

TOMBS OF PRE-CLASSICAL AND CLASSICAL ERAS OF TURKISH ARCHITECTURE IN ANATOLIA

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ABSTRACT

In the Anatolian Turkish Architecture, during the Pre-Classical and Classical eras among the Islamic buildings, tombs which are memorial graves are the structures where we see the strongest characteristics whereby a building acquires monumental status. The emergence of tombs as memorial graves began in Horasan and Türkistan (Central Asia) in Xth century. It is know that the memorial tombs seen, first in Iran and then in Anatolia from the XIth century onwards, the ones vertical in character with pointed hoods (cupolas) evolved from tower graves which, in their turn, evolved from the shape of nomadic tents of central Asia. In the beginning cupolas were built of brick or stone but later stone was the only building material used in their construction. The Anatolian Seljuklu memorial graves were divided into two types according to their shape, vertical or horizontal in character.

During the Principalities Period (XIVth century) the construction of Seljuklu memorial graves, horizontal and vertical in character, continued to be built and in tombs vertical in character the variety increased.

Keywords: Tomb, Anatolia, Turkish, Seljuk, Classic, Principalities

ÖZET

Anadolu Türk Mimarisi'nde, Klâsik Öncesi ve Klâsik Devirlerde, İslâm yapıları arasında anıtsallaşma özelliğinin en etkili olarak görüldüğü eserler, anıt-mezarlar olan türbelerdir. Türbelerin anıt-mezar olarak ortaya çıkışı, X. Yüzyıldan itibaren Horasan ve Türkistan (Orta Asya) yörelerinde görülmektedir. XI. Yüzyıldan itibaren önce İran'da, sonra Anadolu'da görülen anıt-mezarlardan; sivri külâhlı, düşey karakterli türbelerin (Kümbet), kule-mezarlardan geliştiği ve bunların da Orta Asya'daki göçebe çadırlarından kaynaklanan bir biçim olduğu bilinmektedir. Önceleri tuğla veya taş malzeme ile inşa edilmiş kümbetlerin esas yapı malzemesi, sonradan yalnızca taş olmuştur. Anadolu Selçuklular'da mezar-anıtları, biçimlerine göre Düşey ve Yatay Karakterli olmak üzere iki tipe ayrılmaktadır. Beylikler Dönemi'nde (XIV. Yüzyıl) da Anadolu

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YDÜ Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, C. II, No.2, (Ekim 2009)

Selçuklu Yatay ve Düşey Karakterli anıt-mezarları yapımı devam etmiş, Düşey Karakterli türbelerde çeşit artmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türbe, Anadolu, Türk, Selçuklu, Klâsik, Beylikler

Introduction

In our research on tombs of Pre-Classical and Classical Eras of Turkish Architecture in Anatolia, we have observed that among the Islamic buildings the ones that exhibit effective monumental characteristics are the tombs.¹

In Islamic culture, however, we rarely encounter works similar to these, before the X. Century. The appearance of tombs as mausoleums in the Islamic Culture dates from the X. Century in the neighborhoods of Horasan and Turkmenistan.² The oldest surviving tomb was built in the capital of the Abbasies. One other of the early buildings surviving is the domed circumambulation corridor in *Kubbet-us-Sakhra*.³

From the tomb-memorials found in Iran, dating back to XI. Century and later in Anatolia, we understand that tombs, conical in shape and vertical in character, evolved from turret shape burial places which in their turn, are linked to nomad tent shapes converted into stone structures.⁴

Although the Anatolian tomb memorials, compared with Karahanlı, Gazneli and Great Seljuk tomb-memorials, were smaller in size, a distinct improvement can be observed in their (rich) architecture.

The earlier cupolas were built either with bricks or stones. In the construction of the later cupolas, however, only stones were used.⁵ Initially, memorial-tombs were built as separate freestanding structures, but in time they were incorporated into mosque or madrasah buildings.

¹ M. O. Arık, "Erken Devir Anadolu-Türk Mimarisi'nde Türbe Biçimleri", *Anadolu*, C. XI, Ankara 1969, p. 57.

² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58; C. E., Arseven, *Sanat Ansiklopedisi*, C. V, İstanbul, 1975, p. 2076.

⁵ O. Aslanapa, *Türk Sanatı II*, İstanbul, 1973, p. 121.

This research has also shown that in the Anatolian Turkish Architecture, tombs inscribed with a great variety of different typographies went through some changes and improvements during Pre-Classical and Post-Classical eras.

Cupolas and Tombs in Anatolia during the Seljuk Era:

Tomb-memorials are among the buildings in Anatolia that from architectural and decorative points of view, improved greatly during the Seljuk Era. The tomb-memorials of this era are said to be either vertical or horizontal in character, depending on their general appearance (Fig. 1, 2). The ones horizontal in character show further diversity like:

- a) Polygonal prism shape structures with pyramid type hoods,
- b) Structures like cupolas with a covering system (roof) and occupying a section in a madrasah,
- c) Square prism shape structures,
- d) Cubic structures with polygonal lute or pyramid shape hoods,
- e) Cylindrical shape structures with conical hoods,
- f) Prism shape structure changing into cylindrical shapes with conical hoods,
- g) Cubic structures with domes,
- h) Cubic structures with cupolas on top as second body with covering.

Tomb memorials are composed of three different sections;⁶

- 1) The section with the actual burial ground (the *Base*, the *Crypt*),
- 2) The section where the symbolic coffin is placed. (The *Visiting Cell*, the *Body*)
- 3) The covering (*Roof*) (Fig. 3).

⁶ M. Sözen, et.al., *Türk Mimarisi'nin Gelişimi ve Mimar Sinan*, İstanbul, 1975, p. 73-74.

