

Izak Sarhon At A Military Cinema



This is a photo taken in 1945-1946, when I was in Israel (Palestine at that time). I was working for the British Army then. They had this cinema at the Egyptian border. It was a military cinema called "Dunes" and the name of the place was Refah. We used to feed a dog then, and that's it beside me on the photo. I don't remember its name, but I do remember that he had the name of a person. This dog had also fed a few kittens, that I remember. It was a female dog, and when the kittens' mother died, she fed them herself. I remember them breastfeeding on the dog.

This photo was taken by a colleague of mine. The cinema was an open cinema. It was obviously in the summertime.

Let me tell you how I went to Israel in 1944. The British were there at that time and there was something called the "Quota". [The British, who ruled Palestine at the time, took measures against the waves of Jewish refugees by applying a monthly quota. They would allow only a certain number of Jews to enter Palestine every month and refused entry to the rest.] This meant that they gave only a few entrance visas to Jews who wanted to go to Palestine. Only this many [certain number of] Jews could enter Palestine in one month. The Jewish Agency [Sochnut] organized the visas for the Jews who wanted to go from Turkey. They did it in such a way that a whole family, however many they were, could go with one visa. That is why, they preferred married people for a visa because then they would be able to send more people. So they recommended us, the young people to get married and use one visa for at least two people. Both single boys and girls were applying for visas, so they put us in contact with each other. They said: "marry this girl and we will send you to Palestine". They said the same thing to me too. I was given the name of a girl who by coincidence I knew from a group we had. So we got married and went to Palestine. She went to a kibbutz and I went to Tel Aviv. We met only once after that and got divorced. We applied to the Turkish consulate for a divorce and were thus free again. That was my first marriage.

Then by coincidence again I found the job at the British army as a cinema operator and worked there for 3 years. After 3 years, I got really bored and decided to return to Turkey. I returned in 1947.