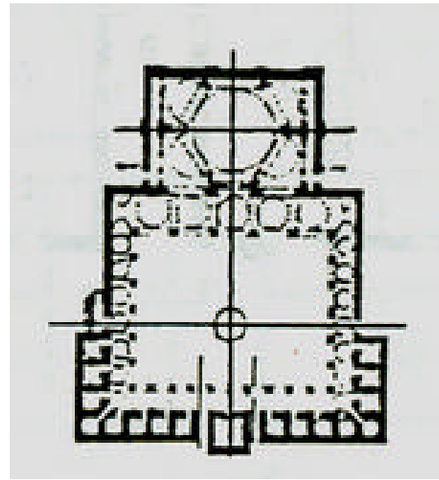

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ENCLOSURES IN ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

Places of worship in Islamic areas were formed by the repetition of simple actions: the believer enters the enclosure, crosses it proceeding in the direction of the qibla and then stops to pray in front of the mirhab having purified himself by washing in the fountain.
The spatial structure of a mosque, a typical nodal element of any Islamic cityscape, is clear in the minds of believers as in that of its constructor (a believer himself) before he builds it by erecting four elementary main outside walls in stone or brick and laying a simple roof of branches over the protected space, supported by tree trunks that in time change into stone columns or pillars in masonry to protect the congregation devoted to the Prophet.
For Islam, mosques are not the house of God but, above all, a meeting place for prayer: in the minds of the constructor, the idea of enclosing the congregation of the faithful, motion and stopovers generate space and the layout of the few elements comprising it.
The order of ritual paths, movements codified through repetition having become customary, coincides with the order of architectural elements, linked by the remembrance of numerous mosques seen and used continuously as far back as the original Kaaba, up to Mohammed's house. The enclosure idea (complementary to the roof idea) and the notion of laws governing it form part of a single, spontaneous and intuitive vision of the world, according to a "natural" perception of space belonging to the mythical conception of the Universe typical of the archaic era.
The close bond between the ritual function (the life of the mosque), remembrance and structure, which becomes meaningful and representative-expressive, a geometrically canonical distillate of the repetition of numerous constructions and their use, represents the substance of type, declined in various forms in all Islamised areas and reproducing the same original anthropic and tectonic gestures.
In actual fact, it is evident, whenever the outcomes of different formation processes of buildings of worship are compared, how the original ritual appropriation of space belongs to very different cultural areas and how universal it is. This can be seen from the development of civil and religious architecture in civil areas far removed in time and space, which have continually cultivated a culture of enclosures.
But the accelerated typological processes of special buildings in the Islamic world, where the first form of sanctuary-enclosure coincides with the simple ritual of externally walling the space of worship of the first believers in the Prophet, show more clearly than others the universality of original constructional gestures and of primary tectonic elements deriving from them, but also the specific nature of identifications. It is from this point of view that a specific enclosure idea, typical in Islamic areas despite infinite exceptions and precautions required by a hypothesis of the kind, seems to confirm the three criteria according to which it is possible, in Oleg Grabar's view, to define the boundaries of real Islamic art (otherwise impossible to enclose area wise or historically): it explains, according

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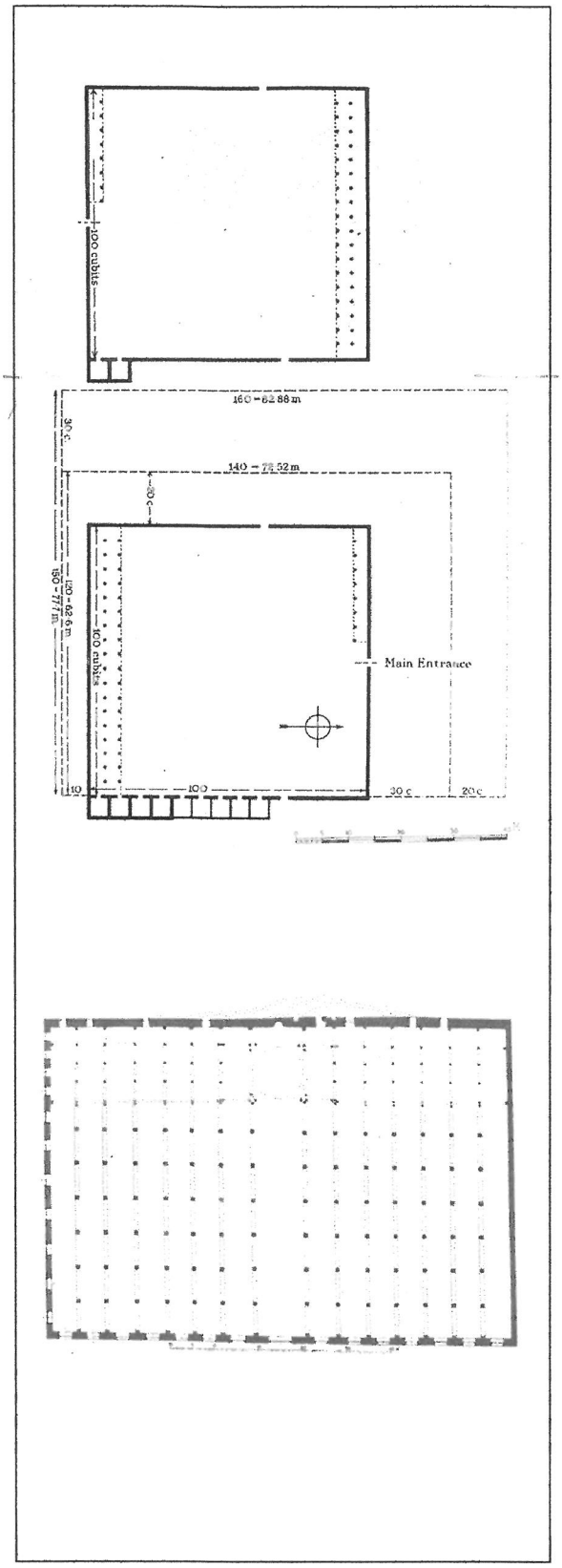
The absolutely sequential nature of elements, systems and organisms seems to be an initial phase of a specialization process terminating in the absolute organicity of central Ottoman plans, the final upshot of a progressive increase in syncretism and osmosis phenomena with the Byzantine world. Therefore, the continuous sequential structure seems to be one of the distinctive characteristics that Islamic civilizations have inherited from Arab culture, whose artistic expressions flee from the organic hierarchization of other cultural areas: not only original architecture but architecture based on repetitive patterns intertwined in potentially infinite series, unlike Western decorations that often uses organic structures with a hierarchy and finalization of parties.

