Yelizaveta Zatkovetskaya

Yelizaveta Zatkovetskaya
Kherson
Ukraine
Interviewer: Zhanna Litinskaya
Date of interview: September 2003

Yelizaveta Zatkovetskaya lives in one half of a private house built in the 1950s in a sunny street in the suburb of Kherson. She opens the gate for me and I see a nice old woman with young eyes wearing a kerchief, a modest dark blue dress. We enter the house: nice clean rooms with the 1960-70s furniture and a kitchen on the verandah. We make ourselves comfortable for our conversation on the verandah. There are onions, garlic and pepper drying on the walls. The hostess grows them in her little garden near the house. There are also jars with freshly made jam and pickled cucumbers, tomatoes and paprika that she preserves for the whole family. There are hens and a turkey cock walking in the garden, and every now and then there is a friendly little dog running around the yard. Her neighbor drops by to borrow some salt and her son Alexandr comes to see his mother few times a day. On this lovely sunny day this old woman's house is warm and cozy: the hostess seems to emanate this warmth, and it makes one feel like staying longer in her home.

My parents' families come from German colonies south of Russia where in the Azov region, in Kherson steppes [present southeastern Ukraine, about 500 km from Kiev] during the rule of Catherine the Great [1] settlements of the minorities, so-called colonies were established on rich fertile lands. In the middle of the 18th century the tsarist government of Russia sent Polish, Greek and German minority groups to populate the areas that previously belonged to the Cossacks [2], who were actually exterminated. Later, in the middle of the 19th century, they deported Jews to this area. They took to farming. I didn't know my maternal grandparents. They died before I was born. I became an orphan when I was just a baby. My mother, dying from puerperal fever asked to name me after her mother, my grandmother. Therefore, all I know about my grandmother is that her name was Yelizaveta like mine, and that she and my grandfather died during an epidemic in the 1910s. I don't know my grandfather's name or what he did for a living. I think that he dealt in farming, like the majority of colonists in the Jewish colony of Ingulets [450 km southeast of Kiev], in Yekaterinoslav [present Dnepropetrovsk] region. [Editor's note: Ingulets, a big Jewish colony; its population in early 1900 2700 residents and 2600 of them were Jews. There were two synagogues and a Jewish elementary school. Now it's a small industrial town. After WWII there were hardly any Jews left in the town]. My mother's brother Zalman Miller, about 10 years older than my mother, lived in Ingulets. Zalman was married twice. His first wife Tsylia died leaving him with four children. He didn't have children with his second wife, and they were raising those four children. During the Great Patriotic War [3] Zalman and his family were in evacuation somewhere in Siberia. He and then his wife Lubov died shortly after they returned from the evacuation. Zalman's older son Moishe, born in about 1912, finished a college and lived in Dnepropetrovsk [450 km from Kiev]. His wife's name was Rosa and their son's name was Rudolf. During the Great Patriotic War they evacuated to Siberia, Novosibirsk town [about 6000 km from Moscow] and stayed there after the war. Moishe died in the middle 1960s. This is all information I have about his family. Zalman's

second son Israel, born in 1915, perished at the front at the very beginning of the war. Zalman's daughters Yelizaveta, born in 1913, and Riva, born in 1919, had education. Yelizaveta became a zootechnician and Riva finished a teachers' college. Yelizaveta married a Ukrainian name, and the family kept it a secret from Zalman for a long time. She and her husband went to work in Yama, a miners' town in Stalinsk [present Donetsk region in about 700 km from Kiev]. Yelizaveta named her daughter Tsylia after her mother. Yelizaveta and her husband passed away a long time ago, and Tsylia lives in Yama. Riva married Yan Usviatov, a Jewish man. They settled down in Krivoy Rog [about 400 km east of Kiev], where she lives now. She has a son and a daughter. As for my mother's brother Benyum Miller, a lame man, I saw him few times. He was single and died long before the Great Patriotic War.

My mother Mirl Miller was born in Ingulets in 1898. I don't know anything about her childhood. She got a Jewish education at home, finished two or three forms of a Jewish elementary school and could write and read in the Jewish language. Before she got married she was helping her father with farming and about the house. From what my uncle Zalman says, my grandmother and grandfather were very religious. They observed all Jewish traditions and celebrated holidays. I don't know how my mother met my father. Probably they met through matchmakers that was customary with Jewish families. She got married in early 1916.

My father's parents lived in Sagaydak, a Jewish colony in Nikolaev region. It was a small colony: there were 2 or 3 streets in the settlement. (Editor's note: according to the census of 1897, the population of Sagaydak constituted 770 residents and 760 were Jews). The Jews dealt in farming in the colony. It was a green town and there were gardens and vegetable gardens near each house. Villagers lived in plain clay houses with ground floors and thatched roofs. My grandfather and grandmother Etah were born in Sagaydak some time in the 1860s. My grandfather was a farmer and my grandmother was a housewife taking care of the house, the garden and raising seven children. They got Jewish education and were raised in accordance with Jewish traditions, but when they grew up and left their parents' home moving into bigger towns, they lost their religiosity. However, they had Jewish spouses, but their families did not observe any traditions.

Feiga, the oldest of the children was born about 1885. Feiga's husband Abram Lubashevskiy perished during a pogrom [4] during the civil war [5] leaving Feiga with three children: sons Mosia and Semyon and daughter Olga. During the great Patriotic War Feiga's sons were at the front, and Feiga and her daughter were somewhere in the Ural in evacuation. Feiga lived a long life. After returning from the evacuation Feiga lived with her younger son Semyon in Odessa [6]. She died in 1980. Semyon and his family live in Germany now. Mosia became an invalid at the war and died shortly after the war. Olga, whose family name was Zeldina, finished a college and moved to Zhdanov (present Mariupol in the east of Ukraine, 670 km from Kiev). She died in the middle 1990s.

My father's second brother Motia , born about 1888, lived and worked in Kirovograd [about 260 km from Kiev]. I don't remember his wife's name, but his children Yura and Asia and I were friends, when we were children. During the Great Patriotic War they were in the evacuation. Motia and his wife died in 1946, shortly after they returned from the evacuation. Yuriy became an engineer. He lives with his family in Dnepropetrovsk. Asia and her children moved to Israel in the middle 1990s. I have no contacts with her.

