Bronislava Chepur’s Family

My mother Aloets Buzia, my father Dmitriy Chepur (my parents are students) and I, Bronislava Chepur. Photo made in Kiev in 1934. My parents got married in Kiev, but I was born in Uman on 25.09.1931. They had no wedding party, just a civil registration ceremony. My mother was an orphan. There was nobody to support the young couple. My mother's stepbrother Shlyoma , his wife Hanne and their children lived in Uman. Shlyoma was a shoemaker. My mother wrote him a letter and went to Uman to give birth to her baby. Uncle Shlyoma visited us before the war. I remember his hands. He had one finger deformed, probably, by a hammer. His hands always smelled of leather. He liked me very much and often played with me putting me on his lap. Later my mother showed me the house where I was born. It was a 2-storied lopsided building on the

corner of Lenin street and a lane. I would know it if I saw it today. It is probably not there any more… We lived in Kruglouniversitetsksaya Street in a shared apartment . This was the house where lawyers and doctors had lived before the war. We had 4 rooms in our apartment and there was a room for servants near the kitchen. Each room was occupied by a different family. I can't say that my parents and I had particularly close relationships. But my obedience was implicit. My parents didn't grow up in families. And they didn't know much about raising children although they were working in a school. They got along well with other children. My mother was the children's favorite. But my parents did not get involved with my reading, my studies or my time. You know, I come from a common family. And in a common family children are some sort of a burden. Children grow up by themselves. Their parents give them food and provide for them and then they think their task is done. Besides, you need to keep in mind that those were Soviet families. They were all busy with social activities: meetings, sittings, emergency training, subbotniks, voskresniks etc. An individual could not stay in the family. And family life was a burden rather than a joy. They had meals at the factory canteen, they washed themselves in the saunas and did their laundry at Laundromats. That was why I loved to spend time at my neighbors' family. It was cozy there. Maria Lvovna was sitting in an old chair, wearing her glasses and reading to Dizia. She was explaining to us what he didn't understand. I just loved it. It was a totally different story. We celebrated 7 November, 1 May and birthdays, of course.