

IMITATION CURTAIN DEPICTIONS FROM BYZANTINE CAPPADOCIA*



BİZANS KAPADOKYASI'NDAN İMİTASYON PERDE GÖSTERİMLER

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ABSTRACT

By scrutinising examples of imitation curtain patterns on Cappadocian wall paintings, this article aims to comparatively evaluate other curtain imitation compositions seen in Byzantine art. In addition to this, the use of curtains in civil and religious architecture (especially at the entrances of large structures) in the Byzantine Period and the theological importance of imitation curtain patterns in the Byzantine Period are also discussed. Curtains were found in all areas of the Empire, although few have survived. In addition to the positive influences of Old and New Testament texts, religious commentaries called tractates written by Gregorius of Nyssa, one of the Cappadocian Church Fathers, may have encouraged the use of curtain patterns in Christian religious structures. Based on this, the theological explanations of aniconic curtain patterns are also included in our article. The article also aims to prove that this pattern we encounter in Byzantine art is a continuation of Roman art traditions. It is possible to find curtain patterns in a lot of handiwork from the early Byzantine Period. Among the churches of the Byzantine Period in the Cappadocia region, which is our main subject, imitation curtain patterns are primarily seen in wall paintings dating to the 9th - 11th centuries. In this study, we have identified that the only exception to this situation is the example in the apse of Ihlara Bezirana Church (end of 13th century, beginning of 14th century). The pattern was implemented especially in the aniconic ornament of the naos or apse wall paintings of the churches in the region, and it is noteworthy that they were painted as the main motif in a row, forming the border of the figural scenes on the lower parts of the walls (in the areas below the human waist). This study explains the properties of the imitation curtain patterns found in the wall paintings of Cappadocia and compares them in terms of ornamental properties, pattern composition, size, colour scale, and theological roots and development in Byzantine art. In addition, the importance of the curtain pattern, its usage areas and its features in the Byzantine Empire have been explained with examples.

Keywords: *Byzantine Art, Cappadocia, Wall Paintings, Motif, Imitation Curtain*

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ÖZ

Bu makale, Kapadokya duvar resimlerindeki imitasyon perde deseni örneklerini ayrıntıyla tanıtarak, Bizans sanatında görülen diğer perde taklidi kompozisyonlarla karşılaştırmalı bir değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bunu yaparken Bizans döneminde sivil ve dini mimaride perde kullanımına ve imitasyon perde desenlerinin teolojik açıdan önemine de yer verilmiştir. Eski ve Yeni Ahit metinleri kadar Kapadokya Kilise Babalarından Nissa'lı Gregorius'un dini yorumları yani risaleleri de perde desenlerinin Hristiyan dini yapılarındaki kullanımlarını özendirmiş olabilir. Bu anlamda makalemizde perde desenlerinin teolojik açıklamalarına da yer verilmektedir. Bizans sanatında karşılaştığımız bu desenin Roma sanat geleneklerinin bir devamı olduğunun da altı çizilmek istenmiştir. Erken Bizans dönemi ile birlikte birçok eserde perde desenine rastlamamız mümkündür. Asıl yazımıza konu olan Kapadokya bölgesi Bizans dönemi kiliselerinde; imitasyon perde desenleri bölgede daha çok 9 - 11. yüzyıla tarihlendirilen duvar resimlerinde görülmektedir. Yaptığımız çalışmalarda, bu duruma tek istisnana İhlara Bezirana Kilisesi (13. yy. sonu 14. yy. başı) apsisindeki örnektir. Bu desenin bölgede özellikle kiliselerin naos ya da apsis duvar resimlerinin anikonik bezemesinde kullanıldığı tespit edilmiş ayrıca, bu alanlarda duvarların alt kısımlarında figüratif sahneler sınır oluşturarak, ana motif konumunda ve bir sıra halinde resmedildikleri dikkat çekmektedir. Bu çalışmada Kapadokya bölgesi duvar resimlerinde bulunan imitasyon perde desenleri, Bizans sanatındaki karşılaştığımız diğer örnekleri ile bezeme özellikleri, desen kompozisyonu, ölçü, renk skalası gibi özellikler bağlamında karşılaştırılmış, teolojik kökleri ile Bizans sanatındaki gelişimi örneklerle anlatılmaya çalışılmıştır. Ayrıca, perde deseninin Bizans İmparatorluğundaki yeri, önemi ve kullanım alanları örneklerle açıklanmıştır.

***Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bizans Sanatı, Kapadokya, Duvar Resimleri, Motif, İmitasyon Perde*

Introduction

Before describing the curtain examples in wall paintings, it is important to understand the use of curtains in daily life and religious space in the Byzantine Empire in order to emphasise the importance of the curtain.

Curtains were used in the decoration of civil¹ and religious buildings.² They could be seen in all areas of the Byzantine Empire, although few have survived³ (**F.1-F.2**). Even though there is no evidence for the use of curtains in the windows of houses dated to the middle and late Byzantine Period,⁴ it is stated in the research that they were generally used in houses between columns/piers, door entrances and wall niches. In addition, studies show that the curtain was functional in a Byzantine house; it protected the interior of the house from extreme cold and heat depending on the season, blocked or allowed the light, regulated the noise made in religious rituals and daily life, and also provided a decorative appearance⁵ as well as protecting the family and the house from dust and insects.⁶ In addition, the sacred meaning of curtains in late Roman society had a great influence on the way they were used: *“It takes less effort to open a door than to pull a drawn curtain.”*⁷

During Byzantine imperial ceremonies, when the emperor needed to change his clothes at the request of the protocol room was closed off with a curtain, and on special occasions, such as the birth of the emperor’s child and greeting ambassadors,⁸ the curtain was used to adorn the corridors and rooms of the imperial palace.⁹ In fact, the capital, Constantinople’s streets were decorated with curtains as a sign of prestige and excitement for the state’s special occasions.¹⁰ In addition to its physical and practical functions in the Byzantine Empire, the curtain was important for both aesthetic and religious reasons in public and private spaces, in public ceremonies, and in the communication of social messages.

Archaeological research carried out in Selime Castle in Cappadocia revealed carvings (especially in the arch interiors of the west gallery in hall 1)¹¹ on the walls

1 Parani, 2019, 146.

2 Maguire, 2019, 218-19, fig.7a / 7b.

3 Many of the surviving curtains used during the Byzantine Empire came from the Egyptian region, as they were reused for wrapping the dead. For more information, see: Maguire, 2019, 223. Also, for some examples of curtains used in Egypt during the Byzantine Period, see: Bolman, 2006, 87-88; Gervers, 1977, fig. 1-12; Stephenson, 2014, fig.12-15.

4 In addition, M. Parani states that there is currently no evidence of the use of curtains in early Byzantine houses. For more information, see: Parani, 2019, 146.

