NEOPLATONISM IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS IN BYZANTINE AND SELJUK ARCHITECTURES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

ORÇUN SENA SARACOĞLU

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE

JULY 2021

Approval of the thesis:

NEOPLATONISM IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS IN BYZANTINE AND SELJUK ARCHITECTURES

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ABSTRACT

NEOPLATONISM IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS IN BYZANTINE AND SELJUK ARCHITECTURES

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July 2021, 409 pages

Neoplatonism was arguably a significant factor in esoterically nurturing Christianity and Islam. It was influential in forming the worldview, culture, art, and architecture of the two religions. This study aims to trace the repercussions of this influence in Middle Byzantine churches from the 11th and 12th Centuries and Seljuk mosques and madrasahs from the 13th Century in Anatolia. By analyzing the typologies in terms of their spatial configuration and decoration, both in respect to geometry, it questions whether it is possible to suggest Neoplatonism as instrumental for the formation of these architectures. The study not only highlights the common aspects within the typologies but also provides a comparison of the two architectural traditions.

To do so, the study first provides a philosophical background regarding Neoplatonism. Based on the Neoplatonic ontology, the study generates

three concepts, “hierarchy, duality and unity.” These ontological concepts are discussed to be transformed into design concepts by means of geometry. Later, case studies selected from each architectural tradition are examined in separate chapters regarding the traces of the three concepts. These examinations are held in relation to the cultural atmosphere and the liturgical characters of the eras, in both the Neoplatonic influence are observable. As a result of these analyses with a multidisciplinary approach, this study claims that Neoplatonic theories were known in Anatolia and influential for the worldview, culture and art of both the Byzantines and the Seljuks. These influences were possibly instrumental for the two architectures, embedded with religion and cosmology.

Keywords: Medieval Architecture, Byzantine Architecture, Anatolian Seljuk Architecture, Architectural Symbolism, Neoplatonism

ÖZ

ORTODOKS HRİSTİYANLIK VE İSLAM'DA YENİ EFLÂTUNCULUK VE BİZANS VE SELÇUK MİMARİLERİNDEKİ YANSIMALARI

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Temmuz 2021, 409 sayfa

Yeni Eflâtunculuk, Hristiyanlık ve İslam'ı batıni olarak besleyen önemli faktörlerden biri olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bu felsefi akım iki dinin dünya görüşlerinin, kültürlerinin, sanatlarının ve mimarilerinin şekillenmesinde etkili olmuştur. Bu çalışma, 11. ve 12. Yüzyıl Orta Dönem Bizans kiliseleri ve 13. Yüzyıl Anadolu Selçuklu cami ve medreselerinde bu etkinin yansımalarını aramayı hedeflemektedir. Çalışma ayrıca bu yapı tiplerinin mekânsal özelliklerini ve bezemelerini çoğunlukla geometrik olarak inceleyerek, Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un bu yapıların oluşmasında bir tasarım aracı olarak kullanılıp kullanılmamış olduğunu sorgular. Çalışmada bu mimari geleneklerin ortak yönleri öne çıkarıldığı gibi iki geleneği kapsayan bir karşılaştırma da sunulmuştur.

Bu amacı karşılamak için, öncelikli olarak Yeni Eflâtunculuk hakkında gerekli temel bilgi çalışmada sağlanmıştır. Ayrıca Yeni Eflâtuncu ontoloji

temel alınarak “hiyerarşi, ikilik ve birlik” olmak üzere üç kavram türetilmiştir. Bu ontolojik kavramların geometri aracılığıyla mimari tasarım kavramlarına dönüşümü de yine çalışmada tartışılmıştır. Daha sonra, her iki mimari gelenekten seçilmiş örnekler üç kavram üzerinden tezin ayrı bölümlerinde incelenmiştir. Bu mimari incelemeler, Yeni Eflâtunculuk’un etkisinin görülebildiği dönemin kültürel atmosferi ve dini ayin ve ibadetleri ile ilişkilendirilerek yürütülmüştür. Disiplinler arası bir yaklaşımla yapılmış bu analizler sonucunda, Yeni Eflâtuncu teorilerin Anadolu’da bilindiği ve hem Bizans’ın hem de Selçukluların dünya görüşleri, kültürleri ve sanatsal üretimlerinde etkili olduğu savunulabilir. Bu etki büyük olasılıkla din ve evrenbilim ile iç içe olan bu iki mimari geleneğin şekillenmesinde rol oynamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ortaçağ Mimarisi, Bizans Mimarisi, Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi, Mimari Sembolizm, Yeni Eflâtunculuk

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Ali Uzay Peker, who has always provided me with the guidance I need in the field. The autonomy and self-determination that he helped me to have enabled this study to become what I exactly wanted it to be.

Secondly, I would like to thank Assist. Prof. Dr. Pelin Yoncacı Arslan from the bottom of my heart for her endless support with her expertise and her warm and joyful attitude. Also, I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tolga Bozkurt for his contributions to this study.

I am grateful to my dear friend Zeynep Gür for her enormous mental support since the day we have met. Our joyful conversations have always been an escape for me. I would also like to express my thanks to my brother, Taha Emre Baran. Without his support, this thesis would have been harder to finish.

I am also thankful to my family, who have supported me throughout this study.

Last but not least, I would like to thank myself for always defining my own path and always staying dedicated.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to examine and analyze architectural monuments from the past, especially from the ancient and medieval ages, particularly in terms of the probable symbolic meanings and incentives for forming these monuments. The main reason for this difficulty is uncertainty. The lack of original documents and sources from the ancient and medieval periods to demonstrate factors in the architectural design background prevents scholars to go beyond the boundaries of assumptions and hypotheses in most cases. Besides, it is even probable to defend that today's scholars cannot extract the same meaning in the background of an architectural monument or a series of monuments that belong to a particular tradition, with the symbolic meaning that it contained for its contemporary society.

John Onians, an English scholar who is an expert on the biological basis of art and the issues regarding perception and cognition of art and architecture, in his article titled *Greek Temple and Greek Brain*, indicates the idea that it is biologically impossible for any of us to acquire the same data or create the same meaning in the mind when observing a monument from the past with the people who lived at those times.[1] To support his claim, the biological explanation Onians offers is that the anatomy of the

[1] John Onians, “Greek Temple and Greek Brain,” in *Body and Building*, ed. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), 43-63.

brain, the literal physical structure of the organ based on the placement of nerves and the connections in between the lines of nerves, is shaped according to the provided data since the electro-biological combinations of nerves in the brain changes based on the types and amount of the auditory and visual information that it receives.[2] Therefore, every individual's brain presumably has a different biological structure since it is impossible for any two people to receive the same data set throughout their lives.[3] However, Onians suggest that it is likely for the brains of individuals who were exposed to a similar set of data in a similar environment for relatively more extended periods to have brains with similar anatomical structures.[4] Based on his perspective, it is not likely to perceive the same meaning from a medieval building by looking through today's glasses. In other words, the electro-biological structure of a brain raised in the 20th or 21st Century is presumably totally different from a medieval brain due to the entirely different data set that it is exposed to. Thus, today's scholars cannot produce specific facts about medieval buildings' reception within their contemporary societies or the motivations in the background of their design without any other original sources.

However, this should not limit the studies investigating the design motives and symbolic values of different medieval architectural traditions. A critical point of this kind of studies is conceivably the requirement for an

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[2] Ibid., 43-63.

[3] Ibid., 43-63.

[4] Ibid., 43-63.

interdisciplinary approach. Blending the field of architectural history with other fields in humanitieas and social sciences, namely philosophy, theology, and sociology, increases the understanding of the modes of thinking in the background of the focused architectural traditions. Although it is not possible for today's scholars and researchers to structure their brain in the same manner as the patrons, architects, or users of the past, studying not only the monuments of those societies but also the social and cultural structure is crucial in order to come close to their world view that shaped architecture.

Moreover, in medieval era, the society, politics, economy, and culture of different domains were embedded within religion. With the steady rise of Christianity and then Islam, the two religions became sovereign faiths in the Middle East. Even though these two religions were generally considered disparate, it is possible to suggest familiarities between each other and probable common sources that highly influenced both, with Neoplatonism conceivably being in the first place among these sources.[5] Neoplatonism's role as a common source of influence and a culture blender between the Christian and Islamic domains is observable throughout the medieval age.[6] Remarkably, the regions that are possibly defined as melting pots for different cultures, such as Al-Andalus (Spain) and Portugal under Umayyad Rule, and Anatolia, witnessed the influence of Neoplatonism on Christianity and Islam comparatively in greater degrees. It is possible to observe different paths of influence that have

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[5] John Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 175-181.

[6] Ibid., 175-81.

formed either direct relationships between one of the religions and the ancient philosophical heritage through Neoplatonism or the indirect transmission of the Neoplatonic concept into one religion through the other. One of the notable peak points for the philosophical and architectural products of these encounters of Neoplatonism with the two monotheistic religions occurs in Anatolia between the 11th and 13th Centuries. In more detail, the 11th and 12th Centuries witnessed the increase of the Neoplatonic impact in the Byzantine Empire, especially in Constantinople, which is generally named the final phase of the Middle Byzantine Period.[7] While the dominancy of Neoplatonic impact was fading in Christian Constantinople, the reflections of Neoplatonism were drastically increasing in Central Anatolia under the new rule of the power-gaining Muslim Seljuks by the 13th Century.[8]

Moreover, when the lifestyles in the 11th, 12th, 13th Centuries in these domains are considered, one common ground is that religion and Divinity were at the center, and theology was formative in the worldview and society's structure. Due to the openness in both societies towards the heterodox approaches in their respected religions, particular within this time frame, the chosen cultures of Anatolia are conceivably two intense manifestations of the Neoplatonic roots. In such societies embedded with theology in different aspects such as politics, economy, and culture and in

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[7] Hans Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, (UK: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), 310.

[8] Resul Ay, "Bizanstan Osmanlıya Anadoluda Heterodoks İnanışlar: 'Öteki' Dindarlığın Ortak Doğası Üzerine (650–1600)," *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, 31 (2013), 20.

which the religious order is reflected in all classes and groups of the community, it would be natural to expect the artistic production to be formed under the heavy impact of the religion. In this sense, the artistic products in Constantinople, including the architectural works, were presumably manifestations of their Christian belief, which is claimed to be nurtured by Neoplatonism in centuries and culminated in the late Middle Byzantine Period. Similarly, the artistic products in Seljuk Anatolia, including the architectural works, were presumably manifestations of their Islamic belief which is claimed to be nurtured by Neoplatonism in centuries and reached its possible peak point, in terms of quality and quantity, among the Anatolian Seljuks during the 13th Century. Therefore, examining the architectural works from these domains produced in these periods in terms of the traces of Neoplatonic doctrines is a way to demonstrate the influence and reinterpretations of Neoplatonism in Orthodox Christianity and Islam. In a corresponding relationship, the investigation of the Neoplatonic impact on the theologies and societies of the Byzantine Empire and Anatolian Seljuks enables searching for the symbolism in the background of their architectural works and providing satisfactory explanations for the possible motives in the background of the architectural design.

Based on this general framework, the introduction chapter of the thesis; which aims to understand the symbolism and motivation in the background of the two of the medieval architectural traditions, Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk, proceeds with the literature review at first. Then, by reviewing the significant works in the field, the chapter provides the reader with the significance of this study and what it aims to bring to the field. In the following part, the research question and the hypothesis are provided. Then the outline which is followed throughout the thesis is given. Finally,

the last part of the chapter explains the methodology employed in the study.

To start the literature review, it is essential to state that this kind of an interdisciplinary study requires the study of a wide range of sources. It is possible to categorize the sources used for this study under two broad types: the sources on Neoplatonic philosophy and the sources on Byzantine and Seljuk architectures. The sources from the first category are primarily used for providing the necessary background information for the basics of Neoplatonism, the historical relationship of the school of thought with the monotheistic religions of Christianity and Islam, and how the original Neoplatonic doctrines are reinterpreted in these religions. These are mainly *The Neoplatonists* by John Gregory, *Neoplatonism and Emanationism* by Mark Sedgwick and *The Significance of Neoplatonism* by R. Baine Harris.[9] Besides, many articles and book chapters by scholars namely John Anton, Fatma Aygün, Lloyd P. Gerson, John Fielder, Ronald F. Kotrc, Anna Motta, Ian Netton, William C. Chittick, Sergei Mariev are among significant studies. The sources on Neoplatonism in a broad sense include not only these relatively modern studies but also original sources from the ancient period, namely *Republic* and *Timaeus* of Plato, *Enneads* of Plotinus, *Elements of Theology* of Proclus, as well as the original works of Christian and Muslim philosophers such as Pseudo-Dionysius, Maximus the Confessor, Michael Psellos, John Italos, Muʿtazila school of thought, Ikhwān al-Safā , Al-Kindī, Al-Fārābī,

[9] John Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, (London: Routledge, 1998). Mark Sedgwick, *Western Sufism: From the Abbasids to the New Age,* Online Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press Online, 2016) Accessed February 22, 2020. DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199977642.001.0001. R. Baine Harris (ed.), *The Significance of Neoplatonism,* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1976).

Suhrawardī, Ibn ‘Arabī and so on from medieval age.[10] Especially the original ideas of Christian and Muslim philosophers are significant in displaying the echoes of Neoplatonism. Most modern sources also touch on the Neoplatonic impact on Christianity and Islam, which is accepted to be crucial for both religions as a nurturing element that enriches and shapes them esoterically.

However, these philosophical sources, whether modern works or originals, are mainly related to philosophy and theology, and they do not include any special ties with architecture. Both in the literature survey made for this thesis as well as the discussions with one of the influential scholars, Anna Motta, it has seen that there is a lack of original sources which dwell upon the relationship between ancient philosophy and architecture in general, and more particularly on the impact of Neoplatonism in medieval architecture. Even though modern sources study the traces and effects of Euclidian/Platonic geometry on architecture, these sources primarily focus on the other periods, dominantly Renaissance, such as Daniela Bertol, cited in this study.[11] In addition, these studies are generally heavier on the philosophical side of the topic rather than the architectural analyses.

[10] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, (Massachusetts: The Internet Classics Archive of Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Accessed February 27, 2021. http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html. Plato, *Timaeus*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, (Massachusetts: The Internet Classics Archive of Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Accessed February 27, 2021. http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/timaeus.html. Proclus, *Elements of Theology,* trans. E. R. Doods, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963). Proclus, *Elements of Theology*, trans. E. R. Doods, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963). Plotinus, *The Enneads*, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[11] Daniela Bertol, “The Parametric Making of Geometry: The Platonic Solids*,” International Journal of Rapid Manufacturing,* 6 (2016), 33–52.

Furthermore, it is possible to state that this thesis' philosophical and theological parts do not introduce unique ideas, neither about Neoplatonism nor about its reinterpretations in Christianity and Islam. Instead, these parts consist of an effective combination of various philosophical and theological sources to inform the reader since this thesis focuses on symbolism in architecture. Therefore, the philosophical and theological sources are not included in this literature review to any further extent.

The rest of the literature review focuses on the sources categorized as architectural. Since there are not many sources that contain Byzantine architecture and Seljuk architecture together and the ones that include both are mostly taxonomical studies, it is possible to discuss these architectural sources seperatel as the ones focusing on Byzantine architecture and the others on Seljuk architecture.

For the sources on Byzantine architecture, a quite limited number of them suggests a relationship between Neoplatonism and Byzantine architecture. Nevertheless, there are significant number of studies that examine the impact of the pagan temples on the formation of the early Byzantine churches. The collective works titled *Sacred Thresholds: The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity* edited by Emilie M. van Opstall and *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium: Art, Liturgy and Symbolism in Early Christian Churches* by Nicholas N. Patricios are major sources for this study and frequently cited in due places.[12] These studies approach the

issue by embracing liturgies and discuss how they were instrumental in forming the architectural space. It is possible to indicate that this methodological approach is also employed in this study to demonstrate the impact of Neoplatonic texts on Byzantine liturgy and architecture. However, this thesis does not limit its discussion with the early periods of Byzantine church architecture and incorporates the Middle Byzantine Period in which the impact of Neoplatonism on Byzantine churches are traced.

It is a fact that the available studies on the Middle Byzantine era are limited and the ones that deal with the Neoplatonic bonds are drastically less. The study of Hans Buchwald titled *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture* and the study of Otto Demus titled *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium* are probably the unique examples that dwell upon the possible impact of Neoplatonism on the Middle Byzantine church architecture.[13] However, these studies are conceivably insufficient in providing the necessary philosophical background and the historical survey of the Neoplatonic impact on the Byzantine Empire in general and its sacred architecture. Despite these possible insufficiencies, a chapter in Buchwald's book titled *Platonic Architecture* in the crossing of Neoplatonic philosophy and architecture has been crucial for outlining the arguments of this study and

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[12] Emilie M. van Opstall (ed.), *Sacred Thresholds: The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).
Nicholas N. Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium: Art, Liturgy and Symbolism in Early Christian Churches*, (London & NY: I.B. Tauris & Co, 2014).

[13] Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium*, (London: Aristide d Caratzas Publications, 1976).

the tools used for architectural analyses.[14] Buchwald's architectural analyses, especially in this chapter, regarding the plan organization, volumetric configuration, and decoration of the Middle Byzantine churches were the starting point for the analyses. However, this study examines more cases and details in terms of architectural elements and general layout. Presumably because it is only a relatively short book chapter, Buchwald's study does very little to provide a historical background either for the architectural tradition or for the philosophical, theological, and social structure of the Byzantine Empire concerning Neoplatonism. Thus, it is possible to state that this study borrows Buchwald's tools of architectural analyses, enriches them with other geometric examinations, and combine these with three basic concepts generated from the Neoplatonic doctrines, i.e. “unity, hierarchy, and duality.” This thesis structures a series of analyses around these three concepts and traces them in various cases.

For the case studies, three books are critical: *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* and *The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul: A Photographic Survey* by Thomas F. Mathews and *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries* by Vasileios Marinis.[15] Although the context, methodology, and aim of these two studies are different from Buchwald's study in terms of the Neoplatonic connection, they are valuable since they provide a list of

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[14] Hans Buchwald, “Platonic Architecture,” in *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, (UK: Ashgate Publishing, 1999).

[15] Thomas F. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*, (US: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990). Vasileios Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

churches with visuals and architectural drawings to be evaluated in this thesis. They are also primary in regard to the relationship between liturgy and Byzantine churches. Thus, they have been crucial for this study to appraise the impact of Byzantine liturgy on church architecture in Constantinople.

Moreover, the studies of Mathews and Marinis are chronologically significant for surveying the churches in Constantinople from the very early examples to the final ones in terms of their architecture and the evolution of the practice and meaning of the Byzantine liturgy throughout the Byzantine Empire. Finally, a matching contribution in case studies is provided by topographical studies of Alexandros G. Paspates from 1877 on churches of Constantinople, which both Mathews and Marinis often cite.

Furthermore, the set of examination tools were not only used for the analyses of Byzantine cases but also for the Seljuk cases as well, again structured with the three Neoplatonic concepts. For the literature review of the sources specific to the Seljuk part of the study, it is possible to indicate that the number of studies focusing on symbolism is even less than the limited sources in the Byzantine part. The number of international studies on Anatolian Seljuk architecture in English is very limited. The first reason for this is that Anatolian Seljuk architecture is skipped in most general architectural history survey books. It is even possible to point out that many of the survey books on Islamic architecture also skip Anatolian Seljuk architecture. In this kind of studies, the focus is primarily on Ottoman architecture regarding the Islamic architecture in Anatolia. It is possible to point out *Turkish Islamic Architecture in Seljuk and Ottoman Times 1071-1923* by Behçet Ünsal and *Turkish Art and Architecture from*

the Seljuks to the Ottomans by Giovanni Curatola among the few survey books on Islamic and Turkish architecture which includes Anatolian Seljuks as well.[16] In addition to these two, *Rum Seljuq Architecture, 1170-1220: The Patronage of Sultans* by Richard P. McClary is a recent stylistic and descriptive study on the architecture of Anatolian Seljuks.[17] This situation resulted in a lack of knowledge and interest in Anatolian Seljuk architecture on the international stage. Besides, these sources are general ones and do not focus on this study's issues and discussions in particular.

However, it is possible to state that the studies focusing on the architecture of the Seljuks produced in Turkish are quite high in number when compared to the international ones. Most of these studies belong to highly significant scholars of the field, namely Semra Ögel, Ömür Bakırer, Doğan Kuban, Aptullah Kuran, and Ali Uzay Peker. Even though some of these names produced English studies, these are mostly articles rather than more comprehensive studies such as theses, dissertations, or books. Nevertheless, their valuable studies influenced this thesis and contributed to it in several different aspects. While Bakırer's articles, including but not limited to *Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Yapılarından Medrese ve Camilerde Portal,* written with Çağla Caner, contributed to this study with technical analyses of architectural elements of the Seljuks such as portals and

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[16] Behçet Ünsal, *Turkish Islamic Architecture in Seljuk and Ottoman Times 1071-1923,* (London: Alex Tiranti, 1970). Giovanni Curatola, *Turkish Art and Architecture from the Seljuks to the Ottomans,* (New York: Abbeville Press, 2010)

[17] Richard P. McClary, *Rum Seljuq Architecture, 1170-1220: The Patronage of Sultans*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017) Accessed May 11, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3366/j.ctt1g0505d

vaults.[18] Her studies are one of the crucial sources for the geometric analyses made on the decorations of the case studies in this thesis. Her studies are also important providing case studies from 13th Century mosques with some technical analyses on plan organizations. Furthermore, Doğan Kuban's book titled *Selçuklu Çağında Anadolu Sanatı* displaying the formal and decorative evolutions has been a source of inspiration and a source for case studies .[19] Besides, Bakırer's studies, such as *From Brick to Stone: Continuity and Change in Anatolian Seljuk Architecture,* are among the rare ones, that discuss the possible impact of Byzantine architecture on Seljuk architecture in terms of use of spolia, material and construction techniques.[20] Similarly, Kuban's book partly discusses the formal impact of Byzantine architecture on Seljuk buildings while tracing their formal evolution and categorizing the buildings. However, as it is possible to understand from these brief explanations, these are not sources specifically dealing with the social structure of the era embedded with religion or the symbolism of architecture shaped under this. Thus, they are not studies that examine the Byzantine and Seljuk architectures in a greater continuity in terms of symbolism. For the studies specifically on the symbolism of Seljuk architecture, Semra Ögel's and Ali Uzay Peker's studies are probably the principal ones in the field. Ögel's

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[18] Ömür Bakırer and Çağla Caner, “Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Yapılarından Medrese ve Camilerde Portal,” *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları* (2009), 13-30.

[19] Doğan Kuban, *Selçuklu Çağında Anadolu Sanatı*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002).

[20] Ömür Bakırer, "Brick into Stone: Continuity and Change in Anatolian Seljuk Architecture," *The Turks*, 2, (2002), 729-736.

approach, such as the one in her study titled *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi,* is to investigate social structure and theological atmosphere in Anatolian Seljuk age in a general sense and is to show how these were possibly in the background of the architectural design.[21] Peker's emphasis is on Islamic philosophical and cosmological concepts. He traces the reflections of these in architectural design, particularly in the decorative program, including the geometric patterns of ornamentation, figures, and motifs. It is possible to observe this methodology predominantly in most of his articles related with the Anatolian Seljuk architecture such as *Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari I-IV, Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tasarımını Etkileyen Evren ve Estetik Anlayışı, Imprisoned Pearls: The Long-Forgotten Symbolism of the Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā' at Divriği, Ortaçağ Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi'nde Anlam, Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tarihinde Anlam Araştırmaları,* etc.[22] It is possible to state that his works on symbolic meaning have been highly influential. The interdisciplinary methodology and rich terminology in his studies greatly contribute to the field of Seljuk architectural symbolsm. Neoplatonism's probable impact is an idea that is

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[21] Semra Ögel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, (İstanbul: Akbank Yayınları Kültür Sanat Kitapları, 1994),

[22] Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi I– IV," in *İnci Aslanoğlu için Bir Mimarlık Tarihi Dizimi*, ed. T. Elvan Altan, Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci, (Ankara: Kalkan Matbaacılık, 20199, 1-6.Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tasarımını Etkileyen Evren ve Estetik Anlayışı." in *Anadolu Selçuklu Şehirleri ve Uygarlığı Sempozyumu 7-8 Ekim 2008*, ed. A. Esen, Haşim Karpuz, O. Eravşar, (Konya: Selçuklu Belediyesi Basın Yayın Müdürlüğü, 2009), 85-107.Ali Uzay Peker, "Imprisoned Pearls: The Long-Forgotten Symbolism of the Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā' at Divriği," in *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: The Life and Times of F. W. Hasluck, 1878-1920 Vol. III*, ed. David Shankland (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 2013), 315-345. Ali Uzay Peker, "Ortaçağ Anadolu Mimarisinde Anlam," *Arkeoloji ve Sanat* XX/85 (1998), 29-38. Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tarihinde Anlam Araştırmaları," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* (2009), 67-80.

frequently mentioned in his works and there is study of him titled *Taklidin Estetiği: Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisinin Mimesis Kavramı Üzerinden Okunması* which particularly dwells upon the Neoplatonic impact.[23] It should be indicated that the core argument of this thesis which suggests Neoplatonism as an overarching concept that was formative in the Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk architectures, is an argument generated from a long series of searches and studies that were initially sparked by the mentions of the term in his works. Indeed, it is possible to state that this study would not have been possible without the particular contribution of Peker's article titled *Imprisoned Pearls: The Long-Forgotten Symbolism of the Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā' at Divriği.* In addition to these works, it is important to mention one final study, conceivably a significant one in Islamic architecture: Gülru Necipoğlu's *Topkapı Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture*, which is often referred to in this study.[24] It is possible to describe this study as one covering geometric patterns in Islamic architecture, whether used for space organization or decoration. Even though Seljuk architecture is not a specific topic examined in her study, her approach of tracing the origin of the geometric patterns in Islamic architecture and how these are possibly related to various theological and philosophical concepts excessively contributed to this study. Neoplatonism's role as the transmitter of ancient Euclidian/Platonic geometry to the medieval age is discussed in her

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[23] Ali Uzay Peker, "Taklidin Estetiği: Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisinin Mimesis Kavramı Üzerinden Okunması," *Türkiye'de Estetik: Türkiye Estetik Kongresi Bildirileri*, ed. Jale Erzen, Pelin Yoncacı (Ankara: TMMOB, 2007) 563-571.

[24] Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll - Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture*, (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1995).

tracing of the origins. Besides, Ann Powell, in her commentary and review of Necipoğlu's work, explicitly discusses this attributed role of Neoplatonism. Therefore both of these studies are significant not only for the field of architectural symbolism in general but also for this study, which helped comprehension of the argument suggesting Neoplatonism as a background for architectural design.[25] In this thesis, this understanding of Neoplatonism as the transmitter of ancient geometry is applied to Byzantine and Seljuk architectures and created the logical base for the geometric examination of the case studies from both architectural traditions.

As the literature review displays, there are limited sources in the context of Neoplatonism's presumed impact on medieval architecture in general. When this broad topic is narrowed down to Byzantine and Seljuk architectures in comparison, the number of studies decreases even more. Even though there are studies that deal with the two architectural traditions together, they are dominantly technical texts that focus on the impact of Byzantine construction techniques and materials on the Seljuk architecture or the formal impact of Byzantine basilicas on the mosques of the Seljuks. In the field of architectural symbolism, it is almost impossible to point out any significant sources that examine the Byzantine architecture and the Seljuk architecture together and suggest a common creative design instrument in their background.

Therefore, this study differentiates itself from the rest of the field in several points. It focuses on the two significant architectural traditions that

[25] Ann Powell, “Neoplatonism and Geometry in Islamic Art,” *Art History*, 21, no. 1 (1998): 135–139.

emerged in Anatolia, Byzantine and Seljuk, without attributing hierarchical values. While not assuming or asserting supremacy, this study aims to suggest a common motive, a creative tool of design in their background and stands at a distance equal to both. Its hypothesis is that this common ground for both architectures is Neoplatonism, a post-Hellenistic school of thought that arose in Alexandria in the 3rd Century AD, conceivably nurturing Christianity and Islam during the medieval age. In predominantly religious cultures such as Byzantine and Seljuk, the heritage of ancient philosophical doctrines penetrated by means of Neoplatonism and nurtured through heterodox approaches. Neoplatonist thought is reflected in their artistic production too. This thesis displays the similiarities and differences in the adaptation of Neoplatonism by Byzantine and Seljuk architectural traditions. It claims that the reason for this variance is the circumstantial reinterpretations of the Neoplatonic notions.

Another different aspect of this study is the selected period of time, when the Neoplatonic impact was at its peak in terms of the cultural influence and it had on Byzantines and Seljuks. Starting with the cases from the late 10th Century and ending with cases from the late 13th Century, the study covers the route of Neoplatonic influences in Christianity and Islam in a broader, and in Anatolia in a particular outlook displaying architecture under this influence over three centuries. Another different aspect of this study, and perhaps a major one, is its interdisciplinary approach that combines philosophy, theology, sociology, architecture, and history. Some previously done interdisciplinary studies combined several of these fields and have been useful for this thesis. Yet, in terms of the covered amount of information transmitted from the fields of philosophy and theology to architecture; the analytical focus on the three basic concepts derived from the Neoplatonic doctrines and the rich architectural analyses made on

several case studies from both traditions, this study is believed to be unique in the field.

Intended to fill a gap in the field in examining Byzantine and Seljuk architectures in a continuum of a greater mindset, this study asks whether Neoplatonism, a nurturing source for both Christianity and Islam, is a common design instrument for both Byzantine and Seljuk architectures. It claims the hypothesis that Neoplatonism was a significant source of inspiration for intellectual life embedded in religion in both Christian Byzantine and Islamite Seljuk periods. Penetrated different institutions and daily life, the Neoplatonic impact is also traceable in Byzantines and Seljuk art production, including architecture. The geometrical analyses of the plan organizations, volumetric configurations, and decorative programs of the case studies selected from Byzantine churches and Seljuk mosque and madrasahs demonstrate that Middle Byzantine churches and Seljuk buildings in Anatolia are great manifestations of the Neoplatonic impact. The study adopts a multidisciplinary approach. It is arguably the most suitable methodology to understand and analyze past architectures concerning their symbolic meanings and philosophical/theological motives. As part of this approach, three concepts, “unity, hierarchy, and duality,” are generated based on the Neoplatonic doctrines, mostly about the Divinity, the structure of the universe, and the place of human beings in it. These three concepts are employed as intermediary concepts between philosophy and architectural design. The reinterpretations and adaptations of Neoplatonism in Byzantine and Seljuk theologies are discussed around the philosophical concepts of “unity, hierarchy, and duality.” These three concepts are also pointed out as design concepts in Byzantine and Seljuk architecture. The architectural analyses of the plan organizations, volumetric configurations, and decorative programs of the case studies are

categorized according to these concepts selected as the main notions the of repercussions of Neoplatonism on architectural design. The different reinterpretations of these concepts in Christianity and Islam are also pointed out as the background of the differences in the architecture of the Byzantines and Seljuks, in either formal or symbolic aspects. Furthermore, the motivation behind the urge to suggest a common factor in the background of the two different theological and architectural traditions is another critical aspect of this study. The purpose of this approach is to break the strict boundaries generally drawn between the Christian and Islamic domains in general and between the Byzantine and Seljuk architectures in terms of symbolism. By suggesting that both influenced from the ancient philosophical heritage, this study aims to create a historiography that does not exclude the cultural and architectural encounters between neighboring cultures and thus does not create a linear historical narrative that overshadows the paths of influences and interactions. This study does not centralize neither Orthodox Christian/Byzantine nor Muslim/Anatolian Seljuk tradition. It offers an architectural history narrative that focuses on a particular region that is Anatolia and discusses the social, philosophical, theological, and cultural encounters dwelling upon the echoes of Neoplatonism that arguably contributed to the formation of two symbolically and geometrically rich architectural tradition in the selected time frame. In addition, choosing Anatolia where Christian and Islamic cultural traditions encountered aims to challenge Eurocentric narratives in the field of architectural history. The Eurocentric approach in architectural historiography regards Islamic architecture a distinct entity which is of derivative nature. With the way it handles Seljuk architecture, this study demonstrates that Islamic architecture is an original chapter in the long history of the Middle East

and Eastern Mediterranean architectural tradition. By emphasizing the links, interactions, and continuity, it aims to show that the ideological separation of East and West has no place in a historical narrative based on transformations. It is also believed that tracing the impact of Neoplatonism in further studies could open doors to many interdisciplinary architectural history studies that provide links between Middle Eastern and European architectural traditions and create inclusive narratives that do not depend on regional separations or supremacies.

The combination of philosophy, theology, and architecture, meditating around the concepts of “unity, hierarchy, and duality,” is fundamental in the for formation of the outline of the study. It aims to inform the reader initially about the Neoplatonic doctrines in the first chapter of the study. In this chapter, the basics of Neoplatonism are introduced around *The Theory of Emanation*, which focuses on the creation. The three principles of Neoplatonic creation, The One, The Intellect, and The Soul, are discussed with their relation to human beings. Based on these three entities and the structure of the universe, which is created using them, the three concepts mentioned earlier, “unity, hierarchy, and duality” are dealt with. Then, Neoplatonism's emphasis on geometry is discussed in terms of the idea that the structure of the universe and creation are based on geometry.The presumed relationship of macrocosm-microcosm between the universe and human products, including the architectural works, is also introduced and discussed here. Since there are not any original Neoplatonic texts which directly indicates that the architectural works are microcosmic models of the macrocosmos, this part of the study builds on other Neoplatonic theories that dwell upon the idea of microcosm by adapting and combining the philosophical doctrines into the field of

architecture.[26] To do so, *The Literary Theory* of Plato, introduced in his work *Republic,* is referenced in this study.[27] This theory, with its continuation in Neoplatonism, discusses the literary works as microcosmic models based on the aspects which are provided in the related part. This thesis adapts the motives introduced in The Literary Theory to suggest that the medieval architectural works were presumably considered as microcosms, building on the ideas of scholars who study on this theme of microcosmic architecture.[28] It contributes to the argument by introducing a systematic method of transforming the three philosophical concepts of

[26] Neither Plato nor notable Neoplatonists such as Plotinus, Proclus, Porphyry and so on, did not mentioned of an architectural symbolism that include the microcosm theme. However, in several other theories, mainly the Literary Theory the theme of microcosm is discussed with its motives regarding other human products such as literary works. Byzantine philosopher Maximus the Confessor (580-662) is probably one of the first and very few commentators on the symbolism of the church as the model of the universe created by God. Other than his comments and impact on the following works, the original sources touching upon the theme of microcosmic architecture is rare in medieval age. For further information on Maximus' commentary see Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium*, 385. His ideas are also discussed in *2.3. Replicating the Divine Work: Perception of Architecture as Microcosm* and *3.2. Significance of Middle Byzantine Churches as a Manifestation of Neoplatonic Understanding.*

[27] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, (Massachusetts: The Internet Classics Archive of Massachusetts Institute of Technology) Accessed February 27, 2021. http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html.

[28] Despite the lack of original sources, many scholars from the field of art and architectural history study the theme in terms of various aspects, focusing on different perspective of microcosm idea or focusing on different architectural traditions or periods. Ali Uzay Peker is one of these scholars and the scholar that suggests this symbolism of Seljuk architecture. Particularly in his article titled *Taklidin Estetiği: Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisinin Mimesis Kavramı Üzerinden Okunması* and many of his works, he deals with the issue of considering Seljuk architectural works as microcosms. This thesis contribute to this argument with a series of architectural analyses conducted regarding the three concepts that were observed in the structure of the Neoplatonic universe and the Neoplatonic understanding of creation. This thesis also provide a full-scale render of the possible transformation of these concepts from philosophical ones into design concepts mostly through geometry.

“unity, hierarchy, and duality” into design concepts by means of geometry, and trace their repercussions in architectural works.

The chapter (with *2.3. Replicating the Divine Work: Perception of Architecture as Microcosm* and *2.4. Significance of Geometry and Geometry as a Tool for the Application of Hierarchy, Duality, and Unity in Architectural Design*) aims to connect the theoretical first part to the following chapters in focusing mainly on the Byzantine and Seljuk architectures and on Neoplatonism's impact on Christianity and Islam. The second chapter that consists of the Byzantine part follows a similar order with the previous chapter. Firstly, the impact of Neoplatonic doctrines on Christianity in the Byzantine period is discussed on philosophical and theological grounds. This chapter dwells upon the significance of Middle Byzantine churches as possible manifestations of Neoplatonic impact on Byzantine theology and highlights the architectural, philosophical, and social reasons in the background of the selected period (11th and 12th Centuries). When these centuries are analyzed in terms of the philosophical movements, social atmosphere, and architectural production, it is possible to observe an increase in the impact of Neoplatonism in Constantinople, probably related to the reestablishment of the University of Constantinople. Also, it is possible to point out the first part of the chapter as a bridge between the previous philosophical and historical ones and the following ones that focus on architectural examinations. Later in the chapter, the blend of philosophy and architecture increases as the chapter discusses the possible Neoplatonic impact on the liturgy, the Byzantine Rite, and how it has been instrumental in the formation of the church space. After this discussion, the plan organizations and the volumetric configurations of the case studies selected from the Middle Byzantine era are analyzed in relation to

“hierarchy, duality, and unity.” The order of the concepts here is determined according to the dominancy of their reflections in Byzantine theology, community and architecture as possible adaptations of Neoplatonic doctrines. The two and three dimensional analyses made in this chapter consist of geometric examination of the plan and the architectural space concerning the Neoplatonic concepts directly and the Byzantine Rite, and how the sacred space and liturgy are embedded with each other and arguably reflect traces of Neoplatonism. Finally in the Byzantine part, the decorative programs of the case studies are focused on. The examination of the decorative program of the churches consists of not only the geometrical analyses but also iconographical ones as well. Besides, even though a separate sub-chapter is created to analyze the decorative program, this one dwells upon the three concepts as well. The reason behind this separation is a conscious choice about the structure of the thesis, done to make it easier for the reader to follow since it is believed that providing architectural analyses on plans, spatial characteristics, and decorations together under one heading would be challenging to follow with all the philosophical references. Furthermore, as discussed in the literature review, Buchwald's tools and analyses are employed and referenced for this chapters, enriched with the ones from other studies and the original arguments created for this thesis. The Byzantine part of the study concludes with these analyses and not only provides an individual examination of the Middle Byzantine churches as the conceivable manifestations of Neoplatonic impact on Byzantine theology and society but also traces the journey of Neoplatonism in Anatolia and its architecture before the dominance of the Seljuks in Central Anatolia during the 13th Century.

The third chapter of the thesis consists of Neoplatonism's probable impact on Islamic philosophy, especially on Seljuk theology and worldview and its repercussions in architecture. The chapter is structured in the same way as the Byzantine one in most aspects, yet it is possible to point out a few differences between the two. One difference is that the theological part of the Seljuk chapter renders a brief history of Neoplatonic impact on Islam and the Islamic reinterpretations of Neoplatonism in general since it is not possible to follow a single path of ideas similar to the Byzantine case. Another difference is the approach to liturgy. While the Byzantine Rite is discussed as formed under the possible influence of pagan rituals from Neoplatonic texts, the Muslim liturgy is examined without any similar influence. Yet, in the Seljuk part, the symbolic meaning of the pagan and Muslim liturgies is still discussed to demonstrate their possible impact on the formation of the sacred architecture. In addition, the order of the concepts in the analyses part on the plan organizations and the volumetric configurations of the Seljuk case studies are different from the Byzantine chapter, related with the degree of emphasis on each concept in Islamic philosophy and Seljuk theology. In this chapter, the case studies are analysed in relation with the order of “unity, duality, and hierarchy”.

Moreover, the last difference is that the Seljuk part of the study focuses not only on the sacred architecture, the mosque cases, but also on the other religious and educational buildings like madrasahs. Even though the reasons of this approach are explained in the related part of the chapter, it is possible to briefly state that these two typologies relate both functionally and physically. Also, since the Anatolian Seljuks employed an architectural symbolism primarily derived from cosmology, and due to their understanding of architectural space as multi-functional, Peker claims that they generated a shared architectural symbolism in their buildings that is

above typological differences based on function.[29] Based on this claim, examining mosque and madrasah cases together in this thesis would enrich the investigation of Neoplatonic repercussions. Other than these, the way the chapter is organized is in the same order as the Byzantine chapter, finishing with the decorative studies after the two and three dimensional analyses of the case studies. The Seljuk part of the study concludes with these analyses and not only provides an individual examination of the 13th Century Seljuk mosques and madrasahs as the conceivable manifestations of Neoplatonic impact on Seljuk theology and society but also continue to trace the journey of Neoplatonism in Anatolia and its architecture after the culmination of Neoplatonic impact in the capital of the Byzantine Empire, finalizing with the 12th Century.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, it is discussed whether the study is sufficient to answer the research question. Then, the basics of the Neoplatonic philosophy and the two analyses on the two architectural traditions are summarized before providing a comparative discussion on the products of these traditions. The comparison part mostly touches upon how these architectural spaces are created, how the Neoplatonic concepts in the design processes differ, how the differences in liturgies are reflected in architectural spaces, and the differences in the architectural characteristics. In addition to the comparison, other outcomes of the study are listed and explained in the conclusion. In the last part, the questions raised by this study are discussed as possible influences for further studies in the field.

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[29] Peker, “Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi – IV,” 2.

Therefore, this study examines the two architectural traditions in separate chapters, yet within a continuity provided through Neoplatonism as a suggested design instrument in the background of both. Again related to the Neoplatonic impact, a continuity covering three centuries is also sustained with the selected time frames. It is possible to consider this chronological structure of the methodology to indicate the Byzantine Empire as a precursor of the Seljuks in terms of Neoplatonism's influence on the theologies, societies, and architectural traditions in Anatolia. Moreover, it is possible for one to claim that the original ideas fashioned in this study for the Byzantine and Seljuk parts are not approximate. The apparent reason for this difference is that there are more studies on the symbolism of Middle Byzantine churches and some that suggest a direct link with Neoplatonism.

On the other hand, as demonstrated in the literature review, there are only a few studies exclusively focusing on the symbolism of Anatolian Seljuk architecture, and only fewer of them mentions Neoplatonism as a possible source of influence though without focusing on neither the basics of the school of thought nor the architectural traces of the Neoplatonic impact on theology. Therefore, the original ideas and analyses produced for the Seljuk part are more than those in the Byzantine part. Although the influence of Byzantine architecture on the architecture of the Seljuks in terms of material or construction techniques is a topic that is studied in architectural history, this study has a different methodology and aim. Thus, these aspects of the relationship between Byzantine and Seljuk architectures are not mentioned in this study profoundly. Yet, in specific points, the probable formal impact of Byzantine architecture on Seljuk architecture is discussed, and also the possible philosophical influences in the general framework of Neoplatonism. Other than these, Byzantine and

Seljuk architectures in Anatolia are handled without defending the supremacy of one over the other. Contrary, one of the aims of this study is to cherish and pay respect to the richness of Anatolia, which depends on differences as much as it depends on the shared values such as the classical philosophical and architectural heritage. To achieve this aim, the study demonstrates the rich philosophical, theological, social, and geometrical knowledge and symbolism in the background of both the Byzantine and Seljuk architectural traditions with a common source of influence, which is claimed to be Neoplatonism.

CHAPTER 2

BASICS OF NEOPLATONISM AND USE OF NEOPLATONISM AS A TOOL FOR SEARCHING MEANING IN ARCHITECTURE

To define Neoplatonism only as the revival of the doctrines introduced by Ancient Greek philosopher Plato (423 BC - 348 BC) would be an incomplete and misleading statement in order to understand not only the basic principles and ideas of the school of thought but also the effects of it on various philosophical movements and religions, mainly Christianity and Islam. Even though it is difficult to suggest an overarching and inclusive definition to it, it is possible to address Neoplatonism as the reinterpretations of Plato's ideas generated by harmonizing his original ideas with the doctrines of Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC), the apprentice of Plato. Although this statement excludes the other influences mainly from Buddhism and Judaism in the formation of the Neoplatonic thought, it is arguably a sufficient one for this study's framework.

One of the reasons for the difficulty of introducing inclusive definitions with clear boundaries is the fact that, as British historian Mark Sedgwick claims, the separation of philosophy and religion which occurred in the pre-modern era did not exist in the ancient and medieval times, in which the boundaries between religion and philosophy were blurry.[30] In parallel with

[30] Sedgwick, Mark. *Western Sufism: From the Abbasids to the New Age*. Online Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press Online, 2016. Accessed February 22, 2020. DOI:

Platonism, even with the studies of Plato himself, the theological studies and efforts to explain the creation of the universe were not the only but the main field of Neoplatonic studies.[31] In addition, the boundary between physics and metaphysics in these studies was not strict either.[32] Again as a continuation of the tradition going back to the times of Plato, Neoplatonism has been dealing with physical forms and matter of the beings, mainly in respect to geometry, and bringing metaphysical explanations to these physical entities.[33] This approach makes it challenging to offer clear definitions for the study fields of many ancient schools of thought, including Neoplatonism.

Furthermore, another reason is the difficulty and sometimes impossibility of tracing back the relationship between philosophers or schools of thought regarding their influence on their successors. Many ancient philosophers possibly did not give importance to indicate their specific influencers except for those who had a master-apprentice kind of relationship. Sedgwick explains this by giving the example of *Theology of Aristotle* edited by Al-Kindī, which is a part of the further chapters of this study, with the claim that most of the philosophers from ancient times did not pay attention to the creator of the doctrines which were influential for

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10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199977642.001.0001 (The online edition of the book does not contain page numbers)

[31] Ibid., no page number.

[32] Ibid., no page number.

[33] Ibid., no page number.

them, but instead focused more on the content of these doctrines.[34] They were probably more interested in taking the studies further or challenge them rather than the particular names and their philosophical legacies and memories. This approach to previous studies is probably why the work of Al-Kindī, who has been identified as a Neoplatonist, was named *Theology of Aristotle*. [35]

Moreover, the use of the term "Neoplatonism" is another possible proof of the lack of classification or labeling used by ancient philosophers themselves. It is not possible to find them referring to themselves as Neoplatonists, or in any other periods as Platonists, or referring to their school of thought or ideas as Neoplatonism. Neoplatonism is a modern term suggested by German scholars in the mid-nineteenth century to differentiate the school of philosophy from Plato's period.[36] Since then, it refers to the particular school of thought established in the 3rd century AD in Alexandria and a general term for the latter philosophers, either Pagan or primarily Christian and Muslim, whose works have probably been influenced by the Alexandrian school of thought.

Furthermore, John Gregory claims that even the attributed and widely accepted father of Neoplatonism, Plotinus (205-270), did not consider, or pay enough attention to consider, himself as a Platonist nor did he give

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[34] Ibid., no page number.

[35] Ibid., no page number.

[36] R. Baine Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” in *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, ed. R. Baine Harris (New York: State University of New York Press, 1976), 3.

any systematic commentary on Plato's doctrines, "but rather came to his (Plato's) support after elaborating his ideas."[37] As mentioned, his primary motive was possibly his philosophical system based on his quest. Thus, it would not be groundless to indicate that "Plotinus is a Platonist because Plato enables him to achieve the most success."[38]

Even though Plotinus barely mentions his personal life in parallel to his sources of influence, it has been known that he was born in 205 AD in Egypt and died in 270 AD in Italia.[39] With other personal details, this information is provided by his student Porphyry (234-305 AD) in the biographical essay titled *On The Life of Plotinus and The Order of His Books* in *The Enneads*.[40] Consisting of 6 volumes on moral, physics, cosmology, psychology, philosophy, and reality, *The Enneads*, collected by Porphyry, are the primary source for Neoplatonic thought, especially about the cosmological matters such as God, creation, universe, and the place of human beings.[41] The main argument of the school of thought regarding these issues, The Theory of Emanation, which is frequently referred to in this study, is generated within *The Enneads* by Plotinus.

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[37] John Gregory, The Neoplatonists, (London: Routledge, 1998), 9.

[38] Ibid., 9.

[39] Ibid., 9.

[40] Ibid., 6.

[41] Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” 2.

Even though they are often referred to in this thesis, especially in *2.1 The Theory of Emanation: God, Creation, and Universe according to Neoplatonists*, it would be misguided to discuss the influence and reinterpretations of Neoplatonism in the latter centuries in Christian and Islamic domains by referring to neither Plotinus nor The Enneads as the only sources for the formation of the basics of the Neoplatonic tradition. R. Baine Harris claims that *The Enneads* were problematic in terms of the clarity of the ideas and the intelligibility of Plotinus's language.[42] He points out two other sources, *Elements of Theology* and *Plato's Theology*, written by Proclus (412-485), as books that "elevated Neoplatonism may be better than Enneads and these circulated in Byzantine, Arabic and early medieval Latin Christian world."[43] Therefore, Proclus is presumably another vital figure of Neoplatonism, after Plotinus and Porphyry, with his contributions to the field and his influence on the later decades. Although he lived in the 5th Century AD, he was possibly influenced by Plotinus, whom he possibly read during his time in Alexandria, and Porphyry.[44] Very similar to Porphyry, Proclus also has a significant role in the penetration and spread of Neoplatonic thoughts in Byzantium due to his time in Constantinople, as discussed in the related part. In addition to Neoplatonists before him, and similar to their process of influences, it is possible to indicate that Proclus was also influenced by the original works of Plato, Aristotle, and Euclid as his commentaries on them and the time

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[42] Ibid., 3.

[43] Ibid., 11.

[44] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 155.

he spent in Athens conceivably demonstrate.[45] Especially in his doctrines about the role of geometry and his system of six causes, it is possible to observe these influences. As a possible result of the studies on works of ancient philosophers and Plotinus, Proclus came up with a formulation of the system of "the six causing principles," which act on every single creation in the universe.[46] These are "the material cause," "the formal cause," "the efficient cause," "the instrumental cause," "the exemplary cause," and "the final cause."[47] According to him, the material cause is related to time and space, two elements of the material universe. The formal cause is the reason behind the style and the physical features of the matter. While the efficient cause is related to the soul, which is mandatory for existence, the instrumental and exemplary causes are the arguments and the problems, and the final cause is the One that is the source of every aspect mentioned.[48]

Therefore, based on these names, which are arguably the notable ones in the early phases of Neoplatonism, it is possible to claim that Neoplatonism was a multifaceted constitution that was influenced by different names from earlier periods. Moreover, it is also an influential school of thought that interacted with different places and important centers in a large area

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[45] Ibid., 155-156.

[46] Anna Motta, “Putting Cosmogony into Words: The Neoplatonists on Metaphysics and Discourse (*Logos*).” Peitho. Examina Antiqua. 1 (10) (2019), 122-124.

[47] Ibid., 124.

[48] Ibid., 124.

around the Mediterranean, including Anatolia. The role of Alexandria, "the cosmopolitan center of learning where western and Eastern cultural influences coincided," as Gregory defines it, was crucial in this layered and hybrid structure of Neoplatonism.[49] Moreover, this network of interactions affected the collective mindset of many cultures, including the Byzantine and Seljuk ones, and penetrated the people's daily lives. Neoplatonism's harmonization with the monotheistic religions of Christianity and Islam probably added mysticism and esoteric depth to both religions. When the power of religion on not only the ruling elite but also on the people in the street throughout the medieval age is considered, it is possible to suggest that the concepts based on the Neoplatonic doctrines were known and probably unintentionally influential in different aspects of the daily life and production including art and architecture.

This chapter explains and discusses the basics of the Neoplatonic thought, starting with The Theory of Emanation and Plotinus and the reinterpretations of this theory offered by different philosophers from later periods, mainly the ones introduced by Proclus. In addition, the three main concepts, hierarchy, duality, and unity, which are generated from the Neoplatonic worldview and doctrines, are to be used to examine and discuss their repercussions in architecture. To examine the theory, the system that Plotinus introduced is analyzed concerning the influential doctrines, mainly from Plato and Aristotle. The issues mainly concerning the Divinity, the creation of the universe, the reality, the matter, and the humans are addressed in the chapter to create the necessary philosophical background to trace the reinterpretations of them within the

[49] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 3.

Christian and Islamic Theologies. Moreover, the chapter also discusses how it is possible to use Neoplatonism as a tool for searching for meaning in medieval architectural design based on the provided philosophical framework.

The creative thinking in the background of the architectural design was likely to be about the perception of God and the relation of human beings to it in most of the medieval civilizations, including the Byzantine and Seljuk domains. While it is likely that this relation was not partaking in the creative process intentionally, it is possible to trace its repercussions in the architectural products in various aspects. The chapter covers the issue in terms of two aspects. The first one is the relationship of the microcosms and macrocosm and how the architectural products of the medieval age are conceivably microcosmic models that consist of the three concepts of the Neoplatonic understanding in parallel with the macrocosm, the universe itself. The other one is the role of geometry within the Platonic and later Neoplatonic schools of philosophy to explain the structure of the universe and how it was used to replicate this structure based on hierarchy, duality, and unity within the different aspects of architectural design.

2.1 The Theory of Emanation: God, Creation, and Universe according to Neoplatonism

Emanation means "to flow from" or "to pour forth or out of" with its primary meaning.[50] It is possible to describe the term as something that originates or issues from a source in theological philosophy. Understanding the

[50] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 8th ed., s.v. “Emanation.” Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009.

emanationism and role the term played in the system of Plotinus is crucially vital for one to understand the basics of the Neoplatonist perception of God, creation, and universe. As Michael Dunn suggests, Plotinus's emanationism is probably "a protest against any account of creation which implies conscious planning."[51] According to the Theory of Emanation, the act of creation is an unwilled and necessary one by its own and happens spontaneously, and it stands against the idea of God creating everything else willingly and consciously.[52] Plotinus rejects the idea of a moment or any planning for the act of creation.[53] The aim of the Neoplatonic mind set was not to despise the superiority of God as it is likely to be misunderstood from the doctrines of the Neoplatonic philosophers as if they disregard God's ability to create at his will and attribute the act of creation to the laws of the universe and define it as a necessity of existence to any being.

Nevertheless, when the Theory of Emanation was examined profoundly, it would be possible for one to see that, on the contrary, the Neoplatonic idea of creation supports and cherishes the superiority of God as the "infinite, undiminished and unchanged primary substance."[54] The Neoplatonists defended that the understanding of *creation ex nihilo*

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[51] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 71.

[52] Ibid., 8-9.

[53] Ibid., 9.

[54] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 8th ed., s.v. “Neoplatonism.” Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009.

diminished God's supremacy since it accepted the creation as a decision made by God, and the idea of a moment that God deciding confines him to time raises the question of what was happening before.[55] Contrary to the idea of the moment God decided to create, Plotinus and his successors claim that "creation is an eternal and spontaneous process."[56]

Although the systematic formulation of The Theory of Emanation belongs to Plotinus, it was highly possible for him to be influenced by a wide range of ideas, mainly from Ancient Greece. "His thought embraces many different philosophical conceptions from diverse sources that are brought together."[57] It is important to briefly cover these influences in terms of displaying the contribution of Plotinus to the issues discussed by many before him and make the examination of The Theory of Emanation and principles of Neoplatonism easier to understand.

Most of the important sources of the field, which analyses and discusses the possible influences of Neoplatonism, including *The Neoplatonists* by John Gregory, *Neoplatonism and Emanationism* by Mark Sedgwick, and *The Significance of Neoplatonism* edited by R. Baine Harris, points out a variety of influential factors from Ancient Greek civilization or neighboring lands of Alexandria like Persia.[58] The Greek sources are particularly a part

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[55] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[56] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 13.

[57] John H. Fielder, "*Chorismos* and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus," in *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, ed. R. Baine Harris (New York: State University of New York Press, 1976), 102.

of this study to connect the Neoplatonic doctrines to Plato and Aristotle's studies, which continued to influence the Neoplatonic tradition even centuries after Plotinus.[59] Yet, Plato and Aristotle are far from being the only inspirations of Plotinus' emanationist theory. It is possible to describe Neoplatonism "as the last major attempt to bring into one complete system to the same themes debated by the philosophers (mostly from Ancient Greece) for the eight centuries proceeding it." [60] One of the possible influences of Plotinus was the Heraclitus' doctrine of logos, a set of structural principles "which maintains a rational equilibrium in the universe by balancing opposing forces."[61] Heraclitus presumably considered *logos* as the reason for creation and existence.[62] Plotinus was possibly familiar with the ideas of *logos* from Plato's writings. Another important part of the theory of Heraclitus is the idea that the opposing forces or contradictions he offered to be existing in the universe.[63] It is possible to trace the influence of this contradiction in Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysic studies as the diversity of "Form and Matter."[64] Plato's idea of "mind over

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[58] See Gregory, *The Neoplatonists,* Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” and Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*

[59] “Majority of the Neoplatonic system after Plotinus have been nearer to the dialectic of Aristotle than to Plato’s dialectic.” (Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” 3.)

[60] Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” 3.

[61] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 6.

[62] Ibid., 6.

[63] Ibid., 6.

matter," derived from the issue of form and matter, is the probable foundation of his doctrines, cosmological understanding, and epistemology.[65] Thus, his approach to the cosmos bases on the duality of the intelligible universe of forms and the material universe of matters. Sedgwick explains the doctrine of Plato on form and matter with the metaphor of "a triangle drawn on paper, and thus made of matter, is not a form, but an imperfect reflection of the perfect form of a triangle"[66] Plotinus must have been influenced by this idea and possibly thought that the incompleteness of the material universe should point out a higher reality which is beyond matter and more complete.[67] Moreover, Plotinus was also possibly influenced by Stoics' emanation, but he did not describe a material structure as Stoics did.[68] Instead, with his Theory of Emanation, "Plotinus was trying to convey the idea of the permanent structure of spiritual essences."[69] He offered arguably the most systematic explanation for the creation of the universe and the order of being by pointing out three main principles for all existence, whether intelligible or material. [70] These

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[64] Ibid., 7.

[65] The term is borrowed from Susan Truett Trammell, *Mind Over Matter*, (Conneaut Lake, PA: Page Publishing, 2019).

[66] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[67] Fielder, "*Chorismos* and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus," 102.

[68] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 11.

[69] Harris, "A Brief Description of Neoplatonism," 5.

principles are The One, The Intelligence, and The Soul in descending order.[71] It is crucially important to discuss these three principles to understand the basics of the Neoplatonic conception of the universe and discuss issues regarding the material universe, such as art and architecture. As it is discussed more deeply in the following parts, the main reason for this is the descending ontology of the universe and the idea that "any problem that concerns reality below Soul or individual souls will require adducing all three principles."[72] Since the material universe is accepted to be below the Soul's reality, it is necessary to discuss the three principles (The One, The Intellect, and The Soul) before discussing humans and their products. (Fig. 1)

2.1.1. The One

According to Plotinus' emanation model, "from The One proceeds Intellect, from Intellect Soul, and from Soul the material universe, which is everlasting. While The One remains self-contained, both Intellect and Soul revert to contemplate their prior reality."[73] In other words, the Soul is the instrument of Intellect, and the two together are the instruments of The One.[74] However, it is important the note that this order is not chronological

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[70] Ibid., 5.

[71] Lloyd P. Gerson, “Plotinus on *logos*,” in *Neoplatonism and the Philosophy of Nature*, ed. James Wilberding and Christoph Horn (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2012), 24.

[72] Ibid., 17.

[73] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 13.

but logical.[75] Moreover, while The One should be considered separately from the rest of the two principles and the material universe, each lower level depends on a higher reality to exist in this descending model. In this order, the degree of reality and perfection is always the reference of distinguishing the lower and higher levels.[76] It is possible to consider this creative process as the self apprehension of the absolute simplicity and perfection of The One manifesting in an "ever-increasing multiplicity: the one-in-many of the form in Intellect, the one-and-many of Soul, and the fragmented world of material bodies."[77] Therefore, there is likely to be a relationship of archetype-image between these levels of reality, similar to the relationship between form and matter in Plato's doctrines. As John Fielder explains:

> … These realities form a hierarchy in which each lower reality points beyond itself to something higher. Thus Nous (Intellect) said to be the image of The One, Soul is likewise the image of Nous (Intellect) and in general each lower level is the image of its higher, generating reality.[78]

Furthermore, it is crucial for this theory to indicate that the dependence is absolutely in one direction: from lower to higher and never the other way

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[74] Gerson “Plotinus on *logos*,” 24.

[75] Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” 5.

[76] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 13.

[77] Ibid., 13.

[78] Fielder, “*Chorismos* and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus,” 103.

around, highlighting and cherishing the supremacy of The One as Plotinus describes it, which is, according to Harris, the biggest contribution of Plotinus to the field.[79] The One of Plotinus is;

> …the base unity of all multiplicities. It is nothing because it is everything. It is no-one thing, non-existed and non-being because any sense of thingness, or existence or its being would be prostitution of it genuine nature.[80]

Therefore, it is possible to indicate that with its perfection based on its simplicity, The One is beyond any state of being or thing, separate from the totality of metaphysical and physical beings emanated from him, yet still ever-present in each one of them without depending on nothing. It is the self-sufficient and necessary cause of all beings. Thus, Plotinus apparently frees The One from any notion of thinking, seeking, possessing, needing, and activity and places it above all. Furthermore, Dominic J. O'Meara indicates that "everything must derive from the One without implicating The One in any form in change, for such change would mean ending the perfect simplicity that is required of The One as first cause"[81] So, The One is associated with absolute simplicity, purity, perfection and, as a result of these, the ultimate Beauty which is also the ultimate Good.[82] Yet, this conception of The One contradicts the Platonic

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[79] Harris, “A Brief Description of Neoplatonism,” 4.

[80] Ibid., 4.

[81] Quoted in Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[82] See Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 104-115.

and Aristotelian understanding of God.[83] Plotinus rejects the self-thinking God of Aristotle since he believes that even the act of thinking diminishes its superiority.[84] He explains The One as simply having a self-apprehension.[85] However, he was also influenced by the idea of the intelligible universe emerging as a result of thinking.[86] Similarly, Plato considered The Good, as he names God, as the craftsman of the universe that mathematically creates everything with perfect order, the idea of Demiurge.[87] Opposing the conscious creation model, Plotinus attributes thinking and the role of Demiurge to the second principle of existence and the first emanated one, The Intellect. [88]

2.1.2. The Intellect

It is possible to explain the emergence of The Intellect as "The One's superabundance and its offspring turns to it and is filled, and in contemplating The One becomes The Intellect."[89] In order words, The

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[83] Ibid., 30-32.

[84] Ibid., 24.

[85] Ibid., 32.

[86] Ibid., 32.

[87] Sedgwick, Western Sufism, no page number.

[88] Ibid., no page number.

[89] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 36.

Intellect is presumably the first product of The One's self-apprehension. The forms overflowing from The One creates The Intellect, which is the first state of being and the supreme one among the beings since it is the closest to The One. "Its stance towards The One gives it (the state of) Being, while its contemplation of The One makes it The Intellect."[90] According to Plotinus, "the thinking Intellect is identical with the intelligible beings" and adapts the self-thinking God of Aristotle.[91] This statement indicates that The Intelligible Universe consisting of the forms is within The Intellect. In other words, The Intellect created it by "its vision of The Good (The One)."[92] The perfect archetypes of everything within any lower level, including the material universe, are contained within The Intelligent.[93] Therefore, it is possible to claim that The Intellect, the totality of the intelligible beings, is the craftsman, or in Platonic terms Demiurge, of the material universe. Mainly due to their nearness to The One, the collective of the intelligible beings is presumably the state of true being. They are the archetypes for every single sensible being within the material universe and imply The Intellect, which is accepted as the archetype of the whole material universe.[94] As an inevitable part of the creation process, The Intellect manifests itself in order for The Soul, the third principle of the

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[90] Ibid., 36.

[91] Ibid., 10.

[92] Ibid., 42.

[93] Ibid., 43-45.

[94] Ibid., 42-45.

existence within the order leading, to generate the material universe based on the archetypes which are collectively The Intellect itself.[95]

2.1.3. The Soul and the Material Universe

The Soul is the presumed animator of the material universe created by The Intellect.[96] In other words, it is assumed as the source of life within the material universe and "the principle of motion" since it is "the self-moved cause of movement" (or life) in the material universe.[97] According to Plotinus, it is possible to claim that The Soul was inspired by Plato's distinction between forms and matters.[98] Even though Plotinus differentiates from Plato in the understanding of creation as a conscious design and suggests that the emanation of the material universe from The Soul is necessary for it to express itself and is unplanned and spontaneous, he attributes a mediating role to The Soul possibly based on the distinction in Plato's doctrines.[99] Gregory suggests that The Soul has three functions or roles; it is forever in contact with its higher reality, The Intellect, and also concerned with the material universe of senses while "a third part holds a mediating position" in between.[100] Basically, The Soul is

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[95] Gerson “Plotinus on *logos*,” 22-24.

[96] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 9.

[97] Ibid., 56.

[98] Ibid., 7.

[99] Ibid., 54.

the mediator between the intellectual beings, the archetypes within the Intellect, and the sensible beings in the material universe. The beings in the material universe emanate from the Soul as the images of the archetypes, which are in the intelligible one. As a totality of these sensible and material beings, the material universe emerges from The Soul as a model of the intelligible universe consisting of archetypes' togetherness.[101] The material universe is probably considered as the "expiry of the creative energy" and the lowest level of reality, which depends on the higher intelligible reality to exist and maintains its state of being.[102] John Fielder explains the dependence of the material universe to the intelligible universe with the metaphor of reflection of an object in the mirror:

> The existence of image (which is the material universe) requires the existence of the archetype (which is the intelligible universe) just as the mirror lasts as long as the object remains in front of the mirror.[103]

Moreover, since the material universe is considered the lowest level, it is the farthest from The One and the least perfect, least good, and least simple. It is "solely characterized by its deficiency."[104] One of the main

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[100] Ibid., 55.

[101] Ibid., 42-45 and 58-59.

[102] Ibid., 13.

[103] Fielder, "*Chorismos* and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus," 105.

[104] Ibid., 105.

reasons for this deficiency is probably contradictions within the material universe.[105] As the opposite of the pure simplicity and stillness of The One, the beings emanated from it contain contradictions. As a necessary outcome of the descending model of the universe in Neoplatonism, these contradictions imply that the material universe is an imperfect copy of the intelligible universe.[106] Because it is a higher level of reality, it is hard to observe these contradictions within The Intellect's perfection. So, the source for the contradictions in the material universe is possibly traceable in The Soul. According to Plotinus, the soul should be considered in two separate categorizes[107]. One is the universal soul, which is the mediating one embodied by the material universe, and the other is the individual soul embodied by the human body.[108] Although the individual souls are one with the universal soul and connected to higher realities, this duality should be considered as a necessary fulfillment of creation laws.[109]

Furthermore, again based on the laws of creation, "to say that (the material universe) is an inadequate copy is false (even though it has contradictions); nothing has been left out which a beautiful representation

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[105] Ibid., 104-105.

[106] Ibid., 104-105.

[107] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 58-62.

[108] Ibid., 58-62.

[109] Ibid., 55.

within the physical order could include."[110] Therefore, the material universe is conceivably the best that could possibly be as an image of the intelligible one. However, the inferiority of its realness presumably resulted as the Neoplatonists considering it a temporary delusion that closely affected their perception of humanity and human beings' place within the universe.[111]

2.1.4. The Humans

According to Neoplatonism, any material thing, including their body, is an obstacle for human beings that stand between the higher realities and their soul.[112] This understanding indicates that humans are made out of contradictions as a part of the material universe. The human being consists of two parts: the material body and the intelligible soul.[113] The true self of a human being is the individual soul that has been separated from the universal soul with the embodiment.[114] According to Plotinus, the task of the human is to free himself from the material universe and strive for the "primal unity (which only belongs to The One) which has been lost by ensoulment of his body"[115] In order to free himself/herself from the

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[110] Fielder, "*Chorismos* and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus," 104.

[111] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 80-81.

[112] Ibid., 13.

[113] Ibid., 80-82.

[114] Ibid., 80-82.

material universe, one should leave all the material senses which deal only with the evil and imperfection of the matter and return his inner self "to recognize one's kinship with the universal soul, then to learn to see intelligible form reflecting the light of The Good (The One)"[116] Plotinus offers a journey of transcendence for the individual soul of the human in between the descending stages of the universe and indicates that "the task of philosophy is to point the way."[117] Only by virtue and study of physics and philosophy can one lift his soul from the wickedness of the material universe, the furthest point from The One, and reunite with The One eternally.[118]

Moreover, in order to explain the descending structure of the universe created through the emanation, it is possible to point out the “Porphyrian Tree”, a diagram originally created by Porphyry (234 – 305 AD) himself.[119] The first known example of this diagram was found in Porphyry’s work titled *Introduction to Aristotle's Categories*.[120] Yet, it is also possible to find different recreations and versions of this diagram in both Christian and

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[115] Ibid., 80.

[116] Ibid., 14.

[117] Ibid., 14.

[118] Ibid., 14.

[119] Amer Dardağan, “Neoplatonic ‘Tree of Life’ (Arbor Porphyriana: A Diagram of Logic and Mystical Theology),” OSF. May 13. 2017, no page number. osf.io/vsnyz.

[120] Dardağan, “Neoplatonic ‘Tree of Life’,” no page number.

Islamic domians through out the medieval age.[121] The Porphyrian Tree is basically a “diagram of logic” that explains the emanation and reversion of Neoplatonism, discussed to be created with harmonization of Plato’s and Aristotle’s ideas.[122] As Amer Dardağan explains the diagram:

> In its most basic form, diagram is made of the terms within the three columns that are interconnected with lines. The highest term is "substance" which is divided into "physical/material"and "non-physical/immaterial" (incorporalis) substances. Material substance includes genus "organic body" which refers to animals and plants. Now, the "organic body" is genus of "living organic bodies subjected to perception or senses" and here for example we talk about animals, but not the plants. Next, the "living organic body subjected to the senses" is the genus of "rational animated body" such as people, but not the animals. "Rational animated body" form genus of "mortal and immortal animated body", so finally the "mortal animated body" emerged from "rational animated body" leads to generation of man. Thus man which consists of individuals like Plato or Socrates for example, becomes most specific species on the diagram[123] (Fig. 2 & 3)

The Porphyrian Tree is significant for the methodology of this study, since it is “an ideal metaphor” to explain the general characteristics of the Neoplatonic universe.[124]

Therefore, based on this brief examination of the creation and structure of the universe, starting from the absolute perfection and good of The One

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[121] Dardağan, “Neoplatonic ‘Tree of Life’,” no page number.

[122] Dardağan, “Neoplatonic ‘Tree of Life’,” no page number.

[123] Dardağan, “Neoplatonic ‘Tree of Life’,” no page number.

