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Rising Above the Faithful: Monumental Ceiling Crosses in Byzantine Cappadocia

Alice Lynn McMichael

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

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RISING ABOVE THE FAITHFUL:
MONUMENTAL CEILING CROSSES IN BYZANTINE CAPPADOCIA

by

ALICE LYNN McMICHAELE

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2018
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Alice Lynn McMichael

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Abstract

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Advisor: Jennifer L. Ball

The design of Byzantine architecture created viewing conditions that reveal social and spatial contexts of Christian ritual, private devotion, and expressions of identity. This is apparent in the decoration of ceilings, which were crucial visual elements within spatial relationships in late antique and medieval architecture but are rarely discussed because few examples survive. However, Byzantine Cappadocia, a region that is now central Turkey, has a high number of extant medieval ceilings in its rock-cut architecture. About eighty monuments there have monumental ceiling crosses that were painted or carved in relief between the sixth and eleventh centuries. In this dissertation the three case studies in St. Sergius Chapel in Göreme (sixth century), St. Basil Church in the Gomeda Valley (late ninth to tenth century), and a tomb in Karabaş Church in the Soganlı Valley (ca. before 1061) demonstrate viewing experiences that use aniconic imagery to reflect Byzantine approaches to spatial relationships over time. They also reflect ways that aniconism and the formal properties of the cross symbol were indicative of medieval visuality and the evolving Cult of the Cross.
This dissertation approaches the process of viewing as experiential and socially constructed. It elucidates ceiling design as a means of guiding the viewer’s spiritual and social activities within architectural spaces. Comparative methods using textual sources (such as hagiography) and material evidence (comparative objects and the monuments themselves) demonstrate Cappadocians’ sophisticated sense of design using both aniconic motifs and the iconicity of the cross, highlighting the role of the visual as an essential element of Byzantine spirituality.

This dissertation is available in the CUNY Academic Works repository (academicworks.cuny.edu). The catalog of monumental ceiling crosses is also being published as Linked Open Data in Open Context (opencontext.org) as the “Cappadocian Ceiling Crosses” project using the following Digital Object Identifier: https://doi.org/10.6078/M7N58JPG
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Introduction: Historical Context and Historiography

Upon entering the south chapel of St. Basil Church (ca. late ninth to early tenth century) its Byzantine patron, a Cappadocian man called Nicander, was surrounded by vibrant floor-to-ceiling paintings that pulled his attention upward (figure 1). On the low ceiling of the small private chapel, just above arm’s reach, he was confronted with a monumental yellow cross. It was painted to resemble a gold object that was adorned with gemstones and set on a background of red, yellow, and green geometric motifs. It seemed to be rising above the faithful viewer below. Reading the dedicatory inscription that wraps around the chapel’s cornice required Nicander to turn his whole body while he recited the inscription’s blessings on his soul. Taking in the geometric designs that turn the small chapel into a jewel box of color and pattern, his gaze could then follow the axis of the ceiling cross toward the apse where the Eucharist (holy communion) was meant to be celebrated. For Christian worshippers like Nicander, the ceiling cross symbolized the liturgy taking place below, cementing memories of Christ’s self-sacrifice on a cross and subsequent Resurrection in victory over sin and death.

Nicander’s experience was a series of intuitive responses to visual and physical stimuli and to the potent symbolism surrounding him. The symbolism was part of the learned practices

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1 Research for this dissertation took place between 2011 and 2015. It was defended at The Graduate Center, CUNY in June 2016.
2 Guillaume de Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province de l’art: Les Eglises Rupestres de Cappadoce (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1936), 2.1: 109-110; Andreas Rhoby, Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken (Byzantine Epigrams in Frescos and Mosaics), vol. 1, Byzantinische Epigramme in Inschriftlicher Überlieferung 1 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 296–97; Maria Xenakis, “Recherches sur les églises byzantines de Cappadoce et leur décor peint (Vie-Ixe siècles)” (dissertation, Universite de Paris 1, Pantheon-Sorbonne, 2011), 426–27; Natalia Teteriatnikov, “The Frescoes of the Chapel of St. Basil in Cappadocia: Their Date and Context Reconsidered,” Cahiers Archéologiques Fin de l’antiquite et Moyen Age 40 (1992): 99–114. In the twentieth century, scholars such Teteriatnikov interpreted and anglicized the patron’s name as Nicander based on part of a damaged cornice inscription with the Greek letters, …κατ… which were interpreted by Jerphanion to be part of the phrase, δοῦλ[ος Νικάτρος], (your servant, Nicander). More recently, Rhoby has determined that line to be illegible; he translates that section as, δοῦλ[ος ………]. I use the name here as a pseudonym for the now-anonymous patron and to highlight an important aspect of Cappadocian studies, which is scholars’ return to material evidence in order to elucidate the roles of individual patrons in the region, to reinterpret monuments, and to reevaluate previous scholarship. See Chapter 4 for additional discussion of the chapel and its inscriptions.
of viewing that were encouraged by his particular community, which consisted of rural elite laity in an Anatolian province. These practices were evident in Byzantine worship experiences and monuments and are an example of what I call ‘socially constructed’ viewing that was part of the community’s collective memory and learned rituals. That the ceiling decoration tapped into two kinds of visual phenomena—the intrinsic and the socially constructed—is a typical yet understudied aspect of Byzantine architecture. I argue that the iconicity of the cross, the way its form directed motion to sanctify space and activate it through the viewer’s physical and spiritual responses, was an important part of the Cult of the Cross as it was practiced in Cappadocia.

This dissertation examines monumental ceiling crosses, architectural decorations like the one in St. Basil Church, that are found throughout the region of Cappadocia, which was a Byzantine province in central Anatolia. Commanding the attention of viewers below, large-scale cross paintings and reliefs made between the sixth and eleventh centuries dominate the ceilings of seventy-nine rock-cut monuments, infusing the interior spaces with the aura of the holy image. Some scholars have described them as depictions of liturgical crosses, but this is speculative because there are no extant Cappadocian liturgical objects to compare or texts that can be associated with specific chapels that might contain inventories of such objects. These studies make no attempt to integrate the hypothetical liturgical items depicted into the larger context of sacral space, viewing experience, or liturgical function. More recently Robert Ousterhout has acknowledged the use of monumental ceiling images over the course of several centuries, but he does not explore their impact as a design element on the viewing experiences of Cappadocians.

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Nicander’s chapel, now known as St. Basil Church in the Gomeda Valley near the town of Ürgüp, reflects the importance of the cross and aniconic imagery in the region during the Middle Byzantine period (873-1204). Using St. Basil Church and two other case studies, St. Sergius Chapel (ca. sixth century) in the town of Göreme and a tomb in Soğanlı Valley’s Karabaş Church (ca. before 1061), I look at hagiography, liturgical documents, extant liturgical objects, and archaeological data to see how similar monuments were used (figure 2). I was able to make site visits to all three in order to record experiential documentation of the relative placement of ceiling crosses, their approximate scale, and surrounding decorative features. Throughout this dissertation, visual analyses are mine unless otherwise noted. In the catalog (Appendix 1), I note monuments for which ceiling cross data was collected first-hand during fieldwork and which entries utilize published sources instead.

By elucidating ceiling crosses through comparative methods and phenomenological examinations of the viewing experience beneath them, I argue that their placement on the ceiling at a monumental scale is a visual expression of a regional manifestation of the Byzantine Cult of the Cross, a broadly defined set of practices venerating the wood of the True Cross from Christ’s Crucifixion. These practices could involve a wide range of activities, from hymns sung in codified liturgies to individual devotional practices such as wearing cross-shaped reliquaries around the neck. Examination of ceiling crosses enables us to incorporate Byzantine monumental painting into the wider conversation about relationships between architecture, liturgy, and private devotion, enriching it by including the bustling but often-neglected province of Cappadocia. I begin by examining ways that monumental ceiling crosses contribute to three

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5 Because my research was not an archaeological survey, all measurements are estimated unless they cite previously published data. Photos are mine unless otherwise credited.

crucial threads in Cappadocian studies: regional identity, patronage by the local population, and the effects of Iconoclasm on scholars’ perception of aniconic Cappadocian art.

**Regional Identity**

Cappadocia, which is now a region in central Turkey, was a Roman province by the first century of the Common Era (figure 3). At that time the regional social dynamic was one wherein wealthy nobles exploited rugged farmers who lived in poverty in Anatolia. Through Late Antiquity (ca. 300-640) and even during the subsequent medieval periods, Greek-speaking Byzantines considered themselves to be Romans, in part to differentiate themselves from the historical pagan identity they associated with “Hellenes” (Greeks).

Cappadocians were recorded in the New Testament among the witnesses of the holy spirit at Pentecost in Jerusalem. Oral tradition claims that early Christians hid from persecution in the rock-cut dwellings of the region. We have no direct evidence of that, although a court historian, Eusebius of Caesarea (263-339), recounted the persecutions of Cappadocians among other Christians in eastern provinces in the year 310. Although these sources indicate that the region’s Christian identity was an early development, it was not demonstrably widespread until the fourth century.

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9 Acts 2:5-9
10 National Geographic, “Cappadocia,” *Nat Geo Traveler* (blog), November 15, 2010, http://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/world-heritage/cappadocia/. This is propagated by popular resources such as National Geographic, which offers no citation for its claim that Göreme, “became a religious refuge during the early days of Christianity. By the fourth century Christians fleeing Rome’s persecution had arrived in some numbers and established monastic communities here.”
The region’s documented relevance in Christian studies is based on the influence of fourth-century theologians and bishops who hailed from the region. Basil of Caesarea (330-379), also remembered as Saint Basil or Basil the Great, was bishop of Caesarea. He was widely known for theological philosophy, especially his rules of monastic order and his treatise *On the Holy Spirit.* Gregory of Nazianzus (329-390) was made bishop of Constantinople, but retired soon after to live a more ascetic life in his hometown in southwest Cappadocia near present-day Konya. Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 331-395), the younger brother of Basil the Great and friend of bishop Gregory of Nazianzus, was a prolific writer and defender of Orthodoxy. Their families had powerful social networks throughout the empire and were largely responsible for the religious conversion of the region to Christianity. Known as the Cappadocian fathers, these philosophers and proponents of monasticism left writings that are noteworthy in that they represent the last pre-modern period of extensive documentation of Cappadocia.

Interpreting the history of late antique Cappadocia is complex because while there are many texts from Cappadocian writers during that time, there are no extant objects or monuments datable to the fourth century. From the subsequent medieval period, administrative or liturgical documents and material culture objects (such as furniture, icons, liturgical objects, coins, and pottery) are even more rare. What do exist there are more than seven hundred rock-cut and masonry churches and domestic structures made throughout the late antique and medieval periods, many of which are decorated with frescoes and relief carvings, making it one of the

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13 Raymond Van Dam, *Families and Friends in Late Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Van Dam, *Becoming Christian*; Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow*. Van Dam’s trilogy traces the Roman and late antique history of the region, paying particular attention to the Cappadocian Fathers.
largest extant concentrations of medieval Byzantine painting in any region. The majority of these monumental paintings and frescoes are in Rocky Cappadocia, a somewhat arbitrary socio-political designation that points to the dense concentration of rock-cut architecture in the area that is framed by the modern cities of Kayseri, Nevşehir, and Niğde (figure 4).16

Monumental ceiling crosses dominate an overhead interior surface of seventy-nine of these structures that were carved between the sixth and eleventh centuries, although the monuments are difficult to date. The procedure through which rock-cut architecture is hewn from the landscape has changed very little since antiquity.17 It cannot be dated by skill level or technique, and many structures are also the result of multiple carving phases that are difficult to discern from one another. Because of this, dating wall paintings or carvings by way of style and iconography is a common method (although there are some datable painted inscriptions), and this technique has dominated art historical scholarship of the region since early explorers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began documenting the area in a systematic way.18

Difficulty in dating monuments, compounded by lack of portable objects and furniture, has had a detrimental effect on Cappadocia’s inclusion into the wider art historical canon. Upon the publication of Marcell Restle’s three-volume catalog of monuments in 1974, art historian

Robin Cormack remarked that the books, “ought to prevent art historians from underestimating the significance of this material.” Since then, some Byzantine-specific survey texts have included references to Cappadocian monuments. However, Cappadocian art is still often excluded from the wider canon in general art history survey texts, despite the importance of its monumental decoration.

Instead of infusing general art history survey textbooks with Cappadocian material, scholars have produced a number of regional surveys. An overview of these provides insight into scholarly conversations about Cappadocia that are currently being reevaluated, namely the relationship of monasticism and lay patronage, and the effects of Iconoclasm in the region. For a long time, survey texts reinforced a regional identity that propagated the idea of monasticism by identifying rock-cut architectural complexes as monasteries, even without any telltale indicators of monastic presence, such as the inclusion of a refectory (monastic dining space). Many of these reflect a “monastic myth” that all Cappadocian painting was created by or for monks. Several of the thematic essays in Luciano Giovannini’s edited volume, The Arts of Cappadocia

21 Helen Gardner and Fred S. Kleiner, Gardner’s Art Through the Ages: The Western Perspective, Fifteenth edition, vol. 1 (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2017), 230–283. As one example, the current edition of this widely adopted art history survey textbook has no mention of Cappadocia or its monuments in the late antique or Byzantine chapters.
(published in 1971), are outdated in this way, but its maps and catalog of churches by geographic region provide valuable data about the landscape and locations. Another overview of the region’s monuments is Spiro Kostof’s *Caves of God* (1978), which was designed as a popular introduction and is still widely available, although its emphasis on monasticism does not reflect up-to-date scholarship, either.

A number of other regional surveys are also currently in use. Catherine Jolivet-Lévy’s brief overview, published in 1997 as a concise introduction, addresses key monuments and their decorative programs within the geographic setting. Another well-known example is Lyn Rodley’s *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia* (1985). She set out to describe and date rock-cut complexes in order to develop a chronology and history of monasticism in the region, resulting in a book that was far-reaching and popular enough for a paperback reprint in 2010. Her extensive fieldwork makes the book a comprehensive survey based on first-hand material and site-specific evidence. Although the architectural plans are not to scale, the volume promoted the study of monuments within their wider environmental contexts of landscape. While it is not an art history survey, J. Eric Cooper and Michael Decker use evidence from art history, history, hagiography, and archaeology to provide an historical overview of the region. Rainer Warland recently published a regional overview, but his attempt to redate a number of medieval monuments to a later period has not been widely accepted.

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27 Cooper and Decker, *Life and Society in Byzantine Cappadocia*.
to *A Byzantine Settlement in Cappadocia* offers background on the geological, historical, and historiographical literature on the monuments. More recently his book, *Visualizing Community: Art, Material Culture, and Settlement in Byzantine Cappadocia*, synthesizes art, archaeology, and architectural history to examine material culture of the region within its social and historical context.

Some of the most significant previous art historical scholarship on Cappadocia is in the form of extensive regional catalogs of monuments and their wall decoration, many of which respond to categories laid out by Restle, who used stylistic analysis to engage with chronology in the 1960s, as part of a wider movement to date the monuments, concluding that many were post-Iconoclastic; although his dates were not widely accepted, the volumes also contain over 500 photographs by Jeannine LeBrun, which constitute an important visual record. Art historian Nicole Thierry has used stylistic, iconographic, and epigraphic analysis in order to establish chronologies. She points to the eighth- and ninth-century Arab invasions as a watershed moment with additional emphasis on the recovery in the ninth and tenth centuries, although the chronology of the region’s monuments is still debated. Her two-volume catalog of monuments in the vicinity of the town of Çavuşin is good for comparing the architectural plans and interior decoration within a small geographic area. Although her emphasis is not on ceiling crosses, her catalog documents eleven of the chapels that have them (Appendix 1). She, along with Michel Thierry, was among the first to publish the monuments of Hasan Dağı (Peristrema Valley) within

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30 Ousterhout, *Visualizing Community*.
its geographic context, adding a “new” set of Middle Byzantine churches to the canon while making iconographic comparisons to other regions.\textsuperscript{34}

One of the most thorough documentations of monuments since Jerphanion is Catherine Jolivet-Lévy’s book, \textit{Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce}, which records monuments in forty-six Cappadocian valleys and towns.\textsuperscript{35} The volume focuses on apse decoration, and she pays particular attention to ways iconographic themes relate to liturgical practice.\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Etudes Cappadociens}, a collection of her essays written over the course of two decades, along with a more recent historiographic essay operate together as an overview of the state of the field in Cappadocian studies, especially with regard to iconography and the exploration of possible connections to Constantinople.\textsuperscript{37} With a two-volume set, Jolivet-Lévy and Nicole Lemaigre Demesnil recently revisited Jerphanion’s oeuvre, augmenting it with the information that had surfaced in the century after his original publications, a project that attests to the ongoing importance of regional catalogs.\textsuperscript{38} These regional art history surveys contain broad iconographic comparisons among Cappadocia’s painted chapels, from which the regional phenomenon of monumental ceiling crosses evolved.


\textsuperscript{36} Jolivet-Lévy, 2.


Population and Patronage

Because the Cappadocian Fathers are closely tied to the region’s Christian identity, central Turkey has long been associated with monasticism and asceticism. However, the overemphasis on monastic presence in modern scholarship has skewed our understanding of the region, which was also home to many lay families. Byzantine sources do not describe Cappadocia as an exclusively monastic center. Instead they point to the bishops’ long legacy in the region that was wealthy and widely connected, and that supported both monastic and lay communities, even during periods of societal change. The relationship between laity and monks was one of mutual collaboration, in both spiritual and practical terms. As I discuss in subsequent chapters, members of the lay population were integral to the region’s patronage as they often commissioned chapels and provided material support for monasteries who reciprocated with clerical duties such as commemoration of the dead.

Historians have documented a well-established chronology of late antique and medieval settlement in Anatolia, which lends itself to analysis of the population. Among them, archaeologist Mark Whittow emphasizes the importance of elites in late antique and Byzantine settlement, where they acted as “intermediaries between primary producers and the state,” to negotiate distribution of agricultural products to feed the urban masses.

After the sixth and seventh centuries, when cities were thriving in both “central” urban areas and “peripheral” rural ones, the transition to the medieval period in Anatolia was one in which the region became populated differently; small towns and villages that had been dispersed

Throughout the provinces gave way to a model of more centralized estates in those areas. The transition from towns to estates came about in part because Byzantium’s eastern borderlands were marred by instability due to the Byzantine-Sasanian Wars, which were altercations with Persian forces from 572-591 and 602–628 that directly affected the safety of Anatolia. Because of this ongoing instability, there are almost no extant civic documents from Constantinople or the provinces from the seventh to ninth centuries, and early modern scholars adopted the name “Byzantine Dark Ages” for the period. Through archaeological and hagiographical evidence, however, scholars have been able to draw conclusions about life in Anatolia during that time.

For instance, numismatic evidence points to the seventh to ninth centuries as a period of economic collapse, especially in rural areas. After the Arab siege of Constantinople in 717-718, much of the population moved to “small fortified towns,” thereby ending urban life in Cappadocia as it had been in Late Antiquity. Ousterhout has recently used an alternate phrase for this period in Cappadocia, calling it the “transitional period” (late seventh through early tenth centuries) so that it describes the time from the end of late antique settlement to the beginning of the Middle Byzantine period. He characterizes this term as “more neutral nomenclature” than


47 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 55–58.
iconoclastic or Dark Age descriptions, noting that there is no conclusive evidence of whether Iconoclasm was enacted in the region. He points instead to the transition brought about by the Arab invasions during late antiquity.48

Cappadocian elites, many of whom had military experience or connections to the imperial court, often managed their own agricultural estates as they became influential provincial patrons.49 In the ninth century the reemergence of these large estates signaled a period of economic growth that continued even more prominently in the tenth and eleventh centuries.50 Agriculture was a major part of this economic revival.51 Monasteries could also have agricultural assets, although their fate often depended on lay patrons who had the potential to act either as benefactors or detriments to the welfare of the monks, depending on their financial acumen.52

This practice of lay patronage is evident in what is now known as the Pigeon House Church, (ca. 963/964) in the town of Çavuşin.53 It was probably commissioned by a military aristocrat who had connections to the powerful Phocas family, from whom Emperor Nikephoros II (r. 963–969) was descended.54 An inscription on the north wall commemorates the patron, “Melias, Magistros,” who scholars have identified as a Byzantine general who served under both

48 Ousterhout, 13.
49 Haldon, The Empire That Would Not Die, 191; Wharton, Art of Empire, 16.
53 Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 1.2: 520-550.
Nicephoros and his successor. Another inscription in the north apse asks for blessings on the emperor, saying, “Lord preserve our pious rulers always, Nicephoros and our empress Theophano.” It accompanies a portrait of emperor Nicephoros depicted alongside his father and brother, with his wife Theophano and an unidentified woman (figure 5). Rodley surmises that the patron of the Pigeon House Church was among a group of landowners who helped Nicephoros’ political rise through military ranks and into imperial rule through an acclimation of power that took place in nearby Caesarea. The Phocas family was also connected to the period of revitalization and rich patronage in the late ninth and tenth centuries. Like the case studies in subsequent chapters, the decoration and dedication of the Pigeon House Church reflect the interests of local patrons with regional concerns and wide connections throughout Anatolia.

The demographic information on lay populations is largely a result of innovative archaeological surveys in the 1990s that started to debunk the longstanding belief that nearly all Cappadocian monuments were monasteries, using the argument that churches were also found on secular estates. That not all complexes were monasteries had been suggested by the 1980s: for instance, Lyn Rodley surmised that Açıksaray was not a monastery and could be a han (caravan stop), but it did not change the monastic narrative of the region. It was archaeological surveys

55 Κύριε βοήθει τὸν δοῦλόν σοι Μελίαν μάγιστρον in Jerphanion, Une nouvelle province, 1: 530; Translated in Lyn Rodley, “The Pigeon House Church,” 311 as “Lord, help thy servant, Melias Magistros.”


58 Rodley, 324.


61 Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 148–50.
that became the catalyst for secular evidence being widely accepted. In 1997 Thomas F. Mathews and Annie Daskalakis-Mathews examined several settlements as villas rather than monasteries, comparing their floor plans to “Islamic-style mansions.” Shortly thereafter Alexander Grishin argued for an approach that included both secular and ecclesiastical architecture. Ousterhout’s monograph on Çanlı Kilise, which was based on four years of surveys, further turned the tide of scholarship toward the exploration of Cappadocia as an enterprising region with a diverse lay population. Subsequent work by Fatma Gül Öztürk and Veronica Kalas has continued in this vein, examining secular architecture at Açıksaray and in the Selime-Yaprakhisar Valley, respectively.

The majority of monastic building in the region seems to be a Middle Byzantine phenomenon. Estates operated in collaboration with local monasteries, supporting them in exchange for prayers and commemoration. An example of this relationship is evident in an inscription in Eğritaş Kilisesi (Leaning Stone Church, ca. 921-927), an extensive network of burial spaces in a complex in the Ihlara Valley that was originally thought to have been a

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67 Wharton, Art of Empire, 16–17; Morris, Monks and Laymen, 138.
monastery. A dedicatory inscription on the east wall indicates that the patron was a rural military aristocrat and administrator, with an honorary title of spatharocandidatos (imperial guard), who reported to the strategos (governor).

Another example is Karabaş Kilisesi (Black Head Church, ca. 1061), a complex in the Soğanlı Valley that had a regional governor named Michael Skepides as a patron. The most recent layer of interior wall paintings in the main church can be dated to ca. 1060/1061 based on a donor inscription that says it was commissioned by Skepides and his family, “in the reign of Constantine Ducas, year 6569, indication 14.” Eight donor portraits are on the walls of the Karabaş Kilisesi main church, including Michael’s (figure 6). Because of these commemorative portraits, the complex has particularly rich evidence about donors, their roles in society, and dates they were involved with the monument. A painted dedicatory inscription in the main church nave says, “This church was decorated at the expense of Michael Skepides, Protospatharios, and Catherine, nun, and Nyphon, monk.” Protospatharios was a title used by provincial governors, demonstrating that the Skepides family members were rural elites with regional political clout. His wife Catherine became a nun after being widowed, yet was buried in

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71 ἐπὶ βασιλέως κωνσταντίου τοῦ δόθη ἐτός, ἥδετ ηδικτίνονος ιδ’ in Jerphanion, 2.1: 334, inscr. 186; Translated and edited in Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia*, 198.

72 ἐκαλιεργήθι ὁ ναὸς ὑπὸς ἰδὴ συνδρομῆς μηχαν προπαθαρίων τοῦ Σκεπίδι κ’ ἐκατερίνης μοναχῆς κ’ Νυφονοσ (μον)αχ(ῆς); Translated and edited in Rodley, 198.
the family chapel; she is depicted in an arcosolium in the northwest corner of the main church (figure 7). Three of their daughters are also commemorated, as is a monk named Nyphon and monastic and lay men and women of various ages, thought to be family groups of donors.73

Commemorative portraits in Karabaş Kilisesi’s main church represent both laity and monks, pointing to a common arrangement in Cappadocian donor relationships: laity commissioned architecture and supported monasteries, and caretakers (either monks or nuns) upheld the monuments for commemoration of the donors and their families after death.74 With no evidence of a trapeza (a table used in a monastic refectory for group meals), it is unlikely that the complex was a monastery. The Karabaş complex was probably on a rural secular estate, similar to Selime (ca. tenth or eleventh century) or other courtyard complexes in Cappadocia, such as the ones in Açıksaray (Open Palace, tenth or eleventh century) and Yapraķhisar settlement (named after the nearby Turkish village, tenth or eleventh century), which have been reinterpreted as domestic estates.75 Notably, throughout the region almost every monastic settlement is found near a civic center such as a town or rural estate.76 This highlights the symbiotic relationship of monasteries and estates among the rural elite in Cappadocia, with commemoration playing an integral role.77 Among those commemorative practices, there is not a

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73 Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 334-338; Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 197–201; Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 190.
74 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 191–192. Teteriatnikov cites Karanlık Kilise in Göreme and St. Michael Chapel in the Ihla Valley as other examples of “joint benefactions.”
76 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 186.
clear trajectory of carving or use, but evidence of cycles and reinventions within the complexes of interconnected rooms. For instance, the Karabaş complex also contains a tomb that commemorates four monks and has a ceiling cross that is the subject of Chapter 5. The tomb was painted before the redecoration of the main church. Yet it remained visible, demonstrating that Michael Skepides and his family maintained access to older commemorative spaces, even after redecorating the main church with updated frescoes and commemorative portraits of family members of more recent memory.

Incomplete epigraphic and archaeological evidence of patrons from the so-called Dark Ages and subsequent Middle Byzantine period can be augmented with hagiographic writings and secular literature about Anatolia that reveals narrative details about its population. While the aspirational tropes of piety and fictionalized accounts in these genres are not historical in a literal sense, the socio-historical value of hagiography is that the authors provide data about day to day life, what Évelyne Patlagean called the “richness of the unconscious level.” Hagiography can be used to further understand material culture in the regular transactions of life in Cappadocian estates and villages. The subtext of saints’ lives gives glimpses into how patronage worked, how holy members of the community figured into social dynamics among classes (wealthy patrons as well as villagers, for instance), and how the spaces built in these communities were used.

St. Petersburg, 2010), 89–100.

78 Louth, “Byzantium Transforming,” 225. As Louth notes, the period was a fruitful one for topics that were less “institutional” than civic records.


In this dissertation I examine ways that Cappadocian architecture may reflect similarities to spaces used by community figures in these texts. Based on evidence of hermitages (small dwellings for recluses) in Cappadocia, there were a number of local “holy men” who resembled the ones in late antique literature by withdrawing from village life as anchorites. Peter Brown first expressed the holy man model to describe the way early Christian communities often had connections to pious individuals whose asceticism was thought to have brought them so close to God that they were able to heal the sick and cast out demons. An Anatolian example of this is Theodore of Sykeon whose *vita* takes place primarily in Galatia, the region directly northwest of Cappadocia, during the late sixth and early seventh centuries. In previous scholarship, this saint’s life has been used as an example of a “visible saint,” a local holy man who walked among his followers and healed in the name of Christ. His *vita* offers evidence of icon use in the seventh century, especially during the reign of Emperor Heraclius (r. 610-641), who knew the saint personally and translated his relics to Constantinople in order to protect the city from Persians shortly after Theodore’s death in 613. The *vita* also describes rural life to the extent

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that it is a useful primary source for the region.\textsuperscript{86} I use the text to shed light on commemorative practices and use of physical spaces, observing details that are used as background information, despite the aspirational nature of the genre’s miracle accounts.

The communities described in Theodore’s vita are contemporary to the earliest case study in Chapter 3, St. Sergius Chapel, a basilica near Göreme that has a monumental cross on the ceiling over the nave. It has been dated to the sixth century based on an inscription naming its patron, Longinus.\textsuperscript{87} Because so little is known about Longinus or his reasons for commissioning the chapel, I use hagiographical accounts like Theodore’s or Gregory of Nyssa’s \textit{Life of Macrina} (ca. before 395), which was written as a commemoration of his sister (an ascetic nun in Caesarea) as comparanda to examine how similar Anatolian chapels were used.\textsuperscript{88}

Hagiography can also give insight into land ownership and patronage through its anecdotes and biographical insights used as “circumstantial detail.”\textsuperscript{89} For example, estate owner Philaretos (ca. 720-788) was an historical figure who held property in Galatia (central Anatolia) as well as in Pontos and Paphlagonia near the Black Sea.\textsuperscript{90} Although his life was somewhat fictionalized by his grandson as a retelling of the Biblical trials of Job, the story shows that a member of landowning class could also be a pillar of society, one who qualified as holy man and was worthy of a vita.\textsuperscript{91} Hagiographies like those of Theodore and Philaretos provide useful

\textsuperscript{89} Morris, \textit{Monks and Laymen}, 70.
\textsuperscript{91} Nesbitt, “Life of St. Philaretos and Its Significance,” 151.
comparanda for relationships of provincial Christians and their patronage of monuments and monastic life in their own communities.

An example of Anatolian literature that is not hagiography is *Digenis Akritis*, an epic poem that takes place in Asia Minor during the late ninth and early tenth centuries. The story likely began as oral tradition and was written down in several versions during the twelfth century. It tells the story of a “double-born” (i.e., mixed-ethnicity) border guard and several generations of his family in the rural eastern regions of Anatolia. The story is a work of fiction, but throughout it, details about life in the provinces emerge. Among them are descriptions of the protagonist’s estate, evidence of his Muslim father’s conversion to Christianity, intermarriage among Muslim and Christian inhabitants, military presence in the area, and artistic patronage in the eastern provinces of the empire. Most importantly, it provides evidence of the large population of laity in the region. I use writings like these to fill in gaps about people who commissioned and used the monuments under discussion here.

Demonstrating a relationship between population and patronage was a primary impetus for choosing the subjects of three chapter case studies, St. Sergius Chapel, St. Basil Church, and Karabaş Church. In addition to having a monumental ceiling cross, each of these was in a different community in the region and has epigraphic evidence of a patron there. Using this evidence of lay patronage (and/or a relationship between monks and laity) alongside literary descriptions, I am able to dig deeper in to the civic roles of chapels in Cappadocian communities, an inquiry which is designed to be a corrective to previous scholars’ over-emphasis on monasteries.

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93 Jeffreys, “Medieval Greek Epic Poetry,” 468.
**Aniconism and Iconoclasm**

Besides having a known patron, the chapel in each case study has a monumental ceiling cross that is the dominant decorative feature in a predominantly aniconic scheme. This means that there is no narrative iconography surrounding these crosses, although it is worth noting that there are portraits in the vicinity of the ceiling crosses in all three. St. Basil Church has two unidentified portraits flanking the apse on the east wall that scholars often interpret as Saint Basil and Saint Gregory.\(^\text{94}\) The Karabaş tomb has monks’ portraits in the interior that were not visible from the adjoining chapel where two additional portraits of donors are painted in the apse.\(^\text{95}\) St. Sergius Chapel also has two portraits in its apse. They are of later dates than the rest of the basilica (probably tenth century) and are not considered part of the original decorative program, making the rest of the chapel a rare example of pre-Iconoclastic decoration consisting of linework and geometric motifs.\(^\text{96}\)

Examining the use of aniconism over time enables more precise analysis of the Cult of the Cross over time in a specific region. Precise dating of monuments in Cappadocia is often impossible, a situation that is reflected in debates that take place in scholarly literature. For this dissertation, I include discussions of chronology for each case study in its respective chapter. In the larger catalog (reflected in Appendix 1), I prioritize time periods over specific years, in part because scholars are still debating the precise dating of many monuments, and relative chronology adequately reflects broad trends over time. The temporal range of case studies (i.e., one pre-Iconoclastic and two Transitional or Middle Byzantine spaces) is important because the

\(^{94}\) Jerphanion, *Une Nouvelle Province*, 2.1: 105-111 and 2.2: 413; Oosterhout, *Visualizing Community*, 202. See Chapter 4 for further discussion.

\(^{95}\) For the tomb, see Jerphanion, *Une Nouvelle Province*, 2.1: 352-5, inscr. 198; See also Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia*, 197; For the donor portraits, see Jerphanion, *Une Nouvelle Province*, 1.1: 67-94 and 2.2: 414-418 and Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia*, 201. See Chapter 5 for further discussion of this chapel.

selection of these particular monuments provides a foundation for discussion of the effects of Iconoclasm (“image breaking”), or a lack thereof, in the province. As a general rule for other individual monuments, I accept Ousterhout’s dates from Visualizing Community as the broadest and most recent research on the region. For a synthesis of debates regarding the chronology of individual monuments, see the first volume of Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil’s catalog.

The cross is an anchor point for this dissertation because it has been at the center of scholarly debate regarding its presence in Cappadocia during Byzantine Iconoclasm (726/30-787 and 814-843), periods during which the use of figural imagery in worship was forbidden. For much of the twentieth century, scholars such as Nicole Thierry interpreted aniconic Cappadocian decorative schemes featuring cross imagery as evidence of Iconoclasm in the province, which she and other scholars used as evidence of the monuments’ dates. However, the extent of the intrusion of Iconoclasm into Cappadocia was, I argue, very minor. My work is part of a reevaluation of Iconoclasm’s relationship to the Cult of the Cross, the origins of which I examine in Chapter 2.

The Iconoclastic debates were, ostensibly, theological discussions over whether it was appropriate to represent the divine Christ in material form or whether such a depiction would constitute idolatry. Often seen as a precursor to Iconoclastic regulations, the Acts of the Quinisext Council of 691/2 reflect some anxiety over images in their regulation of religious practices.

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97 Leslie Brubaker, “Icons and Iconomachy,” in A Companion to Byzantium, ed. Liz James, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 323. As Brubaker notes, the Greek term “iconoclast” is a modern, sixteenth-century term.

98 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community.

99 Jolivet-Lévy and Lemaigre Demesnil, La Cappadoce: après Jerphanion, vol. 1. At the end of each monument’s description, the authors include a summary of published dates, including their own consensus.

imagery, which included a prohibition against the use of cross imagery on floors. The earliest imperial condemnation of figural images is often credited to Emperor Leo III who reportedly removed an icon of Christ from the Chalke gate of the palace in Constantinople around the year 726 or 730. The first Iconoclast Synod (meeting of bishops) to officially adopt an anti-image stance was not until 754 when Constantine V (sole rule 741-775) was in power. Image use was temporarily reinstated by the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council which took place in Nicea in 787. Figural imagery was condemned again in 815, but reinstated once and for all and celebrated in the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 843.

Images of the cross were a lightning rod in these discussions, used by both sides as a symbol of Christ. To Iconoclasts, the cross was an appropriate stand-in for Christ, whose image could not be circumscribed by earthly matter, as well as a symbol of victory. They treated the cross itself as a sign, not an image, so that it could not be conflated with Christ. Charles

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102 Brubaker, Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm, 27–29. The Chalke Gate account is described in Stephen the Deacon, Life of Stephen the Younger (Vita Stephani iunioris), in Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., Patrologiae cursus completus, Patrologiae Graecae (hereafter, PG), (Paris: 1863), 100: 1069-1186; Marie-France Auzépy, ed. and trans., La vie d'Étienne le Jeune, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman monographs, vol. 3 (Aldershot, England: Variorum, 1997), text 87-177. As Brubaker notes, the vita is from the later medieval period (1069-1186) and is not contemporary to Leo.
105 D. Serruys, ed. “Les actes du concile iconoclaste de l’an 815,” Mélanges d’Archaéologie et d’Histoire 23 (1903) 345-351. See also Brubaker and Haldon, 238. Brubaker and Haldon note that the Acts of the 815 council survive in only fragmentary form, which has been compiled by Serruys; the Acts of 843 do not survive.
Barber points out that the Cult of the Cross was widespread enough that it was, “an available tradition to which the Iconoclasts could appeal.”

To Iconophiles the cross was not unlike an icon, a material object worthy of veneration, which was an argument they used to counter Iconoclasts’ logic by saying that to condemn material images would necessitate condemning the cross as well. As art historian Hans Belting puts it, “the iconoclasts were offended by the image, while their opponents considered the sign [i.e., a non-figural symbol] an insult to the image.”

Among the early outspoken Iconophiles was John of Damascus (ca. 675-749), a Syrian monk who wrote treatises in defense of the use of images during the earlier debates, asserting that, “the honor rendered to the image passes over to the prototype.” This was his own citation of Basil the Great, who had written that “the honor shown to the image is transmitted to its model.” Essentially, this line of reasoning made idolatry impossible if the prototypes (i.e., the saints themselves), were venerated rather than the mere matter representing holy entities.

Another proponent of icons was Theodore Stoudios (759–826), who was abbot of the Studious monastery in Constantinople where he venerated the cross alongside figural imagery, saying:

Cross, of all objects the object most venerated; Cross, most steadfast refuge of Christians… Height and breadth of the cross, most comprehensive measure of the vast

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108 Barber, *Figure and Likeness*, 86.
heaven; strength and power of the cross, ruin of the might of every enemy; figure and form of the cross, of all forms the most honorable to look upon.\textsuperscript{113}

Notably, his conception of the cross is monumental, and he uses the tangible traits of impressive height and breadth to channel the enormity of the heavens while recognizing the effectiveness of its recognizable form.

In the Iconophiles’ worldview, the cross was a potent image to be used alongside figural icons, a practice that became “characteristic” of the post-Iconoclastic period.\textsuperscript{114} In many post-Iconoclastic depictions, the cross was portrayed in the same manner that figural portraits were, by using color and shading. Byzantine viewers considered the realistic depiction of a saint to include both underpainting and color, a distinction that made the holy depiction “lifelike.”\textsuperscript{115} Unless an image was miraculously made, underdrawings needed to be covered with colors in order for the icon to be complete.\textsuperscript{116} In a tenth-century example, when a miraculous image of Saint Nikon appeared on a panel, his biographer noted that it was not finished until an artist was able to add colors.\textsuperscript{117}

Byzantine commentary on color also highlights the spiritual qualities that imbue a lifelike image. John of Damascus compared colors to divine attributes, saying, “as the Law [is]… a preliminary foreshadowing of the colored picture, so Grace and Truth are the colored picture.”\textsuperscript{118}

When an image of the Virgin was unveiled in Hagia Sophia in 867, Patriarch Photios (in office 858-867 and 877-886) delivered a homily that argued, “To such an extent have the lips been made flesh by the colours, that they appear merely to be pressed together and stilled as in the

\textsuperscript{113}Theodore the Studite, Oration II in Migne, PG 99, col. 697; Translation in Wharton, \textit{Art of Empire}, 20.
\textsuperscript{114}Wharton Epstein, “‘Iconoclast’ Churches,” 105.
\textsuperscript{117}Sullivan, \textit{Life of Saint Nikon}, 154, cited in Maguire, 36.
\textsuperscript{118}De imaginibus oratio III; Migne, PG 94, col. 1361D-1364A; trans. Maguire, 48.
mysteries… it is the real archetype,”¹¹⁹ Photios implied that color gives lifelike qualities to that image that suggest its prototype, resulting in a deep spiritual impact on the viewer: “Thus, even in her images does the Virgin’s grace delight, comfort and strengthen us!”¹²⁰ Scholars have more recently described Byzantine interpretations of icons as “theology in colors.”¹²¹

By this measure, Iconoclasts would have been loath to see the cross depicted in the manner of the St. Basil Church ceiling and many other similar representations wherein lifelike depictions of gold and gems are framed with vibrant color and pattern. In that context, I suggest that depictions of the cross and cross objects with careful linework and color are closer to ‘non-figural portraits’ of the holy object than to any sort of iconoclastic image replacement.

The resolution of the Iconoclastic debates in favor of image use under appropriate conditions had both spiritual and political impact. Theologically, the result of the debates over icon use were a process for clarification of the concept of real presence, of the relationship between image and prototype.¹²² As art historian Jaś Elsner summarized, Iconoclasm was not simply to codify the cult of images in practice, but to develop a “full theorization” of image use, for both sides.¹²³ Politically, Iconoclastic debates established the control of imagery by the Church (which was, in turn, controlled by the emperor), thereby tightening up control over image use as power.¹²⁴

Philosopher Marie-José Mondzain argues that Byzantines’ perceived control over the visual was not just spiritual but spatial, a claim for earthly territory and world rule. She uses the term “iconocracy” to describe the power of an image to organize the visible in a “submission to

¹²⁰ Photius, Homily XVII, 2; trans. Mango, 290; James, Light and Colour in Byzantine Art, 130.
¹²³ Elsner, 376.
the gaze.” She means that a Byzantine image relied so heavily on institutional and cultural indoctrination that a sacred image could represent vast spiritual and philosophical “territory.” She argues that because Byzantine emperors considered themselves rulers over the visual, through codification of orthodox image use, they ruled as God’s regents over the material world of images as well as the unseen, uncircumscribable realm, laying claim over the entire world that could be seen or imagined. To her argument, I add that non-figural images could be used to make the same claim as figural icons, and the iconicity of the cross was instrumental in its impact. As in Theodore Studious’ passage above, the form of a cross, especially the height and breadth at which it is depicted, is instrumental to its impact on a viewer. A monumental cross claims a large visual territory from which it can be seen and venerated.

While acknowledging that the Iconoclastic periods primarily resulted in the institutional clarification of orthodox image use, scholars have begun to question whether widespread image destruction was reality or hyperbole, and whether the imperial debate in the capital had much effect on rural provinces. A number of sources about image destruction during that period have been determined by scholars to be later interpolations. For instance, a tenth-century account of the torture of Lazaros (fl. ca. 847-858), a monk and painter whose hands were burned by an iconoclast, reads as iconophile propaganda. As Leslie Brubaker points out, the Byzantine concept of iconomachy (“image struggle”), is a more apt description of the period and

126 Mondzain, 59.
127 Mondzain, 58.
its cultural ramifications than “iconoclasm.” 131 As scholars have revisited Iconoclasm’s “greatly exaggerated impact,” they raised new questions about Cappadocia as well, and those are still being investigated. 132

In addition to the twentieth-century scholarship that incorporated Cappadocian examples into wider assumptions about Iconoclasm in the empire, local oral histories also tend to equate aniconism with Iconoclasm. Anthropologist Hazel Tucker discovered this in the 1990s during interviews with a tour guide in the Zelve Open Air museum who said that a Cappadocian chapel decorated with crosses was “no doubt reflecting iconoclastic thought.” 133 Again, the scant survival of sources is at issue. Our knowledge of what Cappadocian monuments contained during the Dark Ages and Iconoclastic periods is limited because there are virtually no extant medieval textual records from that period. Therefore there is no conclusive evidence that these periods of debate affected artistic production in Cappadocia to a significant degree. A more likely scenario is that the faltering economy of the seventh to ninth centuries, rather than imperial decree, led to a decrease in rural patronage.

Chronologically, the cross is a consistent object of veneration over time: devotion to it began long before the periods of Iconoclasm; the symbol was used by both Iconophiles and Iconoclasts; and representations of the cross continued to be used long after the Iconoclastic debates as well. As a result, this complex cult needs more attention in contexts that are not primarily related to Iconoclasm. Scholars have begun to address this by scrutinizing dates of monuments and by paying more attention to the cross and its depictions in Cappadocia. Wharton

131 Brubaker, “Icons and Iconomachy,” 323.
Epstein began to address this in an article about a group of Cappadocian churches that were thought to be “Iconoclast,” wherein she redated four aniconic churches to the tenth century and noted that the “position [of the cross] in the post-Iconoclast period has not perhaps been satisfactorily established.” More recently, art historian Maria Xenaki addressed non-figural decoration, including the cross, in Cappadocian churches from the sixth to tenth centuries, redating a number of them to the ninth century, revisiting monuments that were previously thought to be early Christian and convincingly attributing them to the Middle Byzantine period, post-Iconoclasm.

Ousterhout has credited “post-Iconoclastic enthusiasm” for the continuation of ceiling crosses from the sixth century well into the tenth.

A cross image could have a function within a space, and Cynthia Hahn notes that it “has always been the primary example of the visual cited in discussions of the functions of images in Christianity.” The most important development in aniconic analyses of the cross in a non-Iconoclastic interpretation is the increasing recognition of its function in relationship to its placement within a space. In this vein, Xenaki looks at placement of crosses whose function is to mark a sacred area such as a nave or apse. Teteriatnikov documented a similar phenomenon in the use of a cruciform porch at St. Barbara Church (ca. 1006) in the Soğanlı Valley, where the overhead space is domed and capped with a small ceiling cross marking the viewer’s transition into the church (figure 8).

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134 Wharton Epstein, “‘Iconoclast’ Churches,” 105.
136 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 191.
139 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 140–41; Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1:312-313.
crosses in Cappadocia, highlighting that crosses were placed throughout chapels on walls, ceilings, and tombs during the fifth through ninth centuries.\(^{140}\)

These studies take on the important task of investigating functions and locations of the cross, but they stop short of fully exploring the visual relationships between its shape, placement, and function. What is needed now is a more focused inquiry into the iconicity of the cross, that is, the relationship of its form and meaning (i.e., shape and function). As I argue throughout this dissertation, the cross was not simply a stand-in for figural imagery; it was often chosen for the visual effects achieved by its graphic, axial form. Its visual, physical form is inseparable from the viewing conditions in which it is displayed. In the example of St. Basil Church above, for instance, its portrayal of the cross relies strongly on the axial shape that guides the viewer’s gaze toward the apse.

In examining images of the cross as depictions within active spaces rather than as two-dimensional iconography, I immerse the Cult of the Cross into the context of design history and spatiality. My work contributes a deeper understanding of these monuments by annotating the development of ceiling crosses within their spatial, devotional, and historical contexts. I examine the viewing experiences instigated by monumental ceiling crosses and their possible receptions. I argue that these images were used to manipulate spaces, articulating ways they were used as a design element in order to guide viewers toward particular viewing experiences that offer insight into use of space in rural Byzantine society.

Contributions

My methodology addresses experiences that take place underneath monumental ceiling crosses within the wider context of social history to examine ways that a ubiquitous symbol could be depicted in innovative and deliberate ways in order to enhance the function of spaces. Case studies in subsequent chapters include an examination of visual and kinesthetic experiences to determine how the placement and axial design of a cross could synthesize the viewer with surrounding space. I rely on that common element, the monumental ceiling cross, in order to look at late antique and Byzantine viewing practices as a new way of examining the material evidence alongside primary texts to elucidate sight lines and viewing conditions. These are considered within social and historical contexts using textual and material comparanda. I determine the intended spatial relationships through on-site investigation, photographs of Cappadocian monuments, comparative analysis of similar archaeological sites, and primary texts describing comparable monuments.

This methodology draws heavily from late antique cultural studies by using material and literary evidence alongside site visits to decipher the original viewing experience. I place visuality (socially constructed rituals of viewing) within the wider sphere of material culture, by including monumental cross images as objects that direct viewing within Cappadocian spaces. Through images and documented rituals I examine ways in which the Cult of the Cross was widely celebrated and adapted into local practice through the innovative and deliberate use of monumental ceiling decoration in Cappadocia.

From the historical and historiographic overview in this Introduction, I move on to an examination of the ceiling as an interactive place for imagery in the context of Byzantine use of space. Chapter 1, “Spatiality and the Byzantine Ceiling,” is an historiographic essay and
theoretical framework examining the spatial turn in Cappadocian studies, honing in on its role in late antique and Byzantine scholarship and ways to understand the ceiling as part of a spatial study of interiors. Historical comparisons and definitions from design theory and humanistic geography are used alongside examples from Cappadocia to provide a scaffolding for the case studies in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2, “Visualizing the Cult of the Cross,” elucidates how visuality and viewing conditions work within concepts of spatiality to include both the directionality of the gaze toward the cross and the aura emanating from it. This chapter first traces the historical context for the cult with an emphasis on its origins. Then it examines how the relationship between image and body can be energized by the inherent aura of the cross in depictions of it. The chapter addresses Cappadocian visuality through the monumentality, overhead placement, and materiality of ceiling crosses.

The third chapter, “Sight Lines in St. Sergius Chapel,” looks at the way that the ceiling and apse crosses in a pre-Iconoclastic chapel emphasize the burials of its lay patrons and give evidence of the chapel’s primary function as a commemorative one. Visual alignment of the chapel’s holy places and the crosses’ monumental scale and overhead placement demonstrate the cult’s use of sight lines and movement to guide the faithful toward devotional locations. The crosses are designed to visually interact with one another. In doing this they become objects with agency, working with one another in order to facilitate commemoration. Literary references to funerary practices in similar chapels during this time in Anatolia shed further light on the roles of these spaces as community centers.

The next two case studies address post-Iconoclastic monuments. In Chapter 4, “Immersive Viewing in St. Basil Church,” I identify a group of six ceilings that manipulate the
viewing experience through the use of pattern and motif alongside monumental ceiling crosses. They demonstrate immersive viewing, an ideal experience in Middle Byzantine visuality that was described by Patriarch Photios of Constantinople (in office 858-867 and 877-886). Because the group of monuments includes dated inscriptions, the decoration of St. Basil Church can be more precisely dated in order to decipher ways the Cult of the Cross operated during the Middle Byzantine period, especially with regard to the legacy of Constantine the Great. I also posit a connection between the Exaltation of the Cross liturgy and Glorification of the Cross scenes in Georgia, a topic which points to the wide reach of Cappadocian cultural exchange in this period.

The ceiling cross in “Revelatory Glimpses in the Karabaş Monks’ Tomb,” the focus of Chapter 5, is over a tomb that is painted on the interior and visually accessible from the exterior through a small window in the adjoining chapel. The painted tomb in Karabaş Church is roughly contemporary to St. Basil Church, but whereas the latter’s decorative scheme is one of immersive pattern and ornament that envelopes the viewer, the Karabaş ceiling cross is secluded from most of the monument’s foot traffic. As viewing practices reveal the cross to worshippers, they become part of a network of viewing and symbolic revelations in the liminal spaces surrounding the chapel and tomb, using the imagery for connecting the living and dead through eucharistic concelebration.

The first half of the dissertation looks at the Cult of the Cross and viewing experiences to examine ways the cult was visually and spatially informed in Cappadocia. Case studies follow the framework set out by the theory and methods in the initial chapters. They are indicative of ways the Cult of the Cross utilized the cross form and image (especially with regard to its spatial context) to encourage specific effects. The most important aspect of the three case studies is that each one is representative of a specific viewing experience brought about through use of a cross
image on an overhead space. I use these monumental cross images to facilitate a multimodal understanding of space and decoration as haptic, multisensory experiences rather than simply addressing images as visual symbols in Cappadocian architectural design. Because these relate to wider themes in Byzantine art, including historical context, monastic relationships with laity, Iconoclasm and aniconism, and spatial relationships, they further integrate the region into spatial studies and elucidate its contributions to the widespread Cult of the Cross.
Chapter 1: Spatiality and the Byzantine Ceiling

It is impossible to understand the impact of a ceiling cross when it is described merely as an image on a surface. Instead it must be understood as an integral design element of interior space. Ceiling design can manipulate visual experiences that occur within a monument. For instance when a cross dominates an overhead space, its size, placement, direction, and depiction all become essential to the experience of the viewer below. The image of the cross will guide and manipulate the viewer’s eyes and body. This points to a relationship between visuality and spatiality: Cappadocian ceilings create social spaces that are best understood dynamically (in relation to whatever is going on beneath them) rather than as surfaces for imagery. In other words, monumental ceiling crosses are designed objects, functional tools used by painters and sculptors in Cappadocia to promote the Cult of the Cross through visual communication.

This chapter elucidates Cappadocia’s relationship to the spatial turn through human geography and spatial theory in archaeology, a tactic that is especially potent when applied to a study of the ceiling as an interface for visual communication. In this chapter I examine the material evidence of ceiling design. I then outline the historiography of spatiality in Cappadocia by pointing to literature on regional infrastructure and architectural complexes. Previous scholars have examined Byzantine spatiality using a hierarchy of scales: the largest is the eastern Roman empire and cities within it; a medium-scaled investigation could include monastic complexes or estates and the monuments that comprise them; and the smallest scale moves from individual monuments to places within those built spaces, including areas designated for a specific use, such as a chapel’s apse. Architectural studies address the use of spaces within churches for

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liturgical purposes, and I add to that geographic and visual analyses, with emphasis that an inclusive methodology, to enable us to discern a more holistic view of how ceilings were part of visual and lived experience. Previous scholars have not addressed the role of ceilings in spatial analyses at these three scales, but I argue the ceiling was an integral mechanism used in the construction of “habitus,” the expected behaviors and experiences in the social spaces of Cappadocian architecture which, in turn, represents a localization of wider Byzantine spatial practices.¹⁴²

I have isolated the monumental ceiling cross as an iconographic theme that needs further examination with regard to ceiling decoration because of the widespread cult, the complex system of cross symbolism, and its use as a design element. The ceiling is a transitional area, both figuratively and literally. Poised above the viewer as a metaphor for Heaven, it is an adaptable canvas with the potential to guide viewers below, using an interactive experience found in both sacred and profane structures.

**Material Evidence**

Evidence of late antique or medieval ceilings has been limited by natural disasters and exacerbated by lack of scholarly attention. Ceilings are particularly susceptible to earthquakes, fires, and gravitational pressure, leading them to sag and break. Because of these factors many are no longer extant or so damaged as to be neglected in archaeological documentation. For example, historian Karen Stern notes that in the original excavation reports of the synagogue at Dura Europos (244/245 CE), there were 234 painted terracotta ceiling tiles—comprising the only surviving synagogue ceiling from antiquity—that were mentioned only in summaries and chapter.

In her examination of them, she argues broadly for the significance of the ceiling in assessing the ritual use of a late antique structure:

The countless scholars who study the remarkable building, but overlook its ceiling, inadvertently impede an improved evaluation of the entire structure. First, they neglect a major element of the decoration which … had a striking impact on the décor of the synagogue by playing off the images within the murals. Second, and perhaps even more importantly, they fail to recognize vital clues as to how the synagogue functioned as a ritual space: iconography and textual dedications displayed on the ceiling surface attest the practices of those who built it.144

Stern’s framework for analyzing the ceiling as part of a synthesized interior whole is equally useful for early Christian monuments, yet the evidence is often scant. Medieval documentation of the Lateran basilica (begun ca. 313) in the Liber Pontificalis (Book of the Popes), a text compiled between the third and fifteenth centuries, mentions that five hundred pounds of polished gold had been set aside for its vaulting, but there is no archaeological evidence left of it.145 On that ceiling, as in many early Christian churches, coffers probably hid beams that supported the roof.146 The timber used for roof and ceiling beams in late antiquity was prone to damage from both moisture and fire, making preservation unlikely.147

Cappadocian rock-cut structures are ideal case studies for late antique and medieval ceilings because in the region’s architectural tradition, the landscape and built environment are

created from the same material source, volcanic tufa.\textsuperscript{148} A relatively soft kind of rock that formed from prehistoric seismic activity, tufa is easily carved and has been used in tandem with built architecture throughout the region since antiquity.\textsuperscript{149} Tufa is a more durable material than masonry or wood alternatives, and dozens of ceilings in the extant rock-cut chapels and complexes of Cappadocia survive in a wide variety of structures, including monastic churches, private chapels, burial spaces, secular homes and audience halls, storage facilities, and monastic refectories. In late antique and medieval communities there, the region’s physical geography was integral to the socially constructed spaces in which public rituals or personal encounters took place. The region holds a wide sampling of Byzantine ceiling forms, including examples that are carved to look domed, flat, or vaulted.

The most widely documented ceiling from late antiquity is the dome over the nave in Hagia Sophia, the imperial church in Constantinople (figure 1.1). The original church was probably built in the fourth century and rebuilt twice in the fifth, and much of the current building was reconstructed by Emperor Justinian (r. 518–527) between 532-537 after the Nika Riots.\textsuperscript{150} Its dome has had to be repaired several times since, most notably after an earthquake in 558.\textsuperscript{151} Encapsulating a wide volume of space below it, the current dome has an approximate radius of fifty feet, and its center is over 178 feet high.\textsuperscript{152} Shortly after the rededication of the church in 562, Paul the Silentiary (fl. ca. 560), a poet and palace official, used its scale to compare it to the heavens made tangible:

\textsuperscript{152} Mainstone, Hagia Sophia, 217; Taylor, “Literary and Structural Analysis,” 66.
Rising above this [base of the dome] into the immeasurable air is a helmet rounded on all sides like a sphere and, radiant as the heavens, it bestrides the roof of the church. At its very summit art has depicted a cross, protector of the city. It is a wonder to see how [the dome], wide below, gradually grows less at the top as it rises. It does not, however, form a sharp pinnacle, but is like the firmament which rests on air.\(^1\)

Paul’s description of the dome’s vastness recalls the creation account in the book of Genesis, which says, “God called the dome Sky,” thereby separating the earth from the heavens.\(^2\)

Natural light figures prominently in Paul’s introduction to the dome. He says, “at the base of the half-sphere are fashioned forty arched windows through which the rays of fair-haired Dawn are channeled.”\(^3\) However, the perception of the dome as a space filled with light was not unique to Hagia Sophia, and Paul’s prose relies on a type from earlier structures. In the fourth century, Gregory Nazianzus wrote of the church in his hometown that “at the top is a gleaming heaven,” a description which Cyril Mango translates to be a dome atop a circle of windows.\(^4\) Gregory goes on to say that the arrangement “illuminates the eye all round with abundant founts of light—truly a place wherein light dwells.”\(^5\)

Justinian’s court historian, Procopius (ca. 500-ca. 565), described Hagia Sophia’s ceiling as one of gold mosaic that contributed to the overall impression of a lively visual space where light reflected from the tesserae and surrounding polished marble.\(^6\) The size and shape of the dome offered Byzantine viewers the opportunity to be enveloped by light and connected to the

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\(^2\) Genesis 1:8; Mathews, “Cracks in Lehmann’s ‘Dome of Heaven,’” 12. As Mathews points out, the association of a dome with the heavens was widely used in antiquity.


decoration through space. The widespread metaphor of the heavenly dome speaks to its role as a
social construction of space developed by Byzantine Christians over time.

Reiterating the apotropaic reach of the cross in Hagia Sophia’s dome, Paul wrote that “at
the very navel the sign of the cross is depicted within a circle by means of minute mosaic so that
the Saviour of the whole world may for ever protect the church.”\footnote{Mango, \emph{Art of the Byzantine Empire}, 83.}
Flickering tesserae in
changing light would make the cross seem to hover, while the surrounding light from windows
and gold mosaics would cloak all the faithful below. The cross positioned in the heavenly dome
was a reminder of God’s protection over the empire. Each emperor who was crowned by the
patriarch inside the church was seen as God’s regent on earth. This was evidenced, for instance,
when Constantine VII (r. 945-959) emphasized that an emperor should be greeted in Hagia
Sophia after his coronation as, “the appointee of the Trinity.”\footnote{\textit{χαλῶς ἠλθετε τὸ πρόβλημα τῆς τράιδος} in Constantine Porphyrogennetos, \textit{The Book of Ceremonies}, Ch. 2, trans. Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall, \textit{Byzantina Australiensia}, 18,1 (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2012), 1:39. Moffatt and Tall point out that Constantine VII was the compiler, if not the actual author, of this text (xxiii).}

Much of a dome’s spiritual connotation comes from its spherical shape, and scholars
often focus on symbolism of the form rather than the spatial relationships that a dome facilitates.
For instance, in a seminal 1947 publication art historian Otto Demus articulated the spiritual
connotations of dome imagery when he attempted to codify the decoration of monastic
architecture into three zones of sacredness, with the highest (including the dome, vaults, and
Demus maintained that by the ninth century, the domed, centrally
planned cross-in-square was the ideal form for Byzantine architecture.\footnote{Domed basilicas did exist in Byzantium, including a few cruciform basilicas in Cappadocia. See Appendix 1. See also Ousterhout, \textit{Master Builders of Byzantium}, 89. Ousterhout notes a number of Byzantine basilicas that were converted to cross-in-square churches in the Middle Byzantine period, including a basilica in Amorium.} Writing only a year
after Demus, archaeologist Karl Lehmann published a sweeping article on the “Dome of Heaven” saying:

Interpreting the ceiling as the sky may be the result of a general and not unnatural association … [but] the specific forms and the systematic approach of Christian monumental art far transcend such general associations. In all their specialized varieties and applications, the Early Christian patterns of heaven on vaults and ceilings are united by a common systematic, centralized and organized approach.  