My father was the next child in the family and then came his brother Berl, born in 1892. Berl married his friend's widow whose husband perished during a pogrom in the middle 1920x. She had a child, but Berl didn't have children with her. In the early 1930s he and his family moved to Krivoy Rog to work in a mine. They lived there until the great Patriotic War. During the war he evacuated with his mine and after the war he moved to Kirovograd. He died in the middle 1970s.

My father's youngest brother Duvid lived in Dnepropetrovsk. I don't remember about his education. He worked as assistant accountant. His wife Olga came from Sagaydak. Duvid perished at the front during the Great Patriotic war. I lost contact with his wife and two children afterward. I know that they moved to USA in the early 1970s.

My father's sister Manya. Born in 1898, was an elementary school teacher. Her husband Abram Schwartzman was a musician. Before the revolution he played at weddings with his orchestra and after the revolution he worked at the philharmonic. They lived in Kirovograd. Manya and Abram had one daughter whose name was Clara. She finished a Medical College after the war. She lives in Odessa now. Manya and Abram died during the evacuation.

My father's youngest sister Yelizaveta, born in 1902, didn't get a higher education. She married Yontl Paikin, a Jewish man from the Jewish colony of Romanovka. She and her husband worked in a Jewish kolkhoz [7]. During the Great Patriotic War Yelizaveta, her husband and their son Mikhail were in the evacuation, and stayed in the Ural after the war. Yelizaveta died in the middle 1980s. Mikhail lives in Israel now.

My father Haim Zatkovetskiy was born in 1889, I don't know the exact date of his birth. My father got an elementary Jewish education. He studied in cheder till the age of 13 and then he followed into grandfather Benyum steps taking to farming. This is all I know about his childhood. I know that shortly after he married my mother, and they had a traditional wedding under a chuppah at the synagogue, my father was recruited to the army during WWI. My mother was pregnant with me. I was born on the 2nd day of Chanukkah in December 1916. My mother had mastitis that resulted in blood poisoning. She died in winter 1917 when I was one and a half months old. My grandmother Etah was looking after my mother, when she was ill. When my mother was dying, she took grandmother Etah's hand and asked her to name me Yelizaveta after her mother. Besides, my mother made grandmother Etah promise that she would never allow me to be raised by a stepmother. My mother said that my father would get married. He was young and handsome, she said, and asked my grandmother to raise me in her house. Grandmother Etah became my mother from then on, and I called her 'Mama' till the last days of her life.

My grandmother's neighbor Sarrah Nikitina, who also had a baby, gave my grandmother her breast milk once a day and I also had cow milk. About 1919 my father returned from the war. He came to live with us. He loved me dearly and my first memories are associated with him. He spent all his leisure time after working hard as He played with me, carried me around and made plain toys for me: straw and cloth dolls. The first years of my childhood passed in the atmosphere of love and care. Everybody loved me: grandmother Etah, who gave me the most delicious food, though the family was poor, grandfather Benyum, who always told me interesting stories about Jews before bedtime, and my father's sisters and brothers. Uncle Motl, who was young away from him hiding under the table and he caught me, held me in his hands and kissed. When I was asleep by the time he returned from his outings, he en over grandmother (I slept with my grandmother) to kiss me. My

aunts Manya and Yelizaveta always argued about whose turn it was to bathe me and comb my hair. They loved me so dearly that they enjoyed taking care of me. My father's younger sister Yelizaveta loved me the most. During pogroms, when gangs broke into Sagaydak, Yelizaveta grabbed me telling them I was her daughter. Bandits used to rape young girls, but they didn't touch those who were married and had children. Pogroms stayed in my memory as one of my first childhood memories. I remember that my father's brother Duvid was ill, when a pogrom began, and my father took him to the attic fearing that bandits might kill him. Then my father grabbed me and ran into a field where we were hiding in high sunflower plants. I remember that I was thirsty, and he went to pick a watermelon in the adjoining field and there bandits captured him. My father begged them to allow him take me from the field or I would get lost in the field of sunflowers that were 3 times higher than me. They ordered him to take off his boots, and made him run across the fields holding me to the village. At home bandits turned our wardrobes upside down looking for good clothes, but we were poor and there was nothing to take. My father often hid me and other children in a haystack during pogroms and at times we spent few days there. My father brought us water and food and ordered to be quiet. I remember some military staying in our house. They made my grandfather unharness horses, water and feed their horses and told grandmother to bake bread for them. I have this vivid picture before: my grandmother Etah kneading dough in a big kneading trough with her sleeves rolled up, and tears falling from her eyes into the trough.

Those were horrifying years. When pogroms were over, another disaster began: famine in the early 1920s. Aunt Yelizaveta and uncle Boris gathered everything there was in the house including a Zinger sewing machine and went to sell them or change for food in a town in the north of Ukraine or in Russia. I was almost 5 years old, and I remember well the feeling of hunger. Our neighbor, my wet nurse, whose family was a little better off than ours, brought us potato peels, and my grandmother made Saturday challah bread with them. Our family was very religious, and celebrated Sabbath even in those hard years. My grandfather, father and his brothers went to the synagogue on Friday. There was a big beautiful two-storied synagogue from red bricks in the town. When they returned, the family sat down to dinner. There was challah bread, salt in a salt-cellar covered with a clean napkin and at least some wine on the table. My grandmother lit candles, and my grandfather said a prayer. Then he took a piece of challah, dipped it into salt, and the meal began. In those hungry years there was nothing, but challah baked from potato peels on the table. I remember celebration of Sabbath after the famine was over and life improved. The family was big: Feiga and her children also lived with my grandparents after Feiga's husband was killed during a pogrom. There were 13 of us sitting at the table. All adults worked in the field. On Friday Feiga stayed at home to help grandmother prepare for Sabbath. My grandmother cooked in the Russian oven [8], and needed help with handling heavy casseroles and frying pans. My grandmother and Feiga always covered their heads: with either a plain kerchief on weekdays or a lace shawl on holidays. Men also covered their heads and always had a kippah on sitting at the table. They followed kashrut, and grandfather even forbade his sons to smoke inside.

