

Caravanserais on Konya-Beyşehir Road in the Context of Urban Tourism

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

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Tourism in cities has been around since Mesopotamian times and has survived throughout history. Cities are centers of attraction with their history, culture, entertainment and shopping venues, sports and artistic events. Increasing the diversity of tourism positively affects the development of cities. During the Anatolian Seljuk period, caravanserais on trade routes met the need for accommodation. People who went to another city for trade, military purposes or for sightseeing used the caravanserais. Today, caravanserais have been replaced by hotels. Each of the caravanserais that have survived to the present day as cultural heritage has the potential to affect urban tourism. Konya, the capital of the Anatolian Seljuk period, contains very strong parameters with its caravanserais. In this article, 'Altunapa', 'Kuruçeşme' and 'Kızılören' caravanserais, which are located on the Konya-Beyşehir road of the trade route extending from Konya to Antalya, are evaluated in the context of urban tourism. The characteristics of the three caravanserais are given through literature, plans and photographs, and they are associated with urban tourism. As a result, it is stated that caravanserais have a very important place in Konya's urban tourism and will increase the tourism potential of the city. In this context, it is aimed to contribute to urban tourism research, which has entered the agenda of different disciplines after the 90s and aroused interest in the academic field, by developing a perspective in the architectural discipline.



Kent Turizmi Bağlamında Konya-Beyşehir Yolundaki Kervansaraylar

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ÖZET

Kentlerde turizm, Mezopotamya döneminden beri vardır ve tarihin her döneminde varlığını korumuştur. Şehirler, tarihi, kültürü, eğlence ve alışveriş mekanları, spor ve sanatsal etkinlikleriyle bir cazibe merkezidir. Turizmin çeşitliliğini artması, şehirlerin gelişimini olumlu yönde etkilemektedir. Anadolu Selçuklu döneminde, ticaret yolları üzerindeki hanlar, konaklama ihtiyacını karşılamaktaydı. Gerek ticaret için gerek askeri amaçlı gerekse gezip görmek için başka bir şehre gidenler, hanları kullanmışlardır. Günümüzde kervansarayların yerini oteller almıştır. Kültürel miras olarak günümüze ulaşan hanların her biri kent turizmine etki edecek potansiyele sahiptir. Anadolu Selçuklu döneminin başkenti olan Konya, sahip olduğu hanları ile çok güçlü parametreler içermektedir. Makalede, Konya'dan Antalya'ya uzanan ticaret yolu güzergahının Konya-Beyşehir yolunda yer alan ve günümüze ulaşan 'Altunapa' 'Kuruçeşme' ve 'Kızılören' hanları kent turizmi bağlamında değerlendirilmiştir. Üç hanın özellikleri literatür, plan ve fotoğraflar üzerinden verilerek, kent turizmi ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Sonuçta, Konya'nın kent turizminde hanların çok önemli bir yer tuttuğu ve şehrin turizm potansiyelini arttıracığı ifade edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda 90'lı yıllardan sonra farklı disiplinlerin gündemine giren ve akademik alanda ilgi uyandıran kentsel turizm araştırmalarına, mimari disiplinde bir bakış geliştirerek katkıda bulunulması amaçlanmıştır.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of cities, intensive population increases and rapidly developing technology have brought cities and their formation and transformation processes to a new point. This change in cities has also affected tourism and its users (Ateş et al., 2021).

The phenomenon of tourism, which first entered cities with the Sumerians during the Mesopotamian period, has continued until today with the travels organized by those who want to experience the culture, music, art, architecture, etc. offered by cities. The increase in activities and diversity has enabled cities to find a place on tourism maps (Mafi & Mesgarani, 2013).

Although urban tourism dates back to ancient times, it has started to attract attention after the 90s. The rapid increase in urbanization and cultural transformation under the influence of globalization have necessitated a reassessment of the tourism phenomenon in cities. This process has also affected the academic field of different disciplines and increased the interest of geographers, architects and urban planners in urban tourism research (Pearce, 2001).

With the increasing interest in urban tourism in scientific studies, planning units, local government incentives, supply-demand balances have emerged. In a globalized world, with the formation of social networks that provide information and facilitate the dissemination of information, cities have become a node independent of distances. The urban hierarchy that has emerged as a result of globalization puts cities in a competitive environment and emphasizes that they are part of the national tourism economy. Tourism should not be seen only as an urban activity and should be recognized as an important element in all policies related to urban development (Ashworth & Page, 2010).

This study aims to create a perspective on the impact of Konya city's caravanserais on urban tourism due to their cultural heritage and tourism type potential. It also offers suggestions for local governments.

