

Sic transit gloria mundi? Thoughts on Atatürkism

Abstract. The Atatürkism actually occurred after the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The criticism of his ideology often served as a pretext, where Atatürk's political programs were presented along the own concept of the interpreter. The cult of Atatürk is not at all unprecedented in the history of Hungarian politics. Between the World Wars there was not any foreign politicians who had such a unanimous positive opinion as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had. For different reasons among communists and Social Democrats Atatürk beyond disputes had held positive personality in the public opinion. The reason for the general recognition was undoubtedly his successful modernization policy, as well as his balanced foreign policy (including the agreement with Soviet Russia), a successful attack against Versailles Peace Treaty, and his social policy. There was consensus among the Hungarian (mis) judges that he was a modernizing dictator who followed a balanced foreign policy in an era in which Hungary was unable to do so. The uncritical follow of the Atatürk example is only suggested by the Magyar Nemzet who visioned Atatürk as a racial politician. In my study I focus on the essence of his flexible policy, which served as a model that could be easily used not only in the Middle East, but in the '30s Hungarian public policy as well. *Keywords:* Kemalism, political principles, Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Republic of Hungary, nationalism

Rezümé. Atatürkizmusról gyakorlatilag Mustafa Kemal Atatürk halála után beszélhetünk. Ideológiájának kritikája gyakran ürügyként szolgált, ahol Atatürk politikai programjait az interpretáló a saját céljainak megfelelően mutatta be. Atatürk kultusza a magyar történelemben sem példa nélküli. A két világháború között nem volt olyan politikus, aki ideológiájának annyi értelmezése lett volna, mint Atatürknek. A kommunisták és a szociáldemokraták különböző szempontok szerint emelték példává, emellett Atatürköt a közvélemény is vitán felüli pozitív személyiségnek tekintette. Az általános elismerés oka kétségtelenül sikeres modernizációs politikája, valamint kiegyensúlyozott külpolitikája (beleértve a Szovjetunióval kötött megállapodást), a Versailles-i békeszerződés sikeres megtámadása és szociálpolitikája volt. Hazai értelmezői (és félreértelmezői) között is egyetértés volt abban, hogy modernizáló diktátor volt, aki kiegyensúlyozott külpolitikát követett egy olyan korszakban, amikor Magyarország erre képtelen volt. Tanulmányomban a rugalmas politikájának lényegére összpontosítottam, amely könnyen modellként szolgált nemcsak a Közel-Keleten, hanem a harmincas évek magyarországi közpolitikájának is. *Kulcsszavak:* Kemalizmus, politikai irányelvek, Török Köztársaság, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Magyar Köztársaság, nacionalizmus

Резюме. Фактично про явище ататюркізму можемо говорити з часу смерті Мустафи Кемалія Ататюрка. Критика його ідеології часто служила підставою, щоб відповідний інтерпретатор представляв політичну програму Ататюрка відповідно до своїх цілей. Культ Ататюрка був характерним і для історії Угорщини. У період між двома світовими війнами не було такого політика, ідеологія якого мала б стільки тлумачень, як в Ататюрка. У різних сферах його ставили за приклад як комуністи, так і соціал-демократи, крім цього, Ататюрк був безперечно позитивною постаттю і для громадської думки. Причиною його загального визнання, без сумніву, була успішна політика модернізації, а також врівноважена зовнішня політика (включаючи укладення угоди з Радянським Союзом), успішна критика Версальського мирного договору і соціальна політика. Численні угорські інтерпретатори діяльності цього політика погоджувалися в тому, що це був модерний диктатор, який здійснював виважену зовнішню політику в епоху, коли Угорщина була на це нездатна. У статті акцентовано увагу на суті гнучкої політики Ататюрка, яка могла послужити моделлю не тільки для Близького Сходу, але й для Угорщини 30-х років ХХ ст. *Ключові слова:* Кемалізм, політичні принципи, Турецька Республіка, Мустафа Кемаль Ататюрк, Угорська Республіка, націоналізм.

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Introduction

Every year on November 10, Atatürk's death anniversary, at 9 am life stops throughout Turkey. It literally stops. Traffic stops, people get out of cars, vehicles and silently head bowed salute the memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk meanwhile air raid sirens and the horns and trumpets speak for minutes...

I think this phenomenon that an empire over a decade and a half developed into a parliamentary democratic country is unprecedented in modern and contemporary history. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk created the modern Turkish Republic on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire as the "sick man of Europe". He was the chairman of country's only political party, the Republican People's Party. In addition, he was the first president of the parliament, the first President of the Republic and the first Prime Minister. In his speech given to the representatives of the Republican People's Party led and founded by him in 1927, held in October, after he described the desperate situation of the old Turkey, he said: „*Gentlemen, there was only one decision in this situation. This is to establish a new independent Turkish State which is based on national sovereignty as unconditional.*”¹

Ataturk separated Islam from governance. Deservedly his name is still worshiped, as due to work of Ataturk ("Father of the Turks") since 1952 Turkey continued its membership in NATO and since 1999, December exists its EU membership candidacy.

His military successes in World War I created the opportunity to abolish - using the power obtained - the previous form of government, and create the republic. He introduced unprecedented reforms in the country. His policy principles were: republicanism, populism, nationalism, statism, secularism and revolutionism. These are the pillars of Kemalism, the "six arrows" that show the right way to Turkey.

From Minister of War he became the head of the state who immediately began to build the republic. He gave equal rights to women, displaced the religion from governing, and restricted the powers of Islam to religious issues. He also abolished the caliphate and religious courts, dissolved the dervish sects, and removed all religious formulas from the constitution. He focused on creating a strong identity by means of popularizing Turkish nationalism, patriotism. He found an essential component in Turkish cultural policy and clear Turkish language.

His first aim was to civilize the Turkish people by retaining their own traditions, their customs, and the Turkish culture while approaching the modern Western societies.

