

Lazar And Klavdia Yasinover



This is Uncle Lazar Yasinover and his wife, Klavdia. The photo was taken in Harbin. Uncle Lazar was born in Ananyev in about 1900. In Harbin, he went to a Russian elementary school and gymnasium. He was a citizen of the USSR, and he worked for the China Eastern Railroad. He and Klavdia married in 1930; they had one son, Moses. When the railroad company closed, Uncle Lazar left for the USSR in 1934. He and his family were deported to the gulag. We never heard of him again. My husband, Paul, our son and my mother went to the Soviet Union in 1948. After the victory in Germany, later in Japan, the prestige of the Soviet Union grew, especially among the Russian-

speaking population of China. We decided to go to this remarkable country, which defeated fascism, where all people had equal rights and all people were heroes. We were not afraid of the difficulties. Instead of Vladivostok, our ship arrived in the port Nakhodka. We were told: 'Choose! Siberia or the Urals.' We were afraid of Siberia and we decided to go to the Urals. We lived through this period thanks to my mother. She went shopping, stood in lines, bought food, sold our things - our clothes, porcelain - prepared meals, looked after my child, and encouraged us with Jewish humor. Our neighbors in the Urals had been deported from Estonia. They helped our family assimilate to the new conditions of our everyday life. After the amnesty in 1953, our Estonian friends went back to Estonia. They said we should go live there. From 1953, we too could move wherever we liked, except the capital cities. So we found ourselves in Estonia, in the town Kohtla-Järve, where I have been living since 1953. We would probably be fully assimilated by now, if it were not for my mother. She lived with us until her death in 1962. She kept the house, and helped us bring up our son. She didn't let us forget that we were Jews. She told our son about her family, Jewish traditions and holidays; she cooked Jewish dishes. Thanks to my mother, my son and his children realized that they are Jews.