

# The Reflection of Florentine (Firenze) School of Painting on Muralpaintings of Ottoman Architecture in Balkans in The 19<sup>th</sup> Century\*


## 19. Yüzyılda Floransa (Firenze) Resim Ekolünün Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Mimarısındaki Duvar Resimlerine Yansımaları

### Mehmet Zeki İbrahimgil


Prof. Dr., Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Sanat Tarihi Bölümü  
email: [mzeki@hbv.edu.tr](mailto:mzeki@hbv.edu.tr)  ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7630-9720>

### Funda Naldan

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Güzel Sanatlar Eğitimi Bölümü Resim-İş Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

email: [fnaldan@gmail.com](mailto:fnaldan@gmail.com)  ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2722-4269>

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### Abstract

Wall paintings have an important place in the transition to painting with the western effect in the Ottoman period. From the second half of the 18th century, these paintings were scattered throughout the Ottoman Empire in the capital city, İstanbul, Anatolia and the Balkans, and simultaneously to all provinces and centers of the Ottoman Empire.

The following structures can be evaluated as the examples of the wall paintings in Balkans influenced by the Florentine Paintings: Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque in Albania, Berat Bekarlar (Suleyman Pasha) Mosque, Kalkandelen Alaca Mosque in Macedonia. In Balkan countries, especially in Western Macedonia Tetovo, Alaca Mosque, Harabati Baba Tekke, Skopje İsa Bey Mosque, Sultan Murat Mosque in the last congregation place and home architecture examples, especially in the 19th century, the paintings of the Florence School and it is possible to see in terms of style.

At the end of the 18th century in Florence, especially the fresco-secco technique introduced a new understanding of not only the interiors, but also the outer wall surfaces, the paintings in a rectangular frame, the cartriges surrounded by baroque style. Since the beginning of the 19th century, it is known that the artists who grew up in Florence painting workshops worked in religious and civil architectural decoration in the Balkans. These artist groups applied their art not only in Balkan countries but also in different regions of central İstanbul and Anatolia. In this way, the artists in the understanding of the Florence School contributed to the expansion, development of Western style murals in the Ottoman geography and the development of local artists in this style.

**Keywords:** Ottoman, Floransa, Wall painting, Balkans

### Öz

Duvar resimleri, Osmanlı döneminde batı etkisi ile resme geçişte önemli bir yer tutar. Bu resimler, 18.yüzyılın ikinci yarısından itibaren İstanbul başkentte ve Anadolu ve Balkanlar'da eş zamanlı olarak, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun tüm il ve merkezlerine dağılmıştır.

Aşağıdaki yapılar Floransa resim ekolünden etkilenen Balkanlardaki duvar resimlerine örnek olarak değerlendirilebilir: Arnavutluk Tiran Ethem Bey Camii, Berat Bekarlar (SüleymanPaşa) Camii, KalkandelenAlacaCamii. Balkan ülkelerinde, özellikle Batı Makedonya'da Tetovo Alaca Camii, Harabati Baba Tekke, Üsküp İsa Bey Camii, Sultan Murat Camii cemaat yeri ve ev mimarisi örneklerinde, özellikle 19. yüzyılda, Floransa Okulu resimlerini ve stilini görmek mümkündür.

18. yüzyılın sonunda Floransa'da, özellikle fresk-secco tekniği sadece iç mekânları değil, aynı zamanda dış duvar yüzeylerini, dikdörtgen bir çerçevede resimlerin tanıtılması, barok stille çevrili kartuşlar yeni bir anlayış tarzını ortaya koymaktaydı. 19. Yüzyılın başından beri, Floransa resim atölyelerinde büyüyen sanatçıların, Balkanlardaki dini ve sivil mimari dekorasyonunda çalıştığı bilinmektedir. Bu sanatçı grupları kendi sanatlarını sadece Balkan ülkelerinde değil aynı zamanda merkez İstanbul ve Anadolu'nun farklı bölgelerinde uyguladı. Bu sayede, Floransa Okulu anlayışındaki sanatçılar, Osmanlı coğrafyasında Batı tarzı duvar resimlerinin genişlemesine, gelişmesine ve bu tarzda yerel sanatçıların gelişimine katkıda bulunmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Osmanlı, Floransa, Duvar resmi, Balkanlar

