

Aron Szyniawer And His Family



This is a photo of my family in Israel. It was taken in 1965, when I visited them for the first time. The man standing first from left is Aron Szyniawer, my aunt Malka's and Dawid Szyniawer's son. And the man sitting in the first row is his son. Next to him is his wife and behind him standing are her parents. It is a photo from Aron's son's wedding. My father's younger sister was called Malka. Her husband was Dawid Szyniawer. He was a Torah scribe; it's called a soyfer. You know, he wrote the Hebrew letters from right to left, on a parchment. It has to be officially approved calfskin, very thin; they only write on that, it's forbidden to use anything else. Malka had many children, that is: Mojsze, Szulim, Eta, Mendel, Josel, Ele, and Gedale. I do remember all of them because they lived nearby and were either my age or older. I've been to Israel twice, in 1965 and 1990. Nothing special about the trip, I asked for a visa and got it, they refused the first time but later changed their mind. Jerusalem was still divided in 1965, so I couldn't get to Bethlehem, to the tomb [Rachel's tomb just outside Bethlehem], the Wailing Wall was also on the other side, but you could more or less see it. I don't know if a million Jews lived there at the time, maybe a million and a half, not more. The immigration increased after the 1967 war.