I remember preparations to Jewish holidays. Before Pesach kosher crockery was taken down from the attic. As a rule, there was more needed and grandmother koshered everyday utensils in a big trough. The walls were whitewashed and the floors clayed and painted on edges to imitate carpeting. All children had new clothes made for them before Pesach. I remember dresses made for Yelizaveta and Manya from gray sack cloth with colorful edging, and grandmother made a dress

from the remaining pieces for me. My grandfather usually conducted seder reclining at the head of the table: with his big beard, tallit and fancy kippah, posing questions and one of the older boys answering them. I also liked Sukkoth, when the family had meals in the sukkah near the house installed by grandfather and his sons. Chanukkah was my favorite holiday since it was my birthday. On Chanukkah every day another candle was lit in a special chanukkiyah candle stand. My grandmother made delicious dough nuts and potato pancakes. The children were given some money. The family bought another dress for me and there was a birthday cake made.

When I turned 6, my father remarried. His wife Esther came from Bobrinets, a Jewish town in Kirovograd region. She didn't have children, and my father wanted to take me with him moving to her town, but my grandmother didn't let me go: she promised my mother that she would not let me grow up with a stepmother. She promised my father that I would visit them. Once every few months my aunts Manya or Yelizaveta took me to Bobrinets. I didn't like it there: my stepmother, who actually wasn't a wicked woman, was cold with me. She wasn't bad, but probably having no children of her own, she didn't have any motherly feelings. My father loved me dearly and missed me a lot. Therefore, one or two years later he insisted that they sold their house in Bobrinets to buy one in Sagaydak. My father bought a small house across the street from where my grandmother lived. From then on I sort of lived with my father, though I spent all of my time with my grandmother. My father bathed me and washed my hair. I remember that once he decided to rinse my hair with kerosene solution. Some women advised him that it made the hair grow better. He did something wrong and burned my skin. He almost cried from annoyance applying some herbs on my head. He combed my hair plaiting in ribbons and putting fancy combs into my hair. My stepmother only cooked food and set the table for me. I was used to loving care in my grandmother's house and I often ran into the field crying. Once my aunts Manya and Yelizaveta found me there. They insisted that I told them the reason, but I never confessed that it was because of my stepmother. I felt sorry for my father.

There was a 4-year Jewish school in Sagaydak. I studied very well. I even remember that I helped my cousin brothers and sisters with their studies. On winter evenings we all sat by the stove nibbling seeds and read books. I only went home to sleep, but often stayed in my grandmother's home overnight. My teachers thought I was the best in my class recommending my father that I continued my education. After finishing the 4th form in my school in 1928 a group of my classmates and I went to Israilevka, a Jewish colony [editor's note: in the late 1940s this village was either renamed or became a part of the nearest town; it didn't seem possible to identify its present status] near Sagaydak, to continue our education. Israilevka was bigger than Sagaydak. There were twice as many residents and there was a 7-year Jewish school in the village. We, children from Sagaydak, were accommodated in an abandoned house that formerly belonged to a Jewish family declared to be kulaks [9] and exiled to Siberia. Fortunately, residents of Sagaydak didn't suffer from this dispossessment, so poor they were. Boys accommodated in one room and girls – in another. I studied in Israilevka for a year. When my uncle Zalman got to know that I lived in a hostel, he came to pick me up and take to his house in Ingulets colony, my mother's home town.

My life in Zalman's house was very good. His wife Lubov treated his children like her own, and I was like their third daughter. I even envied my brothers and sisters for having never enjoyed so much warmth from my stepmother. My brothers Moishe and Israel had left their parents' home by then. I became lifelong friends with my sisters Yelizaveta and Riva. Uncle Zalman was a grain

procurer. He traveled on business a lot and the family always looked forward to his return. Zalman wasn't a truly believing Jew. He had to work on Saturday. However, they celebrated holidays, symbolically, though: Pesach, Rosh Hashanah and Chanukkah. I studied in the 6th and 7th forms in Ingulets. I studied well and was a pioneer and an activist. I was usually responsible for helping pupils who were not so good with their studies. I liked it and decided to become a teacher.

In 1932 I finished this 7-year school. Two of my friends also wanted to become teachers and convinced me to go to the Pedagogical College in Kiev. Uncle Zalman tried to talk me out of traveling so far, but I was eager to see a big town, live and study in it. Besides, I had never seen a train before. Everything seemed interesting to me, and I was not afraid of anything. In Kiev we accommodated with a distant relative of one of the girls. Her husband was a Party official, and they lived in a big apartment in the center of the city. There were rabfak schools [10] in colleges – faculties preparing workers for colleges. The girls and I submitted our documents to this school. There were interviews and exams, and I was the only one of the three of us who was admitted. The girls left home ad I stayed in Kiev. I became a student of the Jewish Faculty of Kiev Pedagogical College. This faculty trained teachers of the Jewish literature and language for Jewish schools. There were many Jewish schools in Ukraine at that time. We studied in Yiddish. I lived in a hostel. There were huge rooms. There were 16 tenants in my room. We got along well and had a lot of fun together. Then the period of famine [11] began. Our stipends of 24 rubles were only enough to buy tea and sugar plums. So we had sugarplums with boiled water. In the college canteen we got thin soup with a bit of cabbage or beetroots. Many girls quit their studies. There were military schools in Kiev where cadets received rationed food. The girls were eager to meet cadets and many of them got married and quit the college. Some left home. Once I missed two days of classes looking for some work to do for money in Kiev. The dean asked me why I missed my classes. He started telling me that I should continue my studies in college for whatever it cost me, that I was a born teacher and had to study regardless any problems. I wasn't going to quit the college. I even wrote my father that everything was fine and that we had good stipends. He wrote back that he was happy for me. In summer 1934 I visited my father, and he proudly walked with me around the town brabbing of my successes. My stepmother also gave me a warm reception. She even wanted to give me her suit since I hardly had any clothes, but I refused understanding that my stepmother wouldn't manage to make another outfit for herself. I only took a skirt and later my co-tenants borrowed it from me to wear to a date or to the theater.

I also became a Komsomol member [12], when I was the first-year student and took an active part in public activities. Again I was responsible for helping other students with their studies. We were to study four years, but there was a need in teachers, and they reduced our course to three years. After the second year of studies this Jewish Faculty moved to Odessa to be farther from the capital. We didn't understand then that it was a beginning of a slow attack on the Jewish culture and education. I lived in a hostel in Odessa. We celebrated all Soviet holidays, went to parades and festivals, but I also remembered the Jewish traditions. Being a Komsomol member, I couldn't openly celebrate holidays or go to the synagogue, but I tried to observe traditions quietly. I tried to do no hard work on Saturday and fasted on Yom Kippur without mentioning it to anyone. Of course, following the kashrut was out of the question since we were always hungry and ate whatever we could get.

