

My Mother

One is often reminded of those who are not around us any more when encountering physical objects that connected us to them. But with my mother, it is abstract thoughts. I find reflections of her wisdom in me.

She was educated in a French monastery and then at Sofia University in Bulgaria. After arriving to Israel, she abandoned her university studies and dedicated her attention to raising my two sisters and me. She knitted a sweater that I wore throughout my youth and baked cakes that received high praise from my close friends. She cared about my path in life on a daily basis, like a gardener watering a plant with meticulous dedication. And late in her life, she completed her PhD and wrote a book titled: "[*Franz Kafka: A Question of Jewish Identity*](#)".

As an unfulfilled intellectual, she introduced me to philosophy throughout my childhood, most notably French existentialism. Her mature examination of all facets of reality triggered my interest in the big picture.

Her balanced judgements were trusted by everyone who knew her, from the leadership of our village to neighbors or visitors who were seeking her advice. I used to speak with her every day until she was unable to answer the phone in her last few weeks. When we finally met at the hospital, it was too late to chat. In a way, she did not go away but morphed into an unseparable component of my stream of thoughts. There is no higher livelihood than that. To paraphrase the French philosopher and scientist, René Descartes: "I think, therefore she is".

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