Frieda Stoyanovskaya

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My family background

I am Frieda Stoyanovskaya. I was born in the town of Borispol in the vicinity of Kiev. I was born in 1907. My name is a mystery to me. I don't know who I was named after. My first memories are of my parents - young and beautiful, and most importantly, calm and smiling. Joy and kindness were predominant in the atmosphere of our home. I don't remember my father or mother angry, agitated or sad until 1919, the year of the Denikin pogrom 1 that changed our whole life.

My mother, Rosalia Borisovna Stoyanovskaya [nee Margolina], had another Jewish name, Rasia Borukhovna, but nobody called her by this name. She was born in Borispol in 1884. She looked very much like a rose. Mamma stayed at home, raising me, and later my little sister. Her name was Ida and she was one year younger than I. Then there was our younger brother Semyon. Mother was all kindness and patience with us. She taught us our first Yiddish words and prayers. She also loved Russian literature and knew it well. Mamma was intelligent and well-read, but I don't know where she studied. I remember her reading fairy tales to my sister and me in Russian.

I remember well my mother's mother, my grandmother Chernia Margolina She was kind like mamma and she smiled readily. Her husband, my grandfather Zalman, or Abram Illich Stoyanovskiy, was the breadwinner in the family. He had a small but prospering stationary store in town.

My father was one of six children in the family. His younger sister, my favorite aunt, Gisia, worked in his store. I have the warmest memories of her. She was not much older than I. She had a rosy complexion and she liked to smile. Young people in Borispol enjoyed buying stationary from her. I always enjoyed coming to daddy's store and watching aunt Gisia working.

I was the first and favorite granddaughter of grandmother Chernia and grandfather Zalman. I remember spending all the Jewish holidays in their small house. It was located twenty minutes' walk from our place. Each fall at Sukkot grandfather installed a sukkah in his yard. The family just loved to get together and have dinner there. Grandmother brought the food there. It's amazing

how we all fit there: our family and our grandparents', rather a big family.

My mother also came from a family with many children. She was the oldest and there were three other girls and three sons in the family. They only spoke Yiddish at my grandparents' home. At our home they talked Russian to us kids. However, we were taught Yiddish. Besides Yiddish and Russian, Ukrainian often sounded at our home. There were Ukrainians living around. There was no Jewish neighborhood, so to say, in Borispol in the early 20th century. The town was small - two or three central streets with stores and town buildings. Further on were typical Ukrainian village houses. These were small wooden buildings, with 2 or 3 rooms, with the toilet on the street. The roof was usually covered with straw. In the house there was a stove, which burnt firewood. Usually, near the house there was a garden with fruit trees and a vegetable garden, where vegetables were grown for the family. In the courtyard there was always a pit, where water was taken from inside a small wooden building, for the farm animals. We lived near the central part. There were three one-story buildings, forming a big yard. Three Jewish families rented them from a better-off landlord.

My first fear is associated with one of these houses. I heard the screams of a woman in labor. I was about five years old and the anxiety that it stirred up in me stayed with me for the rest of my life. The feeling of happiness at about the same age is associated with my first carnival costume that my mamma made from crepe paper. I can't remember the holiday - it might have been Purim or Christmas. [Frieda's family celebrated Christmas because her family lived alongside Russian, Ukrainian and Jewish families. They celebrated Christian and Jewish holidays together.]

Growing up

My favorite holiday has always been Pesach. Pesach is associated with our housemaid Galia. She was a Ukrainian girl. She came to help my mother about the house. Later, in the 1930s, she lived in my family and helped me a lot. So, before Pesach, mamma and Galia cleaned and washed everything. They cleaned up all corners in the house. They took all Passover dishes from the attic: special dishes and special jugs. I also remember an amazing Passover tablecloth. There was also a tablecloth on the first and second seder with seven dishes (and their contents) marked on it. A kiara of its kind, as I learned later. Matzah was ground into flour, and mamma and Galia made delicious little pies stuffed with prunes from it. I remember daddy saying a special blessing, filling a wineglass with wine and opening the door for someone. At first I thought it was for Messiah but later I found out it was for the prophet Elijah. I remember this was the most festive holiday.

