

Michaela Vidlakova's Wedding Photo



This photograph is from my wedding in 1960 in Prague. Standing in the bottom row from the left are my in-laws, I with my husband, and then my parents. Standing behind us is my friend and first date, Pavel Svab, my husband's brother Lubor, and Pavel Svab's parents. Mr. Jaroslav Svab was there as our witness, he was a relatively well-known graphic artist. My husband's witness was his brother Lubor.

In jail I developed an infection of the sciatic nerve, which went untreated for a half year back then, and gave me a lot of trouble later. So the doctor gave me a voucher for a spa, where I met Milos Vidlak, my future husband. I was 17, he was 15 years older, and very educated and cultured, which was something I missed in guys my age. Milos was from Prague, and we went out for the entire time of my university studies, and after school in 1960 we got married. I didn't know any Jewish guy that suited me.

My husband was a graduate of the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University. For a long time he worked for the Invalids' Association, in the area of work, wages and care for invalids in general. Due to the Communists he didn't finish his PhD until 1968, and then worked for the Ministry of Social Affairs.

We lived with my husband's parents in a house on Na Vetrniku Street in Prague. Milos may not have been a Jew, but in the beginning he gave the impression of a big Semitophile. But after the wedding that began to gradually change, until he began to behave practically like an anti-Semite. My husband was very much an anti-Communist, and would for example throw in my face that it was actually the Jews that began with Communism. In the end the Jews were even responsible for scorched soup.

I don't know whence it came in him and why. Before we were married, he'd even attend synagogue with me. But I think that it wasn't so much an expression of anti-Semitism as of compensation for certain complexes. Back then he wasn't a university graduate yet, and I was already working at a research institute. I think that he simply didn't feel good, and compensated for that by attacking

me in an area that he knew was the most sensitive for me. Thanks to that we became estranged, of course. We didn't get divorced, because in the meantime, in 1963 our son Daniel was born. Back then I had practically no place to go, I wouldn't have been granted an apartment anyways.

Daniel also had excellent and loving grandparents. I liked my father-in-law, Filip Vidlak, as well as my mother-in-law, Marie Vidlakova, and they loved Daniel. I'm sure that my mother-in-law realized how unstable her son was, and was glad that it was at least the way it was. After she died, I kept taking care of my father-in-law for quite a bit longer; he lived with us, and at the age of 90 would still cut the grass out in the yard.