

Audience as a temporal category: The tenth anniversary of Republic Day in Turkey

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Abstract:

Although participants of an event are commonly divided into two as performers and audience, this article focuses upon a case when these two terms do not correspond to distinct groups of people. The case analysed here is the official celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Republic Day in Ankara, Turkey, on October 29th, 1933. By looking at how this event was represented in the press, the article aims at showing how the audience of these celebrations did not embody any specific group *per se* but rather turned into a temporal category and was filled by different participants at different sequences of the event.

Keywords: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Republic Day, National Holiday, Invented Tradition, Parade, Ankara

An audience is commonly understood as a distinct group in an event, its members part of that event to the extent that the performance is directed towards them and they are excluded from the act of performing. Such an exclusion does not mean that they are of lesser significance compared to the performers. On the contrary, audience members are of utmost importance to a performance, as they are affiliated with the event even prior to its start. In other words, they are in fact the constitutive element, the *sine qua non* of a performance.¹ Every performance requires a witness to be addressed; accordingly, there can be no performance until there is an audience.² Furthermore, their exclusion from the act of performing does not imply passivity, either, as audience members have a performativity of their own. Their verbal or kinetic expressions, their laughter, sudden silence, or restlessness not only accrue meaning to what is performed but can even change its course.³

How the audience relates to the performers and the performance at hand should be analysed separately for each occasion. In this article, my aim is to discuss a case where the

dichotomy of performing and audiencing is not functional and the distinctiveness attributed to each becomes manifest only at intervals throughout the event. The case that I will be analysing is the official celebration of the tenth anniversary of Republic Day in Ankara, Turkey, on October 29th, 1933. My goal with this analysis is not to render the concept of audience redundant, but to show how it can be an elusive category, which does not embody any specific group *per se*, but which is filled in by all the participants of the event during its different sequences. The discussion thus sets off from Mark Hobart's suggestion to ask 'when are audiences' instead of what are they.⁴ In what follows, I will first give brief background information on transition to the republican regime in Turkey. I will then move to how Republic Day started to be celebrated, followed by a description of the tenth anniversary of celebrations. Finally, I will discuss the performing and audiencing aspects of this specific event in a more detailed way.

The establishment of the Turkish Republic

The Turkish Republic was founded on October 29th, 1923, a year after the four-year War of Independence against the Allied Powers had been won. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who had already risen to the leadership of the country during the war, was elected as the first president of the new regime and remained at that position for the next fifteen years until he passed away. The ensuing years under Atatürk's presidency would witness efforts to consolidate the republican regime, to craft a new nation and a new type of citizen suitable for the new state, and to break ties with the imperial past and to modernize the country. The political system under which these efforts were carried out was shaped by the world-historical context of the time period. Accordingly, the political imagination and practice of the early republican years were centered upon a mass politics built around the cult of a charismatic leader under a single party rule. In order to better understand how politics functions in such a system, we can turn to Clifford Geertz, who discussed the symbolics of power in terms of the central positions occupied by the charismatic leaders, depending, in particular, upon Edward Shils's elaboration on the relationship between Weber's concept of charisma and active centers of social order.⁵ To quote Geertz at length,

Such centers, which have 'nothing to do with geometry and little with geography,' are essentially concentrated loci of serious acts; they consist in the point or points in a society where its leading ideas come together with its leading institutions to create an arena in which the events that most vitally affect its members' lives take place. It is involvement, even oppositional involvement, with such arenas and with the momentous events that occur in them that confers charisma. It is a sign, not of popular appeal or inventive craziness, but of being near the heart of things.⁶

The significance of Atatürk in Turkish politics can be interpreted in a similar vein. Atatürk, as the charismatic leader of the Independence War and then of the new regime, stood at the

epicenter of events that would affect the course of the nation. Throughout his presidency, he remained at the heart of events that enabled Turkey's citizens to imagine as well as justify the thresholds to be attained.⁷

One manifestation of his epicentrality in Turkish politics was perhaps the transition to the republican regime. The sultanate had already been abolished shortly after the end of the war on November 1st, 1922, with the previous sultan serving only as the caliphate from then on and the full authority of governance being delivered to the parliament. There were divergent opinions about what the ensuing political regime should have been. It was known that Atatürk opted for a republican regime. But many other prominent figures of the period, who had not in fact approved the abolishment of the sultanate, supported the establishment of a monarchy. The decision to proclaim the republic was not the outcome of a long period of discussion; it was rather brought to the agenda of the parliament without notice, at the request of Atatürk, on a day when many prominent figures who objected to the regime change were not even in Ankara to cast their votes.⁸ The proclamation of the republic by the parliament with unanimous vote on October 29th, 1923, thus signified one of the most significant breaks from the imperial past, initiated and justified by Atatürk himself.

