

**Writing a Psychoanalytic Biography:
A Methodology of Interpreting the Available Data***

By

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*IDENTITY AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN THE OTTOMAN MIDDLE EAST
AND THE BALKANS: A VOLUME OF ESSAYS IN HONOR OF NORMAN ITZKOWITZ.*

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Since early 1970 I have collaborated with Dr. Norman Itzkowitz on various projects, ranging from an examination of the 1000-year history of Turkish-Greek relations (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1994, 2000), to participation in unofficial Russian-Estonian dialogues following Estonia's re-independence in 1991 (Volkan, 1997), to assessment of psychopolitical processes in the Post-Enver Hoxa Albania. This collaboration has also included our writing of two psychoanalytic biographies: one on the founder of the Turkish Republic, Kemal Atatürk (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1984), and the second on Richard Nixon (Volkan, Itzkowitz and Dod, 1997). It was in early 1970 that we met, at Princeton University, while participating in a meeting examining historical and group-psychological processes in the Middle East (Brown and Itzkowitz, 1977). Remarkably, though we did not know each other, both of us came to the meeting with papers titled "Atatürk and his women." Our interest in and focus on the same topic and our identical paper titles naturally established a recognition of our shared aims and a sense of understanding between us. I am happy that our friendship and professional relationship is still going strong after more than 30 years.

It took us almost seven years to study Atatürk's life and to complete our first book, *The Immortal Atatürk*. When we began writing this book, we intended to study the Turkish leader's life through a psychoanalytic lens; we wanted to illustrate how his internal and external worlds were intertwined and how they influenced one another. We had a number of questions in our minds: How was it possible to "analyze" a person who

was not on our “couch” and indeed was dead? Would we have enough data to understand Atatürk? Would we have prejudices, pre-formed ideas (counter-transferences) about our subject that would interfere with a “correct” assessment of Atatürk’s internal world? As we struggled to write about Atatürk, slowly a “methodology” of writing psychoanalytic biographies began to emerge. I must emphasize that our methodology crystallized in our minds after *The Immortal Atatürk* was published (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1984). Thus, when we (and Andrew Dod) began working on the Nixon psychobiography, we were better equipped to approach our subject.

A Methodology for Integrating Information in Psychoanalytic Biographies:

To write a truly accurate, detailed, and enlightening biography of an individual, it would be ideal if the psychoanalytic biographer could analyze his or her subject in the same first-hand and intimate way that a psychoanalyst analyzes a patient. If this were possible, a biographer would have a *total* history of his or her subject that included a complete spectrum of specific external/historical events, internal/psychological processes, and their interaction. Of course, for all practical purposes, this is impossible. However, there are similarities between the information that a biographer and a psychoanalyst in the clinical setting gather, and it is possible as well as useful to follow a methodology of collecting and integrating information so that psychoanalytic insights can be incorporated into the basic historical facts of a biography. To further explain this methodology for collecting and then making sense of useful biographical information, I will describe how a psychoanalyst collects, analyzes, and integrates appropriate information from a patient on the couch. Then I will compare it with the process of

obtaining and synthesizing information on a subject (in this case Kemal Atatürk) for a biography that can still be considered psychoanalytic.

Although in this chapter I discuss one effective methodology, there is no single approach to writing a psychoanalytic biography. As the Israeli psychologist Avner Falk (1985) noted, Sigmund Freud himself undertook his biographical studies of Leonardo da Vinci (1910) and Moses (1939) in different ways. Advances in theory and practice have also influenced the approaches applied in such endeavors. Early psychoanalytic writings on the lives of famous artists and historical figures focused on interpreting the symbols they employed, such as those used by artists in their works, but they did not attempt to identify what accounted for the directions of their creativity. Later, when psychoanalysis became better established, questions were raised about symbol-based approaches, since, as Bergmann (1973) observed, "symbols are over determined and their meaning is less constant and less universal than Freud assumed" (p. 835).

Knowledge gained through studying child development and the evolution of ego psychology (Freud, 1936; Hartmann, 1939, 1950) led to a focus on the actual life history of the biographical subject. Considerable attention began to be paid to childhood traumas. The biographer sought to know why this or that ego function overdeveloped or underdeveloped, how the ego mediated between id forces and superego demands, and what kinds of defensive or sublimated adaptations to one's living conditions were made. Through Robert Waelder's (1930) introduction of the principle of multiple function and his examination of over determination, which established that a subject's decisions, actions, and productions have multiple conscious and unconscious meanings and sources,

psychoanalytic writers began to consider more than one causal factor in investigating an individual's artistic work, political ideology, or drastic and destructive actions.

The character of psychoanalytic biography again changed significantly through the work of Erik Erikson, in which he applied his concept of the psychosocial stages of development to biographical writings (1958). He introduced the concept of the adolescent crisis of identity as a central notion in psychological development; in considering an individual's relationship with his or her society, Erikson suggested that the biographer should focus on the adolescent years, during which the person expands his or her horizons beyond the family and neighbors to a wider social existence. Later, historical situations in the life of a young adult, as well as mid-life crises (Bergmann, 1973), were considered.

Critics continued to argue, however, that a psychoanalytic approach was reductionist, maintaining that what is observed on the surface cannot simply be accounted for by unconscious instinctual forces. Although Erikson's model and rigorous historical scholarship addressed this accusation (see Gedo, 1972), some analysts continued to warn about reductionism as a most pernicious pitfall in the writing of psychoanalytic biography (Mack, 1971). In response, Falk (1985) argued that reductionism should not be equated with fallacy, since psychoanalysis is "a legitimate scientific method because, in truth, all science is reductionist" (p. 611).

One of the key issues that psychoanalysts from Sigmund Freud (1910) to John Gedo (1972) have been concerned about in writing psychobiographies deals with the temptation of the biographer to project his or her own wishes for, fantasies and expectations of, and defenses against the historical or artistic figure onto him or her, the

subject of study. As Freud pointed out, biographers often choose their subjects because they are fixated on or feel special affection for them (Freud, 1910). Accordingly, I will address the matter of counter-transference later in this chapter.

Further research on child development illuminated the importance of dyadic child-mother experiences in the formation of a child's sense of self and in enlarging a child's ego functions (see Mahler, 1968). This ushered in the establishment of object relations theories and the examination of how a person establishes a cohesive sense of self (identity) and mental representations of others (Jacobson, 1964; Kernberg, 1966, 1975; Volkan, 1976).

Focus on self- and object-representations also enlarged our knowledge of how personality organizations are formed, potentially providing valuable assistance to the biographer's attempt to understand his or her subject's inner world. While individuals may try to hide their neurotic symptoms that are felt to be "alien," personality characteristics can be observed in their routine daily interactions with others and are more available to a biographer than subjects' neurotic symptoms. Thus, biographers such as Elizabeth Marvick (1983, 1997) began to describe how different political leaders developed their personality organizations.

