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Christopher S. Wilson. *Beyond Anitkabir: The Funerary Architecture of Atatürk: The Construction and Maintenance of National Memory.* London: Ashgate, 2013. 149 S. ISBN 978-1-4094-2977-7.

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C. S. Wilson: Beyond Anitkabir

75 years after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's death, every visitor to Turkey will notice the omnipresence of visual representations of the founding father of the Turkish Republic and its first president, who died in Dolmabahçe, the former imperial palace and seat of the Ottoman government, on November 10, 1938. Built by Sultan Abdülmecid in 1856 it served as the official seat of the Ottoman government from 1856 to 1876 and 1909 to 1922. In recent years, we have seen a rising number of articles and monographs researching the various aspects of this cult of personality. These publications often focus on the current use of the image of Atatürk and its role in Turkish politics. Esra Elmas, The Cult of Atatürk, the Turkish State and Society, in: Turkish Review 2 (2012) 1, pp. 36-43; Mike Mandel / Chantal Zakari, The State of Ata. The Contested Imagery of Power in Turkey, New York 2010. The historical aspects of the commemoration of Atatürk and its usage for a coherent national and nationalist Turkish narrative have yet to be fully researched, but Wilson's book is a promising start at a key component.

Christopher S. Wilson teaches architecture and design history as a full-time faculty member at the Ringling College in Florida and has published on the relation of monumental architecture to memory and national identity in Turkey before. Christopher S. Wilson, Representing National Identity and Memory in the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, in: Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 68 (2009) 2, pp. 224-253. In this monograph, he revisits the events that followed the death of Atatürk. He focuses on the organization and orchestration of the funeral in 1938, as well as the design and construction of the "Anıtkabir" ("monument-tomb") mausoleum in Ankara, where Atatürk ultimately was put to rest. He gives special attention to the question of how the architectural aspects of reacting to Atatürk's death served the establishment and implementation of an historical narrative.

In addition to marking the end of an era for the young Turkish Republic, the passing of Atatürk was also the beginning of a fifteen-year long journey of his physical and political body. After having been displayed on a catafalque in Istanbul for three days, his remains were transported to Ankara, where it arrived on the morning of November 20. In the capital, the coffin of the *önder* (leader) rested on another catafalque designed by the famous German architect Bruno Taut for the entire day and night. Both catafalques were accessible and served as mourning sites for the general population and the ruling elite. The next day, Atatürk was moved to the Ethnographic Museum, where the *ebedi şef* (eternal chief) as he was called after that day (p. 107), was buried in a state funeral. Yet this was only a temporary solution, as immediately after Atatürk's death, the regime started planning for a national monument which was to become his final resting place. After architectural competitions concerning the exterior and interior design and several building phases, Anıtkabir was finished in 1953 and Atatürk was buried in a second official funeral ceremony.

Wilson closely follows this journey and its various steps. His descriptions of the architectural aspects of the various competition entries and the resulting built objects are meticulous. The methodological part of the book introduces several interesting approaches to the topic without ever becoming confusing (pp. 5-21). It also considers the distinction between memorials, which are reminders of memory and often include painful, unresolved and ambivalent emotions, and monuments, which allow glimpses of a resolved process and enable feelings of closure with a positive and empowering outlook (pp. 18-19). Wilson is able to show the transition from remembering the man, commander and politician Atatürk and the mourning of his death at Dolmabahçe and the funeral processions towards a status in which the body of the deceased leader is immortalized as a symbol and aligned with the nationalist narrative in a state-controlled monument. Thus the "function of Anıtkabir was to fix or

freeze the idea of Atatürk and his revolutions in a physical three-dimensional construction" (p. 132).

Wilson heavily draws upon Republican newspapers such as "Cumhuriyet" and "Ulus" to present the events in greater detail. Particularly interesting is his attempt to contrast the comments from the competition's committees and juries with the sometimes strongly dissenting views of Turkish architects, expressed via the Turkish journal "Arkitekt" (pp. 69-84). This contextualization adds interesting perspectives to the various entries that came from seven countries (p. 71).

The visual content of the book is remarkable. It includes not only historical photographs of the different funeral processions, mourning ceremonies and related buildings from 1938 to 1953, but also original drawings of the competition entries. Wilson also provides four self-made maps that illustrate the historical paths of the funeral processions in Istanbul and Ankara. With his discussion of the actual routes versus possible alternatives, he is able to add a new and fascinating spatial dimension to the analysis of the processions as rituals (pp. 32-53).

The author includes books in English and Turkish as well as archival materials from various countries, but there is an absence of important contributions made by German scholars. One example is Burcu Dogramaci, who has written extensively in German and Turkish on the architecture and history of Anıtkabir. Burcu Dogramaci, Die Neue Hauptstadt. Deutschsprachiges Erbe in Ankara / Almanca Konuşan Mimar ve Heykeltıraşın Ankara'daki Mirası, in: Thomas Lier (ed.), Das Werden einer Hauptstadt. Spuren deutschsprachiger Architekten in Ankara, Ankara 2011, pp. 14-20; idem, Das Atatürk Mausoleum in Ankara. Paul Bonatz, Rudolf Belling und die Genese eines türkischen Nationaldenkmals, in: Mathias Krüger / Isabella Woldt (eds.), Im Dienst der Nation. Identitätsstiftungen und Identitätsbrüche in Werken bildender Kunst, Berlin 2011, pp. 309-324. The absence of her research on German architects and sculptors who played important roles in the conception, design and execution of the buildings devoted to Atatürk is especially disappointing when Wilson discusses the question of nationality in the various competitions for the design (pp. 69-84) and interior (pp. 94-96) of the mausoleum.

That said, Wilson's work is a poignant and ultimately convincing analysis of both the ritualization and performance of Atatürk's death and its importance for the construction of national identity in Turkey. For example, the search for a construction site and the choice of a pre-Ottoman mound reveal the importance of the contemporary "Turkish History Theory" and its connection between ancient Turkic cultures and Atatürk's Republic as a continuous national story (pp. 69, 89). Wilson shows how Anıtkabir was designed to work as a "microcosm of the Nation" (p. 70) with only minor changes over the years. His book contributes to our understanding of one of the longest running personality cults in modern European history. Finally, it is a thoroughly enjoyable read. Thus, despite the minor flaws of omitting some relevant Germanophone works and the steep price for a volume of only 150 pages, the publication fills a huge gap in the field of Turkish studies.

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