C centropa

Pavle Sosberger's Mother's Kindergarten



This photo was taken after one of the children's performances in Jewish kindergarten. It was taken around 1940. My mother Paula is first from left in fourth row, and next to her (from right side) is Hana Simerling who was also working in the kindergarten. In the second row there is one more girl from left side, she is holding a child, she was like additional staff, she would take kids to toilet, helped them to wash their hands etc.

My mother founded this kindergarten at the beginning of 1930, at her expense. It was the first and only Jewish kindergarten in Novi Sad. After the opening of the Jewish cultural home in 1935, the kindergarten had moved into the cultural house and then the Jewish Community took it over. But my mother was still in charge and running the kindergarten; Hana Simerling, after coming back from Palestine (I think in 1937 or 1938, because she got malaria), helped my mother in work with kids.

It was a well-known kindergarten, beside Jewish kids there were non Jewish ones, too. There they would draw, learn Jewish songs, make sculptures from modeling clay. The whole kindergarten was adapted for young kids with small tables, chairs, and even small sinks and toilet sits. All the kids had uniforms, white frocks with blue edges and blue Magen David on the left side, the name of each child was written on the frock's pocket. The kids often prepared shows for holidays, for Hanukkah, Purim and they were presented in front of the Community members. I remember the names of some performances 'Adriatic night', 'Children's conference' and 'Forest dream'. These were all very simple theatre performances made so that even the youngest of kids could participate. My brother and I would also take a part in them from time to time.