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THE ECONOMIC SITUATION AND CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES OF KONYA AND ITS DISTRICTS ACCORDING TO THE 1902 REPORT OF THE ANATOLIAN PROVINCES INSPECTION BOARD

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Abstract

Konya Province, which administratively had the broadest borders in Anatolia at the beginning of the 20th century, came to the fore, especially with agricultural activities. Many reform reports were prepared during the Ottoman Empire to evaluate Konya's agricultural and economic opportunities. One of these is the commission report dated 1902, which is the subject of the study. The article discusses the report prepared by the commission established to examine the situation of Kastamonu and Adana provinces, as well as Konya and its districts, to guide the reforms to be made. The report includes the commission's opinions and Konya Governorship's objections to the commission report. Thus, it is possible to compare the information provided. Most of the original report was prepared based on districts. Accordingly, significant information is given about the branches in which the districts stand out regarding economic activities, their current situation, opportunities, and deficiencies. Although districts and sectors are explained separately, it is seen that the issues are approached from a holistic perspective. In the article, the district-based method was not followed; the report was classified by subject and examined under subheadings such as agriculture and animal husbandry, industry, trade, capital and technology, and public works activities; however, some information about the districts is also provided. In addition to the original documents containing the commission report, the *Salname* of the period (1317/1900) and secondary sources were consulted. Moreover, some similar reports submitted about Konya before the 1902 report were discussed, and a brief comparison was made.

Keywords: Konya province, Konya's districts, Konya's economy, Commission report.

Anadolu Vilayetleri Teftiş Heyeti'nin 1902 Yılı Raporuna Göre Konya ve Kazalarının Ekonomik Durumu ve İmar Faaliyetleri

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Özet

20. yüzyılın başlarında idari olarak Anadolu'nun en geniş sınırlarına sahip olan Konya vilayeti özellikle tarımsal faaliyetlerle ön plana çıkmıştır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu döneminde Konya'nın özelde sahip olduğu tarımsal ve genelde ise ekonomik imkânlarını değerlendirmek amacıyla birçok ıslahat raporu hazırlanmıştır. Bunlardan biri çalışmanın konusunu teşkil eden 1902 tarihli komisyon raporudur. Makale, yapılacak ıslahatlara yön vermek amacıyla Kastamonu ve Adana vilayetlerinin yanı sıra Konya ve kazalarının durumunu yerinde incelemek için kurulan komisyonun hazırladığı raporu ele almaktadır. Rapor, hem komisyonun görüşlerini hem de Konya Valiliği'nin komisyon raporuna itirazlarını içermektedir. Böylece verilen bilgilerin karşılaştırılması mümkün olmaktadır. Raporun orijinalinin büyük bir bölümü kazalar esas alınarak hazırlanmıştır. Buna göre kazaların ekonomik faaliyetler açısından hangi dallarda ön plana çıktığı, mevcut durumları, imkânları ve eksikliklerine dair önemli bilgiler verilmektedir. Her ne kadar kazalar ve sektörler ayrı ayrı anlatılmış olsa da meselelere bütüncül bir perspektifle yaklaşıldığı görülmektedir. Makalede ise kaza bazlı yöntem takip edilmemiş, rapor konu bazlı tasnif edilerek tarım ve hayvancılık, sanayi, ticaret, sermaye ve teknoloji, bayındırlık faaliyetleri gibi alt başlıklara ayrılarak incelenmiş, bununla birlikte yeri geldikçe kazalara dair bazı bilgiler de aktarılmıştır. Komisyon raporunu içeren orijinal belgelerin yanı sıra dönemin salnamesine (1317/1900) ve ikincil kaynaklara müracaat edilmiştir. Buna ilave olarak 1902 raporunun öncesinde Konya ile ilgili sunulmuş olan benzer raporlardan bazıları ele alınarak kısa bir karşılaştırma yapılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Konya vilayeti, Konya kazaları, Konya ekonomisi, Konya komisyon raporu.

