

Jak And Sister Baby Photo



This photograph was taken in 1919. Me and my older sister. We had it taken in Istanbul but I do not know which photographer. My mother used to tell me that in this photograph io me pisi aki.6 mezes teniya (I peed on myself, I was 6 months old). She did not tell anything else.

I was born on May 6th, 1919 in Kuledibi in Istanbul. I was born on the street they called Kal de los Frankos (the synagogue of the Italians). We lived in Kuledibi all through my childhood.

My mother raised me, there was no preschool or such then, in addition, we did not have a nanny or an au paire.

I do not remember the period before school, we usually played at home. My mother and father had close friends, the Frumkin's and the Ruthstein's. We played at home with their children, child games probably. They did not allow us to go out to the streets. I went to elementary school in Saint-George school. This was an Austrian priests' school. It was with tuition. My mother would prepare food for us for after school when we went to school, later we did our homework. We even had a German teacher who came to tutor us, my older sister and me. Later on, of course the siblings would come, my father would come. There was the radio then, we would listen to the radio. We would go to the coffeeshouse in the evenings with my father after dinner. Starting from the time of elementary school, we went to temple to take classes, together with the other children in the neighborhood, for 1-2 hours after school. This went on till 13 years of age, after the bar-mitzvah, we quit.

I attended Saint-George school for junior high and highschool too after elementary school. Among our friends in school, there were Turks, there were Jews, there were 1 or 2 Armenians, mostly there were Jews and Turks.

All my classes were fine, my favorites were math and about animas (naturekunder). I did not have teachers that I especially loved or hated. I had a good relationship with all the teachers. I played basketball in school for a few months but I did not continue. We had a teacher named Maya, he would teach us. I took music classes in school. I was playing harmonica then, the whole school took classes of harmonica.

Ida was born in 1917. She also studied in Saint-George. She grew up here. Later we went to the military. 3 brothers, we were taken into the 20 military classes. My two older brothers and I. They took my older brother Davit three times to the military. We gave a petition saying my two older brothers are soldiers, I do not have a father, I take care of my mother and sister, allow me to stay till one of them comes back. The answer arrived: one of them is in the reserves, since it is not known when he will be released, we cannot allow it. I did not go to the military but I was arrested in the street as a fugitive and went to the military. My mother and sister stayed alone. When they were left alone, my cousin Bernard, the one I said had made fruit leather, the son of my father's sister, he owned a building in Kuledibi, he took in my mother and sister. They stayed there till my older brother came from the military. Later we came back too from the military, my sister was married. She married Sami Reytan. They had one son and one daughter, they live in Israel. Hayim Reytan and Rita Reytan. They each have two sons. My older sister lives in a nice villa in Ramat Hasharon, only, her husband died.