I also remember Chanukkah, mainly because it was approximately on the same day as my birthday, and the family got together making it quite an event for me. I remember these big holidays in many details. As for Sabbath, I can't say, just as I don't remember menorah in the house or mezuzah on the door. It must have been there but I don't remember. I remember daddy saying a prayer in tallit and laying the tefillin. I remember that teachers came to our house - they taught my sister and me the Jewish alphabet and how to read. I remember that our family went to synagogue in Borispol. It was a two-story building. Women and girls sat in the upper part. I was surprised and touched that during the prayer women and my mother often cried. In particular, I remember the Simchat Torah holiday in the synagogue. The men danced below, carrying the Torah. My horrible memories of 1919 are also associated with this holiday.

I was almost 12 in 1919. We survived the mobilization of World War I in 1914 (none of our family fought in that war), and devastation in 1916. The events of 1917 [the so-called Great October

Socialist revolution] hardly touched us. We learned about what was going on in the country from two newspapers (by the way, they were sold in daddy's store). Each day a train from Kiev brought two newspapers: one was a monarchic newspaper, Kievskaya mysl [Kiev Thought], and the other one was a small and cheap one, Yuzhnaya kopeika [Southern Kopeck]. From Kievskaya mysl we learned about the dethronement of the tsar, the Provisional Government and the Bolshevik takeover. We were happy that there hadn't been one shot fired in Borispol as yet and that the events were happening somewhere else. We thought it might go on like that. 1918 was not marked by any disasters either. Military units came and left, doing no harm to us until the dreadful October of 1919. Neither my 10-year-old sister Ida nor I had any negative feelings related to our Jewish origin before. By that time my sister and I were studying at school. This was a Russian school. There was no Jewish school in Borispol then. We felt some isolation at school when a priest came to school to teach religion to orthodox children, and we Jewish kids did not attend this class.

In October 1919 military units of the White Army that was in opposition to the Bolshevik order came to Borispol. Those units looked more like gangs 2, involved in robberies and murders, although there were quite a few tsarist officers in them. At first they executed Bolsheviks and then started beating and murdering Jewish people and burning their houses. This pogrom happened at the same time as the Simchat Torah holiday. Almost the entire Jewish population was in the synagogue, and that's where the slaughter started. All those who couldn't run away were killed there. My grandfather Zalman perished there, as well as his younger son and my uncle Shaya. My daddy and mamma with my two-year-old brother Semyon were hiding in the house of some villagers that they knew. My sister Ida and I ran to our teacher. She was Polish and she had been teaching us for a year before these events. She lived in the yard of the parish school and she kept us in some cellar for several days. When it got colder she took us to her house. She had two daughters. We knew nothing about our daddy and mamma.

The pogrom lasted for a few days, and the screams of the executed people could be heard at night and during the day. After a few days we left our rescuer. We were on the way home when our parents found us. Our house and our grandparents' house were burned, and we couldn't find shelter anywhere. Denikin soldiers were still in town. We were hiding in the gardens and haystacks. My ten-year-old sister and I witnessed an officer beating an elderly man with a rifle-butt until he fell down dead. Aunt Gisia told me later that some bandit was trying to rape her and only her monthly indisposition saved her.

That was how we began to fully identify ourselves as Jews. Our houses were burned and we had no possessions left. We had had no gold or jewelry, although the family was rather well off. After the pogrom we had nothing to live on and we had lost our dear ones. Daddy and mamma, we three kids, and our granny Chernia went to Kiev where there were practically no gangs at that time. We found shelter at our acquaintances' place and lived there for some time. That was where my new life began as well as the history of our family's calamities during the terrible postwar years. I can say that this pogrom was like a black bar, underlining my sister's and my childhood. Our little brother was too young to realize what was happening. But he bore his Jewish identity physically - he was circumcised after his birth (our family observed all Jewish traditions), and everything that happened to him afterwards followed from this fact in one way or another.

Now my own life and the life of my family before the pogrom seem rosy to me. And always, when something terrible or unpleasant was happening to me, I thought that my happiness had stayed

there. I only remember love and it seems to me that Jewish and other people were living on friendly terms in Borispol until that horrible day. I don't think I ever heard the word 'zhyd' [kike] before 1919. This may be wrong, but psychologically my life was divided into two periods. And since then I have tried to slip away from my Jewish identity, either consciously or subconsciously. However, I could never escape.