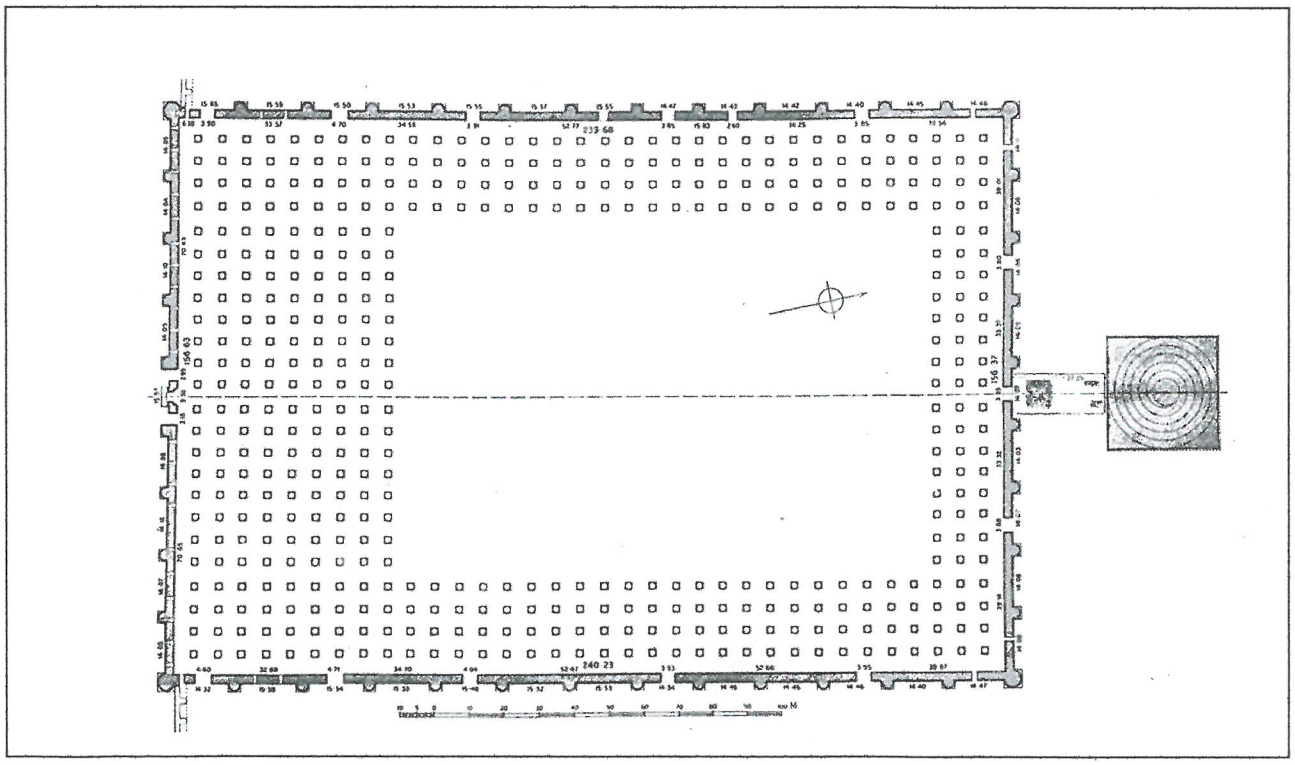
The original form itself of the sanctuary of the Mecca, the Kaaba, consisted of a simple rectangular enclosure in dry stone, slightly higher than a man, enclosing the sacred fountain. A nomadic and semi-nomadic population, who had only embryonically studied the principles of stable constructions, had produced it. With the result that in the 608 reconstruction of the Kaaba, carried out with a masonry technique consisting of alternating courses of stone and wood, it was probably used for the work of a foreign carpenter or master builder, no doubt Abyssinian. True to tradition, the first form of evolved, stable building technique used by Arabs coincides with the first monumental enclosure experimentation destined to influence the whole process of Islamic architecture.

The house that Mohammed built in Medina after Hegira was also a simple enclosure in rough clay bricks with a portico of palm trunks along the southern side and the rooms for the prophet's wife on the east side, confirming the common origins of basic building of tectonic systems used in special building.

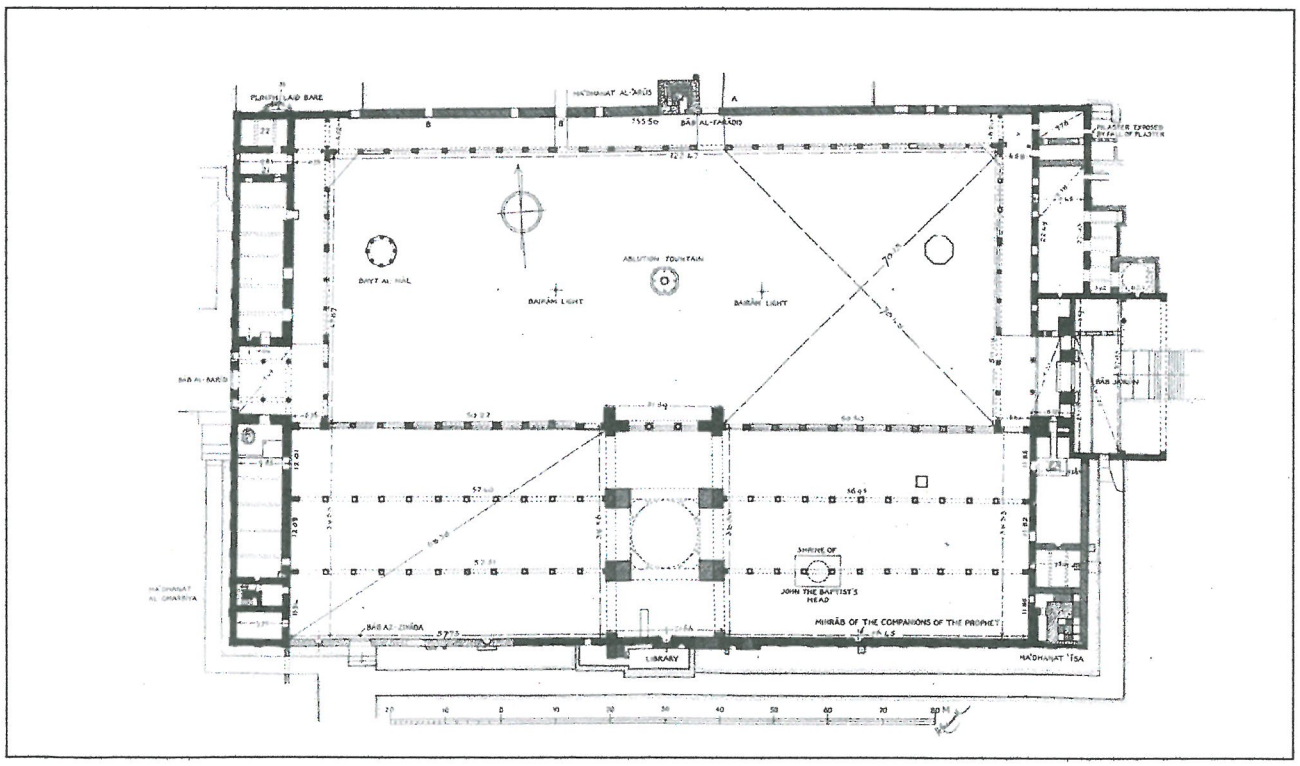
Cesare Brandi observes how the notion of sacred enclosure in its portico form with a squa-



