Naum Tseitlin

Russia
St. Petersburg
Interviewer Olga Egudina
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Naum Efimovich is 94 years old.

He can independently take care of himself,

goes out sometimes, does physical exercises in the morning.
He has poor sight and hearing.

A nice person to talk to, polite,
ready to recount his life without interruption.
He feels lonely without his wife and friends.

- **My family background**

I can remember my great-grandfather. My great-grandfather, Naum Tseitlin, lived in Belarus, and the main residence of the entire Tseitlin family was the provincial town of Mstislavl. During the war I happened to pass through this town, and when we came across a Jewish cemetery, quite by chance, my comrade, a soldier like me, said: ‘Look, Tseitlin,’ pointing at a marble monument. I went up and saw that it really was Tseitlin. I looked at the next – Tseitlin, too. A whole row of Tseitlins. That is, an entire burial place for the Tseitlin family. And I noticed the years. The graves were not only recent, but dated as far back as the 1700s, that is to say that Tseitlins were already living in Mstislavl in the 18th century. I then recalled that in the days of Catherine the Great our ancestors moved to Russia, coming through Germany, the Baltic states, and finally settled in this very place, in Belarus.

I noticed that those were only men's tombstones, and remembered what Father used to tell me. According to Jewish custom, men are buried in one row, and women in another, so that a husband’s and wife’s graves will be found in different places. Only men's tombstones. And a lot of names that I knew so well. My father also told me, that names recurred in our family. My name is Naum, my father’s Efim, his father was Yakov, Yakov’s father was Naum.

Since Jews were not allowed to own land and it was prohibited to sell land sites to Jews, they were mostly dealers, merchants, craftsmen. My grandfather Yakov in particular was a craftsman specializing in many things. His basic trade was pitch-making, so he called himself a pitch-maker. This place in Belarus abounds in woods, so they were very much taken up with extracting pitch, turpentine and rosin. Grandfather was certainly the source of well being for his family. He was really a jack-of-all-trades, and Father, too, inherited all his skills.

It is enough to tell you that I remember as a small boy, how Grandfather fixed a broken samovar. One of our neighbors put on a samovar once [in those days live coals were put in samovars to boil water]. But someone had poured out all of the boiled water, and the coals continued to burn, and the samovar cracked at the seams. This made people upset. Grandfather comes out and says, ‘I’ll fix it.’ ‘How in God’s name are you going to fix it?’ ‘It’s very simple.’

I was a witness to that, a small boy while a big crowd gathered from all over and watched how he was going to repair a completely broken samovar. The pipe had split off the pot, it was all melted down. And Grandfather used the same live coals to fire up the solderer, because electricity was unheard of in the vicinity, soldered whatever required soldering and assembled the samovar in front of the entire crowd. Everybody gasped with surprise. It impressed me, too.

But Grandfather wasn't finished yet. He said, ‘OK, I have put together the parts, but the thing has to be soldered from inside, that’s why I’m going to cover it with tin from within.’ And he showed us how to do it. He melted the tin right there in the fire, and prepared a broom in the meantime. I remember it all very well. I was about five years old then, it was shortly before Grandfather died. And he lined the insides of the samovar with tin. He sprinkled the melted tin on the broom and twirled it fast inside the samovar. Then he called to a man and said, ‘Look to see if I have missed any place?’ No, everything was just fine, lined all over. So, Father and Grandfather were mending, people were paying.

My grandmother on father’s side was called Genessa. I remember trying to find out, as a small boy, what the Russian equivalent would have been. She was always very strict, I cannot remember if she ever laughed. And she brought up her kids along tough lines. She had several children. Of the two boys, my father, Efim Yakovlevich, was the elder. Her other son’s name was Michael Yakovlevich. He received a good education, was a dental technician, and such a good one, that he eventually became a professor at the Moscow Medical Institute’s dental surgery faculty. After the war he worked, being already prominent in his trade, in the dental surgery clinic of the Main Moscow Department of the GPU [1]. I have no information about the sisters.

My grandmother, grandfather and parents were religious people. My grandmother did not change her habits during all her life; she baked challah on Fridays, in order to celebrate Sabbath, though she wore secular clothes every day. Both my grandparents and parents spoke mainly in Yiddish amongst themselves, and with us – only in Russian. All of them knew Russian.

My mother was born in Belarus, in the small settlement of Smolyany, not far from Orsha, in 1875. She was known, in the Jewish manner, as Tseita. People tried to call her Tsetsilia in the Russian way, but all to no avail; sometimes neighbors called her Teresa, but she remained Tseita Alexandrovna.

Her father's name was Grigory. My maternal grandfather, as many Jews, had two names – Grigory and Sender [Alexander]. I actually also had a second name, Matvey, and I was called Motya as a child. His surname was Hoffmann; he was born in Belarus too. He died, when she was a very young girl. His wife got married a second time to Schwarz. And a girl was born out of this marriage, my aunt Fanya, who later lived with us. They were quite rich, could educate their children in Warsaw, and as a young girl she completed a corset-making school in Warsaw.

My mother's maternal relatives took her into their family. She grew up rather far away from Orsha, or from Smolyany, where she was born, on the bank of the Dnieper River, brought up by her uncle and aunt. I passed through this settlement during the war as well; it is now a district center, where my mother spent her youth. The front line passed right through it. My mother had not received any education. Her childhood was such that she had to start working very early. She met her husband-to-be, Efim, in Orsha, when she was seventeen years old and she worked as a saleswoman in a big store in Orsha, in Belarus. Soon they got married.

My father Efim was born in 1876 in Smolensk [a town not far from the border between present-day Russia and Belarus] beyond the Jewish Pale of Settlement 2. As a matter of fact, his mother and my grandmother Genessa helped her husband and my grandfather Yakov with his commercial business, which was often connected with various trips. Being pregnant, she went on one such trip, thinking to be back home on time. However, when in Smolensk, premature delivery started, and Father was born in that town. He spent his childhood and youth in the town of Mstislavl.

My father moved almost simultaneously with Grandfather, they broke away from the Pale of Settlement. Although it cost great efforts, as my father used to say, they managed to settle in Russia. It was before the revolution 3, at the end of the 19th century, when my father was newly married and decided to take advantage of the opportunity, which presented itself then – of course, they had to bribe some officials to be able to leave. Since Jews were authorized to settle only in some cities, he chose the town of Saratov on the Volga River. Grandfather followed right after him.

Father had to take examinations for a trade, because without a profession Jews were not allowed to move. He had passed an examination for drugstore assistant. It meant being able to prepare distilled water, make mixtures, obtain goods for a drugstore, in short being a worker in a drugstore. In order to do so it was necessary to pass an obligatory examination in Russian, and Father had not studied in school, he studied at home. Father did not learn Russian at school, since he did not attend it; he studied it at home with a teacher. They were rather well off, able to hire a melamed for him. The teacher taught him various subjects, and besides, he taught him all prayers properly. He was capable of learning, grasping things fast. He learned Russian and wrote correctly. I keep an album of my sister's from when she was but a schoolgirl. Father wrote verses for her and put them down in her album himself.