Introduction

This article examines the 1902 report on Konya and its districts, prepared by the Anatolian Provinces Inspection Board, which was established by Sultan Abdulhamid II to identify safety and security problems in Ottoman lands and explore ways to improve public welfare. This report's primary focus is to contribute to the history of Konya and its districts by examining the economic situation and opportunities of Konya Province and its subordinate districts, as well as projects currently underway or in the project phase (BOA, DH. MKT, 15.03.1901).

The administrative borders of Konya Province in 1902 encompassed the central province of Konya, as well as the districts of the period, including Antalya, Nevşehir, Niğde, Kayseri, Aksaray, Isparta, Karaman, and Burdur, which are now cities.¹ The districts individually included in the report are as follows: Konya, Bor, Nevşehir, Ürgüp, Arapsun, Aksaray, Hamidiye, Niğde, Karaağaç, Yalvaç, Uluborlu,

Eğirdir, Isparta, Burdur, Tefni, Elmalı, Kaş, Akseki, Alaiye, Antalya, Hadim, Bozkır, Karaman, Ereğli, Koçhisar, Ilgın, Akşehir, Yenişehir, and Seydişehir.

The members of the commission were Mehmed Ferid Bey, the head of the Imperial Commission for the Inspection of the Provinces (Vilayat-ı Şahane Teftiş Heyeti); Ibrahim Bey, a Major in the Ottoman General Staff (Erkan-ı Harbiye Kaymakamı); Şevki Efendi, a Senior Captain from the Ottoman General Staff (Erkan-ı Harbiye Kolağası); and Cemil Pasha, a Member of the Ottoman Ministry of Finance Council (Meclis-i Maliye Azası) (BOA, DH.MKT, 15.03.1902; BOA, DH.MKT, 03.03.1902). While one of the reasons for establishing the commission was to address deficiencies in security and public order, these issues were not emphasized extensively, with a focus on economic matters. The text consists of the commission's thirty-article report, a twenty-one-article addendum (*zeyl*), and a response memorandum (*lahika*) from the Konya Governorship. The report, which is largely itemized and location-specific, contains detailed and vital information about the districts, sub-districts, and villages of Konya Province. The memorandum section addresses the problems more generally, sometimes providing examples from districts and towns. The sections at the end of the commission's report and the memorandum, referred to as "response memorandum", were prepared by the Konya Governorship and serve as a response to the commission's allegations, clarifying ambiguous issues, indicating solutions to the problems under criticism, and presenting activities that have been finalized, are ongoing, or are currently in the project phase. Thus, the report, which has become an intertwined work, ceases to be a one-sided text and offers the opportunity for comparison.

The commission report demonstrates a holistic approach to the problems. The findings regarding a sector in any district are evaluated in conjunction with other closely related economic and development issues, presenting a holistic approach. The most frequently cited problems in the report include inadequate education and capital, as well as technology; the lack of new methods in agriculture and animal husbandry; difficult transportation; the lack of highways; high transportation costs

despite the presence of railways in some areas; livestock theft; insufficient water for agricultural activities; and the environmental damage caused by lakes and marshes. Low coverage is given to forestry and mining.ⁱⁱ

1. Reports Prepared About Konya Before 1902

With the Tanzimat, the Ottoman Empire aimed for reform and development in every field. Through reports prepared by established commissions, it sought to identify reforms in a wide range of areas, including agriculture, trade, industry, public works, public order, and education. Various reports were submitted before 1902 regarding the province of Konya, a significant center during the Ottoman Empire. This section examines two additional reports in comparison to the 1902 report. One of these is a report prepared jointly by the members of the Administration of the Konya Provincial Council (Konya Vilayeti Meclis İdaresi) and the district governors of livas (liva mutasarrıfları) in 1851. The main headings of the report, which itemize Konya's problems and proposed solutions, are as follows:

