

Zinaida Turovskaya's Class



This is my class and I. Photo made in 1953, the year of Stalin's death. I am the one standing on the left in the upper row.

My nee name is Yarovskaya. I was born in Kiev in 1937. I left this town only once - during World War II. I was born on 4 February 1937. Although I was the 4th child in the family my parents were still young: my mother was 32 and my father was 31.

I don't remember the day of 22 June 1941 when the war began. I was 4 years old.

At the beginning of the war we didn't know what was to happen to us. Everybody believed that it would end soon and that we would win the victory over the Germans. Moishe and Gershko's wives refused to evacuate. As for us, my father forced us to live. He saw us off to the train that was to take us away. My mother and I, her sister Rosa and little Boris, Fivish's wife with her 2 children and Dora and her baby were going together. Zhenia, Dora's older girl, stayed in Kiev with her grandparents. I remember little about this trip.

I only remember the overcrowded carriage and people sitting on their luggage. We were all thirsty. My mother got off the train when it atopped to exchange clothes and things for food and water. But hunger and thirst never left us. I didn't cry. I must have felt thet tears could only make things worse and cause pain to my mother. But my younger brother Boris was constantly crying. Dora's baby got dysentery and died. Dora didn't even cry, she was just sitting there pressing her baby to her chest. I remember this well, because my mother took away the baby and got off the train when it stopped to bury the baby. The train started and my mother missed it. I was very scared and afraid that my mother wouldn't catch up with us. But she did on another train.

In 1945 I went to school. it was an ordinary Russian school where boys and girls studied together. We were separated in the year's time. I remember that the teachers treated us, the children that

had lost their fathers very well. We received free lunches at school in 1946-47 and gave us a delicious roll. I remember that I always looked forward to getting this roll and at the same time I felt ashamed to be in the group of children receiving it because their fathers had perished.

I remember, when Stalin died we were all invited to the concert-hall at school. Everybody was crying. Siema Mironovna, our teacher, a Jew, got all fatherless children together. She was sitting and crying with us.