Through combining what has been learned from ego psychology with what is useful from object relations theory, I believe it is possible to write a psychobiography based on a *developmental* approach. Itzkowitz and I used such an approach in writing our psychobiographies of Kemal Atatürk (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1984) and Richard Nixon (Volkan, Itzkowitz and Dod, 1997). I relied on the same approach when I presented the life of Abdullah Öcalan (APO), the leader of the Kurdish Workers Party (Volkan, 1997).

This methodology includes the examination of information from the subject's infancy and early childhood, including the dyadic relationship between child and mother, the construction of the subject's pathogenic unconscious fantasies, and the mother's (and other caretakers') unconscious fantasies about the child, which influence the subject's formation of a sense of self. From childhood and adolescence one also investigates the subject's early traumas or growth-inducing experiences, developmental arrests, early symptom formation and adaptation to the environment, the nature of the subject's oedipal struggles and the crystallization of the personality organization during the adolescent passage. In early adulthood the researcher focuses on a subject's internal responses to external events, attempts to change the environment to fit internal demands, activities in the service of maintaining self-esteem, affective expressions or affect control, sexual adaptation, choosing of mates, and responses to parenthood. Finally, inquiry is made into transformations of identity, regressions and subsequent progressions in the reconsolidation of identity, mid-life issues, and reactions to aging and the approach of death.

The subject's entire life is thus looked at developmentally through a psychoanalytic lens. The result is a "total" history of the individual: the illumination of his or her psychic reality and its interaction with the external world. Obviously, the degree of success that can be achieved in writing a "total" psychobiography through the application of this developmental approach depends on the availability of information about the subject. Furthermore, especially when writing the psychobiography of a political figure, it will be imperative for the biographer to have sufficient information about the political culture and conditions surrounding his or her subject, the political

figure's large-group (i.e. ethnic, national, religious) identity and his or her rituals (Volkan, 1997, 1999a, 1999b); the subject does not live in a vacuum and these aspects of identity must be taken into account.

COLLECTING INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIFE OF A PATIENT: GARY

Except in child analysis, and in very rare circumstances in adult analysis, the patient is the analyst's only source of information about his or her life. During the lengthy period involved in psychoanalysis, his or her life story is told and retold, checked and rechecked. It is possible to divide what a patient makes available to an analyst into six areas: 1) the history of the formative years; 2) adult history (past, present and future); 3) more direct access into the unconscious (such as through dreams); 4) transference and transference neurosis; 5) therapeutic enactments for the sake of mastering insights gained; and 6) counter-transference.

I will use an example of a patient, a young man named Gary, to illustrate in some detail the type of information gathered on an analysand's life and what an analyst does with this information. The emphasis is not on therapeutic issues, but on *the collection of data* in relation to both external and internal events and their interconnections (the "total" history). For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on an issue related to Gary's formative years, more specifically during his oedipal phase, and trace the recurring impact that it had on Gary's adolescent and adult years, its reflection in his unconscious and conscious fantasies, its role in his development of a transference and transference neurosis, its therapeutic reenactment, and my counter-transference. However, the reader should be aware that Gary's case was unusual in its straightforwardness and did not have the complexity and severity of borderline, schizophrenic, or other difficult cases.

Gary, a handsome and athletic man, was 24 years old when he started his analysis with me. Two years before he came to see me, his father, a high-ranking military officer, along with his mother and younger sister, had moved to a foreign country to which the father had been assigned. Gary remained in the US since he was attending a university.

While his family was overseas Gary met a beautiful and intelligent young woman and fell in love. After dating for some time, she asked Gary to get married, he agreed, and they were wed. But Gary kept this event "secret" from his parents and sister--they corresponded and talked on the telephone, but he never mentioned his marriage. One day he received a telegram that his parents were returning home, making it impossible for Gary to further conceal his secret. As his parents' imminent arrival loomed closer, he became anxious. One day while playing basketball Gary was frustrated by his inability to score and suffered a "heart attack." After being released from the emergency room with no apparent physical problems, he was referred to me as someone suffering from "cardiac neurosis."

I. The history of the formative years: During analysis a patient reports on his or her formative years (childhood, latency period, and adolescence), recalling, with or without emotion, his or her interactions with people and objects of special interest encountered in this period. The foundation of an individual's psychic organization is formed during the "formative years." Even though each one of us is born with different psychobiological givens, the mental representations of our interactions with significant (realistic and fantasized) others play a crucial role in how our psychic foundation is formed.

Gary recalled that when he was three he had shared a bedroom with his mother because his father was away on military duty in a foreign country, and he had perceived himself as being her "darling." When he reached the oedipal age, his father returned home and Gary was given his own room. However, his mother came to his room at night just before he went to sleep and, after locking the door, sat by his bed to have a cigarette. Since her husband disliked her smoking,

she would say to her child, "Hush, my darling! Don't tell your father what we are doing here. This," referring to her cigarette, "is our secret." She would also open his bedroom window to get rid of the cigarette odor.

Gary's account of this childhood event might have been realistic, fantasized, or distorted. Whatever the case may be, psychoanalysts are more interested in mapping the patient's internal structures than in determining how much of a story is accurate and how much is representational. When Gary sought to confirm the actual events of his childhood on his own, I learned that his father had indeed been absent from home when Gary was between three and five years old. Novey (1968) used the term "second look activities" to describe attempts by patients to investigate the past, such as returning to a childhood home or other important places. Gary similarly checked and rechecked with other family members the dates of his father's absence from home.

Although it apparently was also true that his mother had visited his bedside to smoke secretly, it was hard to determine whether she had made a nightly habit of this, or did so only occasionally. What was important was the psychological constellation reflected in his narrative that referred to an as yet unresolved oedipal triangle. The mother and son shared a "secret" while the father was locked out, potentially causing anxiety in young Gary based on the (unconscious) expectation that his father would disapprove and retaliate (this retaliation is known as a "castration anxiety" in the psychoanalytic parlance).

II. Adult history (past, present, and future): A patient in analysis also tells of his or her current involvement with people and significant objects, gives the history of adult life up to the current life situation, and expresses expectations of the future. A patient's report of adult life, like early recollections, may be realistic, distorted, or fantasized, and it may

change with time as he or she comes to a new understanding of the meaning of what has been disclosed.

