

Klara Madzhar



This is a photo of my grandmother, Klara Madzhar (nee Pilosof), my father's mother. It was taken in Sofia in 1954. I remember many stories about my grandmother Klara. She lived until she was 104 years old and until the very end she was strong and working. She helped my father with his business which was very dirty work and my mother refused to help my father. What's more, this kind of work can't be put off, because the meat goes bad. In such cases, we all helped my father, all the children and my grandmother. I remember that when she turned 90, she made a ritual. All her relatives and acquaintances gathered at home to sew the dress in which she would be buried. That was an interesting ritual, I don't know if it was performed for the men as well. It was a real celebration ? everyone sang and danced. In fact, we buried her in that dress when she died. I also remember an interesting story about her funeral. She was buried in the Sofia Central Jewish Cemetery. We asked the Rabbi of Sofia, Daniel Zion, to perform the ceremony, but when he found out how old she was, he said that no sad songs should be sung about her, only wedding, joyful ones. That must be the ritual when burying people who had lived for so long. But we weren't able to observe it, because a young woman was also buried on the same day and the rabbi had to pay respect to her age in the ceremony. That took place in 1954 in Sofia. In Dupnitsa grandmother Klara was famous as a healer. She was very good at setting dislocated legs and arms. I don't know how she did it, by some kind of massage. She was very religious: she went to the synagogue in the mornings and observed all Jewish traditions.