Imaret: In the Shadow of the Clock Tower. These novels illustrate the negotiations over the national memory from the perspective of different narratives of incompatibility between Greeks and Turks. They present questions of identity and boundaries between religions, languages, and ethnic communities during the period of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire.

In the epilogue, Willert summarizes and compares the old and new narratives on the Ottoman heritage in Greek history since the late 1990s. Consequently, the book reveals how the historical and fictional narratives played a role in reaching out to a large population with messages for the reimagination of the "self" and the "other" and provide a better understanding of how the Ottoman past is slowly and steadily becoming an integral part of Greek collective historical consciousness. In this historical account, she discusses how these new interpretations reflect the nation's present, the self-definition of national identity in terms of being modern and European, or including a non-European past. However, one issue she does not sufficiently address is the contributions of the Western Thracian Turks in this emergence of a New Ottoman Greece. Nonetheless, the nexus of the book is Greek narratives. Having said that, this book will be valuable for both those looking for a new perspective on the debates of the Ottoman heritage in Greece as well as academics and laypeople.

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Christopher Houston. *Istanbul, City of the Fearless: Urban Activism, Coup D'état, and Memory in Turkey*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020. 242 pp.
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If one is asked to name a scholar of modern Turkey whose work has extended over multiple fields and criss-crossed various disciplines, Christopher Houston, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Macquarie University, Australia, would surely be at the top of the list. His decades-long ethnographic inquiries have culminated in a voluminous *oeuvre* on the politics, society, and built environment in Turkey. His anthropological gaze has exclusively been on Turkey, its peoples and cultures, its history and cities—especially İstanbul—and the state (both Republican and Ottoman). His scholarship took off during Turkey's dizzying transformation from an introverted national developmentalist country into one that hastily tapped into the global flow of capital, culture, and ideas. Following a shocking coup d'état in 1980, the country had to navigate a multipolar post-Cold War world while carrying the burden of many unresolved issues from its past, and Houston was there to observe it all. Since his 1997 article on Kurds in Turkey ('Islamic solutions to the Kurdish problem: Late rendezvous or illegitimate shortcut?', *New Perspectives on Turkey* 16, 1–22), Houston's work has found an appreciative audience among researchers in various disciplines and areas, ranging from urban, Turkish, and Kurdish Studies to the study of Kemalist and Islamist politics. As a cultural anthropologist attuned

to paradigmatic shifts in the social sciences and humanities, specifically the *spatial turn* since the 1980s, he has contributed to the burgeoning literatures on micro-nationalisms, ethnicity, and diasporic communities, transnationalism, Islamism, and multiple modernities, and in the last decade, neoliberal urbanism.

The final outcome of his work, *Istanbul, City of the Fearless,* is a political geography of İstanbul during the tumultuous years of 1974–1983. Houston's historiographical and spatial corrective to the accounts on the coup and post-coup İstanbul utilizes the urban space as the medium, catalyst, and stake of political action of competing groups vis-a-vis the state. He focuses on activists' perceptions and experiences of the city alongside strategies to claim, defend, and control various places and spaces in İstanbul—an İstanbul, mind you, that had not yet become the global city we know today. Throughout the book, we read how these actors transformed even ostensibly neutral everyday places into sites of conflict, violence, struggle, and mobilization. Houston takes the reader on an astral journey, so to speak, to the coffee houses, ferries, alleys, streets, and cul-de-sacs; to dormitories, shop floors, campuses, prison wards, police stations, *gecekondu*s, campuses, classrooms; and even to the living rooms of İstanbulites. His account is on par with his epistemology that merges spatial analysis with phenomenology. As he notes in Chapter 2, phenomenology explains "people's purposive actions, their affective states, their embodied experience, as well as the essential interactive quality of their lives" (p. 28). Such accounts go beyond reductionist statements that simplify events in accordance with cause-and-effect explanations and subject them "too quickly to abstract theoretical or cultural models" (p. 28). Reflecting this epistemology, Houston's sources include interviews with activists, official documents, novels, sketches, national dailies, poems, slogans, or songs.

The 'when, where, and who' of Houston's analysis are detailed in Chapter 1. This chapter provides the temporal context for the military coup d'état in 1980, which harshly ended leftist activism, the labor movement, or any democratic struggle for that matter. The shock of the coup left a whole generation with collective trauma and public amnesia, and laid the ground for the neoliberal restructuring of the economy, state, and civil society in the decades to come. Houston shows us how a society entirely politicized to its core ended up severely violated, suppressed, and subjected to authoritarian rule in the aftermath of the 1980 coup d'état. The *City of the Fearless* is Houston's response to recent studies analyzing neoliberal urbanization in İstanbul that treated the 1980 coup as a "formulaic baseline from which the trends of the present might be imagined, measured, and assessed" (p. 11). To this reader, the significance of his focus on the period immediately before and after the coup lies in his refusal of the ahistorical and 'actorless' treatment of İstanbul's post-1980 global city status. As Houston points out, in such depictions as Sassen's, for example, "there are no national causes, actors, opponents, or makers of its 'globalization,' nor is there a discussion of the city's actual history" (p. 11). In a similar vein, Houston poignantly criticizes some political science accounts of portraying the coup and junta as outcomes of the anarchy, extremism, terrorism, and separatism unleashed by the activists. These scholars present the junta's egregious acts, such as torture, as unavoidable, necessary interventions toward the depoliticization of Turkish society. As an activist generation discursively branded as the remnants of a lost cause—and worse, as the instigators of state violence—the interlocutors he interviews

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remember and commemorate the past and the city, reflecting on their time, their city, and their actions while also embracing self-criticism. This is Houston's primary response to approaches that did not "place much value upon describing and analyzing phenomena such as the built environment, militant bodies, movement around the city, places, moods, ethics, violence, ideologies, or factions as perceived and remembered by participants" (p. 18).