[124] Dardağan, “Neoplatonic ‘Tree of Life’,” no page number.

and ending with the imperfection and evilness of the material universe, there are arguably themes or concepts that are existed within the created whole. It is also possible to discuss these concepts' existence and traces in the different reality levels of the descending universe and their relationship. These concepts are suggested as hierarchy, duality, and unity.

2.2. Neoplatonic Ontology and Concepts of Hierarchy, Duality, and Unity

These are not concepts suggested as universal laws neither by Plotinus nor by later Neoplatonists. However, when their doctrines are studied, it is likely to come across these concepts frequently. These concepts should not be thought of as the *logos* or the divine laws of the universe which provide the order, but they are more like the general characteristics of the created universe. The reason for introducing them as part of this study's methodology is to categorize the main characteristics of the universe in Neoplatonic doctrines to make the physical repercussions of this metaphysical understanding traceable in the design of the architecture from Byzantine and Seljuk traditions.

Moreover, although it is possible to misunderstand that the concepts are separate from each other, they should not be thought so since they are interconnected and examined as if they are necessary ingredients of a whole. The provided order here, starting with hierarchy and continuing with duality and unity, is also arranged to display the connection between them.

2.2.1. Hierarchy

Hierarchy is the one that is arguably most easy to be traced among the three concepts. The One being the ultimate, infinite, undiminished, and so

on directly places it above all the created beings. “Only The One prior to being has no need of Life (provided by The Soul) and Intellect.”[125] The rest of the beings need these two, and these two principles need The One to exist.[126] This understanding conceivably brings a hierarchy and separation between The One and the universe, including the principles of The Intellect and The Soul.

Moreover, the descending model of the universe strengthens the concept of hierarchy since, as explained previously, the degree of reality, perfection, and, therefore, beauty decreases with each emanation creating a lower level. The universe is created based on the understanding of each level has come to be by “imaging” of a higher reality, so the hierarchy is possibly a necessity of the state of being since “image is always inferior to archetype.”[127] One of the most significant archetype-image relationships within the universe is possibly the relationship between the intelligible universe and the material universe. Since the material universe is a complete but imperfect copy of the intelligible universe, the form's supremacy over the matter is presumably evident. The hierarchy is also arguably apparent in the diagram of the Porphyrian Tree. In the spine of the diagram, or metaphorically the trunk of the tree, the order of “substance-body-living body-animal-man” is observable. (Fig. 3) As

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[125] Ibid., 41.

[126] Ibid., 41.

[127] Fielder, “*Chorismos* and Emanation in the Philosophy of Plotinus,” 104.

explained above, this order represents the descending and therefore hierarchical order of the universe.

Furthermore, the increase in diversity due to the decrease in perfection causes conflicts. Because of these conflicts within the universe, the concept of duality emerges as fulfillment and a possibly natural outcome of the hierarchy within the universe and the hierarchy between The One and the rest.

2.2.2. Duality

Like hierarchy, duality is also traceable in different aspects of the universe and the different relationships. While the gradual difference of reality in different stages of the universe suggests a separation, the duality should not be considered apart but rather a differentiation based on the hierarchy. Moreover, the image-archetype relationship also supports duality, and again the most potent example of this is probably between the intelligible universe and the material universe. The relationship between them should not be considered as if "the higher realities are ontologically separate from the sensible world, but that this separation must be consistent with a very close connection between them."[128] This statement indicates that the existence of the material world depends on duality since it is considered an image and could not exist on its own. The relationship between the image and the archetype is a separation based on connection. Thus, it is possible to claim that this relationship itself ontologically consists of duality, meaning the duality of separation and connection.

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[128] Ibid., 101.

Furthermore, as discussed previously, as reality hierarchically emanates further away from The One, its absolute simplicity gets distorted, and diversities start to occur, and the material universe is the stage of reality that consists of diversities the most. As in the example of separation and connection, the duality is probably equal to conflict, and "conflict is a necessary consequence of the diversity of the material universe and the imperfection of its parts."[129] One striking example of the duality in the material universe is the human being. Like the duality of intelligible and material that constitutes the universe, the duality of soul and body constitutes humans.[130] The humans' likeliness to the universe is also a significant part of the Neoplatonic worldview regarding human beings and their products, as discussed in *2.3. Replicating the Divine Work: Perception of Architecture as Microcosm*.

In addition, the Porphyrian Tree conceivably displays the general sense of duality within the universe based on the differences.

> The columns to the left and right refer to specific species within the genus of the higher species. It is interesting that the terms on the "Tree" are differentiating only in the right, but not in the left column. The other member of the pair is therefore always a negation of the first. In other words, there are deliberate contradictory differences that are highlighted…[131] (Fig. 2 & 3)

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[129] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 71.

[130] Ibid., 80.

[131] Dardağan, "Neoplatonic 'Tree of Life'," no page number.

Moreover, Gregory explains the constitution of two separate entities as "the image of concentric circles, with coincident yet separable centers."[132] Based on these statements, the understanding of duality in the Neoplatonic worldview does not challenge the grand unity of the universe, which is the third and final concept.

2.2.3. Unity

Like everything, unity derives from The One too, yet The One does not depend on unity as the beings.[133] Its existence and the ontology of emanation create unity among all beings, whether intelligible or material. It is possible to consider unity as a governing agent of the universe. "Without the presence of unity, continuous magnitudes would not exist, at least, when divided; they change their being in proportion as they lose their unity."[134] Therefore it is the unity of beings with each other and the unity of the beings with The One that their identity is probably based on. This connection is again emphasized in the spine of the Porphyrian Tree. (Fig. 2 & 3)

Furhermore, Gregory indicates that according to Neoplatonism, "the whole universe is a single living organism, all its parts linked by a spiritual harmony and sympathy."[135] Their essence is the same and comes from

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[132] Ibid., 124.

[133] Ibid., 27.

[134] Ibid., 26.

[135] Ibid., 13.

the ultimate source of existence, The One, which is present in all beings and in a way connects them all, yet not being any of them. However, this understanding of grand unity does not contradict the individuality and uniqueness of beings. As Gregory exemplifies:

> …similarly, many eyes look in the same direction, and all are filled with the sight, though the object of the sight is separate because of the difference between the organs. In just the same way, what is capable of ensoulment will possess itself of soul, and again another and another will draw from the same source.[136]

According to this understanding, the diversity within the material universe caused by the embodiment of the individual souls emanated based on the archetypes within the Intellect do not possess a challenge for the unity in the same way unity does not challenge individuality. The reason for this is possibly the Divine laws of creation and the understanding "that it is always true that unity results (inevitably due to the ontology of the universe) even if composed of opposites."[137] Gerson explains the Neoplatonic universe's unity using the term "virtually."[138] In his essay titled *Plotinus on Logos* he provides multiple definitions of the term. One of the most applicable ones to this study's framework is the definition that indicates that "an entity is virtually all of its epistemic appearances."[139] In

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[136] Ibid., 61.

[137] Ibid., 71.

[138] Gerson "Plotinus on *logos*," 18.

[139] Ibid., 18.

the Neoplatonic understanding of being, “x is virtually y” or “y is virtually x” since all the beings emanated from a single source, The One.[140] Based on this, a level of reality is virtually all the levels of reality descending from it, and thus “The One is virtually all things.”[141]

Therefore, it is possible for one to observe hierarchy, duality, and unity in different components and levels of the Neoplatonic conception of the universe and between them. While these concepts are mistaken for each other in some cases since there is no clear separation between them, in some cases, it is possible to think of them as challenging each other. Yet, according to the Neoplatonic worldview, the Divine order of the universe provided by *logos* is like a perfect machine with each and every component and part being in harmony with each other and with the whole. As a result of these, it is possible to observe and trace these three concepts within different scales and different levels of reality, from the whole universe to a single human being, in the same basic manners. This worldview introduces the idea of a microcosm, which is crucially important for understanding the relationship of humans with nature and their relationship with their products, including architectural works.

2.3. Replicating the Divine Work: Perception of Architecture as Microcosm

Although none of the Neoplatonic, or even Platonic, texts directly indicate the conception of architectural works as microcosms, the idea of the humans' effort to replicate the divine creation in his products is discussed

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[140] Ibid., 18.

[141] Ibid., 24.

both by Plato and later Neoplatonists.[142] Maximus the Confessor has the first known commentary, dating the 7th Century, that relates an architectural work to cosmos in terms of symbolism.[143] Yet, his commentary is particular to the symbolism of the Byzantine church, and he does not discuss the motives of creating such symbolism, like Plato discussed for literary works in his *Literary Theory*.[144] Thus, it is significant to discuss this theory and the Neoplatonic approach to replicating divine creation in order to understand the possible incentives of this urge. Only by understanding these incentives, it is possible to discuss the feasibility of the microcosm idea for the architectural works. However, before arguing the applicability of this idea to architectural works, it is essential to clarify the term "microcosm" used in this study.

It is possible to define microcosmic models as beings with the same basic ontological properties as the macrocosm. In other words, they are less perfect models of the universe, the macrocosm. It is argued in this study that tracing the concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity in the microcosmic models is a reliable method to compare them to the macrocosm. As an example of this methodology, the human being, one of the most mentioned microcosms in the Neoplatonic texts, is be examined briefly.

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[142] For a brief cover of different approaches to microcosm idea by Plato, Aristotle, Proclus and so on see Motta, "Putting Cosmogony into Words,"

[143] Maximus comments on the symbolism of the church in his work titled *Mystagogia*. For further information see Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 385. It is also discussed in *3.2. Significance of Middle Byzantine Churches as a Manifestation of Neoplatonic Understanding*

[144] See Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium* and Motta, "Putting Cosmogony into Words,"

The human consists of the duality of soul and body, as discussed previously. Since the intelligible beings are in higher order than the material beings, the human soul, which is a part of the universal soul, is prior and hierarchically superior to the body, made out of matter. In addition, although there is a hierarchical separation between the soul and the body, the two are united and in perfect harmony, thanks to the divine laws of ontology.[145] This examination displays that humans are microcosmic models of the universe and possess its characteristics on a smaller scale and in a less perfect way.

Moreover, another idea about humans is also important to suggest that architectural works be considered microcosms. As Anna Motta indicates, there is an anonymous text written in Alexandria called *Prolegomena.*[146] *Prolegomena* discusses the Neoplatonic doctrines and contains commentaries on the ancient doctrines, mainly Platonism.[147] There is an idea in this text that mentions a metaphorical “friendship” between Plato and the deity.[148] It is possible to describe this concept as one friend following each other in his works and products. When considered the hierarchical relationship, it only makes sense for Plato to be the friend who follows the steps of The One. This metaphorical saying refers to the humans' desire “to follow the example of God and his accomplishment of

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[145] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 80-82.

[146] Motta, “Putting Cosmogony into Words,” 123.

[147] Ibid., 123-124.

[148] Ibid., 120.

the divine work" in their products but in a less perfect way.[149] Therefore, this idea is probably wishing humans to reproduce the act of creation that started with The One in their own works.

Furthermore, Motta explains that The Literary Theory of Plato displays how he considered his literary works as microcosms that in pace to replicate the order and characteristics of the universe and strive to get closer and closer to its perfection.[150] When it is considered that the metaphor of friendship of Plato and The One was known in Neoplatonist Alexandria, it is highly possible that the microcosm understanding in The Literary Theory of Plato was also known. Based on this hypothesis and the Neoplatonic approach to human beings as microcosms, this study claims that it is possible to consider the Byzantine and Seljuk works of architecture, together with the ones from many other traditions, as microcosmic models since they display the concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity in various aspects.

2.4. Significance of Geometry and Geometry as a Tool for the Application of Hierarchy, Duality, and Unity in Architectural Design

It is possible to trace these concepts in the two and three-dimensional arrangement and configuration of the architectural spaces regarding geometry. In addition, they are traceable in the architectural decoration consisting of metaphysical figures and abstracted geometrical patterns. Geometry is conceivably a crucial design tool in many cases, including the architectural traditions selected for this study. For the Byzantine and

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[149] Ibid., 120.

[150] Ibid., 120.

Seljuk architectures, it is possible to claim that geometry had meanings beyond practical as an organizer of design. This role probably passed into these traditions and cultures through the Neoplatonic ideas carrying the ancient Euclidian/Platonic approach to geometry. Neoplatonism and its precursor Platonism have excessively dealt with geometry since it was considered proof of the perfection of the universe, the macrocosm.[151]

In the medieval age, geometrical studies and knowledge were considered mandatory to understand The One and the cosmos emanated from it. This understanding has probably identified geometrical perfection with the cosmos' creation.[152] It is possible to indicate that the medieval people considered the geometric proportions and numeric arrangements, which provided organization to the pre-creation chaotic mass, to be the reason in the background of the perfect harmony and order in the universe.[153] The practice of geometry in the fields like geography and especially astronomy by the interdisciplinary medieval scientists and philosophers are possible indicators of how they tried to understand the perfection of the cosmos using geometrical studies.[154] Also, medieval scientists harmonized geometry and other sciences with the esotericism in their religions in their

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[151] Ann Powell, “Neoplatonism and Geometry in Islamic Art.” *Art History*, 21, no. 1 (1998): 135.

[152] Jan Opsomer, “In defence of geometric atomism: explaining elemental properties,” in *Neoplatonism and the Philosophy of Nature*, ed. James Wilberding and Christoph Horn (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2012), 147-149.

[153] Ibid., 147-150.

[154] Ibid., 147-150.

pursuit of understanding themselves and the cosmos. One of the significant human products that this worldview and harmonization of sciences reflected is arguably the maps. Peter Whitfield claims that the maps were produced with religious imagery throughout the medieval age until the Copernican Revolution.[155] It is possible to define these earth and cosmos maps as the products of the harmonization of mysticism and geometric sciences.

On the one hand, scientific studies based on the heritage of ancient geometry, geography, and astrology enabled medieval scientists to examine the known lands of the Earth and the visible celestials, or in other words, the Euclidian Space.[156] On the other hand, the esotericism of their religions enabled them to make assumptions related to the metaphysical universe, beyond the measurable space, and God. Containing information about both of these aspects, most medieval maps depict the Earth as limited, surrounded by water, and measurable yet with secondary importance.[157] (Fig. 4 & 5) Jurgen Schulz states that:

> Cartographic historians are agreed that the main function of these maps was the representation of religious mysteries and history, rather than recording of precise geographical facts.[158]

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[155] Peter Whitfield, “The Earth and the Heavens: The Art of the Mapmaker: British Library - Picturing Places,” The British Library. The British Library, December 8, 2016. https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/earth-and-the-heavens#.

[156] David Woodward, "Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 75, no. 4 (1985): 511. Accessed July 2, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2563109.

[157] Woodward, "Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps," 515.

Based on this statement, it is not surprising to find the depictions of lands in medieval maps with general outlines rather than detailed calculations that reflect geographical reality.[159] In this sense, the metaphysical realms are also generally depicted on these maps with scenes that arguably highlight the glory of God in his realm and placing the humans in their deserved humble place in the grand scene of the universe. It is possible to relate this effort to the understanding of the afterlife in medieval monotheistic religions. This understanding was likely to be one of the main reasons in the background of how the Earth is depicted as secondary and the cosmos and the metaphysical Divine realm is defined as primary in most medieval maps. (Fig. 4 & 5)

Even though there are certain reinterpretations, the roots of these medieval approaches are suggested to be transmitted from ancient Greek culture by Neoplatonism. How Neoplatonism nurtured medieval Christianity and Islam is discussed in the related chapters of the study. However, it is essential to examine the attributed role of geometry as the tool of creation in the medieval worldview, conceivably reflected in the maps as well. Ancient ideas such as Plato's demiurge as the artisan of the universe and Aristotle's prime mover are possibly reinterpreted in the two monotheistic religions.[160] It is possible to observe the attribution of these

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[158] Cited in Woodward, "Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps," 514.

[159] Woodward, "Reality, Symbolism, Time, and Space in Medieval World Maps," 510.

[160] Whitfield, "The Earth and the Heavens: The Art of the Mapmaker: British Library - Picturing Places,"

roles sometimes directly to God, and sometimes to heavenly beings such as angels in the depictions of the medieval maps.[161] (Fig. 4 & 5) Thus, it is possible to claim that the approach to geometry in the medieval age was embedded with religious mysticism as well.

Neoplatonism was probably one of the most influential sources in the background of this medieval approach due to its role as the transmitter of ancient knowledge. In Ancient Greece, notable names like Euclid, Plato and Aristotle studied geometry concerning the cosmos and paid enormous attention to it. In the seventh book of his great dialogue titled Republic, Plato states that "geometry is the knowledge of the eternally existent," which probably refers to The One as well as the universe it created.[162] Besides, in another dialogue of his titled *Timaeus*, he indicates that "God began by first making them (material beings based on elements) out into shapes by means of forms and numbers."[163] Moreover, he also states that other components of the material universe such as time, planets, and their orbits, which are in a great harmony, "came into existence for the determining and preserving of the numbers."[164] This tradition of using geometry as a tool to explain the structure of the universe continued with Neoplatonists after them as well.

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[161] Whitfield, "The Earth and the Heavens: The Art of the Mapmaker: British Library - Picturing Places,"

[162] Plato, *The Republic*, VII.

[163] Plato, *Timaeus,* 53b.

[164] Plato, *Timaeus,* 38c.

> …In this respect mathematic objects are not inherent in material objects rather they are perfect ideas that reflect to the material world as line, square, circle, number etc. in the world of becoming… This is also interpreted as material world is a reflection of mathematical objects and mathematical objects are reflections of the world of forms.[165]

One of the essential theories of Plato that possibly affected the Neoplatonic doctrines and commented by Neoplatonist the most is his geometrical explanation of the elements, the Platonic Solids.

Plato's approach to geometry is considering the geometry itself as sacred "not because God (The One) constructed the world out of these forms (Platonic solids) but because they collectively embody the Divine blueprint underlying all levels of existence, including the physical universe."[166] He was likely inspired by a Jewish mystical tradition called Kabbalah, in which The Tree of Life, consisting of numbers in a staged model, was accepted as God's blueprint for Creation.[167] This understanding, transferred via the means of Pythagoreans, possibly affected not only Plato's approach to geometry but also his idea of God as the Craftsman since he believed that "craftsman set out to impact distinct configuration to the pre cosmic mass by means of shapes and numbers."[168] Therefore, Plato suggested a

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[165] Deniz Özden, "Theory and Practice of Geometry in Medieval Architecture in the Middle East (10th-14th Centuries)." MA Thesis (Middle East Technical University, 2015), 17.

[166] Stephen M. Phillips, "The Sacred Geometry of the Platonic Solids." *Smphillips.* http://www.smphillips.mysite.com/pdfs/Article03.pdf (Accessed February 27, 2021), 1.

[167] Ibid., 1.

[168] Opsomer, "In defence of geometric atomism," 147.

systematic creation based on geometry that defines the characteristics of elements and their relationships. In this system which is based on the three concepts, Platonic solids, which are stereo metric figures called polyhedra, were associated with the four elements and the matter of celestials.[169] Tetrahedron represents the fire, octahedron represents the air, icosahedron represents the water, and hexahedron represents the earth, while the fifth polyhedron, the dodecahedron, is generally accepted as being related to the matter of celestials.[170] (Fig. 6) However, Plato thought of the polyhedra as the symbols for the elements and suggested that elements were created from smaller particles in the polyhedra shapes.[171]

According to him, the creation system starts with the elementary triangles, which are the first constituent.[172] This idea was possibly formulated under the impact of the Pythagorean system.[173] According to this system, Tetractys are the first shapes which are triangular array of ten dots arranged in four rows symbolizing "the ten Divine names as the counterpart of the outer and inner forms of the Tree of Life, the universal blueprint."[174] Tetractys were considered as the key that unlocks

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[169] Ibid., 148.

[170] Ibid., 148.

[171] Ibid., 148.

[172] Ibid., 148.

[173] Phillips, "The Sacred Geometry of the Platonic Solids," 12.

information about reality encoded in sacred geometry.[175] Therefore, what Plato did was explain the further stages by unlocking the code of creation through triangular particles.[176] In the second level after them, by different combinations of the elementary triangles, complex surfaces, which are the basic shapes of triangles, squares, and pentagons, are created.[177] On the next level, these surfaces combine with identical ones to create three-dimensional polyhedra, Platonic Solids.[178] Then, the combination of many of the same polyhedra constructs the four elements.[179] Finally, as the last step of creating matters, the four elements mix in different portions.[180](Fig. 7) Moreover, as Plato also indicates, there are higher principles prior to the elementary triangles, which are only known to God and some privileged humans.[181] He suggests a part-whole relationship between each level, and this relationship between them is based on composition, except for the higher principles.[182] In other words, the matter presumably

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[174] Ibid., 3.

[175] Ibid., 3.

[176] Ibid., 3-4.

[177] Opsomer, “In defence of geometric atomism,” 148.

[178] Ibid., 148.

[179] Ibid., 148.

[180] Ibid., 148.

[181] Ibid., 148.

"received shape utilizing form and numbers" [183] For the fifth polyhedron, Plato's approach is a little different than the rest of the four. In Timaeus, he writes that "God used it (dodecahedron) for the whole, making a pattern of animal figures thereon."[184] Even though this translation from Ancient Greek seems like it does not make sense in terms of the creation understanding of neither Plato nor Neoplatonist, Ronald Kotrč states that in his philological study A.E. Taylor interprets that this phrase was used for Zodiacs rather than actual animals.[185] However, in terms of its clear function, Kotrč indicates that "the question of what utility, if any, it has in the formation and continuing function of the material universe is perhaps not wholly amenable to solution."[186] Although Plato or any of the Neoplatonists clearly states its role in creating the whole, it is mostly presumed as the matter of celestials, which is composed of the combination of the other four elements. As Kotrč further claims;

> The dodecahedron visibly incorporates in itself all the surfaces that combine and recombine to form the other four regular solids of Platonic physics. In so doing, it constitutes a geometrical matrix in the formation of the physical universe.

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[182] Ibid., 149.

[183] Ibid., 157.

[184] Ronald F. Kotrč, "The Dodecahedron in Plato's "Timaeus"." *Rheinisches Museum Für Philologie* 124, no. 3/4 (1981), 212.

[185] Ibid., 212.

[186] Ibid., 216.

As a result of these approaches, it is possible to point out geometry as an outcome of The One's perfection and beauty. The universe, created through geometry, is its manifestation rather than a presupposition of perfection and beauty.

Latter, Aristotle confronted the identification of the elements with Platonic Solids based on qualities and suggested that “qualitative properties themselves; hot and cold, dry and wet, are primitive facts of physics since they explain the material composition of the world.”[187] This understanding arguably diminishes the role of geometry and mathematics as creation tools. In the Neoplatonic tradition, Proclus, who deals with geometry and mathematical issues the most in the Neoplatonic school of philosophy, offered an interpretation of Plato’s ideas to reject the ones offered by Aristotle.[188] Proclus apparently returned to the Pythagorean roots of Plato’s idea and reinterpreted them to suggest that polyhedra are “active and creative forces of nature.”[189] He believed that;

> They are present and lend structure and motion to the world. Yet contrary to mathematical entities, which are devoid of motion and life, the polyhedra are active and demiurgic principles.[190]

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[187] Opsomer, “In defence of geometric atomism,” 154.

[188] Ibid., 156.

[189] Ibid., 168.

[190] Ibid., 168.

Thus, it is possible to argue that based on the ideas of Proclus, Neoplatonism considered elements, which are the components of matter, as created from three-dimensional geometric particles, the polyhedra, proceed from the demiurge into the different levels of the universe.[191] These geometric particles are the constituent of the beings and active and mobile entities that result in the material universe's motion.[192] According to Neoplatonism, this understanding is likely to prove the necessity of geometry for the harmony in the universe and its creation. It should not be surprising that the amount of importance paid to geometry by artisans for their designs, in which he seeks to get as close as possible to the Divine perfection via replication. In addition to this, Özden also indicates Platonic mind set considers geometry, especially "the mathematical object as an intermediary between metaphysics and material world."[193] Therefore, it would not be groundless to point out the geometry both as a tool to read these architectural spaces and decorations and demonstrate the Neoplatonic concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity in the macrocosm and the microcosm.

Moreover, the transformation of these concepts into architectural design elements is conceivably a process of abstraction. The polyhedra have been accepted as beautiful, divine, and perfect geometrical shapes since they are the only three-dimensional shapes with equal sides.[194]

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[191] Ibid., 168.

[192] Ibid., 168.

[193] Deniz Özden, "Theory and Practice of Geometry in Medieval Architecture in the Middle East (10th-14th Centuries)." 19.

Nevertheless, in addition to the polyhedra, there is one three-dimensional shape that Plato himself paid great significance to and later by Neoplatonists: the sphere. Plato considers the sphere as the symbol of the celestial heavens, the universe and places it above any other.[195] He states in Timaeus that;

> …now for that Living Creature which is designed to embrace within itself all living creatures the fitting shape will be that which comprises within itself all the shapes there are; wherefore He wrought it into a round, in the shape of a sphere, equidistant in all directions from the center to the extremities, which of all shapes is the most perfect and the most self-similar, since He deemed that the similar is infinitely fairer than the dissimilar. And on the outside round about, it was all made smooth with great exactness, and that for many reasons.[196]

Thus, it is possible to categorize these solid geometric shapes into two types. One is the polyhedra that occur with the demiurge. It constitutes and symbolizes the material beings in the physical universe, and the other is the sphere that symbolizes perfectness in the universe and the creation itself. Since the intelligible universe is the perfect level of the created ones, it is possible to associate the sphere with it. Moreover, it is possible to inscribe all of the five regular solids, representing the basic elements and the matter of celestials, in a sphere.[197] (Fig. 8) When the volumetric sizes

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[194] Phillips, “The Sacred Geometry of the Platonic Solids,” 1-12.

[195] Plato, *Timaeus*, 32c-34b.

[196] Ibid., 33b.

[197] Kotrč, "The Dodecahedron in Plato’s "Timaeus"," 215.

and bodies of all five polyhedra are compared, it is possible to state that the dodecahedron is the closest to the sphere's volume.[198] Based on this geometrical analysis, Kotrč argues that the dodecahedra hold "an intermediate position between the four polyhedra of the elements and the figure of the sphere."[199]

From this point of view, it is possible to argue that the geometrical shapes and patterns used in various aspects of the architectural design have been generated from polyhedra employing abstraction, primarily due to their role in God's creation of the universe and the acceptance of them as geometrically perfect.[200] Daniela Bertol claims that it is possible to trace variations derived from the regular convex polyhedra not only in geometry but also in art, architecture, and design by indicating that "the symmetry related properties make polyhedra of great interest in architecture and product design.[201] In addition, as discussed in Plato's system of geometric creation of the elements, the two-dimensional geometry, the element triangles, are prior to the three-dimensional polyhedra and thus closer to The One in the hierarchical order. Based on this reason, it is possible to consider abstraction as an urge to return to what is prior and thus higher in reality. Abstraction of the three-dimensional polyhedra and the sphere

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[198] Ibid., 215.

[199] Ibid., 215.

[200] Daniela Bertol, "The Parametric Making of Geometry: The Platonic Solids," *International Journal of Rapid Manufacturing*, 6 (2016), 34-35.

[201] Ibid., 34-35.

were probably used as a tool to create two-dimensional organizations and patterns both for the architectural plans and the decorations. This abstraction is possibly a symbolic representation of the spiritual journey inwards to achieve the reunion of the soul with The One. This understanding also matches Özden's idea of geometry being the mediator between the intelligible and material.

Furthermore, as a part of the understanding of replicating The One's work, it is possible to suggest that geometric patterns and organizations used in architectural design are abstracted copies of nature, The One's primary work. In his book titled *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style,* Wilhelm Worringer explains two types of decoration: geometric style and vegetal ornament.[202] He claims that "both ornamental styles are actually devoid of a natural model, notwithstanding the fact that their elements are to be found in nature" by suggesting that similar to the vegetal ornament which gives "not the plant itself but the regularity of its outwards structure, the geometric style gives the structural law of inanimate matter, but not the matter itself in its outward appearance."[203] Although it is not as evident as the vegetal one, this explanation displays that the geometric decoration is arguably a reflection of the "structure of nature" within the Neoplatonic mindset. Also, this should not be limited to the decorative program, but it is also possible to apply it to the plan organizations and volumetric configurations of the buildings as this study claims and discusses with the case studies in the following chapters.

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[202] Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, 1997), 59-60.

[203] Ibid., 59-60.

Therefore, based on these discussions regarding the importance paid to geometry by the Neoplatonists, it is possible to state that the universe was created through geometry, starting from its smallest particles. According to the Neoplatonic mind set, from elementary triangles to all material beings, which are the different mixtures of elements, the physical creation is again a perfect order based on hierarchy, duality, and unity, which are organized and arranged by divine *logos* through geometry. Thus, the humans who wanted to get closer to The One and cherish its supremacy by replicating its work apparently paid a tremendous amount of significance to geometry in their architectural works, primarily through abstraction. The geometry was conceivably used as a tool to reflect the ontological characteristics of the universe, the three concepts, in the volumetric configuration, plan organization, decorative program, and precise craftsmanship in architectural work both physically and symbolically.

As concluding remarks, Neoplatonism is conceivably too big of lore to cover in a single chapter. Yet, as the background information for the remaining parts of this study, this chapter's brief covering of Neoplatonic doctrines regarding God, the creation, the universe, human beings, and the relationship between these is arguably sufficient. This study claims that the doctrines discussed in this chapter probably penetrated and influenced Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Islam. As a result of Neoplatonism's influence on the religious culture of post-Neoplatonism in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, it is possible for these esoteric ideas to be reflected in architectural works that were possibly considered as microcosms. Besides, the adaptation of the Neoplatonic doctrines into two monotheistic religions apparently processed differently. These ideas were probably reinterpreted differently by Christianity and

Islam to adapt and fit them into their religion's belief system, as discussed in the following chapters.

With regard to these, the study argues that Middle Byzantine Churches and 13th Century Seljuk Architecture are suitable examples not only to trace the reflections of Neoplatonic ideas which are discussed in this chapter in the architecture of medieval Anatolia but also display the differences in the reinterpretations of these ideas within the two religions.

CHAPTER 3

REPERCUSSIONS OF NEOPLATONISM IN BYZANTINE ARCHITECTURE

Beginning with the Byzantine side of the discussion is probably an accurate methodology to provide a chronological narrative from several aspects. The interactions of Byzantine theology, culture, and community with Neoplatonism are before the Seljuks' interactions in chronological order. As a matter of fact, some of the ideas possibly penetrated Muslim theology through Christian studies under Neoplatonic influence. Even though these are not discussed deeply in this study, when the two parts about the impact of Neoplatonic concepts on Byzantine and Seljuk theologies are concerned, the study provides a brief chronological tracing of Neoplatonic impact in Anatolia from the 4th Century to the 13th Century with references to important philosophers from both Christian and Muslim domains. Another aspect is that the case studies of Middle Byzantine Churches in this thesis are selected from the 11th and 12th Centuries, with reasons discussed later in this chapter, which are prior to the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture. The study analyzes architecture in Western and Central Anatolia in terms of Neoplatonism's repercussions over three centuries continuously. However, even though the interactions between the two architectural traditions are discussable, it is possible to mistakenly think it defends the idea that Byzantine architecture is a predecessor of Seljuk architecture. Although the impact of Byzantine tradition on Seljuk architecture in terms of material use and construction techniques is

discussable, they are not part of this study. It is essential to state that this study examines the two traditions based on their own reinterpretations of the Neoplatonic concepts within their respected theologies. This approach is the reason for discussing these two in different chapters, a comparison of them is also provided to demonstrate both the different reinterpretations and the different architectural applications.

This chapter starts with a brief history of Neoplatonism and Byzantine theology. It introduces philosophers whose doctrines are referenced when needed in the latter parts of the chapter, especially while discussing the liturgy and various characteristics of Middle Byzantine Churches regarding the traces of Neoplatonic concepts in the form that these philosophers adapted them to Christianity. The chapter mainly traces these reflections not only in plan organizations and volumetric configurations but also in decorative programs of particular case studies selected from the 11th and 12th Century Constantinople. The study particularly focuses on the Middle Byzantine church examples from the capital of the Empire. The artistic production including the church architecture in Constantinople was arguably the initial and most complete manifestations of the Neoplatonic influence in the intellectual production at the center of the Orthodox Christianity. A general overview of the intellectual production at the capital is discussed in the next part titled *3.1. Impact of Neoplatonism on Byzantine Theology and Worldview.* It is possible to speculate that the peripheral church examples were not enhanced with these intellectual, philosophical and theological studies conducted in Constantinople within the timeframe of 11th and 12th Centuries. However, any further claim regarding the peripheral examples would require more study and examination and would be out of the scope of this thesis. As demonstrated later in the chapter with the mostly geometrical analyses of the case

studies, it is possible to observe a solid parallelism with the increase of the Neoplatonic doctrines in the intellectual production in Constantinople and the possible repercussions of these in the churches from the capital of the Empire.

Moreover, formerly dealt hierarchy, duality, and unity are the concepts that define the study's approach to the cases in the mentioned aspects.

3.1. Impact of Neoplatonism on Byzantine Theology and Worldview

The relationship between Neoplatonism and the Byzantine Empire is presumably an organic one due to Alexandria and Constantinople's closeness. Indeed, Alexandria itself was a town in Byzantine lands itself for centuries, even though it was under the heavy influence of Hellenistic culture. This part briefly covers the Neoplatonic impact in Byzantine theology and community by highlighting the essential philosophers from Byzantine Empire and their works in a chronological narrative. These names are mainly Porphyry (233-305), St. Augustine (354-430), Proclus (412-485), Pseudo Dionysius (late 5^{th} – early 6^{th} Centuries), Maximus the Confessor (580-662), Michael Psellos (1018-1078) and John Italos (1025-1085). It is not a part of this study to examine the doctrines and ideas of each of these philosophers profoundly, but rather the purpose here is to follow the path of Neoplatonism within Byzantine Empire over nine centuries in order to trace the Neoplatonic impact in theology, community and sacred architecture of Byzantines. The significant works of these philosophers and their significant ideas are also briefly covered in this part to explain the reinterpretations and adaptations of Neoplatonism in Byzantine Orthodox Christianity.

Since the Orthodox Christians of the Byzantine Empire were against the practices and doctrines of the pagans, and these were mostly forbidden in the Empire, it is hard to trace the interactions between Neoplatonism and Byzantine theology, especially in the earlier periods.[204] One of the important names of these very early periods is possibly Porphyry, the presumed editor of the works of Plotinus to compromise Enneads. He has started a school in Byzantine Empire on philosophy, where he taught the Neoplatonic doctrines.[205] This interaction was probably the first penetration of Neoplatonism into Byzantine philosophy and theology. Another one of the influential names in these earlier periods is possibly St. Augustine. He was a pagan for most of his life and studied the doctrines of Neoplatonists, mainly Plotinus, before he converted to Christianity.[206] Coleman states that after he studied with the Bishop Ambrose of Milan, there was a period when St. Augustine worked on the fusion of Neoplatonism and Christianity before accepting the orthodox path of Christianity.[207] Even though St. Augustine was known as a respected philosopher, he was probably not as effective as Porphyry in Byzantine Lands since he mainly studied in Europe, especially in Milan.

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[204] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism,* no page number.

[205] Ibid., no page number.

[206] Janet Coleman, "The Christian Platonism of St Augustine," in *Platonism and the English Imagination*, ed. Anna Baldwin and Sarah Hutton, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 28.

[207] Ibid., 29.

Nevertheless, his studies are crucial for the Christian lore and theology in general, regardless of the region or sect, particularly in terms of how Christians should have perceived Christ, his relationship to God and people, and the church's conception for the Christian community.[208] His ideas on Christian Holy Trinity, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, are vital since they are possible adaptations of the three Neoplatonic principles.[209] Moreover, he has dealt with the issues regarding the virtue and the man's reunion with God in his studies, which was probably an influential factor for The Byzantine Rite, especially the commentaries of Dionysius and Maximus, as a liturgy of virtue that prepares the soul for the ultimate reunion with God after death.[210] Thus, Porphyry and St. Augustine are essential in terms of initial contacts based mainly on the ideas or reinterpretations of the studies of Plotinus. Yet, for the Neoplatonic impact in Byzantine Empire, Proclus was likely to be more influential than any other Neoplatonist with his impact on many significant Christian philosophers in the Empire.

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[208] For his impact on Christian theology in more detail see Coleman, "The Christian Platonism of St Augustine."

[209] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 177.

[210] For further information see Christian Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon: The Entrance to and the Exit from the Church in the First Three Greek Liturgical Commentaries (ca 500 - 730 ce)," in *Sacred Thresholds: The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity*, ed. Emilie M. van Opstall, (Leiden: Brill, 2018). For the original sources see *On the Celestial Hierarchy* and *On Mystical Theology* by Pseudo Dionysius and *Mystagogia* by Maximus the Confessor.

Proclus was a citizen of the Byzantine Empire and born in Constantinople.[211] It is possible to point him out as the most important transmitter of Hellenistic culture into Byzantine Empire before the Iconoclasm period since he studied both in Alexandria and in the School of Athens, founded by Plato himself.[212] His ideas mainly follow Plotinus' doctrines in general, yet he also studied Aristotle closely and offered ideas on the nature of being, the elements, their properties, and mathematical approaches.[213] His prime work is the *Elements of Theology,* in which he mainly discusses these issues, as some of his ideas are mentioned in the previous chapter of this study.[214] Moreover, it is important to state that he was not a Christian but a pagan and conceivably a true Neoplatonist, different than the rest of the names mentioned here who were Christians and studied with the possible goal of nurturing the Christian theology under the influence of Neoplatonism. When their studies are analyzed, it is possible to indicate that they were mostly commenting on Proclus. Two of the critical names among the ones influenced by Proclus and the other before them are Pseudo-Dionysius and Maximus the Confessor. Both were apparently among the most significant philosophers before the

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[211] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 155.

[212] Ibid., 155.

[213] Sergei Mariev and Monica Marchetto, "The Divine Body of the Heavens," in *Byzantine Perspectives on Neoplatonism*, ed. Sergei Mariev, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc. 2017), 36-41.

[214] Magda Mtchedlidze, "Two Conflicting Positions Regarding the Philosophy of Proclus in Eastern Christian Thought of the Twelfth Century," in *Byzantine Perspectives on Neoplatonism*, ed. Sergei Mariev, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc. 2017.), 137-138.

Iconoclasm period. They studied humans' relationship to God and the reunion of the soul with God and created the first comprehensive commentaries on the Byzantine Rite.[215] Thus, it is possible to claim that the two's doctrines are significant to demonstrate the perception of the church space and the liturgy concerning the concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity not only in their lifetimes but also in the following centuries, including the 11th and 12th centuries.

For the importance of Dionysius, it is possible to indicate that he was highly influenced by the Origen of Alexandria, Proclus, and Plotinus, so it was possible for him to interact with the Neoplatonic texts from Alexandria, too.[216] His four surviving treaties are *On the divine names, On the celestial hierarchy, On the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and On Mystical theology*.[217] It is evident even from the titles of the works that he was dealing with the Neoplatonic concepts of hierarchy in the universe and esoterism in the background of the religion in general. Ivanovic states that he developed "the system of the two hierarchies, celestial and ecclesiastical," the counterpart of the duality of material and intelligible universes from the Neoplatonism in the Christian Theology.[218] According to him, "a hierarchy

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[215] Nicholas N. Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium: Art, Liturgy and Symbolism in Early Christian Churches*, (London & NY: I.B. Tauris & Co, 2014), 385.

[216] Filip Ivanovic, "Images of Invisible Beauty in the Aesthetic Cosmology of Dionysius the Areopagite," in *Perceptions of the Body and Sacred Space in Late Antiquity and Byzantium*, (London: Routledge, 2018), 11.

[217] Ibid., 11.

[218] Ibid., 11.

is a sacred order, a state of understanding, and an activity approximating as closely as possible to the divine."[219] The emphasis of Dionysius on the concepts of hierarchy and duality is apparently a general characteristic of the Neoplatonic reinterpretations in Byzantine theology and community.

Later, Maximus the Confessor was highly influenced by Dionysius and contributed to Byzantine philosophy, especially with his commentaries on the liturgy and church. Patricios states that his main work, *Mystagogia*, was the first full-scale interpretation of the liturgy in Byzantine Empire.[220] Moreover, "he is also the first commentator to give an interpretation of the church as a building as well as of the liturgy that is celebrated in it."[221] Although there are differences between the narratives of the liturgy created by Dionysius and Maximus, both were presumably composed under Neoplatonic influences. The details of the Byzantine Rite are the subject of another chapter in the study.

Byzantine Rite was a layered liturgy for both philosophers with different roles assigned to the different classes in the community and performed to prepare the soul for the journey after death towards God by symbolically practicing the journey itself. It is even possible to find parallelism between the physical practice of the Rite with the Neoplatonic rituals, as well as the relationship of the ritual to the sacred space.[222] Thus, understanding the

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[219] Ibid., 11.

[220] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 385.

[221] Ibid., 385.

practice of liturgy in the church space and the meaning in the background of it is highly significant to understand the sacred church space and architecture. Maximus' studies is arguably an important source for this point, too, since he comments on the church space frequently in his studies about liturgy and describes it as "composed of stones and souls and is an image of the world (the universe) which is made up of things visible and invisible."[223] His understanding was possibly created under the influence of the Neoplatonic idea of the microcosm, which Proclus, whom Maximus was known to read, studied.[224] Therefore, it is possible to point out Dionysius and Maximus as the first two significant figures widely accepted in the Byzantine society and elite at their time. However, their importance is not limited to their time since their ideas on the order of the universe, liturgy and church have become influential for centuries. Their influence is traceable, especially in the period after Iconoclasm in which the state censorship hardens not only in the field of art & architecture but also in the field of philosophy.[225] Within this perspective, the state's censorship of the pagan heritage within the Christian Byzantine society was likely to be the reason that triggers the return to a more orthodox

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[222] For further information on Neoplatonic ritual and its effects on the sacred space see M. Lucia Tissi, "Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers," in *Sacred Thresholds: The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity*, ed. Emilie M. van Opstall, (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

[223] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 385.

[224] Ibid., 385.

[225] Jesús Garay, "The Reception of Proclus: From Byzantium to the West (an Overview)," in *Byzantine Perspectives on Neoplatonism*, ed. Sergei Mariev, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc. 2017), 154.

understanding of Christianity. It is possible to define these centuries as insufficient in artistic and philosophical production. As a part of this, antique philosophy, including Neoplatonism, mostly disappeared from the Byzantine scene, particularly from the 8th Century to the 11th Century.[226] However, Buchwald indicates that this censorship has resulted in a search for alternatives within the society that has presumably led to the revival of the Hellenistic heritage with the beginning of the 11th Century.[227] Moreover, the conflicts in and out of the Empire until the 11th Century and the drastic decline of the Empire starting with the Latin invasion of Constantinople in 1204 make it possible to define the 11th and 12th Centuries as a more stable period in terms of economics (mostly sustained in the 12th Century), politics, culture and the artistic production. Thus, the atmosphere of the 11th and 12th centuries was probably one of the culminated period of Neoplatonic influence in the Byzantine Empire generally, and particularly in Constantinople, due to this stability, search for alternatives, and the revival of antique cultural heritage as a result of the decrease in censorship of Iconoclasm.[228]

Furthermore, it is possible to argue that the reestablishment of the University of Constantinople at the beginning of the 11th Century was

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[226] Ibid., p. 154.

[227] Hans Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, (UK: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), 310.

[228] Michele Trizio, "The waves of passions and the stillness of the sea: appropriating neoplatonic imagery and concept formation-theory in middle Byzantine commentaries on Aristotle," in *Byzantine Perspectives on Neoplatonism*, ed. Sergei Mariev, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc. 2017), 75.

essential for the revival of Neoplatonism in the Byzantine Empire. The reestablishment of the University in the capital is a significant factor for the claim that the Neoplatonic influence was mostly traceable in Constantinople during that period. It is also possible to point this out as a result of the focus of this thesis on the case studies from Constantinople. Moreover, many influential philosophers of the period, including Michael Psellos and his student John Italos who was the head of the school, studied at the University of Constantinople under the impact of Hellenistic heritage.[229] It is possible to point out especially Psellos as the key figure in this revival due to his embracement of the cultural heritage of the ancients, possibly more than any other before him.[230] His student Italos was also crucial for continuing his teacher's understanding with the future generations of philosophers particularly in the 12th Century, including but not limited to names like Eustratios of Nicaea (1050-1120) and Michael of Ephesus (1070-1129). They also studied at the University of Constantinople.[231] The common point of these names was apparently their effort to carry the philosophical tradition of Porphyry, Proclus, Dionysius, and Maximus before the Iconoclasm era to the 11th and 12th centuries.[232] Their aim was possibly to carry their successors' effort to combine Neoplatonism and Christianity onwards.[233] Based on this, their time was

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[229] Ibid., 75.

[230] Mariev and Marchetto, “The Divine Body of the Heavens,” 49-57.

[231] Trizio, “The waves of passions and the stillness of the sea,” 75.

[232] Ibid., 75.

when the Neoplatonic impact arguably peaked in terms of its impact on the culture and artistic production. It was most widely accepted in society, even if the majority of the society was probably unaware of the pagan heritage. It is also possible to trace the reflections of this theological atmosphere in the art and architecture, especially the sacred architecture, the Middle Byzantine Churches with cross-in-square plans.

3.2. Significance of Middle Byzantine Churches as a Manifestation of Neoplatonic Understanding in Byzantine Culture

The chronological covering of the Neoplatonic impact on the theology and philosophy of Byzantines provides the necessary historical background to understand the significance of the 11th and 12th Centuries in terms of Neoplatonism's influence. The chronological examination of the church architecture's formal evolution in the Empire is vital to show why 11th and 12th century Middle Byzantine churches are conceivably the most potent manifestation of the Neoplatonic concepts in the Byzantine church tradition. This study claims that when the historical evolution of the Byzantine church architecture is considered, the cases from the 11th and 12th centuries are arguably the complete microcosmic models. Andre Grabar claims that there should be no differentiation between the 11th and 12th centuries, especially in terms of the repercussions in art and architecture.[234] He also suggests marking the Crusader Attack in 1204 as the point for a drastic change in the political, social, and economic

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[233] Ibid., 75.

[234] Andre Grabar, *The Art of The Byzantine Empire*, (New York: Greystone Press, 1967), 99.

environment, as well as the togetherness of the 11th and 12th centuries in terms of art and architecture.[235]

The comparative analysis of the early basilica schemed churches and the cross-in-square planned Middle Byzantine churches supports this. Many of the points mentioned in this part are elevated and discussed more deeply regarding three Neoplatonic concepts. This part only aims to demonstrate the reason for selecting the period in terms of architectural significance concerning the Neoplatonic understanding.

Before discussing the historical evolution of the Byzantine church, it is significant to indicate the symbolic perception of the church in Byzantine theology. Although the impact of the liturgy on the formal creation of the church space is discussed in more detail in *3.3. Special Characteristics of Middle Byzantine Churches in Relation to Liturgy*, it is still important to state the symbolic meaning in the background of the church to contextualize the creation of the space and how it evolved both around this meaning. The first full-scale commentary on the perception and meaning of the church space in the Byzantine Empire was again produced by Maximus the Confessor.[236] In *Mystagogia,* he provides detailed information on the liturgy, as mentioned, and discusses how the church was perceived as a building. In the third chapter of his work, he indicates that "…God's holy Church in itself is the symbol of the sensible world as such since it possesses the divine sanctuary as Heaven and the beauty of

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[235] Ibid., 98-100.

[236] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 385.

the nave as Earth."[237] According to him, the sacred space was thought of as a replica of two realms coexisting together. It is possible to suggest that the two universes, intelligible and material, of the Neoplatonic understanding are reflected in Christian theology as the Divine realm and earth.

Moreover, the Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit in Christianity create the Divinity.[238] It is possible to think of the Trinity as the reinterpretation of the three principles of creation, The One, The Intelligence, and the Soul, in the Neoplatonic philosophy.[239] When The Trinity in Christianity is considered, it is possible to indicate that God was among humans as Jesus Christ since he was accepted as God's incarnation.[240] Thus, it only makes sense for the holy church space to be his dwelling on Earth, based on St. Augustine's ideas on Trinity.[241] Even though *Mystagogia* was a commentary produced in the 7th Century, it is possible to interpret that Maximus formulated his views on the church with the influence of the ideas of earlier Neoplatonist Christian philosophers, mainly St. Augustine. Probably, his formulation of the ideas about the church and his comments

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[237] Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogia,* Chapter 3. quoted in Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon," 97.

[238] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 177.

[239] Ibid., 177.

[240] Ibid., 177.

[241] See Gregory, *The Neoplatonists* and Coleman, "The Christian Platonism of St Augustine"

created bases for the meaning of church space in Byzantine theology and effective for the evolution of the church architecture, which has arguably brought more layers of meaning to the sacred space.

Even though Byzantines' early basilica churches contain the division of sacred and profane, it is possible to claim that as the interior space developed with the liturgy, as Thomas F. Mathews indicates, the division has extended towards the interior of the church hierarchically.[242] The precursor of this is traceable in the pagan temples and the rituals mentioned in the Neoplatonic texts. While this is discussed in the following parts of this study regarding the liturgy, it is possible to indicate that the vestibule space, the narthex, was considered a buffer zone between the profane exterior and the nave, and it symbolized the earth.[243] In addition, the nave symbolized the celestial heavens, and the apse symbolized the Divine realm.[244] (Fig. 9) It is possible to claim that this connotation has been the same throughout the Byzantine period, as it is observable not only in the texts of Dionysius and Maximus but also in other philosophers even from the later periods of the Empire, including a theologian named Symeon of Thessaloniki (1381-1429) who indicates that;

> Three spaces of church – bema (apse), naos and narthex – have multiple meanings. The Three signify the Trinity while bema represents what is above the heavens, naos

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[242] Thomas F. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*, (US: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 177-179.

[243] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 398-399.

[244] Ibid., 398-399.

> (nave) the things in heavens and the narthex what is on earth.[245]

Furthermore, since this understanding was possibly the base for the conception of the church space in the Byzantine Empire regardless of the period, it is possible to claim that this has not been lost with the cross-in-square churches rathe this symbolism conceivably has gotten even more robust. Ali Uzay Peker indicates that with the addition of the dome to the church space in Hagia Sophia, the church has gained another symbolic level of being a microcosmic model of the universe, in addition to being shaped by the liturgy.[246] As a possible outcome of the dome's addition in terms of technically and symbolically, the plan schemes of the Byzantine churches have started to become more centralized with the adoption of the cross-in-square scheme in the Middle Byzantine period.[247] With the centralization of the plan, the separation of the periphery spaces (narthex and side aisles) from the central space (nave) has strengthened.[248] (Fig. 10)

Moreover, the addition of the dome and the centralization of the plan arguably enabled the use of purer geometric forms such as sphere and

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[245] Ibid., 399.

[246] Ali Uzay Peker, “Anadolu Bazilika Geleneği ve Selçuklu Anıtsal Mimarisine Etkisi,” in *Anadolu Selçukluları ve Beylikler Dönemi Uygarlığı Vol. 2.*, ed. Ali Uzay Peker ve Kenan Bilici, (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2006), 55-56.

[247] Evangelia Hadjitryphonos, “"Divinity" and "World" Two Spatial Realms in the Byzantine Church,” in *The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. Alexei Lidov, (Moscow: Indrik, 2006), 241.

[248] Ibid., 241-245.

cube, compared to the rectangular volumes of the basilica scheme to create the interior of the church space.[249] Thomas F. Mathews points out the changes in the liturgy in the Middle Byzantine era as one of the main reasons behind this centralization of the Byzantine churches.[250] He indicates that "wherares the medieval liturgy was shaped around a series of appearances (in addition to the passages) …the early Byzantine ceremony was structured around a series of full-scale processional movements."[251] Although the details of these are discussed in *3.3. Special Characteristics of Middle Byzantine Churches in Relation to Liturgy*, Mathews states that this change transformed the liturgy into a "more closed" and "self-contained" character and this reflected as the "withdrawal of the sanctuary from the nave."[252] Thus, it is possible to argue that the longitudinal nave of the early basilica churches that contained the sanctuary and functioned as a stage for the active community transformed into a central place of hold for the more passive community in the Middle Byzantine era. According to him, this centralization allowed the use of pure, stereometric geometric forms in the Middle Byzantine churches, especially in post-iconoclastic cases.[253] When considered within the Neoplatonic perspective, pure geometric forms have a significant meaning

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[249] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 303.

[250] Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*, 177-179.

[251] Ibid., 178.

[252] Ibid., 179

[253] Ibid., 179.

since they were accepted as the creation particles. Even though it would be a bold claim and a difficult one to support, to suggest that these volumetric shapes were used with this particular reason in every case intentionally, it is possible that they were unanimously known in the community as sacred without acknowledging their Neoplatonic roots and therefore used commonly. The studies of Psellos and Italos regarding the Platonic Solids and the Aristotelian fifth element particularly show that the approach to geometry was known in the 11th and 12th centuries in Constantinople, and they were possibly applied in sacred architecture even if it was done unintentionally.[254] As Buchwald indicates, if there was ever a "Platonic architecture," it could have been "achieved by a perfect combination of simple stereometric forms and the inscribed cross church appears to fully meet the requirements."[255] (Fig. 11) In addition to the use of pure geometrical solids, it is possible to consider the 11th and 12th-century cases as the examples in which the central cross-in-square planned church tradition is matured enough to produce its great examples in terms of craftsmanship. Also, technological advancements contribute to the perfection of the churches' volumetric configurations and plan organizations and the quality of their decorative work. Based on these reasons, even though it is possible to observe the employment of cross-in-square plan scheme in earlier centuries, from the 9th Century onwards, this study focuses mainly on the cases from the 11th-12th Century Constantinople in which the typology and tradition of cross-in-square

[254] Mariev and Marchetto, "The Divine Body of the Heavens," 49-62.

[255] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 318.

churches were probably matured and wholly settled per the social, cultural and economic atmosphere of the era.

Therefore, it would be accurate to state that with the transformation to the central church scheme, more layers were added to the symbolic meaning of the church while keeping the meaning of the church sections demonstrated in basilica plans. The addition of the dome and the use of Euclidian/Platonic geometry for plans, volumes, and decoration make it possible to claim that 11th and 12th century Middle Byzantine churches are the complete manifestations of Neoplatonic understanding in sacred architecture of the Empire. It is possible to take this argument further with the examination of specific case studies mainly selected from 11th and 12th century Constantinople in respect to the Neoplatonic concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity in relation to the church liturgy.

3.3. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Spatial Characteristics of the Middle Byzantine Churches in Relation to Liturgy

To trace the reflections of Neoplatonic concepts, this study adopts a methodology of combining the symbolic meaning provided by liturgy with the examination of sacred space concerning geometry. As mentioned in the previous chapter, geometry is crucial for Neoplatonic understanding and apparently for Byzantine mystical theology since significant names like Proclus, Psellos, and Italos all studied ontology with geometry and mathematics.[256] According to them, geometry was the regulator of the

[256] For further information see Opsomer, “In defence of geometric atomism,” Magda Mtchedlidze, “Two Conflicting Positions Regarding the Philosophy of Proclus in Eastern Christian Thought of the twelfth Century,” and Graeme Miles, “Psellos and his Traditions,” in *Byzantine Perspectives on Neoplatonism*, ed. Sergei Mariev, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc. 2017)

universe consisting of hierarchy, duality, and unity in different components at different levels, including the microcosmic models.[257] Hence, the context of this chapter is primarily the geometrical analyses of the selected case studies mainly from Constantinople, namely, Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami) around the 10th-11th Century, The Church of St. Theodosia (Gül Cami) from around 11th Century The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami) from 11th Century, Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) from 11th-12th Century, the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami) from 12th Century, The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) from 12th Century, Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami) from 12th Century and Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami) from 12th Century. The cases are analyzed concerning geometry to trace the repercussions of the three Neoplatonic concepts with their reinterpretations in Byzantine theology. The traces of hierarchy, duality, and unity in volumetric arrangements and plan organizations of the churches support the understanding of the church as a microcosm. In addition to these, the liturgy's role is discussable as another support for the microcosmic understanding with its symbolic meaning. The Byzantine Rite was possibly generated under Neoplatonic impact incorporating its specific symbolic meaning and practice.[258] Before moving on to the geometric examination of the church space, it is imperative to discuss the Neoplatonic roots of the Byzantine Rite to demonstrate how it affected the formation of the church concerning the Neoplatonic concepts. It is also

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[257] Opsomer, “In defence of geometric atomism,” 147-150.

[258] See Tissi, “Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers.” and Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon”.

essential to indicate that the supremacy of one or two of the concepts over the others can be considered a natural outcome of the different interpretations and adaptations of them in Byzantine theology and by the Christian community. As a result, it is possible to observe traces of the concepts in liturgy and sacred architecture to different degrees.

3.3.1. The Byzantine Rite as a Liturgy under Neoplatonic Influence

It is possible to describe The Byzantine Rite briefly as a ritual based on a series of passages and appearances performed by the Christian community led by clergy within the church space. Through these passages, the spiritual ascension of the faithful Christians towards the reunion with God, which happens after death, is reimagined in the sacred church space. The purpose of this ritual is the purification of the soul and preparing it for the ultimate reunion after death by means of increasing its virtue.[259]

Although the Rite is known to have a pre-Byzantine origin, it apparently developed into more advanced versions of symbolic connotations in Constantinople.[260] Based on the commentaries produced in Constantinople, it is possible to understand the 6th and 7th centuries were significant for the Rite's development. It continued to be performed onwards generally the same, despite some practice changes.[261] Dionysius

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[259] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism* , no page number.

[260] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 8th ed., s.v. “The Byzantine Rite.” Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009.

[261] Ibid.

and Maximus, around the 6th Century, arguably produced the most significant ones of these commentaries. It is possible to point them out as the prime sources about the physical practice and the meaning of the Byzantine Rite, not only in their periods but also in the following centuries.[262] Based on various other commentaries and liturgy calendars of Constantinople, it is known that there were several versions of the Rite that performed on different occasions and were differentiated basically according to their length, scale, and hours.[263] It is possible to categorize them as the cathedral rite, observed in Hagia Sophia and monastic rite, yet no further discussion on this topic is a part of this study.

Moreover, it is mentioned earlier that Mathews points out a differentiation between the early Byzantine liturgy and medieval liturgy from the Middle Byzantine period.[264] In his book titled *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries,* Vasileios Marinis indicates that Robert Taft considers the Rite's development in five different phases that overlap with each other "due to the coexisting of the two practices."[265] According to Taft's categorization, it is possible to consider the liturgy in the 11th and 12th centuries as a continuation of the Dionysius' and Maximus' periods, as a part of "the Imperial period which lasted until

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[262] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,*

[263] Vasileios Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 10-12

[264] Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*, 177.

[265] Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries,* 11.

the beginning of the 13th Century."[266] In addition, Marinis also claims that even though the outdoor processions declined in the 7th century, the main characteristics of the Rite were preserved in the following centuries.[267] When the fact that it is not likely to find detailed information from the original sources dating the Iconoclasm era and the afterward, about what was happening inside the churches during the Rite, this study adopts the approach of referencing the commentaries of Dionysius and Maximus as the primary sources together with the modern studies on them.[268] In addition, *The Book of Ceremonies*, a 10th Century work collected and composed by Emperor Constantine VII (095-959), is referenced in this study.[269]

Although it is not mentioned in the original sources, whether commentaries or any other, the Byzantine Rite possibly formed under the impact of Neoplatonic rituals on the imperial showcase of Romans. The common aspects of physical practices, their relation to the settings, and the symbolic meanings probably point out a strong influence. To trace this

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[266] Ibid., 10.

[267] Ibid., 11.

[268] Ibid., 11.

[269] *Constantine Porphyrogennetos: The Book of Ceremonies*, trans. by Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall, (Leiden: Brill. 2012.) It is possible to consider The Book of Ceremonies as a set of detailed protocols and descriptions about religious and secular rituals in the 10th Century Constantinople. It is more like a manual and provides the details about various rituals in different scales. Although it is possible to point it as the prime source of the period regarding how to perform these rituals, it hardly provides any philosophical background and discussions. Therefore, it is occasionally referenced in this study where descriptions about the religious ritual in the church space are addressed.

impact, it is essential to discuss the common aspects, yet it is also essential to demonstrate the differences to explain the adaptation and reinterpretation in Christian belief and how it affected the church space.

The meaning in the background of the pagan ritual is explained in reference to the Neoplatonist two-way process of emanation.[270] As the emanation creates human beings from The One, their ultimate goal is to reverse the creation process to return to The One through virtue.[271] It is believed that this virtue could be gained from the well-being and fulfillment of one's social duties, yet it also required a higher spiritual practice to tame the soul through a series of spiritual ascension.[272] This spiritual ascension was practiced as a ritual by ancient Greek philosophers to get purified and reunite with The One. This ritual is discussed in the Neoplatonic writings in a physical analysis concerning the temple space.[273] M. Lucia Tissi claims that the temple space, which consisted of three interior spaces, namely vestibule, naos, and adyton, was formed, utilizing this practice in Neoplatonic texts.[274] (Fig. 12) According to this understanding, the "journey of the philosopher," as it is called in the original writings, is a ritual

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[270] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 24-38.

[271] Ibid., 24-38.

[272] Ibid.,, 6-12, 24-38 and 94-103.

[273] Tissi, "Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers," 139-140.

[274] For further information see Tissi, "Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers," 139.

starting from the profane, which is the outside of the temple, and reaches to the most sacred, which is “adyton,” the sanctuary within the temple with the cult image.[275] When the fact that the term “adyton,” also refers to the metaphysical place and state of mind in which the philosophers arrive after the spiritual practice, strengthens this understanding.[276] Thus, it is possible to claim that the temple space represented the hierarchical stages of virtue from less virtuous to the ultimate in the descending order of the universe. The parallelism between this symbolism and the symbolism of the church spaces discussed in the previous chapter is hard to overlook. Nevertheless, there are some fundamental differences in symbolism and the liturgies of Neoplatonists and Byzantines.

One of the main differences is the understanding of interior spaces of the church as the earth, the celestial heavens, and the domain of God, or the Divine Realm, which is beyond the universe. It is discussed that Neoplatonists considered imperfection in parallel to the decrease in goodness. As a result, they considered the material universe as the least divine. In Christian adaptation, it is possible to suggest that this has been transformed into the idea of the earth being the place of sins and humans being born as sinners. This idea conceivably affected many Christian beliefs, for example, baptism, including the church's conception and the earth as the bottom stage of the hierarchical order.[277] Despite this

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[275] Ibid., 147-149.

[276] Ibid., 147-149.

[277] Hadjitryphonos, “"Divinity" and "World" Two Spatial Realms in the Byzantine Church,” 245-248.

difference, parallelism could be observed in the plan organization of the pagan temple and the early Byzantine churches, which were based on the basilica scheme. Similar to the series of temple spaces, mentioned as the vestibule, naos, and adyton, early Byzantine basilica churches also had a similar sequence of spaces, namely narthex, nave, and apse. (Fig. 9 & 12) As discussed in the previously, this sequence of interior spaces continued in the more centralized Middle Byzantine churches.

Another significant difference was possibly the belief in the afterlife. The pagan ritual was the spiritual journey itself, ascension to the gods, and it was believed that purification and virtue were on earth; on the other hand, the Byzantine Rite was a symbolic reinterpretation performed in order to purify the souls of the laity and prepare them for the ultimate reunion with God through ascension after death.[278] This ultimate reunion was believed to be only possible for the faithful Christians who lived their earthly life in virtue and according to Christ.[279] Therefore the purpose of the rite was to recreate the hierarchical ascension, which will happen after death, symbolically in the church space, to awake the "interior teacher," as St. Augustine names Christ, through purification and increasing virtue.[280] This concept of St. Augustine is yet another one that presumably has Neoplatonic roots. As mentioned, the term "adyton" in the Neoplatonic

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[278] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism,* no page number. Also see Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 94-103.

[279] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism,* no page number. Also see Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon," and Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 94-103.

[280] Coleman," The Christian Platonism of St. Augustine," 34.

doctrines means the symbolic inner temple within philosophers representing the divine transcendence.[281] Based on these texts that describe the ancient ritual and point out the aim of this spiritual journey as reaching his inner conscious, *adyton*, which is symbolized with the sanctuary of the temple, generally with the guidance of the mentor of the philosopher, called as "teacher," it is probably to draw a parallelism with St. Augustine's idea.[282] Yet, the pagan ritual was a spiritual ascension itself, not the symbolling reprising of it contrary to the Byzantine Rite. In his work titled *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, Dionysius mainly deals with the symbolic meaning of the liturgy representing the reunion with God, which is suitable to be used in order to explain this difference.[283] According to Dionysius' work and later Maximus' studies, contrary to the pagan understanding of union on Earth with The One through the rituals, the Byzantine Christians believed that the true reunion was after death.[284] Therefore liturgy was only the symbolic practice of the ultimate reunion in the afterlife.[285]

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[281] Tissi,"Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers," 147-149.

[282] Ibid., 142.

[283] Ivanovic, "Images of Invisible Beauty in the Aesthetic Cosmology of Dionysius the Areopagite," 11.

[284] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism,* no page number. Also see Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 94-103.

[285] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism,* no page number.

In addition to these, the most striking of the differences was probably in the fundamental of the physical practice due to the role of Jesus Christ in the Christian belief. It possibly had several effects on the formation of the Byzantine Rite. One of them is the symbolism of the apse section as the Divine realm. Since Christ has been accepted as the incarnation of God in the human form, it was possibly not considered a violation of the Divine realm's sacredness to represent it in earthly space. Furthermore, a more significant effect is likely to be that the Byzantine Rite was performed as a community of Christians, contrary to the individual practice of the pagan ritual.[286] In the Rite, the Christian community is led by the archbishop reprising the role of Christ, who has been accepted as the savior and the leader of Christians.[287] To demonstrate the roles of the community and the arch-bishop, it is crucial to analyze the Rite based on Dionysius and Maximus's commentaries.

According to both Byzantine philosophers, the Rite consists of a series of passages, very similar to the journey of a pagan philosopher. However, contrary to it, these movements were not performed individually.[288] In both commentaries, the Rite starts with the gathering of the community in front of the church doors and continues with the passages from outside to narthex, from the narthex to nave, and finally from the nave to the apse.[289]

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[286] For further information see Tissi, “Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers,” and Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon,”

[287] Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon,” 92-101.

[288] See Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries,* 10-24. and Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium, 385.*

With gathering in front of the church, and in some cases in the atrium of the church, the community starts to feel the liturgy's holistic atmosphere, which starts with the opening of the church doors. Based on the texts about the initial stage of the liturgy narrated by Dionysius and Maximus, the first transition from the outside to the narthex is when the community steps into the sacred by leaving the profane behind.[290] However, before the community, the emperor and the higher groups of the society enter the church and perform a series of prayers and actions such as lighting candles, greetings, and kisses between the archbishop and the emperor, and acclamations from the clergy.[291] Only after the emperor and the clergy completed their own rituals, the "divine communion" is welcomed into the holy and sacred interior of the church space for the start of the Divine Liturgy.[292]

Thus, this is possibly the most substantial separation between the profane and the sacred.[293] With the doors opening, the community has the chance

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[289] See Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon," and Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. M.B.Vizedomand, G.L. Caffee, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.)

[290] Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon,"92-101.

[291] The 9th chapter of the The Book of Ceremonies describes 9 groups of the higher society. These groups of high imperial, military or religious officers accompany the emperor through the different stages of different rituals. They all have their own duties within the rituals. For further information see *Constantine Porphyrogennetos: The Book of Ceremonies*, p. 61-63.

[292] *Constantine Porphyrogennetos: The Book of Ceremonies*, p. 65.

[293] Ibid., 92-101.

to have a vista to the church's sacred interior. Patricios explains that the narthex, nave, and apse being lined up on a straight axis creates the advantage of perspective with the door's opening and the transition to the narthex.[294] Equal importance was presumably given to the initial stage of the Neoplatonic ritual, too. Williamson describes the initial stage of the Neoplatonic ritual at the temple door as;

> …The door to the temple marked the moment of transgression from outer to inner space and was a sacred zone, a formalized point of contact between human and divine worlds. The opening of the temple door was in itself often a ritualized act.[295] (Fig. 12 & 13)

Moreover, this is the stage of the rite where the community is present as a whole and not separated yet. It possibly emphasizes the idea of the narthex section representing the earthly existence where the whole community is together.[296] Yet, the community's presence in the narthex is temporary, just like their mortal lives on Earth.[297] The community present in the narthex is worthy of being in the church space as Christians, yet only the most faithful within the community are worthy of the second passage from the narthex to the nave. For these reasons, it is possible to

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[294] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 53.

[295] Christine G. Williamson, "Filters of Light: Greek Temple Doors as Portals to Epiphany," in *Sacred Thresholds: The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity*, ed. Emilie M. van Opstall, (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 320.

[296] Both Dionysius and Maximus indicates that separations happen after this stage. For further information see Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon,"

[297] Ibid., 93-100.

consider the narthex as similar to the vestibule in temples for their function as transitionary spaces and their symbolic meanings.

Furthermore, it is possible to point out the second passage in the rite as the final step before reaching the climax to awaken the “inner Christ” in the community members. According to Dionysius and Maximus' descriptions, a separation within the community accompanies this passage.[298] After the first part of the liturgy in the narthex, the catechumens among the community leave the church, and this division itself transfers the social status of the ones who are worthy to attend the rest of the liturgy to a higher value.[299] Although this probably has a lifting effect on the community's staying members psychologically because of the unity among them, a stronger one argued to be occurred due to the actual physical passage from the narthex to the nave. Then, the laity steps into a completely different interior space and arrangement by moving forward from the dark and low space of the narthex, representing the lowest level of existence.[300] The moment they step into the nave, they find themselves under the dome of the nave. The heightened ceiling of the nave covered with a dome welcomes the laity into a new spatial experience with a much higher symbolic meaning.[301] For the remaining faithful in the nave, who

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[298] Ibid., 93-100.

[299] Ibid., 93-100.

[300] Ibid., 93-100.

[301] Nave is discussed to represent celestial heavens, which is in a higher level in terms of hierarchy when compared to narthex, symbol of Earth. See Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon,” and Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium.*

symbolically left their sinful habits behind in the earthly space of the narthex, “the nave becomes a symbol of virtue.”[302] This passage presumably represents the spiritual ascension from earth to the celestial heavens to reunite with God after death. The faithful Christians perform this passage from narthex, which symbolizes the Earth, to central nave, which symbolizes the celestial heavens and the end of the material universe to get purified from their sins. By doing so, they presumed that their virtue would reach a higher level. They will be prepared for the actual ascension after their death by performing it symbolically in the church space. (Fig. 14)

In addition to the drastic spatial change in height and size, the surrounding paintings, mosaics, and lighting display significant contrast as they pass from the narthex to the nave.[303] Compared to the ornamentations in the narthex, the nave display increases in the number of mosaics of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, many of the saints and archangels.[304] Besides, the row of windows at the two sides of the nave, lined on the walls in double-storey height, in addition to the windows of the drum, illuminates the central nave, in great contrast with the narthex.[305] (Fig. 15) With the holy sound of the psalm signed by the clergy, the Divine presence starts to be felt by the laity in this holy atmosphere as they symbolically ascent to the

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[302] Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon,” 98.

