

Prof. Dr. Ahmet KESKİN

(July 1982)

MY PROFESSOR KEMAL AHMET

It was 36 years ago when I started taking urbanism lectures and met Prof. Oelsner as the lecturer of the new course. I liked the course because of both his appealing attitude and his assistant Kemal Ahmet. Because Prof. Oelsner used to give the lecture in German and his assistant Kemal Ahmet used to explain it in Turkish after the lecture. I still remember how we embraced the green color with the love of nature.

Then again, thanks to Kemal Ahmet, we learned how much Professor Oelsner liked Anatolian Settlements, fountain heads and big plane trees.

In the same year, I did an internship drawing master plans in the room that Kemal Ahmet and Safa Orhan shared. We used to make such an effort for the professor to like our "lines" that we had drawn either on tracing cloth with the T - ends of graphoz or on blueprint with lead pencil worned by emery. I remember also Gündüz and Lami as older brothers taking care of us.

After I finished the fourth grade internship with Kemal Ahmet, I became interested in Urbanism more and I also took it as an elective course. After I graduated, I did my military service and went to "The Institut d'Urbanisme" in Paris. When I was about to return to the country in the fall of 1951, Prof. Kemal Ahmet was the first person that came to my mind and I wrote a letter to him. I was planning to be an assistant in the Urbanism Department and needed his approval. I received his reply at a short notice and I returned to Istanbul feeling glad. I had to wait a little for the position before I could start to work. Kemal Ahmet was working on the İzmir Competition and I started to work with him as an assistant. Then at the end of December 1951, Hande Suher and I were accepted to assistant positions and we started to work as assistants for Kemal Ahmet. Although thirty years has passed, it still feels like yesterday to me.

As I got to know him better, I liked him more. After he won the İzmir Competition he invited us to his home and we met with his wife Mrs. Günseli Aru. Then we became a family with all the people in the Urban Planning Department. It was a bonding which started forty years ago.

For the last 30 years, he has always been an older brother or a father to me in every stage of my life. He was also an authority in every stage of my academic carrier; passing the PhD proficiency exam and getting my PhD, becoming an associate professor and then a professor. He was there for me as a brother when I got sick, when I married and also during my wife's illness. Whenever I remember the years with Kemal Ahmet, I only have good memories. It is because I liked him, I liked his way of life and his way of thinking. And also, he had graduated from the same high school which had enlightened me. This must have affected me, too.

I guess I found another connection with Kemal Ahmet, since he was the president of student association in academia when my uncle was the director of academy. But perhaps the most important point about him was that; he was not only my teacher at the university but also a role model in my life as an older brother.

After 30 years working together he never said any word which could hurt me. As I felt his trust in me, my loyalty to him grew. Now, albeit an inevitable retirement due to age limit, as the Dean I wonder why there isn't an emeritus title in our regulations and why he has to leave.

On 9th of July, he will officially be retired but I suppose he will be with us more. I believe that with his unending energy he will always be with us, as a consultant of ITU Campus and revolving fund.

The new students and academics of the Faculty won't be able to be with him. It won't be easy to replace his place, but the people who were your assistants will never forget you.

I sincerely wish you happiness for the new independent life. We will never abandon you and I would never consent to being forgotten by you.

Your assistant for thirty years,
Ahmet KESKIN

