Nicole Kançal-Ferrari*

Contextualising the Decorum *of Golden Horde-Period Mosques in Crimea*

Artistic Interactions as Reflected in Patronage and Material Culture

Abstract – This essay reframes the artistic and architectural culture of the Golden Horde monuments in Crimea in their larger trans-regional context. The cultural environment of the period's architectural decoration in the peninsula is analysed in the light of patrons, communities, workshop connections and the *decorum* on the edifices; the material is put into relationship with the socio-cultural network of patrons and craftsmen. The search for concrete formal and stylistic parallels is conducted with a focus on extant religious buildings, primarily mosques. Connections with places outside of Crimea, Transcaucasia and Anatolia (Amasya, Erzurum and Tokat) are established based on concrete examples of Anatolian 'counterparts' that have most often been considered as products originating in local workshops. Thus, Ilkhanid Anatolia's artistic language and its contact with other places are also reappraised. Finally, a hypothetical identification of the patron of the best-known edifice of the Golden Horde period, the Özbek Khan Mosque in Qrïm, is proposed based on new research.

Keywords: Golden Horde architecture, Islamic architecture, Ilkhanid architecture, Özbek Khan, Janibek Khan, Berdibek Khan, Seljūq Dynasty, Crimea, Anatolia, Transcaucasia, mosque, *zāwiyya*, *miḥrāb*, capital, patronage, workshop.

---

* Istanbul Sehir University

Résumé – *Mettre en contexte le décorum des mosquées de la période de la Horde d'Or en Crimée : les interactions artistiques d'après l'étude du patronage et de la culture matérielle.* Cet essai réexamine le style artistique et architectural des monuments de la Horde d'Or en Crimée dans leurs diverses dimensions culturelles et territoriales. L'environnement culturel, qui sous-tend la décoration architecturale, est ici analysé à travers l'étude des commanditaires, des communautés, des connections entre les ateliers et du décorum des monuments. Le matériel est étudié en relation avec le réseau social et culturel de ceux qui commanditèrent les monuments et de leurs artisans. En premier lieu, l'auteur recherche des parallèles spécifiques, tant dans le style que dans la forme, en se concentrant plus particulièrement sur les bâtiments religieux, à commencer par les mosquées. Par la suite, l'auteur établit des connections avec des monuments en Transcaucasie et en Anatolie (à Amasya, Erzurum, et Tokat) en analysant des exemples où les « contreparties » anatoliennes ont été considérées comme le produit d'ateliers locaux. Ainsi, ce travail tient compte du style artistique de l'Anatolie ilkhanide et de ses connections avec d'autres régions. Enfin, grâce à ses nouvelles recherches, l'auteur émet une hypothèse d'identification du commanditaire de l'édifice le plus connu de la Horde d'Or, la mosquée dite d'Özbek Khan à Qrïm.

Mots clés : architecture de la Horde d'Or, architecture islamique, architecture ilkhanide, Özbek Khan, Janibek Khan, Berdibek Khan, dynastie Seljukide, Crimée, Anatolie, Transcaucasie, mosquée, *zāwiya*, *miḥrāb*, capitale, clientélisme, atelier.

In this essay, I aim to retrace the artistic and architectural culture of the Golden Horde monuments in Crimea and to reframe the various dimensions of that culture in their larger territorial context. After a brief introduction to Crimea and the Golden Horde, I begin by detailing the similarities in architectural ornamentation and the concrete formal and stylistic parallels of the extant religious buildings in Crimea and the broader region. On the basis of an analysis of the *decorum*[1] of extant Crimean edifices and the details these and other sources offer about socio-cultural networks of patrons and craftsmen, I argue that these connections are best understood as part of a larger world of shared material culture in the environment of the Golden Horde.[2] This essay thus goes beyond an enumeration of stylistic resemblances, though even these have not been elaborated in detail until now. Much of the material I draw on in this essay was collected during substantial fieldwork I conducted over the last twenty years, most recently in 2012-2014 as part of the Crimean Historical and Cultural Heritage Inventory Project on Turco-Muslim heritage in Crimea (Kırımlı & Kançal-Ferrari, 2016).

1 I use 'decorum' in the sense of the material and visual manifestation of the relationship between suitable ornamentation for a monument and a patron's identity and social position.

2 I presented a related paper, "An overview on mosque architecture of the Golden Horde period in Crimea", at the 15th International Congress of Turkish Art in Naples ICTA (16-18 September 2015; publication forthcoming in the conference proceedings).

Crimea and the Golden Horde

Research on Golden Horde material culture is hampered by the scarcity of remains. This scarcity is the result of the concentration of construction activities in only a few centres, some of which were later abandoned, and of subsequent destruction of much of what remained. Furthermore, scholarship on pre-modern Turco-Mongol-Islamic heritage is still fragmented, which makes it difficult to place the material of a particular region in its broader context. For this reason, this essay is also an effort to reintroduce the material heritage of the Golden Horde culture in Crimea to the broader scholarly discussion.

Interest in Crimean architectural heritage began in the second half of the 19th c. with archaeological excavations in certain core settlements in Golden Horde territory. The rich material these excavations brought to light pointed to flourishing cities, a sophisticated urban culture, and monuments with refined architectural decoration (Fedorov-Davydov, 2001; Kramarovsky, 2012; Zilivinskaya, 2012).

Islam became widespread in Golden Horde realms in the 14th c., though Berke Khan (r. 1257-1266) had already adopted Islam in the second half of the 13th c. His relations with the Mamluk sultan Beybars (r. 1260-1277) were also influenced by his conversion. Under Muḥammad Özbek Khan (r. 1312-1340) many converted to Islam and the empire gained an Islamic identity. Religious buildings arose to serve the emerging Muslim communities (De Weese, 1994; Izmailov-Usmanov, 2010) and, as Islam spread, political and cultural ties to other Muslim regions blossomed. The material evidence discussed below reveals that this process continued under Özbek's successors: his son Janibek Khan (r. 1342-1357), praised by contemporary sources for his construction activities, and later Berdibek Khan (r. 1357-1359).

Some Golden Horde cities had an Islamic identity predating the arrival of the Chinggisids, such as Urgench in Khwārazm and Bulgar in the Volga basin, whose Muslim communities date back to the 8th c. Other cities, especially in Crimea, were founded either newly on empty locations in the second half of the 13th c. or else atop former non-Islamic settlements. The presence of important scholars in cultural centres like Saray, Urgench, and Qrïm (also known as Solkhat; now commonly referred to Eski Qrim in Crimean Tatar or Staryi Krym in Russian) and their contacts with the core regions of the Islamic world promoted a dynamic and advanced cultural life in the Horde's realms (Izgi, 1996).