In other words, his argument is one of universality, directly connecting ancient architectural interpretations of the celestial sphere to medieval examples. He concludes:

in both the pagan and Christian worlds, the manifold visions of the dome of heaven, with their symbolism in the canopies, figures, and structural forms, with the projections of heaven on ceiling, often coupled with an actual or supposed opening in the sky, all reflect the basic experience of man in visualizing the physical as well as the transcendental celestial realm.

Lehmann’s article was widely read, and shortly thereafter, E. Baldwin Smith’s monograph on domes in late antiquity emphasized the symbolism of the dome’s hemispherical and spiritual connotations, also citing it as a Christian tradition continued from antiquity. Liturgist Robert Taft also wrote that the Byzantines inherited the idea of the dome as a “Platonic image of the cosmos,” from antiquity, and he credits Hagia Sophia for fulfilling that notion in material,
Christian form. These scholars tended to overstate the similarities between pre-Christian symbolism and medieval Christian meaning.

Mathews wrote a sharp critique of Lehmann’s focus on continuity between antique and Christian iconography rather than innovation and change. In it Mathews argues that, “the development of Christian dome iconography can be described as the overthrow of the kosmokratores by the Pantokrator,” eschewing continuity of astrological connotations between ancient sources and Byzantine ones. By this he means that Christians discontinued the use of pagan celestial symbols such as the sun, moon, and zodiac and instead, created a new cosmology of images based on the Creation in Genesis.

Although Mathews’ interpretations of dome decoration were innovative—he made comparisons based on surface imagery and not the images’ intended use, scale, or viewing experience—he (and other scholars) missed an opportunity to acknowledge that floors are good parallels to ceilings, literally and conceptually, in their spatial relationships. I emphasize that design of both floors and ceilings highlights the scale and space of images and their relationship to the viewer. Much of Lehman’s evidence consisted of iconographic comparisons, using both portable objects like jewelry and also floor mosaics, which was due to the lack of extant ceilings for him to compare. However, neither Mathews nor Lehmann made connections to the ways that Roman use of floor decoration reflected decisions about use of space, a tactic that prefigures similar Cappadocian use of space via the ceiling. For instance, art historian John Clarke observed a direct relationship between design of Roman floor mosaics and the ceilings above

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168 Mathews, “Cracks in Lehmann’s ‘Dome of Heaven,’” 12-16
170 Mathews, 15.
them; he observed that higher, vaulted ceilings created greater floor areas beneath than flat ceilings, thereby providing an impetus for more “ambitious” and intricately designed figural mosaic designs beneath soaring vaults.\textsuperscript{172}

In Cappadocian architecture the traits of ceiling type, medium of decoration, and architectural plan had a complex relationship that affected the development of monumental ceiling crosses. The use of Cappadocian ceiling crosses follows a general timeline: early carved crosses from the sixth century are on flat ceilings; painted crosses on flat and barrel-vaulted ceilings were the dominant form in the Transitional period, and Middle Byzantine ceiling crosses and can be found on flat, barrel-vaulted, or domed ceilings. Ceiling crosses were primarily painted (rather than carved) on all ceiling types of the Middle Byzantine period, and with the advent of cross-in-square plans, the dome cross became the most prevalent kind of ceiling cross. Pointing to the relationship between the decoration’s medium and the ceiling type, Ousterhout observed, “with the increased prominence of domed architecture in the tenth century … carved ceiling decoration becomes increasingly rare.”\textsuperscript{173}

As delineators of interior space that run parallel to one another, ceilings and floor plans have related purpose and form. Not surprisingly, then, the timeline of ceiling cross development is in sync with widespread changes in the use of Byzantine architectural plans. The development of Cappadocian architectural plans and their respective ceiling designs was similar to the development of masonry architecture in the rest of the Byzantine empire. The most elaborately sculpted Cappadocian basilicas (including some with flat ceilings and others with domes) were

\textsuperscript{172} John R. Clarke, \textit{Roman Black-and-White Figural Mosaics}, Monographs on Archaeology and the Fine Arts 35 (New York: New York University Press for the College Art Association of America, 1979), xxii. For further discussion of this, see Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{173} Robert G. Ousterhout, \textit{Visualizing Community}, 191.
created around the sixth century. Basilicas (with one, two, or three aisles) continued to be made after the sixth century and were the most commonly used form over the next two and a half centuries (i.e., the Transitional period) in Cappadocia. In basilicas, barrel vaults became common alternatives to the flat ceiling, although both ceiling types remained in use. Domes were used more frequently as Middle Byzantine cross-in-square architecture became prominent in the entire Byzantine empire, a trend that developed simultaneously in Cappadocia.

Beyond documenting ceiling types and architectural plans, an assessment of material evidence of ceilings in rock-cut architecture highlights the practical nature of both engineering and interior lighting. In rock-cut architecture there is no need for structural support of a dome, making its engineering very straightforward compared to structures built in masonry or wood for which thrust is an issue. Despite the freedom from engineering, the relative scale of the dome to interior space in extant Cappadocian architecture tends to be very small, which points toward other practical concerns, such as illumination. Indeed, other than scale, one of the most important differences between Hagia Sophia’s dome and Cappadocian chapel ceilings is the availability of natural light. The airiness of open space in the imperial church is in sharp contrast to the relative darkness of rock-cut domes, which were difficult to illuminate because their drums do not have windows. Ousterhout argues that because it is more difficult to light a rock-cut dome, flat ceilings were substituted for them in Cappadocia for practical reasons, asserting that, “effects of natural lighting in a cave church were completely different from those in a built church. Thus, a tall dome raised on a drum was superfluous, and most churches have shallow vaults that better reveal their painted decoration in the dimly lit interiors.” He also casts it as an issue of

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174 Ousterhout, 38–40.
175 Ousterhout, 54–76.
176 Ousterhout, 76–86, esp. 84.
177 Ousterhout, Master Builders of Byzantium, 245.
legibility, saying that, “By reducing the height of the dome and equalizing the vault heights, the painted surfaces of the interior become more legible in the strafing natural light or limited artificial light.” Indeed, the matte pigments used to decorate Cappadocian interiors would absorb light, unlike the reflective gold mosaics of domes in other regions.

In a Cappadocian example known as Kepez Church 3 (ca. tenth century or later), a cross-in-square church near the town of Ürgüp, the monument is topped with an elaborately carved central dome (figure 1.2). Faux pendentives, accented with red painted crosses, are strictly decorative. The drum is elegantly carved to mimic a series of columnar arches, but they, too, are decorative, and the spherical domed area is much darker than the surrounding barrel vaults between bays. Most Cappadocian domes like this one are found in the naos (central worship area) of a centrally planned church. As is the case with the rest of Byzantium, virtually all of the centrally planned, domed chapels in the region are Middle Byzantine in date.

The relative chronology of floor plans and ceiling types convincingly addresses changes over time. However that timeline does not incorporate the effects of ceiling types on viewers’ experiences under domes in comparison to flat ceilings in Cappadocia. Ceilings and floor plans had a profound impact on the viewing experiences of people in spaces. However other than practical discussions of visibility issues, Byzantinists have paid little attention to the differences between viewing conditions of iconography found on flat ceilings as opposed to images in domes as well as the spatial relationships involved.

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179 Natalia Teteriatnikov, *Liturgical Planning*, 151–152. A few small domes in Cappadocia are found over narthexes as a means of highlighting the transition from an entryway (and often a burial space) into a church.
Domes and Spatial Relationships

As architectural elements, domes tend to pull attention upward. The curved sphere leads the eye around the sides of the cupola and up toward its center, forcing the viewer to turn her body in a circle to see images on all sides of the sphere, creating a centripetal force. For instance, when a viewer enters Kepez Church 3, aniconic red painting in the barrel-vaulted transepts in the north and south bays guides the viewer’s attention into the dome, which contains the highest point in the church.180

Other Middle Byzantine dome decoration in Cappadocia and the wider Byzantine Empire usually focuses on an image of Christ Pantokrator (a bust-length portrait depicting him as “Ruler of All”). The presence of the Pantokrator in a Byzantine dome symbolized Heaven as a spiritual realm rather than a physical universe.181 Göreme’s Karanlık Kilise (Dark Church, mid-eleventh century) has the most well known dome in the area because the chapel’s paintings have been well-preserved (figure 1.3).182 It was constructed using a cross-in-square plan and the interior is covered in narrative frescoes. The image of Christ Pantokrator in the central dome is set off by angels in smaller surrounding domes. The chapel is one of the Column Churches, a group of three monuments identified by Jerphanion as having similar wall-to-ceiling figural scenes.183 The central dome of each church in this group is decorated with a Pantokrator image.184

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180 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 134–37.
184 Annabel Jane Wharton, Art of Empire, 48.
apotropaic function of the Pantokrator images in the Column Churches is highlighted by their placement in domes to encompass the viewer with their protective spheres.

The manipulation of images and light inside a dome facilitates a different physical viewing process from that on a flat ceiling. Viewing under a dome is centralized, but not static: the globed sphere simultaneously draws a gaze upward, facilitates the body’s rotation underneath (rather than toward a linear sight line), and encompasses a hemispheric space inside and beneath in a way that had apotropaic and heavenly connotations. Demus contrasted domed ceilings and flat ones by saying that a dome can be thought of as “enclosing real space” of a hemisphere, making any decoration inside it a “spatial arrangement” rather than a two-dimensional image that would be found on a flat surface.185 As Krautheimer has pointed out, Hagia Sophia’s spiritually beneficent light was most visible to the emperor, patriarch, and clergy beneath the dome, whereas “ordinary” viewers had to worship from the darker galleries or aisles.186 In that context the dome’s shape was utilized for political means to send a visual message that the most powerful viewers were the ones touched most directly by God’s light. Mathews has argued, like Demus, that Pantokrator iconography became synonymous with dome symbolism by the ninth century by “controlling the space in the nave” from above.187 This is a nod toward spatial analysis, but neither of them parses the spatial relationships that a dome’s hemispheric form facilitates beneath in the interior.

The imperial status of Hagia Sophia raises the issue of whether the proliferation of ceiling crosses in Cappadocia are simply copies of its enormous, light-filled dome. One argument

185 Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration, 17.
186 Krautheimer and Ćurčić, Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture, 219.
against this explanation is that by the mid-ninth century, the cross mosaic in its dome had been replaced by an image of Christ Pantokrator. Another is that the ceiling crosses inside small, dark Cappadocian monuments may echo a Constantinopolitan precedent to a limited extent, but the grandeur and scale of Hagia Sophia offered a very different viewing experience than the monumental crosses on flat or barrel-vaulted ceilings in the rural chapels. Although they reflect wider Byzantine trends in architectural and ceiling design, Cappadocian chapels involve specific viewing experiences and operate as a regional phenomenon.

**Design of Other Ceilings**

While the Byzantine viewing experience under domes is widely understood to be centralized due to the encompassing sphere, the socially constructed experience of encountering flat or barrel-vaulted ceilings needs more clarification. A flat or barrel-vaulted ceiling could be a space with symbolic meaning and decoration, even without the spherical, heavenly connotations of a dome. Cappadocian artists regularly utilized iconographic themes on flat or barrel-vaulted ceilings that were related to the viewer’s experience in the space. A number of decorated ceilings demonstrate that a tradition of non-domed ceiling decoration thrived in Cappadocia in secular spaces, burial chambers, and chapels. In Cappadocia, at least seventy-three of the hundred and twenty-five monumental ceiling crosses are on flat or barrel-vaulted ceilings. This distinction of form is important because the ceiling type determines, to a large extent, the viewing conditions for inhabitants.

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189 This dissertation’s catalog notes the type of ceiling (flat, barrel-vaulted, domed, or cross-vaulted). See Appendix 1 for the full catalog.
Decoration on a flat ceiling tends to utilize the axial design of a church, particularly when its plan is a basilica. In Cappadocia, flat ceilings and barrel vaults are decorated with both narrative scenes and aniconic decoration. Crosses on flat ceilings are found in basilicas ranging from Late Antiquity through the medieval period.\textsuperscript{190} In chapels, ceiling decoration almost always guides the viewer toward a sacred location, which is often the apse. Ousterhout says this is because the apse was the “focal point of the interior” in churches without domes; he adds that apses remained the most visible area even after domes (which were inevitably darker than flat ceilings) became widely used in chapels during the Middle Byzantine period.\textsuperscript{191} In his observations either the apse or the domed ceiling is visually emphasized.

I have observed a different, more mutual, relationship between flat ceilings and apses wherein the axial design overhead has the potential to guide viewers’ attention, however. The linear design of a church is evident, for example, when an ornamental band of saints’ medallions positioned in a line along the height of the vault, a design that is common in ninth- and tenth-century ceiling decoration.\textsuperscript{192} This is apparent in Tokalı Kilise’s Old Church (early tenth century), where the barrel vault is typical of Jerphanion’s archaic style in that it is decorated with horizontal bands of narratives of the Life of Christ (figure 1.4).\textsuperscript{193} These bands are visually stacked on one another so that the vaulted ceiling acts as an extension of the narrative wall rather than a differentiated space. The two walls unite in a line of prophets’ medallions at the highest point, serving as the spine of the vault and creating a visual axis between an image of the

\textsuperscript{190} For the continuity of basilicas, see Michael Altripp, \textit{Die Basilika in Byzanz: Gestalt, Ausstattung Und Funktion Sowie Das Verhältnis Zur Kreuzkuppelkirche (The Basilica in Byzantium: Structure, Appointments, Function, and Relationship to the Cross-in-Square Church)}, Millennium-Studien Zu Kultur Und Geschichte Des Ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr. (Millennium Studies in the Culture and History of the First Millennium C.E.), Band 42 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013).

\textsuperscript{191} Ousterhout, \textit{Visualizing Community}, 217; See also Ousterhout, \textit{Master Builders of Byzantium}, 245.


Transfiguration in the west tympanum of the barrel vault and the nave of the Old Church, which is no longer extant (figure 1.5 and figure 1.6).

In Pancarlık (St. Theodore) Church (ca. ninth or tenth century), near Ürgüp, the flat narrative ceiling decoration attempts to mimic vaulted decorative schemes (figure 1.7). It is sectioned into rectangular narrative panels, as are the nave walls. Figural scenes on the flat ceiling are oriented so that a viewer facing the north or south walls could continue to look up and ‘read’ the narrative. However, medallions with saints’ portraits that are painted alongside the south and center of the ceiling are oriented so that a viewer facing the apse and a secondary chapel space can see them correctly oriented. This creates one visual axis for the narrative scenes and another toward the altar. The awkward flow of visual imagery in the physical space may be a result of having one workshop for the carving and another for the painting. It also demonstrates that the painter was aware of how to guide viewers through the narrative scenes as well as toward the altar using imagery overhead, even if the process was designed for a vault rather than a flat ceiling.

Geometric or vegetal aniconic designs are used on a number of chapel ceilings in Cappadocia. The painted spine of a vault in the Ihlara Valley’s Pürenliseki (Pine Needle) Chapel (ca. late ninth or early tenth century) also adds visual height to a burial space by combining an aniconic motif with figural imagery (figure 1.8). The focal point is a rectangular box running lengthwise in the vault. It is painted with a linear motif of lines that intertwine at intervals to

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195 A lack of coordination between the carving and painting is often credited for decorative dissonance in rock-cut chapels. See, for instance, Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium*, 234. Note that parts of Pancarlık Church have been heavily restored, and sanctuary steps have been reshaped since the Byzantine period.
196 Jerphanion, *Une Nouvelle Province*, 1.2: 382; See also Thierry and Thierry, *Région du Hasan Dağı*, 153 and ix.
form circles, sometimes called a snail meander pattern. This motif is common in the Ihlara Valley, and here it serves to guide the viewer’s gaze toward an image of Christ in a nimbus.

Aynalı Kilise (Mirror Church, ca. eleventh century) is a good example of a non-figural decorative scheme that uses small crosses as a repeated motif (figure 1.9). Red painting (the use of an ochre pigment to create line work) is a common decoration for Cappadocian chapels that often highlights (or creates faux) architectural features. Aynalı Kilise is a particularly bold example of this technique, wherein alternating red and white color blocks line the arcade and sanctuary arches, emphasizing a visual path to the altar. A row of painted red medallions in the main barrel vault guide the eye toward one cross on the tympanum over the sanctuary, and then to another cross in the apse below. On this ceiling, as with a number of flat or barrel-vaulted ones, the designer was less focused on iconography and more concerned with directing the gaze or manipulating the viewing experience with linear imagery or motifs.

**Decorated Surfaces and Spatiality**

In the case of the monuments discussed here, the examination of ceiling crosses offers a specifically Cappadocian understanding of space. The hundred and twenty-five monumental ceiling crosses in seventy-nine monuments within this dissertation are not the only examples from the late antique or medieval periods—there are ceiling crosses in Phrygia, Italy, and Armenia, for example—but the ones in Cappadocia serve as a useful focus group because of their close proximity to one another and the high number of surviving examples within a

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197 Lyn Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia*, 62. Rodley dates the church to the mid to late eleventh century, based on similarities of red paintings to others in GÖreme, particularly the Yılanlı Group; See also Ousterhout, *Visualizing Community*, 195–98.
relatively small geographic area. Here I put evidence of Byzantine ceilings into social and spatial contexts in order to discern broader themes among ceilings more generally.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the period that coincides with early scholarly exploration of Cappadocia, only one writer was theorizing the Byzantine ceiling to any degree. That scholar was G. T. Robinson, a nineteenth-century decorator with a broad understanding of design history, who touched on the integral role of the ceiling in a carefully designed medieval space by saying, “when you consider that the ceiling of a room is the largest unbroken area it possesses, it is evident that its tasteful treatment … ought to be well considered.” He also observed that in pre-modern decoration, including Roman and Byzantine examples, ceiling decoration often received as much “artistic consideration” as the walls and floor. Robinson was among the first modern design critics to address Byzantine ceiling motifs within their overhead context. In a brief analysis, he looked at the ability of optics to point out ways that Byzantine artists created illusions by manipulating color and decoration to create an impression of overhead space receding or descending toward the viewer. For example, he points out that using wooden ribs that extended from walls to ceiling would add “at least another

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five inches of apparent height.” In another example he determines that visual contrast affects the eye’s measurement of height—i.e., the eye assesses height by a point that is differentiated from those around it. Therefore, a contrasting point on the ceiling would be the one on which a viewer would focus. Robinson’s interest was in replicating the best of Byzantine design for his own clients, but his observations point toward larger issues in spatial analysis.

Robinson’s emphasis on optics, (the science of viewing), was unusual for Byzantine scholarship in his era. Most of his peers focused on the aesthetics of decorated surfaces instead. For instance, in 1856 Owen Jones extracted Byzantine patterns from their contexts for his popular book, *The Grammar of Ornament*. He included lithographic illustrations of “Byzantine” ornament by Francis Bedford who drew from contexts as diverse as a Venetian mosaic, a Greek manuscript in the British Museum, and Constantinopolitan marble pavement from Hagia Sophia (figure 1.10). Jones’ work reflects the emphasis on decorative pattern and surface in nineteenth-century neo-Byzantine scholarship. By contrast, this makes Robinson’s attention to ceilings within their interior contexts unusual for Byzantine studies of that period.

Robinson may not have realized the extent to which his work coincided with theories of spatiality that emerged shortly thereafter among architects and philosophers. Architecture critic Geoffrey Scott observed in 1914 that “we adapt ourselves instinctively to the spaces in which we stand, project ourselves into them, fill them ideally with our movements.”

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202 Robinson, 16.
203 Robinson, 16.
204 Averil Cameron, *Byzantine Matters*, 70. Cameron has noted that in early twentieth-century Byzantine studies, “aesthetic responses were central,” pointing to their emphasis on surface decoration rather than scientific engagement with interactive optic effects.
space incorporates both physical and personal attributes, pointing to a spatial turn in architectural criticism. Although often associated with geography, the term “spatial turn” in the social sciences is used to describe the beginning of an intense period of interest in places and the ways humans construct spaces, both physically and socially, in relationship to location.

In the twentieth century, philosopher Henri Lefebvre understood space as something more than a physical concept, and acknowledged that a mutual understanding of space is inherent to group identities. He referred to that kind of spatial understanding as “social space.”

His development of nuanced socio-spatial analysis is particularly important because it has since been used to conceptualize space in a variety of theoretical frameworks across disciplines. In Byzantine buildings, social space is reflected in the use and design of a church: when the congregation gathered for the Divine Liturgy, the nave was designated for all the worshippers. It was mediated by the sanctuary, a space meant for only the clergy. In the early Byzantine period, a preference for low chancel barriers meant that the congregation had visual access to the sanctuary space but did not try to gain physical access. As another type of social space, the refectory in a monastery reflected the communal meals that were part of monks’ lives, representing their commitment to the coenobitic community.

The social construction of space is closely related to the concept of *habitus* which philosopher Pierre Bourdieu, a contemporary of Lefebvre, articulated as cultural capital or

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“embodied history.” By this he meant similarities of habit due to training or cultural practices at a given time in a group’s history. For example, Basil the Great described the practice of praying toward the east (often toward an apse) despite the fact that, “there are few who know that it is because we are in search of our ancient fatherland, Paradise.” Patristics scholar Andrew Louth points out that these “corporate gestures” of prayer had been adopted by the group, not as decisions by individuals, but as learned behavior that was incorporated into group identity. That group identity was nourished by the habitus of learned personal habits like devotional practices as well as widely accepted codified practices like the Eucharist. In Byzantine parlance the concept of habitus was augmented by the adherence to orthodoxy, the practice of correct belief which became increasingly top-down in implementation after the resolution of the Iconoclastic debates in the ninth century. Deeply rooted practices of habitus infused with the quest for orthodoxy made for a synthesized, if not entirely homogenized, Byzantine viewership.

Examining spatiality (i.e., using the concept of space as an object of inquiry) need not be limited to a person or group’s relationship to space. The concept of spatiality is also used to examine physical and social spaces that have relationships to one another, using either static locations or distances between them. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan clarifies vocabulary by discerning that spaces are “marked off” while places are “centers of felt value.” For instance,

213 Louth, 84.
214 Cameron, Byzantine Matters, 88; See also Mango, Byzantium: The Empire of The New Rome, 88. Cameron refers to the Byzantine religious life as a kind of habitus.
216 Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience, 7th printing (1977; repr. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 4–5. Tuan’s emphasis on place, which coincides with social space, has made him a central figure in humanistic geography since the 1970s; See also Tim Cresswell, Place: An Introduction,
a ceiling is marked off as part of an interior space, and to a Byzantine viewer one with a cross was also imbued with the felt value of the potent symbol, making it a place for holy devotion. Tuan argues that by discerning spatial criteria, people “attach meaning to and organize” the world around them.\(^{217}\) Cappadocian artists indicated that the social space of a local chapel reflected the community’s habitus. They did this first through codified liturgical rituals that were practiced within. Secondary indications of habitus are evident in the chapel’s affordances for worship, that is, areas or experiences that were designed to facilitate private devotion or communal activities beyond a worship service. Extending the creation of place beyond a social activity, art historian Alexi Lidov focuses on the Byzantine creation of sacred space, an activity he calls *hierotopy*, which he considers to be a “special form of creativity” that connects the spiritual realm with human-made forms such as images.\(^ {218}\) I reference Lidov’s term here to point out that because the Byzantine worldview was inherently spiritual, constructing visual practices in Byzantium was intimately connected to the social functions of spatial contexts. The spiritual, visual, and spatial were *modes* of communication (concerted approaches to or manners of expression) used simultaneously in these contexts. Using spatiality as a framework, I posit a new understanding of the ceiling as one of a multimodal interface, rather than a surface, in order to discern the relationship it encourages between imagery and viewers.

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\(^{217}\) Tuan, *Space and Place*, 4–5.

\(^{218}\) Alekseĭ Lidov, ed., “Hierotopy: The Creation of Sacred Spaces as a Form of Creativity and Subject of Cultural History,” in *Hierotopy: The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia (Ierotopiia sozdanie sakral’nykh prostranstv v Vizantii i Dreveni Rusi)* (Moskva: Indrik, 2006), 33; Alekseĭ Lidov, “Creating the Sacred Space. Hierotopy as a New Field of Cultural History,” in *Spazi e percorsi sacri: i santuari, le vie, i corpi (Spaces and Sacred Routes. The sanctuaries, the streets and the bodies)*, ed. Chiara Cremonesi and Laura Carnevale (Padova: Libreriauniversitaria.it edizioni, 2014), 62. Hierotopy is from the Greek words ἱερός (sacred) and τόπος (place).
Surface as Interface

Ceilings are under-utilized in discussions of interior spatiality because art historians usually look at them only as a surface. Ostensibly, architectural structures are straightforward: interior space is framed by a form that includes the walls, floor, and ceiling. In terms of the functionality of a ceiling’s design, however, images on that surface are incorporated into the volume of the interior form as well as the interactions that take place within the space. Actions that may be prompted by the images include reading, interpreting a narrative, or other viewer-centric encounters. Architectural theorist Bruno Zevi has argued for an interactive understanding of interior space as a setting for activities, rather than as an object made of flat surfaces: “That space—void—should be the protagonist of architecture is after all natural. Architecture is not art alone, it is not merely a reflection of conceptions of life or a portrait of systems of a living. Architecture is environment, the stage on which our lives unfold.” I argue similarly that architectural surfaces—and here I focus particularly on the ceiling—are not simply canvases for images but part of an active sphere.

When a space contains a monumental ceiling cross, the image is integral to understanding the interior as an active viewing environment. In the Introduction I described St. Basil Chapel, where Nicander the patron had commissioned a painting of a gemmed cross on the ceiling. There is also a series of crosses in the apse, and several more on the walls of the nave, creating a network of cross imagery that leads the viewer throughout the space. The ceiling is a unifying factor in the design of that chapel, and the viewer’s relationship to it goes beyond iconography; the ceiling design is key to understanding the space. Inversely, an understanding of the chapel’s spatiality, including its role in a community as well as its interior design schema, is crucial to

220 This chapel is the subject of Chapter 4, wherein I describe the viewing process at length.
understanding the richness of the cross symbol and its placement throughout the church. The space can be understood as a carefully designed sphere wherein the walls, floor, and ceiling encompass a dynamic system that includes the viewer, his movements and experiences, and the images and surfaces he encounters.

It is difficult to determine how exactly Cappadocians designed a space or who was in charge of specific elements of the process. Sometimes a patron gets credit, such as in the dedicatory inscription on the cornice of St. Basil Church, although it also names Constantine the presbyter, a church official who may have consulted on the decorative program. But Byzantine architects have left almost no architectural plans specifying how such relationships included carvers or painters. In some cases they probably designed by using ropes to mark off floor plans or directly marking stones to be cut. Rather than focus here on what the design process entailed, however, I look instead to what the finished product was intended to do for the viewer within the space.

Scholars have applied various approaches to discerning the relationship between images and space in Byzantium, often describing it in experiential terms. Bissera Pentcheva uses “aesthetic phenomenology” to describe the effect that an object’s appearance can have on a viewer, focusing particularly on the way the aesthetics and acoustics of a space enhanced the Byzantine worship experience. Similarly, Ellen Swift extends the use of decoration on objects beyond iconography and style; she acknowledges decoration’s inherent meaning as part of the use and influence of an object, highlighting the impact of anthropologist Alfred Gell for

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222 Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium*, 64.
understanding an object’s agency. Other art historians have located space and place within the umbrella of ritual studies. By highlighting the agency of an object to inspire, Carolyn Connor has recently proposed a multi-step framework that can be used for “analyzing mosaics and processions in juxtaposition with one another,” in order to focus on the gaze of spectators, especially on narrative, figural imagery. I am less concerned with liturgical, codified uses of images like these than in the intrinsic responses of individuals who are activated by design decisions made using formal elements within a cultural or religious context. I look instead toward the design process, prior to the object’s existence, and to the agency of the artist and patron to consciously design something that would influence or inspire.

Incorporating monumental images into spatial analysis is a method that draws from cultural studies, a field that uses anthropology and literary theory to examine a group’s rituals and ways of life and how that particular group differs from others. Lidov called his hierotopical approach a “matrix, or structural model, of a particular sacred space,” noting that an examination should include “all visual, audio and tactile effects.” There was also a fairly recent spatial turn in the study of material culture that is closely linked to viewing practices. As archaeologist Kate Giles put it, “the question for archaeologists is how other forms of material culture—landscapes, buildings and artefacts—were actively manipulated both to structure and to transform visuality and spatiality in the past.” Clarifying that the experience of viewing takes place within a

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226 Lidov, “Hierotopy,” 35.
multimodal and multisensory environment points to the relationship between visuality and spatiality.

The concept of multimodality is often applied to digital media in order to parse the visual and intellectual relationships represented by technology (i.e., the “information architecture” of a project) in ways that resemble the spatial. For instance, a computer’s home screen is described as a desktop with folders, referencing three-dimensional objects in order to describe the internal structure of data storage in both visual and spatial terms. However the concept of multimodality is useful in analysis of analog material as well. Cecilia Lindhé, a digital humanities scholar and medievalist, takes the concept of “the digital” as an opportunity to examine the medieval church as a “multimodal space that encourages multi-sensuous involvement,” that is, more than a decorated series of surfaces. Her reference to multimodality means that she is using the church as a rhetorical form to communicate simultaneously across multiple modes of expression, (i.e., visual and textual, or kinesthetic and auditory), for reaching both a broad, public audience and a sophisticated, educated one simultaneously. She suggests an approach that,

moves from treating the medieval church as text [to be deciphered] to treating the medieval church as experience, and explores the relationship between word, image, and performance during the Middle Ages. In this context, “the digital” is not only a phenomenon that could be tied to certain digital objects or used as a tool but as an approach to history, with strong critical potential.

In doing this, she frames the digital not simply as technology, but as a conceptual lens through which to understand medieval material culture. Says Lindhé, “the humanities… would benefit from engaging much more strongly with the digital as a critical perspective on aesthetic concepts

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229 Lindhé, 194.
and cultural history.” Likewise, Guldi says, “the spatial turn represents the impulse to position... new tools against old questions.” In Cappadocia, this means discerning painted programs in a context that incorporates space rather than limiting the examination to surface decoration.

The “new tools” to which Guldi refers should incorporate the vocabulary of visual studies, a field that critically engages the digital for understanding visual information. Most prominent is the concept of interface. Visual theorist Johanna Drucker describes interface as “a mediating structure that supports behaviors and tasks. It is a space between human users and procedures that happen according to complicated protocols.” If, as Lindhé suggests, we think of a Cappadocian monument not as a series of surfaces but as an interface, then the monument can be understood as an instigator of interactions between designers, images, and viewers within its spaces. Drucker goes on to say that, “the encounter between a subject and an interface need not be understood mechanistically,” and that we can think of interface as, “an ecology, a border zone between cultural systems and human subjects.” This is why I emphasize the different kinds of viewing experiences that Cappadocian artists designed using monumental ceiling crosses. The viewing experience, which can also be thought of as interface, emphasizes lived experience beyond seeing an image with the eyes.

This kind of interface is evident in the construction and design of Cappadocian chapels. When the images on Pürenliseki Chapel’s barrel vault draw the viewer’s eye upward and the motif on its spine draws the whole person further into the room, the design of that ceiling has had

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230 Lindhé, 195.
233 Drucker, 148.
an impact on the viewer and activates the space with her movements. Likewise, horizontal scenes in Tokali Kilise’s Old Church vault and tympanum narrate the life of Christ from left to right, requiring the viewer to walk in that direction through the church in order to experience the stories in order.\textsuperscript{234} However, to interact with the prophets at the spine of the vault, he would have to resituate his body, moving around the small space in a way that makes the viewing process dynamic. Byzantines had no formal recognition for this specific phenomenon. Rather, they embodied habitus through orthodoxy, which manifested itself in the appropriate use of imagery and spaces.

To incorporate lived experience into art historical analysis is to examine the use of an image: a monumental ceiling cross is not simply an image that can be seen—it suggests to the viewer a desired outcome that is intentionally brought about by the designer’s use of that image in a specific way. As a Cappadocian viewer stood under the central dome in Karanlık Kilise, she was encompassed by the protection of Christ, or when she followed the sight line of saints’ medallions on the Pancarlık Church ceiling toward the apse, the steps she took were both physical and spiritual. The intended viewing experience within these chapels is richer and more multi-sensory in person than what is conveyed via a two-dimensional photograph or a textual description. As Zevi argues, architecture can only be understood when it is “grasped and felt … through direct experience.”\textsuperscript{235} What Lindhé calls performance may also be thought of as physical responses to design, providing the kind of experience that Zevi suggests. Below I extend this language of design to interior decoration, highlighting multimodal communication that is not limited to surface decoration.

\textsuperscript{234} Wharton and Schwartzbaum, Tokali Kilise, 17.
\textsuperscript{235} Zevi, Architecture as Space, 23.
Discerning vocabulary for ceiling decoration helps to clarify the formal elements of a monumental ceiling cross that are incorporated into an interior space, and throughout subsequent chapters I use descriptors elaborated by James Trilling for deciphering visual information.\textsuperscript{236} Decoration is a term used generally for visual embellishment in any medium. Throughout this dissertation, I use decoration to refer to two-dimensional or surface-oriented imagery, and design as a signal that I am incorporating the wider visual and physical sphere of an image in an interior space. Decoration can be \textit{ornament}, which Trilling describes as “decoration in which the visual pleasure of form significantly outweighs the communicative value of content.”\textsuperscript{237} In the context of a Byzantine church, I would add that spiritual beneficence or devotion would be a more culturally specific goal of ornament than Trilling’s criteria of pleasure. Ornament can be made of up \textit{motifs} (shapes or images, sometimes repeated), which are also the building blocks of patterns. Ornament or motif in any pattern could also include \textit{symbols}, which represent culturally specific meanings or ideas.\textsuperscript{238} The cross, as I describe in subsequent chapters, has been used in Cappadocia in all of these ways. Because of its multifaceted meaning, the context of the cross is important to understanding its viewership. Its potency stems from more than iconography—the context is nuanced and is created by the cross and the design of its depiction(s) as part of an interactive space.

Byzantine architects and designers communicated through the multimodal nature of monumental decoration. They used haptic as well as visual responses in spaces like Tokalı Kilise, which the Byzantine viewer navigated intuitively by taking in visual decoration with their eyes, as well as through physical movement. To do this, the Byzantine ceiling should be examined as part of a series of interactive image networks, not just as a surface for imagery.

Acknowledging design and user experience does not ignore the spiritual components of the cross on the ceiling. Instead, this framework for understanding ceilings augments ways that a study of ceilings fits into spatiality more broadly—ceilings belong to a specific group of spaces that can be studied based on their function within a room or larger monument. With design vocabulary in mind, I revisit Byzantine scholarship on geography with a new focus on the ceiling to examine the social construction of space in Cappadocia.

Theoretical frameworks such as social space and interface aid methodology in that they can help us parse and describe lived experience that has been documented through site visits and field observations. They also shed light on ways to understand Byzantine spaces that are not documented with extant primary texts. Lefebvre differentiated between territory (which he related to “natural” physical space), and social space, a concept which he construed as community or socially-constructed space.\(^{239}\) With the articulation of social space, Lefebvre examined ways people think of space as an emotional or mental concept (such as ‘headspace,’ referring to one’s mindset). His idea of social construction of space includes ways that a group of people implicitly or explicitly agree to attribute meaning to a space, such as a congregation’s use of a church building for the liturgy. Its value is echoed by Tuan’s description of place as having a socially-provided value. Lefebvre was cautious to acknowledge that modern and ancient examples would be different, emphasizing that space is not a universal or abstract concept.\(^{240}\) He pointed out that an ancient city, for instance, must be gauged on its own terms, such as in ways that space was appropriated for its own purposes, and that this would not be fully comprehensible from textual documentation.\(^{241}\)


\(^{240}\) Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 31.

\(^{241}\) Lefebvre, 31.
**Cappadocian Spatial Studies**

Interface theory explains the manifold relationships between visuality and spatiality in the built environment by emphasizing that viewing happens alongside perception by multiple senses and in ways that includes physical movement as well. As study of Cappadocian ceilings, this dissertation is a granular data set, offering a nuanced way of examining spatiality using carefully defined criteria. However, that kind of limited spatial data needs to be juxtaposed with broader categories of study to show how these ceilings can be examined in groups or within a wider geographic context among complexes or valleys in the region. Here I augment interface theory by examining visuality and spatiality in Byzantine architecture using broader categories of analysis that contend with cities and regions, as well as individual rooms. Luke Lavan has articulated three ways that archaeologists frame late antique cities since the spatial turn, all of which can be used to examine Cappadocian monuments as well: architectural studies, site syntheses, and topography.\(^{242}\) In this section I scrutinize spatial relationships that operate at different scales to highlight relationships between spatiality and visuality in Cappadocia.

**Architectural Studies**

Because subsequent chapters examine instances of monumental ceiling crosses that direct the viewer’s gaze and body through spaces, it is important to note the intended functions of those spaces. Lavan describes architectural studies as the examination of space in which “single functional labels are usually given to structures on account of their form.”\(^{243}\) By this he means the designation of a building as a church, house, or refectory, for instance. Within architectural

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\(^{242}\) Lavan, “Late Antique Urban Topography,” 171; This is in line with other responses to Lefebvre that have had the effect of channeling ongoing attention to spatiality in Roman archaeology and architectural history. See, for instance, Newsome, “Centrality in Its Place: Defining Urban Space in the City of Rome,” 25.

\(^{243}\) Lavan, “Late Antique Urban Topography,” 177.
studies, the “functional approach” can also be used to discern ways that smaller spaces within a monument are related to its design and form. This could refer to the nave of a chapel, or a tomb in the floor of a narthex, for instance.

Examining function is most fruitful when it is done within social and historical context, rather than as a strictly typological exercise. For example, Mathews used the functional approach to determine that the forms (i.e., architectural plans) of early churches of Constantinople were related to the liturgy practiced within. He looked at church buildings as a whole, using documents and archaeological evidence to reconstruct a sixth-century liturgy of processions in the capital. Teteriatnikov used the functional approach to examine Cappadocian chapels, arguing that the arrangement of liturgical furniture reflects regional variations in the Byzantine liturgy. Incidentally, although Teteriatnikov examined Cappadocia’s floor plans, furniture, and architectural details, her findings did not uncover any use of ceiling decoration in codified liturgical practice, a detail to which I return below. The functional method is often applied to entire floor plans, but it can also be used to isolate a particular portion of a space as a place of felt value, as I do with ceilings.

At a small scale architectural studies indicate what kind of interior space was dominated by a ceiling cross, raising questions about and how its use was affected by monumental imagery overhead. Of the monumental ceiling crosses in Cappadocia, at least nineteen are in secular

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244 Cyril Mango, “Approaches to Byzantine Architecture,” *Muqarnas* 8 (1991): 40–44, https://doi.org/10.2307/1523151. The terminology often used in Byzantine architectural studies was articulated by Mango in an article identifying four common approaches: a typological approach to identifying and classifying examples; a symbolic approach that attempts to understand Byzantine ideology; a social and economic approach, looking at geography and wide contexts like trade; and the functional approach, which examines the relationship of form and function.

245 Mango, 42. Mango contrasts the contextual functional approach to a typological method of identifying architecture that ignores a building’s use.


247 Teteriatnikov, *Liturgical Planning*. 
(domestic) spaces. One hundred and three of the monumental ceiling crosses are in churches or chapels. Among them, there are two ceiling crosses in transepts (the worship areas just outside the sanctuary), both of which are in Ağaçaltı Kilise (Church of Daniel, ca. late ninth or early tenth century) in the Ihlara Valley. At least sixty-six ceiling crosses are in naves (primary worship areas) of basilical chapels or churches. Twenty-three ceiling crosses are found in narthexes or entryways throughout the region, and almost all of these are associated with burials. In this dissertation’s case studies in Chapters 3-5, I examine ceiling crosses in the context of a nave or burial chapel because those are the kinds of spaces that most often utilize the axial form of the cross in a basilica to enhance viewer interaction.

Previous scholars have identified functions of space as the primary mode of analysis for Byzantine architecture, in part because the Byzantine liturgy is intimately related to the function of spaces designed for it. Liturgy is not simply a worship service dictated via a text or a list of actions to follow, but a set of lived events wherein congregants are connected to the space of the church and the images within it. Louth described the spatiality of that experience by emphasizing the development of participants’ spiritual evolution during the process: “to be in space, then, is not just to be geometrically located … but to belong to the realm of change and becoming.”

The spatiality in this sense is both physical and social: when the liturgy was experienced, the

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248 The catalog in Appendix 1 includes the type of space wherein each monumental ceiling cross is found.
249 As with many Cappadocian monuments, the date is contested and reevaluated by scholars over time. Nicole Thierry, “L’archéologie Cappadocienne En 1978. [Ses Difficultés. Son Intérêt Pour Les Médiévistes],” Ses Difficultés. Son Intérêt Pour Les Médiévistes 22, no. 85 (1979): 13. Thierry dated it to the seventh or eighth century and also notes possible influences from the sixth to tenth centuries in Thierry and Thierry, Région de Hasan Daği, 73–87 and x; Senem Suzek, “The Decoration of Cave Churches in Cappadocia under Selcuk Rule” (University of Notre Dame, 2008), 73-78. Suzek (who argues for a less likely thirteenth-century date in a 2008 Master’s Thesis) summarizes the dating controversy in scholarly literature; Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 74. Ousterhout considers the chapel to be of the late ninth century, making it among the earliest centrally-planned domed churches in Cappadocia. See Chapter 3 for my inclusion of this chapel in a group of late ninth- to tenth-century monuments.
251 Louth, “Experiencing the Liturgy,” 80.
church building was filled with specific movements and actions, and the hearts of the
participants were changed and filled with the holy spirit as well.\textsuperscript{252} The church was also a
representation of the cosmos, with its constrained, manageable space standing in for the infinite
and unknowable.\textsuperscript{253}

Liturgical architectural studies follow a Byzantine literary tradition that is embodied by
the \textit{Historia mystagogica}, an influential eighth-century ecclesiastical text by Patriarch Germanos
I (in office 715–730) that drew on previous sources and became the “traditional Byzantine
interpretation” of symbolic architecture.\textsuperscript{254} The text examines the symbolism of various places
within a church that are related to liturgy. Germanos wrote, “The church is a heaven on earth
wherein the heavenly God ‘dwells and walks.’ It typifies the Crucifixion, the Burial and the
Resurrection of Christ.”\textsuperscript{255} The text goes on to liken numerous places within the church, such as
the apse and altar, to important elements of the Gospel narrative, saying, “The conch is after the
manner of the cave of Bethlehem where Christ was born,” and “The holy table is the place where
Christ was buried, and on which is set forth the true bread from heaven, the mystic and bloodless
sacrifice,” for instance.\textsuperscript{256} A key purpose of the text was to identify functions of smaller spaces
that contributed to the spiritual context of the larger, labeled, architectural form of the church.

Notably, Germanos neglects to mention the ceiling, a place of “extraliturgical” status
despite its presence in every church.\textsuperscript{257} I use the term here to acknowledge that spaces could be

\begin{footnotes}
\item[252] Louth, 83–85.
\item[253] Louth, 85–87.
\item[254] Mango, \textit{Art of the Byzantine Empire}, 123–24; Warren T. Woodfin, \textit{The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and
2012), 110–11.
\item[255] Germanus (attrib.), \textit{Historia mystagogica}, in Mango, \textit{The Art of the Byzantine Empire}, 141–42.
\item[256] Germanus (attrib.), \textit{Historia mystagogica}, in Mango, 141–42.
\item[257] Vasileios Marinis, \textit{Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople: Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries} (New
York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 4 and 100-113. I borrow the term “extraliturgical” from Marinis, who
applies the functional approach by examining specific areas within churches from ninth- to eleventh-century
Constantinople and determines that a number of activities that fall outside of codified liturgy were practiced in
\end{footnotes}
related to the intended spiritual purpose of a chapel even if they were not a codified part of its liturgy. In other words, not every part of the church had a direct role in the liturgical rituals that took place there. Private, social, and even secular activities could also be a part of the extraliturgical actions taking place within a church (or other structures). Other activities could be as diverse as private devotion, miraculous encounters with saints (including incubation and sleeping in hopes of holy dreams), commemoration of the dead, performances, eating, and resting. In subsequent chapters I examine several Cappadocian churches in the context of extraliturgical spaces, determining that they served a civic role for the surrounding communities as healing centers and spaces for funerals and commemorations.

One kind of extraliturgical space that is comparable to the ceiling is the floor. As noted above, floors are parallel surfaces to ceilings. Fabio Barry isolates marble floors as an area where materials could be imbued with meaning. He argues that marble floors made use of a “decorative repertoire” inherited from late antiquity that was expanded during Byzantine constructions. He addresses marble floors as a symbolic seascape, representing (both literally and metaphorically), the place at which the holy church becomes grounded to the earth. I argue in Chapter 4 that the ceiling of St. Basil Church operates in a similarly symbolic mode, navigating the viewer’s attention as a mediator between the earth and Heaven.

A second comparative extraliturgical space is the apse. Beat Brenk maintains that (like the ceiling) the apse had no specific liturgical function because it was not mentioned in liturgical literature and because “official” ecclesiastical prayers were not offered to the saints depicted in chapels. See below for examples.

258 Marinis, 100–113.
These images had some agency over the viewer in that they were designed to inspire “visual worship” as they innately, silently instructed the viewer on how to direct attention and veneration forward. In subsequent chapters, I make a similar argument about the use of ceiling imagery to direct attention upward and make ecclesiastical statements about commemorating the holy dead with eucharistic signals. In those cases I argue that a monumental cross is fundamental to the use of the space, making it inherent to the design, not simply a decorative element. Differentiating between an apse and ceiling is important because while both are extraliturgical, the two kinds of spaces produce different viewing conditions.

Using architectural studies, especially the functional approach, demonstrates that the use of a ceiling is less codified than other areas of a church. As an extraliturgical space in chapels, the ceiling is a surface that is closely connected to liturgical and funerary practices, but its lack of codification allows for innovations, either by regional preference or patron-centric design. A flat ceiling has the practical advantages of providing unbroken surface area and evenly lit space, and its ceiling decoration can become even more significant when it is used to direct the viewer’s attention toward specific sanctified spaces in the interior or to guide them through a particular physical action, gaze, or experience.

**Site Syntheses**

In Cappadocia, rock-cut monuments are often part of architectural complexes, which are groups of buildings such as monastic settlements or rural domestic estates. These complexes were not administratively organized as cities, but they often operated as groupings of buildings where patrons or families had agency and independence, and their viewing and aesthetic choices

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reflected wider trends or influences. In archaeological terms, a “site” in Cappadocia is often a complex. Site syntheses study groupings and relative proximities that provide (physical and social) context at a medium scale (i.e., larger than one room or building, but within a local or regional context). Site syntheses in Cappadocia often look at spatial and visual relationships between comparable complexes, or between similar spaces among several complexes.

For instance, a site synthesis might be an examination of the visual impact of a ceiling cross in one room on the rest of the domestic complex (as I discuss in the next chapter), or it could be a grouping of similar ceiling crosses that are dispersed among monuments in various complexes as a case study (see, for example, the Four-Quadrant Group in Chapter 4). Typological “clusters” of images in monuments point to a regional understanding of visuality because they reveal habits and practices that form around similar viewing conditions or desired kinds of viewing experiences.

According to Lavan, a typical site synthesis begins with “textual and epigraphic discussion of the political and religious history of a site and then recounting details of standing monuments by type, or as part of a site tour.” 262 Site syntheses in the form of catalogs of monuments were the foundation of modern Cappadocian scholarship. Published volumes of descriptions, maps, and photographs by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century explorers who documented, measured, and described the monuments remain fundamental to Cappadocian studies, particularly in light of the ongoing devastating effects of vandalism and natural disasters such as rockslides that continue to alter and destroy them. The comprehensiveness of site syntheses, which Lavan compares to the genre of guidebooks, also recalls the art historical

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262 Lavan, “Late Antique Urban Topography,” 177.
tradition of the catalogue raisonné, a genre of documenting a complete set of images or objects in a group.\footnote{Lavan, 177.}

Robinson made his observations about interior decoration and ceilings in 1892, the same year that archaeologist William Mitchell Ramsey published Tokalı Kilise’s inscriptions.\footnote{Arthur C. (Arthur Cayley) Headlam 1862-1947, Ecclesiastical Sites in Isauria (Cilicia Trachea), Supplementary Paper, no. 1 (London: Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, 1892). Ramsey’s inscriptions were published in Headlam; See also Wharton and Schwartzbaum, Tokali Kilise, 81. For another overview of early explorers, see Veronica Kalas, “Early Explorations of Cappadocia and the Monastic Myth,” Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies 28 (2004): 101–19.} It would be more than a decade until Ramsey made a return trip to Turkey with his research partner, archaeologist Gertrude Bell, or until Guillaume de Jerphanion released his first volume on Cappadocian rock-cut churches.\footnote{Wharton and Schwartzbaum, Tokali Kilise, 81; William Mitchell Ramsay and Gertrude Lowthian Bell, The Thousand and One Churches, ed. Robert G. Ousterhout and Mark P. C. Jackson, ([1909] Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2008); Guillaume de Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province de l’art: Les Eglises Rupestres de Cappadoce, vol. 1 (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1925).} The documentation by these early explorers was almost exclusively of wall decoration and floor plans. Their lack of attention to ceilings reflects a significant shortcoming in scholarship of the time. However, by addressing the monuments in clusters, their guidebook-style overviews have helped scholars discern relative relationships between monuments and complexes that point to regional patterns and practices.

Among the early guidebook writers in Cappadocia was Gertrude Bell, an historian and explorer who published Binbir Kilise (an account translated as The Thousand and One Churches) with archaeologist William Ramsay after traveling to Anatolia in 1907.\footnote{“Gertrude Bell (1868-1926),” Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University, 2014, accessed May 18, 2016, http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/.} The book gives formal analyses with historical background for a number of churches in the region of Konya.\footnote{Ramsay and Bell, The Thousand and One Churches.} It is particularly valuable for its records, including Bell’s photographs, of many churches that are no longer extant.\footnote{Ramsay and Bell, xxi.} Hans Rott took a similar approach by documenting
monuments in Cappadocia and neighboring regions in 1906 and published them in 1908.\(^{269}\) Shortly thereafter, Henri Grégoire transcribed a number of inscriptions in a published account of his travels in Cappadocia.\(^{270}\) He later published an article on Byzantine geography followed by a volume with more inscriptions from Asia Minor, enriching the historical and spatial documentation of the region.\(^{271}\)

Grégoire’s travels in the region were followed by those of scholarly priest Guillaume de Jerphanion. Jerphanion’s contributions to Cappadocian scholarship have been called “magisterial,” for their comprehensiveness.\(^{272}\) His seven volumes published between 1925 and 1942 are still an inevitable starting point for researchers, and his photographs provide evidence of structures that have since been lost or altered.\(^{273}\) His catalogs have continued to highlight an important genre within Cappadocian studies, demonstrated in the recent publication of a two-volume set by Catherine Jolivet-Lévy and Nicole Lemaigre Demesnil that readdresses Jerphanion’s original photographs and supplements the work with additional materials, including bibliographic information and color photographs.\(^{274}\)

Some of the groups of Cappadocian monuments identified by Jerphanion have been revisited by other authors who have identified common themes in the iconography or style in


order to date monuments with similar features. For instance, Ann Wharton Epstein’s article on a
group called the Column Churches in Göreme Valley was important because it ascribes them to
the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{275} Jerphanion’s Archaic Group, which was dated to the late ninth through
early tenth centuries by iconography and style, was further clarified by Robin Cormack through
dated inscriptions and visual influences; Cormack recognized that after the Middle Byzantine
period the continuous, horizontal bands of “archaic” narrative cycles in wall decoration were
abandoned in favor of individual scenes that he calls “festival icons.”\textsuperscript{276} Examining the chapels
using groupings like these allows for the assessment of regional Cappadocian viewing practices
within similar spaces, indicating spatial aspects of the region’s visuality.

\textbf{Topography}

The worldview of the Byzantines was deeply spiritual and visceral, and their collective
visuality was inherently spatial in the ways that it incorporated senses and movement into the
viewing experience. These connections were grounded by an understanding of geography,
wherein the earth was perceived as a parallel to the heavenly realm that was imagined to be a
grander and more splendid version of familiar forms.\textsuperscript{277} Because of the earth’s role as a
familiarized reflection of the heavenly realm, Byzantines were keenly aware of the metaphysical
and symbolic value of topographic landscapes. A study of topography, examination of the built
and natural environments (what Krautheimer has called “political topography” and terrain) and
relevant locations within them, is useful for identifying spiritual centers throughout
Cappadocia.\textsuperscript{278}

\textsuperscript{275} Epstein, “Rock-Cut Chapels in Göreme.”
\textsuperscript{276} Cormack, “Archaic Group,” 19–36; See also Wharton and Schwartzbaum, \textit{Tokali Kilise}, 85.
\textsuperscript{277} Mango, \textit{Byzantium}, 153.
\textsuperscript{278} Richard Krautheimer, \textit{Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics}, Una’s Lectures 4 (Berkeley:
Studying topography extends our capabilities to understand the relationships of regional chapels to their counterparts in other areas, and to trace artistic exchange between Cappadocia and neighboring regions. Topographical mapping involves documenting archaeological sites in the context of natural environment as well as the relative relationships of monuments within.\textsuperscript{279} At a city-wide scale, Roman archaeologists examine urban planning in terms of roads, urban fabric, infrastructure, and imperial administration.\textsuperscript{280} In Cappadocian studies, some of the most extensive topographical documentation is found in volume two of Friedrich Hild and Marcell Restle’s \textit{Tabula Imperii Byzantini} (TIB2), which is an extensive historical atlas; its data incorporates history, archaeology, literary sources, and observations (collected during fieldwork) in order to map the region to the scale of 1:800,000, a remarkably precise scale for such a large area.\textsuperscript{281} As a follow-up to TIB2, Hild built on the data and expanded the project to the road system in Cappadocia in order to visualize the main routes between cities.\textsuperscript{282} Johannes Koder’s recent synthesis of the historical geography of Byzantine Anatolia situates features of human land use, such as administrative regions called themes, within the natural (topographical) setting of Cappadocia.\textsuperscript{283} As these publications demonstrate, the goals and methods of historical

\textsuperscript{279} Lavan, “Late Antique Urban Topography,” 174.
\textsuperscript{282} F. Hild and Marcell Restle, \textit{Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia Und Lykandos)}, Tabula Imperii Byzantini 2 (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 1981); Külzer, “Fifty Years of Tabula Imperii Byzantini,” 3.
\textsuperscript{283} Johannes Koder, “Historical Geography,” in \textit{The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the End of Late Antiquity Until the Coming of the Turks}, ed. Philipp Niewöhner (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 9–27; See also Leslie Brubaker and John F. Haldon, \textit{Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era (c. 680-850): The Sources
geography and archaeology are often similar. Brubaker and Haldon have even said that clear-cut divisions between the two are “a little artificial,” a claim that resonates when examining the ways rock-cut architecture in Cappadocia is part of both the natural topography and human-made networks of spaces. Ousterhout touches on this in Cappadocia in his interpretation of the geographic dispersion of hundreds of rock-cut tombs in the region as part of a sacralizing effect wherein Byzantine inhabitants created “landscapes of commemoration” so that the spiritual welfare of the dead was embedded in the region’s daily life. Topographic study reveals the impact and range of these commemorative spiritual centers, which are often marked by ceiling crosses.

Historian Jo Guldi has credited the discipline’s spatial turn, in part, to the emergence of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for mapping spaces using interactive tools. One example of this is ORBIS: The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World, which allows users to query its data set in order to create a customized map of transportation options available to Romans ca. 200 CE and later. For instance, in the Byzantine period, traveling from Caesarea to Constantinople in springtime was about a two-and-a half-week venture by horseback when using a route that passed through Ancyra (Ankara). Expressing this series of relationships demonstrates how scholars attempt to map the lived experience of Byzantines through measuring and documenting spatial dynamics of urban planning and rural societies. This

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284 Brubaker and Haldon, Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era: The Sources, 159.
285 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 480.
286 Jo Guldi, “What is the Spatial Turn?” See also Tom Elliott, “Stable Orbits or Clear Air Turbulence: Capacity, Scale, and Use Cases in Geospatial Antiquity,” plenary talk, Mapping the Past: GIS Approaches to Ancient History conference at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (April 8, 2016). Elliott adds to Guldi’s analysis that location and realtive location can be the result of a variety of methods, including literary and epigraphic analysis and computational GIS.
288 Hild, Das Byzantinische Strassensystem in Kappadokien, 2 and 77. This estimate uses Hild’s Route C1 (Kayseri to Ankara) in ORBIS.
allows us to estimate both administrative realities and constructed relationships between places in the Roman empire that laid the foundations for Byzantine infrastructure.

To illustrate with a Cappadocian example, I point to a chapel dedicated to Saint Stephen and to the spatial relationships illuminated by its surroundings; St. Stephen Chapel (ca. late ninth century) is a basilica that was carved from the tufa in order to be used as a sacred place (figure 1.11). Within the chapel are smaller areas designed as places toward which to channel devotional attention, including a cross on the ceiling and another in the apse. Outside the chapel are additional volcanic cones in the landscape that contain spaces such as a barrel-vaulted medieval hall with a carved exterior façade that is in the southeast part of a large monastic complex (figure 1.12). The chapel is in the vicinity of a chapel known as St. Michael Church (ca. thirteenth century), which had a hagiasma (healing spring) and a refectory and is in a complex that is known locally as Keşlik Manistir (Archangel Monastery). The nearest town to this monastery is Cemil, which is approximately fifty miles southwest the city of Kayseri (Caesarea). As Lefebvre pointed out, a region’s notions of centrality and importance would be localized, and within a complex like the Archangel Monastery, localized relationships would develop between people and places, a kind of centrality that operated separately from the large-scale conceptions of the empire wherein the capital was central to operations.

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292 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 244.
While many historical models look at topography as a study in centrality, assuming that an urban center or capital city would be central to the people who depend on it, Lefebvre recognized that centrality of a city or settlement was relative. Newsome has continued Lefebvre’s line of thinking by arguing that spatial theories were often localized, saying “dominant ideologies of space in monumentality and urban planning could be appropriated by the users of the city into their own particular spaces of representation.” By this measure, the spatial turn sheds light on ways socio-spatial relationships (interactions in and with spaces) that were expressed in late antique hagiography can be ‘mapped’ onto provincial areas such as Cappadocia using the topographical model. Connor, for instance, has done this by tracing a number of processions through Constantinople, arguing that the capital city became an extension of the church as infusions of processions extended through the streets, incorporating a network of monuments.

The relative geographic relationships between places designated as ‘capital’ or ‘province’ coincide with the social roles that Cappadocian monuments played—highlighting differences between Constantinople and the provinces—especially focusing on the crucial roles of estates and private donations within communities. This underscores the agency of ‘rural’ or ‘provincial’ patrons who distributed wealth at great personal expense, and who worked within their available materials and workshops to express sophisticated messages about identity and devotion. Ousterhout has recently challenged outdated, exoticized notions of the region and described it instead, as a “productive landscape” with a stratified society. Wharton also pushed back

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293 Lefebvre, 244.
294 Newsome, “Centrality in Its Place: Defining Urban Space in the City of Rome,” 27; Lefebvre, The Production of Space, 244–45.
296 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 490.
against the notion of provincialism, citing Cappadocian craftsmen’s knowledge of Constantinopolitan art and their conscious differentiation from it. My examples in provincial Cappadocia examine chapels in less urban areas such as the town of Göreme (Avcılar) or on rural estates. However, each church complex operates as a kind of localized urban center because of its role as a social space, one wherein spatial infrastructure was designed to facilitate administrative or codified activities for a range of inhabitants participating in a variety of practices. Here I operate using Newsome’s inquiry into “the relationship between urban space as a physical state and as a conceptual and perceptual construct.”

Topography is usually thought of as physical, but its concepts are useful for modeling socio-spatial understanding of rural communities as well. For instance, Peter Brown’s historical model of the regional holy man in late antique society takes on a new sheen in the context of spatiality. Brown points to the vita of Theodore of Sykeon for its inclusion of the topographic landscape as a vivid backdrop to the saint’s activities, such as the “contrasted zones” of high crags and deep ravines that dramatize the story. This lively landscape was the ideal setting for the holy man’s presence. In the vita people regularly journeyed to the saint’s monastery so that he could cast out demons. He also healed people repeatedly on a trip to Herakleia in the Pontos. The holy man’s location, wherever he was, became a spiritual center. His movements

301 Georgios, Vie de Théodore de Sykéôn, Ch. 40, in Festugière, 36; Dawes and Baynes, trans., “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 117.
302 Georgios, Life of Theodore of Sykeon, Ch. 44, lines 39–40; For a summary, see Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 120.
throughout the community were a life force of healing, creating a web of locations where miracles had taken place.