¹ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: *Nutuk, The Great Speech by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk*, 2016, Amazon Digital Services. www.ankara.edu.tr

His giant sculptures can be found in all major cities but also in smaller communities. His picture hangs on most of the public buildings (schools, offices), but it is also common in family homes. His portrait adorns all banknotes and coins. Since his death the Istanbul International Airport, a bridge over the Golden Horn, one of the world's largest dam, stadium, and many other buildings were named after him. The Turks considered Atatürk as "their father", and he is often mentioned as follows: Ata, meaning "father" or Ata'mız, meaning also "father". Any violation of Atatürk's memory is penalized in Turkey.

According to my hypothesis without Atatürk Turkey could not have signed the Versailles Peace Treaty, could not have introduced any subsequent positive change in the Turkish society, economy and political life. The nature of the Kemal system is fundamentally different from any modern dictatorship: he gained the exclusive power to create the parliamentary governed, democratic Turkey.²

Atatürk cult is not at all unprecedented in the history of Hungarian politics. Between the World Wars there were no foreign politicians who had such a unanimous positive opinion as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had. For different reasons among communists and Social Democrats Atatürk beyond disputes had held positive personality in the public opinion. The reason for the general recognition was undoubtedly his successful modernization policy, as well as Atatürk balanced foreign policy (including the agreement with Soviet Russia), a successful attack against Versailles Peace Treaty, as his social policy. The essence of his policy made it possible that after his death several political trends set his ideas as an example to follow.

In my study I focus on the essence of his flexible policy, which served as a model that could be easily used not only in the Middle East, but in the Hungarian public policy of the '30s as well.

About Kemalism

„What I'm waiting for my nation, without exception: total obedience to the provisions of the government. (...) The whole nation has accepted the principles which I published, and it is clear that those who oppose these principles, or even my person, have no chance to be elected representatives of the nation.”³

² Napi Gazdaság, XI. vol., 28, February 2, 2001, 24.

³ Ghazi Mustapha Kemal: *A Speech Delivered By Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, President Of The Turkish Republic, October 1927*, Istanbul, Chandra Chakravarti Press, 2007, 24.

The principles mentioned in the above quote from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk⁴ (1881–1938) the “Six Arrows” – republicanism, laicism, nationalism, populism, the revolutionism and statism⁵ – not only defined the ideological stance of the Republic of Turkey but became generally accepted in the Turkish constitutional law from Atatürk age to the present.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, overall was not a big believer of developing theories. This was his deliberate choice, he did not want to leave behind rigid doctrines. He wanted to deserve the dynamic and flexibility of his teachings in order that the values that he represented could be adapted as necessary anytime.

Atatürk did not want to “freeze” the new government philosophy among specific doctrines, he spelled out the six principles that had real roots in the past and in 1930 he selected the direction of the general policy for the Turks and for the Republic of Turkey.⁶

The official purpose of the "six arrows" was to present in “shorthand” form the goals of the Republican People's Party and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The arrows symbolically show the historical development of the Central Asian Turks, metaphorically suggesting that the rapid ejection of the Arrows – which together are Turkey itself – directly in time and space, seamlessly and quickly move on to a clean path, which is defined by the “great shooter”, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.⁷

These „Six Arrows” as a solid political program includes the essence of the so-called Ataturkism. In order to summarize briefly the essence of Kemalism I put

⁴ At the time when Atatürk was born the concept of the surname was still unknown among Turks. Atatürk was given the name Mustafa, which has Arabic origin, meaning "the chosen". It is one indicator of the Prophet Muhammad. Mustafa, when he graduated from his military schools in Thessaloniki, got the name Kemal "perfect" from his teacher of mathematics. From then he was known as Mustafa Kemal. In 1916, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general, and got also the Pasha salutation. From then on he was called Kemal Pasha. On 19 September 1921 the Turkish National Parliament presented to him the award of Gazi "Hero" for his achievements in the war of independence. In 1934, as part of the reforms due to more accurate population register the surname-law was introduced. On November 24, the National Assembly separately codified that Mustafa Kemal is named *Atatürk*, which means “father of all Turks”. The law states that this name cannot be the last name of another person. In Patrick Kinross: *Atatürk. The Rebirth of a Nation. Weidenfeld & Nicolson*, London, 2012, 12.; Kemal H. Karpat: *The Personality of Atatürk*. The American Historical Review, 90. vol, No. 4., 1985, 893-899. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1858844?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents, 2017.01.03.

⁵ I do not deal with statism in the present study. Among the principles the statism (Turkish: *devletçilik*) was that Kemal Atatürk made clear and in harmony with the Western modern in his statements. This means that Turkey's modernization will largely depend on economic and technological development. In order to promote the development the state has to govern the general economic activity of the country and must participate, either as owners in those areas where the national interest requires and private companies refuses to do so.

⁶ Interview with Dr. Andrew Mango: “Turkey’s Walk from 1923 to 2023: A Critique of the Past and Recent Political Challenges”. <http://researchturkey.org/interview-with-dr-andrew-mango-turkeys-walk-from-1923-to-2023-a-critique-of-the-past-and-recent-political-challenges/>

⁷ Sinan Ciddi: *Kemalism in Turkish Politics: The Republican People's Party, Secularism and Nationalism*. Routledge, London, 2009. 47.