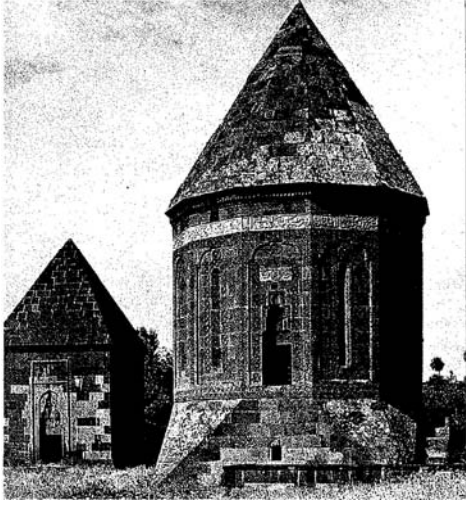


Figure 1- The Tomb of Vertical In Character (M. Sözen-1975)

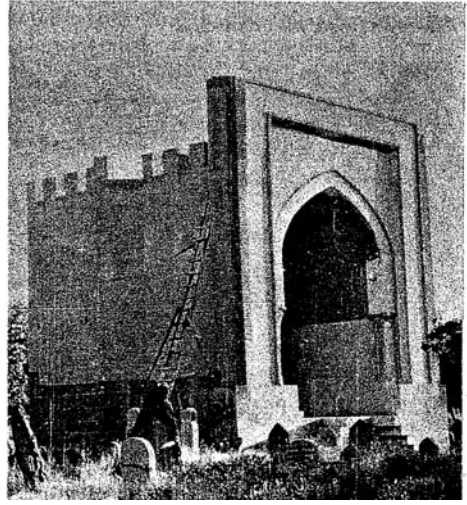


Figure 2- The Tomb of Horizontal In Character (O. Aslanapa-1989)

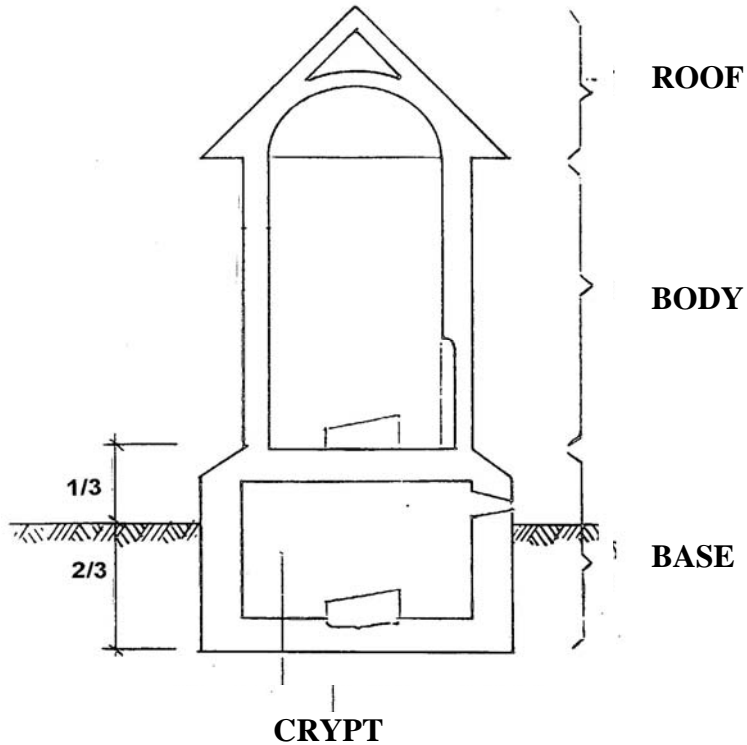


Figure 3- Cupola

The Crypt, a great part of which is below ground level, has a horizontal rectangle prism appearance.⁷ The actual burial place in this tomb cell, also known as “mummy house” is, in the main square shaped, although occasionally cross shaped ones also can be seen and are covered with simple, pointed or arched roofs (Fig. 4a, 4b, 4c). Access to the Crypt is through a small door on ground level and down some steps. For light and ventilation there are small openings high up in the walls.⁸

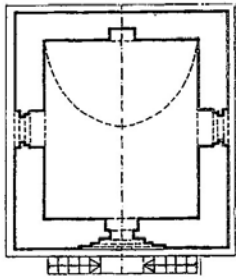


Figure 4a- Square Plan

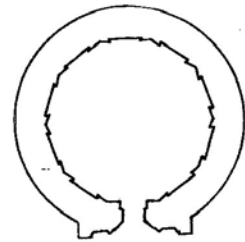


Figure 4b- Circular Plan

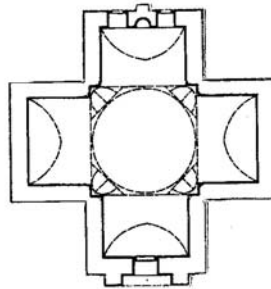


Figure 4c- Crosswise Plan

Inside the body, which is accessible by stairs on two sides (Two sided stairs), there is a symbolic niche (mihrab). This area is also called “Mescit” (a small mosque). While in some works the body can be built directly on the base, in others it is placed on the base together with a conduction component.⁹

The covering, depending on the shape of the body, can be pyramidal or conic; dome shaped on the inside and like a hood on the outside.

⁷ Arık, *op.cit.*, p. 65.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

We have examined two different types of tombs horizontal in character; the single iwan bodied type and the rectangular baldachin type. These tombs are mostly encountered as from the second half of the XIII. Century.

Horizontal tombs other than these two types are only examples of some exceptional cases.

We see a multiplicity in building materials used in the construction of tombs in Anatolia, during the Seljuk Period, instead of just bricks which had been used by the Great Seljuk people before their arrival in Anatolia, Karahanlı and Gazneli people.¹⁰ Alongside tombs built of bricks only on stone foundations, we see those built solely of stone and others built of stone up to the roof with brick coverings.

Kırşehir Malik Gazi Cupola (1228), *Kulak Cupola* (end of XII. Century) *Hacı Çıkrık Cupola*, *Divriği Sitti Melik Cupola* (1195) in Kırşehir can be shown as examples of the Early Period (XII. Century) octagonal bodied tombs¹¹ (Fig. 5, 6).



