	23 ani	precupeț	5 ani	—	—	—	necăsătorită
17	Estera șin Moise	21 ani	—	5 ani	—	—	—	—
18	Șmil M. Roșu	38 ani	comerciant	născut P.I.	Haia Roiza	36 ani	3 copii	necăsătorit
19	Marcu Strulovici	24 ani	comerciant	6 ani	—	—	—	—
20	Iosub M. Totoescu	46 ani	comerciant	născut P.I.	Tipra	41 ani	8 copii	văduv,
21	Herșcu Șor	68 ani	comerciant	născut P.I.	—	—	—	supus rus
22	Rifca șin Avram	56 ani	—	2 ani	—	—	—	necăsătorită
23	Frima șin Avram	56 ani	—	născută P.I.	—	—	—	necăsătorită
24	Alter Herșcu	58 ani	comerciant	—	Șura	54 ani	—	—

16.17 Appendix R: The Statute of Podu Iloae, 1925

Romania. The Jewish community of Podul Iloae.

The STATUTE of the Jewish community of Podul Iloae voted on by the General Assembly on May 3, 1925. Iasi, A. Grinberg Publishing House, 9 Unirei Street, 1925.

By the record no. 33037 from October 16, 1925, released by the court clerk's office at the Iasi Court of Justice, s. I, this community is granted the status of legal entity (no. 62/1925). The report of the General Assembly, which had Mr. Virgil Popovici, administrator of the Bahlui district, and Mr. C. Balan, president of the ad-interim commission of the commune, as its honorary presidents, and Mr. Michel Sanielevici as its full president and Mr. Iancu Horodniceanu as its secretary, describes the discussions and the voting of the statute.

Chapter I. The Community's Goals.

Article 1. All Jews living in Podul Iloae make up the Community of the Jewish Cult of Podul Iloae. The existence of this community dates from before the year 1823, and this statute reorganizes this community as modern times demand it.

Article 2. The name of the Community of the Jewish Cult of Podul Iloae can never and under no circumstances be changed.

Article 3. The missions of the Community are:

- A. To take care of its clergy and to supervise through its commissions the practice of the Mosaic cult;
- B. To take care of the institutions that are designed to educate the masses: the boys and girls primary schools, the professional schools, the kindergardens, the courses for adults, etc;
- C. The maintenance and administration of the social assistance institutions, the public bath, the school's cafeteria, the asylum for the aged and disabled, the medical unit, and any other charitable institutions that are eventually established;
- D. To administrate the holy establishments and the maintenance of the cemeteries.

Chapter II. The Organization of the Community.

Article 4. The community will be presided over and administered by a committee named the Guardianship of the Community and made up of 13 members elected by universal, equal, and direct vote. This committee will have four sections: a) the administrative section; b) the section for religion; c) the cultural section; and d) the section for public assistance and the holy establishments. Each section will have its own special set of regulations, according to the present statute.

Article 5. Three gentlemen will be in charge of each section. All sections put together form the Guardianship of the Community. The president of the administrative section is

also the president of the guardianship, while the presidents of the other sections will be the vice presidents of the guardianship. The guardianship will have a cashier, a supervisor, and a secretary who will also be enrolled in the administrative section. The secretary accountant of the guardianship, as well as any other clerks to be employed when the circumstances demand it will be hired and paid only by the guardianship.

Article 6. The sections work autonomously, but in exceptional cases as well as at the times stipulated by the statute, when the reports will be presented, the general assembly of the guardianship would be called upon.

Article 7. The specific tasks of each section will be established by special regulations.

Chapter III. Revenues.

Article 8. Every member of the community, meaning every Jew who lives in Podul-Iloaiei, has the duty to contribute either directly or indirectly in the form of the tax on kosher meat or the tax on the slaughtering of poultry. Those members of the community who do not subscribe to the paying of the tax will have to bring their direct contribution depending on the number of the members of their families and on their wealth. The taxpayers will be registered in a special record, will receive a community member card, and will enjoy all the rights conferred to them by this status.

Article 9. The community also has the following alternate sources of income: a) the statistics taxes on births, weddings, and deaths, other certificates, etc. The members of the community have the duty to inform the statistics section of any change that has occurred in their families; b) taxes on burials and gravestones, which will be differentiated into several classes according to the special regulation of the section that administers the holy establishments; c) the money from the making of the Passover matzoh, from the public bath, the school, the tax money on the kosher meat (a special regulation will establish the way of imposing this tax); d) the proceeds of money deposited in banks or other institutions for the benefit of the community, as well as the revenues from donated properties or from properties that will be donated to the community and from the personal or real estate purchased by the community; e) donations or voluntary gifts, as well as profits from the charity balls and from theatrical performances or cinema shows; f) in case the revenues do not cover the expenses required for the community's basic needs, the members of the community will have to accept a temporary tax that will depend on the needs at that time. In case of a surplus, the taxes on kosher meat and poultry slaughtering can be reduced.

Chapter IV. The Election of the Community's Guardians.

Article 10. All the Jewish inhabitants of Podul-Iloaiei, who are also contributors to the community's budget and own the membership card stipulated in Article 8, have the right and the duty to take part in the election of the community's guardians by direct, equal, and secret vote.

Article 11. In order for someone to be elected it is requested, besides the conditions that make him an elector, that he not have been blamed with a discreditable punishment and that he must have his payments to the community up to date.

Article 12. The elections will be based on lists containing the names of 13 candidates. Any Jewish organization, synagogue, or other ad-hoc formed group with at least 25 members is allowed to present its own list of candidates. The payment for the publishing of the list will also be presented. One candidate may appear on more than one list, but the endorsers of one list cannot guarantee a different one.

Article 13. The Guardianship of the Community is elected for a three-year term.

Article 14. The announcement for the gathering of the community for the new elections will be made 30 days before the term of the previous committee expires. During these 30 days, a special bureau will be in charge and will release the elector's cards free of charge. During this period of time, new electors will be included in the electors' record from among the persons who haven't been included by then, if, of course, they fulfill the conditions stipulated by Article 10. Also, this bureau will register the candidates' lists. These lists will each bear a distinctive sign, the candidates' names will be written both in Romanian and Hebrew and each will have a number. All the lists will be put on a single list in the order of their presentation at the bureau. Five days before the elections, the candidates' lists will be considered irrevocable and will be made public.