forward the following quotation: *Turkish youth! Your first duty is to protect and defend forever the Turkish Independence and the Turkish Republic. The sole principle of existence and the future is this. This principle is your most valuable treasure. Also even in the future, there will be internal and external enemies who will want to deprive you of this treasure. One day if you are obliged to defend Independence and the Republic, you will not think of the circumstances, opportunities and conditions in which you will be found in order to begin your duties! These opportunities and conditions may appear in a very unfavorable nature. The enemies who will have a design against Independence and the Republic, may be the agent of a victory whose equal has not been seen in the entire world. It is possible that by force or trick that all the fortresses of the beloved country have been captured by force, all the ship-yards have been entered, all the armies have been dispersed and in fact every corner of the country has been occupied. Even more deplorable and serious than all these conditions, those who are possessing power within the country can be discovered to be careless, taking refuge or even committing treason. Moreover, these possessors of power may unite with the political ambitions of the invaders for their personal interests. The Nation may be in utter poverty and become exhausted and ruined. O Turkish child of future generations! As you see, even under these circumstances and conditions, it is your duty to save the Turkish Independence and the Republic! The strength that you will need is present in the noble blood which flows in your veins!*⁸

The "six arrows" in my opinion, was not in itself an ideology. Rather boundary markers, basic standard terms, principles and ideas of the Turkish government and the social transformation, which together with the president's speeches created the main characteristics of the program.⁹

In the announced program the revolution and liberation (revolutionism) was just a first step in Atatürk's plan which was based on a continuous maintenance of the national consciousness (nationalism). In his speech in 1923 Atatürk noted: *"No matter how great victories on battlefield are achieved by a nation, victories bring long lasting results only by the efforts of the army of teachers."*¹⁰

Such statements undoubtedly meant a sense of determination also for teachers living in difficult conditions, meanwhile simultaneously revealed Atatürk's belief that the nation's struggle for independence has not ended with acquiring it. Independence

⁸ Atatürk speech Youth! (October 20, 1927.) <http://www.turkishlanguage.co.uk/hitap.htm>. 2017.03.01.

⁹ Suna Kili: *Kemalism in Contemporary Turkey*, *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique*, 1/3., Political Ideology: Its Impact on Contemporary Political Transformations (1980), pp. 381-404. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1601123?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

¹⁰ Izmir Konferencia 1923. In Taha Parla – Andrew DAVISON: *Korporatist Ideology in Kemalist Turkey. Progress or Order?* Syracuse University Press, New York, 2004. 119.

led to the founding of the republic (republicanism), which in turn paved the way for modernization (reformism), which was the ultimate goal of revolutionism.¹¹

The revolutionism of Atatürk thus beyond creation of the republic turned over to reformism. His reformism was a practical strategy and tactics, which focused on direct daily results. Atatürk did not represent pure reformism as his ultimate goal was not the Marxist socialist aspirations, but also to achieve everyday wealth, modernization.¹²

The two intertwining ideas mainly indicated that the transformation of the Ottoman Empire took place along a non-violent revolution. The secular republic was a result of Atatürk's modernization movement. The reformism actually expressed Atatürk's intention that the Turkish people stand by until the modernization of the Republic as the ultimate aim is completed. However, this vision went beyond the methods used in one place and time, so it can be contemporary at any age.

The national pride (nationalism) was an invaluable resource in this way, so Atatürk wanted to continue to increase the national sense of pride in his political statements. In his famous speech on the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic he identified himself as a member of the great Turkish nation, who is proud of his citizens and his valuable national army, because "*The Turkish nation is intelligent, because the Turkish nation is capable of overcoming difficulties of national unity, and because it holds the torch of positive sciences.*"¹³

The Turks are associated with intelligence, courage and progress. The unit was vital for the troubled war years, and is essential in times of peace as it ensured the progress and greatness. In contrast the discord was presented as a sign of stupidity and disaster.

The famous speech was closed by the next words: "*ne mutlu türküm diyene/ how happy I am to say that I am a Turk!*"

This quote became a constant "national mantra" to the present.

Since the establishment of the Republic¹⁴, this statement is the basis of the definition of Turkish citizenship (*vatandaşlık*) as well.¹⁵ From the legal definition of the citizenship it plays key role in the citizenship, national identity issues in the

¹¹ Taha Parla – Andrew Davison: *opt.cit.* 68-70.

¹² Demeter M. Attila: *Mi a republikanizmus?* https://www.academia.edu/6143395/Mi_a_republikanizmus

¹³ 29 October, 1933. <http://www.ataturksociety.org/about-ataturk/ataturks-speech-at-the-10th-anniversary-of-the-turkish-republic/> 2017.03.01.

¹⁴ 29 October, 1923.

¹⁵ Basak Ince: *Citizenship and Identity in Turkey: From Atatürk's Republic to the Present Day*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2012.79.

everyday life of the Turkish society.¹⁶ Although I note the constant repetition of this could even be interpreted as a sign of national insecurity.

As Atatürk was the leader of the nation founder nationalist liberation movement it is hardly surprising that nationalism was one of the strongest arrows in his program.

The relation of the nationalism and the state of power usually includes spatiality. State of power is territorially defined, and national identity is itself partly in space. Therefore, the states are always trying to define their own territory, where they gain the support and loyalty. Mustafa Kemal as a young first officer in Macedonia and Syria saw that the Ottoman Empire will fall apart. Only the Turkish nation-state may replace the empire. He was the one who set up the new republic map. The area was outlined which was predominantly populated by the Turkish and the central part of the country, Anatolia linked to one area. When he selected Ankara to be the capital of the country, he knew that during the evaluation of historical facts he made correct decision.

