



## M. Kemal Atatürk's Homesickness for Thessaloniki, His City of Birth

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### Abstract

As Atatürk, the founder of Modern Turkey, grew older; he more and more missed his home-city Salonika and its surroundings. The loss of his home-city during the Balkan Wars further aggravated his passionate nostalgia. Some of his behavior patterns as narrated in history, reveal us his homesickness openly. On various occasions; the meals, the accent, and the entire culture of his region with its songs and ballads; always moved the spirit in him, deeply. Despite his deliberate emphasis of his logic most of the time, in reality, he was a man full of tender feelings.

**Key words:** Mustafa Kemal Pasha/Atatürk; Thessaloniki/Salonika; Home-city; Nostalgia

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### INTRODUCTION

It has been said that memories resemble a walking-cane in the sense that as a person ages along the course of years; he tends to lean more and more on his former reminiscences. This fact is valid for all people, including the hero of the Turkish War of Independence and even more so!

After all; with his warmly affectionate feelings for his nation, Kemal Pasha had an especially emotional personality. This may come hard to visualize, because people (and especially his own compatriots, who had

always been prone to hero-worshipping ever since the era of successive glorious sultans) invariably consider him supra-human!

[At the end of the First World War, The Mudros] armistice obligated the Ottoman military to demobilize its combat units quickly, the actual demobilization proceeded slowly and came to a full stop with the start of a new war—this time to save what was remained of the empire in 1919-1921—against Greek, French, Italian, and Armenian forces.

A new generation of combat-tested battlefield commanders, under the supreme leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha, found a willing audience within the ranks of the postwar Ottoman military. Most of the surviving Ottoman officers (including reserves and retirees), as well as the conscripts, were drawn to the nationalist cause (Uyar & Erickson, 2009, p.283).

They eventually accomplished the long-craved final victory, against the invading powers. This wonderful success was to be followed soon by many other oppressed nations, from Vietnam and India to North Africa, as a role model worth of emulation.

Of course in Kemal pasha's younger years; virtues like endurance, patience and dry logic; used to supplant his emotionality and gave the appearance of a pure rational iron man completely devoid of sentimentality. However, times of repression of the immense feelings merely emerged as a consequence of the situations, in other words, in accordance with sheer contingency.

No doubt that even then, humane sensitivity was at work in his noble soul and constituted more of a driving force than plain thought for his unrelenting endeavors. Otherwise; how can one ever display such energy in a manner defying fatigue, full of motivation and self-sacrifice in the line of serving one's sweet country?

Mustafa Kemal Pasha, next to be a model commandant, was also an auspicious son for his mother and a caring sibling for his sister *Makbule*. (He would put

some extra clauses in his will for the sake of his sister, in the future). Lady *Zübeyde* always addressed his son in the formula “my Mustafa”. Only following his promotion to the supreme rank, she began calling him “my pasha”.

The brilliant officer located his mother and sister in Istanbul, following the rout of Balkan Wars, in miserable conditions like all immigrants expelled from their soil. (Selonica was appropriated by the Greek state for good). He rented a house for them in *Akaretler* quartier of Istanbul. During the national struggle times, he took them along to Ankara in his *Çankaya* kiosk. In the persons of his adopted son and adopted daughters he also gave life to his fatherly compassion.

The way he balanced logic with sentiment can be observed in his behavior after the great offensive; as Kinross (1964, p.319) records in his well-known bibliographic book: *He entered the city of İzmir (Symrna) a day after his army. That evening in the suburban town of Nif (Nymphaion) —the name of which would later be changed to Kemal Pasha, in his honor— he was bubbling with the joy of victory. He cried that it is not appropriate to be so silent on a day when İzmir was regained. He said that at least everybody should sing. They fetched some liquor for him but he refused, specifying that drink<sup>1</sup> and duty are incompatible. So he began to sing songs with his officers around the table.*

In actuality, along with his sensitivity; his intuition was also extremely sharp. In the wording of Kaynar (April 14, 2000), *the greatness of Atatürk lies in his perception instinct. He could see fifty years ahead of him. This is a God-bestowed gift. By reading and dealing with positive sciences<sup>2</sup> he further improved this particular supremacy.*

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## 1. THESSALONIKI / SELONICA: HIS OWN CITY

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Probably the most conspicuous proof of Kemal Pasha's sentimentality is revealed through his craving for his city of birth. He was born there and he passed his childhood there. He finished primary schooling and attended the military junior high school<sup>3</sup> within the city. At the level of high school (lycée), he did not go far. He chose to enter Manastir (Bitola) Military *İdadi*. Among a number of such establishments the one in Manastir was considered the best and his teachers had recommended it.