5 Parani, 2019, 149.

6 Parani, 2019, 146.

7 Stephenson, 2014, 6.

8 Parani, 2003, 180.

9 Parani, 2003, 179-180.

10 E. Maguire, H. Maguire, and Flowers, 1989, 46; Lidov, 2014, 104.

11 For detailed information and photo, see: Kalas, 2006, 287, fig.18.

of some houses dating to the 10th - 11th centuries that indicate the use of curtains as space dividers. Researcher V. Kalas claims that these carvings, which are made from wood, were probably either used as paravane¹² to create a division for private spaces or as wooden door frame holes on the columns.¹³ This usage in Cappadocia is an exceptional example for Byzantine houses because a curtain made of cloth was used in order to divide rooms in other Byzantine houses.¹⁴ In addition to dividing the interior spaces, Parani has also contended that the door and the curtain may have been used together in Byzantine houses.¹⁵ In light of this information, it is possible that curtains might have been used together with wooden paravanes in the houses at the Byzantine settlement of Selime Castle in Cappadocia.

The use of textiles was necessary in the holy places of the Byzantine Empire and in the Mediterranean world.¹⁶ As an example of the use of curtains in Byzantine religious architecture, although they have not survived, the finger-shaped hangers on the upper cornices of the doors might be proof that curtains were used in Hagia Sophia as well.¹⁷ Research conducted in line with information obtained from written sources indicates that there were textiles on the walls of Nea Church (9th century).¹⁸

Using the curtain as a barrier was masterfully adapted in Byzantine churches. According to researcher E. D. Maguire: "*In fact, this liturgical use evolved from the civil (non-liturgical) use of the curtain used to separate the indoors from the outdoor, even in the most modest and small houses.*"¹⁹ In early Byzantine churches, low divisions were used for templa so that people could see ceremonies taking place in public areas.²⁰ Nonetheless, with the rise of divisions in the early Christian era, the usage of curtains

12 Kalas, 2007, 408-409.

13 See: Kalas, 2006, 287, fig.18.

14 Parani, 2019, 148.

15 Parani, 2019, 147-148.

16 Weaving in Byzantium was first carried out in many textile factories in the 4th century, when Constantinople factories were in a dominant position. As of the 6th century, historical sources state that private textile manufacturers began to exist within the borders of the Byzantine Empire (See: Ćirić, 2018, 222). Research reveals that wool was produced at certain times in the Cappadocia region, and linen and even clothes were produced in Late Antiquity. (Cooper and Decker, 2012, 49 and also, see: 59-61, 68-69, 254). Therefore, in light of this information - although we do not have any archaeological data today - it is possible that curtain production may have been done in the region.

17 For information on this subject and the photo, see: Mango and Ertuğ, 1997, 11, 14-19, 70; Maguire, 2019, 228-229, fig.7a / 7b; Guidobaldi and Barsanti, 2009, 93-94.

18 Angelidi, 2013, 473-475; Ćirić, 2018, 232. Also, for detailed information about the The Nea Church, see: Mango, 1991, 1446; Magdalino, 2007, Chapter V: 51-64; Magdalino, 1987, 51-64; Mango, 1972, 181, 185.

19 Maguire, 2019, 217.

20 Walter, 1993, 204; Ermiş, 2004, 77.

emerged, and at the same time, people were kept from watching the ceremony.²¹

Both the religious and civil use of curtains have practical, mechanical, emotionally impressive and meaningful features.²² According to Parani, in the narrative context, the preference for fabrics and curtains with bright colours is likely to have been for purely artistic reasons, as it was imposed by the colour scheme preferred by medieval Byzantine artists. Because they were used in imperial ceremony arrangements, these curtains may have inspired Byzantine artists.²³

If we are to consider it in the religious context, the curtain is mentioned in the Old Testament.²⁴ In the book of Exodus, which describes the departure of the people of Israel from Egypt in the Old Testament, there are narrations on the construction and installation of curtains with different functions in the description of the house of God.²⁵

21 Walter, 1993, 206; Ermiş, 2004, 77. Also, for more information about the curtain used in the templons of Byzantine churches, see: Gonosová, 1991, 1113.

22 Maguire, 2019, 217.

23 Parani, 2003, 184. It is understood from the written sources that the curtains used in imperial ceremonies were adorned with gold or were red or purple. See: Parani, 2003, 182.

24 <https://www.jw.org/en/library/books/bible-glossary/curtain/> Accessed 22.02.2023; Lidov, 2014, 101. Corinna Mairhanser participated in a workshop titled “Beyond the Veil: Revealing the Mystery of Curtains,” organised by the Department of Late Antiquity and Byzantine Art History at Munich Maximilian University between 19-20 May 2022. With her work titled “When the Curtain Rises: Sacred Images and the Staging of Gaze” and in her statement, she pointed out that sacred paintings and written sources are proof that curtains in the religious context frame important religious images in Late Antique and Byzantine Art, and she also mentioned that textiles such as curtains play an important role in staging faith and documentation of holiness. Therefore, in this context, the theological roots of aniconic curtain patterns are important.

25 For the passages including these explanations, see: “*The tabernacle itself you are to make with ten curtains of fine twisted linen and blue and purple and scarlet; you are to make them with cherubim that are the work of an artistic designer.*” (**Exodus 26:1**). “*You are to make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames on one side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames on the second side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames on the back of the tabernacle on the west*” (**Exodus 26:26-27**). “*The middle bar in the center of the frames will reach from end to end*” (**Exodus 26:28**). “*You are to overlay the frames with gold and make their rings of gold to provide places for the bars, and you are to overlay the bars with gold*” (**Exodus 26:29**). “*You are to set up the tabernacle according to the plan that you were shown on the mountain*” (**Exodus 26:30**). “*You are to make a special curtain of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine twisted linen; it is to be made with cherubim, the work of an artistic designer.*” (**Exodus 26:31**). “*You are to hang it with gold hooks on four posts of acacia wood overlaid with gold, set in four silver bases*” (**Exodus 26:32**). “*You are to hang this curtain under the clasps and bring the ark of the testimony in there behind the curtain. The curtain will make a division for you between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place*” (**Exodus 26:33**). “*You are to put the atonement lid on the ark of the testimony in the Most Holy Place*” (**Exodus 26:34**). “*You are to put the table outside the curtain and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle, opposite the table, and you are to place the table on the north side*” (**Exodus 26:35**). “*You are to make a hanging for the entrance of the tent of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine twined linen, the work of an embroiderer.*” (**Exodus**

The frequent use of curtains in synagogues²⁶ is semantically based on this theology.

In the New Testament, passages about the death of Jesus²⁷ also mention the holy curtain in the temple in Jerusalem. Based on these explanations, the most common and influential thought in Byzantine culture was that through his death and resurrection, Jesus symbolically went behind the curtain, and *in this context, the curtain of the temple symbolises the flesh of Jesus as an illustration of sacrifice and redemption.*²⁸ Another expression that we can relate to the flesh of Jesus and the curtain appears in the Letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament. It is one of fourteen letters written by the apostle Paul to different congregations and individuals. The passage is as follows:

*“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body... (Hebrews 10:19-20-21)”*²⁹

It can be easily understood that the opinions of Gregorius of Nyssa, one of the Church Fathers of Cappadocia, and the texts of the Old and New Testaments may have had an effect on the use of curtain patterns in Christian religious structures. Dauterman Maguire stated in her study on the subject that Gregorius of Nyssa mentioned the curtains in *De Vita Moysis*, praised their art and colours, and described the curtains separating the sanctuary (outer sanctuary) from the most divine place in the sanctuary as *“masterpieces of colourful fabrics worth comparing even with the body of Christ.”*³⁰ In the same study, Maguire points out that Gregorius of Nyssa extended his *“union of believers”* metaphor

26:36). *You are to make for the hanging five posts of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, and their hooks will be gold, and you are to cast five bronze bases for them (Exodus 26:37). You are to command the Israelites that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, so that the lamps will burn regularly (Exodus 27:20). In the tent of meeting outside the curtain that is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons are to arrange it from evening to morning before the Lord. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for generations to come” (Exodus 27:21).*

See: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus%2026&version=NIV> Accessed 22.02.2023.