As soon as my father moved to Saratov, he began to look for work at once. They found a place in a house next to a synagogue. There were two synagogues in town. One synagogue was big, with a dome and a magen david, all properly built. On the same site of land, leased from a bankrupt nobleman [Jews were not allowed to buy land], another two-storied house was built, and after internal restructuring the second floor accommodated another synagogue. There was one reformist synagogue for well-off people and an Orthodox one for others.

There was a small, two-storied wooden house near this synagogue, and it had a basement. So Father and Grandfather asked, ‘Can we have a store here?’ ‘Yes, you can.’ They wrote the ‘Grocery store’ sign-board themselves. Mother was both the manager and the salesperson. They started to trade little by little, before they could collect some capital. Gradually, with the increase of the turn-over, the store extended to two inter-connected apartments. In one apartment was the salesroom, and the warehouse was in the other. They sold mostly household commodities.

My parents moved to Saratov in 1898, before they had children. Both my sister and I were born in Saratov. I had two younger brothers, who died very young. There was a children’s scarlet fever epidemic, and they died at the age of five and one-and-a-half, respectively. My sister Sofia and I survived. She was born in 1905, was older than me, I was born in 1908.

When the store was ready, one apartment was turned into the sales premises, another into the warehouse, and we all lived in the third apartment, a basement. Then my aunt arrived, my mother’s half-sister from their mother’s second marriage. When she arrived in Saratov, she opened a workshop, with a sign-board, in the same house, on the ground floor. We actually lived in this apartment by then, not in the basement any more, but on the ground floor. But everything that indicated a living room was taken away during the day, when rich and even elite customers came.

My aunt took an active part in bringing up my sister and me. She lived with us for many years. Then she got married, left for Astrakhan, then returned to Saratov. She had another surname then, she became Schwarz.

There were eight apartments in our yard. The neighbors were Russian orthodox people. One of the apartments was occupied by the leader of the Union of Russian People, that is, the Black Hundred [4], he lived in our yard. And, when there was a pogrom in 1905 [5], before my birth, two weeks after my sister Sonya was born, he said to his men in the yard, ‘Don’t touch these Judes [Jews],’ and left to plunder the town. This leader Vaska, as father called him, was a kind of protection for us. My grandfather came running to us, Grandmother remained at home, and he came to us because they mainly hunted for men. We tried to think of where to hide him, there were two sheds by the entry to our apartment, with cellars. He climbed down into the cellar, followed by my father and his brother, my uncle Michael.

Mother had a two-week-old daughter, Sonya. She did not know what to do, to go down to the cellar with the baby would have been difficult. She was thinking and thinking, and right then shouting was heard in the synagogue, which was in the next building. Many Jews wanted to hide in the synagogue, which had big cellars. Mother grabbed the two-week-old girl, some of her clothes and a bottle of baby food and decided to run towards the center.

The center was three short blocks away. We lived near the center, but the place was already considered a suburb. She ran and ran, and didn’t meet any policeman in the suburbs, where only poor Jewish people lived. Police mainly patrolled the central streets, guarding rich Jews, who calmly stayed there, although some of them were robbed as well. But the police were concentrated there. Mother ran, and there was not a single policeman, just deserted streets. She reached the central street, it was called German Street. She passed two more houses, until she came to a smaller street crossing – Groshovaya. She turned into that dark street, and soon came across an old woman. ‘Where are you running to?’‘Well, you know, we are in trouble down there.’ ‘Oh, you are Jewish, let’s go.’ And that Russian woman took her to her home. And the baby cried, needed

swaddling. The woman even helped to change the diapers. And then the daughter of this old lady appears. ‘Mother, what have you done, brought a Jude home?! Kick her out immediately!’

Before World War I, there was the Russian-Japanese war. Father was of call-up age then. And he had to go to the recruitment office. The rules then were that Jews, and not only Jews, but Jews in particular, were to be called up, and in times of war they had to be drafted in the location where they had been registered as subject to the draft for the first time.

My father was born in Smolensk, completely by accident, because the family lived in Belarus all the time. When his mother was pregnant, she had to go to Smolensk, in Russia, from Belarus, to arrange a delivery of a grain consignment to Belarus. They traded in grain and other goods. Her husband could not go. So my grandmother went to Smolensk, found workers there, invited them to the warehouse, they loaded the grain, she paid them off, went to the post-office to send a telegram saying that the grain was being sent by railway, and suddenly felt, that it was time to give birth. There were private midwives in Smolensk. She went to one, and a day or two later gave birth to my father. She came home, and although he was born in Smolensk, his birth was registered in Mstislavl, to avoid any investigation as to why a Jewish woman had left to go somewhere.

And when my father was called up to the Russian-Japanese war and was summoned to the enlistment office, he said, ‘Why should I be drafted, I have just recently got married and brought my family here, what should I do?’ And they answered, ‘Find a substitute from among your relatives.’ The family council gathered, and his younger uncle Noi said, ‘I’ll go.’ He had not yet been called up for some reason. And the Russian-Japanese war began, and Noi was sent to the East and was besieged in some town. This town was blockaded for a long time and he died there like a hero and was awarded posthumously for his courage.

Back then medals and orders were sent to relatives. And because my father or grandfather had been registered as his closest relative, I cannot remember which precisely, the medal was brought to us. But, unfortunately, I showed it to one of my pals, our neighbor, a German boy. We were kids and were fighting street against street then, and he was older and promised me something for it, maybe a higher rank. For we also divided ourselves up into commanders and private soldiers. I was a private soldier. I was six years old, it was in 1914. He never gave that medal back to me.

The moment World War I started I was in the synagogue yard, we were playing. And suddenly the son of the synagogue servant, the shammash Kostya Levin, runs in with a newspaper in his hands and shouts: ‘War has broken out, war has broken out!’ Being a six-year-old boy, I could not understand, what war meant, who was fighting against who, etc. I ran with him to his apartment and to his father. The latter put on his glasses, started to read, Kostya helping him. ‘The Tsar’s manifesto. War has broken out.’

There was a big waste ground opposite our house, over the street. In a few days the recruits started to march there, because there was not enough space in the streets of the settlement. I took advantage of the situation and quickly learned all the intricacies of this square-bashing. Turn right, turn left, attention! – all this front-line service I mastered perfectly when I was seven. None of our relatives had been called up then. Jews were somehow not drafted then at all.

All Jews were divided into two groups in the town. One consisted of mainly prosperous Jews with their feet firmly on the ground – the Mistnagdim [6]. It was the bigger Jewish group. The second,

fewer in number, was called the Hasidim 7 in Yiddish and Khoseds in Russian. My father used to say with pride, that we were in this group – he called it ‘sect’ in Russian, Jews do not like the term. The rich men, as they were called, had everything well organized. They had chazzanim, singers, who sang during the service, and often acted as civil singers. And we, Hasidim, Father said, were a philosophical sect, and he was proud that in the 18th century and later many philosophers were born to this smaller section of the Jews.

Father frequently took me to the synagogue, or I just ran up to the second floor, where it was. Public worship is frequently interrupted by blessings. Everyone who bears the surname Kogan [Kogan is the Russian version of Cohen], steps forward, to where the Torah is, in a special big cabinet, the tabernacle. They turn to all of us, who are not Kogans, and bless us, even the Kogans, who had just reached the age of 13, that is, had just had their bar mitzvah. All the others stand, with their eyes closed or looking downwards, and the Kogans fold their arms like this: hold their arms above our heads, including the thirteen-year-old boys, they look at us, and we have no right to look at them. So they are holding their arms like this and reading the prayer of blessing. And even the 90-95-year-old men are standing with their heads bowed.

