

Asta Pekker And Her Younger Sister Yevgeniya



Myself, Asta Pekker, and my younger sister Yevgeniya. This picture was taken in the evacuation in Alma-Ata in September 1941.

I am Asta Grigorievna Pekker. I'm 72 years old. I was born in Berlin, in June 1929. I lived there for four and a half years. My parents and my grandfather and grandmother were Soviet citizens. With Hitler coming in 1933 the Soviet government called our family to Moscow at the end of the year.

I was well anywhere, I was loved. I felt myself independent in Kiev. In 1941 I went on my first unaccompanied voyage in the city. On that day my sister Zhenia was born. Papa, caring about

Mama's health, did not allow her to give birth at a Soviet maternity home. He arranged everything at home. A famous professor attended to Mama, and I was sent out for a walk. They even didn't send our housemaid Polina with me. On coming back home I was told that I had a sister and I couldn't believe such happiness. I need to say that by that time I had two clear wishes: number one - I wanted a sister or a brother, and number two - I was eager to become a writer.

There were many hospitals in Alma-Ata during the war time. As a rule, they were housed in schools or near schools. We took them under our patronage. All children, even my little sister, performed in front of the wounded soldiers.

Approximately at that time - 1948-49 postwar years, our country stepped into the period of struggle with cosmopolitanism. And my father, of course, turned out to be the first and the main cosmopolitan in Ukraine. He fit in this category completely. He was a Jew, he studied and worked abroad, and perhaps the main thing at that time - he was a close and official, so to say, friend of composer Dmitriy Shostakovich. It was just impossible to stand all these three items. They started pursuing him in newspapers, on the radio and at the meetings at work. Papa actually lost his profession and his job. And following him almost all Jews were dismissed from the Conservatory, and not only from there, per special, although secret, order. This was a general all-Union action.

She lives in the United States of America for many years.