26 The earliest examples have been encountered in the Dura Europos Synagogue in Syria (245 AD) (Goodenough, 1953 (Vol. 1), 231), especially due to the discovery of curtain rods as a result of archaeological excavations, at the Beth Alpha Synagogue (6th century) in Bet Shean Province, Israel (Goodenough, 1953 (Vol. 1), 242), and at the synagogue on the Greek island of Aegina (Goodenough, 1953 (Vol. 2), 75-76; Gervers, “An Early Christian Curtain,” 68.)

27 See: *Matteos 27:51, Markos 15:3 ve Lukas 23:45.*

28 Maguire and Maguire and Flowers, 1989, 46; Lidov, 2014, 104; Vryzidis and Papastavrou, 2021, 94. The curtain/veil has a mystical character, which is also attributed to it by Christian writers (See: Papastavrou, 1993, 150.)

29 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%2010&version=NIV> Accessed 22.02.2023

30 For more information, see: Maguire, 2019, 221.

and explained the meaning of “unified curtains surrounding the tent of peace” as “unification with benevolence and forgiveness” in the soul of believers, thus “becoming the surrounding border of peace.”³¹ Once more, according to the information obtained from Maguire, in this associative thought, Gregorius imagines the constructive process of combining the individual units or setting them up in order to explain the architectural space and make the fabrics and markers whole in his mind. By referring to the unifying and covering aspect of curtains, he goes beyond Old Testament depictions and elevates his physical understanding of curtains and what curtains can do to a mystical level.³²

The roots of imitation curtain patterns that we observe in the wall paintings of the Cappadocia region go back to more ancient times. Thus, imitation curtain patterns are depicted in wall paintings in Pompei in the *Late Antique Period*.³³ Therefore, we should also recognise that imitation curtain patterns can be seen in pagan structures. According to V. Gervers, this pattern is seen *as a symbol of Heaven*³⁴ in Roman wall paintings, such as the Brescia Capitolino Temple wall paintings³⁵ (F.3) in the archaeological site of Brescia, dated to the 1st - 2nd century, in a Jewish catacomb in Rome dated to the 3rd century, in the Villa Torlonia wall paintings of a Torah shrine,³⁶ and in the wall paintings of Herculaneum, on the upper part of the western wall of room six of the Roman house structure Casa del Gran Portali (V35) (1 CE)³⁷ (F.4). In light of the archaeological data, it is also known that in the Forum of Augustus, there were fabrics hung on 14-meter-high white marble panels, depicted with an illusionistic effect.³⁸

Many Roman decorative motifs were also used in curtain patterns painted by Byzantine artists. In the early period, we can see significant examples, such as the well-known Ravenna mosaics.³⁹

31 For more information, see: Maguire, 2019, 221.

32 For more information, see: Maguire, 2019, 221.

33 Stephenson, 2014, 7-8, fig.5; Haug, 2022, 14; Batterham, 2012, 65, fig.16 / 2-5-9.

34 Gervers, 1977, 68.

35 For detailed information and photos, see: Bordi, 2021, 77-78, fig.1/a. Also, for a picture see: <https://www.bresciamusei.com/en/museums-and-venues/brixia-roman-archaeological-area/> Accessed 26.05.2022.

36 Goodenough, 1953 (Vol. 2), 39; Gervers, 1977, 68. *For the wall paintings of a Torah shrine in Villa Torlonia*, see picture: <http://cojs.org/wall-painting-torah-shrine-flanked-menorahs-jewish-catacomb-villa-torlonia-rome-4th-century/> Accessed 26.01.2023.

37 In this work, unlike the examples we have seen so far, what draws our attention is that an armored mask is depicted in the center of each curtain pattern. According to A. Dardenay, these mask depictions symbolise military victories of the Roman Empire and are aimed at increasing the prestige of a house. For detailed information about these wall paintings, see: Dardenay, 2021, 111-112.

38 For detailed information, see: Bolman, 2006, 10. Also, for additional information and photos, see: Bordi, 2021, 78-79, fig.1/b.

39 For example, mosaic depicting the Empress Theodora and her companions in the Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna (6th century) (For more information and images, see: Maguire, 2019, 238-

There are additional examples of curtain use from the early centuries: in the apse mosaic of the Hagios Georgios Church (on a curtain rod) in Thessaloniki (5th century),⁴⁰ in the apse mosaic of the Basilica of Eufrosios in Croatia/Poreč (mid - 6th century), at the entrance door of the model church owned by the donor Bishop Eufrosios⁴¹, and many other examples in the minor arts.⁴² The opus sectile panel in the west wall of the nave in Hagia Sophia (5th - 6th centuries) placed in the centre above the main door dates to the 5th - 6th centuries.⁴³ The curtains hung between the columns can be pulled from both sides; they are open, and the cross is visible in the middle. Moreover, Alexei Lidov, who has been doing research on the subject, notes that the mosaics in the narthex vaults of Hagia Sophia (6th century)⁴⁴ remind one of a decorative curtain. Many imitation curtain patterns can be seen in the wall paintings of Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome (8th century).⁴⁵

239, fig.13; Bustacchini, 1984, 56, fig. 68), the mosaic of the Ravenna Orthodox Baptistry's dome (5th century) (See: Bustacchini, 1984, 90, fig.123), in the mosaic of Ravenna St. Apollinare Nuova Church (6th century) depicting Theodorice Palace on the right nave wall (See: Maguire, 2019, 231, fig.8; Bustacchini, 1984, 124, fig. 189) on the marble sarcophagus relief of the same structure (5th century) (See: Maguire, 2019, 235-36, fig.11).

40 For information and the photo, see: Maguire, 2019, 232-233, fig.9.

41 For more information and the image, see: Maguire, 2019, 219, fig.2. Maguire also explains the reason the curtain hung on the door of a Byzantine church was kept open: illuminating the interior had spiritual importance, and the open doorway was meant as an offer (invitation) to its congregation. See: Maguire, 2019, 219. For information about The Eufrosios Basilica, see: Terry, 1986, 147-164; Terry, 1988, 13-64; Matejčić, 2014.

42 In addition to their presence in monumental paintings, curtain patterns are also found on movable objects. For instance: In the no. 76r. folio (BNF, cod. Lat. 2334) of the miniature manuscript of the Ashburnham Pentateuch (6th - 7th century) in the National Library of France Fort the photo, see: Stephenson, 2014, 8, fig.6; Viridis, 2021, 277, fig. 13; <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53019392c/f161.item>, Accessed 15.04.2023. Also, for information about this manuscript, see: Dinçer, 2019, 395-397, 15.01.2023, doi: 10.26650/artsanat.2019.12.0005. On the ivory diptych of Jesus and Mary dated to the middle of the 6th century, which is now present in the Berlin State Museum (For information and the photo, see: Maguire, 2019, 224-225, fig.3). A late 6th to early 7th century caliche containing scenes from the worship of the cross at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library Collection, in Washington DC. (See: Maguire, 2019, 225, fig.4).