My father was a gabbai – a representative. The word gabbaim means the administration of a synagogue. My father and grandfather were elected to it. We occupied honorary seats in the synagogue, in the first row. All seats were bought out. Father had chosen a seat next to a window for himself, it was permanently his. The chair had a seat that could be lifted up, and it was possible to keep the tallit there. It could be locked, too.

There was one funny incident. Once I am sitting on Father’s chair, he’s standing nearby, and an old man – our neighbor Levit, a god-fearing old man, of whom I was very afraid because he was so strict – slapped me on the knee and said, ‘So, do you know, how they bless us?’ – it was right after the Kogans had blessed us. I said, ‘How? – Like this.’ – and I bent my head and closed my eyes. ‘But did you know, that if you look at them first, you will go blind? And if you look up a second time, you will die.’ I was really scared to death, and blinked at him. And he waited a little bit and said, ‘Shame on you, little boy, you didn’t even hear or understand what I said.’ I said, ‘What do you mean?’ He answered, ‘How can you possibly look a second time if you go blind after the first? My grandson guessed it, but you are not so bright.’ I took great offence at him.

Father read prayers in the morning. He used to wrap a belt around his arm [Mr. Tseitlin refers to the tefillin], so tight, that he could hardly bend it and I read a prayer, too. We observed Sabbath, lit candles. Mother lit the furnace every Friday, made dinner for Saturday, because on Saturday one was not allowed to work. On Friday she baked challot in the Russian stove, and as my grandmother was already old, she baked challot for us and for her, too. Each time the challot were laid out in a certain order, a prayer was said, this was on Friday night, and on Saturday, too, and only after that were you allowed to eat this plaited white bread.

When I grew up a little bit, I used to go to Grandfather and Grandmother’s place, they lived nearby when they came to Saratov. I always took two or three challot to Grandfather and Grandmother. Even after the revolution, during the lean years, when famine struck the Volga region and people were dying in the streets – I remember, it was in 1919-1921 – I still took two challot in a clean, ironed napkin to Grandmother, so that she, too, could read a prayer. [Editor’s note: The famine of 1920-1921 was mostly in Povolzhye and connected with disastrous lack of crop. This famine had

nothing to do with the famine in Ukraine of 1931-1933, inspired deliberately by Stalin.]

I learned to read all by myself. I like to tell people how I learned to read. There was a big market place two blocks from our house. It was called the lower market, a big square with huge stock facilities, and a lot of trading from camp-beds. There were many shops, and all shops had signboards. Signboards were not typed then, but painted with oil paint on tin, with big letters. I used to ask, 'What is this letter? And what is that letter? What is written here?' 'Krestovnikov Brothers, Kazan,' 'Soap and Candles.' That's how I got to know all letters. Another sign said: 'Bread,' and the name of the shopkeeper, the merchant. A drugstore, a bakery, and so on. I learned all letters and started to read little by little. I learned to read from signboards very fluently, understood how words were made. Then I went to the next street, Moskovskaya, also a central street, there were some stores there, too, with inscriptions in large letters.

I liked working very much, and my favorite toy was a hammer. I hammered in nails, small nails into the floor, or, after Grandfather brought me a log, I hammered nails into that. After I would drive in a nail, I would always say, 'Nailed.' All my family began to call me 'Nailed.' 'Nailed, come here, mother is calling, stop knocking.' That was my nickname.

Once I was sitting with Father in our store. There were no customers in. Father was reading a newspaper, I was playing with my hammer. I looked up and saw the name of the newspaper, 'Mail,' written in big letters, this newspaper was published in our town. Another newspaper was called 'Kopeck,' the cheapest one. And the third one was called 'The Saratov News.' I read all the titles aloud. Father put his newspaper aside, took off his glasses and said, 'What did you say?' I repeated: 'It says: "Mail," the one you just held, the other one is "Kopeck".' 'How do you know? You what, learned to read?' My father had no idea that I could read. 'Did you learn to read?' 'Yes, I did.' And I read another headline in the newspaper. And I had not yet turned six years old.

- Growing up

I was admitted to school. There was a Jewish school in the main street. It was founded by Jews. They rented a building, because Jews were not allowed to buy real estate. They made an agreement with the owner that the building would be completely refurbished inside. Thus, they had a school building in the main street. The Mitnagdim, the rich, wanted the school to be close to their houses, all of them lived in the main street. It was prestigious to live in the main street and to have your family signboard in it. I remember, when I walked there, I read: Mitsvakher, or some other Jewish surname. All of them were concentrated in one quarter.

Inside the rented building they made two classrooms out of one apartment, two out of another and there were one or two classrooms on the ground floor. So the Jewish school was organized. Teaching was in Russian, but sometimes in Yiddish, too. I went to that school, in the first grade. The teacher was surprised: 'The smallest boy, and he can already read?' I went to that school in 1917. I studied for two weeks and fell ill, I was very weak. I was admitted, but they were still studying letters, and I could read already, it did not interest me at all.

The following year the school was closed, it was after the February Revolution and I went on to an ordinary Russian grammar school. [Editor's note: The February Revolution was a democratic revolution in Russia in February of 1917, which led to the overthrow of autocracy: Tsar Nicholas II

abdicated the crown. This specific revolution, not the October one, as many think, lifted the Jewish Pale of Settlement.] It was a private grammar school named after a teacher, Dobrovolsky.

Close to it was another school, the First Saratov grammar school, from which N. G. Chernyshevsky [8] had graduated in his time. I was going to enter that grammar school, the senior preparatory class. But I was ill for a very long time with various diseases. And I was too late for the entrance examinations because of my illness. Father agreed that I should be examined with those pupils who were lagging behind and failed to complete the previous grade. There were about 8-12 of them.

I went with my father, and it was a huge building with wide corridors, a rarity for those times. We went up to the teacher. ‘We received permission from the director of this grammar school for him to take the examinations.’ He said, ‘The first examination is mathematics, is he ready?’ Father said, ‘Yes, he is ready.’ ‘He will take it with a group of pupils who had bad marks in the subject.’ They showed me into a classroom. Father waited in the corridor. There were three teachers there, dressed in uniform with shining copper buttons, and dirks – that was the kind of uniform teachers wore then. And high-school students also had special uniforms. My parents bought me some inexpensive uniform – a cap, an overcoat, everything as it should be.

A teacher had stood up and written the conditions of a mathematical problem on the blackboard. In great detail. Then he ordered us to start solving it. I solved the problem straight off without any problems. While I was solving it, I heard a noise and looked back. It was our neighbor Volod’ka, a son of a christened Jew, who was baptized in order to finish the medical faculty of our Saratov Institute. Volod’ka had frequently beaten me, he was stout, three years older than me, and I was small. He usually bullied all Jewish boys, and frequently thrashed them hard. And suddenly this Volodka waves his arms at me, asking for a crib. And I had no idea what a crib was. I turned to him once or twice, but he was only moving his lips, trying to say something.

