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The Fountains of Korgun, Çankırı: Representations of Rural Heritage in Daily Life

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Abstract

This study examines the fountains of Korgun (Çankırı) as architectural and socio-spatial components of rural heritage. While Ottoman water architecture has been extensively studied in urban contexts, rural fountains have received limited scholarly attention. Adopting a qualitative case study approach, the research is based on field documentation, typological analysis, and comparative evaluation within existing scholarship on Ottoman fountain architecture. Seven surviving fountains were analyzed in terms of construction technique, formal characteristics, inscriptional evidence, decorative characteristics, conservation status, and spatial distribution within the settlement. Beyond architectural description, the study interprets these structures as infrastructural and symbolic nodes embedded in daily rural life, emphasizing their role in shaping patterns of social interaction, communal memory, and the organization of public space. The research also evaluates the relationship between architectural form and environmental context, demonstrating how local materials, construction practices, and settlement morphology influenced the development of rural fountain architecture. The findings reveal that the fountains of Korgun reflect both continuity within Ottoman typological traditions and localized adaptations shaped by rural settlement patterns and regional building practices. Furthermore, the presence of inscriptions, decorative programs, and restoration traces provides valuable evidence for understanding the historical development and cultural significance of these structures. By integrating architectural documentation with socio-spatial interpretation, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of rural water architecture as a lived component of local heritage rather than merely a functional infrastructure. It also highlights the importance of documenting and preserving modest rural monuments, which remain vulnerable to neglect despite their historical and cultural value. In conclusion, the fountains of Korgun represent distinctive examples of Ottoman rural architecture, reflecting local construction traditions while illustrating the close relationship between water, settlement organization, and everyday social life.

Keywords: *Çankırı, Fountain, Korgun, Rural architecture, Turkish water architecture*

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INTRODUCTION

Ottoman water architecture not only produced structures to meet the needs of daily life but also shaped these structures through aesthetics, functionality and social representation, thereby contributing to the identity of the urban fabric. In this context, fountains became integral architectural elements of both Ottoman cities and rural settlements. Functioning as the terminal elements of the water distribution system, these structures played an active role in shaping public spaces and the understanding of charity by integrating with the waqf system (Eyice, 1993).

In rural settlements, fountains should not be understood solely as utilitarian structures providing access to water. Their placement within everyday circulation routes, near village squares, mosque courtyards, marketplaces, or residential clusters enabled them to operate as socio-spatial nodes. Around these structures, practices such as water collection, ablution, animal watering, resting, and daily encounters created informal public spaces. Therefore, rural fountains contributed not only to the physical organization of settlements but also to the formation of social memory and collective use of space.

The fountains located in and around Korgun were generally positioned near the centers of settlements, in village squares, or along roads. This placement ensured easy access to water for the public while also creating a social gathering point. By being situated especially in mosque courtyards, marketplaces, or village centers, fountains became an integral part of daily life.

The district of Korgun, located in the province of Çankırı, lies 20 kilometers north of the provincial center. It is bordered by Ilgaz to the north, Kurşunlu to the west and Eldivan and Şabanözü to the south. Due to the predominantly mountainous and rocky terrain outside the plain areas, the region is colloquially referred to as “Taş Yakası” (Rocky Side) (Zeyrek, 2013). The name Korgun derives from the “Kargın” tribe (Ayhan, 2007). Etymologically, the word means “a stream or waterway formed by melting snow” (Ayhan, 1988).

Throughout history, the indispensable role of water in urban life has been reflected in fountain architecture across many parts of Çankırı, as in Anatolia. Particularly during the Ottoman and Republican periods, fountains were not only sources of water but also significant architectural structures where aesthetics and functionality converged, thereby contributing to the urban identity. This study focuses on a total of seven fountains from the Ottoman period located in the Korgun district of Çankırı province, which have either survived to the present day or have been partially preserved.

The identification of the fountains included in the research area was carried out through preliminary field surveys, as well as archival records of local administrations and the Regional Directorate of Foundations. The primary material of the research consists of data related to the plans, facade characteristics, inscriptions, decorative details, building materials

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and restoration conditions of these fountains. The selection of the seven fountains included in this study was based on specific criteria. These criteria comprise the degree to which the structures have survived and preserved their architectural integrity, the presence of inscriptional or datable evidence where available, their representativeness within the spatial distribution of the rural settlement, and their capacity to reflect typological diversity in the local context. Data were collected through direct observation, measurement, documentation and photography of the fountains. During observation, aspects such as the location of the structure, construction materials, building technique, dimensions, content of inscriptions, decorative elements and traces of restoration were individually recorded. Fieldwork was conducted between 2019 and 2022, and original architectural documentation forms were prepared for each fountain.

The findings obtained were evaluated in comparison with similar fountain examples found in the literature. Through this methodology, both the original and transformed aspects of the documented fountains were systematically revealed and the general characteristics of rural Ottoman water architecture in Korgun were assessed within the context of local construction traditions.

Studies on Ottoman water architecture have predominantly focused on monumental fountains and sebils located in urban centers, while more modest water structures in rural settlements have received comparatively limited scholarly attention. In the existing literature, fountains have generally been classified according to their location and physical characteristics. Yılmaz Önge (1997) categorized fountains based on their spatial position and structural condition; Semavi Eyice (1968) proposed typological distinctions between urban and extra-urban fountains. Ayla Ödekan (1992), on the other hand, grouped fountains according to both their spatial context and physical form, systematically defining their structural components and examining their transformation across periods. While these typological approaches provide an important framework for understanding the formal characteristics of water structures, their relationship to rural settlement patterns and everyday life has been addressed only to a limited extent. Building upon this typological scholarship, the present study re-evaluates the fountains of Korgun within a rural context, approaching them not merely as formal architectural entities but also as socio-spatial components embedded in daily life and local identity.

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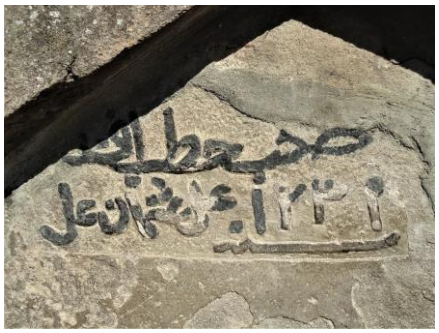
KORGUN FOUNTAINS

Kayıçivi Village Fountain

The fountain is located in Kayıçivi Village, which is 7 km away from the center of Korgun District (Figure 1).

Figure 1. General view of Kayıçivi Village Fountain

Above the keystone of the fountain's arch, there is a date inscription with a diameter of 0.11 meters. The inscription is enclosed within a thin circular molding and contains the phrase "سن ١٢١١" (Hijri 1211). This inscription, which was engraved into the stone using the recessed carving technique, confirms that the fountain was built in the years 1796-97. Additionally, just below the arch of the fountain, there is a prose inscription in Ottoman Turkish written in Jali Thuluth (Celî Sülüs) script. This inscription is placed on a horizontally rectangular panel measuring 0.48 × 0.13 meters and was later painted black, likely to enhance its visibility (Figure 2, Drawing 1).