43 See: Maguire, 2019, 226, fig.5.

44 Lidov, 2014, 107. Researcher M. Evangelatou stated that the vein marks on the marble found on the nave and narthex walls of the Chora Monastery Church resemble striped (layered - pleated) and draped curtains, and even the complex vault system found at the entrance and in the parecclesion looks like a series of woven cloths richly ornamented with mosaics or images, so that the whole area resembles a magnificent luxury tent: a Christian tent on earth symbolising the herald of the heavenly Holy of Holies, which will be seen at the end of time. According to A. Lidov, there is a similarity between the carrier system and the textile cover in Hagia Sophia. Just like this approach, M. Evangelatou made a visual connection between the marble patterns and the curtain in the Chora Monastery Church. For detailed information and images on the subject, see: Evangelatou, 2019, 320-321, fig.11-12.

45 For the curtain motifs in wall paintings of Santa Maria Antiqua, also see: Osborne, "1992, 309-

Curtain Patterns in Wall Paintings We Have Identified in the Cappadocia Region

Imitation curtain patterns can be found in the nave or apse wall paintings of Byzantine-period churches in the Cappadocia region.⁴⁶ These patterns are mostly seen in wall paintings dating to the 9th - 11th⁴⁷ centuries. In our studies, we have indicated that the only exception to this situation is the example in the apse wall painting of Ihlara Bezirana Church (end of the 13th century, beginning of the 14th century). It is noteworthy that imitation curtain patterns are painted in a row, forming a border to the iconographic scenes as the main motif on the lower parts of the nave and apse walls of the churches. This motif is implemented more frequently in the Ihlara and Belisırma regions. Although the chosen colour varies depending on the colour scales of the church wall paintings, we observed that colours such as red brown-white, red brown-white-green, red brown-white-yellow, and black-white are used in a combined (polychromic) manner. Therefore, while the multi-coloured approach that we often encounter in curtain motifs seems to be specific to this motif, the colours used are also in proportion to the painting programmes of the churches. Early Byzantine curtain patterns by Byzantine artists are mostly white, but there are also red, purple, blue and sometimes green colours in the middle and late Byzantine Periods.⁴⁸ The colouring of the curtains in rich hues aims to imitate materials such as silk and wool.⁴⁹ As we have encountered in the other examples from Cappadocia, the imitation curtain motifs in the Byzantine Period are also generally simple. The decoration mostly

351; Avery, 1925, pl. CIII, fig. 34. Painted (imitation) curtains inside the church actually create an illusion, just like imitation marble, and this is expressed in French as “*trompe-l’oeil*,” which means optical illusion. (See: Osborne, 1992, 311). In addition to all the above information, it has been claimed that the first curtain motifs used for ornamental purposes in Turkish art were first seen in Uyghur illuminated manuscripts and in wall paintings dating approximately to the year AD 745. For more information on this topic and images, see: Taş, 2021, 274-75, fig.1-7. Stephenson, 2014, 8.

46 In the researches we have carried out, we did not make any periodical and regional limitations within Cappadocia itself. Therefore, in this article, we have tried to introduce the curtain motifs seen in the Byzantine monumental painting art of the Cappadocia region with their definitions and depictions by documenting all the examples we could reach with the field and source scanning studies we have carried out.

47 Researchers have different views on the dating of the monumental painting programmes of Byzantine churches in Cappadocia, and these views have been presented in many scientific publications on Byzantine Cappadocia. Therefore, instead of repeating these views in this article, we have taken N. Thierry’s “*De la Datation des Églises de Cappadoce*” (see: Nicole Thierry, “De La Datation Des Eglises De Cappadoce,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 88 (1995), 419-455) as a basis, as well as the opinions and suggestions of Prof. Dr. Tolga Uyar, a researcher who has carried out many important and up-to-date studies in the region so far, and in this context, the problematic of dating wall paintings in Byzantine Cappadocia has been tried to be solved.

48 Researcher M. Parani indicates that this application creates a rule for the colours. See: Parani, 2019, 155.

49 Parani, 2019, 155.

consists of motifs such as small-sized ivy leaves,⁵⁰ circles, stars⁵¹ or a small diagonal cross.⁵² Moreover, Parani claims that motifs were used with repeating small patterns on real curtains in the Byzantine Period to create a greater impact on the viewer.⁵³ Examples in Çavuşin Güvercinlik, Belisırma Direkli and Ihlara Sümbüllü Churches are decorated with circle⁵⁴ and star motifs. It is notable that the vegetation patterns that we frequently encounter in the aniconic ornaments of churches are not present in curtain patterns, which are decorated with geometric motifs such as circles and stars. It is interesting that Epiphanius of Salamis tore up curtains illustrated with the image of Jesus, as he saw it as an inappropriate act for believers to touch his holy face during the rite of passage. Researchers think that this may be a reason curtains and nets are often illustrated with geometric patterns.⁵⁵

A number of Cappadocia wall paintings show pleated and draped curtains. These include Başköy Basileos Church (Başköy No. 10 – Kapalı Church) (9th – 10th century), Belisırma Açıklık Ağa (Batkın) Church (9th century), Çavuşin Güvercinlik Church (ca. 960), Göreme Tokalı New Church (960-970),⁵⁶ Belisırma Direkli Church (925-1025), Ihlara Kokar Church (9th-10th century), Ihlara Pürenliseki Church (9th-10th century), Ihlara Yılanlı Church (9th-10th century), Ihlara Sümbüllü Church (11th century), Soğanlı Karabaş Church (10th-11th century), Ürgüp Timos/Tavros Church (10th-11th century), and Ihlara Bezirana Church (end of the 13th century, beginning of the 14th century). The first examples of curtain patterns in Cappadocia wall paintings⁵⁷ made by artists of Eastern and Egyptian origin are seen especially in the Ihlara region, in structures such as Kokar, Pürenliseki and Yılanlı Churches, which date from the 9th and 10th centuries.

50 For more information about the ivy leaf motif, see: Kaya, 2020, 343.

51 The star motif is also painted on the curtain in some miniature manuscripts dated to the 11th-12th centuries. In Vat. gr. 1162, fol.119v, dated to the second half of the 12th century, the miniature of the illuminated manuscript in Isaiah's appearance curtain is an example of this. For the picture see: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1162 Accessed 3.3.2022. This motif is considered the symbol of the sky dome in Byzantine art. For detailed information see: Parani, 2003, 180.

52 Parani, 2019, 157.

53 Parani, 2019, 147; Parani, 2003, 183-184.

54 For detailed information on the circle and disc motifs in the Byzantine Period monumental painting art of the Cappadocia region and the sacred meanings of these motifs, see: Kaya, 2021, Accessed: July 2021. doi: 10.26650/artsanat.2021.16.0014.

55 Mango, 1972, 41-42; Ćirić, 2018, 223.

56 This example, located in the north apse of Göreme Tokalı New Church, is close to extinction today. Researchers J. Levy and W. Epstein's study of the building shows that the white circular forms on which the curtains were hung and the imitation curtain patterns can be distinguished. See for the images: Levy, 2015 (Vol. II), pl.69.3; Epstein, 1986, fig.104,105,106.

