

A Tomb Structure in Pursuit of Tradition in 20th Century Turkey and Its Story; the Tomb of Hacı Hâkim Kemal Onsun and His Wife

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Abstract : Anatolia has been the host of many civilizations and a site where architectural structures of many cultural layers were interpreted. Most significantly the Turks who settled in Central Asia brought their architectural dynamics and cultural accumulation to Anatolia after the 12th century. The tomb structures first observed in Central Asia under the influence of Islamic faith and Turkish cultural heritage has blossomed under Great Seljuk Empire and with the Anatolian Seljuk Empire these tombs changed both in size and form with rich and beautiful samples from Ahlat to Sivas to Kayseri and Konya. This tomb tradition which started during 13th century has continued during the Ottoman Empire period with some alterations of form and evolved into the rarely observed mausoleum type tombs. The Ottoman tradition of building tombs inside mosque gardens and their forms present the clues of an important burial tradition. However this understanding was abandoned in 20th century Turkey. This tradition was abandoned with regard to legal regulations and health conditions. This study investigates the vestiges of this tradition and its spatial reflections over a sample. The present sample is representative of a tradition that started in 1970s and the case of building tombs inside mosque gardens will be illustrated over the tomb of Hacı Kemal Onsun and his wife which is located in Konya, the capital of the Anatolian Seljuks. The building process of this tomb will be evaluated with regard to burial traditions and architectural stylization.

Keywords : tomb, language of architectural form, Anatolian Seljuk tombs, Ottoman tombs

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