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The Seljuk Face of Anatolia:
Aspects of the Social and Intellectual History of Seljuk Architecture

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THE SELJUK FACE OF ANATOLIA:
ASPECTS OF THE SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF SELJUK ARCHITECTURE

PROF. SEMRA OGEL*

Once the foundations of a settled way of life had been finally consolidated during the reign of Kılıç Arslan II at the end of the 12th century, the sultan embarked on a building activity that was to create a characteristically Seljuk environment throughout Anatolia. This development was much accelerated because of the economic prosperity of the 13th century, in the course of which the Seljuk sultans and viziers began to occupy a place among the greatest patrons in the Islamic world. The stability attained during the reign of Ala' al-Din Kaykubad I (1220-1237), generally regarded as the golden age of the Anatolian Seljuks, was reflected in the art of the period. And the Mongolian invasion that immediately followed this, together with the subsequent collapse of the Seljuk state, though they obviously had an effect on art, did not succeed in extinguishing the passion for artistic creation that had gripped the whole of Anatolia. This was due as much to the powerful artistic environment that had been created in Anatolia as to the continued activity of the Anatolian viziers as patrons of art.

Several sources of inspiration shaped the art of the Anatolian Seljuk art. First, a strong influence came from Islamic Sufism. The art of Islam was powerfully influenced by Sufism, which regarded the material world of appearance, with its thousand and one varying aspects, as a reflection of the divine will, recreated at every breath. Inspired by this trend of thought and spirituality, the Anatolian Seljuk art contributed its own interpretation. The conception of the universal order was most clearly represented in architectural stone decorations.

During this period in Anatolia, mysticism was represented by Sufis such as Muhyiddin ibn al-Arabi, Mevlana Jalal al-Din al-Rumi, Yunus Emre and Haci Bektaş Veli.

Shamanism, on the other hand, the oldest and most widespread of the religions adopted by the Asian Turks, endowed natural forces with human or animal form, and various Shamanist symbols appear in Anatolian stone carving and handicrafts bearing the full weight of their inherent significance. It was as if, in the Anatolian Seljuk period, the universe was carved in stone.

The Architectural Environment and its Creators

Monumental architecture in Seljuk Turkey was the product not only of architectural activity within the cities themselves but also, as is exemplified by the caravanserais on the routes connecting the towns, of a rural architectural activity directed from the urban centres. We lack, however, adequate knowledge to reconstruct a full picture of everyday life under the new settled conditions.

* Emeritus Professor at Istanbul Technical University, Architecture Faculty. This summary is extracted from *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, Istanbul: Akbank Yayinları, 1994, pp. 118-135. Among the author's books, see Semra Ögel, *Armağan Mimarlık ve Sanat Tarihi Yazıları*, İstanbul, 2000, ISBN: 9758070355; and Semra Ögel, *Selçuklu Çağında Anadolu Sanatı*, Doğan Kuban, 2002, 460 pp., ISBN: 9750803094 (the editor).

Monumental architectural construction was in the hands of the various members of the ruling class, the sultan and his family, the emirs and viziers. Here, as everywhere else, no matter whether they adopted a settled form of life or if they continued in rural areas the type of nomadic or semi-nomadic existence to which they had grown accustomed during their sojourn in Asia, the Turkmen population made a contribution to art in general and to handicrafts in particular. To them may be attributed the introduction into the traditional art of woodwork of the famous bevelled cut typical of the steppes, and they may also be regarded as the prime preserves of Shamanist imagery. Although they seemed to have little contact with the architectural environment, they must at least have worked as labourers in its construction. Thanks to their tents, we can recognise the widespread features of the Turkish dwelling. Public buildings, including the mosques, could be erected by all**,** but as, according to the mîrî system, the Sultan was the owner of all land, and as he possessed the right to allocate any piece of land to whomever he chose (*ikta*), in actual fact most public buildings were erected either by the Sultan himself or by one of his high officials. Few of those responsible for such *waqf*-s or pious foundations lacked official standing. The Sultan had the power to provide every type of opportunity for large-scale building activity.

The Seljuk sultans showed little interest in prestigious buildings such as the castles and chateaux favoured in medieval Europe, and generally limited themselves to the repair and enlargement of already existing Roman and Byzantine castles. They were much more interested in public buildings such as caravanserais and hospitals. Even their palaces were not as magnificent and imposing as the Sultan Hans (imperial Caravanserais), and the fact that so little of these palaces have survived shows clearly that they lacked the caravanserai's solidity and durability. They actually consisted of complexes of pavilions rather reminiscent of clusters of tents.

