

At A Night Club



This picture was developed at a photo studio called "Foto Senol". The studio's address was: Beyoglu Küçük Parmakkapi Sok. No. 12, Istanbul.

We are at a night club with some friends having fun. The lady at the right is Rejin Behar. I do not remember the lady on the very left of the picture. Rejin Behar and her husband the lawyer Eliya Behar were both our neighbors and also our very good friends. We shared a lot of things with them. We raised our children together, we went on trips together etc... Once I remember, we went to Switzerland with Eliya and Rejin. Rejin's brother Isak Menase was lived there. We stayed at a hotel and Eliya and Rejin stayed at their brother's house. During the day, we were together all the time, sightseeing and having fun. They were very very hospitable people, they did not let us spend even one dime. I am very sorry to say that Rejin died a month ago [beginning of summer 2004]. She was buried here in Istanbul.

My neighbor and friend, the lawyer Eliya Behar, is actually from Thrace. In 1933, there was a rumor spread about the Jews, claiming that they were cooperating with the enemy. Because of these slanders, a lot of anti-semitic events took place. As a result, the Jews sold their possessions for nothing and either emigrated to Istanbul or somewhere else. Eli is one of these families. He completed his education in Edirne, became a career man there, and came to Istanbul. He was the lawyer of the first firm named Niyego, which I worked at. This was the way we met.

You can see my dear wife, Suzan in the middle of the photo. My wife, Suzan, is also from Istanbul. My wife's English was very good, because she was a graduate of the British School in Istanbul (see English High School for Girls). Besides this, her French was also very good. Like I said, we were working at the same firm. We met and went out together. Her mother didn't want me, because of my low income, when we decided to get married. Nevertheless, against everything, we got married in the synagogue in Kuzguncuk, in May 1935. (not the one that is in use today, there was another one on the upper part of Kuzguncuk. I forgot its name.)

At those times, the weddings were not celebrated like today's ostentatious weddings. In the afternoon, as the whole family we went to the Novotni Garden, across Union Francaise in Tepebasi. We ate our dinner, and sat outside, as the season was favorable. It was very nice. We all returned home together, and went to work the next morning.

After we got married, we rented a flat from the apartment named "Belvu" [from the French "belle vue" meaning "nice view"] on Bankalar Street. These flats were so large that we rented it together with our closest friends, David Eskenazi and his wife. They had not had any children, so they loved ours as theirs. They had two rooms, and we had two rooms and a living room. We shared the kitchen and the bathroom. As a result of the solution found, paying the rent was not that hard.

After we got married, Suzan always gave her family what she earned. Her family came to live with us when her father got sick. Later on, when the financial situation of Moiz, Suzan's elder brother, improved, he took care of his parents. When my father-in-law died, my mother-in-law started living with us. Later on in 1957, she went to Israel with her younger son, Moiz, and died there in 1967.