Accounts like that of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (in Crimea in the 1330s) permit us to investigate the location of religious architecture, the cultural practices connected to these monuments, and the socio-religious environment of the cities, where Sufi and Akhī communities, 'orthodox' Hanafis and Shafiʿis, new converts and Christians lived together. The cities Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited had a mix of diverse religious groups similar to that of Anatolia, where the cultural landscape was formed by mosques and convents, which were often multifunctional structures (Wolper, 2003; Tanman-Parlak, 2006).

On Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's journey to Constantinople, he accompanied the Byzantine princess Bayalun, the third wife of Özbek Khan and daughter of Andronikos III Palaiologos (r. 1328-1341). They passed a place called Baba Saltūq, today's Babadağ, in Romania. According to Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Baba Saltūq was the last station in the *bilād-ı etrāk* (the realm of the Turks) before entering the *bilād-ı Rūm* ('realm of the Romans', i.e., Byzantine territory). The settlement was centred around the *türbe* (mausoleum) of Sarı Saltūq, a "saint of a nomadic tribe" (Ocak, 2011: 111), who had followed the former Seljūq sultan ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II (r. 1246-1257) on his exile to the Golden Horde realms. This location, based around the spiritual centre of a Sufi saint, is typical of other places in Golden Horde territory, notably the Crimean peninsula. On his journey, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa often stayed in *zāwiya*s, Sufi convents headed by a shaykh and belonging to a specific community. Together with the *masjid* (mosque), the *zāwiya* was the most important religious structure in cities, and some were founded by important patrons, as will be discussed below. Another important Sufi saint in Crimea was Kemal Ata, a disciple of Sarı Saltūq. Extant tombstones in Qrïm contain the names of shaykhs and scholars, and reveal their important social status in 13th-15th c. Crimea (Akçokraklı, 2006: 220-251).

Besides the socio-religious network of scholars and religious communities, Crimea had direct ties to the Seljūq dynasty in Anatolia. Two of the most important settlements in Crimea, Sudak and Qrïm, were granted as *ʿiqtā* (a non-hereditary grant of usufruct rights to a territory) by Berke Khan to the deposed Seljūq sultan ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II (Ibn Bībī, 1996: 162). Sources also mention a matrimonial alliance with the Golden Horde Khan. ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II died in Crimea in 1282-1283. His son, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Masʿūd II (r. 1284-1293, 1294-1301, 1303-1307, d. 1308) gained the Seljūq throne in 1284 from Crimea and played a crucial role in the last years of the Seljūq Empire in Anatolia (Ocak, 2011: 17-33; Ciocîltan, 2012: 93-96, 241-249).

Mosque architecture in the Golden Horde

Outside Crimea, remains of Golden Horde mosques have been found in more than ten locations, and this list will likely grow. But little is known about their architectural decoration.

Examples of such remains exist in the Volga basin and in Kuchugury on the Dniepr River. The mosque in Beldjamen (Vodiansk), destroyed during the attack of Temür (r. 1370-1405) in 1395, had a minaret with a base of baked bricks decorated with turquoise enamel and tile decoration. The *miḥrāb* was made of carved alabaster and bore Kufic script. Mosques in Bulgar –the economic centre and capital of the medieval Bulgar state, rebuilt in the Golden Horde period– and Old Saray contain *miḥrāb*s with stone carving and paint and/or tile decoration. Their decoration shows their relationship to Central Asia, Iran, Crimea, and Anatolia. Tile decoration, so widely used in Central Asia, Iran, and parts of Anatolia, is scarce in Crimea

(Kramarovsky, 2012: 219-228). The octagonal stone pillars of the mosque in Bulgar, a large mosque with a rectangular hypostyle layout rebuilt in the 13th-early 14th c., also show a technical and stylistic connection to the architecture of Crimea and northeastern Anatolia (e.g., Erzurum). The pedestals and capitals of these pillars were decorated with stylised vegetal ornamentation. The projecting portals had carved friezes with Quranic verses and floral design. This shows that these regions' artistic environments did indeed nourish each other (Izmailov-Usmanov, 2010: 104-105; Blessing, 2014: 130-142; Zilivinskaya, 2014). Contemporary monuments from non-Muslim environments also display architectural decoration similar to that in the Turco-Mongol domain (Yakobson, 1956, 1964),[3] suggesting an even wider scale of artistic interaction.

Examining art and architecture in 11th-14th c. Anatolia in relationship with and against the backdrop of the Seljūq dynasty, one sees that the second half of the 13th c. to the middle of the 14th c. was a period of change in Seljūq architecture. This change has traditionally been viewed as an era of decline due to growing Ilkhanid dominance in Anatolia. As a consequence, the periods' architectural output is viewed in the same negative light.[4] New approaches to the Ilkhanids instead argue for the rise of a new aesthetic understanding in architectural decoration (Blessing, 2014: 103).

Researchers on Golden Horde heritage are often not familiar with Anatolia. Places like Amasya, Tokat, and Erzurum have therefore often gone overlooked, even though they hold edifices of the Ilkhanid period that are contemporary with edifices in Golden Horde Crimea. Connecting the visual idiom of Ilkhanid Anatolia and Crimea during the Golden Horde period can thus lead to new openings for both these regions and their respective environments. To this end, the discussion below offers a new perspective on certain common elements in architectural decoration in Anatolia and Crimea.

Golden Horde architecture in Crimea

Qïrq-yer (Salaçık) and nearby Eskiyurt (literally 'old settlement') in the west of the peninsula and Qrïm in the east were important Golden Horde cultural centres. The harbour town of Sudak in the south was under Seljūq and later Golden Horde domination from the beginning of the 13th c. until it became part of the Genoese Gazaria in 1365. Only a few examples of this Turco-Muslim architectural heritage remain: a *dār al-huffāẓ* (school for memorising the Quran) in Sheikhköy (modern Davidovo), a mausoleum in Eskiyurt, a mosque and a mausoleum in Qïrq-yer, a mosque in Sudak, and three mosques and a caravanserai in Qrïm (Kramarovsky, 2012: 122-268, 206-218; Kırımlı & Kançal-Ferrari, 2016: 88-95, 426-431, 456-461,

3 See Aybabina (2001) for an inventory of decorations in stone, including many fragments.

4 This traditional narrative is discussed in Blessing (2014: 1-20).

488-495, 606-645, 762-773). Some of these have never been evaluated in the context of Golden Horde heritage in Crimea, and thus furnish important new data for the period's architectural culture.

