Sarra Eidlin

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Sarra Eidlin is a short woman, very compact and dexterous, with lively, kind eyes and a very active face mimicry, which allows one to read emotions that she experiences as she tells her life story.

Her hands gesticulate earnestly when she describes this or that scene from her life.

She is friendly and hospitable and possesses an open soul and a warm heart.

It was a real pleasure for us to have this interview, because we established contact and understanding easily.

- **My family background**

I was born in 1914 in the town of Kherson in Ukraine, into a religious family. A beggar Jewish woman, called Sarra Leya, when she was dying, asked my grandmother to give a girl born in our family her name in her honor. My parents gave me the name Sarra in her honor.

Almost only Jews lived in our district. My mum lived with her parents, so during my childhood I learned all the Jewish traditions: I knew that nothing should be done on Saturdays; I knew how to behave on holidays and what traditions to observe.

My maternal grandparents were born and lived in the first half of the 19th century in Kherson. Grandfather Gersh Levit, born in the 1840s was a melamed, a teacher, and that's how he earned a living. He had a big thick beard and he was almost bald. He wore a high hat, a skull-cap and dark long clothes. I remember Jewish boys coming to our house and studying in a separate room. I could hear Jewish words and prayers. Grandma Feiga Leya Levit, who was also born in the 1840s, was a housewife. She was a very hospitable and kind woman. I don't know her maiden name or her background, she never told me and I never asked.

My paternal grandfather, born in 1840, lived in our house for several years. His name was Zalman Eidlin. There was a Jewish colony not far from Kherson, it was called Lvovo, near the small town of Kalinindorf in Kherson region. My grandpa and father came from that place. Grandpa Zalman lived

with us after his wife died. I don't know anything about her. He was kind, did nothing, prayed a lot and read Jewish books. He was very old, and mum and grandma took care of him. He died aged 80 when I was four or five years old, in 1918 or 19. Our family had no pictures of him.

The elder generation and my parents spoke Yiddish to each other, but lived among Russians and Ukrainians, so they knew Russian pretty well, and spoke in Russian to the children as well. In 1920 my maternal grandparents celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. They had lived together for 50 years. All relatives, even poor ones, came to the celebration, collected some money and presented an expensive golden watch to grandpa and a black silk skirt to grandma.

My grandmother died in Kherson in 1922. My grandfather lived another 10 years after. Before he died he had made a voyage to several cities and visited his children, who lived in Odessa, Leningrad and Moscow. He was very proud of that trip of his. He died in Moscow at his daughter Khaya's place in 1932.

While Grandpa Gersh was alive, Jewish traditions were preserved in our family, but later on it slackened a lot: we celebrated holidays less frequently, forgot the prayers and the language. We weren't able to demonstrate our religious predilections under the Soviet regime [during the struggle against religion] 1. Religious people were persecuted; Russian Orthodox churches were blown up; economic warehouses were arranged in the Catholic cathedrals, and synagogues were shut down. People were intimidated.

We could gather in the family circle at home, but we couldn't openly advertise the celebration of Rosh Hashanah, for instance. I remember how, in 1923-1924 in Kherson, we placed and decorated a tent with branches in our yard and our family had lunch and dinner in it. It was Sukkot, the fall holiday.

Grandma and grandpa Levit had six children: Khaya, Volodya, Sonya, Boris, Fanya and Maryasya - my mother.

Their elder daughter, my aunt Khaya, was born in the 1860s. She lived for 94 years, married a native of a Lvov Jewish colony in the 1880s, a religious man called Gersh Kart. He was a sewing cutter and lived in Kherson by that time. Khaya was the most religious of all her sisters and brothers. While grandpa was alive she celebrated all the holidays with us. I remember it because my mum as the youngest daughter lived at grandpa's after she got married.

Aunt Khaya and Gersh Kart had four children: Bella, Vladimir, Boris and Malka. Their elder daughter Bella was born in 1904. Bella is my eldest cousin. She was born in Kherson, as were all Khaya's and Gersh's children. She left for Odessa in the 1920s to study at the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Institute. She didn't graduate from the institute because she married a native of Odessa from Peresyp 2, David Lvovich Katz. He was a commissar in the Kotovsky 3 division, which was located in Odessa after the Civil War 4.

After some time David was transferred to Berdichev, a town with a lot of military units. Bella had no complete higher education at that time, though she was rather well-read and was a good orator. Several years later David retired and was sent to one-year courses to become a construction company manager. After these courses he was assigned to Moscow in 1930. He worked in the defense narkomat [people's commissariat] and supervised the construction of defense fortifications

in the east of the country. It was a secret construction.

Bella worked as an instructor at one of the Moscow party raykoms [district party committee]. She graduated from Mendeleyev Institute in Moscow and after that worked at Narkompischeprom [People's Commissariat of Food Industry] as Glavmargarin Manager, that means she supervised all the plants that produced margarine. When the war broke out David became head of a big construction trust, which was evacuated to Tashkent. Their family also moved there, they already had two children: a son and a daughter.

At the beginning of 1945 after the war ended their family returned to Moscow and David was designated a commander of a brigade, which dismantled electrical power stations in Germany under the Reparation Agreement 5. The dismantled parts were sent to the Soviet Union. Reparation meant something that the Germans, as the defeated, were supposed to deliver to our country under the Agreement. A lot was removed from Germany as the country, which lost the war.

Bella worked at the Promenergomontazh Scientific Research Institute as an engineer and retired after some time. She died at the age of 84 in Moscow in 1998. She was an atheist and a Soviet person, regardless of the fact that her mother Khaya was a religious woman. Bella's and David's son Marlen graduated from the Moscow Aircraft Institute and worked at Baykonur 6 during the time when the space-vehicle launching site was under construction and the first space flight took place.

He was irradiated severely and died of sarcoma in 1963 at the age of 40. He was my grand-nephew. Marlen's daughter Lina graduated from the Pedagogical Institute in Moscow and works as a mathematics teacher at school. She still works, though she is already retired. Her daughter Sonya, after graduating from the institute, also works at the same place. She also lives in Moscow with her husband Vladimir and daughter Sofia, who is fifteen years old. Both Lina and her daughter Sofia married Jews and remained Soviet non-religious women.

Khaya's and Gersh's second child, Vladimir, was born in 1906. He studied at the Odessa University. He died at an early age, approximately in 1922, during an appendix operation.

The third child was Boris. He was born in 1908. He was a construction engineer. He married a Russian woman in Kherson during his studies. His wife was considered the most beautiful woman in town. He had a daughter. Her name was Zoya. Before the war Boris was head of a construction trust in Stalingrad, where he was assigned after he had graduated from the Odessa Construction Institute.

