

## Rosa Kolevska With Her Daughter Bisserka Kolevska And Her Aunt Blanka Aroyo



This picture was taken in Israel in 1979. Here I am with my younger daughter Bisserka Kolevska and my aunt Blanka Aroyo, the wife of my mother's brother Israel Aroyo. I wanted very much to leave for Israel. I went there for the first time in 1979 together with my younger daughter Bisserka. My mother and my sister had already been there before. I liked it very much and I was very well accepted. I have many relatives there - my mother's brother and sister, my father's siblings and a lot of former classmates. During my first visit to Israel all Sliven-born fellow citizens gathered for a celebration. My strongest impressions from Israel were from that very first visit. My relatives invited me to stay there, but I couldn't. I wasn't ready; my divorce wasn't yet finalized. I wasn't mature enough for such a step. Later I did want to do so a lot, but I didn't dare go there all by myself. It was already too late! I am deeply sorry! I like life in Israel very much! Of course, there are unpleasant things there too, but I like even only inhaling the air there. Although they are from a mixed marriage, my children feel Jewish. I acquainted them with the traditions as best as I could.

My mother was offered retirement when she was only 50. I considered that it would be ugly to leave her alone in Sliven. Therefore I invited her to come and stay at our place in Sofia. Maybe it was a mistake on my side. My mother was the soul of the house. The children, my husband and I loved her very much. But practically she didn't have any self-dependence. Maybe she would have been much happier if she had remained in Sliven. As long as my mother was alive, our cuisine was a Jewish one. We didn't celebrate Sabbath, we didn't observe the kashrut. On Pesach we prepared 'Haman's ears' and bought matzah. We tried to follow the traditions. In Sofia my mother didn't work; she took care of the household, yet she was young and healthy and she could have continued working.