Article 15. The voting is done by applying the stamp "VOTED" on the distinctive sign, which means that the whole list was voted for as such. Candidates from several lists can be voted for by erasing with a pencil the names of those not voted for. Under no circumstances can more than 13 gentlemen be voted for.

Article 16. The voting is valid no matter the number of voters who show up to vote between eight in the morning and six in the evening during one day.

Article 17. The electoral bureau, which will be formed by two representatives from each synagogue and by one delegate from the commune who will be invited in due time by the previous committee, will manage the elections. The elections require a relative majority.

Article 18. The results of the election will be mentioned in a report signed by the delegate and the electoral bureau. This result will be communicated to the honorable mayor and to the public the next day. If, after five days, no legal appeal is made, the elected guardians are considered in function and the previous committee has the obligation to hand in the financial administration and the community's wealth during the next eight days.

Article 19. The cash belonging to the community, which is at the time kept by the former cashier or by other persons, has to be handed in to the new committee's cashier, unless it was deposited in a bank within 60 days of the elections. The newly elected guardians will take a vow before receiving their prerogatives in the presence of the community's rabbi and the delegate of the communal authority.

Chapter V. Sanctions.

Article 20. Any Jew who has lived in Podul Iloaiei for at least one year and refuses to obey the present statute, either not willing to contribute materially or commits infringements like refusing to hand in possessions or documents belonging to the community to its guardianship or encourages certain persons who do not have the necessary authorization or to whom this authorization has been declined to enroll in

certain Jewish community functions, will be erased from the record of the community's members and will not be able to make use of, not even for a fee, any of the community's institutions, any assistance from the community's sections being denied until the issue is resolved.

Article 21. In those cases where the property or the documents of the community are being retained, the possibility remains to appeal to the enforcement of the penal code.

Article 22. The bureau of the administrative section will keep a special record of the persons who refuse to contribute to the community's budget, and their names will be made public at the end of each month.

Chapter VI. General Dispositions.

Article 23. Any contracts signed by the guardianship of the community remain valid and have to be considered by the next guardianship.

Article 24. The places that may become vacant in the guardianship, following death, resignation, or expulsion, will be given to those candidates who won the largest number of votes.

Article 25. In case the guardianship is dissolved or its majority is incomplete without the possibility of restoration as stipulated by Article 24, then, in order to avoid disturbances within the community, the remaining guardians have the duty to form an ad-interim commission made up of members of the Jewish community who will organize the election of the guardians in no more than 60 days.

Article 26. All the financial documents, receipts, confirmation of receipts, and money orders will have the president's signature or by special appointment the signature of the vice president of the administrative section.

Article 27. The community, as the rightful owner of all community properties, even if they apparently belong to private persons, will do all that is necessary and fulfill all the legal forms to obtain the full right of property over them.

Article 28. No religious function that requires a special qualification like a wedding service, religious divorce, religious assistance in the pursuit of justice if needed, the religious service, the ritual slaughtering of animals, the making of circumcisions, or the funeral service will be held in the area of this community by persons other than those employed by the guardianship of the community in accord with the contract they will agree upon. Any service that this article refers to that is performed by employees of the guardianship of the community whose contract has expired or by foreigners will be considered usurpation and they will be prosecuted in accordance with the country's laws. The guardianship has the right to temporarily authorize other persons who are not the employees of the guardianship, from other towns or from this commune, to perform the religious services mentioned above, in which case a written authorization from the guardianship is absolutely necessary. The guardianship reserves the right to revoke a given authorization. Any disputes on payments for the religious services that may arise between the parishioners and our employees will be resolved by the guardianship of the community.

Article 29. The regulations for each of the sections will be drawn up by the sections themselves and voted on by the guardianship of the community.

Article 30. Any statute or regulation previous to the present statute is and remains annulled.

Article 31. Changes to this statute or its entire modification cannot be done unless there is a motivated request from two thirds of the members of the community.

Article 32. The present leading committee that was functioning when the work on this statute began will continue to exercise its functions until the termination of the two-year term for which it has been elected; then it will proceed according to the dispositions stipulated by articles 10, 11, 12, and 13, and the following ones.

This statute was voted unanimously and the leading committee, especially Mr. President Michel Sanilovici and Secretary I. Horodniceanu, were given full authority to obtain the legalization of the statute and the recognition of the quality of legal and moral entity for our community. Thus, we have signed it.

Leading committee: President M. Sanilovici, Vice-president M. I. Schor, Cashier I. Schneer, and Secretary I. Horodniceanu. Members: Avram Solomon, Moise Solomon, Anciu S. Anciu, Moise Goldenberg, Haim sin Haim, Lupu Leibovici, Marcu Iosipovici, Lipa D. Maizner, Iechil Blumenfeld, and Moise Hachman.

(A booklet of 16 pages, format 32)

16.18 Appendix S: Schools, 1904

The Newspaper Evenimentul (The Event), Iasi, November 17, 1904, page 3.

The school under-inspector I. Petrov found several (Jewish) confessional schools in Podu Iloaiei that had no authorization. He wants them closed. They are located at Strul Veinberg's (Srul der poliser) on Lapusneanu St., Beris Dascalu's on Vanatorilor St., Iaic Dascalu's on Naaionala St., and Sami Frenkel's on Scob'laeni St.

16.19 Appendix T: Schools, 1914

The Newspaper Egalitatea (The Equality), Year XXV, No. 30, May 23, 1914.

“The Laying of the Foundation Stone for the Jewish-Romanian school in Podul Iloaiei”

On May 11, 1914, this ceremony took place in the presence of a large audience. The following persons gave speeches: Sch. Steinberg, president of the community; Rabbi Dr. Thenen; Moritz Wachtel who praised the initiative and condemned the path of hatred; Petre Comarnescu, student and member of the Student's Society of Iasi, criticized the poor condition of the Jews living in the country; Aron Rosenthal, speaking in Hebrew on behalf of the local Zionist group, demanded a greater development of the Hebrew language; Ghizela Wechsler, former president of the committee that managed the building of the

school, thanked all the donors; Adolf Magder related the hardships they had struggled with to obtain the necessary funds for the building of the school. Among the other people who spoke were Dr. Vittner, the physician at the communal hospital, institutor Dumitru from Iasi, Mozes Duff, and school inspector Ionescu who held the closing speech, praised the teaching staff and expressed his wish for a closer cooperation between the country's elements for its own well-being. Afterward, the founding document of the school was signed and built in the foundation of the school).