Boris evacuated his trust from Stalingrad to the town of Yurga in the east of the country. An artillery plant, a whole town and a railroad station, Yurga-2, were constructed near that city under Boris's supervision. He was an important person, respected by everyone. After the war Boris worked in the town of Gorky at a plant in the position of head of a construction department. Later he worked at the staff of the Gorky gorispolkom [municipal administration, executive committee], supervising a construction department. In 1972 he was recommended for a State Prize with a group of engineers for the invention of unique construction tiles. He obtained the prize, which was very honorable. Boris died in 1990.

Khaya's fourth child is her daughter Malka, born in 1919. She finished a construction technical school in Kherson and moved to Moscow, where her parents had lived since 1930 with their elder

daughter Bella. Malka, Malla in Russian [common name] 7 graduated from the part-time department of the Construction Institute and worked as a principal engineer at the Stalproyekt Institute until retirement.

After the war everyone had to exchange passports and the office employee offered to write Malla instead of Malka in her passport. Thus she became Malla. Malla lives with her daughter Tanya in Moscow, who is also a pensioner, and her husband Ilya. He is a Jew too. Tanya also graduated from the Construction Institute with an excellent certificate. She worked at a construction company too. They live a non-religious secular life.

Khaya's husband, Gersh Kart, died in Moscow after the war in 1949 or 1950. They were in evacuation in the Urals during the war. He didn't participate in the war, as he was too old. He worked at the Klara Tsetkin sewing factory as a trimmer. He cut out patterns. He was a wonderful tailor. He sewed a perfect coat for his daughter from a soldier's blouse pattern. They lived in Izmailovo district in Moscow.

It is so called because when Jews were allowed to live in big cities after the [Russian] Revolution of 1917 8 mostly Jews inhabited this district. When Tanya married Ilya, they exchanged their two-bedroom apartments for one four-bedroom apartment. Now they live near Rizhsky Railroad Station.

My uncle Volodya, mum's elder brother, was born in Kherson in the 1860s. He was married to a Jewish woman. Their whole family starved to death in 1921 in Kherson during the famine in Ukraine 9. They had an apartment in the center of the city and lived moderately, but his wife was a 'stinker,' as everyone called her, she was a bad housewife. It was always very dirty in their apartment and everybody blamed her for that. It was a real shame to have such a wife.

Volodya came to us and told my grandma and his mother and said, 'Bathe me, mum.' We had a zinc bath, into which we placed a samovar and the water was heated. Vladimir and his wife had four children. They all starved to death, except their elder daughter Sonya.

Sonya was born in 1900. She lived at our place in Kherson and studied at the medical school. Sonya stayed with our family. She had a wedding, which was called 'Schwarze Hipe' [chuppah]. There was a canopy; everybody walked around it, but there was no music, since Sonya was an orphan and an orphan was not allowed to have a merry wedding with music. At the end, though, a violinist was invited.

Everything was exactly as a Jewish wedding means it to be: everybody was dressed beautifully. However, later on Sonya and her husband didn't observe the Jewish traditions, deviated from religion and led a life of secular Soviet people. Sonya moved to Moscow from Kherson and got married there. She died in the 1950s in Moscow. She worked at a newspaper stand. She could not work as a physician because during her first operation she felt unwell at the sight of blood and ran out. Her husband was a Jew and worked as an engineer at a plant. He died in Moscow of an illness at the beginning of the war. They have a son, Vladimir.

My mum's next sister, Sonya, was born in the 1880s. She married Gersh Kontsevoy in Kherson. He worked as a seller in a kerosene-store. Sonya and Gersh had four sons and they were all born in Kherson: Motya, Isaac, Iosif and Zalman. After 1930 they all moved to Moscow. Actually, the whole Kontsevoy family left Kherson. Their elder son Motya, married a native of Moscow, Rosa, a Jewess,

and lived with his family in the suburbs, at Udelnaya station.

Now this station is part of the city. They had two daughters, Valya and Sonya. Valya graduated from the Planning Economic Institute in Moscow and worked at the Gosplan of the USSR. Then she married a Jew whose name was Boris and moved to Kishinev [Moldova] with him, where he worked as a dispatcher at the railroad.

They have a daughter, Maya. Later Motya and Rosa moved to their daughter in Kishinyov. Motya died at the age of approximately 90. Rosa died in Kishinyov in the 1980s, several years before her husband. Currently Valya and Borya live in L.A. in America; they are retired. Their daughter finished a technical school and travels a lot: she has been everywhere in California and visited Ireland and Spain, too. She has been living in America for five years already.

Sonya, Motya's second daughter, graduated from the Pedagogical Institute in Moscow as a teacher for handicapped children, but never worked as such a specialist. She married a Jew, his name is Alexander, and moved to Lvov. She worked at a library there and retired there. Her husband had higher education, was in charge of an electricians' team, which put electrical power stations into operations. He worked in this position all his life. They have recently left for Germany for permanent residence. They don't know Jewish customs. They have a daughter who lives separately. They wrote to me that everything became more expensive with the introduction of the euro. However, she visited Venice, Italy, with her husband Sasha and were present at a carnival. It's almost impossible to describe their impressions! She wrote to me that she liked Venice but wouldn't like to live there. This is how she spends time in contrast to us, Russian pensioners. I, personally, as a war participant, have a high pension. But a lot of people, for instance, my daughter Maya, have a pension of $50 only, though she worked as a principal engineer all her life. We cannot go anywhere with this pension.

Lena, daughter of Sonya and Alexander, attends computer courses. She is an adult already and a mother of two children. Her wedding took place in Lvov in the palace of Earl Potocki. [Editor's note: Potocki, Valentine (d. 1749): Polish count martyred as a proselyte. According to legend, during his studies in Paris count Potocki once went to a tavern with a friend of his, also a young Polish aristocrat, and they noticed that the owner of the tavern, an old Jew was studying the Talmud. They asked him to teach them the principles of Judaism. Potocki converted to Judaism in Amsterdam and settled as a Jew near Vilna in Lithuania. He was reported as a proselyte to the authorities and was arrested. As he refused to recant, he was burned at the stake. So far no historical evidence for the story has been discovered, although it is generally believed to have been true.] Her mother had been saving money for a year to celebrate the wedding. The wedding was splendid. Not a Jewish one, but secular. She had such a magnificent wedding dress, that some rented it for their weddings later. She had two children, but she divorced this husband and left for Germany with a different man.

Yura, son of Sonya and Alexander, graduated form Nuremberg University in Germany, works now, and acquired German citizenship. The rest in the family were not able to receive citizenship. They still have Ukrainian passports and citizenship.

