

Shloma Gorovits-Vaisbrot



This is my maternal grandfather, Shloma Gorovits-Vaisbrot. The photo was taken in Zamosc in the 1910s.

My mother's father had a total of four names. I remember one of them: Shloma. My grandfather Gorovits changed his last name to Vaisbrot around 1867. In order for their sons to avoid the tsarist army, some Jewish families gave their sons the family names of their childless relatives because there was a law saying that if a family only had one son, he didn't have to serve in the army. Later, my grandfather had a double surname - Gorovits-Vaisbrot.

The name Gorovits is very ancient. This line comes from Yehuda Geronti, who was a medieval poet and philosopher serving at the court of a Mauritanian sovereign of Spain in the 11th century. His works are well known all over the world; he wrote in Arabic, Hebrew, and Spanish. During the Spanish inquisition, his family moved to Holland, then to Czechia, and in the Czech town of Gorovits they were given this name. People say the line of Karl Marx is also related to our line.