During the first two years of analysis Gary disclosed that he had been so frightened of his father that as a teenager and young adult he suffered anxiety attacks when alone with him in an enclosed space. As a young adult he did not date girls openly—it had to be done “secretly.” On the evening of a date, he would lock his bedroom door, open the window, jump out, meet a girl for a date, and return in the same way. His marriage was similarly a “secret” until the time that his parents returned from abroad.

III. Direct access into the unconscious: In analysis the patient reports his or her dreams, daydreams, fantasies, and hypnogogic images. Clinical examination of these can give more direct information about a patient’s internal world.

Gary reported a dream to me in which he was in his bedroom. A woman sits next to him in the bed and combs her hair. There is smoke from incense in the room (when Gary reported this he made a slip of the tongue and said “incest” instead of “incense”). The window is open, but the bedroom door is locked. The door is made of steel, but Gary knows that there is a huge snake outside the door.

Another dream repeated throughout his analysis. In it Gary dreamt of two cowboys, one small, the other big and frightening (His associations indicated that the larger man was his oedipal father or the analyst who represented his oedipal father and the smaller man was Gary, as a child). Whenever the two met, the small cowboy would run into a house and lock himself into a bedroom to protect himself from the bigger cowboy. Then he would go to the bedroom window and shoot at his opponent, but his bullets were made of some harmless material and did no damage.

These dreams do not need much interpretation. They are directly related to his internalization of experiences (real and fantasized) at the oedipal phase. In the first dream

he created a steel door to protect himself from the oedipal father. His reoccurring dream of the two cowboys helped him keep an eye on his oedipal conflict--it was problematic but would not induce actual violence, since he defended himself by retreating and avoided using lethal bullets.

IV. Transference and transference neurosis: Transference in psychoanalysis is the unconscious process by which a patient displaces feelings, impulses, thoughts and behavior associated with important figures in his or her childhood, and the mental defenses against such experiences, onto the analyst. The analyst in turn nurtures the transference in order to help the patient develop it more fully; as it takes center stage in psychoanalytic sessions, we say that the patient has developed a transference neurosis.

Gary reported, after his analysis had progressed much, that after having sex with his wife he would jump out of bed, put his clothes on, and go to the living room and open the window. His premise was that if people passed by and looked in the window they would not think he had just had sex--they would simply see him watching TV or doing some other mundane activity. Sex with his wife thus would remain a secret. After a while, Gary reported that he thought I might happen to pass by his window and look into his living room. This idea made him anxious since I might then learn of his sexual activities. He in turn stopped having sex with his wife and night after night would sit in his living room, long after his wife had gone to sleep, waiting anxiously for passers-by. Some time later, Gary began to fantasize, with an emotional conviction, that I was in fact passing by his house each night. He and his wife lived in a basement apartment and therefore could not see above a person's waist through their window, but Gary was convinced that he had seen my shoes. He then purchased heavy curtains for his window and a stronger lock for his front door.

V. Therapeutic enactment: When the transference neurosis fully develops, the patient becomes preoccupied, session after session, with what I call "therapeutic stories"

(Volkan, 1984; Volkan and Ast, in press), which include “actions” within the analytic setting. A therapeutic story refers to a sort of “play” that a patient initiates both during and outside sessions, in which the patient and analyst are actors in key roles. The play is a symbolic representation of an aspect of a past real or fantasized event. It is reenacted so as to master anxiety and to write a different “ending” for the play that reflects the patient’s enhanced flexibility. If we consider a neurotic individual as someone who is able to play only a limited number of roles in life, through therapeutic stories and enactments in analysis a patient enlarges his or her repertoire and begins to leave neurosis behind.

After Gary’s transference neurosis was interpreted for him and he understood the meaning of keeping his sexual relations with his wife a secret from me, he noticed a postcard on my desk sent to me from a friend in Turkey in which two men were wrestling. In the background were two minarets, one taller than the other (as in his cowboy dream, where one cowboy was taller than the other). In his sessions he began to repeatedly make chopping motions with his hand, “cutting off” any protruding shapes in my office, such as the arms of a chair, accompanied by the words “chop! chop!” over and over. This continued for a few days as he waited for me to retaliate, but I was instead pleased with his progress and deliberately said nothing that would interrupt his reenactment. Gary then came to his session with a dream in which he saw me coming down the sidewalk toward his apartment in a cowboy hat. In the dream he went to the back of his apartment and opened and closed the outdoor water spigot, but instead of water, a smelly gas came out. I told him that my interpretation was that he was passing gas on me in order to keep me away so that I would not retaliate against his symbolic castration acted out on my office furniture. Gary began to laugh and laugh, and once he had relaxed, said: “I now know what I was going through here. The resolution of my conflict is so simple. You can have your woman, and I can have mine. No need to damage you, and no fear that you’ll damage me!”

Gary's enactment of this therapeutic story signaled that he was mastering and crystallizing the resolution of his oedipal conflict earnestly. He had his reoccurring cowboy dream again during the termination phase of the analysis, but by then it was greatly changed: the small cowboy left the bedroom, went out of the house, and walked toward the big man across an open field. When they were face to face, he saw that he was almost as tall as the big cowboy and both men returned their guns to their holsters, smiled, and shook hands. In real life Gary and his father became good friends.

VI. Counter-transference: Counter-transference, in a general sense, refers to the analyst's perceptions, feelings, and fantasies about his or her analyzand. As I indicated earlier, Gary's case and his treatment were routine, straightforward. Since I had had many experiences with other individuals with neurotic symptoms that are related to the oedipal conflict, throughout his analysis I felt comfortable when he saw me as a castrating father, or in turn when he wanted to castrate me, when he avoided me and when he kept "secrets" from me. My general feelings for him were like a father watching his son grow and mature. My feelings for him, in turn, gave me more evidence that indeed he was a young man having difficulty resolving his oedipus complex.

THE "TOTAL" BIOGRAPHY OF AN ANALYZED PERSON

Although we may divide what Gary or another analysand tells us into six areas, such divisions are made only for practical purposes. In actuality they overlap and information is divulged in a convoluted way. A patient may seem to be reporting on the here-and-now when he or she talks of interaction with an employer, but the patient's boss may in fact represent the analyst, so the patient is really describing a transference.

Furthermore, patients communicate nonverbally as well as verbally, and affect or content may relate to and link to any one of the six areas.

Nevertheless, as a patient's history unfolds before the analyst through the six avenues described above, and over the course years, by the end of analysis the analyst feels that the patient has disclosed a “total” biography: a developmental account of both external events and the patient’s internal world. Formerly repressed material, such as unconscious motivations and defenses, and adaptations to them, has become available, and newly constructed material completes the system. Freud (1905) felt that he followed an approach similar to an archeologist's during the analysis of a patient:

I have restored what is missing, taking the best models known to me from other analyses; but like a conscientious archeologist, I have not omitted to mention in each case where the authentic parts end and constructions begin (p. 12).

