

## Lea Beraha's Family



This is my family, photographed in Sofia in 1944. The photo was taken shortly after 9th September 1944 upon our return to Sofia. We had a picture of us taken with the yellow stars as a memory. My father Yako Delareya is standing, second from left. My mother Rebecca Delareya, nee Mamon, is sitting, first from left. It's me next to her. First from right, sitting, is my sister Eliza Eshkenazi, nee Delareya. You can also see one of my mother's brothers and his family: his wife, daughter and son. Three or four months had passed since my father's return from Somovit camp and we had already fed him a little. There was a protest on 24th May 1943 against the internment of Jews. I took part in it. Horsemen and legionaries were waiting for the protesters and they beat us up badly. We hid in the yards like ants. I lost my father and my little sister. I hid in the yard of an aunt of mine, though I held my peace because I didn't want her to be harmed in case of an eventual arrest. My father and my sister went home. When my father saw that I hadn't come home, he went out to search for me. I was two crossings away from home and I saw how they arrested him. I didn't dare to shout out because if they had arrested me too, there wouldn't have been anyone left to take care of my mother and the family. From the police station they took him straight to Somovit labor camp. They interned him without clothes, without food? When he came back, he told us horrible things. Their daily food ration was 50 grams of bread only. A compatriot of ours, a Zionist and very hostile to 'progressive' people, slandered my father on being a communist. As a result the portions of my father and some other people were shortened to the minimum. My father used to dig in the garbage for scraps of food. He ate potato peels. He was set free at the time of the Bagrianov government. He looked like death warmed up. He didn't even have enough energy to climb the stairs and was shouting from below. My mother and I carried him to the first floor. That was already in Sofia, after the internment.