

Josef Baruhovic's Mother, Simha Baruhovic, Her Children, Rahela And Josef Baruhovic, And The Family Maid , Marija



This photo of some of my family members was taken in Zagreb in the 1940s.

My mother is the second woman from the left, and our family maid is on the extreme right. I am the boy standing in front of her, and the little girl on the left is my sister Rahela.

My family was a typical assimilated Jewish family. Life and circumstances moved us from place to place, but even today I remain a typical assimilated Jew.

I am called Josef (Juski) Baruhovic and I was born on December 21, 1934.

My mother and father lived in Pristina, where my father's family was from. However, my mother wanted to be surrounded by her family for my birth, so I was born in Sarajevo.

We spent a short time there before returning home to Pristina, where I spent my first years.

In 1935 or 1936 my father was transferred to Zagreb and my mother and I went with him. My sister, Rahela (Seli or Selika, as I call her), was born in Zagreb in 1939.

She was a very precocious child. My sister and I went to music school in Pristina. My mother insisted that we have musical training.

I finished elementary music school and my sister secondary music school.

Because of the war, I was rather old when I started playing the piano, around 10 or 12, and did not amount to much of a musician. Seli was a more talented musician and played more than I did.

Before the war in Zagreb, we had a non-Jewish servant named Marija, who lived with us. She was from a village somewhere near Zagreb.

During this time it was normal for village women to come to the city to work as servants.

Since my father was an officer, we also had many military people around our house helping us. My father even had a car and a chauffeur to drive him around.

As an officer, my father, in general, socialized with other officers. My mother generally socialized with Jews in Zagreb. As my family was Sephardi, my mother probably socialized with the small group of Sephardi Jews in Zagreb.

In Pristina and Sarajevo all the Sephardi Jews spoke Ladino. My parents spoke both Serbian and Ladino at home. When they wanted to hide something from us they would speak Ladino.

But we knew Ladino and understood what they said. Today my sister and her husband try the same trick on their children.

When they do not want their children to understand they speak in Spanish and the rest of the time in Hebrew.