

Mark Kabakov And His Grandchildren



This is my grandchildren, Victor's kids. From left to right: Dmitriy Kabakov, I, Sofia Kogan and Innesa Kabakova. The picture was made in Haifa in 2003.

For me personally the war was still not over when the act on capitulation was signed by Germany on the 9th of May 1945. I take pride in the fact that I was still involved in military actions when the war was over. In 1947, when I graduated naval academy, I was assigned an officer to the 6th Krasnoznamennyi mine-sweepers division the Northern navy. Up to 1950 I had been dealing with postwar minesweeping. Our task was to find the mines and exterminate them with the help of mine-sweepers. I, mechanic of the mine-sweeper had such a salary that it was exceeding my combined income for the entire marine service, which was pretty long- 34 years. During Great Patriotic War I was awarded with Great Patriotic War Order of the First Class, medal for victory in the Great Patriotic War and a number of other medals.

In 1950 I was assigned to higher courses for the officers in Moscow. Having finished them I served as a military representative at torpedo building plant in Alma-Ata [about 3000 km to the east from Moscow]. After that I had served in the Baltic navy for 6 years, then at Black Sea navy for another 6 years. Then I came to Moscow and worked for four years in scientific research institute as a military representative having the rank of commodore. I resigned in 1974. I was clad in military uniform in 1940 and resigned in 1974.

I met my wife Maya Zeitman in 1949 during my vacation in Moscow. I had corresponded with her for a year and then in 1950 we got married. We had lived in perfect harmony for a long time. She followed me no matter to what village or city I was sent during my military career. She made a cozy and warm home in any place we happened to be. She gave me 2 sons, whom we raised honest and worthy people, the way we wanted. Maya was a very well-bread and intelligent person. In general we were soul mates. In every stage of my life she was there for me, understanding me and giving me a hand. We traveled a lot in the country and abroad, when I finally got a permit for that. We visited my cousins in France and Switzerland, our son in Israel.

It is hard to say what I enjoyed more-literary activity or military service. There are totally different and discontiguous things. I am thankful for everything I came across with. I am grateful to my commanders. They were decent people and I joyfully recall my service, especially military mine-sweeping. I am not denying anything.

My first son Victor was born in 1951. My second son's name is Leonid. He was born in 1956. Victor has lived in Israel since 1986. Victor graduated from polygraphic institute. He worked as a polygraphist for a while, then he started dealing with books in Israel. Son Leonid lives with me in Moscow. He finished arts school and is currently working as an artist in Moscow art gallery. Children identify themselves as Jews. My wife and I always told their children that they were Jews. We talked about Jewry and about our Jewish problems. Victor, the three of his children are true Jews. My Israeli grandsons' names are Innesa, Dmitriy and Sofia. My son's wife lights candles on Sabbath. Their family observes kashrut and that is it. They are not Orthodox Jews. My son drives on Saturday and he does not consider it a sin. My daughter-in-law talks on the phone on Saturday and does not reckon it a sin either. My granddaughter Innesa is a very gifted girl. She studied at Moscow Literary Institute, Translation Department. She finished four courses. Now she is studying at Jerusalem University, Philology Department. She got bachelor's degree some time ago. Now she is going for masters. She is fluent in Russian, Ivrit and English. She is not like grandpa, who speaks a little bit German and English (with the help of body language).

I identify myself as Jew. If I address to the Creator, I picture him in Jewish apparel, though in the religion of our ancestors he is invisible and immaterial. I am proud to belong to the peoples, who gave 10 commandments to the modern civilization. Only ignoramuses and rascals can deny them.