

The Jewish Symphony Orchestra



This is the Jewish Symphony Orchestra. The picture was taken in Sofia in 1939. No one had ever thought at that time that forming such an orchestra, capable of playing practically everything, would be possible. We were all amateurs. But it was a symphony orchestra indeed. We played all kinds of symphony works - Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn. In 1939 Mario Brontsa, the Jewish Symphony Orchestra's conductor, was looking for musicians. He hired practically every Jew who was able to play any kind of instrument. He had worked with great musicians - the distinguished violinist Leon Surujon [well-known Bulgarian violinist and pedagogue], Miki Baruh, Fidel Baruh. Most of them had other professions and music was only a hobby for them. Albert Baruh had studied dentistry in Leipzig. He was from Kjustendil, a neighbor of mine. I started working with the Symphony Orchestra in 1939. This orchestra was a real phenomenon. We daringly formed it right before the persecution of Jews had begun.