

Frida Khatset's Grandmother Haya Rukhlia Khatset



My grandmother Haya Rukhlia Khatset. My grandmother had a new outfit made for her that suited her well. She had her photo taken on this occasion. Kiev, 1901.

My grandmother Haya Rukhlia Khatset - I don't know her maiden name - was born in 1860s. I don't know where she was born. My grandmother and grandfather lived near the synagogue named after Brodski in the center of Kiev. My grandfather Evzer Khatset told me that this synagogue was built at the end of 19th century. I know that at that time almost half of all merchants were Jews and there were many flour grinding and sugar production enterprises in the town owned by Jews.

My grandmother and grandfather were deeply religious: my grandfather had a Torah and there was a mezuzah over their door: a box with a scroll with a prayer written on it. My grandfather had a black and cream striped tallit and a leather tefillin: two small boxes with long leather straps to be worn on the forehead and hands. My grandfather strictly observed Jewish traditions and went to the synagogue as long as his condition allowed. I remember that my mother and I went to my grandmother and grandfather when they were old and ill. I felt bored when she was taking care of them. Their apartment seemed very big to me: a big hallway, a dining room with high windows and several other rooms. My mother spoke Yiddish to my grandmother and grandfather and my grandfather spoke Russian with me since I didn't know Yiddish. I can hardly remember my grandmother. Her condition was very poor and I wasn't allowed to enter her room. I remember a big table covered with a long tablecloth in the dining room. I used to hide under the table shouting

'Now seek casing with intricate carving, the door panels were also decorated with carving. We have photos of my grandmother: she looks fat and kind, round-faced, with splendidly done hair wearing a magnificent hat with ostrich feathers.

Before the Revolution of 1917, the Khatset family was wealthy: they could afford to take a vacation at the seashore in the Crimea or Caucasus.