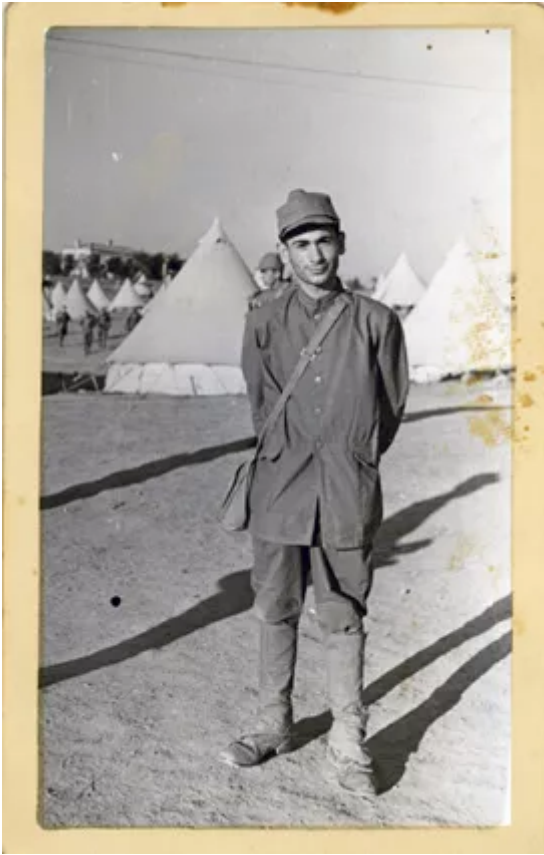


Arditi In The Military



This photograph relates to the military camp I used to go during my university years. Students attending universities also had to take a mandatory course pertaining to the military. The Architecture and Civil Engineering faculty took this class together with the faculties of Literature and Fine Arts in an amphitheatre. An army officer taught this class. When I was a sophomore in college, the officer in question began teaching us the Wealth Tax. ¹¹ What I remember was that he was not teaching the subject in an objective manner, but he rather added his own subjective views. He would say "The Wealth Tax had to be implemented to save us from the non-Muslims. They nearly robbed us of all our businesses. Now we will have a chance to see what they can do without any capital." When they heard this, all of my classmates began looking at me - wondering if and how I would respond. I remember smiling back at them in extreme sorrow because my family had personally been affected by the taxes as well. But, I believe that if there is one thing a person should not lose - no matter what - that is his honor and dignity. After the Wealth Tax had been implemented, my father's capital drained. My family went through very tough times. But, amongst all of those tough times, we were still able to find hope. The tradesmen, from whom my father bought wholesale goods for his store, came to the rescue, and embraced my family. They told my father "Whatever you see in our stores is yours. Take whatever you want, and you can pay us back whenever you can. This is what we have to do for you." They encouraged my father tremendously. It was as if life had restarted for us. I have very interesting memories about my term in the military. After my training, I was given a diploma that stated my graduation status as a reserve officer. It also says "very good," referring to the degree with which I finished my term. I was enlisted in the military in 1950 as a reserve officer. I actually was enlisted before my mandatory military attendance date. I tried to network as much as I could so that I could finish my military term as quickly as possible. I began my military duties as a naval officer first (assigned to me by lottery).

There were not any ranks in the naval forces in regards to architectural engineering, so I was ordered to wear the uniform of ground forces. I worked in the construction of a building in Heybeliada that is currently used as a military school. My commanding officers really liked my work, so they asked me what I wanted in return. One of my painter friends was also in the military at the time. I asked my officers if it was possible to station my friend to my unit so that he could help me with the drawings for the construction. In this respect, I was able to facilitate the relocation of one of my friends, and have him work with me. I knew he was having a very difficult time at his previous location. On Election Day, which resulted in a victory for the Democrats, a curfew was enacted for military officers. We could not go out on the streets, so I was sitting at the military headquarters. My commanding officer, who was residing at a nearby building close to sea level, summoned me to his quarters. I received permission to leave, and went to see him. I remember seeing a high-rank officer sitting across from my commander. My commander asked the officer to leave, so I could sit down. Rank is a very important concept in the military. To be honest, I was scared because I did not know what to expect. In the meantime, the soldiers in the streets were busy with preparation efforts for the 19 May national holiday. They were performing acrobatic dances on a large, iron construction. My commander asked me whether I thought the construction was strong. I told him that I did not think the construction was sufficiently solid, and that there was a very good chance it could cave in. I also walked him through the steps that should be taken in order to make it stronger and more durable. In this way, I was able to correct some of the construction mistakes, and prevent a possible disaster from ever happening. My observation on this matter was very well received by my commander. ar