Examples of intact architectural decoration are rare, but include the portal, pillars and *miḥrāb* of the Özbek Khan Mosque (1314-1315) in Qrïm, the miḥrāb of the mosque (early 13th-first half of the 14th c.) in Sudak, the *miḥrāb* of the *dār al-huffāẓ* (1359) in Sheikhköy, and the *miḥrāb* of the Janibek Khan Mosque (1345-1346) in Qïrq-yer. Tombstones and architectural fragments, in situ or in museums, also bear decoration belonging to the edifices above, or to others now lost.

Portals

The sole partly extant entrance facade belongs to the Özbek Khan Mosque (Fig. 1) and has been studied extensively (Kramarovsky, 2013). According to its Arabic foundation inscription (in situ), it was built by one ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm al-Erbilī in 1314-1315. The inscription contains the name of the Golden Horde ruler of that period, the well-known Özbek Khan, and of the patron with his *nisba*, indicating his origin in Erbil in northern Iraq. Erbil was taken by the Ilkhanid ruler Hülegü (r. 1256-1265) in 1258, and, like much of Anatolia, remained under Ilkhanid influence for decades. Nothing else is known about ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm al-Erbilī, but a hypothetical connection will be proposed below. The portal consists of rectangular frames with flatly carved geometric and vegetal patterns surrounding a niche surmounted by *muqarnas* and columns with capitals of high plasticity. The upper parts of these capitals, once jutting out of the facade, are partly broken. Starting from the capitals, at the level of the *muqarnas* hood, are the remains of a band of decorative inscription in *jalī thuluth*. It perhaps formed an inner frame in the form of a pointed arch around the *muqarnas* hood. Current attempts to reconstruct the portal must be viewed with care, as they are only partly based on the extant material evidence.

The portal has close parallels with some well-known edifices in Anatolia (Kramarovsky, 2013), where decorative facade inscription became widespread under the Ilkhanids in the second half of the 13th c. These include three madrasas in Sivas built by different patrons in 1271-1272: the Çifte Minareli, Buruciyye, and Gök Madrasas. The Çifte Minareli Madrasa, built under the patronage of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Juvaynī (d. 1285), was one of the few direct Ilkhanid interventions in Anatolia before 1277. Juvaynī was a vizier and finance minister of the Ilkhanid khans between 1263 and 1285 and the brother of the historian ʿAlā al-Dīn Malik Juvaynī, governor of Iraq and Khuzestan (Blessing, 2014: 77-79).

The portal also resembles other monuments. The portal of the *bimārhāne* (hospital) in Amasya, erected in 709/1308, has virtually the same arrangement (Fig. 2). Its inscription mentions the Ilkhanid Sultan Öljeytü (r. 1304-1316), underscoring its Mongol suzerain just as the inscription in Crimea evokes



Fig. 1 – Özbeg Khan Mosque in Qrim (1314-1315), entrance facade
Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.

Özbek Khan. The hospital's portal closely follows the facade layout of the edifices in Sivas. Also in Amasya, the decorative panels, window arrangements, and capitals of the portal of the Seyf al-Dīn Torumtay Mausoleum (1278) near the *bimārhāne* are even earlier examples of the evolution of a new aesthetic under

Ilkhanid domination (Blessing, 2014: 199). Tokat is home to other edifices with a similar visual idiom. The portal arrangement of the Sünbül Baba *zāwiya*, erected in 1292, is a case in point. The Seljūq sultan Masʿūd II, son of ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II, is mentioned in the endowment inscription. The *zāwiya* was erected in the period of Ilkhanid domination at a time when the Seljūq sultan, who spent much of his life in the Golden Horde realm of Sudak and Qrïm, had only limited political influence. Because of this, his mention as ruler and the stylistic parallels of this edifice suggest a link between the region of Tokat and Crimea. The mausoleum of the Ilkhanid amīr Nūr al-Dīn b. Sentimūr in Tokat, erected in 1314, also shows decorative elements of high plasticity, and its architectural decorum, style, and technique clearly point to the artistic idiom of Ilkhanid Iran.



Fig. 2 – *Bimârhâne* in Amasya (1308) (left), Sünbül Baba *zâwiya* in Tokat (1292) (right). *Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.*

Other comparable monuments are the Çifte Minareli and Yakutiyye Madrasas in Erzurum (Fig. 3). The Yakutiyye Madrasa bears the date of 1310 on its foundation inscription. The Çifte Minareli Madrasa also dates to the last quarter of the 13th c. Erzurum's Ahmediyye Madrasa, which no longer survives, was erected in 1314, and was thus contemporary with the Özbek Khan Mosque. These three edifices have formal and stylistic parallels to Crimea that go beyond mere coincidence. According to its endowment inscription, the Yakutiyye Madrasa was constructed during the rule of the Ilkhanid sultan Öljeytü, and thus, like the earlier bimārhāne in Amasya, also evokes the Mongol overlord. In Anatolia, the khans Maḥmūd Ghazan (r. 1295-1304), Öljeytü and Abū Saʿīd (r. 1316-1335) appear on several endowment inscriptions from the turn of the 13th c. until the end of Ilkhanid rule (Uzunçarşılı, 2003; Blessing, 2014).

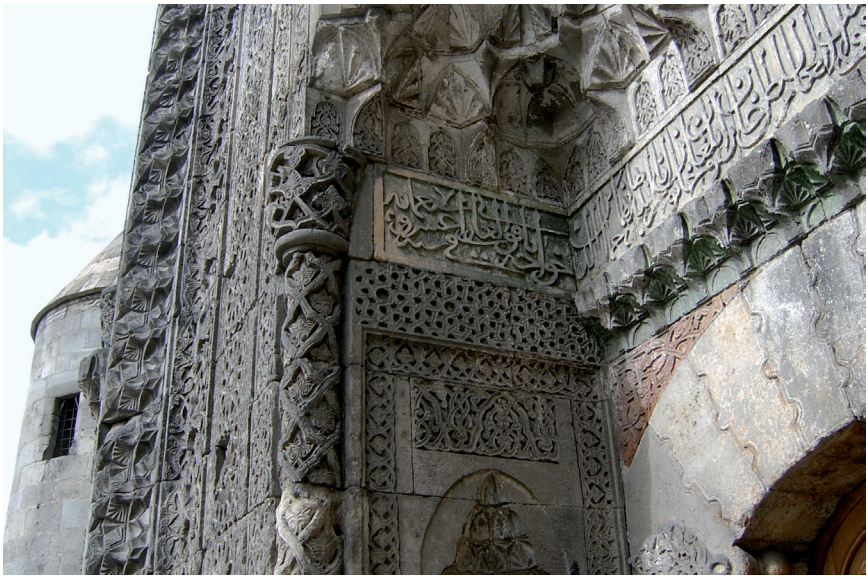


Fig. 3 – Yakutiyye Madrasa in Erzurum, detail of the entrance facade (1310).
Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.