URBAN TOURISM

While the words 'city' and 'tourism' together constitute an activity in a spatial context, they are not sufficient to describe the different relationships between the many social, cultural and economic forces in the urban environment (Edwards et al., 2008). The city is part of history and culture, social and political. As areas with dense populations and easy access to trade and services, cities are the most developed cultural product that can be lived together (Douglas et al., 2001).

Tourists, locals and day-trippers each look for specific characteristics when visiting a city. The preferences of different users, the relationships between resources and users, and the diversity of tourism products offered by the city can increase the length of stay. This provides economic benefits to both the city and its inhabitants (Ashworth & Page, 2011). Diversity and flexibility are important for tourists in urban tourism, which includes short-term visits to cities in order to learn about the history and culture of a city/region, to watch sports and artistic activities, to use shopping and related entertainment opportunities, to take a vacation, and to witness the routine life of the society in which it is located or contacted (Soykan, 2022).

In urban tourism, culture and tourism support economic development. Tourists, who focus on culture and cultural values in order to spend an effective and quality time, are interested in cultural elements and related areas as well as cultural heritage. Local governments should analyze the relationship between cultural elements and creative sectors in cities and bring them into tourism (Richards, 2011).

Today, instead of transnational hierarchies, competition between cities is becoming more

prominent. Each city serving tourism with different product types may face unique administrative problems. Since this situation will affect local governments, it leads to a branding strategy to emphasize the image perception of cities. Local governments, which see cities as a tool due to branding and marketing strategies, take a step forward in the competition between cities by trying to turn urban tourism into an advantage by making culture and cultural values a focal point. The impact of the city's unique resources is important in this step. Local governments should be able to capture the basic and living values of the city in a wide range of natural, cultural, social and economic dimensions and evaluate them in a range that will add value to the city. The social and economic survival of cities will be ensured by the sustainability of these values.

Cities offer different experience opportunities to their visitors. In addition to the historical and cultural values of a city, one of the most experienced activities by visitors is shopping and tasting local products. At this point, inns and caravanserais, where trade activities were carried out in the past, play an important role in terms of urban tourism. These buildings, which are the cultural heritage of cities, have the potential to meet the needs of trade, accommodation, food and beverage, cultural, social, etc. together. The inns located in historical city centers are areas where visitors can sometimes visit for similar functions and feel the past due to their location. However, especially the caravanserais located outside the city center are idle due to accessibility, dysfunction, etc. Each inn or caravanserai structure that becomes functional again will not only be a historical value in urban tourism, but will also contribute to the economy of the city.

Within the scope of the study, three caravanserais located on the Konya-Antalya historical silk road route on the Konya, Beyşehir road will be examined through their place in Konya's urban tourism as a cultural value.

KONYA AND CARAVANSERAI

Konya is one of the most important and oldest cities in the world. It is understood that settled life started in prehistoric times. Çatalhöyük, located about 40 kilometers from the center, is the oldest center found. It belongs to the Neolithic period and is the first known urban settlement in history. From the findings at Çatalhöyük, it is estimated that hunting-gathering transitioned to agriculture, food culture started here, and fire was used. The dwellings were entered from above for defense purposes (Konya Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2024).

Alâaddin Hill, located in the center of Konya, was established between the end of the Neolithic period, 5000 BC, and the beginning of the Chalcolithic period, 5500 BC. Konya, which developed around Alâaddin Hill, was raided by Persians, Seleucids and Pergamon kingdom after the 4th century BC. Later it came under Seljuk and Ottoman rule. Excavations in this region yielded a wide variety of findings from the Phrygian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman periods (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2024).

Konya city, with its potential for different tourism products and product diversity, makes a significant contribution to both local and national tourism with its cultural and faith tourism, congress, health, hunting, plateau and sports tourism. With its natural and cultural heritage, it has two tangible and two intangible cultural heritage in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list (Uluslan & Batman, 2010). In addition, Konya-Seljuk Capital, Anatolian Seljuk Madrassas, Eşrefoğlu Mosque and Eflatun Pınar: Hittite Water Monument is on the Unesco Tentative World Heritage List. In 2005, the Mevlevi Semâ Ceremony was declared a masterpiece within the framework of the UNESCO Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity Program. In 2008, it was registered on behalf of Turkey in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Civelek, 2019).

