

Endre Foldes And Giza Altman



This is my brother Endre Foldes, or Bandi as we used to call him, and our aunt Giza Altman in Cannes in 1948. They went on an Easter trip there. Giza wanted to see it so she paid for a package tour. She was quite well off. She supported Bandi and she could even save up for this trip. This is how she made money: she baked doughnuts for example and some poppy-seed cake. Poppy seed

was unknown in France at the time. She bought it on the flower market where it was sold for birds and called my mother how to make poppy-seed cake. And she made it for some Purim celebration and the Jews took a liking to it and she used to make it regularly. After the war, when it became clear that no one was alive, my mother and her younger sister, Aunt Giza, decided not to stay in Hungary. They had connections with the Glatters in Canada, who had invited them, but not really seriously. Then they tried the Zionists. Bandi was part of a Zionist company, two of the pillars of which were Pista Hermann and Agi Heller. [Hermann was a psychologist and Heller a Marxist philosopher.] In 1946 they got together, ten or so children to go to Palestine. At that time there was still some gold at home, which my mother gave to Bandi, who was then 16. Then Aunt Giza also went, not with the Zionists, but with Russians, as a mediator, on a truck to Austria into the American zone, not the Soviet one. The intention was that Bandi and Giza would meet. Bandi got to Brussels with the Zionists. But the sheliach was very strange, or rather he wasn't a man of high character, as he said that the children had so much gold on them that they should give it to him; it would be safer with him. [Sheliach is a Zionist representative.] They handed it over and then in Brussels the sheliach and his girlfriend disappeared. The 12-13 children were left with no money, or anything. The police caught them and put them in prison. In the meantime Aunt Giza had gone to Paris via Germany, as my father had three cousins who lived there and she knew that. She also knew they were called Friedman, but not where they lived or what they did. In the refugee camp in Paris - there's luck in the world after all - she asked whether anyone knew Imre Friedman, and someone said yes and took her to him. He got a travel document for himself, went to Brussels for Bandi, and brought him to Paris. All this happened in the fall of 1946, there was Bandi and Aunt Giza stayed with them in Paris, my aunt became a cook in a kind of Jewish refuge. Bandi finished high school there. He applied for the Department of Chemistry and Physics at the Sorbonne but then something happened. He met a girl who was Jewish and a communist, and she took him to an anti-Tito [13](#) protest in 1950. And whom did the police catch? Bandi, of course, and two other guys, and as they were refugees they took them to Sante prison for trial, and they informed Aunt Giza who, huffing and puffing, went for him. Bandi was sentenced to two days imprisonment and thrown out of France. In the meantime Aunt Giza had a row with the Jews, as they told her that such a godless man who does such things like protest must be abandoned to his fate. Auntie needed no more, 'You call yourselves Jews, Orthodox religious ones at that', she shouted, left everything and came back to Hungary. So in August 1950 they all turned up in Pest. Aunt Giza was a bookkeeper, she found a position at the Ganz Electric Factory.