57 M. Thierry and N. Thierry, 1963, Summary IX. It is known that Anatolia was the place where different cultures from east and west met in the Byzantine Period, as it has been located on a commercial and military transit route since ancient times. See: Yalçın, 2001, 549.

This raises the possibility that this pattern may have come to the region from Eastern and Egyptian sources.

Although it has not been emphasised enough in studies carried out to this date, the reflections of the aniconic curtain patterns we encounter in Byzantine art on the wall paintings of the Cappadocia region, which is our main subject, are not to be underestimated. Therefore, the examples in the region should be examined in detail.

On the lower surface of the apse wall of Belisırma Açıkel Ağa (Batkın) Church (9th century) (F.5), the floor marks are emphasised with yellow horizontal and vertical lines on a white background (F.6). The fact that the two upper edges of each curtain section are higher shows that the curtains were hung from an iron or wood bar extending horizontally above. Our examples from this church are in a highly damaged condition today; however, as far as we can tell from the remaining traces, there is a reddish-brown circle in the centre of each curtain and a light green circle motif slightly higher than the centre.

Although we could not find information in previous research on Basileos (Kapalı) Church (9th - early 10th century), whose wall paintings are also examples of an imitation curtain motif belonging to the archaic period⁵⁸ we have encountered elsewhere in Cappadocia, on the curtain we have found in the lower part of the northern apse, wall patterns are intertwined with other motifs that we think belong to a different paint layer⁵⁹ (F.7). There should be a second paint layer here; however, with the condition of the imitation curtains today, layer traces with horizontal and vertical reddish-brown lines can be seen on a white background. The lower part of each curtain ends with two rows of reddish-brown wavy lines. These curtain patterns seem to hang from the top two edges, as we have seen in many curtain patterns in the region, and are bordered on top with a reddish-brown frame.

The lower parts of the north and south walls of Ihlara Kokar Church (9th-10th centuries) feature many curtain patterns (F.8-F.9). At the top, a thin black horizontal

58 See about the the painting programmes of churches dating to the archaic period in Cappadocia: Jerphanion, 1931, 5-27; Kostof, 1972, 169-193; Cormack, 1989, 19-36; Ousterhout, 2017, 217-221.

59 J. Levy, who did examinations in the church, mentions that nothing remains on the northern apse decoration except for a hanging imitation curtain with a large medallion at the bottom of the wall for the motif we encountered in the northern apse of the building. (See: Levy, 2005, 94.) However, when we examine the examples of the curtain motifs belonging to the Byzantine Period both in Cappadocia and abroad, we do not come across another example as described by Levy. For this reason, we think that a different paint layer may have been applied later in the place mentioned. The reports of N. Peker and B. Tolga Uyar, who recently conducted surveys in the Güzelöz-Başköy region, were examined; however, in these studies, no evidence was found regarding the dating of the apse wall paintings of Basileos (Kapalı) Church No. 10 in Başköy. See: Uyar and Peker, 2011, 283-302; Uyar and Peker, 2012, 251-266; Uyar and Peker, 2013, 147-156; Uyar and Peker, 2014, 110-119.

line and the iron-bronze or wooden rod (hanger)⁶⁰ on which the curtains are hung is emphasised. The uppermost parts of the curtains, which are small, are completely dark yellow in colour, and the lower parts have a white background. The composition continues with four or five rows of dark blue drapings and four or five rows of reddish-brown drapings. In the centre of each curtain and in the upper-middle-bottom part of the same axis (regardless of the vertical and horizontal pleated composition in reddish brown or dark blue), there is a small reddish-brown circle on a white background with a diagonal cross-shaped mark⁶¹ on it (F.9). This is a unique example in Cappadocia.

In the curtain patterns (F.10-F.11) found on the lower strip of the north apse niche in Ihlara Pürenliseki Church (9th-10th century),⁶² just like our other examples in the region, the wire wood from which the curtains were hung is highlighted with a horizontal line (ribbon) at the top. Horizontal (oval)-vertical extending fold (contour) lines with reddish brown on a white background are also highlighted (F.11).

Yet another example from the Ihlara Valley is Yılanlı Church (9th-10th century) curtain imitation depictions on the apse lower sector⁶³ (F.12). These are similar to Kokar Church in terms of form, colour and decoration. The only difference is that while the drapings are the same as those in Kokar Church, the colours are not as variable. The curtain imitations we encounter in the apse of Yılanlı Church, with their white circular forms and white lines⁶⁴ on the two upper edges, create the impression that they are hung on the black horizontal rod. Highlighting the top of the curtains with a white line and

60 It has been detected with the archaeological data that real Byzantine curtains were also hung on a rod (hanger) or hook (usually finger-shaped) and are depicted in early Byzantine mosaic art. It is known that the hangers in luxury houses were made of bronze with golden gilding or with silver. See: Maguire, Maguire and Duncan Flowers, 1989, 44-45, fig.31. Also, for a real bronze curtain hanger (hook) dated to the 6th century and later, see: Maguire, Maguire and Duncan Flowers, 1989, 50, fig.3.

61 Even though they are not exactly the same in composition, we came across many diagonal cross-shaped marks in the decoration of the curtain patterns in the wall paintings dated to the 8th - 9th centuries in churches in Rome (See: Osborne, 1992, fig.1-7, 11-12).

62 The imitation curtain motif found in the Pürenliseki Church has survived, though most of it has been destroyed.

63 As far as we can tell from the remaining traces, the motif also appears on the lower strip surface of the northern cross arm, lower strip surface of the southern cross arm, lower strip surface of the south cross arm, lower strip surface of the narthex west wall and the lower strip surface of the west narthex wall surface. The motif has the same composition, except for the apse bottom strip surface, which has a dark yellow colour on a white background.

64 We encounter such displays in Byzantine art, especially in the wall paintings of churches in Italy/Rome, which date from the 8th - 9th centuries. See: Osborne, 1992, fig.1-12. Also, the imitation curtain found in the Red Monastery of Egypt has similar features. For a picture see: Bolman, 2006, 15, Pl. 11. Such uses of curtains are also found in Byzantine art, for example in the folio numbered 76r of Pentateuch miniature manuscript (BNF, cod. Lat. 2334) (6th - 7th century) and in the miniature manuscript foil 9v. of Paris Ms. gr. 135 (The Book of Ióβ) (1361 - 1362).

connecting this white line through the circular forms in the middle make this example unique. The artist takes the curtain used in architecture as an example and implements his own artistic fantasy, creating a two-dimensional form.

In Çavuşin Güvercinlik Church, which dates back to the transition period (ca. 950 – 1020)⁶⁵ of Cappadocia wall paintings, the pattern (F.13) found on the lower part of the northern wall of its naos (ca. 960) is dated even little later than the archaic curtain motifs in the region, and it is noteworthy that the walls are decorated with curtains in all four directions (including the apse). In terms of its feature of form, the curtain has the impression of being hung from the two upper edges, as in the other examples. In this example, it is noticeable that there is a white rope, which probably indicates that the curtains were hung. In the upper part of each curtain, a short area is painted reddish brown, while the remaining lower parts are painted with green draping lines on a white background. In the centre of each curtain section there is a stylised reddish-brown leaf motif in the form of a clover leaf/cross. There is one reddish-brown circle in the upper two margins of this motif, one in each of the remaining margins on the side edges, and one in the lower part.