The utilization of the vast lands in Konya, the construction of macadam roads between Konya and its districts, the repair of Teke Harbor and the Mersin Harbor, the closest harbor to Niğde, with the idea that this would improve trade and prosperity in the region, the repair of collapsed bridges, the significant improvement of agricultural tools and equipment for the advancement of agriculture, especially the expansion of mulberry sapling cultivation, the strengthening of road safety and the selection of those to be employed in this field from literate people, the organization of the police according to gendarmerie procedures, the extension of the telegraph line to the livas and the determination of the source and payment method for this, the increase of the number of secondary schools in livas and large towns and districts, the taking of the necessary measures to eliminate the factors that cause air pollution and harm the public health, the establishment of reformatories in livas and the training of children, the elimination of usury, which threatens the wealth of the people, and the elimination of the grievances in this regard, the providing financial support to mosques, madrasahs and foundations, to meet their needs, and the opening

national funds in Konya districts to increase wealth and prosperity (BOA, A.MKT.UM, 01.06.1851).

Another memorandum concerning Konya and its districts is titled “Report on the Reform and Development of Konya Province” and is dated September 22, 1880. In the memorandum, “Prepared for presenting to the central government the needs identified in the settlements within the province as a result of surveys and inspections conducted by the Konya Province,” includes needs and demands in areas such as education, healthcare, transportationⁱⁱⁱ, agriculture, production, commerce, public works, and construction. Although its author is unknown, the General Assembly of Konya Province likely prepared the memorandum (Muşmal, 2007, pp.123).

Hüseyin Muşmal evaluates the report in question as follows: As mentioned in the memorandum, the most significant deficiency in education in Konya Province is that graduates of secondary schools are often deprived of schools where they can pursue a profession due to the lack of industrial and agricultural schools and high schools. Therefore, the opening of these schools is recommended. Significant health problems include the lack of doctors and hospitals in districts, despite the presence of a doctor in each district center. The need for doctors is met centrally but remains insufficient. The permanent employment of doctors and the opening of hospitals are recommended, and the Governorship offers three options to meet these needs. These include increasing municipal revenues, having the public cover the costs of building hospitals and employing doctors, and having all expenses covered by the treasury. The transportation issue focuses on the difficulties in transporting commercial goods. According to the memorandum, road transportation, which is of great importance for trade, is difficult due to the inadequacy of vehicles and the poor condition of the roads. Sea transportation, however, is also problematic due to the distance from the ports. As a solution, it recommends using passages that shorten distances, converting roads along key routes to highways and making them more passable, and emphasizing that building a railway line would increase agricultural

and commercial activities. Regarding agriculture, it is requested that locusts that damage crops be destroyed and that grains be urgently sent to areas experiencing seed and food grain shortages. To increase exports, which are significantly lower than imports in terms of production and trade, it is deemed necessary to repair and rebuild roads and bridges within the province. It is also stated that factories dealing with the soap, candle, and clothing sectors should be built in Konya Province in order to produce in other areas, and that privileges may be given to some companies to facilitate the construction of these factories. Furthermore, it is recommended that some closed mines be reactivated, production should be carried out with new methods and techniques, and engineers be appointed to instruct in the use of these new methods and techniques of production. Requirements regarding public works and development can be categorized under three main headings: Lake Eğirdir-Mediterranean river transportation, port construction in Antalya, and the Konya Plain irrigation project (Muşmal, 2007, pp.124-130).

When the 1902 report, which is the subject of the article, is compared with the reports of 1851 and 1880, it is possible to argue that while some of the problems mentioned persist^{iv}, significant progress has been made in solving some of them. The two reports before 1902 also highlight significant transportation deficiencies. In the approximately 50 years since the 1851 report, some progress has been made in transportation, including an increase in the number of macadamized roads and the railway connecting Konya to Anatolia and Istanbul.^v However, it is understood that many roads between the districts are still incomplete and that existing roads need to be converted to macadamized roads. In the context of the 1851 report's emphasis on eliminating air pollutants and environmentally hazardous elements and their impact on public health, the 1902 report states that some small-scale work was carried out on lakes and marshes; however, it appears that rehabilitation activities requiring larger capital and comprehensive efforts were not implemented. Compared to the 1902 report, there are some developments in the use of modern technology in agriculture. The Ziraat Bank is used, albeit to a limited extent, for capital provision.