The octagonal columns of the Özbek Khan Mosque have beautiful capitals with *muqarnas* decoration. The ones in front of the *miḥrāb* are especially carefully carved. Similar columns exist in the Çifte Minareli Madrasa in Erzurum, and, as mentioned above, in the mosque in Bulgar. A springer stone found at the mosque-cum-madrasa site in Qrïm, now at the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, closely resembles the voussoir stones with vegetal ornamentation in the Yakutiyye Madrasa (1310) in Erzurum, again pointing to a common artistic environment.

A hitherto overlooked edifice, the *dār al-huffāẓ* in Sheikhköy (1359), was erected 45 years after the Özbek Khan Mosque. It was in use to the early 20th c. as a 'mosque-tekke', but was blown up in the 1950s after the mass deportation of the Crimean Tatars from their homeland. A photograph showing the endowment inscription offers clues about the facade arrangement of the edifice's now-destroyed portal. It shows parts of a first row of *muqarnas* decoration, suggesting a portal with a *muqarnas* hood. According to the inscription, this edifice was constructed during the reign of Qutluq-Temür Bek, the governor (amīr) of Crimea and son of the former amīr Tuluk-Temür, at the time of the Golden Horde khan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Berdibek Khan (r. 1357-1359) in 1359 (Kırımlı & Kançal-Ferrari, 2016: 88-95). No other contemporary information exists. Evliya Çelebi, so exact about many places in the peninsula, is silent on this edifice. The *dār al-huffāẓ* was erected some decades after Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's trip through Crimea, but Ibn Baṭṭūṭa did meet and travel with the father and son mentioned in the inscription. They stayed at the *zāwiya* of Amīr Tuluk-Temür, the father, near the town of Qrïm (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, 1994: 366). This *zāwiya* and the *dār al-huffāẓ* later constructed by the son may have been

part of the same complex. Either the father and son both undertook construction activities in the same region, or the son may have added a school to an already existing building. The style of the extant capital of the *miḥrāb*, discussed below, is close to those of the Özbek Khan Mosque. This points to an early date, likely the early rather than late 14th c., and could thus indicate an earlier stage of the building, with the inscription from 1359 indicating a later enlargement.

*Miḥrāb*s

Four extant *miḥrābs*, all in situ, also furnish information on the Golden Horde period's visual idiom.

The extraordinary *miḥrāb* of the Özbek Khan Mosque has a double-niche arrangement with two *muqarnas* hoods, one inside the other, with the exterior one framing the smaller one. Both are framed by colonettes (Fig. 4). The mosque's *miḥrāb*, like the portal, contains a decorative inscription in *jalī thuluth* (Kramarovsky, 2013; Kırımlı & Kançal-Ferrari, 2016: 612-621). *Miḥrābs*

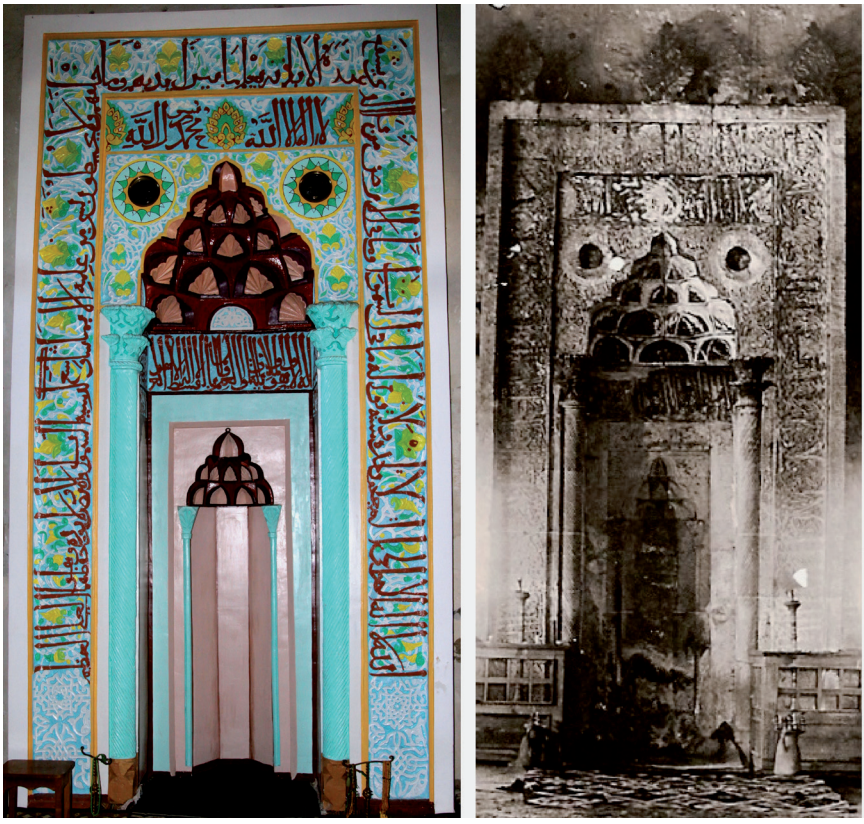


Fig. 4 – Özbeg Khan Mosque in Qrim (1314-1315), *mihrâb* (left: 2012, right: photograph late 19th c.) – *Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.*

with similar double-niche arrangements, inscription, twisted columns, and cubic (dice-shaped) pedestals exist in Anatolia (Bakırer, 2000: 78-100). Late 19th c. photographs show the now-lost upper decoration details of the miḥrāb, the original layout of which had a triple-crest ornamentation of vegetal motifs. These crest elements, together with the vegetal ornamentation, have parallels in the decoration of the nearby Surp Khach Monastery (1358) and other sites in Anatolia and Iran. The entrance portal of the nearly contemporary mausoleum of the Seljūq princess Khuda Khwānd Khātūn (Hüdavend Hatun) in Niğde, dated 1312, also has similar stylistic elements (Kramarovsky, 2013). Its *miḥrāb*, which displays a floral interlacement of high plasticity in the centre of the inner frame, provides even closer formal parallels. Khuda Khwānd Khātūn was a Seljūq princess and daughter of Rukn al-Dīn Qilich Arslan IV (d. 1265) (Akşit, 2011). She married the Ilkhanid Arghun (r. 1284-1291) in 1277, and after his death returned to Anatolia and stayed in Tokat before constructing her mausoleum in Niğde (Oral, 1939).