Atatürk has combined the ancient blood ties with the citizenship of the republic and transformed the citizenship to a sense of power that connecting people. Atatürk argues that both Turks and the Republic are his creations and believes that the two concepts are inherently linked to each other. The Turks carry the protection of Republic in their blood. The blood shed for Anatolia assured the establishment of the Republic and it was not wasted. So consanguineous relationship connect the unborn Turks to the patriarch of the republic who, of course, is none else than Atatürk himself. Individuals should make efforts to protect the land for which their ancestors have died. The one who does not feel loyalty towards the Republic is not even a true Turkish.¹⁷

The text of the speech of Atatürk on 20 October 1927 addressed to young people¹⁸, is carved on public buildings, walls of universities, buildings of the Amtkibir (Mausoleum of Atatürk) universities. Atatürk's words deeply touched the Turkish national consciousness that must and should guard and protect the republic against both its external and internal enemies.¹⁹ And although Atatürk in 1937 stated that the 11 nation had become a family, he maintained the existence of the continuous danger of the national aspirations for independence throughout his presidency.²⁰

¹⁶ On the first of January 1995, Tansu Ciller, Turkey's prime minister paraphrased Atatürk's famous sentence: "How happy is the one who can say of himself. I am a citizen of Turkey." (*Ne mutlu Türkiye'nin vatandasıyım diyene*). Ciller, 2008.

http://www.academia.edu/3426161/ENTERTAINING_THE_CITIZEN_TANSU_CILLER_A_CASE_STUDY, 2015.12.01.

¹⁷ Soner, Cagaptay: *Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey. Who is a Turk?* Routledge, New York, 2006, 44-50.

¹⁸ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: (1927) *Address to Youth* www.columbia.edu/cu/tsa/ata/youth.html translation.

¹⁹ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: (1920-1937) *Excerpts from Speeches*, <http://www.ataturksociety.org/category/speeches/>.

²⁰ Patrick Kinross: *Atatürk: The Rebirth of a Nation*, London, New York, Phoenix Press, 2001.

Republicanism of Kemal was also woven with nationalism.²¹ Atatürk defined and legitimized his own policies with the fusion of nationalism and republicanism and stated that the Anatolian land and home is the product of the nature of the Turks. As after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire the Ottoman / Islamic identity became the symbol of defeat and humiliation, vulnerability, the potential degradation, the secular republic was hailed as the symbol of institutional expression of collectivist and strongly anti-Ottoman-Islamic nationalism which guaranteed the Turkish nation safety and dignity. As there was held that the reason of the backwardness was the ottoman vulnerability Atatürk saw the republic as the first stage of modernization.²²

The Ataturkism is special because generally the idea of republicanism hardly coped with the idea of nationalism, Atatürk solved this problem perfectly. Atatürk saw the nationalism as an ethnically coherent power, a kind of patriotism that binds the otherwise ethnically diverse Turkish nationals to Anatolia.

The laicism of Atatürk made not only the separation of state and religion necessary, but he found more important the severe restrictions and government control over religious organizations and serious restrictions on the public expression of the Islamic identity. These objectives were in 1923 – under the leadership of Atatürk's – carved in stone and at the same time launched the country's rapid modernization. In this context the acceptance of the Latin alphabet took place instead of Arabic letters, the Turkish language reform, and the introduction of the civil legislation that was in one word a powerful and spectacular opening to the West.

According to Andrew Mango, the most famous Western analyst of Turkey and one of the most ardent admirer of Atatürk the secularism naturally followed the nationalist philosophy of Atatürk.²³ In connection with the laicism, from which it can be said that it was the least emphasized among the six arrows, Mango notes that for Atatürk it was not necessary to emphasize its importance, as in a modern state, it only needs to be emphasized when modernization takes place without it. Atatürk in his speech *Nutuk*²⁴ in relation with secularism merely pointed out that the greatness of the Turks preceded their transition to Islam and encouraged his nation to clean

²¹ Sina Aksin: *Nature of the Kemalist Revolution*, In David Shankland (ed.): *The Turkish Republic at Seventy-Five Years: Progress -Development - Change*, Huntingdon: The Eothen Press, 1999. 65.

²² Soner Cagaptay: *Islam, Secularism and Nationalism in Modern Turkey: Who is a Turk?* Routledge, New York, 2006, 74.

²³ Andrew Mango: *Ataturk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*, Overlook, New York, 2002. 127.

²⁴ *Nutuk* is the title of the speech of Mustafa Kemal *Atatürk* he presented 15-20 October, 1927. on the Second Congress of The Republican People's Party.

up their emotions and knowledge "in the light of true science" preventing that the imaginative ideas of Islamic tradition can jeopardize the national survival.²⁵

Atatürk did not represent uncompromising secularism. The leader - even though his religious beliefs are unclear to the present²⁶ - praised the enlightened religion. According to him "humanity will leave Christianity, Buddhism, Islamism (which is according to his opinion is the best and the modernist of all religions) and the common religion will be free of those special features, it will be simplified, understandable to everyone and will be universal."²⁷

This would be in accordance with the universal norms and expectations of the higher level of civilization. The laicism thus can be a tool of Turkey to show the world that it is not a primitive, prejudiced nation which belongs to superstitions. Atatürk opposed the caliphate, not because it determined the religious identity, but because the desire and nature of the religion is to set up an order to block the passage of time, and this is an obstacle of the progress. The caliphate from simple whim and fantasy was trying to sacrifice the Turkish people for a simple whim and fantasy.²⁸

In the Atatürkism the populism (Turkish: halkçılık) has special relationship with the secularism. According to its definition the aim of the revolution is transferring the political power to citizens. The kemalist populism is different from the Western concept of interpretation. In the Western European culture populism is such a political doctrine, where on one side are "people" who fight against the other side which is the "elite". In the Atatürkism "the people" (the correct term is "subjects") are on one side who are struggling against the autocracy (Ottoman dynasty), theocracy (caliphate) and other remnants of feudalism (tribal leaders). The political power is exercised in the interests of major population. The kemalist populism was the extension of the kemalist modernization movement, whereby in an ideal society, the citizens of the republic are able to read religious texts and interpret them freely. To this end Kemal Atatürk was the first who ordered the official translation of the Quran from originally Arabic to Turk. His stance against the clergy is proved by the fact that on several occasions he referred in his statements to prominent religious leaders as simple citizens, rural people or workers.²⁹

²⁵ Bahattin Aksit: *Islamic Education in Turkey: Medrese Reform in Late Ottoman Times and Imam Hatip Schools in the Republic* In R.Tapper (ed.): *Islam in Modern Turkey: Religion, Politics and Literature in a Secular State*, London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 1991.