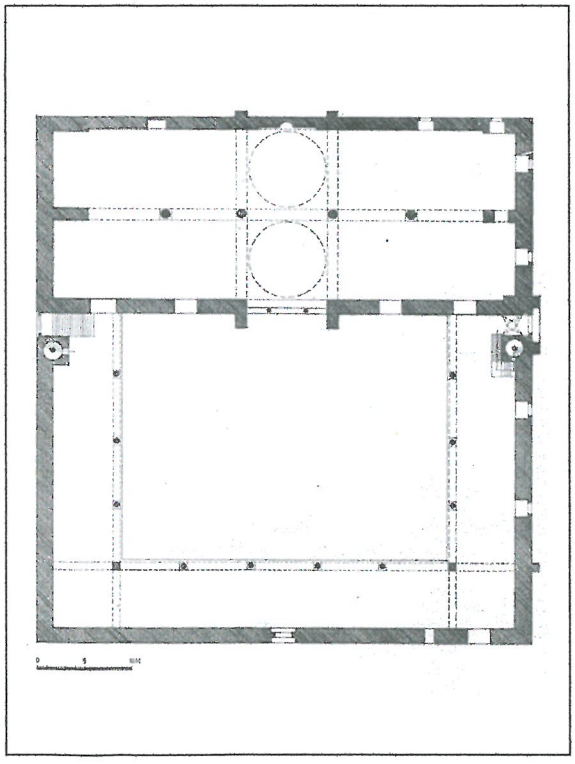
re plan similar to Mohammed's house is a constant in Islamic mosques, planned from the very beginning up to large Ottoman organisms on rectangular or square geometry comprising a large courtyard (sahn).
The Islamic architectural enclosure is ritually hierarchized by indications of the second surah of the Koran that, on giving the direction (qibla) of the position of believers towards Kaaba, implicitly fixes the position of the mirhab (niche in the main outside wall towards which they pray) in the crossing direction and opposite the enclosure entrance. Therefore indications are given of an axiality, whose progressively centralizing and hierarchizing function can be considered the central, albeit not unique, theme of the cyclic process of type mutation: from an absolutely sequential origin (the first types consist of a simple courtyard and enclosure covered for the haram with modular supports in palm wood as in Bassora or consisting of columns as in Kufa) towards upshots of progressive organicity.
These mutations in forms of enclosure from a pure elementary tectonic system to complex forms of the organism introducing vaulted spaces and changing into nodal spaces through the roofs of open courtyards or the progressive hierarchization of sequential bays, can mainly be found in syncretistic cultures such as the Turkish-Islamic culture which, due to the historic events that conditioned its formation (from original Ural-Altaic nomadism to contact with the Iranian culture and to contaminations with the Byzantine world) underwent the most intense experimentation processes and adaptation to different environmental conditions. Through contact with cultural areas that were well-established through consecutive migrations, the Turks acquired from the primitive notion of mobile, precarious encampments during the pre-Islamic era, linked to embryonic forms of enclosures and provisional materials such as fabrics and skins, the stable idea of Anatolian structured enclosures, where types can be identified giving rise to organisms built by great architects like Sinan. The awareness of the symbolism of elementary forms used, and also of their iconic charge, is reached through a contradictory transitional process from attempts at geometrically checking and canonizing initial spontaneous organisms to a design that tends towards critical accuracy of mature organisms.
The typological processes through which the passing from a primordial, spontaneous idea of enclosure to a mature, organic idea in Turkish-

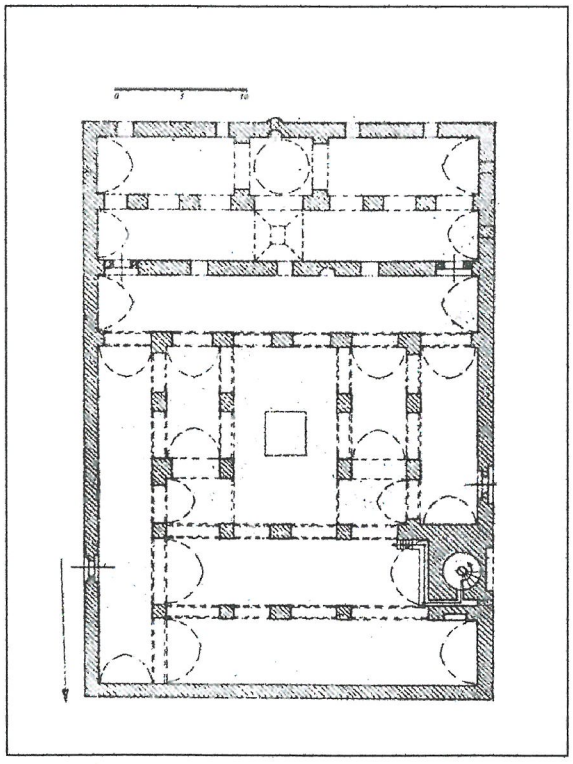


Islamic architecture is identified basically refer to mosques, caravansaries and medrese.
The original enclosure and that inherited from the Islamic sanctuary tradition necessarily had to be adapted by the Turks, on their arrival in Anatolia, through roofs, as they initially occupied the central, less inhabited and colder part of the plateau. The dialectic confluence of roofs as a structure containing the node of the building and the remembrance of the open courtyard (conserved through "traces" of open skylight) is one of the most fertile interpretations of a typological process example of special Turkish building in Asia Minor.
Putting a roof over the enclosure of worship takes place through initially spontaneous forms, which can be summed up in three main typological series. In order to understand their meaning, as in the reading of any building type, one has to reconstruct the logic of the formative process by synchronically comparing homogenous phases enabling us to identify and classify various types and rebuild their development, through diachronic comparison. Let us just mention the series of building types used mainly for small mosques that conserves in tact the remembrance of open courtyard enclosures. Mosques such as that of Orhan Bey and Yldrim in Bursa or those of Murad Pasci and Atik Alì and Istanbul reveal the matrix of the Iranian type identified by the Mesjid al Cuma of Isfahan as the introduction to dome roofs (symbol of the celestial sphere to indicate a virtually open space) corresponding to an open space.
The typological series of the great mosques (Ulu Çami) instead develops through passages of progressive organicity, the enclosure plan starting from a simple main outside wall containing the undifferentiated series of pillars supporting the roof; the matrix type indicates how it is sufficient for worship to identify and sanctify a portion of territory through an enclosure and make this elementary structure face Mecca. The entire pilastrade is a rhythmic, continuous and undifferentiated space in perfect sequence. Yet, even in its initial forms where space appears to be isomorphic, Seljuk mosques contain embryonic indications of spontaneous axiality generated by the geometric demonstration of paths, which are critically reused in mature types through bays always in odd numbers in the main direction of the mirhab enabling the identification at the height of the entrance of a potentially centralizing axis, indicated through allusion to the construction node consisting of an individual bay in the centre of the building

