

## Margarita Kohen With Her Friend From Hashomer Hatzair



I with my friend from Hashomer Hatzair, Sari. I am the first on the right, next to me is Sari and the others are her cousins from Ruse in the garden of their house. There is an inscription on the back: 'As a souvenir to my dear Sari.' The date was written in front – 1932. There is no stamp of a photo shop. The photo was taken during a conference of Hashomer Hatzair in Ruse. We were put up in the houses of members of the organization in Ruse. I was accommodated in Sari's home. It struck me that the manners of the people from Ruse were more European than the rest of the people in Bulgaria.

Apart from going to school every day we also visited Hashomer Hatzair. At the beginning we didn't have uniforms but later we got them. Hashomer Hatzair was instilling a different culture in us and was introducing the spirit of Zionism. And I became a Zionist, I was always telling mum: 'Do you know mum, I'm going to leave for Israel?' and she replied 'I have been looking after you since you were a piece of meat. Are you going to leave me now?' and I was thinking of going to Israel to do what the organization was lecturing us to do.

In the summer during the holidays Hashomer Hatzair organized camps. In the evening by the bonfire we would recite poems by Smirnenski [a famous Bulgarian poet], poems in Ivrit. The people from Sofia were very distinguished with their culture... The people from Ruse were different and they were even nicer. We were all women, you know the girls from Plovdiv and we did what we could in those performances. I remember a Bentsion from Ruse who was singing so nicely, opera arias. I wouldn't have become a part of all that if I had remained in the [small] town of Gorna Dzhumaya. All this could happen only in a big city.