Another early *miḥrāb* at the Sivasī Khātūn Mosque in Develi (near Kayseri), dated 1281-1282, contains elements of extraordinary similarity, especially the ornament atop the arch, which is similar to the central crest motif of the Özbek Khan Mosque (Bakırer, 2000: 194-196) (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5 – Sivasî Khâtûn Mosque in Develi (1281-1282), detail of the *miḥrāb*
Photograph: © Aras Neftçi.

One of the patrons, one Nasrullah in the service of ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II and later an important person in the region, was originally from Iraq (Durukan, 2001: 107),

thus evoking a parallel to the place of origin of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz from Erbil, the patron of the Özbek Khan Mosque. On a page depicting the enthronement of Iskandar (Fig. 6) from the Great Mongol *Shahnāma* (c. 1330s, Tabriz), a similar arrangement of three crests is seen in the upper decoration of the architectural backdrop. Arrangements with these or similar crests seem to have existed throughout the region, thus linking an Ilkhanid visual to Crimea and Anatolia.



Fig. 6 – Miniature from the Great Mongol *Shahnâma* (Book of Kings) Iran (probably Tabriz), 1330s. Musée du Louvre, Paris (7096) – *© Musée du Louvre, dist. RMN - Grand Palais / Raphaël Chipault.*

The remnants of the *miḥrāb* still in situ at the Sheikhköy *dār al-huffāẓ* allow a glimpse of its original layout (Fig. 7). The fragments were parts of two *muqarna*s hoods and a geometric interlace framing the *miḥrāb* niche. The inner space of the interlacement is decorated with a geometric rosette. It likely held a double niche like that of the Özbek Khan Mosque. The capitals of the colonettes framing the *miḥrāb* niche show a vegetal decoration, discussed below.



Fig. 7 – *Dār al-huffāẓ* in Sheikhköy (1359) parts of the *miḥrāb* (upper left: *muqarnas* niche, right: part of the framing; bottom left: fragment of the inner *muqarnas* hood, right: detail of the main *muqarnas* hood). – *Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.*

The *miḥrāb* in the Sudak Fortress Mosque (early 13th-first half of the 14th c.) is, together with the one in the Özbek Khan Mosque, the only intact *miḥrāb* from that period (Fig. 8). It is sophisticatedly crafted and has a *muqarnas* crest, which became widespread in Anatolia in the 14th c. It consists of a set of exterior frames, a niche with a *muqarnas* hood posed on columns and a high-quality, half-sphere in the

upper centre of the moulding, showing a noteworthy à jour technique. The mosque was likely constructed during the reign of the Seljūq Sultan ʿAlā al-Dīn Kayqubād (r. 1220-1237) by Amīr Husām al-Dīn Çoban, governor of Kastamonu, during his conquest of Sudak. It underwent restorations in the 13th-14th c., probably during the prosperous phase of the reign of Özbek Khan, as the decorative patterns are similar to those of the Özbek Khan Mosque. Another hypothesis is that some work was undertaken during the period of ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II, to whom the town was granted as *ʿiqtā* by the khan (Kançal-Ferrari, 2014).



Fig. 8 – Sudak Fortress Mosque (early 13th-first half of the 14th c.), *miḥrāb*
Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.

The partly extant *miḥrāb* of the Janibek Khan Mosque in Qïrq-yer consists of a niche and a *muqarnas* hood supported by colonettes with a rosette on each side and a simple design (Fig. 9). According to the now-lost inscription, the mosque was constructed by Janibek Khan in 1345-1346. It was then reconstructed a century later (1454-1455), at which time the *miḥrāb* was likely partly remodelled (Kırımlı & Kançal-Ferrari 2016: 456-461).



Fig. 9 – Janibek Khan Mosque in Qirq-yer (1345-1346), *miḥrāb* and architectural fragments. *Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.*

Crimea's extant *miḥrāb*s all have a hood with four to five rows of *muqarnas*. Stylistically, the fan-like designs of the *muqarnas* in the *miḥrāb* hoods and on the capitals in Qïrq-yer, Sudak, Sheikhköy, and Qrïm are close to those common in Anatolia. The earliest *miḥrāb* with a *muqarnas* hood in Anatolia is in the Ulucamii (Great Mosque) in Erzurum, dated to 1179 (Bakırer, 2000: 63-74), which suggests this feature entered Anatolia from the Transcaucasian region, perhaps from the Armenian or Ilkhanid artistic environment. Complete *muqarnas* hoods or fragments exist in different places in Crimea, but their provenance is not always certain. The Surp Khach Monastery near Qrïm also has niches with similar *muqarnas* hoods. The *miḥrāb*s of the Özbek Khan Mosque and the Sheikhköy *dār al-huffāẓ* both have a double-niche arrangement. *Miḥrāb*s made of stone with three-dimensional double niches were widespread in Anatolia from the beginning of the 13th c.

Capitals

Capitals are the architectural elements that best exemplify the stylistic relationship between different regions (Fig. 10). In Crimea, capitals from only two edifices, the Özbek Khan Mosque and the Sheikhköy *dār al-huffāẓ*, are extant. The partly broken capitals on the entrance portal and *miḥrāb* columns of the Özbek Khan Mosque show a high plasticity. The capital in Sheikhköy, at first glance shallower because of its damage, is very similar. Both show a double-staged vegetal decoration rising from a horizontal rope design. These capitals are similar to Ilkhanid-period Anatolian examples in Amasya (the *bimārhāne* and Torumtay Mausoleum) and Tokat (the Sünbül Baba *zāwiya* and Nūr al-Dīn b. Sentimūr Mausoleum) (Fig. 11). These capitals again underscore the connection between Crimea and the regions of Anatolia under Ilkhanid rule after the 1270s, when a new kind of deeply carved vegetal ornament with filled-in foliage appeared. This style is also seen in the Transcaucasian region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and northern Iran), thus linking northeastern Anatolia (Sivas-Amasya-Tokat-Erzurum) and Crimea. Forerunners of this new style exist in stucco decoration in Iran, as in the 12th c. *miḥrāb* in the Haydariye Mesjid in Qazvin (Bakırer, 2000: 18).