## 1. Introduction

Renaissance movement awakened by the classical art movement in the 15<sup>th</sup> century in Europe and especially in Italy and shaking all of Europe afterwards was inspired by the classical Greek and Roman artifacts. The influence of Renaissance was firstly seen in Italy especially in Florence and spread all over Italy at the end of 15<sup>th</sup> century (Kuban, 1958, s. 39). Florence is the birthplace of the movement since the city has a rich community that had wealth through trade and banking. "Florentine School" led by the painter Cimabue and Giotto in Florence has characteristics connecting the periods of Late Gothic and Early Renaissance. Painting tradition of this school created the basis of Renaissance plastic arts that would last for 200 years (Stanley, Rosser Owen, and Vernoit, 2004, p. 305-324). Florentine school of art has brought humanitarian values reminiscent of Ancient Greece to the history of art. Florentine school made two dramatic innovations in the painting technique (Tihic, 1979, p. 305-324).

-Perspective was discovered.

-Natural coloration became more of an issue.

Adding a third dimension to the painting, Florentine school diverted the painting art from the usual manner. It formed three-dimensional world in two dimensions with an illusion. In the process, the school did not only benefit from the perspective, it also created the dimension using the tints and shades. Thus two essential methods were found in order to enhance relief effect. The Florentine School; therefore, saved itself from the idealism and abstractionism of Middle Ages and came closer to reality or realistic painting. In this period, two techniques were used: mosaic and fresco. Fresco paintings are executed on plaster, which ensures the mural painting to be perceived and improved as a tableau.

Two motives developed the Renaissance art. The first was the desire of using the elements fallen from favor in Ancient Greek and Roman art and keeping them alive; and the second was the desire of applying newly-found perspective technique. Perspective was reflected on both painting and architecture while the Ancient art was only reflected on the architecture. Here the main purpose is to reflect the space, i.e. a three-dimensional object on paper, to turn into a single plane and to create a perspective in a place. Perspective was derived from a place which enables you to draw a structure on paper "as seen by people". Therefore, it requires having a focal point in structures, which ultimately presupposes symmetry.

In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the orientation towards Westernization starting with Ahmad III, resulted in a social change spreading from upper class to lower class in the society until the end of the century. The lower class subsequently joined to the upper class with higher income, which was influenced by Western culture around the palace. Foreign elements in exterior walls and interior decoration of mansions, pavilions and waterfront mansions of rich people especially from Istanbul, could spread over provincial cities only in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Foreign decoration materials, firstly seen in the Tulip Period primarily became evident in public fountains.

In a short time, both Anatolia and Balkans were under the influence of Renaissance, in-other-words Westernization movement, beginning with the Tulip Period<sup>1</sup>. Since the Ottoman Empire had multiple relations with European countries in commercial, social, cultural and artistic fields as well as the military field, Western decoration and painting culture influenced the Ottoman world. Over time, classic Ottoman perception and taste changed and approach towards art was reformed (Arik, 2001, p. 71-96). European artistic styles including baroque and rococo that look more pleasant and cheerful comparing to the Classic Ottoman art, began to be applied in Turkish art in different ways (Godine, 1972, p. 24). This new perception could be observed in mosque, lodge and house architectures, as seen in all other branches of art. Most of the constructions in the Ottoman Empire were built represents 'Westernization' movement in art after the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This new understanding emerged more explicitly in Balkan countries. The biggest reform in the embellishments of this period was that the wall paintings appeared intensely. The main plan and purpose of the structures built in this period remained unchanged; however, themes and compositions including Western motifs such as the baroque cartridge, acanthus, vases, still life, 'C' and 'S' branch folds, flowers, landscapes and seascapes, architectural structures and ship depictions were outstanding in terms of ornament and wall paintings (İbrahimgil, 2007, p. 233). Imaginary places along with religious, historical, cultural values that linger in the minds of society were also depicted on the wall paintings. In terms of general paint application, wall painting art is a folk art. Therefore, wall painting art does not belong to one particular nation, but all the society adopt and contribute to it. The fact that there are different styles and approaches in the wall paintings and artists from different cultures and environments shows that they come from different workshops.

