

## ALEXNDER KRUTKOVICH, recorded 2011

This does not appear to be an interview. There is no interviewer and there are no questions. Alexander Krutkovich tells his story with family members present. Most likely they are his wife, daughter and granddaughter; one of them, most likely his daughter, occasionally embellishes Alexander's story and translates for the benefit of his granddaughter, whose "babushka" [grandmother] in the room must be Alexander's wife. Additional information may be found in a greatly abbreviated audio, with video: <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn100644>

Alexander was born July 31, 1928 in Minsk. His father was Boris Zakharovich Krutkovich; his mother was Nadezhda Markovna Krutkovich, neé Geldener. Alexander had two younger brothers, Lev b. 1931 and Marat b. 1936. His maternal grandfather, Isaac, was head of a vehicle supply outlet in Minsk; his paternal grandfather was a rabbi.

Boris Krutkovich was from the village of Smolevichi, near Minsk. After the Russian Revolution, Boris Krutkovich fought in the Russian Civil War and in the Russo-Polish War of 1920. He studied in a workers' school, became a police investigator and then worked in the prosecutor's office in Berezino, Mogilevskaya Oblast, Belorussian SSR. He was arrested in 1938 and charged with being an enemy of the people. [Alexander does not say what happened to him; presumably he was killed or sent to the Gulag.]

Nadezhda was a schoolteacher; after Boris was arrested, she was fired from her job and became a janitor.

When the Germans invaded in 1941, Alexander, his mother and two brothers were living in Berezino, about 100 km from Minsk. They fled eastward in a series of moves, escaping German artillery. (Grandfather Isaac and Alexander's grandmother and aunts fled by truck.) Alexander, his mother and two brothers traveled by freight train to Voronezh and were sent to a collective farm where they stayed for a month until the Germans approached [most likely October] and they were told they were in danger. They then went to Chelyabinsk, where they stayed with Rebecca, a friend of Alexander's mother. Then they moved to Kokand, Uzbekistan, where they worked on a collective farm picking cotton. Nadezhda and Lev became ill and died. Marat was sent to a children's home and Alexander to a trade school in Tashkent.

After the war, Alexander made it back to Minsk. He describes postwar work, housing, food, and army service. A family friend named Lev Melamid, who was in the military in Central Asia, tried to find Alexander's brother Marat but failed. (Alexander ends his video interview with the hope that someday he and Marat will find each other.) Alexander found his paternal aunt Riva after the war and learned that his paternal uncle Simon and his grandparents were shot during the war. Alexander describes meeting his future wife in Minsk; her family had come from Tambov after the liberation of Minsk. Alexander describes his wife's work at a sewing shop. [She is not named but most likely is the "grandmother" when Alexander is talking to his granddaughter in the audio.]