

Juliet And Mois Saltiel On A Trip



These days [in 1985] my husband Mois Solomon Saltiel and I were on a big trip in the USSR. We visited Moscow, Leningrad, Riga, Kiev and the whole Latvia. It was very interesting. The place where the picture was taken is called Island's Stone.

Of course, we knew each other with Mois yet from the period he went underground. I remember that one day when I was interned with my family to Asenovgrad [1942] I received a letter from him. Then he was imprisoned in the Skopje jail, but despite all this we had the possibility to be in relatively undisturbed correspondence. I knew they read his letters in the prison before I received them. And after I got the letters I had to show them to my mother (this was the way the things were these days - family matriarchate dominated in our family). But I didn't find these details as something wrong.

The main reason for his imprisoning was as comic as it was tragic. I will describe this important story in details. In 1942 on 'Hristo Botev' radio the platform of the Fatherland Front [A broad left wing umbrella organization, created in 1942, with the purpose to lead the Communist Party to power] was read. There was a series of requirements and tasks for the democratic development of the country set by the Fatherland Front in it, including certain points against the anti-Semitic legislation. Underground members of the Union of Young Workers (UYW) [The Union of Young Workers (also called Revolutionary Youth Union): A communist youth organization, which was legally established in 1928 as a sub-organization of the Bulgarian Communist Youth Union], among whom was also Mois, decided that this platform has to be delivered to the broad public, because the government did not comment on it and the newspapers didn't write anything about it. Mois was then the head of several UYW groups, one of which decided to multiply leaflets with this important platform. These days I kept myself away from the underground activity of my future husband, although I was informed about it. And because it was very labor consuming to write the platform by hand and there was no printing house to publish it, they decided that they could multiply it by photo typing separate parts of the platform. One of them, Sabat Melamed, worked at a photo studio and took materials as well as cassette for film copying. The whole group gathered in the flat of Mois Perets at the corner of Odrin Str. and Stamboliiski Blvd.. [Odrin Street is one of the oldest

streets in Sofia. It is a crossing of Stamboliiski Blvd, relatively near the Jewish Center.] It was in August 1942 between 11:00 and 12:00 p.m.. And they started to copy these pictures. There was a lot of noise coming from the opening and closing of the box where the copying was carried out. Even more, the house was all wattle and daub and on the storey below them lived unknown Bulgarians. Well, as they were producing this noise in the night the neighbors went up to see what happens. They wanted to open the door, but because Mois and the others had locked it and pulled down the curtains, the Bulgarians told them: 'You are doing something wrong and we are going to call the police, if you don't leave.' Then one of the dare-devils, Leon Levi, who lived at the opposite corner took the box with all the materials in order to liquidate them. But when he went out it happened that a policeman was sitting in the nearby cafe who saw that a youngster in a hurry carried a dubious box at an unearthly hour. He started shouting at him; 'Halt! Halt!' and the boy started to run, they chased each other, and finally Leon Levi was arrested. In the meantime, Mois together with Sabat Melamed ran away on the roofs of the low buildings from Stamboliiski Blvd as far as Positano and Odrin Streets, where another friend of theirs lived, Daniel Albahari. There they rested for the night. But when the policemen started to beat Leon Levi, after dawn, he told them who lived in the house and they went and arrested Mois Perets. In fact, this was the beginning of Mois's underground life. That happened in 1943.