Republic Day celebrations

According to Geertz, one must look at the rites and images through which the will of power is exerted in order to understand what 'mark[s] the center as center and give[s] what goes on there its aura of being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built.'⁹ The main argument of this article about the elusiveness of the category of audience will in fact be based upon the analysis of such a rite, that is the tenth anniversary of Republic Day celebrations, and upon the impact of the epicentrality of the leader in the organization of the celebrations.

The proclamation of the republic started to be celebrated officially as a national holiday in Turkey from 1925 onwards.¹⁰ As the regime change marked one of the most obvious ruptures from the imperial past, one can realize how the celebrations of its anniversary turned immediately into an 'invented tradition.' Eric Hobsbawm has famously defined invented traditions as a set of practices of a ritual or symbolic nature actually invented, constructed, and formally instituted, which are governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules, seeking to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition that automatically implies continuity with the past and, where possible, with a suitable historical past.¹¹ Asserting continuity with a suitable historical past does not necessarily require turning back to history, but can also occur by imposing repetition.¹² The celebration of Republic Day in Turkey, which represented a break from the imperial past, marked such an imposition of repetition by taking its own starting point as the beginning of a suitable past and becoming a tradition over the years that symbolized the importance of cherishing republican values and norms.

Republic Day was no doubt one of many invented traditions which came into being with the emergence of the new state. The national calendar was marked throughout the year with several anniversaries significant for the history of the republic. Such anniversaries were indeed so many that it is possible to differentiate between them.¹³ Some of them corresponded to official holidays (e.g. Victory Day, National Sovereignty and Children's Day, Youth and Sports Day); others commemorated the significant events of the republic without turning into official holidays (e.g. various 'Liberation Days,' celebrating locally the liberation of each city during wartime); and there were also celebrations which were created in order to emphasize the achievements and reforms of the new state (e.g. the Day of Language).

All these celebrations were meant to reinforce the unification of the nation as a whole, as well as the state and its people. One can also see that all of them were construed in a way that would emphasize the epicentrality of Atatürk in the political life once again. Everything that was deemed as significant to commemorate in republican history was construed by putting Atatürk at the core of the narrative. As Demiriz argues, in every celebration, Atatürk was brought forward in a way that the biography of the republic, as well as the nation, was to be read as the biography of Atatürk and vice versa. As such, every commemoration celebrated not only the invented tradition, but also the re-enactment of Atatürk's birth as the leader of the country.¹⁴

Although all commemorations were significant in themselves, Republic Day stood apart from all of them as it was the only national celebration that Atatürk attended every year. In the case of other official commemorations, he visited the celebrations only once in his lifetime. For example, he attended the commemoration of the Victory Day only in 1924, which was celebrated then for the very first time in Dumlupınar, where the last collision between the Turkish and Greek armies occurred.¹⁵ He visited the ball organized for the National Sovereignty and Children's Day only in 1929.¹⁶ Finally, he stopped by the celebrations for the Youth and Sports Day only in 1938, before setting out on a trip to Mersin.¹⁷ Even though he was not physically present during the other celebrations of those days, he would issue an official statement addressing what was being commemorated. Furthermore, the connection between Atatürk and the official holiday at hand would be made by the press, where the history of what was being celebrated was narrated and visualised through Atatürk.

When it came to Republic Day celebrations, on the other hand, Atatürk would always be present.¹⁸ Although the anniversary was celebrated each year all around the country, the main centre of attention throughout the early republican years was Ankara. Istanbul had been the capital city of the Ottoman Empire for centuries, but Ankara was designated as the new capital city of the country shortly before the proclamation of the republic.¹⁹ Identifying a new center for a new regime signified another fundamental break from the imperial past. It was thus symbolically significant to celebrate the anniversary of the new regime in its new capital city. Therefore, in his lifetime, Atatürk attended the celebrations of Republic Day only in Ankara with other prominent political and bureaucratic elites of the country.

The official celebration programme of Republic Day in Ankara remained the same throughout the early republican years. The celebrations would start with Atatürk coming to the parliament in the morning to accept the greetings of foreign representatives for the anniversary. Afterwards he would proceed to the arena where the parade would take place.²⁰ The celebrations would end in the evening with the official ball organized at Ankara Palace. The significance of the celebrations in Ankara meant that they were also important news material. Newspapers would thus publish in the ensuing days the details of the execution of the event alongside various pictures taken.

When we go through these photographs, it is possible to discern certain patterns in the way these celebrations were represented over the years. Accordingly, on October 29th, the newspapers would initially celebrate the anniversary on their first pages through the portraits of Atatürk alongside texts, which would make a direct connection between him and the republican regime (Figure 1 and 2).²¹ Photographs from the celebrations in Ankara would be published in the following days (Figure 3-5).²² Improvements in newspaper production certainly had an impact on how these celebrations were represented. For example, photographs started to be printed in larger formats over the years. The number of pictures published increased, as well, spreading over several pages of a newspaper in a way that would get ahead of verbal descriptions. Despite such variations over the years, what remained the same was the emphasis put upon Atatürk. This was done mainly in two different ways; either Atatürk would be visible in each published picture that displayed different sequences of the celebrations, or, the layout of photographs, which did not always contain Atatürk, would be arranged in a way that would put him at the epicenter once again. Such patterns are nevertheless not enough to claim that a category of 'Republic Day photography' existed in itself. Efforts to consolidate the republican regime, to craft a new nation suitable with this new regime, to break ties with the imperial past and to modernize the country meant that early republican years were indeed very eventful. As Atatürk was at the heart of the majority of these events as their initiator and legitimator, putting the emphasis upon Atatürk in their representation was therefore not peculiar to the celebrations of Republic Day.²³