17 At The Turn of the Century. Several Compulsory Additions.

After completing the final draft of this monograph, I came across some sources that offer additional perspectives on the life of the Jewish community of Podu Iloaiei at the turn of the 19th century and into the 20th.

The peasants' uprisings in 1888 and those in the following years, as well as the economic crisis at the end of the 19th century, had even worse effects on the Jewish population due to a series of laws and administrative dispositions that were applied abusively and excessively. This was the case in 1897 when the mayor of the commune of Podu Iloaiei forced the community to pay from its budget the wages of 10 "daytime guardians" who were supposed to protect the interests of all the town's inhabitants. A sum of 450 lei was to be paid from the money collected from the taxes on kosher meat. This affected especially the population with modest revenues—the craftsmen, the workers, and the small merchants. The president of the community, Zeida Rosenberg, resigned because he could no longer pay the rabbi, the four shochets, some of the teachers, and the physician, and it was the same with the payments for social assistance and for his office. On the other hand, the guards, although paid, could not stop the frequent thefts that were taking place in the commune (see the newspaper *Opinia* of Iasi from July 27, 1897).

The abuses of the communal counsel continued in the following years. The Jews protested, though they did not ask for the dissolution of this local institution (see the newspaper *Evenimentul* of Iasi from July 18, 1900 "The Event of Iasi").

Despite the precarious economic situation, which worsened during the years 1898 to 1900, charitable acts were initiated by the Jews who felt united with their coreligionists who were in great need, as happened with the calamity victims in Stefanesti in the Botosani district (see *Opinia*, July 6, 1897).

One of the mayor's abuses was the order to close down the 25-year-old brick factory owned by the Jew Avram, while allowing others nearby to continue to function (see Iasi State Archives, the Prefecture's fund, record 87, 1896, page 13).

The situation caused some of the town's Jews to take part in the well known "on-foot emigration" in 1900. *Evenimentul* on April 30, 1900 writes that 100 of the townspeople are preparing to immigrate to America. After some time, we learn that their number grew to 400. This emigration trend continued during the following years. The paper *Evenimentul* on July 25, 1901 writes on page 3: "A delegate of the Jews named Sraier living in Podu Iloae arrived in town yesterday and pleaded to Mr. Auerbach (the representative of the I.C.A. in Paris—I.K.) the cause of a certain number of craftsmen from this small town who want to emigrate, especially the women who were left alone after last year's wave of emigrations. Mr. Auerbach promised to visit Podu Iloae in the weeks to come."

New hardships appeared after the promulgation of the Public Education Law in 1893, according to which the children of "aliens" will be received in limited numbers at schools, having to pay taxes, which was one more burden on most of the Jews' already slim

budget. Striving to know the country's language better and become familiar with the elements of modern culture, the Jews had to build their own school. The initiative was taken in 1899 and became a reality in 1902.

In the meantime, the borough was developing. A public park was opened and town-planning projects were designed with the hope of obtaining the title of town (1903). The townspeople read Romanian papers; the distributor was L. Fruchtman in 1897. From among the hundreds of Jewish families, only six were considered "rightful," having civil and some political rights. They voted in the communal elections in 1902.

At the end of the century, the community's life becomes more diverse, moving beyond the strict framework of synagogues and, rarely, some charity society. The interest generated by the movement "Hoveve Sion" that started in the 1880s led to the opening of a local branch in 1881 that sent Saie Steinberg as its delegate to the congress in Galati in 1894. There, he presented an activity report. Upon his return, the society's activity was reorganized (see the supplement to the Yiddish paper *Folksblat* from January 12, 1895, page 2).

The society's activity continued with interruptions probably caused by internal rivalries. In 1901, the society Carmel reopened, led by Ghersen Cohn, who previously had edited a temporary Yiddish newspaper in Iasi with I. Finchelman and the student M. Sraier (see *Evenimentul*, May 5, 1902, page 3). In the same year, at the Zionist congress, the delegates were Michel Sor (who became the mayor's helper in 1923) and Iosef Rosental (who later became a Hebrew teacher). Also that year, the Zionist society Macabei was established, led by Iosef Solomon and Asbert Spaier (see *Evenimentul*, April 30, 1902). In the same year, the society Dr. Herzl's Youth opened, led by Elias Reisch and Vigder Iosupovici; it included a reading group with 40 members. Delegates from other towns represented this society and the Carmel society at the congress.

The following people gave a speech at that year's Hanukkah holiday: H. Meirovici, Spirt the medical undergraduate, and the teacher I. Rosental. The children recited and sang in Hebrew as well. More or less, these societies were active until 1916, owning a library of 1,000 books written in Romanian and Yiddish. Actually, between 1900 and 1916, there was a marked process of modernization of the community's life. A notable fact: The attention paid by the newspapers in Iasi, *Evenimentul* and later *Opinia*, to the events that concerned the Jewish community shows that these papers had an important number of Jewish readers and subscribers who had to be taken into consideration. Subsequently, around 1907, both papers not only stopped publishing any news about Jewish life, but also adopted an anti-Semitic attitude. The Jewish readers changed their preferences to the democratic papers *Dimineata* (The Morning) and *Adevarul* (The Truth). These papers had many readers before the Balkan war. The paper *Infratirea* (The Brotherhood) of the Local Jews Union also had many readers and, of course, so did other Jewish magazines and papers that appeared in Romanian or Yiddish. Some subscribed to the Hebrew press from abroad and read Modern Hebrew literature. Yiddish books, some written by second-hand authors and others by famous authors like Shalom Aleichem, I. L. Perea, Morris Rosenfeld, were much appreciated. Romanian books that appeared in the collections *Everybody's Library*, *Minerva*, and *Astra* were very popular since, due to the existence of

the Jewish-Romanian primary school, all the young people were able to read and write in the country's language, although Yiddish was mostly resorted to in private.