Figure 5- Kırşehir Malik Gazi Cupola
(O. Aslanapa - 1989)

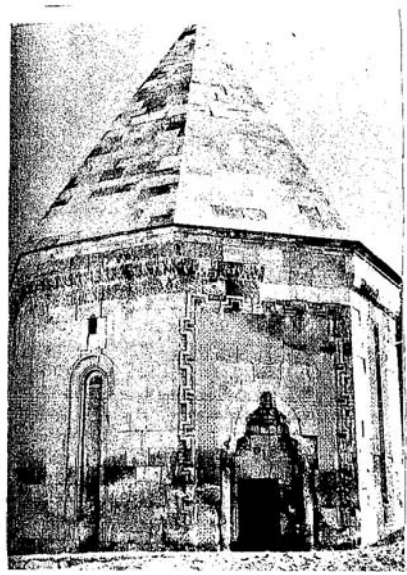


Figure 6- Divriği Sitti Melik Cupola
(O. Aslanapa - 1989)

¹⁰ S. K. Yetkin, *Türk Mimarisi*, Ankara 1970, p. 64.

¹¹ Sözen, et.al., *op.cit.*, p. 74.

Of the *Seljuk Cupolas* in Erzurum the most monumental one is that of *Emir Saltuk* (end of XII. Century) (Fig. 7, 8). It is an octagonal structure having triangular facades on all sides and a sylindrical lute shape cover ending in a compressed conical hood.¹² One other example of sylindrical cupolas is Döner (Revolving) Cupola (1276) in Kayseri; a twelve cornered body on a base with smoothed out top corners with mukarnas cornices and a conical hood on the outside and a domed sylindrical space inside (Fig. 9). A simplified version of *Kayseri Revolving Cupola* is *Çifte Minareli Medrese Cupola* (Twin Minaret Madrasah Cupola) (Fig. 10).

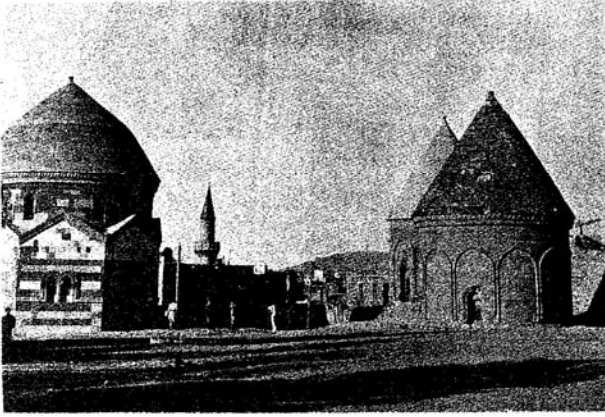


Figure 7- Erzurum Saltuklu Cupolas
(M. Sözen - 1975)



Figure 8- Emir Saltuk Cupola
(O. Aslanapa - 1973)

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 75.

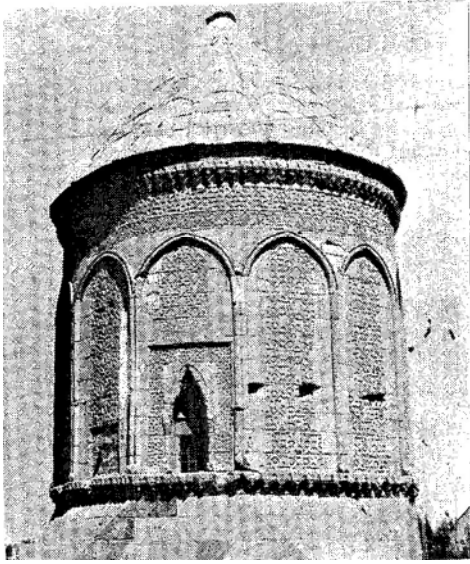


Figure 9- Kayseri Revolving Cupola
(O. Aslanapa - 1989)

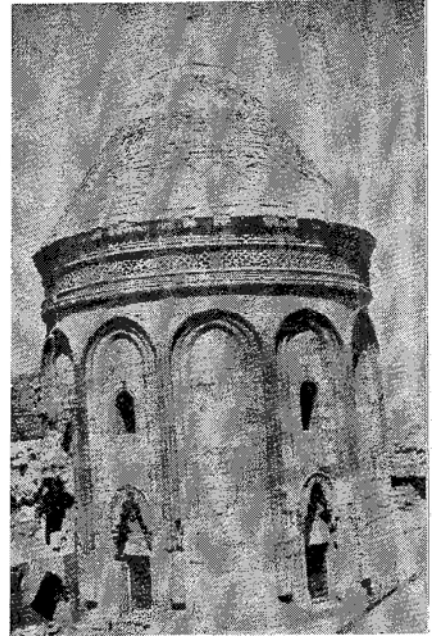


Figure 10- Erzurum Twin Minaret
Madrasah Cupola (O. Aslanapa-
1989)

Ahlat is yet another place in Anatolia where there are many tombs.¹³ The prismatic bodied, pyramid hooded *Şeyh Necmeddin Cupola* (1222) is an example of these (Fig. 11).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

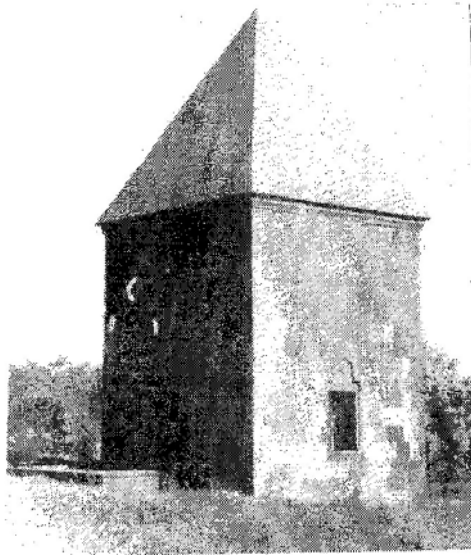


Figure 11- Ahlat Şeyh Necmeddin Cupola
(O. Aslanapa - 1973)

The only example of the most important tomb-memorials in Anatolia is *Mama Hatun Cupola* in Tercan (early XIII. Century).¹⁴ This cupola which is unlike the rest of them in appearance is entirely built of cut stone with a surrounding wall. On the inside of this wall there are eleven niches and on the exterior the portal is built higher than the wall¹⁵ (Fig. 12, 13, 14). The cupola has a cylindrical body with circular segments and a segmented conical hood.