²⁶ Andrew Mango: *Atatürk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*, Overlook, New York, 2002. 174.

²⁷ Ethem Ruhi Figlali: *Atatürk and the Religion of Islam*. 2010. <http://www.atam.gov.tr/dergi/sayi-26/ataturk-and-the-religion-of-islam>. 2017.03.01.

²⁸ Metin Heper: *Islam, Secularism and Democracy in Turkey: The Legacy of Atatürk and the Challenges of Modernity*, Tauris, New York, 2016. 214.

²⁹ Şehnaz Tahir Gürçağlar: *The Politics and Poetics of Translation in Turkey, 1923-1960*, Rodopi, New York, 2008, 35-37.

In order for Atatürk's legacy to become Kemalism one more secret ingredient was needed. The mysticism. The mystical bond between Atatürk and the nation is not only accepted but an axiom in the Turkish textbooks and scientific life. According to this point of view in front of "father of all Turks" we must pay tribute with a monument of an honest father. Without him Turkey would have been created in the same way, but it would be much smaller and a less peaceful country.³⁰ He has shown Turkey the way out of the "Eastern ghetto"³¹, created the new life and the hope that the Turkish people's energy and self-esteem would be restored. He showed not only the way of independence but freedom. He saved his country from being a client state of the British imperialism, so the gratitude towards him is a quasi-obligatory feeling.³²

The "Turkishness" is not necessarily determined by race, or religion but the measure of how a person can be connected to these kemalist concept of thoughts, ideas, goals and identifies himself with these ideas. The aim of the Turkish nation is to protect the progress made so far and to promote the modernization. Other guidelines, such as the republic cannot be a matter of choice. The link that was created between Atatürk and his nation made effectively naturalized the project of the Republic. The project established by Atatürk locked the path of the Turks, so those who wanted to diverge from it, violated the rules of the nature, providence and common sense.³³

The impact of the fusion of nation and the republic was unifying for the general public, and gave the charisma of Atatürk a quasi-mystical aura. Since Atatürk personified the Turkish Revolution, it became almost impossible for other people to do anything for the Turkish Revolution and made it impossible to turn against any manifestation of Atatürk. Atatürk became an anthropomorphic nation and revolution, the saint of Turkey, the source and guarantee of national pride and security. On 10th November, the anniversary of his death, which is a national holiday, every year the students write a letter to Him, in which they ask for peace, health and prosperity. Some announce even their complaints, so the letters resemble prayers.³⁴

Atatürk in the Hungarian Press in the 1930's

In the 1930's those political parties which wanted the change of the regime turned to Atatürk as a role model. Previously Atatürk already got general attention and respect in Hungary as the first successful revisionist, but in the thirties the racial-

³⁰ Andrew Mango: *i.m.* 2-12.

³¹ uo.8.

³² Bernard Lewis: *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response The Atlantic Monthly*, New York, 2002, 293.

³³ Suna Kili: *Kemalism in Contemporary Turkey*. International Political Science Review 1980/1/3. 381-404. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1601123?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents. 2017.03.01.

³⁴ Vamik D. Volkan: On Kemal Atatürk's Psychoanalytic Biography. In Baki Tezcan, and Karl K. Babir (ed.): *Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz*. New York, Psychohistory Press, 2008, 344-345.

ists and early intellectual patriots also turned towards him and his policy, more precisely as far as they saw and interpreted as his policy. This is no accident.

At the beginning of the twenties the inspirer of the militant revisionists - and as in the latest great book of Bela Kalman Borsi³⁵ we can read, at the same time the causer of the Romanian secret police sleepless nights - was Kemal Atatürk.

In Hungary after World War I and the Treaty of Trianon the political parties tried to reconstruct the Hungarian national identity. From the failure of the XIX century liberal nationalism the racial ideology seemed to be the most successful way out. From Gyula Szekfű to Dezső Szabó and László Németh there was one common opinion in the different methods of the identity researches: the decadency of the official liberal nationalism before Trianon caused the catastrophes of historical Hungary. The end of this disaster was the 1918 -19 revolutions, especially the Commune and Trianon. This ongoing political, national and social crisis was attempted to be remedied by creating a new national identity. It was well known that the foreign reference of system change policy of both Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky and Gyula Gombos was Atatürk.³⁶ Gömbös who advertised modernized national self-serving beside system changing saw Atatürk as his own idol.³⁷ In their eyes Atatürk was a relentlessly consistent national politician who dismissed and expelled the corrupt, decadent, traditional ruling class and created the concept of national officials.

In Hungary the cult of Atatürk became commonplace when he died. On 10th November, 1938 died the creator of modern Turkey, and two days later - courtesy of Mussolini and Hitler - Horthy marched in Kosice. Though in these days of destiny the reannex of Upper Hungary as an unexpected gift from Hitler and Mussolini was the leading topic in the Hungarian press, the death of Atatürk, the memory of Atatürk did not get lost in the domestic newspapers. Even the Kristallnacht was not able to blur the re-intensifying cult of Atatürk in Hungary. On the day of the invasion of Horthy to Kosice the 2 sided editorial in Magyar Nemzet was not addressed to the Reannex of Upper Hungary, but the example of Atatürk, and the message of the perceived oeuvre of Atatürk by the end of 1938 to the Hungarians.³⁸ The Magyar Nemzet presented his hero almost a saint, who was able to break with the old life of his nation, choose a new life that he relentlessly disseminated among the people.³⁹

³⁵ Borsi Kálmán Béla: *Nemzetstratégiák*, Mery Ratio, 2013, 34.