So, he stayed in Rumelia region until 1899, when he came to the War College in Istanbul. He attained much of his personality and his early socialization in that western part of the empire. In Sinanoğlu's wording (1973, p.42) *mental chains capturing the mentality of the individual in non-western communities were thus crushed in this very environment where ideals of constitutionalism were flourishing.*

Volkan and Itzkowitz (1984, pp.42-43) note that *Student-Kemal would stroll through the European section of the city with his friends in holidays. In this section, the ambiance was even more tolerant than in the Muslim neighborhoods. Open-faced women would dance and sing and sit at the same table with men.*

As a matter of fact; as full-general Âsım Gündüz would later narrate; in the War College groups from Manastir/Bitola were quite different from groups from Anatolia, in social matters. The latter got to know concepts like fatherland, nation, liberty from the former. In speech, attire, good manners the Anatolian comrades also emulated Kemal and his associates (Özel, 2001).

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## 2. DEPARTURE SHARPENS THE YEARNING FOR HOMELAND

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Of course Rumelia was in possession of many advantages but the capitol had ultimate supremacy. There M. Kemal attended the War College and the Staff College for young officers. Thereafter he ended up in Damascus<sup>4</sup> as an exile. Some years later, he got moved to the headquarters of the third army in Manastir / Bitola. He volunteered for a duty in Tripoli and fought against the Italian invaders. Soon after his return, in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, they made him a military attaché in Sofia.

This also was a disguised exile, now not originating from the palace, but instead coming from envious fellow-officers of the Union and Progress movement, who had gained a lot of influence. (The abolished constitution of 1877 was restored). He made much of his time interval there, in a very productive and progressive way, though. This was his last stay in a Balkan<sup>5</sup> city. (Then would follow in succession his Gallipoli days, eat and south east operations and eventually the War of Independence and proclamation of the Republic).

The law of family names got passed in 1934, transforming the pasha into Atatürk. Between 1919, his treading the soil of Samsun and 1927; let alone the Thracian region; he did not even come in contact with Istanbul. All those years must have aggravated his craving for Rumelia. (Meanwhile he had sailed to Trabzon by ship, passing through the straits but not treading on the land of Istanbul.

Why so? A Freudian interpretation would propose his sulking the city, which played the opposite pole by staying passive or even opposing the Anatolian allocation and movement against the invaders. The bitter memories were yet too fresh).

A substitute he improvised for his nostalgia was inviting his old cronies to his dining table and engaging in candid conversations with them. Kılıç Ali, Salih Bozok and especially Nuri Conker were three of those prominent friends. The death of Conker in 1937 demoralized Atatürk dramatically.



Figure 1  
Kılıç Ali (Internet)



Figure 2  
Salih Bozok (Internet)



Figure 3  
Nuri Conker (Internet)

### 3. IN QUEST OF THE FATHERLAND IN SONGS, IN MEALS

Atatürk would openly seek consolation in Rumelia songs and ballads<sup>6</sup> on every occasion which presented itself. Volkan and Itzkowitz (1984, p.299, based on Tesal, 1975) relate that *one evening he felt like eating omelet / scrambled eggs, which was a meal his mother used to cook for him. Twice he sent the arriving meal to the kitchen impatiently. He was annoyed. He called the cook and asked him if he knew anything about eggs.*

*Nuri [Conker] thought it wise to appease him. He being a Macedonian, as well, sneaked into the kitchen and helped out the cook in preparing the meal the way Lady Zübeyde would have managed if she had been alive. Nuri narrated the incident to his daughter Lady Kıymet, embellishing it by an emphasis on the yearning of Atatürk for his land's songs and food. Nuri drew comparison with Lady Zübeyde's own home nostalgia which she had suffered until her death in İzmir soon after the salvation of the city.*

Atatürk's gourmet palate trained to savor Rumelia food is mentioned in a book of Sunar (1960, p.45). The plot revolves about the memories of *Enver Kezer*, who had performed his clerical home affairs for twelve years. One night in the Presidential seaside residence in Florya in Istanbul he wakes up and heads for the kitchen at 3 a.m. Home affairs clerk sees and follows him. Atatürk opens the refrigerator:

—*Enver*, I feel hungry.