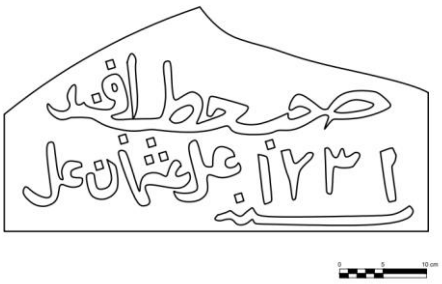


Figure 2. Inscription of Kayıçivi Village Fountain

Drawing 1. Inscription of Kayıçivi Village Fountain

The inscription text is as follows:

ساهيب حطب افندي

على عثمان اغ ا

سنه ١٢٣١

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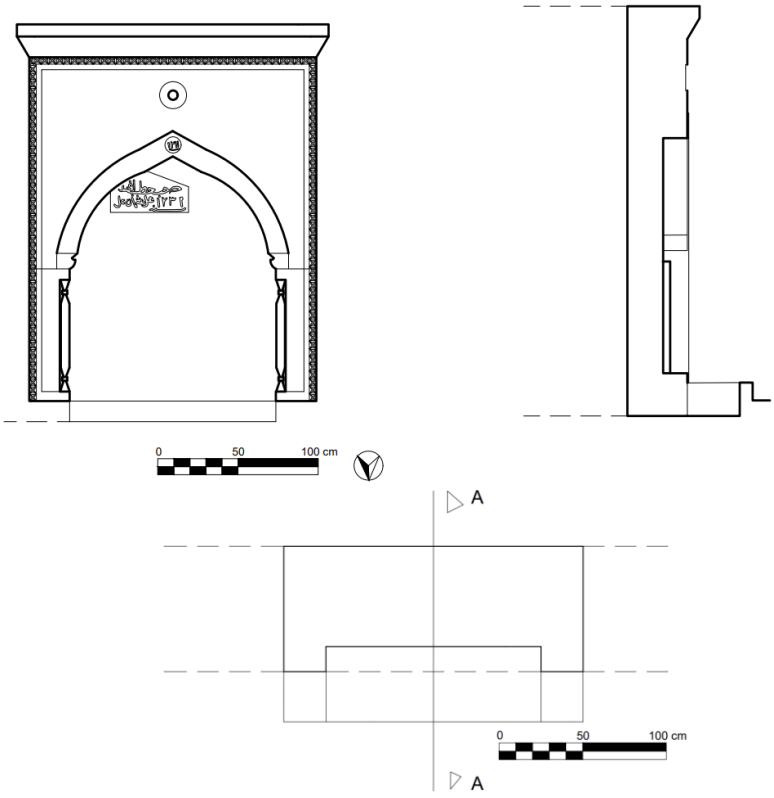
This inscription indicates that the fountain was repaired or renovated by Hatip Ali Osman Efendi in the year H. 1231 / CE 1815-16.

The fountain, named after the village in which it is located, rises on a horizontally rectangular mass. Extending in an east-west direction, the fountain has a height of 2.35 meters and a width of 1.80 meters (Drawing 2).

The fountain's superficial tangent arch has a depth of 0.15 meters. The 1.55 × 1.30 meter superficial arch rests on cylindrical corner pilasters measuring 0.84 meters in length, positioned beneath S-curved bases on both sides. The pilasters have a plain surface, with no transitional elements at the points where they connect with the base and capital. The bases and capitals, measuring 0.17 meters, are designed in an hourglass form, with their central sections constricted by a cubic molding.



Drawing 2. Elevation, section and plan drawing of Kayıçivi Village Fountain

The fountain is externally framed in an inverted U-shape by two rows of moldings. The inner molding is convex, while the outer molding is concave. The outer molding is decorated with a repetitive "X" motif, created by intersecting diagonal lines. Directly above the arch form, there is a rosette (gülbezek) with a diameter of 0.17 meters. At its center, a protruding boss (kabara) is designed within a circular area. The surface of the boss is adorned with a twelve-petaled floral motif, radiating outward from the center. The spaces between the petals are concavely carved, creating a grooved appearance. Surrounding the boss, "V" shaped extensions diverge from the center, ending in sharp points that form star-like edges. Above the keystone of the arch, a date inscription with a diameter of 0.11 meters is engraved using the recessed carving

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technique. Below the superficial arch, there is a rectangular restoration inscription (0.48 × 0.13 meters), placed horizontally on the fountain's surface.

The fountain does not feature a mirror stone or a basin niche on its surface. However, it has a single-spouted faucet hole, which retains its original iron spout. At the upper part of the fountain, there is an overhanging stone cornice with a projecting profile, measuring 1.87 × 0.23 meters. The five-section trough in front of the fountain is a later addition, constructed from reinforced concrete. Only the north facade of the structure is decorated, while the other facades remain plain and unembellished, emphasizing the functional nature of the fountain. Its location in Kayıçivi Village suggests that the fountain functioned not only as a water supply structure but also as a point of everyday encounter within the rural settlement. The presence of a multi-section trough in front of the fountain indicates that the structure may also have served animal watering practices, thereby connecting domestic use, agricultural life, and daily circulation around a shared water point.

Dikenli Village Fountain I

The fountain is located in Dikenli Village, which is 8 km away from the center of Korgun District. It is situated on parcel no 5 of block no 139 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. General view of Dikenli Village Fountain I

On the plain surface of the fountain, there is a vertically rectangular inscription measuring 0.41 × 0.28 meters. The short edges of the inscription are curved in the form of a scalloped ogee arch and contain three decorative cartouches. The prose inscription, written in Ottoman

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Turkish using Celî Sülüs script, is engraved onto the stone using the recessed carving technique (Figure 4, Drawing 3).

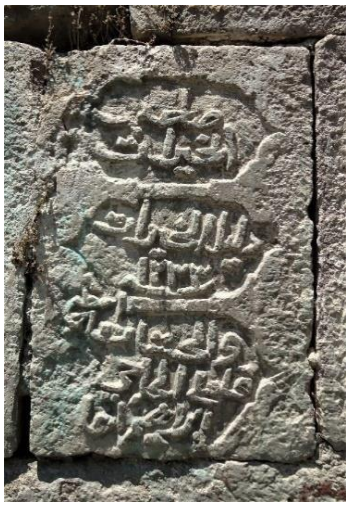
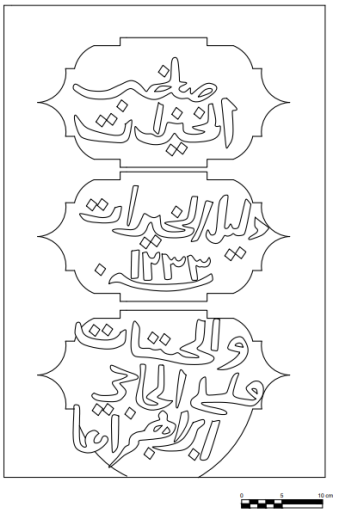


Figure 4. Inscription of Dikenli Village Fountain I



Drawing 3. Inscription of Dikenli Village Fountain I

The inscription text is as follows:

صاحب الخيرات

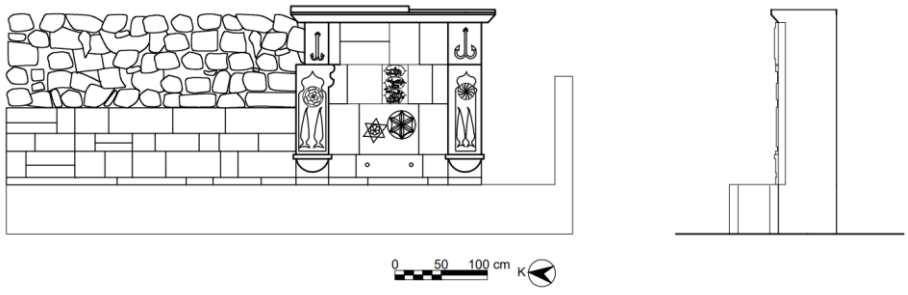
دليل الخيرا ت

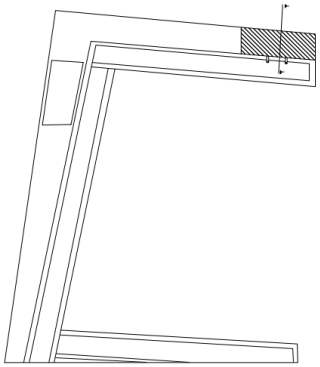
سنه ١٢٣٣

و الحسنات قلعه لى الحاجى ابراهيم آغ ا

This inscription indicates that the fountain was constructed by Hacı İbrahim Ağa in the year H 1233 / CE 1817-18.