One of the teachers noticed and came up to me: ‘Why are you fidgeting?’ ‘It’s nothing.’ ‘You have to stand up when a teacher addresses you.’ I stood up, and the school desks had such folding tops, on hinges, and the folding part had fallen, when I stood up, with a big noise. He instructs me again: ‘You should hold the folder, you don’t have to make such a noise.’ At last I am standing up, and he says, ‘When an older person talks to you, it is necessary to turn to him.’ I turned to the man, already grown red from embarrassment, not knowing what he wanted from me. ‘So why did you fidget?’ I say, ‘I do not know.’ ‘And who will know?’ I thought: ‘Now he will expel me.’ At that moment he looked into my notebook: ‘What, are you finished?’ I answered, ‘Yes, I am.’ ‘All solved? Well, give it to me.’ And, without saying another word, he approached the other two teachers and showed them my paper. They were greatly surprised.

Nobody had completed the task yet, and here comes the green boy, small and shabby, and solves everything almost instantly. It turned out, as I learned later, that they admired the fact that I, having read the question, had decided at once what I needed in the end. The teacher noticed this. I still remember the maths problem today. The teacher came up to me, smiling for some reason. He approached me and took me by the shoulder: ‘Let’s go.’ I was frightened. How is this, all the guys sitting, and I must go somewhere. We went out of the classroom and behind the door were my father and a priest, who had come to wait for his son. Father rushed towards me at once, ‘What’s the matter? Were you confused?’ And the teacher slapped him on the shoulder, ‘Don’t worry,

everything is all right, take your son home.' And he shut the door.

Father continued to worry, because it was only me alone who had been let out. We decided to wait. One and a half hours, two hours – it seemed like ages to me. The priest took me by the hand and asked, 'Listen, boy, was the problem the same for everyone?' – 'Yes.' – 'Was everyone solving it?' – 'Everyone.' – 'And, you were the first to accomplish it?' – 'Yes, I was the first, and the others are still working on it.' 'Can you tell me the problem?' I told him. 'And how did you solve it?' I began to show him the solution to the problem right there on the window-sill. Father was standing nearby, he saw that I had solved it correctly, and clapped me on the shoulder: 'Good fellow.'

We were standing and waiting for what seemed ages, but still the other guys had not finished. One of the teachers came out and Father asked him, 'Shall we wait longer?' – 'No, everything is all right, you can go, and, by the way, he does not have to take the Russian exam.' Father said, 'How come, the day after tomorrow they are supposed to take a Russian examination?' – 'He's fine; he has put down all commas and semicolons perfectly, exactly where necessary, don't bring him.' This was the way I entered grammar school.

The Dobrovolsky Russian private grammar school was a three-storied building. We were all the time competing with the First grammar school. Mainly Russian children studied there. Many Germans lived in Saratov. The Volga Republic was across the river. Two bridges were built over to the town of Engels, now it is a part of Saratov, but earlier it was Pokrovskaya village. [Before 1931 the town was named Pokrovsk and after that up to now it is called Engels]. Germans studied in our grammar school, too. We had a Singer, a Miller, etc.

During the famine in the Volga region it was hard to survive. It is enough to say that not only was bread short, but salt was, too, and it was miserable managing without salt. Salt was brought from Astrakhan, in sacks, it was dirty, and one had to dissolve it in water and pour the dirty water off, to purify it. ARA 9, the American mission to help the starving people in the Volga region, arrived in our grammar school. They brought aluminum bowls and spoons, which were an innovation to us. They had just become fashionable then, but were very costly, one kilo of aluminum cost 50 rubles in the beginning. At home we ate with metal spoons, some were of pure iron, some covered with nickel, and chromium plating superseded nickel plating.

The Americans provided us with very good food. Lenin had a meeting with the famous Jew Armand Hammer 10, who bought valuables and pictures. He bought artworks, sold by the Soviet government from the museums almost for nothing, and Lenin asked him to help. He asked, 'What can I do?' – 'Can you organize a pencil plant?" – 'Yes, I can.' And a pencil plant was launched by Hammer.

I was very weak. I started off well in the first year, but then I fell ill. When I came to enter the second grade, I was interviewed, and I knew everything. I studied Sonya's textbook at home while I was ill. Sometimes Sonya helped me, otherwise I did everything myself. Sonya went to the private girls' grammar school owned by Mrs. Kufeld, who was a German, and very severe. Sonya completed this grammar school.

From the very beginning, I can say, I was the best pupil in the grammar school. In the class I enjoyed some authority, although I was very small. And I even earned my first kiss from a teacher. Teachers kissed me twice in my life. In the fourth grade we had a teacher called Lydia Vasilievna

Maltseva. Her father was the head of the municipal council. He had planted the second Lipki, as we used to say. Lipki was a big garden in the city center, surrounded by a metal fence, near the theaters and the new cathedral. A huge and very beautiful garden, overlooking the Volga River. The father of our teacher had planted a second Lipki near our house: a whole street of chestnut trees. And she bragged about it.

She had been under pressure at times, she had no teacher training. She was hired through contacts, people said. She could teach all right in the first grade, in the second, too … but at the beginning of the fourth grade the problems began. She was not too good at geography, poor at natural sciences. There were subjects that she could hardly teach. She was an expert in German and French, but with other subjects she had problems. And I used to help her.

Once she came into the classroom, turned red in the face, because the director had summoned her and warned her that representatives from the town party committee were going to come and make a survey of our school. She was literally shaking. It was already in Soviet times. Suddenly three men came in, and you could tell at once that they were not very competent at science. ‘Can we attend your lesson?’ What could she do, who to call to the blackboard? Tseitlin, of course. She asked me, first in geography, what continents I knew, what islands, and what an island was, what peninsulas I knew, which peninsulas were in Asia, America, Africa. I promptly answered, I loved geography very much. She was sure I would answer all questions. The teachers kissed me as a sign of appreciation, as I rescued them with the help of my knowledge in front of the inspectors.

By the end of school I had developed a certain inclination for linguistics. I planned to enter the literature department of the teacher training faculty of Saratov University. I completed the school – it was not called grammar school any more. Grammar schools were done away with in 1918. It became an ordinary Soviet school. I ended the ninth grade in 1926, that was the last grade then. I wrote my composition perfectly well. There was no ‘excellent’ mark then, only ‘good,’ ‘satisfactory’ and ‘not satisfactory.’ This was introduced by the Bolsheviks 11, they thought it was quite enough.

I started to take examinations to enter Saratov University, when one of my friends told me, ‘You will be a poor teacher, getting only 75 rubles a month. And I will graduate from technical school – 125 rubles right away, as a junior technician, and as a senior – up to 200-225. You see the difference?’ Eventually, I entered and started to successfully study at the Construction Engineering College. I happened to listen to A. V. Lunacharsky's lectures and communicate with him. [A. V. Lunacharsky (1875-1933): - a political and public figure, a writer and the first Soviet people’s commissar of education.] But even during that period I attended literary circles.

After the revolution we didn’t live well, although we had enough food, otherwise it was not a grand-style life. And the family, especially Father, had been used to living well. In fact, he grew up in a wealthy family. Because people were starving and food was distributed by ration cards, literate people, who could count well, were in demand. Cards were marked for a quarter pound, half a pound, one pound and so on. So Father was appointed a superintendent in the bureau for distribution of food and other products. Cards were typed on whatever paper was at hand, because of the lack of good paper. For example, big sheets of labels had been prepared, say, for sweets, and the sweets came to an end, but the paper remained. And cards were typed on the reverse side of these labels.