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<sup>1</sup> "Tulip Era" is considered to have started in 1725 in the Ottoman Empire.

## 2. Method

Descriptive method was used in the research. Literature review was conducted in the lite and written materials were analyzed one by one. The following structures can be evaluated as the examples of the wall paintings in Balkans for individual studies, influenced by the Florentine Paintings: Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque in Albania, Berat Bekarlar (Suleyman Pasha) Mosque, Berat Emperor's Mosque and Library, Kruje (Akçahisar), Dolma Lodge, Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque in Macedonia and Harabati Baba Lodge, Suleyman Pasha Mosque in Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bayraklı Samakov Mosque in Bulgaria. However, this study only dwells on the wall paintings of Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque, Berat Bachelors' Mosque and Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque in a chronological order. It should be noted that these three constructions were built closely in terms of location between the years 1820 and 1833.

## 3. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque

### 3. 1. History and Architectural Description

Today, Ethem Bey Mosque in Tirana, once known as Pazar Yeri, is located at the heart of the city. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque is the only mosque that sustained the principal purpose, even in the Enver Hodja period in Albania nominally. Today, it is open to worship. The mosque has two inscriptions. One inscription is on the gate of narthex and the other is on the entrance gate of sanctuary. Each inscription dating back to different times indicates the date of construction of that particular section. First, it is understood from the 1208 Hijri dated (1798 CE -1794 CE) inscription on the entrance gate of the sanctuary that Ethem Bey's father Molla Bey completed the construction. The inscription on the entrance gate of sanctuary clearly indicates in the following verse that the mosque including the dome was completed but he could not live enough to construct and decorate ashlar minaret:

*"Şeref yâb oldu itmamiyla iş bu kubbenin lâyikin / Muvaffak olamadı itmamına minarenin amma / Dahi tekmil ve tezyin etmeden azzam-I bekâ kıldı / Hüda canın cinanda dem-bedem şâd ede bi-gervâ".*

After 26 years (AH 1236 / Gregorian on 1820), Ethem Bey, son of Molla Bey, added a porch section with marble pillars that ties the minaret of the mosque and "L" shaped arches in north and south facades. In this extension process of the mosque, all the wall paintings and decorations both in this extension and the interior of the mosque were completed in 1236 Hijri and 1820-21 CE.

The mosque has a square plan measuring 10.35x10.35 m. The mosque built up with masonry stone is covered with a dome that rests on an octagonal base. A basement concrete was installed slightly above the "L" shaped narthex with a porch that was completed after the mosque and three- or four-step stairs need to be climbed to reach the narthex. The porch surrounding north and east facades of the mosque was covered with a wooden hip roof and gave the appearance of an extension structure. Stones, woods and plasters were used in the construction of the mosque in terms of material. Stone materials were used in pillar porch, minaret and main walls of the mosque. Wood was used in minbar, the gathering-place and wings of gates and windows. The mosque is famous for its frescoes rather than the architecture.



Visual 1. Inscription on the gate of sanctuary in the Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque

The transcription of the inscription on the gate of sanctuary in the mosque:

- Cenabı mîr-i a'zam sahibu'l-hayrat Molla Bey / Edub tarh-ı ibadetgâhı can-bahşah
- O mîr-i hüve'l-kerem hemcâhı âli himmeta cüdi / Bu dergâhın binasıyla bu şehri eyledi ihya
- Şeref yâb oldu itmamıyla iş bu kubbenin lâyıkın / Muvaffak olmadı itmamina minarenin amma
- Dahi tekml ve tezyin etmeden azzam-ı bekâ kıldı / Hüdâ canın cinanda dem-bedem şâd ede bi-gervâ
- Zehî dergâhı dilkeş züyûru bildirir kim / Müferrah câygâhta oldu ta'ungâhı rami fersah
- Dedi t'esisinin bu caminin tarihini müznib (günahkâr) / Ziyâh-ı 'ayn ehli dil olub bu cami izîbâ

The year of 1208 Hijri corresponding to 1793-1794 CE was reduced by Abjad calculation.

