

Bella Zeldovich With Her Siblings



This is a picture of me (first from right), my brother Leonid Zeldovich and my sister Lubov Yarmunik (nee Zeldovich). The photo was taken in Odessa in 1949 before I went to Armenia. We returned to Odessa from our evacuation in Aktyubinsk, Kazakhstan in April 1945, two weeks before the war was over. On 9th May we heard about the victory on the radio. Everybody was overwhelmed with joy. I got a job as an assistant accountant at the Financial College. In the evening I attended classes at the evening department of the Credit and Economy Faculty of Lomonosov Institute. Since I had finished school with a gold medal in Aktyubinsk I was admitted without exams. There

were no restrictions for Jews to enter higher educational institutions. There were many Jewish students and Jewish lecturers at the institute - I don't remember the exact number. We didn't pay any attention to issues of nationality at that time. I had Russian and Jewish friends and didn't face any anti-Semitism. Upon graduation in 1949 I got a job assignment in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. I worked as a credit inspector in the main bank of Armenia for three years. It was a good job and a good location. There were only Jews that had been in evacuation in Armenia and there were no synagogues. I didn't observe any traditions while I lived in Armenia - it was a very difficult post-war time. I was glad to have survived the war. I had gotten the job assignment in Armenia along with a friend of mine and we rented a room in a communal apartment together. There were no comforts in the apartment. It was heated with wood or coal. In 1949 the campaign against cosmopolitans began. The Jewish and Armenian population was worried and concerned about the situation. After I completed the term of my job assignment I returned to Odessa. My brother Leonid finished school in 1948 and entered the Mechanical Faculty at Odessa Polytechnic Institute. He graduated in 1953 and worked as a mechanical engineer. In 1955 Leonid married Svetlana, a Jewish woman. They have a daughter called Marina. My brother has always had more Jewish friends. After he got married my brother and his family lived in a three-bedroom apartment. Leonid left for America three years ago. He lives in New York. He doesn't work any more - he's already 70 years old. My sister Lubov finished school in 1955 and graduated from the Physic and Mathematic Faculty of Odessa Pedagogical Institute in 1960. She worked as a teacher at a secondary school. She got married in 1964. Her husband's name was Efim Yarmunik. He was a Jew. He was production manager at the Centrolit Factory. She has two sons; Igor and Sasha [Alexandr]. Igor graduated from the Agricultural Institute and got married. His wife's family moved to America, and Igor and his wife also decided to move there. My sister followed her older son. She left for America in 1990. Her husband died on his way to buy plane tickets, three months before their departure. He died at the age of 53. Lubov lives in New York now. She looks after elderly people.