

Revekka Blumberg With Her Parents



This photograph was taken by the fabric store owned by my father. This is my father Yacob-Berl Levin standing by the store, beside him is my mother Hana-Leya Levin and I am two years old here. This photo was taken in Kaunas in 1939. I don't know how my parents met, though I know for sure that this was not a prearranged marriage considering that my father's family was not really happy about it. They thought it to be a misalliance. My mother came from a poor family while my father's family was a wealthier one. My father's parents were probably going to have their son marry a girl with plentiful dowry, but my father went against their will. From whatever little my mother told me, I knew that her relationships with my father's family were no good, and therefore, she avoided talking about them. My parents got married in 1936. They had a traditional Jewish wedding. My

father insisted that my mother left her job after getting married. My father had a nice apartment in Kaunas where the newly weds settled down. My mother's family accepted my father. They had warm and kindly relationships. My father even employed my mother's sister and brother. I was born in 1937, one year after my parents' wedding. I was given the name of Revekka. The language we spoke at home was Yiddish. Lithuania was the center of Jewish culture before the war, and now, after almost 50 years of Soviet rule, the Jewish culture has very deep roots. I remember the Kaunas of my childhood. This was a beautiful and green town. Vyshgorod, a neighborhood in Kaunas, was located on a hill, and there was a funicular connection with it. We lived on the main street, which was Laisves Aleja at the time. There were many Jews in Kaunas. And, of course, there were synagogues, cheders and everything else that was necessary to support the life of a large Jewish community. Thinking about my aunt Shulia, I believe my father was a religious man, considering that they grew up in one family and received similar education. I don't think my parents were canonically religious people, though they observed all Jewish traditions. Even after the war my aunts had kitchenware for meat and dairy products, followed the kashrut, and I believe that this was the way of living in our family before the war. My father's family strictly observed all Jewish rules, and my father was no exception in this regard. As for my mother, she was always religious, having received religious education in a German school.