

Ida Limonova's Grandfather Moshe-Aren Sneiderman



My grandfather on my father's side, Moshe-Aren Sneiderman. This photo was made at the Krasnaya svetopis photoshop in Kharkov in the 1900s. My grandfather had this photo taken to give pictures to all his children. My grandfather was born in the town of Mitava in Kurlandia province, Latvia, in the 1850s. It was part of the Russian Empire, and Jews had the right to reside there and do their business: commerce, crafts, and so on. They were different Jews in Kurlandia: they were

townspeople, wealthy and well educated. Most Jewish families in other parts within the Pale of Settlement in tsarist Russia grew their own vegetables and kept livestock while Jewish families in Kurlandia were drawn towards a European lifestyle. They spoke the so-called Kurlandia Yiddish, which was their own dialect. My grandfather was a tinsmith, and also sold food products. My grandfather was a big man with a gray beard. He always wore a yarmulka. Unfortunately, I don't know anything about his life in Kurlandia except that his family was wealthy and respectable. At the beginning of the 20th century my grandparents and their family moved to Kharkov. I don't know why they decided to move. We had a pre-revolutionary picture of my grandmother. Her attire shows that hers was a wealthy family. She had a beautiful blouse, a chain watch and a beautiful hairdo. It was a custom among Jewish women to wear wigs at that time, so I guess, it was a wig. My grandmother always wore a long skirt and a blouse. She was a reserved and calm woman. My grandparents were religious. They always fasted on Yom Kippur, celebrated Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, Chanukkah, Purim and Pesach. I sometimes visited them on the eve of Sabbath. On Friday evening my grandmother lit candles and said a prayer. They followed the kashrut. She even had a special cloth for washing kitchen utensils for meat and dairy products. My grandfather was confined to bed from the early 1920s, and my father looked after him. He died in 1926, my grandmother died six years later.