

The Moshe Family



This is me, my husband and our son Yosif. The photo was taken in Sofia. Here my son is three or four years old. So the picture was taken sometime around 1955. At that time I was a research associate at the People's Health Institute, which was later renamed Centre of Hygiene. Those were hard times for me. I met my husband Shemuel Yosif Moshe at that time. He was the son of one of the interned families that rented a room in the house opposite us. I often tried to peep into their little room through the windows. I could see a book on the table: 'The Trade Union Movements in the World' and I was very impressed because I didn't know anything about these trade union movements. How was that possible? We, the young Jewish people, didn't stop studying with the end of school, we were always curious about things. There wasn't a single book by Louis Bromfield or John Galsworthy that we hadn't read. And if somebody mentioned 'The Forsyte Saga' and I

hadn't read it, I would go to the library and do my best to find it and read it. We couldn't afford to be lagging behind. There has always been this desire in the young Jewish people to succeed, to be first. Because that was our slogan: 'you have to be a head taller in order to break through. If you are as good as the others, you won't succeed, you have to be better.' I was pregnant when I graduated and was immediately hired in Sofia, at the Institute of National Health, which was on 'Vladimir Zaimov' Street. I had always wanted to study there and often, on passing it while I was still a student, I used to think about the things they were doing there behind the thick walls. After that we moved to the Center of Hygiene. I've never worked at any other place. After retiring I worked as a microbiologist for four or five years in Pernik. My son, Yosif, was born after my graduation in 1951. When he was born my husband was still studying at the Institute of Technology. I was worrying all the time about how I was going to raise that child because I had already started work. I knew that I had to commit myself to my job but who was going to look after my child? Then my mother came and together we returned to Pazardzhik for three months so that my husband could take his final exam without anyone in his way. Our life in Pazardzhik was extremely hard because my son and I, my mother and my little brother were living in the same room. We didn't have money. After the third month had passed I had to start work. My mother made a great sacrifice: she moved to Sofia with my little brother in order to help me. Sami started going to school. I started work. My mother, who was helping me and was busy with my child, couldn't take care of her own child. We found out from some of his schoolmates that Sami wasn't going to school. And my mother said that we would go wrong with the upbringing of the child.