#### The Inscription on The Entrance Gate of Narthex in Ethem Bey Mosque:



Visual 2. Inscription on the entrance gate of narthex Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque

The transcription of the inscription on the entrance gate of narthex:

- Mekârimkâr bü'l-hayratkân Lutfi Monla Beg / Hülûs-I niyyet-ile böyle hayra eyledi ağaz
- Esasen tarh u kubbenin binasını eyleyüb tekml / Veli olamayub birün u enderün tezyinsâz
- Dedim bâ med bismillah mücevher târihi rihlet / Şafâgâhı cinâna murg-ı rûhi eyledi pervâzs ene 1223
- Bi-hamdüli'llâh 'irfân u kemâl-icâh u devlet ile / Bu dem mahdum Hacı Bey yerine eyledi ihrâz
- Bu cami'in minaresin nukûş u sakfı soffasın / Muvaffak oldu hatmine okunur hamseye avâz
- Binânın tarh-ı te'sîsine hem itmamina târih / Edübdür hâme-i sûzi birer mısraların perdâz
- Bu cami'i a'cibü'n-nakş âli kubbe rühefzâ sene 1208 / Kılub mânend-i Ayasofya bu şehri mehâsinsâz sene 1236

In the inscription, Hijri 1208 corresponds to Gregorian 1793-94; Hijri 1236 corresponds to Gregorian 1820-21.

#### The Transcription of The Inscription on The Wall Paintings on Plaster in Ethem Bey Mosque:



Visual 3. Inscription on attic plaster on the entrance door of narthex in Ethem Bey Mosque

The transcription of the inscription on attic plaster on the entrance door of narthex in Ethem Bey Mosque:

-*Mâşâellah 1238* corresponds to the 1822-1823 CE.

Description: it can be considered as Completion date of the mosque wall decorations.

### 3. 2. Decoration

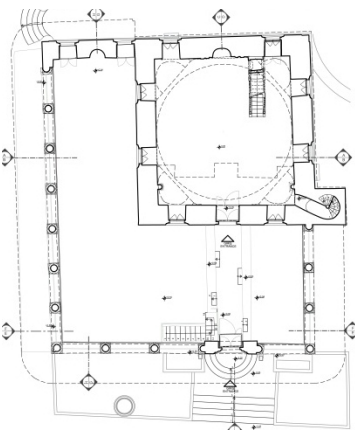
All the wall paintings and decorations in the mosque encircle the entire surface of the interior walls and the entire surface of "L" shaped porch which was added 26 years after the mosque was completed. The surface of the exterior wall facing the porch was decorated with still life, baroque style decorations of "C" and "S" folds and floral motifs of vases along with a view and mosque depictions by constructing a large panel around the first row of the windows and the wooden roof. A second mihrab (niche of a mosque indicating the direction of mecca) was located on the south wall of the porch in the east side. Mostly floral motifs were closely used inside the rectangle panels in the sanctuary of the mosque. There are some view depictions on the pediments of both entrance gates of the porch and sanctuary, on the pediments of windows and in medallions.

A lime plaster was used on the surface of the interior walls of the mosque.

A three-dimensional view of Istanbul, depictions of imaginary or not known villages are located in the wall paintings divided into rectangle boards. A curtain motif was used in some places. The panels for wall paintings are prepared by dividing the first and the second row of the windows with a straight line. Plenty of flowers, vases, walls and still-lifes along with view, mosques and imaginary depictions are located in the wall paintings. These decorations seen since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was widely used in the region. Landscape depictions were mostly used on the surface of the porch. The landscape depictions in the mural paintings occupy fewer places in the sanctuary. Small size of two-dimensional landscape paintings that would not draw the attention of prayers was located in the inside the mosque and in only small portion of interior surfaces of squinch near the cornice. On the contrary, there are larger three-dimensional landscape model of depictions on the surface of the exterior walls with porch. Depictions of Istanbul reveal that two-dimensional miniature of Suleymaniye Mosque was used as a model for the wall painting. The Bosphorus was depicted three-dimensionally. Artists in the region are said to paint the murals (Kiel, 1990, p. 254). The building named "Debra School" and wood or wall painting artists can be considered as an example. It is known that these groups working in teams in the Radika river valley handled and completed the construction as a whole.

