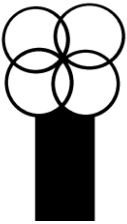


Cover and drawings
Mihai Vişan-Miu

“Life story of Mircea Mitroi”
/ Tudor Vişan-Miu -
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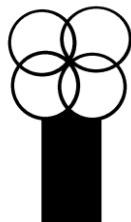
“Because every family has its history”

Life Story of Mircea Mitroi

(b. 29 December 1916 – d.3 January 2012)

**written by
Tudor Vişan-Miu**

**drawings by
Mihai Vişan-Miu**



Memoriae



Foreword

“Life Story of Mircea Mitroi” is a collection from the memoirs gathered in the autumn of 2010, then written in a literary style by his nephew, Tudor Vişan-Miu. The drawings were made by his brother, Mihai Vişan-Miu.

The first edition of the book was printed in 3 copies, on 28 December 2010, in Romanian – with one being gifted to Mircea Mitroi on his birthday, on 29 December 2010 (when he aged 94 years).

The translation into English of a book written into Romanian requires, of course, some justifications – given its implications (being more accesible to like most people of the planet):

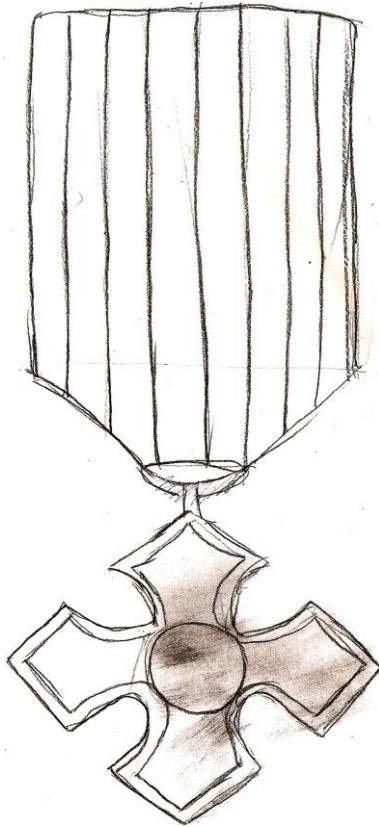
I think that the memoirs of my grandfather, Mircea Mitroi, are interesting in a way that would span outside the coutry for at least four reasons:

- it tells the story of a Romanian peasant who got, through education, from the village to the city, becoming an accountant;
- if tells the story of a War veteran who fough againt Nazi Germany (1944-45) in the Tatra mountains and saved a shoe factory from being ransacked by his own battalion;
- if tells the story of a husband and father imprisoned by the totalitarian Communist regime for no other reason than being against the soviet dictatorship;
- finally, it tells the story of a lovely grandfather who lived his life if a very balanced way, living 95 years;

For all these reasons, I think the story of my grandfather is good to be known.

I thank my family for contributing to the creation of this book (my brother, my sister, my mother - who came with the idea, and my father – who was especially supportive), and send my warm greetings to our relatives in Australia: Dudu, Claudia and Leah.

(foreword by Tudor Vişan-Miu)



Introduction

For historians, the date of 29 December 1916 isn't particularly important, besides being the day of mystic Grigori Rasputin's death (on the New Style), probably assassinated through poisoning.

It was a wintry day of Friday – “ordinary”, we could say, but the First World War being “in full swing”, not a single day included into it could be called so. Since four months, Romania was at war and things didn't go to well, the fights taking place on multiple fronts.

In such a setting, the only days we would give importance to in the “war calendar” would be either

victories, either defeats. On this day not happening such things would make it go unnoticed.

But I shall not write a timeline of deaths but rather one of life: on 29 December 1916, in a pretty large peasant house in a Romanian village was born Mircea Mitroi – my grandfather. It may be a coincidence that me and my brother were born on 29 December exactly 79 years later.

Nearly a century from the “initial moment”, I write this book – which is more than a biography, because, in the pages that follow, I didn’t just put on paper one man’s life, but told *the story of his life*, of he who was Mircea Mitroi, war veteran and patriot, the father of my mother, my grandfather, a man who had a life that deserves to be written and, even more, to be known.

Let’s start....

Coming with a notebook in front of my grandfather to collect his memoirs, he gave me a version of his life in his own words – which I then rewrote in the present book. Returning in the past with 94 years, Mircea started rhetorically asking himself: “The story of my life? Where to being?”. Of course, we started with...

CHILDHOOD

1. The four brothers

My grandfather was born in year 1916, at the middle of First World War¹, in December, day 29. “Where?”, he anticipated our next question: in Romania, of course, more precisely in the Muntenia region, Teleorman county, Ologi commune², Secara village³.

Of course, after first opening his eyes, Mircea started watching around. Naturally, the first person he met was his mother, Lixandra. In fact, her mother’s name was Alexandra – but this version was too long as well was to latin to be used at the village.

The second person that my grandfather met was his father, Radu Mitroi [For the sake of coincidences, I observe that my father of my grandfather bears the same name as my own father, Radu Vişan-Miu].

After a while, Mircea found out that he had other relatives: three older brothers, which he greatly loved and who loved him greatly.

After while, Mircea started observing the beautiful house of his family in the Secara village. It had many rooms and some kind of balcony with a lovely view to the courtyard. „*What to say?*”. The yard was rich and had many fruit trees – with apple, pears, apricots, *corcoduşe* (mirabelles or *Prunus cerasifera*) – and all other kinds.



But let's not lose the thread of the story. As I was saying, or wanted to, after he grew, Mircea's brothers started calling him: *"Hey, little boy! Hey, little Mircea! Come to us, let's play together!"*. With the passing of time, Mircea learned to call his brothers by name:

The biggest was Ispas, called "Spăsică", a good and dutiful boy. The second was Marin, called by his mother "Minică", but by the others by name. The third was Ion (John), called by everyone "Ionel".

How many stories could my grandfather tell me about them! But let's leave memories for the other chapters, ending this one with an overview, given in Mircea's words: *"And so I grew up, together with my dear brothers"*.

¹ 28 July 1914 – 11 November 1918

² From August 1968, the commune is called "Crângu". The initial name, "Ologi" (meaning *"The invalids"*) came, it seems, from the Romanians whose legs were cut by the Ottomans nearby this village, in their (failed) attempt to reach the Turris stronghold. In other version, the peasants were those who made invalids the Turkish soldiers that were pillaging the city, sending them into a wagon back to the Tower Raia. In a third version, the legs of some local people were cut "from knees below" from the Sultan's orders, during the anti-ottoman battles fought by Mihai "the Brave".

³ 200-250 years ago, the Secara village was called "Broasca" (*Frog*), the initial village being built in a marshy land filled with frogs. A cholera epidemic forced the peasants to move nearby a hill, where the actual village is found today. The new name comes from landlord Secăreanu, *"a gentle man that helped all the local employees work on his land. In his memory, the peasants named the village – Secara"*.

2. Childhood Memories

The title of this chapter, dedicated to experiences from my grandfather's childhood, shared, indeed, the same name with the semi-autobiographical book of Romanian writer Ion Creangă – “Childhood memories” (1892), if not a biographical book, at least one inspired from memories. Still, I will summarize in this chapter a series of events from the “stage of innocence” which Creangă relates into a whole book, fully dedicated to this period of life (from his childhood in the Moldovian village Humulești to the theological studies at Fălticeni and Iași, followed in order to become a preast). I cannot fill an entire book with memories from my grandfather's childhood, but I succeeded in selecting a few events worth mentioning.

I will start by writing about Corbea – the house dog of the Mitroi family. This big four-footed animal, with black fur as a bear, was very friendly to Mircea. It is interesting that, every time he saw him, he approached him and sat down, putting his head on the two front paws; if he left the yard, Corbea followed him. Also strange is that this dog knew where Mircea slept. My grandfather's room had a large window, with view to the yard. One time, past midnight, Mircea woke up from his bed and went to look outside. Corbea saw him and touched the window with his paws. Finding himself with a big black dog knocking on the window, Mircea was scared and scried: *“Save me, mother! The dog will eat me!”*. Alerted, one of Mircea's brothers came nearby and calmed him: *“Mircea, don't you see it is Corbea, your dog?”*. They both left the room, and Corbea went near my grandpa, who stroke his head, and it licked his hand, as a faithful dog he was.

Another event Mircea told me had in center a carnivore pretty detrimental for the herbivores of the village. As you well know, a wolf can be the worst enemy of a rural community. The Secara village had problems with such a wolf, that killed the animals left in the pen after midnight. Well, such a night, the wolf came in the yard of the Mitroi

family and caught one of the two goats, enclosed in a wooden pen. The predator tried to drag the poor animal in the family vineyards. Mircea, his brothers and parents, hearing noises, felt there was something wrong and went to catch the wolf. *“Interesting is that all our neighbors came after us, to help”*. Following the traces of the wolf, which was slowed by his capture, the villagers surrounded him and started hitting the animal with weapons at hand (sticks and forks). The wolf was killed, but the dead goat was likewise lifeless. Together with the other peasants, the Mitroi family tied the dead wolf to a very long stick and walked with it through the village, so that everyone would find out that they got rid of the wolf.

Another good story are the duels between Ion and Marib. Those times, the corn crops occupied most of the country's arable land. After collecting the cereals and removing the “știulete” (cob), after it always remained the non-edible part, the stem called “cocean” (stalk), that was either burnt, either used to feed the animals, either used in other, more “amusing” ‘purposes’... As a harmless play, the two brothers, Marin and Ionel, fought with two cornstalks, and Mircea, being younger, served as an arbitrator between them and led their “battle”. When they made a mistake, my grandpa cried “stop!”, temporarily stopping their duel. In the end, the winner was the one who touched his “opponent” with the “weapon”, being announced as such by Mircea.

A less amusing incident was when Marin fell from a tree. In a beautiful day of spring, Mircea saw him above a fruit tree, from which he gathered the “corcodușe” (mirabelles) – the first riped. After he collected enough in order to satisfy himself, Marin wanted to climb down, but he slipped and fell down, on the soil. Luckily, it rained earlier and the soil, being wet, ameliorated his fall. Marin wasn't hurt. But his bad luck followed him again when, one day, being with the sheeps for grazing, hailstone started to fall from the sky. You can imagine how uncomfortable it was for him until he got home!

I left for the end the account of how Ispas tricked his buyers. Being in the Turnu Măgurele city, Ispas had in his bullock cart wheat shed for sale. In front of his client, he had to fill with wheat a wooden vessel of Turkish origin called “oka” - of about 1,25 kilograms (2,75 pounds) - then pour it into the buyer’s “baniță” (bushel), a special vessel used to weigh cereals. Being skilful, “Spăsică” quickly made this action, holding in the same time the count of every “oka” poured into the bushel. When the buyer didn’t pay attention, Ispas filled with wheat only the outer bottom of the oka (which could carry a hundred times less than the interior of the vessel), pouring it into the bushel but counting it as an entire “oka”. This way, Ispas tricked his customers [Domnitor Cuza¹, fighter against corruption – even that in markets, would have punished him pretty harsh for such a mischief, and his father would have done the same].

My grandpa had so many memories! I wished that he told me more about his childhood but, this book being the story of his entire life, we talked only about these few more amusing stories. Going further on the “thread of time”, we will read about the “defining moments” preceding youth – for full was his life with events or, in his words: “*Gosh! How many stories I lived in my life!*”.

¹ **Alexander John Cuza** (b.20 March 1820 – d.15 May 1873) was Prince of Moldavia, Prince of Wallachia, and later – from 1862 - *Domnitor* (ruler) of the Romanian Principalities. Prominent figure of the Revolution of 1848, he strongly advocated the union of Moldavia and Walachia. At the *ad-hoc* gatherings of 1859, he was elected Prince in both principalities (on 5 and 24 January, respectively), uniting them. He initiated a series of reforms that contributed to the modernization of society and state structures. Stepping down from power on 22 February 1866, he was followed by a Prussian prince, Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (1866-1914), who continued his reforms. Although he had no children with his barren wife, Elena Rosetti, she raised as if her own his two sons from his mistress Elena Maria Catargiu-Obrenović: Alexandru (1864–1889) and Dimitrie (1865–1888).