The example we encountered in the lower part of the main apse⁶⁶ of Belisırma Direkli Church (dated between 925 and 1025) shows a red line, which seems to have the function of a horizontally extending iron or wooden rod on which the curtain patterns of the lower horizontal border are hung (F.14). In terms of form, as in our other examples, the impression of it being hung from the two upper edges is created. There is a row of reddish-brown borders on the upper parts of the curtain patterns and two rows of reddish-brown borders on the lower parts. The blue-white draping lines of the curtains on a white background are highlighted. Dark blue and light reddish-brown circles⁶⁷ and dark blue

65 In the so-called transition period (ca. 950 - 1020) in Cappadocia, it is possible to see both liturgical and narrative approaches and styles in the painting programmes of the churches. Moreover, the churches of this period are sometimes characterised by a closed cross plan scheme, as in Göreme Kılıçlar Church (late 10th century), and sometimes by a single nave plan, as in Çavuşin Güvercinlik (Nicephorus Phocas) Church (ca. 960), İhlara Balı Church (mid 10th century or second half), Mamasun Village Church (11th century), Göreme Kılıçlar Church (late 10th century), Çavuşin Güvercinlik (Nicephorus Phocas) Church (ca. 960), Göreme Tokalı New Church (960-970), Göreme Chapel 16 (late 10th-11th century), Göreme Chapel 33 Meryem Ana (Kılıçlar Kuşluk) Church (late 10th-11th century), Soğanlı Tahtalı (St. Barbara) Church (1006-10021) are placed in the transition period (ca. 950 - 1020) within the chronology of the region. See: Kostof, 1972, 205-22, 269-170; Ousterhout, 2017, 221-228.

66 The motif is located on the lower surface of the main apse in this church with three naves.

67 For ornamenting the imitation curtain patterns, the artist may have chosen dark blue and reddish-brown colours especially for the circle motifs; as a matter of fact, the blue circles represent the moon, and the red-reddish-brown circles represent the sun. Saint Basileios, one of the Cappadocian Church Fathers, said, “The Sun and the Moon are instruments to achieve certain concepts such as purity, cleanliness and spiritual light and help people to move towards the great wisdom of the creator” in a sermon. See: Kaya, 2021, 421.

ivy leaf motifs are used in the ornament. This is also one of the rare uses of the ivy leaf motif in the curtain pattern in the region. Moreover, Direkli Church has one of the most remarkable curtain depictions in Cappadocia in terms of its form, colour and motif features.

In the apse of Soğanlı Karabaş Church (10th-11th century), the curtains are formed in oval shapes, and the lines which highlight the fabric are different colours (F.15).

The features of some curtain patterns are different from others in the region. For example, in Timos/Tavros Stavros Church (10th-11th century),⁶⁸ the curtain patterns on the inner surface of the southwest pier of the middle nave are flatter in appearance, and there is not an implication of their being hung by the two upper edges (F.16-17). However, it is similar to our other examples in terms of draping. As far as we can tell from the remaining traces, each curtain has horizontal (oval)-vertical draping in reddish brown on a white background, and a clover leaf/cross motif is placed at the top (F.17).

While the imitation curtain motifs (F.18-F.19) we encountered on the templon and south wall of Ihlara Sümbüllü Church (11th century) do not differ in form from our other examples in Cappadocia, they do differ in decoration. As a matter of fact, in the centre of all the curtains, there is a diamond motif with a diagonal cross-shaped mark and red-brown circles in the remaining empty areas. Each end of the diagonal cross-shaped mark ends with an ivy leaf motif. Even though the examples given in this work have survived with great damage, it can be seen that there are yellow lines on a white background as far as we can see on the remaining traces (F.19).

The only imitation curtain example in the region that we can date to the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century⁶⁹ is seen on the north wall apse niche of Ihlara Bezirana Church, just below the Emmaneul Jesus illustration⁷⁰ in the

68 For more information about Timos/Tavros Stavros Church, see: Levy, 1991, 187; Levy, 2015 (Vol. 1), 193-195; Thierry, 2002, 119-120.

69 J. Levy, who has been examining the church recently, suggests the reigns of Anatolian Seljuk Sultan Mesud II and Andronikos II for the dating of the church wall paintings due to their iconographic style and decoration repertoire. Levy also points out that the wall paintings of the church competed with the noblest foundations of Byzantium thanks to a local Greek artist referencing Constantinople. For detailed information see: Levy, 2017, 142. Also, for more information about Bezirana Church, see: Uyar, 2021, 207-222; Restle, 1967 (Vol. 1), 175-176. Regarding the imitation curtain patterns we encountered in Byzantine art, the other examples we have found dating to the late period are in the wall paintings of the Monastery Church of Sofia Boiana (13th century) and miniature manuscript fol. 9v., which is now at the Paris National Library (The Book of Ióβ) Paris Ms. gr. 135 (1361 – 1362).

70 This depiction, located in a niche between the figure of St. Stephanos and Gregorios of Nazianzos, is in the form of a bust, and the fact that Jesus was almost painted together with curtain patterns shows the significance of the imitation curtain motif. Therefore, perhaps this situation can be understood as an indication of the relationship between the veil and the body (the flesh of Jesus), as we have stated before. As mentioned, it is accepted that the wall paintings of Bezirana Church were influenced by the designs used in Constantinople, and this church

niche (F.20). In terms of form, there is an impression of it being hung by the two upper edges, as in many examples we have given in the region, while dark yellow drapings on a yellow-white background are highlighted. The point which draws our attention here is that the imitation curtains cover a much smaller area compared to the curtain patterns we encountered in the region before the 13th century.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that few examples of fabric curtains have survived to the present day, it is clear that curtains were widely used in buildings in the Byzantine Period, as evidenced by numerous representations in monumental painting and minor arts.

Byzantine artists in the Cappadocia region did not remain indifferent to this element, and included it in their artistic productions. As for the marble imitation motif used in the area, the same goes for the curtain imitation motif in the wall paintings of the Cappadocia region, which are actually illustrations of real examples used in religious and civil architecture.

The first examples of curtain patterns in Cappadocia that we have encountered in the Ihlara region, especially, are in Kokar,⁷¹ Pürenliseki and Yılanlı Churches, which date to the 9th and 10th centuries and are accepted as having been created by artists from the eastern provinces. This raises the possibility that the use of this motif could have oriental origins. Moreover, the examples in the Red Monastery located in Egypt near Sohag city (5th - 6th century) and examples in Chapel No. 42 of the Apa Apollo Monastery (6th - 7th centuries), located in the Bawit Archaeological Site, which is also in Egypt, support this idea.⁷²

has the only imitation curtain pattern belonging to the late Byzantine Period in the Cappadocia region. In addition, curtain patterns are found in the western niche wall paintings of Euphemia Church in the Hippodrome (13th century). In this context, our example of Cappadocia from the late Byzantine Period is a reflection of the art tradition of the capital.