Five of us went to Kiev: mamma and daddy and three children. Our grandmother (now widowed) stayed in Borispol for some time with one of her daughters, mamma's sister. Later she moved to Kiev. The first years in Kiev (1920 to 1922) were very difficult. For a short while we lived with our acquaintances; all five of us in a small room for servants, near the kitchen. Then we lived in some basements, and later we got accommodation in an apartment at Podol 3. This apartment belonged to the landlords Friedland once, a very rich family. Theirs was an eight or nine-room apartment, and after the revolution other families got accommodation in their apartment. Their big apartment changed into a communal flat with quite a few neighbors. In the course of time, there was only one old woman of all the Friedlands living in that apartment. I believe their children emigrated. This old woman Friedland hated all her new and numerous neighbors. The neighbors were mainly Jewish.

Life was extremely difficult - no jobs, no means of existence. I remember a young woman hanging herself in the next door room. She must have done it out of despair. Daddy couldn't find a job. I never saw him smiling after the pogrom. A few years later he died from typhoid, and before that he suffered from continuous heartaches. Mamma went to work as seamstress at a factory. She worked there until she grew old, before 1938 approximately. It is difficult to say what kind of food we had or what we were wearing in those years. It must have been junk food and shabby and worn-out clothes. Mamma was very handy with clothes: she could make one piece from two old pieces of clothing.

In 1921, after daddy died, she was left with three children. I was 14, my sister 13, and the youngest Semyon, was 4 years old. He was very weak; he never had enough food or vitamins. There were eight families living in this big apartment that belonged to the Friedlands. They were Jewish families that used to be well off, but had lost everything. It was a difficult life; people didn't help or support one another. I don't remember any Jewish holidays or Jewish way of life. People were just trying to survive. So did we.

Thanks to mamma, my sister and I could study. We went to school. I went to a Russian school and Ida went to a Ukrainian school for some reason. There were quite a few Jewish children and teachers in my school. It seems they were all living in poverty. However, I remember few very rich girls in our school. They must have lived in Kiev, when we came there to escape from the pogroms. I remember that these girls were merry, not hungry, and well dressed. This made them very different from us. I also remember that they left the country in 1922, 1923 and 1924 with their parents. They went somewhere to Western Europe. And the teachers that had taught in the former high schools for noble children in Kiev lived in hunger and poverty. I remember the teacher of Russian literature and language that had a big influence on me and my personality. Looking at her I wanted to become a teacher, and maybe her example determined my choice to follow that profession.

In 1924 I finished school. By the way, this school became a Jewish school in 1925. There was a decree issued. According to this decree some schools in Kiev became Jewish schools. My school

also became Jewish and they taught in Yiddish, although it was a secular school.

My younger brother Semyon also went to study there. In this school he took to liking Jewish literature and photography. The boys made cameras guided by their favorite teachers. One couldn't even dream about a real camera. This hobby determined his future profession: he became an outstanding cameraman and an apprentice of the famous Roman Karmen in Moscow. [Karmen is an outstanding film director and cameraman, who captured with his camera some of the most important moments of 20th century history, like the Spanish civil war, the opening of the concentration camps, the Cuban revolution, etc.]

I wanted to study and could continue my education, thanks to mamma. I had chosen my profession by then. I went to the Pedagogical College. I didn't have any nationality or social problems during my entrance to school. I had a problem when I wanted to become a Komsomol 4 member. In contrast to my sister Ida, I was interested in politics and I accepted the Soviet way of life and thinking, although it did not agree with our family tradition. Still, I wanted to become a Komsomol member and tried very hard to implement this. This also had to do with the numerous forms that everyone had to fill out at that time. There I had to put down the social origin of my father. If I had written that he owned a store, even if it was a long time ago, the road to the school or Komsomol would have been closed for me. Mamma and I found a way out - we wrote that my father had been a minor craftsman. We did so and it worked out. I became a Komsomol member in 1924, the year of Lenin's death.