The second son of Sonya and Alexander, Iosif, lived in Moscow, where he moved as a boy. He married a Russian woman there. She was run over by a tram and died. Iosif worked as an electrician in Moscow. He wrote poems and some of them were published in Ogonyok magazine.

When the war broke out, he moved to Yurga, to the north and joined his cousin Boris there, son of Khaya and Gersh Kart, in evacuation. Iosif worked there for the Svet Ilyicha newspaper and continued writing poems. When he retired he continued to contribute to this newspaper. He died in Yurga in the 1980s. He has a son, Volodya, who lives in Yurga. He works in oil fields now.

Sonya's and Alexander's third son, Isaac, was born in Kherson in 1910. He lived in Moscow, took part in the war and returned disabled. He lived in a communal apartment, since his relatives had left already. He got acquainted with a woman and raised her children. He didn't have children of his own. He died in Moscow in the 1990s.

Their fourth son, Zalman, was born in Kherson in the 1910s. He worked as an editor-in-chief for a newspaper, a House Organ at the Moscow watch plant. [House Organ: an informational newspaper, published at the enterprise for the purpose of keeping the employees informed about the life and events of their organization]. His wife was Russian. He didn't get evacuated during the war and perished there. His wife didn't want to deal with our family. I don't now why.

My mum's brother Boris, the fourth son of Gersh and Feiga Levit, was born in Kherson in 1885. His wife Klara was a Jewess. He sold quilted jackets from a tray at the market place. They lived in a rented apartment in a three-story house, as many of my relatives did. They moved to Rostov-on-Don [a city in the south of Russia] in the 1930s, as it was difficult to live in Kherson, and Rostov was a more lucrative and populous city. Boris went out of his mind in the 1930s and died.

Everyone lived on starvation rations. I remember how Volodya, who died, came to Aunt Khaya. He was a big guy but he was crying and it was a pity to see it: he had got the bread ration and had carried it under his arm. Some hooligans had robbed him of it and he couldn't protect himself. Everyone was starving then. I remember how we three children sat on the bed.

My parents were suffering from jail-fever or spotted fever, and they were under quarantine. They survived. My mother's brother Boris got ill before the war in 1941. He had some sanity problems and he died before the war. He and Klara had a daughter and three sons: Iosif, Vladimir and Mayorka. They remained in Rostov and didn't get evacuated. To be more precise, Klara and her daughter Manya stayed.

The Germans were in Rostov twice during the war. When our forces kicked them out the first time, the citizens threw flower pots on their heads from the windows. So when the Germans conquered Rostov the second time, they were very angry with the city. Klara, Manya and two children were put into a truck, which was called the 'mobile gas chamber.' People were murdered in this truck with gas. No one ever saw them again.

The two sons of Boris and Klara, born one after another, graduated from Rostov-on-Don University. The elder, Iosif, was assigned to a metallurgical plant in Nizhny Tagil. He had been working there as an engineer for many years. He died in 1992. The second son, Volodya, was drafted to the army in 1940. He was married to a Don Cossack woman, Alexandra. She is still alive and lives with her daughter in Moscow.

Volodya returned from the war holding the rank of colonel. He returned to Moscow and worked there at a military organization until he died. Their daughter Klara was named in honor of her mother. Klara is in Moscow. She married a Russian. His name is Alexander Mokhov. He is a colonel.

He works now at the Ministry of Health. He has a very warm and kind attitude to our Jewish family. Klara works at the State Library.

The third son of Boris and Klara, Mayorka, graduated from an institute in Moscow and worked as a teacher in a technical school. He died at an early age. He had a Russian wife and had a daughter, Marina. She is very nice to us. She works now for the tax authorities in Moscow.

My mother's sister Fanya Georgiyevna, or Fani, was born in 1891. Fani finished a school in Kherson before the Revolution. They lived poorly. She even had to ask her rich classmates for the textbooks and they sometimes didn't let her in, asking to wait outside. After the Revolution she went to Odessa to study at the institute with her niece Bella. They were almost of the same age. Unlike her niece she graduated from the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Institute, married a Jew, Nisya Zelmanov. This aunt was very much respected. She wasn't extremely religious, but followed the kashrut, prayed, knew and tried to observe all Jewish traditions as far as possible. Her husband Nisya was in charge of a grain-collecting station; later it was called grain procurement station, 'zagotzerno'. The station was located in the suburbs of Odessa and Nisya started an apiary, a bee-garden, there.

Obviously, the famine wasn't as severe in Odessa as in Kherson, where we lived, because Aunt Fani sent us parcels with cereals. Nisya's brother lived in St. Petersburg. At the beginning of the 1930s Aunt Fani and Uncle Nisya moved to his place in St Petersburg. By that time she only had one son, Vladimir. They lived in a communal apartment 10 in the center of the city.

Their room was next to Nisya's brother in the apartment. Fani worked as a pharmacist in a drugstore and combined her job with managing a hospital-car, which checked the quality of food products at each station on the Murmansk railroad. She even planned to write a thesis. I keep a brochure of hers. This brochure was published by the Higher Medical Courses in 1935, called 'Sanitary analysis of foodstuffs and food.'

After Kirov 11 was killed in Leningrad in 1934, Nisya's brother - I don't remember his name - was put into prison as a Trotskyist 12. Then Feiga's son Volodya, who was a YCL [Young Communist League] member, went to the party organization and stated that his uncle had been arrested as an enemy of the people 13. However, he himself was exiled from Leningrad to timber- felling sites in the north, as a nephew and relative of an enemy of the people.

Volodya's mother solicited for her son's release, but as soon as she got a permit for Volodya's release, signed by Kalinin 14, she received a message that said that Volodya had perished in an accident: he had been hit by a log in the process of timber loading. This happened at the end of 1938.

Fani and Feiga died in 1958 in Leningrad. Fani's husband Nisya Zelmanov died in 1955. Nisya's brother disappeared in the place he was sent to. We never saw him again.

My mother, Maryasya Gershevna Eidlin, was the youngest among her brothers and sisters. She was born in 1895 in Kherson. My mother gave birth to me when she was nineteen years old. She finished four years at a Jewish school in Kherson. She liked to read. Her sister Fani hired a teacher for her, who came home and taught her. My mother was the favorite child in the family. She assisted her mother, with the household duties. Later she was a housewife. My mother was very

religious, read prayer books aloud at home, attended the synagogue on holidays, observed all ceremonies. She didn't mix dairy and meat utensils, and she kept kosher.