Figure 1: Cumhuriyet, October 29th, 1931, p. 1

Title: We are Greeting the Mighty Ghazi, who Established the Republic, with Respect and Honour



Figure 2: Ulus, October 29th, 1937, p. 1

Title: Our Greatest Feast: Let's Greet the Mighty Chief. This State was Founded upon His Triumph



Figure 3: Milliyet, October 30th, 1928, p. 1.
Title: Celebration of the Big Day



Figure 4: Hakimiyet-i Milliye, October 31st, 1932, p. 1
Title: The Big Day of the Turks



Figure 5: Ulus, October 30th, 1937, p. 1, 6.
Title: The greatest national feast was celebrated yesterday in Ankara in an unprecedented way.

We can now move on to the analysis of the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of Republic Day in Ankara. As the official celebration programme in the capital city remained the same over the years, it was in fact possible to analyse them as a whole, because the elusiveness of the category of audience can be spotted in all these celebrations. I nevertheless decided to focus only upon the tenth anniversary, because the way these celebrations were organized makes this elusiveness much more visible. We should not ignore the fact that there existed a technical reason for this. The tenth anniversary of Republic Day was the most photographed celebration up until that time and the news about it was therefore much more detailed than any other year. As a result, we can grasp the details of this event much better than its other counterparts.

The tenth anniversary of Republic Day in Ankara

Although the celebrations of Republic Day had always had great importance from their very beginning, the decennial anniversary was believed to symbolize a significant cornerstone. An editorial written in *Milliyet* newspaper the day after emphasizes this point:

Ten years is not a long time in history. Nevertheless, the balance sheet of the efforts of nations is made up with the years and the deeds done. In this respect, the Turkish nation has traversed an age-long time-distance in ten years.²⁴

The effort to account for the deeds of the past ten years could be seen in every major newspaper of the period published on Republic Day. On October 29th, 1933, *Vakit* newspaper was published 16 pages, *Akşam* newspaper 32 pages, *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet* newspapers 52 pages and *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* newspaper 96 pages. All these pages were full of articles, making up the balance sheet of the past ten years of the new republic in every imaginable part of the social, economic and political life.

That the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the republic was bestowed with a special meaning was also evident from the 'Law for the Celebration of the Tenth Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic,' accepted on June 11th, 1933.²⁵ When the law proposal was brought in front of the parliament, it was stated that this special anniversary did not only signify an appreciation of the glorious and successful days of the past, but also a new beginning for the future generations.²⁶ In order to celebrate this cornerstone deservedly, it was decided that this specific anniversary would be celebrated for three days in total, and the organization of the celebrations would be organized months in advance, for which a detailed three-day celebration programme was prepared for each city by officials.

When the big day came around at last, newspapers started to report what was happening in major cities with great detail in an attempt to show the unprecedentedness of the celebrations. It was reported that in Ankara, for example, from early morning onwards,

sounds of harmonica and bugle are heard on the streets frequently. Soldiers, scout groups or students are seen passing by ... The city is decorated from end to end. The arches ensue one another on the boulevards.²⁷

Istanbul was similarly described to be

living one of the most glorious days of its long history. The city is adorned from top to bottom. Everybody is enthusiastic and joyous. The crowd has gathered from early morning onwards in the Beyazit Square where the ceremony will take place. The people has aligned on the road from Beyazit until Taksim where the parade will walk.²⁸

The newspapers also reported the celebrations in small cities, describing the ceremonies, the decorations, and the spirit of the people.²⁹ As the celebrations lasted day and night for three days, the newspapers continued to give information in the ensuing days, as well. From such reports we can thus learn how each city celebrated the anniversary each day till early morning; how the cities were lightened up at nights to the extent that it was impossible to tell the day apart from the night; how the fireworks added to the glow of the night; how anthems could be heard all around the big cities thanks to the speakers which were set here and there and how people were enjoying themselves day and night in the clubs and on the streets for three days.³⁰

In order to add up to the magnitude of the anniversary, the news also described how the celebrations did not take place only in the public places, but even in the privacy of people's households. Therefore, it is possible to come across with reports from small cities about how every household built an arch for themselves apart from those officially erected in the city centres,³¹ or how 'everybody added one more flag and one more lightbulb to their houses' in the following days of the celebrations.³² Such details, whether true or made-up, served to display how the tenth anniversary of the Republic Day went beyond an official holiday and was embraced by the entire nation to the extent that the public and private realms were intertwined into one another. In so doing, the celebrations were thus perceived as turning the population into a nation. In the same editorial we cited above, Ahmet Şükrü compares the tenth anniversary of Republic Day to the official holidays of the late Ottoman Empire and claims how a national holiday is celebrated consciously for the very first time in this country's history:

We feel the excitement of a genuine and general joy coming off the nation's hearts for the very first time in this country. In other words, we are having a conscious national holiday. This tells us that Ghazi's Turkey's success in making up the nation is tremendous. A nation does not simply consist of a scattered mass of people living within the borders of a homeland. The modern nation corresponds to people who rejoice together, who mourn together, who march

towards a goal together, who gather around a hope. Our national holiday this year has shown us that there now exists such a nation within our national borders and that the nation has a consciousness.³³

How national holidays function to re-create the nation is openly acknowledged here. But what is ironic is that such a function seems to be attributed only to the tenth anniversary of Republic Day. The writer evidently intended to highlight the republican regime's success in creating a nation compared to the previous regime. But in his attempt to do so, he neglected the fact that this national holiday, among many others, was already being celebrated for the past ten years. As a result, while he tried to emphasize how the tenth anniversary corresponded to a cornerstone, he turned it into a new starting point in itself. But we should also stress that this, in fact, was in conformity with the law issued specifically for these celebrations, which emphasized how this anniversary marked a new beginning in itself.

Even though the newspapers reported that the anniversary was celebrated in every corner of the country, each city had an officially-designated location for the celebration, as well, for the execution of the official celebration programme. For Ankara, this location was the Hippodrome,³⁴ which was the centre of attention of the national holiday due to the political and bureaucratic elite present there, including Atatürk. The official celebration programme in Ankara for the tenth anniversary of the Republic Day was similar to those in previous years. Accordingly, Atatürk was to come to the Turkish Grand National Assembly at 9.15 in order to accept the greetings of the diplomatic corps for the national day. At 10 o'clock, he would move to the Hippodrome, where the parade would take place. The groups who made up the parade were already planned to be present at the Hippodrome by 9 o'clock. Atatürk would first honour them from his automobile and then move to the VIP stand at the tribunes. Once Atatürk took his place reserved for him, the presidential band was to play the national anthem. This was to be followed by the oration delivered by Atatürk. After the oration, the parade would sing the decennial anthem with the band, whose lyrics would have been given to everyone in advance so that they could sing along. The parade, which would also include a tank defile and an air show, would then ensue and last until 4 o'clock. The official celebrations at the Hippodrome would therefore last six hours in total.³⁵ The difference of official programme from previous years was the importance attached to each sequence of the celebrations. For example, in the case of the oration to be delivered by Atatürk, although Atatürk made a speech every year during the celebrations of Republic Day, it was at its tenth anniversary that necessary mechanisms were set up in advance in order to make sure that the Decennial Oration was to be listened live all around the country through the radio.

When are the audiences of Republic Day celebrations?

At first sight, the main performative aspect of the official celebrations in Ankara was the parade. Parades are significant tools to craft and display collective identities publicly.³⁶ They

can occur by people taking to the streets by their own initiative,³⁷ or can be organized formally and meticulously by political leaders.³⁸ Furthermore, they can be exclusionary at times while serving as ‘melting pots’ in other occasions as a result of which every distinct group taking part in it becomes just another ingredient of a larger whole.³⁹ In the case of Republic Day celebrations, parades were part of the official celebrations and were hence crafted by those who were in charge of preparing the programme. Furthermore, they were conceived as melting pots in which the aggregation of different groups symbolized the values of the nation as a whole. In the case of the tenth anniversary celebrations, the parade consisted of soldiers, police officers, gendarmeries, scouts, students, and athletes, as well as the peasants who had come to Ankara as guests from their villages specifically for this event. The remaining participants of the event were the bureaucratic and political elite and the general public. The two sides of the parade road were prepared for two different set of audiences. Behind fences on the left side of the road stood the general public (Figure 6).⁴⁰ On the right side, on the other hand, two stands were erected, one larger on the left for the political and bureaucratic elite and one smaller on the right for the foreign representatives (Figure 7).⁴¹ Such a positioning of the audience meant more than a spatial organization, as we will see shortly.



Figure 6: Hakimiyet-i Milliye, October 30th, 1933, p. 4

Caption: Our troops, which look like a rank made out of steel, are saluting the mighty Ghazi.