Public lectures were held both in Romanian and Yiddish.

Overall, the social and cultural life of the town was very tumultuous and fruitful, much more than would be expected from an "insignificant Moldavian shtetl."

18 I. Kara: History Studies. Selected Bibliography.

Since 1938, I. Kara (Itic Svart) published over 100 studies and history papers of variable value and extent written in Yiddish (Y), Romanian (R), English (E), Ivrit (Iv), Spanish (S), and German (G).

This bibliography includes the most important of them in regard to their conception, synthetic structuring, and the new data they reveal. All of the following titles are listed in English.

Volume or Brochure Studies

1. Itic Svart. *Centuries Old Testimonies*. Bacau, 1947. (R)
2. Itic Svart. *30 Years of Yiddish Literature in Romania*. Iasi, 1947. (Y)
3. I.Kara et al. *From the Principalities' Union to the Romanian Independence War*. Iasi, 1977. (R)
4. I.Kara. *A Boy from Moldova*. Bucharest: Kriterion, 1976. (Y)
5. I.Kara. *The Young and ... the Less Young Years*. Bucharest: Kriterion, 1980. (Y)

Published in Magazines and Anthologies

1. Itic Svart. "The Record of the Funeral Fraternity of Vijnita." 1768. In *Yivo-Bleter*, Vilna, vol. 14, no. 5, September 1938, p. 125-135. (Y)
2. A.Steinhard (pseudonym). "Contributions to the History and Literature of the On Foot Emigrants of Romania. 1900." In *Yivo-Bleter*, New York, vol. 30, 1951, p. 294-298. (Y)
3. A.Lachover (pseudonym). "The Jews and the 1848 Romanian Revolution." Idem, vol. 51, 1951, p. 363-364. (Y)
4. A.Lachover. "Funeral Fraternities in 18th and 19th Century Moldova." In *Yive-Annual*, vol. 10, 1955, p. 300-319. (E)
5. I.Kara (Itic Svart). "New Data Regarding the History of the Yiddish Theater in Romania." In *Bleter far geszichte*, Warsaw, vol. 10, no. 1-2, 1957, p. 93-107. (Y)
6. I.Kara. "Feudal Institutions of the Jewish Population of Romania." Idem, vol. 12, 1960, p. 153-168. (Y)
7. I.Kara. "Jewish Manufacturers' Guilds in Romania." Idem. vol. 4, 1961, p. 138-145. (Y)

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11. "Pages from the History of the Denominational Education in Romania." In *MCR*, no. 165 (1967) and no. 288 (1971). (R)
12. "Fragments from Gh. Asachi's Publishing Activity." In *The Metropolitan of Moldova*, no. 3-4, 1968, p. 229-231. (R)
13. "An Unknown Portrait of Mihai the Brave" In *The Chronicle*, Iasi, February 18, 1967, p. 10. (R)
14. "Pages from the History of Jewish Publishing in Romania." In *RCM*, no. 195 (1968), no. 199 (1969), no. 209 (1969). (R)
15. "New Information on Hontaruse's Printing Machine." In *Karpaten Rundschau*, Brasov, January 3, 1969, p. 7. (G)
16. "The Jewish Print in Romania." In *Kiryat Sepher*, Jerusalem, vol. 45, 1970, p. 287-298. (E)
17. "Hebrew Inscriptions in Piatra Neamt." In *Memoria Antiquitatis*, Piatra Neamt, vol. 1, 1969, p. 369-373. (R)
18. "Liber Amicorum." In *The Chronicle*, Iasi, no. 1, 1971, p. 10. (R)
19. "Fragments from the History of the Rabbinitism in Moldova." In *RCM*, no. 262, 1971. (R)
20. "Rabbis and Scholars in Moldova." In *RCM*, no. 266 (1971), no. 269 (1972), no. 273 (1972). (R)
21. "Little Known Data on Prince Mihai the Brave." In *Acta Valachica*, T'rgoviste, p. 171-175. (R)
22. "The Record of the Cap Makers Guild of Iasi. 1878." In *RCM*, no. 275 (1972), no. 277 (1972). (R)
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24. "The Heirs of Barbu the Fiddler." In *The Chronicle*, Iasi, no. 36, 1972. (R)
25. "An Unprecedented Commercial Correspondence." In *The Yearbook of the A. D. Xenopol History Institute*, Iasi, vol. 9, 1972, p. 475-494. (R)
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27. "Jewish Fiddlers in Moldova." In *RCM*, no. 320, 1974. (R and Y)
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30. "Rabbis and Scholarship in the Romanian Principality." In *RCM*, April 1, 1975. (R and Y)
31. "The Internal Organization of the Jewish Communities of Romania in the Past." In *Toladot*, Jerusalem, 1977, no. 15, p. 11-16. (R and Iv)
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33. "120 years of Yiddish Literature in Romania." In *Folks-sztime*, Warsaw, October 1978. (Y)

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37. "An Unknown Commercial Stamp." In *The Yearbook of the Vaslui District History Museum*. vol. 2, 1980, p. 509-510. (R)
38. "120 Years of Jewish Printing in Romania." In *Folks-Sztyme*, Warsaw, March 1981. (Y)
39. "The Economic Life of the Jews Living in Romania until 1848." In *Bukarester sriftn*, vol. 5, 1982. (Y)

19 References

Note from KME

- ? *The following numerically-sequenced notes by Kara, appeared at the back of his Romanian edition with the title “Notes”. In this English edition the pointers in the body of the book appear in the format [A-1], [A-2], [A-3].*
- ? *In the Romanian edition the notes were not arranged by chapter.*
- ? *A.S.I. is cited many times in Kara’s notes. It stands for “Arh. St. Iasi”. In the English edition we are referring to it as Iasi State Archives (ISA).*