There are some wall paintings applied onto a dry plaster. Fresco-secco technique, called kalem işi (hand-carved) in Turkish, was used in the wall paintings. Some deterioration in wall paintings on the dry plaster and the intervention of the recent restoration can be observed. All the embellishments have the characteristics of wall paintings of the Westernization Period. The birthplace of this style of murals is the workshops in Florence, Italy. We discovered some repetitions of specific motifs in the mosque. Stencil technique; therefore, could also be used on the paintings with an exception of landscape paintings.

In the mosque, plaster was used in the second and third row of windows. These plaster windows might be a mould casting used in late-period restorations so as to create a stained or colored glass look. In the mosque, a plaster material was used in the second and third row of windows. These plaster windows might be a plaster mould casting used in late-period restorations. Wooden material was used for the minbar and the gathering place. Both were the original construction elements of the mosque. A wooden carved flower motif is located on the surface of transom of the pulpit. Oil paint was used for flower motifs on the bottom surface of wooden gathering-place. The window lids and doors are made of wood.



Visual 4. Plan of Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 5. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque





Visual 6. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 7. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 8. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 9. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 10. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 11. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 12. Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque



Visual 13. An example of the exterior mural painting in Florence Square



## 4. Berat Bekarlar (Suleyman Pasha) Mosque

### 4. 1. History and Architectural Description

The mosque situated in Berat, the city in Albania, was commonly referred as Bekarlar Mosque, not as Suleyman Pasha, the name of the architect. The mosque is situated in a location, formerly called Kazancilar Bazaar, near the Osum River that divides the city into two parts. The inscription on the entrance door of narthex, in middle of the north facade informs that Suleyman Pasha built the construction.

The mosque with a rectangle plan measuring 16.90X18.30 m is covered with a hip roof in a way including the narthex. Stone, wood and plaster were used in the mosque for some places. The masonry stone was used in the building in which the ground floor is a shop and the top floor is a mosque. There are two horizontal and seven vertical rows of arches in the narthex on the north facade of the mosque. A larger space was obtained when the narthex did not fit in the main walls of the mosque. The two wood pillars of the destructed gathering-place were tied together with an archway system. Wood archway construction is decorated with hand carved embellishments covered with a plaster or a parget. Both the window frame and wings, and the ceiling of the narthex and the sanctuary and also the pillars of the gathering place are made of wood. However, these structures do not have a significant woodworking or a style. It is seen that all were constructed in the recent restoration processes. Plaster was used in some parts of the mosque including the niche and the upper raw of windows. We estimate that these plaster windows were built in the restoration in 1978. The ceiling and the roof were renewed in the restoration process. Besides, the shop's front porch with four pillars was closed. In 1990's, this section was opened when the shops were brought into use.

### 4. 2. Decoration

The mosque is decorated with the two-dimensional view of Istanbul and imaginary depictions in rectangle panels both on the entire exterior and interior walls. Two-dimensional depictions of mosque and landscapes, vases with flowers, baroque “C” and “S” branch folds were placed in rectangle boards, 2 m. wide, which encompass the interior walls except the north façade. Entire wall of the sanctuary is decorated with hand carved embellishments. The mosque is famous for its hand carved embellishments. City views, mosques, palaces, mansions and still-lives are depicted in the baroque style of wall paintings. Hand-carved wall embellishments are located in a large fascia formed board of the facades of the mosque except the north one. The boards for wall paintings are prepared by dividing the first and the second row of the windows with a straight line. Plenty of flowers, vases, walls and still lives along with view, mosques and imaginary depictions are placed in the wall paintings. Fresco-secco technique, called hand-carved (*kalem işi*) in Turkish, was used in murals. Some deterioration in wall paintings on the dry plaster and the intervention of the recent restoration can be observed.