Figure 7: Vakit, October 31st, 1933, p. 2

Caption: The parade of the soldiers the other day before Atatürk

Atatürk, who was in the larger stand on the right side of the road, stood apart from the rest of the audience from the very beginning. To begin with, the entire official celebration programme was built around him, in that his movements from one place to another represented the unfolding of the different stages of the event. Furthermore, from the moment he came to the Hippodrome, all his movements were announced to the public through the speakers.⁴² Therefore, even if he could not be seen by all, at all times, everyone present would be informed continuously about what he was doing at that moment. Each announcement was reported to be greeted with applause,⁴³ revealing how Atatürk himself was the main centre of attention from the very beginning. What is more, the speech that he was going to make before the parade made him part of the performative aspect of the celebrations. The Decennial Oration was part of the official celebration programme, known by all to be delivered at a specific time at the Hippodrome. Therefore, the audience was there to listen to the oration as much as to watch the parade. We can also talk about a more general and intangible audience who would listen to it live at the radio wherever they were through the mechanisms set in advance. The text of the oration as well as the photographs taken during it was delivered were published in the newspapers in the following days and were thus brought to the attention of an even larger audience (Figure 8).⁴⁴

Although it might be expected that Atatürk became part of the audience once the oration was over and the parade began, this was not actually the case. This can be deduced initially by the positioning of the audience at the Hippodrome. As I have said earlier, the designation of three separate areas for the audience did not merely signify a spatial organization, but rather the manifoldness of the audience and a hierarchy between them. First, whereas the area reserved for the general public was at the same level with the

parade road, the VIP stands on the other side were erected a couple of steps above the ground. Second, although both stands had a similar architectural structure, the one on the left, which hosted the political and bureaucratic elite, was bigger and higher than the other one, which hosted foreign representatives. Accordingly, the stand on the left remained visible by the general public during the entire ceremony, even when the parade walked in between. The other stand on the right, on the other hand, remained visible only at intervals as the passing of the parade would block a clear view. Furthermore, whereas the general public aligned alongside the entire parade road, the stand hosting the political and bureaucratic elite stood right halfway through it. An exclusive audience experience was thus ensured for those positioned in that stand, who could also be watched clearly at all times. The location of the stand also coincided with the highlight of the parade because it was at this very point that the people walking by made their salute (Figure 9).⁴⁵ As a result the VIP stand as a whole and Atatürk in particular were separated from the rest of the audience by remaining the centre of attention throughout the event.



Figure 8: Hakimiyet-i Milliye, October 30th, 1933, p. 1



Figure 9: Cumhuriyet, October 31st, 1933, p. 9

Captions (from top to bottom): The scout banner-bearers all together; The scout band is passing by; The girl scouts are passing by in front of Ghazi

Looking at how the official celebrations were presented in the newspapers later on also reveals how Atatürk was a central part of the performative aspect of the celebrations. Various newspapers used the photograph of Atatürk while delivering the oration for the news about the first day of the celebrations (Figure 10-11).⁴⁶ It is interesting how both these newspapers also used pictures displaying Atatürk while watching the parade. One also comes across with images of him and of the VIP stand before the oration began (Figure 12)⁴⁷ and during the parade (Figure 13).⁴⁸ The abundance of photographs of Atatürk taken at the different sequences of the event in delivering the news about the official celebrations reveals how he was the main centre of attention throughout. The news texts also underline how he was never merely a part of the audience. The newspaper *Akşam*, for example, describes the parade as the following:

Ghazi was standing in his own tribune, with Fevzi and Ismet Pachas on each side, watching the republican army, his own artefact, and greeted the parade continuously ... It was now the peasants' turn. The peasants were in an effervescent mood, shouting. When they were passing by Ghazi, they were waving hands to this great man whom they lived God knows how long with the longing to see. Ghazi was greeting each and every peasant individually and was making the effort not to miss any single saluting of the peasants.⁴⁹

That Atatürk's presence at the Hippodrome constituted the real performative aspect of the official celebrations of the Republic Day in Ankara can be seen here once again. The citation also reveals how the parade itself slipped into an audience at a certain point; that is, while saluting the VIP stand. When the groups which made up the parade reached halfway through the road, they ceased to be part of the performative aspect of the celebrations and turned into a group who was there in order to see Atatürk.



Figure 10: Akşam, October 30th, 1933, p. 1.

Captions (from top to bottom): Ghazi, the greatest Turk, is addressing the nation; The president, the prime minister and the chairperson of the parliament are watching the parade



Figure 11: Vakit, October 31st, 1933, p. 1

Captions: Atatürk watching the parade the other day; Atatürk delivering his oration the other day



Figure 12: Cumhuriyet, October 31st, 1933, p. 1.

Caption: Ghazi together with the government officials during the big ceremony happening the other day in Ankara



Figure 13: Hakimiyet-i Milliye, November 2nd, 1933, p. 3

Caption: The Great Ghazi in the stand during the parade

The elusiveness of the category of audience has been called to attention in other contexts, as well. For example, Vladimir Paperny asks who the spectators were in the Soviet parades and demonstrations of the 1930s. During these events, the paraders came in front of Lenin's mausoleum at one point, on top of which stood the political leaders. According to Paperny, at that point, the leaders were not the audience who watched the parade, but rather the actors, whereas the paraders turned into audience, who were eager to see the leaders as well as Lenin's Tomb.⁵⁰ In his analysis of the state spectacles of the 1950s in People's Republic of China, Chang-tai Hung makes a similar remark about the processions. According to him, '[i]n the processions, marchers were not simply actors but also members of the audience, wanting both to see and to be seen. 'Advancing to Gold Water Bridge' was a ritualistic finale during which marchers as actors turned quickly into an audience, eager to see the real actors, that is, Mao and his senior leaders, on the sacred stage of Tiananmen.'⁵¹ The highlight of all these processions, including the Republic Day parade, was thus when the paraders marched past the leaders. It thus seems that when the paraders came closer to the presence of the leaders, who were 'at the heart of things,' they ceased to be the performers and assumed an audience position where they could watch and greet the 'real' actors.