3. Going to school

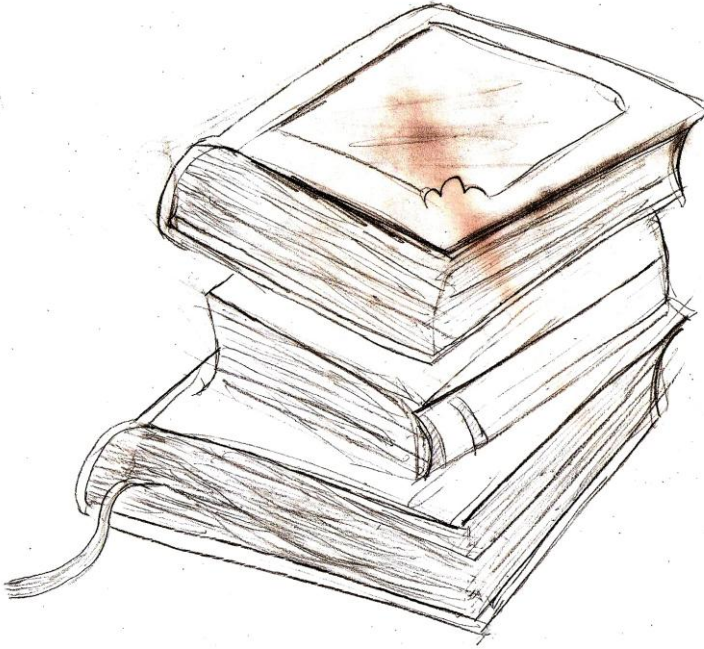
From my grandfather's perspective, the second part of his childhood started when he "had to go to school". Having 6 years, he tied his schoolbooks with a twine (he didn't have a backpack, as today pupils have) and went on to the "path of education".

Having the same age with his cousin, Nicolae (Nicholas), son of Călin, mircea started classes the same time as him. They went on primary school in the Ologi village (the commune residence) because in their village, Secara, such an institution didn't exist. I can't quite imagine how hard was for my grandfather to walk every day to school in the Ologi village, 3 kilometers (1,8 miles) far from home. On his road, Mircea had to pass a Călmățui river¹, across which it was built a pretty frail bridge.

Mircea and Nicolae went to school together with their classmates from the Secara village, who were bigger than them. The "nice" part was that it existed some sort of animosity between the children from the Secara village who went to school in Ologi and the children from this village. Nearly every day, after leaving school, the *secăreni* were chased by the *ologenii* up until the Călmățui river (which the second didn't cross). From the other side of the river, the children from the Secara village teased them: *"The poor invalids, fortune's fools, the polenta from the boiler, are worth a pol and five parale"*.

¹ affluent to the Danube, crossing the Olt and Teleorman countries. It has as its own affluents the rivers Călmățuiul Sec, Urlui and Sohodol.

² **pol** – old coin of 20 lei which circulated in Romania; **para** – small Turkish silver coin which circulated in the Romanian countries; it became equal to the 100th part of a leu and, after it got out of use, the word „para” gained the meaning of money of little money



Still, my grandpa didn't walk 3000 meters just for the chase "after classes". He studied very well, becoming the first pupil of the class. On the other side, Niculae was quite undisciplined, and did things that weren't quite on Mircea's liking. In the absence of the teacher, Mircea was given the duty to maintain discipline in the classroom³. Trying to temper his cousin, with great emotional weight, he hit him with the "nuia" (whip)⁴, some kind of long, thin but painful branch from a young tree. Of course, it didn't last long until they reconciled. The "peace" dialog between them took place in the following way: passing the Călmățui river, the two walked home, being silent. At a given moment, Niculae "break the silence" and rebukes him for hitting too hard with the whip. Mircea asked to be forgiven, but argued that education was much more important than having fun: *"We must go to school to learn so that we will become men, not oxen"*. Niculae admitted that his cousin was right, but still remembered him that *"it (the whip) hurts, you know"*. Arriving home, Niculae got over his irritation and asked

Mircea if he wanted to come and play with him. *“If my parents don’t put me to work, I’ll come”*. Beyond the whip hits (given “for his best”), Mircea cared much for his cousin.

“We must go to school to learn so that we will become men, not oxen”. I assure you, my grandfather became a fully-grown man, showing the truth behind the popular dicton, *“study is for your best”*.

4. Lixandra’s Father

“He who has how much he needs is a rich man” (Romanian popular saying). *„It is great richness to be satisfied with little”* (writer Ioan Slavici).

Mircea’s mother, Lixandra, come from a wealthy family – her father being “logofăt”¹ in the Dracea commune², where he managed the land of a boyar living in the Turnu Măgurele city.

Instead, her future husband, Radu, was a poor man. His father had land, animals, even tree fruits and a vineyard (properties equally divided to his three children: Radu, Călin and Socola), but all these weren’t enough not even for my great-grandfather to even think to come in the Dracea commune in front of the “logofăt”’s daughter and ask his daughter to be his wife. I don’t know in what circumstances he met with Lixandra, but when he saw her, he fell in love, and she shared his feelings. Despite this, her family wouldn’t allow her marry Radu. And so, like in a fairy tale, Lixandra ran from home, “stealing” a “salbă”³ (golden necklacke made of coins, medals, gems or beads) from her family.

Without their parents knowing, Radu and Lixandra married at the city hall. Being nothing more to be done, both families agreed to accept something already made. The “logofăt”’s daughter moved together with her new husband in the Secara village where, alongside his man, made themselves a worth living.

Years later, when Mircea had 5 or 6 years, Lixandra's father came in a visit in the Secara village. My grandfather described him as being fat and tall, like a mountain, with a bushy mustache and having a "cravașă" (leather whip for riding) in his hand. Coming towards Mircea alongside Lixandra, he asked him, with his strong voice: "Are you Mircea?"³, holding his "cravache" in his hand. Intimated, Mircea hid behind his mother and asked her: "Who is this man?". She replied: "He is my father and your grandpa".

After this moment, Mircea and his grandfather became friends. He took him in his arms and stroke his head, after which he took out from his pocket a few coins that he gave to his nephew. At the end of the visit, Mircea and his mother led the "logofăt" to the door, where he mounted his horse and, hitting him with his whip, "hit the road"....

¹ In medieval times, a „logofăt” was a high official in the hierarchy of nobles, member of the counsel of the *Domnitor*. In this case, it means some kind of „estate agent” – one who manages fields for a richer person (from New Greek: *logothétis*).

² commune made by the Dracea, Zlata and Florica villages. The name Dracea was, in old times, "Sichir", as it appears in its first documentary attestation (c.1512). The new name comes from commander Drăcea Golescu, who fought in times of Mircea "the Brave" in Wallachia, winning battles on the Călmățui valley. The Zlata and Florica villages formed together with Dracea the Dracea commune, temporarily breaking off from it between 1924-1932 and 1934-1950, to create the Florica commune. In 1968, the three villages forming the Dracea commune were united to the Crângu commune until 2004, when they broke again to recreate the Dracea commune.

³ A perhaps unintentional reference to the question addressed by sultan Bayezid I „Yildrim” (*Thunderbolt*) to Wallachian ruler Mircea Basarab „the Old” in "Scrisoarea a III-a" (*Third Letter*) wrote by Romanian national poet Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889), published in 1881.



Post scriptum:

I would like a list of the properties owned by Radu Mitroi: he had land (on which he cultivated cereals), animals (sheeps, goats, at least a horse), fruit trees and a vineyard (the single one from the whole village).

With all these “natural riches”, at 1907, Radu Mitroi didn’t had “labor hand” (his sons were either too little, either not born yet). So, at the outbreak of the Romanian Peasant Revolt in 1907 (starting in March 1907 in Moldavia, from which it quickly spread, reaching Wallachia), he was still quite poor, reason for which he took part at the revolt. After the riot ended, he hid for a few days in the family vineyards so that he wouldn’t be found and arrested by the “jandarmerie” (county police) who came from the Ologi village.

My great-grandfather kept very much to his territory and didn’t allow anyone to trespass it. Once, a villager brought his cow to graze on the meadow. Radu argued with him, asking the cow’s owner to leave; he refused, and they continued to argue until they began to fight!

I mention that Radu was born an Orthodox Christian but, one day, meeting an adventist preacher, was impressed by his faith and converted to it. From his children, only Ion and Maria also converted to Adventism of the Seventh Day.

5. A big family

As I told you, Mircea had three bigger brothers (Ion, Marin and Ispas). Well, Radu and Lixandra didn’t had only these four children, but also four other after them: a boy and three girls....

Ilie Mitroi took Mircea’s place as the youngest of the four, now five brothers. Mircea loved very much this brother of his who, even the youngest, died earliest. In a story representative for bravery told my by grandfather, Ilie, though little, took the family horse out of the stable, mounted him and trotted out of the yard. Mircea saw this,

ran after him and forced him to dismount the horse, and Ilie immediately complied. If he was scolded or not – I don't know, but Ilie was happy that he was able to ride the stallion (which, by the way, was very handsome).

From the three girls, Parascheva was the biggest. Named after the saint from Epivata¹, she was a hardworking woman, skilled and full of energy. The second daughter, "Mărioara", poor girl, died at 6 years. *"It was so painful"*, Mircea recalls his and his family's suffering. *"I cried so much at her grave..."*. *"So is life"*, observed Mircea, *"who moves forward"*, no matter how big the losses.... Lord took Mărioara's soul, but sent another spirit to the Mitroi family. It was in His will that, after a year, the parents of my grandfather had another girl, who they named Maria, in the memory of Mărioara.

Besides the four brothers and three sisters, Mircea also had many cousins. Apart from Nicolae (son of Călin), he also remembered Ioana, Nicolae's sister, a pretty frisky girl, bigger than him with 2-3 years. About her, he remembers especially the way in which she teased him: because Mircea's parents took him a not quite common red hat, when my grandfather irritated Ioana, she cried: *"Mircea with the red hat!"* – which was quite annoying for my grandpa.

From Socola's children, Mircea remembers only Anca, a beautiful girl with a long, red hair, that she wore in hair-stalks. Of course, he had more cousins, but he can't remember them due to the fact that, after his childhood, he "kept in touch" only with Nicolae (whose death greatly upset him).

I wish to also write of another person who, even though not related to Mircea, found himself in some quite amusing situations: in the neighborhood of the Mitroi family lived a fatty boy from a large family, who "forgot" that his relatives also had to eat and only cared for his stomach. When his parents and brothers, that worked the field the entire day, came home,

and saw that the boy ate most of the “mămăligă” (polenta) in the cauldron, the “brânză” (cheese) or the “slănină” (bacon), they were greatly upset and wanted to punished him, but he – no matter how hard were the punishments given to him – always had the same response: *“I don't care, my belly is full!”*.

Having told his things, we shall depart in the following chapters from the Secara village. I am glad I succeeded in collecting these memories from my grandfather's childhood – who, even through in eight decades didn't return to his native village, didn't forgot the people he once knew, because (as the Romanian literary critic Eugen Lovinescu said), *one of the most powerful bonds between people is the knowledge of a common past.*



See the genealogy of the Mitroi family at page 58

¹ Saint Paraskeva of the Balkans was born in the XIth century, in the village of Epivates, as the daughter of two rich and faithful Christians. She heard the words of the Savior at 10 years, in a church, and, after this revelation, gave all her clothes to the poor. After the death of her parents, she left to Constantinople, then in the wilderness of Jordan, where she led an ascetic life. At 25 years, an angel came and told her to return to her homeland. She lived in the village of Kallikrateia until 27, when Lord took her to His side. Her relics were moved from Constantinople to Belgrad (1393), from where, in 1641, they were brought to Moldavia, in Iași, at the „Trei Ierarhi” Monastery, by ruler Vasile Lupu. Transposed in 1888 at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Iași, her relics are still found there today. Venerated as a Saint, Paraskeva is honored by the Eastern Orthodox Church on 14 October.

YOUTH

6. Working the fields

Mircea had 11 years when finished 4 primary classes in the Ologi commune. It is quite difficult for me to imagine how hard was for my grandfather to start the first class of high school in the city of Turnu Măgurele¹, at a distance of 13 kilometers from the Secara village.

I don't actually know if Mircea made every day, using the cart pulled by oxen, the road from the village to the Theoretical High School for Boys "Saint Haralambie" in Turnu Măgurele, or if he moved to the boarding school (as it would seem more likely). Either if he had to endure the effort of such a long road, either it had to endure the separation from his family – for certain is that the education he received here was of great use in life.

