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## Materials of subsequent contacts with Israel Yakushko[[1]](#footnote-1)

**New Meeting with Israel Yakushko 27.05.2005**

А. You told me that when you went to Siauliai to get costumes and came back, a Lithuanian didn't take you in.

И. I didn't, yes. I wasn't a smart person at all for going to Šiauliai to get suits. I shouldn't have gone! It was dangerous to go!

А. Yeah, Mom said we shouldn't go.

И. Said: "Don't go." And Moshe said: "Go, go, go. Take the bicycles there and bring them back. I didn't make it to Šiauliai. I made it to Kuje.

There was a group of Jews in Zeimyalis, who always did a play on Passover or Purim. Sometimes Lithuanians would come, the priest would come.

**Processing of a story by Israel Yakushka May 27, 2005**

We left Zeimelis at 5 p.m. on the 26th. Eight carts:

(1) The Yakushok family - father, mother, sister, her husband, me, Moshe, Haim, and the dog "Viking. (7)

2) The next one is Lakunishok: Moshe, Dobra, are the parents. Of the children: Berka, Haimka, Yeshua, Yisrael. Then Zelda is their daughter and her husband Naftali. Their two children: Eliezer, Michael. (10)

(3) Then Yankel Caro's wagon with his wife, Sheina, and their daughter, Hana. (3)

(4) Then there was the Berman family: Yisrael, Hoda are parents, Children: Zalman, Rivka, Leiba. (5)

There were many pedestrians. There were Lithuanians, too.

The workers of the Central Committee of Žeimelis all ran away earlier.

5) Fleischmann was. He came back. Big mistake. Fleischmann was a participant in the attempted assassination of a Lithuanian veterinarian. He was in prison. Avrom Fleischmann. Shane's wife. Daughter was Raska Fleischman. I was in love with her. I was a kid. And Benjamin Fleischman. Benka. They came back.

There was Rabbi Schneider. He didn't have a horse. He walked. And two small children. One in his arms. And my father said, "How do you leave all the people?" And he went back. Where could he go with small children?

6) Beder Aba and his wife and two children. He, too, went back.

Beder and Fleischmann walked about 15 to 18 kilometers.

7) The wagon, I also remembered. Faive-Hirsch Yakushok and wife Sima. (2)

8) Then there was another wagon. Motl Yakushok and Ita Pruhne and the baby, little Shulamit, born a month before the war. Pruhne - that Jakushok was. And the little daughter is tiny. She was married to Motl Yakushok. They went together with their daughter. And the mother was an old woman. (4)

Yakushok Meir, were Meika, Froika Yakushok. These are the children.

In short, there were 49 people.

Besides us, there were about 250 other people: from Šiauliai, from Taurage, from Jurbarakas, who ran away from there and were in Žeimelis. But when we started moving, they came with us.

**June 12, 2005.**

Telephone conversation with Israel (Haifa‑ Herzliya).

А. Were there natives of Žeimialis among the Jews who went to Riga?

И. Hirsch Kremer went to Riga.

А. How many kilometers did you walk to the fork?

И. About 18 kilometers.

**Telephone conversation with Israel Yakushko on June 6, 2007**

А. How many kilometers did you walk in a day?

И. First day 35 km, second day 70.

А. You didn't spend the night in the Bourses?

И. Exchanges have bypassed

А. How many cyclists were there besides you?

И. Three or four people. But they turned to Riga.

А. How busy were the roads?

И. Were not loaded, especially at the beginning of the journey.

А. Does he know Nairi's point?

И. Nairi - not reaching Jaunjelgava about 15 km.

А. What points in Latvia does he remember other than Jaunjelgava?

И. Vairu, Ventspils.

< Mentions some bridge in Latvia where shots were fired.

**Telephone conversation with Israel Yakushko on September 26, 2007**

Israel claims that after crossing the Dvina they followed the highway to Madona, and passed Pļavinas. At or near Madona, they learned that the bridge on the highway had been taken over by Latvian deserters, who had formed a resistance group. Israel's father went to a local Old Believer to ask for directions, since his father spoke Russian. He pointed out the road, but expressed doubt that they would make it there. They drove through the woods and swamps for 12 kilometers and bypassed the obstacle.

**Conversation with Israel Yakushko at the meeting on October 10, 2007**

И. Near Birzai, at about 12 o'clock, several German planes bombarded us. We all ran to the field from the carts, hid in the rye, the planes passed, threw some bombs, but no one was hurt.

А. Were there many refugees near you, or were you walking separately when you were attacked by the plane?

И. There were soldiers, there were also Party and administrative workers from some place. There was a village council in each place. They also came with us.