¹⁴ O. Aslanapa, *Türk Sanatı*, 2. B., İstanbul, 1989, p. 160.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

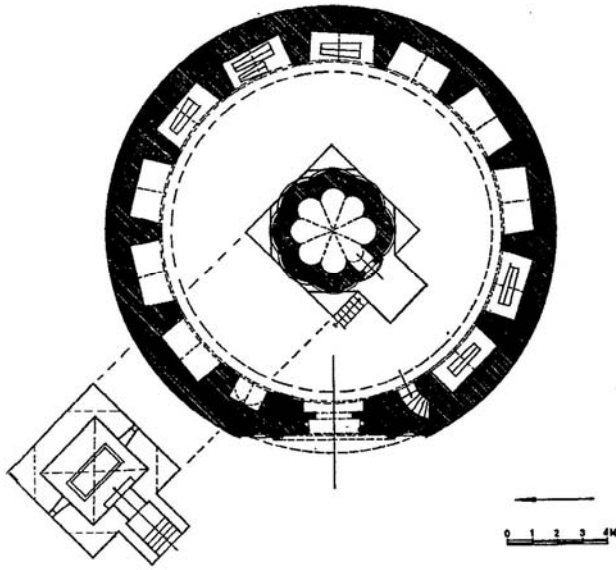


Figure 12- Plan of Tarcan Mama Hatun Cupola (O. Aslanapa - 1989)

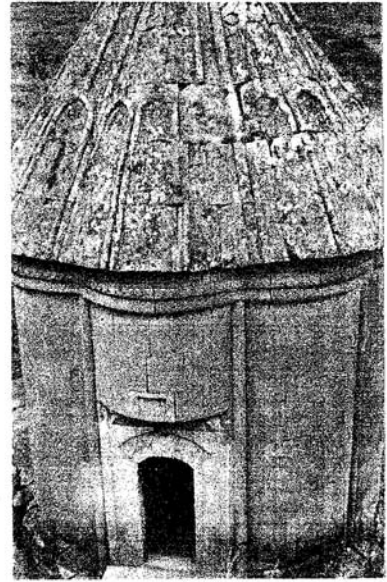


Figure 13- Tarcan Mama Hatun Cupola (O. Aslanapa - 1989)

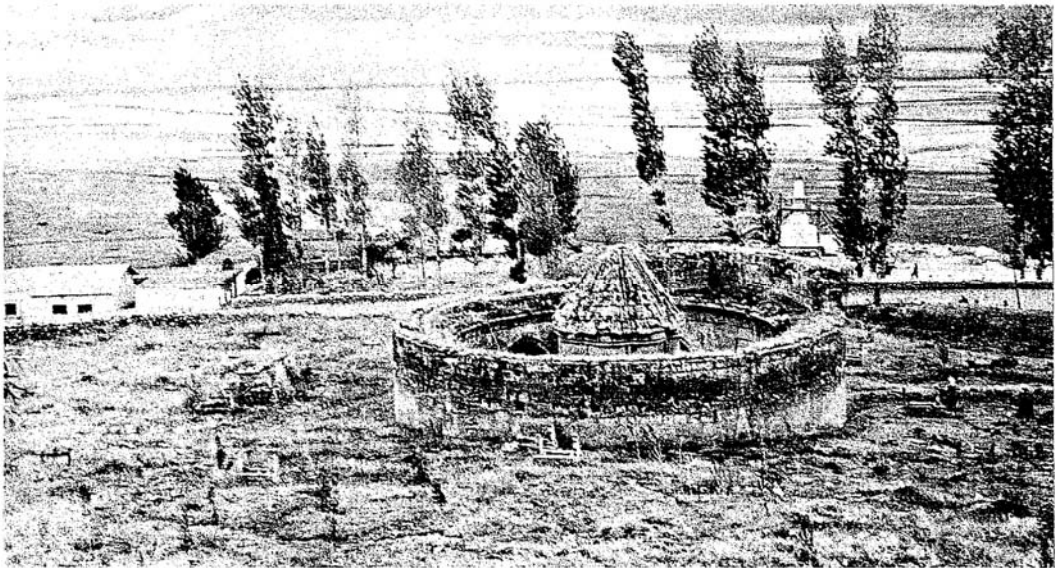


Figure 14- Tarcan Mama Hatun Cupola and Surrounding Walls (O. Aslanapa - 1989)

The tomb of *Gömeç Hatun*, built in late XIII. Century is given as an example of tombs horizontal in character (iwan type) (Fig. 15, 16, 17). The facade of this tomb, which consists of a mummy-house at the bottom, leading up to an iwan, is of monumental quality and decorated with mosaic tiles. The iwan has got a pointed arch and is covered with a barrel vault.¹⁶ It is designed as a small mosque (mescit) for praying.¹⁷ Stones were used for sub-foundation and for the lower and upper parts bricks were utilized. In the middle of lateral surfaces there are triangular support turrets.¹⁸

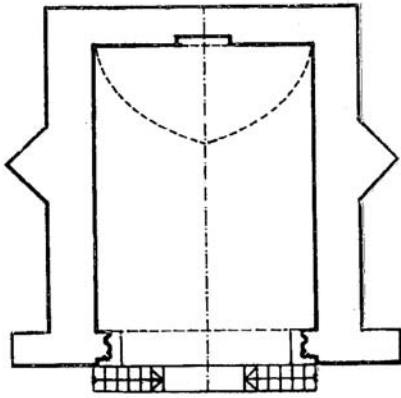


Fig.15- Plan of Gömeç H. Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

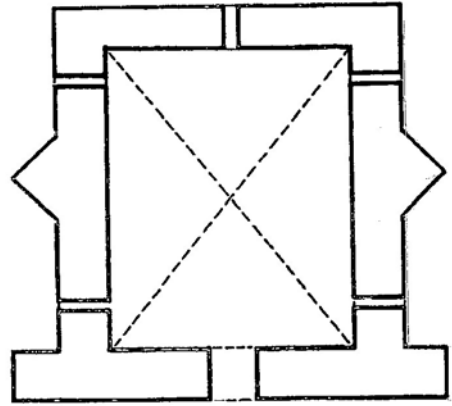


Fig. 16- Mummy-House Plan of Gömeç H. Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

¹⁶ Yetkin, *op.cit.*, p. 68.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

