

Sophie Pinkas In The High School In Vidin



This photo was taken in Vidin in 1941. On this photo I am in the last but one junior high school grade in the girls' school. After the end of the school year we gathered with our class teacher, Mrs. Nikolova, whom we loved very much. She taught us mathematics. We were a number of Jewish girls in our class and we graduated together. The others were Bulgarians. We were a nice class, the fascist organizations weren't very popular in the high school and we had no problems. My best friend at that time, Jina Mashiah, is not on the photo. We were inseparable. After the Jewish school we studied in a junior high school which had three grades - first, second and third. Then we went to high school, which started from the fourth grade. I link this period with my best friend Jina. Her name was Reyna, but we called her Jina. She was a very poor girl without a father. Her mother, a poor woman, supported three children by sewing shirts at home. I remember that my mother helped them a lot by giving them money and clothes. We lived on the same street, our houses facing each other. We went to school together in the mornings and sat together in the classroom. I was one of the shortest children, she was one of the tallest, but nevertheless we sat together in the first row. We returned home together, she often came to have lunch with us and then we started studying. My brother teased us the entire time saying that we were 'klyutskarki' - this word is not used any more. It means someone who likes studying - that we were reading all the time. Since we studied Latin in high school, which was very hard for us, we sat for hours translating from Latin into Bulgarian and from Bulgarian into Latin. My mother would usually bring us some food while we were studying and when we finished, she gave us some money to go for a walk in the town's garden. It was the so-called 'stargalo' - the garden was located along the Danube and all young people arranged their meetings and went for a walk there. At that time uniforms were obligatory - the school uniforms and the berets. There was a confectionery nearby - we went there to eat some cakes and drink boza. We often went to the cinema. Another classmate of mine, with whom I was close, was Adela Arie - in the last row on the left. She graduated in medicine and now she lives in Israel working as a pediatrician. When I go to Israel, I always meet her and another friend of mine, Neli Levi, who is a dentist. She is the second from right to left in the last row.