The Patrons: The Anatolian Seljuk Sultans were active as patrons for the relatively short period of fifty years that elapsed between the reign of Kılıç Arslan II (1156-1192) and the Mongol invasion. Although historical sources give us information concerning the various buildings such as mosques, *madrasa*-s (schools), hans (caravanserai) and *hamam*-s (bath) erected in Aksaray by the Sultan Kılıç Arslan, not one of them has survived to the present day. It seems certain that it was Kılıç Arslan who first embarked on the construction of the caravanserai, a type of building that was to occupy a place of first priority among the buildings erected by the later Sultans. It is interesting to note that the Sultans built remarkably few schools. The two imperial schools to have survived belong to the *sifahane* (hospital) and medical school types. These consisted of the complex erected in Kayseri in 1204-1205 by Kayhusrav I and his sister, and the Sivas hospital and medical school erected by Kaykavus I in Sivas in 1217. The foundation of buildings to be used for religious education was left to other benefactors and the responsibility shouldered above all by the Seljuk viziers. It was by these viziers that the famous schools that constituted the foundation stones of Seljuk monumental architecture in the cities were founded. In erecting caravanserais, the Sultans were actually implementing a definite economic policy. They were acting, too, in accordance with a clear awareness of the existence of centuries-old trade routes, the products of a commercial activity and an age-old civilisation that had developed in the course of many hundreds of years. The caravanserais were a symbol of strength and power. They were built on a national scale and not in accordance with the narrow confines of any single city. In Asia, the Seljuks had become used to wide open spaces and the ability to set their seal on the land, and this was to play an important role in Anatolia, combined with a practical aim and function. Moreover, both the caravanserai and the hospitals served a much larger number of people than did the schools.

On the other hand, no matter who the founder may have been, the fact that even the weakest and most insignificant of the Sultans would be commemorated by glorious titles encouraged them to register their existence in this way.

Figure 1: The Crown gate of Divrigi Hospital (Dar al-Shifa). Source: *Ord. Prof. Dr. A. Süheyl Unver Nakishanesi Yorumuyla Divrigi Ulucami ve Sifahanesi Tas Bezemeleri, VIII. Turk Tip Tarihi Kongresi 16-18 Haziran 2004 Sivas-Divrigi* (ed. Nil Sari, G. Mesara, N. Colpan), Istanbul 2004, p. 1.

What sort of men were the builders who endowed their country with a new physiognomy? The life on the members of the Anatolian Seljuk dynasty, characterised by the most extraordinarily violent and dramatic events and by adventures reminiscent of those recounted in ancient myth and legend, was admirably suited to be made the subject of artistic or literary work. Artistic treatment was precluded by the lack of any tradition of narrative painting or sculpture, but it is amazing that these Shakespearean figures should never have been chosen as subjects of any branch of literature. The Seljuk Sultans were educated individuals with knowledge of the world. They cultivated the fruits of Persian culture side by side with Turkish customs and usages, and continued the old traditional ceremonies. Although they were affected by Christian influences in the recesses of their private lives, they were eager to emphasize their devotion to Islam.

The inhabitants of the Anatolian cities too contributed to the architectural environment a series of mosques and tombs as well as some schools and caravanserais, but our information is limited to their names. After 1243, members of the Seljuk dynasty played no further role as founders of public buildings. Under Mongol occupation the country no longer consisted of state lands *(mirî)*, and, what is more, the state treasury was no longer in a position to be so generous. On the other hand, the emirs, whose wealth and property continued to increase until, in this respect, they surpassed even the old Sultans, played an increasingly important role in architectural activities, particularly in the cities, in which they founded a number of schools. It is indeed, to the emirs that we owe most of the masterpieces of Seljuk architecture.

The years 1243-1308 may well be described as the period of the emirs as far as both history and architecture are concerned. The years 1262-1277 are generally known as the period of Muinuddin Pervane, while Sahip Ata Fahreddin Ali and Celaleddin Karatay are the most important of all the emirs who engaged in building activity.

Field of Construction: 13th-century Anatolia resembled one vast building site. One building after another arose either in the cities themselves or in the open countryside that lay between them. Building construction covered the whole of the Seljuk realm. The local craftsmen and artisans were insufficiently numerous to undertake such a vast quantity of work by themselves, and the cooperation was sought of workers from neighbouring countries. Still we should not exaggerate the numbers of foreign craftsmen involved Prom the 12th century onwards there had been created an army of craftsmen and artisans of sufficient size to undertake, if not all, at least a considerable number of the buildings involved.