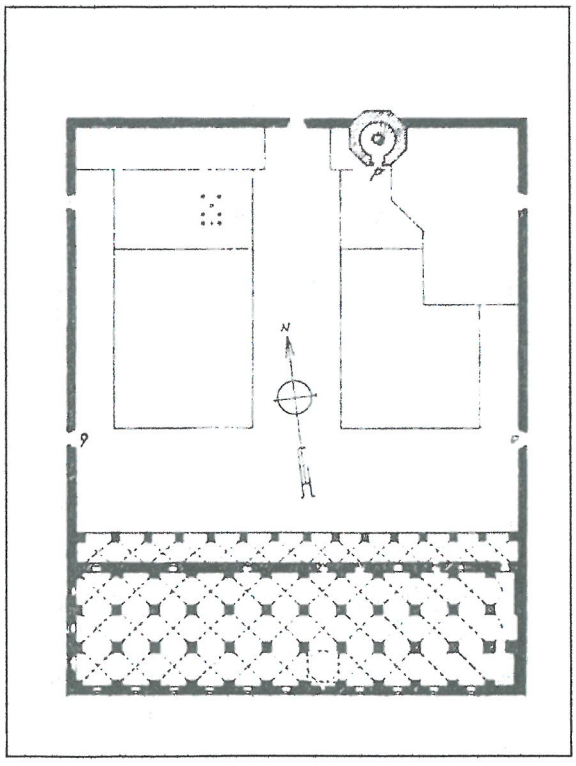


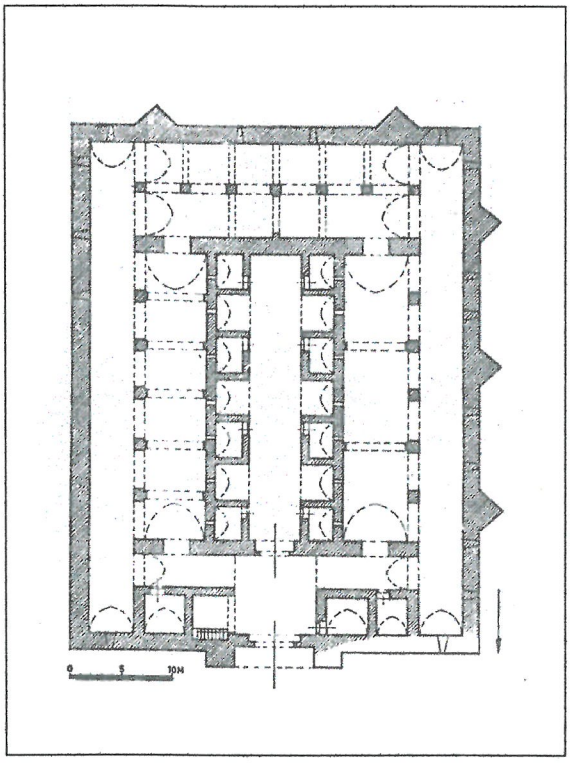
(sometimes left in one or more open bays, inherited from the original open courtyard space of former type).
There are very few exceptions in this sense: the great structures at the root of Islamic architecture (such as the 8th century Great Samara Mosque, where the roof was supported by a repetitive, close knit series of pillars, feature an odd number of bays to enable the central axis to run from the entrance to the mirhab, necessarily placed in the centre of the bottom wall of the covered hall. When the bays of the structure are equal, they are united at the height of the nodal space with modular doubling as in the Huand Hatun mosque in Kayseri (where in the formation of the bay rhythms the intersection of the mausoleum-medresa area interferes). One of the most remarkable exceptions consists of the mysterious Great Urfa Mosque featuring three series of twelve bays parallel to the mirhab wall so that its specular axis, coinciding with the axis of the entrance gate in front of the enclosure, encounters the series of central pillars. In this way, the mirhab is displaced in its immediately adjoining bays. Even the series of pillars forming the front portico, albeit lacking an inner structure, has an even number of bays (14). One of the explanations could be sought in conditions induced by the pre-existing building on whose ruins the Urfa mosque as built.
Another matter is the more frequent case of openings not aligned with the theoretical rectilinear path leading to the mirhab but in directions identified by nodal bays, which could be simple "flaws" often for functional or constructional reasons. However, in some cases, the indirect geometric identification of the path is due to the complexity of the variant of the basic type that the building identifies on account of external (orographic, pre-existing) factors or simply to the type definition and settlement phase, especially during the first transitional stage with relative independence of elements. This applies to the Great Kiziltepe Mosque, where the enclosure axis does not coincide with the entrance axis to the prayer hall (but is anyway inserted among paths leading to external mirhabs) or to the Great Silvan Mosque, where two side entrances indirectly lead to the nodal space or, lastly, to the anomalous Great Madin Mosque, where the inner space of the great hall of worship is usually hierarchized by the symmetric organism based on three parallel paths (the central one being the main path) and a peripheral embryonic organism hinging on the mirhab-entrance axis. These anomalous variants, which are



