

In Heybeliada



This photograph was taken in Heybeliada.. My mother's sister Ida, her husband who was a dentist, my maternal grandmother and my older brother can be seen in the same picture. .

My mother's mother Flor Abravanel and father Senor Abravanel on the other hand were a family from Salonika (Today it is a city in Greece. But during the years we are talking about Bursa and Salonika were cities of the Ottoman Empire). My mother's father Senor Abravanel was a manager of a bank in Salonika.

My maternal grandmother Flor Abravanel was a teacher in Salonika. [The information given uses the term "profesora de eskola": school teacher. This indicates an elementary school teacher rather than a teacher of a specific subject}.

I remember my maternal grandmother living across the fire station in Shishane (Shishane is the district where Neve Shalom is today. During that time the Jewish community lived in this district. The area they called "Kula" was the surrounding area of Galata Tower. A lot of merchants from the fish seller to the sundries/notions store manager were Jewish. The largest fire organization of Istanbul was at the Shishane plaza. Only Jews lived in a lot of the houses then. Fresh Han is an example of this). When I came to Istanbul from Bursa, the city that looked so big to me would seem even bigger from the iron-barred windows of my grandmother's. Flor Abravanel who remains in my memory with her wrinkled face and the pieces of cake she gave me would seat me on the corner of the window at her house with a pillow and enable me to see the surrounding area. I still like sitting at the window, watching the people passing by in the street probably as a habit acquired from those days.

Ida- David Tashman are sister and brother-in-law of my mother. David Tashman was a Russian refugee. He was a true Russian aristocrat. He had studied dentistry in Russia and practiced this profession for a long time. Later he ran away from the mismanagement of Russia and the pogroms and came to Istanbul. Rumor had it that David Tashman had a son named Boris that he left back in Russia. His wife had died but this child never came to Istanbul. There was no communication between father and son. After David Tashman came to Istanbul, he worked with another dentist

since he did not have the right to open a clinic. He was a very well-mannered and dignified man. He provided very well for my aunt. They celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. He died at the age of 80. He loved me a lot too. Only, you should never play cards with him. Because he always wanted to win. This is a joke I remember about David Tashman. Ida's child died while still in her womb because of the cord that was wrapped around its neck. She did not have a child again.