Chapter 6: Chronicle

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21. Constantin Sion. *“The History of the Nobility in Moldavia”*, Edition Hibanesu, Iasi, 1892, p.91.
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24. The Growing Collections of the Romanian Academy in the years 1920-1923, p.232
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26. A.S.I. doc.548/16.
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29. A.S.I. packet 591, nr. 63.
30. A.S.I. packet 591, nr. 63.
31. A.S.I. packet 344, nr. 254.
32. The dates of the mosaic calendar have been transposed in the current calendar format by using comparative tables, published by rabbi Solomon W. Freud, Wien, 1885. (Vienna)
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40. C.C. Giurescu. "The Romanian Principalities in the Nineteenth Century", p.53-57.
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42. "The Administrative Manual of Moldavia", I, p.525, appeal from May 14, 1835.
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44. A.S.I. packet 646, nr. 41.
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46. "Parliamentary Annals", XIII, second part, p.643.
47. "Towns and Boroughs...", p. 241-243.
48. "Bulletin", official document, 1839, p.127.
49. A.S.I. packet 245, nr. 26, April 6, 1840.
50. "Village Paper", 1841, p.251-252.
51. "Village Paper", 1841, p.322, 407.
52. A.S.I., Secret Documents, nr. 798.
53. A.S.I., doc. 776, nr. 56.
54. A.S.I., packet 10, nr. 38-40.
55. "Village Paper", 1843, p.294.
56. A.S.I., Secret Documents, nr. 1228, file 26.
57. "Bulletin", official document, 1845, p.210.
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59. A.S.I., Secret Documents, nr. 340, file 105.
60. "Towns and Boroughs...", p. 280.
61. A.S.I., tr. 1772, work 2020, file 3705, p.30
62. "Bulletin", official document, 1845, p.478.
63. "Village Paper", 1846, p.127.

64. A.S.I., Secret Documents, nr. 1624, file 23.
65. A.S.I., Secret Documents, nr. 1624, file 17.
66. A.S.I. fund I. Kara.
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70. *"Uri Veisi"*, nr. 65.
71. *"The Brotherhood"* (Newspaper), April 27, 1880, p.2.
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73. *"The Brotherhood"*, November 28, 1881, p.3.
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78. A.S.I. the fund of the Iasi County Prefecture, 1895, nr. 5, file 5.
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83. Most of the information regarding years 1903-1908 are extracted from the Iasi newspaper *"The Event"*, while for the years 1909-1940, information is taken from the newspaper *"The Opinion"*. The mentioned event can be found in an issue of this newspaper, published around this date. Other more important sources are described more explicitly in notes.
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Chapter 7: Economic Life

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92. A.S.I., letter IA from 144, file 1 and 8.
93. A.S.I., tr. 875, works 997, file 407, p.1, 2.
94. Verax, *"Literary Works of"*, p.14
95. A.S.I., tr. 1423, works 1619, register 1025, p.3.
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97. *"The Official Bulletin of Moldavia"*, 1842, p.339.
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99. *"Carpica"*, Bacau, III, 1970, appendix III.
100. A.S.I., tr. 1423, works 1619, register 1025, p.3.

101. A.S.I., tr. 1768, works I/2017, file 422, p. 18, 21.
102. A.S.I., tr. 1768, works I/2017, file 422, p. 7.
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104. *"The Scientific Annals of Alexandru Iaon Cuza University - IASI"*, s.III, T. XIII, 1967, p.84.
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107. *"The Development of the Moldavian Economy"*, 1848/1864. Buc., 1963, p.221.
108. A.S.I. the fund of the Iasi County Prefecture, 1895, nr. 5.
109. Article written by M. Arcu in *"The Opinon"*, Iasi, August 1, 1928, p.2.

Chapter 8: Communal Life

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111. *"The Brotherhood"*, September 22, 1889, p.1.
112. *"Folksblat"*, Buc., January 12, 1895, p.3.
113. *"The Event"*, Iasi, November 7, 1901, p. 3.

Chapter 9: Private and Public Education

114. A.S.I. the fund of the Iasi County Prefecture, nr. 86/1884.
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117. *"The Jewish Newspaper"*, January 18, 1913, p.1.

Chapter 11: Rabbinate

118. *"The Jewish Magazine"*, 1887, p.579.

Chapter 12: Hasidism

119. "Meain hachasidut", year 2, nr. 2, 1965, p.10-11.
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20 Glossary of Terms

The following glossary was not part of Kara's work. It's an added feature of this English edition.

Legend: Heb=Hebrew, Rom=Romanian, Yid=Yiddish

Term	Language	Definition
a	Rom	Son of...
a lui	Rom	Son of...
Bani	Rom	Currency, plural of ban. 100 bani equals 1 leu.
Belfer	Yid	Teacher's assistant
Bereshit	Heb	"In the beginning". The book of Genesis.
Braga	Rom	Fermented soft drink.
Bucuros	Rom	Happily
Dayan	Heb	Judge in a religious court
Divan	Rom	An assembly of the nobles of the country
Dumnezeu	Rom	G-d
Ebrews	Rom	Hebrews
El mulei rachamin	Heb	Prayer said for the deceased
Eretz Yisrael	Heb	The Land of Israel
Gabaim de Tzadikim	Heb	Treasurers of the righteous ones. Refers to chief assistants of Hasidic rabbis.
Galbeni	Rom	An old currency. Literally coins made of gold
Ghiter id	Yid	Literally a good Jew, i.e. a good person
Ghitn uvnt	Yid	Good evening
Hahami	Heb	A ritual slaughter. It's from the Hebrew word "chachma", wisdom. (It may actually be a word used in old Romanian that came through Turkish??). Also called "shochet".
Hakafot	Heb	The ritual of dancing around the Torah.
Hamantashen	Yid	Special pastries eaten on Purim, formed in the shape of Haman's hat.
Hasidic	Heb	Religious Jewish sect which emphasized spiritual values
Heder	Yid	Literally a room in Heb but in Yid used for elementary school.
Hekdesh	Heb	Sanctified property – i.e. communal property, charity, etc.
Hidromel	Rom	A light alcoholic beverage made from honey
High Porte	Eng	The High Porte is a synonym of the government of the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman Porte, Sublime Porte, and High Porte are similar terms for the Turkish Babi Ali, the court of the sultan. When translated into English, the Turkish term Babi Ali means, literally, "High Gate". Porte is

