

Belina And Haim Navon And Their Family



This is a family picture from 12th October 1919, taken in Konstanta, Romania. This is the engagement of my mother's sister Ernestina (third from right). The first woman on the right, with the kerchief, is my great-grandmother. My grandparents, Belina and Haim Navon, are sitting at the center of the table, my mother Malka is standing behind them. The photo is proof that the Jewish community in Konstanta dressed in a modern European style. My grandparents were probably religious because there were hardly any non-religious people in their generation. I don't know about my grandfathers, but my grandmothers used to wear secular clothes. I remember my mother telling me about the Jewish community in Constanta, which differed a lot from the one in Bessarabia, where Jews used to wear caftans and payot and had a completely different way of living. My grandfathers were merchants. Both my grandparents and my parents were neither very poor nor very rich. My mother had two sisters, Sharlota and Ernestina Navon, and two brothers, Menaho and Ticko Navon. She was the youngest one. Her sisters were housewives. Ernestina was also married to a Bulgarian. My parents kept in touch with their relatives in Bulgaria more than with those that lived in Israel or in other places. We didn't have enough money, opportunities or desire to visit them. [Editor's note: In totalitarian times continued relations with relatives in Israel would have had a negative impact on the family's situation in Bulgaria. On the other hand, an eventual trip to Israel was beyond their financial capacities.] All of them have already died: Menaho and Ticko in Romania, Sharlota in Israel, and Ernestina in Bulgaria. My mother met my future father at the wedding of her older sister Sharlota, who married a Bulgarian Jew from Ruse. He liked the bride's younger sister. They married in 1923 in Sofia. They had a religious wedding. I was born three years later.