

Faina Minkova's Maternal Aunt Slava Shyfrinson With Her Friend



My mother's sister Slava Shyfrinson (on the left) and her friend in 1929 in Orsha. Slava was born in 1912. My grandfather, Khonia Shyfrinson, wasn't rich, but provided well for his family. He was a wholesale dealer. He had fruit delivered from Pridnestroviye and Odessa region to sell it to locals at

wholesale prices. They had a big two-storied stone house, with a high porch and columns, in the main street in Orsha. They rented out the first floor, and lived on the second floor. My grandfather and grandmother had six daughters. My mother's older sisters were raised religious. A teacher came to teach them Jewish traditions and how to read and write in Yiddish. The rest of the children were growing up after the Revolution of 1917 during the struggle against religion. My mother and her sisters Slava and Haya studied at a Russian secondary school. My great-grandmother taught them to write and read Yiddish. After the Revolution they spoke two languages in the family. The older daughters and their parents spoke Yiddish, and the younger daughters spoke Russian. They studied at a Russian school and it was easier for them to communicate in Russian. Slava went to study in Kiev. She met her future husband, a Ukrainian man, when she was a student. My grandparents were against her marriage, but she got married nonetheless. She remained in Kiev and didn't keep in touch with her Jewish relatives.