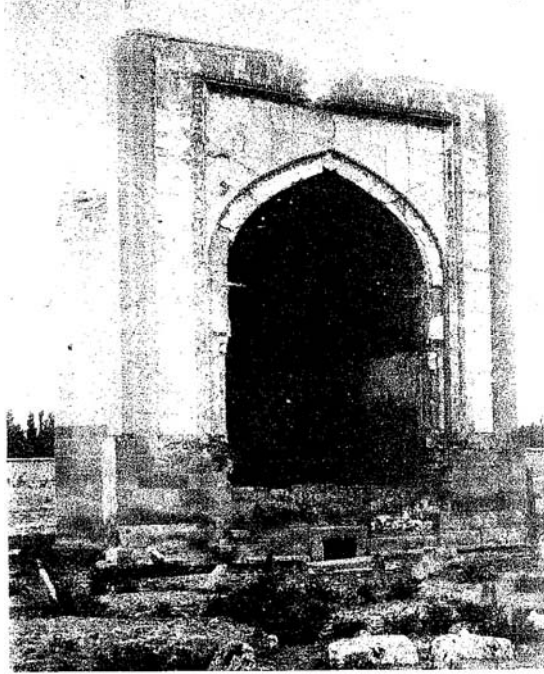


Figure 17- Gömeç Hatun Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

The Principalities Era (XIV. Century):

The construction of tombs, both horizontal (iwan) type and vertical (cupola) type in character, continued during the Principalities Era also, only during this period there was an increase in the variety of cupola type tombs new cupola types appeared.¹⁹ Alongside the cylindrical octagonal bodied cupolas, pentagonal and hexagonal forms were seen; the baldachin type tombs appeared on the scene. *Yörükdede Cupola* in Ankara (late XIV. Century) is the only example of the pentagonal type.²⁰ As an example of the hexagonal type tombs we can show *Hüma Hatun Tomb* (1449) in Bursa. This tomb has got a dome covering on a hexagonal body (Fig. 18). The lower part of *Mevlâna Tomb* in Konya (1397) is seen as baldachin type (Fig. 19). *Hasan Bey Cupola* (1347) known as *Güçük Minare* (Stump Minaret) built by Eretnalılar in Sivas is another type of construction consisting of two different bodies placed on top of each other. *Hasan Bey Cupola*, has got a cylindrical body on triangular brick supports on top of a

¹⁹ M. O. Arık, *Turkish Art and Architecture*, Ankara, 1985, p. 112.

²⁰ Arık, *Erken Devir Anadolu-Türk Mimarisi'nde Türbe Biçimleri*, p. 72.

square base built of cut stone. Unfortunately the hood on this cupola is demolished (Fig. 20).



Figure 18- Bursa Muradiye Tombs (M. Sözen – 1975)



Figure 19- Konya Mevlâna Tomb
(C. E. Arseven)



Figure 20- Hasan Bey Cupola
(O. Aslanapa - 1989)

Improvements in the facade of iwan type tombs are seen during the Principalities Era. The iwan was closed, doors and windows were installed. The iwan of *Sultan Mesut's Tomb* in Amasya with its closed arch and doorways is a good example of improvements on the facades of iwans (Fig. 21).

Also, in polygonal bodied cupolas portal structures are seen. *Kırşehir Aşık Paşa Tomb* (1322) with its long and narrow portal along one side is the best

example of this (Fig. 22, 23). In vertical type tombs, dome covered entrance porches were designed. *Şeyh Halili Cupola* in Musalla, Konya and *Sinan Paşa Cupola* in Gelibolu (Gallipoli) with their entrance porches are examples of this type (Fig. 24, 25). The entrance units added to the body in *Emir Ali* (1350) and *Ali Cafer* (mid. XIV. Century) cupolas are further examples of improvements that took place during Principalities Era (Fig. 26).

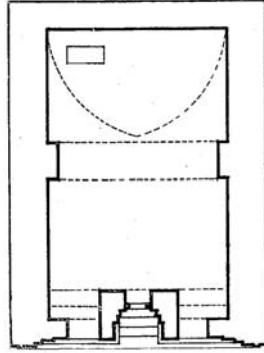


Fig. 21- Plan of Amasya Sultan Mesud Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

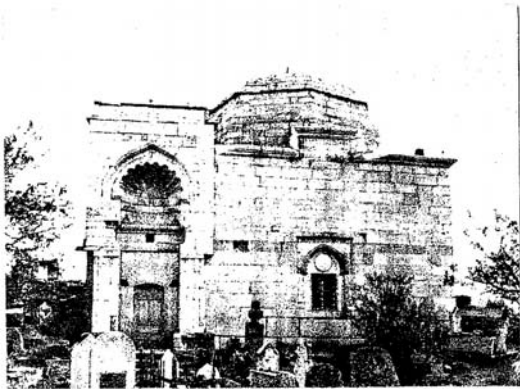


Figure 22- Kırşehir Aşık Paşa Tomb
(O. Aslanapa - 1989)

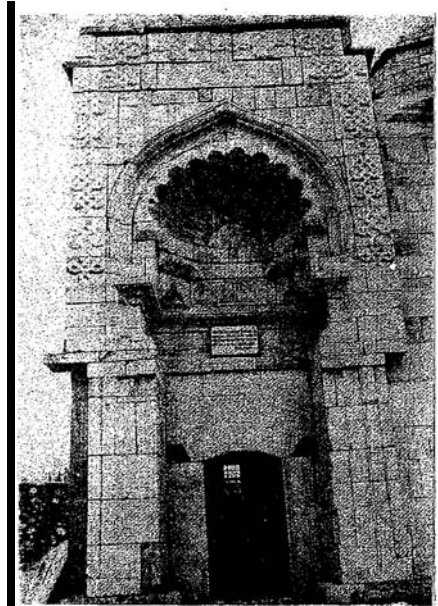


Figure 23- Portal of Aşık Paşa
Tomb (O. Aslanapa – 1973)



Figure 24- Konya Şeyh Halili Tomb
(C. E. Arseven)

