

Musia Krakovskaya



Musia Krakovskaya, my mother, one of the best lecturers on the history of the USSR in Kiev University. This photo was taken in Kiev in 1953.

My mother moved to Kiev in the 1920s. She couldn't stay at her uncle's, as he had many children and she went to the children's home, located in Lukianovka. It was called 'Lenin's town of children.' This was an ordinary Soviet children's home for homeless children. There were also Jewish children's homes in Kiev, but I don't think my mother knew anything about them and went to work at the nearest home. My mother told me that it was a delightful beginning of her social life.

In the children's home my mother was an active pioneer and then a Komsomol leader. I understand social work was some kind of self-assertion for her. My mother learned the profession of a printer after the children's home and worked in a publishing house, before she became a secretary at the

Komsomol district and then town committee. She was a propagandist and took an active part in collectivization. In 1929 my mother became a candidate to the Communist Party and she became a member of it in 1930.

She went to the villages to force peasants to join collective farms. She was among those that took away everything these peasants possessed. I know nothing about this period of her life. She never told me anything. She might have whispered some things to my father at night, but I think she believed that what she was doing was right.

She stayed a firm communist until the end of her days, she never changed. If I was saying something that was different from what she thought she disagreed with me. We did not argue and there was no confrontation. But she never gave up believing that all people had to be together. The slogan 'Proletariat all over the world, unite!' was still meaningful for her when she grew old. But it doesn't mean that she was unambiguously good or bad. She was a wonderful lecturer. She had interesting ideas and she could present them in a very different manner. Her lectures on the Russian history of the XVIII-XIX centuries in the university were of great interest. She loved literature and read a lot.