From among a variety of delicacies, he chooses dry beans and rice and mixes the two. When the clerk intends to heat the dish, he prevents:

—No, *Enver*, don't bother! It is better this way!

(The author of the collection of anecdotes was an educational inspector and husband of my maternal aunt. At home, we had many copies of the book. One day I was reading the passage aloud. My mother is ironing shirts next door could not help sending out a comment to my ears:

Oh, good old Rumelia tastes!

(My mother-side was in a province of Selonica themselves. They emigrated during the population exchange with Greece, in accordance with the terms of Lausanne Treaty.

### 4. AN APPARENT LONGING

Ahmad (1993, p.91) affirms that *many of the founders of the Republic had their origins in the Balkans. They, accordingly, intended to build up a Balkan town in the midst of the Central Anatolian plateau. Garrison-like middle-height buildings to harbor the ministries, alleys with trees lined along the sides, small houses with gardens were all reminding recently lost territories.*



Atatürk's foster daughter and the first female fighter pilot of the world, Sabiha Gökçen<sup>7</sup> said interesting things in a live interview:

[In reply to question "Did he promise gaining West-Thrace and Mosul-Kirkuk to the fatherland, just like Antioch?"]

Gökçen—I do not remember such a sentence of his. He always favored the boundaries of the National Oath. Even though he missed Selonica and his house there; he never expressed a thought of him in this line. When I took a Balkan tour in my airplane ne especially required that I see the house he was born in. Upon my return he made me tell about it again and again. It is then that I comprehended his immense craving for his birthplace (Türkmen & Şahin, 1999, p.24).

As academician Orhan Çekiç (2006) revealed on a television program about the revolutionary history of Turkey; Atatürk was born in that nice wooden house. But, when the lumber business of his father Ali Rıza began to decline; his early childhood years elapsed in an auxiliary outbuilding next to the known house.

Atatürk's interest in wrestling sport is another indication of his longing for Rumelia, the region known as the cradle of oily wrestlers (who smear olive oil on their half-naked bodies. In his student days, he practiced

wrestling.<sup>8</sup> In his presidential years he promoted sports and especially wrestling. Turkish wrestlers' achievements abroad<sup>9</sup> used to please him.

## 5. AN IRREPLACEABLE CITY

Gazi Pasha must have satiated his longing for home partially, in the very person of his beloved mother. The mother, on her part missed the homeland passionately. Armstrong (1933, p.164) notes that in the *chalet*/kiosk at Çankaya; Lady Zübeyde, whose sight was deteriorating, would sit on a mattress and daydream about her Pasha's childhood and Selonica.

Following the battle of Sakarya; she would delight in taking permission to talk with Greek soldiers taken prisoners. She would try to obtain information about her acquaintances left<sup>10</sup> behind. Lady Zübeyde died and got buried in İzmir soon after the victory; which event further increased the melancholy of her son.

If he wished; could he not at least visit the Western Thrace region now more frequently? (He was fond of extensive travels in his private White Train, anyway). In actuality one of his farms<sup>11</sup> is located in Thrace very near to *Alpullu* sugar plant, which he ordered to be built as early as in 1926.



**Figure 4**  
***Alpullu* Sugar-Plant (Photo by the Author). This Plant, and Similar Others, Constitute a Good Example for the Early Republican Principle of *Etatism***

What if he established a second permanent base in Edirne/Adrianople? Maybe he avoided resembling the Ottoman sultans, who had used the city as a capitol before the conquering of Istanbul and as a second capitol afterwards. After all; no matter how much of an action a revolution could be; it is simultaneously a reaction to the past and this aspect is strong especially during the initial acceleration. Such a thing, is what one calls a *revolution*.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, (again in a Freudian interpretation), Adrianople might have reminded him Enver Pasha, his rival fellow-officer; who, following a swift ascend, always

hindered him. It was Enver who recaptured the city just after the second Balkan war or at least who knew how to get credit for the act.