Visual 14. Samakov Bayrakli Mosque



Visual 15. Kruya Dervish Hüsyindol Lodge



Visual 16. Sample of Florence wall painting



Visual 17. Travnik Alaca Mosque

## 5. Kalkandelen (Tetovo) Alaca Mosque

### 5. 1. History and Architectural Description

Alaca Mosque in the city center is called locally either Pasha Mosque or "Şarena Džamija". The mosque was firstly built in 1495 (Bilmenoğlu, 1975, p. 46; Ayverdi, 1981, p. 32), destroyed over time and restored in 1524 (Bošković, 1957, p. 58) and 1675 (Zdravković, 1964, p. 94). Eventually in 1249 Hijri /1833-1834 CE, the mosque, famous with its wall paintings, was built in the place of the old structure -with the exception of the minaret- by Abdurrahman Pasha, the son of Recep Pasha- the administrator of the region (Bilmenoğlu, 1975, p. 38; İbrahimgil, 1997, p. 251). The mosque built in the place of the old structure is longer in north-south direction than earlier and remainder of the masonry minaret stands in the middle of the west wall and away from the wall line of the mosque. On the entrance gate of the rebuilt mosque, there is a repaired inscription measuring 2,20 x 0,80m, including 42 verses written by Muradi with ta'liq script. The date of restoration was 1249 Hijri / 1833-34 CE according to the Abjad calculation in the inscription. The date of verse in the inscription is as follows: "*Abdurrahman Paşa rengin yaptı bunu cami (Abdurrahman Pasha made it a mosque)*". The date corresponds to 1254 Hijri according to the Abjad calculation. However, it is seen that 5 years need to be reduced since the previous verse says "*Gittikçe beş (five gradually)*", which results in the year 1249 Hijri corresponds to 1833-34 CE (Muezzinović, 1976, p. 30; İbrahimgil, 1997, p. 251).

The mosque built by Abdurrahman Pasha has a square plan measuring 10.12 x 10.05 according to interior sizes. The mosque is covered with a wooden dome and a hip roof. Although the mosque receives light from the windows that are placed; 4 in the bottom and 4 on the top on the north façade, 4 on the bottom, 6 on the top on east façade and 3 on bottom, 3 on top on the west façade and thirty five in total, it still has dim look. The mosque has a 4.8 m. wide two-storey narthex. In this section, a gathering place for women near the sanctuary there are three balconies with semi-circular railings. There are wood stairs from the narthex to the gathering place on the second floor.

### 5. 2. Decoration

Alaca mosque is famous for the wall paintings rather than the architectural characteristics. The most important characteristic of the mosque is the ornaments on the surface of interior and exterior walls. In terms of technique, coloring and style, the wall paintings share some similarities with the paintings in the workshops of Florence (Petković, 1965, p. 37). Having a non-Muslim character and falling away from the notion of traditional Turkish wall painting, it is highly possible that artists or craftsmen were non-Muslim.

The entire surface of the exterior walls, narthex, archways and ceilings; and the interior walls of the gathering-place for women and dome and the foot of the dome all were decorated with fresco-secco technique. Very colorful and appealing embellishment plan of the four-tiered rectangle panels appears. A sixteen-sided star motif is placed in the rectangle panels.

The interior walls of narthex are embellished with acanthus, motifs of vases with flowers and the names of the prophets in the boards. There are 30 cm. wide landscape pictures surrounding the cornice. Depictions of the seas painted imagining the view depictions of Istanbul in a bridge structure connecting the seas together. However, these view depictions resemble the views of Florence and Venice rather than Istanbul's. Western architecture can be observed in the landscape paintings with mansion, palace and public fountain figures. Depictions of structures and still-lives between curved acanthus leaves and various flowers in twelve round boards in total were alternately placed. With all these embellishments, Alaca Mosque is the only example of Turkish Islamic art.



Visual 18. General Appearance of Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque





Visual 19. Exterior wall of Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque



Visual 20. The detail of Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque



Visual 21. The detail of Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque

## 6. Comparison and Results

The similar examples of these embellishments can be also observed since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Balkans in Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque in Albania, Berat Bekarlar (Suleyman Pasha) Mosque, Berat Emperor's Mosque and Library, Kruje (Akçahisar), Dolma Lodge, Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque in Macedonia and Harabati Baba Lodge, Suleman Pasha Mosque in Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bayrakli Samakov Mosque in Bulgaria. All the constructions mentioned above are simple structures with a rectangle plan and have no special architectural characteristics. Although Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque is covered by a dome resting on an octagonal base, Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque has a wooden dome under the roof. A simple wooden ceiling was used in the Berat Bekarlar Mosque. While the Ethem Bey Mosque has porch with marble pillars in the shape of "L" that encompasses the north and east facade, the Bekarlar and Alaca Mosques have narthex only on the north facade. While Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque has a narthex, the others have a porch.