Central and local governments are striving to support the development of agriculture and animal husbandry.

Compared to the 1851 and 1880 reports, some issues included in these reports are not included in the 1902 report. While many general themes are common, the 1902 report is more detailed and contains more comprehensive information. First and foremost, this report is organized on a case-by-case basis, identifying and analyzing prominent, problematic, or encouraging issues.

2. The Work of the Commission and the Content of the Report

According to a document dated September 5, 1900, sent from the Ministry of the Interior (Dahiliye Nezareti) to the Grand Vizierate (Sadaret), the Sultan's order, which determined the means for ensuring complete security and safety in the Ottoman Empire and increasing the wealth of the population, was sent to the relevant parties by the Grand Vizierate on July 2, 1900. It was decided that the salaries to be paid to the members of the commission established for this purpose would be covered by the wages of the abolished Anatolian Inspection Committee (Anadolu Heyet-i Teftişiye), and this was notified to the Ministry of Finance (Maliye Nezareti) (BOA, BEO, 05.09.1900). The Commission's findings and recommendations regarding economic issues are explained below.

2.1. Agriculture and Livestock

In Konya, agriculture and animal husbandry are the primary economic activities, as in the rest of the empire. However, in addition to the prolonged droughts and famines that occurred in the 19th century, there were also long-lasting adverse effects, such as locust infestations^{vi} and lake floods. The droughts and famines of 1838-1845 and 1869-1875 depleted food resources, and the inadequacy of transportation infrastructure and irrigation resources^{vii} led to scarcity and high prices in the markets. Ultimately, migration caused by the drought had adverse effects, including hunger, poverty, high prices, and epidemics, on other cities (Erler, 2019, pp.17-18).

The report states that committees formed by qualified individuals in all districts are consistently pursuing the necessary measures to increase agricultural production and facilitate exports. However, it also states that significant problems exist in areas such as capital, technology, education, transportation, and public works. Despite the criticisms in the report, the response memorandum states that every incentive, facility, reform, and initiative has been implemented, carefully considering the salient features of the locations of all provinces, districts, and villages, the fertility of the land, the habits and abilities of the population, agricultural practices, current arts, and proximity and distance from essential centers (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

In addition to foodstuffs^{viii}, industrial agricultural production is also carried out in Konya and its districts. While some of the products are used for the public's own needs, they are also exported to other part of the country and abroad. According to a report prepared by British Consul Stewart in Konya in 1879, the province's exports included corn, leather, opium, raisins, oil, dyes, cherries, meerschaum, lead, silver, carpets^{ix}, oranges, mohair, cellulose, and opium seeds, while its imports included coffee, mineral oil, and cutlery (Şaşmaz, 2002, pp.69).

The *Konya Vilayet Salnamesi* of 1317 (1900) states that while exports from Konya had previously been almost nonexistent due to the scarcity of transportation and its distance from central regions, this problem was eliminated with the connection of the railway line from Konya to Istanbul via the Konya-Ankara route. As a result, the most frequently exported goods from Konya were wheat, barley, fleece, mohair, opium, leather, saltpeter for the Imperial Arsenal (Tophane-i Amire)^x, as well as black cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, butter, cheese, beeswax, corn, chickpeas, rye, buckthorn, tragacanth, acorn, raisins, and other animal and crop products, as well as the skins of foxes, martens, rabbits, wolves, squirrel, and jackals, carpets, prayer rugs, kilims, dried intestines, and fresh and dried fruit (*Konya Vilayet Salnamesi*, pp.71).