The fountain, named after the village in which it is located, rises on a horizontally rectangular mass. Extending in a north-south direction, the fountain has a height of 1.95 meters and a width of 2.00 meters (Drawing 4). The front facade is constructed using finely cut stone, while the other facades are built with rubble stone material.





Drawing 4. Elevation, section and plan drawing of Dikenli Village Fountain I

The fountain, which has a plain surface, is flanked on both sides by a pair of pilasters. At the end of the pilasters, there are plain and convex-molded profiled bases. Near the cornice level of the pilasters, anchor motifs are symmetrically placed on both sides. On the lower section of the pilasters, decorative elements are incorporated within scalloped ogee-arched panels. On the north pilaster's surface, there is a 0.20-meter diameter rosette (gülbezek) motif placed above two symmetrical cypress tree motifs with right-curving tips. The central rosette consists of a four-petaled flower expanding outward in five layers, forming a six-tiered rosette. The central bud-shaped element is surrounded by larger concavely carved leaves. On the south pilaster's surface, a 0.15-meter diameter rosette with a passionflower (çarkıfelek) form is positioned above two symmetrical cypress tree motifs with left-curving tips. The passionflower design is composed of thirteen interwoven, oval-shaped arms radiating from a central circular core, creating a rotational floral pattern (Figure 5, Drawing 5).

Figure 5. Decorative elements on the pilasters of Dikenli Village Fountain I

Drawing 5. Decorative elements on the pilasters of Dikenli Village Fountain I

On the western facade, there is a vertically rectangular inscription measuring 0.41 × 0.28 meters. Below the inscription, on a horizontally rectangular block stone measuring 0.55 × 0.45 meters, Seal of Solomon

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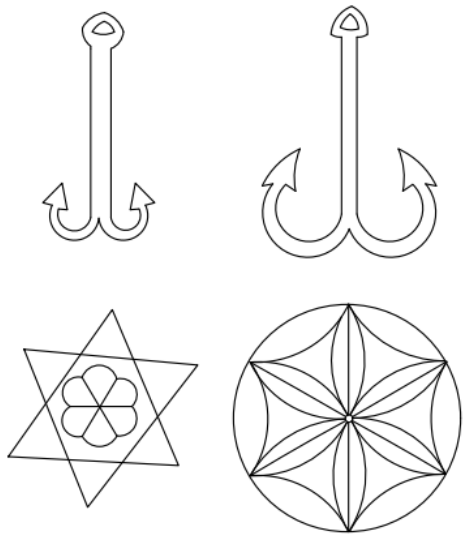
(Mühr-ü Süleyman) and rosette motifs are present (Figure 6). The left decoration features a six-petaled floral motif at its center, surrounded by a six-pointed star. The right decoration, a rosette motif with a diameter of 0.30 meters, has at its core a six-pointed star motif that radiates outward in a sunburst pattern. The star's sharp tips are concavely carved, creating a thin central dividing line. These star points are interconnected through concave semicircles, forming a hexagonal frame around the motif. The outermost layer consists of a thin circular molding encircling the entire composition (Drawing 6).

Figure 6. Decorative details on Dikenli Village Fountain I



Drawing 6. Decorative details on Dikenli Village Fountain I

The fountain does not feature a mirror stone or a basin niche on its surface. However, it has two spouted faucet holes, both retaining their original iron spouts. At the upper part of the fountain, there is an overhanging stone cornice with a projecting profile, measuring 2.19 × 0.15 meters. The trough in front of the fountain is a later addition, constructed from reinforced concrete. Only the western facade of the structure is decorated, while the other facades remain plain and unembellished, emphasizing the functional nature of the fountain. The relatively rich decorative program of the western facade indicates that the fountain was not conceived solely as a utilitarian water structure. Its decorated surface, inscription, and symbolic motifs suggest that it also functioned as a visible communal marker within the village, contributing to the formation of a shared social and spatial focus in everyday rural life.

Yolkaya Village Fountain

The fountain is located in Yolkaya Village, which is 8 km away from the center of Korgun District. It is situated on parcel no 2 of block no 144 (Figure 7).

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Figure 7. General view of the south facade of Yolkaya Village Fountain

On the eastern facade of the fountain, there is a construction inscription engraved on marble using the recessed carving technique. The horizontally rectangular inscription, measuring 0.40 × 0.27 meters, is framed by a thin molding and consists of three lines of text (Figure 8, Drawing 7).

The inscription text is as follows:

ماشاء الله كان

الحمد لله سنه ١٣٠٢

محرم

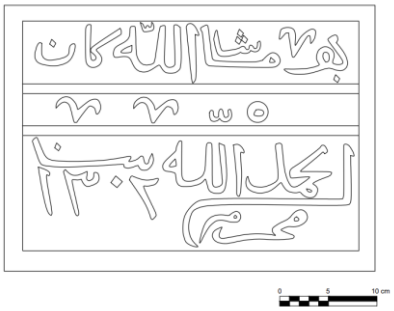

Figure 8. Inscription of Yolkaya Village Fountain

Drawing 7. Inscription of Yolkaya Village Fountain

This inscription indicates that the fountain was constructed in the year H 1302 / CE 1884-85.

Additionally, the ewer motifs on the pilasters contain the inscription “1964”, engraved using the recessed carving technique. This indicates that the fountain underwent restoration in 1964.

The fountain, named after the village in which it is located, rises on a horizontally rectangular mass. Extending in an east-west direction, the main structure of the fountain has a height of 0.93 meters and a width of 1.15 meters (Drawing 8). The structure is built using andesite cut stone.

