

Haya Gorokhovskaya



This is my grandmother on my mother's side, Haya Gorokhovskaya. The photo was taken in Kiev in 1928. I knew my mother's parents well. When I was born they had lived in Kiev for several years already. Before they moved to Kiev my mother's family lived in Gornostaipol, Kiev region, where both my grandfather and grandmother were born. My grandfather, Aron Gorokhovskiy, was born in 1870s. My grandmother Haya was few years younger than my grandfather. I don't know her maiden name. My grandparents got married in Gornostaipol in 1899. They had a traditional Jewish wedding. There were seven children in the family: Shyfra, Michael, my mother Golda, David, Hanne, Naum and the last daughter Polina. My grandfather Aron was a shoemaker and my grandmother was a housewife. They were a poor family since what my grandfather made for their

living was hardly enough for them to lead a hand-to-mouth life. My grandmother kept a few chickens in the backyard. They didn't have a kitchen garden or an orchard. Their family was religious. All I know is what my mother told me. They observed all Jewish traditions. They spoke Yiddish at home. Their favorite holiday was Pesach. My mother told me how they started preparations ahead of time. My grandmother whitewashed the house on the outside and the inside. They brushed away and burnt all breadcrumbs. They didn't eat bread throughout Pesach - they only ate matzah. My grandmother made traditional Jewish food. Chickens that my grandmother fed were taken to the shochet. My grandmother made chicken broth and stuffed chicken necks. In the evening my grandfather conducted the seder for the family. My mother's family moved to Kiev in 1924. They settled down in Spasskaya Street in Podol, an ancient neighborhood in Kiev where craftsmen lived. My grandfather purchased a shoemaker shop from an old shoemaker that had decided to retire. This shop was near the house and all tenants of the house were my grandfather's customers.