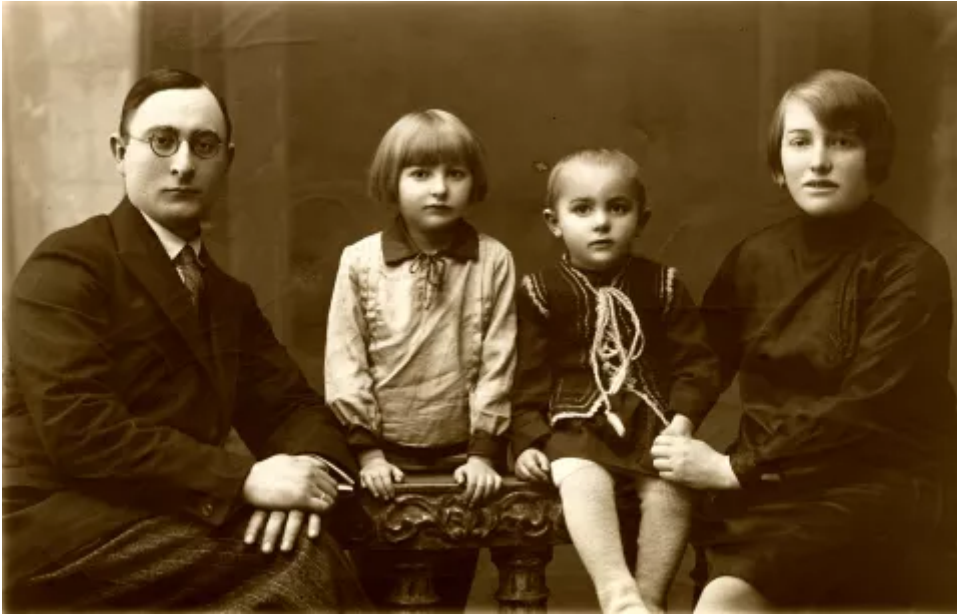


Danuta Mniewska With Her Sister Helena Tenenbaum And Their Parents



These are my parents, Ewa and Benjamin Mniewski, my sister Helena Tenenbaum (nee Mniewska), next to my father, and me. It was taken by a professional photographer in 1926 or 1927 in Lodz. I really do not remember how all the prewar photos survived. It was in Grabow my father met his future wife, my mother. I have no idea what their wedding was like. His parents were strongly opposed to the marriage, but my father was terribly in love with my mother. She was a poor girl and my grandmother didn't want her beloved son to marry a girl without dowry - she wanted a princess for him. And the ladies disliked each other, disliked each other terribly. My parents got married probably in 1922. My sister Helena was born in 1923, and I was born in 1925. My name was Gusta, or Guta. But when I was still a child my parents started calling me Danka and it stuck. When I was two years old, my parents moved from Grabow to Lodz. They had a contact there, because, as I understand it, my mother's parents and their children had already gone back to Lodz. My mother no longer wanted to live in Grabow after they had all left. In Lodz we lived in a Polish neighborhood, because there were more Poles than Jews. Not in one of those ghettos there, like Baluty, but near Hallera Square, on 1 Maja Street. People used to say 'pasa Szulca' before World War I so I suppose it was 'Pasaz Szulca' [pasaz - here: street]. It wasn't downtown - it was somewhere between downtown and the suburbs. We lived in apartment #71, in a three-story tenement house, quite a decent one. The landlord was a Jew named Zdanowski. The barracks of the 28th Kaniowski Rifle Regiment were right next door, so many officers lived in the area. And many Germans. It was a very beautiful street - lined up with wonderful chestnut trees. My parents had two rooms with a kitchen on the first floor. There was electricity, coal-fired tiled stoves, a toilet. A servant who lived with us slept in the kitchen. She was Polish, her name was Regina Kus, a young girl; she may have been eighteen or nineteen. She came from the countryside and stayed with us for a couple of years.