

Feiga Hercovici



This here is my maternal grandmother, Feiga Hercovici, some time in the 1920s, when she was about 70 years old; the photo was taken in Bacau. What I can tell you about her is that she was a very beautiful woman, and that my father, when he was talking about his mother-in-law, always called her ?da glichele Feigele?, that is ?the smart Feiga?! She came from somewhere in Bessarabia, I don't know the exact place. I remember that grandmother used to smoke, and she explained herself to us by saying that in Bessarabia all the women smoke, with some small clay pipes. Grandfather David owned a furrier's shop near the central square of Bacau, and

grandmother was a housewife. I knew grandmother Feiga well, however: she was a tall woman, straight as a fir tree, and judging by the photos and what everybody said about her, she was a beautiful woman, and all her children were like her too, we all brag about it! She didn't wear a wig or a kerchief, but I remember for example that she had a winter coat, called 'cataveica', with fur lining inside and velvet on the outside, it was very popular at the time in Moldavia. For as long as I knew her, grandmother lived in a house on Precista Street, in Bacau. You had to go up two or three stairs and then go along a hallway with four doors. There were three other families living there, only grandmother lived alone - grandfather had already died. She lived in only one room that served as a bedroom, kitchen and living room. At the end of the hallway here was a little garden, which was terribly muddy when it rained. There was a chicken coop, and some fruit trees; I remember a plum tree we used to climb in and fall from! In her room there was a bed, a table with chairs, and a painting from her wedding, with her and grandfather in wedding clothes, tete-a-tete. The stove was made of bricks, and it had a kitchen range. On the bed there were cushions, one over the other, and I must tell you, they were used to keep the corn mush warm. She used to make it before hand - and it wasn't just grandmother who did this -, wrap it in a clean towel, and put it between cushions, so that it stayed warm until her husband (that is when grandfather was still alive) came back from work. She still did it when we were little and came to visit her; she took it out and cut it with a string. Eventually she died in 1937, and she was buried in the Jewish cemetery, in Bacau. We felt so sad! We all loved her very much and suffered a lot when she passed away.