

Joshua Teszler With His Family And Relatives



This photo was taken in Gaza, in Israel. The old woman, first from left, is my aunt, Olga Jakobovics: she was my mother's (Bella Katz) sister. The man, first from right, is my cousin, Joshua Teszler, whom we call Siu, and the woman next to him is his wife, Ester. His mother was my mother's sister, Eugenia. The woman standing near aunt Olga is Siu's daughter, Rachela, and near Rachela is her husband. All the children in the photo are theirs. Joshua has another daughter, Cipora, who is not in the photo. My aunt and my cousin, Joshua Teszler, left for Israel between 1958 and 1960. She gave massages there and she had a clientele. While she was in Israel, we would write to each other all the time. She had a beautiful handwriting and a refined style. She was an intelligent woman. Even when she got old, she used to dress elegantly. She couldn't hear too well though. The first time I went to Israel was in 1978. I went there again in 1980. Back then, they would let you go, provided someone from there had sent you 100 dollars and an invitation. I have many friends in Israel. They come from all the regions of Romania and live in different parts of Israel. They are all Jews in Israel, but they are called after the country of origin, like Romanian Jews, for instance. My cousin in Israel, Joshua Teszler, who's nicknamed Siu, now lives in Gaza, with all his family: his wife Ester; his daughters, Rachela, with her husband and children, and Cipora. Rachela and her husband have even more children now; with religious Jews, abortion is forbidden. And there's something else: the ones living in Israel must have many children, for the Arabs are numerous. Everyone must have at least three children. My cousin's son-in-law is an agronomist. They have a greenhouse and they export flowers. When I went there, my cousin took me to their orange-tree and avocado-tree orchard, which they had planted. They worked hard to settle there, for the land is quite dry and there isn't too much water. They primarily work for themselves; but each kibbutz is thus organized that it can produce goods for export too. They all have to produce something, this is what they do. For instance, my husband's cousin used to work in a tailoring shop where they also fixed children clothes. It's very interesting how life is organized there. They are not religious. I mean, they keep the holidays, but things aren't so strict. Nowadays, none of my relatives in Israel wears a wig

anymore; they all have their natural hair. And I noticed many people there don't even wear a kippah anymore. They became modern. But there is still a region in Israel where people are very religious and they close the confines separating them from the rest on Saturday. In 1978, I watched a Sukkot celebration by very religious Jews: men danced with other men and wore that fur hat called streimel.