Fig. 10 – Capitals of the Özbeg Khan Mosque in Qrim (1314-1315) (left and middle) and Sheikhköy *dâr al-huffâẓ* (1359) (right) – *Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.*



Fig. 11 – Capitals of the *bimârhâne* (1308) (top) and Torumtay Mausoleum (1278) (bottom left and middle) in Amasya and the Nûr al-Dîn b. Sentimûr Mausoleum in Tokat (1313) (bottom right) – *Photograph: © N. Kançal-Ferrari.*

Patronage and artisans

The Islamisation of the urban environments and material heritage of the region went hand in hand with patronage. The patronage of the Golden Horde khans and their role in the construction of religious institutions and the spread of Islam is evoked in narratives (Izgi, 1996), but virtually no inscriptions remain. Only three Crimean edifices have an extant inscription in situ: the Özbek Khan Mosque and two mausoleums in the west of the peninsula. One of these is the mausoleum in Eskiyurt built by Muḥammadshah Bek, son of Muḥammad Bek, for his mother, the daughter of Acagan Bek, Buyūde Sultan (late 14th-early 15th c.) (Kırımlı & Kançal-Ferrari 2016: 426-431). The other is the Hanike Hanım Mausoleum in Qïrq-yer from around 1437, erected for the daughter of Toqtamish Khan (r. 1380-1396). Both are examples of the patronage of powerful families at the dawn of the Crimean Khanate. Some inscriptions have been found independent of the monuments they once belonged to. Others, like those of the Janibek Khan Mosque and the Sheikhköy *dār al-huffāẓ*, are known thanks to excavations and field research (Akçokraklı, 2006: 252-93).

The travelogue of Evliya Çelebi is an essential source for broken or lost inscriptions, and is the basis for much of what we know about Qrïm and Qïrq-yer. Regrettably, some of the inscriptions he gives from the Crimean capital do not match the names in historical sources, which renders interpretation difficult.[5] It seems that members of the family of Tuluk-Temür and Qutluq-Temür, both governors of Crimea, were involved in several constructions in Qrïm (Kramarovsky, 2013) and also, in light of new evidence, in Sheikhköy. This points to patronage by a powerful local dynasty connected to the Golden Horde khan.

Little direct evidence links construction activities and patronage in Qrïm. The first edifices in the city were erected after the foundation of the city in the second half of the 13th c., including a mosque in 1261-1262 at the time of Berke Khan. Sarı Saltūq (Ocak, 2011: 67), his disciple Kemal Ata and other Sufi saints or sheiks from Khorasan, Bukhara, Balkh, etc. (Dagli, Kahraman & Dankoff, 2003: 251-254) did contribute to the cultural life and construction activities of Qrïm, but no information is available on the role of ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II, former Seljūq sultan and holder of the *ʿiqtā* of Sudak and Qrïm, or his son, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Masʿūd II. A direct intervention of a suzerain is only traceable in Mamluk sources. According to the chronicle of al-Maqrīzī, a mosque was built in Qrïm with the support of the Mamluk sultan Qalāwūn (r. 1279-1290), who sent two thousand gold pieces to the Golden Horde khan Berke, likely to honour the khan's conversion to Islam. However, the entry in the chronicle is dated 1287, thus during the reign of Tuda Mengü Khan (r. 1280-1287) (al-Maqrīzī, 1845: 91). In 1283, Tuda Mengü Khan sent a delegation to Qalāwūn to request that the sultan and caliph send signs of sovereignty (banner and drum) and furnish an Islamic name to the newly converted khan. These two events could well be connected (Tiesenhausen, 1941: 142).

The choice of Qrïm as the site for the new mosque points to the city's importance in the second half of the 13th c. It was also a political statement and demonstration of power by the Mamluk sultan in the peninsula's administrative and cultural centre. The Mamluk sultan, the political representative of the Muslim community (*umma*) at that time, was himself a Qipchaq Turk who originated from the peninsula or the steppes beyond, and was eager to establish alliances against the increasing power of the Ilkhanids. This mosque was perhaps finished only under Qalāwūn's successor, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn (r. with interruptions 1285-1341), as Ibn Baṭṭūta referred to him as the founder when describing his visit to a mosque in Qrïm for Friday prayers (Ibn Baṭṭūta, 1994: 361). If so, Mamluk patronage in the town continued over several years. Construction activities in Qrïm are attested until the beginning of the 16th c., when Mengli Giray I (r. 1468-1474, 1478-1514) endowed a *minbar* for the Özbek Khan Mosque (Dagli, Kahraman & Dankoff, 2003: 252).

I came across a possible clue about the identity of the enigmatic ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm al-Erbilī, the patron of the Özbek Khan Mosque in Qrïm, in an account

5 I am currently working on an inventory of the extant inscriptions in the Crimean peninsula in Arabic script in collaboration with a team of scholars from Turkey and Crimea (forthcoming 2019).

on inscriptions in Tokat (Eldem, 1915; Uzunçarşılı 1927: 13-15, 2003: 26-32). According to an endowment inscription, a certain ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm had a mosque constructed in 1300-1301 in Tokat during the reign of the last Seljūq ruler, ʿAlā al-Dīn Kayqubād b. Farāmarz III (d. 1303), who reigned several times during the period 1284-1303, alternating with Masʿūd II. This Kayqubād was the grandson of ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II, and was married to the daughter of Hülegü, the famous grandson of Chinggis Khan. There was also an ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz who was the official (*mustaufī*) responsible to the Ilkhanids for fiscal matters (Aksarayī, 2000: 189; Durukan, 2001: 109). It seems likely that ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz the Tokat mosque patron and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz the Ilkhanid official were one and the same. Could they also be the same as the ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz who established the Özbek Khan Mosque in Qrïm just a few years later in 1314-1315? When ʿAlā al-Dīn Kayqubād III and Masʿūd II were deposed during the instability in Anatolia that ended Seljūq rule,[6] it is possible that ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz could have left Anatolia and settled in Qrïm. Perhaps he even took some of the state treasury and craftsmen with him, which would explain how he managed to construct the most prestigious edifice in Crimea.