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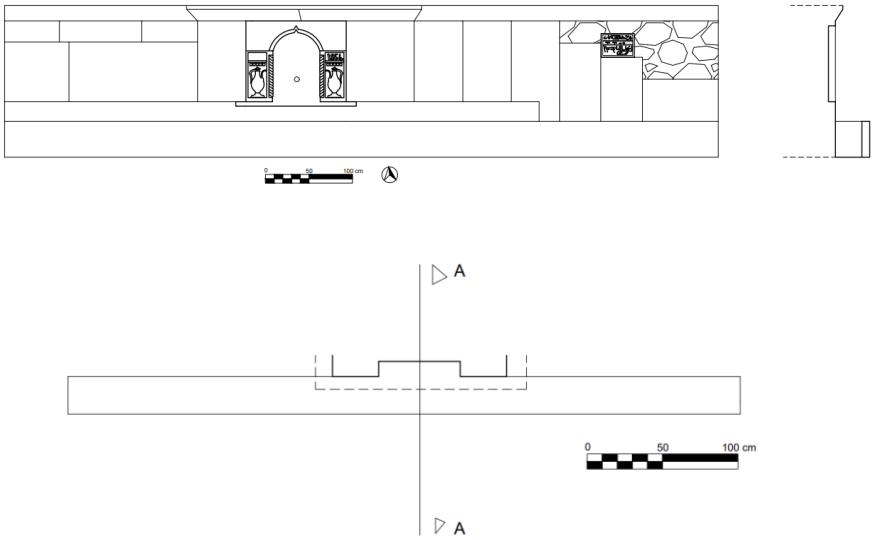

Drawing 8. Elevation, section and plan drawing of Yolkaya Village Fountain

The superficial ogee arch rests on two twisted pilasters measuring 0.60 meters in height. On the pilasters flanking the columns, there are symmetrical ewer motifs. These ewer motifs, engraved using the recessed carving technique, feature a wide body, a slender elongated neck and a spout. The handle extends from the upper part of the body, curving over the neck and attaching above it. Just above these motifs, a rectangular cartouche contains the 1964 inscription in the Latin alphabet (Figure 9, Drawing 9). While the inscription on the left pilaster is worn and illegible, the one on the right remains partially visible. This suggests that the majority of the fountain was demolished and completely reconstructed in 1964.

The fountain does not feature a mirror stone or a basin niche. However, it has a single-spouted faucet hole, which retains its original iron spout. The upper covering of the fountain is not original; it was later constructed using a combination of rubble and cut stone materials, extending over the entire wall. Similarly, the trough (yalak) in front of the fountain is a later addition made of reinforced concrete. The other facades of the structure remain plain and unembellished, maintaining a simple and functional design. Although the fountain was largely reconstructed in 1964, its continued use and restoration indicate the persistence of water-related memory within the village. The survival of the inscription and ewer motifs shows that the fountain remained a meaningful element of the rural landscape, linking functional water use with local memory and communal continuity.

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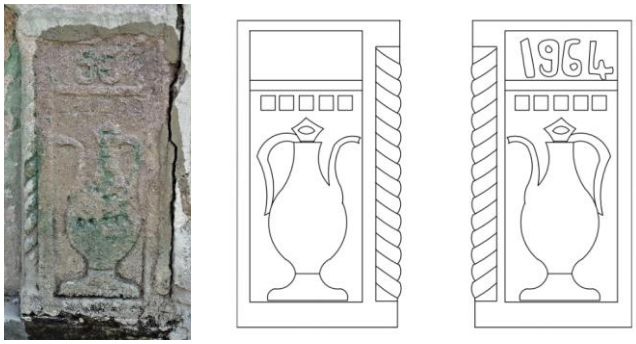

Figure 9. Decorative details on Yolkaya Village Fountain

Drawing 9. Decorative details on Yolkaya Village Fountain

Dikenli Village Fountain II

The fountain is located in Dikenli Village, which is 8 km away from the center of Korgun District. It is situated on parcel no 5 of block no 139.

Figure 10. General view of Dikenli Village Fountain II

The fountain, named after the village in which it is located, rises on a horizontally rectangular mass (Figure 10). Extending in a north-south direction, the fountain has a height of 2.25 meters and a width of 1.62 meters (Drawing 10). The front facade is constructed using finely cut stone, while the other facades are built with rubble stone material.

The superficial tangent arch of the fountain, with a depth of 0.13 meters, rests on two legs with S-shaped curved capitals. The bases of these legs have plain surfaces, ending with convex moldings. The fountain does not feature a mirror stone or a basin niche. However, it has two spouted faucet holes, both retaining their original iron spouts. At the upper part of the fountain, there is a projecting stone cornice measuring 2.18 × 0.15 meters. The trough in front of the fountain is a later addition, constructed from reinforced concrete. All facades of the structure are designed to be simple and unembellished, emphasizing its functional character.

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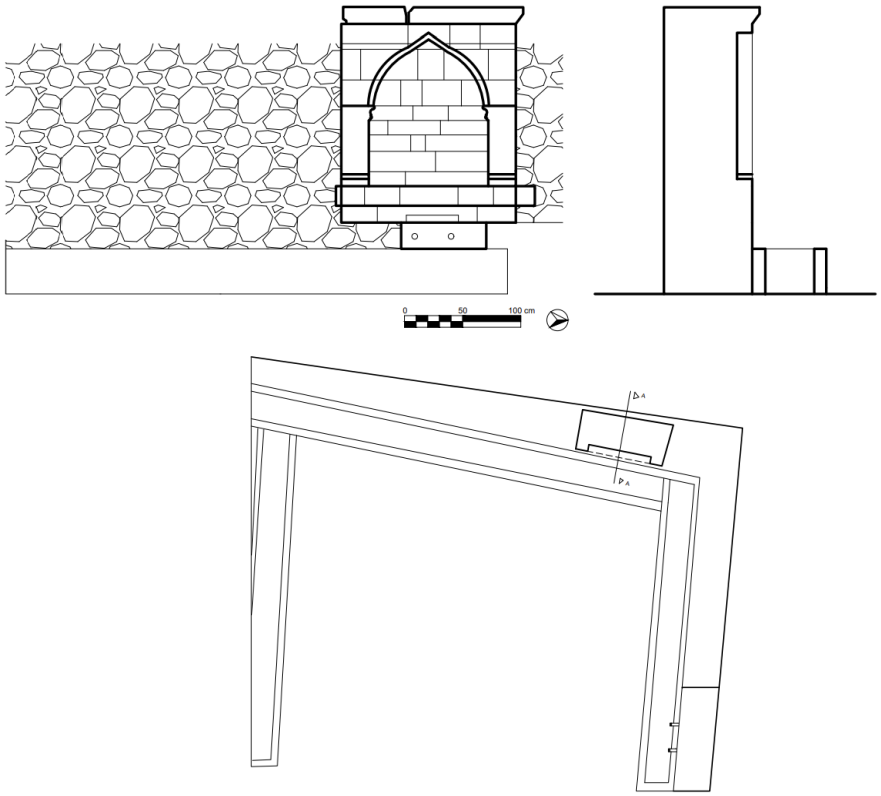

Drawing 10. Elevation, section and plan drawing of Dikenli Village Fountain II

Since the fountain lacks an inscription, its exact construction date remains unknown. However, based on its plan, architectural style and facade composition, it closely resembles several 19th-century fountains in various regions of Turkey. Notable comparisons include: Hatıbın Pınarı (mid-19th century, Çankırı), Karataş Fountain (19th century, Çankırı), Ilgın Kese Village Fountain (19th century, Çankırı) (Demirtaş&Karademir, 2025), Halil Efendi Fountain (1730, Üsküdar) (Koçyiğit, 2013), Hacı Mahmut Ağa Fountain (1758, Balıkesir) (Işıkakdoğan, 2013), Ali Ağa Fountain (1810-11, Eğirdir, Isparta) (Akbaş, 2012). Considering these architectural parallels, it is likely that the fountain was constructed in the mid-19th century. Despite its plain and undecorated character, the fountain's two-spouted arrangement and location in Dikenli Village suggest that it served repeated collective use rather than an exclusively individual function. In this sense, the structure can be interpreted as part of the everyday water network of the settlement, supporting daily circulation and informal encounters around a shared functional space.

Mitik Fountain

The fountain is located in the center of Korgun District, on Büyük Mahalle, Mitik Street, situated on block no 204, parcel no 38 (Figure 11).