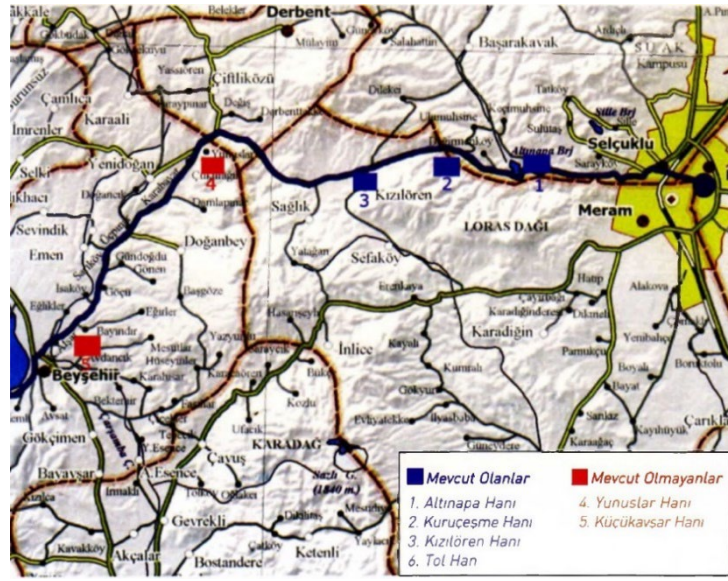
Konya also contributes to tourism with its natural heritage. There is a great potential for highland tourism. Düden Lake, which harbors 186 bird species, Beyşehir Lake National Park, Beyşehir Storks Valley, Obruk Lakes, Bird Paradise Island, Ereğli Reeds, Anamas Plateaus, etc. are places of interest for activities such as natural life and bird watching, photo safari, offroad. Beyşehir Lake and its surroundings are preferred areas for activities such as wildlife observation, camping and caravan tourism. Akşehir Region and Sultan Mountains serve youth tourism with areas suitable for paragliding (Ulusan & Batman, 2010).

Konya city, which contains many historical buildings belonging to the Anatolian Seljuk period, is also very rich with its inns and caravanserais due to its location on the trade route. Although the words inn and caravanserai, which have similar functions, are used synonymously, there are differences between them. While caravanserais are located on the routes connecting cities, inns are located in the city center. Among these structures, which were mainly used for commercial activities, it is stated in the sources that production was carried out in inns, while accommodation was mostly realized in caravanserais (Dilaveroğlu, 2021). Since caravanserais are located on the roads connecting cities, they offer accommodation not only to trade caravans but also to different travelers and travel groups such as pilgrims and military units. Inns, on the other hand, were generally used for short-term stays related to commercial activities (Yaşar, 2019). Since the study will focus on examples of caravanserais located on the routes connecting the cities, the structures named as inns will be referred to as caravanserais.

There are many caravanserais in Konya, such as Kuruçeşme Caravanserai, Kızılören Caravanserai, Hocacihan Caravanserai, Altunapa Caravanserai, Horozlu Caravanserai, Zazadin Caravanserai, Obruk Caravanserai and Dokuzun Caravanserai. Some of them are located on the same trade route and some of them are located on trade routes in different directions through Konya. On the Konya-Beyşehir road on the historical trade route, 4 of 6 caravanserais, namely Altunapa Caravanserai, Kuruçeşme Caravanserai, Kızılören Caravanserai, Yunuslar Caravanserai, Küçükavşar Caravanserai and Tol Caravanserai, have survived to the present day (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2007). Within the scope of this study, urban tourism was evaluated in the context of 'Altunapa', 'Kuruçeşme' and 'Kızılören' Caravanserais, which are the three most important caravanserais on the historical silk road extending to Antalya on the Konya, Beyşehir road. The characteristics of these caravanserais are given and they are associated with urban tourism.

Figure 1

Konya-Beyşehir Caravan Road Map (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2007)



Altınapa Caravanserai

Altınapa Caravanserai, the third Caravanserai on the Konya, Beyşehir route, is located in the Altınapa Dam Lake area. It is important because it was the first caravanserai on the Konya-Antalya trade route during the Anatolian Seljuk period. The foundation of the caravanserai dated 1201-1202 states that it was built by Şemseddin Altınba (Şahin, 2018).

The caravanserai has a rectangular plan and is built of cut and rubble stone. As in the Kuruçeşme Caravanserai, spolia antique pieces are also found. The closed and open sections are together and have the same size. On the left side of the entrance, a staircase leading to the second floor from the outside leads to the masjid (Erdmann, 1961). Looking at the plans of the building, it is observed that the masjid and the entrance have been demolished. It is understood that only the closed section has survived to the present day. The open and closed sections are also called summer and winter sections. On one side of the courtyard section is the stables and on the other side is the carriage or camel section with a portico (Akok, 1973). According to the plans, the entrance leads to a closed courtyard with units on both sides. The eastern part is covered with a barrel vault and the western part is designed as a portico. The door at the transition to the closed part is carried forward. There are three courts with four piers on the right and left, the middle court is higher and wider and covered with a barrel vault. In the plan, there are windows (openings) opening to the exterior walls in both open and closed sections (Naldan, 2020). The caravanserai could not be repaired because it was under the Altınapa Dam. Since it is located in the dam lake area, it is possible to see the closed part of the caravanserai when the dam waters dry up (Kılıcı and Günel, 2013).