Therefore, in the case of Republic Day celebrations, it was seemingly the general public who really embraced the task of audiencing. The news about the official celebrations in Ankara reveal how they fulfilled the performativity of this task throughout the event. For example, they were reported to applaud Atatürk from the moment he stepped his foot on the Hippodrome until he went to his own tribune as well as every single word of the Decennial Oration.⁵² They were also described to applaud, greet, and chant during the entire parade.⁵³ Nevertheless, even they ceased to be the audience and became part of the performance during two different sequence of the celebrations. The first one occurred when the parade sang the decennial anthem after the Decennial Oration. As I mentioned above, the lyrics of the anthem, which was composed for this specific occasion, were given to everyone in advance so that they could sing along. The general public thus became part of the performance over the course of the anthem, turning back to being audience once it was over. The second time they ceased to be the audience, on the other hand, was at the end of the official celebration programme. The newspapers report that once the parade was finally over, the public, who stood behind the fences until that time, hit the parade road and turned into a parade themselves. Accordingly, an immense amount of people walked the entire road for a very long time and saluted Atatürk with joy halfway through the road, just like the actual parade. They also continuously applauded and greeted Atatürk, who waited in the VIP stand until their procession was finally over.⁵⁴

Conclusion

In this article, I have analyzed the tenth anniversary of Republic Day celebrations in Ankara in order to understand who the performers and the audience were. As it turned out, the dichotomy of performing and audiencing is not helpful in understanding this event. The representation of the celebrations in the press reveals that every group of people who filled

the Hippodrome that day assumed both tasks at certain intervals. Atatürk and the VIP stand where he was located remained the main performative aspect of the event, even when they were watching the celebrations. The parade, on the other hand, turned into audiences themselves when they were passing by and saluting the VIP stand. Finally, the general public, who were the main audience of the event, became part of the performance at two different points of the ceremony. The audience here thus became manifest at intervals, not in terms of the what-ness of the participants, but in terms of their when-ness. Therefore, the category of audience in the case of the official celebrations analysed here ceased to refer to the attributes of the attendees of the event, but rather to a temporality, pertaining to each participant group of the event at different times.

Atatürk was the only person in the celebrations who did not assume a role in terms of a when-ness. His significance to the Turkish political life was reflected in him occupying the central position throughout the event. Therefore, in contrast to the temporality and fluidity that marked audiencing and performing here, he was part of both categories at once from beginning to end. Him being at the center of things was also what granted temporality to the event itself because his movements from one place to another corresponded to the unfolding of the different stages of the celebrations. His epicentrality became manifest once again in how the event was represented in the press in the ensuing days as he was put at the core of the narrative visually as well as in writing.

Biographical note:

Idil Cetin holds a PhD from the Political Science Department of Galatasaray University, Istanbul, Turkey. My PhD dissertation, entitled as 'The Visual Repertoire of Power: The Photographs of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the Construction of the Leader Cult (1912-1950)' attempted to sort out the photographs of Ataturk, which were circulated in the press and in public places in the late Ottoman and early Republican era, in an attempt to see what was shown to the public day in and day out during the process of regime transition and how these images functioned. Currently, Cetin works as a part-time lecturer at TOBB Economics and Technology University, Ankara, Turkey. Contact: idilcetin@gmail.com.

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Notes:

¹ Willmar Sauter, 'Thirty Years of Reception Studies: Empirical, Methodological and Theoretical Advances,' in Laura Ginters and Gay McAuley (eds.), *About Performance. Audiencing: The Work of Spectator in Live Performance*, Sydney: University of Sydney, 2010, p. 251. Although the part played by the audience was not the main focus, there are analysis from Turkish history where we can encounter the more 'typical' duality of performing and audiencing as described here. For example, see, Alekos Lamprou, 'Halkevi Sahnesinde 'Yeni Türk Kadını': 1930'lu ve 1940'lı yıllarda kadınlı-erkekli yeniliklerin sahnelenmesi,' *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 130, 2014, pp. 6-35 and Serdar Öztürk, 'Karagöz Co-Opted: Turkish Shadow Theatre of the Early Republic (1923-1945),' *Asian Theatre Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Fall 2006, pp. 292-313.

² Stuart Grant, 'Fifteen Theses on Transcendental Intersubjective Audience,' in *Ibid.*, p. 69.