In the late 1920s – early 1930s new Jewish settlements were established in the south of Ukraine with the help of AgroJoint [13]. Some villages had names and some – Numbers: 16th, 17th, 23rd sites. AgroJoint helped poor Jews with moving to new locations and built houses and schools for them. There was also a need in Jewish teachers, and I received a job assignment [14] to a 7-year school in the 17th site in Kherson region. I am sure that this village is no longer there. It probably became a part of the nearest town. I rented an apartment from the logistic manager of school. Her family treated me like their own daughter. I made friends with doctor assistant Fira who came there from Gaisin Vinnitsa region after finishing a medical school. She worked in the laboratory where we received two rooms where Fira, sanitary assistant Nina, Russian, and I were accommodated. We got along well and had lots of fun. We made a communal budget putting our salaries together spending it for food. We also shared clothes, and my stepmother's skirt became a popular outfit for my friends. The 17th site was a small settlement with a railroad station. There were trains to and from Kherson stopping there. Local young people used to walk along the platform at the station. There was a custom to dress up and go there at the time when a train arrived, walk along the platform nibbling sunflower seeds making comments about boys. Fira dated a zootechnician from the farm. Once we invited him to our home. That evening we made macaroni for dinner and the moment we served the table there was a knock on the door. We put our dinner under the table, just in case, having no intention to share our dinner with anybody and opened the door. There was Fira's friend and an interesting young man with him. It was his friend, senior zootechnician. Fira's friend wanted us to meet. They stayed for quite a while, and we were only concerned that one of them didn't turn our dinner upside down. When the guys left we burst into laughter, but I didn't really feel like laughing. I liked the guy very much. We began to see each other and few months later he proposed to me. I wrote my father (my grandmother Etah and grandfather Benyum had passed away by then) that I was planning to get married, described my fiancé and he gave me his blessing. Then my father and uncle Zalman visited us to meet my husband to be. In late 1936 we got married. We just had a civil ceremony in a registry office. Traditional Jewish weddings were not practiced at that time. We were both Komsomol members and might be expelled from Komsomol or even fired from work. Besides, there was no synagogue in our village.

My husband Peretz Freidkin was born in 1910 in Kalinindorf, a Jewish colony in Kherson region. His parents Zalman Berl and Rasia Freidkins also dealt in farming. Besides, my father-in-law was a shoemaker and it made his additional earnings. My husband's family was a traditional Jewish family. He studied in cheder and then finished a Jewish elementary school. He also finished the Agricultural College in Kherson and became a zootechnician. After the wedding we lived in a small room of a three-apartment house in the 17th site. Our co-tenants were few other newly wed couples. We had a common kitchen and 'comforts' in the yard. Then we moved to the Jewish colony of Seidemenucha where I got a job assignment from the regional department of education half a year later. My husband worked as a zootechnician there as well. In 1937 our son was born. I named him Mikhail, by the first letter of my mother's name. After our son was born we moved to my husband's parents in Kalinindorf. We had a good life together. My husband's parents had a nice big house and a garden. I worked at school. We hired a baby sitter for my son and my mother-in-law was helping me. She observed Jewish traditions. On Saturday our Ukrainian neighbor came to set the table for our family and feed our livestock. My mother-in-law made matzah and we celebrated Pesach. We usually spent vacations with my husband's sister Tsylia in Kherson where she lived

with her husband and two daughters: Yenia and Genia. Tsylia and I became friends, though she was significantly older than me.

My husband was a zootechnician in the kolkhoz [15] 'The way to communism'. It was a very rich Jewish kolkhoz, a 'millionaire', adjoining to Kalinindorf. It was an advanced kolkhoz in the district, and in the late 1930s my husband and his crew were invited to the Exhibition of Achievements of Public Economy in Moscow. He took his pedigree cows and bulls to the exhibition and received a diploma for participation in the exhibition. I still keep this diploma and the photograph of my husband's crew at the Exhibition in the fair memory of Peretz. By that time I had lost my job: the Jewish school was closed. Many teachers got training to become teachers of Russian, geography or history, but I couldn't afford any training having to take care of our son.

This was a concerning period. In 1939 Jewish refugees from Poland appeared in our area escaping from fascists. At that same time my husband's older brother on his father's side Moishe Freidkin, his wife Kleina and their five-year-old daughter and little son Mosia arrived at Kalinindorf from Bessarabia [16]. We began to receive letters and photographs from him after Bessarabia was annexed to the USSR. Of course, we knew about Hitler and fascism, but we didn't have thoughts about a war: it all seemed to be so far away. The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact [17] made people think that there was going to be no war. I shall always remember the day of 22 June 1941, when the Great Patriotic War began. It was a warm sunny day, Sunday, and we were at home. My husband was cutting wood in the yard and I was playing with my son nearby. It was about noontime and we were going to rest in the garden after lunch, when our neighbor ran in screaming 'It's the war!' We ran into the house: we were the only owners of a radio. We listened to Molotov [18] who spoke about the war and perfidious attack of fascists on our country. Mobilization began. My husband obtained a military service release certificate. He was responsible for evacuation of the livestock. He went to Lvovo colony with his crew where they arranged transfer of the cattle. He stayed there few weeks. I and other residents were digging an anti-tank trench. If only we had known how easily Hitler's tanks overcame those funny obstacles for them while we believed that this trench would stop fascists and they would not invade our home town.