Unfortunately, the building activity can be recreated only in our imagination. We have no pictures such as those illustrating the construction of the medieval European cathedrals. Nor do we have records of the craftsmen's contracts, their working hours, pay and method of payment, construction costs, building materials etc.

Patron-Artisan Relationships and the Construction of the Buildings

A common artistic outlook and a common cultural background bound the patrons and artisans. It is true that the artisan was not in a position to in anyway oppose the wishes of a powerful patron. Nevertheless, a common cultural upbringing allowed the craftsman freedom of expression. A particular patron might make a certain request or insist on some special point. In the buildings founded by Sahip Ata, for instance, calligraphy plays a predominant role in the design of the whole. On the other hand, works from the same patron may display quite different compositions, as in the case of the Ince Minareli Madrasa in Konya and the Gok Madrasa in Sivas, both of which were founded by Sahip Ata, which suggests that the artisan was given a certain amount of freedom and that he was capable of bringing his own powers of persuasion to bear. Still, the inscription border on the portal of the Ince Minareli Madrasa shows that the wishes of the patron were normally complied with.

In view of the predominant influence exerted by Ala' al-Din Kaykubad I in both the spiritual and material spheres, it would be difficult to deny a close connection between the artistic outlook of the patron and the works he founded. We know that he took a close interest in these buildings, and that the influence he exerted arose from his assimilation of the images common to the prevalent spiritual climate rather than to his own individual character. Although the work yields obvious clues regarding the patron and the patron

obvious clues regarding the building, the essential factor is to be found in the environment in which the patron was brought up and which he himself had a share in forming.

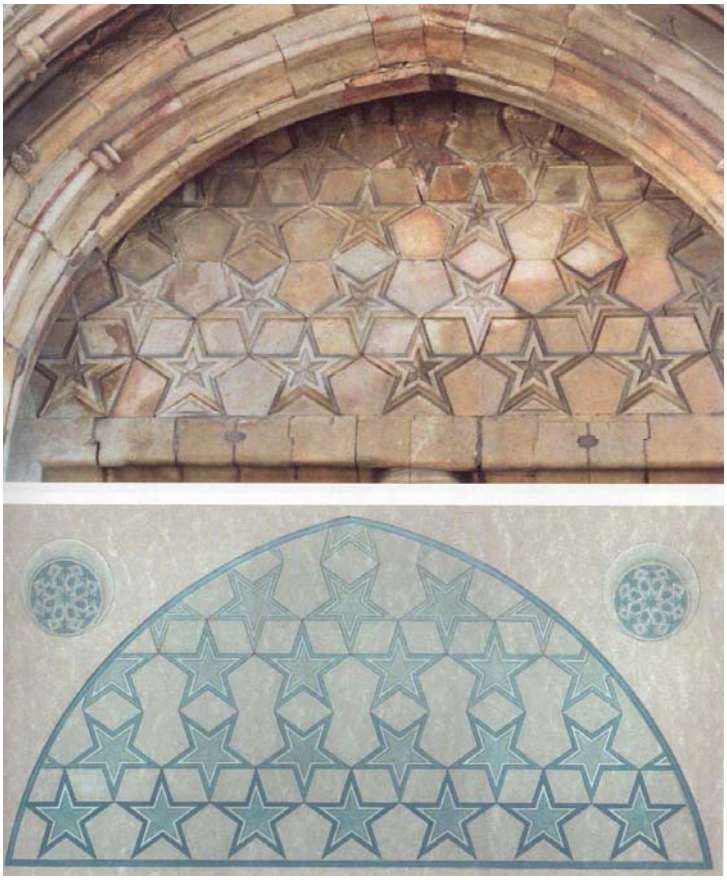

Figure 2: Detail figures from Divrigi Hospital. Source: *Ord. Prof. Dr. A. Süheyl …*, p. 7.

The lack of any references to Anatolian art of this period in the written sources of the time leaves us face to face with the works themselves. We endeavour to extract results from stylistic analyses and the history of stylistic development. There is also the question of signatures, which reveals the position of the artist in society and which yields the greatest amount of evidence regarding Anatolian art. Many signatures are to be found on stone, tiles, wood and metalwork. But information is restricted to the names themselves. Information regarding the individual artist must be extracted from an analysis of the style reflected in the work, and from what we can grasp from the imagery employed. As the craftsmen themselves are products of the artistic environment in which they operate, the nature and character of this environment is as significant as the works themselves.