Romanist Kim Bowes has also contextualized this kind of holy man as a demonstration of networked relationships within the literary trope:

The ubiquity of Christian triumph is described through a public/private binary—the public church or holy man, surrounded by a constellation of Christian homes and families. The tableau of the saint’s image or the Christian cross in the house, attended upon by the Christian family or individual makes concrete the physical permeation of Christian belief, or the fame of a particular holy man, into society’s smallest unit – the home.303

What Bowes identifies as a juxtaposition of public and private is also a glimpse into the hierarchy of social spaces inherent in early Christian society—central figures in the home or community surrounded (both physically and symbolically) by a network of other figures who represent Christianity’s dispersion throughout the wider world. Similarly to the imperial cross in Hagia Sophia’s dome, a monumental ceiling cross like the one in St. Stephen Chapel, hovering over a smaller congregation in Cappadocia, offers a version of this central holy image for its local audience.

Conclusions

Incorporation of ceiling decoration into a discussion of space is a new way of thinking about Cappadocian spatiality, especially when considering monumental painting or carving as part of an interface instead of a two-dimensional surface. Generally, Cappadocian spatial studies incorporate relationships between images and monuments at various scales and sizes, ranging from regional groups of monuments to an image’s immediate context within a chapel. Geographical study of Cappadocia points to spatiality as an understanding of networks and connections between locations throughout the eastern Roman empire. The placement of ceiling

crosses can indicate locations of spiritual centers and their relative geographies at all of these scales. Here I expand on the genre of architectural studies to include the unusual spatial relationships that result from overhead placement of monumental ceiling crosses and experiential examples using extant ceilings. The way this placement relates to the Cult of the Cross and its extensive use of monumental, overhead imagery in Cappadocia is the topic of the next chapter.
Chapter 2: Visualizing the Cult of the Cross

“To us who are being saved [the cross] is the power of God.”

The apostle Paul wrote of the cross in a letter to the Corinthians, using it as both a shorthand term for the wisdom of Christ and a symbol of the Christian community’s unity. Citing the cross was a seemingly straightforward way of summarizing a complex history of sacrifice and redemption to the first generation of believers. Its complexity as an image stems from that multi-faceted history from which emerged the widespread belief that its image could symbolize Christ and channel his protection. This places the cross in a category with saints’ portraits as a protective image that offers access to the divine. Over time, the functions of the cross—both ecclesiastic and apotropaic—grew, dispersed, changed, evolved, and expanded from a symbol to the focus of a widespread cult that venerated pieces of wood from Christ’s Crucifixion as well as images that represented these relics of the True Cross.

Cross imagery is ubiquitous in Cappadocia, but it was never used indiscriminately. The depiction of a cross indicates a desire for sanctification, a reference to the divine, or a need for protection when marking a sacred space and setting it apart. Although the iconographic meaning of a cross references Christ no matter where it is placed, the viewer’s response to the image may vary, and its placement in an architectural setting is one that encompasses the viewer and surrounding space into a devotional environment.

As the previous chapter attests, architecture illuminates socially constructed practices around vision, integrating the function of a space with its aesthetics. The ceiling is ideal for

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304 1 Corinthians 1:18
305 1 Corinthians 1:17-24
studying this because an overhead space is integral to a structure and its decoration is uninhibited by furniture or inhabitants. In most cases a ceiling cannot be physically touched—it is ever-present yet unreachable, and the viewer’s contact with it is exclusively visual. Yet their distance from it elicits a physiological response. In this way, visuality—socially constructed practices of seeing—is a sub-category of the experiential.

This chapter follows two threads: first is a history of the Cult of the Cross as it developed in Cappadocia. Next it moves into the cult’s use of spatial context, including the ways that the Cult of the Cross developed visually—using the form of the cross to enhance ways that it could be displayed, placed, or manipulated—and ways that the visual experience of encountering a cross became an essential part of a multi-sensory devotional experience of the Christian body. A cross depicted at a monumental scale (larger than a person’s body) and on an overhead surface is meaningful in that it elicits the gaze and attention of the viewer and channels it. I look at theories of the gaze in order to elucidate the kinesthetic experience of Byzantine Christians when viewing monumental imagery. This is followed by discussion of the historical context for placement of crosses overhead and in specific areas of architecture. Documentation of existing ceilings and their decoration further highlights the framework for examining case studies in subsequent chapters. In Cappadocia these images provide a sizeable amount of visual evidence for the widespread Cult of the Cross. I argue that by depicting crosses overhead and at a monumental scale, Cappadocian Christians venerated the cross by using its form and meaning to construct specific experiences in sacred spaces.
Historical Origins of the Cult

Historical precedents for venerating the cross developed throughout late antiquity and the medieval period into an articulated Cult of the Cross that was widely practiced with a variety of recognized rituals and images. The earliest references to the cross are in the writings of all four evangelists. Gospel accounts document that Jesus of Nazareth was put to death on a wooden cross in Jerusalem at “a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull).” In Hebrew tradition the site was also thought to be Adam’s burial place and that of Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac. Crucifixion, death by nailing a person’s limbs to wooden beams, was a widely practiced execution method for criminals in the Roman Empire until the fourth century, and two thieves were executed alongside Jesus. While he was hanging from the cross, hecklers taunted, “You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the son of God, come down from the cross.” Through these events, Jesus fulfilled Hebrew prophecies, including one in which his death would be a redemptive sacrifice on behalf of humankind: “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.”

His return as the Resurrected Christ was an appearance to women outside his empty rock-hewn tomb three days after his death. After instructing his followers to be his witnesses “to the ends of the earth,” his resurrected body “was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight,”

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310 Matthew 27:39-40
311 Isaiah 53:5
312 Mark 15:46 and 16:5-6
an event celebrated as his Assumption. They were told, “This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

Subsequently, the Cross became a complex symbol of victory over death and sin for Christians. Citing the verse above that the cross is synonymous with the power of God, Byzantinist Antoine Frolow examines its iconicity in the writings of Paul, who “recognized the cross as the characteristic shape of Christianity—its synonym, as it were.”

The multi-faceted nature of the cross was addressed by Augustine of Hippo 354-430 who wrote, “a sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it makes on the senses, causes something else to come in to the mind as a consequence of itself.” The cross sign signifies a palimpsest of historical and spiritual meanings, any of which can be brought to the forefront at a given time, depending on the context. Ousterhout uses the term “multi-valent” to describe the versatility of meanings that are best deciphered through context. The cross can “shimmer” between these meanings, figuratively flickering back and forth in such a way that one may become more prominent at any given time while the other recedes. The symbol is a visual cue to recall one or more of its meanings, a task which required the Byzantine viewer to move quickly between overlapping ideas.

Incorporating the palimpsest of meanings of the cross symbol, the Cult of the Cross is a set of practices and beliefs that venerate the cross and encompass both the manifold connotations

313 Acts 1:8-10
314 Acts 1:11
317 Hahn, 75.
318 Robert G. Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 209.
319 Ousterhout, 264; Hahn, Strange Beauty, 75. I borrow the term “shimmer” from Cynthia Hahn, who used it to describe the “infinitely iterative” capabilities of the cross symbol.
of the symbol and various ways of depicting of it. The cult emphasizes sacrificial aspects of Christ’s death that are emphasized in the Eucharist, (holy communion), a ritual in which bread and wine symbolize Christ’s body and blood. The sacrament originates in the Last Supper, a Passover meal at which Jesus asked his followers to commemorate him after his death and wait for his return in Glory:

on the night when he was betrayed [Jesus] took a loaf of bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way the took the cup also, after supper, saying “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.320

Because the Eucharist commemorates Christ and his sacrifice, it is often included in funerary liturgies to celebrate the incorporation of saints and other members of the holy dead into Christ’s heavenly presence. For this reason, cross imagery is often used in eucharistic objects and spaces, and in funerary contexts.321

Early Church Father, Tertullian (ca. 160-230), wrote that Christians in the third century traced the sign of the cross on their foreheads for protection, marking their bodies with an apotropaic seal.322 Objects in late antiquity also received this kind of sanctification. An elegantly carved, naturalistic first-century marble head of Aphrodite, found in Athens and now in the National Archaeological Museum of Greece, bears a crudely carved “X” on its forehead.

320 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
321 John A. Cotsonis, Byzantine Figural Processional Crosses (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995), 44. A theological difference between cross imagery and depictions of the Crucifixion were not clearly articulated until the Iconoclastic debates of 730-843, but John Cotsonis insists that the Byzantines did differentiate between the two. The cross was related to “triumphal victory,” especially after the time of Constantine, and the Crucifixion referenced his Incarnation in human form, a theological subject that was under intense scrutiny in time during and closely after Iconoclasm.
functioning as cross that sanctified the sculpture (figure 2.1).\textsuperscript{323} Purifying the statue, the mark renewed the pagan figure, harnessing the power inherent in antique statuary and claiming it for Christian purposes.\textsuperscript{324} From these examples, it is clear that an “X” symbol would have the same effect as an elaborately depicted or constructed cross because every cross image or sign has the same iconographic source. Depictions of the cross and large-scale, cross-shaped objects were a later development and were not widely popularized until the time of Emperor Constantine I (r. 306-337).\textsuperscript{325}

The cross’ symbolism of victory over death took on a more literal victorious connotation with Constantine’s military success. In 312, Constantine defeated his co-ruler, Maxentius, at the Milvian Bridge, an important location on the Tiber River in Rome. Shortly thereafter he issued the Edict of Milan (313), which legalized Christianity. Bishop Eusebius Pamphlius of Caesarea (260-339), Constantine’s court historian and biographer, recounts the story as one of conversion and miracles, highlighting the pivotal roles of the cross as a miraculous sign and protective symbol. He writes that just before the battle, Constantine “saw with his own eyes, up in the sky and resting over the sun, a cross-shaped trophy formed from light, and a text attached to it which said, ‘By this conquer.’ Amazement at the spectacle seized both him and the company of soldiers which was then accompanying him… and witnessed the miracle.”\textsuperscript{326}

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\item\textsuperscript{324} Nikolaos Kaltsas, “Head of Aphrodite” in Lazaridou, 148; For antique statuary, see Liz James, “‘Pray Not to Fall into Temptation and Be on Your Guard’: Pagan Statues in Christian Constantinople,” \textit{Gesta} 35, no. 1 (January 1, 1996): 18.
\end{footnotes}
Christ himself then intervened to make sure that Constantine was able to decipher the apparition. Eusebius reports that, “as he slept, the Christ of God appeared to him with the sign which had appeared in the sky, and urged him to make himself a copy of the sign which had appeared in the sky, and to use this as protection against the attacks of the enemy.”

Constantine responded by having a tangible, material object made to fulfill Christ’s mandate, commissioning a luxurious copy of the cross:

When day came he arose and recounted the mysterious communication to his friends. Then he summoned goldsmiths and jewelers, sat down among them, and explained the shape of the sign, and gave them instructions about copying it in gold and precious stones.

This set a precedent for patronage of gemmed cross objects with imperial connotations.

On a pilgrimage to the Holy Land around 325, Constantine’s mother Helena discovered the wood of Christ’s cross, which was identified when it miraculously healed her sick companion. Eusebius described the pilgrimage, but as Cameron points out, Helena’s name was not attached to the finding of the True Cross until later, possibly first by Ambrose in a funeral oration for Theodosius II was delivered in 395, although Cyril of Jerusalem mentioned the relics around 353. After this point, a full-fledged Cult of the Cross began to emerge, venerating the wood of the cross as a relic that had touched Christ. According to tradition, Helena sent part of

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Lactantius’ version, in which Constantine’s vision was at night and soldiers used the Chi Rho (christogram) as a protective symbol. As Jenson points out, in depictions of Constantine’s vision, the version of the story used is apparent. The vision of a cross or christogram overhead is derived from Eusebius.

the True Cross relic to Constantinople, and another part of it remained in Jerusalem so that both geographic location and relics tied the cult to the Holy Land.\textsuperscript{332}

Soon thereafter, pilgrims’ accounts began to describe the True Cross relics and the site of the Crucifixion as essential aspects of the Holy Land experience. A fourth-century pilgrim named Egeria (fl. 381-384) describes a veneration of the cross relics at Golgotha on the morning of Good Friday. During the service, a bishop holds the relics while pilgrims file by, each touching the wood with their foreheads, then kissing it.\textsuperscript{333} Around this time, Saint Jerome (ca. 347-420) also references the kissing of a True Cross relic in a letter to his friend Marcella, emphasizing the importance of the material presence of the cross for pilgrims.\textsuperscript{334}

By the fourth century, the site of Golgotha was in a courtyard near a basilica built where Helena had found the True Cross relics near the Anastasis rotunda over Christ’s tomb (the Holy Sepulchre) in the Church of the Resurrection.\textsuperscript{335} An Armenian lectionary (ca. 415) gives evidence of an Exaltation of the Cross that was celebrated during the Feast of Dedication of the churches on Golgotha on September 14; during the service, a “venerable, life-giving and holy Cross was displayed for the whole congregation,” but the text does not describe the reliquary.\textsuperscript{336} Other primary sources are also unclear regarding what cross images visitors actually saw at Golgotha, especially regarding how the images were incorporated into the site. This is partly because pilgrims in late antiquity typically deployed imagination as an extension of sight and


\textsuperscript{334} Jerome, Epistle 46.5, ed. Labourt 2:105, discussed in Frank, “The Pilgrim’s Gaze,” 100.

\textsuperscript{335} Egeria, 37.8 in Egeria, Egeria’s Travels, 156; Tongeren, “Cult of the Cross,” 63; Jensen, The Cross, 63.

\textsuperscript{336} Tongeren, “Cult of the Cross,” 62. Translation by Renoux.
experiential learning, elaborating and envisioning biblical scenes without discerning which were physically ‘real’ depictions as opposed to internally envisioned.\footnote{Frank, “The Pilgrim’s Gaze,” 100.} Some literary sources suggest that pilgrims who visited the site in the fifth century could reach the top of a monumental cross there via steps.\footnote{Tsafrir and Yiśre’ēlī, “Golgotha,” 41.}

Although the practice of venerating images had not yet been codified in this period, the cross could be venerated.\footnote{Leslie Brubaker, “Icons Before Iconoclasm?,” 1243–44; Hans Belting, Likeness and Presence, 155–59.} The practice is described by the Piacenza Pilgrim (fl. ca. 570), who wrote that pilgrims carried lights and incense up a series of steps to an “iron” cross set atop a marble column that was associated with Christ’s passion.\footnote{Piacenza Pilgrim, “Travels,” Ch. 25, trans. John Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades (Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, 2002), 141–42.} In Jerome’s letter to Marcella he describes a pilgrim named Paula who venerated the Cross at Golgotha and envisioned Christ on it.\footnote{Piacenza Pilgrim, “Travels,” Ch. 25, trans. John Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades (Oxford: Aris & Phillips, 2002), 141–42.} Similarly, a sixth-century pilgrim ampulla (now part of a church treasury in Monza, Italy), depicts a large bust of Christ over an elevated cross (figure 2.2).\footnote{André Grabar, Ampoules de Terre sainte : Monza, Bobbio. Photographies de Denise Fourmont. (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1958), 22–23.} On the object, the cross is on a tall, narrow stem, rising above two kneeling pilgrims who touch the shrine with their hands.

The cross stem is planted in a low pile of rocks. A comparable ampulla in the collection of Dumbarton Oaks depicts a similarly elevated cross supported by rocks and flanked by supplicants whose gestures demonstrate that they were “approaching the cross as a relic,” according to Gary Vikan (figure 2.3).\footnote{Gary Vikan, Early Byzantine Pilgrimage Art, Rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 39.} Images of the cross in the rock became an easily recognizable reference to Golgotha, the loca sancta in the Holy Land where Christ was bound to the True Cross. We do not know exactly how (or whether) the historical cross was supported in
the rock, but in the commemoration of it, the cross is often shown raised above the ground, projecting the holy and demonstrating widespread sanctification based on viewer’s ability to see it from a distance.

According to an early ninth-century chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor (d. 818), the True Cross relics were housed in a gold, jeweled crucifix that Emperor Theodosius II (r. 408-450) had placed on the site of the Crucifixion. Through this patronage (which was in the tradition of Constantine), gemmed crosses were consistently linked to both the Byzantine Emperor and the Holy Land throughout subsequent Byzantine history. Gemmed crosses had been in use since the fourth century, a practice which Robin Jensen suggests may have been a reference to victory and the divine, a move away from depicting Christ’s bodily suffering. The apse mosaic in the church of S. Pudenziana in Rome (ca. 400) shows Golgotha with a monumental gemmed cross atop a hill, towering above the cityscape of Jerusalem to bless the space by asserting visual control of it. The scene serves as a backdrop for a narrative of Christ Enthroned wherein he is flanked by apostles (figure 2.4). The visually similar Crux Vaticana reliquary was probably made in Constantinople between 568 and 574 and given by Byzantine Emperor Justin II (r. 565-578) to the city of Rome (figure 2.5). The object is gilded silver with forty embedded gems on the front of the cross and four pendilia (additional gems hanging from the arms). A Latin inscription written down the spine and continuing across the arms says,


“Justin and his consort give to Rome a glorious treasure in the wood by which Christ subdued
the enemy of mankind.” The object has undergone heavy restoration, including extensive work
after the Sack of Rome in 1527 when some of the gems were replaced, and additional changes to
the relic capsule at the center that was replaced during the nineteenth century. These repairs
indicate the object’s continued importance to the Cult of the Cross well beyond the medieval
period, and beyond the borders of the Byzantine empire.

When Helena chose to send some of the True Cross relics to Constantinople and retain
others in Jerusalem, their eventual dispersion from both locations spread the Cult of the Cross
throughout the empire. By the sixth century, the Exaltation of the Cross, a ritual that began in
fourth-century Jerusalem, spread widely in Byzantium. During the liturgy, the cross was lifted up
above the crowd for veneration. The feast’s wide celebration may be due, in part, to the
dispersion of cross relics.

Cappadocia’s manifestation of the Cult of the Cross was localized by Gregory of Nyssa
who promulgated legends of Saint Longinus that provided direct links between the region, the
saint, and the Holy Land. In the gospel account of the Crucifixion, “one of the soldiers pierced
[Christ’s] side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.” Apocryphal texts supplied
additional details, and the swordsman’s evolution into centurion Longinus (a word meaning
“lance”) was complete by the time of the Acts of Pilate (ca. fourth century), wherein the author
says specifically of Christ that a soldier named Longinus the soldier pierced his side with a
spear.

348 The inscription says, LIGNO QUO CHRISTUS HUMANUM SUBDIDIT HOSTEM DAT ROMAE IUSTINUS
OPEM ET SOCIA DECOREM. Published and translated in Spier, “The Earliest Christian Art: From Personal
Salvation to Imperial Power,” 283.
349 Spier, 285.
350 Tongeren, “Cult of the Cross,” 62.
351 John 19:34
352 The Gospel of Nicodemus (The Acts of Pilate) A, Ch. 7; Translated in Bart Ehrman and Plese Zlatko, The
Tradition also maintains that Saint Longinus converted his native Caesarea (the city in Cappadocia formerly known as Mazaka) to Christianity.353 Gregory of Nyssa, for instance, listed him among later apostles, saying in a letter to his followers in Nicomedia that, “we Cappadocians [received] the centurion” as the person who brought the gospel.354 Vasiliki Limberis has argued that Gregory of Nyssa and Basil of Caesarea frame Longinus first and foremost as a martyr, de-emphasizing his role in the Crucifixion.355 However, the most enduring aspect of his cult was its material connection to the Passion of Christ. Relics of the sword of Saint Longinus are attested throughout the middle ages. The sixth-century Piacenza Pilgrim described a display of Passion Relics, when he saw “many remarkable things” at the Basilica of Mount Sion in Jerusalem, including “the crown of thorns with which they crowned the Lord, and the lance with which they struck him in the side.”356 In the sixth century, Saint Longinus was the name saint of a sixth-century patron of St. Sergius Chapel, a monument with a distinctive cross theme in Cappadocia, which is discussed in Chapter 3.357 His legend must have resonated with Cappadocians for his role in the Cult of the Cross. Through relics of the Crucifixion, Saint Longinus was linked to the Holy Land, representing his home region of Cappadocia in the story of Christ’s sacrifice.

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355 Limberis, Architects of Piety, 38.
357 Catherine Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 80.
**Visuality and Visibility**

Both private and public uses of the cross illuminate aspects of Byzantine visuality. As I discuss below, perception of the holy efficacy of the cross utilized vision (which could also include memory or imagination), and touch (which could include perception of proximity to the cross or motion that reminded someone of its form). Private devotion to the cross could incorporate crosses of any size, including small ones worn on the body. Crosses worn on the body often came in the form of *enkolpia*, cross-shaped containers worn around the neck throughout late antiquity, many of which held a relic.\(^{358}\) Saint Macrina (d. 379) wore around her neck one that contained a relic of the True Cross.\(^{359}\) A cross worn on the body protected the wearer, whether or not anyone could see it, and that protection relied on knowledge of its presence rather than visibility.

Public veneration of the cross relied on a more visible image of it than private devotional use. For instance, processions of emperors departing on military missions included a *kouboukleion* (imperial staff member) wearing a cross reliquary around his neck, and he was followed by a standard bearer with a gemmed cross referencing victory.\(^{360}\) In other instances, the cross was elevated in order to make it more visible for the public. For instance, three crosses kept in Hagia Sophia were brought first into the sacristy and then into the church during the third week of Lent.\(^{361}\) Then two of them were subsequently “lifted up” and processed to other chapels in the palace.\(^{362}\) During the Exaltation of the Cross (celebrated on September 14), the patriarch of

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\(^{361}\) Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, Book 2, Ch. 11, trans. Moffatt and Tall, 2:549.

Constantinople would ascend the ambo in Hagia Sophia while holding the True Cross relics. This would have the effect of elevating the relics and enhancing the cross’ visibility throughout the spacious nave.

Elevation of a cross is also visible in an illumination in the Menologion of Basil II (ca. 1000, Ms. Vat. Gr. 1613) that depicts a *lite* procession, which is a liturgical ritual of supplication that takes place during a procession (figure 2.6). In the image, participants hold candles while following behind a clergy member who carries a gemmed gospel book and another who holds a large, gemmed processional cross above their heads. The group is commemorating an earthquake that took place in the eighth century. The Constantinopolitan *lite* incorporated the space of the city, starting in Hagia Sophia and continuing through the Forum of Constantine and on through the city toward a designated station, with hymns and prayers at each stop. In this case it was the church of the Virgin at Blachernai which is depicted in the illumination. Unlike hand crosses that are held close to the body, or encolpia, which are worn, processional crosses are designed to be elevated during liturgical events. These crosses are sometimes shown with an elongated spine, as in the manuscript illumination above, or they may have a tang (stem) at the bottom that is designed to fit into a longer handle for elevation. When the cross is elevated, it is visible from a longer distance, and it captures the awareness and attention of viewers, serving as a rallying point.

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Scholars have approached Byzantine viewing in a variety of ways. Byzantine *ekphrases* (texts that rhetorically describe the form of an artwork in order to elicit a particular response) have been discussed as a reaction to extramission, a medieval scientific theory about how the eye perceived images, suggesting that Byzantines believed images dispersed rays toward the eye, enabling the process of seeing. The scholarship on *ekphrasis* looks at ways medieval science and optics shaped practices of viewing and examines the primacy of vision over other senses in Byzantine writings. Scholars of Late Antiquity address instances in which the lesser senses such as touch became a part of seeing in ways that incorporated the eyes and body into a fully immersive, haptic experience. Since visuality encompasses learned behaviors around viewing, it is an important aspect of habitus. The habitus of Byzantine viewers elicited a variety of expected responses to settings wherein the cross was venerated, which I argue helped to codify ideal viewing conditions for cross imagery over time. Expectations for the physical attributes of cross representations became incorporated into the Cult of the Cross.

Whereas a gaze involves attention that is actively paid to the cross by a viewer, the aura of the cross emanates from it whether or not anyone is looking. The terminology of aura has been widely adopted from twentieth-century philosopher Walter Benjamin who described an object’s aura as its essence or as the aspects of the object that would disappear if it were mechanically reproduced. To the Byzantines, however, a copy of an icon was equivalent to the original, and

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carried the aura of the depicted saint. Likewise, the cross symbol carries the potency of the True Cross, making any symbol or depiction of it the visual equivalent of a relic. As the apostle Paul indicated in the passage quoted in this chapter’s opening, any representation of the cross conveyed the power of God himself. As such, the simulacrum is capable of broadcasting the essence of the original, in this case, the True Cross of the Crucifixion.

The effects of an object’s aura can project over a long distance. For instance, Benjamin used the context of geography to reflect on objects as having an intrinsic authenticity that could be detected by the viewer, even across a great distance:

What, then, is the aura? A strange tissue of space and time: the unique appearance of a distance, however near it may be. To follow up with the eye while resting on a summer afternoon a mountain range on the horizon or a branch that casts its shadow on the beholder is to breathe the aura of those mountains, of that branch.

The cross over Golgotha anticipated the concept of aura, as it was a phenomenon that utilized the symbol’s size and shape to manipulate the Jerusalem community’s understanding of sanctity through immersive viewing. The holy aura emanating from a raised cross object is perceived by viewers who, in turn, direct their attention back toward it. A Byzantine ceiling was another ideal position from which to project a holy image because the area beneath was open, facilitating sight lines and visual contact that were activated by its aura.

Aura functions similarly to apotropaism. Visibility is important to apotropaic qualities, because in the mind of the Byzantine viewer, the visibility of the cross was a reminder of its holy power—wherever one could see it, even if it was far away, it offered protection. This is a kind of aura. The presence and protection are emphasized when the cross is elevated because it can be seen from a greater distance. Elevation extends the area from which the cross is visible and able

373 Cynthia Hahn, “Visio Dei,” 176.
374 1 Corinthians 1:18
to become part of the conscious thoughts of viewers, reminding them of its presence ad protection.

Two concepts in ancient philosophy became especially pertinent to the development of a late antique and Byzantine visuality that used ceiling decoration to further the Cult of the Cross. First is the notion that seeing could be both physical and spiritual. Second, that the path of the soul is an upward motion (referencing both sight and metaphysics). This is an element of classical philosophy that emerged in Christian thought through the teachings of highly educated bishops, including the men who became known as Cappadocian Fathers. I argue that this had a profound influence on the cult’s use of crosses overhead, including their depiction on ceilings.

**Kinesthetic Viewing**

Seeing a cross can manipulate the whole body toward other, more haptic, experiences in order to produce a spiritual response. This is apparent in Haçlı Kilise (Cross Church, ca. before the ninth century), a small basilica in Güllüdere (Rose Valley). In the basilica, the form of a monumental cross is carved in shallow relief on a low ceiling, spanning the entirety of the overhead surface (figure 2.7). Because the image is an elongated ‘Latin’ cross, it provides a strong east-west visual axis. The top of the cross is signaled by a semicircular arc over the horizontal arms, its shape mirroring the arch of the bema. The viewer is inevitably drawn toward

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376 Anthony Meredith, *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, NY: St. Valdimir’s Seminary Press, 1995), 11. As one example, Meredith points to the influence of Plato on the Cappadocian Fathers, including what he describes as a Platonic belief that the soul was a “trapped finite spirit [that] is drawn upwards by an inner dynamism of erōs in order to regain its original heavenly home.”

377 Nicole Thierry and Michel Thierry, “Haçlı Kilise, l’Église à La Croix, En Cappadoce,” *Journal Des Savants* 4, no. 4 (1964): 241–54, https://doi.org/10.3406/jds.1964.1083. Thierry and Thierry were the first to publish the chapel. See also Teteriatnikov, *Liturgical Planning*, 39. Teteriatnikov also dates Haçlı Kilise to the tenth century, despite the presence of a synthronon, which is usually found in early Christian monuments. See also Kostof, *Caves of God*, 91. Kostof estimates three periods of decoration: early Christian date (ca. sixth century) for the initial carving, including the apse synthronon; a date of ca. 700 for the ceiling cross (with an assumption that it reflected the Iconoclastic debates; and ca. 850–950 for the painted program in the sanctuary. I note that the style of the relief carving on the ceiling in Haçlı Kilise is similar to ones in St. Sergius Chapel and the Church of Three Crosses (See Chapter 2), both of which are pre-Iconoclastic, although the paintings may be later.
the apse and altar because of the size and direction of its axis. That subtle tug of the viewer’s consciousness along the axis of the cross—a visually striking image, and an indisputably holy sign for the Byzantine viewer—is a socially constructed manipulation of the gaze.

The juxtaposition of social conditioning and physical experience manifests itself in any art that inspires or guides the viewer to act in a prescribed way. According to historian of material culture David Morgan, there are multiple “ways of seeing” an image like this, all of which are “embodied” and require both a physical body and consciousness.378 His understanding of a gaze is one of a structured relationship that includes “the image, the viewer, and the act of viewing, establishing a broader framework for the understanding of how images operate.”379 In his understanding of seeing, images have agency, which means that a gaze is (or can be) interactive, whether or not all participants are human.

Morgan’s work is important because it highlights variations in what a person sees based on cultural factors such as religious belief, and he finds patterns of usage in acts of seeing and looking. He has developed a typology of gazes that “link the sight of one body to another.”380 Among these types, several rely on the tendency of the viewer to relate to and interact with figural imagery.381 For instance, the “reciprocal gaze” is one through which “the image returns the gaze of the viewer (or vice versa).”382 An example would be the icon of Christ (sixth century)

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380 Morgan, *The Embodied Eye*, 55 and 70.
381 Morgan, 70–79. Morgan’s full morphology of gazes is as follows: the unilateral gaze of one-sided authority; the occlusive gaze that is amuletic and wards off evil; the reciprocal gaze between the human and divine; the devotional gaze from viewer to divine; the virtual gaze wherein both parties have projected personas into artificial space to interact; the communal gaze through which members of a congregation see one another participating in a group activity such as worship; and the liminal gaze, which can be a limiting construction of identity such as a nation.
382 Morgan, 59.
from Saint Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai (figure 2.8). In the panel painting—which is approximately life-sized at about thirty-three inches high—Christ’s gaze seems to follow the viewer, subtly drawing attention toward the image for devotional contemplation of the Savior represented in it. In a “unilateral gaze” Morgan says, “the direction of vision moves dominantly from one party (the image) to another (the viewer).” He describes the unilateral gaze as image-to-viewer in its direction, rendering the viewer powerless under an omnipotent eye. By constructing a framework to understand the process of viewing, Morgan contributes to our understanding of the gaze as a nuanced cause and effect process, not simply a momentary outcome of vision.

Aniconic monumental ceiling crosses have no human agency or figural elements with which to interact with viewers, but they are used to inspire or manipulate the viewer into further actions as part of the process of viewing. For this reason, I augment Morgan’s typology with the redirected gaze, whereupon the recipient of the gaze (the image) captures the viewer’s attention and directs it toward another object or visual destination. In a redirected gaze, the image serves as a tool or instigator, guiding the viewer’s attention or action toward a particular visual destination. A fresco panel in Göreme’s Karanhk Kilise (Dark Church, ca. mid-eleventh century) serves as an example. In the narrative scene, the figure of an angel near the southwest corner of the naos (central worship area) points toward Christ’s empty tomb (figure 2.9). The

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384 Morgan, The Embodied Eye, 59.
385 For comparison, see Bill Brown, “Thing Theory,” Critical Inquiry 28, no. 1 (October 1, 2001): 1–22. In the philosophy of Thing Theory posited by Bill Brown, objects are described as having agency outside of human intervention. Here I distinguish the role of the ceiling cross as something quite different. The cross works as a divine symbol whose power comes from God, and the cross image is one through which the artist channels divine power. The ceiling cross is a tool or vessel for human agency. It is a functional object that is able to redirect the gaze through the artist’s intervention, not animism.
386 Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 1.2: 414-415; Ann Wharton Epstein, “The Fresco Decoration of the Column
viewer’s gaze is first drawn to the angel who appears to be looking directly at her, but then the viewer’s eye inevitably follows the line of the angel’s arm toward a pointed finger, indicating a symbolic empty tomb in the background. If the viewer follows the gesture beyond the picture plane and into three dimensions, her gaze falls toward the tomb of the church’s patron in a nearby arcosolium. The artist’s clever use of narrative draws the viewer’s gaze—attention, eyes, and body—into the fresco image and then redirects it outward toward the burial space (figure 2.10).

In Haçlı Kilise the ceiling decoration has no representative human forms with which the viewer can interact. However, the aniconic cross image has some agency over the viewer because its axis, directionality, and scale make the low image impossible to fully experience quickly. To see the cross in its entirety, one must trace it with her eyes, making the interaction not only a momentary glance from viewer to focal point, but a viewing act by following the axis with the eye (and body) in order to complete the viewing process and see the cross in its entirety. The gaze becomes not just a visual connection between visible entities, but a sight line that instigates a follow-up motion of the eyes and body.

Images and the body have an inherent spiritual connection, mitigated by the senses. The gaze is part of lived experience in and with the body that is a result of vision, which relies on the images as tools that direct this entire orchestra of events. Because the redirected gaze occurs as a result of cultural and religious practices that utilize a specific image, the cross, I consider it an element of Cappadocian visibility (socially constructed viewing practices). I define Cappadocian

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388 Ousterhout, “Remembering the Dead,” 91.
visuality as Byzantine viewing experiences that were a result of spaces and opportunities that occurred locally (e.g. rock-cut ceilings).

**Overhead Placement**

While the cross could be venerated in any form and in any setting, its placement and depiction did elicit consideration. With an elevated placement, the upward movement of the viewer’s eyes and attention enhance its spiritual benefit. The impact of classical philosophy on the upward motion of the soul can be traced, in part, to the Cappadocian Fathers who were contemporaries of Constantine and Eusebius, and also of Emperor Julian (r. 361-363).\(^{389}\) Like the sons of other aristocratic and influential families, the Cappadocian Fathers were educated in Athens. At the university there, training in rhetoric and classical philosophy were important aspects of the curriculum.\(^{390}\) Christian thinkers like Origen (ca. 185-ca. 253), who had a profound effect on subsequent philosophers, then put those ideas through a filter of Church doctrine and divine revelation.

Within that educational system, the Cappadocian Fathers were trained with classical perceptions of sight, and as they returned home and educated the region, they made direct connections to classical tradition and its inherent beliefs about the senses and the body as aspects of vision and visuality. By the late antique period, Plato’s writings had been distilled into a few ideals that were addressed by and incorporated into influential contemporary writings. Regarding the use of classical philosophy by subsequent theologians, philosopher Eric Perl says it was often

\(^{389}\) Susanna Elm, “Hellenism and Historiography: Gregory of Nazianzus and Julian in Dialogue,” in *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies: Gender, Asceticism, and Historiography*, ed. Dale B. Martin and Patricia Cox Miller (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 260 and 265-266. Julian was later known as “the Apostle” (i.e. “deserter”) for being the last Roman ruler to attempt a revival of pagan beliefs at the expense of Christianity, but he had several Cappadocians in his court.

“a certain line of reasoning,” that was generally incorporated into later works, rather than specific citations of classical authors. 391 For instance, Plato wrote the following comparing light to goodness in the illumination of the soul:

> When [the soul] is fixed upon that which truth and being illuminates, it thinks and knows and appears to have intellect; but when [it is fixed] upon that which is mixed with darkness, upon that which comes into being and passes away, it opines and is dimmed and changes its opinions up and down and seems then not to have intellect. 392

Basil’s work continues this line of thinking by comparing the function of the soul to knowledge acquisition via the senses, and he quoted the apostle Paul when saying:

> And as is the power of seeing in the healthy eye, so is the operation of the Spirit in the purified soul. Wherefore also Paul prays for the Ephesians that they may have their “eyes enlightened” by “the Spirit of wisdom.” 393

In Late Antiquity it was widely accepted that vision played both bodily and spiritual roles in knowledge acquisition, and that the soul was inherently imagined as headed in an upward direction toward heaven. These Platonic effects echoed through medieval and Byzantine knowledge, through philosophers such as Michael Psellos (1018-ca.1080), a self-proclaimed Christian Platonist who wrote extensively on the relationship of the body and soul, including a passage in which he described an idealized “political man” whose “soul is neither entirely divine nor intellectual, but neither is it in love with material pleasures and ruled by passion.” 394 As Kaldellis notes, this is a reference to Plato’s dualism of the body versus soul, and through

philosophers like Psellus, the “orthodox Platonic conception of the soul, transposed into Christian doctrine, continued to dominate the religious mentality of the Greek-speaking world.”

The presence of ancient philosophy in the thought world of the Cappadocian fathers contributed to the visual sophistication of the material images in the Cult of the Cross as it developed in the region. This can be seen, for example, in a ceiling cross in Karabaş Church (the subject of Chapter 4) that is alternately revealed and hidden as a revelatory symbol of Christ, one that signals an upward trajectory toward heaven for monks who were buried beneath it. Over time, artists who produced cross imagery for interior contexts came to utilize viewing conditions and design elements of the cross itself in order to further incorporate that spiritual connotation of vision. There was a sophisticated, subtle union of vision with the aesthetic functionality of design.

Looking upward was a widely recognized sign of piety in Late Antiquity. For instance, Eusebius described Constantine as one who “was portrayed standing up, looking up to heaven, his hands extended in a posture of prayer.” Several early Christian texts confirm more specifically the process of looking upward toward crosses in the manner of Cyril of Jerusalem, who noted that the cross of light was “suspended for several hours above the earth before the general gaze.” Paulinus of Nola (ca. 353-431) recognized that spiritual benefits would accompany the physical discomfort of looking up—straight up, not forward—toward the cross. He wrote to his bishop, saying “crane your neck a little till you take in everything with face tilted

back,” advocating for True Cross relics and images within the church, as “representations [that are] by no means empty.”

Pseudo-Dionysius (ca. late fifth to early sixth century) reflected the influence of both the Platonic soul of light and the upward trajectory of spiritual vision when he instructed fellow believers to “raise our eyes” to the “intelligent hierarchies of heaven” and then “lift up the immaterial and steady eyes of our minds to that outpouring of Light which is so primal, indeed much more so, and which comes from that source of divinity, I mean the father.”

The seventh-century hagiographer of Theodore of Sykeon mentions a local chapel with a cross over the sanctuary, in the proximity of an icon:

When he was about twelve years old an epidemic of bubonic plague fell upon the village and it attacked him along with the others so that he came near to dying. They took him to the shrine of St. John the Baptist near the village and laid him at the entrance to the sanctuary, and above him where the cross was set there hung an icon of our Saviour Jesus Christ. As he was suffering great pain from the plague suddenly drops of dew fell upon him from the icon, and immediately by the grace of God, freed from his suffering, he recovered and returned to his home.

The overhead area could he mentions have been on the ceiling or apse, but it was most likely in the arch over the entrance to the bema (sanctuary) where cross imagery was common. Festugière suggests that the image may have been on an iconostasis. However, there is little evidence for iconostasis use in early Byzantine Anatolia. An overhead cross image positioned anywhere

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400 Georgios, Vie de Théodore de Sykéon, 8, lines 5-10 in Festugière, 7; Dawes and Baynes, trans., “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 91–92. Dawes and Baynes translate ἐπάνωθεν δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ σταυροδόχῳ as “above him where the cross was set.”
402 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 60; Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 169–74; See also Demesnil, Architecture Rupestre, 55. In Cappadocia, for instance, Teteriatnikov noted the the majority of chapels in the early and Middle Byzantine periods had no chancel screen (i.e. templon Ousterhout has documented a few chapels in
above the boy would make the healing power of the cross available both to him and to anyone to whom it was visible throughout the chapel.

On Constantine’s palace ceiling in Constantinople, Eusebius described a cross by emphasizing its placement:

So great was the divine passion which had seized the Emperor’s soul that in the royal quarters of the imperial palace itself, on the most eminent building of all, at the very middle of the gilded coffer adjoining the roof, in the centre of a very large wide panel, had been fixed the emblem of the saving Passion made up of a variety of precious stones and set in much gold. This appears to have been made by the Godbeloved as a protection for his Empire.403

Eusebius makes it clear that a cross on the palace ceiling symbolizes God’s protection over the emperor’s entire earthly realm.

Images could be placed anywhere without distorting their iconographic meaning. For instance, the Lower City Church (redecorated ca. 900) of the Anatolian city of Amorium contained evidence of polychromy applied to stone sculpture on architectural elements as well as liturgical furnishings.404 Ivison has noted that at Amorium, carved and painted decoration were virtually “interchangeable” in terms of their use between walls and furniture, where the same design could begin in one medium and continue in another.405 An image’s meaning was not solely dependent on its location. Not only could the same kinds of motifs be used in a variety of locations, they could be replicated in a variety of media as well.406 Ivison has also noted motifs depicted in mixed media in Amorium, noting that carved and painted ornament were “regularly

Cappadocia with high templon screens: the late antique Durmuş Kadir Kilisesi in Avcılar, and Middle Byzantine examples in Geyikli Kilise in the Soğanlı Valley and Göreme Church 25. He also notes that some additional chapels have evidence of high beams that were added after the churches were painted.

403 Eusebius, Life of Constantine, Book III, Ch 49 in Cameron and Hall, Eusebius, Life of Constantine, 140.
405 Ivison, 123.
combined.” Furthermore, he says that in some cases, it is apparent that some of the polychromy was designed to enhance the visibility and effect of the relief carving in the dim and changing light in the Lower Church at Amorium.\textsuperscript{408} Likewise, the iconographic interpretation of a ceiling cross did not change across media, but when it also depicted materials or was placed in a significant location, the context of the viewing experience had the potential to express additional meaning for Cappadocian viewers. Location and media are both tied to an understanding of a viewing experience that is constructed, and that uses both historical and iconographic context alongside experiential understanding in order to curate that viewing experience. In addition to placement, visual decisions regarding how the cross is portrayed produce what I refer to as “attributes” of depicted ceiling crosses.

**Attributes of Cross Depictions**

Images of the cross on architecture are particularly subject to body-centric modes and practices of viewing—vantage point, distance, light, reflectiveness, posture, and gesture all affect the experience. Images that function as architectural elements reveal Byzantines’ awareness of the role of the whole body in viewing, particularly when the size of an image enhances its capabilities for affecting the viewer. In philosophical terms they rely on perceptual experience, which includes what is perceived through the senses or kinesthetics and also relates to or enhances one’s beliefs.\textsuperscript{409} That set of perceptions and relations in viewing underscores the understanding of visuality that I assert here. And as such, visuality is a crucial component of

\textsuperscript{407} Ivison, “Polychromy,” 123.

\textsuperscript{408} Ivison, 124; For analysis of pigments, see Elizabeth A. Hendrix, “Painted Polychromy on Carved Stones from the Lower City Church,” in Amorium Reports. 2: Research Papers and Technical Reports, ed. Chris S. Lightfoot, BAR International Series 1170 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003), 129.

phenomenology, the study of lived experience in historical context. For phenomenological understanding of architectural images, a viewer needs spatial analysis, particularly an understanding of the space that incorporates images as elements that viewers would have not only seen but with which they would have interacted.

Attributes of the monumental ceiling cross relate to the viewer’s perception of it. Conscious design choices can be interpreted as problem solving wherein the artist utilized the interface of the interior space and/or the form of the cross by manipulating the tactile reception when choosing certain attributes in order to provide guided, specific viewing experiences. On the “tactile reception” (i.e., haptic experience) of perception, Benjamin wrote,

> Tactile reception comes about not only by way of attention but also by way of habit. The latter largely determines even the optical reception of architecture, which originally takes the form less of an attentive observation than of a casual noticing.

In this sense, perception is integral to the use of space in the way that it forms habitus. With this in mind about perceptual experience, I now focus on the cross, looking at ways it accentuated viewing practices that were part of a multi-sensory, all-encompassing activity of experience. Here I approach it from a material culture standpoint by addressing tangible attributes such as monumentality and materiality rather than focusing on iconography.

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410 Pentcheva, “Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics,” 93. See also ways that Pentcheva points to ways the aesthetics of Hagia Sophia affected the spectator.
412 For discussion of terminology, see Averil Cameron, “The Anxiety of Images: Meanings and Material Objects,” in Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings: Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker, ed. Angeliki Lymberopoulou (Farnham, GBR: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011), 48; Liz James, “Things: Art and Experience in Byzantium,” in Experiencing Byzantium: Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies Newcastle and Durham April 2011, ed. Claire Nesbitt and Mark Jackson, Publications of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies 18 (Farnham, GBR: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2013), 18. Averil Cameron has resisted using “material culture” to describe Byzantine images, arguing that the term is a label that denies the images’ context. However, Liz James responds convincingly that images are most fruitfully investigated as objects that should be understood as material culture, as part of an encompassing “thought-world” of Byzantines that includes objects as part of wider social relationships.
Monumentality

It is not unusual that the size of the cross in Haçlı Kilise is a crucial factor in the viewer’s response to it. Early Christians had historical precedents for monumental images that intensify the gaze by redirection and by a process of duplication. In 351 the city of Jerusalem received a miraculous sign of God’s protection that came in the form of an enormous cross of light that appeared in the sky. Cyril of Jerusalem, (bishop ca. 313-386) wrote a letter to Emperor Constantius II (r. 337-361) describing it:

During these holy days of the holy Paschal season … at about nine in the morning, a gigantic luminous cross was seen in the sky above holy Golgotha, extending as far as the holy Mount of Olives; not seen by one or two only, but clearly visible to the whole population of the city; nor, as might be expected, quickly vanishing like an optical illusion, but suspended for several hours above the earth before the general gaze and by its dazzling splendor conquering the sun’s rays.  

What is striking about his description is the explicit information about its size. He gives the measurement in terms of landscape features—“above holy Golgotha extending as far as the holy Mount of Olives”—that are almost a mile apart. The cross he describes was not only luminous—it was gargantuan. Its massive presence would have enveloped viewers below with sublime sanctification.

A few years later in 363, Gregory Nazianzus saw a similar cross of light in the sky over Jerusalem, part of what he perceived to be divine response to the Emperor Julian’s rebuilding of the Temple there. The cross was one of several natural wonders and disasters at the time, including wind, earthquake, and fire. Responses to the two events were in keeping with an early

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415 Gregory of Nazianzus, Against Julian, 5.4-7; discussed in Jensen, The Cross, 56; See also Jan Willem Drijvers, “The Power of the Cross: Celestial Cross Appearances in the Fourth Century,” in The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity, ed. Andrew Cain and Noel Emmanuel Lenski (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 245–247. Jensen compares the cross events described by Cyril and Gregory to that of Constantine, although as Drijvers points out, we do not know whether or not Cyril was aware of Constantine’s vision.
Christian cosmological interpretation of the cross, based on the four arms extending in all cardinal directions. As Robin Jensen describes, the apostle Paul associated the encompassing effects of the cosmological cross with the vastness of God’s love across the universe, and in the same vein Gregory of Nysssa suggested that the shape of the instrument of Christ’s Crucifixion at such a scale juxtaposed his sacrifice with the cosmos.⁴¹⁶

Thomas F. Mathews addresses this kind of monumentality in man-made images, particularly with regard to public, large-scale art in worship spaces that were meant to reflect the “extraordinary power” of Christ.⁴¹⁷ He distinguishes the “bill-board space of basilica vaults and walls” in churches from narrative scenes or personal devotional art. He identifies a kind of heightened spiritual energy that would come from a congregation focusing on an enormous image for a long period of time, so that “the intensity of their gaze heightened the effect.”⁴¹⁸ Literary critic Susan Stewart reflects on a similar phenomenon in public sculpture’s effect on viewers by saying,

The partial vision of the observer prohibits closure of the object. Our impulse is to create an environment for the miniature, but such an environment is impossible for the gigantic: instead the gigantic becomes our environment, swallowing us as nature or history swallows us. In the representation of the gigantic within public space it is therefore important that the gigantic be situated above and over, that the transcendent position be denied the viewer.⁴¹⁹

Like the spectators of Jerusalem’s fourth-century Cross of Light who were awestruck from below, Stewart’s hypothetical viewer is aware that the transcendent position is that of the creator, not the beholder. With the passage above, Stewart also acknowledges that the process of viewing

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⁴¹⁶ For Paul, see Ephesians 3:18-19; Gregory of Nyssa, Catechetical Oration 32 in Jensen, The Cross, 33.
⁴¹⁸ Mathews, 94.
⁴¹⁹ Susan Stewart, On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection, 1st paperback ed (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 89.
monumental images is often a spectacle because the size precludes glancing at the entire image and requires a more sustained effort, making the image part of a larger viewing environment.

In Mathews’ example, the viewer is able to sustain visual contact for an intense and concerted period of time. However, when a monumental image is directly overhead on a ceiling, the viewer cannot take it all in with a glance. Viewing then becomes a whole-body experience, moving the eyes (and probably even the head and torso) to gaze at parts of the image in order to understand the whole. When the monumental image is a cross, she must trace the shape in order to see it, inherently making the sign of the cross as part of viewing it, replicating it with eyes and body. A single monumental cross like the one in Haçlı Kilise can elicit multiplication of itself when it is viewed repeatedly, as ‘reduplication,’ the reiteration of an image to increase its potency.

According to some understandings of sight in the middle ages, the viewer would also be imprinting the cross on his heart and mind, translating an image from material to soul, creating a replication each time. Gregory the Great (ca. 540-604), for instance, wrote “when the images of external things are drawn into consciousness, whatever is revolved in the mind by thinking in pictured imagery, is, as it were, portrayed on the heart.”\textsuperscript{420} Cynthia Hahn has commented that in early medieval concepts of perception, “the visual is encompassed in a single glance that illuminates the mind.”\textsuperscript{421} In other words, even a mere glimpse absorbs an image as a memory. Certainly a Christian viewer would have been able to glimpse a small part of a cross image and imagine the rest. But monumental crosses are often decorated by motifs or accompanied by other images, a pairing that is meant to be seen in its entirety. Tracing the cross with head, eyes, and

\textsuperscript{421} Hahn, “Visio Dei,” 177.
torso to take it all in is a ‘making’ of the holy cross image with the body in order to then transfer it to the mind and make it again in memory.

This kind of assimilation of a person with the cross is most often recognized in the orant prayer position, wherein the person stands with both arms raised. In the apse mosaic of Sant’Apollinare in Classe (ca. 540) the extended hands of prayerful Bishop Apollinaris in this position echo the shape of the gemmed cross depicted above him (figure 2.11). Art historian Glenn Peers describes this gestural imitation, saying “as one assumes and shares the form of Christ’s cross, a form latent in the whole created world, then one’s proximity to Christ intensifies,” adding that “this incorporation of the position of appeal into the crucifix,” is both physical and visual. In both the orant pose and viewing of a monumental cross, the viewer participates in a haptic experience, essentially learning by doing, while feeling the motion of becoming a cross-shaped entity. Georgia Frank argues that this haptic approach to seeing was “a religious epistemology that combined the noblest of the senses (sight) with the most animalistic one (touch).” Experiencing and embodying the cross (rather than simply looking at it), was a means of avoiding idolatry by channeling a holy image instead of venerating one.

However, unlike the static orant position, the full-body viewing of an overhead monumental cross is a motion. The performative nature of viewing an entire monumental cross requires the viewer to externally make the sign of the cross with his body in a protracted, haptic process of seeing. The monumentality of the cross is an essential part of the kinesthetic experience of seeing it. During that seeing process, the motion becomes directional, taking its cue from the form of the cross axis, which highlights the inherent directionality of the gaze.

To an extent, the viewer is a living part of the interface of a ritual system and he may become the cross through the orant prayer position or through making the sign of the cross while viewing a monumental image of it. Art historian Warren Woodfin describes the celebrant as being “framed” in the space at certain points in the liturgical ritual, but the movement of the viewer is also important.\textsuperscript{425} Woodfin goes on to note that if there were images on the celebrant’s garments, they would be revealed and concealed depending on how he moved around the space.\textsuperscript{426} Indeed, he says, “both surrounded by and clothed in images, the celebrant would appear to be a living extension” of the eucharistic mysteries in the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{427}

This idea can be pushed further to conclude that the wearer is also part of the space. As the celebrant participated in the orchestrated movements of the liturgy, his body could reveal and conceal images on the apse walls and altar surrounding him. When praying, his body would ‘reveal’ a cross, either through an orant prayer position or by making the sign of the cross, increasing the number of holy crosses that decorate the church space.

**Multiplication**

Multiplication of the cross can be a distribution of a holy image across a space, and the repetition of a pattern of crosses is also a multiplication of its apotropaic properties. In Cappadocia there are examples of the cross as a repeated pattern on ceilings. This multiplication is evident in Zelve 1 (ca. late ninth century), a chapel with dozens of crosses that are carved in relief, covering the ceiling and walls (figure 2.12).\textsuperscript{428} Within the space there are variations in

\textsuperscript{425} Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon*, 97.
\textsuperscript{426} Woodfin, 86.
\textsuperscript{427} Woodfin, 97.
depictions of the cross, including encircled crosses and cross shapes made from a diamond pattern (figure 2.13). But every one of the cross images has the same meaning and potency, leaving the viewer surrounded on all sides with a message of sanctification and salvation. Woodfin argues that the “density” of a motif could be protective, citing the increased efficacy of repeated images on garments.\(^{429}\) Instead of wearing the motif (as Woodfin describes), the visitor to Zelve 1 is enveloped by an architectural space that provides the same kind of spiritual protection through many images of the cross.

Woodfin also argues that cross motifs depicted on bishops’ vestments “negate any sense of depth or modeling on the figures,” making them “less corporeal” and more saintly.\(^{430}\) Woodfin writes specifically about bishops and apostles depicted in a fresco in the Church of the Trinity (ca. 1260-1265) in Sopoćani, Serbia (figure 2.14). It is difficult to focus the eye on the busy pattern of crosses, and so the individuality of the bishops dissolves into a procession of supplicants whose holiness is expressed through the ambiguity of their depictions.

In a non-figural setting, a repeated cross motif can create a kaleidoscopic pattern that visually dissolves walls and ceilings in a similar way. When the pattern covers an entire ceiling, the cross as a repeated motif becomes a monumental use of the image. Multiplication in ceiling cross patterns occurs in two hallways in Karanlık Kale (ca. tenth to eleventh century) in the Ihlara Valley. Within the complex, there are two rooms with a carved ceiling pattern of crosses that is accented with red paint. These are on a hallway ceiling leading to a cross-in-square audience hall (figure 2.15) and its adjacent storage space, where two of the crosses are carved with splayed arms (figure 2.16). The ceiling decoration in both rooms is a geometric pattern of the sixth century rather than an Iconoclastic monument, as Thierry suggests.

\(^{429}\) Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon*, 91.
\(^{430}\) Woodfin, 94.
intersecting lines and diamonds that form a grid. Within that grid the multiplied cross becomes a conglomerate of prototypes, operating together as a monumental depiction of it.

Multiplication of the cross has parallels in the reduplication of icons. Regarding the repeated image of a divine emperor, Basil the Great wrote that its “power is not divided nor is glory separated.”

Icons, especially *achieropoietoi* (images not made by human hands), could also be infinitely reproduced without diluting their connection to the divine. Hans Belting calls them “unpainted” images that “came into being either through a divine miracle or by direct contact with the body it reproduced.” *Achieropoietoi*, which were widely used and accepted by the late sixth century, reflect a Byzantine fascination with images that receive divine agency to replicate themselves.

One of the earliest divinely replicated images of Christ was the Camuliana icon, which was named for the village in Cappadocia where it originated. In a text written by an ecclesiastical historian known as Zacharias Rhetor (sixth century), a pagan woman named Hypatia found in her garden’s fountain, “a picture of Jesus our Lord, painted on a linen cloth, and it was in the water,” yet it was dry. In order to show her “veneration” for the astounding image, Hypatia hid it in her *maphorion* (head-veil), and when she took it off to show her teacher, there was “imprinted an exact copy of the picture which came out of the water.” The image’s ability to stay dry in a fountain and its agency to copy itself gave her the proof she needed that it was, indeed, an image of Christ. She converted to Christianity and built a shrine for it. The copy of the

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433 Brubaker, “Icons Before Iconoclasm?,” 1229.


image was taken to Caesarea (present-day Kayseri). In the year 554 the copy, itself a relic of touch, was translated from Cappadocia to Constantinople.\textsuperscript{436} The first image was eventually translated to Amaseia, a city in the Black Sea region, spreading the cult beyond Cappadocia.\textsuperscript{437}

Self-replicating images like the Camuliana icon were a demonstration of the power of icons, especially in the era before Iconoclasm.\textsuperscript{438} As Ernst Kitzinger put it,

> the idea of mechanical reproduction—originally a sideline of the cult of relics… seems to be more popular than that of a celestial origin. It is tempting to see an explanation for this preference in the fact that this type of legend epitomizes more clearly, concretely and dramatically than any amount of theory the role of the icon as an “extension,” an organ of the deity itself.\textsuperscript{439}

Theologically, he cites multiplication as “a reproductive act which repeats, on a lower level, the miracle of the Incarnation,” although his reference to mechanical reproduction echoes Benjamin.\textsuperscript{440} The Camuliana icon story also echoes Christ’s miracle of loaves and fishes, during which he was able to feed a crowd of five thousand followers after blessing only five loaves of bread and two fish.\textsuperscript{441} Herbert Kessler cites the circulation of \textit{achieropoietoi} as an iconophilic stance in favor of the use of images, a debate that had gained traction by the eighth century.\textsuperscript{442} With every new copy of an image, a material connection to the divine was miraculously multiplied, and translated from image to image. Duplicated cross patterns on Cappadocian ceilings referenced the generative power of the cross in a similar manner.

\textsuperscript{437} Zacharias Rhetor, Ecclesiastical History, XII, 4; trans. Mango, \textit{Art of the Byzantine Empire}, 114–15.
\textsuperscript{438} Cynthia Hahn, \textit{The Reliquary Effect: Enshrining the Sacred Object} (London: Reaktion Books, 2017), 45–47. Hahn points to the multiplication of relics, emphasizing that duplication did not dilute the power of the holy image.
\textsuperscript{439} Kitzinger, “Cult of Images,” 115.
\textsuperscript{440} Kitzinger, 143.
\textsuperscript{441} Matthew 14:17-21
\textsuperscript{442} Herbert L. Kessler, \textit{Seeing Medieval Art}, Rethinking the Middle Ages, v. 1 (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2004), 218.
Materiality

There is a sense of materiality in ceiling crosses that are designed as depictions of objects. In this section I examine the phenomenon of depicted objects using several methods: first addressing images of objects that construe wealth and identity in secular settings; next by making comparisons with existing liturgical items (such as a large silver processional cross) in order to examine ways they convey movement and activate space; and then by using primary texts about gold and gems to inform the discussion of potent materials and the role of ceiling crosses that are painted to look gemmed.

Of the hundred and twenty-five ceiling crosses throughout Cappadocia, at least sixteen are representations of cross-shaped objects that depict, for instance, gemmed metal crosses or liturgical crosses with tangs. Placement of ceiling crosses is closely related to their materiality: the location of the depiction was carefully considered in conjunction with what it meant to depict an object, especially one overhead and at a monumental scale. As with monumental and overhead representations of the cross, any representation of a cross—including a depiction of a cross-shaped object—is a signum crucis, the sign of the cross, and it maintains consistent meaning as the sign of Christ. These representations can also operate using multiple registers when the sign is represented in other media such as paint or metalwork.443 Liz James asks, “if the objects that are seen in pictures are translated into things, does it make a difference to how they are perceived and understood?”444 Here I look to Cappadocia for examples. One is in St. Basil Church in the Gomeda Valley, where gemmed crosses are painted in the apse and on the ceiling of the south chapel. On the apse, just above eye level, three crosses are depicted as reliquaries

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443 Beatrice Kitzinger, “Cross and Book: Late-Carolingian Breton Gospel Illumination and the Instrumental Cross” (Harvard University, 2012), 24 and 6. Kitzinger has pointed out a similar relationship in Carolingian manuscripts, wherein she argues that some cross depictions were perceived as “manufactured” objects that were “installed” into pages.

with *pendilia*, a series of gems dangling from the arms on chains (figure 2.17). On the ceiling of the same chapel, a similar object is depicted with no attachments (figure 2.18). Even though all the images are of similar gold, gemmed, cross-shaped objects, to the Byzantine painter it would be understood that depicting the gravitational pull of the dangling gems on the ceiling would be disconcerting on an overhead space. It would require disruptive realism or a willing suspension of disbelief to depict pendilia floating alongside the ceiling cross or falling toward the viewer.

A similar methodological approach has been used in other areas of medieval art history wherein knowledge of objects is gleaned from depictions of them. For instance, Ravenna, Italy, offers a familiar example. Like Cappadocia, Ravenna was also a provincial location with great wealth and enthusiastic patronage. We also have very few extant objects from Ravenna’s churches, and surviving material evidence is scattered throughout European museums. Yet the mosaics have been lauded as exemplars of monumental wall decorations from the sixth century, and objects depicted in Ravenna’s mosaics are often used to discuss the ones that would have been housed in the now-empty spaces.\(^{445}\) An apse mosaic depicting Emperor Justinian and his retinue in the church of San Vitale is a visual source for Byzantine liturgical donations in context (figure 2.19). The mosaic depicts the emperor presenting a gold vessel and Bishop Maximian holding a small, jeweled cross.\(^{446}\)

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Identity

The placement of a monumental ceiling cross can also be a projection of the patron’s identity throughout a space, which is evidenced in the depiction of cross-shaped objects overhead. Ceiling crosses are not strictly a liturgical, or even church-specific, phenomenon. Veronica Kalas documented a number of ceilings, many with crosses, in domestic spaces in the area of Selime-Yaprakhisar, a series of complexes along the Melendiz river (figure 2.20). These objects are identity markers of the patrons: they display wealth and status as well as spiritual inclination, perhaps ostentatiously acknowledging the blessing of wealth. Secular complexes were probably run by rural elites as settlements with their own churches, funerary chapels, agricultural spaces, and living quarters. The architecture is primarily rock-cut with some masonry additions, and a number of domestic dwellings from the tenth and eleventh centuries have elaborate carved exteriors that indicate the patrons’ social status.