My mother was a sick person. She had heart problems. She suffered a lot of miscarriages because of her health condition. When she was in hospital she was treated by a German physician called Berbayer. He wasn't able to cure her. Later this physician worked for the Germans during the war as a mayor. He appeared to be a bad person, tried to save his own skin. My mother died of loss of blood in Kherson in 1929 at the age of 39, when I was 15. Four children remained after her death.

- **Growing up**

My father, Yerakhmil Zalmanovich Eidlin, was born in 1880 in Lvovo Jewish colony near Kherson. However, this is not precise information. There was a time when my father worked as a handicraftsman. He was the only child in the family. My father walked on foot from his village to the synagogue in Kherson. He studied at cheder and left his village for Kherson to look for a job.

He was engaged in trade, but later on, when Uncle Gersh Kart taught him, he became a trimmer. My father rented a corner in a big four-bedroom apartment of my mother's parents. This was how dad met mum. They got married in 1913. They had a wedding with a Jewish chuppah. My mother took her husband's last name. I was born a year after they got married, in 1914.

I finished a seven-year Ukrainian school in Kherson. During the first two years of studies I had a private teacher, Olga Richardovna. She supplied us with writing-books, taught us to read and to count. My parents paid her for that. She was a secular woman. In 1923 I went to a Ukrainian national school and studied there until 1928.

I remember from my childhood how we celebrated all Jewish holidays at home: Purim, Pesach, Chanukkah and Rosh Hashanah. I lit lamps on Sabbath, I was a shabesgoy, as grandma called me and I was forgiven because I was just a small child. I remember how I lit candles with grandma. Grandma always cooked food for Sabbath in a stove, covered up the stove door with clay to prevent food from getting cold, and everything was served hot on Sabbath. We always had clear soup and peas, which were cooked separately. Stuffed fish was cold. It was before the famine [in 1930], and during the famine we ate porridge on holidays and on common days.

Besides this, I remember how grandma prepared for Pesach, how she burnt all breadcrumbs in the stove in a wooden spoon, everything was burnt together with the spoon. We also had Pesach utensils. A stone was made red-hot, we threw it into hot water to purify it, and thus utensils were prepared for Pesach. We only had a few special utensils at home. All the rest were baked [burnt].

We bought milk from a Jewish woman for Pesach. I remember how we hid matzah under grandpa's pillow. It was the custom [The interviewee is referring to the afikoman]. One of the boys was supposed to take it out, when he turned away. I remember Pesach 'fir kashes' [Yiddish], the 'four questions.' Certainly our boys, my brothers, did that. I was only present.

One had to drink four glasses of wine. Each time one took the glass, a little had to be poured out into the plate. We had six glasses on the table for five members of the family. The sixth glass was poured for Elijah the prophet 15 and the door was left open. The chicken was cut by a shochet at the synagogue.

We never had any Jewish pogroms 16 in Kherson. The Civil War didn't affect us. I only remember how we children were led to the cellar because of some military operations nearby. All grandfathers were buried according to Jewish customs. I don't remember how grandma Feiga was buried, but mum told me that grandpa endured starvation, kept the whole fast. I don't remember any other holidays, because it was a very long time ago. Some things I still remember and they appear in my memory like separate pieces of past reality, not like precise clear stories.

I remember how Feiga, my younger sister, was born. She was born at home in 1926. A midwife came to help my mother. She was paid for it. It was a custom in Kherson to give birth to babies at home. Nobody took a woman in childbirth to a hospital. I don't remember if there were gynecologists or maternity hospitals. I remember how my brothers were circumcised. There was a whole ceremony, but I don't remember it in detail.

Some people came. I also remember how at one of the cousin's, uncle Boris's son, Mayorka, a minyan was collected, for ten people to be present. I remember that there was a huge fish on the table prepared for stuffing to feed to the guests after the ceremony.

In 1928 I entered the Jewish Industrial Special School, but lessons were in Yiddish, so I wasn't able to study there. My mother tongue is Russian. I also know Ukrainian perfectly, I learnt German, but I don't speak it freely. I wasn't able to study at the Jewish school because I didn't understand many terms. I remember, when I was a pioneer, there was a Zionist organization in Kherson.

Our neighbor lived across the street. We were taken there for a meeting and were lectured - I don't remember about what. I attended this meeting maybe twice. They were children of approximately YCL members' age, and I was younger. There were Zionists in Kherson but I didn't participate in their activities.

In 1929, after my mother died, my father got married a second time. Aunt Khaya in fact married him off. Father remained alone with four children: Mordekhai, born in 1917, Volf, born in 1920, my sister Feiga and me. Mum's sister, Aunt Fani, was a very smart woman; she wrote letters to father after my mother's death: 'Don't seek a mother for your children, you won't be able to find any. Better look for a wife, you are to live with her!' But aunt Khaya found a woman. I don't know how she managed to do it. Her name was Anna Lazarevna. She was a Jewess. She took my father's last name. She gave birth to two children: Lena and Ilya. Their whole family perished during the war in Kherson.

Anna Lazarevna was able to tell my younger brother Volf, 'Go buy some bread in the store, school can wait.' She never loved us, father's children. They lived in dad's apartment and their life wasn't going right. Dad started to drink, though he had never drunk before. He was at the head of a sewing workshop at the Society of the Blind in Kherson. He was the only person with eyesight there.

He worked in administration and wasn't able to get evacuated when the war broke out. Their neighbor wrote to me later; her signature was crossed out, I think, by the military censorship: the signature and last line were snipped off. She wrote that 9,000 Jews and 6,000 Russians had perished. It wasn't possible to leave Kherson: the railroad was cut off and the ships weren't able to carry everyone, so father remained there. All citizens were taken out of the city, a ditch was dug out and people were executed. They all perished. My father perished too. It happened at the end of

1943 or the beginning of 1944.

I studied at the road construction school between 1929 and 1931. After finishing the school I was assigned to work as a foreman at the Jewish Kalinindorf district. A position of a foreman is much lower than a technician, who supervises the works. I worked at the administration of the executive committee and supervised the construction of bridge roads. In 1932 a party central committee resolution was introduced for all officials in charge to move to agricultural districts. I was authorized by the YCL and worked in a kolkhoz 17.

We got a message that Voroshylov 18 was planning to visit us. I was urgently summoned to Kalinindorf and we constructed pavements and decorated the city hastily. There was this drunkard technician, who was responsible for the sinking of the ferry that I was supposed to use for loading planting seeds. I was urgently summoned because of that accident. I had to figure out how to drag out the ferryboat. We pulled the ferry out and restored it. I was so nervous that I came to the rayispolkom [District Executive Committee] chairman and told him that I was leaving for home. I left for Kherson and finished short-time courses for estimators at a canned food plant. I counted how many cans the workers made, thus calculating their salaries.

