

Zuzana Minacova At A Costume Ball In Preschool



This photograph was taken at a pajama ball in preschool in Bratislava in the 1930s. I'm sitting in the first row, fourth from the left. In childhood I played with all children, Jewish and non-Jewish. There was no need to set them apart. Both my parents were Jews, but the religious side of things wasn't observed much in our family. We already lived in a non-religious way. We lived in Bratislava on Stefanikova Street, in a beautiful five-room apartment. My sister Anna and I had a Christian nanny. Our father was a well-known doctor, and had his practice in the same building. When the harassment and persecution of Jews began, I was small, but I remember that my father had to have a sign at his practice where it was written that he was a Jew. We also had to wear a yellow star sewed to our clothing. During visits and summer holidays that I spent at my paternal grandparents' place, I had the opportunity to come into contact with religious life; my grandparents were truly Orthodox Jews. Jewish customs were observed in their family; they cooked kosher food, separated their dishes for various foods and holidays, attended synagogue, and lived an Orthodox lifestyle. I was a child, so I don't remember any details that clearly, but I do remember that my cousins, sister and I were always at my grandparents' during summer holidays, and had the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with true Jewish sentiments. We were still kids, so we often got things wrong, and then Grandma and Grandpa had to correct our mistakes, so I remember that we had to stick knives into the ground, where they had to stay for several days so everything would be ritually clean again.