Area 1 of Açıksaray (Open Palace, ca. tenth to eleventh century) is notable for its dramatic exterior façade that was carved in three registers (figure 2.21). It is visible from afar, and its ostentatiousness would have been a projection of the owner’s social status. Based on its location in the regional road system and possible date, Alexander Grishin surmises that it may have been built to house the imperial army during emperor Nicephoros’ visit to Cappadocia in

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448 Bowes, “Christian Images in the Home,” 171–190. According to Bowes, early Christian images in the home were used to construct identity for owners who wished to display their religious affiliation in a secular setting.
450 Fatma Gül Öztürk, “A Comparative Architectural Investigation of the Middle Byzantine Courtyard Complexes in Açıksaray - Cappadocia: Questions of Monastic and Secular Settlement” (Middle Eastern Technical University, 2010), 159–161.; Lyn Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 144–45; Alexander Grishin, “Açık Saray and Medieval Military Campaigns,” in Our Medieval Heritage: Essays in Honour of John Tillotson for His 60th Birthday, ed. Linda Rasmussen, Valerie Spear, and Diane Tillotson (Cardiff: Merton Priory Press, 2002), 169. For Açıksaray I use the numbering system of Fatma Gül Öztürk whose dissertation represents the most thorough documentation of the site and logically labels areas geographically, starting with the northernmost complex and working southward. Öztürk’s Area 1 is the same space as Rodley’s No. 7 that was also used by Kalas and Grishin.
963 or 964/5, although he admits the evidence is circumstantial.\textsuperscript{451} His theory, however speculative, highlights the roles of elite patrons in the area and the ways their wealth was used to convey identity.

The façade’s indication of material wealth continues into the interior of Room 1, an audience hall, described as such because there are no tombs or apses to indicate a chapel, and estates often had longitudinal halls for receiving visitors or conducting business. On the flat ceiling of the rectangular space, a large cross above the central entryway spans the narrow width of the transverse hall (figure 2.22). As Grishin notes, the ceiling cross is part of the domestic sphere and cannot be “linked with a specific liturgical function.”\textsuperscript{452} Bosses (faux knobs) mark the center and arms of the cross, resembling rivets, which emulate metal work, making the image a possible reference to material wealth and a marker of elite social status. The depiction of a cross object on the ceiling was adornment for the estate, an amuletic image in a secular environment, and a marker of the patron’s Christian identity.

The most notable domestic example of a domestic monumental ceiling cross is in Selime Kalesi (ca. tenth to eleventh century), (figure 2.23).\textsuperscript{453} One of several complexes in the northern part of the Peristrema Valley, Selime Kalesi is a double courtyard mansion that contains the largest and most elaborately decorated domestic spaces in the region.\textsuperscript{454} It is apparent from the floor plan that the space was designed so that a visitor entered from Courtyard 2 into Hall 2, and then continued through two more extended longitudinal rooms toward a small square room in the northwest (figure 2.24). On the ceiling just above the entrance to the square room is the tang of a

\begin{itemize}
\item Grishin, “Açık Saray and Medieval Military Campaigns,” 170.
\item Grishin, 168.
\item Kalas, “Rock-Cut Architecture of the Peristrema Valley,” 148.
\end{itemize}
monumental cross (figure 2.25). The cross arms extend well into the room but do not touch any of the other three walls. The slightly elongated Latin cross is not embellished with any decorative carving on the splayed arms, nor is there any extant paint. In this setting the cross does not serve as an organizing grid that affects the entire ceiling, but as one that has a direct visual relationship to the doorway and the hall that leads in and out of the room, emphasizing movement and direction.

Kalas describes the space beneath the ceiling cross as a triclinium (dining room) for honored guests and posits that two niches served as cupboards for storage of utensils. She also observes that the inclusion of three alcoves in the floor plan makes the space a cruciform one, underscoring the impression that the ceiling cross was designed to make on viewers below, saying “the striking presence of this salient cross is meant to impress. It conspicuously marks the most prestigious room of the complex as it looms over the dining and audience chamber.” Kalas has also observed that the cross is part of an axis that extends across the complex, arguing that “such a noticeable location for an eminent cross reinforces the axis of hall and church developed by the overall layout of the courtyard manor houses and mansions as a whole.” In this context, the ceiling cross is not only a depicted object, it also functions to activate the space by using the iconicity of the cross axis to guide the viewer’s sight and attention into the wider complex.

The use of ceiling crosses extends into other domestic settings as well. The nearby Gümülkaya complex (ca. tenth to eleventh century), was part of a manor house in a courtyard complex that had residential space, a church, and a secular transverse hall in Area 8. Kalas has

456 This entire paragraph references Kalas, “Rock-Cut Architecture of the Peristrema Valley,” 148–49.
recorded at least seven ceiling crosses carved in relief in that area of the settlement, five of which are on the lower level (figure 2.26) and two in an upper level (figure 2.27). On the lower floor, a trio of adjacent crosses cover the entire ceiling of the audience hall. Although they are damaged, it is apparent that the center cross is rotated a quarter turn from the others, appearing as an X shape (figure 2.28), and the two flanking it are serifed Latin crosses with bosses at the center that indicate stylized depictions of objects (figure 2.29). Two additional, separate ceiling crosses are in small areas near a room that may have been a bath (figure 2.30). A splayed-serif, encircled cross and rectangular serifed cross are side by side in an upper level room that overlooks the courtyard below (figure 2.31).458 Kalas suggests that the lower level of the space was for practical activities such as agricultural storage, and the upper level was residential.459 Despite the damage and rough quality of carving, the ceiling decoration in this complex demonstrates that the patrons were interested in variation and placement of crosses in a variety of spaces. While Güllükkaya has received less scholarly attention than other complexes in the region such as Açıksaray and Selime, it is instructive as part of this group of domestic complexes because its monumental ceiling crosses indicate similar displays of material wealth, both in the objects they depict and in their presence as monumental art that was commissioned for secular residential settings.

**Activation**

The ‘objectness’ of ceiling crosses can also further their function toward the redirected gaze, particularly when the base of the cross is depicted with a tang that mimics liturgical and hand crosses that were designed to be carried. An example is in St. Hieron Chapel (ca. seventh to ninth

459 Kalas, 102–3.
century), a small basilica that holds over a dozen floor tombs and has a longitudinal narthex along the west side (figure 2.32). Its name commemorates an early Christian martyr from the area, Saint Hieron of Matiane (the town previously called Avci̇lar, which is now considered part of Göreme). A painted red ceiling cross in the transitional space between the narthex and nave has a handle at the base and is topped by a semi-circle (figure 2.33). Its east-west orientation draws attention to tombs at either end of the narthex, and its location above an arched portal guides the viewer toward the larger adjoining chapel. Crosses were often depicted near tombs, and burials in the narthex were also common, making this a fairly typical example of a ceiling cross in a commemorative context. In funerary contexts, the ritual included prayers for the dead, asking that they receive forgiveness and eternal repose. In this tradition, the use of the cross on tomb ceilings is further indication of the Byzantines’ desire to be buried in an active space, not only under the symbol of salvation but encompassed within a sanctified sphere under the intercession of Saint Hieron. The visual element that this example has in common with secular examples is the depiction of objects with functional pieces, the handles of the crosses. In addition to directing viewers’ attention through the spaces and drawing attention to tombs to enhance commemoration of the dead, these handles indicate motion; their function is to activate the interior spaces as they sanctify them.

Precedents and comparisons for the activation of space using a cross occur throughout the early Christian and medieval periods. John Chrysostom (ca. 347–407), a fourth-century Cappadocian Church Father and archbishop of Constantinople, led city-wide processions that were illuminated by candles attached to silver crosses, creating what Taft describes as a “river of

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fire” as Chrysostom attempted to reclaim the city from Arian assemblies. Symeon, an archbishop of Thessaloniki in the fifteenth century (1416-1426), wrote of carrying icons, crosses, and relics out of churches and into the city and beyond. By his description, humans polluted the air and the earth by treading on it but they could counteract the pollution with holy objects to sanctify “inhabited town and country” through “possessing and showing” the sacred things. Both active and passive contact offered the sanctification of nature and urban space.

The crosses used to carry out this sanctification process were often votive offerings, given by a donor wishing to express thanks or receive a blessing. The processional cross tradition was a long lasting one, and the crosses themselves may have been treasured and used for centuries. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met) has two processional crosses that help us envision Symeon’s processions. The first is a large, silver processional cross that was probably made in Antioch during the sixth century (figure 2.3). It is inscribed with a hymn on the front and has a donation inscription on the back. At over sixty inches tall, it would have been a highly visible rallying point for a procession leader, and may have even been used in the Syrian tradition of mounting crosses in front of the altar within the church, drawing the congregation’s attention forward in a manner similar to the early Christian apses that Mathews described above.

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A second example in The Met is a silver and silver gilt cross (ca. 1000-1050) that may have been used for liturgical ceremonies or military processions (figure 2.35).\(^{468}\) The object is a typical example of a popular late Byzantine style of cross on which saints’ medallions are displayed on the front and back, with niello decoration on the reverse.\(^{469}\) Since liturgical crosses are meant to be carried through space, they signal motion when used on the ceiling. The presence of a tang indicates its liturgical purpose and moves the viewer away from focusing on the cross as a static symbol and into a mode of envisioning the active sanctification of a procession. The performativity of these liturgical crosses to magnify sanctification and gesture was widely used from Late Antiquity through the medieval period and beyond.

Cross objects are also depicted to energize the spoken word and accentuate gestures within scenes or portraits. A silver plaque (ca. 550-600) in The Met depicts Saint Peter preaching (figure 2.36).\(^{470}\) It offers a context for the use of depicted cross objects in that it may have been used as book cover.\(^{471}\) In it the animation of Peter’s sermon is emphasized by the presence of a cross in his left hand, an object with a long handle that was made to be held and gestured with and raised aloft, sanctifying space and adding impact to his message. The image offers evidence of a cross used as a visual shorthand to refer to gesturing and preaching.

A comparable, if not as widespread, practice was the use of a medieval European body part reliquary as a moving object to activate space through gesture and performativity. These objects are also known as Speaking Reliquaries, a name given to emphasize their role in


\(^{469}\) Helen Evans, “Processional Cross” (Cat. 25) in Evans and Wixom, 64–65. It is one of a group of five similar niello crosses from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries, one of which was found in Asia Minor near Eskişehir.

\(^{470}\) The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guide to the Collections: Medieval Art, 7.

broadcasting the saint’s relic contained within. Hahn has written about arm reliquaries as emphasizing blessing, an extension of the gesture chosen for visual and spiritual impact. She points out that in a medieval account of a relic translation, the arm was the body part used to communicate action, speech, and thinking: the medieval author wrote pointedly that a head relic was translated soon after its arm and collarbone, “since thinking, speaking, and acting are communicated through the collarbone and arm.”

Another example is known as the Arm Reliquary of the Apostles (ca. 1190), now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (figure 2.37). The object was probably commissioned by Duke Henry the Lion (r. 1142-1180) of Lower Saxony (Germany) to house relics he received from Byzantine Emperor Manuel I (r. 1143-1180) on a trip to Constantinople in 1173. Though the core of the object is wood, the exterior is completely covered in silver gilt and enamel that are styled to look like liturgical vestments decorated with medallions of apostles. Priests could raise an arm reliquary like this one and use it (instead of their own arms) to make the sign of blessing over the congregation or perform the sign of the cross. The blessing gesture, one that Hahn emphasizes is a “performance,” not a frozen pose, is permanently captured in an object so that the arm may continually make the sign of the cross. Hahn goes on to argue that the contained relic, along with its gesture, becomes an “active and powerful sign” that is not limited to the object or saint’s remains; it indicates a power that permeates space and resides simultaneously with God.

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473 Holger A. Klein, “Arm Reliquary of the Apostles,” (Cat. 40) in Martina Bagnoli et al., eds., Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe (Cleveland; Baltimore; London; New Haven: Cleveland Museum of Art; Walters Art Museum; The British Museum; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2010), 83–84.


475 Hahn, 28.
The anthropomorphically shaped reliquary tradition was western, not Byzantine, and evolved later than the Byzantine liturgical cross.\textsuperscript{476} However, both liturgical crosses and Speaking Reliquaries point to a widespread medieval use of gesture and performativemovement in worship.\textsuperscript{477} In the same way that western arm reliquaries could be used to emphasize the motion of a blessing gesture to impact a wide area, the depicted tang of a liturgical cross evokes the walking and waving of the object in order to sanctify space. Likewise, a reliquary or cross-shaped object in motion served a similar function to the cross on Golgotha, which was to broadcast the symbol of sanctity to its audience. That function is also essential to the liturgical crosses when they serve as a rallying point. The motion and movement of the processed cross produce sanctification and also move the image’s holy aura through space. When a cross object is depicted on a ceiling, it is a focal point for attention and a sanctifying symbol, projecting the holy aura from a fixed point overhead. When a ceiling cross emulates a liturgical or moveable cross object, it references that same kind of activation and energy. In St. Hieron Chapel (above), the activation of space is achieved through the use of an image that simultaneously sanctifies space and attracts viewers’ attention toward tombs at either end of the narthex. The tang on the ceiling cross resembles the part of a liturgical object that would be inserted into a handle for processing, thereby referencing the kind of movement and sanctification that makes the space under the cross an active and appropriate place for the holy dead to be interred and commemorated.

\textsuperscript{477} Hahn, \textit{Strange Beauty}, 137.
Matter

Above I described ceiling cross images’ materiality in the context of the ceiling decoration depicting a cross-shaped object. Another kind of material attribute of ceiling crosses comes when a ceiling cross depicts particular materials, which I describe here as matter. The materials depicted on a cross object can also be a kind of activation through their reference to potent matter like the gold and gemmed cross depicted on the ceiling of St. Basil Church. In church contexts, the beauty of gems and precious metals were thought to facilitate faith in their metaphorical reflection of God’s light, often enhancing the representation of crosses. Archbishop Hypatius of Ephesus (in office 531-ca. 538) wrote the following to Julian of Adramytion, his subordinate bishop who had been concerned about image use in the church:

For these reasons we, too, permit material adornment in the sanctuaries, not because God considers gold and silver, silken vestments and vessels encrusted with gems to be precious and holy, but because we allow every order of the faithful to be guided in a suitable manner and to be led up to the Godhead, inasmuch as some men are guided even by such things towards the intelligible beauty, and from the abundant light of the sanctuaries to the intelligible and immaterial light.478

Peter Alexander interprets Hypatius to mean that just as authors of scripture made some concessions to the uneducated, clergy also allowed luxurious materials in the church in order to facilitate understanding.479 The precious matter references the holy, and is a widely-recognized metaphor for the beauty and value of Christ. Alexander goes on to say that it was a star that led the magi to Christ, drawing a further parallel between shimmering metals and holy light as a guide toward heaven.480

Other depictions of gemmed crosses, especially in apses, are well attested from the fourth century onward. The cross depicted in the apse is related to the Eucharist, the ritual

478 Hypatius of Ephesus, Fragment of “Miscellaneous Enquiries,” in Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire, 117.
480 Alexander, 180. See Matthew 2:9 for the Magi.
commemorating Christ’s Crucifixion, that would take place on the altar below. As in the examples above, in the church of S. Pudenziana in Rome the gemmed cross is shown on Golgotha’s landscape with a narrative of Christ, but in the apse of Sant’ Apollinaire in Classe near Ravenna, the gemmed cross has a bust of Christ in the center medallion and is encircled by gems in a starry, celestial sphere. Although Christ is depicted in both, his image in Ravenna is an iconic bust that references his divine return after the Crucifixion rather than a narrative scene depicting it.

In the Cappadocian St. Stephen Chapel near the town of Cemil, the encircled cross in its apse is painted to resemble gold and gems, but it is not depicted with environmental surroundings (figure 2.38). Instead it is paired with a ceiling cross in the nave (also painted to resemble gemstones) that is set off by a vine pattern and a leafy motif at its base, referencing the “living” wood representing victory over death at Christ’s Crucifixion (figure 2.39). The pairing of ceiling crosses in a chapel’s apse and nave is seen primarily in Cappadocia where there are at least eight examples from the Transitional or Middle Byzantine periods (see Appendix 2). While these may have liturgical implications (further discussed in the context of St. Basil Church in Chapter 4), they also point to long standing traditions that associate the materiality of objects with images of them.

Alongside liturgical, political, and historical traditions is the crucial fact that to the Byzantine faithful, both gems and True Cross relics had mystical agency to heal and protect. Images and symbols of these objects maintained their meanings across media, and it was

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481 Xenakis, “Recherches sur les églises byzantines de Cappadoce,” 222. As Xenakis notes, these are part of a group of five ceiling crosses that are accompanied by vegetal decoration. For the living cross, see Robin M. Jensen, “Early Christian Images and Exegesis,” n.d., 29–31. The ceilings with vine motifs identified by Xenakis are as follows: St. Stephen Chapel in Cemil, Stylite Nicetas Chapel in Güllüdere, Karşıbıcek Chapel in Avcılar, the Chapel of Joachim and Anna in (near Göreme), and Mistikan Kilise in the town of Güzelöz.
common for one medium to emulate another. But the palimpsest of nuances goes beyond mimicry. The materials themselves were imbued with meaning, and an understanding of them becomes crucial for understanding the multivalent nature of Byzantine images. According to Herbert Kessler, the use of vitreous arts such as cloisonné (in which glass particles were heated to become enamel) was a metaphor for the typology of Hebrew prophecy which was transformed and fulfilled by New Testament scripture. That the vivid colors and luminosity resembled gems made enamels all the more desirable. Gold and glass mosaics also emulated the shimmer and luminosity of gems, qualities highly prized by the Byzantines in any medium. However, Cappadocian painted ceilings have no such luster, even in depictions of gold and gemstones.

I would like to focus momentarily on the perceived properties of gems and precious metals that would have made their depictions particularly suited to Cappadocian ceilings. The early Christian connotation of gold and gems is often celestial. The book of Revelation describes the Heavenly Jerusalem as a city of pure gold, with gates of pearls and walls adorned with sapphires, emeralds, agate, and jasper.

The value of relics, remains of saints whose were thought to have gone straight to Heaven, was often expressed in material terms associated with precious metals. When the monk Pelagius (actually a reformed harlot, Pelagia) died, residents from several neighboring monasteries gathered and “carried out his sacred little body as if it had been gold and silver they were carrying.” Cyprian, a second-century hagiographer, described the remains of martyr

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485 Revelation 21:8-21
Polycarp as “dearer … than precious stones and finer than gold.”\textsuperscript{487} The gold was valued for its durability and strength, attributes which were also true of saints and their relics.

Indeed, as officials first attempted to kill Polycarp by burning him alive, his body was only strengthened by the flames. The hagiographer wrote, “and he was within [the fire] not as burning flesh but rather as bread being baked, or like gold and silver being purified in a smelting-furnace.”\textsuperscript{488} In a similar vein, John Chrysostom alluded to this in a homily referencing the Three Children in the Fiery Furnace, faithful Hebrews who were willing to be thrown in an incinerator rather than worship an idol, but emerged unscathed.\textsuperscript{489} Chrysostom wrote “for hay, although it lie without the flame, is quickly kindled; but gold, although it remain within, becomes the more resplendent!”\textsuperscript{490} In other words, Byzantine hagiography emphasizes that while gold has value in terms of wealth, its real worth lies in its durability, which is a metaphor for the Christian martyr.

Textual references to powerful materials indicate that salvific properties of gemstones could assuage both spiritual and physical afflictions. Gems were potent matter, capable of healing the body, as attested by ancient and medieval sources. Pliny the Elder (23-79 CE) wrote at length on precious stones and metals in his first-century encyclopedic text, \textit{Natural History}, wherein he classified a number of stones by color and juxtaposed their priceless beauty with utility.\textsuperscript{491} Amber, for instance, was valued as a luxury object and for its amuletic and medicinal properties to quell fever, settle the stomach, or treat tonsillitis.\textsuperscript{492}

\textsuperscript{489} Daniel 3:9-30
\textsuperscript{492} Pliny the Elder, \textit{Natural History} 37.44-51 in LCL 419:196-203.
Byzantine science (which drew from Greek and Roman texts and was cited by Islamic sources) also promoted the active properties of gems, with a power granted by God but grounded in their existence as earthly matter. Pliny’s work was widely read and known by medieval writers. Among them was Michael Psellus. His treatise, *On the Powers of Stones*, reveals that Byzantine Christians retained knowledge of classical scholarship. He prescribes the diamond to quell fevers and the amethyst to maintain sobriety, among others.493 As the Byzantine Christianization of scientific tradition developed throughout Late Antiquity, healing with gems inspired new ways of thinking of potent matter.

For instance, relics and images were also potent matter and, like gems, were used medicinally, especially in the late antique period. When a local woman was gravely ill due to demonic possession, Melania the Younger (ca. 383-439) facilitated a cure from the saints, saying, “Since I am a sinner, I am incapable of doing this. Let us bring her to the holy martyrs and by their direct intercession, the God who loves humankind will cure her.”494 The cure came in the form of matter that had touched the saints, which Melania administered to the woman:

She took the oil consecrated from the relics of the holy martyrs and with this she touched the mouth of the sick woman three times, saying in a clear voice, “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, open your mouth.” And straightaway at the calling on the Lord, the demon, who was disgraced or rather frightened, fled, and the woman opened her mouth.495

Before the Iconoclastic debates, images had much of the same agency as relics. This is evident in the story of a sick woman who ate part of an image of Saints Cosmas and Damian:

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495 Gerontius, *The Life of Melania the Younger*, Ch. 60; trans. Miller, 224.
Perceiving herself to be in danger [from colic], she crawled out of bed and... scraped off with her fingernails some plaster. This she put into water and, after drinking the mixture, she was immediately cured of her pains by the visitation (epiphoitesis) of the Saints.\footnote{Miracles of SS. Cosmae et Damiani, miracle 15; trans. Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire, 139.}

The image’s consumption was translated as “visitation” by Mango and by Kitzinger as “the entering in of the saints,” both emphasizing that the images contained the reality of the saints themselves.\footnote{Mango, 139; Kitzinger, “Cult of Images,” 147–48.}

In addition to having similar healing properties as the saint’s image, relics were described in language that was almost identical to descriptions of gems and gold. To Vitricius of Rouen (ca. 330-407), relics were signified by light and brilliance as being “brighter than the sun,” a metaphor used to further associate them with God.\footnote{Patricia Cox Miller, The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 97–98.} Gregory of Nyssa used this vocabulary when he learned of his sister Macrina’s illness. This happened through a dream in which gleaming relics foretold her death, wherein the ascetic woman would achieve a kind of martyrdom. He wrote of the vision, “I seemed to be holding in my hands the relics of martyrs, and there came from them a bright gleam of light, as from a flawless mirror which had been placed face to the sun, so that my eyes were blinded by the brilliance of the gleam.”\footnote{Gregory of Nyssa, Life of Saint Macrina, Ch. 15; trans. Patricia Cox Miller, Women in Early Christianity: Translations from Greek Texts, 1. ed. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 198.}

In commemorative spaces, images of precious materials are reminders of relics and the holy dead. On ceilings, painted gems act as a bridge uniting celestial and physical realms in Byzantine thought. How appropriate, then, that they are so often present on ceilings of rock-cut structures—they are inseparable from the volcanic landscape, existing beneath the earth, yet serving as the celestial window up to heaven. The Byzantines would have recognized the paradox of the ‘gemmed’ rock-cut ceiling, both within and above the earthly realm.
Conclusions

From its origins in the Holy Land to its regional manifestations in places like Cappadocia, the Cult of the Cross developed through sophisticated use of space to display the cross, taking into consideration its size, form, and placement in order to direct attention and devotion. An image of a liturgical cross references movement and an awareness of space. When a cross is depicted with a tang (as many ceiling crosses are), it recalls for the viewer ways that cross objects were inserted into handles and moved through the air with gestures and in processions as an act of blessing. The presence of a cross on a ceiling indicates a Byzantine desire to unite the viewer with sacred space through that kind of lively sanctification process, using both symbols and objects.

The choice of depicting cross-shaped objects rather than simply using an unadorned symbol to visualize the cross alludes to a host of political, social, historical, and metaphysical connotations. As such, monumental ceiling crosses reference the potency of materials they represent, particularly when depictions of reliquaries on ceilings become mediators between celestial and earthly realms. They are designed to activate the space by uniting Byzantine interior decoration with the rituals and objects that existed within.
Chapter 3: Sight Lines in St. Sergius Chapel

In Late Antiquity, viewing was an experience that utilized the whole body. Saints’ shrines, in particular, were designed not only to activate the senses, but also to encompass the entire physical being into the process of commemorating the holy dead. From its inception, St. Sergius Chapel (sixth century) in Göreme accommodated burials and incorporated them into visual unity with the eucharistic altar. As this chapter demonstrates, its ceiling decoration was a meaningful communication device that played a key role in activating sight lines to enhance the viewer’s devotional experiences.

The sight lines in St. Sergius Chapel incorporate the kinesthetic experience of the viewer’s gaze, redirected from a monumental ceiling cross toward the apse, highlighting the eucharistic and commemorative functions of the space to produce a synthesized context for the saint’s shrine. This context is what material culture historian David Morgan would call the “ecology” of the monumental ceiling cross image.500 To examine socially constructed rituals of seeing, he describes images as objects that are “made as instruments to fit the human body… situating them within the social and natural worlds in which they flourish. Images are instruments that connect bodies to places and to one another, productively integrating humans into their physical and social ecologies.”501 Here I argue that the ecology of the monumental cross in St. Sergius Chapel includes the sight lines and the historical and political sphere of the Cult of the Cross, manifested in a particular chapel using the ceiling cross as an instrument of the materialized and visualized Christ.

501 Morgan, 86.
A monumental ceiling cross in the nave is a Christological reference, commemorating the sacrifice of Christ’s human body, and his ultimate Resurrection and return to glory. It is paired with another cross over the apse, highlighting the eucharistic ritual that would take place below. An inscription references a patron saint, a member of the holy dead who served as an intercessor on behalf of the faithful. All of these elements are in the context of a small burial chapel commemorating the patron and his loved ones.

**Sight Lines**

Entering from the north side of this asymmetrical basilica, visitors looking upward in St. Sergius Chapel would have seen two images of crosses, one on the low ceiling and another in the apse (figure 3.1 and figure 3.2).\(^{502}\) The axes of the two crosses seem to be misaligned, creating disconcerting asymmetry. The obscured views of the ceiling and apse from this spot indicate that this was not the preferred viewing angle promoted by the chapel’s designers. From a location in the back of the chapel (near the northwest corner), a glance left reveals privileged tombs, a gaze forward leads toward a dedicatory inscription, and the view overhead leads the eyes directly from one end of a monumental cross and over its axis toward a second cross in the apse, creating a visual axis that extends toward an inscription above the prothesis niche (figure 3.3). This was the view of the laity, of local patrons or members of the community who stood in the nave. The inverse view can be experienced from one vantage point in the apse—looking up reveals the relatively high relief of an encircled cross, the axis of which aligns with the monumental nave ceiling decoration (figure 3.4). From the spot where the overhead visual alignment is most apparent, the eye-level focal point is the privileged burial space in the nave. This view was accessible only to clergy. From either vantage point the space’s structure seems to visually

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\(^{502}\) My photographs and observations of St. Sergius Chapel are based on a site visit in July 2013.
expand and align, offering a physiological and visual balance that is not possible from any other positions in the church. The two crosses work in tandem create an enhanced visual experience from specific vantage points within the chapel.

In this chapter I argue that the designer of the space had these particular devotional locations in mind, and that the sight lines between the two places reveal an intentional, Cappadocian manifestation of late antique visual culture. By incorporating a formal and historical analysis of the design into the theoretical framework of kinesthetic address, I demonstrate that the design of the chapel’s interior enhances its use as a commemorative space.

In Late Antiquity, a visual axis was often used to emphasize significant architectural features or images, a practice that has many predecessors in Roman architecture. Architectural historian John Clarke articulates this with a theory called “kinesthetic address” to explain the Roman practice of designing domestic interiors that guide and manipulate the movements of inhabitants through imagery. Relying on site visits and archaeological evidence to provide contemporary observations about scale and sight lines, he was able determine the experience of viewers through analysis of pavement design and spatial organization used in Ostia, Rome’s port city to the west, in the second and third centuries. Clarke determined that exits, entrances, and preferred vantage points marked by floor mosaics could reveal the architectural program of domestic spaces. For instance, in a second-century bath house, a continuous white highlight in the black “axis-marking figure of Scylla” (a sea-serpent) would

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504 Clarke, “Kinesthetic Address,” 4.
505 Clarke, 2.
lead foot traffic away from doorways, winding through the space from pool to pool, with the figure acting as a silent host to prod visitors and keep them from standing still (figure 3.5).  

Clarke’s research picks up the thread of Burkhardt Wesenberg who determined that a Roman viewer would inherently seek out “optimum” viewpoints for interior decoration, particularly following “perspective sightlines” within a decorated space. Clarke nicknames this role of imagery “spectator address” and clarifies, “[it] is concerned with aspects of human perception: the actual physiology of seeing, the identification of the fictive (i.e., the reading of the imagery), and the psychology of following pattern (i.e., human reaction to design directions).” The term kinesthetic address describes this synthesized physical and visual relationship between a viewer and the interior decoration surrounding her.

Whereas visuality focuses on the socially constructed aspects of viewing, spectator and kinesthetic address include innate physiological responses that transcend social conditioning. The theory has been used to prove that architectural decoration can suggest movement to a viewer. The next task when deciphering a particular monument is to determine why that kinesthetic suggestion is being made by the architect, and how readily the viewer will participate in the designated ritual.

While geographic and temporal differences between viewers’ experiences in late Roman domestic interiors versus Cappadocian chapels are vast, Clarke’s kinesthetic address is a useful framework for deciphering the relationship of designed space and immersed viewer that

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506 Clarke, 16–17; Clarke, Roman Black-and-White Figural Mosaics, 71.
508 Clarke, 3; Clarke, Roman Black-and-White Figural Mosaics, 20–21.
509 Clarke, “Kinesthetic Address,” 4.
elucidates an aspect of late antique visuality. He elaborates this system of viewing as one that goes beyond aesthetics—scale and placement demand that the spectator cannot simply optically engage with floor mosaics, but must follow them with her entire body, interacting with both images and the architectural space designed to contain them. In St. Sergius Chapel, that optical engagement comes by way of the ceiling instead of the floor. The cross placement is metaphorical in that an overhead space has connotations of a heavenly realm, and is undeniably dominant because of the scale of the cross in the small space. We can draw on Clarke’s theory to interpret various uses of the chapel and account for the interplay of aesthetics and physiological responses that Byzantine craftspeople would have considered.

In St. Sergius Chapel the optimal viewing of dedicatory inscriptions, the apse, and access to privileged tombs in this chapel demands a specific vantage point, and a viewer who moves through the space and pauses at specific points is rewarded with a visual connection to the eucharistic apse by means of a monumental ceiling cross directing the gaze. The synthesis of visual and physical experience is in keeping with sixth-century Anatolian commemorative practices. It also taps into current threads in scholarship about the role of early Christian architecture in engaging the entire body for enhanced visual experience.

**Visual Analysis**

St. Sergius Chapel is located on private property in the town of Göreme, (formerly called Avcilar and Matiane), approximately a mile from the Göreme Open Air Museum (figure 3.6 exterior). The chapel is in the upper level of a volcanic cone in a clearing but the landscape and architecture have been altered by modern farming and rockfall, making the original exterior context difficult to decipher. The doorway is now reachable only by ladder but there are

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remnants of a carved narthex that probably had a staircase. The chapel was published only recently by French scholars who argue convincingly for a sixth-century date based on inscriptions, style, and cult associations.\textsuperscript{512} Ousterhout considers the carving to be consistent with other sixth-century carved crosses as well.\textsuperscript{513} The monument is an important case study because it is a rare example of a dated chapel in Cappadocia, particularly one carved before the era of great social and political upheaval that included Arab invasions that began in the mid-seventh century and the Iconoclastic periods (730-787 and 814-843).

Although there has been no archaeological survey, the site appears to be a solitary rock-cut chapel (i.e., with no monastic refectory for communal meals, or additional residence spaces attached). Before the Middle Byzantine period, chapels like this one were built by local patrons, often as burial spaces rather than as monasteries.\textsuperscript{514} Rodley has suggested that many of the donor inscriptions in Cappadocia are from sites that were once hermitages, although there is no remaining evidence of one at St. Sergius Chapel.\textsuperscript{515}

Gregory of Nyssa commented on the plethora of worship sites in Cappadocia by the fourth century, going so far as to encourage locals to use them instead of going on pilgrimage to Jerusalem:

Whereas, if it is really possible to infer God’s presence from visible symbols, one might more justly consider that He dwelt in the Cappadocian nation than in any of the spots outside it. For how many Altars there are there, on which the name of our Lord is glorified! One could hardly count so many in all the rest of the world.\textsuperscript{516}

\textsuperscript{512} Catherine Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 67–84; Lemaigre Demesnil, \textit{Architecture Rupestre et Décor Sculpté}, 65–68.
\textsuperscript{513} Ousterhout, \textit{Visualizing Community}, 40–42.
\textsuperscript{514} Ousterhout, “Remembering the Dead,” 91 and 94. For post-Iconoclastic examples of churches built for privileged local patrons in Göreme, see for instance, Karanlık Kilise’s tomb in the narthex; in western Cappadocia, see the Çanlı Kilise settlement where arcosoleia and floor tombs were gradually added to the narthex.
\textsuperscript{515} Lyn Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 250.
By housing these altars and allowing the visible symbols to permeate the region, Cappadocia becomes a kind of Holy Land.

Anyone who could afford a chapel could legally found one, as long as they kept it sacred and supported its clergy.517 The word “euktarion” was used to describe a variety of burials or martyr’s chapels, either of which could be on a monastery or private estate.518 Mathews discusses this kind of space as a “domestic oratory,” saying the concept of a household worship space probably grew out of monastic tradition, paving the way for the family chapel.519 There are many of these in Cappadocia, and architectural historian Thomas F. Mathews says that the “multiplication of little chapels” in areas like Cappadocia, “radically altered the pattern of ‘churching’ the population in medieval Byzantium,” by distributing aspects of it into the private sphere.520 Archaeologist Marcello Spanu has observed that there were many instances of multiple burials in Asia Minor for families (which could involve reburial or just adding new ones), noting these could be used for several generations.521

Evidence of patronage in St. Sergius Chapel has been determined by inscriptions, two of which are among the first elements encountered by visitors. Both of these painted inscriptions are on the east wall, one above the prothesis niche and the other adjacent to it (figure 3.7). Both are in cryptographic Greek, a code which was in use from the Hellenistic period until the medieval period (roughly fourth century BCE to tenth century CE) and was especially popular

for graffiti in Christian Egypt. Here it seems to reflect the pre-Iconoclastic belief that encrypting text could enhance the mystical value of its message, increasing the efficacy of the petition to a saint for assistance.522

The first inscription is above the prothesis niche in a shape painted red and green to resemble a Roman *tabula ansata* (votive tablet). It identifies the venerated saint (Holy Sergius), the patron (Longinus), and a second, female individual, Maria: “Holy Sergius, assist your servant Longinus, and your servant Maria, and […]”.523 The inscription continues with additional words that cannot be readily translated.524 Using the same convention for Longinus (“your servant”) as for Maria suggests that the second reference is to a living person, not to the Theotokos (Mother of God). The patrons could have been a couple or other familial pair of loved ones who commissioned the church as a family burial chapel. They are part of a long history of local elites demonstrating patronage and power through epigraphy.525

The shape and text of the inscription are not unusual for a dedicatory inscription of this period. In the Church of the Holy Martyrs Lot and Procopius in Jordan (mid-sixth century), a mosaic tabula ansata on the floor of the south aisle has a dedicatory inscription in the floor that

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522 D. Feissel, “Appendice Épigraphique” in Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 80–81.; Ousterhout, *Visualizing Community*, 257–58. Feissel is the first to publish the inscriptions, translating them from cryptographic code into Greek, and from Greek to French. English translations of French and Greek inscriptions in this chapter are mine unless otherwise noted.

523 Αγιε Σέργιο, βοηθήσον τὸν δούλον σου Λονγίνον και τὴν δούλευσαν σου Μαρίαν και τὸν παράμεν... “Sainte Serge, viens en aide à ton serviteur Longinos, à ta servante Maria et à…” trans. J.-L. Fournet, “Appendice Épigraphique” in Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 82. Cryptography and Greek epigraphy, along with the French translation, are by Fournet.

524 The words are τὸν παράμεν. τὸν is probably a masculine, singular, accusative definite article. παράμεν could be the verb “remains.” This construction indicates a continuation of the inscription that cannot be decisively translated. But we can discern that it is not a list of additional patrons because they would have been listed using the “the servant of you [genitive], name [nominative]” convention of the previous two.

uses a similar formula, saying, “O Saint Lot, receive the prayer of Rome and Porphyria and Mary, your servants.”

In St. Sergius Chapel, the tablet-style dedicatory inscription is ceremonial, formally marking and dedicating the space from above. A viewer cannot see the painted tablet, much less read the words, when standing in the doorway or at the prothesis niche. To appreciate it, a viewer must step far enough away that the letters are difficult to discern. Like the overhead crosses, the dedicatory plaque seems to require specific viewing conditions for optimal effectiveness, and the text’s encryption underscores that legibility is secondary to its prominent placement high on the east wall.

A second inscription on the east wall of the nave echoes the first, saying, “Holy Sergius, come to the aid of your servant, Longinus.” It is just above the prothesis niche, with red lettering painted onto an asymmetrical green polygon. Its faded hues are similar to the painted decorative accents throughout the church, and its linework is not of particularly refined quality. Compared to the carefully ‘framed’ painted tablet above, its look is less formal, and the polygon is not centered within the space. Its placement just above eye level, however, means that visitors to the church would read it aloud upon entering, assuming they could decipher or recite its encrypted words.

There is little left in the way of liturgical furniture in St. Sergius Chapel. In addition to the prothesis niche with inscriptions, there is a niche in south wall (perhaps a diakonikon for

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vestments) and a rectangular cavity in the west wall. There is no extant altar, but a low, narrow synthronon (bench for clergy) wraps around the horseshoe apse.

The arch over the bema is delicately carved with a vegetal motif and accented with red and green pigment (figure 3.8 and figure 3.9). There is no evidence of an ambo or solea extending from the sanctuary (which is typical of a small, rural chapel of this period), but there may have been a chancel barrier; destruction on the lower half of the sanctuary arch and the floor below it indicates that there may have been a waist-high structure there. In Constantinople, chancel barriers of this period could come in several forms, including a π-shape, with entrances on either side.\textsuperscript{528} However, a closer visual comparison may be the chancel of Karabaş Kilise’s main church (dated before ca.1061), which has two square barriers on either side of the sanctuary and an entry space in the middle (figure 3.10).\textsuperscript{529}

A birds-eye view of the architectural plan reveals a carefully constructed asymmetry. The only entrance to the basilica is on the north wall, and a niche is directly to the viewer’s left upon entering. The nave is approximately twenty-five feet long and twelve feet wide. Its decoration and that of the large apse are a unified design, with the center of the ceiling cross centered on the apse as well. However, the northern section of the basilica functions as a parekklesion (side chapel) that contains inscriptions and tombs, even though there is no delineated aisle. The flat ceiling is partially damaged over the north side, but the destroyed area (which is about four feet wide), is distinct from the monumental ceiling cross and palms depicted over the central nave. On the west wall, opposite the apse, painted linework is clearly distinguished from a rectangular wall cavity in the north section. The north area remains distinct from the rest of the nave, yet without columns or a walled barrier, it is visually connected to the rest of the church.

\textsuperscript{528} Mathews, The Early Churches of Constantinople, 107–8.
\textsuperscript{529} Although the current decoration in Karabaş Kilise is dated to 1060/1061 based on an inscription, a previous layer of paint reveals an earlier date for the church itself. See Chapter 5 for further discussion.
Despite the fact that the patron saint, Sergius, had a well-established portrait type by the sixth century, the chapel itself is completely aniconic in decoration.\textsuperscript{530} The apse cross is elegantly carved in deep relief, offset by crown molding and accented with a painted red meander motif in a less skilled hand. The nave ceiling cross and palms are carved more simply than the encircled apse cross, but are painted to simulate the carved vegetal motif in the apse. The south and west nave walls are accented with line work simulating horseshoe arches that frame small painted cross medallions. In addition to decorative motifs, the painted interior scheme includes the two inscriptions that play a crucial role in the dating of the chapel.

In general, the apse cross and bema entrance are the most expertly carved areas, and may have been the work of a master carver or specialist. The church, its niches, the nave ceiling cross, and the painted decoration seem to be a unified decorative scheme with the apse and of the same period, but the work is not as precise. This may demonstrate the selective use of master craftsmen, with the most skilled labor and financial resources being put toward decoration of the holiest area of the chapel.

Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil have also commented on the quality of carving in the chapel, describing the nave as irregular and almost concave.\textsuperscript{531} Instead of pinpointing low-quality carving for the asymmetrical shape, however, I argue that the irregularity is integral to the intended function of the chapel as a commemorative space. In the church, one tomb lies in the nave and two more are in a burial annex just off the north wall. This arrangement of the nave—with the north side functioning as a separate entity—anticipated the privileged tombs outside the central worship space.

\textsuperscript{530} Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 77. The authors surmise that two portraits in the apse were added in a later period of use, possibly the tenth century. I agree because they are not well-integrated into the overall decorative scheme; visual access to them is limited to a specific, barely-visible area in the apse; and their style is distinctly different from the typical early Christian motifs on the ceiling and walls.

\textsuperscript{531} Jolivet-Lévy et al., 69.
Circling the church nave, a low bench runs at the base of the south and west walls, stopping at the floor tomb along the north wall of the nave. Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil surmise that the tomb may have been added later, damaging the bench.\textsuperscript{532} But when the nave tomb was created, the carvers took care to maintain a relationship with the burial annex by implementing steps to its entrance. The nave tomb and the adjoining burial chamber function as a unified burial area. Because the carving of the tombs cannot be dated with any precision and are clearly related in both function and design, I treat the burial annex and nave tomb on the north wall as a single, unified burial space.

The tomb chamber’s entrance is by way of two well-worn steps. Inside the low, roughly carved chamber there is one tomb running parallel to the nave and one perpendicular to it in an *arcosolium* (rounded niche) toward the west. These appear to be unpainted. The northernmost wall of the tomb chamber has been rebuilt with stones at an unknown date, so we do not know whether there were additional burials.

The use of asymmetry can signal the sophisticated use of sight lines. One model for comparison on this topic is the House of the Drinking Contest (ca. 200-230 AD) in Antioch, where unevenly spaced columns in the dining room had long puzzled scholars with their asymmetry, which seemed an unlikely in such a carefully designed structure. A three-dimensional model with georeferenced sunlight, however, allowed John Dobbins and Ethan Gruber to conclude that sight lines throughout the house provided unexpected, ideal views of Mount Casius through large windows between the columns.\textsuperscript{533} The exterior vistas that

\textsuperscript{532} Jolivet-Lévy et al., 77.

\textsuperscript{533} Ethan Gruber and John Dobbins, “Illuminating Historical Architecture: The House of the Drinking Contest at Antioch,” in *Proceedings of the 38th Conference on Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology* (CAA 2010: Fusion of Cultures, Granada, Spain, 2010), 5, \url{http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.258049}. Because the home’s mosaics have been dispersed into several museums, a site visit no longer provides a complete indication of the original viewing experience. The site’s images have been recontextualized through sight line analysis using historical photos, georeferencing (with latitude and longitude), and digital reconstruction.
necessitated the unevenly spaced interior columns were part of the ideal viewing experience in the dining room, a design that adheres to Roman expectations about the ideal dining experience, as described by Pliny the Younger (ca. 61-113), for whom ideal views would have superseded consistent placement of architectural elements in the socially constructed norms of image viewing in a dining room.\(^{534}\)

Similar methods for investigating space-oriented visuality are starting to emerge in Byzantine studies, especially for the late antique Christian East. When David L. Chatford Clark studied a group of third- to seventh-century churches, he discerned patterns of accessibility between sanctuary and assembly spaces in early Christian basilicas in Jordan. While acknowledging that deciphering human experience within architectural forms is complex, he juxtaposes qualitative research (observations) with measurable data and visualizes it in graphs.\(^{535}\) Like John Clarke before him, Chatford Clark relies in part on contemporary human observation—his team put an icon on church altars and surveyed a group of nuns about the degrees of visibility from various locations within the churches.\(^{536}\) However, he also utilizes digital methods such as Visibility Graph Analysis, which uses isovists (polygons on architectural plans) to indicate the areas of visibility.

Chatford Clark’s work determines that spatial analysis can help determine liturgical function of architecture, even with a lack of textual evidence.\(^{537}\) In terms of important spaces, he notes the significance of assembly areas, including side aisles, in basilicas, saying, “the assembly area is often the space of highest integration. Yet, it is visually diverse as well. The access to

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\(^{536}\) Chatford Clark, 87–88.

\(^{537}\) Chatford Clark, 86.
auxiliary rooms, placement of columns, ambos, chapels and apses resulted in many different
isovists of space.\textsuperscript{538} From these investigations he finds evidence of regional variations in
liturgical practice, determined by sight lines in basilicas, a conclusion that opens the door for
comparable studies in Cappadocia.\textsuperscript{539} This chapel, for instance, was designed primarily to
accommodate burials and their accompanying rituals, as discussed below.

Although St. Sergius Chapel has little remaining liturgical furniture, the overhead image
alignment can be determined from on-site investigation (figure 3.11). This alignment is
particularly potent in a comparison with saints’ shrines (oratories consecrated with relics) from
the same period. Using analog observations, Ann Marie Yasin describes a fifth- and sixth-
century Mediterranean practice wherein saints’ relics were positioned so that there were two foci
of veneration, the saint’s tomb and the liturgical altar.\textsuperscript{540} While she stresses that the altar was the
holiest and most politically sacrosanct location in the church, the two loci would certainly have
had a visual connection:

In some cases, it is even possible to demonstrate that those responsible for the structures
intentionally manipulated architectural features in order to forge a meaningful connection
between the two types of sacred loci (one eucharistic and one martyrial) and construct a
complex but coherent sacred space that embraced both saints’ memorials and eucharistic
altars.\textsuperscript{541}

A church with separate shrine and altar would usually incorporate (or be incorporated
into) the visitor’s path through the church. Many of them, including the churches of St. Thecla at
Meryemlik and St. Symeon at \textit{Qal‘at Sem‘an}, were pilgrimage sites, indicating that the practice
would be known widely.\textsuperscript{542}

\textsuperscript{538} Chatford Clark, 102.
\textsuperscript{539} Chatford Clark, 101.
\textsuperscript{541} Yasin, 250.
\textsuperscript{542} Yasin, 249.
Yasin also observes the “orchestration of a visual link” at the Basilica of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki (fifth to sixth century), citing an axial alignment of apse, choir, and entrance with a relationship to the saint’s ciborium on the north side of the nave.\textsuperscript{543} She notes in particular that the visual line between the saint’s cult area and the eucharistic altar were “spatially and sensorally linked.”\textsuperscript{544} She explains, the “experience of visitors moving through and gazing around the architectural complexes would have constructed a spatial sanctity that bound together the two types of sacred centers.”\textsuperscript{545} The saint’s tomb would have served as a \textit{loca sancta}, a site for prayers of intercession, while the altar would highlight the liturgical mass and reference Christ’s sacrifice. Although St. Sergius Chapel in Göreme was less visited and more truncated in its size and intentions than these pilgrimage sites, a comparison is fruitful because despite the oratory’s lack of a widely recognized loca sancta that a shine would have, its design does utilize small devotional spaces such as the donors’ tombs within the chapel.

Tracing a visitor’s movement highlights the commemorative use of the chapel because from the exterior of St. Sergius Chapel, the ideal approach offers a burial-centric experience. Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil surmise that the chapel may have been carved above an older tomb.\textsuperscript{546} About eight feet above ground level, a narrow porch, now partially collapsed, probably served as a vestibule or narthex (figure 3.12). Two inscriptions on the west side of the barrel-vaulted porch are located one over the other. The first is painted in a red cross medallion and intertwined with cross arms, which Denis Feissel loosely translates as: “Holy Sergius, help,

\textsuperscript{543} Yasin, 255 and 256-257.
\textsuperscript{544} Yasin, 259.
\textsuperscript{545} Yasin, “Sight Lines of Sancity,” 250.
\textsuperscript{546} Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 68.
Sergius[?], house,” and further clarifies this as, “Holy Sergius, help your servant, Sergius, with all the house and the village,” although it could also be a reference to the patron’s household.  

A second, carved inscription on the porch reads: “Kyriakè died in the sixth indiction, in February, the 11…” Indictions were fifteen-year spans of time designated for tax purposes that began during the reign of Diocletian in 313, were popularized in the fifth century and used widely during the reign of Justinian, and continued into the middle ages. Years in the eleventh indictions of the fifth and sixth centuries that may coincide with Kyriakè’s death began in 413 and cycled through every fifteen years until 593. Although the exterior portal is now a narrow porch space accessible only with a ladder, relief carving of a vegetal motif (nearly identical to the carving around the sanctuary arch) indicates that the entryway was once more defined. Kyriakè’s burial here would be in keeping with Byzantine practice, and narthex burials would enhance the commemorative use of this chapel.

Commemoration Practices

In Cappadocia, examples of every type of chapel and church contain tombs. The tombs could be in the form of floor burials in a pit or cist burial (in a box), or in an arcosolium or a

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547 Ἀγιε Ἁγγεῖα τὸν δοθλόν σου Ἁγγεῖον [?] μετὰ παντός τοῦ ὀκου [?] τοῦ χωρίου, which Feissel says should read: Ἀγιε Ἁγγεῖα βοήθει, Ἁγγεῖον, οἶκου. “Sainte Serge, viens en aide à ton serviteur Sergios (?) avec toute sa maison et le village.” trans. Denis Feissel, “Appendice Épigraphique” in Jolivet-Lévy et al., 79. Greek and French translations are by Feissel.

548 Αἰωνιός Κυριάκης κτιῶν ζ’ μενι φεύγαντο ια’ ΝΑΗΝΩΜΑ, which Feissel says should read: Ινδικτιων, μην. “Kyriakè est décédée dans la 6e indiction, au mois de février, le 11 (…)”; trans. Daniel Feissel, “Appendice Épigraphique” in Jolivet-Lévy et al., 78–79 According to Feissel, the cryptographic symbols are undecipherable. Greek epigraphy and French translation by Feissel.


smaller *loculus* (wall niche) that was cut into a wall (with or without a sarcophagus). Some chapels have a specific aisle or second chapel for burials, but there is no strict pattern. It would be unusual, however, to have a nave burial in Cappadocia unless the structure was originally planned to accommodate it. The *Theodosian Code* (compiled 438), and the *Code of Justinian* (529) legally protected burials but prohibited them inside a church, although archaeological evidence in Constantinople and the provinces reveals that the laws were often ignored. These laws were also bypassed by the creation of funerary chapels, or by placing tombs outside the central worship space in areas like the narthex so that the burials were technically outside liturgical space yet still in proximity to a sanctified sphere.

A reason for the desired proximity to tombs in daily life and worship is that in the Byzantine belief system, all pious dead were considered holy. Unlike the Latin West, the eastern empire had no codified canonization of saints until after the middle ages. This is evidenced by fourth- and fifth-century eucharistic prayers that fold all the saved into the category of saints, naming “the fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics, and for every just one rendered perfect in the faith,” as a unified group. These were holy individuals who might have gained sainthood through martyrdom, but a confessor saint

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554 Marinis, 150–51.

might have made that sacrifice through a life of asceticism (often as a monk) rather than a violent
demise. Mango has called these saints the “living dead.” Taft also acknowledges a paradox
in the prayers that were said both to and for martyrs in early anaphora, petitioning them for help
while acknowledging that their souls might yet face judgment themselves. In effect, this
means that burials became places of commemorative interaction, offering a mutually beneficial
devotional location where one could pray for the deceased while petitioning the holy dead for
intercession.

Although the landscape and chapels of Cappadocia contain hundreds of tombs, virtually
nothing is known about the specific funerary liturgy used there. The eucharistic prayer above
is part of the Chrysostom Anaphora (liturgical prayer, fourth century), from the Divine Liturgy, a
eucharistic service not necessarily included in funerals. The earliest source for funerary liturgy
is Barberini gr. 336, an eighth-century Italo-Byzantine euchology (prayer manual) with a series
of prayer texts for various parts of a service. Seven of these are funerary prayers, three of which
are specifically for the dead, one for blessing the congregation, and three for burials of
individuals by rank (laity, bishops, and monks). Elena Velkovska says its basic funeral
structure—a litany and two prayers, including a final an inclination (blessing) over
congregation—is an ancient one, lending credence to its comparative use for earlier practices.

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556 Cyril Mango, “Saints,” in The Byzantines, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago
557 Mango, 263.
558 Robert F. Taft, “Praying to or for the Saints? A Note on the Sanctoral Intercessions/Commemorations in the
Anaphora,” in Ab Oriente et Occident (Mt 8, 11), ed. M. Schneider and Berschin, vol. Kirche aus Ost und West.
559 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning.
and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm,” Dumbarton Oaks Papers 34/35 (January 1, 1980): 45–75,
561 Velkovska, “Funeral Rites,” 22–23. See Velkovska (21-51) for a number of additional, similar prayers.
562 Velkovska, 22–23.
Our lack of liturgical documents, however, is met with a sizeable body of late antique hagiography that provides numerous references to funerary and commemorative practices in Asia Minor, including rituals and locations of burials, and the demographics of congregations. One richly detailed account is that of Saint Macrina (ca. 330-379), who was widely celebrated as a holy woman. Her brother Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 335-c. 395) wrote the *Life of Macrina* to commemorate the “virgin-philosopher,” framing it as a letter to a monk named Olympus, who he had met in Antioch, elaborating on her piety and worthiness of sainthood.563

In the events he describes, Macrina is buried in her family tomb in Anatolia after a vigil, procession, and funeral that includes men and women from the entire region. Gregory, Macrina, and their older brother Basil (who later became known as Saint Basil the Great) had come from an educated, well-connected family of wealthy land owners in Cappadocia. The hagiography offers insight into the commemoration of a member of the wealthy landowning class in the region, and a monastic woman who was not only a sister of several bishops, but was well loved in her own convent and the local community surrounding it.

Upon the death of his sister, Gregory began planning her funeral. Meanwhile, word of her passing spread to the entire town, whose residents responded by holding a noisy, all-night vigil at the monastery. In the account, Gregory divides the congregation by gender, partly to facilitate a multi-part chorus to sing psalms throughout the gathering, which he compares to the celebration of martyrs’ feast days:

But while we were thus employed and the virgins, voices singing psalms mingled with the lamentations were filling the place, somehow the news had quickly spread throughout

the whole neighbourhood, and all the people that lived near were streaming towards the place, so that the entrance hall could no longer hold the concourse. When the all-night vigil for her, accompanied by hymn-singing, as in the case of martyrs, festivals, was finished, and the dawn came, the multitude of men and women that had flocked in from all the neighbouring country were interrupting the psalms with wailings.564

From there, the procession toward Macrina’s burial spot becomes an emotional and crowded scene wherein her body is slowly carried on a bier by Gregory and a group of priests, deacons, and servants, making their way through throngs of mourners holding lighted candles. The crowd accompanies the pallbearers into a church that Gregory calls the “abode of Holy Martyrs,” where the family burial tomb is located.565 Once the ceremony has ended and the tomb’s lid has been re-closed over Macrina’s body, Gregory flings himself onto the grave in tearful grief.566

The closest documentation for burial rites such as these is found in the fourth-century Apostolic Constitution (ca. 380) from Antioch. It includes chanting Psalms and partaking in the eucharist.567 This ritual, referred to by scholars as “eucharistic commemoration,”568 thus offers metaphorical and spiritual connections that are furthered by the connection made by the monumental ceiling cross that visually links tombs to altar in St. Sergius chapel. According to The Apostolic Constitution (ca. fourth century), additional commemorative services would have been performed on the third, ninth, and fortieth days after a person died.569 Some scholars believe this stems from the Greek belief that the soul separates from the body in stages.570

One can easily imagine a community of mourners filling the chapel of St. Sergius, saying prayers and singing psalms, burying a loved one in a rock-cut tomb, and returning for additional services. Macrina’s family tomb is designed differently from those in St. Sergius Chapel in that it

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567 Velkovska, “Funeral Rites,” 22.
568 Velkovska, 22.
569 Velkovska, 22.
was large enough for multiple bodies; the graves in St. Sergius Chapel are clearly for one person only. But both are in spaces for private devotion and patronage, and the St. Sergius burial chamber was almost certainly used in a similar manner for subsequent burials over time.

The *Life of Philaretos the Merciful* (ca. 821/2) was written more than three centuries later than Macrina’s vita but demonstrates some continuity in commemorative practices, namely the importance of the multi-generational tomb to wealthy landowning families. Philaretos (702-792) was born in the town of Amnia, in the region of Paphlagonia (north of Cappadocia) where he became a wealthy landowner who owned slaves and raised livestock before losing his earthly fortune due to his own excesses of generosity. When his granddaughter participates in a bride show and marries the emperor, Philaretos becomes connected to the royal court and to the capital city, eventually dying in Constantinople.571

Notably, Philaretos purchases a tomb in the Constantinopolitan monastery of Krisis by asking the abbess for one, giving her “a considerable sum of money,” and receiving a new sarcophagus. He notes that Abraham had done the same, purchasing his own tomb with silver.572 By the time he dies, the sarcophagus is already placed at his burial spot in the monastery, and his widow will eventually be buried there with him.573 The funeral procession involves loud lamentations by many mourners, including the poor he had helped. When a demon-possessed man touches the bier, he is miraculously cured and continues as one of the pall-bearers. They

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573 *Nicetas, Ch. 12, 117.*
place Philaretos into the sarcophagus while mourners recite psalms and sing hymns at the large, community-wide funeral.\footnote{Nicetas, 113.}

In the narratives of both Macrina and Philaretos, the role of family tombs is prominent. Plans are made far in advance by the living, and often the head of the household makes preparations for a wife or children as well. Yasin has noted similarities in Roman examples, documenting a change from household burials in Rome to community-wide burial centers in north Africa (during the fourth to seventh centuries), essentially “suppressing genealogical connections” in an attempt to transform commemoration into the responsibility of the “entire local community of churchgoers.”\footnote{Ann Marie Yasin, “Funerary Monuments and Collective Identity: From Roman Family to Christian Community,” \textit{The Art Bulletin} 87, no. 3 (September 1, 2005): 451, https://doi.org/10.2307/25067190.}

She notes, however, that there are tombs with “privileged visibility.”\footnote{Yasin, 451.} These are in keeping with one in the \textit{Life of St. John the Almsgiver} (written after 641), wherein the saint is buried in between two bishops, creating an increasingly sanctified devotional site.\footnote{Leontius, \textit{Life of St. John the Almsgiver}, in Hippolyte Delehaye, \textit{Une Vie inedite de Saint Jean l’Aumonier. Analeca Bollandiana} 45 (1927); trans. Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. John the Almsgiver,” in \textit{Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies}, (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1996), 195–262.}

John the Almsgiver’s vita portrays the commemoration of the saints as an active, beneficial offering for both the living and the deceased with the addition of a miracle during the funeral. John (ca. 600-650) was born in Amathus, Cyprus and served as Patriarch of Alexandria. He was the adopted brother of Nicetas, who was Prefect of Egypt and a cousin and ally of the Cappadocian-born Byzantine Emperor, Heraclius (r. 610-641).\footnote{Dawes and Baynes, “Introduction” in “The Life of St. John the Almsgiver,” 195–97; Walter Emil Kaegi, \textit{Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium} (Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 59.}

John’s burial account in Amathus highlights a local martyrium similar to St. Sergius Chapel in Göreme. The ecclesiastical rites of his funeral are performed in an oratory dedicated to
the town’s patron saint, Tychon. At the moment when John is to be interred alongside relics of
two bishops in a sarcophagus, the bishops miraculously move—“not so much of their own will
but rather at the command of God, just as if they were alive”—so that there is space for John
between them, indicating God’s favor.579

Holy favor is conferred once again on John’s congregation during the yearly
commemoration of Saint Tychon with a “solemn all-night service of psalm-singing” during
which God issues perfumed myrrh from John’s body.580 The town’s martyrium is thus the
backdrop for a second miracle, which delights the faithful congregation and offers them healing
by way of secondary relics from the tomb. The miracle incorporates memory of the recently
deceased Saint John into the commemoration of the long-venerated Saint Tychon. Dispersion of
the souvenirs from the holy place allows the saint’s physical presence to be dispersed throughout
the village as well. These activities and miracles, which are decidedly outside the prescribed
rituals of the liturgy, permeate the boundary between public worship and private devotion,
pointing to the important role of chapels as civic spaces.