Father was the superintendent of this bureau for two or three years. Later, in the days of the NEP 12, he became the manager of a cooperative shop, organized by Jews. It is interesting that the name of this cooperative society was Jewish, but in Russian letters. It was called ‘Mitsva,’ which means ‘a gift.’ Father was the manager of this shop for several years. First they got permission to open some old shop deserted a long time ago, did it up and traded there. And the members of that cooperative society, all of them Jewish, received a discount any time they purchased anything; the total sum was counted and then 2 percent was deducted, just a little bit cheaper. He ordered all necessary products and goods, and sold them himself. For a period there were two more salesmen, also Jews.

Once Father had been sent to the Tambov region, to act as a storekeeper during the construction of a grain elevator. At that time the well-known Antonov gang was active in the Tambov region. [A. S. Antonov (1888-1922), member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, leader of the peasant’s rebellion against Bolshevik power in Tambov and Voronezh region in 1922.]

Later Father was a cashier at the Saratov boiler factory. It was in the 1930s. He paid out wages to workers, brought money from the bank, issued bonds. He died in 1939 in Saratov. His funeral was attended by the entire factory. We lived in the same street as the boiler factory. And the funeral procession went past the factory and on to the cemetery, the cemetery was just right ahead. And when people were passing the factory, someone there decided to blow the factory hooter, and all the workers were asked to come out and bid farewell to Efim Yakovlevich. He was buried with honors.

I went to Saratov in 1979 to bury his daughter, my sister Sonya. I did not find his tomb. During the war Saratov was bombed by the Germans and two or three bombs fell on the Jewish cemetery. I searched there for the graves of my mother and father, but to no avail. I found two or three holes, and some destroyed tombstones down there.

Father was not a communist in Soviet times and Mother did not enter the Communist Party either. Mother survived the war, and she was very active both during and after it. In spite of lack of education, she could read Russian texts perfectly and quickly, and throughout the war she was a propagandist, every evening she read the newspapers aloud to neighbors who came out on the porch. She used to put on her glasses and read the Soviet Information Bureau reports to a dozen people sitting in a circle under a big shed that protected them in rainy weather.

My sister Sonya’s fate wasn’t a very happy one. She did not get married, although there were suitors. She lived with our mother, unwilling to leave her. She worked as a teacher at school, teaching Russian. Then she was a teacher of Russian language and literature in the Library College. She liked her job very much, sitting late in the evenings checking the homework of her students. She never went out anywhere.

Teaching in the Library College, she made friends with a librarian who also worked there. They were such close friends that when the woman became fatally ill, she made Mother promise that Sonya would marry her husband when she dies. And Mother was as good as her word. They officially registered, but in fact did not live together, he lived in one room and she in another. He told everybody that she was his wife, but actually this was not true. Sonya died in 1979. She was buried in Saratov.

I completed the Construction Engineering College in 1931. There were two departments: civil construction and highway engineering. Later a hydraulic engineering department was organized, which I entered. All of us graduated as construction engineers, in other words we became foremen in charge of construction.

When I entered the college, it was a three-year school, admitting people with secondary education, after completing nine or seven years of secondary school. I was the only one to have come after the ninth grade, so I lost two years, but it was easy for me to study general subjects in the technical school. I did almost nothing, I knew everything pretty well. And I was not bad at special construction disciplines, either.

It is enough to say that we published the lectures of one of our professors and my abstract of lectures was used as the basis for this brochure, lectures on hydraulics. It was the most difficult subject for my comrades. The professor's surname was on the cover, with mine below it, saying that the publication was based upon abstracts by Tseitlin, a student of the technical school. I copied and printed all the materials. The circulation was very small, only 50 or 75 copies, just for the students and for the library of the technical school. It was the first of its sort in school.

When I was a first-year student, I negotiated work in the Ryazan Regional Land Administration. I was also offered trips to the Far East and Far North, with very good grants. But I was advised against going there, due to my poor health and I went to the Ryazan region and worked there for a few years. I had to build a water pipeline from the farmyards to the water tower and from the farmyards to a pond in a manor that had once belonged to the builder of the Moscow-Ryazan railway, von Mekk. There was a peasant saying [This was not a rumor or a saying – they really said so]: 'There was a water pipeline here, made of wood; and the master who drilled these pipes out of logs is still alive, and the pipeline worked all right, only it delivered mash to a vodka distillery rather than water.'

I became interested, found this old timer Stepan, who drilled wood pipes [metal pipes were difficult to get then]. With the agreement of the state farm I went to Moscow to see Professor Gineev, the author of a textbook on water supplies. He says, 'Please, find out how they did it and what drills they used.' It appeared the drills were all hand-made by the smith. When this Stepan came to me, he said, 'Grandfather and I did it in 1908-1909. See this stone barn, measure out two sazhens [Sazhen is a Russian measure of length, equal to 7 feet, i.e., 2,13 m] from it and dig, you will find a pipe.' We dug and we eventually found that pipe. We wanted to see how it had survived so many years. We struck it with an axe, and the axe rebounded off it as if from metal – this was how alcoholized it had become from transporting mash to the vodka factory. It didn't decay in the least.

I wrote about it to Professor Nikolay Nikolaevich Gineev, and I was hired right away as a scientific employee at their institute. I went there several times for consultations and they came to me as well to look and to take photographs. Finally I built that water pipeline, not completely though, because I was summoned to Moscow by Professor Gineev, who appointed me as a scientific researcher and even issued a license to order foreign literature worth 10 gold rubles every year. I received some books from Germany for that money.

So I worked a few years in Ryazan as a trainee, in the second, third and fourth years of technical school, and then after graduation. Inspectors from the Moscow Land Administration came to survey my work, and finally I was employed by the design organization of a construction trust,

Mosmeliostroi – a state company dealing with meliorative hydraulic engineering. I began to work in Moscow and was promoted very fast. I was soon elected a member of the Employees Board, and then its vice-president.

I got married in 1936. My wife, Fanny Mikhailovna Epstein, was a member of the Employees Board too. I became acquainted with her on March 3, 1933. She came to my office and said, 'I was advised to approach you. You are a member of the Employees Board, so will you please sign here to confirm that you do not object to hiring this new employee.' She worked at 'The Sickle and Hammer' factory as a secretary to the head of the trade-union organization. She worked at the 'The Sickle and Hammer' factory before she came to work in our organization.

My wife came to Moscow from Simferopol where she lived and studied and completed grammar school. Then she finished a music school and moved to Moscow hoping to enter the conservatory, she played piano. They had a piano at home, so she had a lot of practice. Her parents were religious people and observed all traditions at home. However, after her arrival in Moscow she lost all her religious upbringing. As a matter of fact, it was almost impossible for a young person at that time, especially in a big city, working or studying in a public institution – and there were no other – to remain religious. This concerned not only Jews, but people of other religions as well. It was simply not safe. A religious wedding was absolutely out of the question. In 1938 our daughter Stella was born.

