

Sonia Gerstein With Her Son Shmuel



This is my mother's cousin sister Sonia Gerstein, nee Zilberman, with her older son Shmuel. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1922. Sonia Gerstein, her husband and sons lived on the first floor of the building where we also lived. Her husband Haim was a bookbinder. Her sons Shmuel and Ershl were much older than me. Aunt Sonia was a housewife. She was a cheerful and charming dame. She and her husband took no interest in politics whatsoever. The Gersteins liked parties, guests and playing poker. We celebrated Jewish holidays together and were friends before and after the war. On Pesach we always had matzah at home and celebrated seder with the Gersteins. Aunt Sonia's husband, Haim Gerstein, conducted seder according to the rules: He read the Haggadah; his sons Shmuel and Ershel posed the four questions and searched for the afikoman. I

remember my father muttering that Haim messed it all up on our way back home. I also remember learning these four questions in Yiddish, I remember I had asked them somewhere, but I can't remember the place. We also celebrated Chanukkah with Aunt Sonia: this was her birthday. I don't remember money, but Grandmother Hava always made latkes and dumplings filled with cottage cheese and potatoes. During the war, we found out that the Gersteins were in Bukhara and we moved there. We rented a room in the women's part of an Uzbek house, and our landlords moved to the men's part. The Gersteins lived in another room.