When not in use for funerals, euktaria were still part of the urban fabric of village life in
Anatolia. In fact, these spaces may have been as important for residents of little financial means
as for the wealthy landowners who were buried there. The Life of Saint Theodore of Sykeon
(composed after 613) uses martyrria as a backdrop for many aspects of small-town life, not just
funerals.581 Theodore (ca. 550–613) was an ascetic and bishop, born to a prostitute (who
eventually reformed) who lived in a village called Sykeon in the province of Galatia, which is

579 Leontius, Life of St. John the Almsgiver, Ch. 25, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, Une Vie inédite de Saint Jean
580 Leontius, Life of St. John the Almsgiver, Ch. 46, ed. Hippolyte Delehaye, Une Vie inédite de Saint Jean
Theodore was a contemporary of Saint John the Almsgiver and eventually, a healer of John’s adopted brother Nicetas. Because the vita is contemporary to St. Sergius Chapel and relatively close in distance, it offers particularly potent examples of the roles of saints’ shrines in village life.

Theodore and his sister were raised in an inn by his mother and grandmother, a group of courtesans, and their cook, a man named Stephen. The vita was written after Theodore’s death by a monk named Georgios after the reign of Heraclius, which ended in 641. In Theodore’s early years, local shrines serve as a recurring backdrop for anecdotes about his spiritual development. The hagiographer is clear that the village has a number of chapels, and that people make use of more than one on a regular basis for eucharistic worship. For instance, in the evenings Theodore would “come back [from school] and go off with the pious man, Stephen, to the holy churches and there pray and partake of the body and blood of Christ,” before returning home for dinner.

This description of churches (in the plural) indicates that it was socially acceptable for them to regularly participate in formal eucharistic worship at various locations nearby, rather than at one specific church. Stephen serves as a father figure in this capacity,

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584 Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” xiii; Robin Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 20; Connor, *Women of Byzantium*, 146–58. Dawes and Baynes translated the *Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon* (ca. late sixth century) in part because they felt the text “represents life amongst the peasantry of Anatolia at the end of the sixth century.” Cormack debates the accuracy of the biography, but ultimately concludes that “as a narrative it records the remarkable powers that in the perceptions of this period could be attributed to a man from a poor and deprived background.” Connor cites the vita as a source for “ordinary women.”
aiding the spiritual development of Theodore who, in turn, includes his younger sister, Bletta, emphasizing family-oriented worship practices.\(^{588}\)

Other scenes in chapels include non-liturgical activities such as private devotion and prayer, education, incubation and habitation, and healing. For those activities, Theodore frequently visits the martyrium of Saint George, a practice sanctioned by the martyr himself.\(^{589}\) Saint George regularly appears (in both waking visions and sleep dreams) to guide him there. To escort Theodore there from school, “the Saint would guide him to the spot appearing visibly before his eyes in the form of a young man.”\(^{590}\) Saint George (both in the form of Stephen and later as himself) regularly awakens Theodore saying, “the dawn has risen, let us go and pray at the shrine.”\(^{591}\) Saint George also intervenes with Theodore’s mother and her fellow courtesans at the inn, appearing to them in a dream and threatening them with a sword if they refuse to allow him to visit the shrine.\(^{592}\)

Her hesitation in letting him visit stems from the fact that the shrine is located, “up the rocky hill which lay near the village,” pointing to the rural nature of the area and potential dangers of visiting it at night.\(^{593}\) She notes that children in the “wild, and fearsome place,” were in particular danger from beasts, and that sightings of wolves had left villagers afraid their


children might be carried off, a problem that is easily imagined in Cappadocia where a number of tombs and chapels are isolated from other settlements. In addition to praying alongside St. George at the shrine, Theodore uses it for his education and edification. During mid-day breaks from the village school, Theodore heads to Saint George’s martyrium to “sit down and busy himself with the study of the Holy Scriptures.” In another instance, while studying in a chapel dedicated to a Lycian martyr named Christopher, Theodore prays to God for assistance in memorizing psalms. When he then turns to an icon of Christ, he feels “a sweetness more pleasant than honey poured into his mouth.” Upon recognizing the sweetness as an answer from God, he “partook of the sweetness and gave thanks to Christ, and from that hour on he memorized the psalter easily and quickly, and had learnt the whole of it by heart in a few days.” Neither anecdote about scriptural study indicates whether there were manuscripts or other textual documents housed in the chapels, or whether Theodore had his own copy of the psalter. They do, however, set the stage for his later role as a bishop by linking literacy with spiritual development, and they portray the development of that literacy as a church-centered activity.

Throughout the vita, Theodore regularly spends evenings and nights at Saint George’s martyrium and others like it. He practices incubation, which is sleeping at a shrine hoping to experience a vision or miracle overnight. As a twelve-year-old Theodore spends a night at “the church of the holy martyr, Gemellus, which was near his home,” and wherein he experienced

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594 Georgios, Life of Theodore of Sykeon, Ch. 9, lines 8-9; trans. Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 92–93.
595 Georgios, Life of Theodore of Sykeon, Ch. 7, lines 6-7; Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 91.
597 Georgios, Life of Theodore of Sykeon, Ch. 13, lines 11-12; Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 95–96.
598 Georgios, Life of Theodore of Sykeon, Ch. 13, lines 11-12; Dawes and Baynes, “The Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon,” 95–96.
increased spiritual awakening thanks to a vision of Christ the King.\textsuperscript{599} At the age of fourteen, Theodore leaves home altogether to make his living quarters in a martyr’s oratory where locals begin to call on him there for help in healing and exorcising demons.\textsuperscript{600}

That sanctuaries in this vita are the loci of healing miracles is typical. As discussed in the previous chapter when as a child, Theodore becomes ill with bubonic plague, he is taken to the shrine of St. John the Baptist “near the village” where he is placed “at the entrance to the sanctuary, and above him where the cross was set there hung an icon of our Saviour Jesus Christ.”\textsuperscript{601} When drops of moisture fall from the icon onto Theodore, he immediately begins to recover. There is no indication whether or not an aniconic church like St. Sergius Chapel would have had figural icons like the one of Christ that heals Theodore.

When he casts a demon out of a young boy on Easter, Theodore becomes a living replacement for the icon that had healed him as a child.\textsuperscript{602} His vita underscores that having a holy inhabitant in a chapel was beneficial for everyone. Prayers for the holy dead would be constant, and miracles for the living were possible through sanctified interactions.

These hagiographical comparanda suggest that St. Sergius Chapel could have been used as both commemorative space and community center in Göreme. While we have no information on its specific use or the demographic of its visitors beyond the names of patrons and their tombs, it could have been for liturgy, private devotion, education, and edification. As Theodore’s vita demonstrates, a chapel did not have to be part of a monastery and could be useful to various members of the community for a variety of activities. In addition to serving as a cult center for

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Saint Sergius and a burial and commemorative chapel for wealthy landowner(s) and their families, the space was well suited for other social practices such as incubation and private devotion.

**Syrian Comparisons**

Commemorative spaces in St. Sergius Chapel indicate they were in keeping with documented rituals in contemporary Anatolian monuments. The sophisticated use of sight lines, even in a small private chapel, suggests continuity with wider practices in the late antique Mediterranean and Syria. This is important because the space offers insight into the Cappadocian chapel’s role in community life in a period just before the social, military, economic, and religious upheaval of the seventh century. The chapel’s aniconic use of a monumental cross with petitions to an additional patron saint points toward astute political understandings of the role of the Cult of the Cross in the Byzantine east.

Before the Byzantine-Arab wars in the seventh to ninth centuries severely limited Asia Minor’s connections to Syria and the east, religious leaders were widely connected and traveled frequently between Constantinople and other metropolitan centers. The oldest known Christian inscription (ca. second century) highlights this practice in a funerary context. In it, Abercius (died ca. 161-190), a bishop from Phrygia (the region west of Cappadocia), boasts wide connections saying,

> The citizen of a notable city I made this [tomb] in my life-time; that in due season I might have here a resting-place for my body. … [God] sent me to royal Rome to behold it and to see the golden-robed, golden-slippered Queen…. And I saw the plain of Syria and all the cities, even Nisibis, crossing over the Euphrates. And everywhere I had associates.  

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Later anecdotes in Theodore of Sykeon’s vita also reveal that the region was widely connected during his tenure as bishop, citing his travel to and from Asia Minor, the Holy Land, and Constantinople in the early sixth and seventh centuries. In this context it is beneficial to consider the aesthetic, cult, and epigraphic evidence in St. Sergius Chapel within a larger cultural and political context. The chapel, for instance, was dedicated by a patron named Longinus, as evidenced by the two inscriptions on the east wall of the nave. The name itself was a popular one in the fifth and sixth centuries, reflecting the history of Cappadocian Christianity as well as a Holy Land connection.

Rather than venerating his namesake, though, the inscription indicates that the patron chose to dedicate the chapel instead to Saint Sergius (ca. fourth century), a military saint and martyr. The chapel’s patron may have been in the military himself, or he may have been expressing other political aims in emphasizing his namesake’s role as a soldier when he dedicated the chapel to the widely venerated military saint.

Although this chapel is the earliest evidence of the Sergius cult in Cappadocia, the saint was widely venerated elsewhere by the sixth century. Sergius and his companion, Bacchus, were martyred in Syria around the fourth century, and according their vita, the *Passion of Sergius and Bacchus* (ca. fourth century), both were both well-regarded Roman soldiers in Galerius’ army until word of their Christian beliefs reached their superiors. As a result,

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604 Cormack, *Writing in Gold*, 32.
605 Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè,” 77.
606 Jolivet-Lévy et al., 77.
607 *Passio antiquior SS. Sergii et Bacchi Graece nunc primum edita, Analecta Bollandiana* 14 (Brussels, 1895) 373–395; trans. John Boswell, *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe*, 1st ed, Kindle (New York: Villard Books, 1994), Appendix 5; See also Elizabeth Key Fowden, *The Barbarian Plain: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 28 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 22. Sergius is thought to have been a fourth-century saint, although the date of his written vita, the *Passion of Sergius and Bacchus*, is unknown. See also: *Acta Sanctorum, Octobris,* (vol 3), ed. Joseph de Ghesquiere de Raemsdonk, Cornelio Byeo, Costantino Suysken, Jacobus Bueus, and Ioannem Nicolaum Vander Beken, 1770. The two saints are usually celebrated on October 7, as recorded by the Bollandistes (see also Fowden). The Latin version was included by the
Bacchus was beaten to death, and Sergius suffered a variety of punishments before he was finally beheaded. From there, the cult spread widely to eastern areas such as Mesopotamia and Iran, and also westward toward Constantinople and Rome and Constantinople.

By the time St. Sergius Chapel was dedicated in Göreme, additional texts supplemented the vita in promoting his cult. A sixth-century kontakion (liturgical hymn), written in Greek by Elias is part of a group of hymns about the Sergius and Bacchus. Its lyrics emphasize their military status, saying “Be ye brightened, O people/by the noble/memory of these warriors.” It also elaborates on Sergius’ virtues with the lines, “It was not desire for this world / that captivated Serge for Christ.”

A homily on Sergius by Severus of Antioch (bishop 512-518, d. 538) demonstrates the widespread celebration of the martyr and, more specifically, the circulation of his vita. The homily recounts events from Sergius’ vita with great detail, even describing his torture of being forced to run with nails in his boots, and describes the cult site of Rusafa. A widely known preacher, Severus delivered sermons in churches, martyria, and monasteries, and this particular

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Bollandistes, and Boswell is the first to translate the Greek vita into English. Boswell points out that although a tenth-century Metaphrastes Latin version is most well known now, the Greek version used here is its precursor. Passio antiquior SS. Sergii et Bacchi Graece nunc primum edita, Analecta Bollandiana 14 (Brussels, 1895), Ch. 18-19 and 28; Translated in Boswell, Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe, Appendix 5, (Loc. 11123). Fowden, The Barbarian Plain, 28. Fowden, 9.


one was part of a tour of Greece in 514. It was preached on Sergius’ feast day in the town of Chalcis where we know the cult was practiced because Severus was invited specifically to celebrate the feast with townspeople.616

Alongside the literary evidence, Saint Sergius had a well-established portrait tradition by the sixth century. A monumental example was described by Choricius of Gaza (491-518) who documented an apse mosaic at the Church of St. Sergius in Gaza (built c. 527-565), which depicted a governor donating the church to Sergius while the saint, in turn, presented the politician to Christ and the Virgin.617 In a bust-length portrait icon from The Greek Orthodox monastery of the God-trodden Mount Sinai, Saint Catherine’s Monastery, Sergius is depicted with Bacchus, both haloed and holding martyrs’ crosses (figure 3.1).618 Art historians have alternately speculated that the icon was made in Constantinople and donated to the monastery by Emperor Justinian between 550 and 565, or that it may have been a seventh-century object from a provincial cult center.619

In contrast to the figural tradition of depicting Saint Sergius himself, however, his chapel in Göreme is aniconic, which raises the question of whether there was a religious impetus for its lack of figural decoration. Because the chapel’s date coincides with the flourishing of Miaphysitism a minority Christian group with aniconic preferences, the possibility of its influence on the aniconism of St. Sergius Chapel deserves brief consideration here. Miaphysitism was heavily influential in Syria in the fifth and sixth centuries, and was later cited for its lack of

617 Choricius, Laudatio Marciani I, 17 in Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 62.
619 Robin Cormack “Icon with Christ with SS. Sergios and Bacchos” in Robin Cormack and Maria Vassilaki, eds., Byzantium, 330-1453 (London; New York: Royal Academy of Arts; Distributed in the U.S. and Canada by Harry N. Abrams, 2008), 460.
figural imagery during the Iconoclastic debates.\textsuperscript{620} Miaphysites (often called Monophysites or anti-Chalcedonians) considered God and Christ to be of one nature, as opposed to the two natures emphasized by the Council of Chalcedon in 451.\textsuperscript{621} Some scholars have interpreted the few extant aniconic material culture sources to mean that that Miaphysites were opposed to material images of Christ that failed to capture his divinity, although there was no official doctrinal statement to that effect.\textsuperscript{622} One of the Miaphysites’ most outspoken proponents was Severus of Antioch who wrote specifically about Saint Sergius in the early sixth century and was later remembered as a leader of anti-image sentiment in the proceedings of the Second Council of Nicaea (787).\textsuperscript{623} He was well-read in the teachings of the Cappadocian Fathers and the influence of his writings has been noted as spanning a large region from Antioch to Alexandria, with Cappadocia falling well within that area.\textsuperscript{624} However, as Lucas Van Rompay notes, Severus was eventually deposed and fled to Egypt, and the Miaphysites became “the target of the emperors’ assiduous attempts to bring them back to normative Chalcedonianism, either by persuasion or by force.”\textsuperscript{625}


Political tolerance for Miaphysitism varied over time, although it gained a number of followers around the time that St. Sergius Chapel was commissioned. This was in part due to the influence of John of Ephesus (ca. 507-588). He was a Syriac-speaking deacon and historian who proselytized for Miaphysitism during the early sixth century and became known as a “converter of pagans” for his efforts. He was known to have gained followers in Asia Minor, including regions neighboring Cappadocia. John recorded some measure of imperial support for Miaphysitism during the reign of Emperor Justinian in the mid-sixth century, but the varying levels of imperial favor remained complex and unstable. The Miaphysite movement’s influential leaders such as Severus and John did have contact with the area over an extended period of time, but evidence of Miaphysitism in sixth-century Göreme is circumstantial based on broad historical assessments. Rompay points out that the sixth century was one in which both one-nature and two-nature Syriac belief systems continued to evolve. In other words, not all sees in fifth- and sixth-century Syria were Miaphysite. This means that St. Sergius Chapel could reference a Syrian saint’s cult and demonstrate artistic exchange with the region without necessarily being Miaphysite.

The study of visual evidence in this context is also complicated and broad. Just as there is no reason that aniconism would be explicitly adopted (or not) based on who was emperor at a given time, or that St. Sergius Chapel’s Syrian visual sources would have to have been

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630 Wood, We Have No King but Christ, 18.
Miaphysite in order to be aniconic. In a similar vein, Syriac scholar Sebastian Brock has argued that interpretations of Miaphysite practice as anti-image are unsubstantiated, noting that preferences of Severus, in particular, have been taken out of context. Along the same lines, art historians have noted that it is difficult to differentiate from extant visual evidence whether the sixth-century Miaphysite impetus to use aniconic images was simply a straightforward veneration of the cross or an expressly anti-figural mandate. As a comparison, Ernest Hawkins, Marlia Mundell, and Cyril Mango looked at cross imagery in a monastery near Kartmin in southeast Anatolia that is dated to 512, a year that fell during the period of Severus’ term as bishop. They pointed out that many of the cross motifs at Kartmin (including types that are “jeweled, rayed, stepped, and ‘Tree of Life’”) were part of a widespread ornamental vocabulary that was similar to art in Antioch, Palestine, and Constantinople. While the crosses themselves cannot necessarily be interpreted as Miaphysite, they demonstrate aniconic uses of cross decoration, rather than icons, at the same time that St. Sergius Chapel was decorated, indicating that the Cappadocian chapel may have been part of a wider aniconic practice.

The circumstantial nature of any evidence in favor of a Miaphysite interpretation of St. Sergius Chapel points to other options. For these reasons, I emphasize the emerging Cult of the Cross and its relationship to the Cult of Saint Sergius as a source for the aniconic theme of St. Sergius Chapel. The Sergius cult was heavily promoted in Syria in the 510s with the hope of

632 Brock, 53; Ken Parry, “The Doves of Antioch: Severus, Chalcedonians, Monothelites, and Iconoclasm,” in Severus of Antioch: His Life and Times, ed. John D’Alton and Youhanna Youssef, vol. 7, Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 143. See also John of Gabala, Life of Severus, in Mansi, XIII, cols. 317-8. Brock points out that the only time someone raised a specific example of Severus’ iconoclasm, it was a hostile witness, John of Gabala. Brock interprets Severus as being opposed to the depiction of angels in imperial purple, not the depiction of holy entities.


634 Hawkins, Mundell, and Mango, 284.
converting Arabs for political means, and it did become relatively popular. Wood discusses Sergius’ cult sites as strategic locations, and posits that they were built up in the 510s so Christians could control water supplies there; Rusafa, where Sergius was martyred, was an oasis and important convergence point of two trade routes between Rome and Persia. Fowden also says, “the spread of belief in S[aint] Sergius’ power and subsequently of the influence of the saint and his cult center drew much of its distinctive strength from Rusafa’s location in the fluid frontier zone, where knowledge traveled widely and among varied groups.” Emperor Justinian I and his wife, Theodora, donated a gold and gemmed cross to the treasury of the Church of St. Sergius in Rusafa between 527 and 540 and dedicated a church in his honor in Constantinople as well. Fowden interprets this as a means of establishing an alliance with the saint on the frontier, in regions just east of Cappadocia, as well as in the capital. It also associated the imperial tradition of gemmed crosses and True Cross relics with the saint.

In a reverse play for power, the gemmed cross in Rusafa was later plundered by Persian leader Khusrau in 540 in a siege of the city. He eventually returned it and sponsored another donation to Sergius in honor of his Christian wife and newborn son. Fowden points out that he would have been keenly aware of his donation echoing that of Justinian.

During the imperial reigns of Justinian through Heraclius, anxieties of Anatolian residents increased in proportion to the rise of political instability the east. Cross imagery in this period is often monumental, imperial, military, and used alongside a saint, not in place of him. That St. Sergius Chapel in Göreme uses the aniconic cross as a focal point highlights the

635 Wood, We Have No King but Christ, 237–39.
636 Wood, 238–39.
637 Fowden, The Barbarian Plain, 191.
638 Fowden, 132–33.
639 Fowden, 134.
640 Fowden, 139.
641 Fowden, 139.
increasing presence of Persian troops and cultural exchanges in the Cappadocian sphere and the widely connected nature of Cappadocian society during the late antique period. We know almost nothing about the patron named Longinus but can surmise that his choice of saint may reflect a number of social concerns: military or trade connections, anxiety about impending attacks from the east, or cult practice derived from connections to Syria-Palestine.

Because the Sergius cult in the sixth century was not expressly Miaphysite, nor was its spread due to any one group of Christians, I argue instead that St. Sergius Chapel is an early example of the Cult of the Cross in Cappadocia that also strove to connect to the saint’s role on the “frontier defense” of the eastern empire where cross imagery often took on an imperial connotation. Longinus’ veneration of the saint in Göreme with apotropaic imagery reads as a local response to the wider Byzantine impetus to counter the political instability coming from areas east of Anatolia, especially Persia, with protection from both Saint Sergius and the holy cross.

Finding wider connections to St. Sergius Chapel in Göreme opens the door for comparisons in other early churches of Cappadocia, particularly regarding Cross imagery, which is ubiquitous. Uç Haçlı (Church of Three Crosses, ca. sixth century) in Gulludere (Red Valley) is about two miles away from St. Sergius Chapel (figure 3.14). In the wide basilica with a single apse, a solitary floor tomb runs parallel to the west wall, but it is impossible to discern whether there were more. The floor has been severely damaged, no furniture remains, and its west wall has extensive post-Byzantine carving, so the original sight lines are difficult to decipher. The large encircled cross is flanked by two other crosses with palms and dominates the low ceiling in the nave. The relief carving of the ceiling cross is so nearly identical to the one in the St. Sergius

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642 Fowden, 191.
Chapel apse that it is very likely the work of the same craftsman or workshop. Because of this Jolivet-Lévy has justifiably redated the Church of Three Crosses to the sixth century, whereas previous scholars considered it to be later.\textsuperscript{644} The church also has figural paintings on the east wall and apse that are notable because there is a portrait of Agathange, a Syrian Bishop of Damascus who is rarely depicted, linking the site to Syria even though it lacks cult associations with Saint Sergius.\textsuperscript{645}

Crosses are a common motif in Cappadocian funerary monuments. But the monumentality of these Cappadocian ceiling crosses makes it clear that the funerary function exists alongside a wider sphere of saintly protection and cult influence. These two examples re-open the door for conversations about the Cult of the Cross as one that spread from Syria-Palestine through Anatolia and beyond in the late antique period.

**Conclusions**

In St. Sergius Chapel, the visual union of the holy dead, dedicatory inscriptions to Saint Sergius by Longinus, a monumental holy cross, and the eucharistic altar become an architectural embodiment of local patronage with wider efforts to gain the saint’s favor. Sight lines provide a local, site-specific interpretation of the intended visitor’s experience that incorporates the privileged tombs and commemoration. The incorporation of the dead into devotional practice is consistent with texts describing Anatolian commemoration during the same period. But choices made regarding the dedication and decoration point to the wider political sphere, providing evidence of a particular saint’s cult and cross veneration through a local manifestation of an eastern martyr’s cult.

\textsuperscript{644} Jolivet-Lévy et al., “Saint-Serge de Matianè.”
\textsuperscript{645} Jolivet-Lévy et al., 77.
Chapter 4: Immersive Viewing in St. Basil Church

Wherefore, arresting and turning towards themselves the spectator’s gaze, they [the marble revetments] make him unwilling to move further in; but taking his fill of the fair spectacle in the very atrium, and fixing his eyes on the sight before him, the visitor stands as if rooted [to the ground] with wonder.\textsuperscript{646}

These words describe a hypothetical viewer, frozen in awe at the sight of the Church of the Virgin of the Pharos (first built before 769), the palatine chapel in Constantinople. They were written in a sermon delivered by Patriarch Photios at its rededication in 864.\textsuperscript{647} The homily has become a well-known example of Byzantine ekphrasis, an often-rhetorical genre of description.\textsuperscript{648} Photios’ description begins outside the church entrance at the “splendidly fashioned” atrium of gleaming white marble. These slabs of marble were so expertly joined together that they were “a miracle and a joy to see,” and Photios insists that the viewer would be so transfixed as to stop and stare. He goes on to narrate the visitor’s subsequent experience in the church, noting that visitors must tear themselves away from the atrium “with difficulty,” but that “joy and trepidation and astonishment” will follow when the interior provides the “spectacle” of a Middle Byzantine church:

It is as if one had entered heaven itself with no one barring the way from any side, and was illuminated by the beauty in all forms shining all around like so many stars, so is one utterly amazed. Thenceforth it seems that everything is in ecstatic motion, and the church itself is circling round.\textsuperscript{649}

\textsuperscript{646} Photios, Homily X, section 4 in Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 185; For a full translation of this homily with commentary, see Cyril Mango, trans., The Homilies of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople: English Translation, Introduction, and Commentary, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 3 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 177–90, esp. 186. For the original Greek, see Georgius Codinus, Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae (Corpus of Byzantine History) 15, ed. Immanuel Bekker (Bonn, 1843), 194-202.

\textsuperscript{647} Mango, Homilies of Photius, 177–78.


\textsuperscript{649} Photios, Homily X, section 5 in Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire, 185.
From there Photios goes on to describe capitals and cornices, and the sanctuary and altar. He then discusses the mosaic floor and the ceiling decorated with an image of Christ, who is “overseeing the earth.”650 Although the Church of the Pharos is no longer extant, the homily’s description provides significant insight into the ninth-century decoration of a private imperial church.651 Romilly Jenkins and Cyril Mango believe that it is an example of the many redecorating commissions that took place as a response to the end of Iconoclasm.652 The chapel, probably a basilica, was decorated with images of saints, martyrs, and prophets.653 The Book of Ceremonies reports that it was the home of several relics of the Passion, including the True Cross and Holy Lance.654 Cross-shaped reliquaries in the sanctuary were made of gold and set with pearls and precious stones.655 The visual experience Photios described was one of immersive viewing, a second kind of viewing experience (developed after the late antique sight lines that were discussed in the previous chapter) that was used in Cappadocia and throughout Byzantium in the Transitional and Middle Byzantine periods. In an immersive viewing context like St. Basil Church multi-faceted images physically surround or visually overwhelm the viewer so that the senses are activated so that the room perpetuates a sense of energy and motion.

Even given the relatively private nature of the palace chapel, Photios’ sermons were public communications, presented to worshipers who were connected to the imperial court and had wide influence. As such, the homilies provide insights into ninth-century thinking that would

650 Photios, Homily X, section 6 in Mango, 186.
651 Jenkins and Mango, “Tenth Homily of Photius,” 125.
652 Jenkins and Mango, 139.
653 Jenkins and Mango, 133 and 135.
655 Inventory of Nichols Mesarites, cited in Jenkins and Mango, “Tenth Homily of Photius,” 136. These treasures were under threat around the year 1200, when Nichols Mesarites the sacristan had to defend them from thieves, as noted in his inventory that year.
have been familiar to broad audiences.\textsuperscript{656} Since this sermon was delivered on the occasion of the church’s dedication, its ekphrasis familiarized worshipers with the monument itself, highlighting the emperor as patron and benefactor. As a genre, ekphrasis often acknowledges a usual or prescribed desired experience with decoration in an architectural setting.\textsuperscript{657} Regarding the Byzantine corpus, Warren Woodfin observes that an ekphrasis often describes “a path that corresponds more or less with one’s physical progress through the church.”\textsuperscript{658} In this vein, an ekphrasis reveals that architecture and its images were imbued with the agency to guide the viewer into and through the space, whether in their imagination or by directing physical action. According to Photios, the marble revetments actually reroute the viewer’s gaze and freeze him in place. Then upon entering, because of the visual activity of the decoration, the visitor “imagines that his personal condition is transferred to the object.”\textsuperscript{659} This is a powerful use of imagery to affect full-body, multi-sensory experience, which was typical of the Byzantine use of decorated space, especially in churches of the Middle Byzantine period (843-1204). Since the Virgin of the Pharos Church is no longer extant, we can only imagine its decoration through Photios’ description and comparison to extant Byzantine churches.

What is notable about the chapel, and Middle Byzantine church interiors more widely, is the immersive quality of its decoration. From liturgical descriptions and archaeological remains of early Christian basilicas in Constantinople, Mathews was able to determine that after Iconoclasm, the Byzantine liturgy also evolved so that Middle Byzantine ritual deemphasized

\textsuperscript{657} Ellen Swift, \textit{Style and Function in Roman Decoration: Living with Objects and Interiors} (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 18–19.
\textsuperscript{659} Photios, Homily X, 4, trans. Mango, \textit{Art of the Byzantine Empire}, 185.
elaborate processions through vast spaces toward a distant altar. Instead, he argues, the liturgy began to incorporate static rituals; in response, church interiors became smaller, relegating liturgical instruments to the altar where they would be hidden from sight behind an icon screen. Church interiors were the setting for a sensory experience that needed to remain active and spiritual, despite the fact that the liturgy itself had become physically constrained by a smaller space.

This kind of immersive viewing is evident in Cappadocia in St. Basil Church, which was decorated around the late ninth or tenth century. Although it is much less ostentatious than the Constantinopolitan palatine chapel, it was also decorated with a prescribed viewer experience in mind. There are no documents offering instruction for it, but we can glean this process from the monument itself. Affordances, aspects of the monument’s carving and decoration that offer guidance to the user, operate in place of a written ekphrasis to guide the viewer’s eye toward holy spaces for devotion and through its two adjoining chapels toward a vividly painted interior. Like the Pharos Church, St. Basil Church offers a swirling and energetic juxtaposition of colors and images, and a decorative scheme that also gives the impression of “circling around” the viewer and intended path of viewing that is comparable to the one Photios describes (figure 4.1). It is an excellent example of extant church decoration from post-Iconoclastic period and of painted material evidence of rural, localized practices related to the Cult of the Cross.

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661 I refer to this monument as St. Basil Church, as opposed to the chapel of St. Basil, as Natalia Teteriatnikov does, so that I can more easily differentiate between its south and north chapels. In French the church is often called Hagios Basilios or Hagios Vasilios. It is located about three miles outside the town of Mustafapaşa (formerly called Sinasos in Greek), which is about eight miles from the Göreme Open Air Museum. My photographs and field observations are from site visits in 2011 and 2013.
St. Basil Church is a small double basilica carved on the side of a deep ravine, the Gomeda Valley (figure 4.2). The church opens into a courtyard area in the landscape, although rock falls and erosion have made it difficult to discern what the original entrance looked like. This church’s role in its community must have been different from many others in the region because it is not part of a monastery or estate, and there are no burials inside. However, local tradition holds that there was once a town in this valley, with several churches and about 600 people. One of those churches is Timios Stavros (Holy Cross) Church (ca. tenth century), which is located just across the valley. Although this project could not incorporate 664

expansive investigation of the entire area, there are definite signs of dovecotes throughout, demonstrating a long history of habitation.\textsuperscript{665}

Jerphanion published an eighteenth-century graffito that said Basil the Great was venerated in the chapel, hence its current name.\textsuperscript{666} Despite its modern name after Saint Basil the Great, however, an inscription in the south chapel of St. Basil Church dedicates the church to the cross:

\[…\] and on the walls of the glorious residence / there is an image of the venerable wood. Those [?], Lord, guard always your servant […] and the presbyter Constantine. Grant them the forgiveness of sins. Grant also mercy and aid to your servant the painter.\textsuperscript{667}

It was commissioned by a lay patron who has traditionally been called Nicander (discussed in the Introduction), and I argue that his purpose was celebrating the expanding Cult of the Cross.

There was probably very little coordination between carvers and painters in rural areas where this kind of labor was performed by “itinerant workforces,” and a significant amount of time may have passed between the carving and the painting of a Cappadocian chapel.\textsuperscript{668} Yet the painter of the chapel fully utilized the architectural plan in order to encourage devotion among visitors (figure 4.3).

\textsuperscript{665} Many rock-cut spaces in Cappadocia have been used as dovecotes, which are areas for keeping pigeons to collect guano for fertilizer. The practice has a long tradition in Cappadocian agriculture, and many Byzantine spaces were altered for this purpose in modern times.

\textsuperscript{666} Jerphanion, \textit{Une Nouvelle Province}, 2.1: 111.


\textsuperscript{668} Ousterhout, \textit{Visualizing Community}, 242.
The design of the church ensures that the two parallel chapels of the basilica work in tandem to curate an intuitive experience for a viewer seeking devotional places within the space. The north and south chapels are similar in size and architectural plan, but are decorated very differently—the north chapel has minimal red painting (figure 4.4), and the south is painted with an intense, colorful floor-to-ceiling decorative scheme (figure 4.5). However, visual and spatial relationships between the two chapels point toward opportunities for private devotion and an immersive visual and spiritual experience that utilizes non-liturgical architectural elements within the sacred space. Scholars have documented at least twenty double basilicas similar to this one in Cappadocia, but there is no clear consensus on their purpose.669 Thierry has argued that there is often one chapel for burials and another for liturgy, but St. Basil Church has no tombs inside.670

The only extant entrances into the church are through crawl spaces in the west and north walls of the north chapel (figure 4.6 and figure 4.7). Demesnil says the main entrance in the Byzantine period was in the south chapel under a now-collapsed porch that held four tombs, suggesting that the crawl spaces toward the west were added at a later date.671 However, the south side of the chapel is on the edge of a deep ravine. Even when taking rock falls and long-term environmental changes into account, this would be unusual placement for a main entrance in the region. An entryway was more likely to open toward a courtyard than the side of a ravine,

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669 Marina Mihaljević, “Üçayak: A Forgotten Byzantine Church,” Byzantinische Zeitschrift 107, no. 2 (January 1, 2014): 746, https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2014-0018; Nicole Thierry, La Cappadoce de l’Antiquité au Moyen Age (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 88–95. Scholars have not deciphered a clear purpose for double basilicas, although Mihaljević accepts Otuken’s estimate of at least twenty in Cappadocia. Thierry has said that many double chapels have one chapel for liturgy and another for burials, but this is not the case in St. Basil Church.

670 Thierry, La Cappadoce de l’Antiquité au Moyen Age, 88–95; Teteriatnikov, “The Frescoes of the Chapel of St. Basil,” 112; Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 67. Teteriatnikov has written that, “the pavement of this chapel served as a graveyard. Although it is difficult to know why graves were never made.” It is unclear what she means by this, as the floor of St. Basil Church is earth, not pavement. Ousterhout considers the niches in the west end to be possible arcosoleia but I did not document any burials in them.

as is evident throughout Cappadocia. Therefore I suggest instead that the exterior tombs Demesnil describes were part of a burial annex (similar to the one in St. Sergius Chapel) and that the additional entrances via the courtyard in the west end of the nave were also Byzantine. Apart from these entryways, the architectural plans of the north and south chapels are mirror images of one another.

Scholars have paid little attention to the north chapel, but the space is clearly meant for engagement. The sparsely decorated chapel ‘trains’ the viewer to use the entire church space, by using carefully composed views that guide the viewer’s attention toward devotional images through a curation of viewpoints and movements. The bare stone interior of the north chapel is accented with red painting that emphasizes architectural details, a common practice which may have been used to consecrate the space during and immediately after carving. Thin red lines adorn capitals and outline arches and cornices. They also highlight cross images, moving attention from areas of architectural significance to ones with spiritual potency.

The crawl space in the west wall serves as one entrance and guides the viewer’s eye through the nave and toward the bema (sanctuary), where a two-part barrier once featured elongated crosses carved in shallow relief, flanking three narrow steps (figure 4.8). Although only the bases of these crosses survive, they must have stood approximately two feet tall. The cross stems (and presumably, arms) were splayed and accented with red pigment motifs, including an encircled cross that is still visible on one stem and on crude approximations of leafy vines alongside the crosses (figure 4.9). The leaves resemble acanthus leaves, a motif used since

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672 The area west of the chapel is a steep cliff, severely eroded and impossible to thoroughly explore. Modern erosion notwithstanding, I find it unlikely that the only entrance would be on the side of a ravine while there was also an open, accessible courtyard space to the west of the church.

antiquity that was also prevalent in Byzantine painting and mosaics at this time. A cross with leaves is often interpreted as a “Living Cross,” a depiction of the True Cross of Christ’s Crucifixion as flowering wood, which was a widely recognized visual formula by the ninth century. The leaves may also reference the cross as the Tree of Life from the Garden of Eden, another common trope by the Middle Byzantine period. Both the encircled cross and leafy living cross are repeated in more sophisticated examples in the adjoining chapel. In early Christian sources, in addition to the living wood of the Crucifixion discussed above, vegetal motifs recall Christ himself. When Christ performed the Passover ritual at the Last Supper, he said to his disciples, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower,” followed by, “Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine and you are the branches.” In addition to referencing Christ and the Living Cross of the crucifixion, vine motifs also recall the grapes used to produce eucharistic wine, which commemorates the Last Supper.

Within the apse there is no clerical seating, and it is impossible to ascertain whether the current altar is in its original form or placement. We can, however, see that a red painted cross above the prothesis niche is barely visible from the nave but ideally placed just above eye level for a person standing the south side of the apse, suggesting real (not just symbolic) use of the

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676 Boyd, “Byzantine Silver Plate,” 165; Ernst Kitzinger, “A Pair of Silver Book Covers in the Sion Treasure,” in Gatherings in Honor of Dorothy E. Miner, ed. Ursula E. Maccracken, Lilian M. C. Randall, and Richard H. Randall (Baltimore: The Walters Art Gallery, 1974), 7–8. Boyd follows the lead of previous iconographers, such as Kitzinger, in the interpretation of a similar leafy cross depiction.
677 John 15:1 and 15:4-5.
678 Xenakis, “Recherches sur les églises byzantines de Cappadoce,” 273–76. Xenakis has documented a number of vine and grape motifs in Cappadocian monuments of this period.
apsidal space (figure 4.10). This mirrors a similarly placed red painted cross in the south chapel apse that may have served as a devotional image for clergy (figure 4.11).679

The north wall has a carved blind arcade, which is common in Cappadocian basilicas. It is comparable to linear painting in the sixth-century St. Sergius Chapel (discussed in Chapter 3) that references a blind arcade with an encircled cross in each arch (figure 4.12). Teteriatnikov compares St. Basil Chapel’s arcade to the one in the nave of Holy Apostles Church (ca. ninth to tenth century), another double basilica that is also located near the town of Sinasos (figure 4.13).680 It uses a horseshoe arch shape that is prevalent in Cappadocian arches and apses. Another comparable carved blind arcade is in St. Stephen Chapel, which is about six miles away in the Archangel Monastery (figure 4.14). The arcade in St. Stephen has larger arches that are painted and contain *arcosolia* (arched recesses for tombs) on the north wall of the chapel.

Within two of the rounded arches in St. Basil’s north chapel, niches are carved at eye level above narrow benches on the ground (figure 4.15). The purpose of the now-empty wall niches is uncertain, but based on similar use cases, they may have offered opportunities for personal devotion by holding icons or votives. There are no extant lights, liturgical objects, reliquaries, or textiles from this period in Cappadocia to provide examples, but comparisons offer material comparanda. In the absence of Byzantine examples of use, objects from present-day setting offer a similar use case. For instance, Sharon Gerstel has documented a comparable set-up in present-day Rhodes, a niche in the south wall of the post-Byzantine Church of St. Nicholas Phountoukli (1498), (figure 4.16).681 The niche is used to display small portable

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679 Teteriatnikov, “The Frescoes of the Chapel of St. Basil,” 107. Teteriatnikov says the cross in the northwest apse of the south chapel was “obviously” intended for the personal devotion of the clergy, due to its restricted visibility from the nave.
objects, including icons and candles arranged on a vibrant textile, creating a devotional space within a larger wall of icons. Gerstel points out the relationship of figural imagery and aniconic patterns placed throughout the church that are, “mediating the faithful’s experience with the icon program, conjuring notions of passage through the complex interactions of the pattern’s components.”

She compares the motifs in Rhodes to central Anatolian tiles, surmising that the patron may have been from Konya, the region neighboring Cappadocia. Like various spaces in St. Basil Church, carefully orchestrated spaces within the fifteenth-century chapel offer intimate, personal devotional opportunities, complementing the large-scale decoration that dominates the church and directs group participation. The method of anthropological analogy (also called ethnographic analogy by anthropologists), compares ancient spaces and their use to similar cases in the present day as a way to fill in gaps in the material record in order to help visualize the ancient context. In this case, a post-Byzantine niche can help us visualize how a now-empty niche in Cappadocia was used and the role it played within a larger worship area.

Based on comparanda from elsewhere in Byzantine Anatolia, the niches may also have been a place for practical items such as lamps to illuminate the dim space. A number of comparable clay lamps survive, including examples from the site of Amorium in Phrygia, Cappadocia’s neighboring region to the west, where lamps were in local production from Late

682 Gerstel, 61.
683 Gerstel, 62–63.
Antiquity through the medieval period. Most extant lamp examples from central Anatolia are wheel-made terracotta “saucer” lamps from the tenth or eleventh century. Over a hundred and fifty of these shallow bowl-shaped vessels have been found in Amorium, and they are similar in form to wheel-made lamps from Syria and Islamic lands to the east during that period (figure 4.17). In addition to oil burning lamps, candles were a source of illumination for churches. Imported candles were expensive, but locally made ones may have been available, based on archaeological evidence of beehives that were cultivated in the area.

The third (westernmost) arch of the north wall has no niche, and the remnants of its bench were damaged in the carving or recarving of the crawl space entrance (figure 4.18). Ousterhout says that it was cut “at a later date” but does not speculate on when that may have happened. Indeed, the bench does seem to have been damaged in order to add the second entrance, but the entryway that destroyed the bench may have been a Byzantine addition created after the initial carving of the church in order to highlight the painted program. I suggest this because the entrance plays an important role in guiding the viewer toward an ideal experience within the church. Both entrances in the north chapel are crawl spaces that are similar in size and are shaped as rounded tunnels, but more importantly, they guide viewers to specific images in the painted south chapel. I argue these entryways were added when the south chapel was painted in order to guide viewers toward particular experiences, with the new entryways accommodating

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687 Lightfoot, “Middle Byzantine Terracotta Lamps,” 225; Gill, “Middle Byzantine Terracotta Lamps,” 68.

688 Lightfoot, “Middle Byzantine Terracotta Lamps,” 225; Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 285 and 365.

689 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 67.
views toward cross images and encouraging a variety of devotional moments throughout the space.

These views are most apparent in the fact that the two chapels are simultaneously divided and united by an arcade with three rounded arches that runs between them (figure 4.19). The columns of the arcade have been heavily restored, but we can discern that each arch “framed” a particular view for visitors looking from one chapel to the other. This highlights a relationship between the north wall of the north chapel and the south wall of the south chapel, with the arcade acting as a permeable barrier between the two.

Ideal views of the south wall (i.e., the views from the north chapel) are no longer extant because much of that wall has been destroyed. However, the easternmost arch of the arcade still frames a panel of an aniconic motif—a flower outlined by swirling linework, on a background of crisscrossing red lines (figure 4.20). The ideal view of the panel would have been from the bench directly across from it in the north chapel. The panel painting sets the tone for the entire chapel’s decoration, juxtaposing busy linework with recognizable imagery that allows the eye to rest. The center image on that wall is a severely damaged panel of a floral motif within a geometric frame, also outlined by the arcade and ideally visible from the center bench in the north chapel (figure 4.21). If Demesnil is correct about the burials outside, the doorway must have been carved in this area.

Among the carefully framed views and composed spaces that are “curated” throughout the church by the designer, the most prominent is the third (westernmost) panel (figure 4.22). Entering the church from the north entrance means that the viewer’s immediate view is of a True Cross icon painted on the south wall, framed by the arcade. From the low vantage point (which is inevitable because the entrance is a crawl space), palmettes on the ceiling direct the viewer’s
gaze toward the cross (figure 4.23). The ceiling in the chapel slopes approximately 25 degrees downward toward the south wall, gently demanding that the gaze follow the palmette motif until it rests on the votive cross. Ousterhout has described the ceiling decoration below the cross as an “irregular trapezoidal field,” interpreting the shape as “compensating for the irregularities of the church.” While the painter may indeed have been responding to carving that was completed without his input, his use of the architectural framework clearly demonstrates a sophisticated design of the ceiling motifs in order to draw attention toward the votive cross on the wall.

The sight lines leading the viewer to the cross icon on the wall operate similarly to those in the sixth-century St. Sergius Chapel, channeling viewer experience toward specific devotional locations. But when a viewer moves into the south chapel to fully encounter the wall icon in St. Basil Church, it becomes apparent that the post-Iconoclastic viewing experience was a more complex and immersive one. The chapel walls, ceiling, and apse are covered in floor-to-ceiling frescoes of red, yellow, and green pigments (figure 4.24). The overall effect is one of frenetic energy, with images of crosses and large aniconic motifs offset by busy geometric and vegetal patterns, recalling the “variegated spectacle” that Photios described.

The two churches also represent a different desired viewing process in the use of space. Whereas the designer of St. Sergius Chapel used sight lines and alignment to make conscious, concerted connections between holy locations within the chapel, the designer of St. Basil Church relied instead on an immersive visual experience. In St. Sergius Chapel, the ceiling cross unites and pulls toward a visual axis. In St. Basil Church the ceiling cross is a mediator, designed to give the impression that it hovers between the earthly chapel and the heavenly sphere above. Its relationship to the surrounding decoration makes the ceiling cross the pinnacle of an immersive environment that surrounds the viewer on all sides with color and pattern.

690 Ousterhout, 199.
The Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group

The most striking visual feature of St. Basil Church is the flat ceiling of the north chapel (figure 4.25). It is dominated by a monumental ceiling cross that is painted to represent gold with oversized gems (that are now damaged) and red serifs on the four arms. At over six feet in length, the cross stands out against a background of geometric shapes. On the ceiling’s background, each area sectioned off by an arm of the cross uses a different pattern—with varied motifs, shapes, and colors—to imply movement, depth, light, and reflectiveness. Furthermore, as I argue below, the ceiling cross in St. Basil Church is exemplary of a group of ceilings that all provide a similar viewing experience that contrasts a monumental cross with geometric motifs or figural imagery.

The four quadrants of the ceiling behind the cross utilize the same color palette as the rest of the chapel: red ochre is the dominant hue, juxtaposed with significant use of yellow and accents of green and white. At top left is a grid of concentric squares of red and green with yellow and white interiors, connected by faded diagonal linework. Alternating squares of red and green in the pattern are an optical play on the cross; focusing attention on either red or green allows the viewer to see a repeated cross pattern multiplied in the quadrant. The pattern at top right is largely damaged, but the extant shapes reveal a yellow and white checkerboard pattern. At bottom right is another pattern with playful optics. Yellow diamond shapes, placed over a field of red that is accented with white, play on the idea of visual dominance—the curvature of the lines and shapes is in contrast to the geometry of surrounding quadrants, and the waviness has an unsettling effect on the viewer. At bottom left, the remaining quadrant is decorated with squares that appear to overlap like fish scales, creating a rippling effect. With a dominant red on many of the angular lines, the visual energy of the rippling patterns guides the eye toward the
center and the cross. While the motifs themselves are ancient and not necessarily not unique, they are used here in a way that highlights the medieval Cult of the Cross and its local manifestation. They do this by creating a specific kind of viewing experience, visually destabilizing the surface of the ceiling for dramatic contrast between the cross object depicted there and the perceived heavenly connotations of the overhead space beyond it.

In addition to St. Basil Church, I have identified five more ceilings in Cappadocia with monumental crosses painted on four-quadrant backgrounds (figure 4.26 and Appendix 2).691 One is in Badem Kilisesi, which is located west of Mount Aktepe near the Red Valley, about eleven miles from St. Basil Church and over fifty miles from the other four-quadrant ceilings. The remaining four are in the Ihlara (Peristrema) Valley: in the main church in Eğritaş, the north burial annex of Eğritaş, Ağaçaltı, and Kokar.692 Each of these ceiling crosses is a monumental, with thick, serifed arms and a spine that is painted with images or motifs. They are all in chapels or burial settings. The tops of the crosses point toward an apse in all of them except the burial annex, which is not a chapel. All six are accompanied by figural imagery, either as part of the ceiling design or elsewhere in the chapel, providing further evidence against the previous interpretation that any of these could be read as Iconoclastic. All of them utilize four different motifs or figural designs in the four quadrants created by the cross arms. Because the monuments span an area ranging about fifty miles, I argue that these monuments, which I call the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group, are roughly contemporary to one another and can be interpreted as evidence of a truly regional trend in ceiling decoration over time. While the aesthetic similarities may indicate a particular painting workshop, the geographic dispersion of these chapels, the range in their sizes, and the varied use of the spaces they decorate indicates a variety of patrons.

691 See Appendix 4 for data on monuments in the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group.
692 All of these were first published in Thierry and Thierry, Région du Hasan Dağı (Paris: Librarie C. Klincksieck; Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1963).
Badem Kilisesi (Almond Church, ca. ninth century) has been badly damaged by rock falls, but previous scholars have documented that the barrel-vaulted nave ceiling was once decorated with a monumental ceiling cross with figural imagery in the four quadrants (figure 4.27). Notably, the figures are on a background of geometric motifs and are oriented toward the viewer on the ground, visually operating separately and at a different scale from the cross (figure 4.28). The church is part of the monastery of Kavaklı Dere.

The paintings in Eğritaş Kilisesi (Crooked Stone Church, ca. 921-927), which was discussed in the Introduction, have been dated to the mid-tenth century based on a painted dedicatory inscription on the east wall (figure 4.29). Another inscription, located just outside the apse on the east wall, indicates a military patron named Christopher, who held the titles spantharokandidatos (high-ranking imperial guard) and tourmarchos (governor), and who dedicated the chapel to the Mother of God, Theotokos. The badly damaged ceiling cross over the nave is comprised of a series of geometric shapes, outlined in white on a field of dark pigment and surrounded by bands of figural narratives. The barrel vault in Eğritaş Kilisesi is noteworthy as the highest ceiling of the group, covering a large basilica that it was originally two stories high. Although the west end of the church has collapsed, carving in the remaining walls indicates that wooden beams may have been inserted to separate the floors, an unusual building method.

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The separation is interesting because the church’s many tombs with inscriptions are on the ground floor, while the ceiling cross soars above the upper story. If the top floor was used as a gallery, the ceiling cross would have been visible from both.

A few meters north of the main church is the Eğritaş burial annex (ca. late ninth or tenth century), which also has a monumental ceiling cross on a four-quadrant pattern (figure 4.30). The four patterns in the quadrants are made of various concentric circles and squares where the red, yellow, and possibly green hues (now faded) are accented with white linework. The image at the center of the cross has been vandalized, but it appears to be a silhouette of a haloed figure, most likely Christ. The small space below the cross is about ten feet long and six feet wide, capped by a low ceiling that is only about six feet at the height of the barrel vault (figure 4.31). The intimate scale is of the chapel envelops the three floor tombs like a cocoon, a sharp contrast to the spacious main church. Yet the small scale creates an immersive viewing environment that is comparable to the larger chapels in this group. The decoration of the burial annex echoes conventions in St. Basil Church: on the walls flanking the tombs are three crosses framed by a painted arcade (figure 4.32). A donor portrait on the east lunette shows the patron with an enthroned Virgin and Child.

A similar monument, Kokar Kilise (Fragrant Church, late ninth to tenth century) is another small, barrel-vaulted basilica (figure 4.33). Burials are in a separate area accessible beyond the nave, not underneath the ceiling cross. This means that, as in St. Basil Church, the four-quadrant cross on the ceiling was not necessarily marking a commemorative space. The ceiling cross is at the center of the chapel’s barrel-vaulted nave, surrounded by narrative scenes.

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696 Thierry and Thierry, *Région du Hasan Dağ*, 39 and XII.
that are painted in a palette of warm hues: predominantly brick red, with yellow ochre and green. Emanating from the center of the cross through each serifed arm is a motif of wavy lines; these center lines are all surrounded by geometric diamond and circular patterns to create an overall design that resembles an object made in cloisonné enamel or gilded metalwork. One notable feature of Kokar is an image of the Hand of God that is painted at the center of the ceiling cross (figure 4.34). Thierry and Thierry associated this visual element with the Mission of the Apostles iconography that is located on either side of it in lower registers of the barrel vault.\textsuperscript{699} The overall decorative scheme in Kokar Kilise relies heavily on figural narrative, which highlights the fact that such elaborately depicted cross objects on ceilings are not likely to be the result of Iconoclastic influence.

Ağaçaltı Kilise (Church of Daniel, ca. late ninth century or early tenth century) is something of an outlier in the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group because of its unusual floor plan (figure 4.35).\textsuperscript{700} Although the east side has collapsed, it was designed as a triple-apsed basilica that centers around a central cupola in the ceiling. Barrel vaults visually connect the ceilings in the north, west, and south directions with the dome so that the space beneath operates like that of a centrally planned cross-in-square church with transepts. Its four-quadrant ceiling cross is in the west transept, and both the cross and its four quadrants are painted with floral motifs (figure 4.36). The serifed cross is outlined in grey, and its decorative motifs are similar stylized vegetal shapes to those in the quadrants behind it. This cross stands apart from its background motifs, in

\textsuperscript{699} Thierry and Thierry, \textit{Région du Hasan Dağ}, 116–17. See also Matthew 10:1 for the Mission of the Apostles, when Christ called twelve followers to a life of discipleship and granted them the ability to heal and cast out demons in his name.

\textsuperscript{700} Thierry and Thierry, 73–87, esp. 82-83; Ousterhout, \textit{Visualizing Community}, 74–76, 159, and 204, esp. 74; Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, “Nouvelles Notes Cappadociennes,” \textit{Byzantion} 33 (1963): 159–62, esp. 161. Thierry made comparisons between this chapel and images that she considered to be Iconoclastic, noting that the chapel is very hard to date. Ousterhout calls it one of the earliest centrally planned churches in the region and assigns a late ninth century date. Lafontaine noted that some of the lettering was in a sixth-century uncial style that was repopularized in the ninth and tenth centuries. I consider both the late ninth and early tenth centuries to be possible dates.
part, because the direction of its decoration (extending from the center through the arms) contrasts with that of the motifs in the four grids behind it. This section of the ceiling is designed so that the visual movement of its linear decoration radiates from the center of the cross.

There is an additional ceiling cross in Ağaçaltı Kilise in the south transept with flowers on a field of white instead of a four-quadrant background (figure 4.37). Unlike the ones on four-quadrant ceilings, the cross in the south transept does not extend to the edges of the plane, and its background does not utilize four separate patterns. However, the vibrant cross on a floral background does visually hover over the surrounding figural images on the walls, and the orange cross with contrasting blue and yellow floral elements encompasses the viewer beneath.

Previous scholars have categorized the monuments of this group in several ways. For instance, despite the difference in floor plans, Ağaçaltı Kilise and Eğritaş Kilisesi were both associated with the Archaic Group by Ousterhout. The Archaic Group, characterized as churches with narrative scenes that run together horizontally rather than visually distinct scenes, was first designated by Jerphanion who dated them to approximately 850-950 based on inscriptions. The Archaic Group was further analyzed by Cormack who pointed out similarities in style to a manuscript of Photios’ homilies (Paris.gr.510, dated 879-882), which is further discussed below, but emphasized that Cappadocian churches reflect a variety of sources, and not any kind of homogenous “Cappadocian school” or style. In another method for categorizing these monuments, Ousterhout groups St. Basil Church under the rubric “nonfigural ornament” which he says is a “mode” of visual communication rather than a painting style. He uses the vocabulary of modality to refer to a way that painters organized visual information as a

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703 Cormack, 26 and 35; Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, xvii.
704 Ousterhout, *Visualizing Community*, 198–204.
decorative system rather than an expressive style.\textsuperscript{705} His brief overview of modes does not comment on the visual experience the ornament facilitates. Notably, both Ousterhout and Xenaki have also categorized St. Basil Church’s ceiling cross with other gemmed crosses, several of which are surrounded by vine motifs instead of four-quadrant backgrounds.\textsuperscript{706}

In my identification of the Four Quadrant Group, the defining characteristic is the visual experience these ceilings provide. In each ceiling of this group, juxtaposed motifs represent immateriality, with their energy bursting beyond the painted surface. This mode of communication is an indication that local visuality was experiential and based on the potency of a monumental cross overhead and the context in which it was meant to be viewed. Based on the comparisons above, the monuments in the Four Quadrant Ceiling Group are from the late ninth to the early tenth century (what Ousterhout has called the Transitional period), which was consistent with the immersive viewing experience that was part of the wider Byzantine transition to Middle Byzantine decoration.

\textbf{Immersive Viewing}

Although all the chapels in the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group are Cappadocian, they reflect the desire for an immersive viewing experience that dominates Middle Byzantine decoration beyond the region. This concept is crucial for understanding how Byzantines perceived space, a topic that can be elucidated through the examination of ornament. In the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group, the use of multiple patterns and images to offset the depiction of a large cross object provides a relatively consistent viewing experience of the overhead space in all of the group’s monuments. Like other four-quadrant cross ceilings, the background of the one in St.

\textsuperscript{705} Ousterhout, 190–91.
\textsuperscript{706} Xenakis, “Recherches sur les églises byzantines de Cappadoce,” 273–78; Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 198–204.
Basil Church disarms the visual stability of the ceiling as a surface or canvas, and instead posits the cross as an object in space. It visually bends the flat surface to emphasize the metaphysical, rather than material, connotations of the surrounding space. This activated space can be examined using the concept of interface, a component of viewing experience that engages conscious actions, intrinsic responses, and constructed symbolism. Understanding interface as a model for a Byzantine chapel goes beyond the viewer’s engagement with surface imagery toward an understanding of relationships and even immersion.

Drucker uses interface to describe a “dynamic space,” that “cannot be constructed around expectations of performance, tasks, or behaviors.” Rather than reading words on a screen, as in most of Drucker’s examples, the Cappadocian viewer engaged with a variety of analog images, including ornament and repeated motifs, alongside text that was part of the ecology of images within and among architectural spaces. Viewing becomes an immersion into that ecology rather than simple visual exposure to surface decoration. This recalls Drucker’s observation that interface includes a “codependent relationship with affordances,” with the viewer’s perception of images and spaces working as a call to action or response.

Although ornament has played a role in previous scholarship on St. Basil Church, most scholars attempt to trace influence or make comparisons with the aim of clarifying a style or date for the painting. For instance, Thierry links the style and motif of St. Basil Church to the Iconoclastic period, using comparisons to wider stylistic motifs of “Eastern” (i.e., Islamic) types as well as Western ones, including Lombard and “Romano-Byzantine” examples, during that

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708 Drucker, 147, 152.

709 Drucker, 155.
period.\textsuperscript{710} Jolivet-Lévy assigns St. Basil Church a more likely ninth century date based on ornamental motifs, painting style, and the typology of the cross.\textsuperscript{711}

The shortcoming of approaching motif as an indication of style is that it offers very little social context and no extensive cult analysis.\textsuperscript{712} For this reason, Liz James warns against trying too hard to impose symbolic meaning onto motifs and patterns, emphasizing instead the Byzantine appreciation of light and color.\textsuperscript{713} Many motifs are found across media and had a range of meanings across secular and sacred contexts. For instance, William Tronzo points out that classical and Islamicising motifs had revivals in Byzantine art, but the cultural nuances of a motif were not necessarily transferred from antiquity to the medieval period, or from one geographic region to another, even though the images may have looked similar over time.\textsuperscript{714} He refers to the mutable meanings and styles as the “vagaries” of the motifs.\textsuperscript{715} Henry Maguire and Eunice Dauterman Maguire point out that images of birds of prey, for instance, could range in use from symbols of physical prowess, nature appreciation, hunting scenes, or protective imagery.\textsuperscript{716}

Likewise, Byzantine artists were willing to assess formal elements outside the confines of stylistic preconceptions in order to perceive the effects of those elements on the viewer and the impact of viewing on the soul. Pseudo-Dionysius (ca. late fifth to early sixth century) focused on

\textsuperscript{710} Thierry, “Les peintures murales,” 445 and 475.
\textsuperscript{711} Jolivet-Lévy, \textit{La Cappadoce: mémoire de Byzance}, 40.
\textsuperscript{712} A notable exception is in Slobodan Ćurčić, “Divine Light: Constructing the Immaterial in Byzantine Art and Architecture,” in Bonna D. Wescoat and Robert G. Ousterhout, eds., \textit{Architecture of the Sacred: Space, Ritual, and Experience from Classical Greece to Byzantium} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 307-337. See especially page 313. This is a study in which Ćurčić describes some patterns in borders and mandorlas as a “common symbolic language” to represent divine light in Byzantine manuscripts and architecture. However the three-dimensional cubed patterns he identifies are not present in St. Basil Church.
\textsuperscript{713} James, \textit{Light and Colour in Byzantine Art}, 104–105 and 109.
\textsuperscript{715} Tronzo, 143.
the element of color, saying color was light that had materialized. In St. Basil Church the painter created visual movement using color, shape, and lines to channel the movement of the eye. The visual movements of light and color were used to create pattern and ornament that further enhanced the active nature of the chapel as it was dominated by the aura of the monumental cross on the ceiling.

