

Aleksandar Necak's Grandmother Tereza Hacker With Her Daughter Suzana



My grandmother Tereza Hacker and my mother Suzana Hacker, 2 months old. The photo was made in Senta in 1915.

Tereza was born in 1885 in Senta to Moric and Sirina Bergel. She came from a considerably well-off Senta Jewish family. Her father, Moric Bergel, was a wheat trader in Senta who had his own mill and bakery. At the time there were laws forbidding Jews from owning land so he did not own any wheat fields. They say that he was "poziv na pogrom", "invited to the pogrom" because he had such a Jewish face. He was known to be very witty, constantly pulling practical jokes.

My grandmother was married to Kalman Hacker who worked as a professor of Greek and Latin in a Senta gymnasium. Tereza was much less observant than her husband and was further removed from the customs and practices of Judaism. Although she observed these practices at home, when traveling she would often not adhere to them. She traveled a great deal, most of the time on her own. Rarely, did she travel with her husband, my grandfather, who preferred to stay at home.

My mother was born in Senta on February 25, 1915 and raised there. She studied at the secular gymnasium in Subotica. In 1932, at the age of 17, she married Dusan Necak, a Serbian officer in the Royal Yugoslav Army who was stationed in Subotica. They were married in Prilep [Macedonia] in a Serbian Orthodox church. At the time of the marriage my mother changed her name to Dusanka Necak. She was not religious and did not observe any Jewish holidays or practices nor did she observe the Serbian Orthodox practices. They had two children, my sister Marina and me. As father was an officer in the army we moved around a lot during the pre-war years but regardless of where we were most of our friends were people from the Jewish community in that town. When I was born we were living in Novi Sad, and by the time the war started father was already permanently stationed and working in Belgrade.