

Livia Diaconescu With Her Co-Worker Meri Popescu



This photo was taken on 22nd January 1962, at the Food Research Institute in Bucharest. From right to left: Meri Popescu, a co-worker, and I.

After graduation, I first worked for the State Committee for Planning. I stayed with them for just a month or two, because I wanted to actually work in my field, chemistry; so I got employed at a new factory, called Electroizolantul, located at the exit from Bucharest, on Catelu Drive. It was hard to get there. After I got married, my husband and I lived in Focsani for a year, in 1958. I worked in the local industry, at a factory that processed meat and made tin cans, and then at a medical lab where I did tests. I only encountered overt conflicts because of my Jewish origin once: it was in Focsani, in the food industry. I had discovered some shocking errors. Someone told on me to the party. They called my husband there, told him that, if it hadn't been for that regime, I would have never married him, and asked him to divorce me.

In 1959, we moved back to Bucharest. I worked for a little while at the lab of the Vasile Roaita Hospital, then I applied for another job and, after passing an examination, I was employed at the Food Research Institute. I stayed there until 1979, when the Sugar section was closed and a new institute for the cultivation and processing of the sugar beet was founded. I worked for them till 1st January 1986, when I retired.

After I retired, I got closer to my Jewish origins. I could afford to make anything I wanted of my spare time and I wasn't tired anymore. I went to Israel and met Romanians who acquired the Jewish lifestyle. There is another atmosphere there. Every time I hear Ivrit, I prick up my ears, because I like the way it sounds.

From a professional point of view, I turned from chemist to archivist at the Center for the Study of the History of the Romanian Jews. I like this work. I processed documents from the time when Jews

would leave on foot. These were things I hadn't heard about before, and there were others just like them. I am delighted I can work, for I feel totally useless at home.