Still, before going to "liceu" (high school), because he was the best student in the 4 years of primary studies, my grandfather had what he perceived as an "advantage": for two years, he remained home. But don't think that these 24 months meant some kind of vacation for Mircea! His parents were given by the Romanian state a surface of 10 hectometers of land (= 0,1 square kilometers!), and Mircea had to work it together with his parents and brothers.

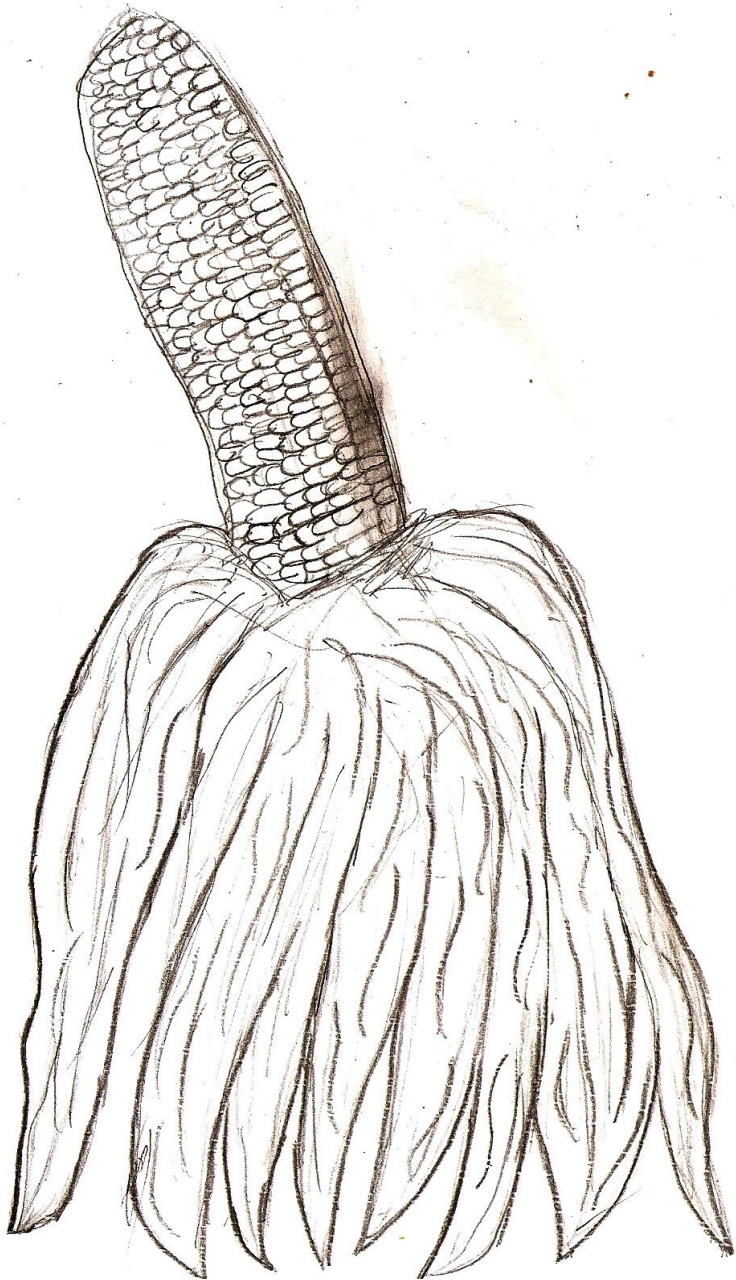
To understand what working on the fields means, some details are required. The peasants' fields were found outside the "vatra satului" (infield), in the so-called "moșie" (outfield). On their lands, the Mitroi family grew only cereals (in particular corn and wheat) – activity which required a great deal of work, starting with sowing, continuing with the care of the fields so that, in autumn, it would end with harvest.

On harvest day, the cultivators had to make up in the morning, preparing all required the day before, go up in their cart and set off the road. Reaching the fields, the peasants started working as soon as they could, because, after sunrise, the heat held slowed their work.

But was harvest so difficult? Well, think that, holding a pretty heavy “seceră” (sickle), the peasants had to cut every single stalk of corn or wheat, bend to gather the fallen ones, then make the round trip until the cart, put there what they gathered, then start again. Multiply this job in order to cover 10 hectometers and, probably, you shall reach the conclusion that working the fields is a hard job (especially for the younger ones – Mircea and Ilie). Despite this, my grandpa was happy that he was able to help his family [I wish to mention that on the fields worked not just the men, but also the female – in the case of the Mitroi family, the two girls and the mother, Lixandra]. Truly, the life of the peasant isn't easy. But, as the old dictons say, “*Work today to eat tomorrow*”, because “*He who doesn't work in youth won't live well at old age*”.

Post scriptum: A suggestive description of the harvest can be found in the first book of the Romanian novel “Moromeții” – “The Moromete Family” (Part 3, chapters I-III), written by Marin Preda and published in 1955.

¹ municipality in the south of Romania. According to archeological evidence, the territory of today's settlement was lived since Dacian times. At the meeting of the Danube with the Olt river was built the Turnu stronghold which, in 1395, belonged to Wallachia. In 1417, during the reign of Mircea Basarab „the Elder” (1386-1418), the stronghold was conquered by Ottoman troops, becoming the center of a Turkish raia stretching to 15 kilometers distance from it. The territory belonged to the Ottomans until, through the Adrianopol Treaty following the Russo-Turkish war of 1828-29, it was returned to Wallachia. During the reign of Alexandru Ghica (1834-42), through Decree no. 5 of 27 February 1836, on the territory of the former raia the Turnu (*Tower*) city was officially built (named Turnu Măgurele thereafter), to open a new market for the cereal merchants. The city grew very quick so that, in 1839, it became the residence of the new Teleorman county. After the administrative reform of 1968, it became a „municipiu” (municipality).



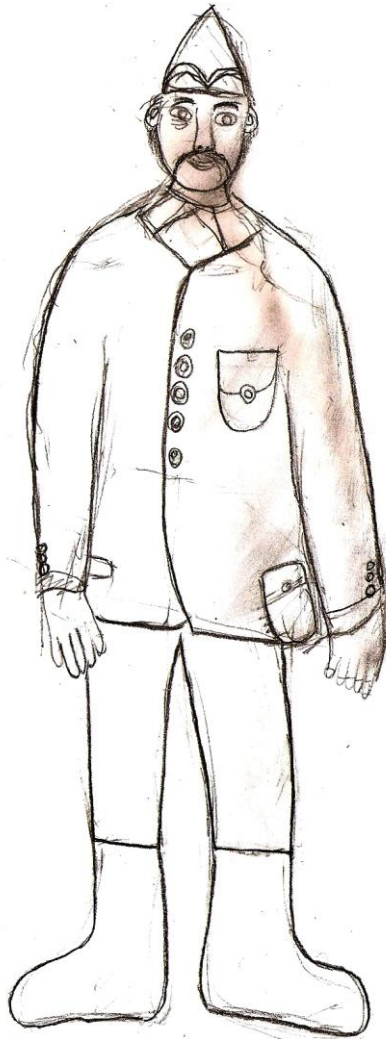
7. Military duty

My grandfather started high school at 13 years. After 8 years of studies at the “Saint Haralambie” High School in Turnu Măgurele, Mircea graduated with results as good as those in primary classes.

In those times, for men, after high school came not college, but military duty – mandatory for Romanian citizens since the Constitution of 1866. Mircea entered the army in 1938. In that year, king Carol II created a “royal dictatorship”, promulgating a new constitution which gave him increased powers (27 February) and dissolving all the political parties in the country (30 March) and replacing them with a single party, “Frontul Renașterii Naționale” - National Renaissance Front (16 December 1938). Of course, the new Constitution of February 1938 maintained the necessity to follow military duty¹.

I think you know how it's in the army... or at least you imagine. You must wake up early, do the morning exercises - push-ups, squats and crunches; run on great distances; and, in large, do all sort of things that require physical effort – and this, for several months. Mircea completed military duty with reduces term (given to all high school graduates), in 1939. In this year, the perhaps most terrible event in the history of mankind began – the Second World War (1939-1945).

Once, an officer of the 9th Infantry Roșiori of the Romanian Army said: “*The army is the last card to be played by a nation*”. The author of this idealist principle sat himself at the “table of belligerents” (1940-1944), but played “chess” rather than “poker”, sending his “pawns” (the soldiers) far beyond the country's borders, reaching even Siberia.... His name was Ion Victor Antonescu, son of an officer, himself a soldier, called the “Red Dog”, the Marshal!



¹ Based on article 118 from Title V. „Despre puterea armată” (*About the armed forces*) of the 1866 Constitution, the demand that citizens between 17 and 50 years (subsequently 45) follow military duty „*in the permanent army, in the militias or in the civil guard, according to special laws*” was maintained by the Constitution of 1923 (Article 119, Title V. „Despre puterea armată”) and of 1938 (Article 88, Title V. „Despre oștire”).

8. Superintendent in South Dobruja

In 1939, having 22 years, my grandfather obtained the function of superindendent above fields in the Durostor and Caliacra counties¹, which formed South Dobruja: „Cadrilaterul”². By decision of the Romanian state, the properties who previously belonged to Bulgarians who left these regions (after they were taken with the Romanian state in 1913) were given to Romanian colonists coming from the Teleorman county.

Being young, my grandpa resisted with difficulties to the enthusiasm of the examinations he had to make in his important function. In this period, the Mitroi family moved to Bazargic, residence of the Caliacra county, in a district mostly inhabited by Bulgarians, quite hostile to the Romanian population. From time to time, conflicts between the two populations started. Worth mentioning is that Radu Mitroi had his own properties in the Quadrilater, some of them in the Ghelengic commune, Cpeler village, Caliacra county (according to a report made on 2 April 1940 – found in the National Archives).

Of course, there were less stressful aspects of this period, such as the holidays at Balcic (Balchik), where the sea was calm, at mild temperatures. There, Mircea could approach to the castle of Queen Maria of Romania, the „Quiet Nest Palace” (built between 1916-1937). Here, from outside, he could see the Prince Heir Mihai (Michael), riding a bike outside the castle.

Liking sports, Mircea played soccer in the “Avântul din Bazargic” team (*Wind of Bazargic*), in which we was a striker. This team wasn’t one of professional players but of amateurs, not that they didn’t knew to play (they played very well), but in the sense they weren’t paid for this – they played for fun.

Mircea lived in the “Cadrilater” with his family for more than a year (1939-1940), situation which changed in autumn. On 6 September 1940, un pressure of prime-minister Ion Antonescu, king Carol II abdicated in favour of

his son, Mihai. On 7 September, a day later, following the Treaty of Craiova, signed by Romania under pressure of Nazi Germany³, the Durostor and Caliacra counties were given back to Bulgaria. In vain did the Romanian locals cried: *“Don’t surrender, let’s defend!”*: the action was already completed. After all, the tragedies created by the annexation of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina by the Soviet Union (June-July 1940) and of north western Transylvania by Hungary (August-September 1940) totally overshadowed the loss of the two Dobrujan counties.

Through article 3 of the Treaty⁴, Romania and Bulgaria engaged in a mandatory population exchange. On 20 September, the evacuation of the Romanians in “Cadrilater” started, ending on 1 October that year. Nearly 110.000 Romanians left their homes in Durostor and Caliacra counties to resettle in northern Dobruja, and nearly 61.000 Bulgarians left Romania to settle in “Cadrilater”. The Mitroi family moved in Tulcea county, in northern Dobruja.

Although my grandpa’s feelings regarding this territorial loss must have been negative at that time, at old age, he reconsidered that *„it is better this way, that us, Romanians, live just until the Danube”*.

¹ today, regions in the north east of Bulgaria (Silistra and Caliacra). Both counties belonged between 1913-1940 to the Romanian state, being found in the south east of the territory. Their residences were Silistra and Bazargic, respectively. Durostor county took his name from an old Celtic, then Roman stronghold, Durostorum, found on the right bank of the Danube, in place of today’s Silistra. Caliacra county took its name from the Caliacra head (in Greek: „good rock”), name given by the Greek navigators for the shelter given by the calm gulf on the stone’s rights in times of storm. Both territories belonged to Wallachia from 1388 (starting from Mircea Basarab „the Elder”’s reign), until being conquered by the Ottoman Empire between 1445-1466. Eventually, they were included into the autonomous (1878), then independent (1908) Bulgarian state, returning to Romania after the Peace from Bucharest following the Second Balkan War (29 June-10 August 1913).