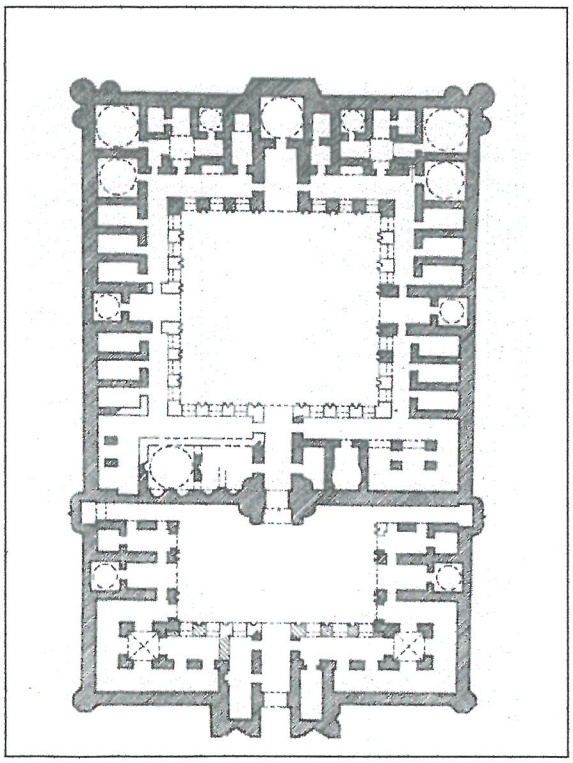


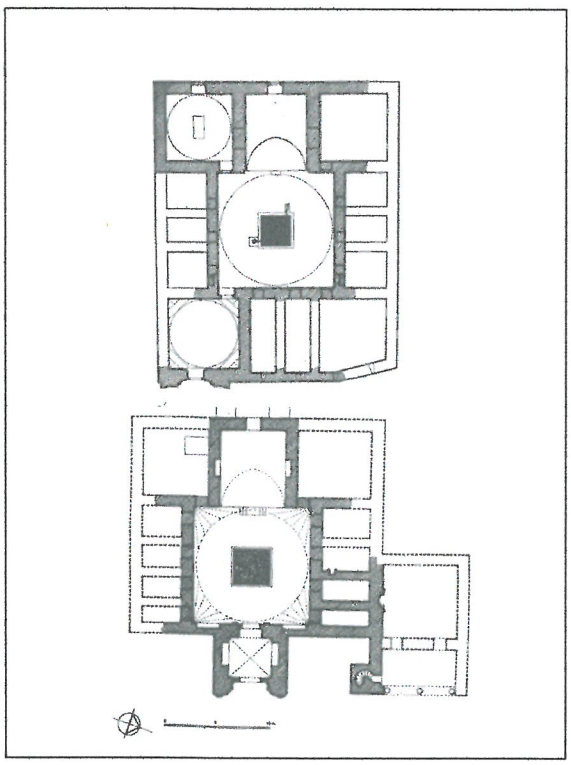
highly divergent not only in terms of general morphological characteristics but of formative typological laws, should in my opinion be interpreted as a heritage of indications about the formation of types as documents of particular cases and exceptions to a general process.
Normally the ongoing recurrent dimension of bays, used in multiples for hierarchized rooms, corresponds to that of elementary cells (increasing in major organisms and decreasing in small mosques), which have analogous measurements to those used in the Western world, but with greater constancy than in corresponding special structures.
One of the first structures where a markedly sequential nature is recognisable, still with wooden pillars identifying the matrix type, is Eshrefoghlu in Beyshehir, with seven parallel bays, the central bay containing the crossing axis from the entrance to the mirhab : in the centre of the nine longitudinal bays, the roof suppressing an entire bay is open to the sky indicating, together with the mirhab's dome, the centralizing axis.
Ulu Çami (great mosque) of Sivas, is a clear example of process development of this former building type, consisting of a main outer wall containing the rhythmic series of pillars, but also an embryonic form of spatial hierarchization that must be recognised in the bay layout order (11 transversally and 6 longitudinally) crossing according to the nodal axis through the two entrances to the outer courtyard and to the interior of the building, confirmed by the existence of two other mirhabs on the façade towards the outer courtyard. The same applies to the other great 12th century mosques in Anatolia, where the type however is identified with relevant variants, as in the renowned case of Ala Al-Din in Konya.
The modification of the most recurrent basic type consists of the symbolic accentuation of a central bay within the continuous structural system that, hierarchizing the surrounding elements, contributes to progressive specialization of other bays. This is typified by the Great Kaiseri Mosque (1140) where the nodal axis is clearly indicated within the pilastrades divided into unevenly numbered bays, whose central bay is open (according to a type identified on a different scale also in the Kölök mosques in Kayseri), almost a reduced version of the type of courtyard mosque with a central basin in Harput (1156-57), which in turn can be considered a transitional link between the original type of mosque consisting of a closed space distinct



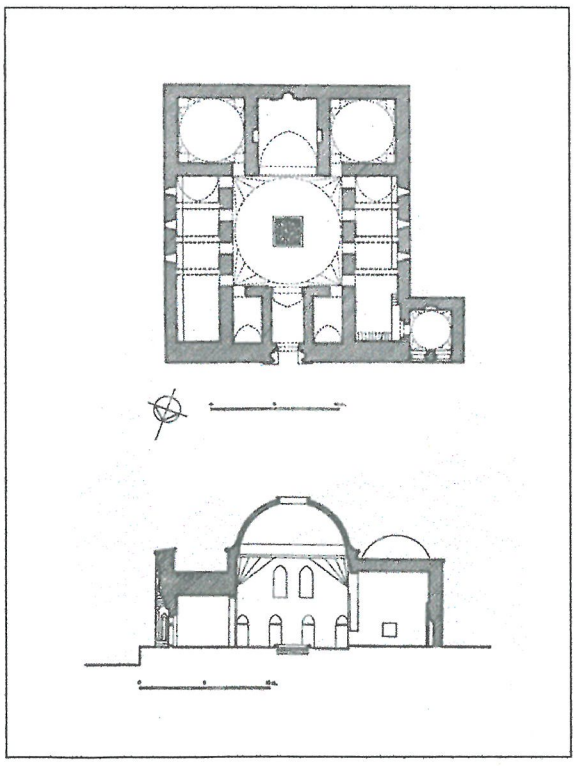


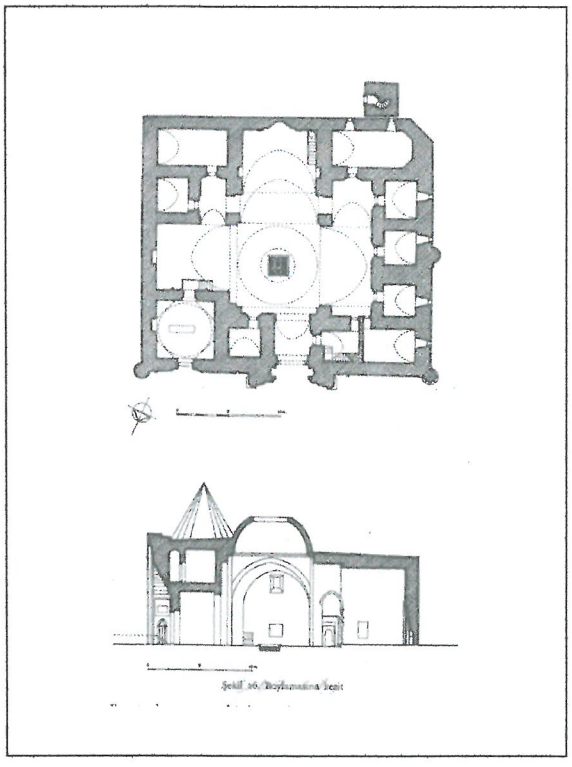
from the courtyard for the washing basin and the closed building type with a central open room, merging the two original elements.
On a lower key, some basic type development forms testify not only to the indication of the nodal axis through the usual dual dome at the height of the central crossing terminating in the main mirhab niche but to the formation of two lateral crossing axes running parallel and ending in two minor niches.
The same can be said for other equally indicative examples belonging to the same typological series, such as Ulu Çami of Develi, near Kayseri (1281) where at the height of the mirhab's dome, the intersection between the central crossing axis (marked by the renowned portal and skylight opening) and secondary axis identifies a sort of embryonic transept, legible through the transversal vault layout, opposite to the sequentiality of all others placed longitudinally.
The third typological series that conserves an enclosure plan of original Islamic forms is that of the open courtyard mosque, diffused in coastal areas, where climatic conditions enabled open spaces to be used, similar to Arab, Egyptian or Syrian mosques (see the 8th century Great Damascus Mosque that identifies a matrix type whose derivations are diffused right throughout the Islamic world and which testifies, by reusing a previous pagan temenos, the special Islamic meaning of the notion of enclosure. This type undergoes a transitional phase and was brought under Turkish influence in the Mameluke mosque of Baybars in Cairo (1266-69).
The mosque of Isa Bek, in Seljuk (1374) near ancient Ephesus, another example of the type under review, shows how the typological process does not coincide with a linear evolution. Built reusing the vast ruins of Ephesus, the Isa Bek mosque does not only reuse materials but also the typological legacy of the huge public areas of the Greek-Roman world; during the 14th century, when it was built, ancient urban structures had to be perfectly legible. The basic type identified by the Damascus mosque is proposed again here according to a geometric order that checks ratios between elements with classic evidence (the portico with an odd number of bays along the nodal axis and with even number along the secondary axis featuring a type of peristyle that reuses ancient columns, geometrical accuracy in representing the mirhab's spatial nodality indicated by a dual dome, the secondary crossing axis clearly marked by two minarets) mediated by the previous ones of the Great Mosque of Diyarbekir (first Turkish mosque in Anatolia, built in 1901-92), and other 12th century mosques such as the great mosques of Mardin, Urfa and the aforementioned Kiziltepe, and followed by the more disjointed, complex example on a smaller scale, of the



