

## Lea Beraha At The Workers' Academy



This is my class from the Workers' Academy in Varna. The picture was taken in front of the Workers' Academy in the 1950s. I am in the second row, fourth from right. The workers used to attend the evening classes here, in order to take a high school degree. We had wonderful teachers. I still keep in touch with one of them - comrade Koteva. Unfortunately she is not on the photo. By 1947 I was alone. My future husband was a student in the USSR. My father died in my arms. My sister Eliza got married and left for Israel. My brother Betzalel and his family followed my sister at my mother's request. In 1949 my mother also left for Israel. It was very hard for me. In order to escape from loneliness, I took part in two consecutive brigades. There I fell and broke my hand. I was falsely diagnosed with bone tuberculosis. Later it turned out that I had simple sciatica. From one sanatorium to another I finally reached the Workers' Academy in Varna, where I finished my high school education. There I was put into a plaster cast and during the whole year they took me to exams on a stretcher. I gained a lot of weight and weighed some 90 kilos as a result of total immobilization. I was lucky that my husband visited me. I told him that I didn't intend to marry him because of my illness. Upon his return to Moscow my husband took my tests to the Institute for Bone and Joint Tuberculosis. The professor there concluded that I have no tuberculosis whatsoever. According to him it was more likely to be rheumatism or something of that kind. And above all he recommended that I should start moving. I stood up and fell immediately.