

Aron Anjel



I am on the balcony of our home on Nerki street overlooking the sea. I was born on June 6th, 1916 on the Asian side of Istanbul, in the Yeldegirmeni neighborhood that was between Haydarpasha and Kadiköy, in the famous Valpreda apartment of the time, on the second or third floor [An apartment built in 1909 at the corner of Düz Sokak(street) and Akif Bey Sokak(street) by the famous architect Valpreda who also built Haydarpasha Gar(train station). According to a rumor, it was built with stones leftover from the construction of Haydarpasha Gari, and yet another rumor was that it probably was built with stones obtained from the stone mines behind Kinaliada [The island among the Princess islands that is closest to Istanbul port, it used to be known as Proti]]. My mother first started to work with the famous industrialist and merchant of the time Lazaro Franco who was of Italian descent. In 1919, through the help of this same person, she was transferred from Salonica to Istanbul Bakirköy [a neighborhood close to the Istanbul Atatürk airport. Previous name: Makriköy] and was appointed as principal to Ittihad ve Terakki Lisesi(highschool) (Union et Progres) which provided education in French just like Galatasaray Sultanisi, and we moved in to a special flat that was designated for us in the school. Within less than two years, in 1921, when my father and mother were appointed gentleman and lady directors of the newly opened Jewish orphanage (Orphelinat) in Ortaköy [a neighborhood on the shores of the Bosphorus Rumeli], this time we moved to a flat that was designated for us in the orphanage and stayed there till 1928. When my father started teaching in the Istanbul University Foreign Languages Department as a French, German and Turkish teacher in 1929, we left Ortaköy and moved into our building in Beyoglu [Pera]Tünel Meydani(plaza), Nerki Sokagi(street). This building with 4 internal stairs was a

four-story mansion where the banker of Sultan Abdülhamid II , Mavrogordato, had lived for years. While construction was going on to convert the building to apartments, we lived in Lemay apartment across the old Russian embassy on istiklal Caddesi(street) While we were in Lemay, the house on Nerkis sokak(street) was converted to an apartment and we moved in when construction was over. My father died in 1958. I moved to Çimenzar apartment in Sakayik sokak(street) in Nisantasi [one of the trendiest residential centers of Istanbul] in 1959, and to Polat apartment that I built on Valikonagi Caddesi(street) again in Nisantai in 1965. Because I allotted different flats of this apartment to my family now we live under the same roof as my married children but in autonomous flats close to each other.