

Tatiana Tets



This is me. I was photographed on my 14th birthday. This photo was taken in Riga in 1940.

I remember the Soviet armies marching into Riga in August 1940. There were endless tanks moving along the road, and open trucks with Soviet soldiers on the sides. It was very peaceful. People were throwing flowers to soldiers. I remember this sight well. My family and I were among the audience watching the Soviet Army march. Most of the Jews in Riga were very positive about the Soviet rule. Most Jews were social democrats with leftist leanings, and they liked the principles declared by the Soviet rule: equality of all nations living in the USSR, the power of people and internationalism. These ideas do sound attractive. It never occurred to people how one could slant these ideas.

Nothing changed for our family, when the Soviet rule was established. We had no property, and were not afraid of nationalization. I kept going to school, and my parents kept going to work. The Soviet authorities nationalized my father's pharmacy, but he kept his job. Mama had no private office, but kept working as a dentist at the clinic. We kept living in the same apartment, though it no longer belonged to its owner. It became governmental property. Therefore, the changes that were changing other people's lives had no impact on us.