We in turn try to follow Freud's model and be aware of our own involvement in constructing the patient’s biography, in "creating" the missing pieces of the jigsaw puzzle. However, the analyst may be justified in filling in the missing aspects of the patient's experience, and may very closely approach the truth, if what he or she supplies fits well into the tapestry of material apparent in the patient's life. If an analyst writes his or her successfully analyzed patient's psychobiography, he or she can offer data not available to any other writer. The assumption is that the “total” developmental history of an individual, in the sense that it is used here, can only be obtained through clinical psychoanalysis and not by any other means, such as simple interviews or perusal of the record of factual milestones of the life in question.

The methodology of gathering biographical data in clinical psychoanalysis follows certain principles. First, it brings the analyst and analysand together in a highly

specific way. Using Harry S. Sullivan's (1946-47) terminology, David Rapaport (1960) referred to this as "the participant-observation variant of the method of interpersonal relation" (p. 125), adding that this particular type of interpersonal relationship applies nondirective (free-association), interpretive-genetic, and defense-analysis techniques of participant observation. For our purposes, the gathering of data about a patient largely depends on the psychoanalytic assumption that individuals repeat patterns (even though they may appear in hidden ways, at times, due to defenses utilized at the time of repetition) developed in their relations with important persons of their formative years—mother, father, siblings, caregivers, and teachers. These patterns are then repeated in dreams, transference neuroses, and enactments of “therapeutic stories.” The analyst examines these patterns in order to illuminate the wishes and expectations that come from within the patient.

Free association and the connection of repeated events will not provide a “total” history unless the repeated events are also connected with the transference. Rapaport (1960) noted that when methods and techniques "are tied up to the concept of transference they are specifically psychoanalytic" (p. 125). Transference neurosis that permits intense repetitions, along with systematic observation of their genetic roots, is the key concept of the methodology of clinical psychoanalysis; other methods simply using the repetition of patterns provide far less information. Psychotherapy in which aspects of transference may occur but are not systematically studied is necessarily incomplete in providing a “total” history that also includes the individual’s unconscious fantasies. Projective psychological tests can yield much information, but also have limitations, especially in details and in illustrating the unique nuances that pertain to the individual.

PSYCHOANALYST IN THE CLINICAL SETTING VS. BIOGRAPHER

There obviously are differences between psychoanalysis and biography, yet there are also noticeable similarities. Both involve the collection of a great deal of information often over many years, the formation of hypotheses, the testing of their validity, and the integration of all available material into a comprehensive picture. Yet a typical biographer would have difficulty formulating hypotheses concerning a subject's conscious, let alone his or her unconscious, psychological processes. This gap is due both to unfamiliarity with psychoanalytic principles and practices and the frequent scarcity of specific information that sheds light on otherwise hidden areas, such as that provided in Gary's dreams and transference neurosis. Yet the psychoanalytically informed biographer must nevertheless attempt to bridge this gap through psychobiographical inquiry if we are to really understand individuals who have influenced our world.

Many years after his psychoanalysis ended, I was given a tour of a house that Gary had designed and built. A few years after he finished his sessions with me, Gary had become an architect and constructed a house that he lived in for a while with his wife, although by the time I saw it, he and his wife had long since moved to another state. A friend of mine purchased the house, and I was given a tour of the inside when invited there for a party. Although I did not tell my host about Gary, he remarked that the home had a "dreamy quality" and in fact reported that Gary had called it his "dream house." The living room reminded me of the set of a western movie. In a child's bedroom a ventilating fan was almost hidden in the ceiling, and a window overlooked a back garden. Stone steps at the windowsill led down to the ground.

I could see that the house concealed the conflictual elements present in the unconscious of my patient when he was in analysis and that he had worked them through by the time he finished analysis, rendering harmless what had once so frightened him and preoccupied him. I could now see his witty and humorous side reflected in the design of the house he built a few years after he completed psychoanalysis. I wondered if a psychoanalytic biographer interested in the architect's life could write a reasonable explanation of his artistic production without ever meeting him but with certain other data that was available.

Suppose the biographer had a diary written by Gary that told of his mother's visits to his bedroom and her repeated emphasis on their sharing a secret. If unfamiliar with psychoanalysis, a biographer would probably not understand the significance of these visits to the architect's unconscious oedipal fantasies and the punishment he expected for having them. The psychoanalytic biographer, if armed with general clinical knowledge of child development, might consider this information valuable. He or she might make a connection between the fan hidden in the ceiling and Gary's mother's secretive smoking.

The diary might also tell of a problem the subject had as a teenager--his fear of punishment if his father learned that he was dating girls and his use of his bedroom window to go out with them. Having this information, the biographer might see a connection between the steps outside the bedroom window of the house and the subject's early fear of revealing his sexuality to his father. And if the repeating cowboy dreams appeared in the diary, the biographer might connect them to the style of the living room.

The biographer would do well to locate sources other than the diary, perhaps interviewing people who knew or had known the architect. Such interviews might

illuminate the architect's formative years, his adult life, and aspects of his unconscious, but would shed no light on transference neurosis and thus do little to compensate for the biographer's lack of solid proof of psychological, if not indeed, historical truth. The biographer's grasp of connections between his subject's artistic production and his childhood memories would basically depend on his informed intuition.

Sometimes in analysis, mostly due to counter-transference, psychoanalysts depend on their own fantasized meanings in interpreting what their patients communicate, but clinical practice allows time for testing and retesting for validity and for other occasions for the appearance of the same material. A biographer does not have this luxury, but the more he or she knows about clinical matters, the more internally consistent his or her findings will be, and the more the gap between his or her informed intuitions and the truth about the subject will be narrowed. Nevertheless, we must allow that intuitions are intuitions and that "wild analysis" springs from bad ones.

The imaginary biography of the architect is an example of the kind of psychobiography in which psychoanalysts explain an artistic production according to their knowledge of what is relevant in the subject's history. A "total" psychoanalytic biography of the sort I am interested in would include the writer's explanation of the nature of the subject's "dream house," but would, more importantly, describe the subject's whole life from a psychoanalytic angle leading to the construction of the "dream house." Assuming that this architect later built other houses of a different sort, the biographer interested in total biography would then focus on internal and external reasons for transformations in his or her subject. According to Mack (1971):

... It is one thing to conjecture, perhaps correctly, about certain events in a writer's psychosexual life on the basis of recurrent themes in his work. It is

another thing to study systematically the detailed history of such a man's life so as to reach a better understanding of the direction of his creativity. The latter is a problem to which psychoanalysis could make little if any contribution without the tools of a developmental ego psychology. (pp. 149-50).