Lenin's death was a blow to me but not to my family. I mourned deeply. I remember two things - hoots on the day of his funeral; everything that could produce a sound was hooting. This was different and scary. It gave the impression of uncertainty. And another thing that struck me was the poem of Vladimir Mayakovskiy, 'Vladimir Illich Lenin.' It began with the description of his death and funeral. It seemed amazing to me that it came out a month after Lenin's death. I decided then that I would take to literature. I was reading a lot then. I devoured fiction and scientific books. Fiction was Russian classical literature. There were hardly any books at home; we hardly had anything at all. But there were good libraries in town and I spent all my free time in them.

It's interesting how nostalgia for the past and revolutionary romanticism entwined in my young mind. As for my political preferences, Stalin was not standing beside Lenin then. The second individual after Lenin was Leon Trotsky for me and for many of my contemporaries. By the way, that Trotsky was Jewish meant nothing to us, we valued and respected him for other qualities.

The years of my study at the Pedagogical College, 1924-29, were the years of the New Economic Policy [NEP] 5 of the Soviet government. It was the end of the famine 6. The stores were selling beautiful clothes, white flour and white bread. I hadn't seen them since my early childhood. But we were extremely poor and couldn't afford them. I remember going on tour to Moscow, wearing shoes with holes and a light jacket. It was winter and the temperature was 25 degrees below zero. I saw the Soviet capital for the first time. I hardly ever went on vacations. I tried to earn a little money during vacations. I worked as a babysitter, and then a nurse in kindergartens and pioneer camps.

My sister also went to Pedagogical College after finishing secondary school. Only I was at the Russian College named after Pirogov, and she went to the Ukrainian Pedagogical College named after Grinchenko. She became a teacher of Ukrainian literature and language and I became a

history teacher.

Our life improved a little in those years. We were still wearing the poorest clothes, but we had more food. Our relatives lived on the 4th floor in the same house as us. My grandmother Chernia lived in a little room with no water or toilet or any other conveniences. She lived with her younger daughter and my aunt Bella. They moved to Kiev from Borispol and we hardly ever saw each other. I hardly know anything about the life of this line of my relatives. Unfortunately, there was nothing left from our former Jewish life in our family or my grandmother's family. I remember my first and only visit to the synagogue in Kiev. It was after daddy died. My brother was too small, and I had to read the Kaddish, the prayer for my father. I came to the synagogue and realized that I wouldn't read any Kaddish, because I identified myself as a Soviet person, and all this was closed to me. I haven't been in a synagogue since then.

After I finished my school I had to go to a far-away village in the vicinity of Kharkov to work as a teacher. The school was in a house with low ceilings and ground floors. There were a few desks and a teacher's desk and the room was dusty. I worked there for a whole year as director and teacher at the primary school. I was living nearby. The house belonged to an old woman. It was cold and very uncomfortable. Back then I made up my mind to live a human life and to build up my own family.

After returning to Kiev I got another assignment to work in the so-called school for the liquidation of ignorance, at the factory where they made matches. I was teaching twenty older women to read and write.

I was twenty when I got a job at a town school. I met my future husband then. It was at the home of Marusia Simanovich, my ex-co-student, where I was introduced to Semyon Goldfine who was almost 26. He was already a well- known journalist, had publications in the Soviet mass media and had a pseudonym. It was Semyon Moiseyevich Gordeyev. They said he loved me at first sight. And I was looking in the opposite direction. To stop his courting I went to Donbass to teach at a new school. And there, far away from him I understood that he was my life. I answered his letters. He immediately came to take me away. He took me as his fiancée, first to Kharkov and then to Kiev. Here I met my future husband's family. He lived with his mother and sister. There were no more relatives. They lived on the ground floor of a small house. There were no conveniences in that house. I didn't have anywhere to live, as there were four of us living in one room with my brother. So, after the wedding I moved in with my husband. His mother and sister accepted me very well. My husband was from a very poor Jewish family from a small shtetl, Makarov, Kiev area. I don't know much about his parents, but the family lived a very difficult life. They observed Jewish traditions and all of them spoke Yiddish.

We got married in July 1931. My sister Ida and I got married at the same time at the registration office of Podol district in Kiev. We had two weddings at a time. We had dinner after our wedding. There were no special guests or special rituals. My sister and her husband stayed at my mother's place, and I moved in with the Goldfine family. We lived there for several years in a little room, one of the two that the family occupied. Misha Shepelyov, he was also Jewish, my sister's husband, was also a teacher. He worked in Kiev, and later in Zhytomir. Later he perished on the front in the first days of World War II.

