

Aleksandar Necak's Grandmother Tereza And Her Brother Andreas Bergel



My grandmother Tereza and her brother Andras Bergel posing for a portrait. The photo was made in Senta.

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.

Tereza and Kalman had one daughter, Suzana Hacker, my mother. At the beginning of the war, Tereza was in Belgrade with my mother. But when we [my mother and us children] went into hiding my grandmother went back to Senta. She was deported in 1943 and taken to Auschwitz where she was killed. A Jewish woman from Senta who survived told my mother about Tereza's death in Auschwitz.

Andras studied pharmacology in Budapest from 1915-1920. During that time he changed his family name from Bergel to Ormos, ostensibly to improve his professional and academic position while in Hungary. He also met his future wife, Suzana Halpert, in Budapest. She was from a Hungarian Jewish family but moved to Senta with Andras after he completed his studies. Andras had his own pharmacy in Senta, where he worked until he was deported. When he and Suzana were captured he brought with him a vial of poison, which they both ingested on the way to Auschwitz.