² south part of Dobruja. It means „quadrilateral” and comes from the four Turkish strongholds which formed a defensive system in nord eastern Bulgaria: Silistra, Ruse, Şumen și Varna.

³ South Dobruja was ceded by the Romanian state that, in this way, it would put in a „better light” the problem of northern Transylvania (ceded to Hungary through the Vienna Diktat of 30 August 1940) in front of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, a thing that did not happen.

⁴ From the Romanian party, the Treaty was signed on 7 September „in name of His Majesty King of Romania” by minister plenipotentiary Alexandru Crețianu and Henri Georges Meitani, legal advisor to the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On 10 September, it was also signed by Ion Antonescu, being ratified in the „Monitorul Oficial” on 12 September.

9. Romanization National Council

From Muntenia – Teleorman county, the Mitroi family reached south Dobruja – Caliacra county, from where it was forced to move in northern Dobruja – Tulcea county. Despite that all these regions in which they lived were contiguous, moving from one place to another brought significant changes (although the agricultural work was the mainstay in all places). From north Dobruja, the members of the family started living in different settlements:

Most of them (Ispas, Marin, Ilie?, Parascheva, Radu and Lixandra) resettled in the rural area, in Iulia village, Izvoarele commune¹ [after 1965, they resettled in Sinoie village, Mihai Viteazu commune – in the north eastern extremity of Constanța county], while Mircea moved to Tulcea city², and Ion and Mărioara, in Constanța city (residence of the county with the same name), in the urban area.

¹ commune found at 32km distance from Tulcea city, formed by Izvoarele, Alba and Iulia villages. Here lived once a large and old Greek community, settled 200 years ago.

² residence of the Tulcea county. Built on 7 hills, the settlement was permanently inhabited: from the Gumelnița culture (2900-2200 BC) to the Greek settlement of Aegyssus (VII century BC), the Roman port and city (I-II centuries AD), then Byzantine domination (centuries V-VII). Abandoned in 650 due to the barbarian invasions, the region came under Bulgarian domination (681-c.1000). Reconquered by the byzantines, here was built a stronghold – destroyed in 1064 by the Turks. Inhabited by Bulgarians (cen.XII-XIII), Genovese (cen.XIII-XIV), Dobrujans (cen.XIV) and Wallachians (towards the end of the XIV century). Conquered by the Ottomans in 1420, the settlement became an important trade center. The name „Tulcea” is first documented from 1506. Near year 1848, Tulcea was a small port, becoming a city and the province capital in 1860. In 1878, following the Romanian War of Independence, the city came under Romanian rule together with the whole northern Dobruja.

I wish to mention that, from all his brothers, Mircea made the most studies: after him came Ion, then Marin, and Ispas, the last [I don't actually know how much studies made Ilie]. As a proof of the importance of education for one's future, Ispas and Marin continued to work the fields (although in his youth Marin went as a mailman in Alexandria³), while Ion and Mircea got good jobs at the city (later, my grandfather became chief-accountant, while Ionel, after going in his youth as a typographer in Bucharest, became, at the end of the war, manager of the "Farul" soccer stadium in Constanța). As it concerns Ilie, I don't know if he had time to make a profession of his own.

Reaching Tulcea, Mircea was hired as a district superintendent at the Romanization National Council, managing the former properties (land and buildings) of the Bulgarians who left the city to resettle in south Dobruja – properties upon which the Romanian state took possession, according to the Treaty signed with the Bulgarian state (Article 4). In the Tulcea county, there properties totalised 55.854 hectometers of arable land and 6268 houses⁴.

Ten months after south Dobruja was ceded, on 22 June 1941, the Romanian Army, allied to the German Army, started the eastern campaign against the Soviet Union, with the purpose of recovering Bessarabia. With this objective accomplished (July 1941), marshal Antonescu forced the

³ Today a municipality and, since 1968, residence of the Teleorman county (replacing Turnu Măgurele in this function). Founded in 1834, the city wears the first name of Wallachian ruler Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica (1834-1842).

⁴ According to the report made in 1948 by the Regional Agricultural Inspectorate Constanța, in 1940, the Romanians left in Bulgaria 204.672ha of arable land and 18.760 farms, while the Bulgarians left in Romania 124.267ha of arable land (58.413ha in Constanța county, **55.854ha in Tulcea county**) and 11.774 buildings (5506 in Constanța county, **6268 in Tulcea county**) [ha = hectometer] (see bibliographical notes– 5).

Romanian army into a campaign beyond “Nistru” (Dniester) river (the eastern boundary of Bessarabia), on Soviet territory, hoping that, in this way, he would put into a “better light” in front of Germany the perspective of reuniting northern Transylvania with Romania.

My grandfather could have taken part at this campaign. He was taken into the army and was to go to the eastern front as a soldier of the 33 Infantry Regime. In order to avoid this situation and not fight alongside the Axis, Mircea arranged that, in the moment of the departure, he would be hospitalized at Ploiești city in Muntenia. There, he befriended a doctor who gave him a notice showing “incapacity for enrollment”, for the fee of 30.000 Romanian lei. Despite this big sum, my grandpa was happy that he escaped from going to war (at least for now). Instead, his brothers weren’t as “lucky”, being enrolled and sent on the anti-Soviet front.

In 1944, my grandpa also reached the battlefield, but on the opposite direction...

WORLD WAR II

10. The gloomy annunciation of war

The Second World War started in the autumn of 1939 through the invasion of Poland by the German and Soviet armies (at first, allied). The territorial losses that began in the summer of 1940 forced Romania to join the Axis¹ the following summer, against the Soviet Union. Paying a large sum of money, Mircea succeeded in escaping from enrollment, but, in 1944, a turn of events changed that.

Through Operation “Barbarossa”², the Wehrmacht³ led the war on Russian land. The failure to defeat the “Soviet colossus” through a *blitzkrieg* (“lightning war”) engaged the Axis forces into a long “war of attrition” for which Germany wasn’t prepared.

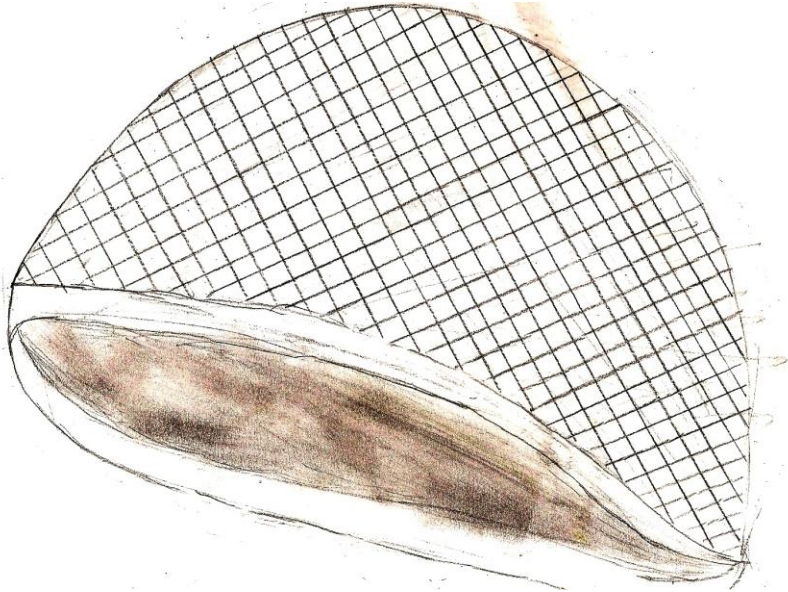
The Soviet's will to protect every piece of territory, the mud, then the snow and cold winter slowed the movement of the Axis land forces up until entirely stopping it. The "turning point" was the failure of the Axis forces to conquer Stalingrad (2 February 1943); up until at that moment, the Soviet army had enough time to rebuild its forces and start the counter-offensive. The Axis troops began to retreat, losing the all the previously gained territories, so that, on 20 August 1944, the Soviet army reached the eastern border of Romania (Bessarabia), starting to breach the Moldavian territory!

Given the desperate situation on the battlefield, king Mihai of Romania asked marshal Antonescu the immediate signing of a treaty with the Allies – from which the Soviet Union was part. His absolute refusal didn't have His Majesty other choice than to dismiss and arrest him – action for which he had the support of the opposition leaders. I wish to say that, Antonescu being named prime-minister through a Decree given by king Carol II, it stood in king Mihai's powers to abrogate it and dismiss the marshal from his function. Given this, the action of 23 August 1944 was legal and not a "coup d'état" (as many said). In the same day, at 22:00 PM, it was broadcasted the "*Proclamația către Țară*" (*Addressing to the nation*) of His Majesty the King, through which the return to a democratical system and ceasing of the fight against the Allies was announced. The German attack against Romania of the following day led to Romania turning against it (situation for which, of course, prepared).

Unfortunately, the action of 23 August hastened the advance of the Red Army in Romania and led, due to the delay of signing an armistice with the USSR and the Allies, to the capture by the Soviet Army of more than 130.000 Romanian soldiers and their exportation to Soviet territory, where they were imprisoned in labor camps. Between them were Marin and Ionel. Fortunately, the two brothers managed to escape and run from Russia. To avoid being captured again, the two brothers hid on daytime and walked only at nighttime. Finally, they safely reached Romania after

12 September 1944, when the armistice with the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom was signed.

One of the points in the Armistice Agreement⁴ was the Romanian participation to the liberation of territories found under Nazi occupation, in a new campaign on the “western front”. As “soldier of the nation”, my grandfather was called to war. This time, he couldn’t avoid enrollment. Although he avoided going to the eastern front, the western front waited him “with open arms”. The greatest tragedy was that in the same day Mircea received the annunciation he would be sent on the battlefield, his parents received the news that poor Ilie died on the front... Would the same fate wait my grandpa? 11.000 Romanians died or were wounded in the Western Front. *Couldn’t Mircea have been one of them?*



¹ Alliance formed at 27 September 1940 between Germany, Japan and Italy, to whom joined Hungary, Romania and Slovakia (20/23/24 November 1940), Bulgaria (1 March 1941) and Croatia (15 June 1941). Here, Romania was allied with Hungary (which took from it northern Transylvania) and Bulgaria (which took from it southern Dobruja) against the Soviet Union (which took from it Bessarabia and northern Bukovina).

² the code-name of a Nazi Army operation to conquer the Soviet territory (22 June – 5 December 1941). Despite the Axis victories (who occupied zones of great economic importance on the Soviet territory), the operation ended with a strategic failure: after failing to conquer Moscow (5 December 1941), the German armies couldn't ever launch a new offensive to cover the entire German-Soviet front. *"The end of year 1941 brought the Wehrmacht in a first deadlock in a campaign that until then was victorious. [...] After the losses suffered and the forced retreat from the gates of the USSR's capital, Hitler had to admit that his plan to destroy his enemy through a blitzkrieg failed. [...] This failure, alongside with the (United States of America) entering the war, forced Germany in a global and lasting war [...]"*, Romanian historian Adrian Pandeia.

³ in German, the "Defence Force"; name given to the military forces of Nazi Germany (1935-1945), formed by the *Heer* (army), the *Kriegsmarine* (navy) and the *Luftwaffe* (air force).

⁴ *"As from August 24, 1944, at four a.m., Rumania has entirely discontinued military operations against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on all theaters of war, has withdrawn from the war against the United Nations, has broken off relations with Germany and her satellites, has entered the war and will wage war on the side of the Allied Powers against Germany and Hungary for the purpose of restoring Rumanian independence and sovereignty, for which purpose she provides not less than twelve infantry divisions with corps troops.*

Military operations on the part of Rumanian armed forces, including naval and air forces, against Germany and Hungary will be conducted under the general leadership of the Allied (Soviet) High Command." (Article 1, The Armistice Agreement).

11. On the Western Front

Year 1944. The liberation of the Romanian territories from the Nazi occupation (especially that of North-Western Transylvania) ends on 25 October, with the Romanian army recovering the last occupied settlements (Carei and Satu Mare). The Romanian campaign continued with the liberation of Hungary, during which the main battle, the siege of Budapest (its capital), lasted from December 1944 to 13 February 1945. With the liberation of Hungary completed, the Romanian troops continued to advance in Slovakia and the Czech state, where, in the Tatra mountains the hardest battles took place.

