

Saffet Gokcen



This is my husband's mother Saffet Orgun, at her graduation from the American College in Istanbul in 1933. I met my second husband in 1965 through a friend, Sehnaz Akinci, at the horse-riding club. She lived on the same floor, in the same apartment, as a lady called Mina Urgan. I met her for the first time when I went to Sehnaz's apartment. Mina Urgan had had a beloved classmate at the American College, Saffet Orgun, who had passed away, and had a son, Günel Orgun. He was a young man of about my age, who had been married and divorced after three years. Mina thought that we should be compatible, and that being both divorcees, we could have some good time

together. So, she introduced us. Günel had a motorboat. Mina asked my friend Sehnaz and me to a boat ride on a Sunday. We went and that is how we met. We got married at the Üsküdar Registry Office. Günel is a graduate of Robert College. He had lots of friends from school, Turkish, Jewish, Greek, Armenians, etc., reflecting the diversity of RC's student body. His family was very Westernized. He teases me to this day by saying that my family is far more 'a la turca' than his. After all, my grandfather was from Canakkale, used to smoke the 'narghile' sitting cross-legged on the sofa, on top of cushions, played with worry beads, etc. In comparison, Günel's relatives were the avant-garde of the day, having been to Europe, studied at the Galatasaray Lycée, in short, much more Western than my relatives.