Undoubtedly, these works are the results of a communal effort. Individual, and often itinerary, groups of artisans constructed buildings. There can be no denying the existence of different workshops and groups, but no matter how many workers were actually engaged in the work, the individual who carved his signature on the portal or the facade must have been responsible for the plan and its realisation, especially in compositions of an organic character. It is only natural that large buildings should be the result of

"collective" or "group" work, but in Anatolian buildings the creation of and responsibility for form and style lay in the hands of architects resembling the "master architects" of the European cathedrals.

The various workers employed in the construction of these buildings may be grouped in the following categories; those responsible for the financial side of the operation; the architect responsible for the plan of the building and the draughtsmen responsible for drawing the plans (these draughtsmen were young apprentice architects that trained by the side of the architect); the labourers who carried out the rough work on the site as well as skilled workers; stone-masons, brick-layers and tile workers; those who prepared the plans and those who realised them, possibly the architects themselves or others in close cooperation with the architects and, finally, the experts in calligraphy.

The Use and Influence of Form: We find the artistic resources of the various groups of craftsmen and of the stone-masons in particular displayed in works filled with motifs of rich and varied provenance. The appearance of compositions displaying a wealth of widely used and widely known motifs, and of forms and, designs from Asia, Iran, Mesopotamia and the Caucasus, Georgia and Armenia, dating from both Islamic and pre-Islamic times is the result of a close cooperation between the architects and the stonemasons. A host of craftsmen employing motifs of widely different provenance created works that give the impression that the craftsmen suggested motifs with which they were familiar and designs in which they were already skilled, and that these, once approved, were applied to the work. The really essential point was that these should be in conformity with the intent and purpose of the composition. It was of vital importance either that the craftsmen arriving form abroad should succeed in establishing a certain sympathy with the Anatolian artistic environment or that only those who had succeeded in setting up such a relationship should participate in the work. The motifs encountered in Seljuk designs and compositions are often striking and unusual, but they are never "alien", they are never at variance with the forms to which they are applied.

The appearance in Seljuk works of forms stemming from neighbouring regions and their giving rise to resemblances that call up certain associations arises from their inherent suitability for use in the Anatolian artistic environment in the service of the aim intended or from their functional compatibility. To refer each example to a particular influence would be highly misleading.

There is a striking resemblance between the Anatolian kumbets with their round bodies and conical roofs and the towers of the Armenian churches. But why should the Turks, who possessed an ancient tradition of funerary architecture, feel the need, on arriving in Anatolia, of constructing some of their burial towers, all of them independent buildings in the form of a church tower, an element constituting only one part of a complete building? What sort of link could be found between the church tower and the tomb, and in what way might the tomb be "influenced" by the church tower? The Seljuk's, in whose traditions there existed a close relationship between the mortuary tent and the tomb, must have found this Anatolian form, which so closely resembles the Asiatic, very familiar, and proceeded to employ it in their funerary architecture. They chose a form with which they were already familiar, and in doing so, they offered a typical example of the adoption of a familiar form without any transfer of functional import.

The Reflection in the Expression: For us, the way in which the transition to form and expression is effected by our topics of discussion is important. This subject gives researchers in the sociology of art much thought and hesitation. Is there a path leading from building organisation to form? Work on the analysis

and interpretation of artistic development would seem to be limited to the determination of the background, a purely "secondary activity". Sociologists of art find the history of style inadequate and divorced from the environment. Art historians need an analysis of form. In view of criticisms that the history of style is insufficient for the interpretation of a work of art, we must keep in mind that in the environment in which the work of art is created there is a common creative power that displays itself as a motive force in every field. Our basis is the spiritual climate and a life force that has absorbed centuries of imagery.

The Representation of the Cosmos

The Cosmic Diagram in Architecture: The cosmic images that found in mysticism a fertile ground for their continued existence are not confined to religious buildings. As a matter of fact, their wide-spread use will provide common ground on which to base our interpretation.

The idea of the buildings as a cosmic image may well be based on the conception of the Turkish tent as a "little universe". The nomad wanders freely over the face of the earth. The world he knows is his home. His tent is his only shelter in the midst of the endless steppes. It is his little universe. His feeling of being in a little universe within a larger world has an intensity that is never to be encountered in dwellings in a more settled existence. It is bound, not to the soil, but to this greater world.