During this campaign, my grandfather fought alongside the 33 Infantry Regime, as a corporal. After crossing the Nazi-liberated Hungary, where he observed the local population's lack of cooperativity (they answered every question raised by the soldiers with *nem beszélnek*, meaning, in Hungarian: "I don't speak"), Mircea reached Slovakia, then the Czech state¹. The mission was clear: the liberation of the country, by the elimination of its invaders.... Lord! I can't even imagine how many atrocities had my grandpa to endure during this campaign!

Not wanting to give too many details, I will say that Mircea led a Romanian battalion in the Tatra Mountains². Here, after the liberation of the city of Zlín³, the soldiers

¹ Between 1939-1945, Czechoslovakia (which existed from 1918 to 1993 – when it peacefully split up) was divided by Nazi Germany between the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (united with the Third Reich) and the Slovakian Republic.

² the largest of the Carpathians (2655m in Gerlachovský Top).

³ today a city in east of the Czech Republic. First historically documented in 1332, it became a city in 1397. The growth of the city was determined by the opening of a shoe factory by Tomáš Baťa in 1894. In that year, the city had 3000 inhabitants, in 1932, the year of Tomáš Baťa's death, it reached over 35.000!

under his command, poorly dressed, wanted to steal some high-quality shoes from the famous Baťa Factory⁴, as some kind of “war prize”. Led by his sense of honor, call of duty and principles of morality, my grandfather forbidden his subordinates to pillage the factory, arguing that that “*We are liberators, not thieves! We came here to help those people, not rob them!*”. Seeing that he cannot temper the soldiers with words, he grabbed his pistol, pointed it in the direction of his battalion and said: “*If someone takes a single pair of shoes from this factory, I will shoot him with my own hands!*”. By doing so, my grandfather saved the factory, which from the end of the war to the present is still active.

During another liberation, Mircea was wounded in his left foot by a “schijă” (splinter – a small part of a projectile resulted from its explosion). Taken away from the battlefield, he was hospitalized in a military unit where he healed, being thereafter discharged from military duty. My grandpa survived the war. On the European continent, the conflagration ended on 7 May 1945, with the surrender of the German army. Still, the wounds of the war remained: although known that it will pay war damages⁵, Romania participated at the campaign against Nazi Germany with the hope that, in this way, it would gain a new status. Unfortunately, thing’s didn’t go this way: at the Peace Conference of Paris (1947), Romania was, in the Soviet

⁴ The most famous shoe factory in Czechoslovakia, founded in 1894. Production increased from 0,7 million pairs/year in 1905 (with 250 employees) to 2 milion pairs/year in 1917 (with 5000 employees) and 60 million pairs in 1939. As Bata shoes reached their highest quality, the factory started to export its products, and later, in 1929, due to introduction of custom duties, factory branches were open in Switzerland, France, Yugoslavia, Poland, Holland, USA, India. In the 30s, Bata was world leader in shoe making. Today, the factory sold in its history over *14 billion* pairs of shoes (see bibliographical notes– 7)

eyes, a “war prize”, and, from the perspective of the western Allies, a defeated enemy state.

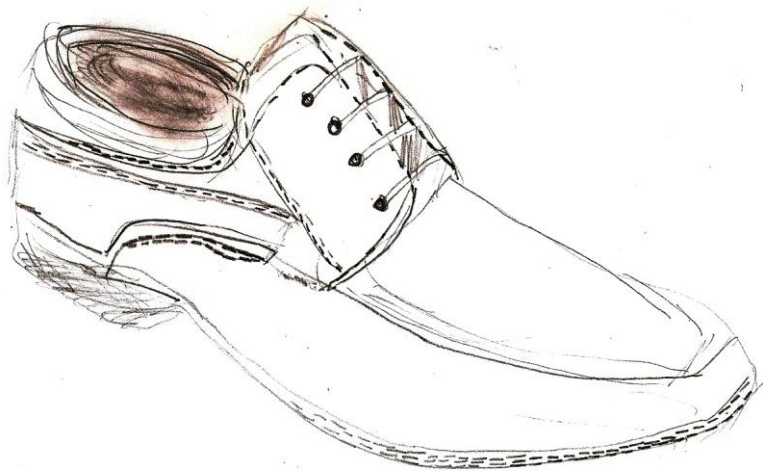
The principle for which Romania paid so much after the war was, in marshal Antonescu’s words: *“I would better day in mud in the Greater Romania than in the paradise of a small Romania.”* Shot dead on 1 June 1946 in a sunburnt valley at Jilava, the marshal didn’t die in the muds of a Greater Romania, but in the dirt of a small Romania.... Despite north-western Transylvania was recovered, Bessarabia was reoccupied by the Soviet Union, and a dictatorship infinitely more terrible than that of Antonescu would come in Romania.... In 1945, the “typhus of war” ended, but a “cancer”⁶ – more hideous – would come upon Romania and the other eastern European states⁷.

An observation regarding war, paradoxically attributed to a Fascist leader with a decisive role in starting the war sounded like this: *“War is a lesson of history from which nations never learn enough”* (Benito Mussolini). Indeed, but this lesson shouldn’t be given to fight better, but to stop fighting at all!

⁵ *“Losses caused to the Soviet Union by Military operations and by the occupation by Rumania of Soviet territory will be made good by Rumania to the Soviet Union, but, taking into consideration that Rumania has not only withdrawn from the war, but has declared war and in fact is still war against Germany and Hungary, the parties agree that compensation for the indicated losses will be made by Rumania not in full but only in part, namely to the amount of three hundred million United States dollars payable over six years in commodities (oil products, grain, timber products, seagoing and river craft, sundry machinery, et cetera).* (Article 11, The Armistice Agreement)

⁶ Figure of speech used by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, French aviator fell on the anti-Fascist front on 31 July 1944 (*„War isn’t an adventure. It’s a disease, like the typhus”*), respectively by Petre Țuțea, Romanian political prisoner of the communist regime (*„Communism is a social cancer. Where it settles, nothing lasts”*).

⁷ Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia; (from 1949) Eastern Germany.



THE COMMUNIST REGIME

12. “Ștefan Gheorghidiu” commercial mill

Supported by the military occupation of the Romanian territory by the Red Army, the communist regime was gradually imposed in Romania, first in economy (by introduction of the ‘sovrom’s¹), then in politics. From this second point of view, the first “stip” was put on 6 March 1945, when Petru Groza, leader of “Frontului Plugarilor” (Party of the Ploughers), was imposed by the Soviets as prime-minister of Romania. In 1946, the Block of the Democratical Parties² won the elections on 19 November (with 68,70% from the votes) only by massively forging them. After the “staging at Tămădău”³, the leaders of the National Peasant Party were condemned to prison, and the party, dissolved (30 July 1947). On 6 November 1947, the PNL-Gheorghe Tătărescu⁴ group was eliminated from the

Parliament and Government. Being the last obstacle in the way of a full establishment of communism, monarchy was abolished through the forced abdication of king Mihai (30 December 1947), who went into exile (3 January 1948). From this moment, the Romanian Popular Republic was proclaimed

The first general inconvenience felt by Romanian citizens with a livable material situation was the monetary reform of 15 August 1947 (the so-called „great stabilization”), through which a second Romanian leu was introduced⁵. The banks changed only 20.000 old lei for a new one, until a total fixed sum. Even after this greatly unbalanced change (actually realised in order to strip the upper and middle classes from the values in their possession), my grandfather still remained with two-three sacs of old lei in his house. The banknotes – who could no longer be changed – lost any value. Given this situation, Mircea had to burn them....

After the „stabilization” came the „nationalization” (based on Law no. 119 from 11 June 1948) – through which they were taken in the property of the state all the private enterprises and most of the lands and buildings (without any compensation), and the „collectivization” (1949-1962) – through which all the private agricultural properties were confiscated and comassed in state farms: ”Gospodării Agricole Colective” - GAC-uri (Collective Agricultural Farms) then “Cooperative Agricole de Producție” - CAP-uri (Agricultural Production Cooperatives).

In 1945, my grandfather worked at the National Colonization Office Tulcea – probably the entity into which the CNR was transformed, with the function of general manager (5 October 1945 – 31 July 1948). Afterwards, after a seemingly period of inactivity (August 1948), he was hired as head of office at the “Olivia” Factory in Tulcea. He didn’t work there much (1 September – 31 October 1948), finding a better service at the milling and baking company “Ștefan Gheorghiu”⁶, where he was head of department (1 November 1948 - 1 June 1951).

After graduating a School of Improvement for Accountancy at Bucharest, we was hired as chief-accountant (1 June 1951 – 31 March 1958), working in this function until his arrest (for reasons I shall explain in a following chapter).

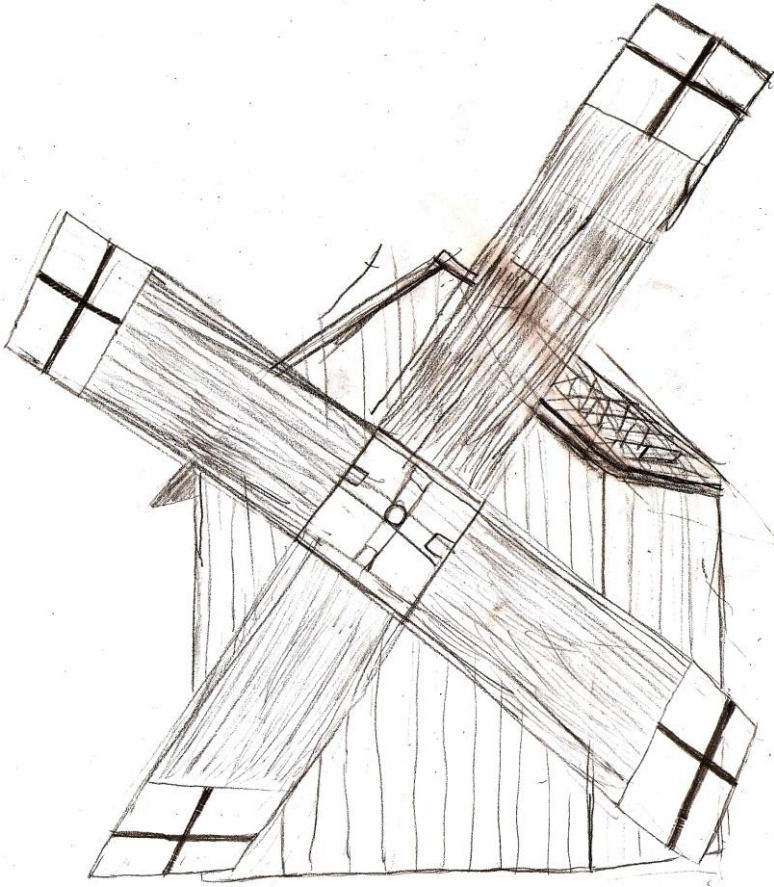
What could I say more? I won't quote anybody else, but just say that the communist regime in Romania (as well as that in all the other countries) proved to be an economical, social, political and cultural disaster, with inhuman conditions of living, which, for Romania, will prove to be worse than the war that just ended.....

¹ mixed Romanian-Soviet societies founded in 1945 following an agreement signed at Moscow on 8 May 1945, with the official purpose of managing the recovery of the debts Romania had towards the Soviet Union. They functioned until 1956, when they were dissolved. Through them, the natural resources of the country (gas, coal, metals, oil, wood, uranium, chemicals) and the entire Romanian economy (transport, buildings, insurances, trade) was massively exploited by the Soviets.

² the alliance of the pro-Communist political forces, made of: Partidul Comunist Român (*Romanian Communist Party*), Partidul Social-Democrat Român (*Romanian Social-Democratical Party*), Frontul Plugarilor (*Party of the Ploughers*), Partidul Național Liberal-Gheorge Tătărescu (*National Liberal Party – Tătărescu branch*), Uniunea Patrioților (*Patriot Union*), Partidul Național Țărănesc-Anton Alexandrescu (*National Peasant Party – Alexandrescu branch*), Comitetul Democrat Evreiesc (*Jewish Democratical Committee*).

³ event which took place on 14 July 1947 at 6:30 AM when, in a conspiracy of the secret police, a trap was set to the PNȚ leaders, giving them a seeming chance to flee the country by air only for them to be arrested before they set off and, on 13 November 1947, sentenced for „high treason” (even țărănist leader Iuliu Maniu, who didn't attempt to flee the country, was nevertheless life sentenced, dying in prison).