Figure 11. General view of Mitik Fountain

On the western facade of the fountain, there is a restoration inscription engraved on the stone using the recessed carving technique. The inscription measures 0.46 × 0.40 meters and is framed by a wreath-shaped border (Figure 12, Drawing 11).

The inscription text is as follows:

صاحب ...
الخیرات دلیل الخیرا ت
بموق اوغلو احمد
تعمیر فی سنه ۱۲۹۲

This inscription indicates that the fountain was repaired by Ahmed Efendi in the year H 1292 / CE 1875-76.

Figure 12. Inscription of Mitik Fountain

Drawing 11. Inscription of Mitik Fountain

The fountain, named after the street in which it is located, rises on a horizontally rectangular mass. Extending in a north-south direction, the structure has a height of 2.10 meters and a width of 1.80 meters (Drawing 12). It is constructed using andesite cut stone and block stone materials. The fountain has a plain surface, flanked on both sides by a pair of pilasters. At the end of the pilasters, there are plain and convex-molded profiled bases. With its simple and unadorned appearance, the western facade of the fountain features a 0.46 × 0.40-meter inscription, framed by a wreath-shaped border.

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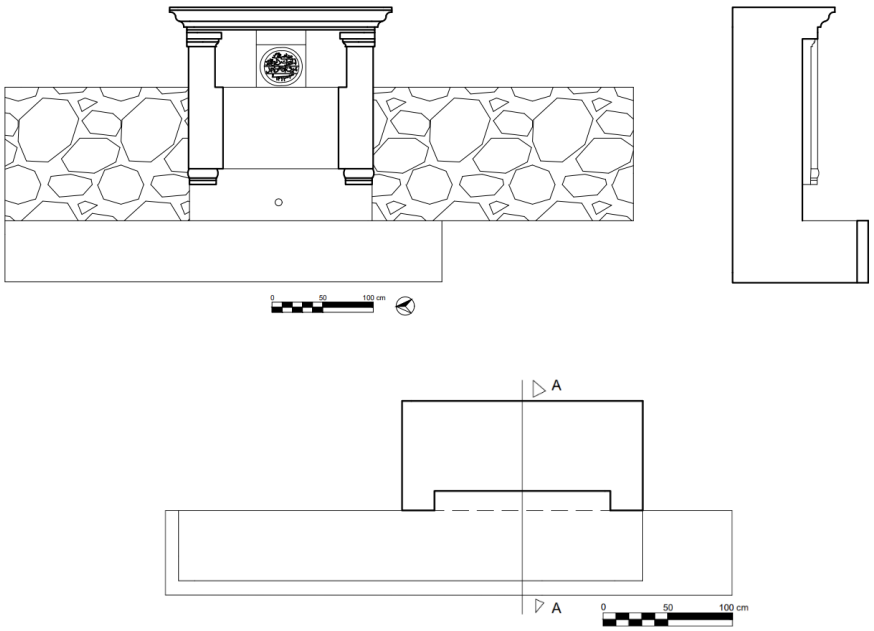
The fountain does not feature a mirror stone or a basin niche on its surface. However, it has a single-spouted faucet hole, retaining its original iron spout. At the upper part of the fountain, there is an overhanging stone cornice with a concave profile, measuring 2.06 × 0.20 meters. The trough in front of the fountain is a later addition, constructed from reinforced concrete. All facades of the structure are designed in a simple and unembellished manner, emphasizing its functional nature.



Drawing 12. Elevation, section and plan drawing of Mitik Fountain

Since the structure lacks an inscription, its exact construction date remains unknown. However, based on its plan, facade composition and architectural unity, it closely resembles several 19th-century fountains in Çankırı, Ankara and Bolu. Notable comparisons include: Kayabaşı Street Fountain (19th century, Çankırı), Güdük Minaret Fountain (19th century, Çankırı) (Demirtaş, 2022), Naciye Hanım Fountain (1907, Ankara) (İşçen, 2019), Kabirler District (19th century, Bolu) (Durman, 2014). Considering these architectural parallels, it is likely that the fountain was constructed between the late 18th century and the early 19th century. Since the fountain is located in the district center on Mitik Street, it can be considered within a more active everyday circulation network than the village fountains. Its position on a street suggests that it functioned as a small-scale public node where access to water, movement through the settlement, and short-term social encounters intersected.

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FOUNTAINS THAT HAVE PARTIALLY SURVIVED TO THE PRESENT DAY

Çukurören Village Fountain

The fountain is located in Çukurören Village, which is 15 km away from the center of Korgun District. It is situated on block no 124, parcel no 3 (Figure 13).

The fountain has undergone multiple repairs over time and was eventually demolished. In its place, a new L-shaped fountain was constructed, incorporating stones from the original structure. The inscriptions from the old fountain were also integrated into the new structure to preserve them. The construction inscription on the south facade is severely worn and difficult to read today. On the east facade, another inscription from the old fountain is embedded within a superficial semi-circular arch. This arch is framed by two rows of concavely carved moldings. Above the arch, a projecting stone cornice (1.30 × 0.15 meters) with a profiled design extends outward.

Figure 13. General view of Çukurören Village Fountain

The fountain contains two inscriptions from the original (old) fountain. The construction inscription on the south facade is engraved using the recessed carving technique and is framed by a thin molding. It is set within a horizontally rectangular panel measuring 0.86 × 0.64 meters (Figure 14). Due to significant wear and erosion, the inscription is difficult to read today.

The inscription text is as follows:

صاحب الخيرات و الحسنات
الحج على ابن الحج
حسين سنه ١٢٣

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Figure 14. Inscription of Çukurören Village Fountain

The restoration inscription on the eastern facade measures 1.17 × 0.65 meters and consists of three lines of text (Figure 15, Drawing 13). It is positioned within the superficial semi-circular arch of the structure and is engraved on andesite stone using the recessed carving technique.

The inscription text is as follows:

ماشاء الله بو چشمه نك بناسنه

نوكه ميسر اولنلره رحمت اولسون انشاء الله

سنه ١٣٠

According to these inscriptions, the fountain was constructed in the year H 1233 / CE 1817-18 and underwent restoration in the year H 1302 / CE 1884-85.

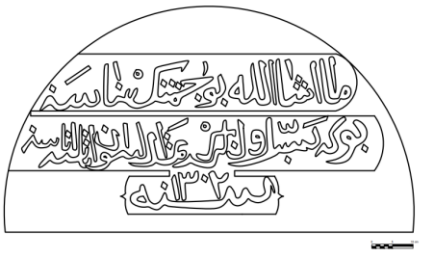

Figure 15. Restoration inscription of Çukurören Village Fountain

Drawing 13. Restoration inscription of Çukurören Village Fountain

Karatekin Village Fountain

The fountain is located in Karatekin Village, which is 12 km away from the center of Korgun District (Figure 16). It is situated in front of the village mosque. The fountain has been completely demolished and replaced with a newly constructed fountain[1].

[1] During an oral interview conducted on June 10, 2020, with Ekrem Baş, the retired imam of the village, he stated that the historic fountain was demolished approximately fifteen years ago. During the interview, Ekrem Baş also mentioned that following the demolition of the fountain, he personally placed the inscription inside the roof cavity of the new fountain for preservation purposes.