In the late 1930s, my life took a sharp turn in a new direction in which, as it happened, I have been moving ever since. I came across a newspaper article saying that the first Municipal House of Pioneers had opened in Moscow, and it also said what circles were organized and what specialists were invited to work with children. It looked interesting to me and I organized an architectural studio there, and a construction laboratory, which subsequently trained a lot of well-known specialists. Simultaneously, I was a correspondence student at the Timiryazyev Academy, the famous Agricultural Academy in Moscow, named after K. A. Timiryazyev [(1843-1920), an important Russian scientist naturalist]. I passed my last examination on June 20, 1941. I only had to defend my diploma. And suddenly the war broke out 13.

- **During the war**

When the war with Germany began, I worked as the head of the science and technology department of the Moscow Municipal House of Pioneers. I learned about the outbreak of the war from a radio broadcast of the speech by V. M. Molotov 14. 'Hitlerite Germany has unilaterally broken the agreement with the Soviet Union, and without a declaration of war has started military aggression on a broad front line from the southern to the northern part of our boundary line.'

I hurried to work and when the entire collective had gathered we had a meeting. I warned the director that I was prepared to apply as a volunteer to the army. After the meeting we dismissed all the kids, and on the next working day, which was Tuesday, I came to work with a filled in enlistment form and handed it over to the secretary of the party organization. She said, 'I did not expect that you would be the first.' I was not subject to the draft. I still hold a passport from that period, which states, 'Not subject to the draft, has not undergone any military training,' right under my surname. It was because I was born with a very serious disease, I had heart problems.

I learned that all 27 men, who worked in our department, had filled out similar forms, and we were enlisted in a squad of the National Guard. On July 2 I received a message saying that I should go to school no. 313 15, close to our House of Pioneers. I came with an ordinary sack, because I did not have any military kit-bag. Just a sack, with things packed by my wife. We were lodged in that school, desks were removed and beds installed, and some guys were sleeping on the floor.

Our military training began. We were endlessly marching in the schoolyard, engaged in square-bashing. We spent the nights there, too, using our sacks as pillows. On July 9 we were raised by an alarm, when we were already asleep, given our military uniforms and ordered to fall in. We went out, we were counted, because some people had earlier received a compensatory holiday to visit relatives. Almost all 27 men were there. A truck drove into the yard, we got in, not knowing where we were going. On the outskirts of Moscow we got off and went to a bathhouse, washed ourselves, changed our clothes into military uniforms, returned to school and put all our civilian clothes and shoes into kit-bags.

The next day our column was bombed. We went by truck to Bryansk. On the way we passed through Kulikovo Field. I remember that the Germans had just bombed the road ahead of us. Then we rode another 150-180 kilometers by bus. We stopped close to the front and walked in a column further on. On the road we were given rifles and 5 cartridges each and were told that it was ‘for the time being.’ This ‘for the time being’ lasted for quite a long while. We had already reached the front line, and we still had only 5 cartridges per person. And there was a strict routine: a daily check-up of the state of the ammunition. And every morning everyone had to show his 5 cartridges and the rifle, and the first sergeant went around and inspected.

I remember well that it was the village of Mitino, 7 kilometers from the town of Gzhatsk [subsequently named after the first cosmonaut Gagarin], where we first met the Germans. We entered Mitino late at night. When we approached, the Germans opened fire. I did not see or hear if anyone was wounded or cried out. The day before, we were sent a commander for the platoon, a young boy, in a clean and completely new uniform; he didn’t even have a revolver, not even those 5 cartridges or a rifle. So he broke a branch from a tree as a weapon. This first skirmish I remember very well. We spent two hours there. I remember a haystack burning. Afterwards we retreated for several days. We retreated trying to hold out. The Germans approached, firing in a disorderly manner.

We fell back to the Moscow region. We entered Volokolamsk, a big regional center in the west of this region, under bombardment. At that moment a bread truck came into town. We approached it: ‘Give us some bread.’ ‘No.’ One of our soldiers jumped into the truck without asking, grabbed a loaf of bread, and was hit by a bottle. He literally howled and threw away the loaf. They had bread, but they wouldn’t give us any, they were to deliver it to their own unit.

So we drew off to Moscow, until the well-known order was issued: ‘Not a single step back. Moscow is behind us.’

I found two of my friends at the station of Golitsyno, a railroad station to the west of Moscow. The forces were retreating to the east to Moscow. One of them was Farid Yarullin, the Tatar composer, known throughout the Soviet Union as the author of the ballet ‘Shurale.’ [Editor’s note: Born in 1914, Yarullin was killed in action in 1943.]

During one of the numerous shelling, which we suffered, I was hit by several bullets, luckily my jacket was unbuttoned, and the bullets went through it, not hitting my three hand grenades. The thing is that while we were retreating, if I found rifle cartridges or grenades, I picked them up. I had 24 cartridges in my pockets. I thought that there was no point in surrendering, that if I was captured by the Germans, they would immediately recognize a Jew, and would inevitably shoot me, so I would rather fight back. And I filled two pockets with ammunition.

One bullet entered my leg. I was thinking to myself, 'What shall I do, I am bleeding, there are a lot of blood vessels here.' As I had puttees on my feet, they bothered me a lot. And Yarullin was nearby, and I told him, 'Take this just in case.' I gave him one grenade. I went on, walking was difficult, I clamped the wound and felt blood. But I could still walk. I went in the opposite direction and turned to that section of the woods, which we had recently left. I went out to the edge of the forest, and, without meeting anybody, reached our unit and got into the medical and sanitary battalion.

The wound healed, but I developed boils on both legs, first on the lower legs, but then higher and higher until my entire legs were covered with abscesses all over. Probably, the reason was that I had to sleep on bare ground for many nights; in fact we only had light jackets, and there weren't even overcoats. The doctor came, and I asked, 'What shall I do?' 'And what can one do? In such cases it is necessary to eat garlic, and to apply special ointment, and I have no ointments with me.' So the female doctor replied, which she accompanied with helpless shrugs. When I came to the hospital for bandaging, they asked, 'What happened to you?' and I said, 'It is what you earn at the front nowadays.' It would have helped if they had anointed the skin with something, but there were no liniments available in the hospital. That is why I was kept in the hospital for a long time.

This was at the beginning of 1942. When I was sent to the group of recovering patients, I was appointed commander of a unit of hospital attendants. And we, though it was hard, carried the wounded, took them from the trains that came from the front, helped them to get into buses and streetcars. Streetcars worked round the clock. It was in Moscow; I was assigned there. We went at nights, mainly to the Kazan passenger depot, sometimes to the Leningrad terminal. We were shelled several times.

By that time I was already a sergeant. We were put on trains and we went to the front. It was the spring of 1942, the snow had already started to melt. My legs had almost healed, but the scabs remained. So I found myself in the 22nd shooting division, then the 82nd Red Banner Division. It fought in the central front, and I spent most of the war in this area, the Smolensk region. We liberated the Smolensk region. In September we liberated Smolensk. I remember very clearly how we passed through Smolensk at night. Explosions everywhere. The Germans mined many buildings in Smolensk and while we were going through Smolensk, we heard endless explosions.

We moved farther and farther to the west. We reached Belarus. Our division was concentrated in the so-called Red Pine Forest. Its southern part was our last outpost to advance to Belarus. It was already the end of September. Our regiment advanced even earlier, approaching the spot where Yarullin was later wounded. The relief was as follows: a narrow strip of land extended 17-20 kilometers, the Dnieper River flowing west from the left, and some huge marshes on the right.

