Maya Kabakov With His Family

This is my family.

In the bottom row from left to right: my son Victor Kabakov, next to him is my mother-in-law Sofia Seitman, holding my second son Leonid Kabakov.

In the second row from left to right: wife Maya Kabakovà, my father-in-law Isai Seitman and my father Volf Kabakov.

The picture was taken in our house in Moscow in 1957.

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.

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.

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 mater 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.

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.

Maya was born in Moscow in 1927. Like me she finished secondary school with honors, then Moscow Higher Technical School named after Bauman [Moscow High Technical School named after renowned revolutionary Nikolay Bauman, today it is called Technical Institute].

She worked as a designer, When we lived in Alma-Ata, she taught technical drawing and resistance of materials in the institute. She died in 2002. She was buried in Donskoye cemetery in Moscow.

My wife came of an interesting family. My father's -in-law name was Isai Seitman. He was a famous artist. Some of his pictures are exhibited in Tretyakov gallery in Moscow [the word renown gallery, one of the main arts museum of Russia, located in Moscow]. Besides, he was a very good optician.

He graduated from Moscow University, Physics Department. Then he taught physics. The first institution he worked for was Jewish commune-school in the vicinity if Moscow in Malakhovka.

Isai Seitman was raised in common Jewish family in the town Alexandria, located in the South of Ukraine, Kherson province [about 1100 km. to the south from Moscow].

Since childhood his artistic talent had been noticed. Religion was alien to my parents-in-law. They belonged to those Jews, who did not mind assimilation to the soviet regime. Everything connected with the Jewry went back to their childhood and adolescence. They live with other things, they breathed another air- international and communistic.

I father-in-law was interested in Jewry merely because very many great artists were Jews and Jewish theme was reflected in their works. Neither my mother-in-law nor my father-in-law denied that their Jews, when the subjects of art was broached.