A Biographer's Counter-transference

If we use the term *psychoanalytic* only when we have the benefit of an individual's transference neurosis and associated "therapeutic stories," we cannot apply it to the biography of someone never treated on the couch. We may ask if we can find substitutes for transference neurosis and be reasonably sure without it what repeated patterns mean. Many psychoanalysts (Greenacre, 1955; Bergmann, 1973) are optimistic about the availability of substitutes for those free associations that let us understand unconscious material and for transference neurosis. William Niederland (1965) found Heinrich Schliemann's "language exercises," in which he revealed unconscious wishes and dreams in sentences written to master a new language, very like free associations. Indeed, transferences occur in everyday life, and may reveal patterns that can be connected to a known childhood event, allowing us to be reasonably sure about the nature of repetitions without the close-up participant-observer evaluation of material possible in transference neurosis.

Psychoanalysts also may be effective biographers through understanding their own counter-transference, which complements transference. Although the psychoanalytic biographer lacks the benefit of his or her subject's transference neurosis and the enactments of "therapeutic stories," and must therefore seek substitutes, he or she is likely to have counter-transference feelings and thoughts toward his or her subject. In order to call a biography "psychoanalytic," we must know how the writer deals with

aspects of his or her counter-transference. The failure to notice and analyze counter-transferences may impair the account of the subject's life. Freud (1910) was keenly aware of how "biographers are fixated on their heroes in a quite special way" (p. 130). One may expect the writer's idealization of his or her subject:

In many cases [biographers] have chosen their hero as the subject of their studies because—for reasons of their own emotional life—they have felt a special affection for him from the very first. They then devote their energies to a task of idealization, aimed at enrolling the great man among the class of their infantile models—at reviving in him, perhaps, the child's idea of his father.... They thus present us with what is in fact a cold, strange, ideal figure, instead of a human being to whom we might feel ourselves distantly related. That they should do this is regrettable, for they thereby sacrifice truth to an illusion, and for the sake of their infantile phantasies abandon the opportunity of penetrating the most fascinating secrets of human nature (Freud, 1910, p. 130).

A biographer may devalue a heroic historical figure in a similar way based on negative counter-transferences (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1984).

When Arnold Zweig asked in 1936 for permission to write Freud's biography, Freud spoke about the importance of the biographer's feelings about his or her subject, warning again about counter-transference. Claiming to be too fond of Zweig to give him permission, he declared that all biographers are committed to "lies, concealments, hypocrisy, flattery," (Freud, 1936, p. 127) and a failure to grasp that not only is there no biographical truth, but if there were, it could not be used. Freud considered truth unobtainable and mankind ill deserving of it anyway but nonetheless made his own bold ventures into biography.

There are numerous examples from other authors who have described their counter-transferences to their subjects. Gedo (1986) explained how, while writing about the effect of adolescent vicissitudes upon Amadeus Mozart's creativity, he struggled to

straighten out the similarities and differences between the childhood of Mozart and his own. More recently, Daniel Rancour-Laferriere (1988), who provided us with a psychoanalytic look at Joseph Stalin's mind, wrote about his dream, several months after finishing his manuscript and after beginning work on another project. In his dream, Stalin appeared as "the steel bird" (Stalin's name translates to "man of steel," and is referred to as such in Rancour-Laferriere's book):

There was a gate. I was not allowed to open it, of course. So I jumped over it, as I always used to do when I went birdwatching. Then there was a road that led through dense woods. I followed the road till it came to a clearing in which stood a round, gray barn. In the barn unspeakable things were happening. There were human screams, but I did not mind. It was just the steel bird being cruel again, as usual. I told him that my book on Stalin was coming out soon. He smiled. There was a gleam in his eye. Despite the terrible things I was saying about him in the book, he was pleased to be getting a little extra immortality.

As for me, I was pleased the whole affair was over. I have no more nightmares of Stalin (p. 120).

In what follows I give examples of how Itzkowitz and I, as psychobiographers, collected information on Atatürk according to a developmental, "total" history model that seeks to overcome the inherent limitations of a psychoanalytic biography.

WRITING A PSYCHOANALYTIC BIOGRAPHY: *KEMAL ATATÜRK*

In gathering information for a "total" psychoanalytic biography of a historical subject, the author must seek data from a wide variety of sources, including diaries, documents, interviews, political philosophies, the subject's actions and artistic productions, and any relevant films or audio material. Visits to places important to the subject are most valuable. As in Gary's case, the information gathered on a historical subject can be divided into the six areas explained earlier, with some modifications; connections between the data in each area are sought as well. This exercise results in the

reconstruction of the meaning of repeated patterns in the subject's mind and the illumination of internal aspects of the subject's activities.

Gathering data about the first area, the formative years, is sometimes problematic if few accounts are available, but is necessary in order to write a "total" psychobiography. Material on the second area, the adult life history, is typically more readily found. Data from the third area—access into the unconscious through dreams and daydreams or other sources—is often sparse. Last, data from transference, transference neurosis and therapeutic enactments is usually missing entirely. Instead, these missing areas are replaced in part by the self-observations of the writer regarding his or her own feelings, fantasies and perceptions about the subject. This of course is a problematic issue. Working with co-authors on a project and discussing ideas with them regularly may be helpful in reducing exaggerated counter-transference issues. Once data is collected from the available areas and counter-transference, insights from actual psychoanalytic patients with similar life stories can be used to guide the author in making formulations about the inner world of the subject.

Before demonstrating this methodology for a psychoanalytic biography, I will begin with a brief summary of the life of our subject, Atatürk, as it appears in conventional history:

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, was born Mustafa in 1881 in Salonika (now Thessaloniki, Greece), a port city then part of the Ottoman Empire. His father, a customs clerk and later a small businessman, died when he was seven. As a young teenager Atatürk left home to enter military school and graduated near the top of his class. Although an officer of the Ottoman military, he was also critical of the sultan, and was active in anti-

government organizations. After distinguished service in World War I, highlighted by his heroic leadership at Gallipoli, he was promoted to general at the age of thirty-five.

As Allied forces threatened to overrun what remained of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, and the sultan proved powerless to fend off Italian, French, British, and Greek incursions, Atatürk sought to salvage Turkish independence. He left Istanbul for Anatolia, the “heartland” of the Turkish people, and in Ankara organized what remained of the Ottoman army to resist invading Greek forces. Fearing his growing power, the sultan, under pressure from the Allies, ordered his dismissal, prompting Atatürk to establish a provisional nationalist government in Ankara to which he was elected president. From Ankara, then only a provincial town, Atatürk planned campaigns against the Greeks, who had invaded part of Anatolia, ultimately defeating them in 1922. The sultan was then deposed by the nationalist government and the modern state of Turkey was established in 1923 with Atatürk at its head.