The cosmic plan found in monumental architecture is more highly organised and more "settled" than the temporary structure of the tent. In Anatolian Turkish architecture the cosmic image exists in all buildings employed as dwellings. It is to be found in the school, the caravanserai and in the tomb, the "house of the dead".

The four *eyvan*-s central courtyard plan, which has been interpreted as an image of the cosmos, is a spatial arrangement that can, as is well known, be traced back to a very distant past and is very closely connected with the Seljuks. As a matter of fact, as a plan employed in mosques and schools, it is generally accepted as having originated with them. We find this plan exemplified in the most important schools in Anatolia, and, if caravanserais are included, Evdir Han (1219/20) may also be cited, showing that the same plan existed throughout Anatolia.

The significance of the four *eyvan* central courtyard plan lies in its constituting a symbol of the cosmos with a symmetrical whole balanced around a central point The *eyvan*-s were placed in the four main directions on two axes intersecting at right angles. Here we find a cosmic symbol as old as humanity itself, known in Buddhism as the Mandala. But the Mandala is not a symbol confined to Buddhism. It is found widely throughout the world. Before its application to architecture and its use in the *eyvan* it was to be found as a four directional arrangement around a central point.

The *eyvan* is a half open chamber offering coolness and shade much appreciated in hot climates. It was an important architectural element in private dwellings as well as in palaces and formed the basis of a definite type of house to be found in southeastern Anatolia. It was also widely used throughout Anatolia in monumental architecture. Interpreted as a door to the heavens and a door to paradise, it possessed layer upon layer of symbolic significance. In Seljuk Turkey, though only one mosque was to be found based on the four *eyvan*-s plan scheme, this type of plan is to be seen in domed schools as well as in schools with open courtyard. The dome employed here is of course another cosmic symbol representing the dome of the

sky. In Anatolian Seljuk architecture, the combination of dome and *eyvan* fused to form a single organic whole. The other spaces were in the form of roofed chambers opening, not into one another, but into the courtyard or domed central space. It is all a question of convergence upon a centre constituting a common link between the various spaces and preventing the four *eyvan*-s courtyard from assuming a special place within the structure. The courtyard or central domed space performs the same function as that performed by the sofa in the traditional Turkish house. This feature of the Turkish house can be traced back to a very early date in monumental architecture, constituting another proof of the connection between monumental architecture and the private dwelling. The relation between the interior and the exterior in the traditional Turkish house also existed on a larger scale in the *eyvan madrasa*.

One rarely encounters even an approximate equality between the *eyvan*-s of a *madrasa*. The *eyvan* directly opposite the entrance is the principal *eyvan* and establishes one of the axes. The side *eyvan*-s provide the balance in the four-*eyvan* scheme. The porticos generally to be found in front of the rooms on the two sides of the courtyard afford access from the chambers to the courtyard and allow circulation. There may well have been a garden in the centre. In the Gök Madrasa, the cosmic symbol is repeated in the pool and its canals, the whole forming a central point with axes intersecting at *right* angles. This arrangement, in addition to the emphasis laid on the centre, also introduces the element of water. The pool placed under the dome in domed schools has this symbolic significance above its practical use.

The plan most widely used in Anatolian Seljuk caravanserais is what is generally known as the Sultan Han type, consisting of an open courtyard leading into winter quarters consisting of a roofed hall with vaulted aisles, the higher, central aisle being flanked by lower aisles. The height is an important element in the ventilation of the building, and a dome placed in the centre of the roofed hall sometimes provides extra illumination. Feeble illumination is also provided by the narrow slits in the walls.

Caravanserais in which the central aisle is surmounted by a dome include two Sultan Hans (1229- 1230 - 1236), Agzikara Han (1231), Karatay Han (1241), Sadeddin Han (1234), Incir Han (1238), Susuz Han, Ishakli Han (1249) as well the Horozlu, Egridir, Obruk, Sarı, Çay and Öresin Hans, the dates of which are unknown. In some of these, we find the development first to be seen in the Aksaray Sultan Han and subsequently found in the Karatay, Çay and Öresin Hans, of a cruciform arrangement resulting from the widening of the central aisle on each side of the central dome with the two arms intersecting at right angles. In other words, the centre and the four cardinal directions produce a cosmic diagram.

