

Estera Migdalska's Soviet ID



This is my ID from the USSR. I got it when I was 16. I had a lot of problems with my return to Poland because I obtained Russian citizenship. In 1946 I was taken care of by Aunt Roza Gershleibovna Sudman and I left with her family from Balanda to Proskurov. In Proskurov, we lived in a single house, but everyone had a place, a room, for themselves. The house had no sewer system, it was awful, old. Roza's parents were Orthodox Jews. In principle, they observed all the rules and bans. Roza's father was some kind of an activist at the community. Aunt Roza, though they had the money to pay for it, completed only seven grades and was unable to enlist for any high school because Jews weren't admitted. Her younger brother and younger sister several years later completed their high schools and graduate studies without difficulty. So not only I did find myself among Jews again, I found myself back in the Jewish tradition. During the war, they observed only so many Jewish traditions they could, so as not to starve, and, in fact, it was permitted in such circumstances; Roza's father certainly didn't take his kippah off, he observed what he could. When we returned to Proskurov, Grandfather Hersz went to the synagogue again, he was the ritual butcher. He was the butcher and also the man in charge of circumcising children. For Yom Kippur, the whole family fasted. I was already past the age that exempts you from fasting so I fasted as well. In 1947 Uncle Uncle then starts efforts to bring me back, I also start efforts to be repatriated. But repatriation has officially ended. Efforts for me to be able to repatriate continue for a year, until 1947. In late 1947, an official letter arrives for the Proskurov education department to escort me to a gathering point near Moscow where the remaining formalities will be completed. That gathering point is a children's home, there isn't much to eat, but there are children, orphans of some high-ranking officers, there's a school, there are music classes. We are a group of perhaps 15 kids. From small children to three older girls roughly of my age, and one more older girl from Bialystok.