Upon becoming the first president of Turkey, he took the surname Atatürk (meaning “Father Turk”) and instituted drastic and sweeping political and cultural changes to transform Turkey into a modern, secular, and Western nation. These included dismantling Islamic law and curtailing religious influences over the state, instituting a civil system based on European models, emancipating women, replacing Arabic script with a Latin alphabet, and establishing various economic modernizations. According to a generally held Turkish belief, Atatürk almost single-handedly inspired his war-weary country to reestablish its independence by force and created a new Turkish identity through cultural revolution. He died in 1938, but in an extraordinary way is venerated in Turkey as though he still lives. He is called “The Eternal Leader,” and his representation is immortalized.

In describing Gary’s case I focused on specific circumstances from his oedipal years and demonstrated their continued conscious and unconscious influence in his adolescence, adult life, and a transference neurosis. Through his analysis I had compiled

a total history of Gary's life, but presented only one thread of many that ran through it. In illustrating Atatürk's case, while I make references to other experiences during his formative years, I will focus especially on the fact that he was born in a house of mourning. The effects of these circumstances can then be traced through the four areas, which, as mentioned before, are modified for a psychobiographical "total" history from the six used in collecting data within the clinical setting. Like the example I used from Gary's life, this is only one thread that is evident in Atatürk's "case."

I. Atatürk's formative years: There is not a great deal of documented information on Mustafa's childhood, latency, and adolescence, or even the exact date of his birth, although brief, but important, published accounts of his childhood are available. One of his sisters outlived him and contributed her rather scanty recollections of her brother and his youth. Itzkowitz and I examined these and other primary sources. In addition, I talked with individuals whose parents had lived in the same neighborhood in Thessaloniki during Atatürk's childhood. I gathered their perceptions about his family and much information about old Salonika and the specific neighborhood about which I was interested.

We know the following information about Atatürk's pre-oedipal phase:

At birth Atatürk was named Mustafa. All three of the previous children born to his parents died at an early age when Mustafa's family lived in an isolated and inhospitable area near Mount Olympus. Mustafa's father worked there as a customs clerk. According to a family story told by Mustafa's only surviving sibling, one of the dead male children was buried in a grave by the sea. A high tide exposed the corpse, which was found ravaged by animals.

Whether or not the story of Mustafa's dead brother is a "historical truth," it reflects a painful time and indicates Atatürk's exposure very early in life to the

psychology of a house of mourning. Psychoanalysts, myself included, often deal with patients who experience complicated mourning, such as parents who have lost children (Pollock, 1989; Volkan, 1981; Volkan and Zintl, 1993). After the loss of a child, a woman, consciously or unconsciously, most likely is anxious about the next child she bears, fearing for its survival. She may perceive it as a replacement or substitute child (Cain and Cain, 1964; Green and Solnit, 1964; Poznansky, 1972; Pollock, 1989; Volkan and Ast, 1997) and make it a living link to the child or children she has lost through “depositing” (Volkan, 1984; Volkan, Ast and Greer, in press) into the child’s developing identity her image of the dead child, whom the living child never actually met. Thus a mother experiences her surviving child as special, yet at the same time may also be distant and ungiving as she struggles to deal with the previous losses the child embodies, and with fears that the new child may suffer a similar fate. As mother and child interact, what the mother “deposited” in the child, and her perception of him or her as a replacement or link, enters into the child’s own developing identity.

Psychoanalysts have observed that the child in such a relationship in turn may have fantasies of saving the mother from grief. At first these fantasies are selfishly focused on obtaining a mother who is not preoccupied with someone else (a dead sibling or spouse) and therefore able to provide the child with “good enough” mothering (Winnicott, 1965), but the child or later an adult may become, through sublimating his or her original wish, truly concerned with the well being of the mother or, more likely, of her symbolic representation. Knowing that three previous children had died, we entertained the notion that young Mustafa, as a living link to his dead siblings, may have had early unconscious savior fantasies. Was this at the foundation of his later strivings to

become the savior of his country, which was filled with grieving people who had lost their sons during World War I and the preceding Balkan War and/or had become refugees? It was later remembered that one could not walk through the streets of Istanbul without hearing someone wailing. We sought specific references to such possibilities as proof of our hypothesis that this pre-oedipal event strongly influenced Mustafa's life.

Other deaths overshadowed Atatürk's oedipal period:

Mustafa's family had a brief respite from hardship after his birth; his father had a new job as a small businessman, and they lived in the city of Thessaloniki. Good times did not last long. The father's business venture, although initially successful, failed, and poor health, drinking, depression, and unemployment followed. When Mustafa was seven, his father fell ill and died, and one of Mustafa's younger sisters soon followed him. Mustafa's mother became a widow at the age of twenty-seven, with only a small pension to support herself, Mustafa, and his only remaining sibling, a younger sister.

But before the father's death, he did something for the young boy that Atatürk considered a special gift: he rescued him from the Muslim school in which his deeply religious mother registered him, sending him instead to a secular school under a teacher named Şemsi Efendi. Atatürk's recollection of this period recounts the "deep struggle" between his parents and how his father prevailed. His father's solution was to allow Mustafa to complete the ceremonious entry into the clerical school, thus satisfying his mother, but then attend the secular school after a few days.

Atatürk recalled this incident as his first memory of childhood (reported by Ahmet Emin (Yalman) in *Vakit*, then a Turkish daily newspaper, January 10, 1922)--in it he idealized his father as standing up to his mother as well as the Islamic traditions that persisted in the Ottoman Empire; he also remembered his father as still working as a clerk in the customs office, though he had long since given up this position. This

idealized version of a courageous father seemingly persisted, while the image of his father as a sickly failure was denied or repressed.

Clinical experience shows how important it is for a child to find a substitute for a father lost during the oedipal period, and we wondered if the teacher Şemsi may have filled this void for Mustafa. Secular education had reached elementary schools in the big cities by then but was strongly opposed by traditional Muslim Turks; Şemsi Efendi's school twice had been attacked, and his classroom destroyed, but he stubbornly kept teaching. We hypothesized that Atatürk found a substitute father in his teacher, a progressive and determined man similar to Atatürk's idealized image of his father. We theorized that the idealization of these two men was in part a crucial source of his appreciation for things Western and his injunction to modernize Turkey. We also wondered if the devalued side of the father found personification in the sultan, whom Atatürk would come to see as corrupt and weak.