With this in mind, I pause on ornament and motif in St. Basil Church to trace not its influence or style but its function, deciphering the effects these motifs had on the intended viewers. Rather than using “decorative” to describe the aniconic motifs in St. Basil Church, I emphasize their functionality as an integral part of the chapel’s design. This is in accordance with Alicia Walker’s observation that Byzantines relied on a variety of “cognitive processes,” including the placement of ornament, to induce particular viewing experiences. She calls this the way Byzantine objects “think” through materiality. Her argument is that the materials and matter comprising Byzantine images are as meaningful as iconographic programs. Indeed, the way matter and materials inspire engagement—touching, rubbing, or moving the object, for instance—are important aspects of how the viewing experience is “orchestrated” by the artist, rather than the object itself. This also evident in St. Basil Church where ornament, pattern, and color are among the affordances used to guide the viewer toward devotional moments throughout the chapel.

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Oleg Grabar referred to the function of ornament as a kind of “intermediary” between representative art and writing. Particularly important is the way ornament interacts with text and image to create a specific reading or viewing experience in St. Basil Church. For instance, at the west end of the ceiling, the narrowing panel of palmettes at the base of the ceiling cross emphasizes the irregular shape of the sloped ceiling (figure 4.38). What looks from beneath to be a sloppy artistic application serves as a visual cue from the south chapel, where the viewer is guided by these palmettes toward a view of a votive cross on the wall, as described above. The ceiling cross, palmettes, and geometric background are framed by a guilloche (snail meander) pattern of intertwined red, yellow, and white lines wrapping around the rectangular ceiling.

A useful comparison is a late Roman practice wherein decorative motifs were valued for their disorienting influence on viewers. Art historian Ellen Swift posits this as a means of homeowners asserting power over guests by manipulating their experience within a domestic setting. She says,

> the visual effects within the pattern give the impression of entities with agency which act upon one another in the tensions and movements inherent within the design. This animates, or brings to life, the pattern itself, “representing” or enforcing a sense of agency, which becomes the agency of the index over the viewer.

One example she gives is a Hellenistic floor mosaic with tiles that resemble “stepped cubes” and are concentric to a central group of figures (figure 4.39). The floor creates a visual vortex that manipulated the viewer’s eye and body toward the center “depth,” creating a feeling of awe or enhanced emotion just before the guest encountered the host in the next room. In St. Basil

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724 Swift, 81–82.
Church the disorienting motifs are designed to set off crucial, recognizable imagery of the cross, asserting spiritual authority of Christ rather than a social hierarchy between architect and viewer.

In the chapel, ornament works in conjunction with text in order to further enrich the viewer’s experience. Just below the guilloche ceiling frame is the cornice inscription that begins on the southeast corner, requiring the viewer to have fully entered the north chapel in order to see the beginning. The text continues across the entire south wall, wraps across the west wall, and continues across the north wall above the arcade. The juxtaposition of ornament with text is similar to the ceiling cross on its busy background. The eye moves between the vibrant pattern of the guilloche above the text and a flowing motif of yellow lines below it to rest on familiar letterforms. The ornament’s general direction is to flow from left to right, encouraging the viewer to follow with the eye, inevitably reading the accompanying inscription. Like Photios’ viewers, visitors to this chapel would have to use visual cues like these to navigate a network of images and motifs whose juxtaposition inspired a fervid passion in the worshippers.

Despite significant damage (which occurred before Jerphanion’s initial documentation of it), Teteriatnikov translated Jerphanion’s documentation of the cornice inscription as follows:

The decoration has been made at the expense of Nicander, the walls of the glorious house which serves as a house of the honorable wood. Lord, always protect your servant Nicander, and Constantine the presbyter; grant them remission of sins, grant also mercy and help to your servant the painter.  

Notably, the church is dedicated to the veneration of the Holy Cross, not specifically to Basil. It is indistinguishable whether “house of the honorable wood” meant there was a relic or whether the presence of cross images was sufficient for the dedication.

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With the exception of the dedicatory section, “The decoration has been made at the expense of Nicander,” the translation by Teteriatnikov is similar in meaning and tone to Rhoby and Xenakis’ revised versions, as discussed above.\textsuperscript{726} They contend that the patron’s name is obscured, but concur with Jerphanion that Constantine the presbyter (priest) is listed with the patron in the appeal for God’s protection. This may indicate that he had some influence over the patron and design of the chapel. The painter is not mentioned by name but is recognized for his work at the end of the dedicatory inscription.

There is no mention of a carver or architect in the cornice inscription; this could indicate that the painter had also carved the church but that the painting was the primary accomplishment, or it could mean that the carving was completely finished before the painter or patron became involved, or that carving was a task with less prestige. Irregularities in the carving are used by the painter to direct attention toward the wall cross icon, via ceiling decoration, using the slanted ceiling. I infer from this that the carver was not the painter, and that the painter was utilizing the irregularly-carved space strategically to maneuver and enhance the viewer’s experience in the church.

The painting throughout the chapel is not of notable quality in its line work, but it demonstrates considerable attention to detail in order to create a visual sphere uniting ornament and spiritual imagery. As Anthony Cutler demonstrated with medieval ivories, denoting the “best” example is often less valuable than recognizing widespread or common viewing conditions for the intended audience.\textsuperscript{727} Here the artist added tiny details that are barely visible from the nave but that enliven the two-dimensional frescoes. For instance, a series of small, red

\textsuperscript{726} Rhoby, \textit{Byzantinische Epigramme}, 1:296–97; Xenakis, “Recherches sur les églises byzantines de Cappadoce,” 426–27; Ousterhout, \textit{Visualizing Community}, 263. Ousterhout uses the interpretation by Rhoby, which was slightly amended by Xenakis, as well.

\textsuperscript{727} Cutler, \textit{Hand of the Master}, 22-27 and 249-250; Walker, “Art That Does Not Think,” 180 Walker cites Cutler’s study as “foundational” for the viewing and social contexts of ivories.
brush strokes are a nod toward three-dimensionality around the white outline of the ceiling cross (figure 4.40). They add visual depth to the shape, indicating that the viewer is to read it as a depiction of a symbolic three-dimensional object, rather than merely as a symbol. Each of the painted ‘jewels’ (now all damaged) is outlined in grey with line work that resembles a metal setting. These indicate a concerted effort by the artist, echoed in his plea to be remembered in the dedicatory cornice inscription. This observation is in contrast to previous Cappadocian scholarship that has treated St. Basil Church decoration as cheap and crude work.  

The chapel’s role as a viewing sphere can be compared with tents, which were a similarly theatrical and immersive space that could provide a multi-sensory setting for devotion or social interaction in Cappadocia. In a literary example, Digenis’ tent is described as “a beautiful tent, very large, embroidered with gold and decorated with multiform shapes of animals.” Margaret Mullet zeroes in on the “sensuality” of the Byzantine tent, noting its “richness of colour and material, the effects of light and wind.” In his Chronographia (chronicle), Michael Psellos describes a giant tent wherein the opening of its entrance produces an “imperial spectacle” at which visitors were “deafened by the roars of the army” that encircled an emperor who reclined on his couch on a gold platform. The opening of the tent, then, was a multi-sensory revelation not unlike the revelatory moment of emerging from a crawl space into a vibrantly decorated rock-hewn church. Mullet’s observations about the intimate and personal context for prayers and 

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728 Wharton Epstein, “‘Iconoclast’ Churches,” 104–105. Wharton Epstein refers several times to the poor quality of the painting and the inexpensive materials, plaster and earth pigments.
social interactions of a tent, particularly for a military elite, hold true with the small-scale chapel that encompasses the viewer with a personalized, multi-sensory environment as well.

Tents also offer an opportunity to pose questions about the soundscape of an intimate, private setting. A tent could be embroidered with poetry, just as a chapel could have an extended dedicatory inscription. Mullet likens the tent to a kind of theatrical home for texts and verbal exchanges, calling them “temporary theater for text,” using the metaphor of a “tent full of words.” From personal readings of the scriptures to inscriptions in public monuments, reading had an auditory connotation, with text usually being read aloud.

However the question remains as to whether visitors in St. Basil Church would have audibly read its cornice inscription, contributing to the soundscape of the small chapel. Ousterhout relates extensive textual decoration to literacy as an indication of education and status. A comparative example is St. Polyeuktos Church (ca. 524-527) in Constantinople, where a seventy-six-line epigram about its aristocratic patron, Anicia Juliana (462-527/528), originally wrapped around the interior (figure 4.41). James says the inscription was not necessarily meant to be read in St. Polyeuktos, citing the unintuitive path the reader would have to take to get to it. By contrast, though, in St. Basil Church’s south chapel the path from wall icon to ceiling cross to east end is the result of a natural flow, if not a direct sight line. It would guide the reader somewhat naturally to the inscription, which would require him to turn himself around in order to read it from start to finish. The inscription is flanked on top and bottom by ornament of wavy lines, guiding the eye so that the vibrant energy of the ornamented decoration

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732 Mullett, 270.
733 Ousterhout, Visualizing Community, 269.
735 Liz James, “‘And Shall These Mute Stones Speak?’ Text as Art,” in Liz James, ed., Art and Text in Byzantine Culture, 1st paperback ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 189–90.
extends toward facilitating the viewer’s interaction with the text. This hearkens back to Photios’ description of the effects of frenetic decoration in the Pharos Church on the viewer whose movements are manipulated by the spectacle.\textsuperscript{736} The swirling and spinning visual experience he points toward are easily imaginable in the small chapel of St. Basil Church, where the inscription’s placement guides the viewer to rotate in a similar fashion while reading it.

But even if, as James suggests, the inscription was not read often, its effect on the church decoration would still be instructive to the viewer. The inscription visually anchors and boosts the busy, varied, and chaotic ceiling that hosts the monumental cross. This framing of the ceiling cross emphasizes its “transcendent position,” an attribute that Susan Stewart ascribes to monumental images, in that the text is in contrast to the heavenly patterns and cross image above (see Chapter 2).\textsuperscript{737} In this chapel the ceiling cross is at a billboard scale compared to the small crosses on the walls. The juxtaposition underscores the variety of roles a small chapel like this could play in Cappadocia, for both group worship and private prayer.

The intended viewing process is also discernable in that it is impossible to read the entire inscription without moving one’s body. Reading the cornice inscription creates a panoramic experience, wherein the image (i.e., the inscription) envelops the viewer. She must move her eyes, and would probably feel compelled to move her entire body, in order to read the inscription from beginning to end. Viewing an immersive visual environment of ornament and cross imagery compels the reader to turn around and take in the chaotic combination of hues and shapes. It is reminiscent of Photios’ spectator who is discussed above as, “whirling about in all directions and being constantly astir,” which is caused “by the variegated spectacle on all sides.” When he says that the viewer “imagines that his personal condition is transferred to the object,”

\textsuperscript{736} Photios, Homily X, 4, trans. Mango, \textit{Art of the Byzantine Empire}, 185.
\textsuperscript{737} Susan Stewart, \textit{On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection}, 1st paperback ed (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 89.
the viewer is acknowledging that his own awe is connected to the vibrancy of the images, which represent a disruption in earthly reality; the destabilization is a reference to awe and majesty in the Christological implications of the ceiling cross symbol.738 This kind of viewing in the round is the result of an immersive “ecology of images” working together to facilitate viewing and the ritual action of reading, to use the phrase coined by David Morgan (discussed in the previous chapter). The ecology for images in this space would include the images and patterns of the walls and ceiling as well as the sounds of worship, the flickering of lamplight, changing temperatures, and even smells of the small chapel.739

These multi-sensory conditions would heighten the drama of the panoramic and immersive space. Byzantines would have experienced a variety of smells in any church or chapel, from eucharistic bread and wine to human odors of the body, not to mention the livestock and plants of the agricultural economy just outside. The most potent of these would have been smoke from incense that was interpreted as rising toward heaven.740 Since early Christianity, fragrance was perceived as a carrier of memory, meaning, and value, and by the fourth century, the remains of saints and martyrs were associated with sweet smells.741 According to Susan Ashbrook Harvey, the scent of relics established a connection between the present, living self and a future resurrected or heavenly one.742 A relic’s perceived pleasant odor would be a tangible link to the saint in Heaven, a hint of heavenly existence that awaited the faithful Christian.743 The afterlife was so close and attainable that the late antique Christian could literally smell it.

738 Photios, Homily X, sec. 4, in Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire, 185.
741 Harvey, 227 and 229.
742 Harvey, 227.
743 Harvey, 227.
Byzantine clergy swung incense from censers that produced a potent olfactory experience and altered the viewing conditions with clouds of smoke, and incense could be used in private devotion as well. Even if the south chapel were seldom used, the stimulation must have been overpowering at times. In fact, Michael Psellos addressed the effect directly, suggesting the ruby as a cure for headaches “brought on by burning incense.”

In a smoky and dimly lit room, ornament certainly has an increased effect during the heightening drama and emotion as well. With the ‘disconnected’ surface, a four-quadrant ceiling like the one in St. Basil Church may very well have given the same sense of vast openness as a dome. While the patterns are not a literal symbol of the heavens, in a chapel context they hint at heavenly presence and metaphysical context for the gemmed cross depicted at its center. The chapel’s motifs and patterns visually open up the space, giving an impression that the holy sphere is expansive and extends beyond the material walls and ceiling. Most importantly, the frenetic energy of the background invites the eyes to rest on the familiar cross, inviting devotion.

**Votive Cross**

In addition to the ceiling cross, another important cross image in the chapel is on the south wall near the southwest corner. It is a prominent feature—from the north chapel, the visitor’s most prominent view of south chapel is of this cross. Just under two feet tall, the Latin Cross with serifed arms is flanked by stylized flowers (figure 4.42). Two leafy vines spring from its base, suggesting the True Cross of the Crucifixion. Four beads are depicted at the center of

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745 Sasha Grishin, “The Church of St. Barbara in Soğanlı Dere,” 46. Grishin has said that, “the fact that so few of the churches [in Cappadocia] contain deposits of soot from oil lamps, candles and incense also suggests that these churches were rarely used liturgically.” However, a chapel’s decoration only indicates that a space was intended to be used, not necessarily how often it was ultimately utilized in practice.
the cross (figure 4.43). In Byzantine luxury metalwork, pearls were often used to fill in gaps in metal designs for a “softened” or more finished effect around the edges, and metalwork with pearls was often imitated in painting. Here the depicted beads resemble a pearl ligature, a decorative device used to embellish the point at which the arms and spine of a cross were connected, that is found on some gemmed reliquaries. Hahn has described one reliquary’s ligature as a symbol of synthesis, a ritual that bound slivers of cross relics into a larger wooden cross object within a reliquary in order to channel the protective power of the True Cross. The depicted ligature in this wall painting makes the image an explicit reference to a reliquary (and by extension, to the True Cross relics it would contain). To extend Hahn’s description, it is also a reference to the process of channeling its protection to the worshipper who is venerating the True Cross. Notably, the ligature detail on the votive wall cross is not replicated on the ceiling cross, which is a more stylized image and is designed for its effect on the space below rather than as a reference to a reliquary object.

As previous scholars have observed, the cross imagery on the St. Basil Church wall is also comparable to two pages in a ninth-century manuscript called the Paris Gregory (Paris.gr.510), which is now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The Constantinopolitan illuminated manuscript of Gregory Nazianzus’ sermons was presented by Patriarch Photios to

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748 Hahn, The Reliquary Effect, 11. Hahn is describing the Limbourg Cross (945-959), an object now in the cathedral treasure of Limburg an der Lahn. Hostetler notes that the pearls in the ligature were later replaced by gold beads.

749 Brubaker, Vision and Meaning, 153.
Emperor Basil I (r. 867–886) some time between 879 and 882. Flanking the dedicatory image, a Latin gold and gemmed cross with thin, serified arms springs from a base of leafy vines (figure 4.44). This is generally understood to reference the living wood of the Crucifixion, despite the depiction of gems rather than wood in this version of it.

The cross illumination in the Paris Gregory is embellished with a woven rope and more gems, which was typical of ninth-century processional crosses. It is accompanied by an inscription saying “victory through Christ.” Because the manuscript was not widely known, it had little impact beyond its imperial circle. However, it points toward depictions of the cross and the relationship of cross imagery to other images in the period contemporary with St. Basil Church. Like the congregation that heard Photios’ ekphrasis, the manuscript’s audience had imperial connections and wide social reach.

The St. Basil Church votive cross on the wall is also accompanied by two inscriptions, one on the cross arms and another down the left side (figure 4.45). Both are almost inscrutable, yet they are crucial in the role that they have played in the scholarly literature toward the dating and understanding of the chapel. Because the inscriptions are both damaged and not easily translated, scholars have produced an array of interpretations. The inscriptions’ interpretations have been debated in part because inadequate documentation of them has encouraged rather dramatic translations. Although Jerphanion had trouble deciphering the damaged letters, he made an initial attempt. His translation of the inscription along the cross arms reads, “the Son of God, symbolically represented by the cross—because by its nature it has

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750 Teteriatnikov, “The Frescoes of the Chapel of St. Basil,” 103; Brubaker, Vision and Meaning, 152. Brubaker observes that the two cross images in Paris.gr.510 are “virtually identical” to one other.
752 Brubaker, 12.
753 Down the left side: CTAVPOC EN AEPÎ (Σταυρός ἐν ἀέρι), and across the cross arms: τυπούμενος Ἰ[Χ] οὐτο (= οὗτο) μι[σόνδεις οὐ καταφθάντος οὐ, in Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 107-108, inscr. 140; See also Rhoby, Byzantinische Epigramme, 1:297. Rhoby expressed the two sections as a unified message: Σταυρός ἐν ἀέρι τυπούμενος Χριστός οὐ μολύνεται ὡς ἀνεικόνιστος ὁν.
escaped all material figuration—suffers no damage,” which is followed by Jerphanion’s own synopsis, “in other words: the image here is not unworthy of one who does not suffer from an image.”

Jerphanion’s sketch implies that the image was less damaged in the early twentieth century than it is now, especially on the right side (figure 4.46). However, in creating a digital overlay of his sketch onto a photograph, I realized that in the original fresco, the text is squeezed into the picture frame, a relationship that is especially evident where the faded red painting is barely visible under the cross arm (figure 4.47). This is not as apparent in sketches as it is in photographs or in situ. This demonstrates that the Byzantine artist’s primary concern was the image, and including the inscription must have been an afterthought (if it was, indeed, painted by the same hand), or a situation wherein the text was simply not considered important enough to be central to the composition. The original Cappadocian emphasis is on the cross image more so than the textual interpretation, thereby privileging the visual argument made by the image rather than the written word.

Thierry’s sketch is reconstructed from Jerphanion’s with some adjustments in the placement of letter forms (figure 4.48). She used the inscription to argue that the church’s aniconism is from the period of Iconoclasm. To her, the inscription implies that Christ could

754 Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 108, inscr. 140. Jerphanion’s French: “le Fils de Dieu représenté symboliquement par la croix - car, par sa nature, il échappe à toute figuration matérielle--n’en subit aucun dommage. En d’autres termes: l’image que voici n’est pas indigne de Celui qui ne souffre pas d’image.”; For further interpretation, see Wharton Epstein, “‘Iconoclast’ Churches,” 106–7; See also Demetrios I. Pallas, “Eine Anikonische Lineare Wanddekoration Auf Der Insel Ikaria, Zur Tradition Der Bilderlosen Kirchenaufstatung (An Anonymous Linear Wall Decoration on the Island of Ikaria, On the Tradition of the Imageless Church Erection),” Jahrbuch Der Österreichischen Byzantinistik 23 (1974): 313. See Wharton Epstein for the English translation and a summary of the inscription’s interpretations by various scholars, including Pallas. Pallas reinterpreted Jerphanion’s paleographic recording as, “The cross in the air was an amorphous type of Christ. Which would not be sullied” or "The drawing (i.e. the cross) would not be sullied.” orig: “Das in der Luft gestaltete Kreuz war ein amorpher Typ Christi. Es wird nicht befleckt”or "Das Zeichnen (d.h.das Kreuz) wird nicht befleckelt.”
755 Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 108.
757 Thierry, 461; See also Grégoire, “Rapport sur un voyage d’exploration dans le Pont et en Cappadoce”; Millet,
not be represented by images, and that the cross indicates Iconoclasts’ use of it as an acceptable substitute for figural imagery. Her translation is, “Christ appeared and undergoes no shame because we can not represent through images.” However, Thierry’s widely reproduced sketch (which was subsequently used by Teteriatnikov) flattens the pictorial space by including the top motif from the ceiling as the frame of the Cross image, changing the image’s relationship to the chapel as a whole, especially its relationship to the ceiling decoration. It also slightly exaggerates the negative space in the painting, de-emphasizing the squeezed-in nature of the painted inscription among other elements.

Subsequent scholars have disagreed with Thierry’s interpretation of the text. Wharton Epstein’s more conservative observations of the inscription are general: first, that a clear interpretation is “impossible” because of the damage and non-standard orthography; second, that it can be loosely be interpreted to say, “the cross of Heaven” (which she parenthetically identifies as “Constantine’s cross” without further explanation) “is an incorruptible symbol of Christ;” and finally, that the inscription cannot be conclusive evidence of an Iconoclastic theme. Teteriatnikov agrees with her that the inscription is insufficient criteria for the chapel’s date. Cormack concludes more broadly that aniconism in Cappadocia is not necessarily Iconoclastic in date, but also acknowledges there is no definitive explanation for why aniconism is so pervasive in Cappadocia. The difficulty in translating the inscription highlights the intangible nature of

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“Les Iconoclastes et La Croix,” 97; Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 1925, 2:105-111 and 413. Thierry’s interpretation was not the first to call St. Basil Church Iconoclastic. Gregoire and Millet ignored the figural imagery on the east walls flanking the apse, and considered the decorative scheme to be from the Iconoclastic period, emphasizing Iconoclastic adoration of the Cross. Jerphanion acknowledged the figures but considered the church Iconoclastic anyway. For a historiography of iconoclastic interpretations (and a reevaluation), see Wharton Epstein, “‘Iconoclast’ Churches,” esp. 104.

758 Thierry, “Les peintures murales,” 445. Thierry’s translation of the Greek inscription into French is as follows: “Le Christ ainsi figuré ne subit pas de dommage car on ne saurait le représenter par l’image.”

759 Wharton Epstein, “‘Iconoclast’ Churches,” 107.


the cross itself in the Middle Byzantine worldview. Frolow has described the symbolism or representation of the cross (which he differentiates from physical relics) as “the characteristic shape of Christianity — its synonym, as it were.” Frolow, “The Veneration of the Relic of the True Cross,” 14. The ability of the cross to move across categories in Byzantine thought mimics several variations of the Cult of the Cross: the cross was difficult to categorize, yet its image was accessible, available, and portrayable.

Painted vertically down the left side of the votive image is the part of the inscription that refers to the cross in the sky. Teteriatnikov interpreted it to mean, “Raised up.” Wharton Epstein calls it a “title,” and Teteriatnikov describes it as an “invocation to the cross.” Jerphanion surmised that it refers to Constantine’s cross “in the sky, above the sun,” an illusion to the emperor’s vision in Eusebius’s Life of Constantine. Jerphanion’s reference is all the more compelling in light of the fact that it inspires the viewer to look upward toward the ceiling, with decoration that is also a Eusebian construct. As quoted in a previous chapter, (but worth revisiting here), when Eusebius described Constantine’s palace in Constantinople, he wrote:

So great was the divine passion which had seized the Emperor’s soul that in the royal quarters of the imperial palace itself, on the most eminent building of all, at the very middle of the gilded coffer adjoining the roof, in the centre of a very large wide panel, had been fixed the emblem of the saving Passion made up of a variety of precious stones and set in much gold. This appears to have been made by the Godbeloved as a protection for his Empire.

The emperor’s use of a cross on the palace ceiling symbolized God’s protection over the empire in a manner that was echoed in later structures like Hagia Sophia’s dome. The monumental ceiling cross in St. Basil Church indicates a similar apotropaic function. In addition

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to their symbolic function, I contend that the crosses in this chapel are consistent with the material tradition that was an important part of the Cult of the Cross. Educated and socially connected patrons like Nicander, along with his presbyter named Constantine, would have been aware of Constantine the Great’s legacy of patronage and the role it played in the development of the Cult of the Cross during the medieval period.\textsuperscript{767} As an example, the Book of Ceremonies describes an annual commemoration of the emperor, the celebration of which included the singing of a \textit{troparion} (short hymn) that recalls, “Having gazed at the form of your cross in the sky” and giving thanks to God in front of the “great cross of Constantine.”\textsuperscript{768} That particular cross object was in the Church of Saint Constantine, a chapel in the New Palace of Bonos in Constantinople, demonstrating the way cross objects commemorated his vision at Golgotha well into the medieval period.\textsuperscript{769} Constantinian references in the St. Basil Church—the presbyter’s name and the ceiling decoration—connect this chapel to the wider Byzantine Cult of the Cross in the medieval period.

The Chapel and the Cult

An immersive viewing experience like the one in this chapel tends to make people look for a unifying theme for the entire space. Scholars tend to want a neat and tidy explanation for the chapel’s overall decorative scheme. As discussed above, Thierry followed early explorers

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{768} Constantine Porphyrogennetos, Book of Ceremonies, Book 2, Ch. 6, trans. Moffatt and Tall, 2:534.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{769} Constantine Porphyrogennetos, Book of Ceremonies, Book 2, Ch. 6, trans. Moffatt and Tall, 2:534. Editors Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall note that the Church of St. Constantine was part of a palace complex, and that the New Palace of Bonos was apparently a new or renovated part of that complex.}
\end{footnotes}
Grégoire, Millet, and Jerphanion in interpreting it as an Iconoclastic statement, an interpretation that subsequent scholars have rejected.\footnote{Thierry, “Mentalité et Formulation Iconoclastes,” 88–95.} Based on the number and placement of crosses in the chapel, Teteriatnikov argued that its decoration weaves together references to Constantine and True Cross relics in a way that refers specifically to the liturgy of the Exaltation of the Cross.\footnote{Teteriatnikov, “The Frescoes of the Chapel of St. Basil,” 112.} The many crosses in the chapel do reflect the multifaceted Cult of the Cross, but I argue that despite the powerful monumental ceiling cross as a central visual feature, the chapel resists simplification (Appendix 3).\footnote{See Appendix 3 for a list of all the crosses depicted in St. Basil Church and their locations within the chapel.}

Cross images on the walls, apse, bema, and ceiling of the double chapel immerse the body and mind. The varied reiteration of the cross is not a duplicated pattern like the multiplied crosses discussed in Chapter 2, but a multimodal invitation to venerate the cross repeatedly as the viewer moves through the space. The layering of aniconic imagery “speaks” to expresses complex ideas using placement, spatial context, and iconographic nuance. Each time the viewer encounters the salvation and protection of Christ, it heightens the immersive qualities of the viewing experience.

The repeated cross images throughout the chapel connect to multiple broad themes in the Cult of the Cross, pointing to a dynamic relationship between local cult practices and the empire-wide traditions. There were several known threads of the Cult of the Cross, including personal devotion, expressions of identity, or a desire for protection, often with the connotation of military protection and victory.\footnote{Holger A. Klein, “Constantine, Helena, and the Cult of the True Cross in Constantinople,” in Byzance et Les Reliques Du Christ: [Actes de La Table Ronde, Tenue à Paris, à l’occasion Du XXe Congrès International Des Études Byzantines, 19-25 Août 2001], ed. Durand, Jannic, Flusin, and Centre d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance (Paris (52 rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, 75005): Association des amis du Centre d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, 2004), 36.} The revival of Constantinian themes in the cult during the medieval period reflects these. In St. Basil Church, for instance, depicted crosses and Constantinian...
references are likely to have military connotations since so much patronage in the area was related to estates of military elites and their role in the financial recovery of the region during the late ninth century.

St. Basil Chapel’s carefully crafted viewer experience was designed to take place in a private chapel for a specific lay patron, Nicander, in consultation with his local presbyter, Constantine, both of whom are known from the cornice inscription. It is likely that Nicander was one of the military elites in the region. At that time Cappadocia was recovering economically and creatively from the so-called Dark Ages (ca. seventh-ninth centuries), that followed years of military incursions from the East. Trade routes through the region were important, and the reopening of these networks in the ninth century produced a noticeable resurgence in patronage of objects and architecture. By the tenth century, the population of Cappadocia was significantly bolstered by the presence of military elites and their rural estates that emerged as agricultural production increased; these existed alongside a number of bishoprics added to the area in the early tenth century by Leo VI (r. 886-912) in an attempt to increase control over provincial families, although most of the bishoprics were gone by around 940. Because the Cult of the Cross included the invocation of its protection during battles, the cross was popular with military patrons.

Once the use of icons had been fully restored in 843 at the end of Iconoclasm, Constantine was framed as an iconophile and defender of the faith, the embodiment of the ideals of the Cult of the Cross. Brubaker notes a conflation of Constantinian and cross-related themes.

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774 See this dissertation’s Introduction for a discussion of Nicander as a pseudonym for the patron.
around that time, saying that “by 800, the constellation of Constantine, his vision, his ex voto cross, and the relics of the True Cross discovered by Helena had melted into one concept, a concept crucial to imperial authority, and especially to the triumph of the Christian Byzantine state.”

In the Chludov Psalter (mid-ninth century), for example, Constantine is depicted on horseback with a cross-shaped staff, smiting his groveling enemies (figure 4.49). The manuscript was produced in Constantinople and is considered to be an example of Iconophiles’ victory polemics that used Constantine’s legacy to promote victory through orthodoxy. The political veneration of Constantine was evident in paeans that were passed down to subsequent rulers and church leaders. Photios owned a copy of at least one of these, describing two books compiled circa 330 by Praxagoras of Athens as the History of Constantine the Great. The text was a panegyric (speech of praise) that was compiled by a political ally of Constantine who ended it with victory the over Licentius in 324. Photios summarized the text, saying that although Praxagoras was a pagan, even he acknowledged that Constantine was more virtuous than any emperor before him. These profiles of Constantine in popular culture of the time are echoed in St. Basil Chapel. The presbyter called Constantine reflects the popularity of the name on a local level, and imagery in the chapel points to wider threads in the Constantinian Cult of the Cross as well.

776 Brubaker, “To Legitimize an Emperor,” 142.
778 Brubaker, “To Legitimize an Emperor,” 145–47.
780 Barnes, 196, Appendix F. See also Felix Jacoby, Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker 2: Zeitgeschichte B (Berlin, 1929), 948–949 no. 219.
Crosses in the Apse

Allusions to Constantine and the Cult of the Cross are important to the understudied painted decoration in the south apse of St. Basil Church. A close reading of multiple iconographic themes in the small space enriches the experience of immersive viewing in the chapel. The apse is a section of St. Basil Church that remains underexamined, particularly in context of the ceiling and overall church decoration (figure 4.50). An important iconographic theme in St. Basil Church is prefiguration (i.e., the role of Christ as the fulfillment of a covenant described in Hebrew prophecy) in the apse decoration. This theme underscores two registers of images with three crosses each. In the lower register, three gemmed crosses at eye level are painted on a bed of flowers. The center cross has an inscription calling it “the sign of holy Constantine,” referencing the emperor’s vision of the cross. These three crosses may be a reference to the True Cross alongside those of the two thieves at Golgotha, which Teteriatnikov simultaneously links to Helena’s discovery of the three crosses in Jerusalem. Despite Helena’s prominent role in the discovery of the True Cross relics, this image is the only one in the chapel that may be considered a reference to her. Teteriatnikov has argued that the use of three crosses in Byzantine art can be traced to Jerusalem’s liturgy for the Exaltation of the True Cross, wherein three crosses were placed in the diakonikon, and that the three in this apse are evidence for that specific liturgy in the chapel. As I describe below, however, the link to the Jerusalem liturgy of the cross is likely one of several options rather than a definitive interpretation.

The Constantinian threads in the Cult of the Cross were particularly effective because of the rich visual and material traditions that were woven throughout his legacy. Raymond Van

781 The fourth apse cross, placed lower than the others in the north side of the apse, is visible primarily from the clerical niche in the apse, not from the nave. It is not gemmed.
784 Teteriatnikov, 114.
Dam suggests that the monumental ceiling cross image in the palace may have influenced subsequent narratives: “perhaps the splendor of this dazzling cross influenced Constantine's memory of his vision or Eusebius’ recollection of the emperor's story about his vision.”

Literary sources indicate that long after Constantine’s death, objects from his era were still in the palace: a fifth-century source recorded relics of the battle standard there, and in the ninth century, the standard was said to be “guarded as a great gift in the imperial store rooms” so that it could act as a “bulwark against any opposing or hostile force.” These sources do not address how long the ceiling cross was still in the palace or whether it was visible to visitors who saw the relics of Constantine there.

The medieval period brought about renewed commitment to Constantine’s veneration through the dispersion of new documents. The seventh through ninth centuries saw a flourishing of his vita, and adaptations of Constantinian stories followed the spread of the Cult of the Cross to the Latin West. Partly in response to the westernizations of Constantine’s legend,
Byzantine authors began to reformulate his legacy to emphasize Constantinople (i.e., “New Rome”) as central to the tradition instead of Rome. Among them is an eighth-century account known as the Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai (translated as “brief historical notes,” ca. 700-750), wherein Constantine sets up a gold cross on top of a porphyry column in the Philadelphion (a public square in Constantinople) to commemorate the battle against Maxentius. Another text, often called the Anonymous Life of Constantine (ca. 850-900) or the Guidi-Vita after its modern editor, commemorates a battle on the site that would become the new capital. In this late ninth-century revision of Eusebius’ Life of Constantine, a monumental cross was formed from the stars in the night sky over Constantinople. This was a variation of the midday miracle in Eusebius’ earlier account that took place outside Rome, echoing the episode at the Milvian Bridge. In the Guidi-Vita, Constantine also commissions a trio of gemmed, bronze crosses to be set up in three locations to commemorate battles against various enemies (Maxentius, the “Byzantines,” and the Scythians), and he names the crosses Jesus, Christ, and Victory. The three gemmed crosses in the St. Basil Church apse that are attributed to Constantine may reflect a local reception of this medieval account or a similar version.

the Latin popes on the day after his baptism. The earliest extant manuscript of the Donation is from the ninth century, and the document was ultimately known as a forgery by the late middle ages.

789 Lieu, “Constantine in Legendary Literature,” 318; Van Dam, Remembering Constantine, 27; Brubaker, “To Legitimize an Emperor,” 142.

790 Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai, Ch. 58 in Cameron and Herrin, Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century, 134–35; Van Dam, Remembering Constantine, 28–29.

791 Anonymous Life of Constantine, Ch. 23 in Lieu and Montserrat, “Constantine Byzantinus,” 126–27; For a discussion of the date, see Kazhdan, “Constantin Imaginaire,” 196–250; Van Dam, Remembering Constantine, 32. For Guidi’s edition, see Life of Constantine in Michelangelo Guidi, ed., Un bios di Costantino (BHG 364), (Roma: Tipografia della R. Accademia dei Lincei, 1908), 306-40 and 637-60.

792 Anonymous Life of Constantine, Ch. 23 in Lieu and Montserrat, “Constantine Byzantinus,” 127.

793 Van Dam, Remembering Constantine, 27.

794 Anonymous Life of Constantine, Ch. 23 in Lieu and Montserrat, “Constantine Byzantinus,” 126–27; Van Dam, Remembering Constantine, 28–29; Kazhdan, “Constantin Imaginaire,” 222–23. The term “Byzantines” in this text refers to the “barbarian” (i.e., non-Roman) residents who resisted Constantine’s rulership in the area that would become Constantinople.
The lower register of crosses in the apse is framed by three additional encircled crosses that form an arc above it in the upper register (figure 4.51). These crosses are stand-ins for patriarchs of the church, identifiable via epigraphic inscriptions listing Jacob, Abraham, and Isaac.\textsuperscript{795} Abraham, a figure from the Hebrew Bible, along with his son Isaac and grandson Jacob, were patriarchs of the Israelites whose descendants were to be led out of captivity in Egypt. They were led by Moses, who saw God transfigured in a burning bush, saying “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”\textsuperscript{796} On behalf of the Israelites, Moses later received the Ten Commandments as God’s law and covenant.\textsuperscript{797}

In the context of a Christian apse, Hebrew references were used because Christ’s sacrifice became a new covenant outlined in the Gospels. The three patriarchs may represent a prefiguration of the Trinity, recalling an episode in the Book of Genesis wherein three angels appeared to Abraham.\textsuperscript{798} Iconophiles later linked the Old Testament theophanies of God to the Incarnation, arguing that because Christ had lived on earth, his earthly form could be depicted without risk of idolatry.\textsuperscript{799} The patriarchs were part of Byzantine apocrypha since at least the second century, and as early as the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} they had become part of funerary liturgy in the form of the Bidding Prayer for the Souls of the Departed.\textsuperscript{800} The prophets gained additional importance in the Feast of Orthodoxy as it developed after the ninth century.\textsuperscript{801} In fact, relics of the Three Patriarchs were documented in the Temple of the Mother of God in the Great

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{795} \textit{ΗΑΚΟΒ (Ἡακόβ)}, \textit{ΑΒΠΑΑΜ (Ἁβρααμ)}, \textit{ΗΣΑΑΚ (Ἡσαάκ)} in Jerphanion, \textit{Une Nouvelle Province}, 2:107; Normalized orthography in Xenakis, “Recherches sur les églises byzantines de Cappadoce,” 425; See also Thierry, “Les peintures murales,” 30.
\item \textsuperscript{796} Exodus 3:6
\item \textsuperscript{797} Exodus 31:18
\item \textsuperscript{798} Genesis 17:1-2 and 18:1-2. The book of Genesis describes God’s covenant with Abraham that he will father the Lord’s chosen people. After Abraham offers hospitality to three men (angels in disguise), his wife Sara is able to bear a son. I am grateful to Eric Ivison for the suggestion of this comparison.
\item \textsuperscript{800} Teteriatnikov, “The Frescoes of the Chapel of St. Basil,” 110.
\item \textsuperscript{801} Woodfin, “Majestas Domini,” 49–50.
\end{itemize}
Palace in Constantinople, indicating the a new covenant of God’s protection over the capital city through the presence of holy relics there. Teteriatnikov associates the prophets’ presence in St. Basil Church with an early Christian Cult of the Patriarchs, the veneration of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that began to be depicted in monumental art during the ninth century. Her examination of the Cult of Three Patriarchs deserves consideration because the narrative scene has also been documented in monumental Egyptian painting during the medieval period. However, she calls the representation of the patriarchs as crosses an “Iconoclastic device,” (i.e., a visual, aniconic shorthand for Christ) and explains that “the artist who executed the frescoes would still have had an Iconoclast mentality” in the late ninth century. This is problematic because there is no evidence of Iconoclasts using personified crosses as stand-ins for saints.

Rather than assuming Iconoclastic aniconism, I note that the practice of ascribing names to crosses can also be traced in part to early Christian Egypt. Helmut Buschhausen documented a depiction of a carved cross that is accompanied by a saint’s name, Apa Kafka, on a votive floor plaque marking his burial in the Coptic Monastery of Saint Fana (ca. fourth century or later), (figure 4.52). The focal point of the relief carving is a central cross, the top of which is a

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second, encircled cross. Two smaller crosses below the arms flank the central cross, and additional small crosses surround the circle atop the central cross arms, creating a network of symbols that feel like a portrait, despite its aniconism. The overall impression resembles an abstracted, stylized crucifixion. Buschhausen notes that this image is not typical of Coptic art, and is probably much older.807 It is one of early Christian aniconism rather than an Iconoclastic device.

The three gemmed crosses in the apse depicted against a background of flowers may also be a reference to early Christian martyrs.808 Like the cross, flowers were a symbol of both blood and rejuvenation in early Christian art and texts.809 The early Christian poet Prudentius (348-ca. 410) described the children killed by King Herod as “martyr-flowers.”810 The placement of a martyr in a field of flowers was a visual convention that was also used in Egypt. In the Oratory at Abou-Girgeh (ca. sixth century) near Alexandria, a wall painting depicts a female martyr standing in a field with hands raised in an orant prayer gesture (figure 4.53).811 Jill Ross points out that some of these flowers “bear the symbol of the cross, suggesting that their martyred bodies have become flowers in paradise.”812 In the Guidi-Vita, Constantine’s first imperial act was to order that the remains of martyrs in Rome be “collected and given consecrated burial,” an

807 Buschhausen et al., “Excavations of Abu Fana in 1990,” 96; For context, see Elizabeth Bolman, “Paintings and Monastic Practice in Early Byzantine Egypt,” in Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300-700, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 166; For additional uses of cross imagery in Coptic art, see Buschhausen, “Excavations of Dayr Abu Fana in Egypt in 1987.”
809 Miller, 229–30.
order followed by the end of persecutions, imprisonment, and exile of Christians.\textsuperscript{813} I speculate that the flowers in the apse of St. Basil Church may also reference early Christian martyrs and their reception during the medieval period, complementing the Hebrew prophecies that came true with Christ’s presence on earth.

The role of martyrdom was essentially the opposite of pre-figuration in that martyrs were reenacting Christ’s sacrifice instead of predicting it. In this apse, the cycle of divine sacrifice, and thus the circle of redemption, is reflected in the simultaneous references to Christ and martyrdom. The flowering of martyrdom can also be associated with the leafy Living Cross depicted on the south wall of the south chapel in St. Basil Church, referencing the Crucifixion on Golgotha as well as Helena’s discovery of True Cross there. While the apse decoration in St. Basil Church does not elucidate exactly which of the “innumerable” Byzantine lives of Constantine were in circulation in ninth-century Cappadocia, it does indicate that the regional population was well-versed in the hagiographic nature of his legacy.\textsuperscript{814} In the chapel, the relationship of the ceiling cross hovering over the congregation—massive, protective, and shimmering—contrasts with the intimate representations of crosses on the walls. In the apse, the Old Testament images reference the new covenant between God and man that manifested itself in the cross. That the ceiling cross also references Constantine’s vision can be interpreted as an acknowledgement of a new theophany, the mark of God’s favor and his presence over the empire.

\textsuperscript{813} Guidi-Vita, 14 in “BHG 364, Frank Beetham, trans., revised by Dominic Montserrat and Sam Lieu in Lieu and Montserrat, “Constantine Byzantinus,” 19; Kazhdan, “Constantin Imaginaire,” 208.

\textsuperscript{814} Lieu and Montserrat, From Constantine to Julian: Pagan and Byzantine Views: A Source History, 101. In their introduction to the translation of the Guidi-Vita, Lieu and Montserrat note that the “innumerable lives of Constantine composed in the Byzantine period” received only cursory treatment by scholars until the late twentieth century, and that only a few have been disseminated for general study.
Crosses for Protection

St. Basil Church echoes several threads in the wider Byzantine Cult of the Cross. The first of these was the use of the cross as a protective image in ways that allude to Constantine’s military success. Apotropaic crosses were not new in the Middle Byzantine period—early Christian crosses had often been used for personal apotropaic purposes—but holy protection channeled through cross images maintained its importance in more public ways after Iconoclasm.\textsuperscript{815} This stemmed largely from Constantine’s vision of the cross in the sky before his battle at the Milvian Bridge, after which he was visited by God in a dream to verify the sign as a holy message that he would be protected.\textsuperscript{816} Many manifestations of the Cult of the Cross are apotropaic uses of the symbol (like the one on Constantine’s palace ceiling), but even those offered opportunities for patronage. Much of the additional material and literary evidence for the cult points toward similar extraliturgical practices. For instance, the Exaltation of the Cross feast was the backdrop for a healing miracle in the ninth century wherein a sickly patriarch of the church was miraculously healed by drinking water from the holy spring of Pege, located just outside Constantinople:

The patriarch Stephen, of blessed memory, the emperor’s brother, was afflicted with an abscess on his chest. After drinking water from the holy spring at the time of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Venerable Cross, he did not fail to attain the healing for which he had hoped. As a thank offering he had the holy vestments that he wore for the liturgy … refashioned into an altar cloth, making sure that the monks in the monastery would spread it over the altar on the Feast of the Exaltation; and this is carried out up to this day.\textsuperscript{817}

\textsuperscript{815} Gregory, \textit{Life of Macrina}, Ch. 30 in Patricia Cox Miller, \textit{Women in Early Christianity: Translations from Greek Texts} (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 203. One early Christian example was a True Cross relic worn by Macrina, sister of Gregory the Great. After she died, two nuns discovered that a chain she wore “for ornament” also held a cross relic that “had been always over her heart.” See also Chapter 3 for a discussion of Macrina.


\textsuperscript{817} “Anonymous Miracles of the Pege,” Ch. 21, trans. Alice-Mary Maffry Talbot in Alice-Mary Maffry Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, eds., \textit{Miracle Tales from Byzantium}, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 12 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012), 257–260 and 432. Talbot notes that Stephen I was patriarch of Constantinople (886-893) and was a brother of Leo VI.
By donating the vestments, Stephen created a richer lore of relics and miracles surrounding the Feast of the Exaltation season at the Pege spring, which held its miraculous potency until at least the Latin occupation in 1204.\(^\text{818}\)

After Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge, the cross was associated with military success for its efficacy in protecting Christian interests on the battlefield, especially by Emperor Heraclius (r. 610 to 641), who relished and encouraged comparisons to Constantine, even naming his son and successor Constantine Heraclius.\(^\text{819}\) The cult received a devastating blow when the True Cross relics were captured by the Persians during the fall of Jerusalem in 614.\(^\text{820}\) While the cult did not die out during the relics’ captivity, it had a renewed energy after Heraclius recovered the True Cross relics in 629.\(^\text{821}\) Upon their recovery Heraclius took the relics first to Constantinople, and then back to Jerusalem in an imperial \textit{adventus} ceremony that may have taken a route through Cappadocia.\(^\text{822}\) The recovery of the True Cross relics coincided with the consolidation of Islamic military power, and the cult helped Byzantines respond more


\(^{822}\) W. M. Ramsay, \textit{The Historical Geography of Asia Minor}, vol. IV, Royal Geographical Society Supplementary Papers (London, 1890), 242 and 278. Ramsey says the pilgrimage route in the sixth century went through Anzyra (Ankara). While I have not been able to determine Heraclius’ exact paths, his route from Persia may have brought the relics through Cappadocia, and a land route would almost certainly have taken the relics through Cappadocia again on his trip from Constantinople to return them to Jerusalem. For possible ancient routes, see ORBIS: The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World, \url{http://orbis.stanford.edu/}.  

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confidently to threats from the east that began in the next decade of the seventh century. The first invasions began in the 630s, and the empire’s eastern Anatolian borderlands continued to be a “permeable frontier zone” that was contested throughout the so-called Dark Ages and medieval period.823

The cross continued to be used as a show of military strength and victory during the eighth and ninth centuries.824 Outside the capital, Constantine’s legacy and the Cult of the Cross were known widely, and they inspired localized traditions that demonstrated God’s protection through patronage and veneration of the cross. In the epic ninth-century poem Digenis Akritas, a young soldier named Constantine engages in combat to protect his sister, armed in part with crosses on all sides of his body for protection.825 The story indicates ways that Emperor Constantine’s legacy was a part of Byzantine popular culture among rural elites and the soldiers who guarded them, compounding military and personal uses of the cross as a protective element within a reconfiguration of the emperor’s experience into that of a common soldier. In hagiographical evidence, the patriarch sent Theodore of Sykeon a piece of the cross along with a stone from Golgotha.826 The gift to Theodore indicates a local tradition that True Cross relics were present in Anatolia by the seventh century.827 This was the regional context in which St. Basil Church was commissioned, and it suggests that the chapel was a personal statement of the patron’s identity and wish for protection, reflecting an acknowledgement of imperial and military protections that were available through veneration of the cross.

824 Kazhdan, “Constantin Imaginaire,” 229.
Crosses for Celebrations

There were a number of feast celebrations and private practices during which the True Cross was venerated in Constantinople, including September 14, the third week of Lent, and Easter Week venerations, all of which were documented by the seventh century. The seventh century was an important one for the Cult of the Cross in terms of formal codification of liturgy. Although an Exaltation of the Cross liturgy had been celebrated in Jerusalem since at least the fourth century (see Chapter 1), the practice cannot be confirmed in Constantinople until around 614. Celebration of the Exaltation of the Cross liturgy spread to the West by the seventh century, first to Rome and from there to Gaul and the rest of Europe. The liturgical development in the West stemmed from Roman practice, and not directly from Constantinople, meaning that Byzantine rituals developed separately from Western European practice, even though it was the same cult. In Byzantium the military and Constantinian nuances of the cult (military victory and discovery of the True Cross relics) were revived in the seventh century and conflated with celebration of the Exaltation of the Cross liturgy on September 14.

As noted above, the variety of depicted crosses in St. Basil Church have led to the suggestion that the overall decorative scheme references a specific liturgy, but it is unclear whether any public liturgies took place in the tiny chapel, or what the liturgical rituals venerating the cross would have looked like in such a minute setting, as there is little comparative visual material. The first representations of the Byzantine Exaltation of the Cross liturgy are from the Middle and Late Byzantine periods, after the ritual was widely established, and probably after St.

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830 Tongeren, Exaltation of the Cross, 4.
831 Tongeren, 3–4; Klein, “Constantine, Helena, and the Cult of the True Cross,” 41–43.
Basil Church was decorated. An example is in the Menologion of Basil II (early eleventh century, Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613) an illuminated manuscript of church services arranged around the months of the yearly liturgical calendar. In its depiction of the Exaltation of the Cross a double-armed wooden cross with a long stem is raised above the celebrant’s head as an “elevation” of the holy object (figure 4.54). Although manuscript representations are often stylized or copied from formal models, some obvious differences between the depicted festival’s setting and St. Basil Church arise. The elevated crosses on long stems would not be possible under the low ceiling in St. Basil Church as it would be in the vast spaces under the domes of imperial churches like Hagia Sophia. In the menologion, the celebrant is also elevated on an ambo (pulpit). While the manuscript illumination and its models may echo a capitaline precedent, existing Middle Byzantine imagery of the Exaltation of the Cross does not reflect the reality of most small Cappadocian chapels where there was no ambo.

Based on the imprecise visual and liturgical information that is available, tracing three cross depictions to an exact liturgy is too specific. However, Teteriatnikov’s hypothesis does point to the issue of what Cappadocian liturgical crosses looked like during that period and how the presence of cross objects contributed to the visual experience in small chapels like this one. The interior of St. Basil Church was designed as a setting in which to venerate the cross, and it has several depictions of cross objects, but there are no extant examples of liturgical documents

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836 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 46–47.
or physical objects that were used in this location. Additionally, regarding the cross-related celebrations described above, we know the dates of these and some information about the rituals, but we do not always know what the cross objects used in the celebrations looked like. Some visual interpretation of the cross object is possible from manuscript depictions (however stylized or idealized) and extant Cappadocian objects, although it is difficult to discern how extant images do (or do not) represent the material reality of worshippers from the seventh to tenth centuries.

The extant architectural details in St. Basil Church offer no indication of what the Exaltation Liturgy would look like if it were celebrated in during the Byzantine period. There is, however, a bit of evidence indicating the scale and shape of at least one cross-shaped object. A cruciform niche on the east wall that deserves further attention with regard to the use and patronage of cross objects in Cappadocia. The niche is a cross-shaped sunken relief, about a foot high, carved in the east wall of the south chapel. Visible from the nave, it is to the left of the altar near a portrait of Saint Basil, which is one of only two figural images in the entire church (figure 4.55). It probably represents a metal or wooden cross that was set into the wall, inside a privileged space that was carefully designed to contain only that object. The juxtaposition is a duplication of the cross, a niche holding a slightly smaller version of the same shape, multiplying the number of crosses (and therefore the holy potency of the space) in the small chapel.

The missing cross object may have borne some resemblance to the Reliquary Cross of Leo (ca. 959-60), which is now in the Museum of Art and History in Geneva (Inv. AD 3062) and is one of the few Anatolian liturgical objects from the Byzantine period to survive (figure 837).

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837 This niche has been largely ignored by scholars, but I have identified several more in Anatolia and plan to further investigate the practice in future research. See also Jolivet-Lévy, La Cappadoce: mémoire de Byzance, 25. Jolivet-Lévy suggests that in Zelve Church 4, a similar cross-shaped niche in the apse may have been used to store a wood or metal reliquary.
The object is a reliquary processional cross from the tenth or eleventh century with an inscription that says it was created by a military commander named Leo. The thin Latin cross with serifed, splayed arms stands about fourteen inches tall and has a tang at the bottom for attaching to a base or handle. Its style is said to be a revival of early Christian silver crosses, with inscriptions in “cruciform uncial” that are comparable to those on a number of other Middle Byzantine crosses. Laskarina Bouras notes that the object’s decoration is a “revival” of sixth- or seventh-century uncial inscriptions and that its “graceful” epigram style and “Islamicizing floral ornament” are both typical of the tenth century. It is a typical kind of votive object for this period because as Brad Hostetler notes, most Middle Byzantine reliquaries with epigrams (that were dedicated as votives) were made to contain relics of the True Cross. There was a revival of early Christian representations of the True Cross in the Middle Byzantine period, evidence of a trend that this Cappadocian evidence also supports.

Bouras concludes that this patron must have been Leo Phocas, a brother of emperor Nicephoras II Phocas (r. 963 to 969) who was born in Cappadocia and was part of the Phocas family discussed in the Introduction in the context of the Pigeon House Church and its

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839 Bouras, “Reliquary Cross of Leo Domestikos,” 180; Hostetler, “The Function of Text,” 186 and 277. Per Hostetler, the inscription says: Ἐργὸν φέριστον ἐκ πόθου γεγονότα / τέτευχε Λέων πρωτάρχης Μακεδόνων / πατρίκιας τε καὶ δομέστικος Δύσης / ποθόν τον θέλων Μιχαήλ στρατηγετὴν / τόν ἐν ταῖς Χώναις ἣδη νέον φανέντα / μετονομασθεὶς αὖθις Δαμοκρανίτης. Bouras translates this as, “This priceless work, / the outcome of devotion, / was created by Leo, first commander of the Macedonians, / patrikios, and domestikos tes Dyses. / Longing for St. Michael, the commander of armies / the one of Chonae who presently reappeared, / his name being changed henceforth to Damokranites.” Hostetler points to Rhoby’s transcription and clarifies that “tes Dyses” is “of the West” and that it was Leo who “took on the new name ‘Damokranites.’”

840 Bouras, “Reliquary Cross of Leo Domestikos,” 179.

841 Bouras, 187.


843 Bouras, “Reliquary Cross of Leo Domestikos,” 179.
patronage. He was known as “Leo Strategos of the theme Anatolikon,” and his title became *kouropalates* (courtier) after his retirement from the military. A statesman of that name was also mentioned by Liutprand of Cremona in 968 when the bishop and diplomat visited Constantinople from the northern Italian peninsula. With this in mind I summarize that the Reliquary Cross of Leo was commissioned by a secular, military patron with ties to imperial Constantinople and Cappadocia. Such a well-connected patron in the region would have influenced, or possibly even been a peer of, the patrons of smaller commissions like Nicander’s St. Basil Chapel in the Gomeda Valley.

**Conclusions**

Although there is no Byzantine ekphrasis of St. Basil Church, the monument itself is a lesson in affordances that encourage spirituality. From the south apse of St. Basil Church, the cross soars above, and the geometric patterns on the west wall and ceiling serve as a backdrop that encourages the celebrant to gaze at the familiar, calm cross that appears to be rising above the faithful (figure 4.57). The church’s decoration demonstrates how the late Roman visuality of axial sight lines and separate devotional spaces discussed in the previous chapter have given way to an immersive ecosystem of Byzantine imagery that creates a holy sphere, wherein the ceiling plays a prominent role. Throughout the space, the eyes and body are directed between and among sacred images of the cross.

The date of the church can be confined to the late ninth or early tenth century because it is part of a group with dated inscriptions to this period. These monuments, which I designate as the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group, demonstrate regional connections and a shared understanding

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844 Bouras, 182; Lyn Rodley, “The Pigeon House Church,” 322.
845 Bouras, “Reliquary Cross of Leo Domestikos,” 184.
846 Bouras, 184.
of visuality based on the use of pattern and motif with monumental ceiling crosses. The viewing conditions created by the monumental cross are indicative of a wider practice in ceiling design that contributes to a visually immersive experience that was desirable in the Transitional and Middle Byzantine periods.

The decoration in St. Basil Church is both patron-centric and indicative of wider connections. The paintings of gemmed crosses indicate ways the Cult of the Cross operated during the post-Iconoclastic period, especially with regard to local reimaginings of Constantine’s legacy that coincide with literary and material evidence. Historically, the likelihood is strong that lay patron Nicander, like many other residents of Cappadocia, had some kind of military background. I dwell on his identity and patronage in order to frame Cappadocia as a melting pot region that was widely connected to empire-wide practices of the Cult of the Cross, rather than a remote rural province.

The iconographic themes and connections to wider practices implicate opportunities for future work on the topic of immersive viewing and regional practices in the Cult of the Cross. One rich area for comparison is medieval Georgia, the region adjoining Asia Minor whose capital city was about seven hundred miles northeast of Göreme (figure 4.58). Not only did the Georgian royal family adopt Byzantine imperial traditions in order to channel the empire’s political legitimacy into its own royal household, the region looked specifically to Cappadocian sources during its conversion to Christianity and development of Christian art forms.

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847 For an overview, see Antony Eastmond, Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); Adriano Alpago Novello, Vaxtang Berize, and Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, Art and Architecture in Medieval Georgia (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Institut supérieur d’archéologie et d’histoire de l’art, Collège Erasme, 1980).
Hagiographic evidence recalls that during the reign of Constantine the Great, a Cappadocian saint named Nino converted the King Mirian (284-361) to Christianity. True Cross relics were documented in Georgia by the fifth century, demonstrating the presence of its cult there. During the ninth century, Nino’s vita was compiled from older sources and redistributed in order to emphasize Constantinian connotations, reflecting wider Byzantine trends. According to the vita, cross images played a prominent role in the Christianization of Georgia, offering evidence of a deeply embedded Cult of the Cross. For instance, Mirian commissioned a cross for the place of his conversion, and three crosses to be made from a miracle-working tree growing the place of his baptism, acts of patronage in the tradition of Constantine’s at Golgotha. In addition to the cross object Mirian commissioned, there were several instances after his baptism when a fiery cross came down from the sky to demarcate holy places, recalling Constantine’s vision of the cross near the Milvian Bridge and Cyril’s cross of light in Jerusalem.

Byzantine and Georgian art were stylistically similar—scholars have described their styles as almost indistinguishable by the eleventh century—yet some specifically Georgian


849 Life of Saint Nino, in Sakart’velos Samot’hkhe, ed. Gobron (Mikhail) Sabinin, St. Petersburg, 1882; Margery Wardrop, trans., Life of Saint Nino (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006), 36 (Mirian’s conversion) and 7 (for background information about Nino). Waldrop’s translation is from Sabinin’s collection of Georgian saints’ lives. Because the original text has no standardized chapter or section numbers, I cite the vita using Waldrop’s page numbers. Waldrop notes that Nino was born to Cappadocian parents and was thought to have been a cousin of a martyr, Saint George the Cappadocian.

850 Frolov, “La relique de la Vraie Croix,” 172 and 174. Frolov documented two of note: One was in the Cathedral of Nikoz until 1799. This reliquary of True Cross was thought to have been brought by King Wakhtang Gourgaslan from Jerusalem around 460. A second is a silver reliquary with embossed floral motifs that dates from the fifth or sixth century and is now in the Museum of History and Ethnography.


853 Life of St. Nino, Wardrop, 46.
artistic developments emerged around that time. Among them was the Glorification of the Cross, a quintessentially Georgian iconographic theme that artists began to depict around the tenth century. In a Glorification of the Cross scene angels lift a gemmed cross aloft, as in the monastery of Bertubani (1212-1213) that was commissioned by Queen Tamar (r. 1184 to 1213), (figure 4.59). This iconography was usually depicted in a vault or dome. The frequency of this scene at a monumental scale in the vault expresses a widespread acknowledgement that a monumental gemmed cross overhead could contribute potency to the spiritual experience of immersive viewing. This is the case in the Bertubani monastery’s small church, where the vaulted ceiling of the nave is decorated with two angels painted on either side of an encircled cross. Although much of the Bertubani ceiling was damaged in the twentieth century, the remains of its cross show an angel holding a framed image of concentric blue circles with stars that hint at depth toward the heavens, and the cross in the center is depicted with pearls and gemstones lining the arms (figure 4.60). While the image is figural and narrative, its background provides a visual depth and destabilized surface that recalls the immersive and dynamic viewing in Cappadocian monuments, including the Four-Quadrant Group. The gemmed cross depicted in this chapel (a typical Georgian example) is similar to some painted in Cappadocia, including ones in St. Basil Church and St. Stephen Chapel in Cemil. These visual and historical similarities indicate that the iconographic theme of the Glorification of the

855 Lafontaine-Dosogne, 87; Eastmond, Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia, 170–71.
856 Lafontaine-Dosogne, 87; Eastmond, Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia, 170–71.
858 Velmans and Alpago-Novello, Miroir de l’invisible, 52–53.
859 For more Georgian examples, see Alpago Novello, Berize, and Lafontaine-Dosogne, Art and Architecture in Medieval Georgia, 89.
Cross and the dynamic viewing experiences brought about by monumental ceiling imagery in Georgia are worth further inquiry in connection to the Cappadocian contributions to the imagery celebrating the Cult of the Cross and the visuality associated with the cult.860

The Middle Byzantine Cult of the Cross emerged through the juxtaposition of codified liturgical practices and the resurgence of Constantine’s popularity alongside local and individual devotional practices in small chapels like St. Basil Church. In this chapter my comparisons of images in St. Basil Church to other objects, chapels, and regions are geared toward a hope that asking new questions of this chapel will result in a more nuanced understanding of Cappadocia’s role in the development of Byzantine monumental art. St. Basil Church, like the other case studies, demonstrates viewing experiences with cross imagery in Cappadocia that highlight the evolving Cult of the Cross in Byzantium.