Term	Language	Definition
		French for "Gate", therefore, the term High Porte is a bilingual combination of English High and French Porte that is equivalent to Babi Ali. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sublime_Porte)
Judaeus	Rom	Jews
Kaddish	Heb	Prayer said for the deceased
Kobza	Rom	Type of lute.
Leu	Rom	The national currency of Romania (plural lei) One leu is subdivided into 100 bani (singular ban).
Lipoveans	Rom	Originally referred to people of Russian origin, who settled in the region of the Danube River and the Black Sea. Later it was used to describe all those coming from Russia.
Machlokes	Heb	Long standing argument
Maot Chittim	Heb	Hebrew for "wheat money". This is money given to the poor for their Passover matzah.
Matseva	Heb	Tombstone.
Melamed	Heb	An itinerant teacher (plural melamdim)
Minyan	Heb	A quorum of 10 Jews for prayer.
Mishna	Heb	A codified collection of Jewish Oral Law compiled circa 200 CE. Together with the Gemara it forms part of the Talmud.
Mitzraim	Heb	Egypt
Moale	Rom	Soft
Mozl tov	Heb	Congratulations, literally lucky constellation (mazel tov)
Nigunim	Heb	Tunes
Oca	Rom	Measure of volume, equals 1.5 liters
Parale	Rom	Currency until 1968
Pericope	Latin/ Greek	An extract or selection from a book, especially a reading from a Scripture that forms part of a religious service. In a Jewish context it is the weekly Torah reading (Parsha).
Podu	Rom	Bridge
Sales-sides	Heb	Literally third meal, used in reference to a meal eaten on Sabbath afternoon (Shalosh Seudos)
Sanatatea	Rom	Health
Sheli sheloh, sheloh sheli	Heb	Literally his, mine, mine, his. A children's game
Shochet	Heb	A ritual slaughter.
Stetl	Yid	A Jewish market town in Eastern Europe
Sin	Rom	Son
Stanjen	Rom	Measure of length equal to 6 feet
Sudit	Rom	A foreign citizen or native who enjoyed foreign protection while living on Romanian territory, as stipulated by the terms of the treaties signed by the Western powers and the Turkish Empire.

Term	Language	Definition
Tales	Heb	A fringed prayer shawl worn by men during religious services
Talmud	Heb	Compilation of the Jewish oral law, consists of the Mishna and Gemara
Talmud Torah	Heb	Study of Torah. Also refers to religious school.
Talmudist		One who is knowledgeable in the Talmud
Treif	Heb	Non kosher food
Tzadik	Heb	Righteous one, a moniker used for Hasidic leaders.
Vedre	Rom	Measurement tool used in Moldova in the past, equaling approximately 15.2 litres.
Yeshiva	Heb	A Talmudic academy

21 Glossary of Places

The following glossary was not part of Kara's work. It's an added feature of this English edition. It appears in both PDF version available from KME and in HTML format at the JewishGen website.

Place	Chapter
Agiud	15
Albesti	16.14
Alesk	12
America	7, 8, 15.6, 17
Arama	15.6
Babylon	11
Bahlui	16.17
Bahlui region	8
Bahlui River	7, 8, 14, 15.3, 15.5, 15.7, 16.3
Bahluet River	7, 15.7
Balcani	16.14
Barbalata	16.13
Basarabia, Old	15.4
Basceaus	16.14
Basel	9
Bekești	16.7
Berdicev	15.2
Berlești	8
Bivolari	15.3
Bogoila	16.14
Boidinești	16.14
Borseni in Neamt	16.14
Botosani	15.4, 16.14, 16.15
Botosani district	7, 17
Braesti estate	7
Brody	12
Bucharest	7, 8, 15, 15.4, 15.7
Bucovina	7
Buenos Aires	15.4
Buhusi	7, 13, 15.2, 15.4
Bukovina	15
Bulbucani	16.14
Bulgaria	7
Burdujeni	8
Burlacu	16.14
Butuliac	16.14

Place	Chapter
Cantacuzino's estate	16.14
Carazeni	8
Carligatura county	7, 16.2
Carligatura district	7
Catesti	16.14
Cernauti	7, 15, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5, 16.2
Constantinople	8
Cosateni	16.14
Craiova	15.5
Cristesti	16.14
Darajeni	16.14
Dobrogea	8
Doroscani	16.14
Drancea in Iasi	16.14
Erbiceni	7
Eretz Yisrael	7, 15, 15.4
Erghiceni	16.14
Esi	16.6, 16.14
Falticeni	15.4
Galati	8, 17
Galicia	13
Germany	7
Hanaseni	16.14
Harlau	7
Harpagesti	16.14
Herta	15
Hirlau	8, 15
Hoisesti	16.14
Holland	15.4
Holy Land	11
Iasi	7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 16.2,17
Iasi county	11
Iasi district	15.5
Israel	8, 15
Korzec	12
Kuty	12
Larga	16.14
Lazareni	16.14
Lelioaiei	15.1
Lespezi	7
Lint	12
Lipova	16.14
Lipsca	8

Place	Chapter
Lithuania	13
Lungani	16.14
Lvov	12
Malaesti	16.14
Maramures	7, 12, 15
Memornita	15
Mihaileni (aka Vladeni)	7, 12
Mircesti	16.14
Moinesti	15.4
Moldavia	15.4, 15.7
Moldavian Principality	7
Moldova	7, 8, 15, 15.3, 15.5
Moldova, Republic of	15.4
Neculachi	16.13
Negresti	16.12
New York	15.6
Obresti	16.14
Obrojeni	7
Odobesti	15
Pacurari (Iasi)	13
Palade's estate	11
Paris	7, 15.4, 17
Pascani	13, 15.2
Plevna	7
Podeloi	15
Podliloaiei	15
Podu Iloae	17
Podu Iloaiei	7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 15.4, 15.7, 17
Podu Iloaiei borough	8
Podu Lelioaiei	7, 15.5
Podul Eloaie (Pont d'Aloia)	15
Podul Lelioaiei	7
Podul Lelioarei	8
Podulelioiaia borough	7
Poduleloaiei	7
Poduleloi	7
Podul-ii-leloe	7
Podul-Leloea	7
Poenile Oancii	16.14
Popesti	7, 8, 16.4, 16.13, 16.14
Prague	15.2
Premislean	15.2
Prut River	15.4