³ Marie-Madelaine Mervant-Roux, 'The Great Resonator: What Historical Anthropology and an Ethnographic Approach to the Auditorium Can Tell us About Audiences,' in *Ibid.*, p. 225 and Caroline Heim, *Audience as Performer: The changing role of theatre audiences in the twenty-first century*, New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 20.

⁴ Mark Hobart, 'Rich Kids Can't Cry: Reflections on the Viewing Subject in Bali,' in *About Performance*, p. 203.

⁵ Edward Shils discussed this relationship on various occasions. For an example, see 'Charisma, Order, and Status,' *American Sociological Review*, April 1965, pp. 199-213.

⁶ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Sociology*, Basic Books, 1983, pp. 122-123

⁷ How the leader cult surrounding Atatürk functioned in Turkish political history has in fact been the subject of several studies, all of which reveal how it was effectual in imagining new horizons as well as in legitimizing various political, cultural, social, and economic endeavours. See, for example, Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (eds.), *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997; Şükrü Hanioglu, *Atatürk. An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011; Esra Özyürek, *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Life in Turkey*, London: Duke University of Press, 2006; Yael Navaro-Yashin, *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

⁸ For a detailed discussion of the process, see Cemil Koçak, 'Siyasal Tarih 1923-1950,' in *Çağdaş Türkiye 1908-1980*, ed. by Mete Tunçay *et al.*, İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1989, pp. 91-93.

⁹ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge*, p. 124.

¹⁰ 'Cumhuriyetin ilanına müsadif 29 teşrinievvel gününün milli bayram addi hakkında kanun,' *Resmi Gazete*, Law No. 628, Vol. 96, April 23rd, 1925, p. 129.

¹¹ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions,' in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 1.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹³ Both Sara-Marie Demiriz and Hale Yılmaz group these celebrations more or less similarly. For a detailed discussion, see, Sara-Marie Demiriz, ‘The Image of Atatürk in Early Republican National Holiday Celebrations,’ in Lutz Berger and Tamer Düzyol (eds.), *Kemalism as a Fixed Variable in the Republic of Turkey: History, Society, Politics*, Ergon Verlag, 2020, p. 30 and Hale Yılmaz, *Becoming Turkish: Nationalist Reforms and Cultural Negotiations in Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1945*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2013, p. 181-184.

¹⁴ Sara-Marie Demiriz, ‘The Image of Atatürk,’ p. 33.

¹⁵ ‘30 Ağustos’ta Geçen Cumartesi Günü Dumlupınar’daki İhtilafa Ait Bazı Intibalar,’ *Son Posta*, September 1st, 1924, p. 1.

¹⁶ ‘Bahar ve Aşk,’ *Resimli Uyanış*, May 9th, 1929, p 356. The National Sovereignty and Children’s Day commemorated the opening of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara during wartime on April 23rd, 1920.

¹⁷ ‘Büyük Önder Mersin’de,’ *Cumhuriyet*, May 21st, 1938, p. 1, 7. Youth and Sports Day commemorated the day Atatürk landed in Samsun on May 19th, 1919, which is taken as the beginning of the National Independence War.

¹⁸ The only exception is the celebrations in 1938, to which he could not attend due to his deteriorating health.

¹⁹ Ankara had in fact become a center much earlier, when the Representative Committee leading the Independence War, of which Atatürk was the president, decided to move there at the end of 1919. About the process of Ankara becoming first a center and then a capital city, see Oğuz Aytepe, ‘Ankara’nın Merkez ve Başkent Olması,’ *Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılâp Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi*, No: 33-34, May-November 2004, pp. 15-22

²⁰ In the early years, the parades would be organized on the avenue in front of the parliament building. From 1932 onwards, the celebrations were carried at the Race Site, which was used for the horse races. In the meantime, the construction of a place specifically designed for celebrating national holidays as well as for carrying out sport activities were already understood in the late 1920s. The decision to construct such a place was taken in 1930 and the construction of the Hippodrome came to an end in 1936 and from then on the official celebrations of Republic Day in Ankara was carried out in there. For a detailed analysis of this, see Diler Özdemir, *Ankara Hippodrome: The National Celebration of Early Republican Turkey, 1923-1938*, Unpublished Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences of Middle East Technical University, Ankara, September 2004. Although the construction of the Hippodrome had come to an end in 1936, we see that the previous celebration place, that is the Race Site, was also mentioned as the Hippodrome in the early republican documents and newspapers.

²¹ ‘Cumhuriyeti Kuran Büyük Gazi’yi Hürmet ve Tazimle Selamlarız!’, *Cumhuriyet*, October 29th, 1931, p. 1 and ‘En Büyük Bayramımız,’ *Ulus*, October 29th, 1937, p. 1.

²² ‘Büyük günün tes’idi,’ *Milliyet*, October 30th, 1928, p. 1; ‘Türklerin Büyük Günü,’ *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, October 31st, 1932, p. 1; and ‘Dün en büyük milli bayram Ankarada eşsiz surette kutlandı,’ *Ulus*, October 30th, 1937, pp. 1, 6.

