With Atatürk's death on November 10, 1938, in Dolmabahçe Palace, the Republic of Turkey lost its first president – the man who was staged by the single-party regime, and perceived by most, as the savior and liberator of the Turkish nation. Apart from the elaborate funeral ceremonies held in Istanbul and Ankara, the government ordered for November 21 state-wide mourning ceremonies that were attended by a majority of the Turkish population.

Based on archival materials, the presentation will explore the spatial politics of the Kemalist regime and the use of visual representations of the leader. It examines, inter alia, these questions: what were the orders given by the party and how did local officials execute them? Did the death of the supreme leader (ulu önder) change his representation and, if so, how did this influence the Turkish nation-building project and its political iconology?

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