According to the commission report, the products and activities cultivated in Konya, its districts, and its villages include wheat, cereals, garden and orchard products, mulberries, silkworm farming^{xi}, roses, fresh and dried fruit, walnuts, almonds, grapes with and without seeds, insect farming, apricots, opium, poppy, sesame, hemp, cotton, acorns, olives, oranges, lemons, and tobacco (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

In the twenty-one-article addendum in the last section of the report, it is recommended that good seeds should be provided and that local officials should pay great attention to this issue to further expand the use of fiber plants such as flax, hemp, cotton, poppy, and potatoes, as well as industrial and food products, depending on the suitability of climatic conditions, since the people's involvement only in grain agriculture would limit the financial benefits. According to the response memorandum, the Konya Governorship distributed the seeds sent both by the Ministry of Agriculture (Ziraat Nezareti) and previously brought by the railway company to the districts affiliated with the province for the improvement of cereal varieties, thereby providing significant assistance and convenience to agriculture. The cotton seeds brought from Adana and Bukhara were proven ineffective through experience. After determining that these seeds were incompatible with the soil and climate, their harvesting was discontinued, and research began on other, more suitable varieties (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

According to the response memorandum, farmers and the state treasury benefit significantly from opium due to the demand in Europe for opium, as well as the efforts spent on the improvement of all kinds of agricultural products and the increase in their cultivation. For this reason, it is necessary to pay attention to its cultivation and to spread it to other livas and districts, especially in Hamidabad and Burdur districts, where poppy cultivation is already done, as well as in Akşehir, Ilgın, Seydişehir, Beyşehir, Bozkır, Karaman, and Ereğli districts. To this end, investigations and assessments have been conducted through local commissions and agricultural chambers. These beneficial results are being observed, and notifications

have been sent to the relevant authorities to punish those who adulterate opium by adding foreign substances to it in areas where cultivation has been practiced for a long time. The Ministry of Finance has also been informed. In the past, due to the practice of auctioning the tithe (öşür) on opium and poppy to tax farmers (mültezim) before the actual measurement of the land, the local population suffered economic harm. To eliminate this obstacle to the cultivation of these crops, over the past four to five years, the tithe on opium has been assessed based on land measurement before auction and collection. As a result, the cultivation of opium and poppy has become increasingly widespread (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

In the addendum of Salname, sericulture is considered a necessary activity and one worthy of expansion. Although saplings and seeds were occasionally provided and distributed to the population starting in 1304 (1888/1889), only a fraction of the expected benefits were achieved because local officials ignored the method of delivery and the development of agriculture. To prevent these and similar problems, strategies for utilizing this art in the future should be determined appropriately, and training should be provided. The art of rose oil production should be expanded, and trees and orchards should be established in some mountain foothills. In this context, special commissions have been established throughout the province to increase mulberry and rose gardens, create useful plant gardens featuring fruit trees such as vineyards and almonds, investigate ways to improve existing fruit trees through grafting, and address related issues. In the Boruktolu and Çarıklar villages of Konya, numerous grapevine and almond saplings were planted, creating new-style vineyards. Realizing the benefits of this, the surrounding villages' desire to establish vineyards and almond groves has increased. They have been provided with the necessary incentives and practical assistance for this purpose. By supplying and distributing various new types of rose honeydew through the Ministry of Forestry, the progress of both this sector and the art of sericulture has been significantly aided (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

In the Konya districts, extensive activities are underway to develop animal husbandry and animal products. However, as in other sectors, serious problems exist in the animal husbandry industry. The report states that due to the scarcity of animals and the difficulties in feeding them, fields in some areas cannot be plowed and are merely shoveled. Although some regions are suitable for cotton cultivation, efforts cannot be made to expand and increase it because animals destroy it. In addition, other factors negatively impact livestock farming. In some districts, sheep production and oil extraction have lagged due to the low number of animals relative to the population. Due to the scarcity of good breeds, the products of existing animals cannot be adequately utilized. Not using shepherds to graze the animals and leaving the animals unattended also harms the sector. While plains and plateaus are suitable for grazing animals, the necessary attention is not paid to animal products, and new tools and equipment are needed for butter and cheese production. Furthermore, scientific methods must be adhered to in the production of dairy products, and it must be improved (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The addendum stated that the number of veterinary inspectors in the province should be increased to enable rapid measures against animal diseases. The response memorandum indicated that there had been no mass animal deaths due to epidemics, that the presence of one veterinary inspector in the provincial center and Isparta, and one animal health officer in Antalya, was sufficient for the treatment of occasional animal diseases, and that if a situation requiring the employment of more inspectors arose, the relevant ministry would be notified (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The report emphasizes that in some districts, there are no suitable stallions and bulls for livestock breeding, and that scientific methods are not being taken into account in their reproduction. It also highlights the need to pay attention to the improvement and reproduction of cattle and horse breeds, as well as the lack of demand for raising cattle. In the response memorandum, some of the allegations made in the commission report regarding animal husbandry are confirmed, but many are rejected. Accordingly, although every part of the province was inspected, no