Working at the plant, I simultaneously studied at the workers' faculty of the Odessa Water Resources Institute. This faculty assisted those who had no education to enter a higher school. We studied in the evening after work. Jewish traditions were out of the question - I was a YCL member, and religion was alien to YCL members.

In fall 1933 I was assigned to work at the machine-tractor station [MTS] according to the mobilization program of the YCL obkom [regional committee]. The Komsomol 19 members were summoned and informed about the necessity to participate in works for a year. I had this stepmother, Anna Lazarevna, so I left without demur. Total collectivization 20 was carried out and the kolkhozes were to be strengthened. I visited various villages, conducted seminars and taught people how to arrange Komsomol meetings. I was always an active member. I was also sent as an authorized member for sowing grain crops.

There was the editor-in-chief of a house body for the political department of the MTS, Weisman. He entrusted me with the production of Komsomol pages and dreamed about making me his secretary. But he was soon transferred to Kiev. I was left almost alone. The newspaper was signed by the political department deputy head; all the rest was done by me: I collected materials and printed everything. The newspaper was called 'For Bolsheviks' Kolkhozes.' In 1935 these political departments were shut down.

At the beginning of 1935 I moved to the town of Gayvoron in Odessa region. From then on I worked for the district newspaper, Put Communy. Later its name was changed. At first I supervised the mass department in the editorial office: wrote articles, taught new employees, rural reporters and conducted meetings. Reporters went to kolkhozes and brought me material for publication. Later I became the executive secretary for the newspaper.

In 1939 I became deputy editor-in-chief and in 1940 I was approved editor-in- chief for the same newspaper. I worked there until 1969, and then retired. There was no Jewish employee with the newspaper except for me. Everyone knew I was a Jewess, but I didn't feel any anti-Semitism at that time.

- **During the war**

My younger brother Mordekhai finished several grades in a Ukrainian school and worked in Kherson as a car and tractor re-fueller. When I started to work I took both my brothers to live with me in Gayvoron. Mordekhai worked at a machine-tractor station as a mechanic. He moved to Nikolayev in 1939 according to mobilization. He worked as a mechanic at the Andre Marti ship- building plant. [Andre Marti: leader of the French sailors' rebellion at the Black Sea; Secretary of the Comintern Executive Committee.]

Later the plant was renamed. Andre Marti seemed not to satisfy communists anymore. He worked as a foreman and had a reservation, which kept him away from the army, in spite of his call-up age. The country needed him at the home front. However, in 1940 he voluntarily joined the army and served in Roven region and in western Ukraine. In 1941 when the war broke out, they were bombed on the first day. The first and last message about him was that he was in Kiev in 1941. Mordekhai perished at the front.

My other brother, Volf, came to stay with me in Gayvoron in 1936. He finished a Russian secondary school there, left for Moscow and entered the Moscow Transport Engineering Institute. He was a final-year student when the war broke out. The institute was evacuated and he stayed in Moscow to participate in the defense.

When, in December 1941, the Germans were driven away from Moscow, he was sent to a tank school in the town of Vetluga in Gorky region to become an officer. He finished that school in 1943, studied for two years, and fell ill with meningitis. He was allowed vacation and came to visit me in Podolsk, near Moscow, where I was in evacuation. He stayed with me for a month. I insisted that he continue his studies at the institute. There was a Party and Government Resolution introduced regarding recalling final-year students from the front for the purpose of continuing studies.

His institute was in evacuation. I asked him, 'Did you write an application to say that you want to leave the front and continue studying?' He replied, 'What? How can I, a Jew, ask to be released from the army during the war?' He felt uneasy writing such an application, as he was a man of honor.

I remember how one man, standing on his knees, asked my Russian husband to go to the front instead of him. After some time Volf returned to school and visited the combatant department. He was told that there was a detachment being formed and he was supposed to accompany it to the front. The studies office offered him a teaching job, since he had completed three years at the institute. But he refused, and in several days left for the front with the detachment. I keep one of Volf's last letters, which he sent to me from the front.

He perished in January 1944 in Dnepropetrovsk region in Ukraine. I was looking for my brothers in order to find out what had happened to them. A notification about Volf's death arrived after some time: 'He perished, burnt in the tank on 11th January 1944'; and the place was indicated. I heard a lot of conversations about Jews not participating in the war, 'resting in Tashkent.' But I don't understand it, both my brothers perished at the front.

When mum died my younger sister Feiga was three-and-a-half years old. Aunt Fani, mum's elder sister, adopted her and took her to Leningrad. Feiga is still alive and lives in Leningrad. She finished

a secondary school in Kherson and graduated from the Faculty of Biology of Leningrad University. Being a final-year student she got married and thus acquired a free certificate, without any assignment. Formerly, the Party assigned all institute graduates to workplaces prepared in advance for young specialists. It was called 'the assignment.' Feiga worked for a long time, all her life, at a laboratory of a children's hospital. She is retired now, but continues to work. She is 73.

Her husband, Berg Zvyagin, a Jew, is a candidate of physical science. Feiga took his last name. Berg was in the army during the war and had been to many fronts. After the war he defended a thesis and taught physics at the Leningrad Institute of Mines. Now he is an activist at the synagogue, attends it and observes all Jewish ceremonies. He and his wife are present at all Jewish events. They have a daughter, Marina. She graduated from university, became a candidate of mathematical science and works as a teacher. However, neither I, nor Feiga have grandchildren any more, but I'll come back to that later. We meet every weekend and visit each other.

I married a Ukrainian, Kuzma Yefremovich Zelinsky in 1938. He was born in 1911 in the village of Salkovo in Gayvoronsky district. It is a Russian territory. I worked in Gayvoron at that time. There was a township nearby, which was called Khaschevataya. There was a Jewish school, a Jewish kolkhoz 'Progress' [the district leader] and the Jewish town council before the war. [Village (town) council -self-government body in kolkhozes and small inhabited localities of rural type]. I know that because I worked there and knew the territories around. It was Odessa region.

The town council was also a progressive one. After the war there was a Russian town council established, but the chairman of the council was a Jew, Yakov Izrailevich Vinokur. My husband Kuzma was raised in a big family with nine children. He went to the town school and later joined the army. Their family was very nice to me, and his mother said that I was her best daughter-in-law. His father came from the village of Polish settlers, which was formed during World War I.

My husband's parents were common peasants and worked in the kolkhoz. His mother remembered the serfdom times. His father's name was Yefrem, and his mother's Natalia Danilovna Melnik. His mother stayed with me in evacuation during the war in Podolsk.