Place	Chapter
Roman	8, 16.15
Romanesti	16.14
Romania	7, 8, 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6
Romanian County	15.3
Romanian Principalities	8
Sadagura	12, 13
Sarca estate	8
Scheia	7
Scobalteni	7, 8, 16.1, 16.8
Scobalteni borough	7
Scobalteni estate	7, 11, 15.6
Sculeni	16.14
Sinesti	16.14
Sirca	16.4, 16.14
Slavuta	12
Sneatin	16.11
Stefanesti	8, 13, 15.2, 17
Stornest	16.14
Strelite	15.2
Strelitk	12
Suceava	13
Sulita	13, 16.14
Sulitoae	15
Targu Frumos	7, 8, 11, 12, 15.4
Tel Aviv	15
The United Principalities	7
Ticau	7
Timisesti River	7
Tirgu Frumos	16.13, 16.14, 16.15
Tirgu Nou	16.1
Tirgu Ocna	15.5
Todireni	10
Toma	16.15
Totoesti	16.4, 16.13, 16.14, 16.15
Totoesti estate	7
Transylvania	7
Tulcin	8
United States	15.4
Vijnita	12
Vilna	11
Vladeni (aka Mihaileni)	7, 16.1
Zahorna	16.14
Zloczow	13

22 Glossary of People

The Glossary of People was not part of Kara's work. It's an added feature of this English edition. It does not appear in the PDF version; however it is available in HTML format at the JewishGen website or in Excel format from KME.

22.1 Overview

There are hundreds of names mentioned throughout the book, making it a treasure trove for Jewish genealogists. We hope this glossary will aid them in finding the names they are researching.

In its native form in MS Word, names of interest can be found in this document quite simply by doing a global search for the name. There is one drawback with this approach however. We may not be using the same spelling that appears in the book. For example, if we are looking for Cohen, we are not going to find "Cohn", the way it is spelled in Romanian.

The search process becomes even more difficult when the document is hosted on JewishGen, with each of the 21 different chapters in a separate HTML file. That means if we are searching for Cohen we will have to do 21 searches. Using the glossary will make the job much simpler.

The glossary contains the following information:

Field	Description
Surname	The family name, as best we can ascertain from the Name.
Name	Can contain first name, surname, occupation, place of origin or combination of the above.
Date	
Desc	
Chapter	Chapter in the book where the person can be found.
Sequence#	Sequence number of the entry in the book. Two people with similar names, in close proximity in the book, may be the same person or related persons. If the entry comes from the 1898 Census (Chapter 16.6) then the sequence number is the record number as it appears in the census plus 2000. For example, the 1898 census record# 246 appears in the glossary as sequence# 2246.

By default the glossary is sorted by Surname, Name and Sequence#. However other sort orders are possible.

In the description field we have captured only small pieces of information. It's usually worthwhile to go back to the appropriate chapter/s, in which the names of interest are found, to get the full information.

The glossary contains virtually all the people mentioned in the book, including the censuses in Chapter 16.

Please note that the Census of 1898 (Ch 16.16) is being hosted, in its entirety, at JewishGen as a separate entity with different search capabilities. Nevertheless some of the information is being included in the Glossary of People to allow for unified searches. If you do find names of interest in the glossary it's recommended that you go to the 1898 Census to get the additional information.

It should also be noted that some of the people listed in the glossary were not Jewish (eg. city officials, landowners, etc). Furthermore, the glossary is not restricted to Podu Iloaiei residents. Some of the people listed had nothing to do with this town (eg. famous rabbis, writers, etc).

Some people appear to have multiple listings in the glossary. For example:

Name	Date	Description	Chapter
Moise Berlescu	1836, 1842	From Berlesti; proposal for taxes; litigation	7
Moisa Birlescu	n/d	Renters list; tax collector, signatore	16.14
Iekel Blumenfeld	1938	Community leader	7
Iechil Blumenfeld	1925	Jewish Community Constitution; committee member	16.17
Moise Iuster	1830	Municipal income	16.4
Moise Juster	1830	Business transaction	7

Notice the variations in spelling from one entry to the next.

22.2 Challenges in Finding Names in this Book

Some JewishGen/PoduIloaiei researchers have been disappointed not finding their ancestors in the various censuses in the book. I must caution that these censuses in their current form may not be complete. The material went through several different processes:

- ? Kara transcribing from the source documents (which themselves may have been incomplete)
- ? Printing of Kara's book
- ? Translation into English

But I wouldn't rush to any conclusions. I was also perplexed why the siblings of my great-grandparents were missing from the 1898 census, until I found other civic records showing them residing in some of the surrounding communities.

Another major obstacle in identifying ancestors is the fact that a large number of entries appear without surnames. Apparently the adoption of surnames was a rather late innovation in Podu Iloaiei. Nat Abramowitz couldn't find his father on the census because he didn't adopt the name Abramowitz until he left Podu Iloaiei for America.

Others were more successful in finding their ancestors amongst the non-surnamed entries such as Avram sin Moise. So look closely at all the entries.

Another issue is the fact that the letters in the Romanian alphabet do not always sound phonetically the same as they do in English. Consequently the Hebrew and Yiddish origins of many given names listed in the census may not be readily apparent. In a separate document titled "Introduction to the 1898 Podu Iloaiei Census" we have a table showing the Hebrew and Yiddish origins of many given names.

22.3 Dates

Code	Meaning	Example
C	circa	c 1857
B	birth	1843 b
D	death	1895 d
b&d	birth & death	1843-1895 bd
n/d	no date	n/d
+	after	1843+

22.4 Surnames

Surnames are generally derived from one of four sources:

1. the name of the person's father (patronymic) - eg. Abramovici, Nathansohn
2. the person's locality - eg. Berliner
3. the person's occupation^[B-54] - eg. Tischler (carpenter)
4. a descriptive nickname for the person - eg. Klein (small)

Many of the people listed in the census show only one name. They usually appear to be first names; however some may be surnames. And even with surnames, we can never indeed be certain that they are surnames.

