

Mazal Asael With A Friend In Sofia



This is a picture of my friend since childhood Vinka (on the left) and me in Sofia in the 1940s. I became a member of the left wing, anti-fascist Revolutionary Youth Union in 1940. At the time the photo was taken Vinka and I were members of the RYU. I was working in an upholsterer's workshop then. Vinka lives in Israel at present. I came into a Bulgarian circle of friends in the late 1930s. I was already a left-winger then. We had to trade in our ID cards for new pink ones in the 1940s, and some of us had our names changed. (Repressive measures against Jews were taken after the National Defense Law was passed in 1939. Their ID cards were replaced by pink ones so that they differed from the ID cards of other Bulgarian citizens. Many Bulgarian Jews were moved to

designated towns where they had the right to leave their lodgings at certain times only.) The names of some Jews were changed to typically Jewish ones so that our Jewish origin was clear to the other citizens. My name was from Matilda to Mazal. We had to wear yellow badges that showed our Jewish origin but I hardly ever wore mine because I was living in a mostly Bulgarian circle. Anyway I was always ready to show it when necessary.