

Viktorya And Rafael Baruh



When my uncle Rafael Baruh married Viktorya Hodara, they had their photos taken at a studio according to the traditions of the day. If you take a close look at Viktorya's wedding dress, you see that it is very interesting indeed. The front of the dress is short and the back is long and the veil was arranged so it could cover the whole of her head. She has elbow-length gloves. My uncle Rafael has preferred a bow instead of a tie.

Rashel Baruh's middle son, Rafael Baruh, used to live in Ortakoy, and was educated in Bene Berit [Bnai Brith]. He met Viktorya Hodara in Ortakoy, and got married again in Ortakoy. Salti Franko, a businessman living in Ankara, offered a job for Rafael Baruh, at his textile shop. In this way, Rafael Baruh and Viktorya Baruh, moved to Ankara. I used to spend most of my summer holidays in Ankara, when I was a teenager. The life in Ortakoy, was like a village life for me. Everybody knew each other, and lived together like siblings whether they were Greek, Turkish, or Jewish. On the other hand, you could smell the city life in Ankara. Aunt Viktorya was such a lady, who dressed up in a very stylish manner, and who never removed her corset. Even the gatherings held in Ankara, were not like the ones in Ortakoy. There was much more protocol in Ankara. There was even a secret competition between my mother, and aunt Viktorya. I guess the difference between the husbands' income levels, was the cause of this competition. My father worked at a bank, while his brother was among the prominent merchants of Ankara. Rafael-Viktorya Baruh had their first son in 1931. They named him Selim after Rafael Baruh's father's name, Salamon Baruh. And they had their second son whom they named Erol in 1937. Erol finished Saint Joseph [French catholic high school], while Selim finished Robert College [5], both in Istanbul. In 1956, the government declared that merchants' accounts would be more stringently monitored. Rafael Baruh, and his family,

sensing this coming pressure on his business, emigrated to Paris, in the year of 1958. Selim and Erol completed their higher education in Paris. Erol became an electronics engineer, while Selim became a decorator. Erol married a French lady, named Nicole, and had a son named David. After getting divorced, he made his second marriage with a designer named Eti. Selim had two sons from his first marriage. After getting a divorce from his first wife, he had a long secret relation with a lady whom he met while decorating her house. He married her after a while, and settled down. Everyone married a Jewish spouse in the Baruh family up till now. Rafael and Viktorya died in Paris. My cousins, Erol and Selim, still reside in Paris.