[303] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 69-72.

[304] Ibid., 69-72.

[305] Ibid., 69-72.

heavens.[306] Moreover, the association of the terrestrial sky and the celestials as the final stages of the material universe is another Neoplatonic understanding.[307] According to the reflection of it in Byzantine theology, beyond them is the spiritual universe, the Divine realm. It is then possible to indicate that the laity gets prepared spiritually and psychologically during the Rite to reunite with God through architectural and environmental factors. Before the final step of the Rite, in which the remaining faithful get lifted to a higher statue of virtue and feel closer to God, the drastic change in the architectural and environmental characteristics of the narthex and nave triggers their minds. This shift, accompanied by the passage, conceivably affects their minds to create new event models as they left the narthex, which symbolically represented their sinful, earthly life, and now present in the nave, the symbolic church space for the celestial heavens and higher virtue.[308]

Moreover, in terms of its symbolism and spatial characteristics compared to the previous space, it is possible to consider the nave as parallel to the central sanctuary space of the pagan temples.[309] (Fig. 9 & 12) The

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[306] Ibid., 69-72.

[307] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 71-80.

[308] See Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, & G.A. Radvansky, "Across the Event Horizon," for further information on how transition from one space to another affects the human mind psychologically and in the case of Byzantine Rite create a higher value with the each following space

[309] Tissi, "Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers," 147-150.

Neoplatonic texts indicated that the philosophers stood in front of the cult image in the sanctuary area before passing to adyton.[310] In parallel, Dionysius and Maximus also indicated that the community stands in front of the iconostasis wall and the Holy Table behind it before reaching the climax in the final stage.[311] The central nave of the Middle Byzantine cross-in-square churches acts as the standing place for the laity, which is more passive than active after this point of the Rite in the medieval form of the liturgy.[312] After this stage, the clergy, particularly the archbishop, are more active in finalizing the liturgy and purify the laity's souls by performing a symbolic reunion.

Furthermore, even though they do not differ in the laity's role, the doctrines of Dionysius and Maximus display different practices with different interpretations for the archbishop's role. According to Maximus, the archbishop leads the community in its transitions within the church, reprising the role of Jesus Christ.[313] After opening the Gates of the church to the community, he performs a transition to nave as well.[314] Since the nave is discussed to be still in the boundaries of the material universe symbolically, the passage of the archbishop symbolizes the first coming of

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[310] Ibid., 147-150.

[311] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 78-79.

[312] Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*, 177.

[313] Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon,” 96-101.

[314] Ibid., 99-101.

Christ to the Earth.[315] On the other hand, Dionysius' doctrines indicate that the community comes to the nave on its own where their minds and souls get prepared in this new holy atmosphere for the archbishop to come from the apse section, symbolizing the coming of Christ from the Divine realm, his eternal home.[316] Despite the differences, the archbishop's role is crucial for the final stage in both versions of the rite. This importance is because the final stage of the rite is a different one from the previous stages in terms of the fact that it does not contain a transition performed by the laity. (Fig. 14)

One of the different factors between the pagan ritual examined by Neoplatonist and the Byzantine rite was the belief in an afterlife in the religion. This understanding is probably directly reflected in the rite's practice, especially in the final stage. The apse section is discussed as the symbol of the Divine realm, which remains unknown and inaccessible for the laity before the death and ultimate reunion in the afterlife.[317] Based on this understanding, the laity's physical transition to the apse and bema in it with the Holy Table was forbidden in the Rite.[318] This closeness is the most probable reason in the background of the fact that Mathews describes this medieval version of the liturgy as "more closed" and "self-

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[315] Ibid., 99-101.

[316] Ibid., 92-93.

[317] Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*, 177-179.

[318] Ibid., 177-179.

contained."[319] Then, it is possible to indicate that the last passage is mainly performed through the means of visual connection for the laity rather than a movement of passing, unlike the previous ones. As Patricios indicates that "the bema reserved for priest and ministers, represent symbolically the invisible, spiritual universe while the naos, reserved for the faithful people, represents the material world."[320] When this is considered with the afterlife understanding, it only makes sense for the laity to be separated from the apse physically. However, this separation contributes to the meaning of the symbolic connection and the visual connection provided by the iconostasis doors.[321] The laity gets the chance for a quick vista while the archbishop is passing through the doors of the iconostasis.[322] Nevertheless, his transition's directionality differs in Dionysius and Maximus's texts.[323]

When the laity is ready to reach the climax of the liturgy, the doors of the iconostasis get opened. According to Maximus, the archbishop accompanying the laity as the symbol of Christ now leaves them behind to pass through the iconostasis doors and reach the apse section.[324] This

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[319] Ibid., 178.

[320] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium*, 386.

[321] Ibid., 386.

[322] Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon," 99-101.

[323] Ibid., 92-101.

[324] Ibid., 99-101.

second transition of the archbishop symbolizes Jesus Christ's ascension after his crucifixion to reunite with his Father.[325] Contrary to this direction of the passage, in the adaptation of Dionysius, the archbishop comes from the apse to the nave.[326] According to this adaptation of the liturgy, the archbishop remains his role as the symbol of Jesus Christ. Since Christ is believed to be God's incarnation, it only makes sense for him to come from the apse section symbolizing the Divine realm, not from the narthex, the section of the church representing the sinful Earthly life. In both adaptations, the archbishop is in relation to the apse, symbolizing the Divine realm. The laity reaches the liturgy's climax and gets purified by reaching a higher level of virtue through his movement. (Fig. 14)

This brief cover of the Byzantine Rite displays the possible impact of Neoplatonic doctrines of mainly the descending universe model and the transcending return of the humans to the Divine for the reunion. These core ideas are discussed with their adaptations to Byzantine theology. Moreover, the Byzantine rite was conceivably a creative design instrument for forming the Byzantine church architecture, very similar to the idea that the Neoplatonic ritual was formative in creating the sacred temple space. So, the similarities and differences between the pagan and Byzantine rituals practice are also observable in the similar and different characteristics of the pagan and Christian sacred spaces. Besides, it is possible to claim that the early Byzantine churches based on the basilica

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[325] The first transition of the archbishop was to nave with the laity. (Boudignon, “From Taboo to Icon,”)

[326] Ibid., 92.

scheme display more resemblances with the pagan temples in terms of the architectural characters and how these characteristics took form under the rituals performed in both sacred spaces. This study argues that Middle Byzantine churches are more complete, complex, and layered to reflect the Neoplatonic concepts and microcosmic understanding. One of the possible reasons for this is that the Middle Byzantine churches continued to hold the directionality of the early basilica churches, coming from the liturgy, while transforming from longitudinal plan organization into a central one as a result of the transformation of the liturgy. The additions of the elements like the dome and the iconostasis possibly aimed to elevate the symbolic meaning and richness by means of replicating the macrocosm in the church space. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the cases selected from the respected period of the Middle Byzantine churches in terms of the Neoplatonic concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity to support this argument.

3.3.2. Traces of Hierarchy in the Plan Organizations and Volumetric Configurations of the Middle Byzantine Churches

The first one of the concepts is the hierarchy generated from the descending model of the universe. It is probably the most widely reflected concept in the Middle Byzantine churches and the theology and community. As discussed, getting less good and less perfect by getting further away from The One in the Neoplatonic mindset has probably transformed into the idea that the people being sinners at birth since their souls are separated from God, in Christian theology.[327] Besides the idea that this is traceable in the Byzantine Rite consists of movement in

[327] This is the reason of the ritual of baptism. For further information Hadjitryphonos, “"Divinity" and "World" Two Spatial Realms in the Byzantine Church,”

between hierarchical spaces of the church as symbolic ascension toward God, the community has divided into hierarchical groups as it is observable in the practice of the Rite. The catechumens, laity, and clergy are discussed to play different roles in the liturgy. Their relation to the space is also different from each other according to their status in the hierarchy within the community. Each group generates different relationships to the church space since the interior sections they allowed to be present and the movement they perform are different then each other. As an example to this situation, it is stated in The Book of Ceremonies that different hierarchical groups of people are situated in different spatial components of the church interior and in different positions.[328] While the emperor sits in front of the cross and the image of Christ, consolidating his status as the representer of the God, the different groups of clergy moves to gallery spaces leaving the central space to the newly welcomed laymen.[329] Thus, how the church space is perceived by one is based on the hierarchical class of the society that the person belongs to. In hierarchical order, the configuration of interior spaces, narthex, nave, and apse, conceivably not only reflects their cosmological connotations but also social classes as well.

Moreover, Williamson indicates that "thresholds in sanctuaries were furthermore signifying elements in a hierarchy of space."[330] Then the

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[328] *Constantine Porphyrogennetos: The Book of Ceremonies*, p. 66-67.

[329] *Constantine Porphyrogennetos: The Book of Ceremonies*, p. 66-67.

[330] Williamson, "Filters of Light: Greek Temple Doors as Portals to Epiphany," 319.

threshold between each space is more than a physical connection, suggesting leaving one space with the connotations it has behind and moving on to a new, higher level of purity with the rite.[331] In addition to the symbolic meaning of the series of interior spaces, it is possible to trace hierarchy physically in the various aspects of the church space, starting with the underlying organization of the church plans.

With the move towards a more central understanding of the church plan, the organizing principle of the plan scheme has also shifted away from the grid organization of the basilica.[332] As a result of Neoplatonic revival due to the search for alternatives after the iconoclasm era, experimenting with and getting experience on the use of geometry apparently increased.[333] Buchwald suggests a link between these experiments and the shift from the grid system, which was used as a design tool to organize the plans of early Byzantine Churches, to quadrature for creating the plans of most Middle Byzantine Churches with a more centralized understanding.[334] The use of quadrature, besides the exceptions, was dominant among the plan configurations and the volumetric configurations of Middle Byzantine Churches.[335]

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[331] Ibid., 319. For more detail of this theory regarding the passages during the Rite also see van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*,

[332] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 298.

[333] Ibid., 296-302.

[334] Ibid., 296-302.

It is possible to define Quadrature as a geometrical organization consisting of squares arranged in a hierarchical order. Although without a direct reference or link, this geometrical organization probably has ancient Greek roots, possibly Euclidian, and transferred to Byzantine Empire via Neoplatonism for two particular reasons. One reason is the use of the square, a single two-dimensional face of the cube, as the main geometric shape. As discussed, the cube has been accepted as both the symbol and the particle of the Earth in Neoplatonic lore, based on the theory of Platonic Solids.[336] Since the square is used in the quadrature system to create the base for the church spaces to symbolize different parts of the material universe, such as the Earth and the celestials, the two are possibly linked. Moreover, there is an underlying circle pattern in the quadrature, which is the perfect geometrical shape and representation of the Divine perfection in Platonic and Neoplatonic understandings.[337] For this reason, the generation of squares in the quadrature organization from circles arguably implies a hierarchical descending from a perfect geometrical shape to another, less perfect one. (Fig. 16 & 17)

Another reason for the possible Neoplatonic connection is how the squares are arranged in the quadrature system. As displayed in the diagrams, there is a hierarchical order and ratio between the parallel squares.[338] It is likely to consider the squares as developing outwards from

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[335] Ibid., 296-302.

[336] Opsomer, “In defence of geometric atomism,” 148.

[337] Issam El-Said and Ayşe Parman, *Geometric Concepts in Islamic Art*, (London: World of Islam Festival Publishing Company Ltd., 1976), 9.

a central one regulating the order and organizing the rest.[339] When the macrocosm model in Neoplatonism is considered, it is possible to discuss this geometrical organization as an abstract manifestation of the creation of the universe through emanation from The One. It is possible to indicate that the quadrature system was juxtapositioned into the plans of case studies selected from 11th and 12th century Middle Byzantine churches. (Fig. 18)

As demonstrated in the diagrams as well, squares in different scales define the points for different architectural elements of the church, namely the four columns underneath the dome, inner faces of the three sides of the nave, outer edges of the nine central bays of the nave, and the locations of the inner faces of the apse and the west wall of the narthex, in the order from the center of the church to the periphery.[340] Based on this, the hierarchy in the Neoplatonic universe was possibly geometrically manifested in the plan organization of the Middle Byzantine cross-in-square churches, which were considered to be microcosmic models via the use of quadrature. Also, further geometrical analyses demonstrate that some of the Middle Byzantine Churches were designed according to quadrature in the third dimension as well.[341] (Fig. 19)

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[338] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 298.

[339] Ibid., 298.

[340] Ibid., 297-298.

[341] Ibid., 299.

Moreover, in terms of the volumetric configuration, the stereometric architecture of the Middle Byzantine Churches was another significant feature, possibly influenced by the Neoplatonic concept of hierarchy. According to Buchwald's further studies, Middle Byzantine Churches were designed by being honest to the pure volumetric forms of geometry.[342] He indicates that “each geometric component is viewed and considered by itself and its relationship to other components without interference from secondary features such as coffers, ribs, fascias.”[343] Based on his statement, it is possible to consider the Middle Byzantine Church space as the composition of volumetric geometries connected from nothing but their faces, without intermediary elements that obscure the geometry's pureness. The best demonstration of this is probably the central space of the church consisting of the dome, the drum, and the nave underneath, in the vertical order.[344] Buchwald believes that the composition of these three elements originated from three volumetric geometries, the sphere, the cylinder, and the cube, placed on top of each other in a hierarchical order based on Neoplatonic cosmology.[345] As mentioned, the sphere has been considered the perfect geometrical shape in Platonic and Neoplatonic schools of philosophy.[346] Furthermore, based on the relationship between

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[342] Ibid., 303.

[343] Ibid., 306.

[344] Ibid., 317-318.

[345] Ibid., 318.

form and matter, it was discussed that as the matter's resemblance to the form increases, so does its perfection.[347] Based on this Neoplatonic theory, Buchwald suggests that under the perfect hemisphere of the dome, the drum was placed as a less perfect geometrical form but still more perfect than the cube since it resembled the curvilinear nature of the sphere more.[348] (Fig. 20) When considered in this framework, it only makes sense for the use of curvilinear geometrical forms in the critical components of the church space, such as pendentives and the cylindrical apse section. It is possible to support this argument with the placement of the decorative frescos on these particular architectural elements, which is included in *3.4. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Decorative Program of the Middle Byzantine Churches*.

Thus, the plan organization and volumetric configuration of the 11th and 12th century Middle Byzantine churches are possible reflections of the Neoplatonic concept of hierarchy, which was dominant not only in Byzantine theology but also in the Byzantine community. As Otto Demus indicates, "the architectonic conception of a building developing downwards from the central cupola, like the Middle Byzantine Church, is in complete accord with the hierarchical way of thought manifested in every sphere of Byzantine life, as it is to be met within the hierarchic conception

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[346] "…wherefore He wrought it into a round, in the shape of a sphere, equidistant in all directions from the center to the extremities, which of all shapes is the most perfect and the most self-similar…" (Plato, *Timaeus*, 33b)

[347] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[348] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 318.

of the series of images descending from the supreme archetype" which is God itself.[349]

Furthermore, hierarchy is also traceable in more minor elements within the church space. One of them is probably the bema. Bema is the platform that contains the Holy Table and extends from the apse section of a church towards the central nave in the earlier basilica churches.[350] Nevertheless, with the addition of the iconostasis wall and the increase in the symbolic closeness of the liturgy, it is possible to consider it as a part of the apse section since it is located behind the iconostasis wall and separated from the nave in the Middle Byzantine examples.[351] It is possible to observe the bema as a heightened platform since the early basilica examples.[352] This level difference is probably an architectural repercussion of hierarchy within the Byzantine society based on laity and clergy classes since only the clergy members are allowed to pass and stand on the bema.[353] (Fig. 21) Even though the bema conceivably implies a symbolic duality, derived from and following hierarchy, which has been architecturally reflected on the floor level, the addition of the iconostasis in

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[349] Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium*, (London: Aristide d Caratzas Publications, 1976), 10-12.

[350] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 72.

[351] Ibid., 81-82.

[352] Ibid., 72.

[353] Ibid., 399.

the Middle Byzantine churches, apparently added a new layer to the symbolic duality of the church space.

3.3.3. Traces of Duality in the Plan Organizations and Volumetric Configurations of the Middle Byzantine Churches

The meaning of duality, in the fields of theology and philosophy, is discussed as transforming from the duality of form and matter in Plato's system to intelligible and material universes in Neoplatonism, and as a possible reinterpretation of Neoplatonic idea, to Earth and Divine realm, the domain of God, in Byzantine theology. Although it is possible to reach the outcome that the traces of hierarchy is dominantly observable in the Middle Byzantine churches compared to the traces of the other two concepts, the concept of duality was probably the initial symbolic motive of the emergence of church space due to the sharp separation between profane and sacred. In this framework, it is possible to consider each threshold within the church space, interior, and exterior, as a duality point separating profane from sacred or sometimes less sacred from more sacred. The passages performed in the Byzantine Rite are transitions through these thresholds. Nevertheless, three architectural elements, generally lined on an axis, arguably stand out as strong thresholds with their symbolic meaning and architectural characters. These are the atrium walls, together with the outer gates, the church's main doors, and the doors of the iconostasis wall. (Fig. 22)

The first of these elements is possibly the atrium walls of the church, which are the first threshold that separates the profane, sinful earth from the sacred church space, the house of Christ.[354] The atrium is an open

[354] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,*66-67.

courtyard, generally located in front of the church.[355] It is possible to define it as a zone for the community's preparation for the initial stage of the Rite, starting with the opening of the church doors.[356] This preparation consists of the psychological effect of the two-storey high atrium spaces surrounding the four sides, implying the departure from the rest of the world.[357] The colonnades of the atrium work as a visual barrier since they break the community's interaction with the unholy outside.[358] Symbolically, it is also possible to describe the atrium walls as if they are the borders of the universe, which are replicated with the microcosmic church space. Besides, considering the atrium's function as a purifying space, the connotation of its walls as a separating line between the profane and sacred is strengthened.[359] In his work *From Synagogue to Church*, John Wilkinson expresses the thoughts of Bishop of Tyre on the atrium as "he did not wish those who entered the gates to go directly into the building with unholy or unclean feet."[360] This statement also explains why fountains and water channels are found in most church atriums. The cleaned and psychologically ready community waits for the opening of the church

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[355] Ibid., 66-67.

[356] Ibid., 66-67.

[357] Ibid., 66-67.

[358] Ibid., 66-67.

[359] Ibid., 66-67.

[360] Quoted in Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,*. 390.

doors, the starter of the Rite, which is discussed to have Neoplatonic roots, in the atriums at the churches.[361] However, possibly due to the increase in the density of the urban fabric in Constantinople during the 11th and 12th centuries, the atriums of the most selected case studies are more likely to be described as small gardens or courtyards rather than big open-air gathering spaces.

Another possible reason for this the scale and purposes of the churches concerning liturgy. Based on the studies of Baldovin and Marinis, it is possible to indicate that various liturgies were differentiating in their scale.[362] The first complete liturgical calendars of Constantinople from the ninth and tenth centuries demonstrate that Hagia Sophia was the starting point of the ritual that spreads on a particular path passing from public spaces, mainly the forum.[363] Then, the community moves towards the selected church of the day.[364] Therefore, it is possible to understand that there were city-scale rituals that were possibly performed by a larger community. When the fact that the cases of this study are either small in scale or a part of a monastery complex, it is not surprising not to find grand atrium spaces in most of them, especially in the ones that are not

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[361] For further information of the entrances and passages during the Byzantine Rite, see Boudignon, "From Taboo to Icon."

[362] John F. Baldovin, "The City as Church, The Church as City," in *City, Church and Renewal*, (Washington DC: Pastoral Press, 1991), 7-9. Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries,* 9-11.

[363] Baldovin, "The City as Church, The Church as City," 7-8.

[364] Ibid., 7-8.

part of the monastery complexes, compared to the larger churches in Constantinople. Furthermore, Turkey's government's new city planning policy, starting from the 1950s onwards, conceivably affected the historical fabric of the city profoundly.[365] As a result, it is possible that the surrounding of these churches has changed with the massive increase in housing due to population growth. Nevertheless, even with the current situations of the relationship of the atriums and the rest of the urban fabric, it is possible to claim that the atrium walls are like fortresses that block the view with almost no opening other than the gates and create a strong duality of the inside and outside by means of separation from the sinful daily life based on senses and earthly motives. This characteristic of the atrium walls is observable, probably more close to their original forms from the illustration by Alexandros Paspatis collected in his book, *Byzantine Studies, Topographical and Historical*.[366] His study, dating 1877, consists of watercolor or black and white drawings of Byzantine monuments in Constantinople, including the cases analyzed for this thesis.[367] (Fig. 23-30) Based on his drawings of these churches, together with the observations on the current situation of the atrium and exterior walls, the fortress-like characteristic of the atrium walls, with few openings and height that

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[365] Sibel Bozdoğan and Esra Akcan, "Populist Democracy and Post-War Modernism," in *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, (London: Reaksion Books, 2012), 108.

[366] See Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries,* and Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*,

[367] Cited in Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries*, and Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Ligurty*,

blocking the view, is observable as well. Also, probably due to the lack of urban space, some cases do not contain an atrium space with an open courtyard's quality. However, in this kind of churches, the symbolic duality of the profane and sacred is conceivably maintained by the solid walls of the church buildings.

The second elements are presumably the main doors of the church. Their significance for the liturgy as marking the Rite's starting point with their opening is crucial in terms of a threshold. Although it is not the first one, it is possible to consider it as the threshold that marks the complete departure from the profane in the church's symbolic meaning. In his theory titled "The Doorway Effect," Radvansky refers to the phenomenon of transition from a space to another triggering the human mind to forget what it was in the previous space in the short-term memory immediately.[368] This analysis identifies the doorways as "event boundaries" in his cognition and memory model named "event horizon model."[369] According to this, memory is described as "the parsing of past actions into separate events that are spatially contextualized."[370] Based on this, it is possible to state that the human mind creates close links between the events and their physical settings and updates its event model every

[368] For further information of this theory see G.A. Radvansky, "Across the Event Horizon," *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 21 (2012), 269–272. and G.A. Radvansky, S.A. Krawietz and A.K. Tamplin, "Walking through Doorways Causes Forgetting. Further Explorations," The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology, 64 (2011), 1632–1645.

[369] G.A. Radvansky, "Across the Event Horizon," 269–272.

[370] Williamson, "Filters of Light: Greek Temple Doors as Portals to Epiphany," 319-320.

time one passes from one space to another.[371] Therefore it is possible to argue that spatial characteristics, together with side factors like smell, light, sound, have a stimulating effect on the event's perception.[372] With the help of this theory, it is possible to suggest that the transition from exterior open space to the closed interior through the door of the church creates an entirely new event model in the minds of the community members and trigger them to forget about the profane, and left the sinful life behind them. Even though this threshold is the separation between profane and sacred, the community is still present in the material universe symbolically, whether in narthex or nave, representing the earth and celestial heavens. Thus, the final threshold marks the separation of the material universe and the Divine Realm.

The third and last element is the iconostasis, a symbolic wall with sacred Christian icons, emphasizing the boundary between the apse section, the symbol of the Divine Realm, and the rest of the church interior, the symbol of the material existence.[373]

> The effect of the solid iconostasis that completely fills the archway of the apse is to cut congregants off both hearing the most important prayers and seeing the vital actions of the liturgy. The idea behind this was the belief that the mystery of the consecration was too holy for the laity and

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[371] Ibid., 320.

[372] Ibid., 320-321.

[373] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 81.

> only the clergy by virtue of their ordination could hear, see and touch mysteries.[374]

When considering the afterlife understanding, it only makes sense for the laity to be separated from the apse physically. In addition to its contribution to the symbolism of the duality between the two realms in the church space, it probably has Neoplatonic roots by simply representing the gates of heaven or the heavenly gates. Plato and Neoplatonists discussed the idea of heavenly gates after him as astrological gates placed in the sky, the heavens, where the celestial road or the constellations crossed each other.[375] Since the iconostasis is placed at the end of the nave, where the heavens are replicated, the symbolism of the iconostasis as the heavenly gates gets strengthened as well as its connection to the Neoplatonic ideas. Furthermore, the historical evolution of the iconostasis wall also apparently displays parallelism with the peaks of the Neoplatonic impact on Byzantine culture and theology. It is possible to point out the wooden railing surrounding the bema in the early Byzantine churches as the precursor of the iconostasis of Middle Byzantine churches.[376] (Fig. 31) The primitive examples of the iconostasis, as higher railings resembling a row of columns, have started to be observed around the 6th century, the period in which the impact of possible Neoplatonist Christians, namely Dionysius

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[374] Ibid., 81.

[375] George Beke Latura, "Plato's Cosmic X: Heavenly Gates in the Celestial Crossroads, Ancient and Modern Prophets," in *Proceedings of the 20th Conference of the European Society for Astronomy in Culture*, ed. Ivan Sprajc and Peter Pehani, (Ljubjana: Slovene Anthropological Society Press, 2003), 258.

[376] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 44.

and Maximus, was difficult to overlook.[377] After the pause during and after the iconoclasm period, the iconostasis has taken its final and common form with three doors and specific decorations, discussed in *3.4. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Decorative Program of the Middle Byzantine Churches*.[378] It is possible to indicate that this was probably the time around the 11th and 12th centuries in which the Neoplatonic impact has arisen.[379]

Moreover, the examination of the iconostasis door in comparison to the main door of the church possibly displays a symbolic meaning that might not be evident at first sight. It is possible to observe a significant difference in the sizes of the two doors, lined on an axis starting from the outside and extending towards the apse section at the other end of the church. It is possible to consider this scale difference as a natural outcome of the functions of the doors, with one serving the whole community while the other serving only a few people and mostly just the archbishop or priest. Yet, when considered two thresholds that separate more sacred from less, the duality between them in terms of scale possibly reflects the hierarchical order of the ascension. The large church doors serve as the gate that welcomes the whole Christian community into the narthex that symbolizes the Earth, so its permeability is more since it is connected to a lesser level of sacredness and virtue. On the other hand, the iconostasis

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[377] Ibid., 44-45.

[378] Misijuk, “The Multilayer Composition of an Iconostasis,” 222-224.

[379] Michele Trizio, “The waves of passions and the stillness of the sea,” 75.

door is only large enough for a single person to pass to the apse section that symbolizes the highest level of sacredness, the domain of God. Thus, its permeability is much lesser than the church doors because only a very small portion of the faithful is able to pass through it due to their high virtue, in parallel to the belief that only the ones with complete faith and highest virtue will rest in the domain of God with Christ after death. Therefore, the horizontal axis followed during the Rite probably symbolizes the return of the human soul to God, while the doors on this axis, arranged hierarchically to symbolize the thresholds of duality. (Fig. 13)

In addition to these traces in the plan organization of the Middle Byzantine churches, it is possible to find possible traces of the concept of duality in the volumetric configuration of them, as well. It is possible to indicate that with the Middle Byzantine churches, the duality based on the contrast between the periphery spaces and the central nave gets more drastic. The central nave space with a dome on top of it gets higher as the periphery spaces remain lower and more interconnected.[380] Evangelia Hadjitryphonos claims that the central, heightened part of the church represented the divine presence within the church thanks to the heightened ceiling, compared to the height of periphery spaces like narthex and side aisles, and the addition of the Dome emphasizing the central cross-in-square plan.[381] (Fig. 10) Besides, she also empathizes that the daily and ritualistic functions of the central domed nave and the

[380] Hadjitryphonos, “"Divinity" and "World" Two Spatial Realms in the Byzantine Church,” 241.

[381] Ibid., 241-242.

periphery spaces are in accordance with their symbolic meanings.[382] For example, while the nave is the main space for the Byzantine Rite, by symbolizing the celestial heavens, the periphery spaces are used for individualistic rituals with lower virtues since they are more earthly than the Rite, such as baptism and funerals.[383] To this respect, it is possible to claim that the symbolic meaning of the Byzantine church as a microcosmic model of the macrocosm has gotten stronger and become more emphasized with the central cross-in-square plan scheme of the Middle Byzantine churches with various traces of duality primarily based on thresholds and volumetric contrasts, in addition to hierarchy.

3.3.4. Traces of Unity in the Plan Organizations and Volumetric Configurations of the Middle Byzantine Churches

Compared to the previous two concepts, unity is arguably a less traceable one in the Middle Byzantine churches in plan organizations or volumetric configurations. Although unity among the Christian community under the rule of Christ is a fundamental understanding, it is not openly reflected in the society based on classes of hierarchy, even affected liturgy.[384] However, when the meaning of unity is considered in the Neoplatonic understanding, as togetherness of everything in perfect order despite the conflicts of dualities, it becomes possible to observe and reinterpret unity within the same traces which are suggested to reflect hierarchy and

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[382] Ibid., 241-245.

[383] Ibid., 241-245.

[384] See *3.3.1. Byzantine Rite as a Liturgy under Neoplatonic Influence* for the discussions regarding the Byzantine Rite.

duality. As demonstrated by examining these traces, they do not display clear separation from each other, but they are categorized under different concepts due to minor differences in interpretations based on the Neoplatonic doctrines and architectural analyses.

To trace the concept of unity in the plan organization of the Middle Byzantine churches, it is crucial to analyze the meaning of quadrature again. It is discussed to reflect the hierarchy of the emanation, yet it is possible to discuss that it also reflects the unity of the emanation. Since the squares in the organization are emerged from a single point, in parallel to the metaphysical emanation from The One, it is possible to suggest an understanding of unity. In addition, the way that the squares are arranged conceivably indicates a harmonious unity, too, provided by employing geometry. (Fig. 18) As Buchwald indicates, various ratios are used for different geometric organizations, and the most commonly used ratio for quadrature is the square root ($\sqrt{2}$).[385] Besides, striking parallelism in terms of ratio is traceable between the Platonic Solids and quadrature. As explained in the first chapter, Platonic Solids consist of elementary triangles combined in different ratios. Ronald Kotrč's examination of the polyhedra displays that for the solids of water, fire, and air, the ratios between the triangles are 1, 2, $\sqrt{3}$, which enables them to transform into each other.[386] On the other hand, the earth's solid is composed of the ratio of 1, 1, $\sqrt{2}$.[387] The sensibility to calculate and apply this geometric

[385] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 300.

[386] Kotrč, "The Dodecahedron in Plato's "Timaeus"," 217.

[387] Ibid., 217.

organization as the underlying scheme for the church plans is possibly a reference to the acceptance of geometry as a sacred organizer, even though it has probably been unintentional.

Furthermore, as an outcome of the fact that the squares have determined the places of architectural and structural elements in the quadrature organization, it is possible to observe symmetry, particularly in the central nave space. When the plans of the case studies are examined, it is possible to observe symmetry with the structural elements defining the central space. (Fig. 32) In addition to the two-dimensional organization, symmetry is observable in the third dimension as well. Symmetry is evident mainly because of four columns with pendentives on top of them to create a baldachin with the stereometric volumes of the cylindrical drum and the half-sphere dome. While the symmetry itself arguably implies unity due to its organization and harmony, it is also possible to claim that symmetry has significance in the Neoplatonic perspective towards geometry. Plotinus presumably strongly refutes symmetry as a source or provider of beauty since this idea conflicted with The One as the ultimate beauty and the source of all beauty in the universe.[388] He suggested that "beauty is that which irradiates symmetry rather than symmetry itself."[389] This understanding of Plotinus possibly has its roots back in Plato's ideas. Plato discusses the issue in *Philebus* as;

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[388] John P. Anton, "Plotinus' Refutation of Beauty as Symmetry," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 23, no. 2 (1964): 234, doi:10.2307/427785, (Accessed March 1, 2021).

[389] Ibid, p.234.

> …"symmetry" along with truth and beauty, are forms in which we "catch" the Good (The One), where "catch" is obviously a metaphor for cognitive achievement… just focusing on symmetry, the understanding or knowledge of it is nothing but cognition of one manifestation of Good.[390]

As a result of this understanding, it is possible to point out symmetry as a way to acknowledge the ultimate beauty of The One. It could only be an outcome of this beauty, not its source, similar to the universe generated utilizing geometry in general.

In addition, Bertol indicates that one reason that makes polyhedra this special is the three-dimensional symmetry of them due to their identical surfaces.[391] He argues that the polyhedra mainly inspired symmetry and these regular three-dimensional forms in art and architecture.[392] The purpose here is not to suggest that symmetry was applied in Middle Byzantine churches as a direct reference to the characteristic of the Platonic Solids. Instead, the acceptance of symmetry as a manifestation of The One's beauty was probably known in Byzantine Empire with its adaptation to Christianity. Based on these, it would not be groundless to think that the use of symmetry in the sacred space of Byzantines was possibly tradition generated under the Neoplatonic impact.

Moreover, the thresholds mentioned as the points of separation and reflections of duality presumably have unifying symbolism as well. When

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[390] Gerson "Plotinus on *logos*," 21-22.

[391] Bertol, "The Parametric Making of Geometry," 3.

[392] Ibid., 3.

considered with the Rite, they bond two different spaces with different symbolic meanings. As discussed, these spaces' different architectural characters also accompany their symbolic meaning. These unifying functions of the gates as thresholds basically imply a connection and, thus, an idea of unity. This relationship is conceivably very similar to the relationship between the intelligible universe and the material universe in Neoplatonism. The relationship between form and matter is a dilemma since the archetype-image relationship is based on separation due to the hierarchical decreases. Yet, it also depends on unity due to the inferior depending on the superior's existence. It would not be groundless to claim this relationship exists for the series of church spaces separated by the thresholds. (Fig. 22) In the order of atrium, narthex, nave, and apse, each of them depends on the following one, which is on a higher level of hierarchy in terms of sacredness, to be meaningful, and the thresholds mentioned between them are the ones that provide their connections to create a harmoniously united whole, a microcosm. In order to explain the dilemma of the thresholds, Mircea Eliade indicates that;

> …Between the sacred and the profane there is a threshold that represents a boundary, a frontier that distinguishes and opposes these two worlds but, at the same time paradoxically is the place where the two worlds communicate.[393]

Also, the precise geometrical work of the proportions of the church's volumes possibly reflects unity. Even though they are discussed as a reflection of duality due to the contrast of the volumes per their symbolic meanings, the church space consists of the unity and togetherness of the

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[393] Quoted in Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 399.

volumes and their symbolism. It contains both realms symbolically and the architectural relations of these spaces to each other, a combination of pure geometric volumes. Studies of Buchwald and Hadjitryphonos on these pure geometric volumes and their relations and proportions conceivably suggest that there has been a geometrical sensibility in the background of the designs of Middle Byzantine churches and precise craftsmanship to reflect this sensibility.[394] Even though it would be a bold claim to suggest that these were all done with the awareness of the Neoplatonic roots, it is still possible to suggest that the importance is given to geometry as the organizer and regulator of the unity in the universe presumably reflected unintentionally in the design of the volumetric configuration of the Middle Byzantine churches.

Furthermore, the most dominant one of these spaces consisting of geometric volumes is probably the central nave. While this is primarily because of the height of the space, the central understanding was also emphasized and strengthened with the dome in this sense. The cube, cylinder, and half dome volumes on top of each other apparently create a vertical axis in the nave. (Fig. 33) In addition to this vertical one, a horizontal axis within the church space is discussed in the direction of the Rite and the longitudinal organization of the series of thresholds. The nave is conceivably the intersection point of these two axes. (Fig. 34) Two crossing axes in the three-dimensional space are possibly the symbols for earthly existence and spiritual one by symbolizing the directions of the

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[394] See Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture,* and Evangelia Hadjitryphonos, “"Divinity" and "World" Two Spatial Realms in the Byzantine Church,”.

earthly journey performed in the church and the spiritual one, which is after death. Therefore, it becomes possible to suggest that the church space contains both journeys and the symbolic representations of their realms united under one roof. As a further interpretation, since these two axes span across the church space and cover it in both horizontal and vertical dimensions, the church itself conceivably becomes a threshold itself, a connection point on Earth for Christians and their God. Thus, it is possible to consider the church space as a unifying focal point of the two domains as a sacred space.

These analyses and examinations of the plan organizations and the volumetric configurations of the case studies within the three Neoplatonic concepts are possible thanks to the fact that the buildings, or ruins enough to create hypothetical plans, survive this date and their documentations in terms of drawings and photographs exist. However, this is not the same for the decorations of most cases because they were transformed into mosques after the Ottomans' conquest.

3.4. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Decorative Program of the Middle Byzantine Churches

It is possible to gather knowledge about the decorative program of the Middle Byzantine churches in Constantinople primarily based on the surviving examples from neighboring lands, original texts that describe the churches and a few examples surviving from Constantinople. These surviving pieces are mostly column capitals or partial cornices, preserved while the churches are transformed into mosques. Besides, mainly from the archival documentation of restoration and maintenance projects, it is possible to find photographs of original frescos and mosaics which partially survived.

Based on these surviving examples and examples from neighboring lands, examining the decoration in this part is made in two general categories: the architectural decorations that possibly contribute to the characteristics discussed previously and the furniture decoration. The decorative analyses are also made by mostly taking the same case studies into account, not to decrease the arguments' coherence. However, due to the reasons mentioned above, examples from other cases are also used to provide an overview of the general characteristics of the era in particular aspects. Whether architectural or furniture decorations, it is possible to describe the decorative program of the Middle Byzantine churches as a rich combination of geometric, vegetal, and iconic ornamentations. These mainly include the architectural decorations employing mosaics as well as the brick and stone decorations both from the interior and the exterior of the building, together with the marble furnishing and the iconostasis wall.

A critical application of architectural decoration in Middle Byzantine churches is mosaics. Mosaics were mainly used as coverings of the interior surfaces such as floor, walls, or ceiling.[395] In the cases where they were applied to the floor, the geometric motifs and patterns were generally employed, while the mosaic work on the upper surfaces generally depicted the icons of the holy people from the Christian past, including but not limited to Christ, Virgin Mary, Apostles, and later saints.[396] The use of

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[395] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 255-265*.* Also see Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 305-307.

[396] Ibid., 255-265.

mosaics to depict icons is conceivably a stage in abstraction in Byzantine art and architecture. James Ward states that:

> …Sculpture was subordinate to painting as plastic art was not encouraged, because of the dislike to images shown by early Christians, and so painting which led to the mosaic picture, which in its turn led to enamelling on metals…[397]

Based on this statement, it is possible to claim that the abandonment of the sculpture and painting and the increase in the standardized application of icons with mosaic pictures was a process of abstraction in the art based on geometry. It apparently occurred in the iconoclasm period, a period during which the Byzantine philosophy was in search and conceivably verged more into the Neoplatonic doctrines.

For the mosaics with icons placed on the upper levels and architectural elements, it is possible to suggest a hierarchical order in the organization of the frescos on the dome, semi-dome, and the pendentives, as well as a separation between central and periphery spaces.[398] Buchwald argues that the placement of the frescos in the icons' hierarchical order was following the completeness of the geometrical volumes that these figures are depicted on.[399] In this tendency, Christ was generally depicted on the dome, the Virgin Mary on the semi-dome of the apse, and the archangels on the curvilinear pendentives. The possible link between this hierarchy

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[397] James Ward, *Historic Ornament, Treatise on Decorative Art and Architectural Ornament*, (London: Chapman and Hall Limited, 1897), 298-299.

[398] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 310.

[399] Ibid., 310.

and geometry with the Neoplatonic doctrines of form and matter generated from the Theory of Emanation is strong. The central dome of The Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami) and the archangel icon from The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) in addition to the dome mosaic of the parecclesion of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) are presumably examples of this decorative tendency. (Fig. 35-37)

Moreover, the mosaic works with secondary importance in Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami), the church with the most surviving mosaics from its era, are located in the periphery spaces such as side aisles or narthex following the tendency mentioned above.[400] (Fig. 38-40) In addition, when the surviving mosaic in the interior surface of the dome of the parecclesion of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) is examined, it is also possible to observe that the icon in the center of the dome is Christ while the mosaic in the periphery spaces of the parecclesion, as well as the main church, mainly depicts saints. (Fig. 37) As a result of this categorization, the spatial duality between the periphery and central nave was probably supported by the decorative program.

Furthermore, it is possible to support this argument with another study by Iakovos Potamianos, James Turner, and Wassami Jabi titled *Exploring the Proportions of Middle-Byzantine Churches: A Parametric Approach*.[401] Even though it is a highly technical study on the proportions of geometric

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[400] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 356-358.

[401] Iakovos Potamianos, James Turner and Wassami Jabi, “Exploring the Proportions of Middle-Byzantine Churches: A Parametric Approach.” in *Sixth International Conference on Computer-Aided Architectural Design Futures*, (Singapore, 24-26 September 1995), 483-493.

volumes through digital re-creations, their diagram suggests that the proportions were arranged to support the visual access during the Rite, the icons' hierarchical order, and the symbolic meaning of the spaces.[402] When this diagram is applied on the sections of the case studies of this thesis, it is possible to indicate that this was a common tendency. (Fig. 41) Their re-creations apparently indicate that the hierarchy, together with duality, was possibly known as a concept to be used as design tools and shaped the geometric formation of the Middle Byzantine Churches.

In addition, when compared to the mosaics applied to the walls, domes, vaults, it is probably harder to find examples of floor decoration from this period. Some studies examine the floor mosaics and marbles of Byzantine churches, yet the examples rarely match the time period of this thesis.[403] Nevertheless, based on the few surviving examples, it is possible to assume that geometric patterns were the mainly applied patterns on the floor decoration of churches from the Middle Byzantine period. With the archival photographs taken during the restoration project of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami) made by the municipality of Istanbul, it is possible to support this assumption. In these photographs, the geometric floor patterns made from marble are observable. Similarly, the archival photographs of The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) also display geometric floor patterns. (Fig. 42 & 43)

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[402] Ibid., 489-490.

[403] One of the few full length studies devoted to mosaics of Middle Byzantine era is Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*

Another architectural decoration where the geometric patterns were mainly applied is the exterior brickwork of the Middle Byzantine churches. It is possible to observe “various forms of meanders, chevrons, checkerboards, triangles, lozenges, herringbone and basketweave patterns” in addition to various shapes of arches in these exterior brickworks.[404] The geometric ornaments on the exterior brick façade of The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami) are probable examples of this decorative tendency. (Fig. 44 & 45)

Furthermore, in terms of the decoration of furniture, it is possible to examine the marble furniture of the Middle Byzantine churches. Unfortunately, it is not much possible to find surviving pieces from the Constantinople examples, yet similar to floor mosaics, it is possible to provide a general overview by the examples from neighboring lands. Buchwald indicates that;

> Middle Byzantine carved marble church furnishings (including lintels, door and window frames etc.) included a rich variety of geometric figures, such as circles, rosettes, quatrefoils, spirals, squares, triangles, hexagons, octagons, rhombuses, star shapes, knot forms, and crosses.[405]

It is possible to observe different geometric pattern applications with different techniques and precise craftsmanship to combine them in various examples from the Middle Byzantine Churches.[406] (Fig. 46-48)

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[404] Buchwald, *Form, Style and Meaning in Byzantine Church Architecture*, 295.

[405] Ibid., 295.

In addition to these examples from neighboring lands, the column capitals, cornices, and lintels from the selected cases in this study are also possible examples of the importance of geometric works with their precise craftsmanship and vegetal decoration. Since these pieces were mostly continued to be used as spolia in the buildings after they transformed into mosques, it is possible to find more surviving examples. The column capitals with geometric and vegetal ornaments of The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami, Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami) and Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami) are among these surviving ones. (Fig. 49-51) The tendency to combine geometric patterns and vegetal motifs is traceable in partial cornice pieces and spolia stones in the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami). (Fig. 52 & 53)

Moreover, besides the marble furniture of the Middle Byzantine churches, the rich decoration of the iconostasis is conceivably a significant part of the church's symbolism. It is discussed both as a threshold being a physical barrier that adds to the symbolic separation between the nave and apse and as a unifying element since it allows passage and works as a connection point. The icons on the iconostasis wall conceivably add another level of symbolism as a connection point and therefore contribute to the understanding of unity within the church space. It is possible to point out these icons as elements that strengthen the idea of connection.[407] In terms of being the symbolic point of connection, iconostasis is likely to be

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[406] Ibid., 295.

[407] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 82.

a very accurate example of the paradoxical meanings of the thresholds indicated by Eliade. Patricios argues that;

> Symbolically it (the iconostasis) can be sensed in two different ways. In one sense it marks the border between the terrestrial naos (nave) and the heavenly Holy Bema but in another way, it connects the faithful in the naos (nave) to the Holy of Holies and the Holy Table through the holy persons (including Theotokos and St. John) represented by the icons.[408]

Then, even though the laity was not able to pass through the door of the iconostasis symbolizing the heavenly gates, the idea that the holy people of the Christianism will accompany them once they were dead and ready for the reunion was apparently there, through the medium of architectural decoration.[409] In her article, *The Multilayered Composition of Iconostasis*, Misijuk indicates that there has been a standard composition of icons on iconostasis after a certain point in its historical evolution.[410] (Fig. 54) Based on this statement, the iconostasis of the 11th and 12th century churches, including the case studies used here, possibly had the iconostasis walls in accordance with the descriptions of Patricios and therefore presumably contributed to the symbolic union of the two realms as well as the faithful with God.

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[408] Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium,* 82.

[409] Tatiana Misijuk, "The Multilayer Composition of an Iconostasis," *Rocznik Teologii Katolickiej*, XVI, no.3 (2017), 221-236.

[410] Ibid., 222.

Therefore, even though the lack of surviving pieces of evidence and examples of the decorative program of the Middle Byzantine Churches from the 11th and 12th Centuries in Constantinople, the remaining samples and the interpretations based on the knowledge gathered from neighboring lands, the decorative program of these churches probably had a massive impact on the perception of the symbolic meaning of the church space by the community as well as contributing to the meaning of the sacred space highly based on the influence of Neoplatonic concepts by means of not only the content of the decorations but also the placement of them and their relations to the volumetric space.

As concluding remarks, this chapter provided a brief covering of Neoplatonism's impact on the theology and community of the Byzantine Empire first. It then examined the case studies in relation to the liturgy, the Byzantine Rite, and the concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity. Concerning these examinations and discussion, it is possible to claim that the impact of Neoplatonism on Orthodox Christianity of Byzantine Empire as an esoterically nurturing element is traceable in the 11th and 12th Century examples of cross-in-square Middle Byzantine churches as complete, rich, and significant cases as microcosmic models based on the Neoplatonic concepts of the universe. It would be difficult to claim that these reflections are directly linked to the Neoplatonic doctrines, yet their reinterpretations in the form of basic concepts in Byzantine theology are hard to overlook. Thus these traces, whether direct or indirect, are possible reflections of the reinterpretations and adaptations in the Byzantine lore. Based on this, it is possible to trace different architectural repercussions in different architectural traditions from other cultures in which the Neoplatonic doctrines are possibly reinterpreted and adapted in

different ways according to their religion. Such a case is observable in Seljuk theology and the 13th century Seljuk Architecture in Anatolia.

CHAPTER 4

REPERCUSSIONS OF NEOPLATONISM IN THE ARCHITECTURE OF ANATOLIAN SELJUKS

Although differences are present between the reflections of Neoplatonism in Byzantium/Christianity and Anatolian Seljuk/Islam, it would be comprehensive to structure this chapter dedicated to the Seljuk side of the study in the same order of topics with the Byzantine one, despite some minor variations due to the historical differences in between the two cultures. This order is arguably a correct approach for such a comparative study. In the same order as the previous one, this chapter starts with a brief history of the relationship between Neoplatonism and Islamic and Seljuk theology. The reason for this is the need to explain the motivations behind the selected time frame and introduce philosophers whose doctrines are referenced when needed in the later parts of the chapter. These are referenced while discussing the world view and mindset of the Seljuks and their architectural spaces regarding the possible repercussions of Neoplatonic concepts. The chapter mainly traces these repercussions not only in plan organizations and volumetric configurations but also in decorative programs of particular case studies selected from the 13th Century Anatolia. Moreover, hierarchy, duality, and unity are the concepts that define the approach of the study to the cases.

Varied interpretations of the two religions affect the chapter's content and the historical differences between the Byzantine Empire and Anatolian Seljuks in terms of age and time gaps. One difference is how Neoplatonic

concepts are reflected compared to the Byzantine examples in the cases selected from the 13th Century Seljuk monuments in Anatolia. The study argues that this divergence is due to the Neoplatonic concepts reinterpreted to adapt them to the basic notions and rules of the Islamic belief system. Another significant difference is that Anatolian Seljuk architecture consists of an original set of products generated by a new mindset in the Islamic domain. Nevertheless, it should not be considered separate from Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East traditions, as this study opposes, but rather a new interpretation of thousands of years old traditions. Thus, the chapter explores the cultural and political environment that birthed this architecture in *4.2. Formation of a New Culture and Its Architecture in Anatolia under the Seljuks*. A final difference is that this chapter examines the sacred architecture of the Seljuks and includes another typology, the madrasah, developed by Anatolian Seljuks.

The main reason for madrasahs' involvement is that these buildings probably were products of a common mindset promoting symbolism, as suggested by Ali Uzay Peker.[411] He indicates that the Seljuk spaces were multi-functional.[412] As a result of this tendency, Seljuks created these spaces without case-specific functional motives but by a system of symbolic codes.[413] The Seljuks' architectural design theory conceivably

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[411] Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi – IV," in *İnci Aslanoğlu için Bir Mimarlık Tarihi Dizimi*, ed. T. Elvan Altan, Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci (Ankara: Kalkan Matbaacılık, 2019), 2.

[412] Ibid., 2.

[413] Ibid., 2-3.

enabled the employment of several architectural elements and components such as iwan, maqsura dome, lantern dome, inner courtyard, vault, and portal in different typologies with symbolic connotations.[414] In other words, Peker indeed claims the existence of an architectural symbolism of the Seljuks that is above typologies.

Moreover, the lack of architectural or ideological agendas imposed by a central authority, ecclesia, or clergy class, as discussed further in this chapter, probably enabled this design understanding. Based on this claim, while it is possible to discuss various building types of the Seljuks to contain similar symbolic meanings and connotations, this study particularly focuses on mosques and madrasahs. There are several reasons for this approach. One reason is that these two typologies are chiefly religious buildings, mosques for prayer, and madrasahs for religious education. Madrasahs, the higher education institutions of the Seljuks, were significant facilities for creating their cultural and political atmosphere, discussed in the following parts.[415] In addition, since madrasah is a typology invented by the Seljuks, it is likely to reflect their mindset and worldview to a significant degree. Besides, the mosques and madrasahs are part of larger complexes in numerous cases from the 13th Century. Even when they were not built within the same complex, it is possible to observe that the madrasahs were generally built in relation to the surrounding urban fabric, including the mosques.

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[414] Ibid., 2-3.

[415] Ali Öngül, "Selçuklularda Eğitim Faaliyetleri ve Yetişen İlim Adamlarına Genel Bir Bakış." *Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 1 Issue 2 (2003), 67.

However, despite the idea that madrasah is a significant case to demonstrate the possible impact of the Neoplatonic doctrines on the Seljuks' architecture, this chapter mostly dwells upon the mosque typology. The reason for this is to discuss how the Muslim liturgy affected the formation of the architectural space and how parallelism could be drawn with Neoplatonism.

Furthermore, this chapter is not limited to architectural typologies and repercussions only. The content of *4.1. Impact of Neoplatonism on the Theology and Community of the Seljuks*, related to the Neoplatonic impact on Seljuks' theology and community, follows a different narrative than its counterpart in the Byzantine chapter. This difference is due to various interactions with Neoplatonism that are particular to the two religions. Moreover, another divergence is in the content of this part which is related to the relationship between liturgy and Neoplatonism. While it is possible to trace the origin of the Byzantine Rite back to Neoplatonic or even Platonic rituals, it is difficult to suggest such a link for the Muslim liturgy, Salât. In a different approach from the previous one, this chapter discusses the possible parallelism between the meaning of Salât and the Neoplatonic concepts and its effects on the architectural space regarding the Neoplatonic concepts.

4.1. Impact of Neoplatonism on Islamic Theology and Worldview

It is possible to indicate that the relationship between the theology of Seljuks and the Neoplatonic school of philosophy is fundamentally different from the Byzantine case. The main reason for this is probably the significant time gap between the establishment of Neoplatonism and the Seljuk rule in Anatolia. Because of this gap, it is not possible to offer direct interactions between the Seljuks of Anatolia and Neoplatonism, contrary to

the Byzantine situation in which the kind of an organic bond was present. Therefore, to understand the mindset of the Seljuks properly, the interactions between Neoplatonism and Islam, in general, should be traced. With the brief cover of Neoplatonism's impact on Islamic theology chronologically, this part provides the necessary background for how the cumulative lore has been building over six centuries until the 13th Century. It also dwells upon theological constitutions and philosophers such as Muʿtazila school of thought, Al-Kindī (801–873), Ikhwān al-Safā, Al-Fārābī (872-950), Ibn Sīnā (980-1037), Suhrawardī (1154-1191), Ibn ‘Arabī (1165-1240) and Sadreddin Konevi (1209-1271). They are among the notable names under the Neoplatonic influence in the history of Islamic philosophy. The works and doctrines of these names are also discussed in this chapter as the possible reinterpretations and adaptations of Neoplatonism into Islamic belief and the background that probably influenced not only the works of two 13th Century philosophers, Ibn ‘Arabī and Sadreddin Konevi, but also the symbolism in architectural space of the Seljuks in the following parts. The earlier works are provided to trace their influences in the philosophy of the period, mainly around the works of Arabī. He was contemporary with the selected Seljuk monuments. His doctrines are crucial to understanding the philosophy of the era and why the theological state of 13th Century Anatolia is significant to examine these monuments.

Moreover, although the narrative is generally a chronological one, it is also possible to observe opposite views from the same periods throughout Islamic philosophy. The Byzantine aspect of the study enabled the focus on philosophers from Constantinople. However, to understand the possible influences of the Seljuks in terms of theology, it is crucial to cover the doctrines of different philosophers from various cultural centers,

including Alexandria, Baghdad, Samarkand.[416] The reason for this is probably the rapid spread of Islam in a relatively large area, yet no further discussion on this topic is part of this study.

The Neoplatonic impact is conceivably traced best in the Sufi tradition, the mystical branch of Islam. It is possible to point out the reason for such an esoteric search as the urge of Muslim philosophers to offer explanations regarding creation, the structure of the universe, and humans' relationship with God.[417] These are the issues that were discussed in Qur'an, yet Qur'an does not provide full-scale information on them.[418] Besides, Qur'an consists of two types of verses: *Muhkamat* verses which have clear and direct meanings and explanations, and *Mutasabihat* verses which are highly allegorical and challenging to understand.[419] The second type of verses were possibly the reason in the background of a need to provide metaphysical explanations by Muslim philosophers. However, even before the rise of Sufism as a systematic constitution around the 10th Century,

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[416] Metin Bozkuş, "Anadolu Selçuklularında Sosyal, Dini ve Mezhebi Yapı," *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 5 (2001), 251.

[417] Michael Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī," in *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Richard C. Taylor and Luis Xavier López-Farjeat, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 250. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315708928

[418] Ibid., 248-249.

[419] Leah Kinberg, "Muḥkamāt and Mutashābihāt (Ḳoran 3/7): Implication of a Koranic Pair of Terms in Medieval Exegesis," Arabica 35, no. 2 (1988), 143. Accessed March 29, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4056832.

some schools of thought and philosophers were dealing with metaphysical issues, possibly under Neoplatonic impact.[420]

The first encounter of the Islamic domain with Neoplatonism is accepted to happen when the Abbasid Caliphate conquered Alexandria in 642.[421] Although the Neoplatonic doctrines started to be studied onwards, it is hard to point out any significant study from the earlier periods. The first significant studies in which Neoplatonism's influence is traced were probably generated by a school of thought named Mu'tazila, established around the 8th century and located in Baghdad, the Abbasid capital.[422] It is possible to discuss their studies, especially those regarding the creation from "the non-existent (*al-madüm*), " to have Neoplatonic or even Platonic roots with similarities to Khora, the mysterious entity before the creation of the universe, according to Plato.[423] Even though it is difficult to point out significant works composed or created by members of Mu'tazila, their impact is traceable in studies of Al-Kindī, who was possibly one of the pioneer names of Islamic Sufism.[424] In his works titled *On the Quantity of*

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[420] For these schools of thought and philosophers see Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī," 249-251.

[421] Ian Richard Netton, "Neoplatonism in Islamic philosophy," In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London: Taylor and Francis, 1998). doi:10.4324/9780415249126- H003-1.

[422] Encyclopaedia Britannica, 8th ed., s.v. "Mu'tazila," (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2009). Accessed January 22, 2021. https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mutazilah.

[423] Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī," 250.

[424] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

the Books of Aristotle and *What is Required for the Attainment of Philosophy*, Al-Kindī deals with the metaphysical issues regarding God, the creation of the universe, and their relationship.[425] In these works, he was likely influenced by Mu'tazila's idea of "the creation of it from non-it" and the Christian Neoplatonist John Philoponus (490-570) from Alexandria.[426] According to Al-Kindī, creation is an instantaneous notion, which happens "all at once."[427] Especially for this approach of his, it is possible to presume that the ideas of Porphyry were possibly transmitted to Al-Kindī through the works of Philoponus, whom Porphyry highly influenced.[428] Besides these studies, it is possible to point out *Athulujiya Aristu* (Theology of Aristotle) from the 9th Century as the prime work of Al-Kindī. [429] Although the work is attributed to Al-Kindī, it is unclear whether he was the only one who worked on it.

Moreover, *Athulujiya Aristu* was not completely an original work either but rather an edited translation of the *Enneads* into Arabic.[430] As mentioned earlier, Sedgwick explains that there were no clear separations between

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[425] Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī," 251.

[426] Ibid., 251.

[427] Ibid., 253.

[428] Ibid., 253.

[429] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[430] Ibid., no page number.

the doctrines of different philosophers in antiquity, and it was known that although the school of thought is referred to as Neoplatonism, Plotinus was also highly influenced by the doctrines of Aristotle.[431] Therefore, probably, Al-Kindī was mainly concerned with the ideas and doctrines in his work rather than who generated them. In any case, *Athulujiya Aristu* (Theology of Aristotle) is probably the first significant Sufi work under Neoplatonic influence. Its impact is traceable in later centuries and even in Europe in the late medieval age.[432]

Contemporary with Mu'tazila and Al-Kindī, it is possible to point out Ikhwān al-Safā (The Brethren of Purity), a society of philosophers, under Neoplatonic impact.[433] Their *Rasa'il* (Encyclopedia) claims that creation has a twofold nature.[434] "In the first instance, divine and spiritual things were created all at once, without place and matter."[435] The ideas regarding the twofold ontology of the universe in Islamic philosophy possibly started with these *ibda* and *halq* understandings of Ihwan al-Şafa. [436] In other words, this first stage of creation was a creation *ex nihilo* (*al-ibda*).[437] After

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[431] Ibid., no page number.

[432] Ibid., no page number.

[433] Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī," 255.

[434] Ibid., 255.

[435] Ibid., 255.

[436] Ibid., 255.

this, “natural things (*al-halq*) then developed over time by a process of combination (*tarkib*).”[438] It is possible to observe Neoplatonic influence in various points of this idea, particularly the twofold nature of the creation displays parallelism with the difference between intelligible creation and material creation in the Neoplatonic understanding.

Regarding these discussions, probably derived from them as well, it is possible to observe the duality of the domain of God and the material universe in Islamic belief. The intellectual realm, or the Divine realm as it is named in Byzantine theology, is named *alam al ghayb* by Muslim philosophers, translating into English as the unknown realm. [439] On the other hand, the material universe is named *alam al mulk*.[440] Besides, the word used to describe the creation of material beings is *tarkib*, in English, “combination.”[441] Based on this, it is possible to argue that the idea of organizing a mess through combination possibly had Neoplatonic or even Platonic roots to the creation process, starting from elementary triangles and continuing with their different combinations.[442] Thus, the idea of the

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[437] Ibid., 255.

[438] Ibid., 255.

[439] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. I, s.v. “alam al ghayb.” (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 349.

[440] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. I, s.v. “alam al mulk.” (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 351.

[441] Chase, “Creation in Islam from the Qur’an to Al-Fārābī,” 255.

[442] Plato explained the creation as a process of organizing the pre-creation mess by means of combining elementary triangles to bring order to the universe in his *Republic*

duality of realms is observable in Islamic theology as well. The influence of this idea, probably introduced by Ikhwān al-Safā with the harmonization of Qur'anic doctrines with Neoplatonic ones, is traceable in the following centuries, particularly in the works of Arabī.

Furthermore, the 9th and 10th Centuries are also crucial in terms of the studies of another highly significant name, Al-Fārābī, who is probably the most influential Islamic philosopher.[443] Even though he was from Central Asia, it is possible to point out that Al-Fārābī was under the influence of Hellenistic heritage in Baghdad, since "the Abbasid capital sustained a direct continuum between the Alexandrian school of late antiquity and Baghdad."[444] Al-Fārābī's epistemology consists of a combination of Aristotelian cosmology, Neoplatonic emanationism, and Islamic belief.[445] It is possible to refer to this new emanationist model as *sudûr* in Islamic philosophy.[446] While he borrows terms and theories such as emanation

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and *Timaues*. See 2.4. Significance of Geometry and Geometry as a Tool for the Application of Hierarchy, Duality and Unity in Architectural Design.

[443] He was named as the "second teacher" after Aristotle in the Islamic theology under the impact of ancient heritage. See Mariana Malinova, "Al-Fārābī and His Concept of Epistemological Hierarchy," in *Knowledge and Education in Classical Islam: Religious Learning between Continuity and Change*, ed. Sebastian Günther, (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 186-199.

[444] Mariana Malinova, "Al-Fārābī and His Concept of Epistemological Hierarchy," in *Knowledge and Education in Classical Islam: Religious Learning between Continuity and Change*, ed. Sebastian Günther, (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 186.

[445] Ibid., 186.

and descending order, his understanding of God is arguably similar to the self-thinking God of Aristotle.[447] He basically divides the universe into a hierarchical order of the ten Intellects emanated from the First Intellect, which is non-other than God.[448] He explains the process of creation based on these hierarchical levels of intellects with the following order: "The First (The first Intellect) is The One. The Second Intellect comes from it with emanation. Then the third (Intellect comes). Then by thinking on its own, it produces a celestial body, the first heaven."[449] Even based on this short passage, it is difficult to overlook the possible influence of Neoplatonic principles in this description of creation. Although there have been some other Islamic philosophers before Al-Fārābī who discussed hierarchy within the material universe, such as the 9th Century philosopher Al-Tustari, who created a hierarchy among the humans by placing Prophet Muhammed at the top and ordering the other prophets and caliphates down to the ordinary Muslims, these were not widely accepted in the Sufism and not much reflected in the later doctrines.[450] Rather than this approach to the universe's hierarchy, Al-Fārābī's division of Intelligence

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[446] Fatma Aygün, "İslam Düşüncesinde Tanrı-Alem (Birlik-Çokluk) İlişkisine Yönelik Temel Teoriler: Hudus, Sudur, Zuhur," *Kader*, Vol. 16 Issue 1 (2018), (Accessed January 12, 2020). 167.

[447] For further information on Al-Fārābī's hierarchical system see Malinova, "Al-Fārābī and His Concept of Epistemological Hierarchy."

[448] Malinova, "Al-Fārābī and His Concept of Epistemological Hierarchy," 187-188.

[449] Ibid., 187.

[450] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

into ten, associated with celestials, has been much more appreciated and referenced by later Muslim philosophers.[451] Ibn ‘Arabī as been apparently influenced by the system of Al-Fārābī and continued his own interpretation of this system in his *zuhûr* theory.

Moreover, it is possible to indicate that the hierarchical division of Al-Fārābī also transferred to the studies of Sadreddin Konevi and some other Anatolian Muslim philosophers from the 13th Century, possibly utilizing Arabī’s reinterpretations since Konevi and others were accepted to be in direct relationship with Arabī and his studies.[452] Therefore, the Islamic worldview suggests a hierarchical understanding of the cosmos yet apparently defends equality and unity among the created, particularly human beings. This understanding is most likely to be an adaptation of Neoplatonic doctrines about unity and hierarchy in the universe.

In addition, it is possible to state that Al-Fārābī refuses the creation idea of Al-Kindī and defends the notion of continuous creation. He also manages to adapt this understanding into the Islamic belief of *tawhid* (the oneness of God) by associating the First (Intellect) with the One and considered the rest as secondary.[453] This conception of God is presumably more parallel to the Neoplatonic perception of The One rather than the incarnated God in Byzantine theology. Thus, it is possible to consider *Tawhid* as the opposite of the Trinity understanding in Christianity, yet both perceptions

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[451] Ibid., no page number.

[452] Ibid., no page number.

[453] Malinova, “Al-Fārābī and His Concept of Epistemological Hierarchy,” 188.

of God possibly have Neoplatonic roots with various reinterpretations. Moreover, the Arabic translation of the word “One” used as the name of the deity by Plotinus is “ahad” which is used several times to describe Allah in various Sufi texts.[454] In addition, Plotinus also describes the deity by using the adjective “unknowable” several times in his works.[455] When the fact that Ibn ‘Arabī referred to God as “the blind point,” which is impossible for the mortals to see and know, is considered, the similarity between the two doctrines is observable. [456] Additively, it is possible to consider the understanding of *tawhid* in Islam as a doctrine that contains all three Neoplatonic concepts. It suggests a duality between God and the created beings while also suggesting unity and equality among the created beings. In this sense, it also suggests a unity between the created beings and God yet places God above any being in a hierarchical manner. Thus, it is a significant doctrine to search for its repercussions in different fields, including architecture. Besides, Al-Fārābī also deals with the Islamic political system regarding equality among people and leadership, whose possible repercussions in the Seljuk architecture are discussed in the following part of the study.[457]

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[454] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[455] Ibid., no page number.

[456] İbrahim Coşkun, “Muhyiddin İbn Arabi’nin Felsefesinde “Allah” Mefhumu,” *İlmi ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi (İbnü’l-Arabi Özel Sayısı-1)* Vol. 9 Issue 21 (2008), 125-126.

[457] For further information on Al-Fārābī’s political doctrines see Nani Widiawati, “Epistemology of Islamic Political Leadership in the Al-Fārābī’s Emanation System,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 8 Issue 5 (2019), 25-36. ISSN(P): 2319–393X; ISSN(E): 2319–3948. (Accessed August, 18 2020).

Moreover, the last quarter of the 10th Century and the early 11th Century are significant periods in terms of the doctrines of another Muslim philosopher, Ibn Sīnā. Ibn Sīnā was presumably highly influenced by the formulation of Al-Fārābī, which was a combination of Aristotle's and Neoplatonic philosophers' ideas.[458] Aygün indicates that Ibn Sīnā provided permanence to the theory of *sudûr* mainly by his categorization of beings as "the necessary ones" and "the contingent ones" under the concept of duality.[459] According to him, the necessary beings did not need an external cause to exist, while the contingent ones' existence requires an external cause.[460] It is possible to claim that this categorization has been influenced by the three-staged categorization of Al-Fārābī and the similar categorization of Neoplatonists, including Plotinus and Proclus.[461] With this approach, he proved both the hierarchical order in the universe of emanated beings and the oneness of the necessary One as the ultimate One that the universe emanated from.[462] According to him, all beings were united with God, the metaphysical source of their existence.[463] He

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[458] Fatma Aygün, "İslam Düşüncesinde Tanrı-Alem (Birlik-Çokluk) İlişkisine Yönelik Temel Teoriler," 168.

[459] Ibid., 168.

[460] Ibid., 168.

[461] Ibid., 168-169.

[462] Ibid., 169.

[463] Ibid., 169.

perceived the act of *sudûr* as a bridge connecting the emanated cosmos with God himself, and this connection is not related to the phenomenon of time, which means it does not have a beginning or an end at a specific point in time.[464] He suggested that creation was not a conscious choice of by God, but the necessary emanation happened due to God acknowledging his existence, and ever since that, the universe is in a state of *sudûr*.[465] It is possible to observe the influence of this understanding of *sudûr* in Arabī works very frequently, especially in his theory of *zuhûr*.

Before proceeding to the understanding of *zuhûr* by Arabī, it is important to mention another notable philosopher, Suhrawardī. He also supported the theory of *sudûr* by explaining it with the metaphor of light.[466] Apparently, light has been an ancient symbol of the Divine since God was associated with the sun in many different beliefs.[467] Even in Qur'an, it was written that:

> Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow

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[464] Ibid., 169.

[465] Ali Durusoy, "Ibn Sīnā" *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1999), 327.

[466] Ian Richard Netton, "Neoplatonism in Islamic Philosophy", *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, London and New York, Routledge, 1998.

[467] Ian Richard Netton, "Neoplatonism in Islamic philosophy," In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London: Taylor and Francis, 1998). doi:10.4324/9780415249126- H003-1

> even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is knowing of all things.[468]

Under the possible influence of this verse from Qur'an that associate God, his power, and his knowledge with the light, Suhrawardī used light to explain the *sudûr* as the primary source of the light is God himself, as his light flood from him to create the universe and the beings in it. When the original text of Plotinus is analyzed, one may find that light was one of the metaphors he uses to explain the creation of the universe by emanation.[469]

As this very brief cover of the Neoplatonic impact in Islamic theology displays, there have been various reinterpretations regarding God, the creation, and the universe, generated either contemporary to each other or in chronological order. It is possible to find different points in each of them possibly related to Neoplatonic doctrines. However, it would be a bold claim to defend a constituted and systematic approach to Islamic theologies for metaphysical issues. Ibn 'Arabī's role is arguably highly crucial in terms of this aspect. Although he was possibly influenced by names like Al-Kindī, Al-Fārābī, and Ibn Sīnā, whose studies are discussed here about the Neoplatonic concepts, Arabī has essentially been identified with the most complete and harmonious fusion of Islamic doctrines with Neoplatonic concepts by important scholars such as Netton, Chittick, and

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[468] Qur'an 24:35

[469] Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 27.

