

Meyer Tulchinskiy



This is a picture of me in Kiev in 1925. It was taken to be sent to my grandmother in Shargorod. My father and mother moved to Kiev from Tarashcha in the 1920s. They rented an apartment in the center of the city. I was born there in 1924. My parents spoke Yiddish with each other. Sometimes they communicated in Russian, when they also wanted me to be involved in the conversation, or if someone else was in the house and didn't speak Yiddish. I'm surprised that my parents didn't even try to teach me Yiddish. Regretfully, my parents didn't celebrate any Jewish or religious holidays or observe any traditions. I rarely visited my mother's mother in Tarashcha. My relatives spoke

Ukrainian to me, and I don't remember celebration of any religious holidays. My relatives got together at Soviet holidays at our place. I was the only child in the family. My mother had babies several times, but they all died. I studied at a Russian secondary school in Kiev. It was located near the Ukrainian Drama Theater and school children participated in the performances. We often went to the theater. I remember the terrible famine of 1933 well, although the situation in Kiev wasn't as tense as elsewhere. I remember long lines of people waiting to get bread. There were supervisors to watch the order. After the government moved to Kiev from Kharkov in 1934 life improved a lot. Kiev, as the capital of Ukraine, had better supplies of food products. We lived in the main street of Kiev, Kreschatik. We had a huge room and seven other families were our neighbors in the same apartment. My parents separated my part of the room with a screen, which they bought from the sales. It was a heavy mahogany screen, upholstered in a beautiful manner. My parents and I had iron beds. We had a sofa with a high back, a carved cupboard, a floor mirror and a table in this room. We also had a radio.