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860 While extensive attention to medieval Georgia would be outside the parameters of this dissertation, the region deserves further attention. I plan to continue comparative research of Cappadocian and Georgian Cult of the Cross traditions in the near future.
Chapter 5: Revelatory Glimpses in the Karabaş Monks’ Tomb

Deep within a rock-cut church complex in the Soğanlı Valley, eleventh-century visitors to a small burial chapel had access to an adjoining tomb through a rectangular interior window. It was situated at eye level and was slightly larger than the viewer’s face. Through that fenestella they could glimpse the tomb’s ceiling cross, a boldly painted image that contrasts so sharply with its white background that its presence is apparent even in low lighting conditions (figure 5.1).\textsuperscript{861} The cross itself is thin and stylized, with arms and spine that display a green and yellow diamond pattern outlined in orange. Like the ceiling cross in St. Basil Church, its effect in dim, flickering light would be one wherein it seems to float above the viewer. Mediating between the holy dead interred below and their presence in Heaven, the ceiling cross gave the viewer in the chapel a recognizable image on which to fix her devotional gaze. Visitors on the chapel side of the window could not see inside the tomb, but on its interior walls were four portraits of monks painted beneath the ceiling cross, channeling the petitions of the faithful toward heavenly intercessors (figure 5.2).

This ceiling cross represents the revelatory glimpse, a third kind of Byzantine viewing experience in Cappadocia. This occurs when an image may not be visible all the time or in its entirety, but its presence and occasional revealment remain present in the viewer’s mind, and the image maintains a spiritual presence in the space. In this chapel, visions of the cross could be quick and fleeting, revealed through the fenestella as the image in a dark space became visible through natural or artificial illumination.

\textsuperscript{861} Jerphanion, \textit{Une Nouvelle Province}, 2.1: 356-360; Lyn Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 195. Jerphanion documented the wall that had the fenestella, but it was heavily damaged later in the twentieth century. Rodley saw it intact but later confirmed its destruction in the early 1980s. My own observations and photographs are from site visits in June and July of 2011 and July of 2013.
The tomb chamber and its adjoining chapel are among several rock-cut spaces adjacent to Karabaş Kilisesi (Blackhead Church, ca. before 1061). In comparison to the ceiling crosses in the previous chapters’ case studies, the one in the Karabaş monks’ tomb is relatively small, roughly six feet long and four wide, and painted over a space that is only about four feet high. But the cross is monumental in that it demarcates the area below and represents a powerful visual convergence of ideas. Though the cross was usually hidden in darkness, its presence (even via a quick illumination) would reveal to Cappadocians that a symbol of hope and faith was just out of sight in the dark tomb on the other side of the fenestella. The presence of the fenestella that connects the painted tomb chamber to the chapel indicates that the commemorations were enhanced by the ceiling cross.

In this chapter I argue that the ceiling cross is crucial to understanding the dynamics of the spaces from which it was visible to its Byzantine viewership, a group that consisted of both laity and monks on earth as well as the heavenly dead. In this monument, vision offers spiritual access to the divine, and the cross sanctifies the physical space while referencing salvation.

Visual Analysis

The Soğanlı Valley, which is now an open air museum, is located about thirty-three miles south of Göreme near the town of Yeşilhisar. In the valley there was a mutual relationship between monasteries and estates wherein monks were supported by lay patrons in exchange for commemoration.\textsuperscript{862} One complex there is Karabaş Kilisesi where several rock-cut structures were accessible through doorways in an open courtyard in the landscape (figure 5.3 and figure 5.4). Toward the west side of the complex there is a large, transverse barrel-vaulted space that

\textsuperscript{862} Ousterhout, “Remembering the Dead,” 91 and 95.
Rodley inferred was an audience hall with an arched entryway.\footnote{Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 193.} Currently the most prominent entrance is into the main church on the eastern side of the courtyard, but a second entrance (possibly the original) further east of it led into the narthex of a burial chapel that is connected to the tomb chamber. The tomb chamber and its adjoining burial chapel are ancillary spaces in a network of carved rooms that are connected to the main church.\footnote{Jerphanion, \textit{Une Nouvelle Province}, 2:333-360; Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 193–202; Robert Ousterhout, “Sightlines, Hagioscopes, and Church Planning in Byzantine Cappadocia,” \textit{Art History} 39, no. 5 (November 2016): 848–67, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8365.12229. Scholars are not in agreement as to the nomenclature for carved spaces in the Karabaş complex. In addition to the chapels discussed in this chapter, there is a large, transverse barrel-vaulted space in the same courtyard complex that Rodley inferred was an audience hall, calling it (1) of the complex; its entrance was probably the now-destroyed arched entryway at the westernmost side of the courtyard near (2). Just south of the audience hall is the main church (Rodley’s Chapel 3 and Ousterhout’s Chapel 1, after Jerphanion) with several adjoining rooms: Rodley’s chapel (4), which Ousterhout and Jerphanion call Chapel 2; Rodley’s (5) which Ousterhout calls the third chapel, after Jerphanion, and I discuss as the “burial chapel” or “adjoining chapel” to the tomb; area (6) which I discuss as the monks’ “tomb chamber” that Ousterhout refers to as a hermitage or the fourth chapel, after Jerphanion; and Rodley’s (7), which is a burial annex that Ousterhout calles the original vestibule.}

The Karabaş Kilisesi complex was in use for over a century, which is evidenced by several distinct layers of painted decoration, making it a complicated space in terms of chronology. Much of the early scholarship on this monument focused on the main church and its iconography.\footnote{Nicole Thierry, “Etude stylistique de Karabaş kilise en Cappadoce (1060-1061),” \textit{Cahiers Archéologiques} 27 (1967): 161–74 Thierry’s is the most thorough treatment of the main church’s iconography; See also Jerphanion, \textit{Une Nouvelle Province}, 2.1: 333-351; Hans Rott, \textit{Kleinasiatische Denkmäler Aus Pisidien, Pamphylien, Kappadokien Und Lykien: Darstellender Teil} (Leipzig: Dieterich, 1908), 135; Henri Grégoire, “Rapport sur un voyage d’exploration dans le Pont et en Cappadoce,” \textit{Bulletin de correspondance hellénique} 33, no. 1 (1909): 95–101, https://doi.org/10.3406/bch.1909.3211; Marcell Restle, \textit{Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor} (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1968), vol I: 162-164.} Based on stylistic analysis of layers of painted decoration, the main church (a barrel-vaulted basilica) was probably carved and painted in the tenth century; it was redecorated in the eleventh, based on an inscription saying that an upper layer of extensive wall painting was commissioned by Michael Skepides in 1060/61, as discussed in the Introduction.\footnote{Jerphanion, \textit{Une Nouvelle Province}, 1.1: 67-94 and 2.2: 414-418; Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 198 and 201. One of those earlier layers of paint is similar to the one in the monks’ tomb. Rodley compares the lower (previous) layer to Jerphanion’s “archaic” group of churches, which he dated to the tenth century based on iconography.}
My interest in this space centers around the viewing experience of people who saw the
tomb chamber’s ceiling cross through the fenestella from the adjoining burial chapel, a view that
was constructed before the Skepides family documented their patronage of the monument.
Archaeologist Kate Giles advocates for the use of “palimpsest,” to describe spaces that were
used over long periods of time like this one, using the term “both as a metaphor for the layers of
paint and plaster and acts of erasure which constitute these schemes, but also as an analogy for
the process of archaeological interpretation itself.” Giles points to the “spatial turn” in
archaeology, wherein scholars examine visual relationships of monuments and objects within a
wider context of relationships and surrounding landscape, but she criticizes frameworks such as
hierarchy or social status when they merely reflect categories that are modern constructions,
citing the importance of the “historicity of visuality and spatiality.” In other words, the
intended users had a cultural, if not personal, memory of the site during earlier phases. In the
parlance of rhetoric, this refers to “public memory” which centers around a common identity or
symbolic connection, to a group that would be part of the complicated and nuanced movements
and rituals that took place there.

Ousterhout has recently begun to examine the church in this context, hypothesizing that
when Michael Skepides redecorated the main church, he was aware of the monument’s history
and kept a sight line from the main church altar to the tomb’s fenestella in mind. Ousterhout
has described the chronology of the complex as a “process of gradual expansion with
components added at different periods of time,” noting that the practice is common throughout

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868 Giles, 106–9.
Cappadocia but is “dramatically” evidenced at Karabaş. For many years, the accepted chronology was that the main church was probably excavated first, around the tenth century; then four additional, connected chapels and burial spaces toward the south, one of which includes the tomb chamber under discussion here, are estimated to have been dug within a century after that. Like Rodley before him, Ousterhout posits that the tomb chamber was for a recluse and he adds that the fenestella may have been his window for experiencing the liturgy taking place in the adjoining chapel. He deviates from previous scholarship, however, to argue for a new and plausible chronology, suggesting that the tomb chamber with its adjoining chapel and vestibule comprised a holy site that sprang up around a hermitage (now the tomb chamber and its adjoining chapel) that was augmented later with the main church and another chapel.

If Ousterhout is correct about the sight lines from the altar, the tomb space was important enough to become the focal point of the entire complex. Before that time, the fenestella into the monks’ tomb was designed to be a place for people to encounter the holy. By the mid-eleventh century, Cappadocians would have understood these images and spaces within the context of an evolving site, indeed, a kind of palimpsest. The Karabaş complex has a chronology that attests to the ebb and flow of life and affluence in the province. This is most notable in that even after the redecoration of the main church around 1061, the tomb chamber continued to be accessible.

871 Ousterhout, A Byzantine Settlement, 66.
872 Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 201.
Eucharistic Commemoration

Related spaces within the chapel create a viewing experience that echoes the structure’s primary purpose, which is eucharistic commemoration of deceased lay patrons and their families. This is reflected in an important axis in the burial chapel that operates as a conceptual line between an unpainted niche on the north wall, just outside the apse, and the fenestella on the south wall, directly across the chapel from the niche (figure 5.5 and 5.6). Because the tomb has been destroyed, the fenestella is no longer extant. Photographic evidence shows the small rectangular window’s placement at approximately eye level (figure 5.7). Digitally layering Jerphanion’s photo of the fenestella onto a more recent photo of the damaged tomb wall demonstrates that the opening of the fenestella was visually aligned with the niche on the other side of the chapel (figure 5.8). This relationship indicates a sight line that reflects a design choice to incorporate the presence of the monks’ tomb into the eucharistic setting.

The niche opposite the fenestella on the north wall is a prothesis, a space used for the preparation of eucharistic bread and wine. The semicircular niche is carved at approximately the same height as the fenestella and is also about a foot tall. The placement of the prothesis in the nave, rather than the sanctuary, is a common Cappadocian architectural trait. In the floor below the prothesis is a tomb, dug so that the interred person would have to be acknowledged whenever a celebrant stood over the burial to reach into the niche.

The location of a prothesis within a chapel and its exact use varied regionally and over time in Byzantium. In most areas (including Cappadocia), the prothesis was paired with a

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875 Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, Plates 3, Pl. 200.4. Jerphanion published a photograph of one side of the wall before it was damaged.
876 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 80–81; Marinis, Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople, 30–34.
877 Teteriatnikov, Liturgical Planning, 38 and 80.
878 Yannis D. Varalis, “Prothesis and Diakonikon: Searching the Original Concept of the Subsidiary Spaces of the Byzantine Sanctuary,” in Hierotopy: The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia (Ierotopiia:...
a storage space for liturgical vestments that was usually located on the other side of the apse. Diakonikon, a storage space for liturgical vestments that was usually located on the other side of the apse. A prothesis and diakonikon work in tandem to facilitate liturgical rituals that take place in the sanctuary. The vestments in a diakonikon could include items of clerical attire or objects used in the celebration of the liturgy. In the Karabaş chapel, the tomb’s fenestella was in the location where a diakonikon niche would be expected so that, in effect, the tomb of the monks takes the place of a diakonikon.

As Marinis notes, Byzantine use of the term diakonikon varied, and it was used at least once in the Late Byzantine period to describe a space for deacons to stand during the liturgy. It was used similarly in the tenth-century vita of a Cappadocian abbess in Constantinople, Irene of Chrysobalanton (ca. 830-ca. 930). The hagiographer recalls that when a nun in her convent was possessed by a demonic passion, Irene called a meeting and, “when she as usual had entered the diakonikon, she gathered the sisters before her,” in order to shelter them from evil and extort them to fast and stay vigilant against the devil. The space they called a diakonikon was apparently a regular gathering place for the monastic community. Marinis considers this use of the term diakonikon to describe a “monastic context for hearing confessions.” While the Cappadocian origins of both Irene and the possessed nun are incidental to the anecdote and its setting in a diakonikon, it may indicate that the gathering in or near a diakonikon was a regional practice. Because the protagonist is Cappadocian, it is also likely that the vita was popular in

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879 Varalis, 288–91; Marinis, Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople, 38–39.
880 Woodfin, The Embodied Icon, xxxiii and 3-43. Woodfin traces the evolution of vestments from the eleventh century onward, noting that they usually denoted the rank of the celebrant (i.e., bishop, priest, or deacon).
881 Marinis, Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople, 38. For a description of this use, see Symeon of Thessaloniki, De sacro templo et ejus consecratione, 131 in PG 155:345.
883 Life and Conduct of Our Holy Mother Irene Abbess of the Convent of Chrysobalanton, Chapter 13: “The Possessed Nun from Cappadocia,” trans. Rosenqvist, 55. See also 95 for another gathering in the diakonikon.
884 Marinis, Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople, 38.
Cappadocia during and after the late tenth century. The story is useful here because its use of a diakonikon for monastic involvement may indicate a symbolic placement of the monks’ tomb in the Karabaş complex. In that sense, rather than storing vestments for a living celebrant, the fenestella (in place of a diakonikon niche) provides access to the heavenly intercessors depicted inside the tomb. The painted monks on the tomb walls function as stand-ins for practicing clergy, offering a visual reminder of the holy dead who can offer commemoration continually and in concelebration with living viewers.

The prothesis niche and tomb fenestella in the Karabaş burial chapel are of similar size and height and are placed as conceptual mirror images of each other across the chapel. In one, the Eucharist was prepared, symbolizing the sacrifice Christ’s body and blood; in the other were the remains holy monks who benefitted from that redemption and lay in repose under a cross, the symbol of that sacrifice and victory over death. Even if the chapel were rarely used, the eucharistic reference was an appropriate symbolic presence near burials. Early Christian prayers and theologians often referred to the Eucharist as an “unbloody sacrifice.” As liturgist Jean Daniélou interpreted it, “the sacrament of the heavenly sacrifice” was a fulfillment of the New Covenant that “concluded with mankind by Christ on the Cross.” A Cappadocian viewer standing in the chapel’s nave could gain redemption through the eucharistic sacrifice being prepared to her left in the prothesis and from the intercession of the holy dead interred to her right. The visual path between the two spaces also crosses over floor tombs situated between the

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886 Daniélou, The Bible and the Liturgy, 131 and 172.
niche and the fenestella, grouping all of the buried loved ones and the living viewer within the circle of redemption as well.

The Burial Chapel

The small basilical burial chapel that contains the prothesis niche and fenestella is about fifteen feet long by seven in width. It has six floor tombs in the nave. Present-day visitors must enter the church from the north through a newer chapel, but as Ousterhout argues, a burial space at the western end of the basilica that is now blocked with masonry was probably the original vestibule.887

Enhancing the relationship of the adjoining chapel and tomb chamber are several features that enhance the eucharistic commemoration in the space. The burial chapel’s apse (which is toward the southeast) had an inscription petitioning God on behalf of a patron named Kosmas and paintings of two heavily damaged figures that were described by Jerphanion as one man and one woman who are flanking a large encircled cross (figure 5.9).888 While the paintings are too damaged to identify whether either of these individuals was monastic, that two genders were represented may indicate worshippers and tombs of both genders in the chapel as well.

The east wall is also painted with four encircled crosses that flank the bema, one of which is perpendicular to the fenestella. That cross is accompanied by a painted inscription that was meant to be read aloud and includes the phrase, “holy, holy, holy is God” (figure 5.10).889 The chapel has no natural light, so a Byzantine visitor would have needed lamps or candles to see any

888 Θ(εο)ς ἐν τῷ ὄνομα με κε ἐν τῷ δύνας ὑμᾶς σωτήριον κρίνομαι σου Κόσμας in Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 352-355 and inscr. 199; trans. Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 197. Rodley translates the inscription as, “God, in your name save me, and in your power judge me. Kosmas.”
889 ἀγιος, ἀγιος, ἀγιος, ο θ(εο)ς in Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 353, inscr. 198; Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 197.
of the decoration, and to read the inscription she would have needed to stand over tombs in the
floor, a motion that compelled commemoration of the people interred there. To her right, the
visitor could also see the fenestella opening into the rock-cut tomb chamber (figure 5.11).

The Karabaş complex reflects the thread in scholarship that underscores Cappadocia as
an important region for information about landowners like the Skepides family and their
patronage of church decoration so that they could be commemorated.890 Along those lines, many
of the chapels in the region seem to function primarily for burials and commemorative activities
rather than daily or weekly church services; this observation is based on the high number of
chapels in the region, which is almost a thousand—many more than would be needed to
accommodate the population for worship—and the relative lack of soot from oil lamps, which
indicates they were rarely used.891 Sasha Grishin has noted that many chapels seem to have been
built for one tomb, but then other floor burials or arcosolia were added gradually, saying, “it is
clear that in addition to the original tomb further burials were progressively accommodated so
that the chapel functioned as a mausoleum.”892

By Grishin’s measure, Cappadocian burial chapels may not have been used often for the
Divine Liturgy, but I emphasize that the number of tombs in the burial chapel (and elsewhere
throughout the complex) indicates that it would have gotten regular use from commemorative
activities. Remembering the dead was a task undertaken on the third, ninth, and fortieth days
after death, and annually on the anniversary of death.893 This series of events allowed for a

890 Wharton and Schwartzbaum, Tokali Kilise, 38.
892 Grishin, 46.
893 Symeon of Thessaloniki, “Concerning our end and the sacred order of the funeral, and the things being done
according to custom for commemorations,” Ch. 372-373, in Migne, PG 155:692B and 692D; trans. Sarah Tyler
Brooks, “Commemoration of the Dead: Late Byzantine Tomb Decoration (Mid-Thirteenth to Mid-Fifteenth
Centuries)” (New York University, 2002), 457–58, ProQuest Ebrary.
gradual process of accepting and channeling personal grief toward spiritual fulfillment. The presence of the holy monks’ burial with family tombs in the same chapel made commemorating them a community-wide practice.

Although the Eucharist was not performed at funerals, it is integral to commemoration of the dead. For Middle and Late Byzantine commemorative practices, written sources such as typika (monastic foundation documents) allow for examination of how burial chapels like this may have been used. A typikon written around 1061 for the Monastery of the Mother of God Evergetis (“benefactoress”), a private foundation in Constantinople, prescribes an annual liturgical commemoration of anyone who contributed to the monastery (such as donors). Names of important contributors would be listed on diptychs in order to remind the celebrant to commemorate them generously. Translator Robert Jordan suggests that commemoration in exchange for donations was an important source of outside income for the monastery. Recently deceased monks were to be remembered daily during matins, liturgy, and vespers for the first forty days after their death.

Symeon of Thessalonike (bishop 1416/7-1429) recommended that if anyone were “in fear of death” they should “be more zealous toward communion.” He also recommended commemorating loved ones through the “awesome sacrifice” of the Eucharist, suggesting that

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895 Velkovska, “Funeral Rites,” 29.


the practice was used for both commemoration of the dead and edification of the living.  

Symeon’s perspective is an important one because, although he wrote in fifteenth-century Thessaloniki, he had lived in Constantinople and collated earlier sources with contemporary ones. When Symeon cited “holy Dionysios,” he believed he was citing the works of Dionysios the Aereopagite, a follower of Paul, but he was actually reading an author now called Pseudo-Dionysios (ca. sixth century). In addition to the sixth century author, Symeon also alludes directly to biblical passages and other unnamed sources, showing the multi-faceted knowledge that matriculated from earlier centuries into later Byzantine practice. The genre of commentary is one that includes historiography and is useful for tracing ancient authors who continued to be known in the later medieval period.

Commemoration is evident not only in the presence of tombs throughout the Karabaş complex, but also in their arrangement. The complex has a variety of burials, including floor tombs (which are shallow pit graves) and arcosolia (tombs in arched recesses), that are both common throughout the region. Symeon wrote about an “ancient” hierarchy of burial spots in and around the church, based on the tradition of the Holy Apostles Church in Constantinople: bishops and saints were buried in the sanctuary, the most sacred place; in monasteries, ordained monks were buried below the sanctuary, separately from unordained monks; and laity were buried in the naos near doorways. He adds that monasteries adhered to the practice more strictly than other institutions.

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903  Hawkes-Teeples, “Liturgical Commentaries,” 4. For Dionysios the Aereopagite, see Acts 17:34.
The proliferation of tombs in and around Cappadocian monuments indicates that although the codified burial strategy may not have been enacted so stringently in the province, there are certainly privileged burial spaces in the Karabaş complex. These are the painted arcosolia in the main church and the monks’ tomb. However, every threshold or doorway into or out of the chapels in the Karabaş complex has floor burials. This means that throughout the complex the more humble floor tombs are directly related to the flow of foot traffic. Even if these were for people of lower social status, their burial spots were positioned to attract attention, offering them a better chance of commemoration, despite the lack of images or inscriptions to prompt intercession by the faithful. This shared existence of the living and the dead made commemoration efficient, incorporating it into almost every possible movement within the complex. For instance, there are two tombs to the right of the entryway to the main church, a small, child-size burial in the opening to a chamber, and larger one in the chamber itself. Once inside the nave, a visitor can see arcosolia and approximately four floor tombs, including two on the south wall in doorways to the adjoining chapel.

Here the presence of floor tombs offers affordances for the living to be mindful of the dead. This is evident especially in the floor tomb that is in the chapel on the other side of the monks’ tomb wall where prayers might be directed through the fenestella. The wall kept the viewer at some physical distance from the tomb, but the window allowed visual proximity to the monks. To the lay viewer the fenestella offered a multi-sensory connection between the two commemorative spaces. Reading the inscription or praying aloud would include the tomb’s holy occupants in concelebration of liturgy and prayer. The inscription, the monks’ tomb, and the

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905 By comparison, in Constantinople’s Church of the Theotokos in the monastery tou Libos, all of the tombs align with doorways in the narthex, meaning that they run parallel to the flow of foot traffic, with the head of the deceased toward the west. See Marinis, “Tombs and Burials in the Monastery tou Libos in Constantinople,” 156.
906 Most of the tombs throughout have been filled in with dirt, and the unevenness of the unpaved floor makes it difficult to discern every tomb. My count is based on personal observations and photographs from 2011 and 2013.
floor burial were clearly meant to work in tandem. Visitors who approached the fenestella to the tomb chamber in order to commemorate the monks would cross over the floor tombs, and the opposite is also true—a reader standing before the homily and encircled cross would be in the vicinity of the tomb chamber as well. Any prayers or inscriptions spoken aloud were in concelebration with the tomb’s holy occupants, who were believed to be in a state of perpetual worship.

**The Monks’ Tomb**

The tomb chamber’s relationship to the adjoining burial chapel through the fenestella points to the chapel’s role in commemorating the dead, with the ceiling cross operating as a touchstone from a variety of viewpoints, extending the wider sanctified sphere from the tomb into the adjoining chapel. The northernmost wall that housed the fenestella and separated the tomb from its adjoining chapel was heavily damaged in the twentieth century. Remnants of the wall show the background color in three registers: yellow at the top, a middle area of green, and orange at the bottom (figure 5.12). Jerphanion’s black and white photograph reveals that the wall once had paintings of three figures in clerical attire and the small fenestella (figure 5.13). On the inner side the fenestella is framed with a diamond pattern and situated between the artist’s vertical lines on the wall, in a style and palette that indicate it is an integral part of the original design of the tomb. The figures wear the monastic habit and carry elongated (Latin) hand crosses with splayed ends. The monks’ faces and crosses had been vandalized by the time Jerphanion documented them, but he could see that each was accompanied by a funerary inscription. Decoration of the monks’ tomb is similar in style and color palette to one of the earlier layers of
paint in the main church, which Rodley compares to Jerphanion’s Archaic Group that he dated to 850-950 based on iconography.\(^{907}\)

The painted monks’ tomb was a small rectangular space, slightly larger than a sarcophagus, with an interior that is painted on the walls and ceiling. It is one part of the tomb chamber, which is a small, roughly cut cavity at the far south of the complex that is only accessible by a small crawl space. Although the area has an apsidal cavity toward the southeast, it is so cramped and roughly cut that it was probably not a chapel meant for liturgy but a simulation of one for the benefit of the monks, emphasizing the tomb as a sanctified space within the chamber.

Ousterhout surmises that a series of hermits may have lived in the tomb chamber over a long period of time, in which case they would have been able to participate in the liturgy through the fenestella.\(^{908}\) But another use, perhaps the more important one, was for the commemoration of the monks buried inside. In the Byzantine worldview, the liturgy performed on earth was in concelebration with the heavenly realm, and the emperor, his court, and worshippers performing it were God’s regents on earth.\(^{909}\) In funeral proclamations the deceased were “ranked with the saints.”\(^{910}\) This means that in the Karabaş chapel the interred monks had the potential to act as holy intercessors for the living.

The extensive decoration in the monks’ tomb indicates that it was a privileged space and that recognizing its importance was beneficial for the church community. Although Byzantine tradition considered all Christian dead on par with the saints, monks had a special place in

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\(^{908}\) Ousterhout, “Sightlines, Hagioscopes,” 17.


Symeon of Thessaloniki even insisted that people become a monk before death, saying, “Therefore let him who is at the end [of his life] confess, repent, and concerning all things ready himself; and [let] the imperfect be perfected in the habit, lest he die imperfect and without the most perfect initiation of the habit.” He returns to the theme several lines later, saying, “anyone who has not managed to become a monk should become one at the time of his death; for it is the greatest gift, the royal seal, it is a second baptism.” This was the case with Catherine Skepides, the wife of patron Michael Skepides; Jerphanion recorded her now-damaged portrait inscription in the main church as, “Entreaty of the servant of God, Catherine the nun,” which seems to indicate that she entered monastic life after her husband’s death.

The tomb chamber’s first two monks are depicted similarly. On the far left, the first monk’s inscription said, “The servant of God, Photios, died on August 9.” One of the few identifiable features of the damaged portrait is a dark robe with a dotted pattern that resembles flowers (figure 5.14). His rounded headgear is compatible with monastic dress. Second to left was a second monk’s portrait, accompanied by this inscription: “The servant of God, Bardas, died on September 10.” Bardas’ lighter robe is decorated with dark stylized line work and a dot pattern, and he, too, has a rounded headdress (figure 5.15).

The third monk on the wall is bearded and outranks the others, which is shown by the bishop’s omophorion (a vestment usually embroidered with crosses and worn over the shoulders, indicating clerical rank) and pointed hood that he is wearing (figure 5.16). In the extant painting,

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914 Δήσις τις δούλης / τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ / Ἐκατερίνας / μοναχὴς Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 338, inscr. 190; trans. Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 200.
915 Μηνὶ Αὐγούς / τοῦ ις τῆς ἐνέ / α ἑπτὰ / ἄθνα ὀ / δούλως / τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ / φοινικός trans. Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 196; See also Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2.1: 357, inscr. 201.
he is also carrying a damaged hand cross. His inscription says: “I, Bathystrokos Abbas who worked hard for this church and thereafter died, lie here. I died in the month,” (and the message of the undamaged inscription remains incomplete). The title Abbas refers to a monastic father, and in this case, an elder or superior. His portrait was separated from that of Bardas by the small fenestella that opened into the adjoining chapel. The opening was original, at least to the time of the painted decoration, because its geometric motifs are incorporated into the wall’s overall decoration.

On the east wall is an inscription accompanying a fourth monk that says, “The servant of God, Za[charias?], died on February 3.” The portrait of Zacharias is still extant and his ochre robe with dark lines is comparable to what the other lower-ranking monks looked like before they were damaged (figure 5.17). Beside Zacharias on the eastern end of the chamber, a second opening into the tomb is decorated like the fenestella, outlined with a dot pattern surrounded by zigzag lines that create a geometric frame of triangles. This carving is an open-ended niche that could also be described as a short tunnel into the apse. The painted frame on this window matches that of the other fenestella and indicates that it, too, is contemporary with the rest of the painted program.

Scholars have disagreed on the number of burials within the tomb chamber. According to Henri Grégoire, who was among the first to publish the monument, there were three burials in the chamber under the monks’ images, describing them as “three sarcophagi carved in the rock,” and indicating their location by adding, “above these tombs on the wall, coarse frescoes represent

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917 ἔγο ὁ βαθύστροκος ὁ ἀβας, ὁ πολῶ κάμων ἡς τὸ ναὸν τούτον κέ/ με[τ]ὲ ταῦτα ἀπόθανον, ἐνθα κα/ τάκημε. ἐπελήθη ἡ μνήμη trans. Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 197; See also Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2:356, inscr. 200.
918 Μηνή Φεροχρηστού, ἢ τας τρης, ἐπεληθην ο δούλος του θεου Ζα(χαριας). in Jerphanion, Une Nouvelle Province, 2:357, inscr. 203; trans. Rodley, Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia, 196.
the dead” alongside red inscriptions that were damaged and difficult to decipher.\textsuperscript{919} It is difficult to determine the accuracy with which he described the space because within the tomb, a horizontal layer of original stone has now been destroyed, along with some of the painting (figure 5.18). Rodley did not document grave pits in her discussion of the tomb when she was there in the early 1980s, making Grégoire’s description all the more important.\textsuperscript{920} Grégoire’s documentation highlights the complicated nature of the tomb in several ways: the tomb area (i.e., under the ceiling cross) is not large enough for three large stone sarcophagi. This could be a semantic issue—that Grégoire simply meant three interments, perhaps for shrouded bodies, within the area or that he used the terminology to refer to \textit{loculi} in the opposite wall. Weissbrod mentions Grégoire’s description of the now-damaged tomb and adds recognition of the floor burial.\textsuperscript{921} I documented the floor tomb and south wall niches, which were extant in 2013 (figure 5.19).\textsuperscript{922}

That the monks would be commemorated together in a chapel is not surprising. Textual documentation for Constantinopolitan \textit{koinon} (monastic cemeteries) accompanied by \textit{eukontia} (accompanying chapels for commemoration) is found in a number of typika.\textsuperscript{923} The Evergetis typikon, for instance, allows for consolidation of commemorative duties when the number of deceased being commemorated became unmanageable in a given week.\textsuperscript{924} Material evidence of multiple monks interred together is rare, however, making Karabağ monks’ tomb a

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{919} Grégoire, “Rapport sur un voyage d’exploration dans le Pont et en Cappadoce,” 98. Grégoire wrote: “Trois sarcophages taillés dans le roc. Au-dessus de ces tombeaux, sur le mur, des fresques grossières représentent les défunt. À côté de ces portraits, on déchiffre avec peine des inscriptions en lettres rouges, très effacées.”
\item \textsuperscript{920} Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 196.
\item \textsuperscript{921} Weissbrod, “Hier liegt der Knecht Gottes--,” 112.
\item \textsuperscript{922} Ousterhout, “Sightlines, Hagioscopes,” 16. More recently, Ousterhout described an alcove burial in the chamber, and the wall niches as two smaller tombs in the south wall. He also noted two floor tombs that he believes were added after the painted portraits.
\item \textsuperscript{923} Ivison, “Mortuary Practices in Byzantium (c 950-1453): An Archaeological Contribution,” vol. 1, 28 and 38.
\item \textsuperscript{924} Timothy Evergetinos, “Evergetis: Typikon of Timothy for the Monastery of the Mother of God Evergetis,” section 36; pg 494.
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particularly important aspect of the monument.\textsuperscript{925} One comparable example of a joint burial in Asia Minor is Tomb #6 in the Lower City Church (ca. before 963) in Amorium.\textsuperscript{926} With a probable date in the late ninth or early tenth century, it is roughly contemporary to the Karabaş tomb. It, too, contains the interments of four people, but unlike the Karabaş tomb, the Amorium burial was in a limestone sarcophagus; archaeological analysis revealed human remains of two middle-aged men, a younger woman, and an unidentifiable individual, with textile evidence of expensive silk and shrouding, possibly pointing to their status as local aristocracy, a social standing comparable to the Skepides family in Cappadocia.\textsuperscript{927}

For monks who lived in brotherhood there was cachet in dying together and being buried alongside one another, and the practice was akin to that of a family burial space.\textsuperscript{928} Gregory of Nyssa was confident that joint burial promoted comradeship for the deceased, to reflect their closeness in life. He said of his sister, a nun, and their parents,

For both were with one voice asking God for this boon all their lives long, that their bodies should be mingled with one another after death, and that their comradeship in life should not even in death be broken.\textsuperscript{929}

The Karabaş monks’ tomb is decorated so that this seems to have happened, but the evidence is inconclusive. All four monks’ portraits were painted at the same time, according to Rodley who notes the consistent color palette and uniform background.\textsuperscript{930} Cooper and Decker speculate the monks all died in the same year and that after inscribing the others’ names, Bathystrokos was the

\textsuperscript{925} Claudia Rapp, \textit{Brother-Making in Late Antiquity and Byzantium: Monks, Laymen, and Christian Ritual} (Oxford University Press, 2016), 152–54.


\textsuperscript{927} Eric A. Ivison, “General Introduction” and Usman, 193–194 and 197.

\textsuperscript{928} Rapp, \textit{Brother-Making}, 152.


\textsuperscript{930} Rodley, \textit{Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia}, 197.
last to die or leave. This theory infers that the monks were contemporary to their images, but there is no direct evidence of that.

What scholars can confidently assert is that the images themselves are post-Iconoclastic. After Iconoclasm, imperial and church mandates about appropriate, orthodox use of imagery served to control and codify the use of images, especially in depicting holy figures. The portraits in the tomb are front facing and non-naturalistic, indicating the monks’ spiritual beneficence rather than earthly presence. The paintings have a background of flat color rather than the environment of a narrative scene, enhancing the spiritual connotations of the depicted men. Finally, each has an inscription identifying him by name and clothing that reflects his clerical rank, which can be used to identify them by “class” of saint.

Although the details have been obscured by vandalism, each monk holds a small cross in his right hand. In Byzantine art martyrs carry hand crosses like these, and the monks may also be referencing a funeral procession. All of the monks’ portraits are marked off by orange lines that section off the chamber so that each portrait has its own visual space. It is a post-Iconoclastic convention to set off their portraits as icons rather than as a unified narrative scene, but the placement and design of the cross objects demonstrate commemorative actions.

An encircled cross is painted on the westernmost wall is green with accents of yellow and orange (figure 5.20). Its background is yellow and the cross is a medallion, framed by an orange diamond pattern with green dots. Encircled crosses are used throughout Byzantine history to mark tombs. For instance, archaeologist Theodore Macridy observed five sarcophagi buried in the Church of Theotokos in Constantinople’s tou Libos monastery, each with an exterior mark of

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931 Cooper and Decker, *Life and Society in Byzantine Cappadocia*, 118.
933 Maguire, *The Icons of Their Bodies*, 66.
934 Maguire, 16.
a small cross at the deceased’s head (the west end). In the Karabaş tomb the cross on the wall functions similarly as a headstone, which may indicate that the monks were buried facing east.

Because the tomb chamber could only be accessed with difficulty through a crawl space, these images had a small audience, possibly limited to the hermits who inhabited the space, as Ousterhout suggests. The tomb chamber’s low light and cramped size mean that it functioned as a complete and unified space. Its decorative scheme, then, can be interpreted as an instance of self-perpetuating commemoration. The monks’ images on the three walls below the cross exist in a sanctified sphere, with their holy gaze resting upon each other and the earthly remains of their comrades in the tomb chamber. For the monks, the ceiling—including its stylized white field with orange dots—also referenced heavenly paradise and their presence there. From the heavenly realm, these monks can look down on viewers (including themselves in the representation of them in paradise), thereby perpetuating a cycle of holy commemoration that stems from the tomb and its images. Unfortunately, the plaster remnants in the rest of the chamber are so damaged that it is impossible to assess whether they extended the metaphorical references to earthly and heavenly viewing to any other painted decoration.

In this viewing experience, the holy dead become active participants by using a kind of disembodied spiritual vision that Gregory Nazianzus described as clarity. He wrote,

> Whoever has been permitted to escape by reason and contemplation from matter, and from the fleshly cloud or veil (whichever it should be called) and to hold communion with God, and be associated with the purest Light, blessed is he.

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936 The tomb chamber and adjoining chapel are carved with the apses facing southeast, rather than directly east, but I use cardinal directions in my descriptions for clarity.


The inclusion of the holy dead in the worship and viewing process touches on the transition from the late antique locus of the holy in saints and matter toward a more developed, codified use of images as windows to the saints after the Iconoclastic debates.  

Although the tomb’s painted ceiling cross was visible from either side of the fenestella, the low lighting conditions and small size of the window mean that its presence was usually hidden from the chapel’s visitors. However the ceiling cross is also an object that activates the space. Even when the cross was hidden from viewers in the chapel, it functioned as a marker of the monks’ burial and a sanctifying symbol in the space. To activate these revelations, the designer of the ceiling cross in the Karabaş monks’ tomb paired the ceiling cross with both a commemorative inscription that was painted on the other side of the wall above a floor tomb in the nave, and a eucharistic niche placed directly across the chapel nave. The concept of interface is more instructive here than that of a flat surface in terms of understanding the role of the cross image in the experience of viewers. The position of the ceiling cross relates to several kinds of viewing, devotion, and liturgical actions for which this space was designed. The effects of these carefully placed elements converge in the tomb’s ceiling cross, an effective design that guided attention and served as an appropriately symbolic reminder of eternal life after death through Christ’s sacrifice.

Revelation and Vision

When the cross was illuminated it coerced the viewer to direct devotional attention and curiosity toward the dark and mysterious painted tomb, hinting at the accessibility of salvation, a concept that was hidden from earthly intellect but would be revealed to the faithful upon Christ’s return. Paul wrote of the revelatory nature of salvation in his first letter to the Corinthians, saying

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939 Brubaker, “Icons Before Iconoclasm?,” 1216.
“For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.” *1 Corinthians 13: 9-10* He compared knowledge to vision, saying, “For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.” *1 Corinthians 13: 9-10* The designer of the ceiling cross used its partially obscured presentation to emphasize that the viewer is invited to “know fully” the redemption it symbolizes. The revelatory nature of the ceiling cross image recalls Christ’s promise to his disciples that they had nothing to fear when sharing the gospel, saying “nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered… What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.” *Matthew 10:26-27*

Instead of the ceiling cross dominating the space with a single axis to offer visual guidance, as in St. Sergius Chapel, or immersing the viewer in the sanctified sphere, as in St. Basil Church, the viewing experience of this ceiling cross was one wherein a glimpse of a cross through a small window in a dimly lit space offered a visual reference to salvation. It emerged from darkness for the viewer to see, internalize, and then proclaim.

Likewise, the revealed cross on the Karabaş tomb ceiling was a reward to the faithful viewer. It was so much larger than the small fenestella opening that the giant image almost certainly had to be revealed a little at a time when the space was lit. Unlike other ceiling crosses that dominate open spaces, this one was an experience that the viewer had to seek out. The suddenly visible cross may have surprised viewers who peered into the fenestella for the first time, or it may have been something anticipated by returning viewers who knew to approach it with a candle so that the image could be seen. Viewing the cross was a revelation of Christ whenever it was suddenly illuminated in the dim space, allowing the image to emerge from darkness.

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*940* 1 Corinthians 13: 9-10  
*941* 1 Corinthians 13: 9-10  
*942* Matthew 10:26-27
darkness. Its presence in the returning viewer’s memory or anticipation also ensured that the cross sanctified the space with its aura, even while it was cloaked in darkness.

The ceiling cross reflects the theme of revelation that runs throughout gospel narratives wherein God revealed himself to humankind through Christ.⁹⁴³ For instance, God’s appearance to the gentiles was represented by the Magi who followed a miraculous star to acknowledge the Christchild; this theophany was an instance of the divine word made flesh.⁹⁴⁴ The Byzantine liturgical calendar designated January sixth as the Feast of Epiphany, recognizing Christ’s baptism when “heaven opened” and then “the holy spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”⁹⁴⁵ The whole trinity was present at the moment Christ was revealed to the newly baptized masses as the son of God. After his Resurrection, Christ makes unexpected appearances to his followers. The book of Matthew recounts Jesus’ greeting to three women who visited his tomb and found it empty; they worshipped him immediately when he appeared to them.⁹⁴⁶ The gospel of Luke recounts a different epiphany of the risen Christ who appeared to a mournful man named Simon; Simon was only able to recognize Jesus after he broke bread and blessed it, a reference to the eucharistic ritual commemorating events that had just taken place.⁹⁴⁷

Spiritual vision was an integral aspect of the eucharistic ritual. As Georgia Frank explains, it was frequently utilized by early Christian Fathers as they mentally prepared initiates so that the revelation of the Eucharist would leave them adequately awestruck upon their baptism.⁹⁴⁸ To do this, they emphasized spiritual, metaphorical interpretations of the sacrament.

⁹⁴³ Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, 221.
⁹⁴⁴ Matthew 2:1-12
⁹⁴⁶ Matthew 28:9
⁹⁴⁷ Luke 24:31-32
⁹⁴⁸ Georgia Frank, “‘Taste and See:’ The Eucharist and the Eyes of Faith in the Fourth Century,” *Church History* 70,
Cyril of Jerusalem wrote that, “instead of judging the matter by taste, let faith give you an unwavering assurance that you have been privileged to receive the Body and Blood of Christ.”

John Chrysostom used a variety of phrases to insist on spiritual vision as the best way to perceive the Eucharist, calling it “different eyes,” “spiritual eyes,” and “the eyes of the soul.”

Heather Hunter-Crawley has noted parallels to that revelatory process during the removal of eucharistic bread from a silver paten. The object, now one of two in the Dumbarton Oaks collection, is part of the Sion Treasure (ca. 550-565), a liturgical silver collection that was found in southern Asia Minor near the city of Antalya. The circular plate is about fifty-eight centimeters in diameter with a ridged lip around the edge that alternates between bands of gilt and plain silver, and the flat center is filled with a gilded, serifed cross that is encircled by a donor inscription (figure 5.21). It was designed to be used during the liturgy, and as celebrants broke away pieces of bread during the eucharistic rite, the diminishing supply revealed the paten’s gilded cross.

The understanding that a piece of a holy object or image is as powerful as the whole is the concept that drove the dispersion of relics during the Middle Byzantine period. A tiny
fragment of the True Cross, for instance, could be alternately concealed or displayed from its placement in a reliquary. Elsner describes this as a “rhetoric of interiority and revelation.”  

Even a partial or broken cross object carried some potency, demonstrated by a number of damaged crosses in Middle Byzantine burial settings. In Amorium, Ivison has identified a number of cross objects in burial contexts that were broken but were apparently still considered potent enough to help sanctify the burials. The partial image or brief visual encounter was as spiritually fulfilling as an immersive one because the Byzantine viewer would have enough information (through habitus or cultural memory) to fill in the gaps with imagination, which they considered to be a form of spiritual vision. In other words, to the faithful a fragment could be completed in the mind and heart.

The Karabaş ceiling cross, poised over the remains of the holy monks, appropriates the role of a reliquary. As Hahn defines it, a reliquary is, at minimum, “a container intended to protect its relic contents.” However Hahn goes on to note that enshrinement (i.e., presentation) plays a crucial role in “relic-ing,” that is, the making of relics as recognized, holy matter that become part of its process of revelation. In the medieval period, “incomplete objects—fragments of bone or small pieces of fabric—were turned into functioning relics by being labeled, decorated and, above all, enclosed.” In the same manner as a reliquary that presented relic fragments as whole objects, the ceiling cross signifies the tomb as a place for the spiritually

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955 Ivison, “Mortuary Practices,” vol 1, 205.
957 Hahn, The Reliquary Effect, 6.
958 Hahn, 9.
959 Hahn, 8.
complete bodies of the monks. Their sanctity was conveyed to the faithful by a partial glimpse of the revealed cross that could be completed in the imagination as an act of faith.

The Karabaş funerary chapel adjoining the monks’ tomb was probably not used often, but the built-in revelatory glimpses are a link to wider themes in liturgy that were emerging in the Middle Byzantine period. During Late Antiquity, the Divine Liturgy was performed with a series of elaborate processions, known primarily from Hagia Sophia where the emperor would enter from the courtyard, followed by the patriarch, a retinue that included a deacon carrying the gospel book, and the lay congregation.960 By the Middle Byzantine period, however, the motions of walking through the church had ceased and the congregation’s role was more static. Instead of moving through the church in processions, the celebrant would make a series of appearances from the sanctuary, a practice well suited to smaller churches that became more common at that time.961 Liturgist Robert Taft has described the liturgical change as a “shift towards greater symbolization, as the former processions, reduced to ritual appearances of the sacred ministers from behind the sanctuary barrier, are reinterpreted as epiphanies of Christ in word and sacrament.”962 The revealed cross through the fenestella was a similar kind of visual reward to the faithful that the Eucharist or gospel book would have been for congregants in a worship service.

Space and Light

Light had a prominent, if varying, role in the physical settings for Byzantine Christian worship. The process of *hierophany* (manifestation of the holy) through direct manipulation of light was prevalent by the sixth century, and was practiced in various settings throughout the Middle Byzantine period as well. For instance, the revealing of the cross in the Karabaş tomb is very different from Hagia Sophia’s Constantinopolitan dome where a ring of light illuminated its cross through windows in the drum, creating an effect that Paul the Silentiary said was, “radiant as the heavens.” He also gave details about the dome’s cross, which is no longer extant: “at the very navel [of the dome] the sign of the cross is depicted within a circle by means of minute mosaic so that the Saviour of the whole world may for ever protect the church.” The light from a windowed dome enlivens the space and illuminates the church below while windows in a drum also illuminate the dome’s decoration above. In Hagia Sophia this had the potential to make the mosaic cross fade from view when the dome was dark so that it could be dramatically revealed every time daylight or artificial illumination hit the mosaic tesserae.

For Byzantine artists, channeling “real” (i.e., external) light into a space was a means of bringing its surfaces “to life.” A sixth-century Syriac hymn describes symbolic use of daylight in the Cathedral of Edessa (ca. after 524-525) in present-day Urfa, saying “a single light shines in the choir through three open windows / Announcing the mystery of the Trinity, Father, Son and

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966 James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art*, 5.
Holy Ghost.” The structure, which is no longer extant, had no windows in its dome, so light from the small apse window was used to activate the holy space. The effect may have been similar to the apsidal windows that shed light on the Karabaş tomb chamber.

A Middle Byzantine example of redirected light is visible in the katholikon (main church) of the monastery of Hosios Loukas (founded ca. late tenth or early eleventh century) in Phokis, a region in southern Greece. Light from the dome’s windows is channeled toward eleventh-century mosaics in the surrounding squinches, highlighting narrative imagery (figure 5.22). In a mosaic of the Nativity, for instance, light brings visual depth to the landscape that is depicted on the curved surface (figure 5.23). The figures of Angels, Shepherds, Magi, and animals wrap around the haloed figures of the holy family to create a sphere that appears to be lit from above, from the area that coincides with the deepest recesses of the squinch. The reflected light in the squinch references starlight on the left side of the scene, and this is echoed in the scene itself, wherein tesserae depicting the light from the star of Bethlehem are directed toward the Christ child.

Another example of strategically directed light in a squinch mosaic is the Annunciation scene in the Church of the Dormition (ca. 1100) in Daphni, Greece (figure 5.24). Demus

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967 “The Cathedral of Edessa,” sec. 13 in Mango, Art of the Byzantine Empire, 59. The structure described was a rebuilt monument that had been constructed shortly after a flood that took place in 524-525. The present-day monument on the site has been rebuilt several times since the sixth century.
968 Mango, 55; Krautheimer and Ćurčić, Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture, 219.
971 James, Light and Colour in Byzantine Art, 6.
972 James, 7 and Pl. 27; Connor, Saints and Spectacle, 23 and 39. The monastery’s dates are contested. Connor has argued for a tenth-century date for both buildings and mosaics, but based on epigraphic evidence, Oikonomides argued that while the monastery was founded in the tenth century, the katholikon and mosaics are from the eleventh century.
remarked that the “spatial distance” between Mary and the Angel in the pictorial plane represented a “spiritual separation” between the two figures. But James observed that the curvature of the squinch was designed to channel light so that reflections from the gold tesserae shimmer between them. In the dark, these tesserae look like a blank space in the picture frame, but the application of light activates a specific part of the squinch so that the area becomes a representation the holy spirit, both within the Biblical narrative and as part of the viewer’s experience of the shimmering mosaic in the church.

The alignment of windows in the Karabaş tomb chamber suggests that the provincial monks’ tomb had a comparable relationship to daylight. Within the Karabaş tomb, a visual relationship is evident between the fenestella and a window in the tomb’s easternmost wall that opens into the apsidal cavity there. The tomb is roughly cut into a rectangular shape, but the northeast corner is skewed outward (figure 5.25). At first glance, this seems like the effects of rough, unsophisticated carving. Yet the apparent mistake extends the open space within the tomb and allows for a visual line between the fenestella and an interior window inside the tomb (figure 5.26). Directly above, the tang of the ceiling cross is pointed toward the tomb window, a placement that is emphasized by the downward slant of the ceiling in that direction as well (figure 5.27). It is the irregularity of the tomb’s carving that makes these alignments possible.

Although the painted geometric decoration of the interior window is in keeping with the rest of the tomb, its intended purpose is not evident from the decoration or form (figure 5.28). Although I call it an interior window for convenience, the cavity’s opening is also a narrow, curved tunnel in the wall that opens into the wider tomb chamber. The tomb chamber is a small, relatively inaccessible and roughly cut room that has an apsidal space toward the east

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973 Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration, 23.
974 James, Light and Colour in Byzantine Art, 7.
(referencing a chapel), and surrounds the monk’s painted tomb. The tomb chamber’s only entrance is a crawl space toward the west end, and the space is so small and irregular that it was almost certainly not used for formal liturgies. While the tomb’s interior window into the apse could reference a prothesis niche, it is primarily another means of visually and conceptually connecting the tomb with a eucharistic altar, albeit in a sanctuary that was symbolic rather than functional.

An additional and heretofore unexplored purpose of the interior window was for the tomb to have better access to daylight by way of the nearby exterior window in the apse (figure 5.29). Seen through the fenestella, a ray of daylight would illuminate the tomb just enough to highlight the ceiling cross, the color and pattern of which are dark and are clearly demarcated from the white background in low light (figure 5.30). The ceiling cross is set apart from the rest of the ceiling decoration in the tomb chamber, which was once plastered and painted in dark orange but is too badly damaged to fully assess now (figure 5.31). It draws the viewer’s attention and highlights the roles of the ceiling cross as mediator between the living and the dead and as a means to eternal salvation through Christ’s sacrifice and the Christian reenactment of it via the Eucharist. The ceiling cross’ illumination may have offered a moment of revelation to monks participating in a night vigil or to a hermit dwelling in the tomb chamber. The gradual illumination of the cross at sunrise or from the flickering light of candles meant that the cross would have been visible through a process of revealing, with its form coming into view gradually or incrementally.

That artificial light was also used in the burial chapel is certain, as the apse window’s tiny prick of daylight from the tomb chamber would not illuminate the adjoining chapel enough for

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visitors to move around safely. For spaces like this, Byzantines used a combination of lamps, including freestanding candelabras and hanging lamps (although to my knowledge there has been no documented evidence of these in this chapel). Based on material evidence from nearby Amorium, these may have been mould-made saucer lamps, similar to the ones discussed in Chapter 4.  

Candles were also used to commemorate the dead, especially during festivals. Written sources express a fairly wide range of lighting instruments and effects that would be incorporated into devotional activities. The Rule and Inventory of the Kecharitomene convent in Constantinople (written before 1118) outlines a number of ways that lighting was integral to festivals. For instance, the document notes that “on the tombs… candles of four ounces shall be placed… scented with rose oil, essence of aloe wood, and incense shall be added.” The area was never dark, as evidenced by further directions that, “everlasting lamps shall burn day and night [on other days as well].” The specific measurements of candle wax indicate its relative value and the status of the illuminated areas where they were used. Candles and wax were such expensive trade items that provincial chapels probably used cheaper materials. Based on evidence from Amorium, fuel probably came from local sources such as vegetable oil or animal fat, although churches may have also used local beeswax or imported wax candles.

The light would evoke the presence of Christ himself, as described in the gospel of John, who wrote, “He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.” Hunter-Crawley succinctly discusses the relationship of the cross and light as

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977 Empress Irene, “Rule for the Convent of Kecharitomene in Constantinople (before 1118),” in Belting, Likeness and Presence, 520.
978 Empress Irene, 520.
979 Lightfoot, “Middle Byzantine Terracotta Lamps,” 225.
980 John 5:35
intricately connected, if not equivalent, by describing that “it was through the cross (the Crucifixion) that Christians could attain eternal life, and knowledge of this, along with divine presence, was the light that Christ brought to the world.”981 As such, she continues, the cross could be materialized through light, not only in narratives like Constantine’s sign of victory at the Milvian Bridge or Cyril’s revelatory vision of a cross over Golgotha, but in objects as well.982 As an example, she mentions that the two-toned cross on the Sion paten would have emerged as reflective rays from gilt contrasting with the silver in candlelight, enlivening the cross image as the eucharistic bread was removed from it.983 The darkness in the Karabaş tomb and placement of the cross on the ceiling also point to a connotation of the cross within the topos of the Cross of Light, offering Cappadocian viewers a visual metaphor for the revelation of Christ’s presence as an illumination of the soul.

In Karabaş Church the viewing conditions created by candles and oil lamps, especially the effects of flickering light, on the dark cross against the dotted white background would visually destabilize the surface. This would make it seem as if it were hovering, emphasizing the cross as mediator between heavens and earth, similarly to the one in St. Basil Church in the previous chapter. In the Karabaş tomb the ceiling cross could also shimmer in terms of being visible or hidden, based on flickering light that created quick succession between illumination and darkness.

Lefebvre wrote of the constantly changing nature of a body’s relationship to space, saying, “a mere change of position, or a change in a place’s surroundings, is enough to precipitate an object’s passage into the light: what was covert becomes overt, what was cryptic

982 Hunter-Crawley, 189; Jensen, The Cross, 52–56.
Scholars have documented this kind of figurative shimmer in Byzantine settings as well, not only in relation to reflective properties but to quickly changing light, visibility, and meanings. Bissera Pentcheva argues that shimmer, the achievement of ever-changing visual conditions using materials such as gold tesserae or polished marble, was a guiding principle in late antique architectural decoration. She posits that “such natural phenomena as shimmer [can] trigger observers to view the inanimate as animate.” James has also demonstrated that Byzantines took advantage of changing light (i.e., flickering candles or reflective surfaces) alongside contrasting color in order to create the aura of otherworldliness. Both scholars point to the luminosity of luxury materials such as gold tesserae, not the matte paint or fresco used on Cappadocian walls and ceilings. However, James also notes that it was “light created by space as well as by color” that helped manipulate the viewing conditions of an image.

In the provincial tomb in Karabaş Church, perception of shimmer was achieved by light, activeness, and otherworldliness through the design and placement of the ceiling cross. Each glimpse of the ceiling cross was a revelation, and an appearance of the symbol of Christ, his victory, and the presence of the holy emerging from a dark space. When it goes away, the memory of the cross’ presence still exists in the viewer’s mind. Memory offers an instance of spiritual vision, wherein the aura of the cross lingers in the dark, and it sanctifies even when no one is looking. Additionally, as noted in Chapter 2, the cross can shimmer between meanings with the impetus on the viewer to be able to quickly think of one connotation or another—it is simultaneously victorious, redemptive, and protective. The cross is a multimodal image in that it

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984 Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 183.
986 Pentcheva, 101.
988 James, 5.
can communicate multiple ideas at the same time or in quick succession, operating to convey information visually and spiritually. The viewer of the Karabaş tomb was able to engage with the ceiling cross in a variety of ways that promoted private devotion.

Conclusions

Rather than the straightforward sight line demonstrated by the ceiling cross in St. Sergius Chapel, the Karabaş viewing experience reaffirms the role of the cross in commemoration and the Eucharist, and it highlights the sophisticated ways that Cappadocian artists set up viewing conditions for this ceiling cross. The design of the Karabaş ceiling cross—in the overhead position, barely visible through the window, and in low or changing light—shows a sophisticated use of iconicity in order to bring about a revelatory experience. The viewing experience of the ceiling cross here is a multimodal communication of its meaning, signifying the revelation of Christ’s victory over death and his imminent return, as well as and the active presence of the holy in the present moment. Just as the cross symbolized revelation in Byzantine eucharistic ritual, the cross in the Karabaş tomb promoted revelatory viewing when glimpsed by viewers from the adjoining chapel.

The visual effect of the Karabaş ceiling cross is similar to the one St. Basil Church in the Gomeda Valley, representing both physical and metaphysical space. It marks a stratified, separation between the earthly remains of interred monks below and their heavenly repose above. It also takes on a liminal role as an image for both living and dead viewers who were separated by a vertical tomb wall. Although the ceiling cross in the Karabaş tomb chamber is a signal of mutable boundaries and relationships between spaces, its role as a marker of light is a unifying one. The tomb is in a seemingly remote area of the complex, but it was integral to
various visitors’ relationships to the overall space, which was used over a long period of habitation. Even when it is hidden from view, the cross retains its potency and meaning, augmenting historical symbolism with its functional role on the ceiling as mediator between various holy interlocutors and the social roles and physical spaces they inhabited.
Conclusion

The Cappadocian Cult of the Cross was inherently spatial in its manipulation of cross images. This is demonstrated by its widespread use of cruciform imagery that was placed overhead at a monumental scale as part of multimodal interfaces. Viewing experiences could be strategically manipulated using ceiling decoration to produce sight lines, immersive viewing, or a process of revelation and concealment. These socially constructed viewing practices were facilitated by ceiling design and relied on spatial relationships that included both images and viewers. By discerning Byzantine responses to monumental ceiling crosses I clarify the experiences of viewers within Cappadocian spaces. In this dissertation I argue that form, design, and materiality are avenues through which Byzantines engaged the cross symbol to further develop and promote its expanding cult within a spiritual context.

The ceiling is an important, yet often overlooked, space in discussions of architectural interiors. Its design is an integral element that reveals regional and cultural nuance. Because of a ceiling’s non-liturgical, uncodified existence, its decoration—and the rituals and practices it influences beneath—offers opportunities for understanding widespread practices as well as regional or patron-centric manifestations of them. Cappadocian ceiling decoration is rich in material evidence about sight lines, optical experience, and local manifestations of the Cult of the Cross that are used in extraliturgical and secular contexts. This project reveals that Cappadocian artists produced a surprisingly high number of monumental ceiling crosses—over a hundred in a small geographic area—bringing to light a new corpus of images through which to examine Byzantine art and architecture. Exploring the design of overhead spaces created in tandem with the evolution of a cult image offers a new approach to the Cult of the Cross and Byzantine experiences that were heretofore unexamined.
This examination of monumental ceiling crosses addresses several practices representing the Byzantine worship spectrum—ranging from performed liturgy to solitary private devotion—as part of the Cult of the Cross. The former is formal, codified worship. The latter, while adjacent to liturgical rituals in either its location or spiritual goals, is performed in domestic or individual instances. Because ceilings are not a codified space in terms of liturgical requirements, their potential as an object of investigation lies in their ability to help scholars decipher the experience of Byzantine viewers through the extraliturgical information they provide.

This dissertation highlights the activities of a heterogeneous society of monks and laity, including rural (often military) elites who built and decorated chapels and domestic spaces for a range of private and communal devotional activities. Using monumental ceiling crosses as a sampling, I demonstrate that churches and commemorative chapels were also civic gathering spaces for a wide variety of activities that included healing, petitioning saints, private prayer, education and mentorship, socializing, and worshiping. The ceiling crosses further illustrate the sophistication with which these people worshipped and constructed identities through patronage. This dissertation works to further integrate commemorative chapels into our understanding of cultural networks that extended both west toward the capital and east toward Syria or Georgia. It highlights ways that laity and monks played various roles within chapels in Cappadocian society. This furthers ongoing scholarly discussion of the identities of groups and individual patrons that counters the emphasis on monasticism in much of the scholarly literature up to the 1990s.