My husband returned in late July. There was panic and people tried to escape wherever they could manage. On 8 August my husband went to a meeting in the district party committee. Although he wasn't a member of the party, they invited all managers of the kolkhoz to this meeting. They said at this meeting that fascists would not come to this area and that it was necessary to stop those defeatist moods and tell people that everything was all right and that they had to go back to work and stop panicking. My husband returned late. Our neighbors waited for him at the gate. He told them what he heard at the district committee. We went to bed. At 2 o'clock in the morning somebody knocked on our window. It was Gudkovich, chief of the district chemical department, who was on duty at the district executive committee. He said Germans were bombing Kherson and that we had to leave. He managed to keep two good horses and now he harnessed them. His wife and four children were already sitting in the wagon. They were small children: the youngest was a 2-week-old baby. Gudkovich offered us a ride. We packed whatever we could grab in a basket and a bag, locked the house – and left. In all this chaos I didn't take warm clothes, but I grabbed white bed sheets for my sonny: I couldn't imagine that Mikhail could sleep without white sheets. We didn't have any money. The day before we left my mother-in-law wanted to take our savings from the bank, but they told her there was no money available. I didn't say 'good bye' to my father. I

never saw him again. It turned out that his wife refused from evacuation and sent back the wagon that uncle Boris sent for them from Krivoy Rog. Like other Jews she believed that Germans were not going to do anything bad to Jews. My father obeyed her thinking that I was staying in Kalinindorf and he would be there to support me. Besides my husband's parents, my husband, my son and me, there was my husband's niece Genia, a ten-year-old girl, his older sister Tsylia's daughter, with us. She was spending her vacation with us and since we didn't where her mother was at the moment we had to take her with us. Besides, there was senior accountant of the district chemical department with his wife and daughter in our wagon. Gudkovich also rode with us as far as the river crossing. On our way a wheel broke and while the men were fixing it, local boys were running around shouting 'zhydy [kike] are running away!' It was the first time in my life that I heard an abuse of this kind. I had always lived among Jews before and I don't think I even suspected existence of anti-Semitism.

So we reached Lvov where there was a crossing on the Ingulets River. There were masses of wagons, horses and cattle near the crossing and the crossing was closed following the order of authorities who were concerned about possible panic. While we were there waiting we heard that my husband's sister Tsylia and her younger daughter Genia came to our home and were looking for us. My husband and father-in-law took one horse and rode back home to pick her up. They were also concerned about the older brother. It turned out that Moishe and his family also made an effort to evacuate, but the crossing was closed and they were told to go back home. This family perished in the occupation.

A messenger from the town came to the crossing telling people to go back home. I still don't know whether he represented some authorities or he was a saboteur. There were many sent by fascists. .The crossing was often bombed. During an air raid people around began to yell at me demanding that I took away my son's white sheets and our white horse that might be a guiding point for German bombers. I took the horse to the bushes. There was screaming and groaning, cows and bull mooing and horses shying. After the bombing about ten people remained lying on the ground. This was terrible! In the morning my husband and father-in-law returned with my husband's sister Tsylia and her daughter Yenia. My husband made arrangements for us to cross the river. People knew him since he had been involved in evacuation of the cattle some time before. Gudkovich said 'good bye' to us and we agreed to keep in touch via his relative living in Kazan. When we crossed the river my husband said that thought he was released from military service he could not be an outside observer in this blood shedding war and that he had to fight fascists. Peretz hugged and kissed me and said he understood that I would have a hard time having to take care of our son and old folks. He gave me his watch to sell it for money. I begged my husband to stay, but he was inexorable. In the morning he left with the accountant's son. I never saw my husband again. There was no military registry office in Kalinindorf and the accountant's son returned, but Peretz went on looking for our troops. He must have perished on his way: there were violent battles in this area at that time.

We went on. My father-in-law was riding the wagon and Tsylia and I walked behind it. There were few bombings on the way. We reached Rostov region having covered over 250 km. We spent the nights in the woods. Local villagers gave us some food on the way. We stayed in a kolkhoz. There was an order issued to kolkhozes to accommodate the newcomers and give them jobs. We rented a room in a house. Tsylia and I worked in the kolkhoz. My father-in-law was a shoemaker and my

mother-in-law looked after the children. Tsylia and I went to the railroad after work every day: there were trains passing to the front or to the rear with the wounded. We were hoping to find our husbands or hear something about them. Tsylia's husband was recruited on the first days of the war. We were standing there giving bread or crumbs to the soldiers: whatever we had with us. We never heard anything about our relatives or acquaintances. My father-in-law's brother Gershl Kalman found us in the kolkhoz. He had evacuated with his daughter, a lame and sickly girl, and his wife. His wife died on the way and his daughter got lost. Gershl stayed with us. His daughter found us few days later: somebody told her where we were.

In late October the management of this kolkhoz notified us that we had to leave urgently: fascist troops were approaching Rostov. There were no horses available. Chairman of the kolkhoz had left on them. We got two bulls. My father-in-law was angry: how was he going to manage them? But what could we do? So, we harnessed them and started on our way. My son fell ill with measles on the way, he had fever of 39 degrees lying in the wagon in the rain. Tsylia sprained her joints jumping off the wagon. I walked after the wagon carrying my son. Every night we asked villagers to let us in to stay overnight. There was so much trouble. Once the hostess' husband wanted to rape me and we had to pack and escape. Once I left my son lying on the floor and went out to unharness the bulls, when the hostess ran out of the house screaming: she decided that I left a dead child in the house. I told her that my son had measles. She started fire in her oven to warm up my son, gave him a hot drink and tried to help me. I was grateful to this woman and felt like staying in her warm house. But we had to move on. Winter began. We were cold having no warm clothes. Gudkovich's wife came to our rescue. She shared her warm clothes with us. In the daytime fascists were bombing roads and villages and Tsylia suggested that we traveled on forest roads that were quiet. She said we had to stay near rivers so that if fascists captured us we could rush into the water and get drowned. The bulls were very good especially considering that ground roads became muddy and they were very enduring. We often unharnessed them to help to pull other wagons out of the mud. I liked these bulls and tried to gather more grass or hay to feed them.

In late November we reached Elista town, the capital of Kalmyk ASSR in 900 km from home. It was a small town. There were mostly private houses in it. There were bigger houses in the center of the town: the Supreme Soviet, Party Central Committee, central post office and a theater. There was a kolkhoz in the suburb where we left our hardworking bulls. A Kalmyk family gave us shelter. We slept on the floor in a big room. I was sleeping near the door and every morning I found a piece of bread or a lump of sugar by my side. The host of the house left them feeling sorry for us, but keeping it a secret from his wife. His wife also sympathized with us. She gave food to the children till I went to work. I began to work at the post office and Tsylia got a job of a cloakroom attendant at the theater. We received bread coupons for us and the children. My father-in-law worked as a shoemaker and his customers paid him with food: milk, eggs or read. Gudkovich arrived shortly afterward. His relative from Kazan told him our whereabouts. I asked him whether he knew anything about Peretz, but he didn't. He left with his family. We lived there till summer 1942.

