

Albert Ozlevi



This photograph was taken in Adapazari, in the Janissary band that was formed with the military band, as the player of the small kettle drum. I played the kettle drum there. Kettle drum (Nakkare) is the name of the instrument, it is a percussion instrument that is used in the Janissary band of the Ottomans. I was a soldier then. They chose me for the Janissary band because I knew how to play from Edirne.

When I was young, there were military parades, special celebrations, or independence days in our city. At the time my only hobby was to play Mi bemol clarinet in the band. I was an amateur bandmember starting at age 13. When I was in the band we went to practice every evening, after I turned 15, after this paper bag business was done. There were 7-8 people working in the band. For example, there was someone named Misel Ovadya, he learned trumpet there. My older brother played an instrument resembling the French horn, it was a blowing instrument but he didn't want to continue. We practiced in the old public building. Every evening, we went there to practice. We learned the musical notes, we had learned the national anthem, the anthem of izmir and such without knowing the first thing about music. I was an apprentice then. They would give us outfits for Liberation day, Independence day, or holidays like May 19th, or April 23rd, and we would play. Especially on Liberation day, they would put an arch for the liberation of Edirne, we, the bandmembers would be right across it. We would play anthems for official parades.