⁴ PNL - Partidul Național-Liberal (*National Liberal Party*). Splitting from the PNL – Brătianu branch, Gheorghe Tătărescu formed his own PNL group, allied to the communist government. Thereafter, Tătărescu became uncomfortable for the Communist party, being dismissed from the government alongisde all his ministers



(5 November 1947). Although that PNL dissolved from the will of his own members, the party leaders were arrested and imprisoned at Sighet (at 5/6 May 1950).

⁵ The first leu was introduced on 22 April 1867, during Prince Carol's reign as the national coin. In 1947, the second leu was introduced and, in 1952, the third leu (ROL), 1 new leu being equal to 20 old lei.

⁶ **Ștefan Gheorghiu** (b.1879, Ploiești - d.1914, Bucharest) was a Romanian socialist activist, whose name was worn by the Political Studies Academy in Bucharest (1946-1989). Not to be confused with the violonist having the same name (b.1926, Galați – d.2010).

13. Maria Covaliov

My grandfather met Maria Covaliov in year 1953. She was walking on the street alongside a friend, “Jenny”, who Mircea knew from a party. Being alongside a friend and accountant, Toma Jurea, grandpa probably liked Maria and, through “Jenny”, entered a conversatin with her. They met again a few times after that I don’t know if they met “by chance” or if Mircea arranged they would meet, but I know that the good impression he had on my grandmother proved to be right. When he asked her to marry him in front of her family, Maria accepted, and her mother gave her consense – although where was a difference of about 15 years between them. On 18 January 1954, in a monday, they got married. From that day, my grandma changed her name into Maria Mitroi for the rest of her life.

Mircea would have preffered to set aside this fact, but, to be honest, I must say what he was divorced from his first wife “Mina” (Maria) Arsenescu, from Bucharest¹. Their relation didn’t work – although they probably had more in common between them than Mircea had with my grandmother: between him and Maria Covaliov was a a big

¹ Capital city of Romania from 1859 until thep resent. First historically documented in 21 September 1459, in a paper issued by ruler Vlad „Țepeș” (Dracula). On 14 October 1465, Bucharest is choosen as lordly residence by Radu „the Beautiful”. From 1659, during George Ghica’s reign, the capital of Wallachia became Bucharest, moving from Târgoviște. Starting from then, the city was gradually modernized, with stone roads (1661), the first university, Academia Domnească (1694), Mogoșoaia Palace (1702), Colțea Hospital (1704), theaters, cafés, restaurants, cinemas, tram and telephone lines, electric lighting. Known in the Interbellum (1919-1939) as the „Small Paris”, due to the apparent similarity to the French capital, Bucharest lost its charm with the urban changes made during the communist regime.

difference of age – more precisely, of 14 years and 6 months (in 1954, my grandpa had 37 years, and Maria, 22).

More than that, as her family name suggests, although my grandmother was born in Romania, she was of Russian origin. My grandpa wasn't quite fond of the Russians (seeming them was "guilty" for bringing communism in Romania), but, despite this, he married a Russian woman. My grandma frequently asked him why. "*Because you are different*", he answered. The Mitroi husbands moved to Maria's house, living together with her mother, Evdokia.



With the start of the the new year (1954), Mircea was announced he had to go to Bucharest to present the previous year's financial report of the milling and baking company he was working at. Being newly married, my grandpa didn't want to leave his wife alone just a few days after they just got married, so he took her with him at Bucharest, for some kind of „honeymoon”. There, because

of the „Great winter of 1954”², they got stuck in the capital for two months (from the end of January to the beginning of March). During this time, Mircea fulfilled his personal duties but also those of his colleagues from Tulcea who, due to the winter, couldn't reach the capital. In the meantime, Maria sat with Mircea's former wife, Maria Arsenescu, in her home in Bucharest.

14. The Four Mitroi

On 3 December 1954, the much-desired son of the Mitroi husbands, Dudu Mircea, was born, and on 25 May 1958, was born their much-desired daughter, Mirela. Their father, Mircea, wanted very much that his first born would be a boy, and that after four years he would have a girl – thing which happened exactly as he wished.

My grandpa gave a special attention to his first born, Dudu, “Duduleț” as he called him. He took care he wouldn't miss anything, from clothes to shoes to toys. Mircea remembered how, while going with his son on the streets of the city, he was imitating all his actions: when Mircea put his hands in his pockets, Dudu did the same; when Mircea took his hands out of his pockets, Dudu copied; when Mircea looked at a shop from outside the window, Dudu also looked there. And so did the father and son walked together on the streets....

Dudu's godparents were the Jurea husbands: Toma, called “Puiu”, deputy director of the Tulcea branch of the National Bank of Romania (with headquarters on 9 May Street), and Cornelia, economist at the same institution. They had a daughter, Elena (Helen), who will graduate the Faculty of Chemistry, becoming a researcher. Mirela's

² The greatest winter in Europe during the XXth century. It started in the first week of February 1954. In Bucharest, snow-drifts reached 5m height, the doors and windows being blocked by the snow, and the wind reaching the speed record of 126 km/hour.

godparents were the Glonț (*Bullet*) husbands: Ovidiu, chief accountant at a horticultural farm (with vegetables, flowers and fruits) in Tulcea, while Lidia, of Italian origin, came from a rich family. They were parents of three daughters.

“Mirelușa” was a “nice looking” girl. My grandpa agreed not to call her “beautiful” so we wouldn’t exaggerate. In fact, other were his motivations: he couldn’t see her at birth or in the first 6 years of her childhood.

You may ask: *why?* A detailed explanation will be given in the following chapter. Still, I will say that, looking in perspective, to be blamed is only communism. *Why would the regime forbid a father see his own child?* Well, because the human nature of things didn’t mature when it came to the obsession with security, which all the dictatorships have. The communist “principle” for which my grandpa and so may others suffered so much sounded, in Joseph Stalin’s word, like this: “*You’re either with us, or against us*”. Being neutral wasn’t an option to follow.



15. In the chains of communism

Around year 1947, Mircea did the great mistake of speaking in public against communism. He thought, as many Romanians did that time, that the American¹ troops will liberate the eastern European states under Soviet occupation (a thing that never happened). Still, the criticism he made regarding the regime led him in a direct strife with a "Iipovean"².

A decade later, that person became an important man inside the communist system. Still holding a grudge against my grandpa and wanting revenge, he reported Mircea for speaking out against communism. Perceived as a "hostile element", the "Securitate" (Security of the State) only had to find a motive to arrest him.

After a verification at the "Ștefan Gheorghidiu" commercial mill where Mircea worked, by grandfather and the firm's manager were accused of a "fraudulent misuse" of the state firm's funds, misdemeanor which, those days, was severely punished. "Fired" from his job on 31 March 1958, he was held in arrest during the trial.

Found guilty, my grandpa was sentenced to 17 years of prison and forced labor as the "Poarta Albă" (*White Gate*) prison³. Given in May, a few days before the "criminal"'s daughter was born on 25 May, the court's adjudgment rested the same, despite the appeal made by my grandma in Autumn.

While imprisoned, Mircea's greatest suffering was not the humility of the prison conditions (working at the Danube – Black Sea Channel), but the fact he was separated from his family. In one way, he felt guilty he had brought this great misfortune upon him and his family.

My grandfather would have felt grief reading an account of the difficulties endured by my grandmother while he was in prison. But, with no incomes (the remaining money being spent for trial), having two children and a mother to take care of, with no one to hire for (until 1962), this period was very hard for her. She could resist only with the help of

Mircea's brother, Ispas and Marin, who helped her by sending food, water and all she needed from Iulia village.

My grandpa was released from prison after 6 years. Although rehabilitated, he didn't return the same man he once was.....



¹ After the war, USA and URSS became the two super-powers of the world, but were divided by two opposed economical and political systems (capitalism / communism; democracy / dictatorship). From 1947, a long conflict more of ideological nature started between the two states and their allies, which lasted until 1991, known in history as the "Cold war" because it didn't imply a direct military confrontation ("hot war").

² The "Iipoveans" are a population of Russian origin settled in the Danube Delta since the XVIIIth century. Their main activity is fishing.

³ Prison in Poarta Alba commune in Constanța county, opened in 1950 by the communist authorities. From the 12.000 inmates imprisoned here during the prison's history, many died due to the hard conditions of work at the Danube – Black Sea Channel.

16. Back home

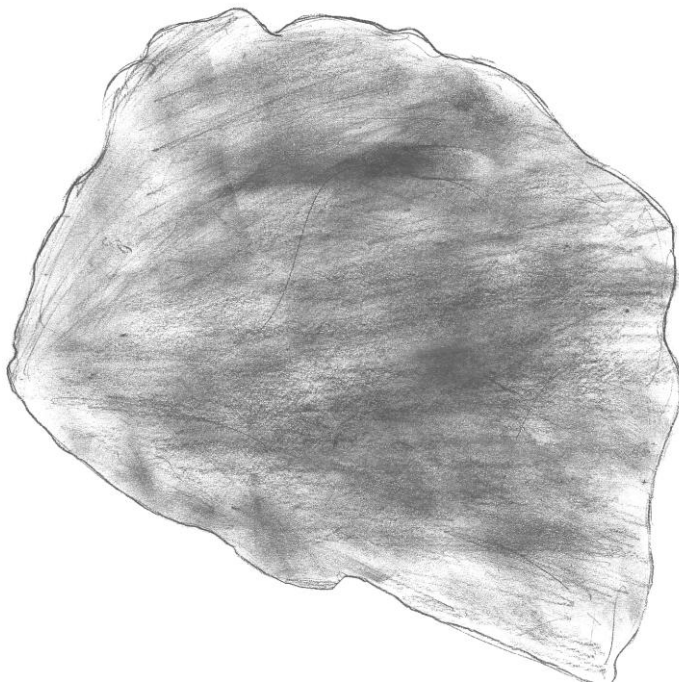
In 1964, from Romanian state leader Gheorghie Gheorghiu-Dej's orders, took place an amnesty (general pardon) by which all inmates imprisoned for political reasons were released¹. Gheorghiu-Dej had made a similar action in 1954, only to start after that a new "wave of arrests" (that ended with the amnesty of 1964).

After his released, Mircea was rehabilitated, the accusations for which he was imprisoned proving to be false. More than that, he had a "clean past" (from communist perspective): a "healthy" origin (son of a peasant), soldier on the anti-fascist front, a serious and competent employee, family man, a respectable and proud citizen. Still, after his release from prison, he wasn't the same man as before: he lost not only all his previous "fortune" (money and goods), confiscated after his arrest, but also the patience, hope and optimism he once had. The time in prison changed him....

A short time after his release, Mircea decided to sell the old house of his mother-in-law, including its courtyard, and move to a flat on Isaccea Street – for financial and social considerations (the regime encouraged the citizens to live in a flat's single apartment and not in "bourgeois" houses with many rooms). On 26 October 1966, his mother-in-law died due to a degenerative mental illness.

Rehabilitated on 11 May 1964, Mircea found a living at the Somova² Mine, being hired on a pretty good job ("main accountant"). This mine, where baryte³ was extracted, was a branch of the Dobruja Mining Trust – with headquarters at Constanța. In 1967, my grandma was hired at the same mine as an accountant.

In 1966, Mircea became "accountant-general" (head of accounting). He worked at Somova until he retired in January 1977, when he aged 60 years [Imagine how his retirement would have been if my grandfather would have served the entire sentence of 17 years – being released in year 1975!].



¹ The amnesty decree no. 411 was given in July 1964, but some inmates were released starting from 1962. Gradually, over 12.7000 inmates were pardoned – 9600 in 1964, in three consecutive batches. Between them were Romanian intellectual Petre Țuțea and political leader Corneliu Coposu. The amnesty was produced in the context of a separation of Romania towards the Soviet Union, starting with the evacuation of the Soviet troops from the country in 1958.

² Somova is a commune in Tulcea county at around 12km distance from Tulcea city, formed from three vilages: Mineri, Parcheș, Somova. The name comes, according to local tradition, from a big „somn” (*catfish*) fished in Gârla Somovei. The barytine mine here was one of the very few in Romania.

³ Barium sulfate mineral (BaSO_4). Used as a weighting agent for drilling fluids in oil and gas exploration, as well as to produce paint, heavy concrete, to extract barium etc.

17. “If you can’t...

..... *we help you. If you don’t know, we teach you. If you don’t want, we force you*”. This was the main motto of the communist regime. My grandpa was never a communist party member and neither did he “collaborated” with the Security of the State....

