

Ihil Shraibman With His Wife Marina Shraibman



This is me with my second wife Marina Shraibman at the meeting of the editorial board of the 'Sovietische Heimland' Jewish magazine with its readers. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1981.

In 1961 the 'Sovietische Heimland' magazine was established. Its chief editor was Aron Vergelis. My miniatures were published in the first issue on 1st August. Three-four years later I was assigned to the editorial board of the magazine. Members of the editorial board were to gather twice a year in Moscow. Besides, other writers were involved in editorial board meetings to reach a wider audience. Manuscripts of new books were sent to members of the editorial board for review and references, so to say.

I wrote a lot in the 1960s and often went to work to the Creative Houses of the Union of Writers of the USSR. One of the most popular of these was located in Maleyevka near Moscow. I went there for a few years in a row in March. Each writer could have a room on his own. There were nice doctors in these centers. I met many famous writers from Moscow and other Soviet republics. I have many bright memories and books in many languages that the authors gave me. In summer I

worked in the writers' creative house in Yalta. I also went to Dubulti near Riga. In the Creative House in Pizunda I met Arkadiy Raikin, he stayed in the House for Actors nearby. I often walked with him and his wife. He liked to speak Yiddish to me. He was a wonderful person. I wrote most of my works in Creative Houses. My three novels were written there: the trilogy 'Zibetsnyorike' [The Seventeen-year-olds], 'Veyter' [Further] and 'Zibn yor mit zibn hadoshim' [Seven Years and Seven Months]. They are based on my biography. You know that every writer writes about himself. Whatever he composes it's still about himself. In other words, if he doesn't have himself in his mind, he has nothing to write about. And if he has his life inside, all events and details, they make material for his works. So, the main material for a writer is his life. Even if he narrates it on behalf of his characters.

My first wife Olga Kalyusskaya died in 1967. On 25th June 1968 I met Marina. We got married in June 1969. I was happy. From the first minute of our acquaintance Marina asked me to spell her name in Yiddish. This was the start of her acquaintance with the culture of my people. This was the first time she met a Jew. She studied Yiddish to be able to read my works and now she knows it better than many Jews. We speak Yiddish at home and she is my first reader now, like Olga was in the past. She tells me that when I work and when I read my works to her she lives the happiest moments of her life. I value her opinion more than that of many critics. I think I'm very lucky: I met two wonderful women: Olga and Marina.