

Tsylia



This is my cousin Tsylia, my mother's sister Shyfra's daughter. She and her family moved to the USA in 1923. This is the only photograph they sent us. This photo was taken in the USA in 1924.

My maternal grandfather Gersh Braginskiy had died before I was born. My grandmother's name was Mara Braginskaya, but I don't know her maiden name. I don't know what my grandfather did for living. They lived in Romanovka village near Kiev. They had five children: four daughters and one son. His name was Boruch. The oldest daughter's name was Shyfra. Malka and Boruch came after her. My mother Doba was born in 1900. My mother's sister Elka was the youngest.

My mother's family spoke Yiddish. They also spoke Russian and Ukrainian with their non-Jewish neighbors. Romanovka was a Ukrainian village where few Jewish families resided. I've never been in Romanovka. When I was born, my mother's family lived in Kiev. The Pale of Settlement was cancelled in 1917, and numbers of Jewish families living in the Kiev region started moving to Kiev. Only my grandfather Gersh's grave remained in Romanovka. Mama hardly told me anything about her family and I don't know how religious they were.

My mother's sister Shyfra and her husband moved to the USA in 1923. I was 3 years old, and my parents and I went to say good-bye to them. I was put on a stool to kiss my aunt and uncle. This is all information I have about them. We had no contacts with them. In the late 1920s the authorities had a suspicious attitude to those who had relatives abroad and corresponded with them. They might accuse people of espionage without any reason. Mama received few letters from Shyfra, but

she did not reply and the correspondence terminates.

My mother's sister Malka married Elia Elman, a Jewish guy, who had moved to Kiev from a small nearby village. Elia worked as a foreman at a furniture factory and Malka was a housewife. They had six children: 3 daughters: Ida, a middle daughter, whose name I can't remember, and Anna, and three sons: Fitel, Grisha, who was older than me, and Pyotr, the youngest, born in 1921. My mother's sister Elka, who had the Russian name of Olga, lived near the Vladimirskiy market in Kiev. Her family name was Gershtein. Her husband's name was Elia. Elia worked at a pant and Olga was a housewife. Their son Israel was born in 1932. My mother's brother Boris Braginskiy got fond of revolutionary ideas and got actively involved in the revolution. After moving to Kiev he went to work in the party bodies and by the 1930s he became some high official in Kiev. Boris married Alla, a Jewish woman, some time in 1934, they had no children. My grandmother lived with him after moving to Kiev, and later she moved to a one-bedroom apartment in Proreznaya Street in the center of Kiev. Of my mother's whole family that I knew only my grandmother, my mother and her sister Olga were moderately religious. They celebrated the main Jewish holidays at home. The rest of the family was atheist.