Two other structures, rather than Tiran Ethem Bey mosque discussed in the notice, are covered with a large wooden roof fascia. All three structures were built in the form of a house plan rather than a mosque plan. Each of three mosques has wall paintings on surface of the interior and exterior walls. Although there are some similarities in terms of style and technique applied in three structures, paints and construction styles differ from one another. Symmetry in the wall paintings was prioritized in all three mosques. Geometrical figures, vases with flowers, still-lives, objects, architectural structures and view depictions in a rectangle board are included in all the structures. While there are wall paintings on the each façade of the Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque, only north and west facades

of the two other structures have wall paintings. While there are predominantly baroque paintings on the walls of Alaca Mosque and Berat Bekarlar Mosque, rococo style with flower paintings are used in Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque.

There are some differences between the structures and themes of the paintings. Depictions of Istanbul and some significant religious buildings in Istanbul such as Suleymaniye Mosque, Sultan Ahmad Mosque etc. and rustic views in the region are included in Tiran Ethem Bey Mosque and Berat Bekarlar Mosque. On the contrary, the depictions of the views in Kalkan Delen Alaca Mosque were intended to represent Istanbul but remind of Florence and Venice or imaginary depictions rather than Istanbul. The fact that too many mansions, palaces and public fountains and minarets were placed in the landscape depictions located in the roof cornice of the mosque clearly shows that the depiction of Istanbul was intended. Moreover, the depiction of Ka'ba, the most important place for Muslims, was also placed unlike other two mosques. Fruit preferences of still-lives in wall paintings also differ from the others. The fruits of the region were not prioritized.

The so-called embellishments on which we focus on the paper have characteristics of the paintings of Western Period. The birthplace of this style of wall paintings is the workshops in Florence, Italy. Fresco-Secco or hand-carved techniques were used for the embellishments of the interior and exterior walls of the mosque. There are different opinions on the working styles and techniques of the painters, in wall paintings. All three examples give the impression that the stencil technique could be used in the current wall paintings. The same or the similar models were used repeatedly. The same or similar compositions in different structures reveal the presence of stencil tradition. The same size flowers, still-life, vases, floral figures such as a tree or a leaf and geometric figures prove the presence of the templates. Because of the stencils, sometimes colors change but the shape remains the same.

Stencils could not be used in the brush strokes with hand-made look in the view depictions of all the three mosques. Therefore, there are some wall painting examples that visual materials were used as a second method (Tekinalp Şahin, 2010, p. 718) the miniatures and gravures are the examples of the visual materials. Photograph was not used as a visual material, since it was discovered in 1839. The so-called view painting was earlier (Tekinalp Şahin, 2010, p. 137) perspective and depth were tried to be created in the all view paintings. As seen in the example of Alaca Mosque, Ka'ba was depicted two dimensionally as the miniature was used as a model.

While the Christianity themes and figures of saints were common in the wall paintings in Florence, the view of Istanbul and other significant structures, floral embellishments and geometric figures were preferred. In wall painting compositions, the pursuit of a space in a balanced symmetric surface is remarkable despite the perspective and depth concerns in the background. Figures in the archways or presence of a gold bronze in the background are considerable steps for the awareness of space. The wall paintings were realized by regional artists, regardless of the ethnics and beliefs of the craftsman or artists. The artists only adopted and used three dimensions in view compositions since the artists of the region were educated or worked in Italy, especially in Florence, they reflect these experiences on their works.

19<sup>th</sup> century brought a new conception of embellishment in Ottoman architecture. It is known that the artists educated in Florence painting workshops work in groups to decorate civil and religious architecture in Balkans since the early 19th century. These traveler artist groups produced their own works of art in the center of Istanbul and in various regions of Anatolia (Bağcı, Çağman, Renda & Tanındı 2006, p. 296). Thus artists adopting Florentine painting contributed to educate the artists of the region by spreading the Western culture of wall painting over the Ottoman territories.

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### Visual References

All images used in the research are the authors' own shots.