А. [July 3, 1941] Latvian partisans stood on the bridge and fired. People went back on their bicycles. They said they couldn't pass the bridge. It was toward evening. Then my dad went to one Lithuanian or Latvian.

- How to get to Pskov?

А. You say Latvian, Old Believer, Russian Old Believer.

И. Yes. I can't say for sure. Dad didn't speak Russian very well, he knew Latvian very well. He said: "You have to go 12 kilometers, there's a forest road. It's very bad. There is mud there. It was raining the day before [July 2]. We had to take the Pskov highway. So, after a night, in the morning [July 4] it was light and we did 12 kilometers. We drove for probably five or six hours. With stops. There were such potholes, water. When we reached the Pskov highway, we stopped: Russian soldiers were retreating along the highway, leaving one by one, by three or four people. But the asphalt road.

And then we reached one village. There was nothing to eat, the Latvians didn't sell anything. We went to buy potatoes. One potato each. And that's good. We had sprats, but we ran out of sprats. And here we're approaching - 20 kilometers to the Russian border. The Pskov region begins. And there we were detained by Russian soldiers. They said: "Go to the village here" - it was Jaunlaicene, but I don't remember exactly. "The Germans are still far away. Madona is still in our hands." Madona is 50-60 kilometers away. They gave us something to eat. Some commander came: "You will go to work, digging trenches. We all [on July 5] went to work, digging trenches. When we were digging the trenches, a motorcycle came rushing over: "Get out of here! The Germans are 20 kilometers away!" You could already hear the artillery. We were all running, a mile or two, hitched our horses and headed for the border. The Germans were ten kilometers away. We approached the border. They wouldn't let us in.

А. Very interesting, how long were they sitting at the border? And what was the date?

И. A few hours. [July 6] An officer came and said: "These are refugees, let them through." And we passed all the wagons. That's it. Dad says, "That's it, the end. Russian land. Not a step will the Germans make. Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia are occupied. It's all right. The Germans won't come here. Let's go to the highway at noon - the Leningrad highway. Soldiers are retreating, others are going to the front.

Me and Motel Jakushok. My twin brother. Faive-Hirsch Yakushok is his father. We'll go to the village there. We'll buy something from them. And so we go into the house. There's a woman in it. We say a few words in Russian: bread, butter, potatoes.

- What are you! Where have you come! We're starving! We have nothing! - She has nothing, a broken chair, a stool, an old table. We went out. "Where have we come." All the people who are from this village go to gather mushrooms and berries. That's how they live. The collective farm works, doesn't work.

We drove on. By nightfall we arrived in Pskov. The barracks alone were red. The whole street is barracks, still of tsarist times. Pskov is an ancient city. That was it, that was the end.

By morning there is nothing to eat. Everyone is hungry. We were told where the bakery was, the store. So we ran. We bought three or four loaves each. Old bread. Doesn't matter. We were happy.

There's a bridge there. A big one. We came right to the bridge. German planes keep dropping bombs here and there. Not so strong bombs. But they're throwing bombs. We have to go over. And so Daddy went. Talked to a soldier.

- What are you, they're bombing, you can't go, they're bombing all the time.

Daddy came over. He gave 200 rubles to this soldier.

- Go through quickly.

All the horses were beaten hard, beaten so that they ran across the bridge. We ran across the bridge. We drove about 13-15 kilometers, were held up by the locals, the collective farm.

А. Again the kolkhoz, for the second time? You were the one who told the story 20 km before the Russian border.

И. There was no kolkhoz, I think, in Latvia. And here there was a kolkhoz. It was already beyond Pskov. Our horse fell down, doesn't get up. Doesn't eat anything. And only one other horse.

А. So your horse was tired before, I remember.

И. Yes, yes. The second horse is tired, not eating, lying like dead. So, what are we going to do without the horse? There are more rags, something else from the things. And so we went to the collective farm. And there they gave us dinner. Daddy doesn't eat. Not kosher. Mom screamed.

А. After all, according to Jewish law you can.

И. Yes. My brother, who was in the ghetto, ate lard. The rabbis didn't forbid him.

Tomorrow morning the chairman of the collective farm came: "You go to work at the collective farm. A kolkhoz is like a kolkhoz. I went in, it was beautiful there. At night at 12 o'clock that chairman came again: "Get out of here. The Germans are leaving Pskov".

А. So there were two such cases?

И. Yes.

А. You told me about it. But I remember, you told me only one case.

И. I'll make it short. And so they harnessed the horse and dragged it all by themselves. They pushed the cart. Mother was sitting on the cart. I lost my doggy in this place. We got to Porkhov. There we went straight to the railroad station. We don't go anywhere from here. We'll wait for the train and get on.

А. You don't remember when you arrived?