Now; what if he chose Rodosto/Tekirdağ, which is a coastal Thracian town on top of it? It might have been a splendid surrogate-Selonica! Then, he would have awakened the envy of other cities and he would not do that. Perhaps it would arouse suspicions in the neighbor Greek state, causing associations or insinuations about approaching and planning for Selonica. The owner of the motto "Peace at home; peace on the globe" wouldn't desire that possibility.

Maybe even his home nostalgia then would have appeared more obvious. Now; no statesman would tolerate his image of sternness, which feeds the appearance of strength, to get damaged in any way. As it is depicted in the short story of classical French Author Alphonse Daudet (*la mort du dauphin/The Death of the Heir to the Throne*); even if the queen gives free reign to her tears in witnessing the decease of her little son; His Majesty would never show a crying face to his subjects in public.

Those entire considerations left side; Atatürk cared for his individual happiness up to a certain point, all in all. Beyond that specific point; he would not care at all. In the words of Yakup Kadri (1961, p.109) *his uppermost priority was his nation. It was his desire to see his nation marching forward in front of the others.* The author, who, personally knew him; goes on as follows:

*I know this why he suffered from insomnia at night. This is why he took shelter in poison [alcohol].* The author admits that; let alone being a happy man; Atatürk was suffering and unhappy just like all self-sacrificing idealists and true heroes of mankind!

## CONCLUSION

Atatürk embraced his entire nation with equal love. Turks were all the same, in his eyes. As Türkmen & Şahin (July 1999, p.23) put it in their impressions of the interview with the female pilot; in 1932 he announced the following unforgettable message: *Those of us from Diyarbakir, Van, Erzurum, Trabzon, Istanbul, Thrace and Macedonia are all the children of the same core / race<sup>13</sup> and the veins of the same precious ore!*

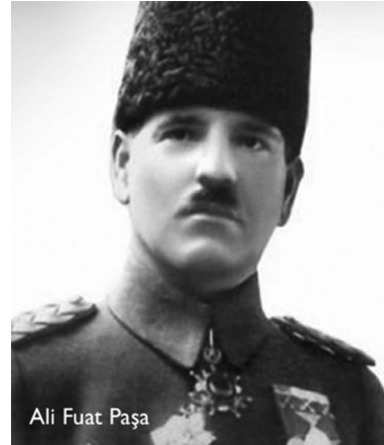
It is a good formulation, yes. But everybody also traces his origins to a specific place. His origin was the last item in the list. He was proud of his origins. He missed the lost territories. He let them survive in his very heart. He indulged in a search to figure out compensation mechanisms in order to alleviate some of his deep pain.

He let the experts design the expansion of Ankara in a manner to resemble a Balkan town. He opened his dinner table to his friends<sup>14</sup> from his youthful days. To some extent. Despite his incredible achievements, relentless struggle and invincible strength; in a sense he too was only human. Moreover, a man prone to gusts of emotion,<sup>15</sup> at times.

From time to time Gazi M. Kemal would falter into low spirits limiting to melancholy. At other times: He would reach exuberant peaks. In the former periods he would drink more; while in the latter periods, he would work harder to compel the revolutionary march, thanks to his gifted creativity.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Normally, he was very fond of strong anisette-traditional drink (*Schnaps*). His cause of death, cirrhosis, is attributed to this little feebleness. The rumor goes that General Ali Fuat (Cebesoy), his comrade in the War College introduced him to alcohol, initially, in their military schooling days. Ali Fuat was an Istanbulite-youth from Scutari, an Istanbul-situated French high school graduate, and the son of Ismail Fazil Pasha of the Ottoman army.



**Figure 4**  
**Ali Fuat (Cebesoy) Pasha (Internet)**

After Atatürk became the president of his evening table was always decorated with alcohol. This table was a place of debate and planning, equating a sort of academia. Nevertheless; during the war years he always refrained from drinking. Instead, he relied on chain smoking and Turkish coffee. It is written that in those days his orderly was always seen with a coffee pot in his hand.