Our son Victor was born in this little room. We lived there until 1938, when Semyon Gordeyev, my husband, became a member of the Union of Soviet Writers and we received our apartment in Lenin Street, in the so-called Writer's Building in Kiev. I worked as a history teacher in a lower secondary, and then a higher secondary school. I studied at the Kiev Pedagogical Institute from 1932-35. My husband had over 10 books published by that time. Our life improved a little. Our circle of friends became wider and more interesting. But this was after 1935.

Our son was born in 1933 and that was an awful period in our life, the period of collectivization 7, i.e., the period of collective farms formation, and the 1933 famine in the Ukraine. The Soviet government took all the grain and bread away from the peasants and farmers to force them into joining the collective farms. This was called the 'state grain procurements'. My husband had to go to villages and describe these processes in the newspaper. He was a Soviet writer. His business trips to villages were very long. This work was not just psychologically hard, but also dangerous - the starved people hated those who were doing this to them and often fought for their bread and families with pitchforks in their hands. Ukrainian villages were full of rumors about cannibalism. My husband returned from these trips morally depressed and physically ill. In Kiev or other bigger towns of Ukraine the situation was not so adverse. Townsfolk were getting rationed food. Our family also got rationed food. But I saw women dying from hunger in the streets. They were coming from villages but didn't get any help. This lasted until the end of 1934. Until 1934 we also got meals in the special canteen at the Regional Committee of the Communist Party. I took food for my family from there. This food supported our family and my mother. She was still working and also received rationed food. I also gave some food to my husband's mother - she wasn't working and couldn't earn her living. My sister Ida and her husband were in Donbass then. They managed, more or less.

1935-1936 was the time of repression [the so-called Great Terror] 8. They were chasing after the 'enemies of the people'. They didn't find any in my school. But in the Union of Soviet Writers arrests began in 1936. There was a rule that before a writer was arrested, they expelled him from the Party. My husband, Semyon Gordeyev, was Deputy First Secretary of the Communist Party Committee at the Union of Soviet Writers. He had to conduct these meetings. It was all so scary that he didn't tell me anything about them. The writers often committed suicide, knowing the procedure after they were expelled from the Party. Semyon suffered all his life for being involved in all this. He expected to be arrested, too. When we heard about the Great Patriotic War 9, the first thing that he said was, 'Thank God, they won't arrest me, and I will be killed on the front.' Arrests of the writers continued until the start of the war and afterwards. They happened almost every night and we were aware of them.

During the war

We lived in the Writers' Building. The war with the Germans became an escape from the fear of arrest for many people. This war was a surprise for us. It is difficult to imagine this now. We had known that it might begin since the end of 1939. There was a map in our teachers' room at school, and every day our geography teacher marked the areas occupied by Hitler. The circle was getting narrower and narrower. But we still believed that it would not happen to us. We also knew about the German attitude towards the Jewish people from newspapers. In 1938 they showed Doctor Mamlock in Kiev. [This was a German film about a remarkable Jewish physician who hoped for salvation. He was killed because he was Jewish.] We were struck by what we saw, but again, we

thought it wouldn't happen to us. It was so far from me then that I didn't even associate Denikin's pogrom with what I saw. My husband and I were so far from this kind of development that we planned a second baby. Our second son was born in February 1941.

At the beginning of the war Kiev was full of the people from the western parts of Ukraine. There were many Jews among them; there were some that we knew. They stayed with us. It was from them that I heard about the Germans' attitude towards the Jews. But again, this resulted in our decision to leave Kiev as soon as possible. On 6th July we left on the writers' train to be evacuated to Ufa, Bashkyria. We were running away from the war with one little suitcase, full of photographs and diapers. We had our 4-month- old Lyonechka [Leonid] and 6-year-old Victor with us, as well as my mother. We were running away from the raids and had no idea what occupation was like. We couldn't imagine the horrors of it. So, the four of us left. My sister Ida, her husband and their two daughters were in Zhytomir at the beginning of the war. They found us in Bashkyria later.