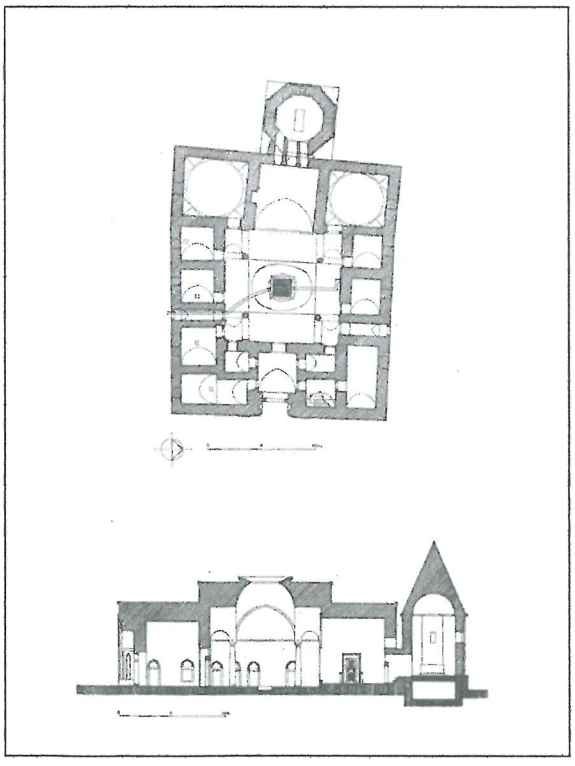


Great Manisa Mosque.
In the late 14th century types, when the relative unity of the Seljuk administrative structures followed the formation of sixteen major independent principalities that develop their own architectural forms within the cultural koine under changed socio-political conditions and in closer syncretistic relations with Byzantine organisms, the open space of the original enclosure is reduced to an indication of the nodal dome skylight (opening and node coinciding) and, often, by a corresponding basin for ritual ablutions (shadirvan). Clear examples identifying the basic type are the Ulu Çami of Bursa (1396-1400) and the Eski Çami and Edirne mosques (1403-1414) where the traditional sequential structure of bays (in odd numbers along the main crossing axis, and in odd or even numbers in the other direction) is indicated not through a system of continuous roofs as in the former Seljuk one, but enhanced by a sequential structure of domes (sequential structure consisting of organic elements). In both mosques, the nodality of the open dome is indicated much more clearly than in the Seljuk examples by the intersection of the main axes, coinciding with the qibla direction and of the secondary axes indicated by two side entrances. The nature of the material and constructional solutions used defining the organism's elements are plastic-masonry and, despite indicating the passing of highly organic organisms of the Ottoman phase clearly legible through the spatial divisions expressed by the arch-dome system, they still maintain in their walls the sequential nature of elastic-wooden structures of Seljuk buildings.
A similar process of progressive specialization and organisation of elements starting from initial sequential types linked to original tectonic elements can be read in the development of caravansaries, enclosure structures typical of the Islamic landscape linked to philanthropic institutions. These structures clearly denoted a religious reference (omnipresent in public Islamic institutions) through the existence of the majid (small mosque), which was always placed nodally as compared to the crossing of the building, whereas free lodgings, bathrooms, etc. were distributed in sequential rooms around the central courtyard.
The specialization process of caravansary structures starts from a simple enclosed space: the enclosure, built around a safe, guarded area simply as protection against hostile external territory. The sense of the most ancient structures is particularly legible from the exterior, because





its constituent elements appear didactically clearly: absence of references (except for access) to the surrounding territory determines its absolutely enclosed nature and continues along the perimeter where buttresses (tectonic nodes) often intersect with internal structures. All symbolic attention and constructors' expressed will is focused on the portal, place of exchange between the interior and exterior. Not by chance on the entrance wall, where even fine loopholes that sometimes exist on other walls disappear to emphasize their role, the portal used the same compositional elements as the great mosques as far back as the distant central Asian matrices.
Mature basic types, identified by Sultan Han and by monumental organisms recurrent right throughout Anatolia, consist of two distinct parts: a completely covered enclosure with pillars for the winter and an open courtyard for the summer, enclosed by a row of rooms sometimes hierarchized by function. The central part of the courtyard, providing immediate internal structural legibility, is geometrically governed by a rigid symmetrical order whereas the side rooms pragmatically comply with the needs of various specializations (sheltering livestock, deposit of merchandise, housing, etc.). The division of the two (summer and winter) enclosures shows, here as in mosques, how antinodal axes marking enclosures are dividing axes, separating structures equipped with their own autonomous laws, united by the main centralizing crossing axis to which the various (distributive and static) systems refer. In major structures, wayfarers' lodgings are situated on the upper floor with a portico pathway assuming the same distributing function carried out in an urban fabric (Islamic declination of other special types organised according to a courtyard plan like convents).