When fascists approached the Volga, we decided to move on to the east. Again we harnessed our bulls and went to the railway station. We left our bulls with some people. We kissed the animals thanking them for rescuing us and asked their new owners to take care of them. We boarded a freight train. Our trip lasted about ten days. We didn't know where we were going. My mother-in-law Rasia fell severely ill on the way. She got poisoned and had high fever, vomiting and bloody

flux. We got off at a station. It turned out to be inviting people to come with them. Our family left for a kolkhoz and I stayed with my mother-in-law. Rasia was taken to hospital. My son and I spent the nights at the railway station. I exchanged some clothes for food and cooked in a casserole on stones and visited my mother-in-law in hospital. Rasia recovered: she had good treatment and food in the hospital. We stayed at the railway station ten days more before I found out where our family was. We got a ride there. I remember an Uzbek girl kissing me ‘hallo’: this turned out to be Genia’s daughter wearing an Uzbek gown. We were accommodated in a nice house. The kolkhoz provided wheat grains to us. Tsylia and I took it to the mill to have it ground. We worked in a cotton field. It was hard work. Misha and I were allergic to cotton. We decided to leave this sovkhoz. We took a freight train to Begovat station near Tashkent where we met a Russian woman from Nikolaev. We started talking to her at the station. She helped us a lot. She found accommodation and paid for us, lent us some money and helped me to find a job. She also helped us to obtain a residential permit [19] through her Uzbek acquaintance working in the militia. We lived in a small room in the basement. Tsylia and I went to work at a shop manufacturing ropes for the front. Mikhail and Yenia went to a kindergarten and Genia went to school and helped her grandmother about the house. Tsylia received letters from her husband. I wrote many requests searching for him, but it was in vain. One of commanders wrote me that my husband may have perished never reaching our troops. I was ready to do any work to support my family. After work I made jam from cherry plums or apples – whatever I could pick in the streets, and ran to the market to sell it. I sold jam in glasses and then bought food for the money I got. I was surprised that locals didn’t make jam, but willingly bought it from me. My father-in-law fixed shoes sitting and working on his box outside. He earned a little, when a financial inspector [state officer responsible for identification of illegal businesses], a young and strong Uzbek man demanded that we paid him 10 rubles per day. My father-in-law didn’t have this much. Once this inspector pushed his box throwing his tools about the street and told the old man to stay away from the street, if he didn’t have money for him. When we came back from work, my mother-in-law and father-in-law were crying. I wrote a letter to the Ministry of defense in Moscow. I wrote about our life, about having to escape from our home leaving all our belongings behind, and that our husbands had perished and the old man was trying to earn some money to support the family and we didn’t beg the state to help us, while this young strong inspector was not at the front for some reason. Two weeks later a commission came from the executive committee. They inspected our room, saw drying bread on the stove and allowed my father-in-law to do his work without fearing anyone. . The financial inspector, his offender, never showed up again. I don’t know what happened to him. In early 1944 my father-in-law died. Local Jews buried him wrapping him in his tallit and recited prayers. They buried him on planks in the grave. There was no coffin.

On 14 March 1944 Kalinindorf was liberated. I submitted a request for going back. We received permission for reevacuation only in November. I wrote to the village council that we were returning and asked them to inform me on what happened to our relatives. They wrote me back that Moishe and Kreina Freidkins and their children were shot by fascists in Kalinindorf. I received the same notification for my father and stepmother in Sagaydak. I was eager to go back to my home place. Our return trip lasted for about a month. The trains were passing by without stopping, so overcrowded they were and we had to wait at stations for a long time before getting on another train. Finally in late December 1944 we arrived at Kalinindorf. I hired a wagon to take us home. Our house was there, but the door was locked. A Ukrainian woman and her son had moved into our

house. She came back in the evening with a friend of hers and chairman of the village council. They allowed us to live in half of the house, but we were happy about it. Hungry and exhausted, we fell asleep on the floor. In the morning we found out that there was nothing left in the house: this woman had taken our belongings away. Our Russian neighbor Maria came to see us. She was very happy that we were back. She gave us stools, dishes, buckets and casseroles: everything we needed to start with. That same day the Ukrainian woman moved into another Jewish house. Its owners had perished. There were many empty Jewish houses in Kalinindorf and other colonies. Tsylia and I went to work in the kolkhoz. People were helping us giving us whatever they could. I remember how my son got severely ill. I found the apartment of an assistant doctor, but he wasn't at home. When I returned home, my son was almost fainting from pain and I burst into tears for the first time in the past years. I felt so unhappy that I rescued my son in Asia and in the hard conditions when we were evacuation, but now my son was dying. At night the assistant doctor knocked on the door. He examined my son, gave him some medications and stayed beside him through the night till my son got better.

In January 1945 the Supreme Soviet issued an order about opening children's homes for all homeless children. In Kalinindorf a children's home was opened in the building of the Jewish school built before the war. The executive committee [20] authorized me to take the responsibility for restoration of the building and opening of the children's home. We gathered bricks to make a stove and washed and cleaned the walls and windows, bought beds, desks, blankets and bed sheets. The villagers also donated whatever they could. On 16 March 1945 I conducted the opening ceremony. At first there were six children in the home. Four of them were German children, whose parents had been deported from the colony before fascists came to the village. The children stayed in a Ukrainian family. At first I was acting director of this home till they appointed a nice man for this position. He returned from the front where he had lost his arms. I became a teacher. I assisted director with everything. We celebrated 9 May 1945 – Victory Day, in the children's home. God, it was happiness!

Some time later men began to return from the front. In early 1946 Abram Aral, our neighbor, returned. We were friends with his family before the war. Abram had a wife and two children: Sonia, 6 years old and a baby son. His older brother Shmilyk lived in this same house. When the war began, Abram was recruited to the army and Shmilyk took his time considering whether they should evacuate or stay home. When they finally decided to move, it was too late. There were Germans all around. They were shot by fascists in 1941. Abram's sister from Zaporozhie, whose husband perished at the front, came to live with him. Abram and his sister often came by to see us and Tsylia visited them. We were sad about our deceased dear ones often talking about them. In summer 1946 Tsylia's husband Avrum returned from the front. They moved to Kherson, and my mother-in-law Rasia went with them. My mother-in-law sold the house under condition that my son and son would live there as long as we needed. Some time later Abram and I felt that there was more to our relationship than just the memories: our late and much suffered for love came to us. I moved in with Abram and we got married in 1947.

