

Bina Dekalo With Her Friend Matilda Seliktar



This is a photo of me and a friend of mine, Matilda Seliktar. It was taken in 1937 in Sofia. Mati, as we called her, was a Jew from a very large family that was relatively poor and all family members were firm communists. I remember that her father was a craftsman, I think he was a cobbler. I met Mati Seliktar during the camps organised by Hashomer Hatzair around the country. We most often went to camps around the towns of Velingrad and Vidin. Mati Seliktar and I once went to a congress of Hashomer Hatzair in Plovdiv. We were accommodated by the family of the owner of the Frida soap factory. I remember that their family was very big - eighteen children. Mati left for Israel before the foundation of the state. She had graduated from a crafts school located in Sofia on Bacho Kiro Street. It prepared the Jews who left for Palestine teaching them in sewing, fruit growing, painting and technical disciplines. She founded the kibbutz Ramat HaShofet, where she lives. Around 1931 my parents and I moved to live in Sofia. My brother Marco who supported us

decided to leave for Israel and we decided to leave Lom. In Sofia I worked as a shop assistant and tried to help with what I could, because the money was never enough. I enrolled to study singing in the conservatory. I was admitted to study dramatic soprano. The director of the conservatory advised me to take additional singing lessons and his wife Ruth Tsankova, who was German, became my tutor. I didn't graduate from the conservatory, because the Law for the Protection of the Nation was passed and I was expelled, because I was a Jew.