Figure 16. General view of the newly constructed fountain replacing Karatekin Village Fountain

Archival records and photographs from the Regional Directorate of Foundations indicate that the original fountain was constructed using block stone material, attached to the building behind it (Figure 17). The structure featured two arches, with a horizontally rectangular inscription positioned at the central axis. Both arches were designed in a superficial pointed arch form and rested on pillars with profiled capitals and bases. The photograph reveals that the left pillar of the right arch had been broken. Above the arches, a concave-profiled plain molding was present.

Figure 17. Karatekin Village Fountain (VGMA, 180702002-RP002, fol. 12b)

The inscription of the historic fountain is currently stored within the roof of the newly constructed fountain for preservation. Measuring 0.65 × 0.42 meters, the inscription is in the form of a horizontally rectangular panel, surrounded by a thick border. However, its upper right corner is broken (Figure 18, Drawing 14).

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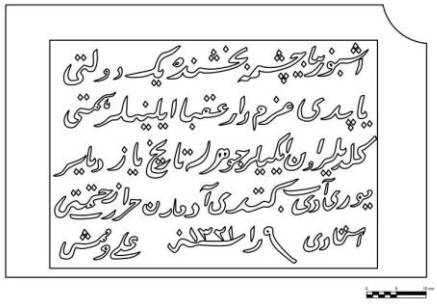

Figure 18. Inscription of Karatekin Village Fountain

Drawing 14. Inscription of Karatekin Village Fountain

The inscription text is as follows:

اشبو زیبا چشمه بخشنده یك دولتی
یاپدی عزم دار عقبا ایلینلر همتی
کلدیلر اون ایکیلر جوهرله تاریخ یازدیلر
یوریدی آب کتدی آدملرن حرارت زحمتی
استادی ۹ را سنه ۱۳۲۱ علی و ممش

According to the inscription that has survived to the present day, the historic fountain was constructed in the year H 1321 / CE 1903-04.

On the southern facade of the fountain, there was also a tombstone inscription and a spolia inscription dated H 1291 / CE 1874-75[2]. These inscriptions have also been placed inside the roof cavity of the newly constructed fountain for preservation purposes (Figure 19).

The spolia inscription text is as follows:

ماشاء الله
ممش آغا که ایدوب... .کانقری قلعه سنك دزداری
... حاجی مصطفی آغا
...ابدی .همان .. . .در مادری ایچون انجق
... یدیلر چقدی دیدی تاریخنی
۱۲۸۲

[2] This information has been obtained from the Ankara General Directorate of Foundations Archive, report number 180702002-RP001.

Figure 19. Spolia inscription located on the southern wall of the fountain

EVALUATION

The historic untains in Korgun are significant cultural heritage elements that reflect Ottoman-era architecture and social structure. These fountains, with their functional and decorative features, provide valuable insights into the stone craftsmanship, calligraphy and architectural aesthetics of the period. Research indicates that while some fountains have preserved their original structural characteristics, others have either been demolished over time or altered for continued use.

Within the scope of the research, five fountains in Korgun that have survived to the present day and two fountains that have partially survived have been examined. The fountains in Korgun have been classified based on Ayla Ödekan's typology, which categorizes fountains according to their location and physical characteristics (Ödekan, 1992). This classification allows for a more systematic examination of the architectural features and local contexts of the fountains.

Typology

Fountains According to Their Location

All of the examples identified in Korgun were constructed independently, without any structural connection to other buildings. Although some of the examined examples give the impression of being attached to a structure, the absence of any static connection between the fountain and the building places them in the category of freestanding fountains.

Four of the fountains examined in the catalog were constructed as square (public square) fountains. These include the Kayıçivi Village Fountain (1796–97), Dikenli Village Fountain I (1817–18), Yolkaya Village Fountain (1884–85) and the Mitik Fountain (19th century). Examples of the square fountain type from Anatolia include the Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha Fountain in Edirne (1667) (Karademir, 2020), the Hacı Veli Mosque Fountain, Kastamonu (19th century) (Gür, 2009), the Nazım Bey Fountain in Ankara (İşçen, 2019).

Dikenli Village Fountain II (19th century), on the other hand, is classified as a wall fountain. This type of fountain is quite common in Anatolia. Especially due to unplanned urbanization in city centers and villages, many fountains have been surrounded by residential buildings and walls. Examples of this type include the Taş Minare Street Fountain in Safranbolu (1691) (Bölükbaşı Ertürk, 2014), the Bereketzâde Fountain in Istanbul (1732–33) (Barışta, 1989), the Ulu Yolu Fountain in Gediz, Uşak (1893–94) (Durman, 2014), the Keçeciler Cihannüma Sarı Mosque Fountain in Konya (1924) (Kunt and Soy, 2020).

Fountains According to Their Physical Form

Fountains According to Facade Composition

In the overall context of Korgun, the arch stands out as a significant architectural element in the facade compositions of the examined structures. Based on their facade composition, the fountains have been

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classified under two categories: those with a single arch and those with a flat facade. All of the fountains analyzed were constructed with a single facade.

Single-Arched Fountains

In this category, the facades of the fountains, most of which face public squares, feature niches framed by arched forms. The tangent arch, commonly used in many fountains across Istanbul and Anatolia, begins in a circular form at the impost level but transforms into a linear trajectory above, terminating in a triangular shape (Mutlu, 2014). Among the examples examined in Korgun, the Kayıçivi Village Fountain (1796–97) and Dikenli Village Fountain II (19th century) fall into this group.

Although numerous examples of tangent arches can be found throughout Anatolia, studies often group tangent and pointed arches together. Examples of fountains with tangent arches include the Hacı Ali Fountain in Çorum (1843) (Okumuş, 2017), the Hacı Beşir Ağa Complex Fountain in Eminönü (1744) (Tay, 2015), the Kapı Ağası Hüseyin Ağa Fountain in Amasya (1489) (Urak, 1994), the Sultan Selim Fountain in Karapınar (1569–70) (Mutlu, 2014) and the Halil Efendi Fountain in Karaman (19th century) (Denktaş, 2000).

The fountain in Yolkaya Village (1884–85), on the other hand, features a shallow horseshoe-shaped arch over its fountain niche. Examples of horseshoe-arched fountains in Anatolia include the Hacı Abdullah Fountain in Kastamonu (1904–05) (Gür, 2019), the Çatal Fountain in Tire (16th century) (Geyik, 2007) and the Kümbetli Mosque Fountain in Karatay (Mutlu, 2014).

Flat-Facade Fountains

Flat-facade fountains are those constructed without arched niches, featuring plain, flat surfaces on their facades. Among the fountains examined in Korgun, the Dikenli Village Fountain I (1817–18) and the Mitik Fountain (19th century) fall under this category. This type is widely observed in both Anatolia and Istanbul. Examples include the Abdülcebbar Fountain in Kastamonu (1891–92) (Gür, 2019), the Sultan Mustafa III Fountain in Istanbul (1760) (Kara Pilehvarian et al., 2000), the Kavaklı Mosque Fountain in Bursa (1778) (Çetinkaya, 2012), the Ciğercioğlu Abdullah fountain in Afyonkarahisar Bolvadin (Bahargülü, 2024), the Dümen Village Fountain in Aydın (19th century) (Özbalkan, 2019), the Eski Çeşme Street Fountain (1890–91) and the Mustafa Fountain (1910) in Bodrum (Kakız, 2019), the Çarıkçıoğlu Fountain in Erzurum (19th century) (Yurttaş and Özkan, 2002), the Çaypınar Fountain in Tokat (1818) (Demirbağ, 2022).