Kuzma returned form the army and worked in DOSAAF [Voluntary Society of Assistance to the Army, Aircraft and Navy]. They taught the youth and prepared them for service in the army. We got acquainted at a Komsomol meeting when he came back from the army. We knew each other for about two years, and then he proposed to me. He knew that I was a Jewess. I accepted his proposal and didn't discuss it with anyone; I had become a rather independent person by that time.

There was no wedding; we just registered the marriage at the ZAGS [civil marriage registry office], which was located in a room in the rayispolkom building. Kuzma didn't even have three rubles to pay for the registration. We were registered on credit, since it was in rayispolkom [District Executive Committee] and everybody knew us as active YCL members. Later our friends came to celebrate the wedding, and his mother also visited us to take a look at me.

We lived together and rented an apartment at first, later we got an apartment from the state. I didn't take his last name: there was a boy in my class at school who told me that my last name was sonorous. I remembered it and didn't want to change my last name. Later during the war when Kuzma was at the front, I regretted that very much, because we had to show our documents everywhere to prove that we were husband and wife. Kuzma's mother tongue was Ukrainian, but

he also spoke Russian. He worked in DOSAAF, later as a secretary at the rayispolkom. We had a Russian housemaid, whom we paid some money and we provided her with food. We actually had several at different times.

They helped me all the time. I kept housemaids while the kids were small because the working hours were irregular; we had to work a lot during the evenings: I never got home until I completed the newspaper, so I could come home from work at 12 at night or at 6 in the morning. The children had to stay with someone. I worked at the editorial office. Even my baby Maya was brought to me there, so that I could feed her. My elder daughter Maya was born in Gayvoron in 1939.

When in 1941 the war broke out I was evacuated with my daughter Maya and my husband from Gayvoron. We were escaping from the approaching front line in whatever possible way: on horses, on trains, on passing cars. Trains didn't leave on schedule. There were lice on the walls in the railroad cars. The train traveled for two weeks and nobody washed himself. I never thought that the Germans might reach so far because we had such a strong army. We had been traveling 400 kilometers in the train for two weeks.

We made a stop at a kolkhoz. I found out that my cousin Boris was in Stalingrad and we left for Stalingrad. But by that time dreadful battles took place there. Then we began to find a way to Pyatigorsk, where my husband served. We reached the place in summer 1942. I met my husband in Pyatigorsk. I worked there for several months as a radio broadcasting editor and got an apartment.

In fall 1942 the Germans landed at Mineralnye Vody station not far from Pyatigorsk. The military artillery school, with which Kuzma was evacuated to Pyatigorsk, was the only one that defended Pyatigorsk. When the Germans retreated, we were provided with a train and on that train we went to Podolsk. It was a one-month journey! It happened at the end of 1943. At the end of 1944 Kuzma joined the front-line forces and appeared in Germany, in Leipzig. When he came back, we went to Gayvoron at the end of 1945.

- **Post-war**

After the war, when the Party Schools 21 were first organized, I sent him to study to Odessa in a Party School and he became a party supervisor. I started to work for a newspaper. In 1947 our second daughter Yekaterina, or Katya, was born. Kuzma never came back to me from Odessa. There was a trial and my friends persuaded me not to divorce my husband. So we remained non-divorced.

He didn't want to live with me because he'd found a new wife. I knew about his life, and he about my life. He assisted our daughters, paid the alimony until Katya came of age. He died in Odessa in 1970. My husband didn't have any problems about me being a Jewess. He simply fell out of love with me and abandoned me with two children.

In 1969 I defended a thesis at Kirovogradsky Pedagogical Institute for the specialty of 'Ukrainian Language and Literature.' I worked for the newspaper before moving to Leningrad. I retired in 1969 when my grandson, Katya's son, Volodya was born. I took care of him for a year, then exchanged my apartment and left for Leningrad. I continued to work in Leningrad. When my seniority was calculated, it came to 52 years. I didn't work at the editorial office any more, though I was a

member of the Journalist's Guild. There was no job for my profession and I worked as a typist for a housing trust. I enjoyed my life. I went to all the theaters with my daughter and watched the best performances.

I thought that my life in Leningrad was something that God had rewarded me with in exchange for all my suffering. I went on tourist trips to Volga, in Leningrad region, organized trips for the party cell and party committee. Life was wonderful. We had a friend who worked at the theater ticket office. We overpaid a ruble for each ticket but always got the best tickets for the best performances. I've seen all the famous actors. If there was a 'burning' ticket at the Trust for a tourist trip, they gave it to me and I went on the trip. The Trust had a good trade union.

My elder daughter Maya worked in Leningrad. Her friends helped her to find a job. She lived with temporary registration in the city for eight years and rented corners. She was registered in the region; she had paid for it. I exchanged my 'villa' for a garden, and a vegetable garden in Gayvoron for a room of 12 square metres.

My daughter found an old woman who had come to Leningrad in 1926 to participate in a construction project. So I obtained a room in an apartment located in Vasilievskii island [one of the disctricts of St. Petersburg]. It had a very small kitchen and three neighbors. My daughter wasn't able to get registration with me. They told her that she had to get registration from her employer otherwise it wasn't possible to get registration in a big city.

Maya graduated from the Leningrad Institute of Mines as an electrician, mechanical engineer. After graduation she worked at the Graphite Combine. Later on an incident happened with her. She worked as a foreman at the mechanical shop in Zavalye in Gayvoron district and simultaneously was the secretary of a YCL organization.

Maya is a very well-educated girl. She had practical work in the mines and the miners never cursed in her presence, she couldn't stand it. Katya, for example, could say a swear word, but Maya was a very delicate person. She listened to the radio and concerts very attentively and liked classical music very much. Later she moved to Leningrad to study.

A worker came to her mechanical shop looking for a part. She told him, 'Go to the Komsomol meeting!' And he replied: '...you - he used some dirty words - I cannot finish this part and you make my head spin with your Komsomol meeting!' She held a piece of cloth in her hand and slapped it across his face for those swear words. A huge thing was stirred up out of it: the foreman beat the worker. She wasn't invited to party plenary sessions anymore. When my daughter was summoned to the party committee, she was asked, why she had hit the worker. She told them that he had cursed. And they said to her, 'Well, well, what a pampered young lady we have here!' I wrote an article to the central newspaper Izvestiya. I called the article 'In defense of a pampered lady.' I received a lot of responses and comments. It was a huge story. In short, my daughter had to leave Gayvoron.