<sup>2</sup> Atatürk read many books, some of them in French. It was his habit to annotate the margins of the pages; as it can be seen in his Museum-Mausoleum in Ankara. He even wrote a Geometry book, all by himself. He instigated new Turkish equivalents for the terminology, as well {replacing Ottoman words like *müsellez* with *üçgen* (triangle), *murabba* with *dörtgen* (quadrangle) and so forth}.

While a military student, he had excelled in his Math classes more than in any other course. He even received his second name *Kemal*, meaning perfection, as a recognition from his very Math teacher in military school. (His eloquence of speech drives from his preoccupation with literature, which he later gave up, following the dissuading advice of his teachers).

Yurdadoğ (1993) mentioned that in 1933 during the reformation of Istanbul University under the auspices of Swiss experts, he personally indulged in the studies with a critical eye, reevaluating the proposals and turning down what he considered inappropriate.

<sup>3</sup> Turks are indeed a martial nation. Even junior high schools for boys between the ages of 12 to 15 (!) were established in later Ottoman times. The tradition lingered in the Republican times with interruptions until mid-1960s. Satirical author Aziz Nesin (1996) (he got expelled from the army at the rank of captain, for being a leftist officer), as a former military high school cadet, talks about his recruitment into the military high school from a civilian school, where military *junior* high school “veterans” mocked them and horse-played with them. For the “veterans”, the new-comers were merely *kaydikabaks*, a pejorative label literally meaning “pumpkin-registrees”.



**Figure 5**  
**Cadets in Erzincan in Early 1960s (Internet)**

<sup>4</sup> M. Kemal was politically active in the War College and Staff School. He even instigated a hand-made journal for propagating progressive ideas, naturally incompatible with absolute monarchy reign of the sultan. Once the Commandant ran into his fervent writing with a couple of comrades and feigned indifference. The young officer spent a few days before becoming a staff captain in the infamous *prison rouge* and got interrogated by secret agents. But he got pardoned and sent to the far post in Damascus, immediately after graduation, without even being able to go farewell his kinship.

<sup>5</sup> “During the Balkan Wars, Bulgaria was a newly-independent off-shoot of the Ottoman State, revenging his former master. Mustapha Kemal got appointed to Sofia as the military attaché, after the peace treaty ending the Balkan Wars. One night he watched an impressive opera-show and whispered to his two friends: “I see why they were victorious. After all, a power capable of such a polyphonic performance could be capable of many other achievements” (Çaya, 2016, p.39).

<sup>6</sup> Rumelia music is jovial, vivacious even if some are of slow and heavy rhythm. Even the funeral songs there sound as if they had been composed in happy festivity

occasions. Sometimes he would go along escort the singer with his own voice, in a low tone. At times, he would urge and improvise a chorus with the guests around. Especially, Safiye Ayla had the honor of entertaining the president on a number of occasions.

<sup>7</sup> Her last name was given to her by her spiritual father *Gök* means *sky*. *Gökçen* is related to the *skies*. Having picked up the last name *Atatürk* (father of Turks) for himself, “The First Man” donated meaningful family names to many of his deserving associates. One of the defunct later presidents, Korutürk (literally meaning *protect the Turks!*) is another example.

<sup>8</sup> Atatürk would tease and joke with plain soldiers. (The ordinary citizen on the street was a precious being he cared about). One day he encountered a sentry and began to chat with the young fellow. What was his profession before conscription? A farmer and a wrestler! Atatürk indicated a man among his court and asked if he could beat him. The yes-reply contained no hesitation. Then the President indicated a man of bigger stature and got the same answer. When the turn of an officer came, the soldier stocked. Atatürk removed his dilemma.

—Talk without considering his being an officer.

—I would beat him, as well.

Finally, Atatürk asked the last question and received a most ingenious answer.

—Well, sonny, what about me?

—You, sir? Seven great state powers in collaboration could not beat you? How could I ever do it?

<sup>9</sup> Ali Gümüş’ün (2006) explained on the screen that beginning in early 1900s, Filiz Nurullah, Adalı Halil and Koca Yousouf engaged in professional wrestling. A manager named Pierre took them to Europe and made a lot of money. Yousouf did wrestling matches in America, as well. On the return trip his steamer sank and he got drowned in Atlantic. The last of the world champion series was Kara Ahmet in 1930s.

