

Ventura Mashiakh With Relatives And Friends At Purim



This is my mother Ventura Mashiakh with relatives and friends, dressed in a man's suit [the others are in Bulgarian national folk costumes], since they didn't have specially designed carnival clothes for Purim. My mother is sitting in the center with Aunt Lisa, my father's sister, at her legs. Rebeka,

my father's second sister, is on the right (they say I have my ill-temper after her). From the left a friend of my mother can be seen, but I don't know anything about her. This is all I know about this picture, taken in Sofia in 1910.

I'll never forget how we used to celebrate Purim. There was a very nice song for Purim of whose origin I know nothing. The specific point about it was that every new stanza began with a letter in accordance with the order of the Hebrew alphabet. My sister Sara sang it marvelously. On Purim my father would always tell her, 'Sarika, please, kerida... ['dear' in Ladino] and she would start singing. The feeling was remarkable. I remember visiting Sara in her kibbutz during my last journey to Israel in 1990. I cannot recall the name of her kibbutz. Her job was to patch up clothes on a machine and the people loved her. So we, the three sisters, went to see her. I remember she lived in a small neat room; she also had a toilet and office in her room. Well, I went to her and asked her, 'Sister, please, sing the first stanza of our favorite Purim song.' She was 80 then. When she started singing something happened to me. I rushed out of the room in tears; I just couldn't stop crying. I remember we were a very warm, united, extraordinary family.