

My Student Card



When I discovered that the principal of the school in Paris, Ecole Speciale d'Architecture, was no other than Prost who I had met coincidentally and who had given me a list of four college-level schools in France to choose from, which I did with the help of my older sister who lived in France and who I sent the list to, I realized that fate was on my side. When Prost asked me if I wanted to study urbanism, I enrolled at the Sorbonne University of Paris, Faculty of Rules and Letters, Institute of Urbanism as well and I graduated from both schools with a couple of days in between: June 8th, 1940 Saturday Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture de Paris (The Special School of Architecture of Paris) and June 10th, 1940 Monday Institut d'Urbanisme (Urbanism Institute). Let's not forget that Hitler entered Paris on June 14th, 1940. On June 12th, there is a phone call to the house. Our ambassador Behiç Erkin called and invited all the Turkish students. We were about 100 students, from different faculties, there was only me from mine, we got together. He said: "The Germans are very close to Paris, they are getting closer and closer. In this morning's newspaper I read that Turkey declared war on Germany in big print. Did you also read it?" he asked. "It is hard to investigate this. Hitler's army is 1,5-2 km.s away from Paris.. If they get here, they can round you up, send you to camps. I will send you in groups of 12 with my limousine that holds 12 people to 40-50 km south of Paris. I will give you other opportunities, money etc., you will see". The next day we met at 6.00 in the morning as if we were going strolling or shopping for bread, cheese etc. The limousine came, twelve people among us are pulled as if with a magnet, they jump in and go. These I think were the sons of higher level people. We wait for the limousine to return. The ambassador also waits. It did not come back the whole day. The next day I put 20 small cans of sardines in my bag. We wait and we wait and we decide amongst ourselves that we will walk there. There are no vehicles or gasoline. We took off.. It was June 14th. We left in the morning. The same day Hitler entered Paris in the evening. The Stukas (German attack planes) are bombing everywhere on the roads regardless if civilian or soldier so France will surrender quickly. All of a sudden you see the one next to you, boom, goes down. The walk took 22 days. Everyone dispersed. I was left with a friend from law school. When we were in the middle of the walk, we learned that France surrendered.