Sedgwick.[470] Sedgwick argues that "the basic underlying system of Arabī, derives from Plotinus through various re-interpretations, with additions appropriate for an Islamic context."[471] Besides, Ibn 'Arabī's studies apparently mark a significant period in Islamic Sufism. İhsan Kara explains that it is possible to divide Islamic theology into four periodical categories.[472] According to him, the first phase was about the interpretations of the Qur'an.[473] With the second phase, the harmonization of the philosophical heritage and Qur'anic doctrines begins.[474] The third phase was the culmination period for these harmonization studies, and it finishes with the 13th century.[475] After this, there have not been new theories introduced in the fourth phase, but rather dervish orders were constituted around the old doctrines from the previous phase.[476] Thus, it is possible to state that Arabī has lived in the very final period of the third

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[470] See Netton, "Neoplatonism in Islamic philosophy,"Chittick, and Sedgwick, *Western Sufism.*

[471] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[472] İhsan Kara, "İbnü'l Arabi'nin Tasavvuf Istılahlarına Etkisi ve Seyyid Mustafa Rasim Efendi'nin Istılahat-ı İnsan-ı Kamil'ı Örneği," *İlmi ve Akademik Araştırma Dergisi (İbnü'l Arabi Özel Sayısı)*, Vol. 2 Issue 23 (2009), 586-587.

[473] Ibid., 587.

[474] Ibid., 587.

[475] Ibid., 587.

[476] Ibid., 587.

phase, and his original doctrines have been influencing the following religious orders in the fourth phase.

Furthermore, to basically discuss Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrines, Aygün defines *zuhûr* of Arabī as a concept from the mysticism branch of Islam called the *tasavvuf* system.[477] According to Montague, Islamic mysticism in general and the theory of *zuhûr* deal with the unification of human beings with God.[478] Though mistakenly perceived by some as a pantheist approach, in *tasavvuf,* it is possible to identify a spiritual search and desire to reunite with God.[479] To achieve this, one should tame his/her soul and train his will by isolating himself/herself from the pleasures of earthly senses.[480] Moreover, in terms of the approach to creation and God, Ibn ‘Arabī’s *zuhûr* suggests that God is the ultimate being, and the universe is the manifestation of his being.[481] He defines God as the essential one and everything else in the physical universe as shadows of this essence.[482] This understanding of unity is the core of his *vahdet-i vücud* concept,

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[477] Fatma Aygün, “İslam Düşüncesinde Tanrı-Alem (Birlik-Çokluk) İlişkisine Yönelik Temel Teoriler,” 174.

[478] Pepperell Montague, *The Ways of Knowing or The Methods of Philosophy*, (London G. Allen & Unwin Limited, 1925), 55-58.

[479] Fatma Aygün, “İslam Düşüncesinde Tanrı-Alem (Birlik-Çokluk) İlişkisine Yönelik Temel Teoriler,” 174.

[480] Ibid., 174.

[481] Ibid., 174.

[482] Ibid., 174.

which is referred to particularly in the part related to unity.[483] *Vahdet-i vücud* is translated into English as “the oneness or unity of all (beings)”.[484] This concept briefly suggests God's complete unity with all of its creations, whether intelligible or material.[485] In accordance with his *zuhûr* theory under the possible influence of emanation in Neoplatonic doctrines, *vahdet-i vücud* defends a unity provided by God, yet God does not depend on this unity to exist. [486] While it is possible to observe parallelism between Arabī’s perception of God and the Neoplatonic perception of The One, the similarities are not limited to this point. Virtue and separation from the material senses are mentioned to prepare the soul for the Divine reunion in Neoplatonic doctrines. Under the possible influence, Al-Fārābī formulated his understanding of *insan-ı kamil*, a “perfect man” who was purified by virtue and worthy of the ultimate reunion.[487] This doctrine of Al-Fārābī was likely to be the most decisive influence for the Sufi practice of Ibn ‘Arabī to tame the soul and his doctrine of ***fena fi’l Hakk,*** which means being one with God as the ultimate outcome as well as the final stage of *vahdet-i vücud*. [488] Arabī considered the prophets and the philosophers

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[483] Coşkun, “Muhyiddin İbn Arabi’nin Felsefesinde “Allah” Mefhumu,” 120-122.

[484] Ibid., 120-122.

[485] Ibid., 120-122.

[486] Ibid., 120.

[487] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[488] Coşkun, “Muhyiddin İbn Arabi’nin Felsefesinde “Allah” Mefhumu,” 123.

before him, including the pagan ones, to be in the stage of *fena fi'l Hakk*.[489] It is possible to suggest this approach as proof of the inclusive mindset of Arabī and the religion of Islam in general. The doctrines that influenced the Arabī's mindset, whether Qur'anic or philosophical, were possibly known by the Seljuks. Therefore it is possible to claim the theology of the Seljuks was shaped based on these sources as well and contained parallel views.

In addition, the stage of *fena fi'l Hakk*, being one with God, is likely to realize the reversible nature of emanation, mainly discussed by Plotinus and Proclus. According to them, the emanation process includes three steps: immanence, procession, and reversion.[490] The final step, the reversion, indicates the soul's return to God since emanation was a two-way phenomenon in the eternal cycle. [491] Another similarity is observable in terms of Neoplatonism's influence on the doctrine of *fena fi'l Hakk*. Chittick claims that *insan-i kamil*, the perfect man, has been considered as the minimized version of the ultimate reality in the Sufi understanding. [492] Conceivably, this understanding is highly similar to humans' perception as microcosms in Neoplatonism, thus reinforcing the possible impact of the concept of unity on Sufism. There are also verses in the Qur'an that

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[489] Ibid., 123.

[490] Christoph Helmig and Carlos Steel, "Proclus," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2020 Edition),* ed. Edward N. Zalta, Online Encyclopedia. 2020. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/proclus/>

[491] Ibid., no page number.

[492] Quoted in Coşkun, "Muhyiddin İbn Arabi'nin Felsefesinde "Allah" Mefhumu," 123.

support this idea, such as: “His are all things in the heavens and on earth”[493] It is possible to indicate Arabī that harmonized the Qur’anic doctrines with the heritage of previous Muslim philosophers. Since Neoplatonic influence in the works of these philosophers is briefly demonstrated, it is possible to claim that the Neoplatonic impact in the theories of Ibn ‘Arabī is conceivably a strong one. According to Proclus, “the cosmos is a single being made up of a multiplicity of other living beings that live by virtue of demiurgic causality.”[494] In addition to this statement of Proclus, the unity of beings is discussed to be a fundamental part of not only the Theory of Emanation but the Neoplatonic philosophy in general. Furthermore, Arabī’s ideas about virtue as a mean to reunite with God are again possibly formulated under a fusion of Neoplatonic doctrines and Islam.

Moreover, concerning his *zuhûr* model of the universe and *vahdet-i vücud* understanding, Ibn ‘Arabī’s *barzakh* idea is conceivably another significant contribution of his to Islamic mysticism.[495] The idea of *barzakh* and *vahdet-i vücud* is essential for the claims of this study. Dictionary definition of the word *barzakh* is “gap, break, partition, bar, obstruction; isthmus.”[496] However, according to Arabī, *barzakh* is the “thingness” that

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[493] Qur’an, 2:255

[494] Motta, “Putting Cosmogony into Words,” 124.

[495] Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fütûhât-ı Mekkiyye*. Trans. Ekrem Demirli. (İstanbul: Litera Yayıncılık, 2015), 55-56.

[496] Ursula Badenhorst, "The Language of Gardens: Ibn al-‘Arabi’s Barzakh, The Courtyard Gardens of the Alhambra, and The Production of Sacred Space," Master

connects and separates two different entities or zones in general.[497] In the metaphysical conception of the universe in Islam, it is possible to define it as an intermediary zone between the two realms: *alam al ghayb* and *alam al mulk*. While *barzakh* is none of these entities or zones, the essences of these two are present in it.[498] In other words, “Even though the *barzakh* differentiates between the two, it is not only its function to prevent the two entities mixing with one another, but it also unites them.”[499]

Furthermore, in Islamic belief, it is believed that the souls of the dead rest in an intermediary zone until the ultimate resurrection for judgment.[500] Arabī possibly blended this Qur’anic understanding of an intermediary zone with Neoplatonic esotericism. Even though there is no notion of a zone with the function of purgatory or intermediary position in the descending model of the universe, it is still possible to trace the influence of the Neoplatonic ontology in Arabī’s *barzakh*. As the cumulative of the individual souls and its function as the bridge between the intelligible universe and the material universe, the Soul's role is possibly parallel to

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Thesis. University of Cape Town, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Religious Studies, 2014, 31. http://hdl.handle.net/11427/13083

[497] Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fütûhât-ı Mekkiyye,* 56.

[498] Ibid., 56.

[499] Badenhorst, "The Language of Gardens,” 33.

[500] Ali Uzay Peker, “Imprisoned Pearls: The Long-Forgotten Symbolism of the Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā’ at Divriği,” in *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: The Life and Times of F. W. Hasluck, 1878-1920 Vol. III*, ed. David Shankland (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 2013), 335.

barzakh in esoteric Islam. Besides, the concepts of unity and duality in the essence of the Neoplatonic universe are traceable in the function of *barzakh* as both the connection and the separation zone. Basically, it is possible to interpret that Ibn 'Arabī explained how these two concepts do not challenge each other with his *barzakh* doctrine and how the soul transcends towards God. In this manner, Arabī's *barzakh* is a zone that the souls of the dead are present and a zone that believers of God could reach through virtue gained with meditation or prayer.[501] This approach attributes mysticism to *barzakh*. It is possible to define it as not an imaginary zone but the zone of imaginaries (*al-khayāl*) which are only visible for the souls of *insan-ı kamil*.

Therefore, when Arabī's impact on Sufism and esoteric Islam with these doctrines is considered, it is possible to point out the 13th Century as a significant period for Islamic Neoplatonism. It was probably a significant era, particularly for Anatolia, since Ibn 'Arabī himself was present in Anatolia and settled there several times during his life.[502] He studied with different philosophers in Anatolia, had relations with the ruling elite and even Sultans of Seljuks, and accepted students from Anatolia.[503] Sadreddin Konevi was one of the most significant students of Arabī in terms of the continuation of his ideas in Anatolia and Sufism in general.[504]

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[501] Ibid., 55-56.

[502] Kazım Yıldırım, "İbnü'l Arabi'nin Kültürümüzdeki Yeri ve Önemi," *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 4 (1998), 31.

[503] Ibid., 31.

Moreover, in addition to the philosophical sources, which are the products of earlier traditions, the Qur'anic verses are referenced in these heterodox studies since, at certain points, they show resemblance in the perception of God and the relationship of humans with the Divine.[505] Based on this resemblance, it is possible to presume that the acceptance of Neoplatonic doctrines in Islam was not as forced as their acceptance in Christianity since, as Sedgwick indicates, early Christian philosophers and mainly St. Augustine had difficulty in relating Neoplatonism to Biblical doctrines.[506] Contrary, the Qur'anic verses about the creation of the universe remarkably resemble the Theory of Emanation and the understanding of creation based on regulations, especially employing geometry.[507] Scholars on Islamic studies like Al-Alousi, Peterson, and Lizzini agree that "the preponderant notion of creation in the Qur'an seems to be one of shaping, moulding, vivifying or otherwise perfecting some kind of material that is already present, however, in imperfect state."[508] Also, based on their studies, it is possible to indicate that "creation in Qur'an is not a one-time affair, but rather a continuous act of endowing."[509] This parallelism

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[504] Ibid., 31.

[505] For further information on the resemblances and references to Qur'anic doctrine of creation in the Islamic philosophy see Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī."

[506] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[507] For the understanding of creation according to Qur'an see Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī," 248-249.

[508] Chase, "Creation in Islam from the Qur'an to Al-Fārābī ," 251.

probably smoothened the adaptation process of the Neoplatonic doctrines. Besides, Sedgwick claims that Neoplatonic doctrines were known in the Muslim lands before the arrival of Islam, resulting in a more straightforward adaptation process than the contradictions in Christianity.[510] Apparently, this peaceful and respectful attitude towards Sufism and heterodox branches of Islam continued in Anatolia after the Islamization of the land. It conceivably peaked in the 13th Century under Seljuk rule with notable names such as Ibn ‘Arabī and Sadreddin Konevi, who were presumably driven by the Neoplatonic impact.[511] This theological and social atmosphere of the Seljuks in the 13th Century arguably had a significant impact on architecture in terms of meaning and form.

4.2. Formation of a New Culture and Its Architecture in Anatolia under the Seljuks

Before discussing the significance of the 13th Century Seljuk architecture in Anatolia in terms of its architectural characteristics and how Neoplatonic concepts were possibly instrumental in forming these, it is also essential to understand the social and theological atmosphere of the era. How the Neoplatonic concepts possibly nurtured Islam esoterically is discussed previously. However, the reasons for the arguable uniqueness of the architecture in the 13th Century Anatolia regarding the Neoplatonic concepts should be first searched in the Seljuks’ approach to these heterodox branches and their connection to art and architecture. It is

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[509] Ibid., 249.

[510] Sedgwick, *Western Sufism*, no page number.

[511] Ibid., no page number.

significant because, under the Seljuks, a new culture and understanding of architecture were created. In other words, it is possible to consider the Seljuk architecture in Anatolia as a new branch in the oeuvre of Islamic architecture. Thus, the social, cultural, and political environment in the background of this new architecture is needed to be discussed before the characteristics and uniqueness of the mosques and madrasahs of this era.

First, the initial penetration of the heterodox ideas of Islam to Anatolia probably started with the initial migrations of the nomadic tribes from Central Asia to Anatolia.[512] These tribes were presumably under the heavy influence of theologies generated in multi-cultural centers such as Baghdad, Khorasan, Samarkand, and other significant Islamic cities.[513] Neoplatonism's possible impact on the studies generated in such centers is already discussed in this study. Scholars indicate that up to the 13th Century, the cities of Seljuk Anatolia enhanced.[514] Also, by this time, the official religion of the Seljuk state has become an established Sunni branch of Islam.[515] However, the Sunni state's relationship with the heterodox approaches to Islam was apparently unique in the Islamic World in terms of inclusivity.[516] The love and respect that most of the society had

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[512] Metin Bozkuş, "Anadolu Selçuklularında Sosyal, Dini ve Mezhebi Yapı," 251.

[513] Ibid., 251.

[514] Ibid., 251.

[515] Ibid., 251.

[516] Ibid., 251-252.

for the sheiks and dervishes of heterodox approaches were probably the main reason for the state's policy.[517] This peaceful approach of the state presumably created the stage for the penetration of mystical and esoteric elements into the culture and contributed to the country's image as a desirable destination for the important names of the era. Many visits not only by sheikhs and dervishes but also by influential philosophers, including Ibn ‘Arabī, from different lands to Seljuk Anatolia happened throughout the 13th Century.[518] Resul Ay indicates that visits of these philosophers, especially Ibn ‘Arabī, resulted in the rapid spread of their esoteric ideas in Anatolia, and the doctrines carried through these visits affected Anatolian Sufism deeply in the 13th Century.[519] Thus, a balanced and inclusive social and cultural atmosphere was sustained in Anatolia during the 13th Century.[520]

Furthermore, it is possible to interpret art and architecture as highly affected by this atmosphere, and unique works were produced in this era.[521] The inclusive attitude of society impacted not only philosophy and

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[517] Resul Ay, “Bizanstan Osmanlıya Anadoluda Heterodoks İnanışlar: ‘Öteki’ Dindarlığın Ortak Doğası Üzerine (650–1600),” *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, 31 (2013), 31.

[518] Ibid., 20.

[519] Ibid., 20.

[520] Nusret Algan, “Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları,” PhD Diss. Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi, 2008, 12.

[521] Ibid., 16.

theology but also art and architecture.[522] Neither the state nor the society confronted with the openness in art and architectural design, especially in their symbolism and decorative programs.[523] As discussed later in more detail, the reception of artisans and artists from neighboring lands as a part of Seljuks' inclusivity arguably had a significant role in the uniqueness of artistic production.[524] Besides, it is crucial to indicate that the state did not impose any ideological agenda on the producers and patrons of art and architecture, conceivably strengthening uniqueness.[525]

One of the reasons for this approach was likely to be the political and economic power of the lodges, mainly formed under religious orders.[526] It is possible to state that these functioned as institutes and syndicates for merchants, artisans, and artists.[527] Their power and position within society are traceable due to the Seljuk state's policy to let the foundations and lodges regulate different branches of production and trade and provide facilities and education in both the realms of crafts and religion.[528] In

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[522] Ibid., 16.

[523] Ibid., 16.

[524] Ibid., 16.

[525] Ibid., 16.

[526] İrfan Aladağ, “Anadolu Selçukluları ve Beylikler Devrinde Dini Yapıların Toplum Hayatına Etkileri,” *Akademik MATBUAT,* Vol. 2 Issue 2 (2018), 11.

[527] Ibid., 11.

addition, this system apparently has been crucial to sustain and maintain the high welfare of the 13th Century. Based on these, it is possible to suggest that the economic and religious power of the lodges enabled them to have a certain degree of autonomy and self-determination.[529] Under the Seljuks, this autonomy possibly enabled artists and artisans to produce more freely without any religious or political agenda.

Moreover, the migrated artisans and artists congregated in these lodges with the locals.[530] As a result of this, a creative atmosphere was presumably created, in which the artisans from various lands in a wide range interacted artistically and influenced each other. Since the migrations and the power of lodges are discussed to be culminated in the 13th Century, it is likely to claim that these contributed to creating unique architectural production and style as a possible combination of a wide range of influences, possibly including the Neoplatonic one. In addition, since the lodges were religious institutions formed around sheikhs and dervishes, Sufism probably dominated the artistic production in Anatolia under Seljuk's rule, as Semra Ögel indicates.[531]

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[528]Algan, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları," 12.

[529] Aladağ, "Anadolu Selçukluları ve Beylikler Devrinde Dini Yapıların Toplum Hayatına Etkileri," 11-12.

[530] Ibid., 11-12.

[531] Semra Ögel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, (İstanbul: Akbank Yayınları Kültür Sanat Kitapları, 1994), 63.

Furthermore, it is possible to indicate that the architectural production, predominantly han, caravanserai, bath, madrasa, and mosque building, was under the lodges and foundations' responsibility mostly since they were the regulators as well as the institutions of the artisans.[532] Thus, the lodge members were respected individuals and probably significant for society's arts and crafts education.[533] It is possible to point out the mosques as the urban setting for most of these interactions between dervishes from lodges and society.[534]

For the further significance of the mosques, the prayer to God, especially the ritual of Salât, is considered crucial by scholars for the Seljuk society in Anatolia.[535] The collective performance of Salât in mosques was probably a significant part of daily life for the Anatolian Seljuks, especially in the cities.[536] The prayer was likely to be the main reason for the mosques' important place in the Seljuk society, yet the reasons are not limited to the praying function of the mosque only. The mosques were also cultural and

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[532] Aladağ, “Anadolu Selçukluları ve Beylikler Devrinde Dini Yapıların Toplum Hayatına Etkileri,” 11-13.

[533] Ibid., 11-13.

[534] Ibid., 11-13.

[535] Some heterodox groups who are pointed out as “marginalized” ones refused the canonical ritual practices of Islam including the Salât due to the belief that they had corrupted formalist approaches to Islam. Yet, even these groups were tolerated by the dominantly Sunnid rule of Seljuks. See Bozkuş, "Anadolu Selçuklularında Sosyal, Dini ve Mezhebi Yapı.”

[536] Aladağ, “Anadolu Selçukluları ve Beylikler Devrinde Dini Yapıların Toplum Hayatına Etkileri,” 1-2.

social centers for the Seljuks.[537] İrfan Aladağ states that the religious buildings, mainly mosques and madrasahs, were significant for the daily life of Seljuks.[538] Among these typologies, mosques were significant since they conceivably worked as a connection point for the sheiks and dervishes to meet with the rest of the society and interact with them.[539] Even though this social and educational purpose of the mosque space has been an Islamic tradition starting with Prophet Muhammed's tradition, it was apparently significant for the Seljuks since these interactions in the mosque space were one of the main penetration points of the esoteric ideas to the society. The 13th Century was probably the period in which these interactions have reached their peak. Thus the reflections of the esoteric ideas transferred by these interactions are traceable in the mosque architecture of the 13th Century. For the generation and teaching of these ideas, madrasahs were conceivably essential. It is possible to define madrasahs, a significant architectural typology invented by Seljuks, as the architectural setting for higher education, including education in various areas such as theology, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy.[540] Also, madrasahs were closely related to mosques and dervish lodges. These relationships were probably not only physical and architectural but also social and educational. Madrasahs probably

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[537] Ibid., 1-2.

[538] Ibid., 2.

[539] Ibid., 3.

[540] Öngül, “Selçuklularda Eğitim Faaliyetleri ve Yetişen İlim Adamlarına Genel Bir Bakış.” 67.

provided accommodation for the dervishes, whether permanent, traveling, or immigrant, as it is observable from the student cells and guest quarters.[541] They apparently had importance in terms of the policy as well.[542] When madrasahs in urban centers such as Sivas and Kayseri are taken together with the urban fabric and city planning, it is possible to claim that these buildings were located at strategically significant points.[543] These points had close relations with urban typologies such as hospitals, bazaars, mosques while not losing their connections with the countryside, where the dervishes mostly cloistered and secluded themselves in their lodges.[544] As a result of this, it is possible to claim that madrasahs conceivably provided architectural connections with the mainly heterodox rural areas and dominantly Sunni urban centers, very similar to the connections that mosques probably provided.

Aside from the social, religious, and educational aspects, the 13th Century Seljuk mosques and madrasahs in Anatolia conceivably produced prominent examples of technical and formal characteristics compared to previous or later ones. Before discussing these characteristics, it is essential to state that the buildings of the 13th Century are arguably unique

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[541] Ethel Sara Wolper, *Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia*, (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press. 2003), 42-44.

[542] Ibid., 42-44.

[543] Ibid., 42-44.

[544] Ibid., 42-44.

in terms of the extent and quality of the craftsmanship.[545] The main reason for this was possibly the prosperity and welfare of the Seljuk state and society during the 13th Century.[546] The level of prosperity and welfare possibly directly links with the increased trade relations of Seljuks since they have taken the Anatolian branch of the Silk Road under their control.[547] The 13th Century was a more peaceful period in terms of wars and conflicts with the Crusaders, Byzantines, and other municipalities, compared to the previous centuries. This atmosphere presumably contributed to economic prosperity and probably directly affected the building production of the era. As a result of this prosperity and the politics of the Seljuk state, as discussed, different groups from Central Asia started to settle in Anatolia in the 13th Century, including merchants, artisans, artists, sheikhs, and dervishes, who gathered around lodges.[548] Especially the migration of artisans was significant for the Seljuks' architecture during the 13th Century. As Oya Pancaroğlu's studies indicate, most of these artisans traveled in Anatolia.[549] These people brought the architectural tradition of mainly Central Asia and Iran, probably embedded with theology, and apparently had significant contributions to the Seljuks'

[545] Algan, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları," 22-24.

[546] Ibid., 22-24.

[547] Ibid., 22-24.

[548] Bozkuş, "Anadolu Selçuklularında Sosyal, Dini ve Mezhebi Yapı," 250.

[549] Oya Pancaroğlu, "The Mosque-Hospital Complex in Divriği: A History of Relations and Transitions," *Anadolu ve Çevresinde Ortaçağ*, 3 (2009), " 187-189.

architectural tradition in the 13th Century.[550] For the mosque and madrasah architecture of the 13th Century, the impact of these artists and artisans is observable not only in the quality of the stonework of the construction but also in the richness of the stone decorations of the mosques and madrasah.[551] Although the structural quality possibly enabled the theological and philosophical concepts to be reflected in the plan organizations and volumetric configurations of the buildings, these artists' impact is arguably much more in the decorative program.[552] The new lore of decorations, or even motif and pattern books, probably brought to Anatolia through these people and spread in Anatolia, mostly in lodges, and applied to many monuments, including mosques and madrasahs.[553] Thus, these patterns, motifs, and figures with possible connections to Neoplatonism penetrated the architectural tradition of Anatolia and applied throughout the land, even though some applications might be unintentional of this connection. Based on these interactions and the level of prosperity, the examples produced in the 13th Century were presumably highly unique and even the peak of the decorative program of the Seljuk mosques and madrasahs. These patterns, motifs, and figures applied to these buildings are discussed in the following parts regarding their relationship to the

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[550] Ibid., 187-189.

[551] Algan, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları," 30.

[552] Ibid., 30.

[553] Pancaroğlu, "The Mosque-Hospital Complex in Divriği: A History of Relations and Transitions," 187-189.

Neoplatonic concepts. Furthermore, Doğan Kuban's statement indicating that the Seljuk examples in Anatolia before the 13th Century were mainly built for daily function and did not contain much symbolism strengthens our view that the 13th Century cases are manifestations of concepts enhanced by means of mysticism in its culmination period in Anatolia.[554]

In addition to the impact of the traditions from foreign lands, the architectural traditions that existed in Anatolia by the Seljuks arrived were apparently highly influential. The Byzantine basilical tradition was likely to be the most influential pre-Seljuk Anatolian impact on the mosque architecture in 13th Century Anatolia.[555] In earlier centuries, the Seljuks built mosques on the ruins of churches or sacred lands of Byzantine cities.[556] Although the use of spolia from such sites or buildings continued in the 13th Century, mainly in column capitals, column pedestals, or construction stones, it is possible to indicate that the cases from the 13th Century mainly were *ex nihilo*.[557] This situation presumably enabled the Seljuks to continue to be influenced by the Byzantine basilicas' formal characteristics. They adapted the basilica scheme to their religion's needs

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[554] Doğan Kuban, *Selçuklu Çağında Anadolu Sanatı*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002), 95.

[555] For further information on the impact of Byzantine basilicas on Peker, “Anadolu Bazilika Geleneği ve Selçuklu Anıtsal Mimarisine Etkisi.”

[556] Scott Redford, "The Seljuqs of Rum and the Antique," *Muqarnas* 10 (1993), 148-149. Accessed March 29, 2021. doi:10.2307/1523181.

[557] Ibid., 148-149.

while not restricted by the existing ruins and produced original examples of their traditions during the 13th Century.

Moreover, for the formation of the madrasah scheme and typology in Anatolia, it is possible to claim that the plan organization of the cross-in-square Byzantine churches was influential.[558] When the madrasah plans are examined, it is possible to observe a similar centralization of the plan with a dome in the third dimension, in the enclosed courtyard type madrasahs, which is the main characteristic of cross-in-square churches. Yet, the uniqueness of the madrasah typology is observable in the way Seljuks combined the cross-in-square scheme with the four iwan courtyard, which they mainly employed in Iran.[559] As a result of this possible synthesis, a new typology has emerged for the Seljuks' highly valued sheiks, dervishes, and religious education and production. With the increase in prosperity, migration of dervishes, and the empowerment of lodges, and so on in the 13th Century, it is possible to claim that the madrasah typology matured enough to reach its architectural peak with numerous buildings being produced in the century.

Therefore, it is possible to suggest that the 13th Century was a period of prosperity and production for the Anatolian Seljuks. While the control of the Seljuks over The Silk Road enabled them to sustain welfare in the country, this welfare, as well as the characteristic inclusive policy of the state and society, possibly made the migration of not only the merchant

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[558] Ali Uzay Peker, "The Monumental Iwan: A Symbolic Space or A Functional Device?," *Journal of the METU Faculty of Architecture,* XI/1-2 (1991), 7-10.

[559] Ibid., 7-10.

but also sheiks, artists, and artisans mainly from the cultural centers of Central Asia possible. In addition to these migrations, the atmosphere of Muslim Anatolia in the 13th Century apparently made it a center of attention for important philosophers such as Ibn ‘Arabī. These people, especially the sheiks and philosophers, possibly contributed to the religious and philosophical atmosphere of Anatolia with their heterodox Islamic belief systems, which were possibly under Neoplatonic influence. Moreover, the artists and craftsmen probably carried their architectural traditions with them to the Seljuk lands.

Furthermore, it is possible to indicate that the sheiks and dervishes were respected by the society of Seljuks and tolerated to great degrees by the state. Simultaneously, the system of lodges under the protection of the ruling body arguably enabled the artists and artisans to shelter and produce freely without any political or religious agenda dictated by the state. The fact that the lodges were also nourished by the esoteric views and practices possibly indicates that the artistic production needs to be dealt together with the impact of Sufism. Besides, the broad-mindedness of the society and state made it possible for local traditions, mainly the Byzantine one, to nurture and influence the architectural style. As a result of these cultural interactions as well as the open-minded approach to artistic production, it is possible to define the architectural tradition of the Seljuks in the 13th Century as a synthesis of various influences, and it produced examples that were at a higher level of uniqueness compared to the previous and later ones in terms of both formal and decorative characteristics. Mosques and madrasah of the period were likely to be significant examples of this unique architectural style of synthesis, which

this study claims one of the prime manifestations of the Neoplatonic impact on Islamic theology and its repercussions in architecture.[560]

4.3. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Spatial Characteristics of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture in Relation to Liturgy

In a similar approach to the one in the Byzantine part, this part of the study adopts a methodology combining the symbolic meaning provided by liturgy with the examination of the architectural space regarding geometry to trace the Neoplatonic concepts in the 13th Century Seljuk architecture. Although this relationship with the liturgy is a specific one to mosques, and it is not possible to claim a similar one for the madrasahs, the chapter traces the reflections of Neoplatonic concepts in madrasahs without liturgical aspects.

Moreover, it is difficult to suggest a relationship between Muslim liturgy and the mosque space similar to the Byzantine one. The main reason for this is the fundamental differences between The Byzantine Rite, a continuation and adaptation of the pagan rituals, and the Muslim prayer of Salât. Although it would be difficult and out of our focus to trace the pagan roots of Salât, the thesis discusses the conceptual similarities between the Neoplatonic doctrines and the Muslim prayer before moving on to the examination of the case studies. Furthermore, it is possible to state that geometry's importance as the regulator of the universe in Neoplatonic understanding possibly impacted Muslims, particularly the Seljuks. Hence, this chapter also includes the geometrical analyses of the selected case studies. The selected case studies for this part of the study are Alaeddin

[560] Ögel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, 46-48.

Mosque (1223) in Niğde, Divriği Great Mosque (1228) in Sivas, Burmalı Minare Mosque (1237) and Gökmedrese Mosque (1266) in Amasya, Hunad Hatun Mosque (1237), and Hacı Kılıç Mosque (1249) in Kayseri, Arslanhane Mosque (1289) in Ankara and Eşrefoğlu Mosque (1296) in Beyşehir among the 13th Century Seljuk mosques. The case studies for the madrasahs are Karatay Madrasah (1251) and İnce Minareli Madrasah (1279) in Konya and Cacabey Madrasah (1272) in Kırşehir among the madrasahs with enclosed courtyards and Çifte Minareli Madrasah (1265) in Erzurum, Gökmedrese (1271) and Çifte Minareli Medrese (1271) in Sivas, Sahabiye Madrasah (1276) in Kayseri among the madrasahs with open courtyard.

Moreover, Hacı Kılıç Mosque and Hunad Hatun Mosque have madrasah attached to them as well as the madrasah of Divriği Great Mosque which functions as a Dār al-Shifā. In related points, these madrasahs are referred to as well. The cases are analyzed to trace the reflections of the three Neoplatonic concepts with their reinterpretations in the Seljuks' theology. It is possible to consider the repercussions of unity, duality, and hierarchy in plan organizations and volumetric arrangements of the mosques to be supported by their similarities to the prayer of Salât and the Islamic worldview. Even though the impact of Salât is not observable in the plan organizations and volumetric configurations of madrasahs, they are also referred to for particular aspects they contain with possibly similar symbolism.

For this reason, in addition to the discussion of Salât before the analyses of the case, the doctrines of the Islamic philosophers, especially the ones from Al-Fārābī and Ibn ‘Arabī, are referred to during the architectural and geometrical analyses. Furthermore, it is vital to indicate that the

dominancy of one or two of the concepts over the others is a natural outcome of the different interpretations and adaptations within the Seljuk theology and community. As a result of this, it is possible to observe traces of concepts in liturgy and architecture to different degrees. Thus, the order of the concepts followed in the Byzantine part is changed for the Seljuk one.

4.3.1. Meaning in the Background of the Muslim Prayer and Its Relation to Neoplatonic Doctrines

Before discussing how it is possible to find similarities between the meaning in the background of the Muslim Prayer of Salât and the Neoplatonic understanding of reunion, it is essential to provide basic information about Salât and its place and importance in Islam. Salât is a ritual prayer performed by Muslims individually or as a community in mosques.[561] Although there are other special occasions for Salât, it is indicated as a principle of Islam and performed five times a day.[562] Even though the discussion of the physical practice of Salât is not necessary for this study, some of the rules are important in terms of the effect of the liturgy on the mosque space. One of the most important rules that possibly affected the formation of the mosque space was its orientation. Since it is ordered for Muslims to face towards the Ka'ba while performing the ritual of Salât to follow the tradition of Prophet Muhammed, Sunna, the qibla axis has been an instrumental factor for the formation of the mosque space in later periods.[563] Another critical factor is the advice to Muslims to

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[561] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. VIII, s.v. "salât." (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 925-934.

[562] Ibid., 925-934.

perform the ritual as a community and in the format of rows lined to face the qibla equally.[564] The effects of physical manuals of the Muslim prayer on the formation of the plan organization and volumetric configuration of 13th Century Seljuk Mosques in reference to the Neoplatonic concepts are discussed in the following parts. In addition to the effects of the physical practice of the Salât on forming the Seljuk mosques, it is possible to argue that the symbolic meaning of it excessively contributed to the symbolism of the mosque space as well. To demonstrate this contribution and the traces of Neoplatonic concepts in the 13th Century Seljuk Mosques, this study adopts an approach of drawing parallelism between the esoteric meaning of the Muslim prayer and the Neoplatonic doctrines. However, it is crucial to indicate that there is a drastic difference here compared to Neoplatonism's influence on the formation of the Byzantine Rite. Suggesting a similar influence for the Muslim Prayer would be a groundless claim and out of this study's framework and purpose.

Although there is not a direct reference to the prayer of Salât in the Qur'an, praying daily to God is an emphasized topic in the book of Islam.[565] Most of the information in the canonical Islamic belief about the symbolic meaning or the practice of Salât was likely to be gathered by the

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[563] Mahya Ghouchani, Mohammad Taji and Fatemeh Kordafshari, "The Effect of Qibla Direction on the Hierarchy of Movement in Mosque: A Case Study of Mosques in Yazd, Iran," *Frontiers of Architectural Research* Vol. 8 Issue 3 (2019), 399. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foar.2019.01.002

[564] M. M. Dheen Mohamed, "Muslim Prayer in Practice," in *Prayer: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*, ed. David Marshall and Lucinda Mosher (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 33.

[565] See Qur'an 2:3, 2:238, 4:43, 4:103

hadiths of the Prophet Muhammed.[566] Prophet Muhammed's teaching displays that the meaning of Salât is praising God and its supremacy and demonstrating Muslims' devotion and submission to God.[567] Asides from the Qur'anic verses that are read during the practice of Salât, the phrases repeated also demonstrate this understanding, especially with the phrase of *subhana Rabbi al-Azim* (Glory be to my Lord, the Great), *subhana Rabbi al-Ala* (Glory be to my Lord, the Most High) and *Rabbana wa laka al-hamd* (Our Lord, for You is all the Praise).

In addition to the canonical meaning of Salât, there are more layers to its meaning, especially more esoteric and mystical ones which Sufis mostly reinterpret. Sufis presumably considered the ritual of Salât as a symbolic reunion with God or, in other words, their own spiritual ascension.[568] "Sufis generally called this phenomenon (the level that reached through the practice of Salât) *wasl*, or spiritual reunion, with God."[569] They named this stage "station of annihilation (*maqam al-fana*)," in which one reaches in the climax of Salât and is "totally immersed in the presence of his Lord."[570] It is possible to discuss this understanding as showing similarities to *vahdet-i vücud* understanding of Ibn 'Arabī suggesting the unity of all

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[566] Mohamed, "Muslim Prayer in Practice," 27-28.

[567] Ibid., 27-28.

[568] Ibid., 31-32.

[569] Ibid., 32.

[570] Ibid., 32.

beings with God and possibly formulated under the influence of the reinterpretations of Neoplatonic doctrines. Based on this, there has probably been a corresponding relationship between different Sufi doctrines and the mystical symbolism of Salât. Furthermore, the mysticism of Salât conceivably demonstrates close resemblances with the spiritual journey of philosophers discussed in the Neoplatonic texts in terms of their symbolic meaning. It is likely to consider the stage of *maqam al-fana* parallel to the metaphysical stage of *adyton* at the climax of the pagan ritual since, in both, the one who is practicing the liturgy becomes united with God.[571] Moreover, Dheen Mohamed explains this stage in the Sufi understanding as:

> …true and complete submission to the Lord is only possible when Lord's will and desire is voluntarily acquired as one's own will and desire; in other words one does not pass a will or desire of one's own and hence stands unified with God.[572]

This passage about the Sufi understanding arguably displays similarities to the original ideas of Plotinus. Especially his ideas about the lack of free will and the misguided meaning of desire in the material universe were presumably influential for this Sufis' conception of Salât.[573] The unification understanding is also very similar to the reversion of the emanation

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[571] The concept of *adyton* in the Neoplatonic rituals is discussed in *3.3.1. Byzantine Rite as a Liturgy under Neoplatonic Influence*. For further information on the concept see Tissi, "Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers."

[572] Mohamed, "Muslim Prayer in Practice," 31-32.

[573] For Plotinus' ideas on will power see Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 81.

process, ekstasis, discussed not only by Plotinus but also by Proclus.[574] Although these resemblances are not enough on their own to suggest any kind of Neoplatonic influence on the formation of the meaning of Salât, the fact that Sufis knew the Neoplatonic doctrines, in general, enables the possibility of these doctrines' impact on how Sufis perceived the Muslim liturgy esoterically.

Furthermore, Quranic verses and hadiths were possibly influential for this mystical understanding and consolidated it for the canon and mainstream Islamic belief. Although the origin of Salât dates earlier, or even pre-Islamic periods, the regular "five times a day prayer is authorized after the Mir'aj of Prophet Muhammed" in the eleventh year of his Prophecy.[575] Thus, the practice of Salât is apparently a symbolic reprising of the Mi'raj of Prophet Muhammed by the Muslims themselves. The Prophet's hadith of "prayer is the ascension of the believer" extremely strengthens this reinterpretation.[576]

While the similarity between the esoteric meaning of Salât and the Neoplatonic concept of unity is an arguable one, it is possible to discuss the similarities with the other two. The Mi'raj of Prophet Muhammed is explained as arisen "through the seven heavens" in the Quranic verses 53:1-18.[577] Under the possible influence of this passage from the Qur'an,

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[574] See Gregory, *The Neoplatonists*, 124-125.

[575] Mohamed, "Muslim Prayer in Practice," 26.

[576] Ibid., 33.

[577] Ibid., 33.

many Muslim philosophers, including Ibn ‘Arabī, have dealt with the Mi’raj as a journey between the celestial stages in a hierarchical order.[578] Based on this, it is possible to claim that the ascension has been accepted as a hierarchical journey in Islamic understanding, and therefore, the symbolic meaning of Salât most probably contains a hierarchical lifting. Finally, for the concept of duality, the physical practice of Salât, accompanied by spiritual lifting, conceivably accepts and reflects the twofold nature of the universe and human beings as microcosmic models. When considered with the mosque space, the ascension meaning of Salât was probably a significant factor for the symbolism of the mosque interiors, as it is discussed in the following part about the traces of duality.

Therefore, the parallelism between the Neoplatonic concepts and the meaning of the Muslim prayer, Salât, is difficult to overlook. In addition to the corresponding relationship of the liturgy and the architectural space, it is essential to discuss further the architecture of the Seljuks' mosques in the 13th Century, considering the liturgy's symbolic and formal effects.

4.3.2. Traces of Unity in the Plan Organizations and Volumetric Configurations of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture

It is possible to observe the dominancy of the concept of unity both in the Islamic doctrines that discussed to be shaped under Neoplatonic impact as well as the culture of the Seljuks. Similar to the domination of the concept of hierarchy in Byzantine theology and community, the domination of unity is not observable in the social, political, and religious life of the Seljuks. Embedded with the esoteric and Quranic doctrines, the Seljuk

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[578] For further information on Ibn ‘Arabī’s personal Mir’aj see Morris, “The Spiritual Ascension: Ibn 'Arabî and the Mi'râj.”

theology and society were formed with an inclusive understanding of union, as discussed. Their political system apparently “rejects every form of absolute control other than the domination of Allah.” [579] Even the ruling elite or Sultan, for the Seljuks' case, are merely considered the shadow of God on Earth.[580] On the contrary to the Byzantine political and social system based on the hierarchy of classes, “in the Islamic political system, the highest power is the power of God, not the power of some people over others.”[581]

Furthermore, for the esoteric Sufi studies, the unity of human beings with God was considered a pervasive concept, and the *vahdet-i vücud* doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī is apparently the most formulated version of this understanding. For the Qur’anic doctrines, the unity among humans is emphasized several times in Qur’an, the clearest one being the verse 3:103: “…and hold fast all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves, and remember with gratitude Allah’s favor on you..”[582] This understanding of unity and equality

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[579] Nani Widiawati, “Epistemology of Islamic Political Leadership in the Al-Fārābī’s Emanation System,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 8 Issue 5 (2019), 26. ISSN(P): 2319–393X; ISSN(E): 2319–3948. (Accessed August, 18 2020).

[580] Ali Uzay Peker, ""İsfahan Cuma Câmii'nin Maksûre Kubbesi ve Üzerindeki Bânî Kitâbesinde Yer Alan “Sultan” Unvanı Üzerine"," in *Bilge Vezir Nizâmülmülk* (Konya: Konya BB, 2019), 558.

[581] Widiawati, “Epistemology of Islamic Political Leadership in the Al-Fārābī’s Emanation System,” 26.

[582] Qur’an 3:103

among people is reflected in the practice of Salât as well. Therefore, it is possible to claim that the concept of unity was highly significant in different aspects of the social life and political system of 13th Century Anatolia.

This study claims that this multi-layered understanding of the unity is traceable in the Anatolian Seljuk architecture in terms of the plan organizations and the volumetric configurations.

To analyze the plan organization of the case studies in terms of geometry, it is essential to state that scholars like Nasr and Crichlow claim that the use of geometry for design "is essentially Islamic because it expresses the unity and diversity of the Divinity (*tawhid*)."[583] On the other hand, Gülru Necipoğlu, in her study based on *The Topkapı Scroll*, a historic geometrical pattern manual, states that Islamic design is organized and controlled by "girih," the term referring to a network of lines, originated from the Persian word meaning knot and the origin of this system is older.[584] Moreover, in her review of Necipoğlu's work, Ann Powell draws a historical line from Islamic geometry to Euclid, the ancient Greek mathematician.[585] According to her argument, Euclidian geometry was effective in forming Neoplatonic doctrines, and therefore the studies on these concepts in Muslim Baghdad included the influence of Euclidian geometry.[586] In other words, geometric sensibility and expertise

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[583] Powell, "Neoplatonism and Geometry in Islamic Art," 135.

[584] Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll - Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture*, (Santa Monica: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1995), 9.

[585] Powell, "Neoplatonism and Geometry in Islamic Art," 137-138.

penetrated Islamic culture and art dominantly through Neoplatonism. Rather than defending one opinion over the other, a middle path, between the ideas of scholars like Nasr and Crichlow and Necipoğlu, suggesting that the use of geometry, especially in the form of grids, generated from the Neoplatonic approach in Islamic philosophy as a medium to express the understanding of *tawhid* could be employed.

Furthermore, as Necipoğlu indicates, it is possible to encounter different geometrical grid patterns in varying complexities in Islamic design.[587] When the 13th Century Seljuk mosques' plan organizations are examined, it is possible to observe that the grid system was the main tool to produce the plans. When these grids, organizing the single prayer space, are analyzed, it is observable that the geometrical form regulated the grid is quadrilateral and sometimes even square. As demonstrated in the figures, the column axes of the Seljuk mosques in the 13th Century were based on quadrilateral grid systems. (Fig. 55) This geometric approach enabled the Seljuks to create mosques generated from an underlying grid system that organizes the space with the column axes extending in both east-west and north-south directions. In addition, the grid planning also allowed the Seljuks to threaten the space equally in the two-dimensional level and the third dimension. In other words, it is not possible to observe significant differences in the dimensions of each grid unit. Even though it is possible to observe an emphasis on the qibla axis, as discussed among the traces of hierarchy in the following parts, this emphasis is arguably not drastic

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[586] Ibid., 137-138.

[587] Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll,* 10.

enough to distort the sense of unity in the mosque space. With this sense of unity mainly provided with the grid that governs the whole interior design of the mosque space, it is probable that the connotation of a space that implies unity and equality was also created in the community's minds who came to pray in these mosques.

Moreover, considering the symbolic meaning of the square in terms of Neoplatonic cosmology, it only makes sense for the single quadrilateral prayer space of the Seljuk mosque to be organized again by a quadrilateral shape.[588] This organization possibly emphasizes that the mosque manifests God's unity with his creations since the grid system is basically a single quadrilateral space consisting of quadrilateral units on a smaller scale. In other words, the grid organization possibly symbolizes the plurality that does not challenge the oneness in the Sufi understanding of unity. Moreover, when considered with the physical practice of the Muslim prayer Salât, this world view of unity was likely to be why the single-spaced prayer area of the mosques regulated by grids. On the contrary to the axial and hierarchically organized spaces of the Byzantine church, the prayer space of the Seljuk mosques does not consist of separated sections but a single space extending from the entrance to mihrab yet elongated in the east-west axis to be suitable to the prayer of Salât since it is performed by facing the south, towards the Ka'ba, as mentioned.[589] Another reason for the unity in the interior space is

[588] The square is considered as the two-dimensional representation of the cube by means of abstraction. The cube is one of the polyhedra and the symbol of Earth. For further information on Platonic Solids see Opsomer, "In defence of geometric atomism."

[589] Peker, "Anadolu Bazilika Geleneği ve Selçuklu Anıtsal Mimarisine Etkisi," 60.

apparently the necessity of facing the qibla direction while praying.[590] The formation of the Muslim prayer probably resulted as the plan organization generating from the qibla axis, which "bring equality among the mosque."[591] This equality is also traceable in the symmetric plan organization as well. When the case study plans are analyzed, it is observable that the qibla axis also functioned as a symmetry axis in the middle of the mosques. In other words, the qibla axis runs through the middle of the mosques. In every example, on both sides of the qibla axis (east and west), the corridors are equal in number. (Fig. 56) As a matter of fact, the whole space configuration (placement of exterior walls of the mosques, placement of the opening) is almost equal on both sides of the qibla axis, except for minor changes probably due to the topographical or tectonic considerations such as side entrances or shifts on the column and opening axes. Thus, it is possible to indicate that the qibla axis divides the mosque space into two symmetrical halves in the Seljuk mosques from the 13th Century. In addition to the symmetrical floor plan of the mosques, it is possible to observe the employment of symmetry in the design of the particular architectural elements of the Seljuks, such as portals, mihrabs, domes, in a similar manner. (Fig. 57 - 72)

As discussed in the Byzantine part of the study, symmetry was possibly considered as an outcome of the beauty and order in God's creation and geometrically implied the concept of unity. In addition to the qibla axis and the symmetrical organization, the grid system in the mosque design also

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[590] Ghouchani, Taji, Kordafshari, "The Effect of Qibla Direction on the Hierarchy of Movement in Mosque," 397.

[591] Ibid., 397.

arguably emphasizes equality among the community, which is parallel with the Sufi doctrines on unity in Islam, mainly the *vahdet-i vücud* doctrine of Arabī. As discussed earlier, it is possible to trace the Neoplatonic impact on these Islamic doctrines and, therefore, on the Seljuks' mindset regarding equality. Besides, the quadrilateral mosque space, which consists of smaller scaled quadrilaterals due to the grid plan, conceivably reflects the Neoplatonic idea of each human being is a microcosm on his/her own consisting of the three concepts. (Fig. 55)

Furthermore, although the underlying organization of the plans of the Seljuk madrasahs is not determined by the qibla axis and the equal unit grid system as the mosques due to the more centralized space organization related to the function of the building, the existence of an axis starting from the main portal and leading towards the main iwan across the entrance is observable.[592] (Fig. 73) When the plan organizations of the madrasah cases are examined, it is possible to indicate that this axis also works as a symmetry axis whether it has an enclosed courtyard like Karatay and İnce Minareli Madrasahs or an open one. (Fig. 73) Thus, a similar tendency is traceable in the madrasah design, possibly related to the concept of unity.

Moreover, it is also possible to observe the effects of the two-dimensional grid system as the underlying organization in the three-dimensional

[592] Even though in some examples, mainly Karatay Madrasah in Konya, the main portal is shifted, the traces of a central axis is observable. See Figure 87. In addition, it is possible to find madrasah cases in which the axis does not central such as Hacı Kılıç Madrasah. The possible reason for this situation is the fact that mosque and madrasah parts of the complex is built as a single building. Despite the non-centrality of it, the role of the axis running from main portal towards the main iwan is observable in the creation of the space. See Figure 93.

configuration of the mosques. While the formal origin of the mosque prayer area was a single space, the Seljuks created a hybrid formal configuration for the mosques as an adaptation of Byzantine basilica architecture.[593] When the formal and technical continuation between these two architectural traditions is analyzed, it would be more convincing to demonstrate how the Seljuks symbolically perceived the prayer space by explaining how they transformed the Byzantine basilica to adapt it into their religion. Ali Uzay Peker indicates that mosque architecture before the Seljuks was also influenced by basilica architecture, particularly in Damascus and Jerusalem.[594] However, the Anatolian cases include some unique ones in experimenting with and adapting the basilica form and are studied by many notable scholars, including Kuban and Perreira.[595] Also, the adaptations of the basilical form vary in the Anatolian examples.[596] Despite these variations, one common point and a critical feature is probably eliminating the hierarchical interior of the church space mainly based on height differences while adapting the typology into mosque architecture.[597] Some examples which Perreira categorizes as "longitudinal rectangular" are likely to be specifically important since they

[593] Peker, "Anadolu Bazilika Geleneği ve Selçuklu Anıtsal Mimarisine Etkisi," 60.

[594] Ibid., 60.

[595] Ibid., 60.

[596] Ibid., 60.

[597] Ibid., 60-62.

preserve the side aisles with the central nave.[598] Yet, unlike the hierarchical organizations of these volumes in the Byzantine churches, as discussed previously, the mosque adaptations have similar height arrangements with the possible aim of creating a unified interior by eliminating hierarchy.[599] (Fig. 74 - 76) Furthermore, as an outcome of the quadrilateral-based grid, in the third dimension, the rectangular prayer space of the mosque consists of equal units, except for the central corridor leading to mihrab and minor shifts in the column axis in some of the case. As an outcome of this space organization, the rectangular prisms between the columns were created in the third dimension. Whether intentional or not, Seljuks conceivably contributed this with the ceiling design, too, by covering each unit's ceiling with similar vaulting systems except for the lantern dome(s).[600] In addition, in terms of volumes, these spaces are created by using stereometric geometric shapes of sphere and square based prism. This geometrical tendency is also significant when considered with the Neoplatonic mind-set. (Fig. 77) Based on these geometrical analyses, it is possible to claim that Seljuks created microcosmic models regulated side by side in lines within a bigger microcosm representation, the mosque itself. They arguably achieved this by utilizing the Neoplatonic understanding of the use of geometry. The

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[598] Ibid., 60.

[599] Ibid., 62.

[600] For the main covering systems employed in the Seljuk mosques see Ayşıl Yavuz, "Selçuklu Döneminde Malzeme ve Mimarlık İlişkisi." in *Anadolu'da Malzeme ve Mimarlık (Geçmişten* Geleceğe), (İstanbul: Mimarlar Odası, 2006), 98-99, 113-116, 118-120 and 131-136.

underlying geometric grid resemblances the community praying in lines, with each of the people being a microcosm himself/herself. It would be right to defend that this understanding of mosque architecture in terms of the concept of “oneness in plurality” in Sufism is related to the reinterpretations of the Neoplatonic concepts discussed earlier. Thus, while it is possible to find hierarchy in the vertical order, possibly representing the layers of cosmos, the ground level dwells upon the concept of unity in relation to the practice of Salât and the understanding of *tawhid*.

Therefore, when transforming the Byzantine church based on the basilica scheme highlighting the hierarchy, there was a possible intention of the Seljuks to eliminate this hierarchy and unify the interior. This urge's motivation was probably the different reinterpretations and inferences of the Neoplatonic concepts, which were most likely to be formative in Seljuks' worldview and philosophy. As the two and three-dimensional analyses of the case studies arguably demonstrate, the concept of unity was manifested in the 13th century architecture of the Seljuks by using geometry as the design tool. It is possible to argue that the motivation behind creating such a unified architectural space employing precise use of geometry was the urge to replicate the Divine work based on the universe.[601] Thus, it is possible to consider the architectural space again as a microcosmic design. Another aspect that possibly contributes to this

[601] This claim is first made by Ali Uzay Peker. For further information see Ali Uzay Peker, “Imprisoned Pearls: The Long-Forgotten Symbolism of the Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā’ at Divriği,” in *Archaeology, Anthropology and Heritage in the Balkans and Anatolia: The Life and Times of F. W. Hasluck, 1878-1920 Vol. III*, ed. David Shankland (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 2013), 315-345.

understanding is to trace the repercussions of duality, another concept of the universe in the Neoplatonic cosmology, in Seljuks' architectural design.

4.3.3. Traces of Duality in the Plan Organizations and Volumetric Configurations of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture

Ali Uzay Peker suggests that the repercussions of duality are traceable in various aspects of the Seljuk architecture in general, such as the dualities of "local/universal, openness/closeness, traditional patterns/plurality, vertical/horizontal,…"[602] Among these aspects, the most significant ones, which are traceable in the spatial configuration and decoration, are probably the dualities of openness/closeness and esoteric/exoteric (*batini/zahiri*), symbolizing the twofold nature of the universe in the Islamic cosmology.[603] As a probable architectural reflection of the duality of esoteric/exoteric, vertical/horizontal duality is also observable in Seljuk architecture.[604] For the duality of openness/closeness, when the regular grid systems of the plans of the Seljuk mosques are considered again, it is possible to state that they create a contrast with the exterior of the mosque. While it is possible to think of the exterior as less organized, the mosque interior is well organized and precise using geometric arrangements. Even though it is not possible to suggest a gridal organization with the same tendency for the madrasah architecture, it is still arguable that the madrasah interior is more organized with lines of student cells, iwans, and the big central courtyards organizing the space;

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[602] Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi – I," 2-3.

[603] Ibid., 2-3.

[604] Ibid., 2-3.

when compared to the exterior setting. This duality of the exterior and interior is presumably a symbolic reference to the doctrine of *tarkib* (combination) in the Islamic understanding of creation. Furthermore, the duality that differentiates the exterior from the interior is also observable in the thick exterior walls of the Seljuk mosques, with limited openings.[605] (Fig. 78 - 85) To support this further, the mosque portal, the main entrance gate to the mosque interior, is also differentiated from the rest of the exterior façades both in scale and decoration.[606] (Fig. 78 - 85) These tendencies are traceable in the portals of the madrasahs as well. (Fig. 86 - 94) Then, it is possible to understand the importance given to these architectural spaces by the Seljuks from the emphasis given to the gate by the scale difference and the precise work of their portals. Contrary to the plain façades, the portals are highly decorated with figures and geometrical patterns since they are the gates to the sacred and esoteric, as discussed in *4.4. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Decorative Program of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture*. The meaning attached to the gate leading to the interior space presumably contributes to the duality between the interior and the exterior of the mosques and madrasahs.

Moreover, for the symbolic meaning of the interior space of mosques, it is possible to generate ideas by focusing on the doctrines of *alam al ghayb*

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[605] Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisi – I," in *İnci Aslanoğlu için Bir Mimarlık Tarihi Dizimi*, ed. T. Elvan Altan, Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci (Ankara: Kalkan Matbaacılık, 2019), 3-4.

[606] Ömür Bakırer and Çağla Caner, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Yapılarından Medrese ve Camilerde Portal," *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları* (2009), 23-25.

and *alam al mulk* as well as the Sufi understanding of reunion and the prayer of Salât. In the Byzantine part, it is discussed that the church spaces contained the two realms symbolically. Contrary to this symbolism, it is arguable that the approach to two realms and the reflections of this approach in the mosque design fundamentally differ in Islam. In the Islamic belief, it is not possible for any mortal from the material universe, or as it is referred to in the Sufi texts from *alam al mulk,* to know about *alam al ghayb*.[607] Even Prophet Muhammed, in his spiritual ascension, could not go beyond the celestial heavens, which were considered as the limit of the *alam al mulk* to *alam al ghayb*, the dwelling realm of God.[608] In addition to his studies on the Mi'raj of the Prophet Muhammed, which ended at the tree at the gates of heaven, Ibn 'Arabī's own spiritual ascension also ends at the tree as it is located at the furthest point for any mortal.[609] Based on these reasons, it would not be possible to claim that the architectural space, particularly the mosque interior, symbolizes the domain of God.

As another supporting argument, contrary to the Byzantine perception of the church as the Earthly dwelling of God, in Islamic theology, God is everywhere and in every being, which was likely to be an outcome of

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[607] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. I, s.v. "alam al ghayb." (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 349.

[608] Qur'an 17:1 : "Holy is He Who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque (in Makka) to the farther Mosque (in Jerusalem) - whose surroundings We have blessed - that We might show him some of Our signs 1. Indeed He alone is All-Hearing, All-Seeing." See James W. Morris, "The Spiritual Ascension: Ibn 'Arabî and the Mi'râj." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* Vol. 107 (1987): 629-652

[609] For further information see Morris, "The Spiritual Ascension: Ibn 'Arabî and the Mi'râj."

doctrines like *sudûr*, *zuhûr,* and *vahdet-i vücud* and also supported by Qur'an.[610] Thus God does not need any space on Earth to dwell or be present. As a result of this understanding of Islam, it would be misleading to argue that the mosque interior represented *alam al ghayb*. If it was the case, it would be possible for Muslims to know what *alam al ghayb* looks like to replicate it and it is not only forbidden but also beyond perception for the human mind according to Islamic theology. However, despite this understanding, the traces of duality in the Seljuk architecture are hard to overlook. Furthermore, as discussed previously, the prayer of Islam, Salât, is considered a symbolic connection of the mortals with God through prayer. The importance of reuniting the human soul with God is discussed with various aspects of this study in esoteric Islam as well as the Quranic verses and hadiths.[611]

When these are considered with the previous discussion on the unknowability of the *alam al ghayb*, it is likely to conclude that the mosque interior was perceived as a connection space for the mortals with God.[612] In other words, it is possible to consider the mosque space as a representation of a symbolic intermediary zone between *alam al mulk* and *alam al ghayb,* which is parallel to Arabī's doctrine of *barzakh*.[613] As

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[610] For further information see Coşkun, "Muhyiddin İbn Arabi'nin Felsefesinde "Allah" Mefhumu," and Aygün, "İslam Düşüncesinde Tanrı-Alem (Birlik-Çokluk) İlişkisine Yönelik Temel Teoriler: Hudus, Sudur, Zuhur,".

[611] Qur an 4:103:" …And when you have completed the prayer, remember Allah standing, sitting, or [lying] on your sides. But when you become secure, re-establish [regular] prayer. Indeed, prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times"

[612] Peker, "Imprisoned Pearls," 334.

discussed, Arabī's *barzakh* understanding was based on separation and connection, which was probably influenced by the Neoplatonic concept of duality, even though it is not likely to find an intermediary realm similar to *barzakh* in Neoplatonism. Similarly, it is possible to consider the mosque space as a zone or setting that symbolically divides and unites the two realms and connects humans with their God through prayer.

Besides, even though the madrasahs are not buildings specifically functioned for praying, it is still possible to argue them as connection points for mortal with God through science and education. Education and practice of the sciences have been accepted as an example of high virtue in Islam in general.[614] It has been believed that the study of science is a symbolic way of getting closer to God by obtaining a higher degree of virtue through these studies.[615] It is possible to consider this tendency parallel to the importance of studying sciences in Neoplatonism. Besides, even in the Qur'an, education and the power of knowledge are emphasized several times, including the verse of "…Allah will raise up, to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted Knowledge."[616] In this aspect, it is possible to draw a parallelism between the Neoplatonic understanding and the Islamic one.

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[613] Ibid., 334-336.

[614] Todd Lawson, "Muhammed as Educator, Islam as Englightenment, and the Quran as Sacred Epic," in *Knowledge and Education in Classical Islam: Religious Learning between Continuity and Change*, ed. Sebastian Günther, (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 81-82.

[615] Ibid., 81-82.

[616] Qur'an 58:11

As discussed in the first chapter, studying sciences, especially philosophy and geometry, was accepted as a path to understanding the universe and God and reaching higher levels of virtue, and preparing for the ultimate reunion. This tradition started with the Academy of Plato continued with Neoplatonists in the later centuries. It is possible to count the University of Constantinople, mentioned in the previous chapter, and the Seljuk madrasahs as a continuation of this tradition, yet no further discussions on this topic are needed. Besides, education was also emphasized in Qur'an, similar to knowledge: "…they could devote themselves to studies in religion and admonish the people when they return to them."[617] Thus, as the centers of education and religious knowledge, it is possible to claim that the madrasahs were also symbolic *barzakh* spaces where Muslims connect with their God through prayer and religious studies and knowledge.

Furthermore, vertical and horizontal axes together within the architectural design conceivably reflect the duality of esoteric/exoteric in the Islamic understanding. Due to the necessity of facing Ka'ba during the prayer of Salât, horizontal axes within the mosque space are likely to be created. These horizontal axes are possibly accepted as earthly or related to the *alam al mulk*. In addition to the horizontal ones, vertical axes are also created with volumetric organizations, covering square bases with star vaults of domes, which are discussed as a part of the repercussions of hierarchy. Bowing (*rukuh*) and prostrating (*sajda*) during Salât, with the horizontal axis being created by the human body, a microcosm, facing the mihrab wall and the vertical axis being created by the symbolic ascension

[617] Qur'an 9:122

during standing (*qiyam*), contributes to the creation of these two axes. (Fig. 95 & 96) In addition to the idea that these two axes exist together within the mosques, it is possible to discuss that they symbolically intersect only only in the praying individuals, who are also microcosms, and each gird unit but alos on the central corridor. (Fig. 97) It is possible to trace the same symbolism in madrasah architecture as well. In enclosed courtyard types such as Karatay and İnce Minareli Madrasahs in Konya or Dār al-Shifā in Divriği, a vertical axis is created with the dome covering the central space. This vertical axis intersects with the horizontal one, extending from the entrance gate towards the main iwan across the building. In the cases with open courtyards, the same horizontal axis is also traceable, and the open-air central courtyard arguably creates a similar vertical axis. The two symbolic axes running across the buildings presumably intersect at the central space in both types. (Fig. 98) Thus, these intersections conceivably add to the idea of these architectural spaces as a microcosm as well as the idea of them as symbolic *barzakh* where mortals from *alam al mulk* and God from *alam al ghayb* connects.

Therefore, it is possible to claim that the architectural reflections of the metaphysical duality in the twofold nature of the universe are traceable in Seljuk architecture. However, it would not be suitable for the architectural space, the mosque interior, to represent God's domain, *alam al ghayb*. The doctrine of *tawhid* is crucial for the Islamic belief, and in order not to challenge God's supremacy, the interior space should be considered an intermediary connection zone, *barzakh*, for Muslims to unite with their God through the prayer of Salât. Thus, it is possible to argue that the duality in Islamic understanding as a concept does not challenge the ultimate

unity.[618] In addition to these, this approach to duality possibly demonstrates the concept of hierarchy in Islamic understanding.

4.3.4. Traces of Hierarchy in the Plan Organizations and Volumetric Configurations of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture

It is previously discussed that unity among humans and their unity with God is emphasized both with Quranic doctrines and Sufi studies. Yet, it is possible to observe the concept of hierarchy in Islamic doctrines between God and the created beings, as indicated previously. It is also possible to state that *alam al ghayb* has been considered prior and superior to the *alam al mulk*, as discussed mainly with the studies of Al-Fārābī. As arguable microcosmic models of the universe, the reflections of the concept of the hierarchy are also observable in the buildings of the Seljuks as well.

To trace the repercussions of this concept, it is possible to point out the portals of the buildings as the first architectural element that implies hierarchy. Considering the portals as a threshold within the framework of the Theory of Doorway Effect mentioned in the Byzantine part of the study, they are possible triggers for the Muslim community's minds, creating a new event model by stepping through the interior space.[619] For the mosque cases, even though there has been an understanding that any

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[618] Ali Uzay Peker, "Ortaçağ Anadolu Mimarisinde Anlam," *Arkeoloji ve Sanat* XX/85 (1998), 37.

[619] For further information on the Theory of The Doorway Effect see Radvansky, “Across the Event Horizon.” *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. 21 (2012), 269–272. and Radvansky, Krawietz and Tamplin, “Walking through Doorways Causes Forgetting. Further Explorations.” *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*. 64 (2011), 1632–1645.

place on the face of Earth could be a mosque for Muslims to pray, the mosque space has been accepted as a sacred one and hierarchically more elevated, possibly with the *barzakh* symbolism. Since "the architecture of the mosques can be involved in the connection of the human soul with the highest level of existence and facilities both spiritual and mystical perceptions," the mosque space was presumably considered as a higher level symbolically, compared to the outside of it.[620] While the portal is the connection and separation point between the two symbolically hierarchical levels represented by the mosque's interior and exterior, it is also the starting point for the qibla axis that leads to mihrab on the plan organizations of the mosques.[621] Because the portals are mostly placed in the northern wall, as seen in the plans of the case studies, the qibla axis is usually a straight line in the Seljuk mosques. However, in some examples, the portal is not located on the northern wall of the mosque, at the opposite side of the mihrab, but rather on the side walls. Although this resulted in the axis not being a linear one but one that turns its direction at one or several points, the qibla axis leading to mihrab still exists in these examples, too. (Fig. 56) Similarly, it is possible to observe the placement of the portals right across the main iwan in madrasah cases, probably to highlight the horizontal central axis. (Fig. 73)

Furthermore, when the mosques from the early Islamic period in centers like Jerusalem, Damascus, Baghdad are examined, it is found that the

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[620] Ghouchani, Taji, Kordafshari, "The Effect of Qibla Direction on the Hierarchy of Movement in Mosque," 397.

[621] Ibid., 397.

corridor on the qibla axis is usually emphasized.[622] This emphasis is mainly provided by heightening and widening the central corridor, such as the example of Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.[623] The influence of this formal tendency was probably basilical church architecture. However, the adaptations made from basilical churches in the mosque examples of the 13th Century differ from this tendency, which arguably makes them unique cases. As explained while discussing the traces of unity, Seljuks tried to eliminate the height difference while adapting the basilica scheme to mosque architecture with the possible aim of creating a more unified interior. Yet, a hierarchical emphasis on the central qibla axis presumably remained. It is possible to discuss that the central corridor on the qibla axis is wider than the side ones, as it is observable in the plans, to reflect the concept of hierarchy in the plan organizations of the mosques. (Fig. 99) Even in the cases with the main portal located on the east-west axis, it is possible to observe the central nave-like corridor wider than the side ones. Based on this consistent tendency, Seljuks possibly wanted to organize their mosque plans, considering the concept of hierarchy.

Moreover, the reflections of the hierarchy are also traceable in the third dimension. Even though a height difference is not created in the volumetric configuration, the central corridor was likely to be emphasized

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[622] Peker, “Anadolu Bazilika Geleneği ve Selçuklu Anıtsal Mimarisine Etkisi,” 59-60.

[623] For further information on the architecture of Al Aqsa Mosque and the drawings of the building see Ra'ef Najm, "Islamic Architectural Character of Jerusalem: With Special Description of the Al-Aqṣā and the Dome of the Rock," *Islamic Studies* 40, no. 3/4 (2001): 721-34. Accessed April 26, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20837154 and Rafi Grafman and Rosen-Ayalon Myriam, "The Two Great Syrian Umayyad Mosques: Jerusalem and Damascus," *Muqarnas* 16 (1999): 1-15. Accessed April 26, 2021. doi:10.2307/1523262.

by the domes placed along the qibla axis. When the covering systems of the case studies are analyzed, it is possible to find lantern domes placed almost at the center of the central corridor on the qibla axis, except for the wooden mosques. In wooden cases such as Eşrefoğlu Mosque in Beyşehir, the domes are replaced by square openings. Whether the lantern dome or the opening, these parts of the covering system are slightly higher than the rest, even though the difference is not drastic. (Fig. 100 - 105) While it is possible to discuss the technical functions of these architectural elements, such as illuminating the interior of the mosque or removing the snow from the roof and so on, they arguably reflect the celestial hierarchy in Islamic mysticism and also contributing to the emphasis of the qibla axis. When most cases contained lantern domes are considered with the symbolic meaning of the sphere, the use of dome, and the symbolism of light, this interpretation possibly gets more convincing. Besides, the dome is conceivably a crucial architectural element for the madrasahs. As it is observable in the case studies, madrasahs' inner courtyards are covered with lantern domes in the closed courtyard type. (Fig. 106 & 107) These lantern domes provide verticality to the space while also highlighting the centrality. Thus it is possible to claim that the lantern domes of madrasahs contribute to the traces of hierarchy with these two symbolic functions. Moreover, very similar to the cross-in-square churches, the volumetric configuration of the central space of the madrasahs with closed courtyards basically consists of a semi-spherical dome placed on a rectangular or square base space. (Fig. 108) When considered with the connotations of cube and sphere in the Neoplatonic understanding, placement of the ontologically higher one, sphere, on the lower one, cube, possibly replicates the hierarchy of the universe symbolically.

Furthermore, the employment of another type of dome on the qibla axis, which is the maqsura dome, is observable in mosques. (Fig. 109 - 111) As explained by Ali Uzay Peker, the original purpose of the maqsura dome is to cover the place where the Sultan prayed in the mosque in front of the mihrab niche.[624] Later, maqsura dome is given as a general name to the dome in front of the mosques' mihrab area, mainly in the Anatolian examples.[625] In his study, Peker indicates that it is possible to observe the example of maqsura dome in the Isfahan Great Mosque with the inscription of “Sultan.”[626] He claims that a symbolic relationship between the Sultan’s power as the shadow of God’s power on Earth and the maqsura dome was present.[627] By taking Peker’s claim into account, it is possible to interpret that the maqsura dome is an architectural element that highlights God's supremacy and ultimate power by means of praising the servant of God, the Sultan. Thus, the maqsura domes of the 13th Century Seljuk mosques were presumably the traces of the ultimate hierarchy in the Islamic understanding, the domination of God. In addition to the domes placed on the qibla axis, which apparently strengthens the hierarchy in the volumetric configuration of the mosques, the rest of the mosque units are usually covered by vaults, particularly the star vaults invented by Anatolian Seljuks, except for the repeating domes in a few

[624] Peker, ""İsfahan Cuma Câmii'nin Maksûre Kubbesi,” 547-548.

