

daily life tense and frightening. I remember going to visit an aunt and staying with her overnight. As we returned to my parents' house the following morning, we had to pass by the barracks, the watch took arms and shot into the air, laughing at us. We ran home as fast as we could. It was a joyless and disturbing time, so as a consequence we left Bialystok for Warsaw in Poland, although things turned out to be not much better here. I have only very sketchy memories of this year or so spent in Warsaw, the whole of Poland was occupied by the Russians at the time and I think we must have been staying with relatives of my mother. The situation did affect me, but in a typical small boy's way. I was sitting at the breakfast table one day eating my soft-boiled egg, when I suddenly burst into tears. Asked by my father "What on earth are you crying for?" I replied that I would be very sad, should I never be able to eat an egg again. And eggs have always remained my favourite dish, in whatever shape or form.

My father was then invited to join the opera house in Kalisch, a beautiful small town in western Poland. And that is where we went to live next. Not far from where we lived in the town was a picturesque park through which a magical small river flowed, upon which floated water lilies and leaves. Whenever I had enough pocket money, I would hire a boat and row in and out of the small inlets and bays of the banks, over which bent old trees. I would have been six, nearly seven. There was also an elegant cafe in the park, where my mother would sit and drink coffee, or even champagne in the late afternoon. Opposite was a bandstand, and the