..... but, due to his terrible experience in prison, Mircea didn’t spoke against communism in front of his children, didn’t criticize the party’s policy and, by his authoritarian nature, tried to define them some kind of “automatic subordination” – so that they wouldn’t revolt against the system but accept it as it is (who could have hoped communism would eventually end, in the days when it seemed it would forever last?).

His children passed through the system in a natural way: they both graduated “Spiru C. Haret” High School (1974/1977), Dudu completed the 9 month mandatory military duty in Buzău (1975), they both graduated the Faculty of Geology and Geophysics at the University of Bucharest (1978/1980), with distributions in communes in Muntenia¹ [After Mirela went to higher studies in Bucharest in Autumn of 1977, my grandparents moved to a smaller apartment on “Păcii” Street].

Despite his efforts, my grandpa didn’t manage to hide his children the true face of communism: the worship a single person (the dictator), the miserable conditions in which the population lived, the terror created by the Security of the State, the enmity created between the citizens and the official atheism that denied the existence of God – all these showed that communism was an “empire of evil” (as American President Ronald Reagan called it).

¹ During the communist period, graduates of a college received a place to work according to the education they followed, anywhere in the country – where they worked a few years.

In 1987, driven by the “dream of freedom” in the western society, Dudu planned to escape from the “lagăr” (the area of communist states, with closed borders), alongside his nephew, Gelu Popa (son of his cousin Lidia, daughter of Ispas). About Dudu’s plan knew only his sister, Mirela, and his wife, Claudia Stan (who he had married previously that year). My grandparents didn’t had any idea their son wanted to flee from Romania.

The initial plan was to cross the Danube by swim and reach Yugoslavia (that, although a communist state, had a much more liberal policy with immigrants from the “lagăr”), and ask there for “political asylum”². A turn of events prevented them to cross the Danube, another plan being devised: Gelu worked at the Constanța port, from where a commercial boat going to France was soon to set. Dudu was to hide in a container on that boat and, after the ship reached the territory of the democratical state, leave the boat and ask for “political asylum”. They succeeded in doing so, but in Turkey and not France: being no longer capable to bear the conditions in which he had to stay, Dudu asked Gelu to jump off-board and be rescued from the water by the Turkish coastal patrol. They lived in Turkey a few months, until their visa to settle in another democratic state was approved: Gelu moved to the United States of America, Dudu, in Australia.

Before this “happy end”, a few days after the authorities discovered Dudu was missing from the country, an agent of the “Securitate” came to my grandparents’ home and asked them a few questions. They didn’t had to lie when they said they didn’t knew nothing about their son’s intention to flee the country, because this was true. After the “interrogation” was over, the security agent left his badge in my grandparent’s apartment (accidentally or intentional); if it

² Protection given by a foreign country to a person persecuted by his or her own country (for political reasons).

wouldn't have been returned in time, Mircea and Maria would have got in a big trouble: from the perspective of the authorities, an agent of the Securitate couldn't have lost his badge (sic!), so, "for sure", someone must have stolen it (in this case, the Mitroi husbands). Happily, a few minutes after the agent left, my grandma observed the badge left on the table and ran after him to give it back; he took it, smiled and said thanks.

In the next chapter, I will write about the revolution that led to the fall of the communist regime in Romania. Despite being a controversial event, I preferred to show an idealized version of what meant the end of a terrible system because of which my grandparents had suffered enough....

18. Romanian Revolution of 1989

Year 1989. While most of communist regimes became more liberal (including that of the Soviet Union), the Romanian socialist system didn't reform in any way, fact seen in dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu's megalomania and "cult of personality"¹, similar to that of Asian communist leaders like Mao Zedong (in China) and Kim Il-sung (in North Korea), far from the reforms of which Mikhail Gorbaciov spoke of in the USSR.

On 21 August 1965, by decision of the Grand National Assembly, the Romanian Popular Republic became the Romanian Socialist Republic. Becoming president of the Romanian Communist Party (1965) and the political leader of the country (1967), Nicolae Ceaușescu named himself "President of Romania" at 29 April 1974. His megalomania reached its peak when, in 1983, after a period of demolitions in the 70s and 80s, the "Casa Republicii" (*House of the Republic*)² started being built.

In 1989, where the "Letter of the six"³ in March and the protests of the students from Cluj-Napoca in Bucharest of 11 November failed, succeeded a small number of citizens from Timișoara who gathered together in front of the parish in Maria Square in order to prevent the communist

authorities fo arrest preacher László Tőkés. On 16 December, the number of protesters grew.

In the following days, the revolution extended to the country's big cities (in Bucharest, from 21 December), becoming an national outrising. I am not sure what my grandpa thought when, at 24 December 1989, the victory of the revolution was announced at the television, but I'm sure he was glad. On 25 December 1989, my grandparents celebrated not only the birth of Christ, but also the fall of the "sickle and hammer" from the country's flag, although the execution of the Ceaușescu husbands in the same day, after a mock trial, was unfair.

In 1990 a democratical Romanian state began being built. It is true that by popular vote the power was given exactly to the former communist statemen, that important resources of the country were sold ridiculous sums, that most of the "good" things during that period (like the industry) were broken. But, despite all this, the new system, based on individual freedom, is for sure, if not "better", then more humane, more right. Many citizens today still have a "communist nostalgia". My grandfather was never one of them.

1 use of mass media, propaganda and other methods to create an idealized, heroic and at times god-like public image, often through unquestioning flattery and praise, towards a living political leader. The cult of personality if required by the system's nature itself.

² Today, the world's largest civilian building with an administrative function, situated in the center of Bucharest, on Arsenalul Hill. The building's project was made by 700 architects coordinated by Anca Petrescu. Since 1992, it is the seat of the Parliament, being known as "Palace of the Parliament" of "People's House".

³ Letter written by communist stateman Gheorghe Apostol and five other party members: Alexandru Bârlădeanu, Corneliu Mănescu, Grigore Răceanu, Constantin Pârvulescu, Silviu Brucan. The letter criticized Ceaușescu's policy. Its authors were quicly arested at home, being released after 22 December 1989.

AT OLD AGE

19. A free country

Year 1991. By national referendum (8 December), Romania adopts a new constitution, that grants the right to private property and freedom of speech, supporting a Republican semi-presidential system and a Democratical regime based on multiple parties. The new political situation, despite being below the expectations of the Romanian citizens, gave, through the idea of economical, social and political freedom, the faith and hope they were totally lacking during the oppressive communist regime.

On 21 October 1991, Mihaela Mitroi married with designer Radu Vişan-Miu and, on 24 April 1992, their first child was born: Andra. *During communism, my parents didn't want to have a child (despite they wanted one) due to the unnatural political situation of those times.*

That same year, Dudu came back to Romania to take his wife Claudia with her and return to Australia. On 20 March 1993 their daughter, Leah Mitroy, was born. *During communism, my uncle couldn't have returned back and neither could his wife emigrate in other way than escaping the country – a quite unlikely scenario. In this situation, Dudu couldn't have a family.*

In 1994, Maria Mitroi made a visit to Melbourne, Australia (the city where Dudu settled), sitting there for six months (from 26 July 1994 to 7 January 1995). *During communism, such a visit wouldn't have been accepted by the authorities, due to the conditions in which Dudu left the country (by illegal means) and the big distance between Romania and Australia, across the ocean.*

We, twins Tudor (Theodor) and Mihai (Michael) Vişan-Miu, were born on 29 December 1995. A few months before that day, my grandparents moved to Bucharest, in a flat on Ripiceni Street from Lacul Tei District. *During communism, my grandparents probably wouldn't have moved to the capital, having no family to go – just their daughter.*

I don't say that all these happened *because of the revolution*, but that, if the fall of communism wouldn't have taken place, all these happy events *probably* wouldn't have taken place. Of course, I prefer all the difficult aspects of this neverending "transition" above the state of not existing. My grandpa would have agreed.

20. My dear grandpa

What can I say more, in the last chapter of this book?

At the moment I gathered my grandfather's memories, all his brothers and sisters died: he remained last, the longest-living of the 8 children of Radu Mitroi and Lixandra.

In my childhood, I rarely saw Mircea, which a few special occasions (birthdays, Christmas and Pesach). Only our grandmother, "Granny" was we called her, in English (instead of "bunică", as in Romania), visited us every day. For this reason, I was very glad when my grandparents moved, in 2007, from Lacul Tei to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Street, a few steps from our home (at first, we lived in the same flat, at different floors; in 2009, we moved in another house, separated from our former flat by a small courtyard). Being able to see Mircea more often, my grandfather could share me stories of his life. He showed me his war veteran's medal, of which he was very proud. Since 2009, I we visited him nearly every Sunday (from 16:00 to 17:00), and he always had something to tell – to me and to my brother.

One day, Mircea expressed his regret he couldn't write a book about his life, despite he would like to. I felt sorry for this, but it didn't crossed my mind I myself could gather his memories. My mother is the one who suggested me to write a book about Mircea's life (me being interested in the family's genealogy), and my grandpa was very pleased with this idea. So, in the first Sunday of that week, I paid him a visit and started writing his life experiences (he told me what to write), then transpose them in a literary style. So i had written „The Life Story of Mircea Mitroi”. When, on 29

December 2010, we gave grandpa the book as a gift, he was very very pleased with the result, and quite surprised by the illustrations made by my brother (observing his great talent). Many times thereafter, he said (like for himself) he didn't ever expect his nephews would write a book about his life – a thing that he considered remarkable.

I wish to also say that my grandparents had been married for 58 years. They had their difficult moments and misunderstandings along their marriage, but the nice and beautiful moments meant much more. They didn't had to many “public displays” (beside going to the supermarket), with a notable exception when, on 18 May 2010 (Sunday), at Sala Palatului, the Mitroi husbands participated at an event organised by the Town Hall of District 2 in Bucharest, where hundreds of couples celebrated their “golden wedding” (50 years of marriage).

That same year (Friday, 23 April 2010), in an event organised as a homage for war veterans, Mircea received the “PLAQUE OF HONOR” of District 2 Town Hall, *“for the heroism, bravery and the exceptional military merits of a true patriotic heart, fighting on the front for the national reunification in the most terrible global war, the Second World War. Mr. Mircea Mitroi risked his life in every moment to protect his Homeland, being a model of virtue, dignity and honor for all future generations.”* *

On 1 December 2010, when I wrote this last chapter (on the national holiday), I ended it with the words of my grandfather, addressed to his family. Today, when I rewrite the book to better preserve the memory of my grandpa, I extend the initial quote, his own words:

* I note that, from the rank of corporal (that he got during WW2), my grandpa was forwarded to the rank of sergeant, major sergeant (1994), „plutonier” (2000), then „plutonier-major” (2007). Through law no. 44 / 1994, was war veteran, Mircea had numerous privileges (see chapter 2 of the law).

“This is my life, which until today I lived with courage and of which I am proud. On 29 December I age 94 years and, in a happy coincidence, my grandsons, Tudor and Mihai, were also born on 29 December.

In the present, my son Dudu settled in Melbourne, Australia, where he followed a second college and married with a Roman woman, Claudia, having a daughter of 17 years, Leah. My wife, Maria, went in Australia in 1994, where she stayed at Dudu’s home for 6 months. I wish to say that I myself wasn’t able to go in Australia to see my boy, my niece and my granddaughter, all of which I îmi este tare dor.

From my entire family, only I remain still alive, but my great satisfaction is that in the present I live together with my wife and the family of my daughter, married to Radu Vișan, who had three wonderful children. I greatly love these two families, who gave me four nephews: two boys, Tudor and Mihai, and two girls: Andra and Leah.

I pray to good Lord to take care of my family. I love you so much! Yours, Mircea, who still lives, at 94 years.

MIRCEA MITROI“

Post scriptum

On 3 January 2012, at 8:00 AM, Mircea Mitroi died in his apartment from W.A. Mozart Street, without pain (being asleep), with his wife in the next room, joining his parents and brothers in the Heavens.

Lord gave him a nice life that he lived in a balanced way, without excesses. Having a strict schedule (even for going to bed), keeping a healthy way of life, with daily physical exercises (even at 94 years), we shouldn’t be surprised he reached such an age.

He was buried at Pipera Cemetery on 5 January 2012, a day before Lord’s Baptism (6 January). He remains in our memory, of those who still remain to remember him.



Photographies



Mircea Mitroi (left) with a war comrade (right). Behind them: casino "Vraja Mării" (*Charm of the Sea*). Constanța, Sept.1940.