She went to Murmansk region where a friend of hers worked; they studied together at the Leningrad Institute. He wrote a letter to her saying that she could come; get a job and a room after a year of work. She left for Murmansk but never reached it. With her railway ticket it was possible to make a stop. She made a stop on her way from Gayvoron to Murmansk in Leningrad for ten days. My younger sister Feiga lived there. Besides, a lot of friends, who studied with her at the

institute, lived there, too. They helped her to find a job at the Heavy Machinery Central Design Office in Metallostroy, near Kolpino, in the suburbs of Leningrad. She worked there for many years and became principal engineer.

Later she was transferred to the Electrosila plant and worked there until she retired. Maya had a fiancé, his name was Lyonya Weissman. His mother was Russian and his father was a Jew. They planned to get married. She wanted to stay in the city, but his parents worked somewhere in the North. His mother arrived and she didn't like my daughter at all. After that Maya never got married.

My younger daughter Yekaterina [Katya] finished a secondary school in Gayvoron and went to work in Kirovograd. She worked as a laborer in a vinegar shop at the foodstuffs plant. Later she was appointed foreman. She got married in 1976. Her husband was a Ukrainian. His name was Pyotr. He still calls me mother. He now lives near Kiev. He was a musician in the army. She worked at the plant at that time and was on duty 24 hours every day. They got acquainted on the phone. He was on duty in his unit and the soldiers were entertaining themselves, calling girls on the phone. They got married and in 1969 their son Volodya was born. He was born in the town of Kirovograd. After he finished a vocational school he was drafted to the army.

Volodya joined the army in 1988 and served in the town of Kaunas in Lithuania. In 1990 two months were left before his demobilization. The soldiers were driving in a car, 15 of them, and sang songs. The driver wasn't very well trained. The car turned over at a sharp turn and 12 people were killed. Katya fell ill from grief and died in a year. During the year that Volodya perished and Katya was still alive, she adopted two kids at the boarding school, a girl for herself and a boy for Maya. This boy lived with us for six years and perished, too. He was riding a bicycle at our summer house near Moscow, fell into a pit, smashed his head badly and died. When Katya died, a childless newly wedded couple adopted the girl. Thus we remained with Maya.

I never wanted to emigrate to Israel. I liked it here, in this country and I didn't want any changes at my age, so the constitution of that country didn't influence me in any way. My parents' graves are here. I was at the burial place, but couldn't find mum's grave. There is a memorial at the place of my father's execution. 15,000 were executed there.

Meetings are held there annually on 9th May, Victory Day 22. I wrote to the Kherson Rabbi and asked him to send me the lists of the executed and information about my parents, if possible. A woman from the Rabbi's office called me and asked me, 'Where was your father born?' It happened five years ago. I replied that I didn't remember where he had been born for sure, but I was certain that he had perished there. Later I lost contact with the Rabbi. But I visited the place on my own, when I came to see my daughter Katya in Kirovograd.

When Hesed was set up in 1993, the Warm House program was the first to be arranged. My friend invited me there. We got together and listened to lectures about customs and holidays. I celebrated Pesach according to what I remembered from my childhood. In a year or a year and a half when that woman left I began to conduct the Warm House myself. Food products are delivered to us. I don't cook lunch, only starters and desserts. I get accustomed to this tradition and try to introduce others to it, telling my recollections at these meetings. I have 13 people at my Warm House. There are very interesting people, even a candidate of science, so there is a lot to talk about and to recall.

I turned back to my Jewish origin, when the situation in the country started to change. We celebrate all Jewish holidays, get acquainted with the Jewish customs, talk about our current business, about our families and celebrate birthdays. We always have refreshments on the table during such meetings and everybody is happy. People say that as soon as they leave, they begin to wait for the next Friday to come. Sometimes women fall ill and we call them and visit them in hospitals.

So we have a very friendly and united family. There are two lonely women among my visitors who still live in communal apartments. In the near future they will supposedly get separate apartments in a social house, which is already built, though something needs to be completed in order to let people move in. As they say, I combine jobs: I'm also a member of the War Veterans Council. I'm a war veteran myself, I have eight medals and recently received a 'front-line soldier' medal. But I'm not as strong as I used to be, so I'm now impatiently waiting for the re-elections in order to be free of this position. However, I'm not planning to get rid of the Warm House.

Hesed delivers food products permanently and there is enough strength so far for cooking and keeping in touch with people. Seminars are held for volunteers, as well as boat trips on the Neva River and trips outside of the city, which helps to regain vitality. I also attend concerts, which the Jewish community arranges in honor of Jewish holidays. I didn't really become a very religious person. I don't pray every day, but I celebrate the Sabbath with the first star every Friday and wait for every Jewish holiday with pleasure.

- **Glossary:**

1 Struggle against religion
The 1930s was a time of anti-religion struggle in the USSR. In those years it was not safe to go to synagogue or to church. Places of worship, statues of saints, etc. were removed; rabbis, Orthodox and Roman Catholic priests disappeared behind KGB walls.

2 Peresyp
An industrial neighborhood in the outskirts of Odessa.

3 Kotovsky, Grigory Ivanovich (1881-1925)
Russian hero of the Civil War. He worked as an assistant to a manor manager. He was arrested several times over the years and was even sentenced to death, but this was later changed to penal servitude for life. In 1917 he joined the leftist Socialist Revolutionaries. He carried out a heroic campaign from the river Dnestr to Zhitomir in 1918 and took part in the defense of Petrograd in 1919.

4 Civil War (1918-1920)
The Civil War between the Reds (the Bolsheviks) and the Whites (the anti-Bolsheviks), which broke out in early 1918, ravaged Russia until 1920. The Whites represented all shades of anti- communist groups - Russian army units from World War I, led by anti- Bolshevik officers, by anti-Bolshevik

volunteers and some Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. Several of their leaders favored setting up a military dictatorship, but few were outspoken tsarists. Atrocities were committed throughout the Civil War by both sides. The Civil War ended with Bolshevik military victory, thanks to the lack of cooperation among the various White commanders and to the reorganization of the Red forces after Trotsky became commissar for war. It was won, however, only at the price of immense sacrifice; by 1920 Russia was ruined and devastated. In 1920 industrial production was reduced to 14% and agriculture to 50% as compared to 1913.

5 Reparation Aggreement at the Yalta Conference

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin met at Yalta, Crimea, USSR, in February 1945 to adopt a common policy. Most of the important decisions made remained secret until the end of World War II for military or political reasons. The main demand of the 'Big Three' was Germany's unconditional surrender. As part of the Yalta Conference an agreement was concluded, the main goal of which was to compensate Germany's war enemies, and to destroy Germany's war potential. The countries that received the most reparation were those that had borne the main burden of the war (i.e. the Soviet Union).
The agreement contained the following: within two years, removal of all potential war-producing materials from German possession, annual deliveries of German goods for a designated amount of time, and the use of German labor. Fifty per cent of the twenty billion dollars that Germany had to pay in reparation damages was to go to the Soviet Union.