In this dissertation I determine that the size and placement of a cross depiction can have a profound effect on the viewing experience of its intended audience. Based on examination of spatial contexts that incorporated both codified rituals and personal practices with widely
understood symbolism, the use of the cross as a visual element could organize space and guide experience within. This use of cross imagery goes beyond recognizable iconography as a cultural means of visual communication. It is experiential, agency-based phenomenology, based on formal analysis considered alongside historical documents and archaeological evidence. The Cult of the Cross has often been studied through codified actions or through certain uses of the symbol that indicate victory with apotropaic potency. These interpretations often look at the cross as part of a relic cult, interpreting depictions of it simply as a symbol or a reference to the True Cross at Golgotha. Yet, the Cult of the Cross also had a vibrant and active existence outside the context of codified or liturgically prescribed ritual. The concept is demonstrated clearly by decoration on the ceiling, which was an extraliturgical space that had no prescribed design required for it to be orthodox. Here I concentrate on visual properties of the cross and placement of its depictions in order to discern the ways its iconicity was used to further its spiritual properties.

My methodology is centered around visual evidence, gathered primarily from site visits and comparative images, that is enhanced by secondary sources. Visual analysis is augmented by written literature, especially hagiography, which I use to reconstruct use cases of monuments. In addition, I also examine both material objects and descriptions of them in primary texts. Saints’ vitae enable me to compare material evidence throughout Byzantium to the material and spatial contexts of Cappadocian monuments. This is a means of filling in the material record to determine how space was used and how ceiling crosses demonstrate the use of interface to engage with surface decoration in the social construction of place. It also allows for reflections on who was using the spaces.
This work offers a framework for assessing patterns of viewing practices based on monumental design elements. Appendix 1 is a data set of one hundred and twenty-five monumental ceiling crosses in the region. The corpus demonstrates a need for more case studies, which will undoubtedly reveal additional viewing conditions and patterns of image-based rituals related to the Cult of the Cross in Cappadocia. A forthcoming interactive catalog of this data will allow for searching by category, enabling readers to ask additional research questions and consider additional groupings of monuments based, for instance, on location or architectural plan. It may even nuance our understanding of existing viewing practices with the publication of additional or previously undocumented Cappadocian ceiling crosses that come to light.

Similar to icons that represent saints with human bodies, images of cross objects often emphasize the relic they represent, serving as a kind of icon of the True Cross in that they inspire visualization of not only the entire cross, but the kinds of reliquaries and objects that exemplify it. Ceiling crosses often convey materiality when, in addition to functioning as a symbol of Christ, they depict a designed image or object. In St. Basil Church, for example, the cross is painted to look gold and gemmed in a way that references Constantine’s commissioned objects or Theodosius’ crux gemmata at Golgotha. Thus the “objectness” of the cult relates to relics. But in all representations, the cross keeps the same symbolic meaning that conveys Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection because his followers have imbued it with spiritual meaning and Christ’s authority. Also, whether or not a ceiling cross is a depiction of an object, it is inevitably a designed image with a function.

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The visual form of the cross (and multiple iconographic variations of it) were effectively manipulated by Byzantine artists in order to encourage and manage cult activity with visual imagery that directs the gaze, requires a person to move in a particular way in order to see and comprehend it, or draws their eye and attention in such a way that the imbued meaning demands action of a particular sort. This is evident in St. Sergius Chapel, for instance, where the alignment of the ceiling cross and apse cross guide the viewer toward tombs or the altar, encouraging eucharistic commemoration of the deceased.

The form of the cross and accompanying ornament are meaningful in deciphering phenomenological experience because a ceiling cross is integral to the design of a space. For instance, in the monks’ tomb in the Karabaş Church complex, the ceiling cross marks their commemorative space, whether or not living viewers can see it at any given time. Revealed and concealed as lighting and visitors changed, the cross was always mediating, always available, and functioning as a sanctifying object over the space. This is an argument toward describing a monumental ceiling cross as part of a designed interface rather than as surface decoration. Interface addresses aesthetics as part of the affordances or kinesthetic address used to influence or guide viewers toward specific movements, places, or actions as a result of the viewing conditions.

The ceiling is an area that is understudied, but as I have shown, it offers great potential as a non-liturgical space where aesthetic and architectural decisions affected viewing, spiritual perceptions in the space, or movement within. Because of the lack of codification regarding its decoration, these ceilings demonstrate trends and decisions made within a very loose set of parameters such as the type of ceiling (flat, barrel vaulted, or domed), medium of the cross (carved, painted, or both), and iconographic nuances of the cross depiction.
Definition and form unite to produce concerted viewing experiences in the chapters’ case studies, explicating the experiences of the region’s diverse population. The cult (and its venerated image, the cross) actively shaped viewing. While I have not attempted to constrain these use cases into an explicit typology, there are several functions of ceiling crosses that can be identified in Cappadocia as contributing to specific viewing experiences. The cross’ axis can guide sight lines; the ceiling cross can be used as a mediator between heaven and earth; and the overhead image is also a projected signifier of holy space and a marker of liminal space, even when visibility is limited.

When the eye is manipulated by images, it guides the entire body. This, in turn, drives ritual movements (both codified and personal) toward liturgy and private devotion. These effects of viewing are cultural and spiritual as well as physical. They reveal a variety of viewing experiences, all drawn from the way a monumental ceiling cross was integrated into interior space. The axis and alignments to tombs in St. Sergius Chapel reveal the architects channeled visual attention for manipulation of the viewer’s body and spirit for commemoration of the dead. In St. Basil Church, the four-quadrant ceiling and panoramic viewing in the round indicate a regional ceiling decoration trend utilizing optical motifs. Surrounding decorative elements there also point to regional manifestations of Constantinian threads in Cult of the Cross. The matrix of views that coincide in the Karabaş tomb ceiling are a multivalent signal for various groups of viewers to commemorate the dead. The use of sight lines, immersive viewing, and revelatory glimpses tap into a wider discussion about the role of vision in an image-based cult.

I argue that as a shape and a form, the cross on a ceiling becomes part of an interface through which designers direct gazes, movement, attention, and experience. A cross is always on a linear axis, and always has four arms anchored at a center point. Uses of the cross under certain
conditions (specifically, at a monumental size with overhead placement) highlight its iconicity. The cross activates the agency of the space, manipulating the viewer both spiritually (reflecting the cult) and visually (based on culturally specific design). These observations add to extant conversations about vision and movement in the domestic spheres of Late Antiquity, channeling John Clarke’s framework of kinesthetic address and Ellen Swift’s investigations of household power toward Byzantine society. I connect their arguments that Romans used images to direct movement and express social status to ways that David Morgan addresses the gaze in religious settings, looking at power and influence of the art itself over viewers, not just as reflections of patrons. This, in turn, frames images as objects with functions, an assertion that responds to the archaeological work of Kate Giles and visual theory of Johanna Drucker who both show spatial relationships between people, objects, and rituals through analysis of objects and texts. Using these areas of inquiry I show that in Cappadocia, not only was the image of the cross venerated as sacred, it was used to promote personal devotion through patronage. This is not Iconoclastic activity but devotion to the cross, resulting in innovative means of veneration and promoted to enrich religious and domestic life through monumental decoration. The Cappadocian Cult of the Cross was an image cult that channeled the visual in order to produce ritual movement and devotion, not as a means to promote iconomachy.

The project opens the door for several additional avenues for research, all of which will enable scholars to move further toward historicity for a better understanding of lived experience. One avenue for this will be digital models to explore experience in virtual or augmented reality. For instance, a digital reconstruction of St. Basil Church could come closer to emulating a multisensory understanding of the chaotic viewing conditions of the Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group in changing light conditions or with incense clouds. A three-dimensional rendering of the
Karabaş tomb that visually reconstructs the damaged wall will give a clearer picture of ways the ceiling cross was visible from the adjoining chapel and was a counterpart to the eucharistic niche.990

Another avenue for additional research on visuality of monumental ceiling crosses will be to test these theories in nearby Anatolian regions such as Phrygia, as well as in neighboring areas beyond the Byzantine Empire, especially Georgia and Armenia, in order to look more closely at regional variations in monumental ceiling crosses. We also need wider explorations of late antique and medieval ceilings that make comparisons to areas outside Byzantium, including the Latin West and Ethiopia, in order to examine the overhead space as an often-neglected but crucial component of medieval architecture.

Although the Cult of the Cross was widespread in late antique and medieval Byzantium, regional trends in depictions of the cross reveal local practices. In Cappadocia, artists and patrons developed sophisticated ways to venerate the cross using monumental imagery on ceilings that incorporated a nuanced understanding spatiality. Ideal viewing experiences were facilitated by the design of domestic and religious spaces so that ceiling imagery could direct movement and inspire devotion. By discerning these viewing conditions as a result of interface—design that incorporates the sphere of images, movements, and activated space—I demonstrate that Cappadocians produced creative, localized manifestations of a widespread cult through patronage that valued keen awareness of spatial and visual relationships.

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Figure 5.7. Tomb detail showing the fenestella. (Source: Jerphanion via Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil, *La Cappadoce: un siècle après G. de Jerphanion*, pl. 200.3).
Figure 5.8. Photo overlay using a photo of the extant tomb and Jerphanion’s photo of the wall before its destruction. (Photo overlay: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.9. Chapel adjoining the painted tomb, apse with remnants of patrons’ images. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).

5.10. Jerphanion’s photo of the encircled cross with inscription. (Source: Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil, La Cappadoce: un siècle après G. de Jerphanion, pl. 200.2).
Figure 5.11. The damaged wall between the chapel and the tomb. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).

Figure 5.12 Tomb detail showing registers of pigment. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.13. Jerphanion’s tomb photo. (Source: Jerphanion via Jolivet-Lévy and Demesnil, *La Cappadoce: un siècle après G. de Jerphanion*, pl. 200.4).
Figure 5.14. Rendering of the portrait of Photios (left in tomb). Source: Rodley, *Cave Monasteries*, 196.

Figure 5.15. Rendering of the portrait of Bardas (second to left in tomb). Source: Rodley, *Cave Monasteries*, 196.
Figure 5.16. Portrait of Bathystrokos in the tomb. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).

Figure 5.17. Portrait of Zacharias in the tomb. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.18. Tomb, detail of carving underneath the painted cross. At left is the crawl space entrance to the chamber. Photo: A.L. McMichael

Figure 5.19. South wall niches in the tomb chamber. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.20. Encircled cross on the westernmost wall of the tomb. (Photo: A.L. McMichael)

Figure 5.21. Paten with Cross and Inscription (Source: Dumbarton Oaks Collection BZ1963.36.2). http://museum.doaks.org/Obj27470?sid=4333&x=18265&sort=76
Figure 5.22. Hosios Loukas Monastery, Phocis, Greece: Church of the Katholikon, interior, view towards the east. ca. 1021. Source: University of Michigan Art Images for College Teaching, http://quod.lib.umich.edu/a/aict/x-ec063/ec000_img0063

Figure 5.23. Hosios Loukas katholikon, mosaic of the nativity. (Source: Connor, Saints and Spectacle, 23).
Figure 5.24. Annunciation mosaic in the monastery church in Daphni, Greece. (Source: Connor, *Saints and Spectacle*, 39).

Figure 5.25. Screenshot from a photogrammetric model (detail) showing the shape of the ceiling cross over the tomb and the tunnel leading into the apse. (Source: A.L. McMichael using Agisoft Photoscan).
Figure 5.26. Diagram of the tomb chamber and adjoining chapel: A) fenestella, B) interior window, C) apse window, D) wall niches, E) crawl space exit, F) doorway to adjoining chapel, G) eucharistic niche. (Plan is estimated based on photogrammetric data, and photographs by A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.27. Tomb detail showing the downward slope of the ceiling. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.28. The tomb’s interior window with painted frame (i.e., the tunnel into the apse). (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.29. Windows in the tomb chamber apse. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).

Figure 5.30. View of the ceiling cross from the damaged wall area (where the fenestella would have been). (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Figure 5.31. View of the tomb chamber ceiling, with cross at left and damaged paint remnants at right. (Photo: A.L. McMichael).
Appendix 1: Catalog of Monumental Ceiling Crosses in Cappadocia

This appendix is a listing of each documented monumental ceiling cross in Cappadocia with its accompanying metadata. For a searchable version of this catalog as Linked Open Data, see the “Cappadocian Ceiling Crosses” project in Open Context: using the following identifier:

http://opencontext.org/projects/542a1d87-f399-4a82-a2cd-9fda54b1c609
DOI: https://doi.org/10.6078/M7N58JFG

Metadata Schema for Ceiling Crosses in this Catalog

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<th>identifier:</th>
<th>catalog number and nickname or label for the ceiling cross</th>
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<td></td>
<td>location:</td>
<td>town or valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>(if applicable) church or complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monument name:</td>
<td>published name of the monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>additional name(s):</td>
<td>additional published name(s) of the monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>type of floor plan, noted primarily for chapels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>area of church or building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>smaller area within monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>smaller area within monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred (chapel or burial chamber) or secular (domestic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>(of area with cross) flat, barrel vault, dome, or cross vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>single, group, or pattern. Crosses in a group are listed individually, but a pattern of crosses is listed as one instance of a monumental cross design, (i.e. with one entry in the catalog).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>(if applicable) relative placement of the cross with regard to the others in the group (i.e., center cross or north cross)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved, painted, or carved and painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>red painting or polychrome</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>visual elements that describe the ceiling cross design or form</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>description:</td>
<td>(if applicable) any additional information or notes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Late Antique (ca. fifth to sixth century), Transitional (ca. seventh to early tenth century), or Middle Byzantine (ca. mid-tenth to eleventh century). Based on periods used in Ousterhout 2017: 13.</td>
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<td>published in:</td>
<td>selected secondary sources that discuss the monument, but not necessarily the ceiling cross. (See Bibliography for full references).</td>
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1. identifier: east cross over Saklı Kilise narthex
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name: Saklı Kilise
additional name(s): Göreme 2a; Hidden Church; St. John
architectural plan: triple-apse basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred

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<td>triple-apse basilica</td>
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<td>group</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>polychrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>splayed arms; framed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>This is the center cross in the narthex. Although the church is no longer accessible (as of 2013), you can glimpse this cross through the locked gate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
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<td>additional name(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
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description: Of the three ceiling crosses in the narthex, this is the only one that is unpainted. This church is no longer accessible (as of 2013).

period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011; 2013

4. identifier: north cross over west end of Göreme 2b nave
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name: Göreme 2b
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: north cross
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; encircled
description: The three ceiling crosses are at the west end of the nave.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011

5. identifier: center cross over west end of Göreme 2b nave
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name: Göreme 2b
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: center cross
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; framed
description: This is the center of three ceiling crosses that are at the west end of the nave.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011
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<td>Ceiling Type:</td>
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<td>Cross Attributes:</td>
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<td>Period:</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Use of Space:</td>
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<td>Ceiling Type:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Arrangement:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Medium:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Pigment (If Painted):</td>
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<td>Data Collection:</td>
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additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cruciform basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: splayed arms; encircled
description: The cross is reversed out of a red background on the flat top of the dome over the nave.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

9. identifier: cross over Göreme 2g
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name Göreme 2g
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: cruciform basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: splayed arms; encircled
description: The red painted cross is in a circle in the dome over the nave.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Ousterhout 2017: 428-430
data collection: literature only

10. identifier: cross over Göreme 3 narthex
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name Göreme 3
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: triple-apse basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
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<td>Use of Space:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Attributes:</td>
<td>boss; framed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
description: The carved cross covers the entire nave ceiling, and is decorated with red geometric painting. It is framed by the cornice. Jolivet-Levy estimates the aniconic chapel is from the tenth century.

period: Middle Byzantine

published in: Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 22; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 2; Ousterhout 2017: 380 and 452-454;

data collection: literature only

13. identifier: cross over Göreme 12 naos
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name: Göreme 12
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cruciform basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: boss
description: The carved cross with a boss at center covers the interior of the dome and is decorated with geometric red painting.

period: Middle Byzantine

published in: Jerphanion 1925, 1:171; Ousterhout 2017: 81-85 and 198;

data collection: literature only

14. identifier: cross over Göreme 13 south chapel nave
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name: Göreme 13
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: double basilica
location within monument: south
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: boss; framed
description: Damaged saints’ portraits are painted in the four quadrants of the framed cross. The arms have relief carving that is visible through the damaged polychrome geometric motif. Jolivet-Levy dates the carving to the eighth or ninth century and the polychrome to the early tenth century.
The chapel is outside Göreme Open Air Park and has been used recently as a parking space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>period:</th>
<th>Transitional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>2011; 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**15. identifier:** cross over Aynalı Kilise narthex

**location:** Göreme

**additional location:** null

**monument name** Göreme 14

**additional name(s)** Aynalı Kilise, Mirror Church, Göreme 14

**architectural plan:** basilica

**location within monument:** null

**placement within monument:** narthex

**additional placement of cross:** null

**use of space:** sacred

**ceiling type:** dome

**cross arrangement:** single

**arrangement within group:** null

**cross medium:** painted

**cross pigment (if painted):** red

**cross attributes:** encircled

**description:** The red painted cross at the top of the dome is small and encircled, with arms that extend to the entire dome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>period:</th>
<th>Middle Byzantine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>2011; 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**16. identifier:** cross over Göreme 14a nave

**location:** Göreme

**additional location:** null

**monument name** Göreme 14a

**additional name(s)** null

**architectural plan:** basilica

**location within monument:** null

**placement within monument:** nave

**additional placement of cross:** null

**use of space:** sacred

**ceiling type:** flat

**cross arrangement:** single

**arrangement within group:** null

**cross medium:** carved

**cross pigment (if painted):** red

**cross attributes:** splayed arms; framed

**description:** This is a roughly carved cross with red painting accents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>period:</th>
<th>Transitional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>published in:</td>
<td>Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 101-102; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 88;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. identifier: cross in Göreme 21 narthex dome
location: Göreme
additional location: Göreme Open Air Park
monument name: Göreme 21
additional name(s): St. Catherine Church
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: boss;
description: This carved cross has a center boss and is accented with red painting. It is in the cupola of the narthex.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

18. identifier: cross in Göreme 21b narthex dome
location: Göreme
additional location: Göreme Open Air Park
monument name: Göreme 21b
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cruciform basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red painting
cross attributes: null
description: Red painted arms extend from the center of the dome.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

19. identifier: cross over Karanlık Kilise refectory porch
location: Göreme
additional location: Göreme Open Air Park
monument name: Karanlık Kilise
This badly damaged ceiling has the remnant of a cross arm on the diagonal over the entrance to the refectory of a monastery. It is located beneath the well-known Dark Church at the refectory's entrance on the ground floor.

**period:** Middle Byzantine

**published in:** Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 81-85; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 82; Ousterhout 2017: 396-400;

**data collection:** 2011; 2013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Placement of Cross:</th>
<th>null</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of Space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceiling Type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Arrangement:</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement within Group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Medium:</td>
<td>painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Pigment (if Painted):</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Attributes:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description:</td>
<td>This cross is painted diagonally (from corner to corner) in a flat, square space over the entrance to the chapel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period:</td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Published in:</td>
<td>Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 66-67;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**22. Identifier:**
- cross in north dome in Göreme 20
- Göreme
- additional location: null
- Göreme 20
- additional name(s): St. Barbara; Azize
- architectural plan: triple-apse, cross-in-square,
- location within monument: null
- placement within monument: naos
- additional placement of cross: north dome
- use of space: sacred
- ceiling type: dome
- cross arrangement: group
- arrangement within group: north cross
- cross medium: painted
- cross pigment (if painted): red
- cross attributes: encircled
- description: The small, red painted cross is encircled, with arms that extend to the entire dome.
- period: Middle Byzantine
- data collection: 2011

**23. Identifier:**
- cross in center dome closest to apse in Göreme 20
- Göreme
- additional location: null
- Göreme 20
- additional name(s): St. Barbara; Azize
- architectural plan: triple-apse, cross-in-square,
- location within monument: null
- placement within monument: naos
- additional placement of cross: central dome
- use of space: sacred
- ceiling type: dome
- cross arrangement: group
- arrangement within group: center
- cross medium: painted
- cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: encircled
description: The church is a cross-in-square chapel with three apses.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011

24. identifier: cross in south dome in Göreme 20
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name Göreme 20
additional name(s) St. Barbara; Azize
architectural plan: triple-apse, cross-in-square,
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: south dome
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: south cross
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: encircled
description: The small, red painted cross is encircled, with geometric shapes and additional crosses that extend to the entire dome.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011

25. identifier: cross in main dome in Göreme 20
location: Göreme
additional location: null
monument name Göreme 20
additional name(s) St. Barbara; Azize
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: main dome
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: central
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: serifed; encircled
description: This is the central dome in the naos. It is near three additional domes with crosses that are in the eastern vaults near the apses.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011
26. **identifier:** "Devil church" dome 
**location:** Göreme 
**additional location:** null 
**monument name:** Göreme 33a 
**additional name(s):** Devil Church 
**architectural plan:** cruciform basilica 
**location within monument:** null 
**placement within monument:** naos 
**additional placement of cross:** null 
**use of space:** sacred 
**ceiling type:** dome 
**cross arrangement:** null 
**arrangement within group:** null 
**cross medium:** carved; painted 
**cross pigment (if painted):** red, green 
**cross attributes:** splayed arms, tang; arched; 
**description:** This church is sometimes identified by the devil-like mask images painted on the dome's pendentives. The cross is small, with a red painted boss and red painting that seems to extend the cross arms, yet does not align with the center cross. 
**period:** Middle Byzantine 
**published in:** Ousterhout 2017: 195; Lucas 2003: 40 
**data collection:** literature only

27. **identifier:** cross over St. Sergius Chapel nave 
**location:** Göreme 
**additional location:** Avcilar 
**monument name:** St. Sergius Chapel 
**additional name(s):** St. Sergius; Serge; Sergios; Avcilar 9; Mesevli Kilisesi 
**architectural plan:** basilica 
**location within monument:** null 
**placement within monument:** nave 
**additional placement of cross:** null 
**use of space:** sacred 
**ceiling type:** flat 
**cross arrangement:** single 
**arrangement within group:** null 
**cross medium:** carved; painted 
**cross pigment (if painted):** red 
**cross attributes:** splayed arms, tang; arched; 
**description:** The cross is flanked by palms. Both are painted with red and green line art. The carving and painting are consistent with the apse cross as well. 
**period:** Late Antique 
**published in:** Lemaigre Demesnil, 2010: 65-68; Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 113; Ousterhout 2017: 41; 
**data collection:** 2013

28. **identifier:** cross over Hieron narthex 
**location:** Göreme 
**additional location:** Avcilar 
**monument name:** Hieron
This cross runs horizontally at the center of the narthex ceiling of a burial chapel. The ceiling area beneath the cross is flat, although the rest of the narthex is barrel vaulted.

period: Late Antique

This cross was documented in a plan and section drawing by Kostof.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kostof 1972: Fig. 20;
data collection: literature only
use of space: sacred
celing type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: splayed arms; encircled
description: The domes in the north and south chapels of Avcılar 6 have very similar red painted crosses. The painted cross on the flat top of the dome appears to be encircled by the carving.
period: Transitional
published in: Ousterhout 2017: 80
data collection: literature only

31. identifier: cross in Avcılar 6 south dome
location: Göreme
additional location: Avcılar
monument name: Avcılar 6
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: double basilica
location within monument: south
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
celing type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: splayed arms; encircled
description: The domes in the north and south chapels of Avcılar 6 have very similar red painted crosses. The painted cross on the flat top of the dome appears to be encircled by the carving.
period: Transitional
published in: Ousterhout 2017: 80
data collection: literature only

32. identifier: cross over Avcılar 8 nave
location: Göreme
additional location: Avcılar
monument name: Avcılar 8
additional name(s): Chapel in Hotel Kelebek
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
celing type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; serifs; framed
description: The decoration is damaged, but the red painted cross is visible in the nave.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 112-113; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 103;
data collection: literature only

33. identifier: cross over Karşıbecak north chapel nave
location: Göreme
additional location: Avcılar
monument name: Avcılar 3; Karşıbecak
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: double basilica
location within monument: north chapel
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; serifs
description: The badly damaged cross is on a painted background with a vine motif.
period: Transitional
data collection: 2011

34. identifier: north cross over Church of Three Crosses nave
location: Güllüdere
additional location: null
monument name: Church of Three Crosses
additional name(s): Güllüdere 3; Üç Haçlı; Saint Agathange
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: north cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: arched; splayed arms; tang
description: The cross is flanked by palms.
period: Late Antique
35. **identifier:**
   *center cross over Church of Three Crosses nave*

**location:**
Güllüdere

**additional location:**
null

**monument name:**
Church of Three Crosses

**additional name(s):**
Güllüdere 3; Üç Haçlı; Saint Agathange

**architectural plan:**
basilica

**location within monument:**
null

**placement within monument:**
nave

**additional placement of cross:**
null

**use of space:**
sacred

**ceiling type:**
flat

**cross arrangement:**
group

**arrangement within group:**
center cross

**cross medium:**
carved

**cross pigment (if painted):**
null

**cross attributes:**
splayed arms; tang; encircled;

**description:**
The encircled cross is flanked by additional crosses on either side. Although the figural painting in the church's apse is likely Middle Byzantine, the style of the relief carving is similar to the ceiling and apse crosses in Sergius Chapel, which has been dated to the sixth century.

**period:**
Late Antique

**published in:**

**data collection:**
2011; 2013

---

36. **identifier:**
   *south cross over Church of Three Crosses nave*

**location:**
Güllüdere

**additional location:**
null

**monument name:**
Church of Three Crosses

**additional name(s):**
Güllüdere 3, Üç Haçlı, Saint Agathange

**architectural plan:**
basilica

**location within monument:**
null

**placement within monument:**
nave

**additional placement of cross:**
null

**use of space:**
sacred

**ceiling type:**
flat

**cross arrangement:**
group

**arrangement within group:**
south cross

**cross medium:**
carved

**cross pigment (if painted):**
null

**cross attributes:**
arched; splayed arms; tang

**description:**
The cross is flanked by palms.

**period:**
Late Antique

**published in:**
37. identifier: cross over Haçlı Kilise nave
location: Güllüdere
additional location: Kızılçukur
monument name: Haçlı Kilise
additional name(s): Cross Church, Church of the Cross, Saint Theodore
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: splayed arms; tang; arched;
description: The carved cross is decorated with concentric circles, and is accompanied by figural paintings in the apse below. Ousterhout considers this carving to be Late Antique, roughly contemporary to St. Sergius Chapel, with apse paintings added later.
period: Late Antique or Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011; 2013

38. identifier: cross over secular room north of Güllüdere 4
location: Güllüdere
additional location: Kızılçukur
monument name: room north of Güllüdere 4
additional name(s): room north of St. Jean Church; room north of Ayvalı Kilise
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: room
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: splayed arms; tang; framed;
description: This cross is carved over a small space that Demesnil says was likely a secular annex room.
period: Transitional (?)
published in: Lemaigre Demesnil, 2010: 43-44;
data collection: literature only
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over Joachim and Anna south chapel nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>Güllüedere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location</td>
<td>Kızılçukur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Joachim and Anna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Joachim and Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan</td>
<td>double basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument</td>
<td>south chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium</td>
<td>painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted)</td>
<td>polychrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes</td>
<td>boss; splayed arms; serifs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description</td>
<td>The damaged cross was originally painted in polychrome to look gemmed with a vine motif referencing the cross of the Crucifixion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over Joachim and Anna narthex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>Güllüedere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location</td>
<td>Kızılçukur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Joachim and Anna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Joachim and Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan</td>
<td>double basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument</td>
<td>narthex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium</td>
<td>carved; painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted)</td>
<td>polychrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes</td>
<td>arched;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description</td>
<td>The carved cross was carved with the top pointing east toward the chapels, and was also painted with polychrome motifs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over chapel west of Joachim and Anna nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>Güllüedere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location</td>
<td>Kızılçukur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>chapel west of Joachim and Anna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
42. identifier: cross in west vault of Stylite Nicetas Chapel nave
location: Güllüdere
architectural plan: basilica
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: Only the lower half of the roughly textured cross is extant, but it once covered the ceiling of the small nave.
period: Transitional
data collection: 2013

43. identifier: cross in nave vault of Stylite Nicetas Chapel nave
location: Güllüdere
architectural plan: basilica
additional location: Kızılıçukur
monument name Stylite Nicetas Chapel; Hermitage of Niketas church
additional name(s) Üzümlü Kilise
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: west vault
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; serifs;
description: Although the polychrome has faded, the cross was originally painted to look gemmed, and is surrounded by a vine motif.
period: Transitional
data collection: 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional placement of cross:</th>
<th>Center vault</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of space:</td>
<td>Sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceiling type:</td>
<td>Barrel vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross arrangement:</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement within group:</td>
<td>Null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross medium:</td>
<td>Painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>Polychrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross attributes:</td>
<td>Splayed arms; serifs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description:</td>
<td>The cross, painted to look gemmed, is surrounded by a vine and grape motif. It is over the nave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period:</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection:</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

44. Identifier: cross over Stylite Nicetas hermitage
Location: Gülüdere
Additional location: Kızılçukur
Monument name: Stylite Nicetas hermitage; Hermitage of Niketas
Additional name(s): cell of Nicetas
Architectural plan: null
Location within monument: null
Placement within monument: monk's cell
Additional placement of cross: null
Use of space: Secular
Ceiling type: Flat
Cross arrangement: Single
Arrangement within group: null
Cross medium: Carved
Cross pigment (if painted): null
Cross attributes: Splayed arms; arched;
Description: Thierry describes this space as the hermitage at the top of the volcanic cone where Stylite Nicetas Chapel is found below.
Period: Transitional
Data collection: Literature only

45. Identifier: cross over Archangel Chapel nave
Location: Gülüdere
Additional location: Zindanonu
Monument name: Archangel Chapel
Additional name(s): Church of the Archangel
Architectural plan: Basilica
Location within monument: null
Placement within monument: Nave
Additional placement of cross: null
Use of space: Sacred
Ceiling type: Flat
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cross arrangement:</th>
<th>single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved; painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>polychrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>The cross is now damaged, but it was carved and then painted. The ceiling behind the cross was a geometric floral motif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Late Antique or Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cross arrangement:</th>
<th>single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>The painted cross is badly damaged, but it is possible to see its outline in the nave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cross arrangement:</th>
<th>single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>polychrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>arched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>This lower half of the cross is very damaged and the chapel is not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
48. identifier: cross over Açıksaray Area 1 hall
description: The ceiling cross is in a secular audience hall. It has a boss carved at the center, along with others on the arms. The Açıksaray Area 1 naming convention is per Ozturk.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011

49. identifier: cross vault over Açıksaray Area 3 church, northwest bay
description: Area 3 refers to Rodley's nomenclature for Açıksaray. The church's dome supports are badly damaged. Ousterhout describes plural bays with cross vaults, but only the northwest bay is documented in his photo or Rodley's plan.
period: Middle Byzantine
50. identifier: cross vault over Açıksaray Area 3 church, northeast bay
location: Gülşehir
additional location: Açıksaray
monument name: Area 3
additional name(s): church
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: northeast bay
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: Area 3 refers to Rodley's nomenclature for Açıksaray. The church's dome supports are badly damaged.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

51. identifier: cross vault over Açıksaray Area 3 church, southeast bay
location: Gülşehir
additional location: Açıksaray
monument name: Area 3
additional name(s): church
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: southeast bay
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: Area 3 refers to Rodley's nomenclature for Açıksaray. The church's dome supports are badly damaged.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

52. identifier: cross vault over Açıksaray Area 3 church, southwest bay
location: Gülşehir
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>53. identifier:</th>
<th>cross in west vault of Ağaçaltı nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>Belisirma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Ağaçaltı</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Church of Daniel; Pantassa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>three-apsed basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>west vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>barrel vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>polychrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>serifs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>The church was built with three apses. The ceiling cross is in the west vault that leads toward the central dome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cross over Eğritaş main church nave

Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi

Eğritaş Kilisesi

Eğri Taş Kilisesi; Crooked Stone Church; Panagia Theotokos Church

basilica

main church

nave

null

sacred

barrel vault

single

null

painted

polychrome

serifs;

This ceiling cross is over the nave of a large, two-story basilica.

Middle Byzantine


2011; 2013

56. identifier: cross over burial annex north of Eğritaş

Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi

Eğritaş

null

null

null

null

sacred

barrel vault

single

null

painted
This ceiling cross is over a burial annex north of the main church at Eğritaş. It is a Middle Byzantine period piece published in 1963 by Thierry and more recently in 2017 by Ousterhout. The cross is located in the Ihlara Valley, specifically in the Belisırma area. The monument name is Karanlık Kale, also known as the Dark Castle. The cross is framed and painted red. Its arrangement within the group is not specified.

### Data Collection
- **Identifier:** Cross pattern over Karanlık Kale hallway
- **Location:** Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
- **Additional Location:** Belisırma
- **Monument Name:** Karanlık Kale
- **Additional Name(s):** Dark Castle
- **Architectural Plan:** null
- **Location Within Monument:** null
- **Placement Within Monument:** hallway
- **Additional Placement of Cross:** null
- **Use of Space:** secular
- **Ceiling Type:** flat
- **Cross Arrangement:** pattern
- **Arrangement Within Group:** null
- **Cross Medium:** carved; painted
- **Cross Pigment (if Painted):** red
- **Cross Attributes:** framed
- **Description:** This hallway leads to an audience hall.
- **Period:** Middle Byzantine
- **Published In:** Ousterhout 2017: 355, 358, 360;
- **Data Collection:** 2013
59. identifier: cross pattern over Karanlık Kale hall
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Belisirma
monument name: Karanlık Kale
additional name(s): Dark Castle
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: hall
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: pattern
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: splayed arms; framed;
description: null
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Ousterhout 2017: 355, 358, 360;
data collection: 2013

60. identifier: cross over Kokar Kilise nave
location: Ihlara/Peristrema
additional location: null
monument name: Kokar Kilise
additional name(s): Fragrant Church
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: serifs;
description: At the center of the painted cross is a Hand of God image.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011; 2013

61. identifier: cross pattern over Sümbülü Kilise hallway
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: null
monument name: Sümbülü Kilise
additional name(s): Hyacinth Church
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
This cross is over a secular space that Kalas argues was a dining hall in an aristocratic mansion.

period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: Pl. 105, 123; Ousterhout 2017: 335-341;
data collection: literature only

64. identifier: cross in Selime Courtyard 2 domestic barrel vault
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Selime Kalesi
monument name: Selime Courtyard 2
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: domestic
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss
description: Kalas recorded this area as a bath.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: Pl. 105, 123; Ousterhout 2017: 335-341;
data collection: literature only

65. identifier: west cross in Selime Courtyard 2 lodging upper level
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Selime Kalesi
monument name: Selime Courtyard 2
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: null
location within monument: lodging upper level
placement within monument: east domestic space
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: vault
cross arrangement: pair
arrangement within group: west
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss
description: Kalas recorded this area as lodging.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: Pl. 105, 123; Ousterhout 2017: 335-341;
data collection: literature only
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>identifier:</strong></th>
<th>east cross in Selime Courtyard 2 lodging upper level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>location:</strong></td>
<td>Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional location:</strong></td>
<td>Selime Kalesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>monument name:</strong></td>
<td>Selime Courtyard 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional name(s):</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>architectural plan:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>location within monument:</strong></td>
<td>lodging upper level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>placement within monument:</strong></td>
<td>east domestic space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional placement of cross:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>use of space:</strong></td>
<td>secular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ceiling type:</strong></td>
<td>vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross arrangement:</strong></td>
<td>pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>arrangement within group:</strong></td>
<td>east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross medium:</strong></td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross pigment (if painted):</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross attributes:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>description:</strong></td>
<td>Kalas recorded this area as lodging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>period:</strong></td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>published in:</strong></td>
<td>Kalas 2000: Pl. 105, 123; Ousterhout 2017: 335-341;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>data collection:</strong></td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>identifier:</strong></th>
<th>church behind Selime groin vault 1 in bay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>location:</strong></td>
<td>Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional location:</strong></td>
<td>near Selime Kalesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>monument name:</strong></td>
<td>cross-in-square church behind Selime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional name(s):</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>architectural plan:</strong></td>
<td>cross-in-square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>location within monument:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>placement within monument:</strong></td>
<td>naos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional placement of cross:</strong></td>
<td>northwest bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>use of space:</strong></td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ceiling type:</strong></td>
<td>cross vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross arrangement:</strong></td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>arrangement within group:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross medium:</strong></td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross pigment (if painted):</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross attributes:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>description:</strong></td>
<td>Ousterhout recorded that the corner bays in the church have groin vaults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>period:</strong></td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>published in:</strong></td>
<td>Kalas 2000: Pl. 54; Ousterhout 2011: 168; Ousterhout 2017: 169;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>data collection:</strong></td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>identifier:</strong></th>
<th>church behind Selime groin vault 2 in bay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>location:</strong></td>
<td>Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional location:</strong></td>
<td>near Selime Kalesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>monument name:</strong></td>
<td>cross-in-square church behind Selime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>additional name(s):</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>architectural plan:</strong></td>
<td>cross-in-square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>location within monument:</strong></td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identifier</td>
<td>church behind Selime groin vault 3 in bay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| identifier | church behind Selime groin vault 4 in bay | location | Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi | additional location | near Selime Kalesi | monument name | cross-in-square church behind Selime | additional name(s) | null | architectural plan | cross-in-square | location within monument | null | placement within monument | naos | additional placement of cross | southwest bay | use of space | sacred | ceiling type | cross vault | cross arrangement | single | arrangement within group | null | cross medium | carved | cross pigment (if painted) | null | cross attributes | null | description | Ousterhout recorded that the corner bays in the church have groin vaults. | period | Middle Byzantine | published in | Kalas 2000: Pl. 54; Ousterhout 2011: 168; Ousterhout 2017: 169; data collection | literature only |
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: Ousterhout recorded that the corner bays in the church have groin vaults.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: Pl. 54; Ousterhout 2011: 168; Ousterhout 2017: 169;
data collection: literature only

71. identifier: cross over Güllükkaya Area 5 portico
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Güllükkaya
monument name Area 5
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: portico
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss
description: Arms extending from a circular center that extend to the edge of the small dome on the vaulted porch of a hall.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

72. identifier: cross over Güllükkaya Area 7 church nave
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Güllükkaya
monument name Area 7
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: null
location within monument: church
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: The stylized cross form is made up of triangular carving in the dome, emphasized by the triangular shape of the pendentives beneath.
period: 
published in: 
data collection: 

73. identifier: west cross over Güllükkaya Area 8 church nave 
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi 
additional location: Güllükkaya 
monument name: Area 8 
additional name(s): lower level 
architectural plan: null 
location within monument: null 
placement within monument: hall 
additional placement of cross: null 
use of space: secular 
ceiling type: flat 
cross arrangement: group 
arrangement within group: west cross 
cross medium: carved 
cross pigment (if painted): null 
cross attributes: boss; splayed arms; 
description: This cross is one of three in a transverse hall in a courtyard complex. 
period: Middle Byzantine 
published in: Kalas 2000: 101-105 
data collection: literature only 

74. identifier: center cross over Güllükkaya Area 8 church nave 
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi 
additional location: Güllükkaya 
monument name: Area 8 
additional name(s): lower level 
architectural plan: null 
location within monument: null 
placement within monument: hall 
additional placement of cross: null 
use of space: secular 
ceiling type: flat 
cross arrangement: group 
arrangement within group: center cross 
cross medium: carved 
cross pigment (if painted): null 
cross attributes: null 
description: This stylized cross runs on the diagonal, from the corners of a rectangular room, resembling an X, which is in contrast to the crosses that flank it on either side. 
period: Middle Byzantine 
published in: Kalas 2000: 101-105 
data collection: literature only
75. identifier: east cross over Güllükkaya Area 8 church nave
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Güllükkaya
monument name: Area 8
additional name(s): lower level
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: hall
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: east cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss; splayed arms;
description: This cross is one of three in a transverse hall in a courtyard complex.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: 101-105
data collection: literature only

76. identifier: cross over Güllükkaya Area 8 lower level room east of "bath"
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Güllükkaya
monument name: Area 8
additional name(s): lower level
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: room
additional placement of cross: room east of "bath"
use of space: secular
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: splayed arms;
description: This cross is over a secular space that adjoins (to the east) a domed cavity with a bench that Kalas argues was a bath.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: 103
data collection: literature only

77. identifier: cross over Güllükkaya Area 8 lower level room west of "bath"
location: Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi
additional location: Güllükkaya
monument name: Area 8
additional name(s): lower level
architectural plan: null
This cross is over a secular space that adjoins (to the west) a domed cavity with a bench that Kalas argues was a bath.

This small, secular room has two ceiling crosses.

This cross is over a secular space that adjoins (to the west) a domed cavity with a bench that Kalas argues was a bath.

This small, secular room has two ceiling crosses.

north cross over Güllükkaya Area 8 upper level

Ihlara Valley; Peristrema Valley; Ihlara Vadisi Güllükkaya

Area 8

upper level

null

null

south cross

carved

splayed arms; encircled;

This small, secular room has two ceiling crosses.

This small, secular room has two ceiling crosses.
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss; splayed arms;
description: This small, secular room has two ceiling crosses.
period: Middle Byzantine
published in: Kalas 2000: 102
data collection: literature only

80. identifier: cross over St. Stephen Chapel nave
location: Keşlik Valley
additional location: Cemil
monument name: Archaengelos Monastery
additional name(s)
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; serifs;
description: The area behind the nave ceiling cross, which is painted to look gemmed, is a vine motif.
period: Transitional
data collection: 2011; 2013

81. identifier: north cross over Kemerli Deresi 3 nave
location: Kemerli Deresi
additional location: Cemil
monument name: Kemerli Deresi 3
additional name(s) church with a transverse nave
architectural plan: double-apsed basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: pair
arrangement within group: north cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: splayed arms; tang; framed
description: Jolivet-Lévy notes that this chapel is north of Cemil. The pair of ceiling crosses is in a transverse nave.
82. identifier: south cross over Kemerli Deresi 3 nave
location: Kemerli Deresi
additional location: Cemil
monument name: Kemerli Deresi 3
additional name(s): church with a transverse nave
architectural plan: double-apsed basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: pair
arrangement within group: south cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: framed
description: Jolivet-Lévy notes that this chapel is north of Cemil. The pair of ceiling crosses is in a transverse nave.

83. identifier: cross over St. Basil Church in the Gomeda Valley
location: Gomeda Valley
additional location: Sinasos; Mustafapaşa
monument name: Basil Church
additional name(s): Saint Basil; Hagios Basilios; Hagios Vasilios;
architectural plan: double basilica
location within monument: south chapel
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; serifs
description: The ceiling cross is painted to look gold and gemmed and is surrounded by a dedicatory inscription on the cornice. It is in the south nave of a double basilica.
84. identifier: cross over Kurtdere 1 nave
location: Kurtdere
additional location: Karacaören
monument name: Kurtdere 1
additional name(s): church 1; early Christian church; Karacaören 1;
arbitrary plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: The (now damaged) cross coved the entire nave ceiling.
period: Transitional
data collection: literature only

85. identifier: cross in Kepez 2a narthex
location: Kepez Vadisi
additional location: Ürgüp
monument name: Kepez 2a
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: northwest vault
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: single
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: encircled
description: This cross is carved into the cupola of the vault in the northwest corner of the naos.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

86. identifier: cross in Kepez 2a northwest dome
location: Kepez Vadisi
additional location: Ürgüp
monument name: Kepez 2a
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
cross pattern over Kepez 3 hallway

cross vault northwest bay in Hallaç Church

A small cross, which is damaged at the center, is interwoven into the decoration of the narthex dome via a series of concentric circles.

Intersecting lines create a cross forms within repeated diamond shapes. This hallway is near Kepez 3 Church, which is in the vicinity of Sarıca Church.
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: boss; encircled;
description: The arms of the small cross at the center are visually extended as ribs of the groin vault.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011

89. identifier: cross vault over southwest bay in Hallaç Church
location: Ortahisar
additional location: Hallaç Manisteri
monument name: Hallaç Church
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: naos
additional placement of cross: southwest vault
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: boss
description: The arms of the small cross at the center are visually extended as ribs of the groin vault.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011

90. identifier: northwest cross over Ortahisar 1
location: Balkan deresi
additional location: Ortahisar
monument name: Ortahisar 1
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: west annex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: pair
arrangement within group: north cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: bosses; tang:
description: This is one of two ceiling crosses over the west end of the chapel, and is more damaged than the southernmost ceiling cross.
period: Middle Byzantine (?)
91. identifier: southwest cross over Ortahisar 1
location: Balkan deresi
additional location: Ortahisar
monument name Ortahisar 1
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: west annex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: pair
arrangement within group: south cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: bosses; tang;
description: This is one of two ceiling crosses over the west end of the chapel.
period: Middle Byzantine (?)
data collection: literature only

92. identifier: cross over Ortahisar 3 narthex
location: Balkan deresi
additional location: Ortahisar
monument name Ortahisar 3
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: splayed arms; arched;
description: The bottom of cross is directed toward the south (into the chapel).
period: Transitional
published in: Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 179; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 180;
data collection: literature only

93. identifier: north cross over Church on Hacı Telgraf Street narthex
location: Ortahisar
additional location: Ortahisar village
monument name Church on Hacı Telgraf Street
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: north
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: This church is on private property near the House Hotel. This cross is the northernmost in a group of three in the vestibule at the west of a chapel. The date is uncertain.
period: Middle Byzantine (?)
published in: Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 181; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 182-183;
data collection: literature only

94. identifier: center cross over Church on Hacı Telgraf Street narthex
location: Ortahisar
additional location: Ortahisar village
monument name: Church on Hacı Telgraf Street
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: group
arrangement within group: center
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: bosses; pendilia
description: This church is on private property near the House Hotel. The cross is depicted with pendilla hanging from two arms. The unusual carving style is difficult to date and may be Late or post-Byzantine, or a later addition or alteration.
period: Middle Byzantine (?)
published in: Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 181; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 182-183;
data collection: literature only

95. identifier: south cross over Church on Hacı Telgraf Street narthex
location: Ortahisar
additional location: Ortahisar village
monument name: Church on Hacı Telgraf Street
additional name(s) null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: narthex
additional placement of cross: null
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over Uçhisar 3 nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>Uçhisar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Sari Kilise; Kepez; St. Basil in Uçhisar; Hagios Basiliros; Sari kale Kilisesi;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan</td>
<td>double-apse basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved; painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>bosses; arched;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>The cross is carved and has remnants of figural painting. According to Demesnil's drawing, the bosses at the center and on the arms are encircled crosses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

97. identifier: cross over Karankemer Vadisi 2 nave
location: Karankemer Vadisi
additional location: Uçhisar
monument name: Karankemer Vadisi 2
additional name(s): aniconic church; U14
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: serifs; tang
description: The ceiling is badly damaged, but the cross is painted to look gemmed and is on a background of winding motifs.
period: Transitional
published in: Jolivet-Lévy 2014: 279, Fig. 14; Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 125-126; Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 124-125;
data collection: literature only

98. identifier: cross over Karabaş Church tomb
location: Soğanlı
additional location: Karabaş complex
monument name: Karabaş Church
additional name(s): Karabaş Kilise; Karabaş Kilisesi; Black Head Church
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: tomb
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: splayed arms; tang
description: The cross is on the ceiling of a small space commemorating four monks. It is painted with a green, orange, and yellow diamond motif.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: 2011; 2013

99. identifier: cross over cone south of Karabaş Kilise
location: Soğanlı
additional location: Karabaş complex
monument name: cone south of Karabaş Kilise
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: room
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
The carved cross completely covers the ceiling of this small room south of Karabaş Kilise.

Middle Byzantine

Jolivet-Lévy 2015b: Pl. 260;

literature only

This painted cross within a carved rectangle dominates the overhead space in a small cupola.

Middle Byzantine


2011

Jolivet-Lévy's drawing of the architectural plan indicates a cross in the nave near the apse.
102. Identifier: west cross over Zelve 1 narthex
Location: Zelve
Monument name: Zelve 1
Additional name(s): null
Architectural plan: basilica
Location within monument: null
Placement within monument: narthex
Additional placement of cross: null
Use of space: sacred
Ceiling type: flat
Cross arrangement: single
Arrangement within group: null
Cross medium: carved; painted
Cross pigment (if painted): red
Cross attributes: boss; splayed arms;
Description: This is the largest ceiling cross in the nave, situated at the west end of the ceiling.

Period: Transitional
Data collection: 2011

103. Identifier: north encircled cross over center of Zelve 1 nave
Location: Zelve
Monument name: Zelve 1
Additional name(s): null
Architectural plan: basilica
Location within monument: null
Placement within monument: nave
Additional placement of cross: null
Use of space: sacred
Ceiling type: flat
Cross arrangement: pair
Arrangement within group: north encircled cross
Cross medium: carved
Cross pigment (if painted): null
Cross attributes: encircled
Description: This is one of two encircled crosses in the center of the nave of the small basilica chapel.

Period: Transitional
Data collection: 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>104.</strong> identifier:</th>
<th>south encircled cross over center of Zelve 1 nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Zelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name:</td>
<td>Zelve 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s):</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>south encircled cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>encircled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>This is one of two encircled crosses in the center of the nave of the small basilica chapel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>105.</strong> identifier:</th>
<th>north cross over east end of Zelve 1 nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Zelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name:</td>
<td>Zelve 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s):</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>north cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved; painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>splayed arms; framed;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>This is one of a pair of crosses at the eastern end of the nave in the small basilica chapel. There are traces of red paint on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
106. identifier: south cross over east end of Zelve 1 nave
location: Zelve
additional location: null
monument name: Zelve 1
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: pair
arrangement within group: south cross
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: framed;
description: This is one of a pair of crosses at the eastern end of the nave in the small basilica chapel. Its embellishment has eroded so that few carved details are extant.
period: Transitional
data collection: 2011

107. identifier: cross over Zelve 1a nave
location: Zelve
additional location: Zelve Open Air Museum
monument name: Zelve 1a
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: null
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved; painted
cross pigment (if painted): red
cross attributes: tang; arched;
description: The roughly carved cross is in fairly deep relief, accented with red painting, in the westernmost vault of the basilica. Lemaigre Demesnil indicates that there may have been a second cross (with only the base visible) in the nave closer to the apse.
period: Late Antique
published in: Lemaigre Demesnil 2010: 19-20; Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 139; Ousterhout 2017: 45;
data collection: literature only
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over Zelve 3 narthex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>Zelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location</td>
<td>Zelve Open Air Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Zelve 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Geyikli, Deer Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan</td>
<td>basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument</td>
<td>narthex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium</td>
<td>carved; painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted)</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes</td>
<td>boss; splayed arms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description</td>
<td>This church has collapsed and the ceiling cross is no longer accessible. In Thierry's photograph, geometric designs on the arms resemble gems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period</td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over Zelve 4 north chapel nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>Zelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location</td>
<td>Zelve Open Air Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Zelve 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan</td>
<td>double basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument</td>
<td>north chapel; Balıklı Kilisesi; Church of the Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium</td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted)</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes</td>
<td>splayed arms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description</td>
<td>Most of the cross has been destroyed, but its size was comparable to the one in the adjoining south chapel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period</td>
<td>Transitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection</td>
<td>2011; 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over Zelve 4 south chapel nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**111. identifier:** cross over Zelve 6

**location:** Zelve

**additional location:** null

**monument name:** Zelve 6

**additional name(s):** Haçlı Kilise, Putlu Kilise

**architectural plan:** basilica

**location within monument:** null

**placement within monument:** nave

**additional placement of cross:** null

**use of space:** sacred

**ceiling type:** flat

**cross arrangement:** single

**arrangement within group:** null

**cross medium:** carved; painted

**cross pigment (if painted):** red

**cross attributes:** boss; splayed arms; arched

**description:** The cross is decorated with encircled crosses at the center and on the arms, and is flanked by two small, stylized crosses. It is accented with red paint.

**period:** Transitional

**published in:** Thierry 1983b: 360-362; Lemaigre Demesnil 2010: 27-28; Jolivet-Lévy 2015a: 140; Ousterhout 2017: 40;

**data collection:** 2013

---

**112. identifier:** cross over Zelve 6b

**location:** Zelve

**additional location:** null

**monument name:** Zelve 6b
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>Yedi Direkli Kilise cross vault</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Zelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Yedi Direkli Kilise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>secular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>cross vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved; painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>The groin vault has a red painted boss at the center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>identifier</th>
<th>cross over St. Symeon Chapel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Zelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>Paşabağ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>St. Symeon Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Chapel of St. Symeon the Stylite; St. Symeon Cone; Triple-topped cone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The carved cross was originally decorated with red painting (including an encircled cross and the center), and was later covered with polychrome and accompanying figural imagery.

Period: Middle Byzantine


Data collection: 2013

115. Identifier: cross vault over hermitage narthex
Location: Zelve
Additional location: Paşabağ
Monument name: Hermitage near St. Symeon Chapel
Additional name(s): null
Architectural plan: monk's cell
Location within monument: null
Placement within monument: narthex
Additional placement of cross: null
Use of space: secular
Ceiling type: cross vault
Cross arrangement: single
Arrangement within group: null
Cross medium: carved; painted
Cross pigment (if painted): red
Cross attributes: boss;
Description: This is a second hermitage just east of the well-known hermitage and chapel of St. Symeon.
Period: Middle Byzantine
Published in: Ousterhout 2017: 406-409;
Data collection: 2013

116. Identifier: cross over Badem Kilisesi nave
Location: Kavakli Dere
Additional location: Monastery of Kavakli Dere
Monument name: Badem Kilisesi
Additional name(s): Almond Church; Church of Kavaklıdere
Architectural plan: basilica
Location within monument: null
Placement within monument: nave
Additional placement of cross: null
Use of space: sacred
Ceiling type: barrel vault
Cross arrangement: single
Arrangement within group: null
Cross medium: painted
Cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
Cross attributes: serifs
Description: Thierry's drawing of the nave shows a monumental cross flanked
by figural imagery, situated like motifs in the Four-Quadrant Group.

period: Transitional
data collection: literature only

117. identifier: cross vault 1 in Çanlı Area 7 church bay
location: Akhisar
additional location: Çanlı Kilise, Area 7
monument name: church
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: corner bay
additional placement of cross: northwest
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss
description: The groin vault pictured by Osterhout has a boss carved at the center. He describes the corner vaults of the church as having ribbed groin vaults.

period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

118. identifier: cross vault 2 in Çanlı Area 7 church bay
location: Akhisar
additional location: Çanlı Kilise, Area 7
monument name: church
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: corner bay
additional placement of cross: northeast
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: boss
description: The groin vault pictured by Osterhout has a boss carved at the center. He describes the corner vaults of the church as having ribbed groin vaults.

period: Middle Byzantine
119. identifier: cross vault 3 in Çanlı Area 7 church bay
location: Akhisar
additional location: Çanlı Kilise, Area 7
monument name: church
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: corner bay
additional placement of cross: southeast
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: The groin vault pictured by Ousterhout has a boss carved at the center. He describes the corner vaults of the church as having ribbed groin vaults.
date: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

120. identifier: cross vault 4 in Çanlı Area 7 church bay
location: Akhisar
additional location: Çanlı Kilise, Area 7
monument name: church
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: cross-in-square
location within monument: null
placement within monument: corner bay
additional placement of cross: southwest
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: cross vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: The groin vault pictured by Ousterhout has a boss carved at the center. He describes the corner vaults of the church as having ribbed groin vaults.
date: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>121. identifier:</th>
<th>cross over Chapel A near Çanlı Kilise Area 17 narthex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Akhisar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>Çanlı Kilise, Area 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Chapel a near Çanlı Kilise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Chapel 1 near Çanlı Kilise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>narthex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>The carved cross is on the ceiling in the narthex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Middle Byzantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>published in:</td>
<td>Jolivet-Lévy 1991: 287; Thierry 1977: 189 and Fig. 17; Ousterhout 2011: Fig. 177, Area 17 monastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>122. identifier:</th>
<th>cross over Güzelöz 10 nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Başköy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>Güzelöz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>Güzelöz 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>Saint Basil in Güzelöz; Kapalı Kilise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>architectural plan:</td>
<td>triple basilica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location within monument:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placement within monument:</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional placement of cross:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of space:</td>
<td>sacred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceiling type:</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross arrangement:</td>
<td>single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrangement within group:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross medium:</td>
<td>carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross pigment (if painted):</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross attributes:</td>
<td>arched;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>description:</td>
<td>Ousterhout notes that the site may have been used an altered over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>period:</td>
<td>Transitional (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>published in:</td>
<td>Lemaigre Demesnil 2010: 141-142; Ousterhout 2017: 123;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data collection:</td>
<td>literature only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>123. identifier:</th>
<th>cross over a room in a plateau in Çavuşın</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location:</td>
<td>Çavuşın</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional location:</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monument name</td>
<td>room in a plateau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional name(s)</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
architectural plan: null
location within monument: null
placement within monument: room
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: secular
ceiling type: flat
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: encircled
description: Jolivet-Lévy notes that the space is near Saint Theodore chapel and might be funerary although there are no visible tombs, and it could also be a hermitage.

period: Transitional (?)
data collection: literature only

124. identifier: cross over chapel north of Haç Kilise
location: Çat Valley
additional location: Çat Dere
monument name: chapel north of Haç Kilise
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: basilica
location within monument: north
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: barrel vault
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: painted
cross pigment (if painted): polychrome
cross attributes: serifed
description: This cross may be similar to ones in the Four-Quadrant group, with remnants of figures instead of motifs in damaged quadrants.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only

125. identifier: cross over Haç Kilise nave
location: Çat Valley
additional location: Çat Dere
monument name: Haç Kilise; Yanık Kaya Kilisesi; Church of St. Luke;
additional name(s): null
architectural plan: double basilica
location within monument: north
placement within monument: nave
additional placement of cross: null
use of space: sacred
ceiling type: dome
cross arrangement: single
arrangement within group: null
cross medium: carved
cross pigment (if painted): null
cross attributes: null
description: This cross is carved in the cupola (dome) of the north chapel.
period: Middle Byzantine
data collection: literature only
**Appendix 2: Monumental Apse Crosses**

This chart identifies monuments that have both a monumental ceiling cross and a monumental apse cross that is encircled and painted to look gemmed. See Appendix 1 for catalog entries. (It does not include a variety of smaller apse crosses in the region or apse decoration that is not accompanied by a ceiling cross).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
<th>monument name</th>
<th>placement of ceiling cross(es)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>St. Sergius Chapel</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Avci̇lar 8</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Avci̇lar 3 (Karşi̇becak)</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Stylite Nicetas Chapel</td>
<td>west vault (porch); center vault (nave)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>St. Stephen Chapel</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Karankemer Vadisi 2</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Badem Kilisesi</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Kurtdere 1</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Crosses in St. Basil Church

Sixteen crosses are on the walls and ceiling of St. Basil Church in the Gomeda Valley. Of these, three are carved. Fifteen of the crosses have either red or polychrome painting, and eight of them are meant to represent gemmed objects. (Not included in this count are painted crosses that may have been depicted on garments in two saints’ portraits on the east wall because the portraits are too damaged to assess).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>chapel</th>
<th>placement</th>
<th>relative placement</th>
<th>which cross in group</th>
<th>medium</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>north</td>
<td>chancel barrier</td>
<td>north</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>carved, painted</td>
<td>carved in relief; red painting; (damaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>north</td>
<td>chancel barrier</td>
<td>south</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>carved, painted</td>
<td>carved in relief; red painting; (damaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>north</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>north side</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>red painting; splayed arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>upper register</td>
<td>north</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; encircled; inscription: ΗΑΚΟΒ (Ἡακόβ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>upper register</td>
<td>center</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; encircled; inscription: ΑΒΠΑΑΜ (Ἄβραμ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>upper register</td>
<td>south</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; encircled; inscription: ΗΣΑΑΚ (Ησαάκ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>lower register</td>
<td>north</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms; (damaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>lower register</td>
<td>center</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms; with inscription: Σηγνον του αγιου Κοσταντινου</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>lower register</td>
<td>south</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms; (damaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>apse</td>
<td>north side</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; possibly painted to look gemmed with leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>nave</td>
<td>ceiling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome, painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>east wall</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>carved</td>
<td>cruciform sunken relief; splayed arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>arcade</td>
<td>westernmost arch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>arcade</td>
<td>center arch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms; (badly damaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>arcade</td>
<td>easternmost arch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to look gemmed; splayed arms; serifed arms; (badly damaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>south wall</td>
<td>southwest corner</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>painted</td>
<td>polychrome; painted to depict a gemmed reliquary with vines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: The Four-Quadrant Ceiling Group

Monuments with monumental ceiling crosses painted with four-quadrant motifs on the backgrounds, as described in Chapter 4. Catalog numbers reference Appendix 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
<th>location</th>
<th>monument</th>
<th>placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Gomeda Valley</td>
<td>St. Basil Church</td>
<td>south nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>İhlara (Peristrema) Valley</td>
<td>Eğritaş Kilisesi</td>
<td>main church nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>İhlara (Peristrema) Valley</td>
<td>Eğritaş Kilisesi</td>
<td>north burial annex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>İhlara (Peristrema) Valley</td>
<td>Ağaçaltı Kilise</td>
<td>west transept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>İhlara (Peristrema) Valley</td>
<td>Kokar Kilise</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Kavaklı Dere</td>
<td>Badem Kilisesi</td>
<td>nave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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