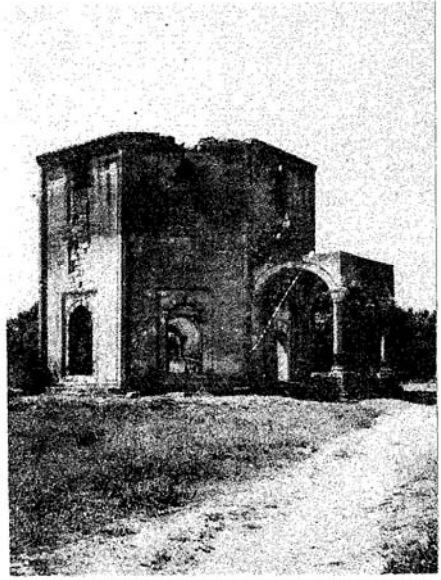


Figure 25- Gallipoli Sinan Paşa Tomb
(M. Sözen - 1975)

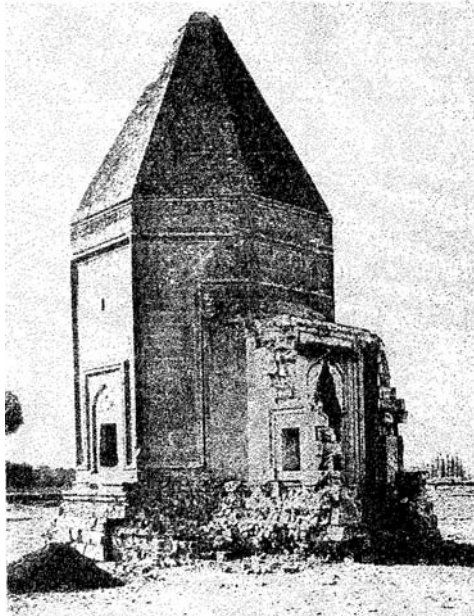


Figure 26- Kayseri Ali Cafer Cupola (C. E. Arseven)

An occasionally encountered rare type of tomb is the one which is half baldachin and half closed, like the Cupola of Ahlat Emir Bayındır (1492)²¹ (Fig. 27). Another rare type is the cupola with an octagonal lower and sixteen sided upper body. *Sungur Bey* (1335) and *Hüdavent Hatun* (1312) cupolas in Niğde are examples of this distinct variety (Fig. 28, 29).

One other type built during the Principalities Period is the tomb which was built by combining the horizontal iwan type with the vertical cupola type, like *Çerkez Bey Tomb* in Çayıralan. This tomb is created by the addition of an iwan in front of an octagonal prism shape cupola.²²

Because the Principality of Karamanoğulları was very ambitious and wanted to take the place of the Seljuk State it perpetuated their style and traditions.²³ The cupola of *Alâeddin Bey* in Karaman (end of XIV. Century) which exhibits a different architectural character to the tombs of the Seljuk Era, has a twelve sided body and a conical hood with a ledge. It is built of cut stone (Fig. 30).



Figure 27- Ahlat Emir Bayındır Cupola (M. Sözen - 1975)

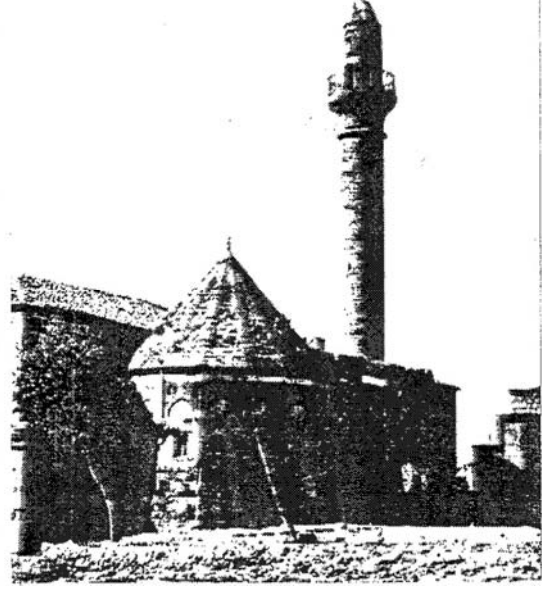


Figure 28- Niğde Sungur Bey Cupola (O. Aslanapa - 1977)

²¹ Sözen, et.al., *op.cit.*, p. 77.

²² Arık, *Erken Devir Anadolu-Türk Mimarisi'nde Türbe Biçimleri*, p. 93.

²³ O., Aslanapa, *Türk Sanatı II*, İstanbul, 1973. p. 202.

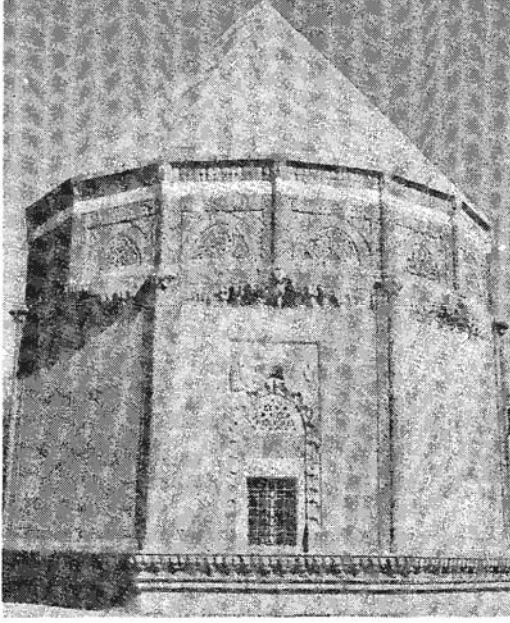


Figure 29- Niğde Hüdavent Hatun Cupola (O. Aslanapa - 1973)

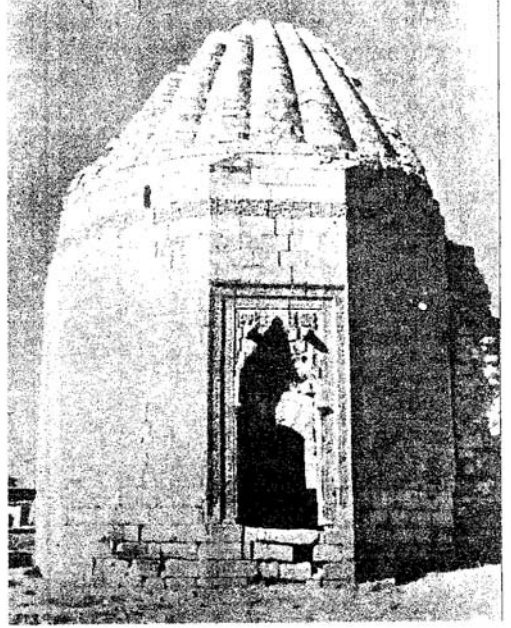


Figure 30- Karaman Alaaddin Bey Cupola (O. Aslanapa - 1989)

The differences and characteristics in the tombs of the Ottoman Principality can be enumerated in the following ways.