[625] Ibid., 547.

[626] Ibid., 550.

[627] For further on this claim of Peker, see Peker, ""İsfahan Cuma Câmii'nin Maksûre Kubbesi.”

examples like Gökmedrese Mosque in Amasya.[628] (Fig. 55 & 95) It is possible to interpret this covering system as creating vertical axes in each of the equal units symbolically, and the vertical axis is discussed to be in accordance with celestial hierarchy and ascension mostly. The use of streometic volumes of sphere on top of square based prism implies hierarchy regarding the symbolic meaning of these shapes in the Platonic/Euclidian geometry. (Fig. 77) Therefore, with the domes on the qibla axis and the star vaults in the rest of the mosque units, a vertical hierarchy is probably represented in the 13th Century Seljuk mosques possibly under esoteric understandings such as Al-Fārābī's and its reinterpretations by the latter Muslim philosophers. When the facts that ascension is a frequently employed theme in the Sufi texts and a mentioned one in the Qur'an, as well as the meaning of Salât as the symbolic connection with God, are considered, this interpretation of the reflections of hierarchy in the vertical volumetric configuration of the mosques possibly gets even stronger. In addition to the mosque, whether open courtyard or enclosed courtyard type, madrasahs of the 13th Century Seljuks conceivably consisted of the same hierarchical symbolism created employing the vertical axis in the central courtyard.

A final architectural element related to the hierarchy is possibly the minbar placed in the mosques concerning the ascension again. Minbar is not an architectural element specific to the Seljuk mosques but instead found starting from the earliest mosque examples.[629] Nevertheless, it is still

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[628] Yavuz, "Selçuklu Döneminde Malzeme ve Mimarlık İlişkisi," 98-99, 113-116 and 118-120.

possible to consider it an important element of the Seljuk mosque tradition. It is possible to indicate that minbars of the Seljuk mosques are the continuation of the standardized minbars of the Emevid period, which have their roots going back to the first minbar used by Prophet Muhammed himself.[630] Besides its practical use due to acoustic purposes, the minbar is an elevated platform that arguably contributes to the Seljuk mosques' vertical hierarchy. (Fig. 112 - 118) It is possible to support this interpretation by the meaning of the word “minbar,” which is the “platform climbed stage by stage,” similar to the metaphysical ascension.[631] Furthermore, the Seljuk minbars' precise decoration, which is discussed in *4.4. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Decorative Program of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture*, possibly indicates the importance paid to it by the Seljuks, yet any further reinterpretation would be groundless due to the lack of explanations about the symbolism of minbar in Seljuk mosques.

4.4. Reflections of the Neoplatonic Concepts in the Decorative Program of the 13th Century Seljuk Architecture

The richness of the ornamentation applied to the 13th Century Seljuk architecture in Anatolia is probably one of its kind. This claim mainly comprises the high number of monuments built in this period, the importance paid to the decorative program of these monuments, and the

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[629] Andrew Petersen, “Minbar.” in *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture*, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 191-192.

[630] Ibid., 191-192.

[631] Ibid., 191-192.

unique combination of decorative elements primarily due to the free improvisations by the artists.[632] In addition to the wide variety of geometric motifs and vegetal ornaments, it is possible to find surprising decorative figures such as animals or even humans, which are heterodox approaches against the aniconism of orthodox Islam.[633] One of the main reasons for this richness is most possibly the inclusive and open-minded policy and community of the Seljuks, which enabled many artists and artisans from different cultures and traditions to move to Anatolia and work there under Seljuk rule, as discussed previously.[634] Similar to the argument in the Byzantine part, it would be a bold claim to suggest that the artisans or the patrons acknowledged the possible Neoplatonic interpretations of the ornaments they use. The community's unintentional acceptance of some motifs and figures as important elements is possible. However, in particular cases, the decorative program supports the Neoplatonic concepts traced in the plan organizations and volumetric configurations to such a high degree that one might even question the unconsciousness of these applications. Moreover, most of the ornaments from the 13th Century architecture survive until this date enabled the interpretations of these according to the Neoplatonic concepts in this study.

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[632] Algan, “Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları,”

[633] For further information on aniconism in Islam see Ismail Ozgur Soganci, "Islamic Aniconism: Making Sense of a Messy Literature," *Marilyn Zurmuehlen Working Papers in Art Education*, Vol. 2004 Article 4 (2004), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.17077/2326-7070.1376

[634] See 4.2. Formation of a New Architecture and Its Culture in Anatolia under the Seljuks

To start with the concept of unity, as an example of the decorative elements that support the understanding of this concept, it is possible to point out the inscriptions. The inscription that praises God and his ultimate power and dominancy and humbling the humans is observable, especially on the portals. These inscriptions on the buildings about the patronage arguably display that Sultans or the ruling elite who ordered the building acknowledge that the glory only belongs to Allah and they are just servants of his glory on Earth.[635] The placement of such statements right above the entrance gate probably offers a reminder for the Muslim community members who enter the buildings that they are all equals under God's supremacy, and they pray as equals without distinction among them based on any class system.[636] As an example to these inscriptions, it is possible to point out the common phrases such as “the humble servant of God, religion and his people,” “the premises and the power only belongs to God,” or “the servant who in need of God’s mercy” from various cases including Alaeddin Mosque in Niğde, Hunad Hatun Mosque and Hacı Kılıç Mosque in Kayseri and Divriği Great Mosque in Sivas and İnce Minareli Madrasah in Konya.[637]

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[635] Arel Hilmi. “Divriği Ulu Camii Kuzey Portalinin Mimari Kuruluşu,” *Vakıflar Dergisi* 5 (1962), 103.

[636] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. VIII, s.v. “salât.” (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 925-934.

[637] For the inscriptions see Nermin Şaman Doğan, “Niğde’deki Türk Dönemi (13-15. Yüzyıl) Yapılarında Taç Kapı-Mihrap Tasarımı ve Bezeme İlişkisi,” *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Faükltesi Dergisi*, Vol. 30 Issue 1 (2013), 155-140., Kifayet Özkül “Sivas Divriği Ulu Cami ve Darüşşifası Bezemeleri,” *International Journal of Volga-Ural and Turkestan Studies (IJVUTS)*, Vol. 2 Issue 3 (2020), 56-81., Hamdi Uzunharman,“İnce Minareli Medrese’nin Taç Kapısındaki Kitabelerin Hat Sanatı Açısından Değerlendirilmesi,” Master

In addition, the use of grids for the geometrical decoration is likely to be another supporting element for the reflections of unity in Seljuk's architectural design, similar to the plan organization. Necipoğlu indicates that in the same manner as the grid controlling the plan organization, different variations of gridal organizations generate motifs for the decoration in Islamic architecture.[638] This tendency is observable in 13th Century Seljuk buildings in Anatolia. As mentioned earlier, it is possible to find decoration on the portals of the building as well as the vaults, minbar, mihrab niche, and capitals inside. The geometric decorations in these elements are generally geometric patterns, following Necipoğlu's suggestions of using the grid system.

In addition, geometry in decoration has another possible symbolic meaning related to abstraction. Critchlow argues that "the effort to trace origin in creation, the direction is not backwards but inwards" in Islamic philosophy.[639] When *vahdet-i vücud* is considered, since the creations and God is one, in essence, it only makes sense for the created ones to reunite with God through their inner selves, as discussed in the first chapter too. Critchlow also indicates that "in Islamic understanding, the created world is represented by the three dimensions."[640] This claim

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Thesis. Hitit Üniversitesi, İslam Tarihi ve Sanatları Anabilim Dalı, 2015., "Hunat Hatun Külliyesi." Kayseri.gov.tr. Accessed March 21, 2021. http://www.kayseri.gov.tr/hunat-hatun-kulliyesi and "Hacı Kılıç Cami ve Medresesi." Kayseri.gov.tr. Accessed March 21, 2021. http://www.kayseri.gov.tr/haci-kilic-cami-ve-medresesi.

[638] Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll,* 13.

[639] Keith Critchlow, *Islamic Patterns An Analytical and Cosmological Approach*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 8.

suggests that the two dimensions presumably represent God's domain since it was accepted as prior and essential to the material universe.[641] Then, it becomes possible to argue that the two-dimensional grid decorations of the Seljuk buildings are a trace towards inwards, adding up to the possible meaning of the architectural space not only as a space that demonstrates the unity of beings with God but also as the intermediary zone, *barzakh*, as it symbolically reimages the creation process in reverse with abstraction.

Moreover, as a result of the in situ examination of the case studies as a part of this thesis, it is possible to observe a repeating geometrical pattern applied mainly on the portals. It is arguably striking to find similar underlying patterns with minor variations used in the decorative programs of buildings from different cities. Furthermore, many studies on the geometrical patterns used on the Seljuk monuments consist of geometric analyses of the patterns.[642] Most of these studies do not go beyond indicating that geometric shapes represent the understanding of eternity or the Islamic understanding of *Tawhid*.[643] On the other hand, scholars like

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[640] Ibid., 8.

[641] Ibid., 8-9.

[642] See Ögel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, Mustafa Kemal Şahin, "Anadolu'da Selçuklu Döneminde Niğde ve Kayseri Çevresinde Bulunan Taçkapılar Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler," *The Journal of International Social Research*, Vol. 6 Issue 25 (2013), 473-503. and Algan, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları."

[643] Şahin, "Anadolu'da Selçuklu Döneminde Niğde ve Kayseri Çevresinde Bulunan Taçkapılar Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler," 479.

Semra Ögel and Ali Uzay Peker are among the ones who study further aspects of geometric patterns in terms of symbolism and cosmology. This study aims to continue their approach and provide a branch of it embedded with the Neoplatonic doctrines and concepts with the geometric analyses of the decorative patterns.

To return to the geometric pattern mentioned, it is possible to observe specific examples of this pattern on the portals of Hunad Hatun Mosque, Hacı Kılıç Mosque and Sahabiye Madrasah in Kayseri as well as Dār al-Shifā in Divriği, Allaeddin Mosque in Niğde, Burmalı Minare Mosque and Gökmedrese Mosque in Amasya and Eşrefoğlu Mosque in Beyşehir. This situation conceivably contributes to the claim of geometric patterns, together with their symbolic meanings, spread in the community anonymously. Nevertheless, the geometric and symbolic analyses of this pattern are more striking in terms of its possible connection to the sacred geometry of Platonism and Neoplatonism. The pattern basically consists of a pentagon at the center and five tilted hexagons around it. Yet, it is possible to observe the pentagon's replacement with the star shapes generated from inclined cubes and the examples where the two are applied together as part of more extensive patterns. The excessive use of pentagon and hexagon probably has its roots going back to Neoplatonism, to the Platonic solids. As Bertol argues, it is possible to observe the use of two-dimensional abstractions of polyhedra in various aspects of architectural design.[644] From this perspective, both the pentagon and hexagon are presumably the abstraction of two polyhedra, namely the dodecahedron and the cube. (Fig. 119 - 129)

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[644] Bertol, “The Parametric Making of Geometry: The Platonic Solids,” 33-35.

While each face of the dodecahedron consists of a pentagon, it is possible to create a hexagon simply from the combination of the cube's outer edges. Thus, it is possible to suggest that the dodecahedron and the cube are applied to the mosque portals in an abstract form. Based on the symbolic meaning of these shapes discussed in the first chapter, it is possible to suggest that the idea of union, with the cube symbolizing the earth and the dodecahedron symbolizing the celestials, incorporates the concept of ascension from the earth to hierarchically higher celestials. With the meaning of abstraction as a process inwards to strive for the ultimate reunion, this suggestion would be more comprehensive. Besides, Kotrč indicates that a geometrical relation between the dodecahedron and cube based on the generation from inwards is present.[645] According to him, “the cube can easily be inscribed in the dodecahedron” by “drowning the pentagrams upon the pentagonal faces of the dodecahedron, the cube could be generated.”[646] This geometrical relationship is another possible support for inwardness as well. As a final remark on this pattern, it is possible to observe a bigger pentagon surrounding the central pentagon and the cubes in some of the applications, which presumably represents the macrocosm-microcosm relationship. Even though this is a difficult one to support further interpretations, the emphasis on the shape of cube and pentagon on the decorative program of the 13th Century Seljuk buildings is hard to overlook. While it is discussed to have the symbolism of connection and unity, it is also possible to argue that these geometric shapes also contributes to the understanding of *barzakh* based on the

[645]Kotrč, "The Dodecahedron in Plato’s "Timaeus"," 222.

[646] Ibid., 222.

argument of the dodecahedron holding an intermediate position between the polyhedra, corresponding the basic elements, and the sphere, the intelligible existence with its perfection.[647] In Seljuk ornaments, the pentagon and hexagon possibly contribute to understanding the architectural space as an intermediary zone between the earth and God's domain. (Fig. 119 - 129)

Like these geometric analyses of the decorative patterns, Ali Uzay Peker's examination of the geometric pattern applied on the northern portal of Divriği Great Mosque demonstrates that different patterns with complex geometric organizations and possible symbolic meanings were used.[648] His article titled *Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tasarımını Etkileyen Evren ve Estetik Anlayışı* reveals that the star-like peace placed right above the northern entrance gate is possibly generated by using the hexagon shapes as the two-dimensional abstracted form of the three-dimensional cube.[649] (Fig. 130 & 131) Based on this examination, it is possible to develop that the organization of cubes in the third dimension is abstracted on the two-dimensional surface, and from the intersections and gaps in between, the star shapes are created.[650] Furthermore, besides the

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[647] For the discussions regarding the relationship between the polyhedra and the sphere see Kotrč, "The Dodecahedron in Plato's "Timaeus"," 215.

[648] Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tasarımını Etkileyen Evren ve Estetik Anlayışı," in *Anadolu Selçuklu Şehirleri ve Uygarlığı Sempozyumu 7-8 Ekim 2008*, ed. A. Esen, Haşim Karpuz, O. Eravşar, (Konya: Selçuklu Belediyesi Basın Yayın Müdürlüğü, 2009), 92.

[649] Ibid., 92.

[650] Ibid., 92.

hexagon's relationship to the cube found in both patterns, the hexagon shape itself has a possible symbolic meaning, too. It conceivably symbolizes the six directions, four cardinal ones, and the two from the vertical axis, which was probably accepted to represent the material universe.[651] Thus, it is possible to suggest that the use of hexagon was another decorative repercussion of understanding architectural space as a microcosm.

Moreover, it is possible to find the pattern which is on the northern portal of Divriği Great Mosque, also in the wooden work of the Eşrefoğlu Mosque in Beyşehir. (Fig. 132) Based on this, it is possible to assume that this pattern was widely known since its variations in the stone and wooden works are observable. Also, it is possible to make the same arguments for this pattern, like the previous one, in terms of the cube's symbolic meaning and the employment of abstraction as a tool for geometric decoration.

In addition to these two-dimensional abstracted decorations based on the grid system, Gülru Necipoğlu also claims that muqarnas decoration is also generated using a grid system.[652] Although it is not possible to suggest the symbolism of abstraction to two dimensions for the muqarnas decoration since it is a three-dimensional one, the use of a three-dimensional grid system, as Necipoğlu indicates, also represents the idea of unity as well as a plurality, or duality, that does not challenge the unity as a part of the *tawhid* understanding in Islam.[653] Moreover, the muqarnas decoration is

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[651] Ibid., 90-93.

[652] Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll,* 350.

found in the mihrab niches of the mosques as well as the portals of both mosques and madrasahs. (Fig. 133 - 140) Mustafa Kemal Şahin, in his study on the portals of the Seljuk monuments in Central Anatolia, claims that the 13th Century examples are also important and partly unique in terms of the way they use muqarnas decorations in portal niches.[654] While his approach is more of numerical analysis, his study also demonstrates another aspect of the muqarnas decorations in the portal niches in terms of symbolism.

The application of muqarnas decoration is observable in all case studies, whether mosque or madrasah. Also, affirmed with the in situ observation made for this study, Şahin demonstrates how various silhouettes are created on muqarnas parts of the portals with light and shadow.[655] It is also possible to observe these mainly in the portals of Alaeddin Mosque in Niğde, Hunad Hatun Mosque and Hacı Kılıç Mosque in Kayseri and Divriği Great Mosque in Sivas.[656] In terms of the figures of these silhouettes, it is possible to state that they are usually in the form of humans or human heads, birds, and lions.[657] Even though the way that these muqarnas decorations are applied probably might not be more than a coincidence

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[653] Ibid., 164.

[654] Şahin, "Anadolu'da Selçuklu Döneminde Niğde ve Kayseri Çevresinde Bulunan Taçkapılar Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler," 480-481.

[655] Ibid., 480-481.

[656] Ibid., 480-481.

[657] Ibid., 480-481.

that creates these silhouettes, these figures were also found in the stone relief decorations of the buildings from this period. Therefore, it is possible to suggest a connection between the decorative figures used, especially on portals of the Seljuk monuments and Sufi texts. As examples of this decorative tendency, bird and tree symbols are frequently used as possible metaphors for threshold, principles of creation, and reunion in Sufi texts.[658] Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī, Ferīdüddin Attār, and Ibn 'Arabī are among the Muslim philosophers who used these metaphors in their treatises.[659] For the reflections of these in the mosque decoration in the 13th Century, Arabī's work titled *Risaletu'l Ittihâd al Kawnî* (Epistle of Comic Unification, Universal Tree, and the Four Birds) might be the possible influence.[660] In this treatise, Arabī explains the creation with the metaphor of birds on the sacred, Lote-tree.

To explain the work's content very briefly, Arabī places Royal Eagle, which symbolizes First Intellect (*al-Akl al-Awwal*), on the most elevated place of the tree of life.[661] From Royal Eagle, the Dove, which symbolizes the soul, is created.[662] Remarkably similar to the understanding of the Soul in the Neoplatonic system, "Dove has nothing but dualities."[663] Then, from the

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[658] Peker, "Imprisoned Pearls,"330.

[659] Ibid., 323-330.

[660] Ibid., 327.

[661] Ibid., 328.

[662] Ibid., 328.

love of Royal Eagle and Dove, their daughter Anka is created, and she symbolizes the prime matter.[664] Furthermore, finally, Black Crow is created as the son of Anka, and "from him arises the world of bodies."[665] According to Ibn 'Arabī, these are the principles of beings in the universe.[666] The parallelism of this metaphor with the principles of Plotinus and casuality system of Proclus is hard to overlook.

Moreover, Jaffray claims that "the fantastic creatures are the imaginatively conceived representations of the Perfect Human Being's own faculties."[667] Thus, it is also possible to draw a parallelism between these metaphors and the Neoplatonic idea of human beings as microcosms. It is also possible to point out this parallelism as the reason for using human figures and silhouettes as part of the buildings' decorative program.

Under the possible influence of this work and many others, birds, trees, and even human figures are found predominantly on the portals of the monuments. Even though the portals of the Divriği Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā are probably the prime example of a decorative program including these figures, it is possible to observe their use in other examples in lesser degrees. (Fig. 141 & 142) Bird reliefs are found on the portal of Alaeddin

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[663] Ibid., 329.

[664] Ibid., 329.

[665] Ibid., 329.

[666] Ibid., 329.

[667] Quoted in Peker, "Imprisoned Pearls," 329.

Mosque in Niğde, right above the gate and in the middle.[668] It is also possible to find tree figures in Gök Madrasah in Sivas and Çifte Minareli Madrasah in Erzurum in addition to the various vegetal decorations employed in all cases. (Fig. 143 & 144) When considered together with the silhouettes, the examples of the employment of figures are enriched.

Furthermore, it is possible to point out the vegetal decoration as another critical aspect of the decorative program of 13th Century Seljuk architecture. Although the examples and the application areas of the vegetal decoration vary, some repeating patterns similar to the geometric ones are observable. These are usually applied on the portals as bands surrounding the gate or on the capitals of plasters, as observed in situ examinations. It is also possible to find applications where the vegetal motifs are connected with geometric patterns or even examples that consist of the juxtaposition of the two.[669] However, the various applications demonstrate that there was possibly a standardization of the vegetal decorations. These motifs were possibly transported among the artists, similar to geometric patterns. This transportation might have resulted in their symbolic meaning disremembered. From this study's perspective, it is possible to consider the standardization of vegetal decorations as an abstraction of nature. Thus, similar to the geometric patterns, the vegetal motifs in the decorative program of the buildings possibly represented divine perfection in the order of nature and cherished God's supremacy

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[668] Şahin, "Anadolu'da Selçuklu Döneminde Niğde ve Kayseri Çevresinde Bulunan Taçkapılar Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler," 474.

[669] Algan, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları," 37-38.

through abstraction. The arguments of Wilhelm Worringer regarding the role of abstraction both for geometric ornaments and vegetal ones discussed in the first chapter support this meaning.[670] Moreover, the symbol of the tree is discussed as an important one used in the Sufi texts and found in Quranic verses. Possibly related to this emphasis on the symbol of the tree, tree relieves on the portals are observable, such as the example of cosmic tree relief on the portal of Divriği Great Mosque and Dār al-Shifā as well as other tree motifs mentioned previously.[671] (Fig. 143)

Therefore, applying these figures and vegetal decoration presumably symbolize the creation of the universe through emanation and cherish God's work in the Seljuks' architectural space. These ornaments also signify the portal's symbolism as a threshold and the architectural space as *barzakh*, which is discussed as the traces of the concept of duality.

In addition to the decorative figures and vegetal decoration, the inscriptions conceivably support the idea of architectural space being the symbol of *barzakh*. The Throne Verse of the Qur'an is often applied to different components of the Seljuk buildings, such as the northern portal of

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[670]He claims that "both ornamental styles are actually devoid of a natural model, notwithstanding the fact that their elements are to be found in nature" by suggesting that similar to the vegetal ornament which gives "not the plant itself but the regularity of its outwards structure", "the geometric style gives the structural law of inanimate matter, but not the matter itself in its outward appearance." (Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style,* 59-60.) Also see *2.4. Significance of Geometry and Geometry as a Tool for the Application of Hierarchy, Duality and Unity in Architectural Design*

[671] Algan, "Anadolu Selçuklu Dönemi Mimarisi Taş Yüzey Süslemelerinin İncelenmesi ve Seramik Yorumları," 113.

Divriği Great Mosque or the interior surface of the dome of Karatay Madrasah. In the verse it is written: "...Allah! There is no god but He - the Living, The Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him Nor Sleep. His are all things In the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede In His presence except As he permitteth?"[672]

Based on this Qur'anic inscription, since the domain of God could not be known by any mortal, it is possible to understand that it is placed beyond the macrocosm, and therefore the mosque space is not the symbol of his realm but differentiated from the earthly spaces to be an intermediary zone. Thus, this differentiation is a possible repercussion of the Neoplatonic concept of duality. Moreover, another inscription, particularly from Eşrefoğlu Mosque in Beyşehir and Karatay Madrasah in Konya, is likely to reflect the *barzakh* symbolism. On the interior surface of the dome of Eşrefoğlu Mosque and the pendentives of Karatay Madrasah, the name of Prophet Muhammed and the four caliphs are written. (Fig. 106 & 107) Peker claims that, based on the Prophet's role in the Islamic understanding as the messenger and communicator between God and humans, these inscriptions contribute to understanding these spaces as an intermediary connection zone *barzakh*.[673]

As discussed earlier, the concepts or their reflections are not easily distinguishable from each other since they compose the universe's fundamental ontology. From this point of view, it is possible to interpret an

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[672] Qur'an 2:255

[673] Ali Uzay Peker, "Anadolu Selçuklu Mimari Tarihinde Anlam Araştırmaları," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* (2009), 77.

architectural reflection of a particular concept as the trace of another. The examples of this situation are discussed in the Byzantine part of the study, especially about the roles of the thresholds in the church space.[674] Similarly, the inscriptions and the Qur'anic verses that applied on the Seljuk buildings arguably indicate the hierarchy as well, even though they are discussed within the concepts of unity and duality. Whether they are about the patron of the building or a Quranic verse, the inscriptions of the 13th Century Seljuk buildings generally highlight the ultimate hierarchy in Islam: the absolute dominancy of God over its creations. It is possible to interpret the placement of these inscriptions, usually on portals or lantern domes, as if they are at critical points to support the meaning of the inscription and reminding the community about the supremacy of God.[675] The fact that the mosque portals, in general, are referred to as "the divine mercy door" in some texts and studies possibly supports this interpretation, too.[676] Similarly, the placement of the other types of ornaments, geometric or vegetal, is likely to emphasize the hierarchy reflected in the architectural design. Based on the observations on the case studies, it is possible to indicate that the decorated elements of the mosques are mostly placed on the qibla axis, usually starting with the

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[674] Thresholds are discussed as indicating both separation and connection. On this issue Mircea Eliade states that "…Between the sacred and the profane there is a threshold that represents a boundary, a frontier that distinguishes and opposes these two worlds but, at the same time paradoxically is the place where the two worlds communicate." Quoted in Patricios, *The Sacred Architecture of Byzantium*, 399.

[675] Ghouchani, Taji, Kordafshari, "The Effect of Qibla Direction on the Hierarchy of Movement in Mosque," 398.

[676] Ibid., 398.

portal and extending towards the south, where it ends with the mihrab wall. Even though there are examples that the portals are not placed on the northern wall, and the entrance axis is parallel to the mihrab wall such as Alaeddin Mosque, Hunad Hatun Mosque, Hacı Kılıç Mosque, and Eşrefoğlu Mosque, the points for the use of excessive decoration is identical in all cases: the portal, the mihrab, and the minbar. It is possible to consider this axis as the first part of the symbolic axis extending towards the Ka'ba due to the mosque's orientation and from Ka'ba to the heavens. Thus, the decoration along the axis, starting with the portal and ending with the mihrab, presumably highlights the hierarchical journey towards God for the symbolic reunion. (Fig. 65 - 72) Similarly, the main architectural elements on the horizontal axis of the madrasahs, namely the portal and the central dome, are generally the most decorated components that highlight the two axes within the building. (Fig. 86 - 94 & 107 - 108) Furthermore, the minbars' decoration, which again symbolically represents the ascension, probably contributes to this discussion as well. The in situ examinations of the cases demonstrate that geometrical ornament is mainly employed for the minbars' decoration. (Fig. 113-119) Thus, a relationship between the minbar symbolizing ascension and the geometric abstraction symbolizing tracing inwards towards a higher level is likely to be claimed. However, other than these interpretations, it is not easy to trace the possible reflections of the concept of hierarchy in the 13th Century Seljuk monuments' decorative program.

Therefore, the extreme richness of the decorative program of the 13th Century Seljuk mosques and madrasahs, consisting of geometric patterns, muqarnas, animal and human figures, and vegetal motifs, is a highly significant aspect of these monuments, which not only supports and elevates the meaning of the architectural space and reflects the Seljuk

culture of the era under various influences including the influence of Neoplatonism.

As concluding remarks, this chapter provided a general tracing of the Neoplatonic impact on the theology and community of the Anatolian Seljuks and how the reflections of this probable impact have shaped the culture and newly established architectural style. After this, the chapter continued analyzing the case studies conducted regarding the three Neoplatonic concepts: unity, duality, and hierarchy. Concerning these examinations and discussion, it is possible to state that the apparent impact of Neoplatonism on the theology of the Seljuks is an esoterically nurturing element that is traceable in the 13th Century examples of mosques and madrasahs as complete, rich, and significant cases as microcosmic models based on the Neoplatonic concepts of the universe. It would be difficult to claim that these traces are directly linked with the Neoplatonic doctrines, yet their reinterpretations in the form of basic concepts in the Islamic theology in general and Anatolia under the Seljuk rule is hard to overlook. Thus, these repercussions are probably reflections of the reinterpretations and adaptations in the Seljuks' multi-cultural and theological atmosphere. Based on this, it is possible to trace different reflections in 13th Century Seljuk monuments in Anatolia compared to the 11th and 12th Century Middle Byzantine churches, conceivably due to the different reinterpretations and adaptations of the same Neoplatonic concepts within the two religious domains.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

By analyzing several case studies, selected from the Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk architectures, within the framework of Neoplatonic concepts of hierarchy, unity, and duality, this thesis has shown that it is possible to suggest Neoplatonism, which has been a nurturing element for both Christianity and Islam, as a shared design instrument that was formative for the two architectural traditions. Several examinations, predominantly geometry in the plan organizations, volumetric configurations, and decorative programs of these case studies displayed that the three concepts of Neoplatonic ontology were possibly employed as design tools in Byzantine and Seljuk architectural traditions. Even though the number of the case studies makes it possible to come up with generalizations in their respected periods, our knowledge of the practice of these concepts in particular architectural cases is not sufficient to support any claim regarding the awareness of the Neoplatonic origin in the application of the concepts into architecture. Thus, as mentioned throughout the study, this certainty is neither the aim nor the motive of this study. Contrary, the uncertainty about the conscious adaptation of Neoplatonic concepts in different medieval architecture traditions in Anatolia is the factor that led to this study.

Approaching the past architecture with today's mindset and worldview is possibly a methodology that falls short in providing a full depiction of the traditions, monuments, and architects together with various social and

cultural aspects and in their accurate contexts. When the framework is narrowed down to the ancient and medieval ages, the certainty in the contextualization of architectural traditions and monuments becomes more challenging to achieve. It is even impossible for most situations. Moreover, though it is possible to make analyses and produce outcomes based on examining the surviving monuments employing geometry to understand symbolism, meaning, and motives in the background of the monuments, this work conceivably requires the involvement of different disciplines. To be specific in this study, the search for meaning in the background of the Byzantine churches and the Seljuk mosques and madrasahs required the involvement of not only philosophy and theology predominantly but also political and sociological studies. It is only possible to contextualize these monuments and produce ideas about what they meant for their societies and which motives were influential in their formation by understanding the patrons, architects, and users of these monuments. As a reference to John Onians' study on the anatomy of the brain mentioned in the introduction chapter, understanding how Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuks thought and lived is the key to getting as close as possible to how they perceived the architectural monuments. Based on this reason, theology's involvement is arguably necessary for an architectural history study conducted on these medieval societies, which was embedded in every layer of their social, political, economic, and cultural structures.

Furthermore, discussing only their particular religions, Christianity and Islam, and overshadowing the potentially shared influencer that nurtured both would have been insufficient to provide the links of theological and cultural influences. Also, it would not have provided the evolution of ideas that led to these monuments' creation. Thus, Neoplatonism is pointed out as a common nurturing element for both societies and religions and a

possible formative creative tool in the background of architectural traditions. As the study argues, it provided links of influences and historical contextualization. In this effort to empahsize Neoplatonism’s role, the heavy involvement of philosophy in this study was necessary.

Moreover, structured by this multidisciplinary methodology, the study first discussed the philosophical aspects of the topic before moving on with the possible reflections of these philosophical doctrines in the architectural field. This logical structure is observable not only in the general outline but also in the particular order of each chapter. This approach provided an outline that is easier to follow for the reader regarding how philosophical concepts are adapted in each monotheistic religion, how these adaptations transformed and shaped their societies, and how these reinterpretations are reflected in the architectural traditions. However, it is possible to argue that this order of architectural discussions following the philosophical and theological background information creates gaps between the two and insufficient to provide the links. To prevent such disconnection, all architectural analyses, whether on plan organization, volumetric configuration, or decorative program, are classified based on the three concepts, hierarchy, unity, and duality, generated from the ontology of the Neoplatonic universe. This method, which is probably a significant contribution of this study to the field, enabled the display of architectural traces more in relation to the philosophical doctrines by keeping track of the three concepts. It also arguably increased the coherency and persuasiveness of the study's arguments, which at the bottom suggest the architectural works as microcosms based on their Neoplatonic repercussions. In addition to this categorization, the adaptations of the Neoplatonic ontological concepts in Byzantine and Seljuk theologies are frequently referenced while examining the case

studies concerning each concept. By doing so, it is achieved to demonstrate the transformation of philosophical doctrines into architectural repercussions and again help the reader to keep track of these transformations. Moreover, it is essential to briefly summarize the three main chapters before proceeding with the study's primary outcomes, including a comparative discussion regarding the two architectural traditions.

The second chapter of the study, titled *Basics of Neoplatonism and Use of Neoplatonism as a Tool for Searching Meaning in Architecture*, is the chapter that provided the predominantly philosophical background regarding the Neoplatonic doctrines and introduced the three concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity. Neoplatonism is a school of philosophy established in the 3rd Century AD in Alexandria by Plotinus. As the final major revival of the antique philosophical heritage, Neoplatonism mainly consisted of Plato’s and Aristotle's doctrines. It is possible to define it as harmonizing Plato’s and Aristotle’s ideas and their reinterpretations. The school of thought's primary focus is the issues regarding God, the creation of the universe, the structure of the universe, and human beings' position in this universe. Plotinus was possibly inspired by Plato’s ideas, such as the two-fold nature of the universe, The Good and Demiurge. In his system of explanations regarding the universe, he conceptualizes a descending universe model, in which all creation is based on three main principles: The One, the Intellect, and the Soul. In this creation and universe model, the universe consists of different stages that, in descending order, get further away from The One as an ontological outcome of existence.

Nevertheless, the order is not the chronological order but the logical order of the creation. The term emanation explains this creation model, and Plotinus' ideas are formulated as The Theory of Emanation. In this sense, The One is absolute, perfect, self-sustaining, and beautiful. It is possible to indicate that Plotinus attributed God with the title of The One. Without a conscious decision or moment of creating, the Intellect emerges through emanation from The One's self-apprehension. To define the Intellect, Plotinus employs the two-fold model of Plato. According to this, the material universe and the beings are images and replicas of the intelligible archetypes in a higher stage. It is possible to separate the universe into two as the intelligible universe and the material universe.

The Intellect of Plotinus consists of the intelligible beings, and by being the total of intelligible beings, it is indeed the intelligible universe itself. It is the first created and the closest to perfection due to its closeness to The One. It contains the archetype of every being within the material universe, and it is the archetype of the material universe by itself. Due to the ontological necessity of existence, the third principle, the Soul, emanates from the Intellect. It is possible to consider the Soul as the mediator between the Intellect and the material universe. In other words, it is the source of life in the material universe and the principle that emanates as the images within the material universe, made from matter and based on the intelligible archetypes. The material universe is the lowest level of existence with the least perfection and good. It consists of dualities, mainly the duality between the soul and the body. It is possible to observe this duality best in human beings consisting of the body and the soul. Since this duality is similar to the duality of the two realms, humans are considered the microcosmic models in the Neoplatonic understanding. Moreover, according to Plotinus, the human's purpose should be to free himself from

the material universe and its imperfections and strive for union with The One's absolute perfection. Based on the model of creation and the structure of the universe in Neoplatonism, this study generated three concepts: hierarchy, duality, and unity based on the observation of the Neoplatonic universe's nature.

Firstly, based on the relationship of archetype-image, it is possible to suggest a hierarchy between each of the stages, including the principles. This hierarchy is suggestable since perfection and beauty decrease with every level of reality. Besides, The One has the ultimate hierarchy over everything else that emanated from it. Secondly, duality is also observable mainly in the relationship of archetype-image. While the ultimate duality is conceivably between the intelligible universe and the material universe, it is also possible to observe the increase of duality in the lower levels of reality related to the decrease in perfection. The duality of soul and body in human beings is probably a suitable example. Finally, the ontological system of emanation also points out unity in the universe. Whether intelligible or material, everything is created from The One, and The One is in each one of them in various degrees. This unity also presumably suggests that every principle or created being is connected since they all contain The One in themselves. It is significant to indicate that these concepts do not challenge each other but are embedded. They should not be considered separate from each other, and they are observable in every stage of the universe as their general characteristics. This generalization includes the microcosmic models such as human beings, as this study claimed the perception of architecture as a microcosm. One reason for this claim is the urge of human beings to replicate the Divine work of creation in their products to get closer to God. Although Neoplatonic texts do not specifically mention architectural works, Plato discusses this urge to

produce microcosm, as discussed in The Literary Theory. Later it is also discussed with the metaphor of friendship in Neoplatonic texts. This study suggested examining possible microcosmic models, including the architectural works, concerning the three concepts to discuss their resemblance to the macrocosm. In this manner, geometry is considered significant for the Neoplatonic ontology and should be considered a tool for applying the three concepts in architectural design. Neoplatonic understanding inspired by Plato's ideas considers creation as regulating and ordering the pre-universe mass.

The creation process is explained as a series of geometrical combination that starts with elementary triangles, which called *tetractys*. Tetractys were considered as the key that unlocks information about reality encoded in sacred geometry. Thus, Plato explains the further stages by unlocking the code of creation by the elementary triangles. In the following stages, the complex surfaces of triangles, squares, and pentagons are created with various elementary triangles. Later, the surfaces combine with identical ones to create five three-dimensional shapes called polyhedra, or Platonic Solids. These stereo metric solids are associated with the four elements and the matter of celestials. In the order, tetrahedron represents the fire, octahedron represents the air, icosahedron represents the water, and hexahedron represents the earth, while the fifth polyhedron, the dodecahedron, is generally accepted as being related to the matter of celestials. As the final stage of creation, the matter is created by mixing the four elements constructed by polyhedra. Therefore, in Neoplatonic understanding and most cultures that it influenced, geometry was seen as the creation tool and the manifestation of the perfection, beauty, harmony, and order of the universe provided by The One. The creation based on geometry also probably led to the identification of geometry and

abstraction with ascension. In other words, geometry and mathematical objects were considered intermediaries between the two realms. Based on this approach to geometry, the chapter displayed that it is possible to examine architectural works, which are claimed as microcosms, with the tool of geometry to trace the repercussions of ontological concepts of hierarchy, duality, and unity.

The third chapter of the study, titled *Repercussion of Neoplatonism in Byzantine Architecture,* focused on Neoplatonism's impact on the culture, theology, and society of the Byzantine Empire, particularly in the 11th and 12th Centuries before proceeding to the architectural examination of Middle Byzantine churches from this era. It is difficult to define a direct relationship between Neoplatonism and Orthodox Christianity of the Byzantine Empire. Although it is possible to discuss the impact of the pagan school of philosophy in any given era, there have been periods in which the reflections of this impact are arguably more traceable. The fluctuations in this relationship probably occurred mainly due to the political, economic, and social atmosphere of distinct realms. It is possible to trace these reflections in Byzantine theology and social structure much more in particular periods. One of these particular periods is apparently the 11th and 12th centuries due to the revival of the Hellenistic impact on the culture and artistic production. After the censorship period against the pagan and Hellenistic heritage named iconoclasm, this period witnessed a revival of the Hellenistic culture, especially Neoplatonism in the Byzantine Empire. Mainly with the studies of Michael Psellos (1018-1078) and John Italos (1025-1085) from the University of Constantinople, the Neoplatonic impact in Byzantine theology presumably increased in this period. These are the possible significant names in carrying the past heritage, including pagan philosophers like Plotinus and Proclus and Christian ones like

Pseudo-Dionysius and Maximus the Confessor. Although it is difficult to state that these centuries had peaceful and stable circumstances economically and politically, it is possible to observe togetherness in terms of art and architecture. Based on these reasons, the case studies from the 11th and 12th centuries are conceivably suitable examples to trace Neoplatonic reflections in Orthodox Christian theology and design concepts in Byzantine sacred architecture.

Moreover, it is vital to examine the cases with references to liturgy, the Byzantine Rite, which possibly had heavy Neoplatonic influences, too, since it was presumably a space-making tool of the Byzantine churches. It is possible to trace the reflections of the three Neoplatonic concepts in the plan organizations and volumetric configurations of the cases selected from the 11th and 12th century Middle Byzantine churches. For the concept of hierarchy, it is possible to state that the Rite's hierarchical practice and the social classes affected the organization of the interior spaces of the church. Also, it is possible to observe that the quadrature scheme, a geometric organization created by hierarchically arranged squares, is employed in these examples as an underlying system for the plans and sections of the cases. Furthermore, the vertical configuration of the stereo metric forms is likely to be a trace of hierarchy in the church space. To continue with the concept of duality, it is possible to discuss the church itself as a space of threshold between profane and sacred.

Nevertheless, since it is considered a microcosmic model with hierarchy, it consists of a series of thresholds that provide separation between profane and sacred or, in some cases, between less and more holy spaces. Three of these symbolic and physical thresholds arguably stand out as more sharp and significant points. These are the atrium walls that separate the

sinful daily life from the sacredness of the church, the church doors which separate the profane outside from the sacred microcosm of the church interior, and finally, the iconostasis wall, which separates the nave and apse section and symbolically the material universe from the Divine realm. In terms of the volumes, the duality is discussable to reflect on the contrast between the spatial characteristics of the central and the periphery spaces. As to the final concept of unity, all these reflections are probably its repercussions as well. The squares are generated from a single point In the quadrature as a possible geometric manifestation of the universe's emanation from The One. Therefore, it possibly implies unity among them. Also, this plan organization results in the symmetric nave space at the center of the church. It is possible to point out symmetry as implying unity on its own. In terms of Neoplatonic understanding, it connects with the characteristics of Platonic Solids, which have been accepted as the particles and regulators of the universe through geometry. Furthermore, the thresholds, discussed as symbols of separation and duality, are connection points that provide unity with different spaces and between their symbolic meanings.

In addition to the traces in the plan organizations and the volumetric configurations of the churches, it is possible to trace reflections of Neoplatonic concepts in various aspects of the decorative program of the churches. The architectural decorations incorporating icons are possibly supporting elements of the hierarchical organization of pure geometric forms. It is also possible to observe that the decoration contributes to the separation between the central and periphery spaces with the richness and the sacredness of the icons used. Moreover, the precise geometric work of the floor mosaics and exterior brickwork is likely to reflect geometry's importance. It is possible to point out the stone carving

decoration of the marble furniture to support this claim about the precise craftsmanship of geometric patterns. Moreover, the holy icons on the canonical configuration of the iconostasis wall are probable contributors to the idea of connection and unity with the belief that these holy people are the community's helpers in their journey of virtue towards God.

Finally, the fourth chapter of the study, titled *Repercussions of Neoplatonism in the Architecture of Anatolian Seljuks*, focused on how the impact of Neoplatonism shaped the culture, theology, and society of the Anatolian Seljuks, particular in the 13th Century before proceeding to the architectural examination of mosques and madrasahs of this new architecture. It is essential to examine the interactions between Islam and Neoplatonism to understand the impact of Neoplatonic concepts in Anatolian Seljuk theology and philosophy. The relationship between Islam and Neoplatonism is a more peaceful compared to the case of Christianity. The possible reason is that the Neoplatonic doctrines were already known in Muslim lands before Islam's establishment. Other possible reasons are Islam's inclusivity regarding the previous religions and philosophies and the parallelism between Neoplatonic doctrines and the Quranic conception of God, the universe, and creation. The impact of Neoplatonism is mostly traceable in the esoteric branch of Islam, Sufism, and the works of many significant Sufi schools of thought and philosophers such as Muʿtazila school of thought, Al-Kindī, Ikhwān al-Safā, Al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī, Ibn ‘Arabī and Sadreddin Konevi and many others. Although most of their studies display a continuation in main aspects, each could be regarded as a different reinterpretation and combination of canonic Islamic beliefs and Neoplatonic doctrines. Among them, the system generated by Ibn ‘Arabī in the 13th Century is probably the most complete one and the most influential one in the theology and community of the Seljuks and

continued in Anatolia by his successors. The social, economic, and political prosperity and welfare in Anatolia during the 13th Century probably enabled the heterodox influences of Sufis like Arabī and Konevi as well as the sheiks and dervishes, and the artistic influences of artists and artisans migrated from Central Asia to be welcomed, accepted and even respected among the society and Neoplatonism was possibly one of the most significant nurturing factors. As a synthesis of the local traditions and foreign influences, a unique cultural atmosphere conceivably emerged in Anatolia under the Seljuk rule during the 13th Century.

Furthermore, the cultural and economic richness among the society and the ruling elite apparently affected the building production in terms of the quantity and the uniqueness of the formal, decorative and symbolic aspects. Two of the most significant examples from this era's architecture are the mosques and madrasahs as the synthesis of various impacts, whether architectural or philosophical. Based on these reasons, the case studies from among the mosques and madrasahs dated to the 13th Century are suitable to trace the Neoplatonic impact.

It is crucial to examine the mosques among these cases with references to liturgy, the Muslim prayer of Salât, which conceivably displays parallelism with the Neoplatonic doctrines. It is possible to point it out as instrumental for the generation of the mosque space. Thus, when the plan organizations and volumetric configurations of the cases selected from the 13th Century Seljuk mosques in Anatolia, it is possible to trace the reflections of three Neoplatonic concepts. For the concept of unity, it is possible to state that the unity among humans in Islamic belief and the practice of Salât affected the organization of the interior spaces of the mosques to create unified interiors. Besides, it is possible to observe that

the grid system, which is likely to reflect the understanding of *tawhid* and *vahdet-i vücud*, is employed in these examples as an underlying system for the plans.

Furthermore, the volumetric configuration of the 13th Century Seljuk mosques is also a possible trace of unity since the height is uniform and aisles are almost equal with the central qibla lane. The level difference on the ceiling is eliminated in the adaptation process of the form from Byzantine basilicas. Also, connected with the practice of Salât, the existence of the qibla axis as a design instrument for the mosques apparently brought symmetry and unity to the mosque space. Even though the madrasah space lacks a grid organization, it is still possible to find a similar horizontal axis that unifies the space and acts as a symmetry axis.

To continue with the concept of duality, it is possible to discuss the buildings themselves as connection points between the mortals and God. Both mosque and madrasah interiors differentiate and separate from the outside in terms of their symbolic meanings. However, this separation and the duality resulted from it fundamentally different from the Byzantine churches, since it is forbidden for any Muslim from material universe, *alam al mulk*, to learn or know about God's domain, *alam al ghayb*. Thus, these spaces are presumably intermediary zones, connection points, or in other words, symbols of *barzakh*. The symbolic meaning of the prayer in the mosque strengthens this interpretation. The *barzakh* symbolism is also applicable for madrasahs since studying sciences has been accepted to get closer to God, again with a Neoplatonic and even Platonic root.

Moreover, for the architectural reflections of the concept, it is possible to point out the dualities of local/universal, openness/closeness, traditional patterns/plurality, vertical/horizontal. The most significant ones for the 13th

Century buildings architecture are arguably the openness/closeness and vertical/horizontal, mostly related to esoteric/exoteric duality. The solid, plain fortress-like exterior walls, heightened and decorative portals, and the interactions of the vertical and horizontal axes are possible Neoplatonic traces in plan organizations and volumetric configurations.

Finally, for the concept of hierarchy, the effects of the vertical hierarchy within these architectural spaces is a probable reflection of the celestial hierarchical system in esoteric Islam, suggested by Al-Fārābī and influenced the works of many, including Ibn ‘Arabī. The vertical organization of each mosque unit consists of a square base and a star vault covering. This arrangement possibly demonstrates the celestial hierarchy. Also, the qibla axis' domination on the plan organization as a wider and more central corridor is a possible repercussion of hierarchy. In terms of the volumetric organization, even though this corridor is not heightened significantly, the placement of the lantern and maqsura domes along this axis conceivably contributes to its emphasis and hierarchically highlights it within the mosque interior. For madrasahs, the space-dominating central dome presumably represents the vertical hierarchy with a semi-sphere placed on a cube-like space.

In addition to the repercussions in plan organizations and volumetric configurations of the buildings, it is possible to trace reflections of Neoplatonic concepts in various aspects of their decorative program. One of its rare kind in richness the 13th Century Seljuk monuments in Anatolia contain geometric, vegetal, and figurative decorations. While the geometric patterns generated from grid systems probably demonstrate unity, they presumably reflect the concept of duality as well by contributing to the symbolism of the architectural space as *barzakh* zone through

abstraction. According to Neoplatonism, shapes such as squares, circles, and pentagons found in ornaments are suitable to symbolize creation. Furthermore, it is possible to consider vegetal ornaments as an abstraction of nature, similar to geometric ones. For the concept of hierarchy, the placement of the ornaments on architectural elements such as portal, mihrab niche, minbar, lantern domes, muqarnas domes, and vaults arguably contributes to the reflection of the concept in the architectural space by means of highlighting the horizontal and vertical axes. Also, the fact that the most decorated elements generally function as thresholds in mosque architecture is discussed to reflect hierarchical ascension. Moreover, it is possible to point out the figures used as a part of the decorations in the 13th Century, such as plants, stars, birds, human heads, as significant symbols frequently found in Sufi texts, possibly generated under Neoplatonic impact. When considered with their symbolism, they are most likely the repercussion of all three Neoplatonic concepts in different aspects.

As the summaries of the chapters reminded, with the methodology and the general structure of the study, the topic is taken in the grandest scale, the created universe in the Neoplatonic doctrines, and narrowed down to a single church, mosque or madrasah in medieval Anatolia while keeping the same ontological concepts of the universe preserved as the design concepts in the background of these buildings. The architectural analyses conducted are arguably generous in two aspects: the quality, the demonstration of the possible Neoplatonic repercussions, and the number of the case studies. Thus, it is possible to state that both of these aspects in this thesis are sufficient enough to achieve the aim of suggesting Neoplatonism as a shared creative instrument in the background of Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk architectures.

Furthermore, there are several outcomes of these architectural analyses, and this study, in general, makes this claim possible and increases the significance of this study. By following the outline of the thesis, the first one of these outcomes is the consideration of architectural works as microcosmic models of the macrocosm, the created universe. As part of The Literary Theory of Plato and the continuation of this theory in Neoplatonism, literary work of humans are considered microcosmic models. Nevertheless, except for the Christian understanding of the church as the image of God and his universe apparently started with Maximus the Confessor's doctrines, it is probably not possible to find any ancient or medieval sources that attribute the symbolism of microcosm to architectural monuments. This study has shown that the Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk monuments are probably designed predominantly by the three design concepts of hierarchy, unity, and duality in their two-dimensional and three-dimensional organizations, as well as their decorative program. Besides, as the philosophical discussions of this study regarding the Neoplatonic conception and perception of the universe demonstrate, these three concepts are the ontological themes of the universe created through emanation from The One. Based on these discussions in philosophical and architectural fields, this study traces the architectural repercussions of this philosophical perception of the universe, the macrocosm, in the Neoplatonic school of thought and provides the outcome that Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk monuments are considerable as microcosms.

The second outcome is claiming Neoplatonism as a transmitter that metaphorically functions as a bridge between the ancient period's heritage and the medieval age in three particular aspects. One of these aspects is that the ancient geometric knowledge, particularly the Euclidian/Platonic

doctrines of geometry, transferred to the medieval age through Neoplatonism. While discussing the content of the Neoplatonic doctrines, it is mentioned that their primary focus was to explain God, its creations, and the relationship in between. Although this topic is open to be considered metaphysical and abstract, the harmonization of metaphysics with arithmetic and geometry, masterfully achieved by Plato, explains the basis of creation and the structure of the universe in the Neoplatonic tradition. It is possible to observe this tendency in medieval philosophical traditions, predominantly generated under Christianity and Islam in Anatolia, under the presumably excessive Neoplatonic influence. This study starts the discussions regarding geometry from the theory of Platonic Solids, heavily embedded with metaphysics. It proceeds with the geometrical analyses of the medieval Anatolian monuments from the 11th to 13th Centuries, which are claimed to be formed under Neoplatonic impact in their particular religions. By doing so, this study has shown that a philosophical school of thought, which is possibly considered abstract, metaphysical, and unrelated to the practice of designing and building, is arguably related to the practice of architecture by means of being the transmitter and edifier of geometry. The other aspect of this outcome is that Neoplatonism transferred the ancients' geometric knowledge to the medieval religions of Christianity and Islam and nurtured both esoterically. As explained in the related parts, many Christian and Muslim philosophers and theologians studied Neoplatonic texts and generated reinterpretations to adapt them to their religion. The lore created with the studies of many different philosophers in both Christianity and Islam regarding the harmonization of Neoplatonic perception of God, universe, and humans with their orthodox religions created heterodox branches. In the 11th and

12th Centuries, it is possible to observe the effects of these heterodox branches at most in the society and culture of the Byzantine Empire.

Similarly, this situation is observable for Anatolian Seljuks in the 13th Century. This study has displayed that in these periods, the Neoplatonic impact played a significant role in the formation and constitution of the symbolic meaning in the background of the architectural works, under a unique political and cultural atmosphere that enabled the dominancy of heterodox approaches. In other words, it is possible to trace the esotericism and mysticism of the heterodox beliefs in architectural works in many different aspects, mainly including but not limited to esoteric and metaphysical figures employed in the decorative program. The impact is traceable in the new layers of meaning attributed to the interior spaces. Also, mysticism affected the orthodox beliefs in these religions and, most significantly, the symbolism in the background of the liturgies. As the third aspect, concerning the symbolism of liturgy, this study has shown that the Byzantine Rite and the Salât were significant factors for forming the sacred architecture of the Byzantines and Seljuks. It is demonstrated with the detailed surveys of each liturgy in terms of historical evolution, physical practice, symbolic meaning, and the parallelism with Neoplatonism that these liturgies were presumably space creating tools for Byzantine churches and Seljuk mosques.

To continue with the third outcome, the discussions reserved regarding the penetration of the Neoplatonic doctrines into Byzantine and Seljuk theologies and societies are believed to be sufficient to demonstrate how deeply these doctrines penetrated their cultures. In more than several points, it is mentioned that whether geometrical or esoteric and mystic repercussions of Neoplatonism in Byzantine and Seljuk buildings were

most probably applied without being aware of the Neoplatonic roots. The historical survey of the Neoplatonic ideas within the Byzantine culture has shown that these ideas were adapted into Christianity. They are not only embedded with its heterodox branches but also orthodoxy. A similar situation is observable in the Seljuk culture based on the historical survey of the relationship between Neoplatonism and Islam. Although these esoteric approaches were not always welcomed and accepted peacefully by orthodox powers in the two religions, the particular centuries focused on in this study were unique in terms of the inclusivity level that both societies displayed towards heterodox beliefs. This inclusivity apparently increased the Neoplatonic impact in the two cultures since Neoplatonism's heavy impact in heterodox systems of belief added to the existing traces of Neoplatonism in orthodox Christianity and Islam. This study correlates the peaceful, inclusive, and philosophically prosperous atmospheres of the two societies with the quality and quantity of the architectural productions in these particular time frames. As displayed with the symbolic, liturgical, and geometric analyses of the case studies selected from the 11th and 12th Century Constantinople, it is displayed that the churches of this period were geometrically precise, symbolically layered, rich in terms of the repercussion of hierarchy, unity, and duality and followed the same set of principles in most of the examples. Similarly, the analyses of the 13th Century Anatolian Seljuk mosques and madrasahs display that these buildings contained the same qualitative characteristics mentioned for the Byzantine cases in their own architectural traditions. By examining these periods architecturally, culturally, and philosophically, this study has shown that the parallelism between the increase of the Neoplatonic influence and the qualitatively and quantitatively rich architectural production is apparently not a coincidence but highly related to each other.

However, despite this common narrative of Byzantine and Seljuk parts of the study, they differ from each other drastically in several aspects. This thesis has shown different cultural influence paths between the two medieval traditions and the Neoplatonic doctrines in philosophy and theology. More direct interactions between Neoplatonist philosophers and Byzantine Empire in the earlier periods led to the rise of the tradition of combining Christianity and Neoplatonism in the 11th and 12th Centuries Constantinople. Contrary, the more indirect journey of the Neoplatonic doctrines in Islamic lore led to the peak of the harmonization of Islam and Neoplatonism in Anatolia during the 13th Century Seljuk rule. In addition to the differences in the historical evolution of ideas, a more drastic and significant difference is that the Neoplatonic doctrines reinterpreted differently in two domains to adapt them into their religions. The study discusses these differentiations again under the three generated concepts, hierarchy, unity, and duality, and structures the analyses of Byzantine and Seljuk case studies according to how dominantly these concepts are reinterpreted. Also, these different reinterpretations are pointed out as one of the main factors in the background of the two different architectural typologies: cross-in-square plan Middle Byzantine Churches and Anatolian Seljuk mosques and madrasahs from the 13th Century.

To display this study's contributions to the field more profoundly, it is essential to provide a comparative discussion based on these two architectural traditions. The set of analyses and examinations made on various case studies from Byzantine and Seljuk architectures arguably demonstrate that the ontologically apparent concepts in the Neoplatonic perception of the universe are traceable as design concepts in the background of these monuments. Based on these repercussions, it is possible to define the Middle Byzantine churches, Seljuk mosques, and

Seljuk madrasahs as microcosmic models created with the same set of concepts. Despite this common ground in a broader sense, these typologies were approached and perceived with different symbolic connotations by their societies. The churches were considered the microcosmic representations of the whole created universe, the Earth, and the Divine Realm. On the other hand, Seljuks' mosques and madrasahs were probably considered intermediary zones, *barzakh*, containing the basic concepts of the universe. Although it is possible to observe the influence of transcendental Neoplatonic ontology and the idea of replicating the Divine work in both of these approaches to architectural space, the difference in their symbolic meaning is conceivably shaped under the adaptations of Neoplatonism into Christianity and Islam.

Intending to replicate the descending structure of the universe, the church space consists of a series of sections lined up on a horizontal axis, starting from the outside and extending towards the apse. The role of the liturgy, The Byzantine Rite, was also crucial for the formation of this order of interior sections. The Rite is also discussed to be formed under Neoplatonic influence since it symbolizes the soul's ascension to reunite with Christ, employing a series of passages performed within the interior sections of the church. The relationship between the liturgy and the church space is possibly corresponding. It is likely to claim that the longitudinal architecture of early basilica churches, with an elongated nave in the east-west axis, reflected this corresponding relationship and the liturgy’s movements more openly.

Nevertheless, the cross-in-square churches were still based on the same order as the interior divisions. Based on the configuration of the narthex, nave, and apse spaces, symbolizing the earth, celestials, and the Divine

realm, the domination of the concept of hierarchy is observable in the church space. While the dominancy of one concept over the others is conceivably not apparent in the Neoplatonic understanding, the process of fusion and adaptation of this understanding into Christianity is the possible reason in the background of the domination of hierarchy in the Byzantine culture. Even though the theological discussion of this situation is out of topic for this stage of the study, the concept is strongly apparent in architecture and society. Narthex, nave, and apse are interior spaces with drastic differences between their architectural characteristics and their symbolic connotations. While the role of duality and unity should not be overshadowed in the formation of the church space, and their repercussions are discussed in detail, the concept of hierarchy is arguably the main instrument.

Furthermore, even in the transformation process of the church space from basilica scheme to cross-in-square, it is possible to trace the impact of hierarchy, this time in the form of the class-based society of the Byzantine Empire. The transformation from elongated nave space of the basilica form, which allows the laymen's movement towards the apse section during the liturgy, to square-based nave spaces of Middle Byzantine churches is discussed to be related with the change in the role of the laymen. The evolution of The Rite reached the stage in which the laymen are passive after their entrance to the nave during the Middle Byzantine period. In this version of The Rite, the laymen did not perform any passage after a certain point of the liturgy, and the only active participants are the clergy, and more specifically, the archbishop. Only he, reprising the role of Christ, was able to perform the passage from the door of iconostasis into the apse section, or the other way according to the different commentaries, while the laymen were not more than just

spectators. As a result of this new role, the nave space presumably transformed into a square one that is more suitable for passive spectatorship than the elongated naves of basilicas. Thus, in the form of the social classes within the Byzantine society, the hierarchy was effective in this transformation and the architectural space of cross-in-square churches as well. Furthermore, with the centralization of the plan and the dome's addition, the vertical axis, symbolizing the ascension in the hierarchical universe, is also added to the symbolism of the Byzantine churches.

Contrary to the church space, which consists of a series of symbolically, functionally, and architecturally hierarchical interior sections, the mosques of Anatolian Seljuks consist of a single-space prayer hall. As a combination of early Islamic hypostyle mosques and Byzantine basilicas in Anatolia, the Seljuk mosques carry traces of hierarchy as a formal heritage of the Byzantine basilicas. However, the hierarchy is not maintained by a series of spaces lined on a horizontal axis, but rather through the domination of a central axis running through the middle of the prayer hall space. Although the preservation of this axis implies hierarchy, when how it organizes the space is analyzed, it is possible to indicate that its function of creating a unified architectural space is much more crucial in mosque cases. In relation to the physical practice of Salât, the horizontal axis running towards the mihrab wall located on the mosque's southern face practically works like a guideline for creating the gridal mosque space. Similar to the corresponding relationship between The Byzantine Rite and the spatial organization of the church space, the necessity of facing the Ka’ba during the prayer of Salât was presumably an instrument that affected the formation of the mosque space. While each Muslim facing Ka’ba during the prayer creates an axis in the north-south direction,

parallel to the central qibla axis, the rows of Muslims lined side by side creates axes in the opposite direction. Thus, a metaphorical grid is created from the physical practice of Salât that implies unity without separation between the praying Muslims who are equals in the presence of God. It is possible to claim that this metaphorical grid is transformed into an actual geometric organization with the mosques' unified, single-spaced interior. Based on this approach to creating the mosque space, the dominancy of unity in the Seljuks' architectural design is defendable. The reason for this is searchable in the process of the fusion of Neoplatonism with the religion of Islam. While duality and hierarchy are also present both as architectural and philosophical concepts in the Anatolian Seljuk culture, unity is emphasized both by philosophical doctrines, such as *tawhid* and *vahdet-i vücud,* and the architectural repercussions. This emphasis on a particular aspect of the universal ontology is probably due to its closeness to the Islamic worldview and understanding discussed around both Sufi and Quranic doctrines. The dominancy of unity is observable in different aspects of the Islamic world, varying from the meaning in the background of Salât, which is considered like connecting or communicating with God, to the social structure of different Islamic states, including the inclusive atmosphere of Anatolian Seljuks. It is possible to define these various reflections of unity under a general understanding of a plurality that does not challenge the oneness in Islamic understanding. This understanding is traceable in the practice of Salât as well. Although Salât is a liturgy that is mostly performed as a community in mosques, each Muslim prays individually. Based on this, it is possible to claim that mosque space is filled with people, microcosmic models during the prayers. As an outcome of the unified and grid arrangement, the mosque space, an arguable

microcosm, consists of smaller microcosms, the quadrilateral spaces between the columns with their coverings and vertical axes.

Thus, despite the possible main motive of replicating the Divine work in the background of the Byzantine churches and Anatolian Seljuk mosques, their approach to the architectural space is fundamentally different, probably related to the conception of God and the universe in their own religions. It is possible to claim that these conceptions were formulated by the fusion of Neoplatonic ontological doctrines with the two religions' orthodoxy. Observing the Neoplatonic universe with the Christian epistemology resulted in the emphasis of hierarchy in the structure of the universe and God's relationship and its creations. On the other hand, observing the same universe with the Muslim epistemology conceivably resulted in the emphasis on unity. The repercussions of these two different approaches are traceable in their perception of the microcosmic spaces and their design tools as well as the end products with two drastically different space arrangements. Moreover, comparing the underlying geometric arrangement of the plan scheme of the cross-in-square churches and Seljuk mosque also displays these emphases on two different concepts. Although both quadrature and gird arguably reflect all three concepts in their geometry, it is possible to state that quadrature is more based on a hierarchy with different square sizes and rotation, while the grid is based more on unity with equal divisions.

The horizontal axis present in both architectural spaces also functions differently in relation to their dominant concepts. In Byzantine churches, it is the axis that the hierarchical spaces are line upon. In Seljuk mosques, it is the axis that generated the unified grid. Furthermore, the function of the horizontal axis is presumably related to the liturgies as well, in which the

dominancy of the concepts is also observable. The Byzantine Rite is reprising the ascension between the hierarchical levels of the universe, and thus it involves movement directed by the horizontal axis.

On the other hand, Salât is a journey inwards, so it does not involve physical movement in the sense of walking or passing. Thus, the horizontal axis' role is only pointing to the direction faced during prayer. As a result of these, it is possible to indicate that Byzantine churches are spaces arranged for movement from one space to another during the liturgy, while Anatolian Seljuk mosques are spaces arranged for standing side by side in the form of rows during the liturgy. As a final remark, the difference in the two cultures' approaches to the microcosmic architectural space is also reflected in the decorative program. While the content of the decorative programs in terms of patterns, motifs, icons, and figures are related to the culture of the two domains and discussed in detail in this study, the placement of the ornaments in the two typologies are arguably crucial to read their understanding of microcosm in architectural works. The interior surfaces and elements of the Byzantine churches are more decorated when compared to their exterior. In addition, the distribution of the decoration is not equal in the interior sections as well. As the symbolic meaning of each section hierarchically increases from narthex to nave and apse, the amount of decoration increases as well as other characteristics such as ceiling height and illumination. These differences are probably related to the church's perception as a microcosmic model that involves different levels of descending universe from Earth to the Divine realm. For the Anatolian Seljuk mosque cases, it is discussed that they were probably considered intermediary zones, *barzakh*, which imitates the characteristics of the universe (*barzakh* explanation belongs to Peker as above referenced). In this sense, the mosques were metaphorical connection

spaces for Muslims with their God. As a potential decorative repercussion of this understanding, only the architectural elements which provide physical and metaphorical connections are heavily decorated. The first one of these elements is the portals. They are the thresholds that connect the exterior of the mosque to the interior, and they are heavily decorated with various patterns, motifs, and figures compared to the plain façades. In the mosque interior, while the surfaces are left as plain, the elements such as the mihrab niche, the mimbar, and even the lantern dome provide metaphorical connections either in terms of extension Ka'ba or ascension to higher levels are heavily decorated.

Before concluding the comparative part, it should be indicated that the madrasahs of Anatolian Seljuks are not involved in this part since they are not generated in relation to the liturgy like churches and mosques. Since liturgy and prayer are not their primary program, the creation and evolution of their spatial arrangement are different. Nevertheless, it is discussed in the related parts of the study that Seljuks probably considered madrasahs as microcosmic models as well. It is possible to trace the repercussions of Neoplatonic concepts in their plan organizations, volumetric configurations, and decorative program. Besides, as discussed, Seljuk understanding of multifunctional architectural spaces enabled them to consider both mosque and madrasah typologies in the same symbolic manner (an explanation from Peker). Therefore, it is possible to claim that Anatolian Seljuk madrasahs display the same fundamental differences that the mosques have in terms of their symbolic conception compared to the Byzantine churches, despite the formal resemblances that the madrasahs have to the cross-in-square Byzantine churches.

Based on the philosophical and architectural analyses as well as the comparative discussion, this thesis has suggested a common influential source in the background of the symbolism, design ideas, and motives of these two traditions that have been mostly considered as very distinct and separate in terms of the symbolic aspects. This claim, derived from the architectural analyses, not only increases the dependability and accuracy of the study's hypothesis but also marks the final one of its significant outcomes. Furthermore, with this outcome, the study has also shown that with the necessary interdisciplinary approach and effort, it is possible to provide links and associations in terms of symbolism between these two distinct traditions that have generally not been considered having these common backgrounds. The main motive of this effort is that the studies that ignore or overshadow these links are usually insufficient to provide a complete understanding of the design mentality in medieval Anatolia. They usually remain insufficient to explain the symbolism and meaning of the buildings as well as the worldview of the societies that made them.

Moreover, despite this set of outcomes which enable answering the research question, support the hypothesis of the study, and make contributions to the field in order to fill the gap of studies that investigates the symbolism in Byzantine and Seljuk architectures together in an architectural history narrative, there are several aspects of this study that requires further research or raises questions. One of these aspects is why and how Neoplatonism became the prime source for esotericism in Byzantine and Seljuk cultures. With the harmonization of Neoplatonic esotericism and mysticism with Christianity and Islam over the centuries, the Neoplatonic ideas penetrated different layers of Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk cultures, including artistic production. As this study displays, Neoplatonism is apparently more than just a source of inspiration

for these monuments but rather a creative design tool that governs their plans, volumes, and ornamentations. It is possible to describe these monuments as the architectural products of the theologies and cultures created by the syntheses of each monotheistic religion with Neoplatonic philosophy. However, in such an inclusive approach, it should be indicated that there were other influential factors in nurturing the religions and in the background of the architectural symbolism. For example, the impact and influence of Judaism and Buddhism on Neoplatonism, Christianity and Islam are discussable. Significantly, the influence of these two beliefs is observable in spiritual, esoteric, and mystic depth. When the idea that Judaism and Buddhism probably affected Neoplatonism in this manner is considered, it is likely to assume that their impact has contributed to the symbolism of architectural monuments produced under Christianity and Islam, such as the Byzantine churches and Anatolian Seljuk mosques and madrasahs. However, this study does not discuss these other possible influencers in the background of the Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk architectures. One reason for this is the necessity to structure the study according to the extent of a master's thesis. To cover each and every one of the presumed factors of influence of these traditions or their particular religions would be too broad of a topic to cover in such a study. Another reason is that the most dominant influencing factor for the Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk theologies, societies, and architectures is probably Neoplatonism. Besides, whether Judaism, Buddhism or another one, these other sources of influence arguably either add depth to what Neoplatonism already brought to these religions or prepared these monotheistic religions esoterically to the penetration or acceptance of Neoplatonic ideas. In other words, when the framework of the study is set as the Neoplatonic impact and its repercussions, it mainly covers the

effects of other sources due to the parallelism of them with Neoplatonism. This is presumably because the pre-Islamic or even pre-Christian interactions between mainly Judaism and Buddhism with the ancient philosophical heritage of Plato and Aristotle possibly led to Neoplatonism's emergence. Thus, it is possible to claim that the study raises the question of what other philosophical schools of thought or religions were influential in forming the Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk architectures in particular and even Christian and Islamic architectures in general.

Another enquiry raised by this study is what other branches of Islamic and Christian architectures other than Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk have Neoplatonic repercussions. The 11th and 12th Century cross-in-square type Byzantine churches and the 13th Century Seljuk mosques and madrasahs in Anatolia are pointed out as the two solid and complete manifestations of Neoplatonic concepts within their architectural traditions. However, it is frequently mentioned throughout the study and particularly discussed in the historical survey that Neoplatonism nurtured Christianity and Islam in general. The impact of the pagan school of thought in the two religious domains is too deep-rooted for attributing mysticism and esotericism exclusively to Byzantine and Anatolian Seljuk civilizations. This study demonstrated these civilizations' uniqueness in terms of their approach towards heterodox beliefs in the focused periods and the architectural production shaped by these theological atmospheres. However, the role of the general Neoplatonic impact on Christianity and Islam points out the necessity to study other architectural traditions formed under the Neoplatonic impact. Although the Neoplatonic impact on the formation of Gothic architecture in Europe is a topic that studied in architectural history, the medieval age is a long period that contains many different traditions in Europe and across the globe. Within the broad framework of

repercussions of Neoplatonism in architecture, the Middle East and Central Asia are probably significant places to study the architectural traditions that emerged in these regions to search for the repercussions of Neoplatonism.