We got along very well. My husband was good to Mikhail and my son began to call him 'papa'. In 1948 our son was born. I named him Alexandr after Avrum's brother Shmidyk. I worked in the children's home and my husband worked as a storekeeper in the military registry office. In 1956 our second son was born. I named him Yuriy after my father (Yefim is 'Yuhym' in Ukrainian, and I

found the name with the same first letter). My mother-in-law Rasia visited us every summer.

My older son Mikhail finished school in 1956 and went to take exams to a military college in Tambov. It was his dream to become a military. They didn't admit him without explaining the reasons, though it clearly had to do with his nationality. He went to work at the mechanic plant of Perovskiy in Kherson. He lived with Tsylia's family. Then he went to his mandatory service in Azerbaijan and then in Moscow region. Mikhail's dream was to study in college. He wanted to become a doctor and he studied a lot when in the army. After the term of his service was over Mikhail entered Moscow Medical College and after finishing it he became a physician. He married Galia Aronina, a Jewish girl from a traditional Jewish family. I often visited my son in Moscow and went to the synagogue with her parents. I always brought matzah for my family from Moscow. Mikhail had twin boys: Pyotr (after his father) and Ilia, born in 1964. Ilia and his wife live in Israel and Pyotr lives in Moscow.

My middle son Alexandr was very fond of history. After his service in the army he submitted his documents to the Historical Faculty of Simferopol University. They didn't admit him explaining that there was a quota for Jews. He returned home and went to work as a mechanic. He finished Machine Building College in Kherson. He married Sopha Yudich, a Jewish girl from Kherson. They have two children: son Yevgeniy and daughter Alla.

My younger son Yuriy also got a secondary technical education. He married Yelena Zeiger, also a Jewish girl and they moved to Kherson. Yuriy and Yelena have two daughters: Lilia, born in 1980, and Anna, born in 1984. Yelena's parents went to Israel telling their daughter to come with them. My son Yuriy didn't want to leave me here. So his wife and the girls moved to Israel and Yuriy lives alone in Kherson. They get along very well. Though they are officially divorced Yuriy visits them once a year and my granddaughters visit us here. My sons Alexandr and Yuriy are in computer and software business and so is Yevgeniy: he has a store in Kherson. Alla is a 5th-year student of University. She wants to move to Israel upon graduation.

I retired from the children's home in 1972. Abram and I often visited our children in Kherson, and our children and grandchildren came to see us. We had a big and close family. Abram was always interested in the situation in the world, particularly in Israel. He bought a good radio listening to the Voice of America and Free Europe [The Voice of America and 'Free Europe' were popular radio stations broadcasting from America and Germany in Russian. They were thoroughly jammed in the Soviet Union so that Soviet citizens couldn't hear the truth about life in capitalist countries and actual state of things in their own country], Freedom [21], in the evening discussing their programs with his Jewish neighbor. He was particularly concerned when there was a war there and the Soviet propaganda throwing mud at Israel. However, none of us wanted to leave the country where our dear ones perished. We tried to observe Jewish traditions and teach our children to remember them. . Abram knew when it was a holidays. Of course, we didn't follow kashrut, but we never ate pork or mixed meat and dairy food. On holidays we had festive meals with traditional Jewish food: chicken necks and gefilte fish. We invited friends and neighbors. On Yom Kippur my husband and I fast and so do our sons and their wives. That's mandatory.

We never traveled on vacations: at first our children were small and there was nobody to look after them and later we were hard up and couldn't afford a family vacation, though my husband and I worked and had a garden and a vegetable garden where we grew vegetables and fruit, but we

lived on our salaries. We were doing well and our children had all they needed, but we never afforded any luxuries. We lived like everybody else: from one pay day to the next one.

In 1982 Abram died. I lived 7 years in our house and then gave up to my sons' requests to move closer to them. They sold my house and bought half a house for me in Kherson in 1989. My sons support me and I have everything I need. I know that many people are unhappy about perestroika [22] and the resulting changes in the country, but I feel content as long as my sons are happy. They manage well in life and support me. My grandchildren often visit me. They treat me with great respect and love.

In 1962 I decided to visit Sagaydak to bow to the land where my father perished. I went there by bus. When it stopped in the square an old Ukrainian woman met me. She was our neighbor. She said she recognized me and that I was Haim Zatkovetskiy's daughter. We went to the suburb and she told me how they were shot: children by the edge of one pit and adults – another. The earth was stirring for a long time afterward. There were human remains on the ground. After the war the chairman ordered to plough the field and forget the deceased. It was an insult. It was terrible that people didn't install a monument to honor the deceased. I left that same day so hard it was for me.

There was a monument to the deceased installed in Kalinindorf. My sons and I attended the opening ceremony in 2001. Two old women approached me there, too: they were daughters of the storekeeper of the school. Back in 1936 I rented a room from them. Their father also perished, and we recalled our dear ones with grief. The opening ceremony was grand. There were administration representatives and veterans of the war present. After the opening ceremony Jews and a rabbi recited the prayer. My sons recited the words of prayer with them. They observe Jewish traditions, go to the synagogue on Sabbath and celebrate Jewish holidays. It was Rosh Hashanah recently, and my sons and their families came for a festive dinner with us. I attend the synagogue once a year on Yom Kippur. I am not religious, but I always remembered Jewish traditions. I do my best to observe the rules: I light candles on Sabbath and give my grandchildren Chanukkah gelt on Chanukkah.

GLOSSARY:

[1] Catherine the Great (1729-1796): Empress of Russia. She rose to the throne after the murder of her husband Peter III and reigned for 34 year. Catherine read widely, especially Voltaire and Montesquieu, and informed herself of Russian conditions. She started to formulate a new enlightened code of law. Catherine reorganized (1775) the provincial administration to increase the central government's control over rural areas. This reform established a system of provinces, subdivided into districts, that endured until 1917. In 1785, Catherine issued a charter that made the gentry of each district and province a legal body with the right to petition the throne, freed nobles from taxation and state service and made their status hereditary, and gave them absolute control over their lands and peasants. Catherine increased Russian control over the Baltic provinces and Ukraine. She secured the largest portion in successive partitions of Poland among Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

[2] Cossack: A member of a people of southern European Russia and adjacent parts of Asia, noted as cavalrymen especially during tsarist times.

[3] 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.