- 1) Tombs which have divisions on the floor where the Crypt is, as seen in the *Green Tomb*, Bursa (1421) (Fig. 31a, 31b),
- 2) Tombs where a lute shape polygon is placed on top of a polygonal body with a single dome as an outer cover.
- 3) Tombs built under Byzantine influence with corridors all around the inside perimeter.
- 4) Tombs like that of *Sultan Murad II*, Bursa (1451), where the main space consists of two sections, one within the other, with the inner section housing a space covered with a dome on pillars and pedestals (Fig. 32a, 32b).²⁴
- 5) Also during this period, tombs were built where no Crypt could be found and this has thrown some doubt on whether a Crypt existed or not in this type of tombs.

²⁴ Sözen, et.al., *op.cit.*, p. 82-83.

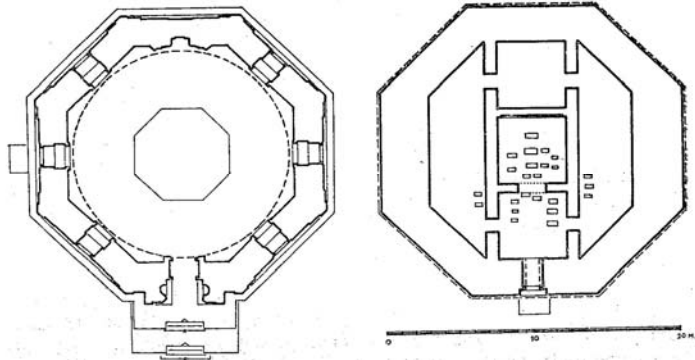


Figure 31a- Plans of Bursa Yeşil Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

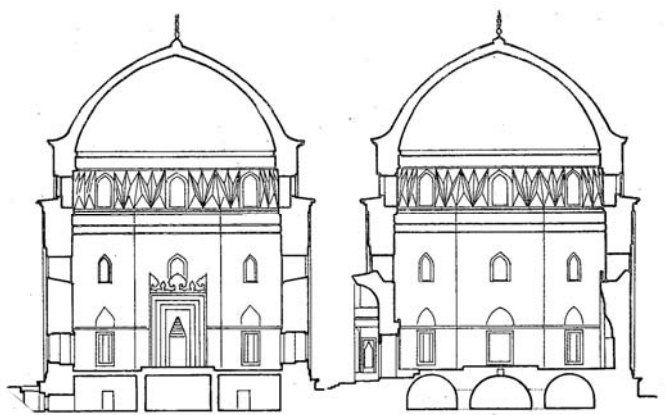


Figure 31b- Sections of Bursa Yeşil Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

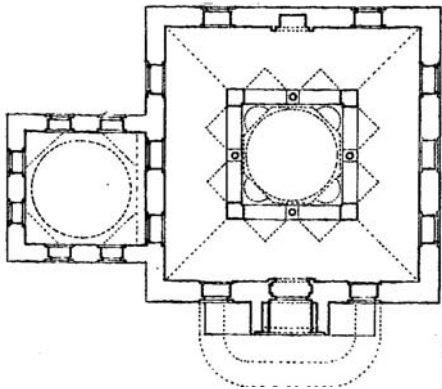


Figure 32a- Plan of Sultan II. Murad Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

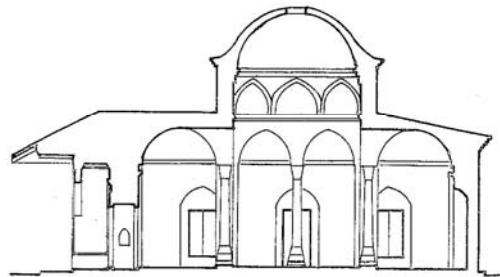


Figure 32b- Section of Sultan II. Murad Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

Classical Ottoman Art

In the tomb architecture of the Classical Ottoman Art Era, the type horizontal in character is not seen.

In the architecture of tombs vertical in character, the body got more and more elaborate richer facade compositions were introduced.²⁵ In cupolas polygonal bodies continued in use; the most widely used polygonal body was the octagonal type. In addition to this, twelve and sixteen sided bodies also were seen during this period. The two-floor frontal arrangement took its place among the concepts of rich facade designs. In the planning of this type of facades a homogenous appearance was achieved by using facades of similar character that complimented each other.

On the exterior, porches assumed importance and were used in the whole area.²⁶ On the interior, keeping the space undivided the gallery system was employed. The tomb of *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman* built by *Architect Sinan* in 1566, an outstanding example of this period, has got an octagonal body, dome covering and porch all around its outside perimeter.²⁷ The tomb which has a gallery inside and fringe decorations on the outside reflects the richness of the facade (Fig. 33a, 33b).

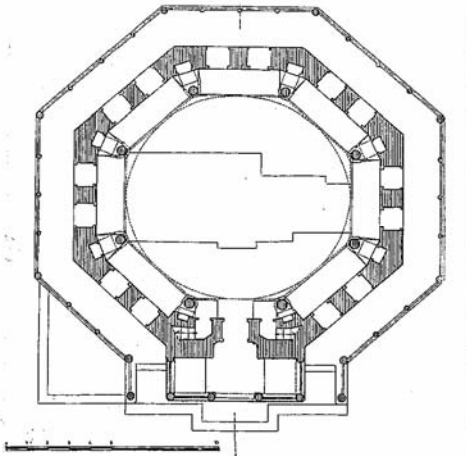


Figure 33a- Plan of K. Sultan Süleyman Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

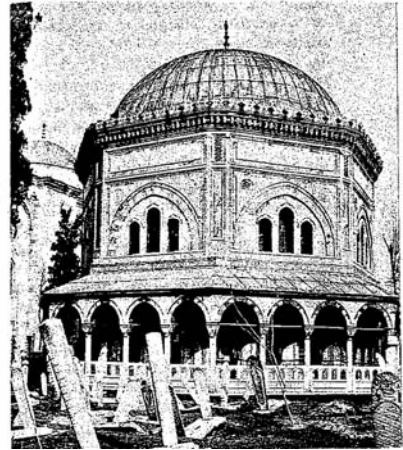


Figure 33b- K. Sultan Süleyman Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

²⁵ Arık, *Turkish Art and Architecture*, p. 168.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 168-169.