Houston sets the stage for the 1980 coup d'état in Chapter 3 with an account of the ways in which the "violence of architecture" had been built since the foundation of the Republic in 1923. In pre-1970 İstanbul, the readers learn about the de-Ottomanization of İstanbul through the dispossession and expulsion of non-Muslim İstanbulites en masse and rural–urban migration that created the *gecekondu*s. Onto this backdrop, he then situates the actors and analyzes activists' tactics to construct their spaces in İstanbul. Chapters 4 and 5, in that sense, are the core of his analysis. In Chapter 4, Houston focuses on the visuality and sonority of their political actions and their occupation of spaces such as *gecekondu*s, factories, streets, and cafes. Here we also read how they resorted to violence and intimidation tactics in self-defense. Curiously, however, Houston analyzes sonority only through written sources such as the slogans (e.g. "NATO'ya *hayır*"—No to NATO) reported in national dailies. One wonders how else this section could depict the tempo, rhythm, and force of chanting slogans en masse, perhaps through original audiovisual recordings that are available through documentaries and online raw footage. Chapter 5 zooms in on three fields of spatial politics, namely squatter settlements, factories and other workplaces, and municipalities. It nicely maps the various political/leftist factions' ideological and ethical engagements with the city and people. To this reader, these two chapters illustrate how in those revolutionary times, every nook and cranny of everyday life was politicized. A specific issue to highlight in Chapter 5 is the notion of peripherality, especially when it comes to *gecekondu* neighborhoods. The interchangeable use of such terms as *suburb, edge, edge suburb, borderland, shanty,* or *squatter settlement* to describe *gecekondu* neighborhoods and their makers should have been clarified. Some of these terms, particularly the *suburb,* have context-dependent connotations emanating from the urbanization processes in the Global North. Moreover, the very term *gecekondu* has already been established in the Urban Studies lexicon alongside, say, *favela;* thus, the direct use of this term with some detailed explanation for the uninitiated would suffice.

Grasping and explaining the intricate webs among the leftist factions in the 1970s is a significant challenge in itself. However, in Chapter 6, Houston successfully maps out the competing ideologies and factions, including the ways in which the activists perceived them. We read many layers of activist organizations as a) pedagogic entities where ideological training and learning took place, b) exclusivist entities relying on a strong sense of belonging among membership, and, relatedly, c) authoritarian and hierarchical entities controlling their members' every move (pp. 145–152). Against this background, he tackles the connections between their spatial politics, politico-economic analyses, and their vision of a new and better social order.

Chapter 7 is an account of the 1983 Constitution that ended the era of revolutionary activism. Here, Houston's account narrows to the violent pacification of both the

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activists and İstanbul. This chapter details activists' memories of torture in prison, commemoration of fallen comrades, and the actions of the junta to efface the last vestiges of activist politics in İstanbul, whether through its own occupation of places or its sonic and visual tactics such as "Silence. Curfew. Martial music. Checkpoints. Military graffiti" (p. 168). It is also in this chapter that Houston presents activists' responses to the state's spatial assault on İstanbul and its people. Some striking examples include the increased frequency of house visits as a way of keeping social ties and solidarity alive or still crowding the streets only minutes before the midnight curfew as a mode of resistance. He concludes the chapter by explaining the legal and institutional reconfiguration of Turkish society that became the backbone of an oppressive state architecture operated by the National Security Council.

In the concluding Chapter 8, Houston directs his arrows unflinchingly to the "vulgar sociological, economistic, and/or psychological schemas" that uniformly ascribe activist behavior (i.e. violence) to manifest intentionality. This is at the expense of the activists' own meanings and descriptions of violence ("*sensefulness*"). Through this sensibility, Houston extends an emphatic hand to this activist generation whose status was unfairly reified (and partly internalized by themselves) as the culprit of the chaos, ensuing state violence, and the post-1980 restructuration of Turkey. Houston lays positive claims to their *agency* by portraying them as neither victims of state violence nor militants in a civil war. Instead, throughout the book, activists appear as political actors, flesh and bone. They are sensing, feeling, perceiving, evaluating, organizing, mobilizing, writing, fighting, singing songs, reciting poems, chanting, and graffitiing slogans, or working, eating, and living among workers and *gecekondulular.*

One shortcoming of this otherwise exemplary urban ethnography is the occasional mistranslation of and typos in Turkish party names, utterances, or quotations. Some examples include names such as Pilsel (Bilsel is the co-author of a book cited in the text), *Halk Kurtuluşu* (orig. *Halkın Kurtuluşu*), Mirazbeyoğlu (orig. Mirzabeyoğlu), *Yeni Aysa* (orig. *Yeni Asya*), or *Ufaklar* meaning 'smalls' where what is actually meant is *Ufuklar* meaning 'horizons." In some others, the in-text translation of political factions does not match with those given in the list of political parties and groups at the beginning of the book. For example, *Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Partisi-Cephesi* (THKP-C) is translated correctly as People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey on p. xii but is given in the text as Turkish People's Liberation Party-Front (*Türk Halkının Kurtuluş Partisi-Cephesi*) (p. 43) which ascribes an ethnic value to the organization that is in contradiction to its leftist ideology. To this native Turkish speaker's eyes, these are mostly minor nuisances that usually do not invalidate or damage the arguments and claims in the book. Yet, they still give a sense of a rushed-to-the-deadline editorial process. A final reading by a Turkish speaker would easily solve the issue. This oversight falls particularly on the editorial board of the prestigious university press that is UCP. Nevertheless, urbanists and students of Turkish Studies will find an enlightening, state-of-the-art ethnography in the *City of the Fearless.*

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