The appearance of the cosmic symbol in imperial buildings, particularly in the palaces, which constituted the ruler's residence, is a phenomenon encountered throughout the centuries in every part of the world. The same tradition is known to have existed among the Turks. Even among the nomads, the tent of the Khan constituted a cosmic symbol. As nothing remains of the Seljuk palaces at Konya and Kayseri and the sources are, silent on the subject we have no evidence for the existence of cosmic symbolism in these instances.

The cosmic diagram is also reflected in the kiosk *mescid* or mosque (a sort of mosque pavilion). This was always situated in the courtyard and occupied a very special place in the Aksaray Sultan Han. In the Kayseri-Sivas Sultan Han the *mescid* is located on the same axis as the dome in the central aisle. A new feature of this caravanserai consists of the relief on the arches of the kiosk *mescid* which enriches the

cosmic layout with its symbolic character. The cosmic figure of the dragon here depicted bears various meanings and is to be encountered in a number of different caravanserais.

Another important feature is the alignment of the buildings. An examination of all the Seljuk buildings reveals that most of them are aligned according to the four cardinal points of the compass, which suggest that concern with the alignment of the building in the four main directions had retained its traditional importance. That the four cardinal points should have been "embedded" in, the four-*eyvan* plan is a fact of great significance and gives added emphasis to the cosmic diagram.

Another Anatolian Seljuk form of architecture with symbolic significance is the Kumbet, and it would appear reasonable to interpret this on the basis of the mortuary tent/kurgan tradition. The Kurgan, with its underground burial chamber, establishes a link with the sharp-pointed cone of the tent above.

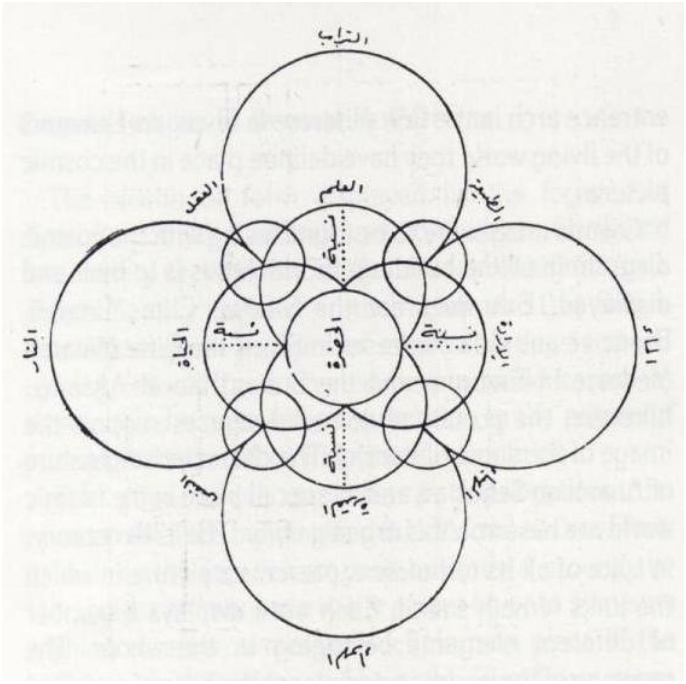

Figure 3: Extracted form the *Futuhat* by Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi. Source: Semra Ogel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, Istanbul: Akbank Yayinları, 1994, p. 126.

Cosmic Images in Decorative Patterns: The wealth of form displayed by the facades of Anatolian Seljuk buildings can no doubt be attributed to a variety of reasons. But that the whole significance should be concentrated on the facade and that Seljuk art, whose main medium of expression lay in stone carving, should have created here a world carved in stone, is to be regarded as something in the nature of pure expression rather than mere ostentation.

The door, which provides a link between the microcosm of the building and the external environment, as well as the façade composition formed around the threshold, communicate to the passer-by or to someone wishing to enter, a message defining the place of the building, in the universe. The highly significant stone

carving on the facades, composed of calligraphy geometric and vegetal motifs and animal figures, has something to say to all.

In the first half of the 13th century, the principal motifs on the portals inviting one to enter and expressing the significance presented by the Seljuk building to the outer world, consisted of geometric motifs and, above all, of what we refer to as "star systems".

