

The Streets Of Bascarsija In Sarajevo



My paternal grandfather's name was Avram Altarac.

He was born in the 1860s and a plumber by profession. He did all kinds of installation work and also owned a little shop on Bascarsija [1] Street, where he worked alone.

It's a long street, very famous in Sarajevo and known as a market place; all kinds of craftsmen used to have shops there. My grandfather was one of those craftsmen and sold all kinds of products made of sheet metal in his shop.

It was my grandfather who passed on the trade to his family. On my father's side everybody was a craftsman. They were plumbers, traders or innkeepers, and my father was a barber. The women in the family were mostly housewives.

Jews in Sarajevo were mostly known as tradesmen and craftsmen. There were no Jewish quarters, but there was a Jewish school called Maldar.

Life in Sarajevo was very active and the relations between people were very good. National minorities were friends and socialized, but marriages between them were very rare and mostly not approved by the families.