²⁷ Sözen, et.al., *op.cit.*, p. 216.

One other monumental tomb is that of *Sultan Selim II* (1577) in *St. Sophia*. The polygonal gallery built inside a cubic body with tempered corners projects a different type altogether.²⁸ Eaves were built around the entrance section only (Fig. 34a, 34b).

During the Classical Period, cross plan type tombs also appeared. The tomb of *Şehzade Mehmet* (1543-1544) with its decorative frontage has taken its place among the tombs of the Ottoman Classical Period. The frontal, in addition to the porch and ribbed dome which were used during the Principality Period, too, was also adorned by coloured stones and baked earth and further enriched by the use of glazed tiles²⁹ (Fig. 35).

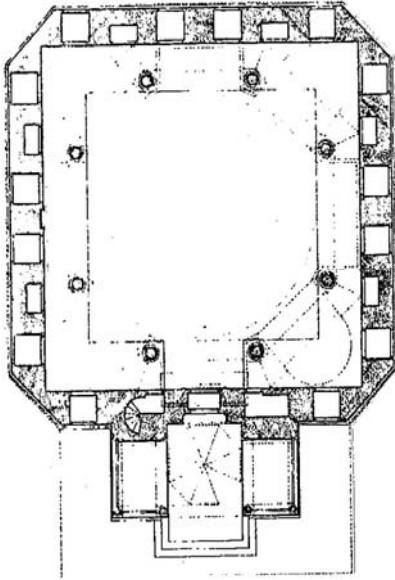


Figure 34a- Plan of Selim II Tomb (M. Sözen - 1975)

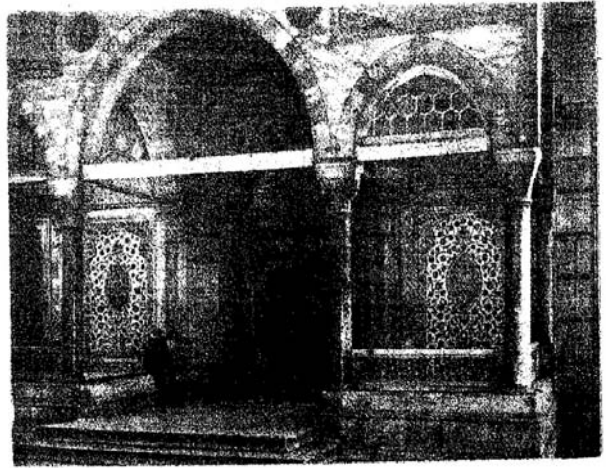


Figure 34b- Front Elevation of Selim (M. Sözen - 1975)

²⁸ O. Aslanapa, *Türk Sanatı*, 2. B., İstanbul, 1989, p. 270.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

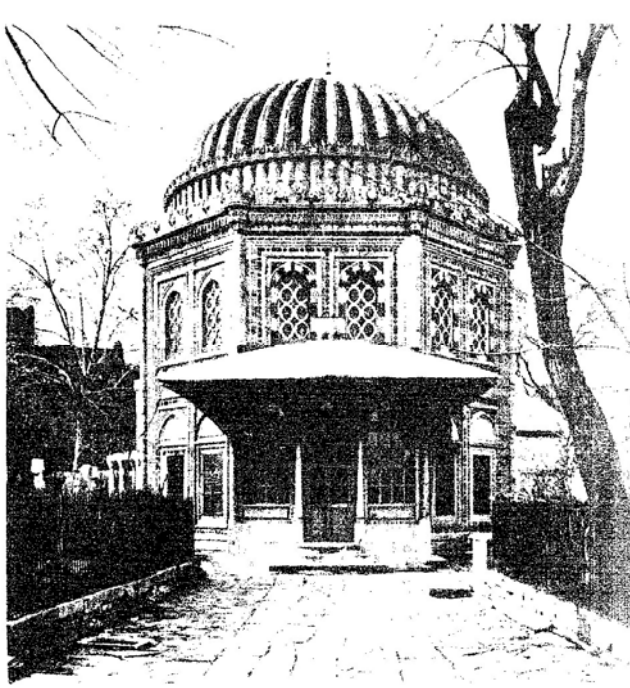


Figure35- İstanbul Şehzade Mehmet Tomb (O. Aslanapa - 1989)

Conclusion

According to our research, among the buildings of Islamic culture, tombs, which attained a monumental nature, managed to maintain their pre-classical period prominence during the Ottoman Classical Era, also improving all the time as from X. Century onwards. Tombs, the examples of which we encounter in every part of Anatolia, continued in existence in Anatolian Turkish Architecture, too, and with an increased number in their types. Also, during this period, there is a greater variety in the building materials used in their construction of tombs.

Whereas in earlier periods, the changes and improvements in the interior and exterior of the tombs secured richness in typology, during the Classical Era, in addition to using polygonal bodies there were improvements were made in the composition of the exteriors. The use of rich decorations, arcades and eaves increased the vivacity of the facade and strengthened the monumental nature of the tomb. Furthermore, the totality of the space inside the tomb was maintained by

the changes made and enriched by the use of galleries, during this period. The octagonal prism type tomb was the most widely used variation in every period.

The iwan type tombs seen in pre-classical times could not survive the Classical Period. In the main structure of tombs, the use of two different but homogenized floors as a single floor, culminated in new research in the Classical Period.

Byzantine influence upon the works of Principality Era is also seen at times, in many works, Pre-Turkish Era traditions are predominant. The formation of a dominant mode in tomb-monuments paved the way to the formation of Classical Period Architecture.

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