

Toni Grimberg



This is my mother, Toni Grimberg, may God rest her soul. I don't know when and where this photograph was taken.

My mother's maiden name was Toni Meerovici, and her Jewish name was Toba [Tobe]. She was from Sulita, she was born in 1900. She went to school in Sulita, I don't know how many classes she graduated. But my mother spoke French, she learned French in private, my grandfather hired a private teacher for her.

I don't know how my parents met, I didn't even ask. But they were both from Sulita, they probably knew each other. They certainly had a religious ceremony performed. My mother didn't have a job, she was a housewife - that's how it was in those days.

They were pious people, both my mother and my father. My mother didn't wear a wig, she wore her hair naturally. My mother was a tall woman. My father was a rather shortish person. They dressed appropriately. They wore good clothes, especially when they had to go to the shul. 'Metit un desensta kleidar, ve ne geitan sil ara.' [Editor's note: This is the correct form of the Yiddish phrase: 'Me tit (zakh) un di shenste kleyde(r) [az] me geyt in shil arayn.'] Meaning: 'We wear our most elegant dresses when we go to the shul.' That's what my father always said when they went to the synagogue.

My mother lit 5 candles on Friday evening. [Ed. note: It is customary to light two candles, although some families light more, sometimes in accordance with the number of children. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabbat>] When father returned from the shul, we, all the children of our household, would sit down to eat, and mother served soup, meat, what she cooked in advance. My mother baked bread every Friday. We had an oven when we lived in Sulita, and she baked homemade bread. It used to last us for the whole week, and we didn't buy bread from the bakery. For Saturday and holidays, she baked kneaded bread, colilici. [Editor's note: Colilici is a variant for challah, similar to the word "kajlics" used by some Hungarian-speaking Jews in Romania. Both words have the origin of the Hungarian word "kalacs".] My mother used to buy fowl. We had a cage in the back, and that's where she kept the fowl until they had to be slaughtered. For back then, when I was a young woman, there were hakhamim in Sulita as well. It was father who took the fowl to the hakham.

My mother died here, at my place, in Botosani, on Zimbrului St. After she fell ill, they took her to Iasi, then they brought her here, to Botosani. My mother died in January 1973, she is buried here, in the cemetery.