[4] Pogroms in Ukraine: In the 1920s there were many anti-Semitic gangs in Ukraine. They killed Jews and burnt their houses, they robbed their houses, raped women and killed children.

[5] Civil War (1918-1920): The Civil War between the Reds (the Bolsheviks) and the Whites (the anti-Bolsheviks), which broke out in early 1918, ravaged Russia until 1920. The Whites represented all shades of anti-communist groups – Russian army units from World War I, led by anti-Bolshevik officers, by anti-Bolshevik volunteers and some Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. Several of their leaders favored setting up a military dictatorship, but few were outspoken tsarists. Atrocities were committed throughout the Civil War by both sides. The Civil War ended with Bolshevik military victory, thanks to the lack of cooperation among the various White commanders and to the reorganization of the Red forces after Trotsky became commissar for war. It was won, however, only at the price of immense sacrifice; by 1920 Russia was ruined and devastated. In 1920 industrial production was reduced to 14% and agriculture to 50% as compared to 1913.

[6] Odessa: The Jewish community of Odessa was the second biggest Jewish community in Russia. According to the census of 1897 there were 138,935 Jews in Odessa, which was 34,41% of the local population. There were 7 big synagogues and 49 prayer houses in Odessa. There were heders in 19 prayer houses.

[7] Jewish collective farms: Such farms were established in the Ukraine in the 1930s during the period of collectivization.

[8] Russian stove: Big stone stove stoked with wood. They were usually built in a corner of the kitchen and served to heat the house and cook food. It had a bench that made a comfortable bed for children and adults in wintertime.

[9] Kulaks: In the Soviet Union the majority of wealthy peasants that refused to join collective farms and give their grain and property to Soviet power were called kulaks, declared enemies of the people and exterminated in the 1930s.

[10] Rabfak (Rabochiy Fakultet – Workers' Faculty in Russian): Established by the Soviet power usually at colleges or universities, these were educational institutions for young people without secondary education. Many of them worked beside studying. Graduates of Rabfaks had an opportunity to enter university without exams.

[11] 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.

[12] 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.

[13] Agro-Joint (American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation): The Agro-Joint, established in 1924, with the full support of the Soviet government aimed at helping the resettlement of Jews on collective farms in the South of Ukraine and the Crimea. The Agro-Joint purchased land, livestock and agricultural machinery and funded housing construction. It also established many trade schools to train Jews in agriculture and in metal, woodworking, printing and other skills. The work of Agro-Joint was made increasingly difficult by the Soviet authorities, and it finally dissolved in 1938. In all, some 14,000 Jewish families were settled on the land, and thus saved from privation and the loss of civil rights, which was the lot of all except for workers and peasants. By 1938, however, large numbers left the colonies, attracted by the cities, and most of those who stayed were murdered by the Germans.

[14] Mandatory job assignment in the USSR: Graduates of higher educational institutions had to complete a mandatory 2-year job assignment issued by the institution from which they graduated. After finishing this assignment young people were allowed to get employment at their discretion in any town or organization.

[15] Collective farm (in Russian kolkhoz): In the Soviet Union the policy of gradual and voluntary collectivization of agriculture was adopted in 1927 to encourage food production while freeing labor and capital for industrial development. In 1929, with only 4% of farms in kolkhozes, Stalin ordered the confiscation of peasants' land, tools, and animals; the kolkhoz replaced the family farm.

[16] Bessarabia: Historical area between the Prut and Dnestr rivers, in the southern part of Odessa region. Bessarabia was part of Russia until the Revolution of 1917. In 1918 it declared itself an independent republic, and later it united with Romania. The Treaty of Paris (1920) recognized the union but the Soviet Union never accepted this. In 1940 Romania was forced to cede Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to the USSR. The two provinces had almost 4 million inhabitants, mostly Romanians. Although Romania reoccupied part of the territory during World War II the Romanian peace treaty of 1947 confirmed their belonging to the Soviet Union. Today it is part of Moldavia.

[17] Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact: Non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, which became known under the name of Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Engaged in a border war with Japan in the Far East and fearing the German advance in the west, the Soviet government began secret negotiations for a non-aggression pact with Germany in 1939. In August 1939 it suddenly announced the conclusion of a Soviet-German agreement of friendship and non-aggression. The Pact contained a secret clause providing for the partition of Poland and for Soviet and German

spheres of influence in Eastern Europe.

[18] 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.

[19] Residence permit: The Soviet authorities restricted freedom of travel within the USSR through the residence permit and kept everybody's whereabouts under control. Every individual in the USSR needed residential registration; this was a stamp in the passport giving the permanent address of the individual. It was impossible to find a job, or even to travel within the country, without such a stamp. In order to register at somebody else's apartment one had to be a close relative and if each resident of the apartment had at least 8 square meters to themselves.

[20] Ispolkom: After the tsar's abdication (March, 1917), power passed to a Provisional Government appointed by a temporary committee of the Duma, which proposed to share power to some extent with councils of workers and soldiers known as 'soviets'. Following a brief and chaotic period of fairly democratic procedures, a mixed body of socialist intellectuals known as the Ispolkom secured the right to 'represent' the soviets. The democratic credentials of the soviets were highly imperfect to begin with: peasants - the overwhelming majority of the Russian population - had virtually no say, and soldiers were grossly over-represented. The Ispolkom's assumption of power turned this highly imperfect democracy into an intellectuals' oligarchy.

[21] Radio Liberty: Radio Liberty, which started broadcasting in 1953, has served as a surrogate 'home service' to the lands of the former Soviet Union, providing news and information that was otherwise unavailable to most Soviet and post-Soviet citizens. During that time, the station weathered strong opposition from the Soviet Union and its allies, including constant jamming, public criticism, diplomatic protests, and even physical attacks on Radio Liberty buildings and personnel. In 1976, Radio Liberty was merged with Radio Free Europe (RFE) to form a single organization, RFE/RL, Inc.

[22] Perestroika (Russian for restructuring): Soviet economic and social policy of the late 1980s, associated with the name of Soviet politician Mikhail Gorbachev. The term designated the attempts to transform the stagnant, inefficient command economy of the Soviet Union into a decentralized, market-oriented economy. Industrial managers and local government and party officials were granted greater autonomy, and open elections were introduced in an attempt to democratize the Communist Party organization. By 1991, perestroika was declining and was soon eclipsed by the dissolution of the USSR.