Information available on Atatürk's adolescence suggests that it was characterized by separation-individuation struggles (Mahler, 1968) as he attempted to separate from his mother (or her representation). We theorized that Mustafa's oedipal "victory" through the death of his father had made the mother-son relationship problematic and full of ambivalence—as his mother's rescuer and link to her dead children he was special, but at the same time she may have been smothering:

After his father died, Mustafa and his sister lived with their mother on a farm outside Thessaloniki, but he eventually returned to Thessaloniki to live with an aunt. At secondary school one of his teachers gave him a new name, Kemal, which means "perfect." From then until the time he took the surname Atatürk, he was known as Mustafa Kemal. Envious of the uniforms worn by boys attending military school, Atatürk made the decision to enter a military preparatory

school. Although the culture esteemed the military, he wrote that his mother "strongly objected to my becoming a soldier," and that "without letting her know, I took the entrance examination for the military secondary school on my own. Thus, I achieved a fait accompli against my mother" (reported by Ahmet Emin Yalman in Vakıf, 10 January, 1922).

His mother soon remarried, greatly angering her son. After the wedding he packed his books in a bag and left his mother's house (Gökçen, 1974). Atatürk then departed for a military training school in Monastir (in present-day Macedonia), nearly one hundred miles from Thessaloniki, and did not return to his mother's house for years.

The history of Atatürk's childhood and adolescence suggests that he was driven toward self-sufficiency. Itzkowitz and I wondered if these characteristics were defensive/adaptive responses to living in a "house of death" and the conflicted relationship with his mother. In joining the military, the most westernized institution in the Ottoman Empire at that time, we theorized that Atatürk may have sought an idealized image of his father and a way to free himself from the influence of his grieving and devoutly religious mother.

II. Adult history: There are many connections which separately do not, but which collectively do, give strong evidence of the influence being born in a house of death had on Atatürk's adult life. In various ways he sought to reverse childhood misfortunes:

As president of the new Turkey, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Atatürk sought to transform the city of Ankara into "a house of life." He wanted the glittering gaiety of Paris or Berlin in his new and still provincial capital. He went to balls and encouraged dancing, singing, and revelry. Furthermore, he had adopted a young boy as his "son" during the war, and as president adopted a number of "daughters," pushing them to excel and to become westernized. I interviewed one daughter who had become Turkey's most famous aviator, Sabiha Gökçen; then in her sixties, she told how he had forbidden any display of grief by any member of his entourage,

ordering his daughters to smile and advising them to distrust anyone without a smiling countenance (Gökçen, 1974). (Gökçen died in 2001).

He told one of his adopted daughters, "I want so much to create something with my own hands" (Gökçen, 1974). In this behavior I heard an echo of his desire to give life to children in order to give life to his dead siblings and end his mother's grief. Yet these adopted children would not be raised as his mother would have raised them; instead they would be reared in a less grim and oppressive environment and without her strict and confining religious views. He rebelled against the religion in which his devout mother sought comfort:

As president of Turkey, Atatürk closed tekkes (the traditional lodges of dervishes) and railed against the primitive worship of ancient saints of folk Islam: "To seek help from the dead is a blot on any civilization" (Afetinan, 1971).

In one of his speeches, given only a year before his death, Atatürk said:

Some people like gardening and flowers. Others prefer to train men. Does that man who grows flowers expect anything from them? He who trains men ought to work like the man who grows flowers. (Volkan and Itzkowitz, 1984, epigraph)

In the above remarks there is an allusion to raising living things from the earth—symbolically bringing his dead siblings and father to life, thus repairing his mother's broken heart. Only after she is repaired can he be free of her influence. He also refers to his sublimation of his role as repairer—he does not wish recognition for such efforts.

There is evidence that Atatürk also repeated in adult life the pattern from his youth that involved giving attention to his grieving mother but at the same time following the road his dead father had pointed out, leaving her behind. It appears that it was difficult to reconcile his living mother who conformed to the old ways of the past and his

dead father who left him an injunction to break with the Ottoman/religious past and look toward the future:

On the night before he fled Allied-occupied Istanbul, Atatürk dined with his mother. He wore an aba, the long gown of the Near East, which he would on no account have worn in public; and in Muslim fashion the two sat on the floor while eating. Paying her traditional homage, he told her of his plan to leave Istanbul on the following night, and she prayed for him. The next day he started a highly dangerous journey to Anatolia where he began the Turkish war of independence.

Even when president, he continued to ritualize his relationship with his mother, always visiting her when first awaking to kiss her hand before embarking on activities too much a part of the modern, westernized world for her to dream of.

Like his father's solution to the conflict over religious and secular schooling, Atatürk first appeased his mother and then was able to identify with the idealized father bent on westernization.

Atatürk's success in separating from his mother, at least physically, which he accomplished through secretly taking the entrance examination for military school. Being "examined" and passing the test became a symbol of intrapsychic separation from his mother's mental representation. We see repetition of it in his later life:

Atatürk adopted a peculiar manner of quizzing (giving an examination to) other people. While interviewing those who had known him, I was struck by how often this was mentioned; it appears also in writings about him. Apparently, when meeting someone new he would question him or her and determine the person's acceptability by the response. He scorned anyone who failed his "examinations," and often gave rewards to the successful.

His original concern about independence (separation-individuation) from his mother later generalized, preparing him to tackle issues of national independence. There

is considerable distance between independence from the representation of a mother and issues of national independence, but a connection between the two seems evident in Atatürk's case:

In 1921 Atatürk said, "Freedom and independence is my character," and went on to describe how he had been consumed by a love of freedom from childhood:

I put it as a main condition that my country should have the same characteristics. In order for me to be able to live I should be the child of a free nation. Thus the national sovereignty is a matter of life for me (Aydemir, 1969, vol. 3, p. 475).

Other statements similarly condense his personal upbringing with his public stance:

Since my childhood, in my home, I have not liked being together with either my mother or sister, or a friend. I have always preferred to be alone and independent, and have lived this way always. ...Because when one is given advice one has either to accept and obey it—or disregard it altogether. Neither response seems right to me. Wouldn't it be a regressive retreat to the past to heed a warning given to me by my mother who is more than 20 or 25 years older than I? Yet were I to rebel against it I would break the heart of my mother, in whose virtue and lofty womanhood I have the firmest belief (Aydemir, 1969, vol. 3., p. 484).

