

Liselotte Teltscherova And Her Fellow Passengers On The Ship From Palestine To Europe



This photo was taken on the boat that took me home to Czechoslovakia from Jerusalem in 1946. I am the first on the right. The others were my fellow passengers.

In 1940 my father was told to leave the Protectorate [Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia] within one week. There was only one place in the world where it was possible to go with a J-passport - Shanghai. We took a train to Opatija, Italy and we waited there for the boat to Shanghai. But I was very lucky, because I got a student certificate there to study in Palestine, so I went to study biology in Jerusalem.

My studies in Palestine were an interesting experience. I got the certificate and everyone with the certificate got a scholarship for two years. It wasn't much but it helped. But still we had to work. I had to pay for the room I rented and I had to eat something. We were doing the cleaning at Jerusalem University, but there were too many applicants, so everyone only got the job for three months. I also cleaned in houses. At first I thought I could teach languages or something like that, but there were too many educated people. There were many doctors, who were selling eggs instead of working in their profession.

I returned to Prague in 1946. I didn't want to stay in Palestine because I felt my home was here, in the Czech Republic.

I went by boat, it was a very adventurous journey. We went to France first since the immigration offices were there. The journey took very long because the boat was half broken, it was from South America. There were cabins but we stayed on the deck, which was cheaper. There were about five

or six young people - mostly from Austria - and we shared our food. We went through Egypt, then to Greece and then to Marseille. The journey should have taken five days, but finally we were going for more than a week. After we left Egypt, the boat had some problems; there was soot everywhere, we were very dirty. There were showers on the lower deck, but there wasn't enough water, so after a few days they didn't want to let us take a shower. It was horrible. The most terrible thing was that we didn't have enough food. We had some Palestinian money? they sold bread but the further we got from Palestine, the higher was the price. So we were very hungry. There were some French actors on the boat, they lived in cabins and also had food. I remember as we were watching them eat and felt really sick from hunger. Finally we got to Marseille. We had some family friends there, so I stayed with them for a few days, they gave me food and some money and then I took the train to Prague.