

Olga Jakobovics



This is a photo of my aunt, Olga Iacobovics, my mother's (Bella Katz) youngest sister. The photo was taken in Israel, in Gaza, in the 1990s. I only met Aunt Olga when I came back to Romania, in 1955. She came from Cluj to Timisoara just to see us. My aunt told me how people were treated at Auschwitz. How they had tattooed her. Everyone there was given a number that could never be erased. She had managed to survive only by chance. They were separated in two groups: the ones who would be sent to the gas chambers and the ones who were apt for work. A mother asked my aunt to switch places with her, so that she could be in the same group with her daughter. This is how Olga survived. It was an extraordinary thing. The gassed ones were burned, then turned into soap. At Auschwitz, they would do whatever works they had to do. The young ones, who were stronger and had more faith in life, stood more chances. But things were very harsh. My aunt did various works; they were temporary, not permanent. She didn't tell me what she did exactly. I took

a trip to Auschwitz in 1977 and I laid flowers at the gate of the crematorium where my parents had been burned. Aunt Olga told me that, when she returned from Auschwitz, she went to Cluj, not to Satu Mare. She met a Jewish dental technician there and she married him. His name was Tiberiu Jakobovics and he ran a private practice. She helped him and they had a good life together. She didn't keep the custom with the wig, as she was more liberal. Her husband was a decent man and he received us well when we went to Cluj. After she divorced, my aunt didn't get her maiden name back, but kept her former husband's, Jakobovics. She had learned how to give massages in the meantime, and she lived from it. She didn't have any children. After the divorce, they both left for Israel separately. This is how things were. My aunt and my cousin, Joshua Teszler, left for Israel between 1958 and 1960. She gave massages there too 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. Aunt Olga died at the age of 86, in 1998, in Jerusalem. She had been very patriotic and she left all her fortune to the Israeli armed forces. She saved 100 dollars to be sent to my son, Francisc Illes, in Germany and she left everything else that she owned to the Israeli army, because they are the ones who sacrifice their lives, as they have no choice.