The information above indicates that Atatürk's childhood mother (her mental representation) exerted an influence on him throughout his life on both a personal and unconscious level, as well as his professional career and political ideology. But although Atatürk rarely mentioned his father in his adult life, the impact of his death on young Mustafa also seems significant, as does the role that his first teacher, Şemsi Efendi, played. The name Şemsi, derived from the Arabic word *Shems* ("sun"), means "the illuminator," a suitable name for a teacher; yet the sun is an image that would persist in Atatürk's life. It is featured prominently in many of Atatürk's speeches in symbolic reference to the lifting of darkness from his troubled country. Interestingly, many of his followers similarly saw him as the symbolic representation of the sun that would bring new light and life to Turkey, dispelling the dark cloud that hung over the remnant of the

crumbled Ottoman Empire. Journalists of the time even directly referred to him as the “Savior Sun,” and some people who met him noted that they had trouble looking him in the eye because of his radiant blue-eyed gaze and the bright aura it invoked. In this symbol of hopefulness and reparation Itzkowitz and I heard an echo of the house of mourning from which Mustafa may have desired to lift the darkened cloud that hung over his grieving mother.

III. Roads into the unconscious: Only one dream of Atatürk's is reported; this foreshadowed the death of his ailing mother soon after the Turkish war of independence. The day his mother his mother died, she was in Izmir, while Atatürk was in Ankara. That morning Atatürk woke up and one of his associates brought him a telegram. He said he knew what was in the telegram and that his mother was dead, because he saw it in his dream. While he appears to have correctly foreseen his mother's death, this dream does not inform the psychobiographer much about his unconscious, so we must look for other symbolic references that may provide access to it. One of Atatürk's essays, preserved in his own handwriting, clearly refers to his early childhood and the death of his older siblings near the inhospitable and dangerous Ottoman-Greek border. It opens with a discussion of man's relation to nature:

Man does not decide whether or not to be born. At the moment of his birth he is at the mercy of nature and a host of creatures other than himself. He needs to be protected, to be fed, to be looked after, to be helped to grow (Atatürk, 1930, pp. 77-78).

We are reminded of the story of Mustafa's dead sibling whose body was buried by the sea and torn apart by wild animals—man is born in a primitive state at the mercy of nature and its creatures. Yet this excerpt also reflects Atatürk's own fulfillment of the role of “father” at the birth of Turkey, for he protected his country in battle, sought to

feed it through agricultural reforms, and became a “teacher” to the Turkish people.

Although in this chapter I do not fully discuss the evidence that suggests Atatürk sought an idealized father image, through internal transformations he himself eventually became the idealized father of the Turks.

IV. Counter-transference: While working on the biography of Atatürk, I came to realize that to analyze him was to analyze part of myself. As a Cypriot Turk, Atatürk was the idol of my people, and had been part of my idealized self as I grew up. As the “Father Turk” he was seen as more than a man, as anyone traveling to Turkey would see through his omnipresent portraits, statues, and memorials. But the more I learned about Atatürk, the more I began to have mixed feelings for him, for the Turkish people’s belief in his greatness seemed paralleled by his personal sense of grandiosity. It took considerable energy to reconcile the superhuman and human sides of my subject as I struggled to integrate the information I was gathering into a realistic picture.

In the course of my work I was frequently reminded of a family story that recalled how my own father had bravely identified himself with Atatürk when the leader introduced western headgear and restricted men from wearing the fez:

Atatürk calculatedly went to the most conservative community in Anatolia, wearing a panama hat as he alighted from the train before a waiting crowd. Pointing to his hat he announced, "The name of this is 'hat!'" The Turkish men doffed their fezzes in compliance, and scattered to find hats for themselves.

My father, wearing a western hat in imitation of Atatürk, went to a traditional coffee house in a conservative Cypriot Turkish village and stepped up on a chair to demonstrate his conversion. But unlike Atatürk, my father’s boldness was met with hostility from villagers armed with pistols.

I heard my father's story many times during my childhood. I thought my father, unlike Atatürk, had failed. But through investigating Atatürk's life in detail, I was forced to re-examine my devaluation of my father and my idealization of Atatürk. I came to appreciate my father's bravery, and tempered my idealized image of Atatürk who was in fact a man in many ways similar to many others who had troubled childhoods.

A dream I had while collecting information on Atatürk also helped me understand my counter-transference. In the dream Atatürk and a patient that I was seeing at that time exchanged identities. Like Atatürk, my young patient was handsome and gifted, and I thought of him as "The Last Renaissance Man" (Volkan, 1976). Both had grandiose self-images, and one statement of Atatürk's might have been uttered by my patient:

Why, after my years of education, after studying civilization and the socializing processes, should I descend to the level of common people? I will make them rise to my level. Let me not resemble them; they should resemble me! (Aydemir, 1969, vol. 3, p. 482, tr. by Volkan)

Each man had childhood reasons for developing a grandiose self: each had suffered significant early losses, each were pushed to mature at an early age, and each considered himself to be "number one" and sought validation for this perception. Although they had both received flawed mothering, in each case the mother had seen her son as special—a savior—and supported his developing grandiosity. Arnold Modell (1976) reports on such a background of exaggerated self-esteem among those who psychoanalysts consider as having narcissistic personality organizations, and clinical findings (Kernberg, 1975; Volkan, 1976; Volkan and Ast, 1994) about the early mothering of those who subsequently develop narcissistic personality organizations seemed to apply to my patient as well as to Atatürk.

One of the differences between my patient and Atatürk was that the former's narcissism eventually drove him to seek psychoanalysis, while the latter's drove him to become leader of his country. But their similarities shed new light on Atatürk, and helped me differentiate the psychopathology of my analysand from the psychology of my biographical subject. Each led to a more informed view of the other, though each was a distinct and unique individual. Atatürk's greatness lay in his actualization of his inner expectations and requirements—his narcissistic needs were transformed, and he himself was transformed, as his own struggle became Turkey's struggle.

As indicated by the above discussion, the process of writing a psychobiography can be an arduous task. I learned that Dr. Itzkowitz was moved to tears as we completed our book on Atatürk. After its publication the then Dean of the University of Virginia's Medical School, Dr. Norman Knorr, held a reception to celebrate. An evening for me to remember with great pleasure, it was also a ritual marking the end of my association with Atatürk. That night I dreamt of seeing newspapers written in many different languages, all bearing headlines announcing the death of Atatürk. Although I felt a great sadness in my dream, on the following day, remembering it, I knew that I could now let him rest in peace and address myself to other work, including cementing my friendship with Dr. Itzkowitz, my fellow traveler into the mind of the great Turkish leader.

Summary:

My focus in this chapter has been a methodology of data-integration for a psychoanalytic biography. I believe that the way in which a clinician learns about a patient's life events, internal world, and the interaction between the two can serve as a model for finding a continuity of themes in the behavior patterns of a psychobiographical

subject's life. Although it goes without saying that the sophistication of a psychobiographer's final product depends upon the amount of available data, psychobiography can be a valuable source for understanding the inner world of unique figures in history and how and why they came to influence our world.

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