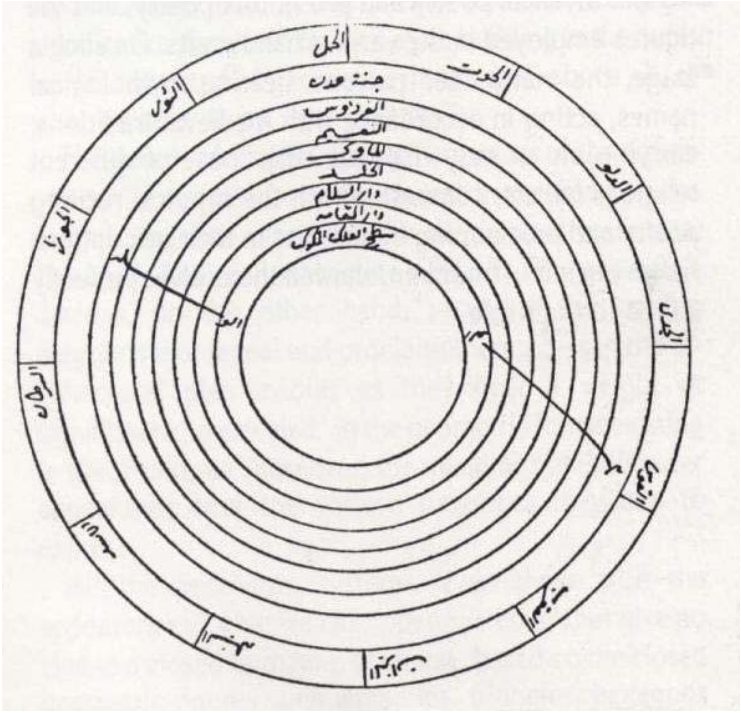

Figure 4: From the *Futuhat* by Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi. Source: Semra Ogel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, p. 126.

The geometric motifs, being themselves of the nature of cosmic symbols, are the closest in meaning to the cosmic diagrams represented in the architectural plans. The figured reliefs do this quite explicitly. The geometric designs, on the other hand, resemble the cosmic diagrams that reveal and proclaim themselves in the architectural plan insofar as they bear a weight of significance "concealed" in the geometric forms existing in the structures. Moreover, the meanings in their outer appearance bear the various messages they aim to express.

All the geometric systems, even those with the appearance of what we call "open systems" that give no *due* to a closed form, are, of course, based on the closed geometric figures such as circles, triangles, hexagons and octagons of which they are actually composed. These basic figures possess an accumulation of meaning acquired over the centuries, and if we go back far enough we shall find ourselves confronted with the basic geometrical figures of Plato. Starting out from the numerical cosmic laws of Pythagoras, Plato accepts the numbers given by these geometrical forms as cosmic numbers on the basis that cosmic phenomenon can be measured and expressed in mathematical terms. Thus, mathematics is the source of the laws of the universe and divine wisdom.

The star systems are founded on the circle and the intersection of the basic geometrical forms traced within it. It is linear movement in a state of perpetual transition from one star to another. None of the "arms" or "rays" of the stars are closed. All of them leap from one star to another in an infinite pattern. This produces an appearance based on a perpetual interlacing. It is this perpetual movement that achieves the desired appearance of 'unity within multiplicity'. This arrangement constitutes a cosmic order.

From within this perpetual repetition two movements emerge. One of these is the path traced by lines, the other is the return movement around the centre. In the continual linking paths, in the continual return movement and behind the continual formation around the centres, there lies the conception of a multiplicity of appearances within a single whole, the formation of a single unity or the infinite multiplication of the one.

The 'star' motifs to be found in these geometric compositions, which we have referred to as "star systems" or "star designs" may also be referred to as "vegetal motifs". In that case, the compositions are described in terms such as 'the flow of one flower to another' or 'the opening of the flowers'.

The single, cosmic unity behind all appearance is the principal theme of mysticism. Muhyiddin ibn Al-Arabi (1165-1235), one of the greatest of the mystics and perhaps the most influential of the preachers of *Vahdet-i Vucud* (unity of the universe, the philosophical basis for monotheism) explains the layers of the universe by means of circular lines. The scheme he employs consists of circles interlacing and intersecting around a central point. This is the basic plan of our star systems and clearly shows how a link has been formed between geometrical forms and Sufi images.