Altınapa Caravanserai reflects the characteristics of its period with its architecture and materials among the caravanserai buildings of the Anatolian Seljuk period. The caravanserai is on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List (Kültür Envanteri, 2024).

Figure 2

Plan of Altunapa Caravanserai (Erdmann, 1961) and Photographs (URL-1)



Kuruçeşme Caravanserai

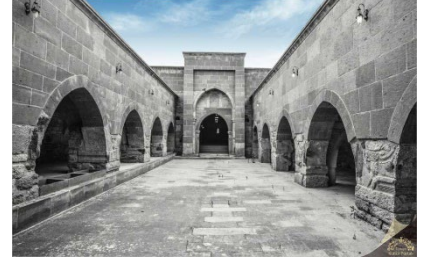
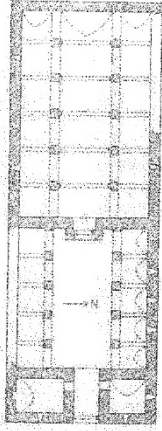
It is a caravanserai structure located on the trade route extending to Antalya on the Konya, Beyşehir route. According to the inscription, it was built in 1207 during the reign of Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev I. It has an area of 820 m². The open section at the entrance of the caravanserai measures 17.50 x 23.00 m. and the closed section measures 17.50 x 27.00 m. (Şahin, 2018). It consists of closed and open sections, each with a rectangular plan. Cut stone and rough chipped stones obtained from nearby ancient buildings were used in its construction. During the restoration works, plant motifs were found in geometric patterns on the wall surfaces. Due to the column capitals, lintels and ornaments, the spolia materials, which are estimated to have been taken from the Byzantine church, make the building different from other caravanserais (Dursun, 2014). The building is entered from the east through a door under the barrel vaulted cover opening to the courtyard. To the right and left of the entrance are two rooms, the larger one on the left being designed as a masjîd. In the courtyard, there are five iwan with barrel vaults connected to each other by arches on four pillars symmetrically opposite each other (Türkiye Kültür Portalı, 2024).

The closed section, which is used for accommodation, is entered through a crown door carried forward from the façade. It is noteworthy that the crown door with the inscription is more flamboyant than the main entrance door of the caravanserai. The closed section is divided into three levels, with five pillars on each side, the central part wide and high, and the sides narrower and lower. There are a total of 18 units in the shelter section where the carriers and walls are connected to each other with pointed arches (Dursun, 2016).

Kuruçeşme Caravanserai was restored by Konya Metropolitan Municipality in 2015. From time to time, it is used for workshops, etc. programs or different organizations (Konya Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2024).

Figure 3

Plan of Kuruçeşme Caravanserai (Karpuz et al., 2008) and Photographs (Türkiye Kültür Portalı, 2024)

**Kızılören Caravanserai**

Kızılören Village and its surroundings in Meram district of Konya is an important region in terms of historical and cultural heritage with many structures such as Asar Castle, churches, underground shelter (city), rock-carved structures, caravanserais, etc. Kızılören Caravanserai is also located near Kızılören Village and on the Konya, Beyşehir route of the Silk Road, the historical trade route (Karpuz et al., 2008). Built during the reign of Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev I by Emir Kutluğ bin Muhammed who served him, the building is also known as Emir Kandemir Caravanserai. There is no date on the inscription, but it is stated in the sources that the construction date is accepted as 1207 (Tokat, 2020).

Kızılören Caravanserai is located on a rectangular planned session area on the north-west and south-east axes. Built in a classical plan in two building masses with a courtyard and an indoor/shelter section, the building belongs to the complex caravanserais group. Unlike the other two caravanserais on the Konya Beyşehir route, the courtyard section is wider than the shelter section. The building is made of cut stone with a width of 28 m. and a length of 54 m. (Karpuz et al., 2008). The caravanserai, which has a total area of 820 m² with its open and closed sections, creates a massive image with its 1 meter wide outer walls. Thanks to the buttresses used on the entrance façade and side façades of the caravanserai, the mass appearance of the building was lightened. The entrance façade of the two-storey caravanserai is protruding from the center. There is a fountain in the portico section on the left side. An oval arched vault leads to the courtyard. It has four iwans symmetrical to each other. The upper floor is reached by a staircase adjacent to the courtyard wall. There is a square-planned, cross-vaulted masjid here. Rooms are placed at the corners where the courtyard intersects the shelter section. The shelter section is entered through a crown door. It is divided into three levels by two sets of piers, the middle one being wider and higher (Erdmann, 1961).