farmer was found without livestock. For the improvement of existing animal breeds, Arabian stallions and high-quality breed bulls from Çifteler Imperial Farms (Çifteler Çiftlikat-ı Hümayunu), as well as four head of animals for breeding from Urfa, were brought and sent to the designated locations. However, considering the size of the Konya province, these numbers were deemed insufficient, and attempts were made to bring in around two hundred bulls and take the necessary precautions to prevent the stray animals from damaging the crops. It was officially announced that, in the event of repeated occurrences of such incidents, those responsible would be subject to punishment. Accordingly, those who were apprehended were penalized, and guards were assigned in certain areas (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The commission report and the Governor's response memorandum to animal theft provide conflicting information. The report stated that animal theft could not be prevented and that the insecurity caused by its increase had weakened the public's ability to raise livestock. Additionally, it noted that grain revenue had decreased compared to the past due to animal theft, and that mobile officers who constantly monitored theft were beneficial (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903). In the response memorandum, it was stated that, contrary to the commission report, animal theft was almost nonexistent, therefore it did not negatively affect revenue and exports, severe measures were taken to prevent theft, mobile officers were assigned, places where theft was relatively frequent were persistently followed and dealt with, and the perpetrators were punished, and animal theft would gradually be eliminated with the measures taken (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The addendum emphasizes the need to increase the number of domesticated animals and improve their breeds, as well as improve cheese and butter production, due to the vastness of the Konya plains. According to the information provided, despite the extensive pastures in Konya province, water is not readily available. In years with severe winters, there is a shortage of grass to feed the animals, and pastures are utilized adequately for grazing and harvesting. In years with little rain, the animals suffer severe difficulties. If Lake Karaviran is connected to the Konya

Plain and transferred^{xii}, the region will become a fertile pastureland and hamlets. Suitable stallions and bulls are brought in annually from the Çifteler Imperial Farms (Çifteler Çiftlikat-ı Hümayunu) to improve the animal breeds in these pastures, which currently yield very little.

Additionally, contacts with the relevant authorities are ongoing to obtain funds from Ziraat Bank to supply bulls to the public through a joint guaranteed system. It was decided that the mohair goats would be brought from Ankara in season, with the one hundred and fifty liras received from the Ziraat Bank on behalf of the Provincial Administrative Council (Vilayet Meclis-i İdaresi) for the improvement of the goat breeds. The necessary incentives for butter and cheese production were implemented. Following communication, five thousand okkas of butter were dispatched from the Ministry of the Imperial Treasury (Hazine-i Şahane Nezareti), and the purchase process for twenty thousand okkas of butter was initiated. The issue of butter and cheese production is of considerable importance. Rather than merely offering incentives, it is suggested that more refined butter and cheese could be produced through the expertise of skilled individuals, and that the organization of transportation would further contribute to the regularization and improvement of this process. However, to make Dutch cheese at the Halkalı School, it is necessary to find a few master cheese makers among the existing cheese makers who possess the knowledge of this craft and can demonstrate its practice (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

