

Alina Fiszgrund With Her Aunt Anna Dirunger



This is me with my aunt Anna Dirunger. Her husband, Imek, was my mother's cousin. The photo was taken at their apartment in Lodz in 1936 or 1937. I was living with the Dirungers. I have very, very fond memories of Lodz. That was the growing-up period. While I went to school in Lodz, I lived with the Dirungers. I called them Aunt and Uncle, but in reality they were more distant relatives. The Dirungers were a childless couple. Both were teachers and worked at a private Jewish gymnasium. He was a mathematician, and his wife, Anna, taught Polish literature. She had a PhD from Lwow University, as one of the first PhD students of Professor Juliusz Kleiner. Anna's maiden name was Lidechower, she was born in Zloczow. Her father was a doctor there, a military doctor, I think. She was roughly of my mother's age, born sometime in the 1890s. The place was at Nawrot Street, 34, I guess, and that was my official address. We had all, my parents and sisters too, lived there for some time, I think it was 1937. The Dirungers had Art Nouveau furniture, a nicely furnished apartment. They weren't poor, though they weren't rich either. With Imek we went every Friday night for a walk to the Jewish quarter to watch the Hassidim go to the synagogue. Imek didn't go to synagogue because he was an atheist. There was an Orthodox synagogue at Poludniowa Street. On holidays, especially Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, crowds of people would go there. It was a beautiful world. When I watched those Hassidim going to the synagogue, I felt a whiff of sainthood from them. When I think of human piety, I think of nobleness, of an inability to spite others, to treat them ill. On our way back, we'd buy bagels and bring them home.