My brother Semyon was mobilized to the front. He went through the whole war with military units. He had finished the Russian State Institute of Cinematography, the famous VGIK, in Moscow by that time, and was sent to serve in the army at the beginning of 1940. He was on the front line until his tragic death in Vienna at the end of April 1945.

During the war, until the summer of 1944, I worked as a history teacher in the small village of Chishmy in the vicinity of Ufa. We lived with mamma in a cold house near the school. We got coal to heat the house by ourselves; we also grew vegetables in the vegetable garden. We received letters and money from my husband and my brother during the war. But our life was very hard, the children got ill, they were not adjusted to the climate there.

I was a history teacher at the higher secondary school. We heard about the war on the radio and read about it in newspapers. From 1942 all my students turning 17 were summoned to the front. At my history classes we also talked about tsarist Russia and the status of the Jews. But telling them about the pogroms, I never mentioned my personal experience. This seemed impossible and improper then. It wouldn't have occurred to me to share my own experience.

It seemed that we were the only Jewish family in this village. There were no Jews at school or among my colleagues. The locals treated us well. I will always remember a young teacher who saw me holding a baby. She came on a visit with a small bottle of milk for the baby. I never heard the word 'zhyd' [kike] there.

My sister Ida and her children joined us in the middle of the war. Her husband Mikhail perished on the front. She became a widow during the first days of the war. We read about the horrors of the occupation of Kiev in the newspapers, the extermination of several thousands of Jews. We suffered terribly. Rivka Margolina, Semyon's mother, was living in Kiev. She was dying in hospital from an incurable illness. We don't know until now how she died. We suffered form the hardships of life. In the middle of 1942 we cheered up, seeing that we would win the war and that it was not the end of everything.

In 1943 we were looking forward to the liberation of Kiev. It was liberated in autumn. We were happy. In the summer of 1944 my family and I returned to Kiev, which was empty, dark and ruined, but so dear to us. There was no electricity, heating, gas or water in our house, but it was not destroyed. We returned home, all of us, but grandmother Chernia. She came to Bashkyria with my

sister Ida in the middle of the war and died there a few months later at the age of 64. My husband Semyon Moiseyevich returned in 1946, the whole time he was mobilized in military units, and served far away from us.

Almost on Victory Day, on 5th May 1945 we received notification about the death of my brother Semyon, a military cameraman. So this day of everybody's joy and happiness became the day of deepest sorrow for us. We found out that he was buried at the cemetery of the Soviet military in Vienna. Later his colleagues brought us the video that they took during his funeral at the end of April 1945.

After the war

We hardly recovered from this disaster in 1947-48, when we were covered by the wave of anti-Semitism . It was especially clearly felt in Kiev. This started with the campaign of the Soviet government against cosmopolitans. 10 The intelligentsia suffered the most from it. Arrests began anew in our Writers' Building, but this time they were arresting the Jewish writers. Gofstein, a famous writer, was arrested, and our friend Riva Baliasnaya, a poet. After few years in prison camps she remained an invalid for the rest of her life.

Fortunately, I got a job teaching history. That was what I wanted. But Semyon Moiseyevich didn't have any official posts. Nominally he remained a member of the Union of Soviet Writers, but actually he was a free artist. Naturally, free from his salary as well. I became the main breadwinner at home. The change of attitude of the people surrounding me came as a sad surprise. They turned into anti-Semites almost from one day to the next. Many of our Ukrainian friends among writers just pretended they didn't know us and divorced their Jewish wives. The rumor was actively spread that NKVD 11 officers were mainly Jews. I found out that Mr. Shtepa, my favorite professor from the Pedagogical Institute, was at the head of the anti- Semitic press in occupied Kiev. It looked as if the Soviet government didn't blame him for it.

The situation became aggravated because the rumors appeared that Jewish doctors didn't give proper care to people. This was the Doctors' Plot 12 - because of it we were afraid to go out into the streets. The Jews in Kiev were actively getting ready to be moved to the remote areas of the Soviet Union. [The interviewee refers to the planned deportation of Jews to Birobidzhan.] 13 Therefore, the establishment of Israel, the Jewish State, went almost unnoticed for us. Besides, even if we wanted to leave, we didn't have any physical opportunity to do this.

