

Mark Kabakov And His Son Leonid Kabakov



This is my younger son Leonid Kabakov and me. The picture was made in Moscow 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.

Besides, I am actively involved in literary activity. My first publication was made by house magazine in Astrakhan in 1942. My first book was published in 1968. About two dozens of my books were published. Most of them are poetry, but there is also prose and journalistic genre. I was admitted in the council of writers in 1973. I have been its member for about 30 years.

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. Leonid lives with me in Moscow. He finished arts school and is currently working as an artist in Moscow art gallery. Leonid has two children - daughter Svetlana and son Yuri. They are expecting the third child. Younger son became Orthodox. He is religious and he strictly observes all the rites. All my grandchildren (his children) are baptized. His family goes to the church. The family of my son Victor, living in Israel, disapproves of the baptism of Leonid's family. Being baptized and Christian Leonid still identifies himself as Jew. The fact that Leonid and his family became Christians was calmly accepted by me. Everybody has the right to profess the religion of his choice.

I identify myself as Jew. If I address 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 people who gave 10 commandments to the modern civilization. Only ignoramuses and rascals can deny them.