The architectural decorations in Crimea and Anatolia discussed above have similar traits that link these regions artistically. However, we also have to account for how these parallels arose. Influence can occur through patterns transported on material (textile, paper, wood), as I have discussed elsewhere (Kançal-Ferrari, 2018). Another way is the direct travelling of craftsmen or groups attached to a workshop. In the case of Crimea and Anatolia, there was direct contact between the two regions through artisans and workshops, most probably linked through patronage. Builders and masons, perhaps in groups, followed their (potential) patrons or were invited by them. This was likely the case with ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm and Ömer, both of Erbil, whose names appear in the Özbek Khan Mosque, the first as the patron and the second as an artisan (Kramarovsky, 2013). It could be that the patron had his own team of artisans work on the mosque. Al-Maqrīzī's account of the mosque erected in the name of the Mamluk sultan shows that this was a common practice. Stone carvers would have come from as far as Cairo to ensure a well-executed foundation inscription bearing the sultan's title and name, which underscores the importance given to the representative quality of inscriptions and decoration in general.[7]

Although not documented, ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāwūs II and his son Masʿūd II may also have brought artisans to the peninsula. In Seljūq Anatolia, artisans are documented from such diverse places as Tiflis, Qazvin, Mosul, Tabriz, and Aleppo (Durukan, 2001; Gündüz Küskü, 2014: 90-113). Tabriz was a centre of artistic and architectural innovation, and the Mamluks, whose art and architecture were still in their formative period in the early 14th c. (Rabbat, 2012: 22), were fascinated with

---

6 I would like to thank Sara Nur Yıldız for sharing her knowledge and discussing these issues with me.

7 See Juvin (2013) for a discussion of monumental inscriptions and their broader scope in the Mamluk environment.

Ilkhanid art. The builder of the mosque of the vizier ʿAlishah in Tabriz (1312-1322) came to Cairo in the 1320s after the Mamluk amīr Aytamish expressed admiration for the mosque during his diplomatic mission at the court of Abū Saʿīd (r. 1317-1335) (Behrens-Abouseif, 2012: 305-306).

Considering these patterns of patronage, it is noteworthy that all of the edifices in Crimea and Anatolia discussed as bearing similar traits are from the Mongol (Golden Horde and Ilkhanid, respectively) period. Patrons were part of the ruling classes, with connections to the Seljūq rulers or Mongol overlords. Stone construction was extremely expensive and only rich, influential people would have been able to afford it. Endowment inscriptions served as prestigious representations of identities and, in evoking the overlords, as legitimising marks for all those named. Thus, the patterns of patronage discussed here also point to the close ties of the last Seljūq rulers and the administrative elite with the Mongol ruling power, either the Golden Horde khans or the Ilkhanids, with both parties intervening directly into the political scene of Anatolia and Crimea. This is also reflected in the stylistic and formal manifestation of decorum in the region.

Conclusion

The architectural details and decoration of the monuments discussed here furnish important information on the context of the artistic environment in Crimea. The forms –the motifs, patterns and decoration schemes– of the edifices can be contextualised within Crimea itself and the northern Black Sea shore (Aibabina, 2001; Kançal-Ferrari, 2018). Additionally, it is possible to support the often-evoked relationship with places outside of Crimea, Anatolia, and the Transcaucasian region on the basis of socio-politico-cultural evidence from the period. Furthermore, parallels to Ilkhanid Anatolia can be found in concrete examples of Anatolian ‘counterparts’, which have hitherto been considered as products originating in local workshops rather than the result of broader regional networks (Blessing, 2014: 187). This leads to a reappraisal of the artistic language of Anatolia and its contact with other places during the Ilkhanid period. Current knowledge and close analysis reveal stylistic relations with places like Amasya, Tokat, and Erzurum, which are contemporary with the edifices in Crimea. The Mongol (Ilkhanid and Golden Horde) umbrella would have fostered the introduction and spread of a new aesthetic language, which would have been adopted by patrons in the form of powerful local rulers and their entourages or members of the Seljūq and other dynasties, who were in contact or linked through marriage with the heirs of the Chinggisid empire.

This investigation opens up new paths for contextualising artistic connections within a currently fragmented region. Patronage, traceable through inscriptions, and close study of written sources open new perspectives on artisan networks and craftsmanship. To this end, I have offered a detailed analysis of the hitherto-neglected

ornamentation and endowment inscriptions of the Sheikhköy *dār al-huffāẓ*, the Sudak Fortress Mosque, and the Özbek Khan Mosque. These cases show the need to (re-)locate the artistic environment of Golden Horde Crimea within its broader geographical and historical context, and highlight some of the possible fruits of doing so. But much remains to be done, especially in terms of research into the connections between the material culture of the lands of the Golden Horde, the Ilkhanids, and even the Mamluks. Just which elements were the products of local workshops, and which the joint products of much larger transregional patronage and artisan networks? I would argue that despite the political differences between the Golden Horde and the Ilkhanids, it is likely that the cultural environment and artisan networks showed a degree of connectedness over a broad geography that has, until now, gone overlooked.

References

Primary Sources

AKSARAYĪ Kerīmüddin Mahmud-i, transl. Öztürk Mürsel, 2000, *Müsāmeretü'l-Ahbār*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu.

DAĞLI Yücel, KAHRAMAN Seyit Ali & DANKOFF Robert (eds), 2003, *Evliyā Çelebi Seyahatnāmesi* Istanbul, Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

IBN BAṬṬŪṬA Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd Allāh, 1994, *Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah*, Frankfurt am Main, Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, reprint of the edition C. Defrémery and B.R. Sanguinetti, vol. 2, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1877.

IBN BĪBĪ, 1996, *El Evamirü'l-Ala'iye fi'l-Umuri'l-Ala'iye (Selçukname)*, Öztürk, Mürsel (ed.), vol. 2, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu.

AL-MAQRĪZĪ, transl. Quatremère Étienne Marc, 1845, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Égypte*, Paris, The Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland.

TİESENHAUSEN Ernst Woldemar von (Tizengauzen, Vladimir), transl. İzmirli,İsmail Hakkı, 1941, *Altınordu devleti tarihine ait metinler*, Istanbul, Maarif Matbaası.

Studies

AİBABİNA Yelena Akimovna, 2001, *Dekorativnaia kamennaia rezba Kaffy XIV-XVIII vekov*, Akmescit-Simferopol, Sonat.