Except for the 1898 census, most people in the censuses are listed by one name only and with many of these it is difficult to determine whether the name is a first name or surname. This is illustrated by the following examples.

⁵⁴ [KME] In a separate document titled "Introduction to the 1898 Podu Iloaiei Census" we have a list of occupations mentioned in that census, translated from Romanian into English.

The name David followed by one of the following:

1. Abram
2. Abramovici
3. a lui Abram
4. ben Abram
5. sin Abram
6. son of Abram^[B-55]

In the first example, the name Abram may be a surname, however it may just be another given name for David (ie a middle name). With regards the other five examples, the question is whether they are patronymic surnames, derived from one of David's ancestors named Abram, or was Abram simply the father of David?^[B-56]

The same question applies, if the name David is followed by names such as these: Berliner, Tischler, Klein. Are they surnames, derived from one of David's ancestors who was from Berlin or was a carpenter or was small? Or were these attributes of David himself?

Wherever a surname was in question, we considered it a surname. If there was no surname we put "ZZZ" in the surname field, so that it would appear at the end of the list.

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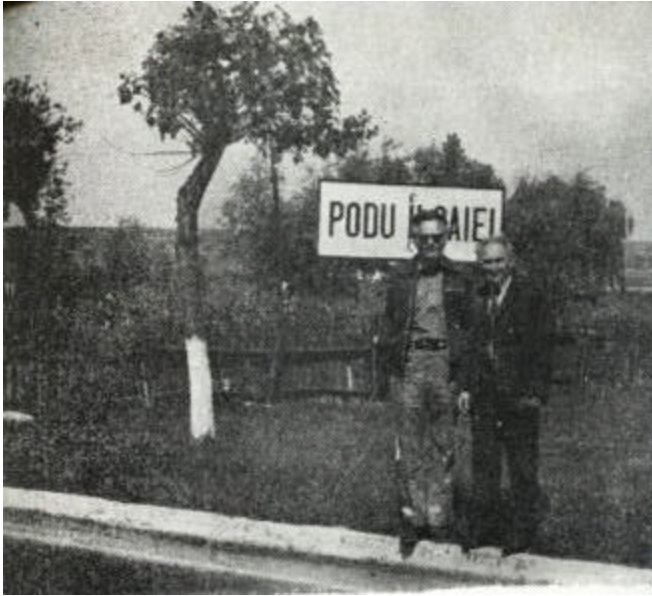
To see the Glossary of People in HTML format, visit www.JewishGen.org .
To obtain a copy in Excel format, contact KM Elias.

⁵⁵ [KME] Our translators usually left the words “sin” and “lui” as-is in the censuses, however in the narrative parts of the book they often translated them as “son”.

⁵⁶ [KME] My great-grandfather is listed in the 1898 Census as “Mendel Ilie” while his brother is listed in the civic records of 1883 as “Faval sin Ilie”. We know from their tombstones, that their father was Yehuda, not Ilie. So perhaps the family was originally known by the surname “sin Ilie”, derived from an earlier ancestor named Ilie; however by 1898 the name had been shortened to “Ilie”.

23 Pictures

Note from KME the following pictures appear at the back of Kara's book. Unfortunately they were very poor quality and are difficult to reproduce. We've also had to reduce the resolution to make them easier to download over the Internet. High-res versions of these pictures are available from KME upon request.



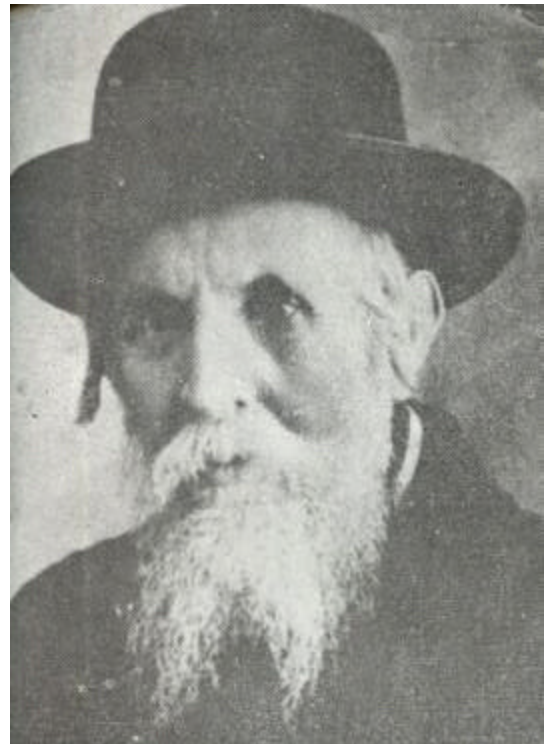
I. Kara (right) in Podu Iloaiei, 1975



National Street, in Podu Iloaiei



Author's family - June 28, 1898
Ita Ruhla & Iosif Svart (grandparents)
Ghitla & Hers Svart (parents)



Rabbi Elie Rosental (deceased 1927)



Chanuka Menora (approx. 1920)
Belonged to Rabbi Itcovici of Podu Iloaiei.



Jewish-Romanian school, Podu Iloaiei, 1913.
Teachers: Horodniceanu Iancu, Rosental Aron



Jewish-Romanian school, Podu Iloaiei, 1929.



A group of soldiers T.R.,
from Podu Iloaiei (1916)



[B-57]

Shalom Aleichem Cultural Assembly, Podu Iloaiei – June 23, 1927
Front, R-L: Herman Elias, Bianca Lozner, Ghizela Solomon, Itic Svart;
Top, R-L: Milu Horodniceanu, Ioel Finchelstein, Ghedale Westler, Moise Sor



Zionist Organization, Podu Iloaiei, 1920

⁵⁷ [Ed-Com] Shalom Aleichem Cultural Assembly. The caption in the book says the names are listed right-to-left, putting Itic Svart Kara at front-left. However we know from other pictures that Kara is the man at front-right.



The Jewish Cult Community of Podu Iloaiei
The Statute of the Jewish Community of Podu Iloaiei
Voted in the General Assembly of May 3rd, 1925
Published by A. Grunberg, Unirii Street #9
Iasi, 1925