Kızılören Caravanserai was restored by the General Directorate of Foundations in 2009 and is used as equestrian club (Tokat, 2020).

Figure 4

Plan of Kızılören Caravanserai (Erdmann, 1961) and Photographs (URL-2)



Altunapa, Kuruçeşme and Kızılören Caravanserais in the Context of Urban Tourism

It is important to revitalize the historical and cultural richness of Konya, which was the capital of the Seljuk period, with tourism. In the study, the architectural and functional features of Kızılören, Kuruçeşme and Altunapa Caravanserais, which are located at close distances to each other on the Konya-Antalya silk road route on the Konya-Beyşehir road, are described with plans and visuals. In the past, these buildings, which served for accommodation and resting between settlements on the trade route, contributed to both the economic structure and tourism of the region. Among the three caravanserais, Kızılören Caravanserai is the only one that provides cultural sustainability today. Although it is not used as a hotel in terms of function, it contributes to tourism with its riding club service and allows the use of especially day-trippers.

Although Kuruçeşme Caravanserai is suitable for visiting as a cultural heritage, it only serves a certain number of people in certain organizations. It does not have the features that can serve city or regional tourism.

Altunapa Caravanserai was flooded and damaged by the dam. Due to conditions such as uncontrolled irrigation, the building is idle and threatens the existence of cultural heritage.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Cities today must be able to control information, finance and cultural products that support cultural and economic globalization. Global cities that fulfill multiple functions and have high service accessibility see tourism as an integral part of the city, without limitations of space and time. However, they can be vulnerable to ecological, social and developmental problems. Cities should be able to produce managerial strategies taking into account urban tourism planning (Akin, 2023).

The WTO's 2018 declaration on "Culture and Tourism" emphasizes the importance of cultural tourism for sustainable and creative cities. Among the 17 chapters of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, sustainable cities and communities envisage resilient, reliable and inclusive settlements. In order to achieve this goal, cooperation between users and local authorities, a culture of co-development should be taken into account and the necessary exchange should be ensured. If needed, international networks should also be utilized to strengthen interaction (WTO, 2018).

As culture is one of the most influential forces in tourism growth, preserving cultural heritage and promoting tourism for sustainable development serve the same purpose. Therefore, sustainable

development of cities can be achieved if tourism management is constantly on the city's agenda.

The following headings can be taken into consideration in local government policies to bring Kızılören, Kuruçeşme and Altunapa Caravanserais to Konya tourism:

If accommodation is provided in Kızılören Caravanserai, which is used as an equestrian club, it can become a center of attraction for locals and tourists as well as day-trippers.

The sustainability of the Kuruçeşme Caravanserai as a cultural heritage should not be dependent on organizational events at defined times of the year. The space can be given functions such as accommodation, museum, workshop, etc. that will contribute to the tourism industry.

Altunapa Caravanserai was damaged because it was flooded. Ecologically, the Dam Lake should be handled comprehensively and the building should be unearthed. If restoration is possible, the building can contribute to tourism by providing functions such as accommodation, museum, workshop, etc.

Beyşehir Lake is located approximately 95 km from the center of Konya. It is an area that serves Konya tourism with the ruins of Kubadabad Palace, historical buildings by the lake, beach and national park. In order to increase the length of stay of the users, providing accommodation services in at least one of the three caravanserais on the route can increase the attractiveness of both the lake and its surroundings and the historical silk road.

Today, hotels offer the services of accommodation, food and beverage, and commercial activities offered by caravanserais in the past. Hotel structures that combine shopping, spa, cultural activities, etc. are among the preferences of visitors. Inns and caravanserais can be turned into an important experience center for visitors who want to better understand the history and culture of Anatolia. An accommodation structure where handicrafts and local products are introduced and offered for sale in the open courtyards, where open-air shows or exhibitions can take place, and where hammams can become a spa center can increase the length of stay of visitors in the region. In addition, the planned restoration of caravanserais as a whole with the empty spaces around them can increase social interaction in tourism. Functions that will allow workshops and trainings while experiencing local products can contribute to the economy of the city.

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Research Design (CRediT 1) Author 1 (%100)

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Research - Data analysis - Validation (CRediT 3-4-6-11) Author 1 (%100)

Writing the Article (CRediT 12-13) Author 1 (%100)

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Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Sustainable Development Goals: 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

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