AKÇOKRAKLI Osman, 2006, *Eserler Toplamı*, Akmescit, Tavriya.

AKŞİT Ahmet, 2011, « Sultan Hatun Hakkında », *Büyük Selçuklu Devletinden Türkiye Selçuklu Devletine, Mehmet Altay Köymen Armağanı*, Konya, S.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, p. 233-237.

BAKIRER Ömür, 2000, *Onüç ve ondördüncü yüzyıllarda Anadolu mihrabları*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu.

BEHRENS-ABOUSEİF Doris, 2012, "Mamluk perceptions of foreign arts", *in* Behrens-Abouseif, Doris (ed.), *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria –Evolution and Impact*, ed. Doris Behrens-Abouseif, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress, p. 301-318.

BLESSİNG Patricia, 2014, *Rebuilding Anatolia after the Mongol Conquest: Islamic Architecture in the Lands of Rūm, 1240-1330*, Farnham, Ashgate.

CİOCÎLTAN Virgil, 2012, *The Mongols and the Black Sea Trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, Leiden, Brill.

DEWEESE Devin, 1994, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*, Pennsylvania, Penn State University Press.

DURUKAN Aynur, 2001, « Anadolu Selçuklu dönemi kaynakları çerçevesinde baniler », *Sanat Tarihi Defterleri* 5, Istanbul, Ege Yayınları, p. 43-132.

ELDEM Halil Edhem, 1915, « Anadolu'da İslāmī kitabeler », *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası* 35, Istanbul, Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası, p. 604-607.

FEDOROV-DAVYDOV German, 2001, *The Silk Road and the Cities of the Golden Horde*, Berkeley, CA, Zinat Press.

GÜNDÜZ KÜSKÜ Sema, 2014, *Osmanlı Beyliği Mimarisinde Anadolu Selçuklu Geleneği*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu.

IZGİ Cevat, 1996, « Cani Bek Han devrinde (1342-1357) Altınordu hanlığında bilim hayatı », *Divan* 2, Istanbul, Bilim ve Sanat Vakfı, p. 145-72.

IZMAİLOV Iskandar and Mirkasim USMANOV, 2010, "The Djočid nation and its Islamization: muslim culture of the Golden Horde period", *in* Ishaqov, Damir and Ünay, Sadık (eds), *Tatar History and Civilization*, Istanbul, IRCICA, p. 75-115.

JUVİN, Carine, 2013, "Mamluk inscriptions", *in* Conermann, Stephan (ed.), *Ubi Sumus? Quo Vademus? Mamluk Studies – State of the Arts*, Göttingen, Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress, p. 211-229.

KANÇAL-FERRARİ Nicole, 2014, "Evaluating the heritage of the Golden Horde in Crimea: the example of the Bayezid-i Veli Mosque in the fortress of Sudak", *in* Özkan, Mustafa-Enfel Doğan (eds), *Proceedings of the 8th International Turcology Congress* 4, Istanbul, Istanbul University, p. 141-160.

—, 2018, "Transcultural ornamentation and heraldic symbols: an investigation into the aesthetic language of the architecture and artistic environment in early modern Crimea and the northern Black Sea shore (XIIIth - XVIth centuries)", *in* Alina Payne (ed.) *From Riverbed to Seashore, Art on the Move in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean in the Early Modern Period (1400–1700)*, The Getty Foundation, Connecting Art Histories Initiative; Harvard University, forthcoming 2018.

KIRIMLI Hakan and Nicole KANÇAL-FERRARİ (eds), 2016, *Kırım'daki Kırım Tatar (Türk-Islām) Mimarī Yadigārları*, Ankara, YTB.

KRAMAROVSKY Mark, 2013, "Charity in the Golden Horde: Kutlug-Timur's family and the architectural landmarks of Solkhat", *Reports of the State Hermitage Museum LXX*, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, p. 35-45.

—, 2012, *Chelovek srednevekovoi ulitsy. Zolotaia orda, Vizantiia, Italii*, St. Petersburg, Evrasya.

OCAK Ahmet Yaşar, 2011, *Sarı Saltık. Popüler İslâm'ın Balkanlar'daki destanī öncüsü (XIII. Yüzyıl)*, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu.

ORAL Zeki, 1939, *Niğde Tarihi tetkiklerinden Hudavend Hatun türbesi ve hayatı*, Niğde, Niğde Halkevi.

RABBAT Nasser, 2012, "In search of a triumphant image: the experimental quality of early Mamluk art", *in* Behrens-Abouseif, D. (ed.), *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria – Evolution and Impact*, Göttingen, Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress, p. 21-35.

TANMAN Mehmet Baha and Parlak SEVGİ, 2006, « Tarikat yapıları », *in* Peker, Uzay and Bilici, Kenan (eds), *Anadolu Selçukluları ve Beylikler Dönemi Uygarlığı*, Ankara, Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, II, p. 391-419.

UZUNÇARŞILI İsmail Hakkı, 2003, *Tokat Kitabeleri*, Mercan, Mehmet-Mehmet Emin Ulu (eds), Ankara, Türk Hava Kurumu.

—, 1927, *Tokat, Niksar, Zile, Turhal, Pazar, Amasya vilayet kaza ve nahiye merkezlerindeki kitabeler*, Istanbul, Milli Matbaa, p. 13-15.

WOLPER Ethel Sara, 2003, *Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia*, Pennsylvania, Penn State University Press.

YAKOBSON Anatolii Leopoedovich, 1956, « Armianskaia srednevekovaia arkhitektura v Krymu », *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 8, Moscow, Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, p. 166-191.

—, 1964, *Srednevekovyi Krym. Ocherki istorii i istorii material'noi kul'tury*, Moscow-Leningrad, Nauka.

ZİLİVİNSKAYA Emma, 2012, *Arkhitektura Zolotoi Ordy: Vzaimodeistvie kul'turnykh traditsii*, Saarbrücken, Lambert Academic Publishing.

—, 2014, « Mecheti Krima i ih Mesto v kultovoy arhitekture Zolotoy Ordy », in Ayder Ismailov-Elmira Muratova, Safiye Eminova *et al.*, *Sbornik Materialov Mezhdunarodnaia Nauchno-Prakticheskaia Konferentsiia "Aktual'nye Problemy Izucheniya i Sokhraneniia Islamskogo Nasledıia Kryma", Posvyashchennaia 700-letiiu Mecheti Khana Uzbeka*, Simferopol, KRU, KMI, DUMK, p. 175-93.