In 1953 my mother died, and my sister Ida and I were left. Ida got married for the second time. Hers wasn't a happy marriage. Perhaps, this pushed her to emigration. She went to Israel in the early 1970s, lived many years there, and died in Netanya several years ago.

Our children were growing up. Victor and then Leonid studied at my school. This caused some problems and helped to get rid of others. They took their daddy's pseudonym for their last name and became the Gordeyevs. This was a trick to conceal their Jewish identity. But it was equivocal, as I didn't conceal that I was Jewish at all. In their passports, under Item 5 14 it was also written that their nationality was Jewish.

Victor chose the humanities direction after finishing school. But in the 1960s higher education in the humanities was closed for him, as he was a Jew. The only institute in Kiev that he could enter

was the Institute of Light Industry. This institute gave him the profession that he didn't like at all.

Victor began to identify himself as a Jew in 1940 when he saw Doctor Mamlock. It was our mistake to take him with us. After the film he suffered from psychological shock. Later he was overtaken by the tragedy of the unloved profession. He saw the way out of the crisis in running away from his Jewish identity. He married a Russian girl. He wanted his children to have no problems with nationality in the future. He couldn't make up his mind about leaving the Soviet Union, either in the 1970s or the 1980s.

Leonid, our younger son, entered the Odessa Communications Institute after finishing school. It wasn't his choice either, but he didn't suffer from it. Perhaps he had a more solid position in life and national consciousness than my older son. He was standing on the ground with his both feet. Nevertheless, he decided to emigrate in 1992. But he didn't choose the far- away United States or Israel, with its national orientation. He went to Germany. He and his wife and my grandchildren live in Munich now.

In 1990 my husband Semyon Moiseyevich Goldfine-Gordeyev died. It seems to me now that my older son Victor takes after his father. Victor is retired now. He is 67 and he wants to publish a collection of his father's works for his 100th anniversary.

My younger son works in Munich. He seems to have found his place in the Western world. My children, their wives and children and my grandchildren take care of me. My son Leonid calls me every week. I hear Victor's voice on the phone every day. I can feel them beside me all the time.

Leonid and Victor have continuously invited me to move in with them. However, I clearly made up my mind that my freedom is most important for me. Besides, I am 95 and I believe that the only land where I can feel free and happy is the land where I was born. I remember my husband was of the same opinion. However, I am in touch with Israel. My three nieces, Ida's daughters, live in Israel. Two of them live in Netanya, and one lives in Tzefat with her husband. They have six children.

Regrettably, I have never been to Israel. In general I haven't traveled much. I wanted very much to visit this country, to see how my natives live there, but it has never been really possible.

I have lived alone for 10 years. There are three portraits in my room: my mother's, my husband's and my brother's. They are my dearest people. I talk to them every day. I look back at our long and hard life and ask myself whether I did everything right. The only thing that disturbs me is the cemetery in Vienna where my brother was buried. The Soviet authorities never allowed my husband and me to go there and put flowers on his grave. I feel guilty about it. There is another cemetery in Kiev - the Jewish cemetery - where my father and my mother are buried. It's becoming more and more difficult for me to get there.

I am happy about my children and grandchildren. I am happy about the perspectives opening for the Jews. I am pleased that there are so many possibilities in Ukraine now to develop Jewish consciousness. I realize, however, that my time has gone. I am a very Soviet person and regrettably, never kept Jewish traditions and holidays. After the death of mamma in 1953 so much left my life forever. I feel so sorry that I cannot work. I worked for over 75 years of my life. Many of my students have become candidates and doctors in sciences. Many of my former students are

retired now. They don't forget me and I feel their love and support. I have hopes for the future. I hope that my children, grandchildren and my future great- grandchildren have a better life than I did. But I wouldn't repudiate anything in my life.

Glossary

1 Denikin, Anton Ivanovich (1872-1947)
White Army general. During the civil war he fought against the Red Army in the South of Ukraine.

2 Gangs

During the Civil War in 1918-1920 there were all kinds of gangs in the Ukraine. Their members came from all the classes of former Russia, but most of them were peasants. Their leaders used political slogans to dress their criminal acts. These gangs were anti-Soviet and anti-Semitic. They killed Jews and burnt their houses, they robbed their houses, raped women and killed children. 3 Podol: The lower section of Kiev. It has always been viewed as the Jewish region of Kiev. In tsarist Russia Jews were only allowed to live in Podol, which was the poorest part of the city. Before World War II 90% of the Jews of Kiev lived there.

