

Sabat Pilosof With Some Friends



This is a photo of me and some of my friends. The photo was taken after 1944 in Dupnitsa.

First from left in the second row is Ida Alkalai, then Estrea, I, Vitka and my sister Lizka. Aron Alkalai is first from left in the first row. Then comes Herzal, who left for Israel, and Haim Pilosof.

There were Zionist organizations in Dupnitsa but I wasn't a member of any. The youth were members of Maccabi. The Jews in our town had their cultural-educational organization at the 'Saznanie' and Chitalishte. It was a Jewish community club, supervised by the Jewish community and was entirely at the disposal of the Jews in town. It had a big and rich library. We borrowed books from there. There we received all kinds of periodicals and newly published books. The richer Jews used to support it financially. The premises of the Jewish community club were close to the building which sheltered the Jewish community. There was a very nice choir at the 'Saznanie' community club, which had no name. The songs were Bulgarian. There was also a theater, in which many plays were performed. There was a big hall in the community club, where the library was situated and the theater and choir rehearsals were held. The plays were mainly by Jewish authors. I remember, for example, a play, 'Tevye, the Milkman' by the Russian author Sholem Aleichem.

Between 1938 and 1940 we often went on excursions to the Balkan Mountain. These trips were organized by the UYW of which I was a member. I wouldn't say we had much of an activity. We had a friend, a tailor, Zhak Alfandari, who lived in the Jewish neighborhood. He had a closet in his atelier. He kept a jacket there with an illegal newspaper from Sofia in its pocket. We were interested in the illegal newspaper. I think it was 'Rabotnichesko delo'. He knew why we visited him and let us in. He was a communist. He was caught and sent to prison. After he was set free from prison in September 1944, he returned to his dressmaking atelier.