

Riva Smerkovicene With Her Husband's Niece Maya Kantorovich



This is I, Riva Smerkovicene, with my husband Gutman's niece Maya (Maria) Kantorovich. The prison where I was detained in the 1930s is in the background. I was imprisoned for underground Communist activity. It is a museum now. My picture is there. It was taken in Kaunas in the 1960s.

My husband had an elder sister, Chaya. Her husband – I can't recall his name – was an underground Communist. In 1933 he fled with his family to the USSR in order to avoid persecution. He was arrested on the border with the Soviet Union for being a spy and then executed. Chaya and Maria were exiled to Kyrgyzstan in accordance with article 58. [It was provided by this article that any action directed at upheaval, shattering and weakening of the power of the working and peasant class should be punished.] She got married for the second time and took her husband's name – Kantorovich and changed her daughter's name to that as well for her not to have any trouble because of her father. Consequently Maria's father was rehabilitated. Chaya died in the 1980s. Maria Kantorovich lives in Israel.