71 In Ihlara Kokar Church, imitation curtain motifs of the wall paintings are 75 cm long and approximately 15 cm wide. These measurements are generally valid for our Cappadocia examples, except for some. On the other hand, the length of the curtain patterns we have encountered in the wall paintings of the churches in the city of Rome (8th - 9th centuries) ranges from 50 centimeters (See: Osborne, 1992, 337) high to 210 centimeters high (Osborne, 1992, 324).

72 Moreover, there are examples of imitation curtain patterns in the Red Monastery, which is located in Egypt near Sohag city (also known as Virgin Mary), in a niche at the entrance of the main church and in the central lobe. One of the researchers, M. R. Marchionibus, asserts that it is not a coincidence that the imitation curtain patterns encountered here are depicted at the closest distance to the people in the building, and that this pattern is clearly used in order to create “an active part of the manifestation of the divine mystery.” For detailed information and the image of the imitation curtain patterns in the central lobe on the east of the building, see: Marchionibus, 2021, 331, fig.17/b) of the three-lobed (three-leaf clover) at the easternmost part of the temple, and in the northernmost niche (For information and the picture, see: Bolman, 2006a, 88. For the picture, see: Bolman, 2006b, 15, Pl.11) of the east lobe dated to the 5th - 6th century and

Small circles, clover leaf/cross (2 examples), ivy leaf (2 examples), diagonal cross-shaped marks combined with a circle motif (in 1 example) and diagonal cross-shaped marks combined with ivy leaf motifs (in 1 example) were used as ornamental motifs on the curtain illustrations.

There may be two reasons why we do not encounter curtain patterns from the 12th century to the end of the 13th century. The first reason is that interest in painting imitation curtains may have decreased due to a decrease or halt in textile production in the region and the bringing of curtains to the region. Just as in the wall paintings of the churches in Rome, imitation curtains were frequently painted in the 8th - 9th centuries. At the end of the Carolingian period (end of the 9th century), along with a decrease in the arrival of textile products from Rome, the simultaneous disappearance of imitation curtain patterns from wall decorations had begun.⁷³ The second reason is that it is possible that this pattern was no longer preferred due to changes in architecture and painting concepts during the middle Byzantine Period. In fact, we need to consider that both reasons may have had an effect on this situation.

Studies have shown that real textile motifs⁷⁴ have been seen in the ornamental curtain motif repertoire, and these motifs used in the church wall paintings of Rome date back to the 8th - 9th centuries.⁷⁵

patterns seen on the eastern wall (For detailed information and the picture, see: Thomas, 2019, 380, fig.14) of Chapel 42 of the Apa Apollo Monastery, which is in the Bawit Archaeological Site in Egypt today (6 - 7th century).

- 73 For detailed information see: Osborne, 1992, 350. Moreover, the presence of curtain motifs in Cappadocian wall paintings was of course not directly related to textile production. In addition to its symbolic and iconographic meaning, its aesthetic characteristics should also be taken into account. In this sense, the above-mentioned assumption may have been a factor in the decline in the depiction of imitation curtain motifs, even if not directly.
- 74 Osborne, 1992, 346. One of the researchers G. Bordi, gives an example on this subject by correlating ornamental motifs in the curtain patterns seen in the Roman S. Maria Antiqua eastern nave wall paintings, and the motifs found in Egyptian linen and wool fabrics dating back to the 7th-8th centuries, which are present in the Museum of Art and History in Friburg and the Metropolitan Museum in New York today. For detailed information, see: Bordi, 2021, 81-82, fig. 4a/4b/4c/4d.
- 75 Western examples include those in Santa Maria Antiqua (8th century) (For detailed information and the picture see: Osborne, 1992, 324-337, fig. 1-9), Church of S. Adriano (Curia Senate) (772-795) (For detailed information and the picture see: Osborne, 1992, 337-339, fig.10), the south wall of San Clemente Basilica (second half of 8th century) and left aisle and nave (847-855.), St. Crisogono Church (731-741) (For detailed information and the picture see: Osborne, 1992, 340, fig.11), Church of Santi Giovanni and Paolo (second half of 8th century), Church of Santi Quirico E Giulitta (second half of 8th century or 10th century), Basilica of San Saba (9th century) (For detailed information and the picture see: Osborne, 1992, 343-344, fig.12), and in Sancta Sanctorum o Lateran Palace (741-752). The same Roman executions are also in the wall paintings of the inner chamber of the part called the "chief tomb monument" in the Sant' Andrea Necropolis (in a rocky settlement) (8th century) (For the dating and visuals of the chief

It should not be a coincidence that we encounter imitation curtain patterns in Byzantine examples in Italy, Bulgaria, Egypt and then in the Cappadocia wall paintings. As a matter of fact, the importance of textile products for commerce and production in these four regions is already known. In this sense, we can clearly see that there is a relationship between textile manufacturing and artistic production in the city of Rome and in the regions mentioned above. According to Osborne, these imitation curtain patterns may come from a common source. Osborne suggests that there were Greek monks present from the Eastern Mediterranean to Italy, especially after the Arab conquests in Egypt, Syria and Palestine.⁷⁶ In fact, this information also supports the thoughts stated in the previous paragraph.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the imitation curtain motifs we have seen were influenced by imported fabrics, especially from Constantinople⁷⁷ and Egypt.⁷⁸ In addition, we also know that textile production went on in Cappadocia.⁷⁹

These patterns are frequently preferred in the apse of the churches, and they were also painted on the lower parts of the naos walls and on the templon (only in one building). The fact that almost all of the examples we have identified depict curtain motifs in the apse, the most sacred place of the church, may be due to the functional use of the curtain in the apse in early Byzantine liturgy and its symbolic association with the body of Christ in biblical passages. Moreover, while in the apse the imitation curtains formed a lower border to sacred figures such as Mary and the child Jesus and the apostles, in the naos they usually formed a lower border to iconographic scenes. Moreover, in the example we encountered in the templon (only in one building), it can be seen that the imitation curtain motif covers the area alone. It is notable that almost all of these patterns were painted under scenes with figures. Lidov writes, “*The holy figures above the curtains can be viewed as the images on the veil and beyond the veil, coming from heaven and becoming visible and accessible because the Temple veil was opened forever with the sacrifice of Christ.*”⁸⁰

tomb monument wall paintings in the Sant’ Andrea Necropolis, see: Virdis, 2021, 271, fig.8. Additionally, A. Virdis did an evaluation of examples in the mural paintings of the Church of Santa Maria Antiqua (8th century) and imitation curtain patterns encountered in the murals of the Sant’ Andrea Necropolis “Chief Grave Monument,” stating that it is a very simplified version of the curtain patterns seen in Rome in the 8th century, and as we know, numerous curtain patterns remain in the wall paintings of Santa Maria Antiqua. For detailed information see: Virdis, 2021, 271), and within the borders of Bonorva Municipality on Sardinia Island.

76 Osborne, 1992, 323-324.

77 The capital city was the center of the Empire for production and distribution of textiles since the 4th century. See: Volbach, 1969, 23.

78 Osborne, 1992, 323. Also, for information about textiles made in Egypt, see: Thomas, 2007, 137-162; Koroli, 2020, 116-127; Jørgensen, 2020, 49-59.