И. It was in the middle of the week. July. And then at night in the early morning the train arrived, the red cars. The chief came out. "Load quickly. Quickly, it only takes 20 minutes." Who could, who could not. We left the horses behind. But we lifted the carts. The cart with the things. There was still sugar. We had some flour. And there was a radio set. We just climbed in, closed up, not completely, so that there would be air, and the train drove off.

А. I thought they said they were going with horses.

И. Yes. Berman took the horses and sent them away. All the horses died somewhere. Berman ended up in Kirov. His father Zalman was killed. Jew.

I also want to say that when everyone boarded the train, they were happy. The train went 15-20 km and stopped. They don't let us through. I do not know what is the matter. It turned out - military echelons were coming. We were put on the reserve line while they were passing through. Nothing to eat. Everybody is hungry. I don't remember. A small station. A village, probably. What to do? Someone said there was a place nearby that sold bread. We had two bikes. "An Enesson and a Focke Wolf. We got on our bikes and four people rode to the place. 2.5-3 kilometers. We came to a store. Such a barn. There was a line of 40-50 people. You can't get anything.

The gunman came through in the morning. Seeing what bikes are like. Red lights. And he walked up, probably somewhere in the militia and said: "There's spies in there." We were all young. A policeman came and took us away and put us in jail. To find out who we were. One of us knew Russian: "We were refugees. We were from Lithuania", he kept telling us. Nothing helped. It was early in the morning. At 8 o'clock an officer came, a lieutenant colonel. They report to him. We are sitting in another room, locked up. It's a wooden house. They opened it for him, he goes in.

А. Your dad and mom are on the train on the back track, and you got arrested?

И. And we were arrested, for Enesson and Focke-Wolfe bicycles. "The Focke-Wolf is a German bicycle, and the Enesson is an English bicycle. The lieutenant colonel came in, "Who are you people?" Turns out he's a Jew. "I say, so and so, we only went to look for something, bread, we didn't eat anything." He tells the policeman that they wanted to buy something. He told the policeman something else. He took us to the store on the other side. They were selling ramen there, dark ramen. Hard as rocks. But how do you get a baranki. We bought some rope, with which they tie a cow in a pasture. We went back to the police. He said: "Let them out, there's an echelon, their parents are there. Asked: "Can I ride your bicycle car." He did a lap and returned the bike.

**Letter to Israel Yakushk on March 19, 2009.**

St. Petersburg, March 19, 2009.

Dear Israel!

Anatoly Haesh wishes you and sweet Ida good health.

I appeal to your unique memory.

I got hold of the original minutes of interrogation of August 24, 1944 of Lithuanian Dervinskas Ignas Jurgis, born in 1916 in Krasniškis village of Žeimelis volost, in which he tells about the policeman Stanislav Ivanovich Uzenas, born in 1898 in Mašeliai village.

Quote:

"Before the Jews were shot, that is, before they were herded into the barn, Yuzenas demanded gold from Jew Büzes and promised him that he would save his life. This fact was told to me personally by Büzes, but I do not know whether he gave gold to Yüzenas, because Büzes was shot together with all the Jews.

My question. Who is Buzes? I don't know such a Jew in Zeimelis.

Is Buzes a last name or a first name? If a first name, what is it in full and what is the last name? How old was Buzes approximately? Did he have a family?

All the best to you.

Your Anatoly Haesh

**Conversation with Israel Yakushko by telephone April 11, 2009**

Buzzes comes from the Hebrew name Buzya. This is Buzya Ehrlich.

He came from Poland, a cunning Jew. He saw that Abramovich was a rich family and married Abramovich's sister. The latter lent him or gave him some money. Buzya did not return the money. He was not a very decent man. Abramovich then went to Riga, sold his warehouses on Linkuva Street to Leizer Haesh, the red brick houses. Buzya Ehrlich moved to Siauliai under the Soviets, he gave me his bicycle. I called him to leave with us on June 22, but he didn't want to part with his junk. Then he ended up in Žeimelis and died there.

Yakushok said there were (Buzes?) two sons, one of them Zelik, with whom Israel played soccer, the other Israel.

Juzenas was in the military, he was kicked out of the army under the Soviets and became a tailor. Then he joined the militia. On June 23, he smashed Stalin's bust in Žeimelis with a stick, he was no longer afraid of anything. The Lithuanians rejoiced at the German attack.

Israel knew Dervinskas, too. But what he said about him on the phone, I don't remember.

Barry Mann called Yakushk regarding Leiser Mann's wife. Israel says that her name was Sheina-Rivka, she was a large woman, she, according to Israel, was killed in Zeimyalis/.

1. Editing, formatting, illustrations, and explanations of the text - the author of the publication. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)