Kurtdereli Mehmet also went to Europe and on one occasion, his promoter Joseph Doublier arranged for a rigged game, whereby Mehmet would prolong the match as much as possible. The opponent was a French champion. On the stage Mehmet turned to his manager and spoke:

—Doctor, I back out of the deal!

Then he grabbed the opponent and literally spread him on the mattress. After the match he went to the manager to apologize once more:

—Sorry, Doc; I felt as if Turks were beyond as spectators!

When the incident comes to the attention of Atatürk [many years later] the President shows his delight by sending gifts to the wrestler. In a letter he says: *Wrestler, I do hereby proclaim your own words as ethical principles of the Turkish sportsman!*





**Figure 6**  
**Wrestler Kurtdereli Mehmet (Internet)**

<sup>10</sup> let us note that her second husband Ragip had died before they escaped from the city. Lady Zübeyde had agreed to this wedding while her son was in Manastir, *à son insu*. When the teenager discovered an unknown step-father, he resented the mother for that. A distant relative of the second husband seems to be the best gift to the family. Lady Fikriye got a divorce in Egypt and came to find shelter in the kiosk. The young woman was totally devoted to “her Pasha”, who, by no means stayed indifferent to her charms. After the victory Kemal Pasha made a hasty marriage. He took the hand of Lady Latife in marriage, an European-educated girl and daughter of a rich merchant in İzmir. They arranged to send Fikriye to a sanatorium in Swiss to treat her tuberculosis. She read the news in the clinic; rushed back by train to Ankara but was not admitted to the kiosk by the henchmen. She shot herself dead with a small pistol brought in her bag.

Kemal is known to address his official wife with the name of the former lady absent-mindedly on or two times. The marriage proved to be short-lived; it got dissolved due to incompatibility; which must have intensified his dark moods.

<sup>11</sup> Those farms represent the noble love of nature and admiration of pastoral beauties in his heart. The most important was in Ankara. Each farm was a role model in demonstrating the techniques of modern agriculture. In his will, he donate them to the state treasury, whereby they kept operating as state-owned institutions.

<sup>12</sup> Some comrade-in-arms starting together in Anatolia {Ottoman Naval Commander Rauf Orbay as well as Kazim (Karabekir), Refet (Bele), Ali Fuat (Cebesoy) and Cafer Tayyar pashas} disapproved Kemal’s quick and harsh revolutions in attire, calendar, jurisdiction, worldly education, weights and measures, alphabet, social life etc. (Ismet Pasha and Fevzi Pasha stuck to him unquestioningly; ironically, those two had been late in leaving Istanbul and coming to join forces with the Anatolian movement; especially Fevzi was only reluctantly accepted by Kemal Pasha, if only thanks to interceding of Ali Fuat in a frantic telegraphic correspondence).

The pashas were of the opinion that the conjecture was not ripe, yet and theorized for the preference of an evolution rather than a revolution almost overnight. They especially resented the laic applications of the French type. Today; many circles go on criticizing the Jacoben or forced style of modernization and suggest the much more moderate Anglo-Saxon style of secularism, instead. In the last analysis; the westernization was indeed a Herculean task, of course. Arnold Toynbee praised him for achieving in a decade what had been done in a century in the western world.

<sup>13</sup> The concept of race is actually a very underestimated concept in Turkish culture and social history. The hard code of the Ottoman army, the Janissary corps, consisted of grown-ups who had been Christian children collected from the Balkans and converted to Islam. The European ideal of nationalism evolving after the French revolution did permeate into the empire, nevertheless, with some tinge of race. In the early years of the Republic; trial-and-error studies and dilemmas reached a final conclusion in one of the most rational quotations / sayings of Atatürk: *How happy is he, who says that he is a Turk [not he who is a Turk]*.

<sup>14</sup> As some foreign authors admit, Atatürk had a constant problem of the surrounding company. It is a fact that most of his associates were mere yes-men rapacious for their personal benefits that they and positions that they would squeeze from the powerful figure. Their respect was no more than lip-service. One great mistake he made was to eliminate his best friend and closest confidant, Arif. Again foreign authors record that the two men looked pretty much alike. Arif was a brilliant officer trained in Germany. He was on the board of the ship to Samsun. They were together in school days and in Gallipoli actions.