Once a commander called me, and ordered me to take documents to the opposite side of the Dnieper River, and I went at night on a ferry, accompanied by our signalman. This ferry consisted

of 4-5 logs up against each other. You sat on top squatting, or with your legs down in the water so that the Germans, whose planes flew around and regularly bombed, could not see us. We crossed the river, I received a folder with papers for the chief of staff and we needed to go back. The signalman, who was with me, remained on the other side. And I had to get back alone. He had canvas mittens, and I had none.

I should have asked the commander to send somebody else with me, but I didn't. I went there and had to ferry over by myself. In the middle of the river I had a lot of trouble throwing the braid through the connected ropes. And the ropes were not only tied together, but for strength they were wrapped round in several places with a telephone cable, and the loose ends stuck out everywhere. I could not do the job at all, my legs almost froze in the water. I vaguely remember how I reached the bank.

When I was on the bank, I could hardly make out what the guards were asking me about. I had no right to give the documents to anyone except for the chief of staff. I asked, 'Where is Major this and that?' 'He is here in the blindage [dugout] you can see him.' They showed me to the blindage, and suddenly everyone shouted, 'Air, air!' I was on my way to this blindage where the chief of reconnaissance and the chief of staff were sitting. Everyone hails me, 'Down! Down!' It was an open spot. I came back.

Near the crossing someone had started to dig a trench, but then there was nobody there, only a spade. I started to dig a hole, when a raid began. I am standing near this pit and see an airplane making a circle and starting to dive. While it's diving, I am looking at it, and it turns directly to where I am. And suddenly I see a black pinpoint falling from it, and I realize it is a bomb, and it flies at me. I jumped in the pit.

This was my second wound, and there were more contusions later. We failed to break through the German defense then, they held onto that spot for a few more months. We burst through in another direction only the following year, the Germans had been compelled to retreat, threatened by encirclement.

Our division was awarded the order of Kutuzov, it is normally an order given to military leaders, military units are rarely granted this award. We tore off of the enemy defenses and went to the rear for reinforcements, and fresh forces entered in our stead. Then we broke through in another location. We liberated the Belovezhskaya Puscha [also known as Bialowieza Forest, a national park in Belarus and Poland, a UNESCO World Heritage Site]. I walked through it two times, a very good place, and I saw live bisons. There is a museum in Belovezhskaya Puscha, which I visited. The Germans did not touch it.

I went to Nicholas II's small hunting lodge, I was even in his apartments, I passed through all the rooms of this two-storied building. On the second floor were the apartments of the tsar and his court, and the servants lived downstairs. When I was on the second floor, one of the attendants told me, 'These are Nicholas's private rooms, and this is his lavatory.' Upon which I said, 'I will take advantage of this lavatory.' And I used that imperial lavatory.

Let me also tell you about my correspondence with the writer Ilya Ehrenburg 16. For some time at the front I was in charge of informing soldiers of political issues. Many of my brothers-in-arms liked bright journalistic articles, including those by Erenburg. They frequently asked me to re-read them,

so once I decided to write to the well-known author. Imagine my surprise when on June 7, 1943 the field post-office brought me an answer from the writer and his book 'Exasperation' with a dedicative inscription. Needless to say, the letter and the book became very popular among our scouts.

We fought both at the Baltic front, and at the First Belarus front. We were endlessly transferred from place to place, without a chance for a rest. After a week or two for reinforcements, we were again ordered to tear at the enemy defense. At the end of the war we entered Berlin. We finished the war on the Elba, where we met American troops. I finished the war as a sergeant. In 1944, at the front, I joined the Communist Party. I was demobilized in November 1945.

- **After the war**

Having returned home, I, without a day for rest, went to the place where I had worked before the war. I was received with open arms, and I immediately resumed my favorite job. Gradually I became not simply a teacher in circles, but also a propagandist of manual labor at secondary schools. At that time I supervised the department of science and technology in the Moscow Municipal House of Pioneers, directed the club of young craftsmen, I was the initiator of the first 'Skilful hands' hobby groups in this country, for which I created the program and the first methodical recommendations.

At the end of the 1940s, the campaign against the 'rootless cosmopolitans' 17 – i.e. Jews working mainly in science, art and culture – was launched in the country, and finally in January 1953 the Doctors' Plot 18 was fabricated. Though, thank God, our family was not affected by the repressions – neither those of the 1930s [the interviewee is referring to the so-called Great Terror] 19, nor the post-war ones.

I was nevertheless summoned to the authorities and suggested to remove my last name from the list of the compilers of the professional collections. Thus, in books or articles, beside my last name – and sometimes instead of it – much more favorable last names would appear. Apart from the moral harm, this caused a material one as well: I did not get the author's fee. Of course we were 'short-sighted' then and did not link all the negative things going on in the country with the name of Stalin. Stalin's death in 1953 was a national tragedy, and all my family members were questioning themselves in terror: 'What will happen now to all the country and to us, Jews?'

From 1954 I worked as a scientific employee in the research institute of general and polytechnic education at the Academy of Teaching Sciences, and from 1962 until retirement I worked in the Moscow State Teaching Institute as senior lecturer.

With co-authors I have published more than 100 works devoted to methodological issues, including more than 20 monographs. I wrote many articles. Some books had more than ten publications, have been translated into the languages of the peoples of the USSR, and were even issued in some countries of the then National Democracy [countries of Eastern Europe: Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Eastern Germany, which together with the USSR formed the Warsaw Treaty countries] under the patronage of UNESCO. Copyrights didn't exist in the USSR then, and I got nothing for the translated books. Only for my first monograph, published in Russian in 1948, I was paid quite a good fee, and we could buy furniture for our apartment and clothes after

the war, because, in fact, I returned from the war without a thing.

Apart from my main work, I had been involved in a lot of public activities: I was a member of the Scientific and Methodical Council of the Ministry of Public Education of the USSR, an associate editor of the journal 'Elementary School,' a member of the Academic Council of the Institute of Polytechnical Labor Education, the vice-president of Council of Veterans of the 82nd Yartsevo division. I keep a file of names and addresses of the surviving veterans at home.

I was always very enthusiastic about my job and social activities, and I was never in opposition to the system. When at the beginning of the 1970s the process of emigration to Israel started, we never censured those people leaving, but for our family it was out of the question.

I retired only after the second heart attack, a little more than 20 years ago. But I only abstain from paid jobs, and go on with my public activities. I continued working with the veterans until I left Moscow. In 1998, after my wife died, I moved from Moscow to Saint Petersburg, where I live now with the family of my daughter Stella. She is a doctor of sciences, professor, the head of a department at the Teaching University, so teaching continues in our family.

- **Glossary:**

1 GPU
State Political Department, the state security agency of the USSR, that is, its punitive body.

2 Jewish Pale of Settlement
Certain provinces in the Russian Empire were designated for permanent Jewish residence and the Jewish population was only allowed to live in these areas. The Pale was first established by a decree by Catherine II in 1791. The regulation was in force until the Russian Revolution of 1917, although the limits of the Pale were modified several times. The Pale stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, and 94% of the total Jewish population of Russia, almost 5 million people, lived there. The overwhelming majority of the Jews lived in the towns and shtetls of the Pale. Certain privileged groups of Jews, such as certain merchants, university graduates and craftsmen working in certain branches, were granted to live outside the borders of the Pale of Settlement permanently.