³⁶ Ósz Gábor: *Kemal Atatürk, a Török Köztársaság megeremítője*, Ómagyar Kultúra Baráti Társaság, 2004, Budapest. <http://www.gecse.eu/Kemal.htm>

³⁷ Paul Hanenbrink: *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism, 1890-1944*, Cornell University Press, 2006, 23-28.

³⁸ Magyar Nemzet, 12 November, 1938. https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/ORSZ_PIMU_Pimbf_G_Mn_01/?pg=0&layout=s

³⁹ Szemenyi KISS Tamás: *Kemal Atatürk és a magyar diplomácia*, Ellenszek.hu 2012. 09.26. http://ellenszelben.blog.hu/2012/09/26/kemal_ataturk_es_a_magyar_diplomacia

The newspaper of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party, the *Népszava* remembered Atatürk not as a saint but as an exemplary enlightened politician: "it was Peter the Great who tried to create European civilization from nothing in his country. Kemal Pasha also worked to highlight the Turkish people from the Asian isolation and dramatically reached into the oldest traditions as well." Like all his Hungarian admirers, the author of *Népszava* also pointed out that Atatürk had taken the fez off the head of the Turkish men, the veil from the women's face, introduced the use of the Latin alphabet. For the Hungarian social democrats Kemal's most important work was the modernization. "Roads and railways were built, industry was strengthened, and public schools were established. [...] His foreign policy activities were also successful. His friendship treaty with the Russians secured a strong rear guard, and Turkey was saved from living in constant friction with its big neighbour. [...] He made Turkey the most important state of the Balkan League. Due to his policy he linked to the Western democratic powers." After the First Vienna Award, on the day of the invasion in Kosice, Atatürk was remembered as a genius politician who agreed on a compromise with the Soviets, bound treaty of friendship with them, who connected Turkey to the Western democracies, who continued independent foreign policy.⁴⁰ All in all in the eye of the Hungarian Social Democrat newspaper the oeuvre of Atatürk was to follow.⁴¹

In the *Pesti Hírlap* on the occasion of Atatürk's death the famous foreign policy expert, Antal Balla wrote a necrology.⁴² The Atatürk picture of Balla and *Pesti Hírlap* was both a glorious victor over Treaties of Versailles, the spirit of progress, one of the greatest figures, statesmen and national leaders of the twentieth century. Beside the biography and respectable list of political history the author put extra emphasis on the fact that Atatürk was the first who firstly faced the humiliating decisions of the Treaties of Versailles, who fought successfully with the Greek and Armenian rebels, and the French and English invaders, and who made an alliance with the Soviets.

After the victory, "the new national Turkey gave up its targets of power and did not want to keep any nation subjugated anymore. Atatürk had no other purpose than organizing, modernizing and thus saving the country clenched into national borders from "blood devastation". He got rid of the influence of Islamic religion in his country and then with great success he made the transformation of Turkey, the indicators of which were the abolition of wearing fez and using Arabic letters. Balla ended his writing with following: Was Atatürk a dictator? He was, but not institutionally. Turkey was a constitutional country, and the National Assembly

⁴⁰ Kende Tamás: *Musztafa Kemál Magyarországon*, Beszélő, November, 2006. 11/11

⁴¹ 22 November, 1938. <https://adtplus.arcanum.hu/hu/search/results/?list=eyJmaWx0ZXJzJjogeyJDT0wiOiBbIk5lcHN6YXZhl10sICJFVi16IFsiUEFsvDA3II19LCAicXVlcnkiOiAiU1pPPShhdGF0XHUwMGZjemspIn0>

⁴² <https://adtplus.arcanum.hu/hu/search/results/?list=eyJmaWx0ZXJzJjogeyJDT0wiOiBbIk5lcHN6YXZhl10sICJFVi16IFsiUEFsvDA3II19LCAicXVlcnkiOiAiU1pPPShhdGF0XHUwMGZjemsgaGFsXHUwMGUxbGEgKKSJ9>

personifies national power and national sovereignty. Atatürk was a dictator because of his personal features, through his unlimited authority. He was such a dictator like Cromwell was in the English Revolution or Rákóczi and Kossuth in the Hungarian War of Independence. He showed that the nations have vitality and were, not destroyed as a result of a lost war.⁴³

The Atatürk's image of Pesti Hírlap was similar to the Népszava's Atatürk, however it differs in several aspects. The image of Atatürk in Pesti Hírlap was as follows: national leader, the savior of the country from the "blood devastation", the man who victoriously fights for the revision, the modernizing constitutional dictator.

On the day of his funeral, which was held in Ankara, the Lord Mayor of Budapest appealed to the people of the city. This appeal below the picture of Atatürk decorated with Turkish and Hungarian national colors called the inhabitants of Budapest to express their grief with black flags. These flags were hanged out on almost every house.⁴⁴

All elements of the Népszava and Pesti Hírlap can be found in the editorial of Magyar Nemzet, though the published text emerges from the cultic articles of Atatürk's memory at that time in the Hungarian press.

The first striking difference is that the article of the famous Slavic expert Lajos Gogolák is not a conventional in the inner pages of Magyar Nemzet but also an editorial.⁴⁵

Next to the two page long editorial the report follows of the paper's special correspondent about Horthy's entry into Kosice, and the preparations of the invasion. In this historical moment it is particularly interesting that the Magyar Nemzet, as an intellectual newspaper of the national defense dedicated its editorials not to the Reannex but to the death of Atatürk and his oeuvre.

Obviously, the editors considered it especially important to evaluate Atatürk's oeuvre in the given historical moment, precisely with what the newspaper and the author interpreted as meaning, and held instructive for the Hungarian public. The editorial of the Magyar Nemzet that was obviously created in the sense of intellectual defense of Hungarian history considered in a fateful moment to submit an appropriate and detailed report to look at the history of the modern Turkey and its creator for Hungarian readers.

