

## Where and Why? Ship Graffiti in Ayşe Kadın Mosque

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Graffiti in sacred/religious contexts have been interpreted as votives for protection, good fortune, hence scratching graffiti became a ritual rather than an ordinary act. However, ship graffiti are mostly considered as a source for nautical technology and researchers may neglect the contextual interpretation of the graffiti. This talk aims to interpret a group of ship graffiti within its context. These ship graffiti are located in Ayşe Kadın Mosque in the old village of Mordoğan in Karaburun peninsula, İzmir. They are densely clustered on the walls of the women's mezzanine in the prayer hall. The frescos that graffiti were scratched on give a *terminus post quem* of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This corpus of graffiti is particularly important and unique. Even though ship graffiti in churches are well studied, the research on Islamic religious contexts is very limited. As they are found in the women's section of the mosque, this ritual can be safely identified with women of the village and their involvement in the maritime community.