The difference of style to be observed in the 13th century may well be attributable to the dissolution of the central atelier in Konya. The more or less uniform picture presented during the first half of the 13th century is replaced by portals containing the names of artists such as Koluk and Kaluyan, by a marked diversity, with striking differences between one work and another, and an environment quite capable of creating unique compositions like the portal of the Ince Minareli Madrasa. The influence of the craftsmen or groups of craftsmen who had worked at Divrigi leads to individual expressions. There is very little uniformity even within the work of a single craftsman. It is now the period of Mevlana Jalal Al-Din Rumi, whose personality was to push the mysticism of Ibn Al-Arabi into the background. It is doubtless no mere coincidence that the star system no longer plays a dominant role in the compositions on the main portals. Kaluyan belonged to the Mevlana environment, and, in his work, a linear movement reflecting the cosmic laws has replaced by a rich diversity of appearances reflected in the material world. Yunus Emre and Haci Bektaş, though they may appear to differ from Mevlana, are both much closer to Mevlana than to Ibn Al-Arabi. Their world of colourful images combines in typical compositions peculiar to Anatolia. Apart from the dominance in design of the much more easily comprehensible vegetal motifs, reliefs in the form of individual 'tableaux" provide the key to the whole. There is no need to force figures from the Asian animal calendar into the reliefs depicting animal heads on leaves on the corner stones of the entrance arch in the Gök Madrasa in Sivas. As elements of the living world, they have definite place in the cosmic picture.

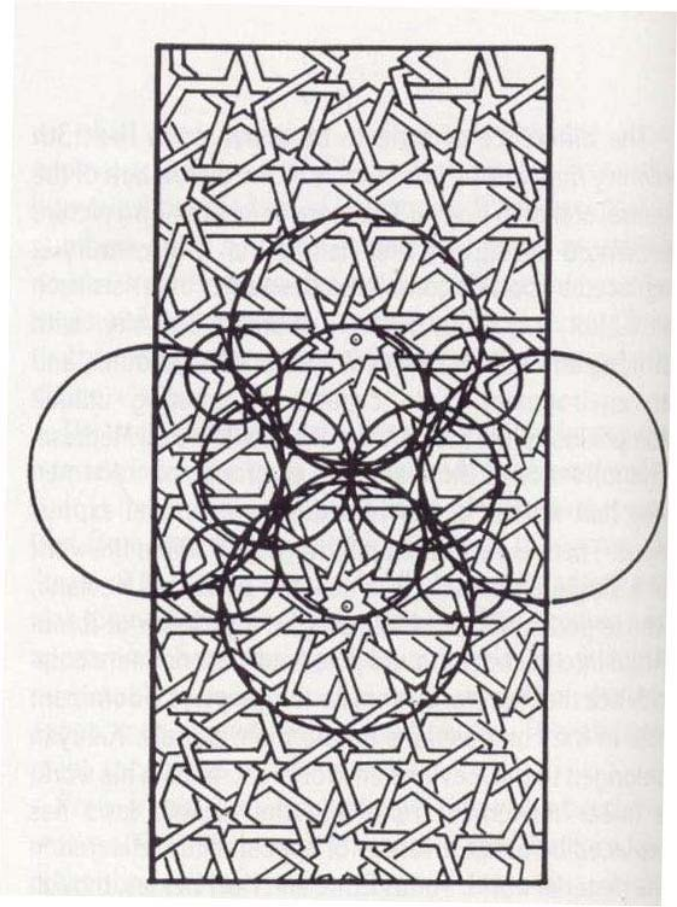

Figure 5: The detailed figure of the star system of the gate of Evdir Han in Antalya-Burdur road. Source: Semra Ogel, *Anadolu'nun Selçuklu Çehresi*, p. 126.

Cosmic images are to be found fusing with the cosmic diagrams in all the buildings in which these features are displayed. Examples are the Şifaiye, Çifte Minareli, Buruciye and Gök Madrasas in Sivas, the Çifte Minareli Madrasa in Erzurum and the Sultan Han at Aksaray. Likewise, the portals of domed schools support the image of the dome of the sky.

The characteristic feature of Anatolian Seljuk art and its special place in the Islamic world are based on this organic unity. The 13th century, in spite of all its turbulence, presents a picture in which the links remain sound. Each work displays a number of different elements belonging to the whole. The message of the cosmic principles at the base of a myriad appearance, the call to achieve greater awareness and to take one's place in the great cosmic order, is unchanging. With the unity achieved by these elements of varied provenance, fuse the other products of the period, mystical poetry and prose, folk poetry, and the figures employed in the various handicrafts. On such a stage, the many-sided patrons, bearing mythological names, acting in accordance with medieval traditions, carrying on an easy dialogue with those of different religious beliefs, conversing with the mystics, reciting poetry and proclaiming themselves in their inscriptions *Kasim ul Amir Al Muminin,* showed themselves perfectly suited to their role.

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