For the emphatically anti-German right-wing national intellectual and political movement makers the confrontation with Atatürk and his career just seemed unavoidable. This career was determined by Gogolák as one of the most impor-

⁴³ Pesti Hírlap, 1938.11.10. No.255.

⁴⁴ Vecdet Erkun: *Magyarországról és magyarokról. Visszaemlékezés*, Magyar Tudomány, 2011. 04.06. <http://www.matud.iif.hu/2011/04/06.htm>

⁴⁵ 651. Gogolák Lajos: *Kemal Atatürk. A török államfő, mint réalpolitikus, belső reformer és államépítő*, 11 November, 1938. No. 67. https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/ORSZ_PIMU_Pimbf_G_Mn_01/?pg=60&layout=s

tant and most interesting career of the European contemporary history that was deemed impossible to understand without historical retrospection he outlined. He gave a devastating picture of Turkey and Turks before Atatürk. These Turks - as stated - totally burnt in the ideas of both political and religious thoughts of Islam.

According to him the original Turan manifest of the Turks later increasingly was deformed by the dominant Albanian, South Slavic, Arabic, Persian blood. The Albanian and Slavian blood components – according to the Balkan expert – almost only integrated into the Turkish way of life, military and psychological concept of Turks, but the Arab, Persian and Levantine suasion made it more softened. These effects not only softened, but embellished, blossomed the original Turan temper, but the domination of the alien spirit eventually disintegrated the Turan military class.⁴⁶ Gogolák stated that Turkey as a result of foreign spirits was destroyed from the inside, and was unable to respond to the challenge of the national and nationalist movements. These challenges, from the Balkans to Egypt only highlighted the mistakes that have been encoded at the birth of Ottoman Empire which sacrificed itself for Islam.⁴⁷

The crucial turning point was World War I, which brought newer mistakes on top of the older ones: the decadent, corrupt Turkish leadership made the empire the sub-office of Germany and the Monarchy.⁴⁸ According to Gogolák in the decadent imperial Ottoman Empire it was impossible to create a new Turkish national state. For the internal and external enemies of the empire it was obvious “how Islam has absorbed the best forces of the Turks and how pervaded the Islamic decadence the Turks without Turkish nationalism.” This Turkey was eliminated from the Asian and European politics after the Treaty of Sèvres, but an almost saintly hero was capable of shaking off the decadence and renew the country and his nation. Not out of nowhere came this hero according to Gogolák. Atatürk had already emerged before in the struggles for renewing Turkey on racial basis. “In the general decay the Thessaloniki-born military officer, Mustafa Kemal appeared on the Turkish political scene who gained reputation in the Young Turk movement and in the promotion of the anti-Armenian Young Turk racial thought. The founder of national Turkey who shaked off the humiliation of the Treaties of Versailles – so the author of Magyar Nemzet – propagated the Turkish racial thoughts in the most decadent era of Turkey.

Gogolák briefly presented the story of Atatürk and the rise of Atatürk’s Turkey. Peculiarly linked together the public events of the story and the alleged racial politics of Atatürk, in one sentence mentioned the war against Greece and the strong and heavy-handed solution of the Armenia related racial and economic issues, and the elimination of any constraints of Islamic religion and the Caliphate

⁴⁶ Gogolák Lajos: *Pánzlávizmus*, Cserépfalvi Könyvkiadó, Budapest, 1940, 3-37.

⁴⁷ Kende Tamás: *Musztafa Kemal Magyarországon*, Beszélő, November 11/11.

⁴⁸ Gogolák Lajos *opt.cit.* 40.

that consumed the energy of the nation. “All of these paralyzed previously the free development of the spirit of Turkish nationality.” In November, 1938 neither Jew nor an anti-Semite did not have to be to decode the above. The heavy handed solution of the alleged Armenian issue (racial and economic) that paralyzed the originally healthy state of the peasant Turan soldiers was an important example to be followed for the author of the *Magyar Nemzet*. Atatürk could not implement his racial politics without social support and internal allies. At this point the Hungarian reader could obtain unmistakable crosstalk from Gogolák, who said that the only possible way of Atatürk was: the (Turan) Turkish peasantry.

“Kemal despised the overripe, rotten Constantinople overly exposed to European influences and turned back from which all Turkish power has also started: to Europe. The Anatolians had been the Ottoman Empire's best and toughest soldiers, and Kemal had returned to the hard, lean, barren land of Anatolia, turned back to the Turkish people is sky, to the Turkish peasantry, and he wanted to renew the rotting country.” Kemal was the first popular leader of the post-war world politics, and with ruthless force removed all Arab, Persian and Armenian effect from the Turkish people and the Turkish spirit.” Atatürk was seen by Gogolák as a huge and revolutionary leader of a reduced country who similarly to - St. Stephen and Peter the Great – successfully operated the revolution of quality.

Gogol – compared to other authors - devoted less space to Atatürk's foreign policy, although found important to point out that at one time he was able to maintain good relations with Germans, French and the Soviets. In the Gogolák editorials of *Magyar Nemzet*, Atatürk was basically the representative of the correct and successful racial and ethnic politics, who by the revolution unfolded by himself created a reduced but much stronger and tougher new Turkey.