To Mircea Mitroi: *"He who shall never forget you offers you this portrait in the memory of a beautiful and continuous friendship, during the time we worked together at the RNC (Romanization National Council)"* – Trajan, violonist

(Photo: Iosef Weich, Frumoasă Street no.3, Tulcea)



Constanța, 28 September 1945. At the marriage of
Mărioara Mitroi with Alexandru Dincă (center)
Best man: Mircea Mitroi (right).
Bridesmaid: Lidia, daughter of Ispas (left).



Mircea and Maria Mitroi,
Tulcea, 14 April 1954



Mircea Mitroi (right), Maria Mitroi (center) and the wife of an
economist (left), on New Year Party: 1 January 1958.

Genealogy of Radu Mitroi's family

- Ispas (b.c.1910), married Zoia
 - Lidia, married *Ion Popa*, Navy officer
 - ❖ Magdalena – teacher, married married *Ion Gemănaru* – buildings engineer
 - Cătălin (b. 28 May 1964)
 - ❖ Aurora, *married; has two children*
 - ❖ Gelu - sailor
- Marin (b.c.1912), married *Marița*
 - Emil – teacher (*died young*)
 - Gheorghe – technician (*died young*)
 - Ion – fishing engineer, married *Mioara; has three children*
- Ion (b. 29 January 1914 – d.8 June 2001), married *Ana* (b. 20 October 1915 – d. 3 March 1989)
 - Emilia (*died a few months after birth*)
 - Emil (b. 13 September 1937) – surgeon married *Minodora Ritter*
 - ❖ Simona (b. 26 November 1978) married *Mihai Tudoran* (b. 30 August 1977)
 - Ana Emilia (b. 29 September 2009)
 - Paula Selina (b. 15 March 2013)
- Mircea (b.29 December 1916 – d.3 January 2013)
 - Dudu (b. 3 December 1954), married *Claudia Stan*
 - ❖ Leah (b. 20 March 1993)
 - Mirela (b.25 May '58), married *Radu Vișan* (b.5 May '52)
 - ❖ Andra (b. 24 April 1992)
 - ❖ Tudor and Mihai (b. 29 December 1995)
- Ilie (*died young*)
- Mărioara (*died at 6 years*)
- Parascheva, married *Gheorghe*
 - Ion – driver, married *Geta*
 - Didina, *married*
- Maria (d. 2007), married *Alexandru Dincă*
 - Doru – doctor, *married; has a boy and a girl*
 - Gabriela – chemist, married *Ninel Nae*
 - ❖ Oana
 - Aurora – dentist:
 - ❖ Edith

Timeline

FAMILY EVENTS

29 December 1916 = Mircea Mitroi was born

1923-28 = Mircea follows the primary classes in Ologi village

1928-30 = Mircea stays home, working the fields with his family

1930-38 = Mircea follows high school in Turnu Măgurele city

1938-1939 = Mircea satisfies military duty

1939-1940 = Mircea is hired as a superintendent in south Dobruja, where he lives in Bazargic with his family

September – October 1940 = the Mitroi family moves in Tulcea county

1 March 1942 – 1945 = Mircea works at the Romanization National Council

1944-1945 = Mircea fights on the western front alongside the 33 Infantry Regime

5 October 1945 – 31 July 1948 = Mircea works as general manager at the National Colonization Office Tulcea

1 September – 31 October 1948 = Mircea works as head of office at “Olivia” Factory in Tulcea

1 November 1948 – 31 March 1958 = Mircea works as head of department at the “Ștefan Gheorghiu” milling and baking company

18 January 1954 = Mircea Mitroi and Maria Covaliov were married

3 December 1954 = Dudu Mitroi was born

31 March 1958 = for political reasons, Mircea was “fired” and arrested; in **May 1958**, he was sentenced to prison and forced labor at “Poarta Albă” prison.

25 May 1958 = Mirela Mitroi was born

1964 = Mircea was released from prison through an amnesty

11 May 1964 = Mircea was hired as “main accountant” at Somova mine

1966 = Mircea became “accountant-general” at Somova mine

15 January 1977 = Mircea retired from work

1975 = Dudu Mitroi serves military duty at Buzău

Autumn 1975 / 1977 = Dudu and Mirela go to the Geology and Geophysics Faculty in Bucharest

1987 = Dudu flees from Romania, demanding political asylum in Turkey; he is allowed to resettle in Melbourne, Australia.

24 April 1992 = Andra Vișan-Miu was born
20 March 1993 = Leah Mitroy was born
26 July 1994 – 7 January 1995 = Maria Mitroi visits Dudu Mitroi and his family in Australia
1995 = Maria and Mircea Mitroi move to Bucharest
29 December 1995 = Tudor and Mihai Vișan-Miu were born
28 December 2010 = the first edition of the “Life Story of Mircea Mitroi” was made; a second edition was made in **March 2013**.
3 January 2012 = Mircea Mitroi died

HISTORICAL EVENTS

28 July 1914 – 11 November 1918 = **First World War**

1938 = king Carol II creates a royal dictatorship

1 September 1939 – 2 September 1945 = **Second World War**

- **1 September / 17 September 1939** = the Nazi and Soviet invasion of Poland, respectively

- **6 September 1940** = under pressure of prime-minister Ion Antonescu, king Carol II abdicated in favor of his son, Mihai

- **September – October 1940** = south Dobruja is ceded to Bulgaria, the Romanian population being evacuated north

- **20-24 November 1940** = Hungary, Romania and Slovakia join the Axis

- **22 June 1941** = the German and Romanian armies start the campaign in the east against the Soviet Union

- **23 August 1944** = Ion Antonescu is arrested; Romania turns against Germany in favor of the Allies.

- **12 September 1944** = the armistice between Romania and the United Nations (Soviet, American and British) is signed.

- **25 October 1944** = the liberation of the Romanian territory is completed (with Carei and Satu Mare)

- **7/8 May 1945** = Germany surrenders

- **15 August 1945** = Japan surrenders

- **2 September 1945** = the peace with Japan is signed

6 March 1945 = Petru Groza, leader of the Plougher's Party, is imposed by the soviets as prime-minister of Romania

21 August – 26 December 1945 = the “Royal strike”: king Mihai refuses to promulgate the law-decrees issued by the government

19 November 1946 = the alliance of the pro-communist forces in Romania forge the elections, “winning” them with 68,70%.

14 July – 12 November 1947 = leaders of the anti-communist National Peasants Party are arrested and sentenced to prison

6 November 1947 = the National Liberal Party-Gheorghe Tătărescu branch is eliminated from Parliament and Government
30 December 1947 = king Mihai is forced to abdicate; the Romanian Popular Republic is proclaimed
21 August 1965 = by decision of the Grand National Assembly, RPR becomes the Socialist Romanian Republic
9 December 1967 = Nicolae Ceaușescu becomes the political leader of Romania
4 March 1977 = at 21:22 starts a grand earthquake (7,2 on Richter scale) with the epicenter in Vrancea, causing great damages
16 - 25 December 1989 = it takes place the revolution who led to the fall of communism in Romania
13-15 June 1990 = the miners violently suppress the protests against president Ion Iliescu, former communist official, ending the “Piața Universității” (*University Square*) phenomenon.
8 December 1991 = the first post-communist constitution is adopted in Romania

List of personalities

Ion Creangă (b. 1 March 1837, Humulești – d. 31 December 1889, Iași) = Romanian writer known especially for his novel, “Amintiri din copilărie”, his fairy tales and stories.

Marin Preda (b.5 August 1922, Siliștea-Gumești, Teleorman county – d.15 May 1980, Mogoșoaia) = Romanian writer known especially for his novel, “Moromeții” - two books (1955 / 1967).

Carol II Caraiman (b.15 October 1893, Sinaia, Romania – d.4 April 1953, Estoril, Portugal) = king of Romania from 8 June 1930 to 6 September 1940; son of king Ferdinand I and queen Maria.

Ion Victor Antonescu (b. 2 June 1882, Pitești – d. 1 June 1946, Jilava) = Romanian general and statesman who decided Romania entered the Second World War besides the Allies.

Mihai I (b. 25 October 1921, Sinaia) = king of Romania from 20 July 1927 to 8 June 1930 (with a Regency), then again from 6 September 1940 to 30 December 1947; son of king Carol and queen Elena.

Tomáš Baťa (b. 3 April 1876, Zlín, Moravia, Austro-Hungary – d. 12 July 1932, Otrokovice, Czechoslovakia) = Czech entrepreneur, founder of the Bata shoe factory; mayor of Zlín city.

Benito Amilcare Andrea Mussolini (b. 29 July, 1883 – d. 28 April 1945) = Fascist leader of Italy from 1922 to 25 July 1943, when he was arrested and Italy signed peace with the Allies.

Petru Groza (b. 7 December 1884, Băcia, Hunedoara - d. 7 January 1958, București) = prime-minister in the first communist government (1945-52), president of the Grand National Assembly of Romania (1952-58).

Iuliu Maniu (b. 8 January 1873, Bădăcin – d. 5 februarie 1953, Sighet) = Romania statesman, president of the National Peasant Party and prime-minister of Romania (1928-1930, 1932-1933).

Gheorghe Tătărescu (b. 21 December 1886, Craiova – d. 28 March 1957, București) = prime-minister of Romania (1934-37;1939-40), minister of foreign affairs in Groza government (1945-47), quality in which he led the Romanian delegation at the Paris peace conference (1946-47).

Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (b. 8 November 1901, Bârlad – d. 19 March 1965, București) = leader of the Romanian Popular Republic from 1961 to his death.

Nicolae Ceaușescu (b. 26 January 1918, Scornicești – d. 25 December 1989, Târgoviște) = leader of the Romanian Socialist Republic from 1967 until the revolution of 1989.

Mikhail Sergheevici Gorbaciov (b. 2 March 1931) = leader of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991, whose reforms led to the ending of the “Cold War” and the fall of USSR.

Ion Iliescu (b. 3 March 1930, Oltenița, Călărași county) = Romanian politician, member of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (from 1965), leader of the National Salvation Front; first post-communist president of Romania (1990-92; 1992-96; 2000-2004).

Timeline for the date of 29 December 1916

FIRST WORLD WAR: At this moment, on the European continent, fights take place between the German and Franco-Belgian armies (in west), Austro-German and Ruso-Romanian (in east), Austrian and Italian, Bulgarian and Romanian (in south). Hard battles take place in Moldavia; the enemy troops forward on Romanian territory to Oituz valley and Râmnicu Sărat village.

It is published (in a Supplement to the “London Gazette”) the second despatch of Marshal *Sir Douglas Haig*, Commander in Chief of the British Armies in France and Flanders, regarding the

Battle of the Somme (July – November 1916), with casualties of over a million for both sides.

DEATHS (*with age and cause of death*)

Grigori Efimovici Rasputin – Russian mystic; controversial figure with an important influence over the family of the last tsar of Russia (Nicolae II Romanov); in 1907, he apparently succeeded to cure of hemophilia their son, Alexei, becoming their advisor (**47 years – crime**)

Thomas Chase-Casgrain – French Canadian lawyer and politician; deputy in Quebec county Legislative Assembly (1886-92), attorney general in the provincial cabinet (1891-96), deputy (1896-1904; 1914-16) (**64 years - pneumonia**);

James Loudon – Canadian Physics teacher, director of the Toronto University (1892-1906); he started building a Chemistry (1895) and Physics (1907) lab for the university (**75 years**);

Edwin Richard Doheny – Basketball player in the Major League (1895-1903); he developed a "dead arm", thing which prevented him performing at the same level; emotionally stressed, he became violent and irrational, being hospitalized in Danvers Asylum for the Criminally Insane (**43 years - tuberculosis**);

BIRTHS

Johannes Spielmann – officer of the German Army (1937-1945), Major during WW2; decorated for bravery on the battlefield and his military qualities (**d.14 August 2005**).

Alfred George Richard "Red" Carr – Canadian hockey player; played 8 seasons at Seniors as well was in the National League of 1943 (**d.16 May 1990**).

Mary Christine McConkey – Canadian freestyle and backstroke swimmer; participated at the 1936 Summer Olympics.

Erle Charles Reiter – American figure skater; three-time silver medalist at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, competed at the 1936 Winter Olympics (**d.3 December 2008**).

SOURCES

- Pages for the above personalities on en.wikipedia.org
- www.firstworldwar.com/onthisday/1916_12_29.htm - Michael Duffy, 22 August 2009 (citând "*Chronology of the War, 1914-18*", Londra).

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