4 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.

5 NEP
The so-called New Economic Policy of the Soviet authorities was launched by Lenin in 1921. It meant that private business was allowed on a small scale in order to save the country ruined by the October Revolution and the Civil War. They allowed priority development of private capital and entrepreneurship. The NEP was gradually abandoned in the 1920s with the introduction of the planned economy.

6 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.

7 Collectivization

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.

8 Great Terror (1934-1938)

During the Great Terror, or Great Purges, which included the notorious show trials of Stalin's former Bolshevik opponents in 1936-1938 and reached its peak in 1937 and 1938, millions of innocent Soviet citizens were sent off to labor camps or killed in prison. The major targets of the Great Terror were communists. Over half of the people who were arrested were members of the party at the time of their arrest. The armed forces, the Communist Party, and the government in general were purged of all allegedly dissident persons; the victims were generally sentenced to death or to long terms of hard labor. Much of the purge was carried out in secret, and only a few cases were tried in public 'show trials'. By the time the terror subsided in 1939, Stalin had managed to bring both the party and the public to a state of complete submission to his rule. Soviet society was so atomized and the people so fearful of reprisals that mass arrests were no longer necessary. Stalin ruled as absolute dictator of the Soviet Union until his death in March 1953.

9 Great Patriotic War

On 22nd June 1941 at 5 o'clock in the morning Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union without declaring war. This was the beginning of the so-called Great Patriotic War. 10 Campaign against 'cosmopolitans': The campaign against 'cosmopolitans', i.e. Jews, was initiated in articles in the central organs of the Communist Party in 1949. The campaign was directed primarily at the Jewish intelligentsia and it was the first public attack on Soviet Jews as Jews. 'Cosmopolitans' writers were accused of hating the Russian people, of supporting Zionism, etc. Many Yiddish writers as well as the leaders of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee were arrested in November 1948 on charges that they maintained ties with Zionism and with American 'imperialism'. They were executed secretly in 1952. The antisemitic Doctors' Plot was launched in January 1953. A wave of anti-Semitism spread through the USSR. Jews were removed from their positions, and rumors of an imminent mass deportation of Jews to the eastern part of the USSR began to spread. Stalin's death in March 1953 put an end to the campaign against 'cosmopolitans'.

11 NKVD

People's Committee of Internal Affairs; it took over from the GPU, the state security agency, in 1934.

12 Doctors' Plot

The Doctors' Plot was an alleged conspiracy of a group of Moscow doctors to murder leading government and party officials. In January 1953, the Soviet press reported that nine doctors, six of

whom were Jewish, had been arrested and confessed their guilt. As Stalin died in March 1953, the trial never took place. The official paper of the party, the Pravda, later announced that the charges against the doctors were false and their confessions obtained by torture. This case was one of the worst anti-Semitic incidents during Stalin's reign. In his secret speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 Khrushchev stated that Stalin wanted to use the Plot to purge the top Soviet leadership.

13 Birobidzhan

Formed in 1928 to give Soviet Jews a home territory and to increase settlement along the vulnerable borders of the Soviet Far East, the area was raised to the status of an autonomous region in 1934. Influenced by an effective propaganda campaign, and starvation in the east, 41,000 Soviet Jews relocated to the area between the late 1920s and early 1930s. But, by 1938 28,000 of them had fled the regions harsh conditions, There were Jewish schools and synagogues up until the 1940s, when there was a resurgence of religious repression after World War II. The Soviet government wanted the forced deportation of all Jews to Birobidjan to be completed by the middle of the 1950s. But in 1953 Stalin died and the deportation was cancelled. Despite some remaining Yiddish influences - including a Yiddish newspaper - Jewish cultural activity in the region has declined enormously since Stalin's anti-cosmopolitanism campaigns and since the liberalization of Jewish emigration in the 1970s. Jews now make up less than 2% of the region's population.

14 Item 5

This was the nationality factor, which was included on all job application forms, Jews, who were considered a separate nationality in the Soviet Union, were not favored in this respect from the end of World War WII until the late 1980s.