An evident typological example is Sultan Han along the Konya-Aksaray caravansary (1229) or Sari Han near ürgup with the summer and winter part planned along the same crossing axis, whereas Edvir Han (1210-19) along the Antalia-Korkuteli caravansary exemplifies the simple open courtyard type surrounded by a dual portico. As confirmation of type duration and necessity, caravansary structures continue to demonstrate capacity of adaptation also when passing on to the Modern Age during the initial car diffusion phase as courier stations and stopovers along ancient caravan routes that had become roads suitable for vehicles. This, however, makes us think about how the nature of transformations induced in the Islamic landscape by modern conditions is more closely linked to the quantity than the quality of innovations: a limited number of cars can be housed in the same structures used to transport animals; mass motorization, on the contrary, requires new speeded-up specializations. In the former case, the need for enclosure remains while in the latter there is a need for openness to allow traffic to flow. Lastly, building types connected to medrese form the third special type, which immediately reveals a transformation process that, despite its development being by no means linear, is triggered off by simple, sequential matrices to define progressively complex, organic types.
Medrese, originally only theological schools, soon changed into institutions comparable (and prior) to our universities (also based on enclosed plans of monastic origin) and also used with an identical plan as hospitals to teach medicine. Iranian matrices, from which Seljuk Turkish types derive, are very clear, identifying the plan of an enclosure of sequential rooms (scholars' cells) in which the intersection between two (main and secondary) axialities generate highly hierarchized, clearly recognisable nodal spaces around the perimeter: iwans, doubly-high rooms often featuring a rectangular ornamental cornice. This type of organism with four iwans, latent in Islamic special building with regard to any function, is exemplified by the medresa, where the spatial plan, crossing and static systems and sequential order of rooms coincide with functional needs requiring distributive organisation for the four main Koranic schools.

Even though in original Iranian medrese there is almost no cell hierarchization, according to widespread tradition in most of the Islamic world, in Iran, Egypt and Turkey, through a non-linear evolution, antinodal rooms tend towards progressive hierarchization. These rooms, placed at the height of the intersection of portico paths enclosing the courtyard, appear as nodes on the smaller scale of elements forming the angle of buildings, favoured in this by forming a distributive defect due to difficulty of access. 13th century examples identifying the basic type with open courtyards and four-iwan plans, can be found in the medresa-hospital of Keykavus (1217) and in Gök Medrese (1271: where the rooms on the main iwan side are highly hierarchized) both in Sivas and in çifte Manareli in Erzurum (1253) where nodal axiality is reinforced by the founder's mausoleum at the height of the central iwan.

Almost synchronous examples of the identification of two courtyard variants with dome coverage of the central space are to be found in Konya, a real typological laboratory of 13th Century Turkish architecture. Sirçali Medrese (1243) is built around an open courtyard with strictly sequential rooms along the longitudinal portico sides and antinodal rooms, which are highly hierarchized in roof sizes and types, on the side opposite the entrance. A building erected a few years later, Ince Minareli Medrese (1258), apparently conserves a similar plan but introduces a dome roof over the courtyard, which becomes a nodal space with the obvious variant of the elimination of the small redundant portico but keeping the relative external part leading to hierarchized antinodal rooms. The new junction type of impost shows the almost mechanical overlapping of the dome over a well-established plan where the dome is simply supported by large fan junctions.

As proof of substantial continuity of the enclosure notion during the Ottoman era and also of transformation process cyclicity from sequential to organic structures, the Fatih and Sulemaniye complexes in Cairo testify a phase in which antinodal elements once again tend to lose organicity (to reduce specialization) to reacquire the sequentiality needed for the junction of each individual enclosure within an organism on a larger scale. In the Sulemaniye complex the tendency of antinodes to become the centre of new nodalities in the composition of supramodules starting from a basic enclosure is clearly legible in the Sani and Evvel Medrese union according to two antinodal axes that coincide in a new nodal axis: the two antinodes external to special built complexes according to their new complex gate role (nodal axiality); this does not occur in the apparently similar union of the Salis and Rabi Medrese. The reason for this lies in axiality on a larger scale: whereas the former are structured with the common antinodal axis along the entrance path to the mosque enclosure and of the side entrance to the mosque itself, the latter are in peripheral positions to the polarity triggered off by the mosque.

Giuseppe Strappa

Notes

Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art,* New Haven, London, 1973, pag.17.

Note how the same occurs for the majority of Arab music, where the beginning and end of the theme is unconventional: a typical Arabian musical excerpt could end at any moment, as occurs in decoration. Also in literature the same continuity principles recur: A Thousand and One Nights has the narrative structure of an enclosure, a fable-frame enclosing a potentially endless quantity of tales.

The master builder came off the wreck of a ship whose timber was reused. The technique used, probably too ultra-modern to be indigenous, confirms historic tradition. Creswell puts forward the hypothesis that it came from Abyssinia, where the technique used to rebuild the Kaaba was widely used. (See K.A.C. Creswell, *L'architettura islamica delle origini*, Milan 1966, page 11 onwards).

Note how Mohammed not only indicated the improvement of simple building but had no inclination towards unstable settlement forms: "A building", he asserted, "is the vainest enterprise that can devour the wealth of a Believer" (Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, cit. in Creswell, Op.cit., pag.14).

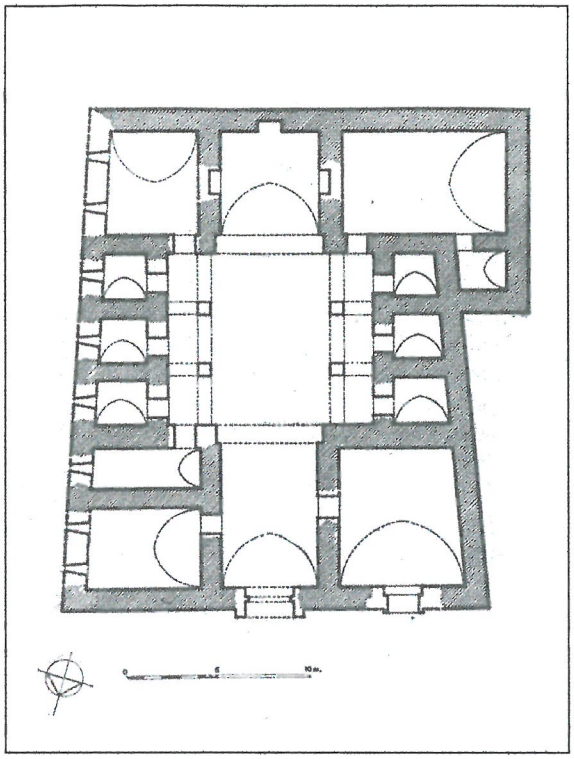
Cf. Cesare Brandi, *La casa di Maometto, in Struttura e architettura,* Turin 1967.