Moreover, in terms of the period, this study also raises the question that what other cultures and architectural traditions from later periods, after the medieval age, were possibly inspired by Neoplatonic philosophy. When how deeply rooted the relationship of Neoplatonism and monotheistic religions of Christianity and Islam is considered, it would be expectable to observe its impact in later traditions as well. While it is possible to observe the architectural revival of the ancient formal and tectonic heritage in different periods and different forms, the Neoplatonic impact is discussed chiefly for the design theories and understanding of the Renaissance. Nevertheless, the possible reflections of Neoplatonic concepts and doctrines are conceivably worth tracing in other traditions as well.

To sum up the main points, this study analyses a set of selected Byzantine churches from the 11th and 12th Centuries as well as a set of 13th Century mosques and madrasah of Anatolian Seljuks in terms of their plan organizations, volumetric configurations, and decorative programs. While geometric examinations are the greater portion of these analyses, other aspects, namely motifs and figures of ornament and inscriptions are also included. The case studies are examined to trace the Neoplatonic repercussions in different aspects of their design in respect to three concepts, “hierarchy, unity, and duality”, generated from the Neoplatonic ontology of the universe. These architectural analyses are harmonized with the philosophical, theological, social, and cultural aspects of both the Byzantine Empire and Anatolian Seljuks. This interdisciplinary

methodology aimed to provide a more complete insight into the symbolism and motives in the background of these architectural traditions. As discussed in the concluding chapter, this study fulfills its initial aim by providing several outcomes. It arguably achieves to reply to the search question of “whether it is possible to suggest Neoplatonism, which has been a nurturing element of both Christianity and Islam, was also a common design instrument that was formative in both Byzantine and Seljuk architectures.” In addition to the number of outcomes, the study also raises a series of questions, again discussed in the conclusion chapter, which points out the gaps in the field which are possible to be filled by investigating the further effects of Neoplatonism in different architectural traditions or different schools of philosophy in a similar manner.

As the concluding remark, it is hoped that this thesis also inspires further studies that blend the boundaries of architectural history with other social sciences. This study is fashioned with a mindset and passion for investigating the influences, interactions, commonalities and separations in Byzantine and Seljuk architectural traditions, which have mostly been overlooked by scholars from both fields. It is valuable to study the links between Christian and non-Christian architectures and cultures, the latter of which mostly considered “other” from Eurocentric viewpoint. Intercultural and interdisciplinary approaches are suitable and efficient to understand the mind-sets in medieval era and reveal possible interactions that are difficult to observe by means of merely taxonomical architectural studies. Thus, it is sincerely hoped that this study inspires future researchers to investigate and study the questions raised by this study and many further ones that are not included here. It is genuinely believed that this inclusivity

and versatility will contribute to our tailoring of a new “glocal” architectural scenery.

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APPENDICES

A. FIGURES

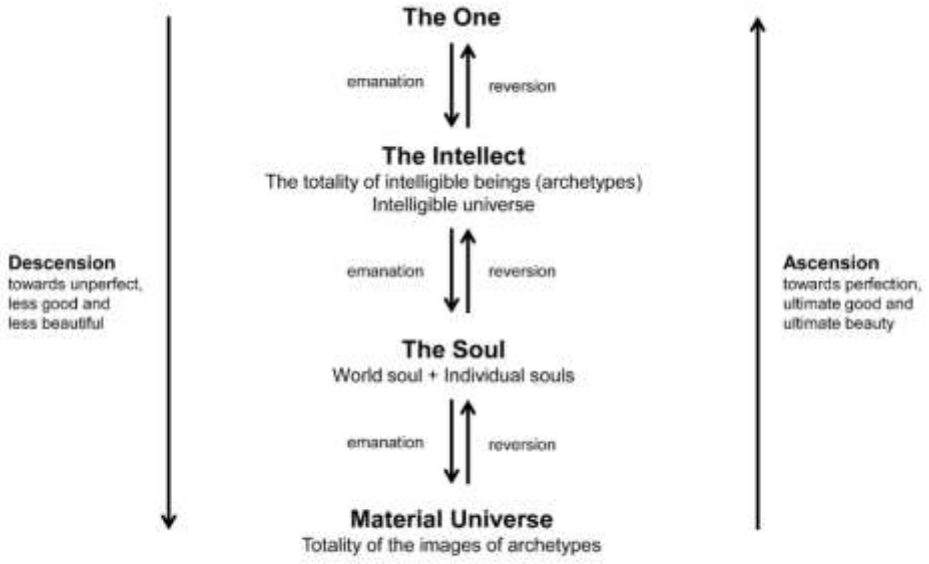


Figure 1: Diagram showing the basic ontological structure of the universe according to The Theory of Emanation (Drawn by the author)

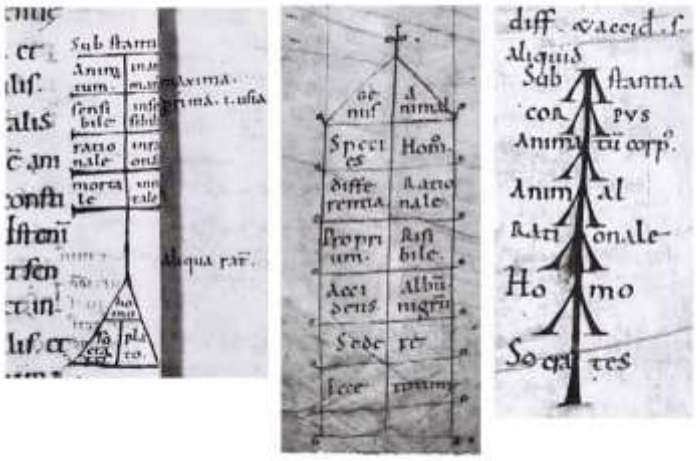


Figure. 2: Examples of the Porphyrian Tree from 11th Century (From Dardağan)

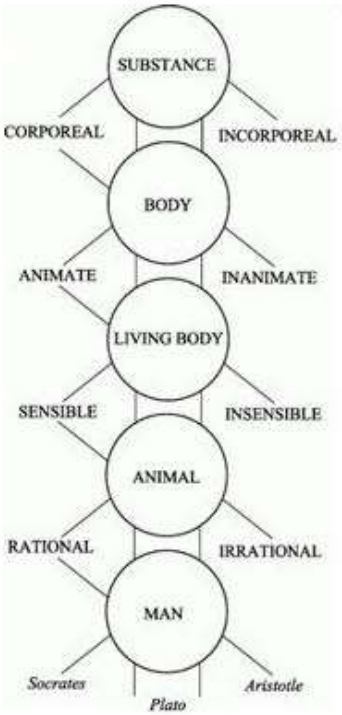


Figure. 3: Shematical Porphyrian Tree in English (From Dardağan)

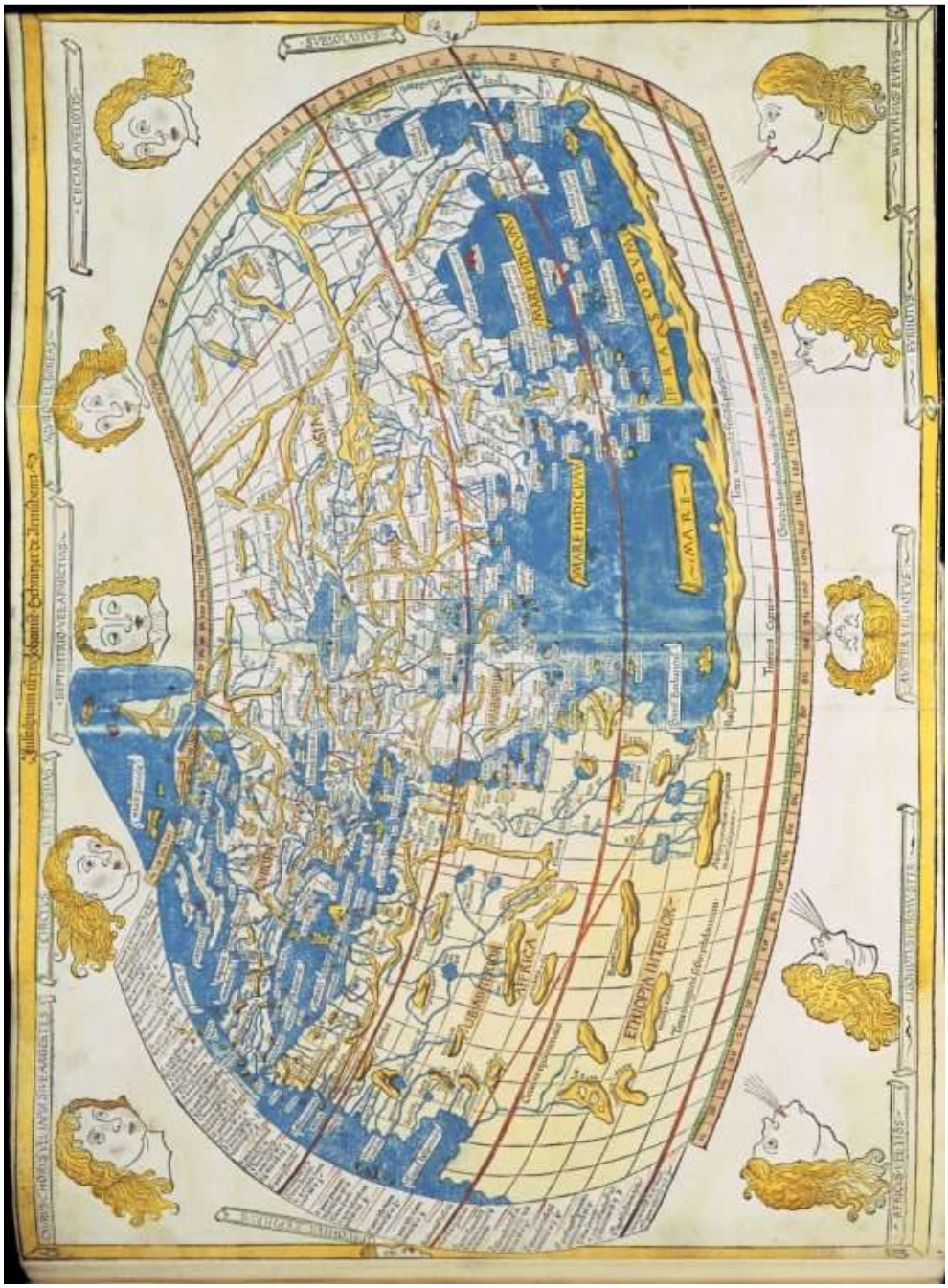


Figure. 4: The world map from around 11th Century (From Whitfield, British Library, Public Domain)

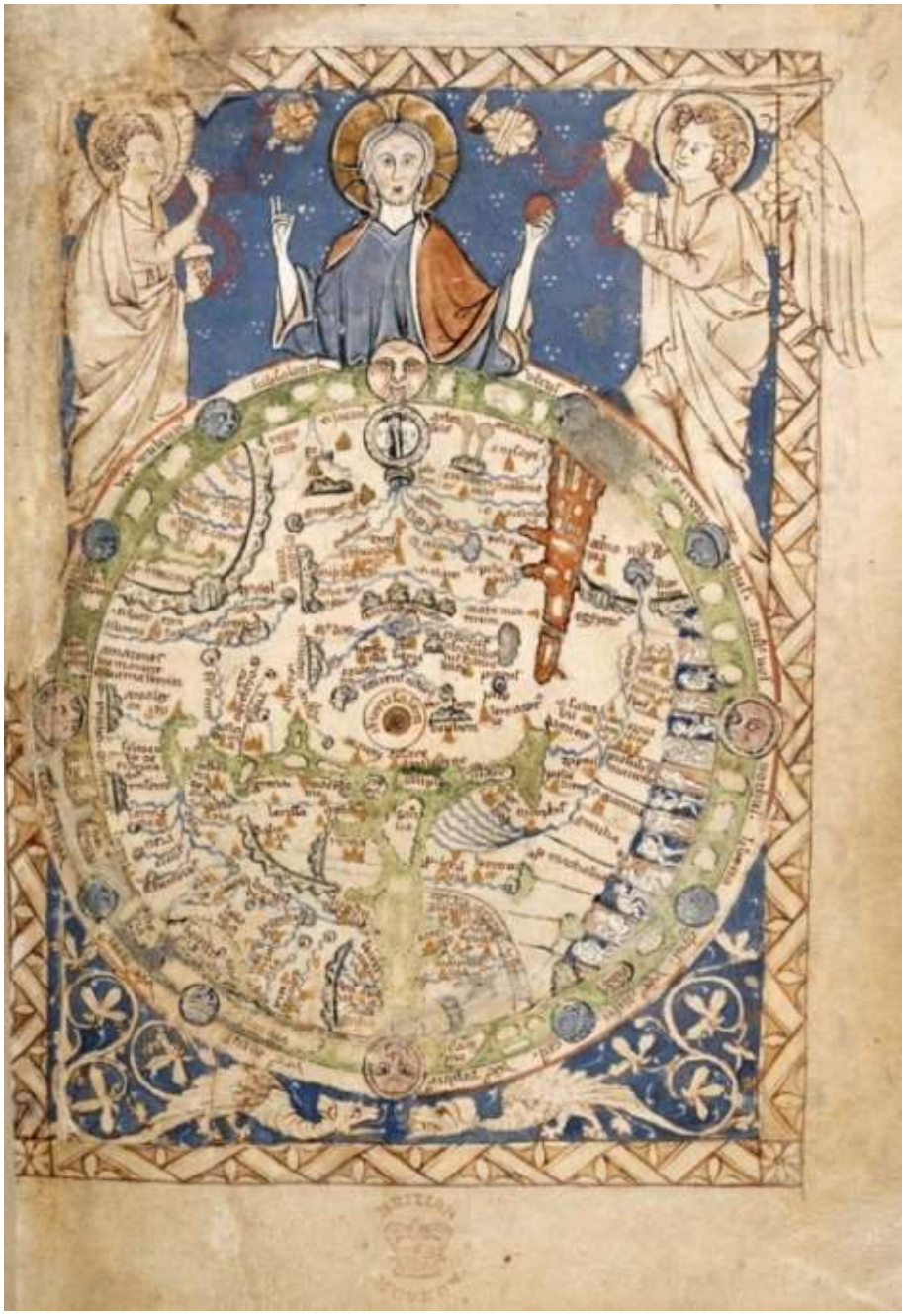


Figure. 5: The world map from 13th Century (From Whitfield, British Library, Public Domain)

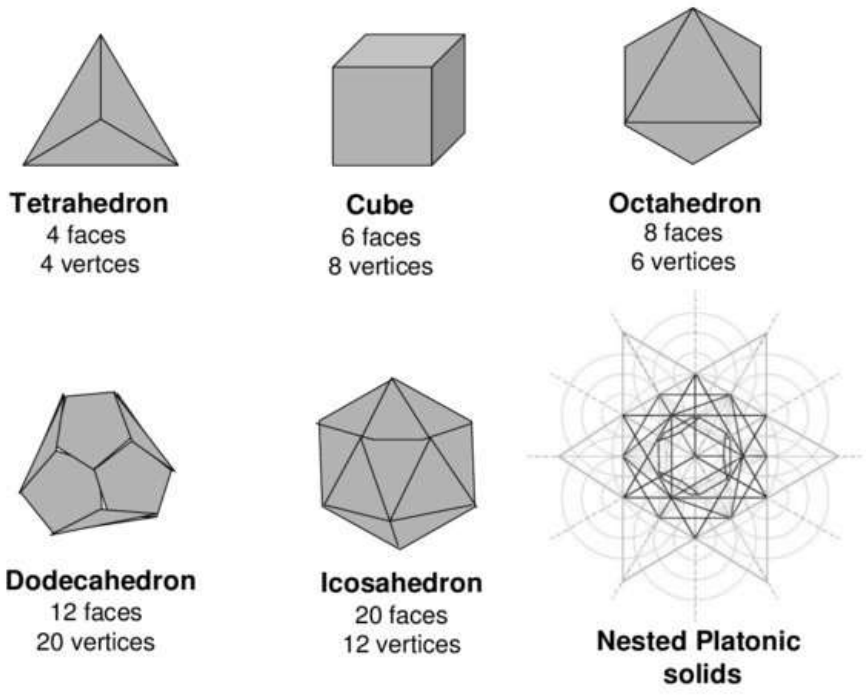


Figure 6: Three-dimensional drawings of polyhedral (From Hill and Rowlands)

I.	'higher principles'		
II.	elementary **triangles**	**type A: scalene** (half-equilateral)	**type B: isosceles** (half-square)
III.	complex **surfaces**	**type *A*: equilateral triangle**	**type *B*: square**
IV.	elementary **polyhedra (stereometric bodies)**	**tetrahedron** (triangular pyramid) **octahedron** **icosahedron**	**hexahedron** (cube)
V.	EWAFs ('elements')	**fire** **air** **water**	**earth**
VI.	mixtures (by juxtaposition)		

Figure 7: Table showing the process of the creation of polyhedra (From Opsomer)



Figure 8: Three-dimensional drawings showing the relationship between polyhedra and sphere (From Tavakoli and Gisin)

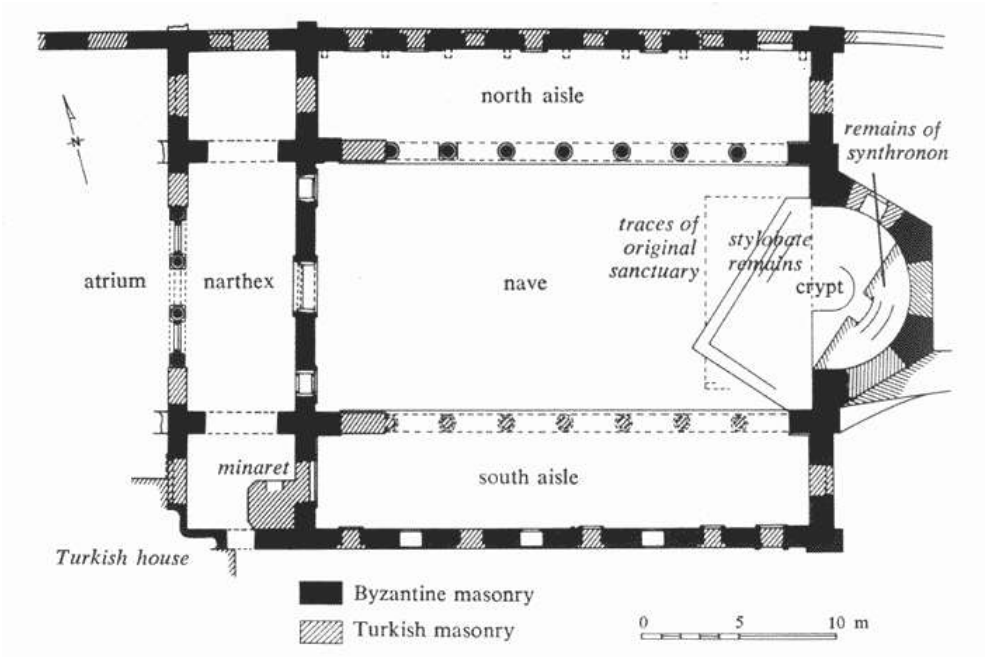


Figure 9: Plan of St. John the Forerunner Stoudiou indicating the interior sections of early basilica churches (From http://projects.mcah.columbia.edu/medieval-architecture/htm/related/ma_st_john_stoudios_01.htm)

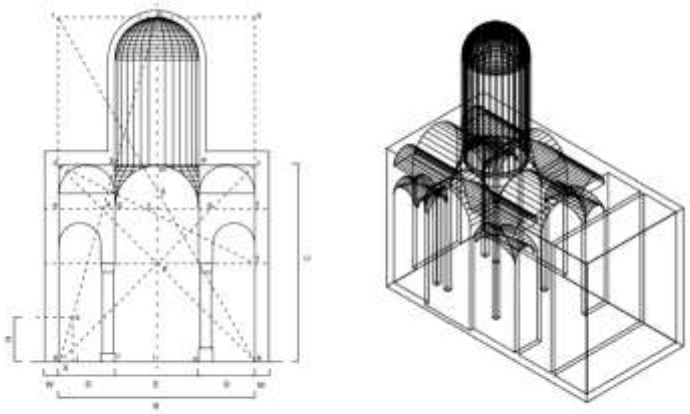


Figure 10: Parametric drawing showing the separation of the side spaces from the heightened central part in Middle Byzantine Churches (From Potamianos, Turner and Jabi)

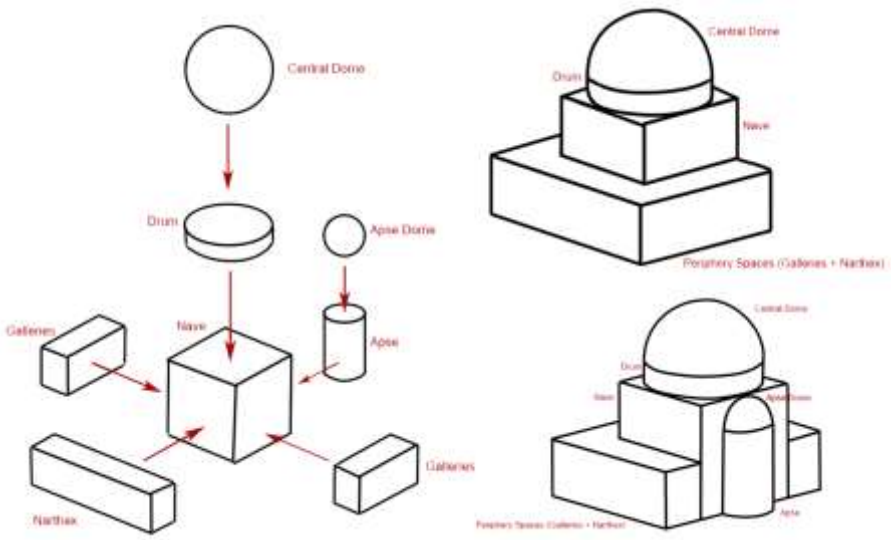


Figure 11: Three-dimensional diagram showing the simple stereometric forms of cross-in-square church scheme (Drawn by the author)

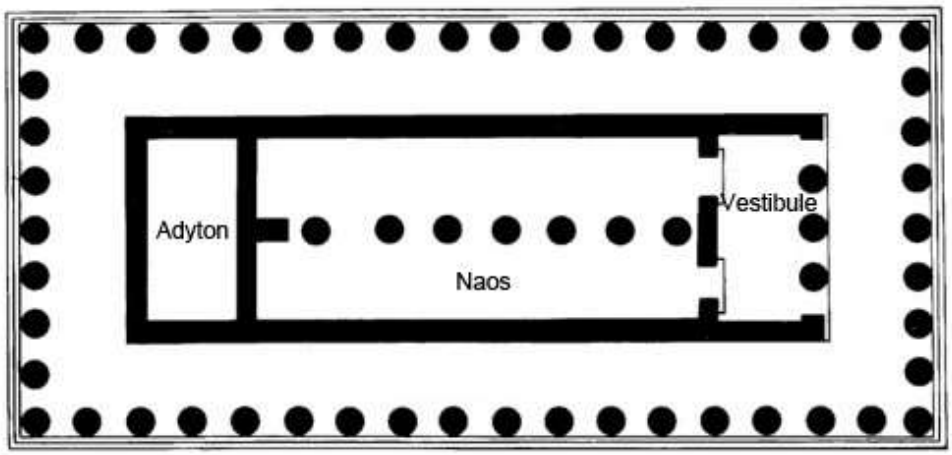
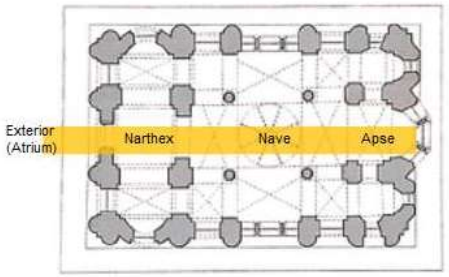
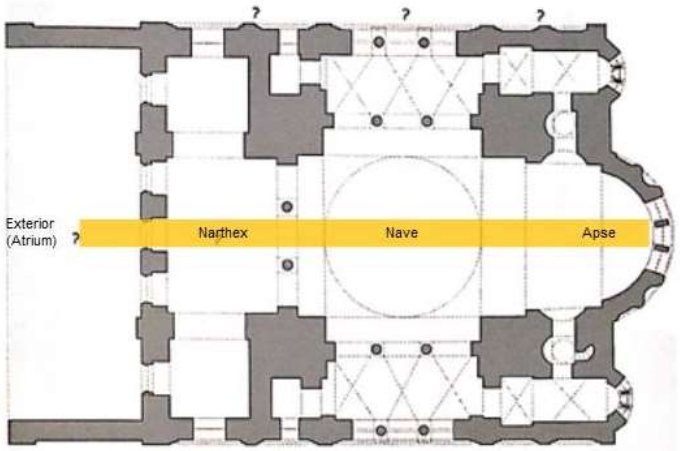


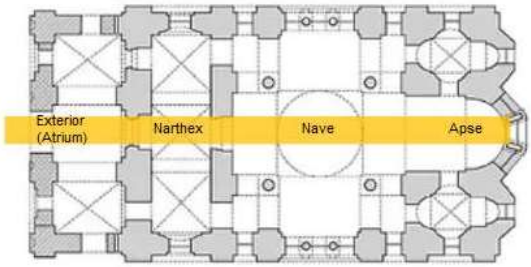
Figure 12: Plan of Temple of Hera in Paestum indicating the interior spaces as a precursor of interior sections of the Byzantine church (From http://www.paestum.org.uk/temples/basilica/)



13.1. Plan of Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami)



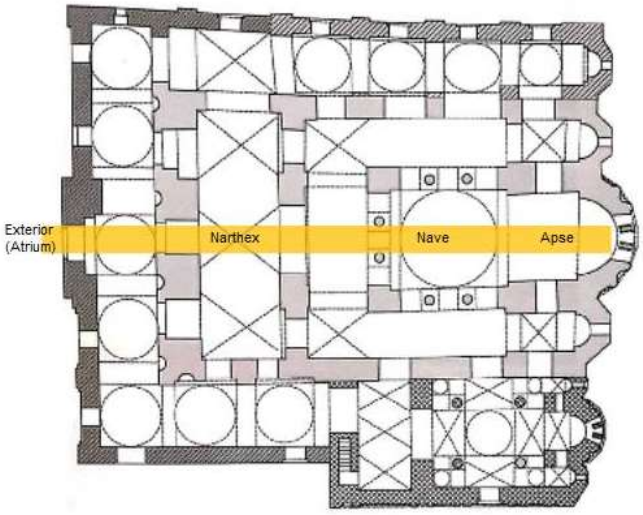
13.2. Plan of The Church of St. Theodosia (Gül Cami)



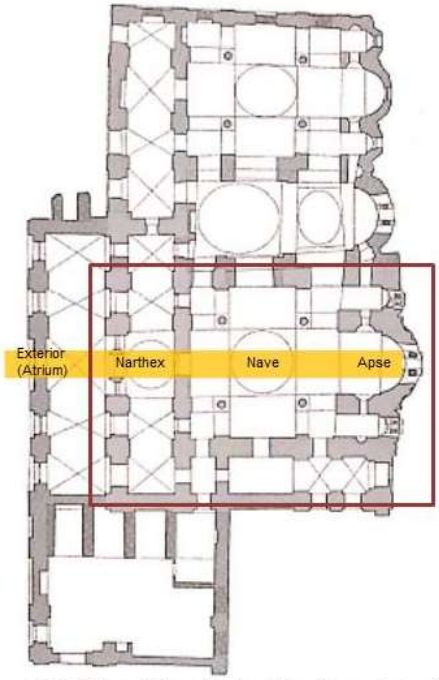
13.3. Plan of The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami)

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Figure 13: Church plan diagrams indicating the horizontal axis from the entrance to the apse with yellow (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)



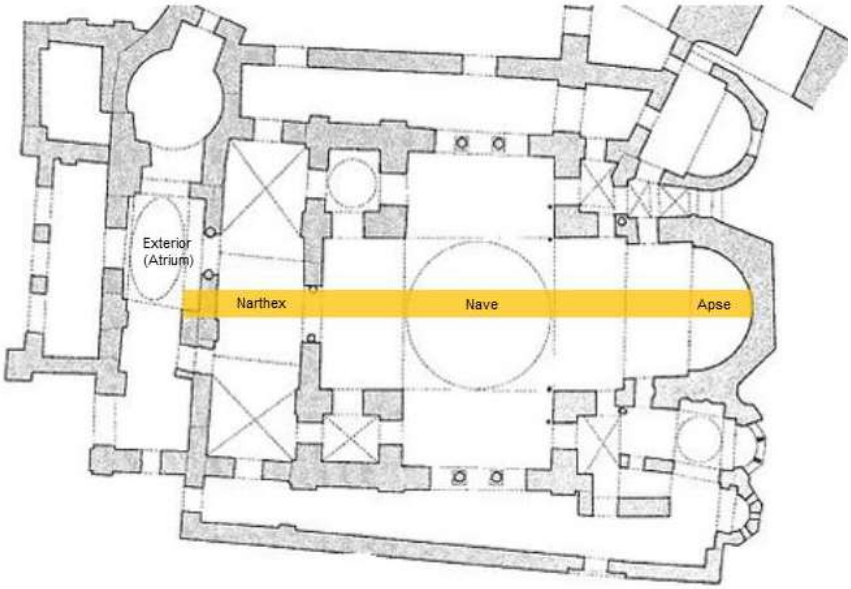
13.4. Plan of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami)



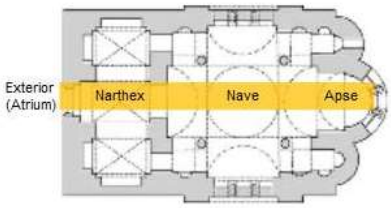
13.5. Plan of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami)

0 10m

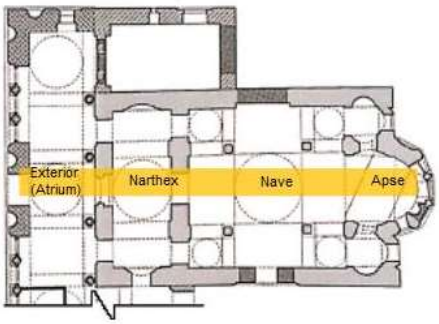
Figure 13 (continued): Church plan diagrams indicating the horizontal axis from the entrance to the apse with yellow (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)



13.6. Plan of The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami)



13.7. Plan of Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami)



13.8. Plan of Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami)

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Figure 13 (continued): Church plan diagrams indicating the horizontal axis from the entrance to the apse with yellow (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)

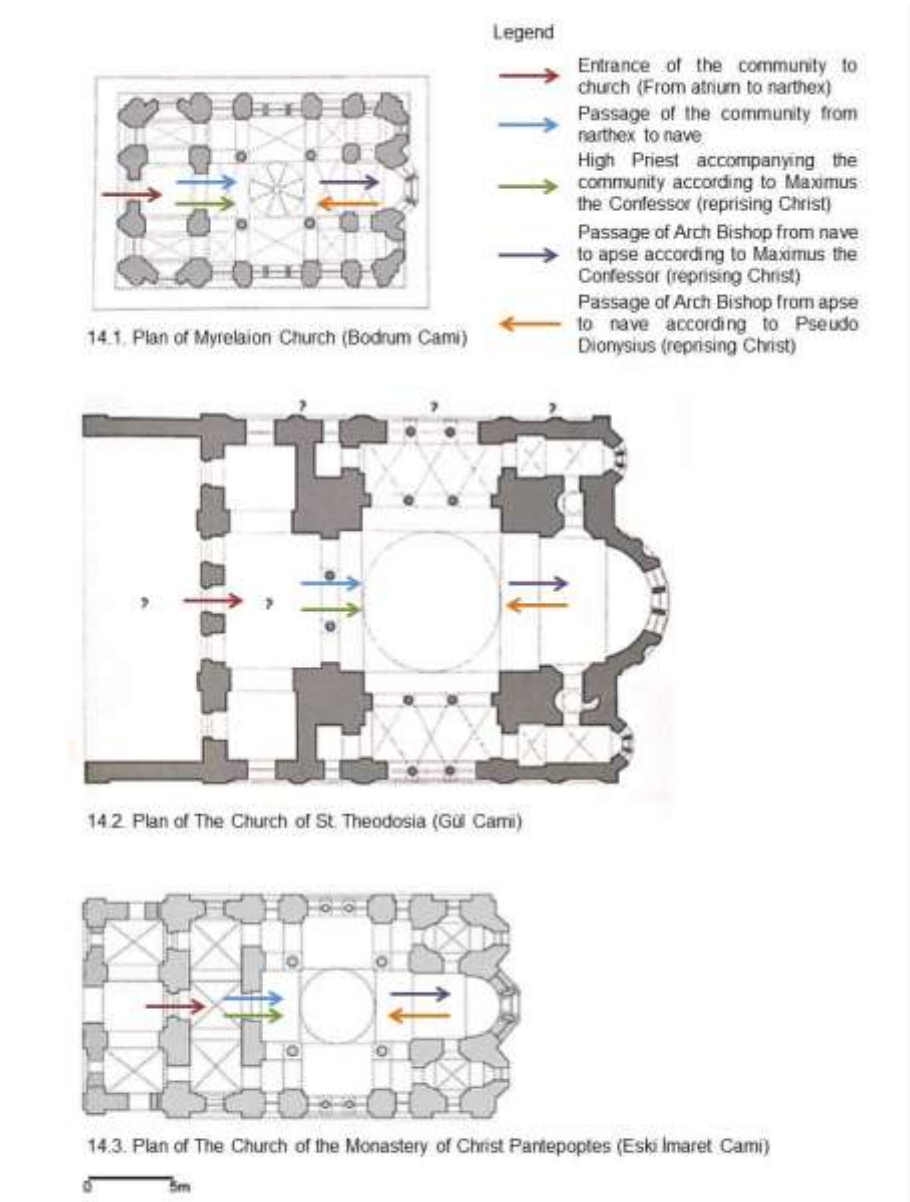
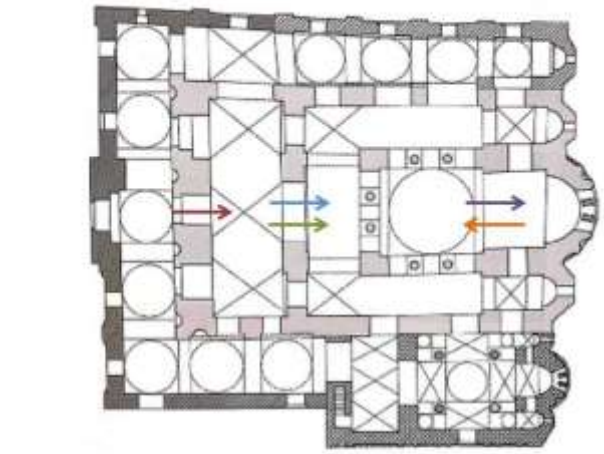
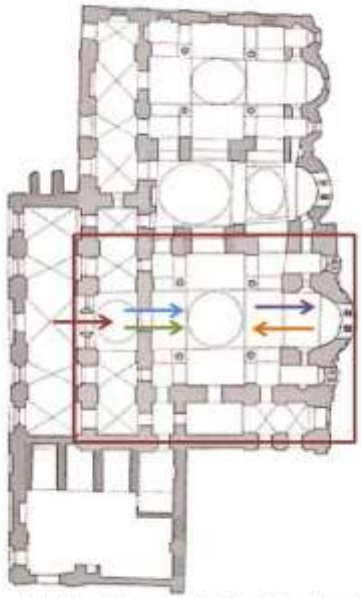


Figure 14: Church plan diagrams indicating the passages during the Byzantine Rite (From Marinis, diagrams drawn the author)



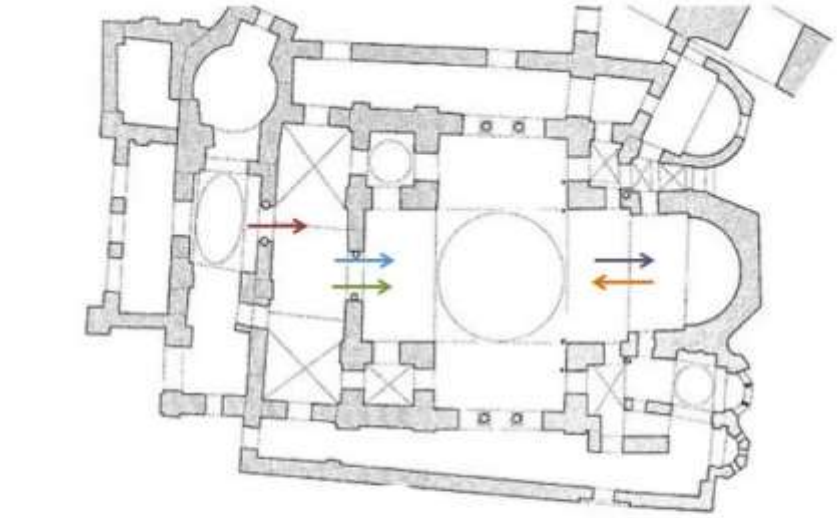
14.4. Plan of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami)



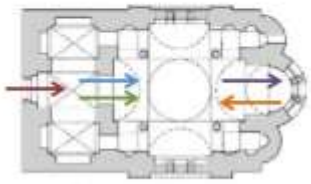
14.5. Plan of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami)

0 10m

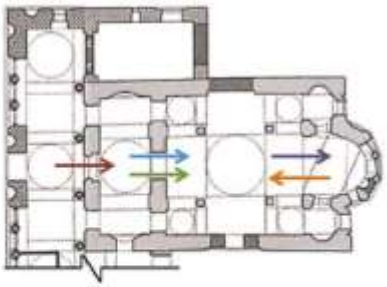
Figure 14 (continued): Church plan diagrams indicating the passages during the Byzantine Rite (From Marinis, diagrams drawn the author)



14.6. Plan of The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami)



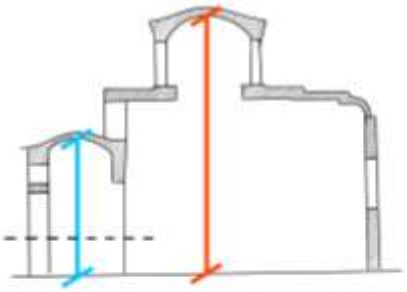
14.7. Plan of Hagios Ioannes (Hirami Ahmet Paşa Cami)



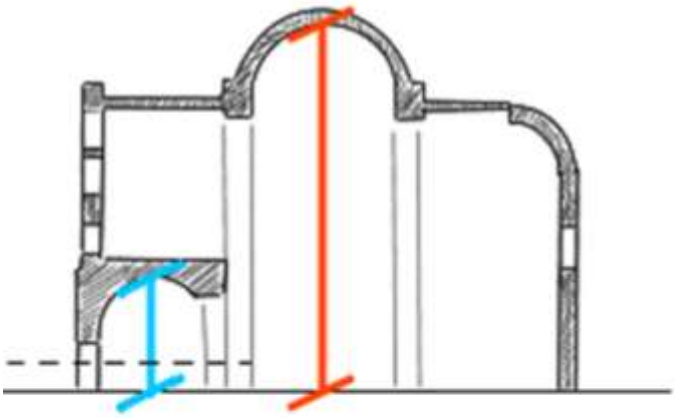
14.8. Plan of Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami)

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Figure 14 (continued): Church plan diagrams indicating the passages during the Byzantine Rite (From Marinis, diagrams drawn the author)



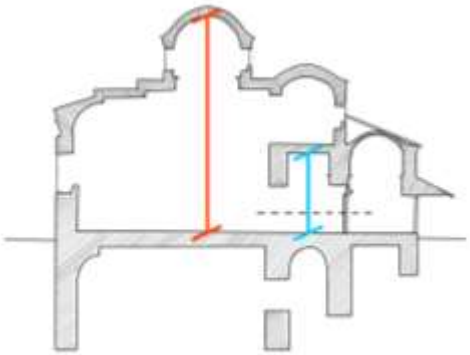
15.1. Section of Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami)



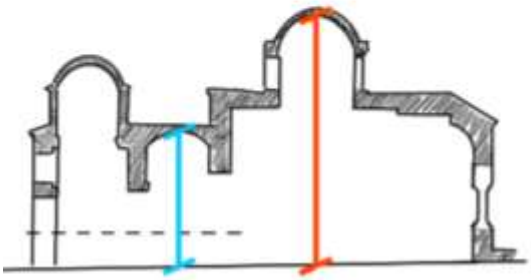
15.2. Section of The Church of St. Theodosia (Gül Cami)

0 5m

Figure 15: Church section diagrams indicating the height difference between the narthex and the nave (Redrawn by the author with diagrams, based on drawings from Birer Kurultay Mimarlık, Buchwald, van Millingen and Sağdıç)



15.4. Section of The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami)



15.5. Section of The Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami)

0 5m

Figure 15 (continued): Church section diagrams indicating the height difference between the narthex and the nave (Redrawn by the author with diagrams, based on drawings from Birer Kurultay Mimarlık, Buchwald, van Millingen and Sağdıç)

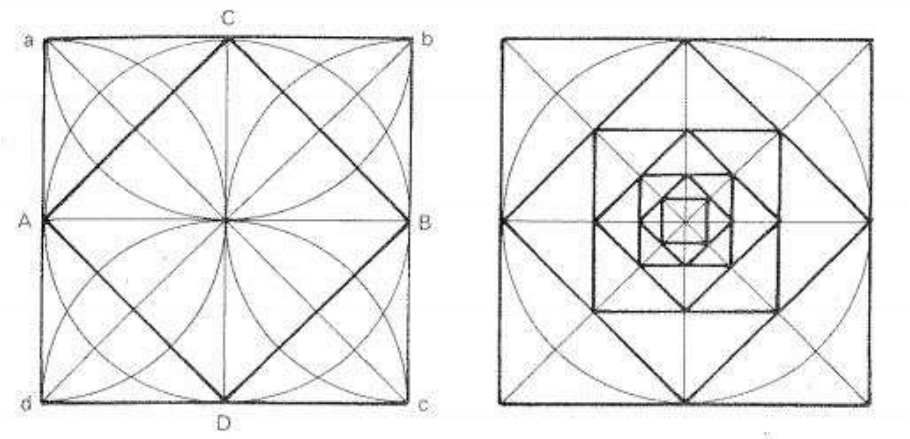


Figure 16: Diagram showing the underlying circles in quadrature (From El-Said and Parman)

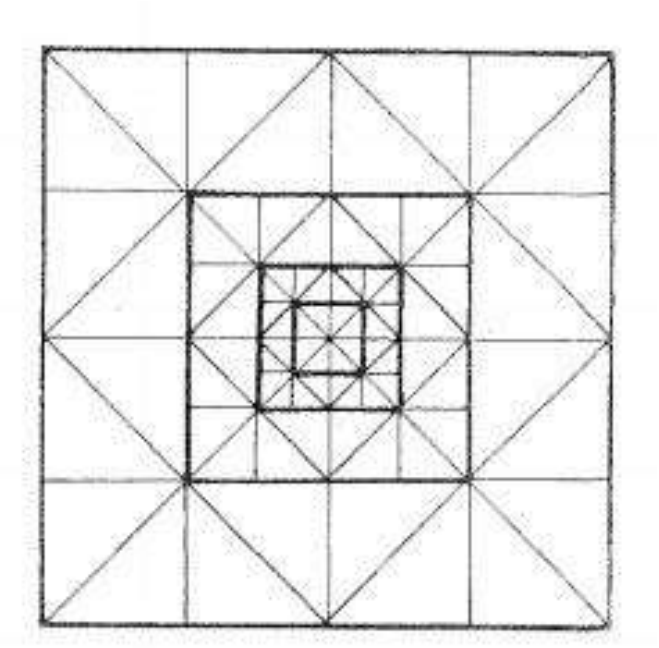


Figure 17: Diagram of quadrature (From El-Said and Parman)

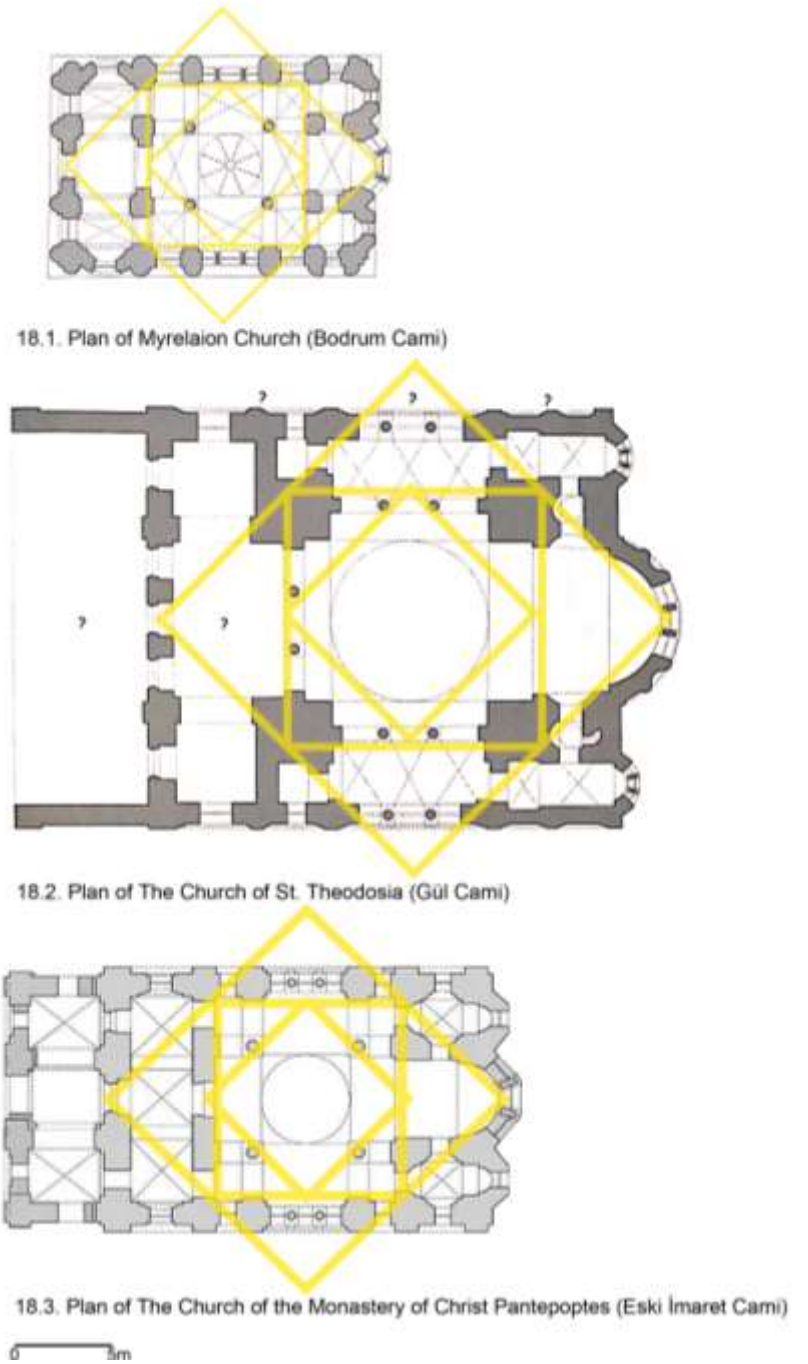
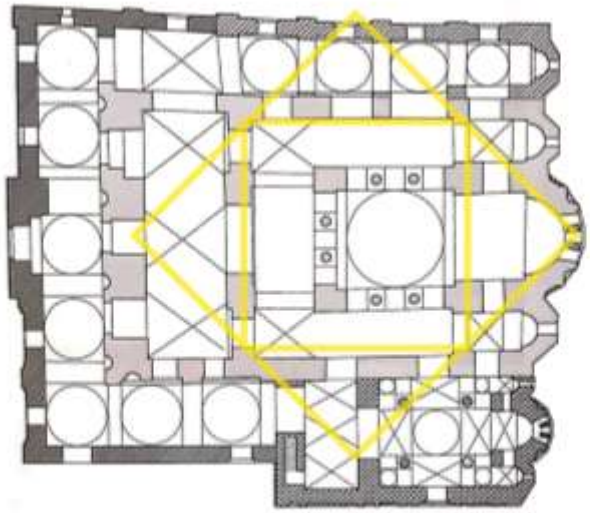
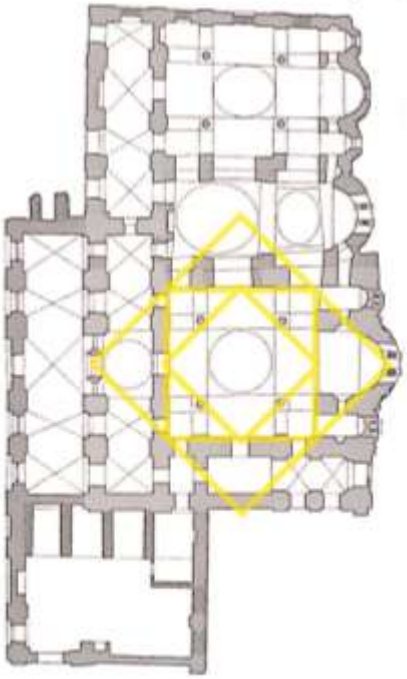


Figure 18: Church plan diagrams showing the juxtaposition of quadrature (From Marinis, diagram drawn by the author)



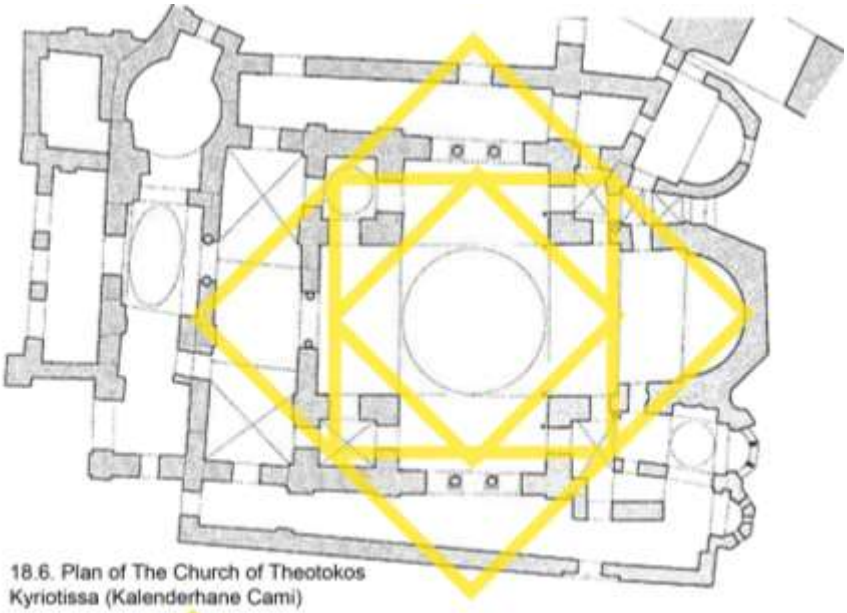
18.4. Plan of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami)



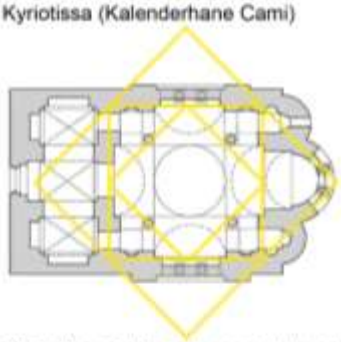
18.5. Plan of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami)

0 10m

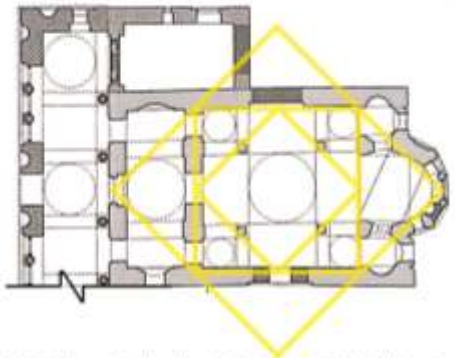
Figure 18 (continued): Church plan diagrams showing the juxtaposition of quadrature (From Marinis, diagram drawn by the author)



18.6. Plan of The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami)

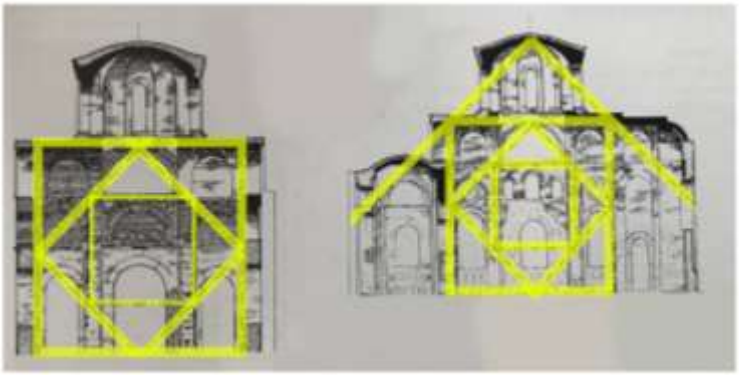


18.7. Plan of Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami)

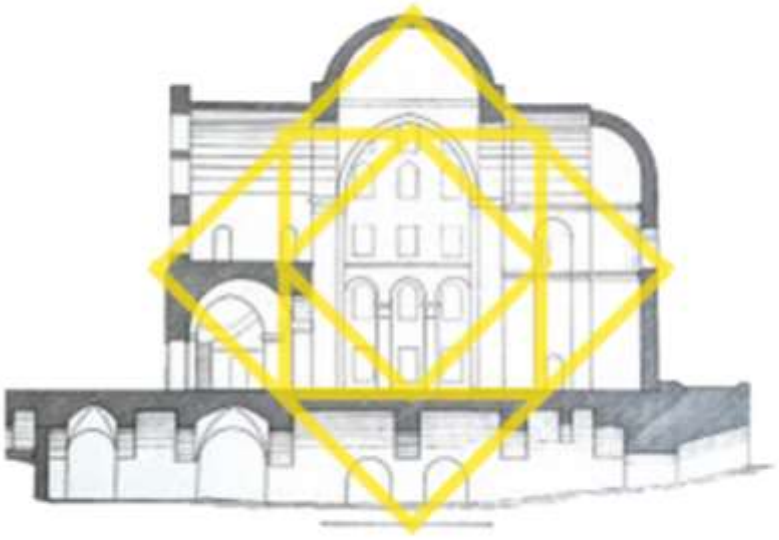


18.8. Plan of Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami)

Figure 18 (continued): Church plan diagrams showing the juxtaposition of quadrature (From Marinis, diagram drawn by the author)



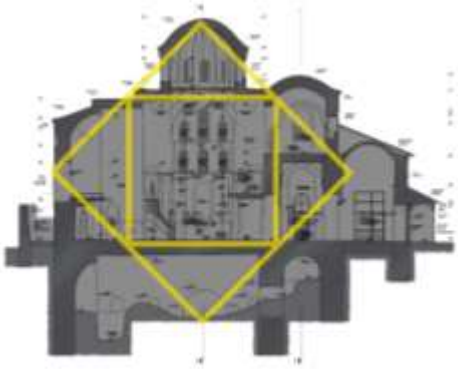
19.1. Section of Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami)



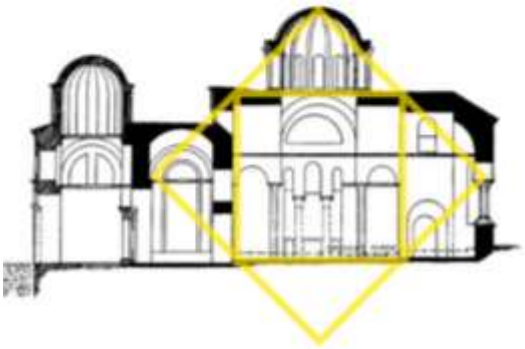
19.2. Section of The Church of St. Theodosia (Gül Cami)

0 5m

Figure 19: Church section diagrams showing the juxtaposition of quadrature (From Buchwald and Sağdıç, diagrams drawn by the author)



19.3. Section of The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami)



19.4. Section of The Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami)

0 5m

Figure 19 (continued): Church section diagrams showing the juxtaposition of quadrature (From Birer Kurultay Mimarlık and van Millingen, diagrams drawn by the author)

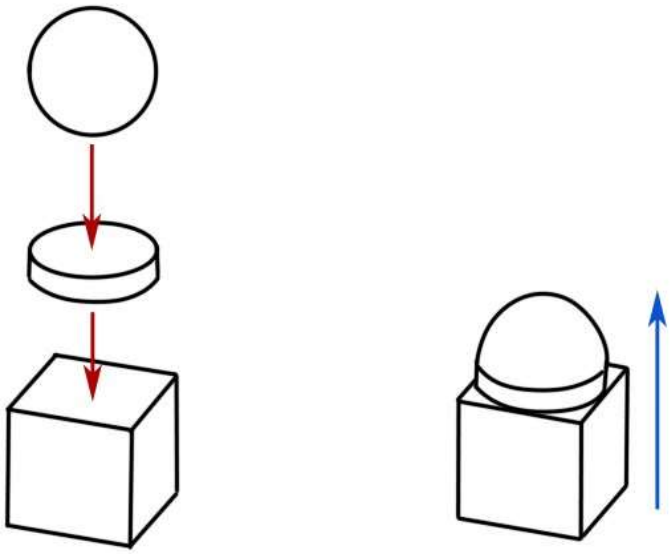


Figure 20: Three-dimensional diagram showing the relationship of cube, clynder, sphere in the nave of Middle Byzantine Churches. Vertical axis is indicated by blue. (Drawn by the author)

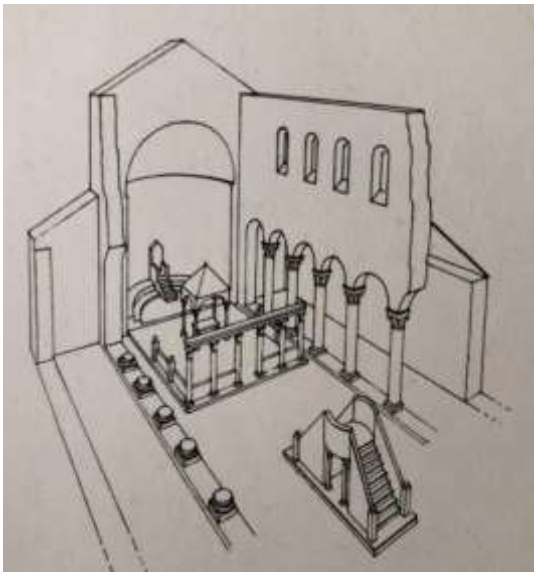


Figure 21: Drawing of a typical bema from Middle Byzantine Churches (From Patricios)

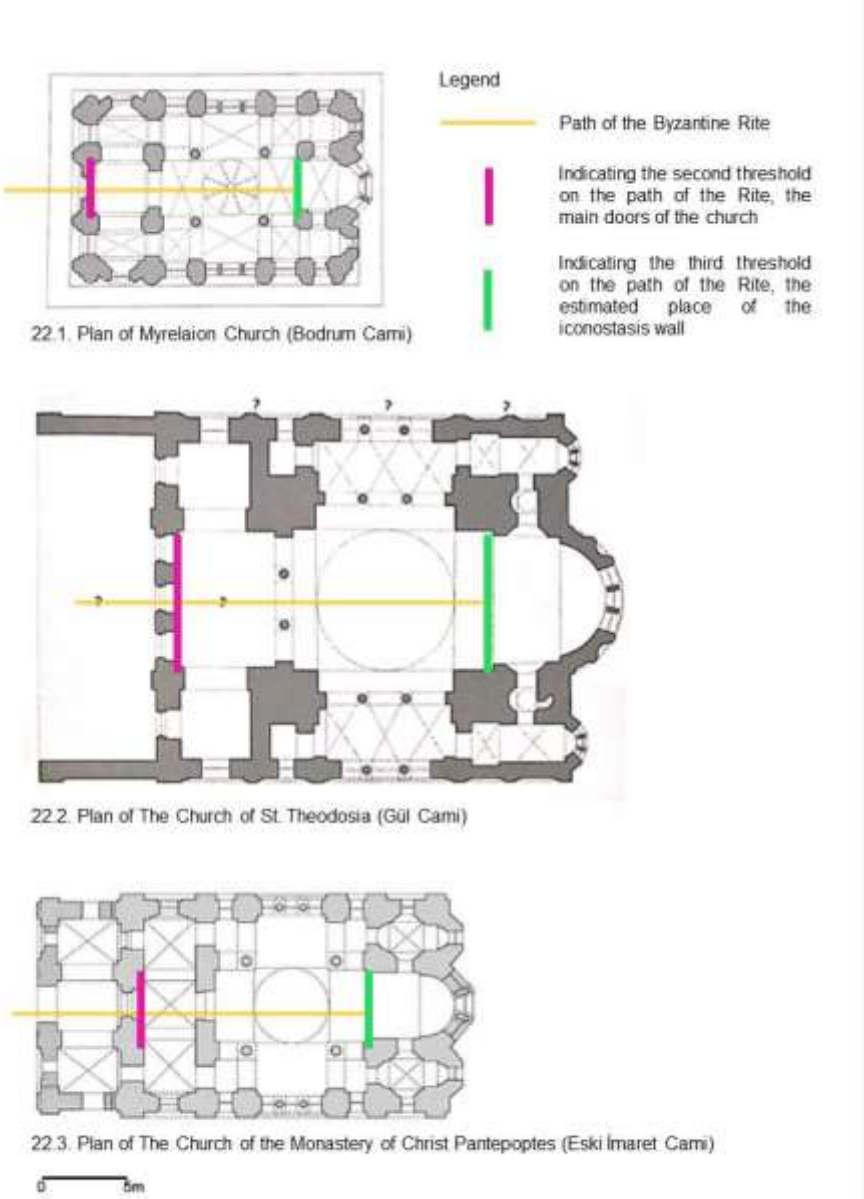
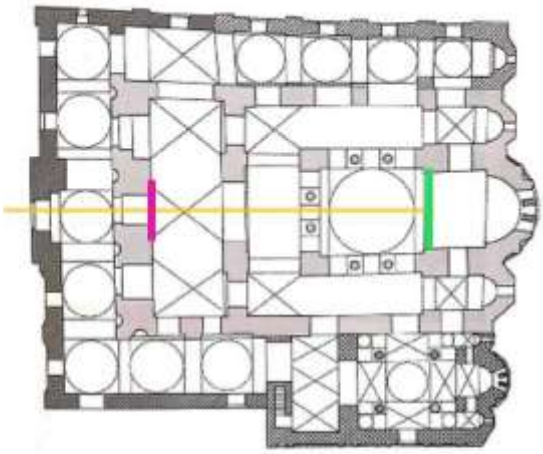
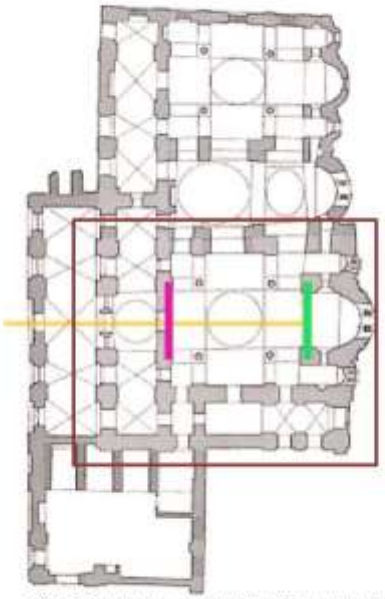


Figure 22: Church plan diagrams showing the three thresholds on the central axis. The first threshold, the gates of the atrium are not shown since they are not included in the existing plans. (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)



22.4. Plan of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami)



22.5. Plan of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami)

0 10m

Figure 22 (continued): Church plan diagrams showing the three thresholds on the central axis. The first threshold, the gates of the atrium are not shown since they are not included in the existing plans. (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)

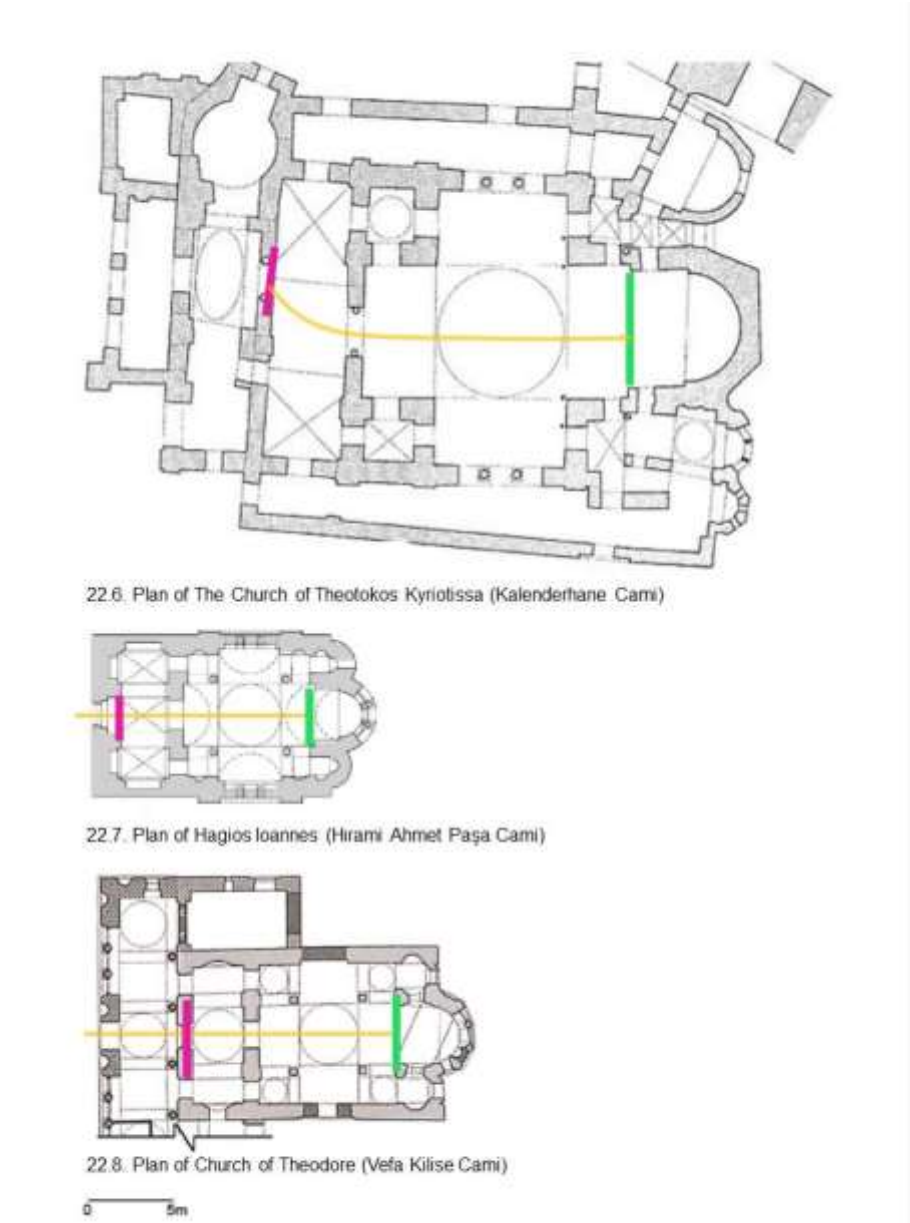


Figure 22 (continued): Church plan diagrams showing the three thresholds on the central axis. The first threshold, the gates of the atrium are not shown since they are not included in the existing plans. (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)



Figure 23: The atrium and exterior walls of Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami) (From Marinis)



Figure 24: The atrium and exterior walls of The Church of St. Theodosia (Gül Cami) (From Marinis)

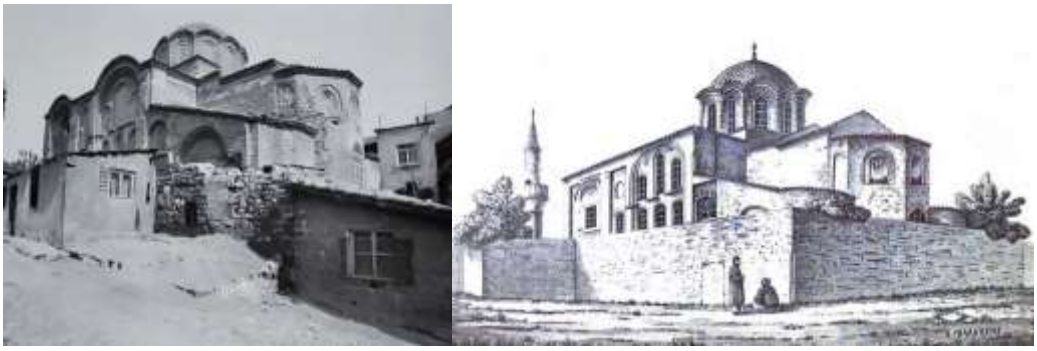


Figure 25: The atrium and exterior walls of The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami) (From Marinis and Paspates)



Figure 26: The atrium and exterior walls of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) (From Marinis)



Figure 27: The atrium and exterior walls of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami) (From Marinis and Paspates)



Figure 28: The atrium and exterior walls of The Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) (From Marinis and Paspates)



Figure 29: The atrium and exterior walls of Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami) (From Marinis and Paspates)



Figure 30: The atrium and exterior walls of Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami) (From Marinis and Paspates)

