

Helena Cizmarikova



This is a photo of my daughter Helenka in front of a bookstore. The photo was taken sometime during the 1960s. At home we spoke exclusively Hungarian, because my parents were Hungarians. After the war I had a hard time with Slovak. I don't even call them anything else but Tótok [Tot: the Hungarian name for a Slovak. Tótok is the plural of Tot.] I don't have good memories of Slovaks. Most of them embittered my entire life, and many of them lied to me. They hounded me my whole life for being born a Jew. They wouldn't even let us live. I'll jump ahead a bit. My husband, Juraj Fischer, participated in the invasion of Normandy as a soldier. He is one of the four Slovaks in history to hold the highest French award, the Legion of Honor. Before him, this award was received for example by Milan Rastislav Stefanik as well. Before he accepted this award, he experienced

utter hell. The Communists accused him of sabotage and jailed him as a spy and Zionist . They even wanted to execute him. The fact that he was a Jew and that the Slansky trials were in full swing made it worse for him. I'll return to these events. I just want to say that as a result of this, they didn't accept our older daughter Helena at university. When the same was waiting for our younger daughter Viera, I dug in my heels and began making a fuss. I told them that we'd never done anything to anyone, so why are you persecuting us like this our whole lives? My daughter wants to go study! She's got the brains, so let her! Finally we succeeded and Viera graduated from mathematics.