3 Russian Revolution of 1917
Revolution in which the tsarist regime was overthrown in the Russian Empire and, under Lenin, was replaced by the Bolshevik rule. The two phases of the Revolution were: February Revolution, which came about due to food and fuel shortages during World War I, and during which the tsar abdicated and a provisional government took over. The second phase took place in the form of a coup led by Lenin in October/November (October Revolution) and saw the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks.

4 Black Hundred
The Black Hundred was an extreme right wing party which emerged at the turn of the twentieth

century in Russia. This group of radicals increased in popularity before the beginning of the Revolution of 1917 when tsarism was in decline. They found support mainly among the aristocrats and members other lower-middle class. The Black Hundred were the perpetrators of many Jewish pogroms in Russian cities such as Odessa, Kiev, Yekaterinoslav and Bialystok. Although they were nowhere near a major party in Russia, they did make a major impact on the Jews of Russia, who were constantly being oppressed by their campaigns.

5 1905 Russian Revolution

Erupted during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, and was sparked off by a massacre of St. Petersburg workers taking their petitions to the Tsar (Bloody Sunday). The massacre provoked disgust and protest strikes throughout the country: between January and March 1905 over 800,000 people participated in them. Following Russia's defeat in its war with Japan, armed insurrections broke out in the army and the navy (the most publicized in June 1905 aboard the battleship Potemkin). In 1906 a wave of pogroms swept through Russia, directed against Jews and Armenians. The main unrest in 1906 (involving over a million people in the cities, some 2,600 villages and virtually the entire Baltic fleet and some of the land army) was incited by the dissolution of the First State Duma in July. The dissolution of the Second State Duma in June 1907 is considered the definitive end to the revolution.

6 Misnagdim

or Mitnagdim is a Hebrew word meaning "opponents". It is the plural of misnaged or mitnaged. Most prominent among the Misnagdim was Rabbi Elijah (Eliyahu) ben Shlomo Zalman (1720–1797), commonly known as the Vilna Gaon or the Gra. The term "Misnagdim" gained a common usage among European Jews as the term that referred to Ashkenazi Jews who opposed the rise and spread of early Hasidi Judaism, particularly as embodied by Hasidism's founder, Rabbi Yisroel (Israel) ben Eliezer (1698–1760), who was known as the Baal Shem Tov or BESHT. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misnagdim)

7 Hasidism (Hasidic)

Jewish mystic movement founded in the 18th century that reacted against Talmudic learning and maintained that God's presence was in all of one's surroundings and that one should serve God in one's every deed and word. The movement provided spiritual hope and uplifted the common people. There were large branches of Hasidic movements and schools throughout Eastern Europe before World War II, each following the teachings of famous scholars and thinkers. Most had their own customs, rituals and life styles. Today there are substantial Hasidic communities in New York, London, Israel and Antwerp.

8 Chernyshevsky, Nikolay Gavrilovich (1828-1889)

Russian critic and editor, who began his journalistic career in 1853 at Sovremennik (The Contemporary), which he turned into the leading radical publication of the time. He emphasized the social aspect of literature. His novel Chto delat (What Is To Be Done?, 1863) was regarded as a revolutionary classic in the Soviet Union. Chernyshevsky was arrested for revolutionary activities in 1862, sentenced to seven years of hard labor and twenty years of exile in Siberia. He was allowed

to leave Siberia due to bad health condition in 1883 and spent the rest of his days in his native Saratov.

9 ARA (American Relief Administration)

After the Revolution of 1917, the ensuing Civil War produced acute food shortages in southwestern Russia. By 1920 it was clear that a full-scale famine was under way. In early 1920 the Soviet government sent out a worldwide appeal for food aid to avert the starvation of millions of people. Although it had not officially recognized the Soviet regime, the United States government was pressed from many sides to intervene, and in August 1920 an informal agreement was negotiated to begin a famine relief program. Congress authorized $20 million, and the American Relief Administration (ARA) was set up to do the job. After Soviet officials agreed, hundreds of American volunteers were dispatched to oversee the program. The ARA distributed thousands of tons of grain, as well as clothing and medical supplies. ARA aid continued into 1923.

10 Hammer, Armand (1898–1990) was an American-Jewish business tycoon most closely associated with Occidental Petroleum, a company he ran for decades, though he was known as well for his art collection, his philanthropy, and for his close ties to the Soviet Union

Thanks to business interests around the world and his "citizen diplomacy," Hammer cultivated a wide network of friends and acquaintances. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armand_Hammer)

11 Bolsheviks

Members of the movement led by Lenin. The name 'Bolshevik' was coined in 1903 and denoted the group that emerged in elections to the key bodies in the Social Democratic Party (SDPRR) considering itself in the majority (Rus. bolshynstvo) within the party. It dubbed its opponents the minority (Rus. menshynstvo, the Mensheviks). Until 1906 the two groups formed one party. The Bolsheviks first gained popularity and support in society during the 1905-07 Revolution. During the February Revolution in 1917 the Bolsheviks were initially in the opposition to the Menshevik and SR ('Sotsialrevolyutsionyery', Socialist Revolutionaries) delegates who controlled the Soviets (councils). When Lenin returned from emigration (16th April) they proclaimed his program of action (the April theses) and under the slogan 'All power to the Soviets' began to Bolshevize the Soviets and prepare for a proletariat revolution. Agitation proceeded on a vast scale, especially in the army. The Bolsheviks set about creating their own armed forces, the Red Guard. Having overthrown the Provisional Government, they created a government with the support of the II Congress of Soviets (the October Revolution), to which they admitted some left-wing SRs in order to gain the support of the peasantry. In 1952 the Bolshevik party was renamed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

12 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 Revolution of 1917 and the Russian 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.

13 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. The German blitzkrieg, known as Operation Barbarossa, nearly succeeded in breaking the Soviet Union in the months that followed. Caught unprepared, the Soviet forces lost whole armies and vast quantities of equipment to the German onslaught in the first weeks of the war. By November 1941 the German army had seized the Ukrainian Republic, besieged Leningrad, the Soviet Union's second largest city, and threatened Moscow itself. The war ended for the Soviet Union on 9th May 1945.

14 Molotov, V

P. (1890-1986): Statesman and member of the Communist Party leadership. From 1939, Minister of Foreign Affairs. On June 22, 1941 he announced the German attack on the USSR on the radio. He and Eden also worked out the percentages agreement after the war, about Soviet and western spheres of influence in the new Europe.

15 School #

Schools had numbers and not names. It was part of the policy of the state. They were all state schools and were all supposed to be identical.

16 Ehrenburg, Ilya Grigorievich (1891-1967)

Famous Russian Jewish novelist, poet and journalist who spent his early years in France. His first important novel, The Extraordinary Adventures of Julio Jurento (1922) is a satire on modern European civilization. His other novels include The Thaw (1955), a forthright piece about Stalin's régime which gave its name to the period of relaxation of censorship after Stalin's death.

17 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 anti-Semitic 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.'

18 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.

19 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.