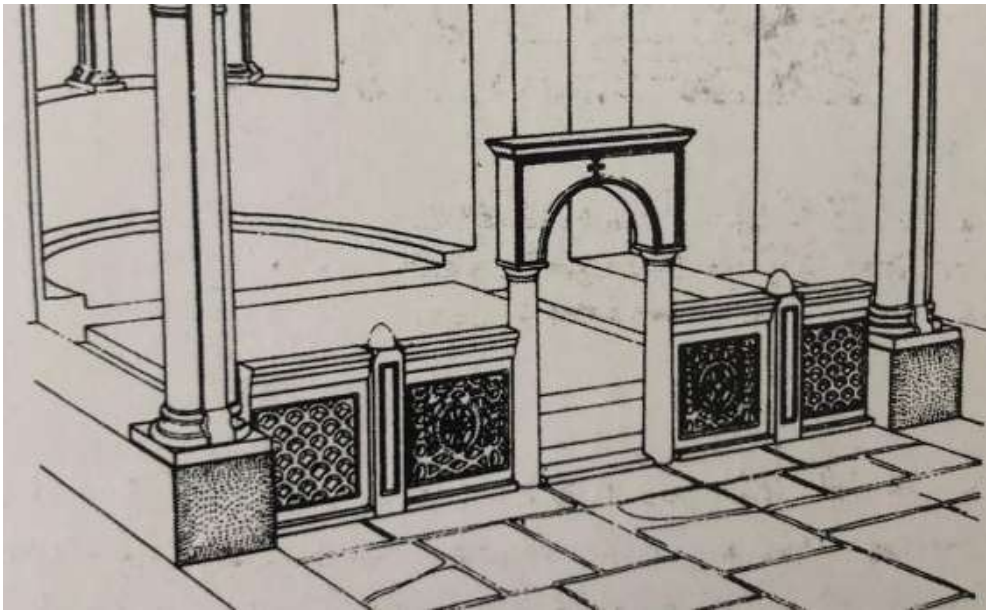


Figure 31: Drawing of the typical wooden railing, templon, as the precursor of iconostasis wall (From Patricios)

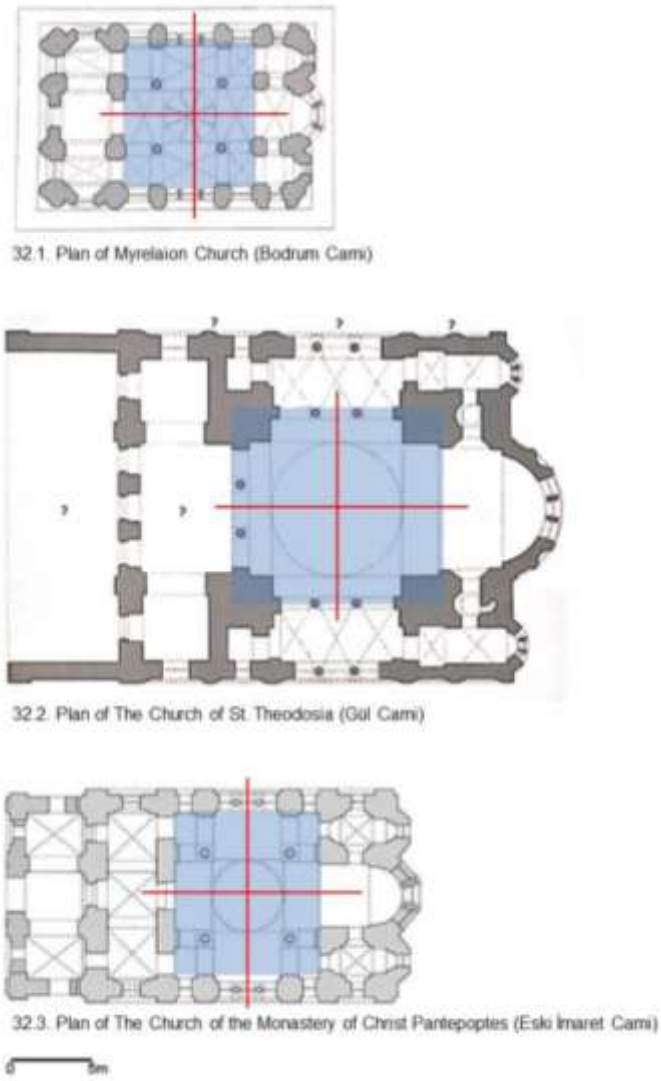
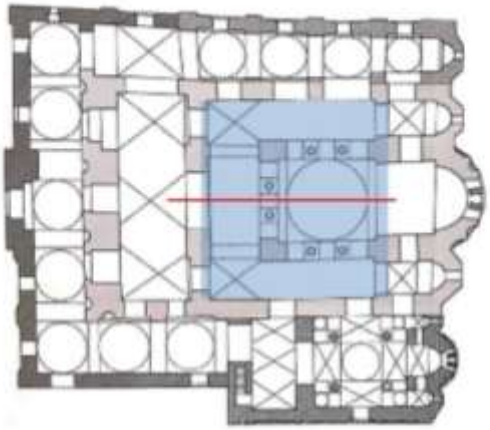
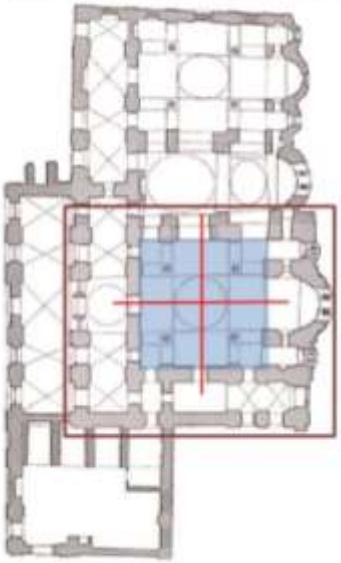


Figure 32: Church plan diagrams showing the symmetry in the central nave. The red lines indicates the symmetry axes of the central area of the church, rendered with blue. In some examples, the side spaces are arranged symmetrically in accordance with the nave such as Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami) and the church of Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami). (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)



32.4. Plan of Panmakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami)



32.5. Plan of the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami)

0 10m

Figure 32 (continued): Church plan diagrams showing the symmetry in the central nave. The red lines indicates the symmetry axes of the central area of the church, rendered with blue. In some examples, the side spaces are arranged symmetrically in accordance with the nave such as the church of Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami). (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)

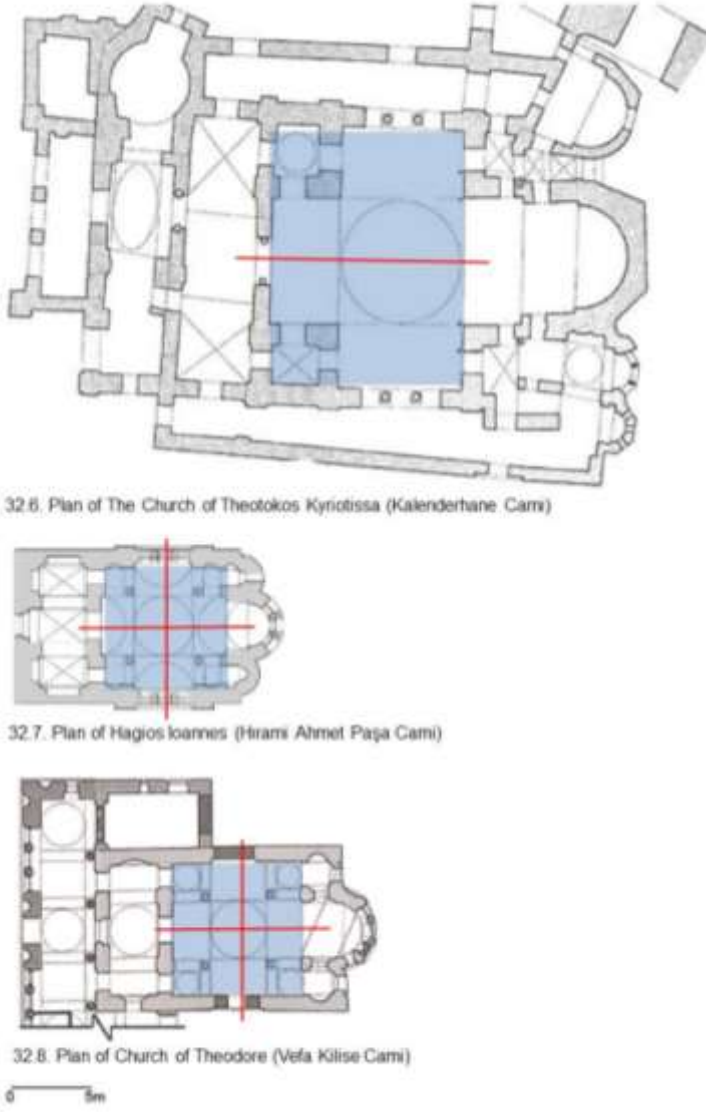


Figure 32 (continued): Church plan diagrams showing the symmetry in the central nave. The red lines indicates the symmetry axes of the central area of the church, rendered with blue. In some examples, the side spaces are arranged symmetrically in accordance with the nave such as the Church of Theotokos (Kalenderhane Cami), Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami) and Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami). (From Marinis, diagrams drawn by the author)

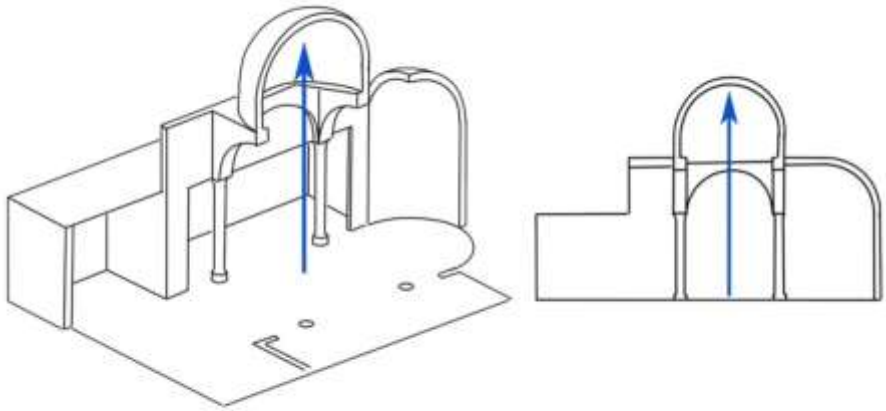


Figure 33: Three-dimensional church diagram showing the vertical axis in the central nave. The vertical axis is indicated by blue (Drawn by the author)

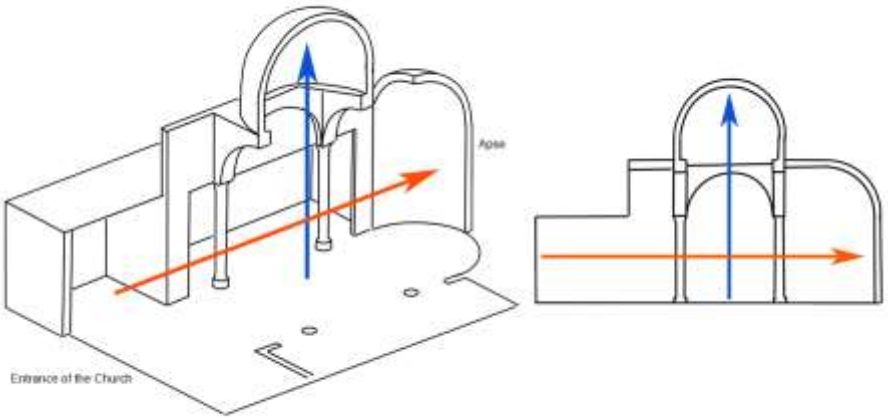


Figure 34: Three-dimensional church diagram showing the intersection of the horizontal axis and the vertical axis. The vertical axis is indicated by blue and the horizontal axis is indicated by orange (Drawn by the author)



Figure 35: The mosaic work on the central dome of the Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami) (From Nicholas V. Artamonoff Collection https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/vefa)



Figure 36: The archangel mosaic from the Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/kyriotissa)



Figure 37: The dome mosaic work from the parecclesion of Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) (From Patricios)



Figure 38: The mosaic work from Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) (From Patricios)

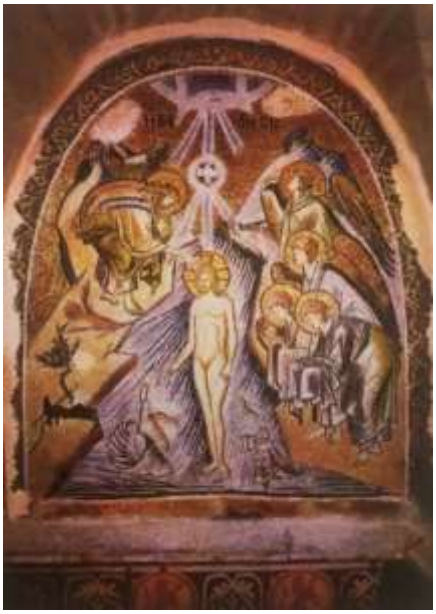
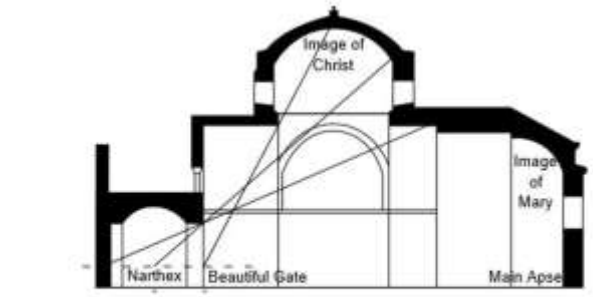


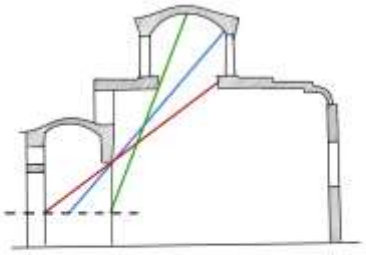
Figure 39: The mosaic work from Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) (From Patricios)



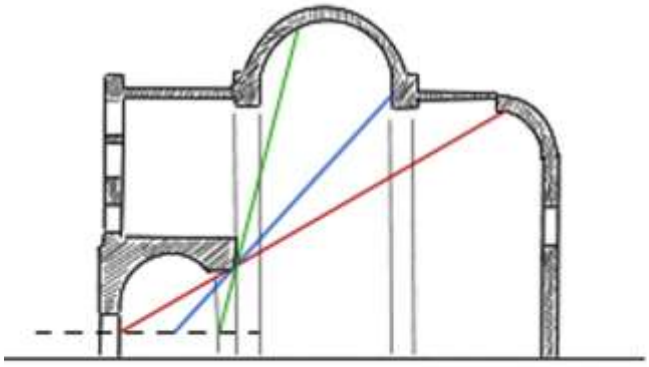
Figure 40: The mosaic work from Pammakaristos Church (Fethiye Cami) (From Patricios)



41.1. Generic diagram produced by Iakovos , Turner and Jabi



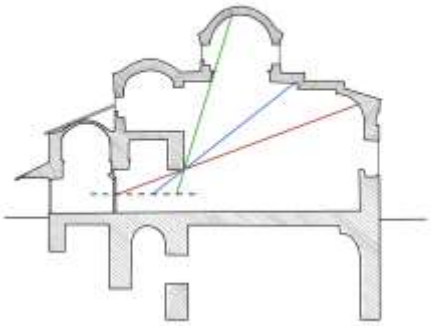
41.2. Section of Myrelaion Church (Bodrum Cami)



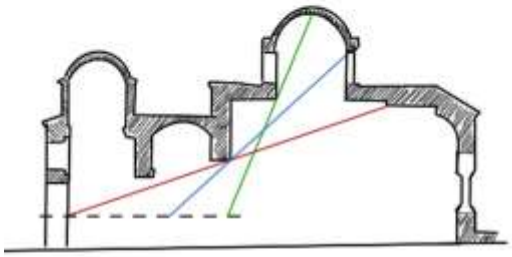
41.3. Section of The Church of St. Theodosia (Gül Cami)

0 5m

Figure 41: Church section diagrams showing the placement of the figures in the domes of cross-in-square type churches (Original diagram from Potamianos, Turner and Jabi. Redrawn by the author with diagrams, based on drawings from Birer Kurultay Mimarlık, Buchwald, van Millingen and Sağdıç)



41.4. Section of The Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami)



41.5. Section of The Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami)

0 5m

Figure 41 (continued): Church section diagrams showing the placement of the figures in the domes of cross-in-square type churches (Original diagram from Potamianos, Turner and Jabi. Sections redrawn by the author with diagrams, based on drawings from Birer Kurultay Mimarlık, Buchwald, van Millingen and Sağdıç)



Figure 42: The floor mosaic from the church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami) (From IBB Restoration https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/pantokrator-monastery)



Figure 43: The floor mosaic from the Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) (From Nicholas V. Artamonoff Collection https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/kyriotissa)



Figure 44: The exterior brick ornament from the Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/pantepoptes)



Figure 45: The exterior brick ornament from the Church of the Monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Eski İmaret Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/pantepoptes)



Figure 46: The closure slab from Pergamum (From Buchwald)



Figure 47: The lintel from Manisa (From Buchwald)



Figure 48: The alter from Manisa (From Buchwald)



Figure 49: The column capital from the Church of Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/kyriotissa)



Figure 50: The column capital from Hagios Ioannes (Hırami Ahmet Paşa Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/prodromos-constantinople)



Figure 51: The column capital from the Church of Theodore (Vefa Kilise Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/vefa)



Figure 52: The cornice piece from the Church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/pantokrator-monastery)



Figure 53: The spolia stone from the Church of the Monastery of Pantocrator (Zeyrek Cami) (From https://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/pantokrator-monastery)

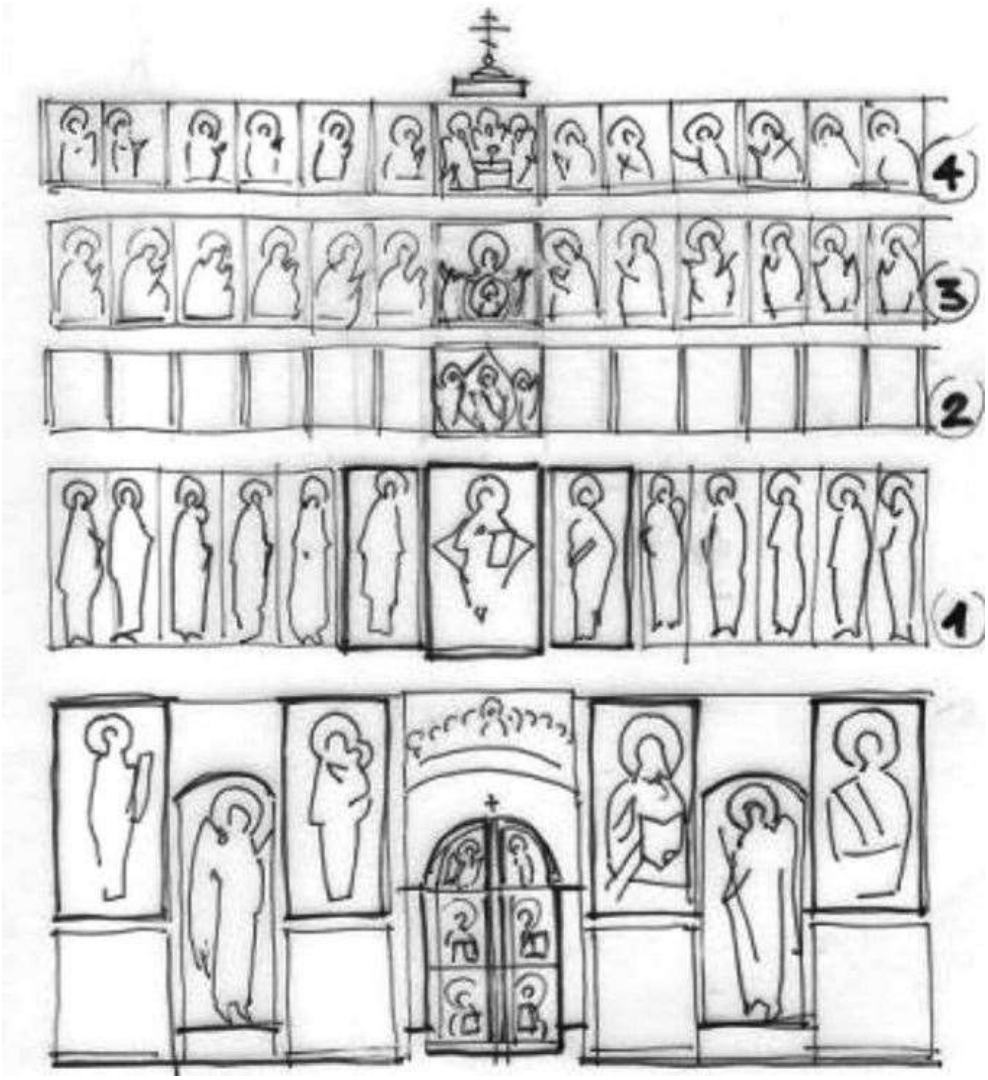
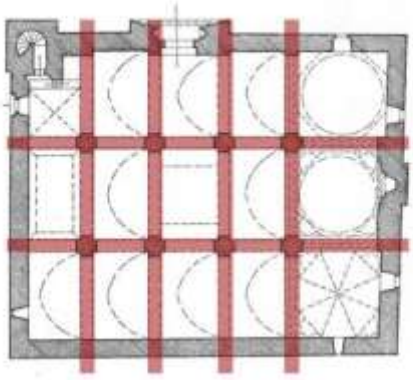
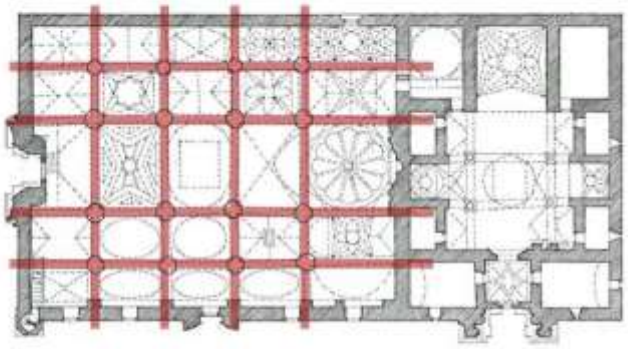


Figure 54: Drawing of the iconostasis wall showing the placement of the figures in the common composition in the Eastern Orthodox Churches (From Misijuk)



55.1. Plan of Alaeddin Mosque



55.2. Plan of Divriği Great Mosque

0 10m

Figure 55: Mosque plan diagrams showing the underlying grid system (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)

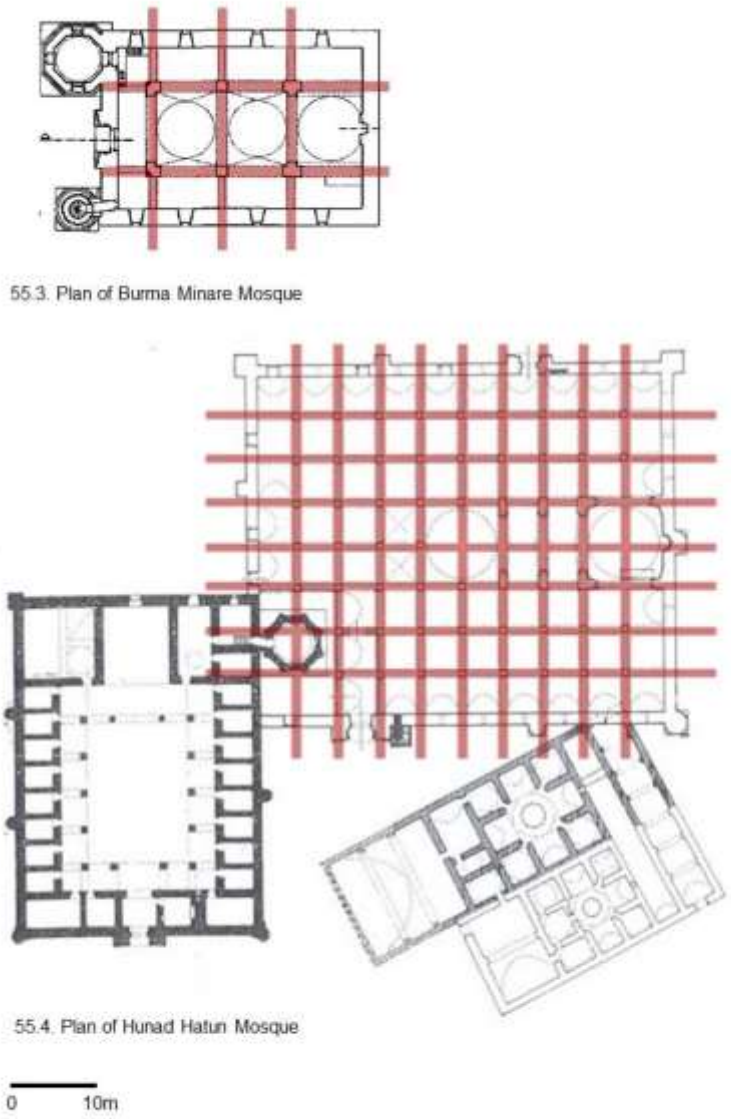
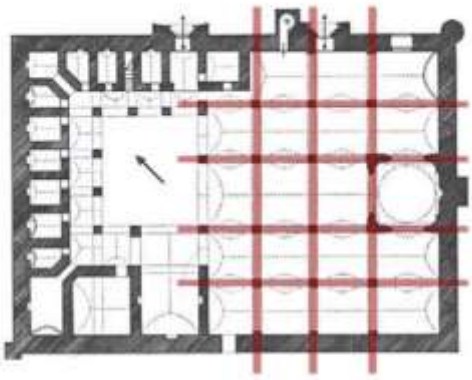
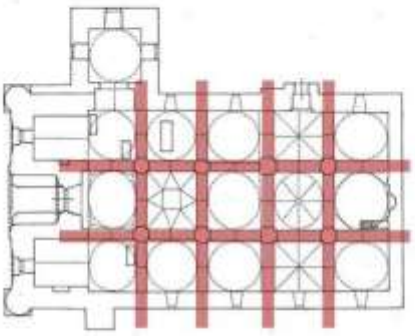


Figure 55 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams showing the underlying grid system (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



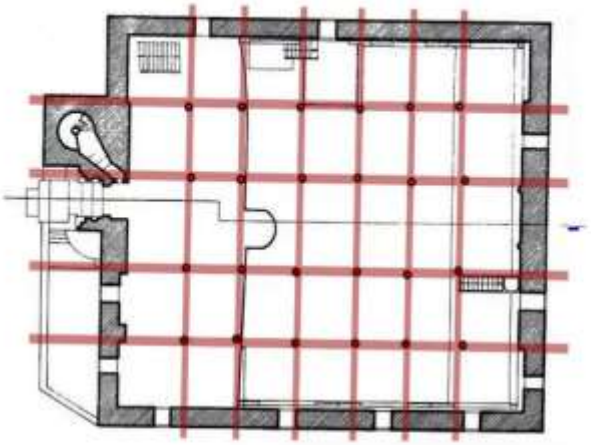
55.5. Plan of Hacı Kılıç Mosque



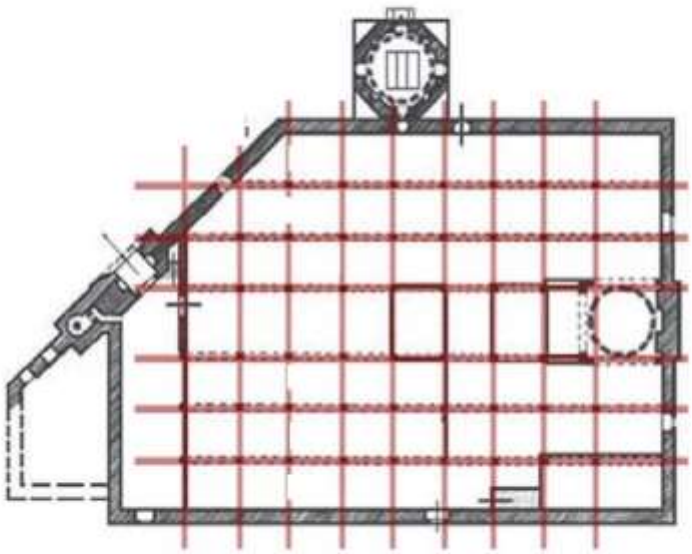
55.6. Plan of Gökmedrese Mosque

0 10m

Figure 55 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams showing the underlying grid system (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



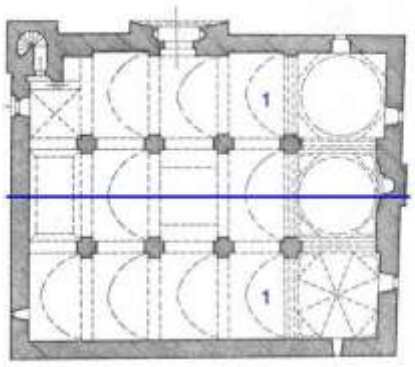
55.7. Plan of Arslanhane Mosque



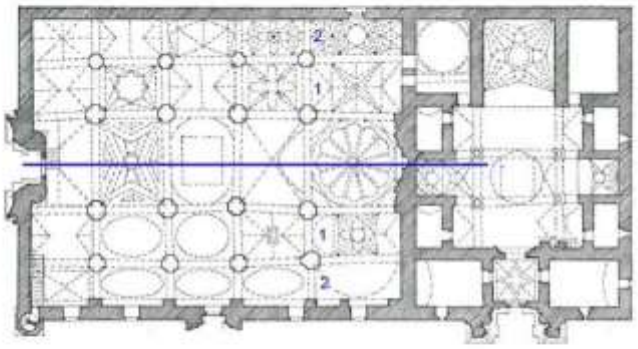
55.8. Plan of Eşrefoğlu Mosque

0 10m

Figure 55 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams showing the underlying grid system (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



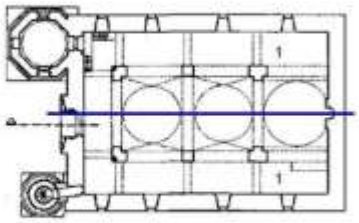
56.1. Plan of Alaeddin Mosque



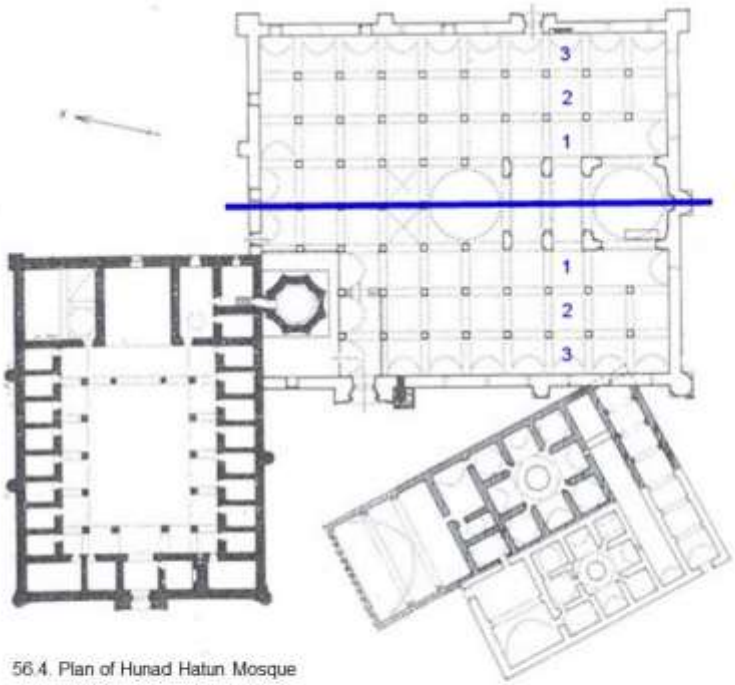
56.2. Plan of Divriği Great Mosque

0 10m

Figure 56: Mosque plan diagrams indicating the qibla axis and the symmetrical corridors (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)

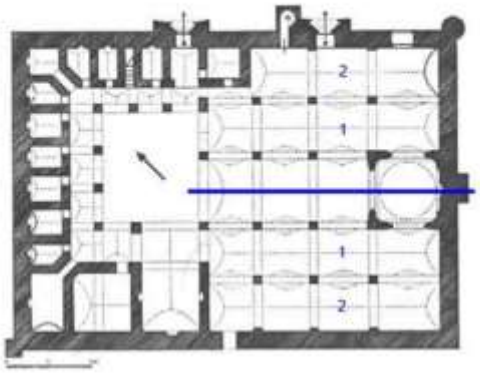


56.3. Plan of Burma Minare Mosque

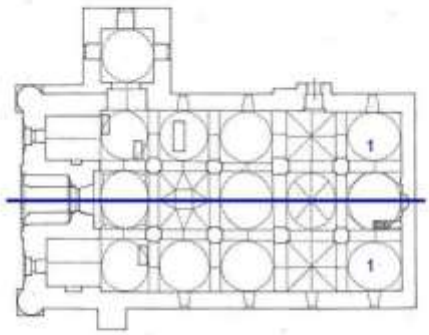


56.4. Plan of Hunad Hatun Mosque

Figure 56 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams indicating the qibla axis and the symmetrical corridors (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



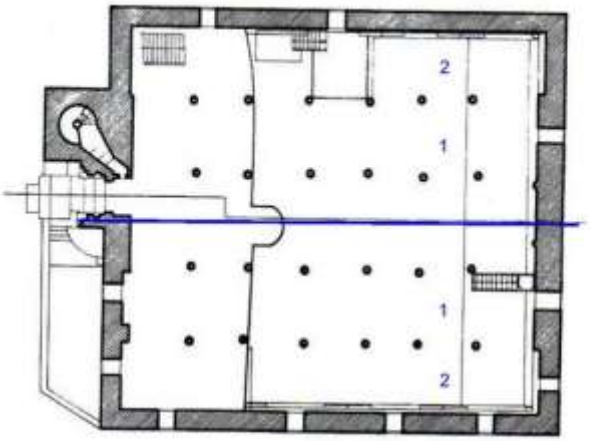
56.5. Plan of Hacı Kılıç Mosque



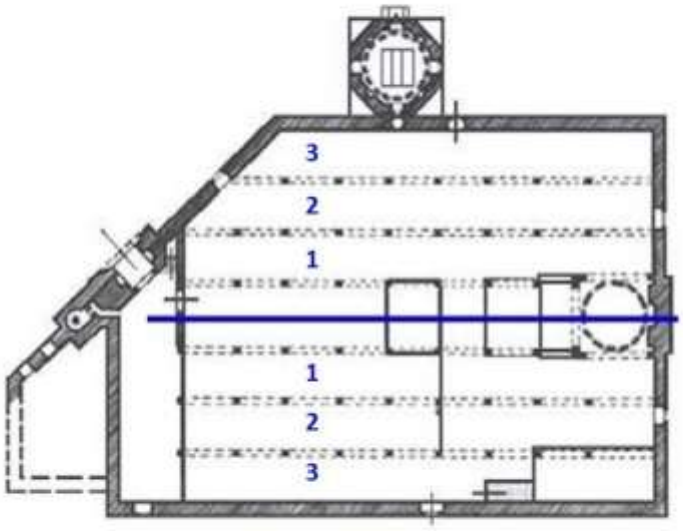
56.6. Plan of Gökmedrese Mosque

0 10m

Figure 56: Mosque plan diagrams indicating the qibla axis and the symmetrical corridors (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



56.7. Plan of Arslanhane Mosque



56.8. Plan of Eşrefoğlu Mosque

0 10m

Figure 56: Mosque plan diagrams indicating the qibla axis and the symmetrical corridors (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



Figure 57: The portal of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 58: The portal of Divriği Great Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)

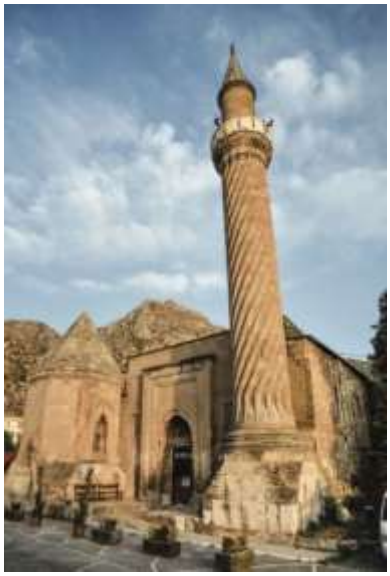


Figure 59: The portal of Burmalı Minare Mosque (From http://www.selcuklumirasi.com/architecture-detail/burmali-minare-camii-ve-turbesi)



Figure 60: The portal of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 61: The portal of Hacı Kılıç Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 62: The portal of Gökmedrese Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 63: The portal of Arslanhane Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 64: The portal of Eşrefoğlu Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 65: The mihrab of Alaeddin Mosque (From Doğan)



Figure 66: The mihrab of Divriği Great Mosque (From http://www.divrigiulucamii.com/tr/Mihrap_10.html)



Figure 67: The mihrab of Burmalı Minare Mosque (From http://www.selcuklumirasi.com/architecture-detail/burmali-minare-camii-ve-turbesi)

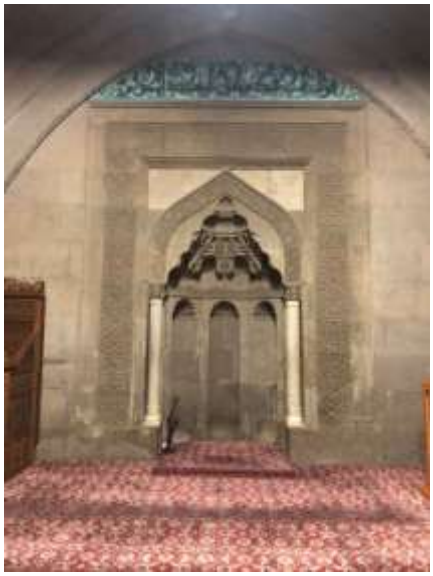


Figure 68: The mihrab of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 69: The mihrab of Hacı Kılıç Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



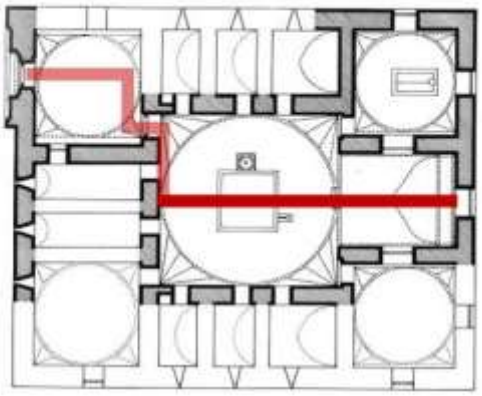
Figure 70: The mihrab of Gökmedrese Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



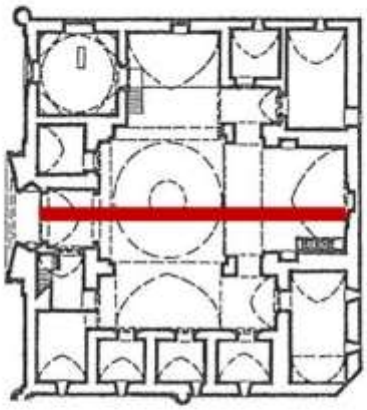
Figure 71: The mihrab of Arslanhane Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 72: The mihrab of Eşrefoğlu Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



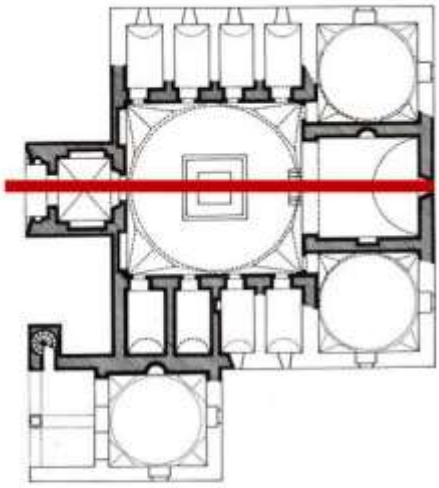
73.1. Plan of Karatay Madrasah



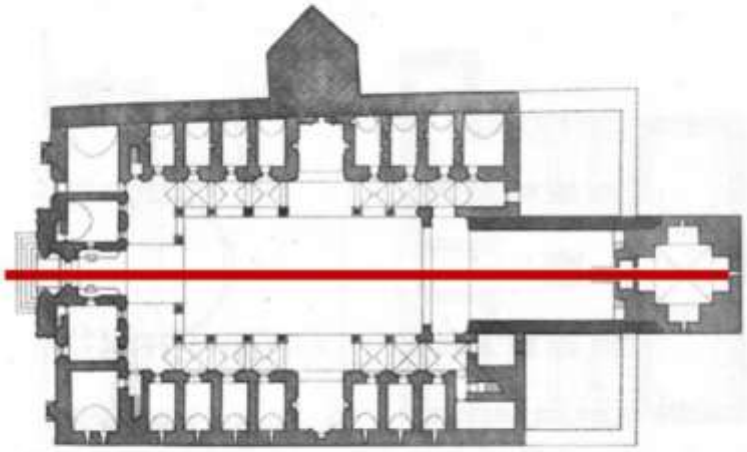
73.2. Plan of Cacabey Madrasah

0 5 m

Figure 73: Madrasah plan diagrams showing the central axis (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



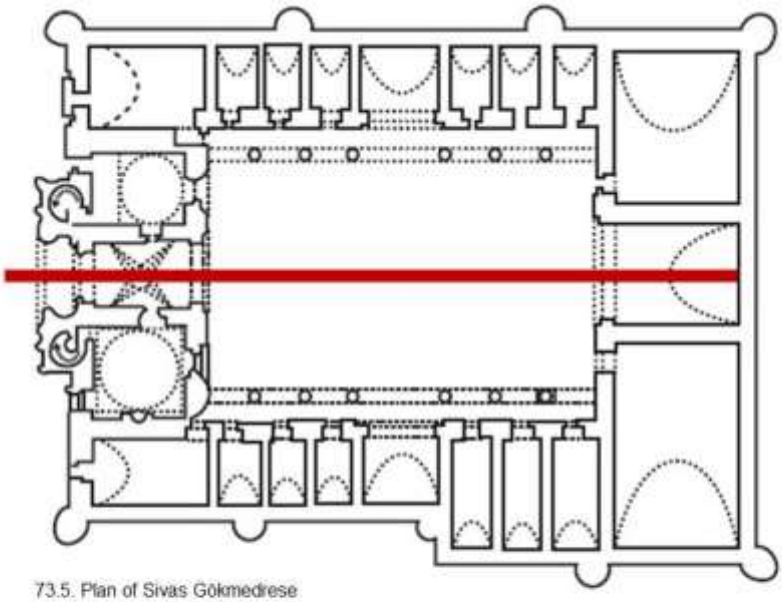
73.3. Plan of İnce Minareli Madrasah



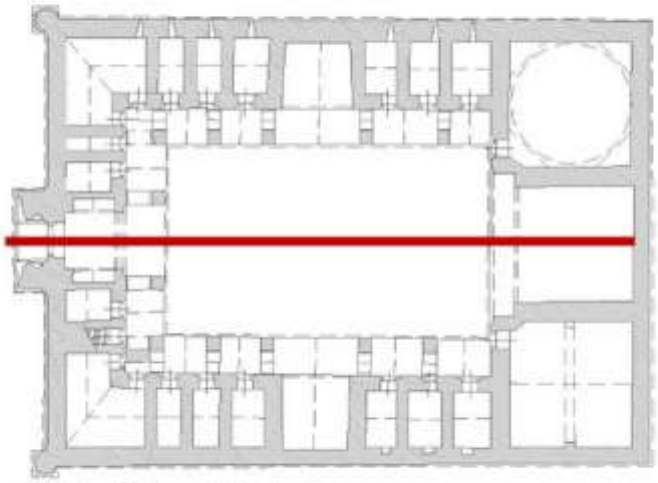
73.4. Plan of Erzurum Çifte Minareli Madrasah

0 5 m

Figure 73 (continued): Madrasah plan diagrams showing the central axis (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



73.5. Plan of Sivas Gökmedrese



73.6. Plan of Sahabiye Madrasah

0 5 m

Figure 73 (continued): Madrasah plan diagrams showing the central axis (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)

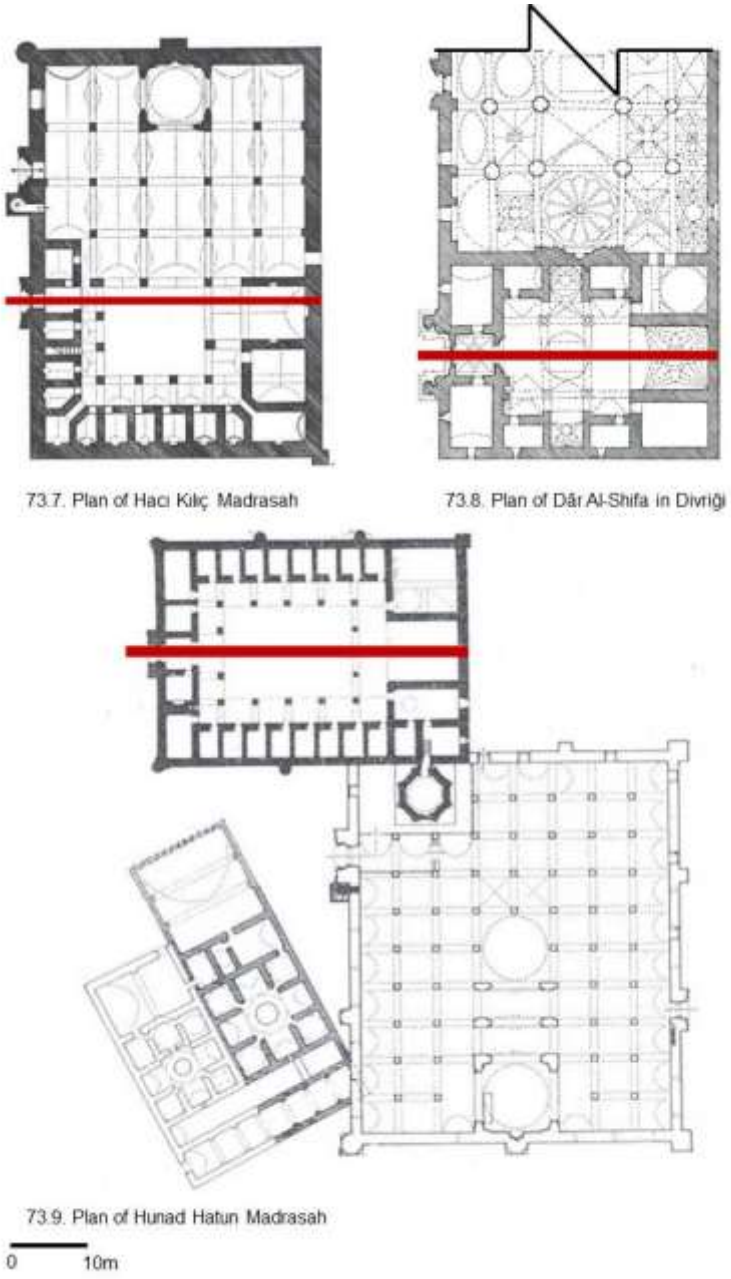


Figure 73 (continued): Madrasah plan diagrams showing the central axis (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)

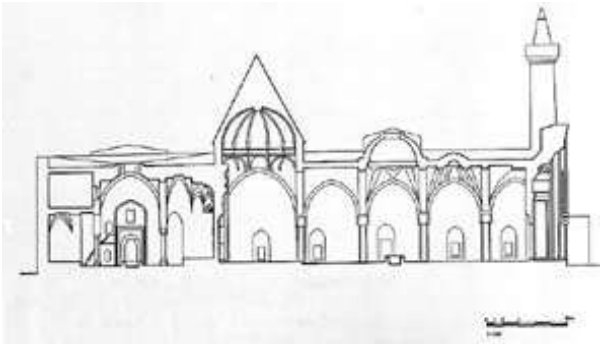


Figure 74: Section of Divriği Great Mosque showing the height arrangement (From İpekoğlu and Hamamcıoğlu)

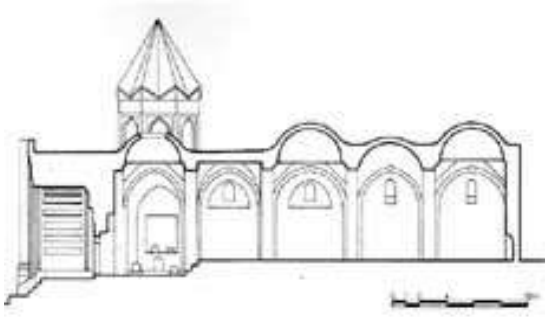


Figure 75: Section of Gökmedrese Mosque showing the height arrangement (From İpekoğlu and Hamamcıoğlu)

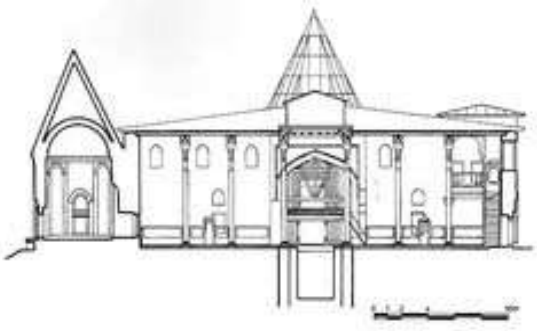


Figure 76: Section of Eşrefoğlu Mosque showing the height arrangement (From İpekoğlu and Hamamcıoğlu)

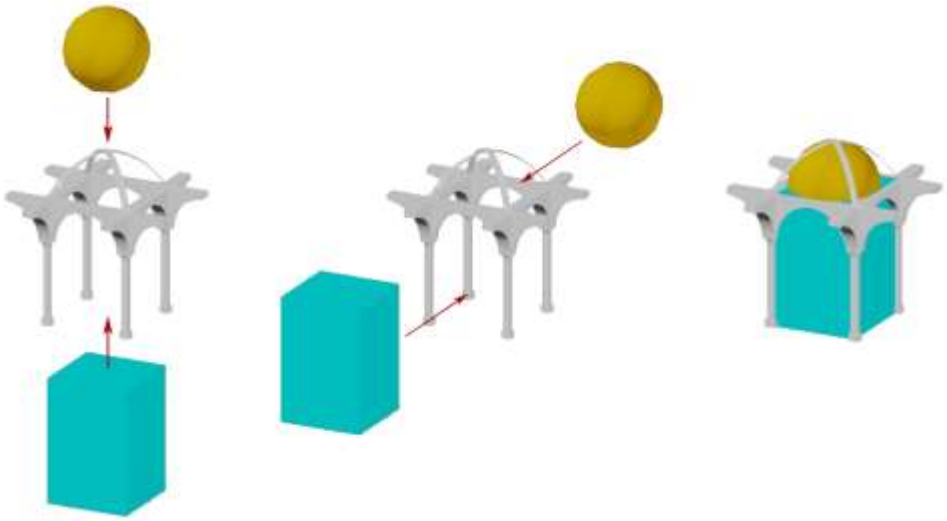


Figure 77: Three-dimensional diagrams showing the vertical arrangement of the mosque units (Drawn by the author)



Figure 78: The exterior walls and portal of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 79: The exterior walls and portal of Divriği Great Mosque (From Sivas İl Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü)



Figure 80: The exterior walls of Burmalı Minare Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 81: The exterior walls and portal of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 82: The exterior walls and portal of Hacı Kılıç Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 83: The exterior walls and portal of Gökmedrese Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 84: The exterior walls and portal of Arslanhane Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 85: The exterior walls and portal of Eşrefoğlu Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 86: The exterior walls and portal of Karatay Madrasah (From The Municipality Archive)



Figure 87: The exterior walls and portal of Cacabey Madrasah (From Kırşehir İl Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü)



Figure 88: The exterior walls and portal of Çifte Minareli Madrasah in Erzurum (From https://archnet.org/sites/1947/media_contents/128020)



Figure 89: The exterior walls and portal of Çifte Minareli Madrasah in Sivas (From https://archnet.org/sites/2083)



Figure 90: The exterior walls and portal of Gökmedrese in Sivas (From https://archnet.org/sites/2084/)



Figure 91: The exterior walls of Sahabiye Madrasah (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 92: The exterior walls and portal of Hacı Kılıç Madrasah (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 93: The exterior walls and portal of Hunad Hatun Madrasah (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 94: The portal of Dār al-Shifā of Divriği Great Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)

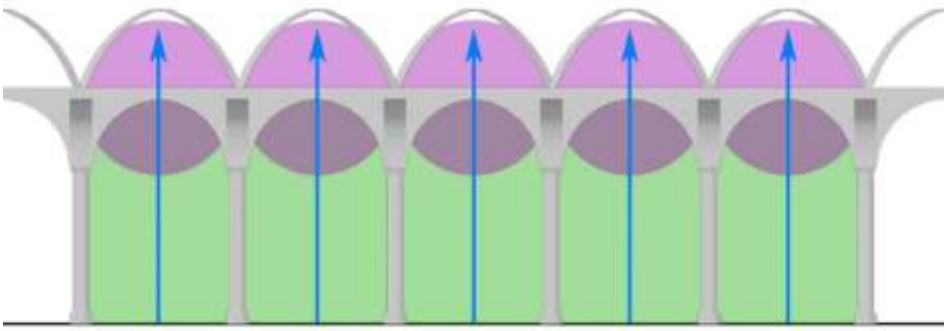


Figure 95: Diagram showing the vertical axis in quadrilateral mosque units. Vertical axis are emphasized by the volumetric arrangement (Drawn by the author)

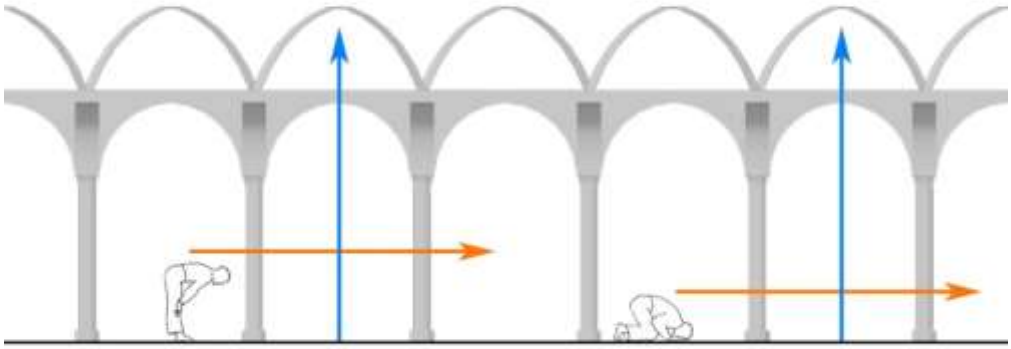


Figure 96: Diagram showing the intersection horizontal and vertical axes during the performing of Salât (Drawn by the author)

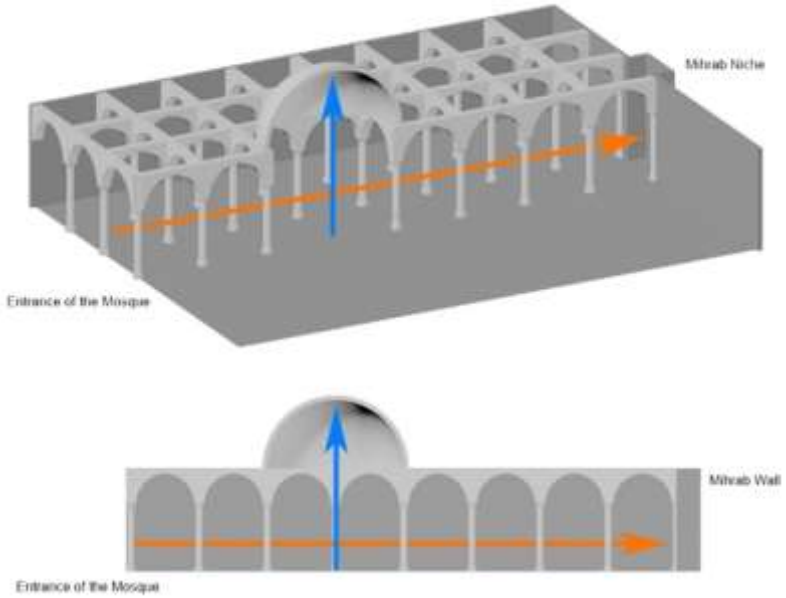


Figure 97: Three-dimensional mosque diagrams indicating the intersection of two axes in the central corridor (Drawn by the author)

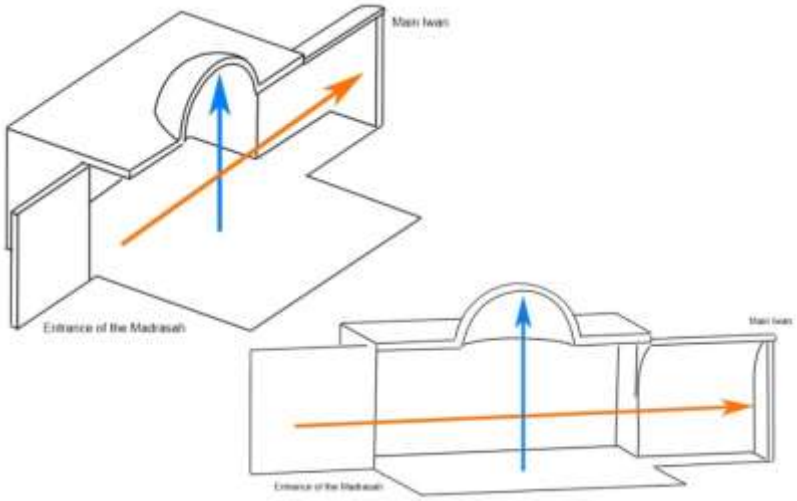
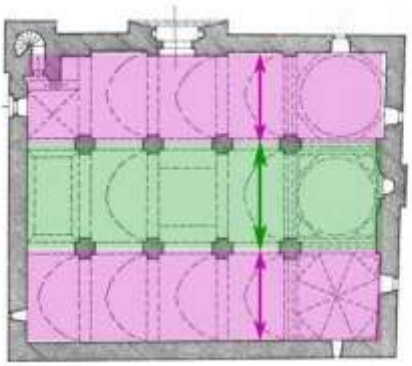
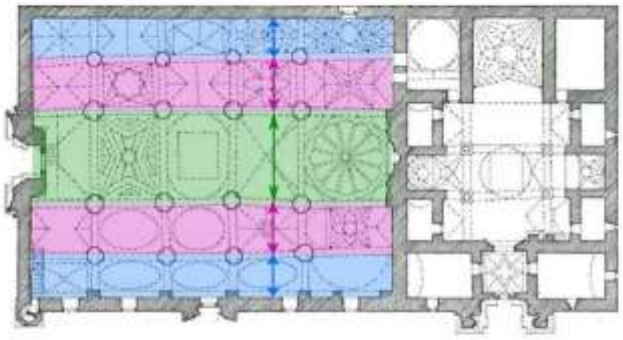


Figure 98: Three-dimensional madrasah diagrams indicating the intersection of two axes in the courtyard. Closed courtyard type is employed. (Drawn by the author)



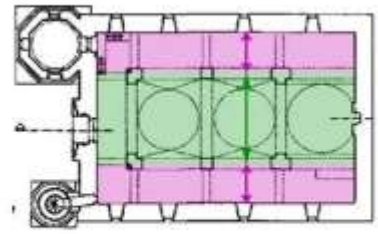
99.1. Plan of Alaeddin Mosque



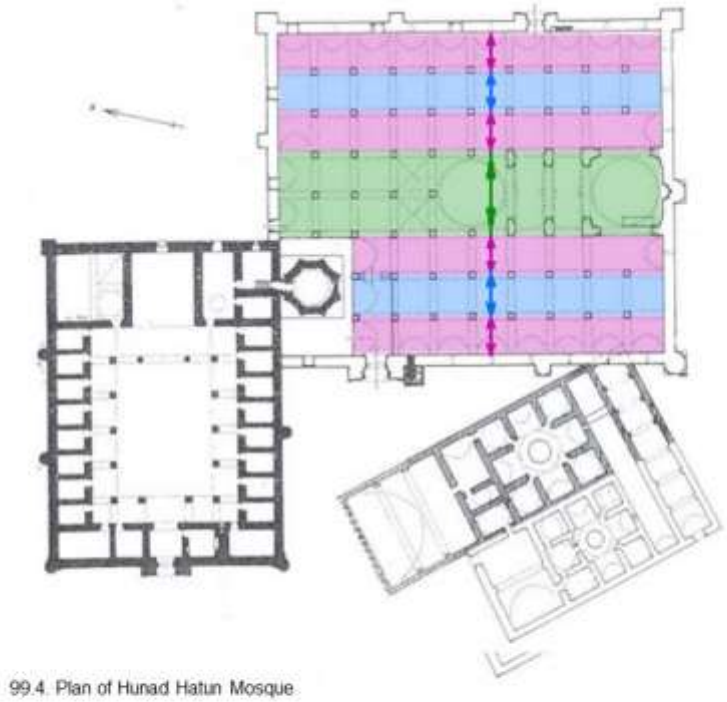
99.2. Plan of Divriği Great Mosque

0 10m

Figure 99: Mosque plan diagrams indicating the hierarchy of central corridor (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



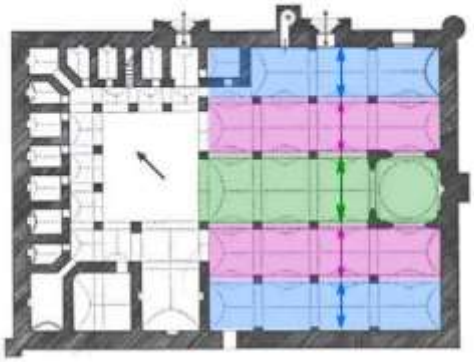
99.3. Plan of Burma Minare Mosque



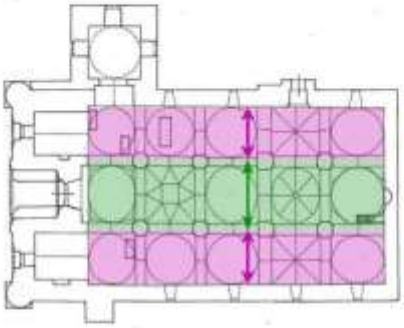
99.4. Plan of Hunad Hatun Mosque

0 10m

Figure 99 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams indicating the hierarchy of central corridor (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



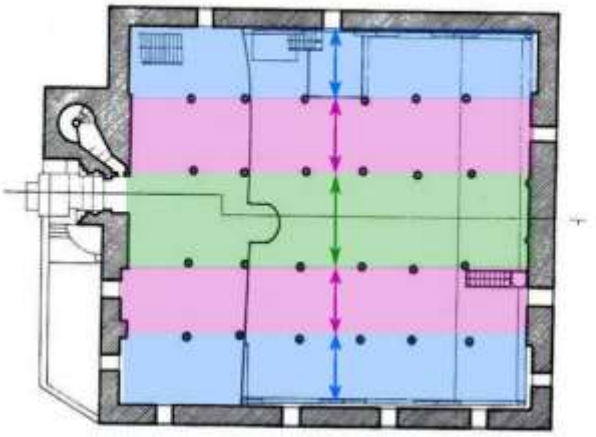
99.5. Plan of Hacı Kılıç Mosque



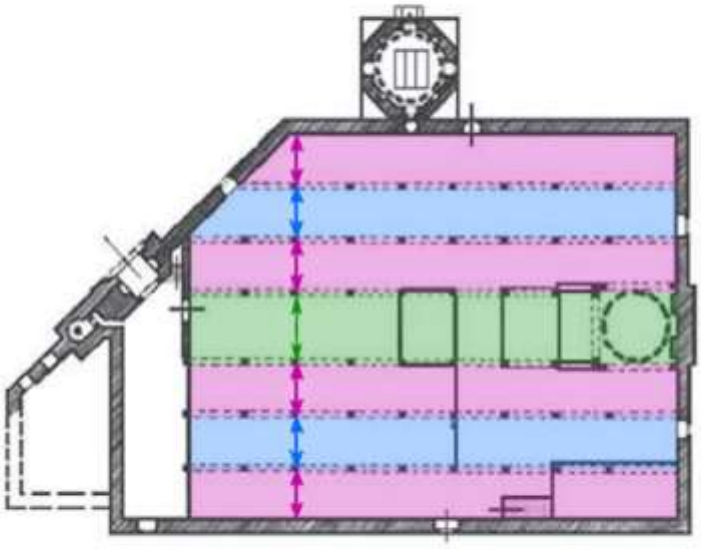
99.6. Plan of Gökmedrese Mosque

0 10m

Figure 99 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams indicating the hierarchy of central corridor (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



99.7. Plan of Arslanhane Mosque



99.8. Plan of Eşrefoğlu Mosque

0 10m

Figure 99 (continued): Mosque plan diagrams indicating the hierarchy of central corridor (From https://okuryazarim.com/anadolu-selcuklu-donemi-mimari-planlari/, diagrams drawn by the author)



Figure 100: The lantern opening of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 101: The central dome of Burmalı Minare Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 102: The lantern dome of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 103: The central dome of Hacı Kılıç Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 104: The lantern dome of Gökmedrese Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 105: The lantern dome of Eşrefoğlu Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 106: The central dome of Karatay Madrasah (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 107: The central dome of İnce Minareli Madrasah (From The Municipality Archive)

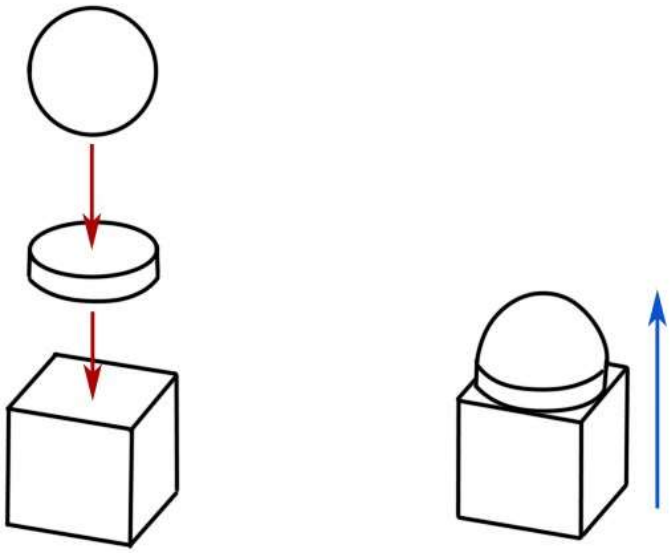


Figure 108: Three-dimensional diagram of stereometric forms of the central courtyard of closed courtyard type madrasahs. Vertical axis is indicated by blue (Diagram drawn by the author)



Figure 109: The maqsura dome of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 110: The maqsura dome of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 111: The maqsura dome of Gökmedrese Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 112: The minbar of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 113: The minbar of Divriği Great Mosque (From http://www.divrigiulucamii.com/tr/Minber_9.html)



Figure 114: The minbar of Burma Minareli Mosque (From http://www.selcuklumirasi.com/architecture-detail/burmali-minare-camii-ve-turbesi)



Figure 115: The minbar of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 116: The minbar of Hacı Kılıç Mosque (From Mustafa Cambaz's archive)



Figure 117: The minbar of Arslanhane Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 118: The minbar of Eşrefoğlu Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 119: The geometric pattern on the portal of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 120: The geometric pattern on the mihrab niche of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)

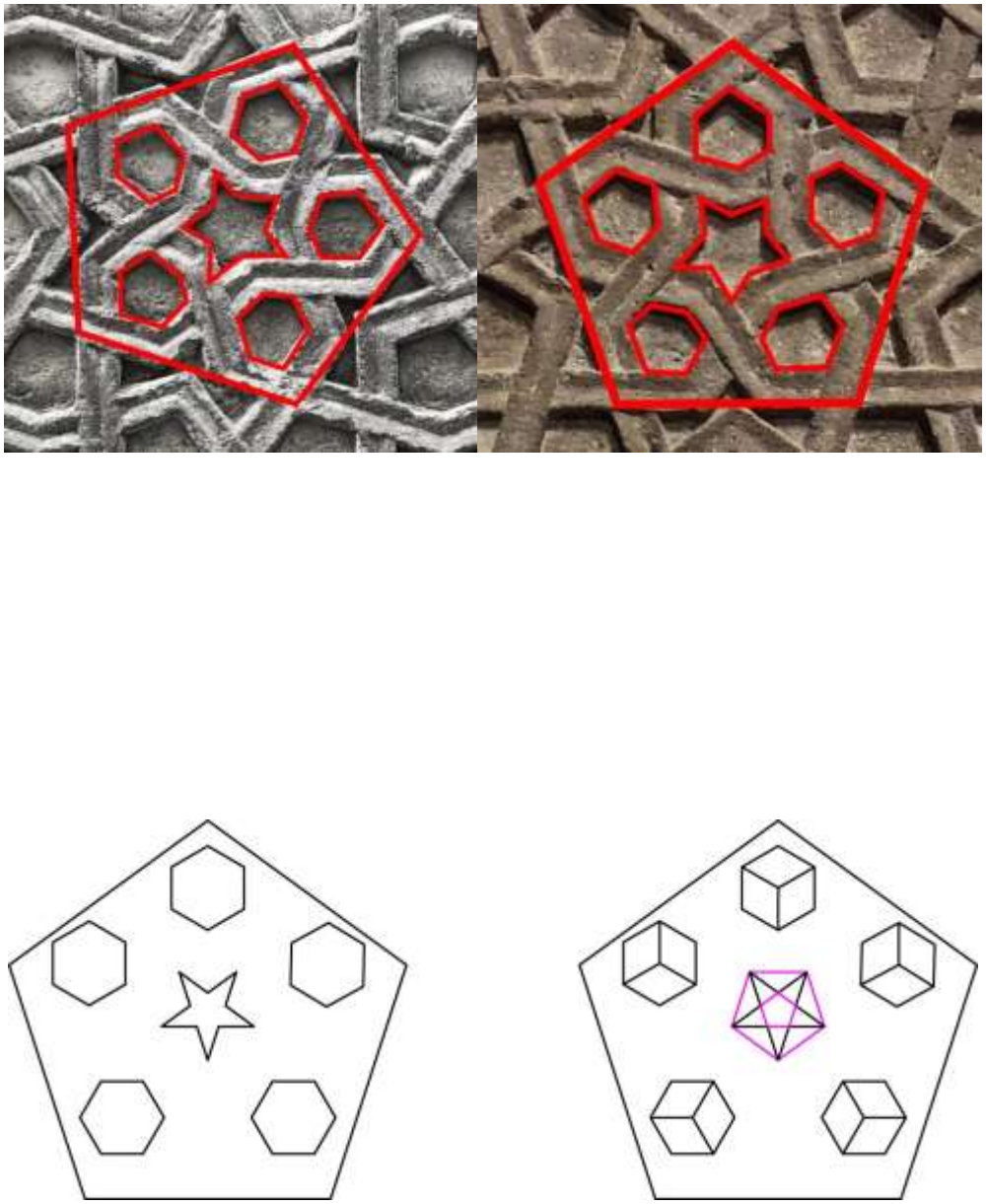


Figure 121: Drawing and examination of the geometric pattern on the portal and mihrab niche of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Drawn by the author)