“[In Gallipoli] Mustafa Kemal Bey’s classmate from the Military Academy and the Staff College, Major Mehmet Arif (Ayıcı) Bey (who was also a General Staff officer), was the chief of staff of the 5<sup>th</sup> Division” (Uyar & Erickson, 2009, p.241).

Arif’s nickname was *Ayıcı* (bear-keeper) because he once domesticated a newly-born grizzly found in Inegöl forests near Bursa. His full name is Mehmed Arif Adana. (The poor man was to receive a posthumous family name). Retired officer Apak (1957) in his memoirs mentions that his bear was smoking cigarettes, falling in love with girls and wrestling with peasant boys.

{This mascot renders him sympathetic just like American folk hero, eccentric Judge Roy Bean (Paul Newman played him in a movie and he also head a bear). Similarly; owning a wild dear made Niyazi of Resne look sympathetic. (Niyazi, a comrade of Enver Bey, also died at a young age in an assassination in Macedonia)}.

As I remember from the lines of a French book; Arif never left M. Kemal in his distressed days: After returning to Istanbul under invasion, up to the time of departure

to Samsun, despite his rank, *Kemal was sort of a sulky failure* ["*un raté morose*" in the original phrase], *a man whom no one would listen to*, he argued. [The troika comprising Enver, Cemal and Talat Pashas had enjoyed immense power and fame; they ruined the empire by drifting to Germany's side; and they finally escaped. But at least; they got gloriously recorded in history]. The attempts of equally-ambitious Kemal to advise the Palace for new measures to be taken to save the situation, proved to be futile. *All except Arif left him in those gloomy moments.*

Arif was one of the accused condemned to capital punishment, after the assassination attempt to the person of M. Kemal in 1926, during his travel to İzmir. Many critiques claim that this was an opportunity for the leader to get rid of all opponents and concentrate the entire power in his own hands. The itinerant Court of Independence was activated once more and gave verdicts in İzmir and in Ankara, separately.

In one of his illustrated History-strips, Painting-drawing artist Suat Yalaz depicted Arif as a traitor resenting his not being promoted to the rank of a brigadier general and thus turning against the leader. In the speech balloons of his drawing, Yalaz makes Arif talk about a retrieval of the statement in hope, until the very last minute. But a pardon is not accorded. In a recent History program presented on the screen by historians Yavuz Bahadıroğlu and Mustafa Armağan; the latter scholar on one occasion could not help asking the question: "Was Arif the Bear-Keeper a man deserving to be hanged?"

<sup>15</sup>As I remember from the lines of a British scholar; he was mild mannered and eager to listen to others' opinions; [even though he took the final decisions himself]. *The cantankerous bursts in his very last days* were merely due to the *side effects of his advanced illness.*

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## APPENDIX: FURTHER VISUAL MATERIAL AND TWO PIECES OF POETRY

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**Figure 7**  
**Gazi Kemal Pasha Issuing His Historical Order on the verge of the Major Assault (Illustration by the Author)**



**Figure 8**  
**A Melancholy-Stricken President Boozing and Pondering over the House he was Born in (Illustration by the Author)**

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### I INSIST ON THE TRAIN!

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*¾ contagious magic ¾*  
When I go on vacation  
I 'll be riding the train.  
It is the train that I adore,  
Among all the transports.  
Something hard to explain  
Exerts its hot attraction  
Within the rails, switches,  
Forlorn, solemn stations.  
Would I call it romantic?  
Well, er, obviously more than that:  
Oozing out of the past,  
It's the living memory  
Of the famous Private White  
Presidential train of  
Great-leader-Atatürk!

The Author

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### WHAT AN ASSOCIATION!

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This is my first Saturday  
Within capital-city,  
In the midst of the steppe.  
On the table of my lunch  
Dry beans which I mixed  
With some fuming fragrant rice!  
On the radio behind  
A Rumelia-melody:  
*I do have a nice kiosk  
Overlooking the water!*  
This is the meal He liked most!  
This is the song He fancied!  
Out of the window  
Of my cozy hotel-room  
Visible is the boulevard  
On which he rode, Goodness knows,  
How many times, proudly!  
Here I am now, all-submerged  
In the near History  
Of becoming-and-sweet  
Hard-earned Turkish Republic!

The Author