6 Baykonur

Situated in Karaganda region in Kazakhstan, it was one of the biggest space vehicle launching sites in the USSR, which carried out an extensive program of space research. The first artificial satellite was launched from Bayknour; the first human astronaut, Yury Gagarin, as well as the first woman astronaut, Valentina Tereshkova, was also launched from Baykonur.

7 Common name

Russified or Russian first names used by Jews in everyday life and adopted in official documents. The Russification of first names was one of the manifestations of the assimilation of Russian Jews at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. In some cases only the spelling and pronunciation of Jewish names was russified (e.g. Isaac instead of Yitskhak; Boris instead of Borukh), while in other cases traditional Jewish names were replaced by similarly sounding Russian names (e.g. Eugenia instead of Ghita; Yury instead of Yuda).
When state anti-Semitism intensified in the USSR at the end of the 1940s, most Jewish parents stopped giving their children traditional Jewish names to avoid discrimination.

8 Russian Revolution of 1917

Revolution in which the tsarist regime was overthrown in the Russian Empire and, under Lenin, was replaced by the Bolshevik rule. The two phases of the Revolution were: February Revolution, which came about due to food and fuel shortages during World War I, and during which the tsar abdicated

and a provisional government took over. The second phase took place in the form of a coup led by Lenin in October/November (October Revolution) and saw the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks.

9 Famine in Ukraine

In 1920 a deliberate famine was introduced in the Ukraine causing the death of millions of people. It was arranged in order to suppress those protesting peasants who did not want to join the collective farms. There was another dreadful deliberate famine in 1930-1934 in the Ukraine. The authorities took away the last food products from the peasants. People were dying in the streets, whole villages became deserted. The authorities arranged this specifically to suppress the rebellious peasants who did not want to accept Soviet power and join collective farms.

10 Communal apartment

The Soviet power wanted to improve housing conditions by requisitioning 'excess' living space of wealthy families after the Revolution of 1917. Apartments were shared by several families with each family occupying one room and sharing the kitchen, toilet and bathroom with other tenants. Because of the chronic shortage of dwelling space in towns communal or shared apartments continued to exist for decades. Despite state programs for the construction of more houses and the liquidation of communal apartments, which began in the 1960s, shared apartments still exist today.

11 Kirov, Sergey (born Kostrikov) (1886-1934)

Soviet communist. He joined the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1904. During the Revolution of 1905 he was arrested; after his release he joined the Bolsheviks and was arrested several more times for revolutionary activity. He occupied high positions in the hierarchy of the Communist Party. He was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, as well as of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. He was a loyal supporter of Stalin. In 1934 Kirov's popularity had increased and Stalin showed signs of mistrust. In December of that year Kirov was assassinated by a younger party member. It is believed that Stalin ordered the murder, but it has never been proven.

12 Trotsky, Lev Davidovich (born Bronshtein) (1879-1940)

Russian revolutionary, one of the leaders of the October Revolution of 1917, an outstanding figure of the communist movement and a theorist of Marxism. Trotsky participated in the social-democratic movement from 1894 and supported the idea of the unification of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks from 1906.
In 1905 he developed the idea of the 'permanent revolution'. He was one of the leaders of the October Revolution and a founder of the Red Army. He widely applied repressive measures to support the discipline and 'bring everything into revolutionary order' at the front and the home front. The intense struggle with Stalin for the leadership ended with Trotsky's defeat.

In 1924 his views were declared petty-bourgeois deviation. In 1927 he was expelled from the Communist Party, and exiled to Kazakhstan, and in 1929 abroad. He lived in Turkey, Norway and then Mexico. He excoriated Stalin's regime as a bureaucratic degeneration of the proletarian

power. He was murdered in Mexico by an agent of Soviet special services on Stalin's order.

13 Enemy of the people
Soviet official term; euphemism used for real or assumed political opposition.

14 Kalinin, Mikhail (1875-1946)
Soviet politician, one of the editors of the party newspaper Pravda, chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the RSFSR (1919-1922), chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (1922-1938), chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (1938-1946). He was one of Stalin's closest political allies.

15 Elijah the Prophet
According to Jewish legend the prophet Elijah visits every home on the first day of Pesach and drinks from the cup that has been poured for him. He is invisible but he can see everything in the house. The door is kept open for the prophet to come in and honor the holiday with his presence.

16 Pogroms in Ukraine
In the 1920s there were many anti-Semitic gangs in Ukraine. They killed Jews and burnt their houses, they robbed their houses, raped women and killed children.

16 Kolkhoz
In the Soviet Union the policy of gradual and voluntary collectivization of agriculture was adopted in 1927 to encourage food production while freeing labor and capital for industrial development. In 1929, with only 4% of farms in kolkhozes, Stalin ordered the confiscation of peasants' land, tools, and animals; the kolkhoz replaced the family farm.

17 Voroshylov, Kliment Yefremovich (1881-1969)

Soviet military leader and public official. He was an active revolutionary before the Revolution of 1917 and an outstanding Red Army commander in the Russian Civil War. As commissar for military and naval affairs, later defense, Voroshilov helped reorganize the Red Army. He was a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party from 1926 and a member of the Supreme Soviet from 1937.
He was dropped from the Central Committee in 1961 but reelected to it in 1966.

18 Komsomol
Communist youth political organization created in 1918. The task of the Komsomol was to spread of the ideas of communism and involve the worker and peasant youth in building the Soviet Union. The Komsomol also aimed at giving a communist upbringing by involving the worker youth in the political struggle, supplemented by theoretical education. The Komsomol was more popular than the Communist Party because with its aim of education people could accept uninitiated young

proletarians, whereas party members had to have at least a minimal political qualification.

19 Collectivization in the USSR

In the late 1920s - early 1930s private farms were liquidated and collective farms established by force on a mass scale in the USSR. Many peasants were arrested during this process. As a result of the collectivization, the number of farmers and the amount of agricultural production was greatly reduced and famine struck in the Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus, the Volga and other regions in 1932-33.

20 Party Schools

They were established after the Revolution of 1917, in different levels, with the purpose of training communist cadres and activists. Subjects such as 'scientific socialism' (Marxist-Leninist Philosophy) and 'political economics' besides various other political disciplines were taught there.

21 Victory Day in Russia (9th May)

National holiday to commemorate the defeat of Nazi Germany and the end of World War II and honor the Soviets who died in the war.