Fountains According to Body Form

The fountains of Korgun, distinguished by their niches and arched forms on the facades, are built upon a horizontally (transversely) oriented rectangular prism mass. These fountains, characterized by their

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simple and functional structures, feature straight lines and are generally positioned in public squares.

Material and Construction Technique

In the construction of the historical fountains in Korgun, locally sourced materials such as andesite ashlar and rubble stone were commonly used. Ashlar stones were generally preferred for facades, arches and inscription panels, while rubble stones were used in the side and rear sections of the structures, where visibility was limited. In terms of construction technique, the stones were laid using a stacking method with regular joint spacing; some structures were later repaired with mortar and thick mortar fillings were particularly applied on the surfaces. The inscriptions were usually carved into the stone using a recessed ground technique. Architectural elements such as cornices, pilasters, capitals and bases were shaped using stone carving techniques, serving both structural and decorative functions. In later interventions, reinforced concrete troughs were added to the fountains and the upper coverings were rebuilt using a mixture of local stone and concrete.

The Kayıçivi Village Fountain (1796–97), Yolkaya Village Fountain (1884–85) and Mitik Fountain (19th century) were constructed using andesite ashlar and block stone materials. Dikenli Village Fountains I (1817–18) and II (19th century) were built with neatly cut ashlar stone on the front facades, while the other facades were constructed with rubble stone.

The use of locally sourced materials in construction and the continuation of traditional stone craftsmanship in building techniques indicate that these structures were shaped in accordance with both the geographical identity and the production methods of their respective periods.

Structural Elements

The historical fountains in Korgun were generally designed as freestanding structures with a single facade and a horizontal rectangular plan. Architectural elements such as water troughs, arches, back panels and upper coverings are present in their composition.

In all the fountains examined in the catalog, the water troughs were later additions and constructed using reinforced concrete. In terms of functionality, water troughs are among the most essential components of a fountain; however, due to their constant contact with water and exposure to seasonal temperature variations and freezing conditions, they are also the most deteriorated parts of the structures.

Niche recesses for water cups, commonly referred to by various names such as taslık, bardaklık, or maşrapalık, are small arched niches built into the back panels of fountains, designed for placing a cup or ladle. These features began to appear in the 15th century (Önge, 1997). They can be formed either by building them into the wall masonry or carving them

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from a single block of stone. None of the fountains identified in Korgun include taslık applications.

Arches are among the most prominent architectural elements that add dynamism to the fountain's facade. The Kayıçivi Village Fountain (1796–97) and Dikenli Village Fountain II (19th century) have tangent arches, while the Yolkaya Village Fountain (1884–85) features a horseshoe arch. The piers supporting the arches are shaped like pilasters and in some examples, they include decorative details such as twisted shafts, S-shaped capitals and hourglass-shaped bases.

In the Kayıçivi Village Fountain (1796–97), the arch rests on cylindrical pilasters on both sides. The capitals and bases of these pilasters are shaped in an hourglass form. In the Yolkaya Village Fountain (1884–85), the horseshoe arch sits on twisted pilasters that lack both capitals and bases. On the front facade of the Dikenli Village Fountain I (1817–18), there are projecting pilasters with distinct capitals and bases.

The back panel is an architectural element in fountains where the spout or tap is mounted. It is typically positioned at the center of the facade and often designed with ornamental features (Mutlu, 2014). None of the fountains examined include an ayna taşı. The original taps of all the fountains have not survived to the present day. In some cases, new taps or spouts have been added later to restore water flow.

The fountains studied in Korgun are freestanding structures with visible upper coverings. Their roofs have flat covering systems and overhanging eaves with profiled projections.

Among the surviving fountains, four have inscriptions that remain intact, while the two partially preserved examples also feature inscriptions. These inscriptions were written in Ottoman Turkish in celî sülüs script, carved using the recessed-ground technique on stone or marble surfaces. The Kayıçivi Village Fountain includes both a construction inscription (1796–97) and a repair inscription (1815–16). The inscription of the Dikenli Village Fountain I (1817–18) features concave-curved, scalloped horseshoe-arch-shaped short edges and contains three cartouches. On the eastern facade of the Yolkaya Village Fountain (1884–85), there is a construction inscription carved into marble using the recessed-ground technique. Additionally, on the pilasters, within ewer (ibrik) motifs, the number "1964" is inscribed using carving techniques, indicating that the fountain underwent repairs in 1964. Although the Mitik Fountain does not have a construction inscription, it does feature a repair inscription framed with a wreath-shaped border.

Ornamentation

Although the historical fountains in Korgun generally exhibit a simple architectural style, they occasionally feature symbolically meaningful decorative elements. Ornamentation is most commonly observed on the front facades, which are the functional areas of the fountains. Decorations are concentrated primarily on inscription panels, arch pediments,

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pilaster surfaces and stone plaques. Among the most frequently encountered motifs are rosettes, passionflowers, cypress trees, ewers, the Seal of Solomon and X-shaped symbols. These elements reflect the belief systems, aesthetic sensibilities and symbolic language of the period. The motifs were typically carved into the stone surface using the recessed-ground technique; in some cases, they are framed with concave or convex border designs.

Geometric Ornamentation

On the facade of the Kayıçivi Fountain, two rows of moldings frame the surface in an inverted U-shape. The inner molding is carved in a convex form, while the outer one is concave. The surface of the outer molding is decorated with repeated "X"-shaped motifs that intersect diagonally. The "X" shape, also used as a "Tengri" symbol in ancient Turkic beliefs, came to represent faith in God, devotion to Him and unity with Him following the Turks' conversion to Islam (Kuru, 2020). These types of emblems, frequently seen in inscriptions from the Göktürk and Uighur periods on the Central Asian steppes, were used by tribes to mark both living beings and inanimate objects as symbols of belonging. After the adoption of Islam, such motifs continued to appear in architectural works, especially from the Karakhanid period onward, and persisted within geometric arrangements during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods (Duran, 2019).

Another decorative element observed in the Korgun fountains is the rosette (gülbezek) with geometric compositions. Among these compositions, star-shaped ornaments are the most common. In the Kayıçivi Village Fountain (1796–97), a rosette is located just above the arch, featuring a central twelve-petaled floral relief, around which star points are formed by V-shaped lines radiating outward from the center and ending in sharp tips. In the Dikenli Village Fountain (1817–18), beneath the inscription, there is a rosette containing a six-pointed star motif that radiates from the center. Examples of star-composition rosettes on arch keystones or other surfaces in Anatolia include the Temenne Deveci Fountain in Çorum (Okumuş, 2017) and the Ulusu Street Fountain in Demirciler Neighborhood, Bolu (1790–91) (Can, 2015).

On the surface of the southern pilaster of the Dikenli Village Fountain I (1817–18), there is a rosette in the form of a çarkıfelek (passionflower). The çarkıfelek motif consists of a decorative pattern formed by curved arms radiating from a central point in a spiral or rotating arrangement (Demiriz, 1979). Examples of this motif in Anatolia include the Karagöz Cemetery Fountain in Kayseri (1878–79) (Tali, 2014), the Tahta Mosque Fountain in Nevşehir (18th century) (Sevim, 2015).

Among the fountains examined, a six-pointed star (Seal of Solomon) motif can also be observed on the Dikenli Village Fountain (1817–18). Symbolizing power, authority and spiritual strength, this motif also conveys meanings of continuity and permanence (Türeli, 2006). Examples of fountains in Anatolia that feature the Seal of Solomon motif

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include the Tarakçılar Fountain in Kastamonu (Gür, 2019) and the Üçler Fountain in Nevşehir (1902) (Sevim, 2015).

