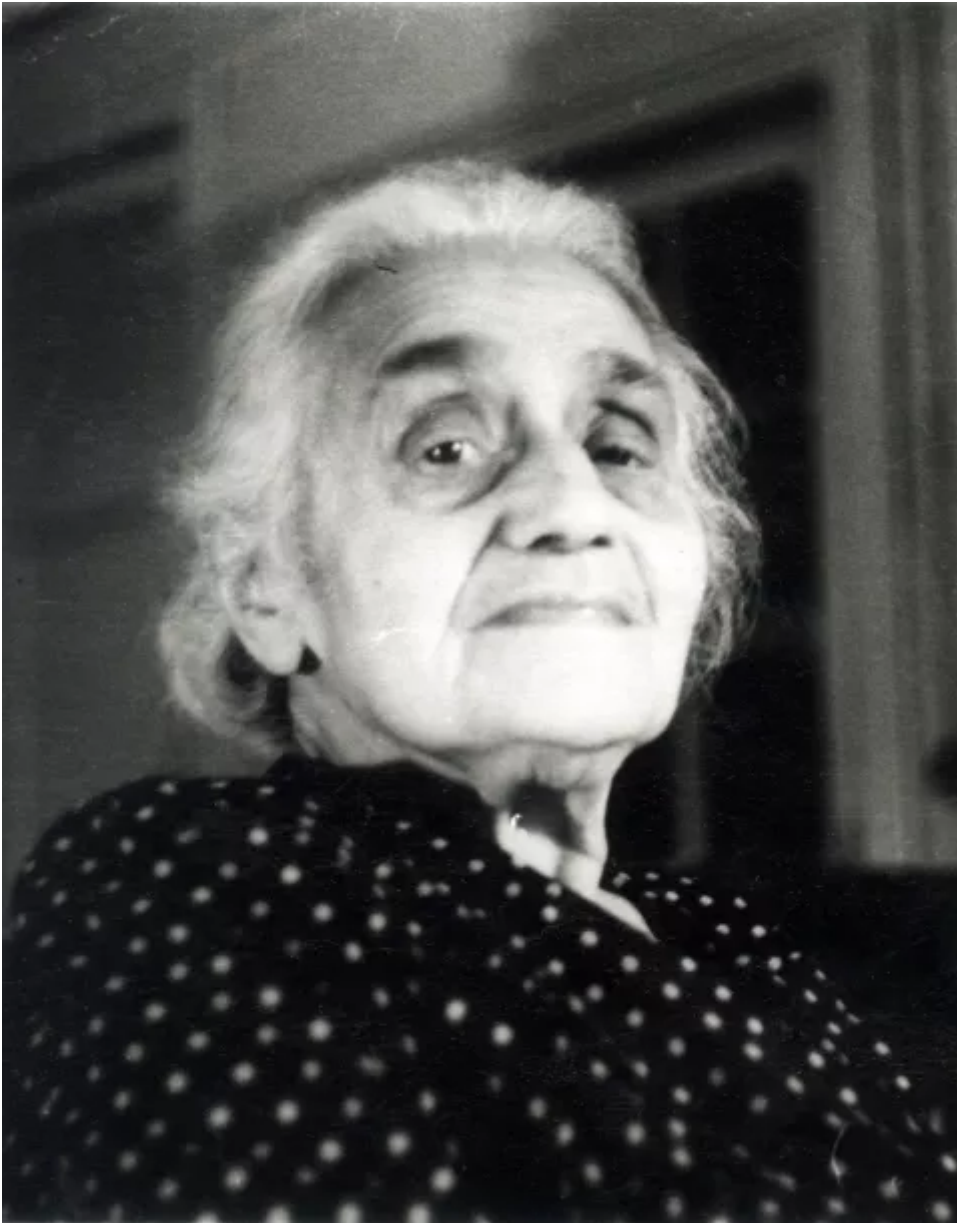


Sara Dembo



This is my paternal grandmother, Sara Dembo, nee Bugg.

The picture was taken in Riga in the apartment of grandmother Sara and her daughter Cecilia in 1955.

My grandmother is 90 years old on this picture, it was taken on her jubilee. She died four years later.

My grandmother was born in Riga in 1865. The Bugg family was wealthy; they owned a fur factory in Riga named Electra. This factory was one of the first in Europe, which learnt to make mouton out of sheepskin, a shining fur with a soft flexible base.

They really succeeded in it. They also had a dairy farm near Riga, in Saulkraste, so they were a fairly well-to-do family.

Grandmother Sara had several siblings, though I know little about their life. She didn't get any education, she was a housewife.

She got married in the 1890s, they lived in Riga and had three children: Aron, my father Gerasim - his Jewish name is Gerson - and Cecilia.

Regardless of the fact that grandfather died early and grandmother was left alone, she tried to provide the children with education. I believe, her well-to-do brothers supported her financially. All her children finished a classical gymnasium and obtained education abroad, in Europe.

The German - not Yiddish - language was the mother tongue of Grandmother Sara's family, because the German influence was very strong on the Latvian culture at that time, especially so in Riga, the capital of Latvia.

All members of the family spoke Latvian and German; grandmother Sara and Aunt Cecilia, who lived most of their lives in Latvia, spoke it perfectly; my father and Uncle Aron spoke it less well.

They all spoke Russian well, Cecilia spoke without any accent and her brothers had a slight accent. Grandmother Sara wasn't religious, as far as I remember, she was a secular woman.