²³ I have discussed this issue elsewhere. See, my own article, ‘Photographs of Atatürk in the Early Republican Press: How his image was used to visualize events?’, *Middle Eastern Studies Journal*, Vol. 55, Issue 5, 2019, pp. 701-732.

²⁴ Ahmet Şükrü, ‘Büyük Bayram,’ *Milliyet*, October 30th, 1933, p. 1.

²⁵ ‘Cumhuriyetin ilanının onuncu yıl dönümünü kutlulama kanunu,’ *Resmi Gazete*, Law No. 2305, Vol. 2437, June 26th, 1933, p. 2785.

- ²⁶ Cahide Sınmaz-Sönmez, 'Cumhuriyetin Onuncu Yıl Kutlamaları ve 26 Ekim 1933 Tarihli Genel Af Yasası,' *Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 33-34 (May-November 2004): 90.
- ²⁷ 'Ankaradaki büyük geçit resmi 6 saat sürecek,' *Akşam*, October 29th, 1933, p. 2.
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- ²⁹ See, for example, 'Vilayetlerde Bayram,' *Milliyet*, October 31st, 1933, p. 3 and 'Memlekette Bayram,' *Vakit*, November 1st, 1933, p. 6.
- ³⁰ See, for example, 'Ankarada şenlik sabaha kadar devam etti, kimse uyumadı,' *Akşam*, October 30th, 1933, p. 2.
- ³¹ 'Memleketin her köşesi sevinç ve heyecan içinde: En küçük köylerde bile büyük tezahürat yapıldı,' *Akşam*, October 30th, 1933, p. 2.
- ³² 'Memleketin uzak yakın her köşesinden Gazi Hazretlerine dün birer avuç toprak gönderildi,' *Milliyet*, October 31st, 1936, p. 1.
- ³³ Ahmet Şükrü, 'Büyük Bayram,' p. 1.
- ³⁴ See n22.
- ³⁵ 'En Büyük Geçit Resmi,' *Vakit*, October 29th, 1933, pp. 1, 8.
- ³⁶ Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Renia Ehrenfeucht, *Sidewalks: Conflict and Negotiation over Public Space*, Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2009, pp. 61, 62.
- ³⁷ See, for example, Mary Ryan, 'The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order,' in *The New Cultural History*, ed. by Lynn Hunt, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, pp. 131-153. The display of collective identities in such cases can certainly have political claims, as well. See, for example, Dominic Bryan, *Orange Parades: The Politics of Ritual, Tradition and Control*, London: Pluto Press, 2000.
- ³⁸ See, for example, Joshua Hagen, 'Parades, Public Space, and Propaganda: The Nazi Culture Parades in Munich,' *Geografiska Annaler*, Vol. 90, No. 4, 2008, pp. 349-367.
- ³⁹ Carl F. Stychin, 'Celebration and Consolidation: National Rituals and the Legal Construction of National Identities,' *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2, Summer 1998, p. 273. On this, also see Christel Lane, *The Rites of Rulers: Ritual in Industrial Society – the Soviety Case*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 156.
- ⁴⁰ *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, October 30th, 1933, p. 4.
- ⁴¹ 'Büyük Bayram,' *Vakit*, October 31st, 1933, p. 2.
- ⁴² 'Ankara'da Bayram,' *Vakit*, October 30th, 1933, p. 2.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*
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- ⁴⁷ 'Bütün Dünya Cumhuriyetimizin 11 Yaşına Basmasile Meşgul,' *Cumhuriyet*, October 31st, 1933, p. 1.
- ⁴⁸ *Hakimiyet-i Milliye*, November 2nd, 1933, p. 3.
- ⁴⁹ 'Anadolu orta yaylasında akisler uyandıran bir ses,' *Akşam*, p. 3. Ghazi, meaning veteran, is a title given to Atatürk after he was wounded during the National Resistance and was used very commonly in the early republican period as a shorthand to refer to him. The other two names mentioned in the news to be accompanying Atatürk are the two important figures of both the National Resistance and the early republican period. At the time of the tenth anniversary of the Republic Day, Fevzi Pascha (Fevzi Çakmak) was Chief of General Staff and İsmet Pascha (İsmet İnönü), was the prime minister.

⁵⁰ Vladimir Paperny, 'Moscow in the 1930s and the Emergence of a New City,' in *The Culture of the Stalin Period*, ed. by Hans Günther, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990, p. 232.

⁵¹ Chang-tai Hung, 'Mao's Parades: State Spectacles in China in the 1950s,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 190, June 2007, pp. 430-431.

⁵² 'Ankara görülmemiş bir gün daha yaşadı,' *Milliyet*, October 30th, 1933, p. 6.

⁵³ 'Ankara'da Bayram,' *Vakit*, p. 2.

⁵⁴ 'Ankara görülmemiş bir gün daha yaşadı,' *Milliyet*, p. 6.