Floral Ornamentation

Floral ornamentation, widely used in Turkish architecture, offers significant insight into the period and cultural context of the structure in which it appears.

On the surface of the northern pilaster of the Dikenli Village Fountain (1817–18), there is a rosette (gülbezek) motif with a diameter of 0.20 meters. Examples of fountains in Anatolia and Istanbul that feature similar motifs include the Başkadın Square Fountain in Istanbul (1729) (Koçyiğit, 2013), the Darıcı Fountain in Konya (Taşdelen, 2023), the Square Fountain in Kütahya (18th century) (Verim, 2009) and the Safalan Fountain in Kastamonu (Gür, 2019).

The cypress tree motif, commonly used in Turkish decorative arts, symbolizes immortality and is thought to be associated with the concept of Ab-ı Hayat (Water of Life) when placed beside or above the spout of a fountain (Gür, 2019). In the late Ottoman period, cypress trees became frequent elements in decorative programs, appearing singly or in pairs, symmetrically or asymmetrically, on the front facades of fountains (Gökler, 2018).

At the Dikenli Village Fountain (1817–18), the cypress trees are arranged in symmetrical pairs with curved tips. Examples of fountains featuring the cypress tree motif in Anatolia and Istanbul include the Fındıklılı Mehmet Ağa Fountain in Istanbul (1726) (Koçyiğit, 2013), and the Büyük Olucak Fountain in Afyon (1789–90) (Karasu, 2006).

On the Mitik Fountain (19th century), the surface of the floral wreath is decorated with acanthus leaves. This motif, which began to appear in Turkish architecture in the 18th century, can be seen in examples such as the Ahmed III Square Fountain in Istanbul (1729) (Koçyiğit, 2013), the Hacı Kadir Fountain in Edincik, Balıkesir (1834–35) (Işıkakdoğan, 2013) and the Karaağaç Village Fountain in Bolu (Can, 2015).

Figurative Ornamentation

On the Dikenli Village Fountain (1817–18), an anchor motif is located near the eaves on the surfaces of the pilasters, placed symmetrically. Based on this motif, it is presumed that the person who commissioned the fountain may have been a sailor. In Turkish art, the anchor motif is more commonly seen on gravestones, symbolizing the profession of the deceased. One example is the gravestone of Ömer bin Elhac Muhammed (1800) in the Üçler Cemetery of Konya (Önder, 1970). Other examples of the anchor motif can be found on the Fountain of Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Pasha, the Ottoman Grand Admiral, in Istanbul (18th century) and the Mirkelamoğlu Han Fountain in Izmir (18th century) (Geyik, 2007).

Another frequently observed figurative motif in Ottoman decorative art is the ewer (ibrik). Typically depicted with a low base, a bulbous or pear-shaped body, a long neck and a straight or S-shaped spout, the

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earliest examples of the ewer motif date back to the Sasanian and Mamluk periods (Altıer, 2019).

On the pilasters of the Yolkaya Village Fountain (1884–85), a pair of symmetrical ewer (ibrik) motifs can be observed. Executed using the recessed-ground carving technique, these ewers have wide bodies, long slender necks and spouts. The handle emerges from the upper part of the body and connects above the neck. Examples of fountains in Anatolia featuring the ewer motif include the Büyük Olucak Fountain in Afyon (1789–90) (Karasu, 2006), the Taşçılar Mosque Fountain in Manisa (1799–1800) (Uçar, 2012) and the Hacı Ömer Ağa Ilıca Fountain in Ilgın (1791–92) (Mutlu, 2014). The depiction of the ewer motif on structures directly associated with water—such as bridges, baths, fountains and ablution fountains (şadırvan)—is particularly meaningful. This motif, which evokes the act of ablution before prayer, may be interpreted as symbolizing bodily purification and the sacred nature of water (Altıer, 2019).

Fountains as Socio-Spatial Nodes in Rural Daily Life

The spatial distribution of the Korgun fountains indicates that these structures functioned beyond their basic role as water supply points. Their placement in village centers, mosque courtyards, along roads, and within residential clusters shows that they were embedded in the everyday spatial organization of rural life. In this context, fountains operated as small-scale socio-spatial nodes where daily practices such as water collection, ablution, animal watering, resting, and short-term encounters took place.

These fountains also contributed to the formation of informal public spaces in rural settlements. Unlike formally designed urban squares or monumental public spaces, the social spaces created around rural fountains emerged through repeated everyday use. The act of accessing water brought different members of the community together and transformed the immediate surroundings of the fountain into a shared place of interaction. Therefore, the fountains of Korgun should be evaluated not only as architectural and functional water structures but also as elements that organized daily movement, social relations, and local memory.

The surviving examples in Korgun demonstrate that rural water architecture played an active role in shaping the spatial identity of settlements. Even when modest in scale and architectural decoration, these fountains created recognizable points within the rural landscape. Their continued presence, partial survival, or transformation also reflects the changing relationship between water infrastructure, collective memory, and everyday life in rural Çankırı.

CONCLUSION

The fountains of Korgun constitute more than modest rural water structures; they represent enduring components of the socio-spatial

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organization of the settlement. While their formal characteristics demonstrate continuity with established Ottoman fountain typologies, their scale, material choices, functional arrangements, and spatial positioning reveal adaptations shaped by rural production patterns and local community needs.

In this study, seven Ottoman-period fountains located in Korgun and its surrounding villages were examined. Five of these examples have survived substantially, while two have been partially preserved. Within this scope, the fountains were analyzed in terms of their plan schemes, facade compositions, construction materials, inscriptions, decorative details, functional elements, restoration traces, and spatial locations. The findings show that a simple architectural approach dominates the fountains of Korgun. However, this simplicity should not be interpreted as a lack of architectural value. On the contrary, refined stone craftsmanship, carefully designed inscriptions, symbolic motifs, and functional details demonstrate that these structures combined practicality with aesthetic and cultural meaning.

Beyond their architectural attributes, the fountains functioned as infrastructural and symbolic nodes within everyday rural life. As water supply points, they structured daily routines; as fixed elements within the settlement fabric, they contributed to the formation of informal public spaces. Their locations near village centers, roads, mosque courtyards, residential clusters, or street networks indicate that they were embedded in daily movement patterns and collective practices. They supplied water, supported animal watering and ritual use, created places of encounter, and contributed to the continuity of local memory.

The examined fountains also reveal the role of patronage, charity, and repair practices in rural Ottoman water architecture. Their inscriptions indicate that some were constructed or repaired as acts of piety and public benefit. Later additions, restorations, reinforced concrete troughs, and partial reconstructions show that these structures continued to be used, adapted, and reinterpreted over time. This variation reveals how preservation awareness, local interventions, and changing patterns of use have influenced the aesthetic and authentic values of the fountains.

All these findings demonstrate that the fountains of Korgun should be regarded not only as architectural elements but also as historical, social, and cultural documents. They provide evidence for the continuation of traditional construction practices in rural areas while also showing how small-scale water structures could shape settlement identity, social memory, and communal use of space. In this respect, the study contributes to the literature by shifting attention from monumental urban water architecture to the socio-spatial role of rural fountains within local heritage contexts. Future restoration and conservation efforts will be critical for ensuring the transmission of this heritage to future generations.

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NOTES

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Resume

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