

Fania Meitina



This is my mother Fania Meitina, nee Kazarnovskaya. She is about 27-30 years old. The photo was taken in Petrograd in 1910-1912 by photographer Kadison. My mother's parents lived in the village of Kazarnovichi near Vitebsk. My mother was born there in 1883. Later her family moved to Vitebsk where they lived on Smolenskaya Street in the center of the town. My mother finished lower secondary school and a Medical/Obstetrical School in Vitebsk. She entered a Medical College in

Petrograd, but quit after finishing her 2nd year when I was born. My mother was also interested in politics when she was young. She was a member of the party of Mensheviks. She told me little about it, but I know that she even went to Geneva to a meeting with the Menshevik Party leaders: Plekhanov and Martynov and even to meet with Lenin in Paris, but I don't know any details, of course. My mother and father met in Vitebsk, probably during some [revolutionary] activities, that they were both involved in. They got married in Vitebsk in 1912. I don't know whether they had a wedding at the synagogue or just a civil ceremony at the registry office. I know that they were both atheists. My parents' mother tongue was Yiddish, but they always spoke Russian. They switched to Yiddish when they didn't want their children to understand the subject of their discussion. My mother obviously liked my sister more. She was never satisfied with me and constantly reproached me with her 'she can sew', or 'she is so handy while you aren't'. The only time I heard my mother praise me was when I defended my thesis. My mother called her friend and said 'Rachel has defended her thesis today'. This was the only time in my life that she complimented my achievements. She was strict and greedy. Her father was greedy and she probably took after him, as well as my sister and her son. My mother was prudent. She was a cold person. I was never as close with my mother as I was with my father.