79 Cooper and Decker, 2012, 59, 61-68, 254.

80 Lidov, 2014, 107. A. Lidov remained alone in his opinion on the subject and could not find support. As a matter of fact, researcher J. Osborne draws attention to the fact that the imitation

In light of all this information, the imitation curtain depictions that we have encountered in the Cappadocia region not only formed a cornice to the iconographic scenes in the lower parts, but also offered believers an aesthetic visuality, as well as sending strong and symbolic messages that may have been rooted in early Byzantine iconography.⁸¹ In Byzantine church architecture, depictions of figures were not preferred in areas at human height in the interior; instead, these parts were covered with marble when possible. In cases where it was not possible to use real marble, sometimes wall paintings with imitation marble ornaments were used. Just like they imitated existing material with imitation marble patterns, Byzantine artists' curtain paintings imitated the richness of the fabric curtains used in architecture.

In addition to the influence of Roman artistic traditions, Byzantine theology, and aesthetic understandings in the design of curtain patterns, the thoughts of Gregorius of Nyssa may also have had an effect. Whereas animal figures and fruit patterns do exist in some examples,⁸² this does not apply to Cappadocia. The use of curtain patterns in the monumental decoration of Byzantine churches was generally preferred in the earlier period together with iconographical narration. This study has identified the fact that whereas this ornamental motif was frequently preferred in the Cappadocian archaic decoration of the 9th-10th centuries, in the 11th century, after the building of churches dating to the transition period (ca. 950 – 1020), it became rare. It is only seen in Bezirana Church, which dates to the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century. Bezirana Church possesses the only example in the region of an imitation curtain motif dating back to the late Byzantine Period.

In conclusion, the imitation curtain patterns we have encountered in Byzantine Cappadocia are used due to their symbolic meanings, liturgical and visual aesthetic features. Indeed, Byzantine art is an ongoing practice that comes from its own tradition of painting. The small mahogany circle combined with a diagonal cross mark, which is seen

curtain pattern is designed to fill the gap between the ornamental program and the floor. See: Osborne, 1992, 311. Another researcher, G. Bordi, points out that although the use of imitation curtain patterns is not specific to sacred contexts, the origin and need for it can be found there. See: Bordi, 2021, 78. In addition, even in a modern preserved state, where we can only see the shell material of the structure, A. Lidov views these paintings as spatial images created by real people in real historical conditions. The project includes immovable architectural forms and sacred images, as well as changing ritual containers and ritual signs - movements, illuminations and dramaturgy of incense, echoing words and memories from stories of miracles, and with this concept of hierotopy, Lidov tries to analyse all these aspects as a whole. This creativity that occurs in the creation of spatial images is called hierotopy. (See: Lidov, 2014a, 98). Therefore, in current studies, the images in the wall paintings of the holy temple (for example, patterns such as curtains) are included in the field of hierotopy, and Lidov examines curtain patterns in the context of the hierotopy project. (See: Lidov, 2014a, 97-108). Also, for more information on this topic, see: Lidov, 2014b, 61-89.

81 Dauterman Maguire, 2019, 221.

82 See: Osborne, 1992, 333-334, fig.7-8; Bolman, 2006b, 15, Pl.11.

only on the embellishment in imitation curtain motifs in the wall paintings in Ihlara Kokar Church, seems to be unique to Cappadocia. The reason we encounter this motif during the last period of Byzantine art (after the 11th century) might be related to the reuse of these late antique motifs in the art of the Palaiologan period. Apart from the Cappadocian frescoes, this pattern has not been seen as an aniconic decoration in the wall paintings of buildings dating to the Byzantine Period in Anatolia.

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FIGURES



Figure 1: An original Byzantine curtain example from the Monastery of Saint Demyanah, Egypt (5th century), (Stephenson, 2014, fig.13)



Figure 2: An original Byzantine curtain example from Egypt (6th -7th century), The British Museum <https://www.doaks.org/resources/textiles/images/maguire-images/maguire-fig02.jpg> accessed 10.05.2023

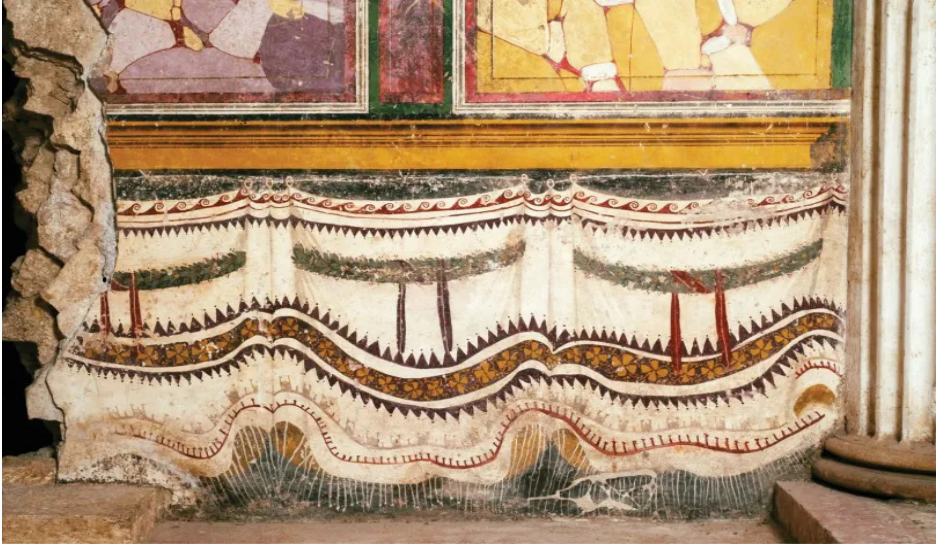


Figure 3: An example of the curtain pattern from the wall paintings of the Brescia Temple (Mid 1 BCE), <https://the-past.com/feature/brescia-wings-of-victory/>, accessed 14.10.2022.



Figure 4: Imitation curtain patterns in the upper part of the western wall of room six of the Roman house structure Casa del Gran Portal (V35) in Herculaneum (Dardenay, 2021, 112, fig.4).



Figure 5: Belısırma Açıkel Ağa (Batkın) Church, looking toward the apse (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 6: Belısırma Açıkel Ağa (Batkın) Church, lower wall of apse detail (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 7: Başköy Basileos (Kapalı) Church no. 10, part of a mural of north apse (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 8: Ihlara Kokar Church, a view from the lower band mural on the north wall (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 9: Ihlara Kokar Church, a view from the lower band mural on the south wall (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 10: Ihlara Pürenliseki Church, north apse (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 11: Ihlara Pürenliseki Church, north apse imitation curtain detail (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 12: Ihlara Yılanlı Church, apse (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 13: Çavuşin Güvercinlik Church, north wall of naos (M. Kaya, 2017)



Figure 14: Belisırma Direkli Church, the lower part of main apse (M. Kaya, 2017)



Figure 15: Soğanlı Karabaş Church, apse (M. Kaya, 2017)



Figure 16: Timos/Tavros Stavros Church, central nave, looking south (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 17: Timos/Tavros Stavros Church, inner surface of the southwest pier of the middle nave; a clover leaf/cross motif on imitation curtain pattern (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 18: Ihlara Sümbüllü Church, curtain motifs on templon (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 19: Ihlara Sümbüllü Church, curtain motifs on templon and south wall (M. Kaya, 2016)



Figure 20: Ihlara Bezirana Church, imitation curtain patterns on the apse niche of the north wall
(Levy, 2017, 110, fig.4)

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