

Ruth Greif In The Synagogue



This is a photo taken in the synagogue here, in Brasov, in the 1940s, after the war. Rabbi Deutsch - you can see him in the photo - did something for a group of girls, I was among them as well, which was called confirmation, like it is for the Hungarians. It's the exact equivalent of bat mitzvah, but I don't know why everybody referred to it as confirmation back then. We were a group of girls, of different ages, and the ceremony took place in the synagogue with the rabbi. Each of us had to know by heart a prayer in Hebrew on that occasion. I am the fifth from the right in the photo. After the war, I studied religion with Rabbi Deutsch, here, in the community's headquarters in Brasov, two hours every week; those were compulsory religious classes from school, but since we were Jews, we studied with the rabbi. I was also in a Zionist organization right after the war, but I can't remember if it was Gordonia or Hanoar [Hatzioni]; I think both. In any case, every day, after school, we were there, playing ping-pong, or dancing traditional Jewish dances, like lulala. It's a dance very similar to the Romanian ring dance, the hora. It was danced in a large circle; you had to take two steps to the right, one to the left, and lift your foot. In the middle of the circle there was a boy who chose a girl from the dancers and danced with her in the middle, then the girl would be there alone and choose a boy, and so on. It was nice. We made friends, fell in love? we were young girls. I also participated in some classes held by a sheliach, about Jewish history, about religion, about making aliyah to Palestine because Israel didn't exist back then.