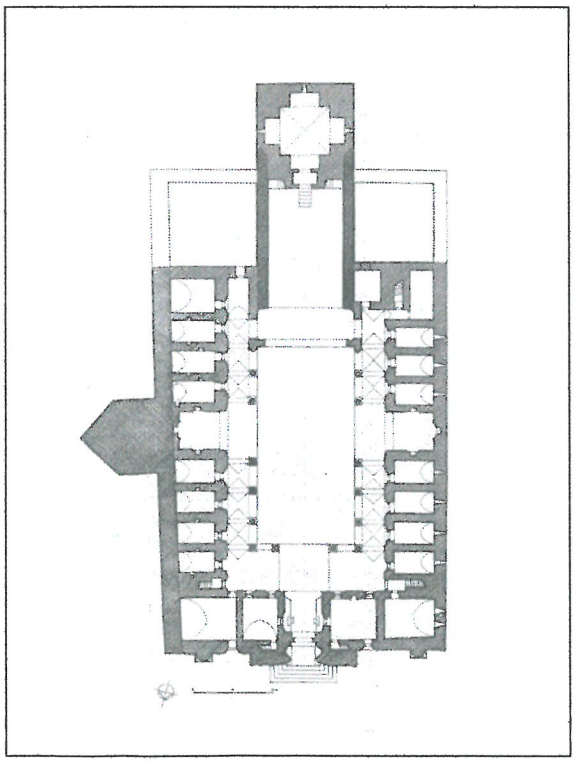
The ritual direction of religious organisms lays down a very profound identity principle for the Islamic area: Mohammed, before establishing its meaning, turned towards Jerusalem as the centre of the world to indicate a desire to establish a common reference between the Jewish and Arabian religions; the change indicates the formation of a recognisable, autonomous culture: "We see you turn your face", says the Koran, "to the sky with uncertainty: however, we shall now turn you towards a qibla that you will like; therefore turn you face towards the sacred temple and wherever you are you will turn your face towards that place. ... Even if you performed all kinds of miracles upon those to whom the book was given, they shall not adopt your qibla, nor will you adopt theirs, nor shall one adopt the qibla of the other; ..." *(Koran, Cow Surah, II,* 139 and 140.)

Cf. Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey,* London 1968.

Byzantine chronicles narrate embassies sent to the Turks, whose king had a large tent on wheels richly adorned with silk carpets and gold *(Historici Graeci Minores,* Leipzig 1871, cited in Alessio Bombaci, *La Letteratura Turca,* Florence 1968, page 23). The first news of the Turkish civilization comes from China and dates back to the 3rd century B.C.; however, to show the fragility of the original civilization, the term "Turk" appears in Chinese and Byzantine texts, like the one we mentioned, only during the 6th century A.D.

In the same ancient Turkish language, after the traumatic





experience of contact with walled settlements, the word "brick" identified building material and towns.

The Turkish civilization in Anatolia is indicated as that of the Seljuks of Rum, i.e. Rome, to distinguish between the Western influence of settlements in Greek-Byzantine areas and the syncretistic culture developed by the Great Seljuks in the Iranian area (See Claude Cahen, Op.cit., pages 55 onwards).

For an analysis of elements comprising the ritual space of Turkish mosques, see Mahmut Akok, *Architecture intérieure des mosqués turques construites entre les XIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, in the proceedings of the First International Congress of Turkish Art, Ankara 1961.

However, historians do not agree on dates. The mosque is dated, for instance, 11th century by the ünsal, who considers it to be the most ancient Anatolian mosque of this type and 1197 by Asnalapa, according to an inscription referring to the founder of the work. Whatever the actual date, typologically speaking there is no doubt that Ulu çami of Sivas identified the basic type as exemplifying the trend, whereas buildings that can be referred to it, even of great artistic importance such as the Ala al-Din mosque in Konya, are not such a striking example of its fundamental characteristics, often due to the complex constructional events or functions (mausoleums, etc.) which overlapped the original one. (Cf. Oktay Asnalapa, *Turkish art and Architecture,* London 1971, page 100).

Oktay Asnalapa, Op. cit., pages 96-97 and 99.

The present central wooden dome, replaced after the demolition of the large dome on original pendentives.

See the example of Ulu Çami of Erzrum, variant of the type identified by the Kayseri mosque.

Naturally type identification in contexts highly characterized by sultans who founded Turkish mosques in Anatolia deviate considerably as in the Nigde mosque, where the crossing axis does not indicate the direction of the mirhab, despite encountering the open room reminiscent of the original enclosure's courtyard. Moreover, it must be noted how the secondary crossing identified by the side entrances often only coincides functionally (and sometimes it does not coincide at all) with the open central room, as in the Eshrefoghlu and Khwand Khatun mosques and in Ulu Çami in Kayseri.

In fact, the hypothesis that Islamic temple enclosures interpreted the temenos of a pre-existing pagan temple as asserted by Arab authors, seems to be confirmed by archaeological excavations. Enclosures were 385 x 305 m and a large portico bazaar ran along the inner perimeter. (Cf. K.A.C. Creswell, Op.cit. pages 60-61).

See Oktay Asnalapa, *Türk Sanati,* Istanbul 1973 vol. I, pages 3-19.

Nowadays the meaning of inner space is incomprehensible due to changes and decorations added to the original structures.

In Anatolia caravansaries sufficed logistical trade needs especially in the hinterland as from the 12th and 13th centuries, when Seljuk trade peaked. The Seljuk caravansary building type is closely connected to territorial reorganisation carried out after the Turks settled in Anatolia. Even though during the initial Turkish settlement phases in Asia Minor the Byzantine road network was not dramatically changed, reorganisation was required to structure the road

network in the Anatolian hinterland which had been neglected during previous eras, starting from the Diocletian decision to make Nicomedia the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. Another reason to change the road network was the formation of new territorial nodes (road junctions) and poles (road origins) originated by the new role that towns played in Islamic Asia Minor, where the frequent phenomenon of the abandon of Byzantine centres and the foundation of new town centres (See W.M. Ramsey, *Historical geography of Asia Minor,* London 1890, page 83 onwards).

Small mosques, in the particular version of mosque-cloisters used in caravansaries, are not immediately of primary importance in building courtyards but initially placed to the left of the entrance, in some cases not incorporated into the building's structure but resting against the façade, as in the case of Kizilviran Han (1207) situated between Konya and Beysheir (Cf. Suut Kemal Yetkin, *Les Caractéristicques des caravansérails seldjoukides*, in the proceedings of the First International Congress of Turkish Art. cit.)

"The Persian caravansary", wrote Robert Byron in an account of a trip during the early thirties, "an admirable institution, bravely resists the assault of modern transport, even though everywhere there are garages, which, however, follow the original plan, i.e. a square courtyard, as large as an Oxford college, defended by huge gates. Near these and alongside the vaulted entrance, there are kitchens, a dining room, a dormitory and a conference room. Along the three other sides there are a series of small rooms similar to convent cells, stables and garages. Amenities can vary." (R. Byron, *La via per l'Oxiana,* Milan 1993, Pages 108-9).

Even though it was already used in the Great Mosque of Isfahôn, this solution is an original version of a building technique not commonly found in the Turkish-Seljuk area, demonstrating a building tradition connected to the new building type.