So there was a consensus among his domestic (mis) judges in whose view he was a modernizing dictator who continued a balanced foreign policy in an era in which Hungary was unable to do so. Obviously, Atatürk's life and death was only a great apropos of the current messages of the domestic opinion makers.⁴⁹

Conclusion

All in all, Atatürk wanted to be a leader of modern Turkey. In his opinion the essence of modernity was: secularism, the republican nation-state and economic growth. He wanted to visualize modernity, therefore his often exaggerated (hint with populism) republicanism, secularism and nationalism easily essentially were the means of achieving that aim.⁵⁰

His arrows together formed such a specific ideology, methodology, along with language, which used political despotism in order to eliminate and destroy

⁴⁹ Kende Tamás *opt.cit.*

⁵⁰ Andrew Mango: *opt.cit.* 144.

the social tyranny, that was spread among traditionally Muslim minded Turkish population, that crossed the way of the modernization (the ultimate goal) and for which ultimately Atatürk blamed the ulema (*'ulamā'*) itself.⁵¹

The recipe of Ataturkism was simple and austere, which lacks specifics and objectives of its political agenda. It offers a universal vision. In order to shape this Atatürk in the 1930's diligently carried out historical and linguistic basic researches and tried to get control over the policy directions with formulating the six arrows (*Altı Ok*). The arrows had universal validity with building them in the constitution and maintaining during the constitutional amendments.⁵² Since the legitimacy of the constitution derives from Atatürk, all the provisions and principles based on Atatürk's principles. As for the legal system terms this means that the law notwithstanding berth under certain principles and any legal reforms can be interpreted by the principles of Atatürk. In fact, the Ataturkism is the language of the law and the legal system in Turkey.⁵³ A legitimate political language, which formats the political debates and processes for decades. This language is not retreating or hegemonic. It formed under eight decades of continuous institutionalism. It became the language of policy, legislation, and language of journalism, regardless of whether the referrer understands the legacy of Atatürk or not. A language that constantly can be renegotiated.

In the Ataturkism and with the Ataturkism was formulated the national identity, which did not mean a radical racial nationalism.⁵⁴ Atatürk identified the republicanism and the unquenchable thirst for progress (revolutionism) the Turkishness "*that is the natural state of Turks*", "*the vehicles of the progress*".⁵⁵ Secularism is depicted as a natural republican feature, which is necessary for national survival and development, which is the most similar to evolution. "*A nation must move with the times, otherwise it will die.*"⁵⁶ "*In the eyes of the world our greatest strength and prestige is in the new form and character of our new regime.*"⁵⁷ The system, which Atatürk connected with national identity became a ticket to the civilized West and a pledge of the world's adoption.⁵⁸

His populism is a solidary opposition posed to the monarchy and the privileges it confers, inspired by the French Revolution. His nationalism bordered on

⁵¹ Metin Heper: *The Routledge Handbook of Modern Turkey*, London, Routledge, 2012, 1-12.

⁵² Taha Parla – Andrew Davison: *opt. cit.* 9.

⁵³ Rodney Barker: *Political Legitimacy and the State*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990, 57-61.

⁵⁴ Agapi-Leda Glyptis, *Kemalism as a language for Turkish politics: cultivation, reproduction, negotiation*. PhD thesis, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 2007. <http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/423/> 2017.03.01.

⁵⁵ *Nutuk*.

⁵⁶ *Nutuk*

⁵⁷ *Nutuk*

⁵⁸ Utkan Kocatürk: *Atatürk's Revolutions and Modernization*, 2015. <http://www.atam.gov.tr/dergi/sayi-13/ataturks-revolutions-and-modernization>. 2017.01.05.

his populism. It is true that he himself embodied the national will, under which he insisted on formalism, i.e. his decisions materialized in legislative acts, which were in accordance with the will of the nation, but that did not mean despotism.⁵⁹

His steps towards the complete secularization (removed the clause that Islam is the official religion from the Constitution, the abolition of the caliphate, all the modernizing reforms were different from the earlier Islamic tradition)⁶⁰ which simply separated the secular from the Divine and is opposed the exploitation of religion for political purposes, Islam has become a tool of the permanent state surveillance.⁶¹

The principles of Kemalism were linked to each other in three layers. First, in the Turkish nation concept they were associated with - as natural and essential elements - citizenship, national history and fatherland. Secondly, republicanism has been presented as a natural consequence of the Turks as a quasi-ethnic feature, “organic” component of the “natural” identity. The Turkish nation, on the one hand, is a strength behind the Atatürk policies, on the other hand, the natural consequence of Atatürk's republican reforms, but not preceded those as proclaimed some (mis) interpreters. The legacy of Atatürk is clear: “*our country must raise to the prosperous and civilized level of the world's nations*”.⁶² Turkey is the project, and the nation is the vehicle to achieve this. The national will of Turkey is implemented through Atatürk, best manifested in a decision that the citizens proclaimed themselves as a nation.

Atatürk with the help of national rhetoric effectively gave legitimacy to his acts, including the establishment of the secular Republic. Some considered this the ideological legacy of Atatürk, while others as a method of determining the direction of progress, but all the analysts agree on the fact that these are regarded as the most important intellectual legacy of Atatürk.⁶³

The Atatürkism actually occurred after the death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the criticism of his ideology often served as a pretext, where Atatürk's political programs were presented along the own concept of the interpreter. There was consensus among the domestic (mis) judges that he was a modernizing dictator who followed a balanced foreign policy in an era in which Hungary was unable to do so. However, it is clear that Atatürk's life and death was only apropos of the messages

⁵⁹ Ahmad Feroz: *Turkey: The Quest for Identity*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2003.

⁶⁰ Atatürk was not openly atheist, he belonged to the deist, who believed in a rational theology, denying the absolute truth of the revelation of religions. For tactical reasons, at the early political career he recognized the Islam as the latest and most perfect religion, adding that he hold all religions equal. In fact, during the war the Islamic solidarity has helped unprecedented scale to ensure cooperation between non-Turkish Muslims.

⁶¹ Patrick Kinross: *opt. cit.* 47.

⁶² 29 October, 1933. <http://www.ataturksociety.org/about-ataturk/ataturks-speech-at-the-10th-anniversary-of-the-turkish-republic/2017.03.01>.

⁶³ Henry Elisha Allen: *The Turkish Transformation: A Study in Social and Religious Development*. 1935. <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/481852>

of the different opinion makers. The uncritical follow of the Atatürk example is only suggested by the Magyar Nemzet who visioned Atatürk as a racial politician.

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