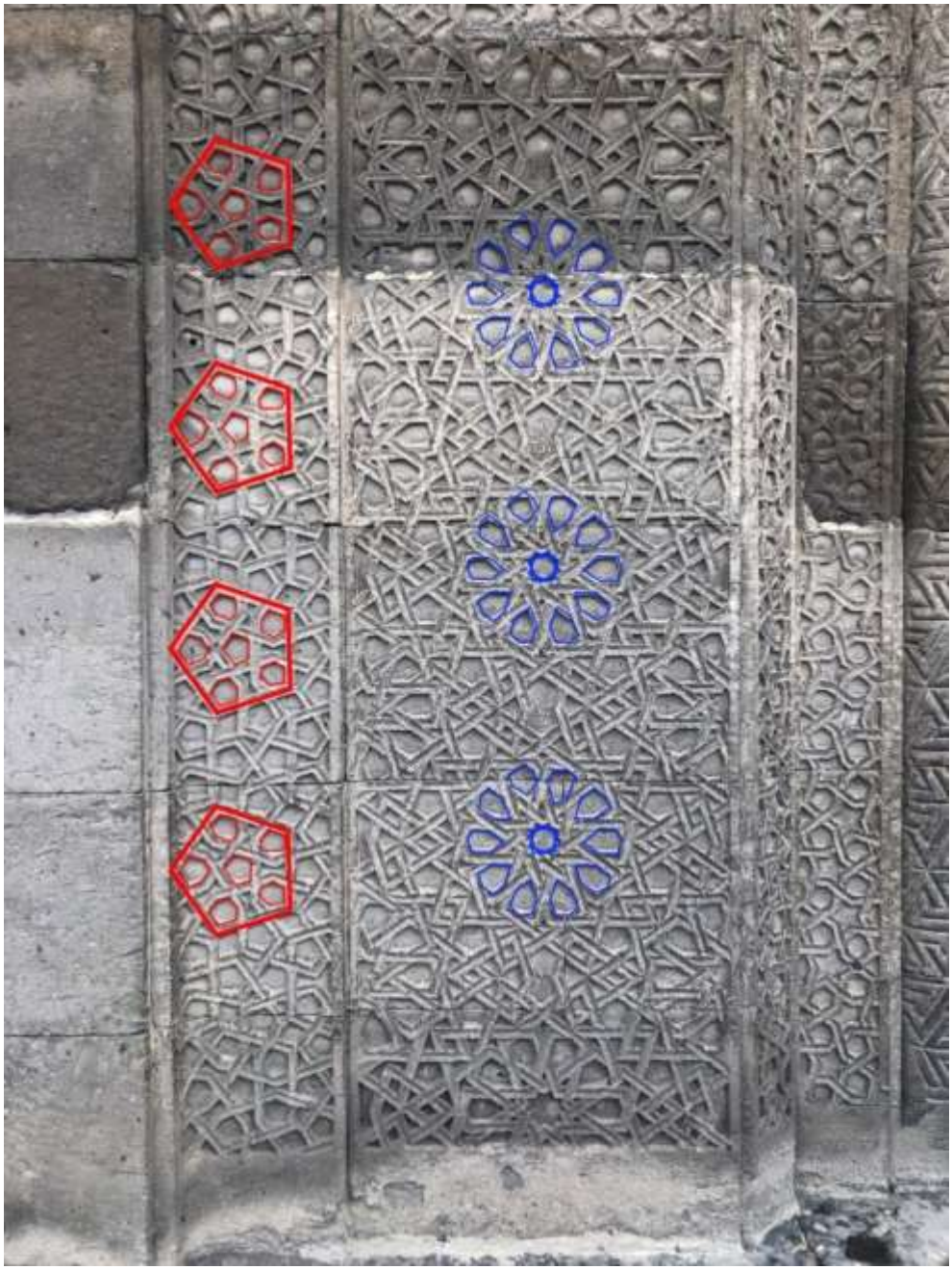


Figure 122: The geometric patterns on the second portal of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)

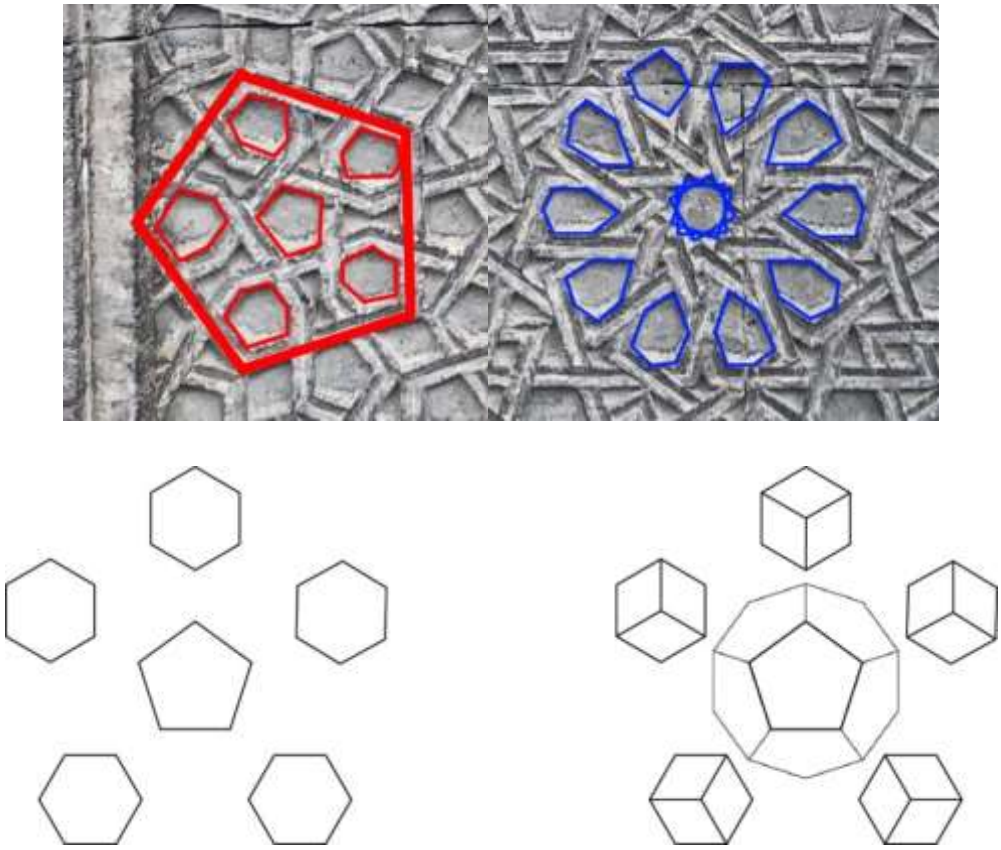


Figure 123: Drawing and examination of the first geometric pattern on the second portal of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Drawn by the author)

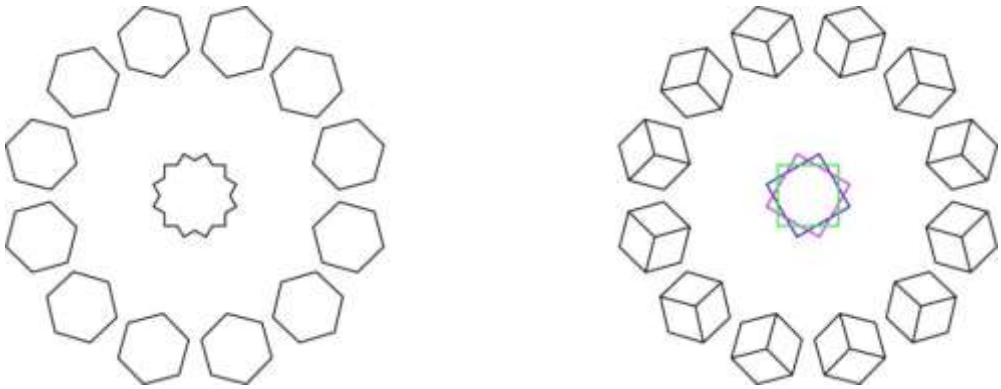


Figure 124: Drawing and examination of the second geometric pattern on the second portal of Hunad Hatun Mosque (Drawn by the author)

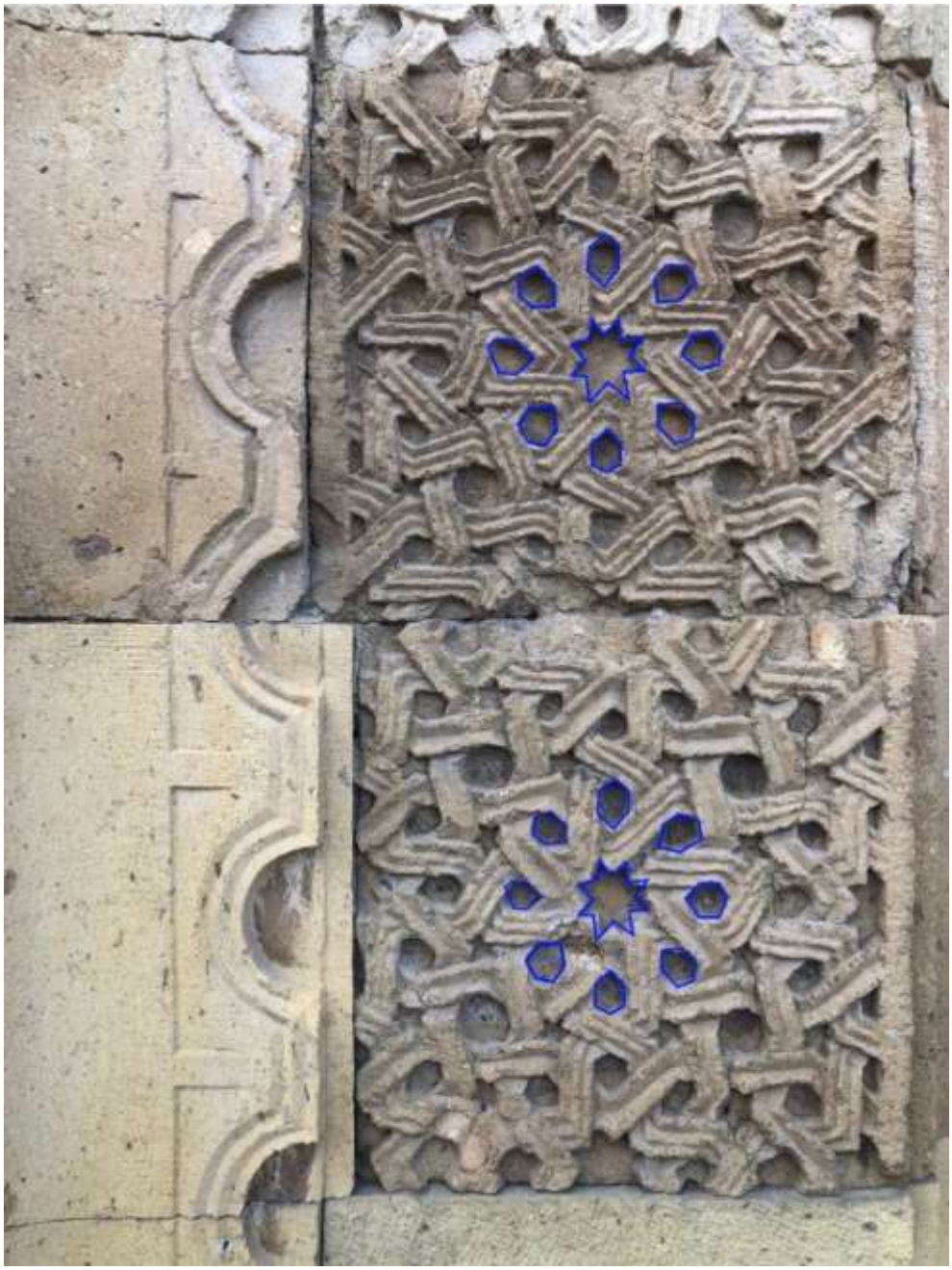


Figure 125: The geometric patterns on the portal of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



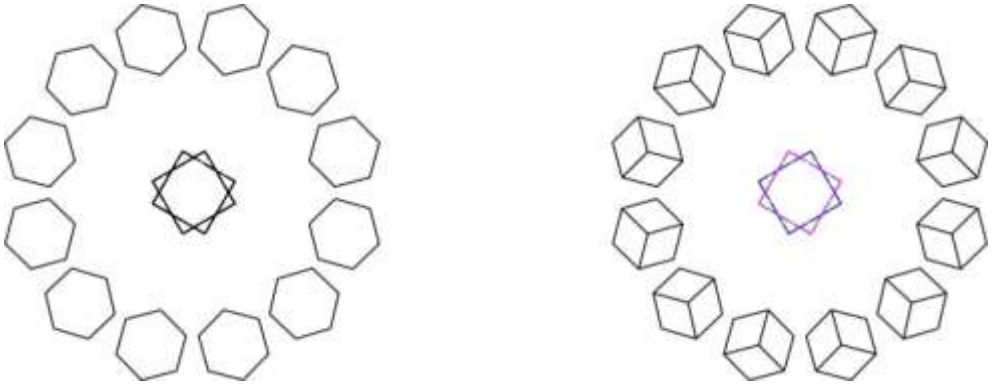


Figure 126: Drawing and examination of the geometric pattern on the portal of Alaeddin Mosque (Drawn by the author)



Figure 127: The geometric patterns on the mihrab niche of Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)

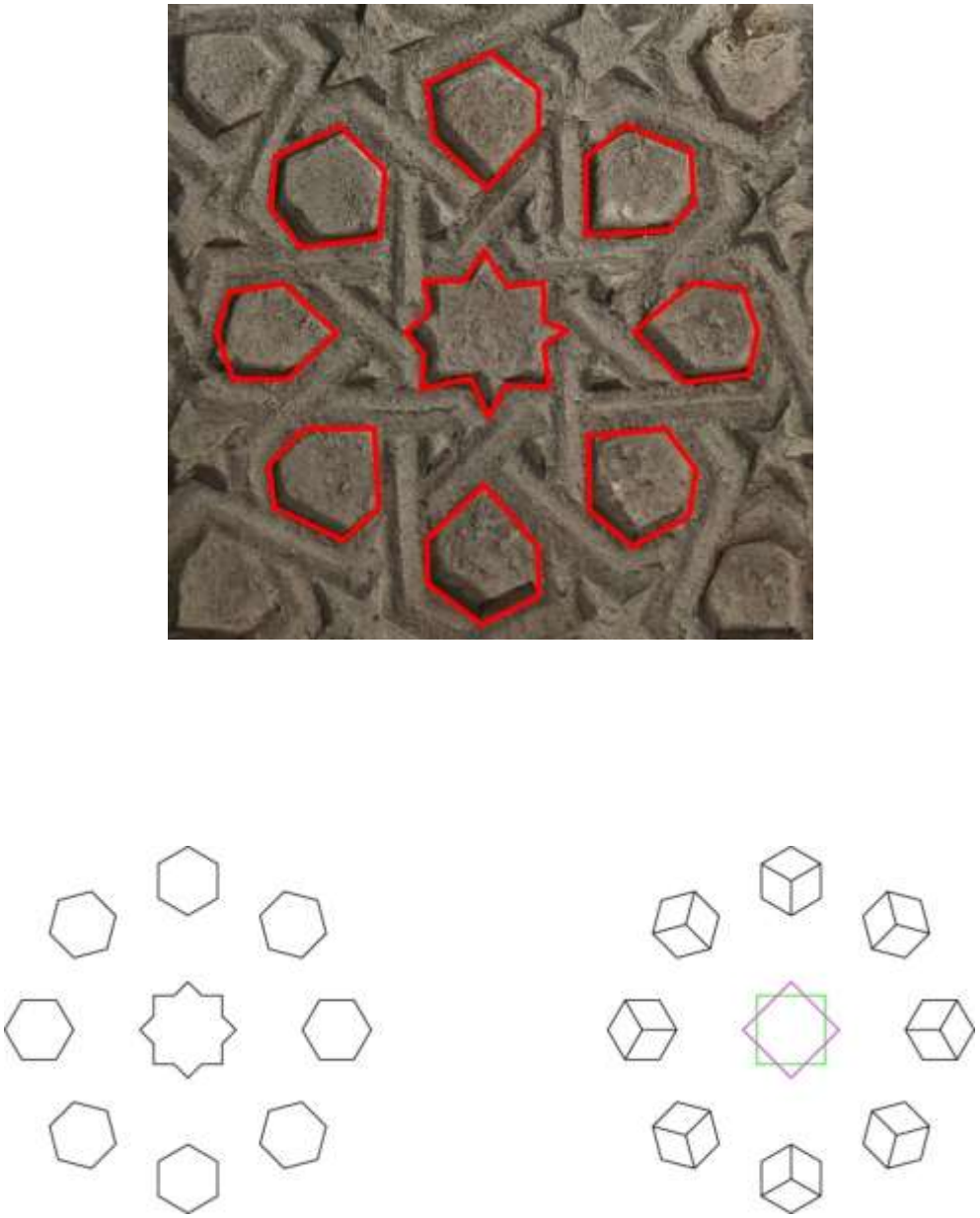


Figure 128: Drawing and examination of the geometric pattern on the mihrab niche of Alaeddin Mosque (Drawn by the author)

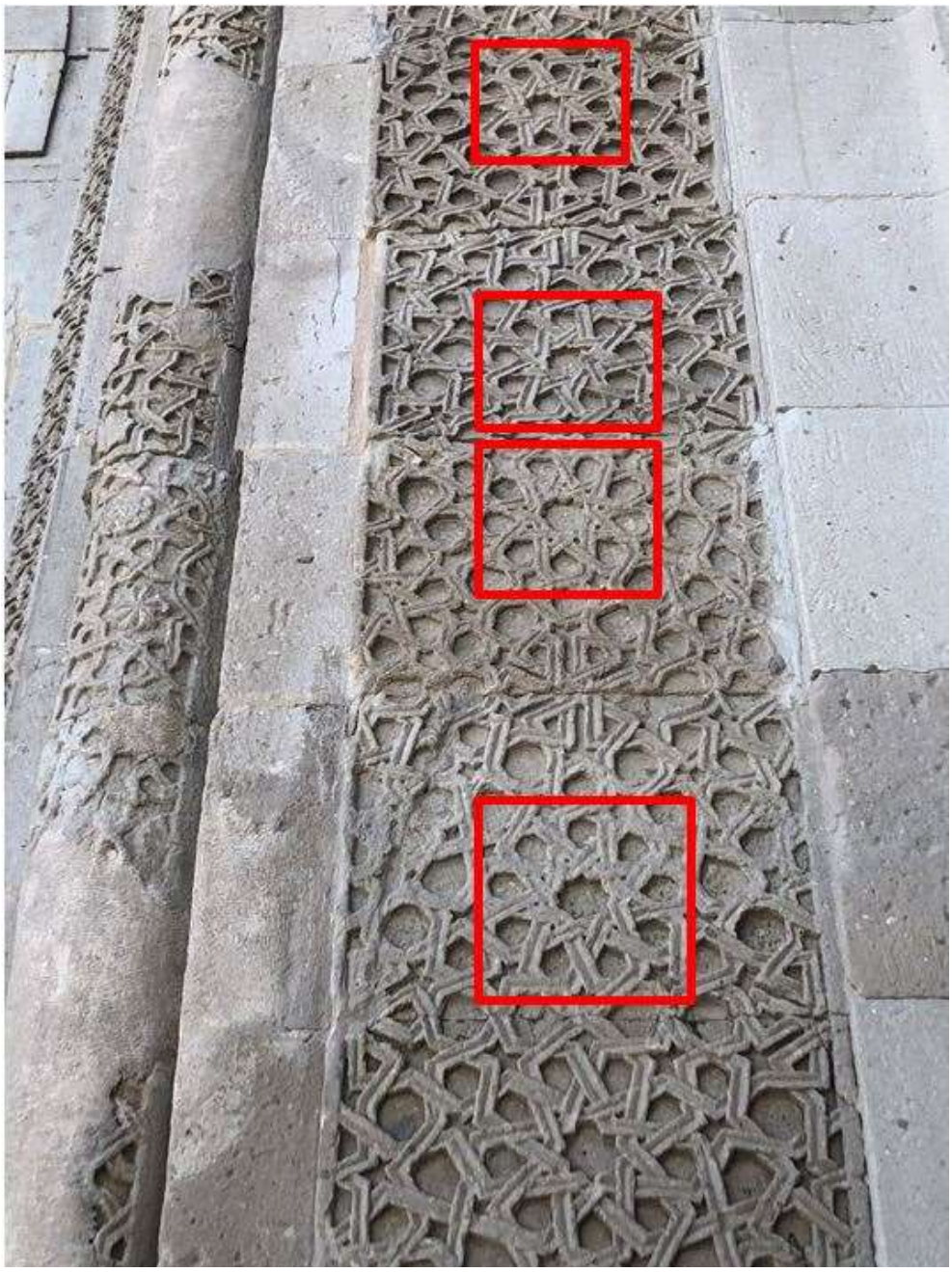


Figure 129: The geometric patterns on the façade decoration of Gökmedrese Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 130: The geometric pattern on the portal of Divriği Great Mosque in Sivas (Photograph taken by the author)

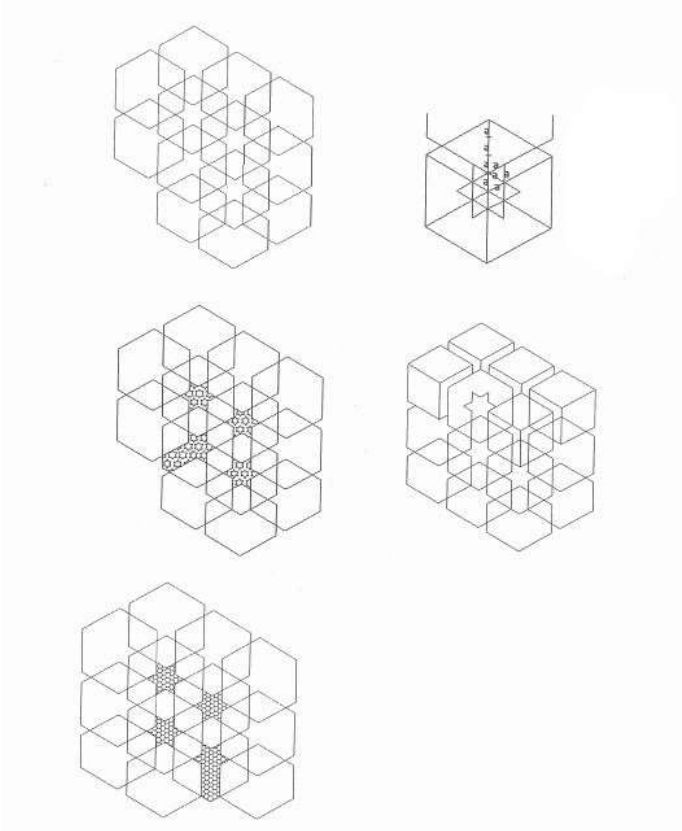


Figure 131: Drawing and examination of the geometric pattern on the portal of Divriği Great Mosque in Sivas (From Peker)

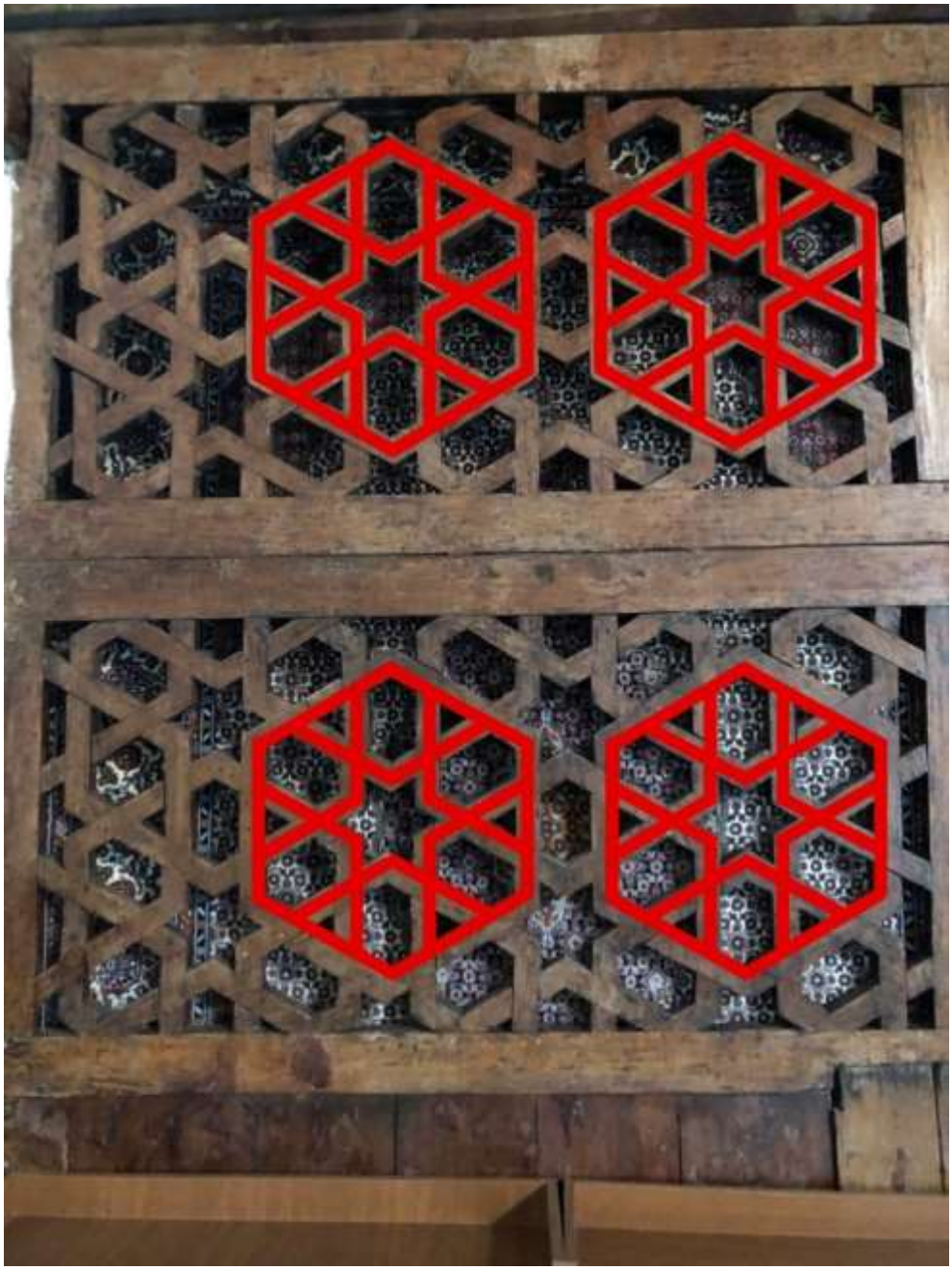


Figure 132: The geometric pattern on the wooden work of Eşrefoğlu Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 133: The muqarnas decoration from Alaeddin Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 134: The muqarnas decoration from Burma Minareli Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 135: The muqarnas decoration from Hunad Hatun Mosque
(Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 136: The muqarnas decoration from Hacı Kılıç Mosque
(Photograph taken by the author)

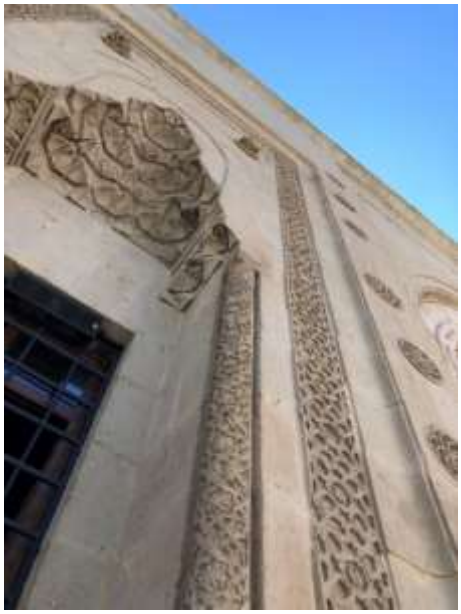


Figure 137: The muqarnas decoration from Gökmedrese Mosque
(Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 138: The muqarnas decoration from Arslanhane Mosque
(Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 139: The muqarnas decoration from Eşrefoğlu Mosque
(Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 140: The muqarnas decoration from Karatay Madrasah
(Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 141: The bird figures on the portal of Divriği Great Mosque (From Özkul)



Figure 142: The tree figure on the portal of Divriği Great Mosque (Photograph taken by the author)



Figure 143: The tree figures from Gökmedrese in Sivas (From Özkul)



Figure 144: The tree figures from Çifte Minareli Madrasah in Erzurum (From SALT Archive)

B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Özellikle antik dönem ve ortaçağ mimarileri üzerine yapılan çalışmaların belirsizliğe dayanan belli bir zorluğu beraberinde getirdikleri söylenebilir. Sembolizme odaklanan çalışmalarda bu belirsizliğin ve dolayısıyla zorluğun daha da arttığını söylemek mümkündür. Bunun arkasında, hem yapıların arkasındaki tasarım yaklaşımlarını hem de bu yapıların kullanıcılar tarafından nasıl algılandığını kesin olarak bilmemek yatmaktadır. Ortaçağ gibi günümüze uzak sayılabilecek bir geçmişe ait yapılara atfedilen anlamları araştırmak sadece mimari analizlere dayanan çalışmalardan daha fazlasını gerektirmektedir. Bu tarz araştırmalar için disiplinler arası yaklaşımların gerekliliği savunulabilir. Mimari yaklaşımın başka beşeri bilimler ile harmanlandığı çalışmalar, geçmişe ait tasarım anlayışları hakkında daha yüksek olasılıklı çıkarımlar yapmayı mümkün kılmaktadır.

Ayrıca ortaçağın genel bir özelliği olarak toplumların politika, ekonomi ve kültürleri din ile iç içe geçmiş durumdadır. Bu dönemde Hristiyanlık ve İslam, özellikle Orta Doğu ve Doğu Akdeniz'de, egemen inançlar konumundadır. Çoğunlukla birbirinden ayrı olarak düşünülen bu iki dine etki etmiş ortak etmenlerin izi sürülebilir. Bunlar arasında Yeni Eflâtunculuk akımı ön plana çıkmaktadır. Yeni Eflâtuncu etkinin yoğunluğu özellikle 11 ve 12. Yüzyıllarda Bizans İmparatorluğunda; 13. Yüzyıl başıyla ise Anadolu Selçuklularında artmıştır. Bu üç yüzyıl boyunca mimari yapılar da dâhil olmak üzere her iki kültürün sanatsal üretimleri, yüzyıllar boyunca Yeni Eflâtuncu düşünce ile beslenmiş dinlerinin birer yansıması olarak görülebilir. Buna dayanarak iki kültürün bu dönemde üretmiş oldukları yapılardaki Yeni Eflâtuncu yansımaların araştırılması, Ortodoks

Hristiyanlık ve İslam'daki Yeni Eflâtuncu etkiyi göstermenin bir yöntemidir. Aynı şekilde bu iki kültürde ve dinde Yeni Eflâtuncu etkilerin araştırılması da dönemin yapılarındaki sembolik anlam ve dönemin tasarım anlayışı üzerine açıklamalar getirmek için önemlidir. Bu çalışma, Hristiyanlık ve İslam dinlerini besleyen önemli bir unsur olarak Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un Bizans ve Selçuk mimarilerinde ortak bir tasarım aracı olarak kullanılıp kullanılmadığı sorunsalı üzerine kurulmuştur. Bu sorunun cevabını aramak için yapı örneklerinin planları, hacimsel ve mekânsal karakterleri ve bezemeleri üzerinde yapılan çoğunlukla geometrik inceleme ve analizlere ek olarak hem Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncenin temelleri hem de bu düşüncenin her iki dindeki yansımaları üzerine felsefi, kültürel ve tarihsel tartışmalara yer verilmiştir. Bu yaklaşımın temeli olarak Yeni Eflâtuncu ontolojiden türetilmiş olan üç kavram, "hiyerarşi, ikilik ve birlik," kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada bu üç kavramın ontolojik temelden mimari tasarıma dönüşümü tartışılmış ve yine bu üç kavram üzerinden mimari incelemeler yapılmıştır. Seçilmiş olan yapı örneklerinde bu üç kavramın yansımaları aranmıştır. Ayrıca bu yansımalar üzerinden iki mimari geleneğin tasarım anlayışları ve yapıları karşılaştırılarak ortak ve farklı yönler gösterilmiştir. Burada hedef, etkileşimleri ve ortak temelleri çoğunlukla yok sayan tek yönlü ve doğrusal tarih anlatımlarının aksine kültürel ve mimari etkileşimleri ön plana çıkaran bir anlatı oluşturmaktır. Ek olarak, gerek Orta Doğu ve Doğu Akdeniz'in bir parçası olarak Anadolu kültürünün gerekse de hem Bizans hem de Selçuklu mimarilerinin Avrupa merkezli ana akım anlatı içinde ötekileştirilmesi ve marjinalize edilmesine karşılık daha kapsayıcı ve bütünleyici bir anlatı amaçlanmıştır.

Felsefe, teoloji, kültürel çalışmalar ve mimarinin harmanlandığı bu çalışmada önce Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncenin temel özellikleri, türetilen üç kavram ve bu ontolojik kavramların mikro evren anlayışı ve geometri ile

mimari tasarım kavramlarına dönüşümü tartışılmıştır. Daha sonra Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un Bizans ve Selçuklu mimarilerindeki yansımalarını araştıran mimari analizler; felsefi, kültürel ve tarihsel bağlamları ve dini ayin ve ibadetlerle olan ilişkileri ile ele alınmıştır. Çalışmanın sonuç kısmında ise bu iki mimari geleneğin ürünleri olan kilise ve cami yapı tipleri; mekân oluşumları ve sembolik anlamları üzerinden karşılaştırılmıştır.

Yeni Eflâtunculuk'u Antik Yunan filozofları Platon (Eflâtun) ve Aristoteles'in düşüncelerinin harmanlanması ile milattan sonra 3. Yüzyılda İskenderiye'de oluşturulmuş bir felsefi düşünce sistemi olarak tanımlamak mümkündür. Temelde Tanrı, yaratılış, doğa ve insan gibi konular üzerine düşüncelerden ve doktrinlerden oluşan Yeni Eflâtunculuk, fizik ve metafizik alanlarını harmanlayarak evreni anlamaya çalışmak üzerine kurulmuştur denilebilir. Uzmanlar bu düşünce sisteminin Plotinus'un çalışmaları ile kurulduğu konusunda çoğunlukla hemfikirdir. Plotinus'un en önemli eseri olan *Enneads'*ın, yukarıda belirtilen konularda Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncenin temellerini oluşturduğu kabul edilmektedir. Ek olarak uzmanlar başka önemli Yeni Eflâtuncu düşünürler de olduğunu işaret eder. Bu isimlerin başında Enneads'ın derleyicisi olarak kabul edilen Porphyry ve eserlerinin Hristiyan ve İslam dünyalarında çok daha fazla etkiye sahip olduğu kabul edilen Proclus gösterilebilir.

Genel olarak Yeni Eflâtunculuk, her iki dini de batını açıdan beslemiş olarak kabul edilmektedir. Konunun uzmanlarına göre bu etki o kadar derindir ki ilerleyen yüzyıllarda, örneğin bu çalışmada konu edilen 11,12 ve 13. Yüzyıllar gibi, bu etkinin izleri günlük yaşamda, kültürde ve sanatsal ve mimari üretimde çoğunlukla Yeni Eflâtuncu kökenlerinden habersiz olarak devam etmiştir. Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un Tanrı-doğa-insan üçgeninde her iki dinde de önemli etkilerinin bulunması, insanın önemli sanatsal

üretimlerinden olan mimari yapıların üretilmesi ve anlamlandırılmasında da yüksek ihtimalle rol oynamıştır. Bu sebeple mimari analizlerden önce Yeni Eflâtuncu düşünce hakkında gerekli bilginin sağlanması bu çalışma için kritiktir.

Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un temelini oluşturan ontolojik sisteme göre yaratılış, Tanrı'nın bilinçli ve anlık bir kararı ile gerçekleşen bir eylem olarak değil; onun varoluşu ve bu varoluşun farkında oluşu gereği istemsiz ve sonsuz bir süreç olarak kabul edilmektedir. Bu sistemde tüm yaratılış üç temel ilkeye bağlanmıştır. Bu ilkelerin ilki Plotinus'un Tanrı'ya vermiş olduğu isim ile "Bir" dir. Bir, tüm evrendeki yaratılışın temelidir. Platon'un "İyi İdeası"nın muhtemel etkisi altında, Bir'i mutlak iyi, güzel ve kusursuz olarak tanımlamak mümkündür. Bir'in kendi varlık ve kudretinin farkında oluşu ile ikinci ilke olan "Akıl" tezahür etmiştir. Platoncu "idealar" teorisinin muhtemel etkisi altında, Yeni Eflâtuncular Akıl'ı idealaların bütünü olarak tanımlamışlardır. Bu anlayışa göre maddesel evrendeki her varlık, Akıl içerisinde bulunan idealaların birer kopyasıdır. Varlıkların gerçek ve en mükemmel versiyonları bu idealardır. Son olarak, üçüncü ilke olan "Nefis", Akıl'dan var olagelmiş olup, maddesel evren ile Akıl arasındaki geçişi sağlar. Nefis'i Akıl içinde bulunan idealaı maddesel formlara büründüren araç olarak tanımlamak mümkündür. Bir'in mükemmelliğinden uzaklaşılması sonucu Nefis içerisinde başlamış olan çelişkiler varoluşun son basamağı olan maddesel evren ile daha da artar. Yeni Eflâtuncu evren anlayışının bu kısa özetinden anlaşılabileceği üzere gerçekliğin, güzelliğin, iyiliğin ve mükemmelliğin giderek azaldığı; bununla beraber çelişkilerin de giderek arttığı mantıksal sıraya dayalı bir evren modelinden bahsetmek mümkündür. Yeni Eflâtunculara göre maddesel evrenin bir parçası olan insanın yaratılıştan gelen görevi ve içgüdüsü bu giderek azalan evren düzenini tersine takip etmektir. Bu anlayışa göre insan,

erdemini arttıran eylemler yaparak ruhsal olarak yükselmeli ve varoluşun basamaklarını tırmanarak Bir ile yeniden bütün olmalıdır.

İlk ilke olan Bir'den başlayarak insana kadar tüm evrene bakıldığında, evrenin tamamında karakteristik olarak gözlemlenebilecek üç kavram türetmek mümkündür. Bu kavramlar hiyerarşi, ikilik ve birliktir. Hiyerarşi, bu evren modelinde birbirini takip eden her seviye arasında, varoluşun doğal bir sonucu olarak gözlemlenebilir. Ayrıca Bir ile geri kalan tüm ilke ve varlıklar arasında mutlak bir hiyerarşi bulunduğu savunulabilir. İkilik ise yine her bir hiyerarşik seviye arasında görülebildiği gibi evrenin tamamına yansımış şekilde idealar evreni ve maddesel evren arasında da gözlemlenebilir. Son olarak Birlik, evrenin tamamında düzeni sağlamakta ve kaynağını Bir'in mutlaklığından almaktadır. Tüm varlıklar, idea veya maddesel, Bir'in mutlak varoluşundan tezahür etmiştir. Bu yayılmacı modelin bir sonucu olarak tüm yaratılmış varlıkların özünde Bir'i farklı miktarlarda bulmak mümkündür. Bu kavramların evrenin tamamında egemen olarak görünüyor olması durumu, Yeni Eflâtuncu metinlerde de geçen mikro evren anlayışı ile de ilişkilendirilebilir. Bu anlayışa göre evrenin özelliklerini daha düşük bir mükemmellik seviyesinde taklit eden varlıklardan söz edilebilir. İnsanlar kendileri bir mikro evren olarak kabul edilmekle beraber insanların üretimleri konusunda da bu anlam tartışılmıştır. Yeni Eflâtuncu düşünceye göre insan hem doğanın mükemmel yapısından etkilenmesi sonucu Bir'in yüceliğini kutlama hem de bu mükemmelliği kendi üretimlerinde taklit ederek erdemini artırma ve Bir'e yaklaşma eğilimindedir. Bu konu Yeni Eflâtuncu metinlerde özellikle edebi eserler için tartışılmış olsa da birçok uzman farklı kökenler ile mikro evren anlayışını mimari yapılarla da ilişkilendirmiştir. Bu çalışma bu ilişkiyi savunmakta olup, Yeni Eflâtuncu etki altında üretildiği varsayılan yapı örneklerinde üç ontolojik kavramın yansımalarını inceleyerek bu savı

araştırmaktadır. Ontolojik kavramların mimari tasarımdaki yansımalarının incelenmesi için geometri bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır. Bu yaklaşım yine Yeni Eflâtuncu düşünceler ile temellendirilebilir.

Ortaçağda geometrinin evreni anlamak için mutlak bir gereklilik olarak görüldüğü gözlemlenmektedir. Bu sebeple, metafizik ve astroloji gibi farklı çalışma alanları ile ilişkili olarak geometrik çalışmalara oldukça önem verilmiştir. Geometriye soyutlama üzerinden bir aracı rol biçildiği söylenebilir. Ortaçağda geometriye olan bakış ve bu dönemdeki geometrik çalışmalar çoğunlukla Öklid-Platoncu Antik Yunan geometrisini temel almaktadır. Uzmanlar, bu antik geometrik bilginin büyük ölçüde Yeni Elfâtunculuk aracılığıyla ortaçağa taşındığında hemfikirdir. Bu sebeple ortaçağın geometriye yaklaşımını anlamak için Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncede geometrinin yerine bakmak önemlidir. Platon'un Öklid geometrisini muhtemel Kabala etkisiyle yaratılış sürecini açıklamaya uyarlamasının, Yeni Eflâtunculuk'ta da belli ölçülerde yeniden yorumlanarak devam ettiği söylenebilir. Bu anlayışa göre yaratılış süreci, yaratılış-öncesi dağınıklığın geometrik birleşim ve ayarlamalar ile düzene sokulmasından ibarettir. Üçgenler üretilmesi ile başlayan bu süreç, üçgenlerden yüzeyler elde edilmesi ve bu yüzeylerin birbirleriyle birleşmesi sonucu oluşan üç boyutlu cisimler ile devam eder. Bu cisimleri Platonik Cisimler olarak adlandırmak mümkündür. Birbirlerine eş yüzeylerden oluşan ve simetriye sahip bu üç boyutlu cisimlerden dördü temel elementler (ateş, su, toprak, hava) ile ilişkilendirilmiş olup, bu cisimlerin elementlerin hem sembolü hem de en küçük yapı taşı olduğu savunulmuştur. Buna ek olarak, Platon tarafından göksel madde olarak adlandırılabilecek bir başka madde ile ilişkilendirilmiş beşinci bir cisim de bulunmaktadır. Basitçe açıklanan bu anlayışa göre yaratılışın ikinci boyuttan üçüncü boyuta geometrik birleşimler ile geçilen bir süreç olduğu savunulabilir. Bu yaklaşım, insanın evreni taklit etmek

istediği varsayılan mimari yapılarda da geometrinin büyük öneme sahip olmasını sağlamıştır denilebilir. Yapıları evrenin bir soyutlaması olarak kabul etmek ve geometriyi de bu soyutlamanın aracı olarak göstermek mümkündür. Başka bir değişle, yukarıda bahsedilmiş olan ontolojik kavramlar çoğunlukla geometrik uygulamalar aracılığıyla yapılarda tasarım kavramlarına dönüştürülmüştür ve uygulanmıştır denilebilir. Buna dayanarak, bu çalışmadaki incelemelerinin çoğu geometrik analizlerden oluşmaktadır. Geometrik hassasiyetin ortak olduğunu söylemek mümkün olsa da Bizans ve Selçuklu mimarilerinde yüksek ihtimalle her iki kültürdeki uyarlamalarının farklılığına dayanarak ayrışmalar gözlemlenmektedir. Mimari analizlerden önce bu uyarlamalar ve dönemin bağlamından kısaca bahsetmek önemlidir.

Bizans-Yeni Eflâtunculuk ilişkisine tarihsel olarak bakıldığında, özellikle 11. ve 12. Yüzyıllara kadar olan süreçte pagan düşüncelerin imparatorluk merkezinde çoğunlukla kabul görmediğini söylemek mümkündür. Bunun sebebi olarak imparatorluk tarafından uygulanan katı Ortodoks Hristiyanlık propagandası gösterilebilir. Buna rağmen erken dönemlerden muhtemel Yeni Eflâtuncu etki altında üretim yapmış iki isim, Pseudo-Dionysius ve Maximus the Confessor, özellikle dini ayinler ve kilisenin sembolik anlamı üzerine yazmış oldukları metinler ile ön plana çıkmaktadır. Uzmanlar, İkonoklastik Dönem ile zirve yapan ve bir süre daha devam eden düşünce ve sanatsal üretim sansürünün Bizans'ta alternatiflerin aranmasına sebep olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu arayışın sonucu olarak da antik kültürün düşünsel ve sanatsal mirasına bir yönelişten söz edilebilir. Özellikle Konstantinopolis Üniversitesi'nin yeniden açılması ve bu üniversitede görevli önemli isimlerden Michael Psellos ve John Italos'un çalışmalarıyla 11. Yüzyıldan başlayarak Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncenin etkileri kültürel, felsefi ve sanatsal üretimde gözlemlenebilir. Uzmanlar, 11. Yüzyıl ile

başlayan 12. Yüzyıl ile devam eden ve 13. Yüzyıl başında Haçlı Seferleri ile son bulan bir refah dönemini işaret etmektedir. Bu iki yüzyıl, öncesi ve sonrasına göre, hem politik hem de ekonomik olarak daha az kargaşaya sahne olmuştur. Bu durumla muhtemelen ilişkili olarak, dönemin sanat ortamı da üretim miktarı ve kalitesi açısından zengindir. Kilise mimarisinin bu dönemlere kadar olan gelişiminin de Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un etkilerinin artması ile paralellik gösterdiği önerilebilir.

Maximus'un yorumlarına göre, kilise dünyevi/günahkâr (profane) ve kutsal (sacred) arasındaki ayrım üzerine kurulmuştur. Kilise tipolojisinin bazilika şemasından kare-içinde-haç şemasına dönüşümü ile bu ayrımın iç mekâna doğru uzamaya başladığı söylenebilir. Böylece iç mekân bölümlerinin sembolik anlamları da gelişmiş ve narteks dünyayı, nef göksel cisimleri ve aps da Tanrı'nın diyarını sembolize etmeye başlamıştır. Kilise planlarında merkezileşmenin sebebi olarak kubbenin bazilikaya eklenmesinin strüktürel gereklilikleri ve dini ayinlerdeki rol değişikleri gösterilebilir. Böylece merkezi ve çevre mekânlar arasındaki ayrım daha da keskinleşmiştir. Bu değişimlerle ilişkili olarak kilise daha temel geometrik şekillerden oluşan hacimlere sahip olmaya başlamıştır. Yeni Eflâtuncu anlayışla beraber düşünüldüğünde, temel geometrilerin kullanımı önemli bir unsur olarak değerlendirilebilir. Sonuç olarak, daha erken dönemlerde görülmeye başlansa da 11. ve 12. Yüzyılın hâkim şeması olarak kabul edilebilecek olan kare-içinde-haç plan ile kilisenin sembolik anlamlarına daha fazla katman eklendiği savunulabilir. Bu anlam dini ayinlerle de bir bütün olarak sağlandığı için, yine muhtemel Yeni Eflâtuncu izler barındıran Bizans ayininin de incelenmesi önemlidir.

Birçok uzman Bizans ayinlerinin, Yeni Eflâtuncu pagan ayinleri ile Roma geçiş törenlerinin bir karışımı olarak oluştuğunu ileri sürmektedir. Temel

olarak Bizans ayini, cemaatin toplu olarak kilise mekânları arasında gerçekleştirdiği bir dizi geçiş hareketi olarak tanımlanabilir. Yeni Eflâtuncu metinlerde ruhun Bir'e doğru yükselişinin bir ayin olarak tapınaklarda uygulandığı geçmektedir. Dionysius ve Maximus'un Bizans ayini açıklamalarına bakıldığında hem anlam hem de uygulama olarak paralellikler görmek mümkündür. Bizans ayinin amacının cemaatin erdemini artırmak ve onları günahlarından arındırarak ölümden sonra Tanrı ile olan buluşmalarına hazırlamak olduğu söylenebilir. Uzmanlar, Yeni Eflâtuncu metinlerde geçen ayinlerin tapınak mekânının oluşumu ve gelişimi ile iki taraflı bir ilişkisi olduğunu ve aynı ilişkinin varlığından Bizans kilisesi ve ayini için de söz edilebileceğini savunmaktadır. Buna dayanarak, bu çalışmanın devamındaki mimari analizler dini ayin ile ilişkilendirilerek açıklanmıştır.

Üç kavram arasında yansımaları kilisede en yoğun bulunabilecek kavram olarak hiyerarşi gösterilebilir. Cemaatteki sınıfsal ayrıma göre ayindeki roller değişmekte ve buna bağlı olarak her grup mekânla farklı ilişkiler geliştirmektedir. Yani kilise mekânının algılanmasının, toplumdaki sınıf ayrımlarına göre değiştiği söylenebilir. Ayrıca kilisenin iç mekânları, evrenin hiyerarşik basamaklarını sembolize etmektedir. Bu sembolizmi mekânların yükseklik ve aydınlatma gibi karakteristik özelliklerindeki çarpıcı farklar ile ilişkilendirmek mümkündür. Ek olarak kare-içinde-haç tipi kilise planlarının organizasyonu "dördün (quadrature)" denen bir geometrik kompozisyon ile sağlanmaktadır. Bu organizasyonu tek bir noktadan gelişen ve her karenin bir sonrakini oluşturduğu hiyerarşik bir düzen olarak tanımlamak mümkündür. Böyle bakıldığında evrenin yapısının bu geometrik sistemde soyutlandığı düşünülebilir. Dördün organizasyonunun kilise planları üzerine yerleştirilmesi ile oluşan diyagramlar, mimari elemanların ve yapı sınırlarını oluşturan duvarların bu organizasyondaki

karelere göre konumlandığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca aynı diyagramlar kesitler ile oluşturulduğunda da benzer bir durum gözlemlenmektedir. Son olarak nefteki temel geometrik hacimler arasındaki dikey ilişki, Yeni Eflâtuncu geometrik anlayış ile bakıldığında, hiyerarşinin bir göstergesi olarak düşünülebilir. Bu dikey ilişkiye göre kubbeden kasnağa ve oradan da alt hacme doğru gidildikçe küreden küpe bir geçiş izlenmektedir.

İkilik kavramının kilisedeki yansımalarına bakıldığında, ilk olarak ayin ile oluşan yatay aks üzerinde konumlanmış üç eşik noktası göstermek mümkündür. Avlu duvarları ve kapısı, kilisenin ana giriş kapıları ve ikonostasis kapıları olarak listelenen bu üç eşik noktası, uzmanlara göre ayin sırasında yapılan geçişlerde cemaatin aklında önceki mekâna ait tecrübenin unutulup yeni bir tecrübe modeli oluşmasını sağlamaktadır. Buna dayanarak bu noktaların, günahkâr ve kutsal arasındaki ikiliği vurgulayan ögeler olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Ayrıca ana giriş kapılarının ve ikonostasis kapılarının boyutları karşılaştırıldığında büyük bir fark olduğu gözlemlenebilir. İşlevsel gerekliliğin yanı sıra, bu fark yine günahkâr-kutsal ikilemi üzerinden değerlendirilebilir. Bunlara ek olarak, merkezi ve çevresel mekânlar arasında da hacimsel bir ikilemden söz edilebilir. Bu ikilemlik mekânların yüksekliklerine yansımıştır. Son olarak, güçlü ve sağlam görünümlü avlu ve kilise dış duvarları da ikilik kavramının bir başka yansıması olarak değerlendirilebilir.

Son kavram olan birliğin yansımalarını ise şu ana kadar bahsedilmiş olan farklı plan, hacim ve mekân özelliklerinde okumak mümkündür. Buna göre, kilise planını oluşturan dördün organizasyonunun, evrendeki yapının bir soyutlaması olduğundan birlik kavramına da işaret ettiği söylenebilir. Organizasyonun tek bir noktadan doğması ve uyum içinde yayılarak genişlemesi bunu desteklemektedir. Ek olarak, yine bu organizasyon ile

plan kurulmasının bir sonucu olarak çoğunlukla nefte, bazı durumlarda da tüm kilisede, simetrik bir organizasyon olduğu gözlemlenebilir. Yeni Eflâtuncu ve Platoncu metinlerde simetriye sık olarak yer verilmiş ve evrendeki Bir'den kaynaklanan uyumun ve güzelliğin bir göstergesi olarak işaret edilmiştir. Ayrıca, eşik noktalarının aynı zamanda farklı mekânları bağladığını savunmak mümkündür. Mimari sembolizm uzmanları arasında bu tarz ögelerin paradoksal durumu sıkça ele alınan bir konudur. Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncede de Nefis, benzer bir şekilde hem ayıran hem de birleştiren özelliklerde tartışılmıştır. Son olarak, dikey ve yatay aksların kilisede sembolik olarak beraber bulunması ve nefte bu iki aksın kesişmesi birlik kavramının yansıması olarak gösterilebilir. Bu durumu dünyevi ve ruhani sembolizmin mekânda birlikte yansıtılması olarak yorumlamak mümkündür.

Plan ve hacimlerde yapılan incelemelere ek olarak Bizans kiliselerinin bezemelerinde de Yeni Eflâtuncu yansımalar olduğu savunulabilir. Bunun ilk örneği olarak ikonların yerleştirilmesi ile hacimlerin geometrisi arasında sağlanan hassasiyet gösterilebilir. İkondaki kişilerin Hristiyan kültüründeki önemi ile üzerine işlendikleri mimari elemanın geometrik olarak tamlığı ilişkilidir. Buna göre İsa genellikle kubbe üzerinde işlenirken, Meryem genellikle yarım kubbede gösterilmiş ve baş melekler de eğrisel pandantifler üzerinde konumlandırılmıştır. Ayrıca oranların ve yerleşimlerin ayinde yapılan geçişler ile bu ikonların görülebilmesi için özellikle ayarlandığı uzmanlar tarafından ortaya konmuştur. Bunlara ek olarak, yer mozaiklerinde, dış yüzey tuğla kaplamalarında ve mobilyalarda kullanılan geometrik bezemelerdeki hassasiyet de önemli bir yansıma olarak kabul edilebilir. Son olarak, ikonostasis duvarı üzerinde bulunan Hristiyan kültüründeki önemli kişilere ait ikonlar, duvarın göksel cennet kapıları sembolizmini kuvvetlendirmektedir. Göksel cennet kapıları düşüncesi,

Platoncu ve Yeni Eflâtuncu metinlerde astroloji ile beraber sıkça işlenmiş ve uzmanlar tarafından ikonostasis duvarının sembolizmine katkıda bulunduğu tartışılmıştır.

Yapılan bu incelemeler üzerinden Ortodoks Hristiyanlıktaki Yeni Eflâtuncu etkinin yansımalarının Bizans kilisesinin gerek plan ve hacimsel organizasyonu gerekse de bezemelerinde farklı şekillerde gözlemlenebileceği savunulabilir.

İkinci kısım olarak, Selçuklular-Yeni Eflâtunculuk ilişkisinin dinamikleri Bizans'ta olduğundan farklı ilerlemiştir. Buna göre İslam kültürünün önemli merkezlerinde düşünürler tarafından farklı yüzyıllarda yapılan çalışmaların Selçuklular altında Anadolu'ya geldiği savunulabilir. Bu düşüncelerin Anadolu Selçuklu kültürünün şekillenmesinde büyük etkisi olduğu da söylenebilir. O yüzden muhtemel Yeni Eflâtuncu etki altında üretim yapmış düşünürlere ve çalışmalarına kısaca bakmak, Anadolu Selçuklularını anlamak için gereklidir. Antik felsefenin etkilerini ilk olarak 8. Yüzyıl civarında kurulan Mu'tazila teoloji okulunda gözlemlemek mümkündür. Fakat uzmanlara göre Yeni Eflâtuncu düşüncelerin İslam kültürüne ilk büyük girişi Al-Kindī'nin Enneads'ı Arapçaya çevirmesi ile olmuştur. Bu eserin sonraki yüzyıllarda birçok düşünür tarafından kullanıldığı ileri sürülmektedir. Daha sonraki yüzyıllardaki düşünür ve okullar arasında başlıca Ikhwān al-Safā, Al-Fārābī ve Ibn Sina'yı göstermek mümkündür. Bu isimlerin çalışmaları tasavvufun temelini oluşturmuş nitelikte olup, ana olarak Tanrı'yı ve evreni anlamak, yaratılışı açıklamak ve insanı evrende konumlandırmak üzerine düşünceler içermektedir. Konunun uzmanları, tüm bu düşüncelerin etkisi altında 13. Yüzyılda çalışmış olan Ibn 'Arabī'nin en kapsamlı tasavvuf sistemini kurduğunu işaret etmektedir. Arabī'nin özellikle tüm yaratılanların birbirleriyle ve Tanrı'yla arasındaki birliği

savunan *vahdet-i vücud* ve maddesel evren (*alam al mulk*) ile Tanrı'nın diyarı (*alam al ghayb*) arasındaki mekân olarak tanımladığı *Barzakh* düşünceleri ön plana çıkmaktadır. Bu düşünceleri oluşturmasına ön ayak olan çalışmalar Anadolu Selçukluları tarafından da bilindiği için paralel düşüncelerin Anadolu'da da üretilmiş olması ihtimali yüksektir. Ayrıca Arabī'nin 13. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da bulunmuş olması da önemli bir husustur.

Selçukluların heterodoks düşüncelere karşı içlemci ve hoşgörülü yaklaşımı, özellikle 13. Yüzyılda örneğine az rastlanabilecek bir düşünsel ve sanatsal üretim atmosferi oluşturmalarını sağlamıştır. Bu atmosfer sayesinde büyük miktarda felsefi ve sanatsal kültür Anadolu'ya taşınmıştır. Bunlar arasında Yeni Eflâtuncu etkileri de fazlaca gözlemlemek mümkündür. Ayrıca, devlet tarafından dayatılan bir ideolojinin olmaması özgür bir sanatsal üretim ortamına sebep olduğundan dönemin mimarisinin de özel bir yerde olduğu savunulabilir. Bu dönemde üretilen cami ve medreseler; felsefe, din ve evrenbilim ile iç içe olan toplumsal, kültürel ve sanatsal atmosferin yansımaları olarak gösterilebilir. Camiler, halkın dervişler ve şeyhler ile etkileşimi için önemli ortamlar olmuşlardır. Ayrıca, Anadolu bazilika ve Anadolu öncesi Selçuklu formlarını harmanlayan yapıları ile de biricik bir forma sahiplerdir. Benzer şekilde, medreseler de dönemi yansıtan önemli yapılardır. Medreselerin formlarında ise kare-içinde-haç kilise şeması ile dört eyvanlı şemanın harmanlanmasını gözlemlemek mümkündür. Ayrıca medreseler dini eğitim ve üretim merkezleri olarak, muhtemel Yeni Eflâtuncu etki altında düşünsel üretim yapılan mekânlardır. Bu çalışmada bu iki yapı tipine ait analizler yapılacak olsa da, dini ibadet ile ilişkisinden dolayı camiler daha fazla ele alınmıştır.

Temel İslam ibadetlerinden biri olan namaz, camilerde toplu veya bireysel olarak yapılabilecek bir dizi fiziksel harekete dayalı bir ibadettir. Yukarıda Bizans ayini için yapıldığı gibi namaz ve Yeni Eflâtuncu ayinler arasında direkt bir ilişki savunmak mümkün değildir. Fakat Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un muhtemel etkisi ile gelişen İslam'daki batıni derinleşmenin, namaza bakış açısına ve atfedilen anlama da yansımış olması mümkündür. Temel olarak namaz, Müslümanların Tanrı'nın kudretine olan teslim oluşlarını yineledikleri bir ibadet olarak tanımlanabilir. Buna ek olarak Sûfî'lerin namazı Tanrı ile içsel bir buluşma olarak gördükleri de söylenebilir. Bu mistik yaklaşımda Yeni Eflâtuncu etkiden söz etmek mümkündür. Ayrıca bu etki muhtemelen caminin bu buluşmanın mekânı olduğu yorumlanmasına sebep olmuştur. Ek olarak, Kâbe'ye yönelmenin olası bir getirisi olarak namazın caminin mimari gelişiminde de etkili olduğu kabul edilmektedir. Bu sebeple bu çalışmadaki cami analizleri namazın etkileri göz önünde bulundurularak yapılmıştır.

Üç kavram arasında yansımaları Selçuklu mimarisinde en ağırlıklı olarak bulunabilecek kavram olarak birlik gösterilebilir. Cami planları incelendiğinde, mekânı organize eden bir grid sistemi gözlemlenmektedir. Kolon aksları ve dış duvarları belirleyen bu grid sistemi, ikinci ve üçüncü boyutta mekâna homojen ve eşitliği ön plana çıkaran bir yaklaşımı mümkün kılmıştır. Bu grid organizasyonu eşitlik üzerinden birliği vurgulayan bir soyutlama olarak tanımlanabilir. Selçuk camilerindeki gridal organizasyonun mikro evren anlayışını da desteklediği düşünülebilir. Ayrıca namazın toplu olarak kılınması ile bağlantılı olarak, caminin iç mekânı, farklı bölümlere ayrılmadan tek bir mekân olarak bırakılmıştır. Bu tek mekân, çoğu zaman kıble aksının getirdiği bir simetriye de sahiptir. Camilerin hacimsel ve üç boyutlu organizasyonları içinse, Ali Uzay Peker'in öne sürdüğü üzere bazilikadan camiye evirilme sürecinde

yükseklik farklılıklarının ortadan kaldırılması ile hiyerarşinin elimine edildiği ve üçüncü boyutta da eşitlikçi ve bütüncül bir mekân oluşturmaya çalışıldığı anlaşılabilir. Son olarak medreseler için bir grid organizasyonu veya kıble aksından söz etmek mümkün olmasa da, taç kapıdan ana eyvana uzanan bir temel aks ve bunun bir getirisi olan simetriden söz etmek mümkündür.

İkilik kavramının yansımalarına bakıldığında, hem cami hem de medreselerin iç mekânlarındaki nizam ile dışarıdaki dağınık yapılaşmaya bir tezat oluşturdukları gözlemlenebilir. Bunu, İslam'daki yaratılış anlayışında var olan *tarkib* (birleşim/düzen) ile ilişkilendirmek mümkündür. Ayrıca bu tezatın, Selçuklu yapılarının kalın ve az açıklıklı duvarları ile de vurgulandığı düşünülebilir. Ayrıca taç kapılar da hem boyut hem de bezeme miktarı olarak cephelerin geri kalanı ile bir tezat oluşturmaktadır. Ek olarak, İslam anlayışına göre maddesel evrenin bir ögesi olan insanın *alam al ghayb* hakkında bilgisi olması veya bu metafiziksel mekânı tasvir etmesi mümkün değildir. Bu anlayış, namazın mistik anlamı ile birlikte düşünüldüğünde cami mekânının kullar ve Tanrı arasında bir buluşma mekânı, bir orta bölge veya *barzakh* olarak görüldüğünü düşündürmektedir. Bu fikir ilk olarak Ali Uzay Peker tarafından ileri sürülmüştür. Medreseler içinse namazın getirdiği anlam olmasa da, İslam'da yüksek erdem olarak kabul edilen ilim ve eğitim ile benzer bir sembolik anlam sağlandığı söylenebilir. Son olarak, ikilik kavramının bir yansıması olarak kabul edilebilecek yatay ve dikey akslar cami mekânında kesişmektedir. Bu kesişmeyi her bir birimde tekrar gözlemlemek mümkün olduğu gibi merkezi koridorda gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bu kesişim medreselerin avlularında da gerçekleşmektedir.

Son kavram olan hiyerarşinin yansımaları ise ilk olarak taç kapılarda gözlemlenebilir. Taç kapıların boyutları, bezemeleri ve çoğunlukla kıble aksını başlatan eleman olmaları ile yapılardaki diğer mimari elemanlar üzerinde bir hiyerarşi kurdukları söylenebilir. Ek olarak, yükseklik farkları elimine edilmiş olsa da kıble aksına denk gelen merkezi koridorun genişlik olarak ön plana çıkarıldığını gözlemlemek mümkündür. Merkezi koridor ayrıca ışıklık kubbesi veya açıklıkları ve maksure kubbeleri ile de vurgulanmıştır. Kubbe ve ışıklıklar, dikey akslar yaratarak göksel hiyerarşiye de referans veriyor olarak düşünülebilir. Son olarak, kapalı avlu tipi medreselerde de dikey aksın getirdiği hiyerarşiyi gözlemlemek mümkündür. Ayrıca hacimlerin bir araya gelişi, Bizans kiliselerinde tartışılan küp üzeri kare ilişkisi ile, hiyerarşinin olası bir yansımasıdır. Aynı hacimsel ilişkiyi ve sembolizmi her bir cami biriminde de gözlemlemek mümkündür.

Plan ve hacimlerde yapılan incelemelere ek olarak Selçuklu yapılarındaki bezemelerde de Yeni Eflâtuncu yansımalar olduğu savunulabilir. Bunların ilk örneği olarak Tanrı'nın kudretini ve insanlar arasındaki eşitlik ve birliği ön plana çıkaran kitabeler gösterilebilir. Bu kitabelerin hem birlik hem de hiyerarşiyi vurguladıklarını düşünmek mümkündür. Ayrıca bir soyutlama ürünü olarak tartışılan geometrik bezemelerin de hem birlik hem de ikilik kavramlarını yansıttığı savunulabilir. Bu çalışmanın önemli bir katkısı olarak, birçok yapıda karşımıza çıkan bir geometrik bezeme organizasyonu Platonik Cisimler üzerinden incelenmiştir. Bu bezemenin farklı varyasyonlarında dodecahedron ve küpün soyutlanmış iki boyutlu halleri olarak kabul edilebilecek olan beşgen ve altıgen beraber kullanılmıştır. Dünya ve toprağın simgesi olan küp ve göksel maddenin simgesi olan dodecahedron ile bu bezemede ruhani yükseliş ve birleşme temalarının yansıtıldığı savunulabilir. Bu çalışmada, fotoğraflar ve çizimler

üzerinden bu bezemenin farklı yapılardaki farklı varyasyonları incelenmiştir. Son olarak ruhani yükseliş, evren, yaratılış vb. konularını işleyen ve Yeni Eflâtuncu etki altında üretildiği varsayılan birçok tasavvuf metninde yer verilen ağaç ve kuş figürlerini Selçuklu yapılarındaki bezemeler arasında gözlemlemek mümkündür.

Yapılan bu incelemeler üzerinden İslam'daki Yeni Eflâtuncu etkinin yansımalarının Anadolu Selçuklu yapılarının gerek plan ve hacimsel organizasyonu gerekse de bezemelerinde birçok farklı şekilde gözlemlenebileceği savunulabilir.

Her iki mimari gelenekten seçilmiş örneklerin Yeni Eflâtuncu kavramlar üzerinden incelenmesi sonucunda bu çalışma, her iki dinde de etkileri gözlemlenebilen Yeni Eflâtunculuk'u Bizans ve Selçuk mimarilerinin ortak bir tasarım aracı olarak göstermiştir. Ayrıca bu çalışmadan ulaşılabilecek birkaç çıkarım vardır.

Bunlardan ilki incelenen mimari geleneklere ait yapıları mikro evren modelleri olarak düşünmenin mümkün olduğudur. Yapılan analizler bu yapılarda üç kavramın tasarımsal olarak bulunabileceği göstermiştir.

İkinci çıkarım olarak, Yeni Eflâtunculuk'un antik dönem ile ortaçağ arasında bir köprü görevi gördüğüdür. Buna göre Yeni Eflâtunculuk üzerinden, Öklid/Platon geometrisinin ortaçağa taşındığı savunulabilir. Ayrıca Yeni Eflâtunculuk'ta ağırlıkta olan metafizik düşüncelerin ortaçağda Hristiyanlık ve İslam'ı batıni anlamda derinleştirdiği ve bunun sonucu olarak her iki dinde gelişen mistik yaklaşımların dini ayin ve ibadetler üzerinde de etkisi olduğu düşünülebilir.

Buna dayanarak yapılabilecek son çıkarım da, Yeni Eflâtunculuk etkisi altında gelişen gerek bu batıni derinliğin gerekse de dini ayin ve

ibadetlerdeki anlamın her iki kültürün sanatsal üretimde büyük etkisi olduğu düşüncesidir. İki kültürdeki farklı yorumlar da bu üretimlerdeki farklılaşmaların sebebi olarak okunabilir. Bununla ilişkili olarak, Bizans kare-içinde-haç şemalı kiliselerinin evrendeki hiyerarşik düzenin bir dizi iç mekân ile simgelendiği mikro evren modelleri olduğu söylenebilir. Ayinin bu mekân organizasyonundaki etkisi de kritiktir. Bu mekânlar arasındaki keskin karakteristik farklılıklar da sembolizmle paralel olup hiyerarşi üzerindeki vurguyu kuvvetlendirir niteliktedir. Ek olarak, bazilika şemasından kare-içinde-haç şemasına geçiş sürecinde de hiyerarşiye olan vurgu muhtemelen önemli bir etmendir. Bu vurguya rağmen kilise mimarisinin oluşumunda ikilik ve birlik kavramlarının da etkili olduğu belirtilebilir. Diğer tarafta, Selçuklu yapıları sembolik birer orta bölge olarak işlev görev mikro evren modelleri olarak düşünülebilir. Bazilikadan gelen hiyerarşi Selçuklu camilerinde birlik ve eşitliğin önüne geçmeyecek şekilde kısıtlanmıştır demek mümkündür. Tek mekândan oluşan camilerde, kıble aksından üretilen grid organizasyonu ile bütüncül ve eşitlikçi bir iç mekân oluşturulduğu savunulabilir. Bu grid organizasyonun, namaz için Kâbe'ye yönelmiş ve kıble aksine dik olarak sıralanmış Müslümanların oluşturduğu varsayımsal grid sistemine bir referans olduğu düşünülebilir.

Toparlamak adına, disiplinler arası yaklaşımıyla bu çalışmanın sembolik anlam açısından birbirlerinden bağımsız kabul edilebilecek olan bu iki mimari gelenek arasında Yeni Eflâtunculuk üzerinden bir ortak zemin kurduğu ve böylelikle ortaçağda Anadolu ve Doğu Akdeniz'deki tasarım anlayışına daha fazla ışık tuttuğu savunulabilir.

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English): NEOPLATONISM IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS IN BYZANTINE AND SELJUK ARCHITECTURES

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE**:** **Yüksek Lisans** / Master ☒ **Doktora** / PhD ☐

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