2.2. Industry

In addition to agriculture and animal husbandry, various industrial activities were also carried out in Konya, and the products produced there were sold both domestically and internationally. In this context, Konya province's revenues increased more than twofold from the last quarter of the 19th century to the early 20th century (from 319,905 lira in 1878 to 795,104 lira in 1899) (Topkaya, 2007, pp.36). However, the traditional industrial structure continued during the same period. Industrial products primarily consisted of semi-finished products derived

from animal husbandry. According to the 1298 (1881) *Salname*, industrial products mainly consisted of felt, linen, multicolored woven fabric from yarn, shoes, leather and leather products, as well as linseed, poppy, and sesame oil, and abundant mohair and fleece. This situation in industrial production persisted for a long time due to factors such as the limited transportation and technological infrastructure in Konya and its surrounding areas, as well as the lack of a vast market network. The *Salname* of 1317 (1900) shows a certain degree of differentiation in industrial products compared to the past. Accordingly, the products produced included shirting and bedsheet fabrics, prayer rugs, kilims, socks, felt, wool headscarves, peshtamals, undershirts made of wool and mohair, aba (a kind of robe), bricks, and roof tiles. Furthermore, certain professions developed, such as haffaf (shoemaking), saddlery, blacksmithing, and coach-making. The railway connection to Konya, established in 1896, played a major role in the developments seen in both local products and certain professions (Yılmaz, 2015, pp.45).

According to the memorandum, handicrafts such as carpet and rug weaving are valued and popular in Konya. However, the carpet patterns and color harmony are criticized for their poor selection and lack of order. Furthermore, poor-quality earth dyes are preferred over pure plant dyes in these arts. Therefore, recommendations are being made to mandate the use of pure dyes, distribute models to those engaged in this trade, and encourage carpet weaving. The response memorandum states that carpet weaving has progressed significantly, particularly over the last few years, and exports have increased accordingly. The carpet and rug exhibition^{xiii} held in Konya has been instrumental in significant developments in this regard. The exhibition showcased products from every country, allowing us to see the various colors and weaving styles, and fostering a consensus on which ones are most popular. Those who practiced this profession were warned about some deficiencies in color varieties and pattern drawings. Model photographs brought from Europe were distributed, and it was stated that necessary conveniences and assistance were constantly provided by local officials, especially to the local industry

and relevant parties (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903). It was emphasized that *kaliçe*^{xiv} production, all raw materials of which are supplied domestically and which is in great demand in foreign countries as well as being used domestically, provides a livelihood for many poor people, and that this sector should be specially protected and that all kinds of facilities and incentives should be implemented for its development and that some measures should be taken for this purpose (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The rose oil industry is developed in some districts of Konya. While Konya, Isparta, Bor, Nevşehir, Ürgüp, Yalvaç, Uluborlu, and Antalya are important rose cultivation regions, it is reported that production is not at the desired level. Numerous contacts have been made with European perfumery manufacturers regarding the export of the rose oil, and this goal has been achieved to some extent. Efficient methods are always employed to ensure the production of scientifically sound rose oil (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

Those involved in the perfumery industry, which sells perfumery harvested from rose gardens in the Isparta district, incur significant expenses because they have to travel to Istanbul and Izmir, as a result, they are compelled to sell their goods to certain profiteers at low prices. Therefore, several perfumery samples from the production areas are planned to be collected and sent to the Ministry of Agriculture for presentation to reputable customers and centers. For this purpose, contact has been made with the Giret les Freres factory in Paris and with several businesses in Istanbul, and local merchants are being provided with the necessary facilities (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

2.3. Capital and Technology

Konya has excellent potential in agriculture, animal husbandry, and some arts. However, due to limited capital^{xv} and inadequate technology^{xvi}, these sectors have not reached the desired level. Relevant and responsible local bureaucrats, who appear to be aware of and enthusiastic about modern technology, emphasize its importance in almost every district. Ziraat Bank^{xvii}, one of the most significant

institutions providing capital for agricultural needs and technology transfer at the time, was unable to fully meet these needs due to its limited number of branches and insufficient capital. Furthermore, educating the public on the use of new technologies is also crucial.

The addendum notes that the population lacks knowledge of the intricacies of agricultural practices, such as fallowing and seed disposal, silkworm farming, rose cultivation, and fruit cultivation. It is recommended that an expert agricultural inspector be assigned to the settlement centers to inform the public on these matters and to teach them how to use scientific methods and new agricultural equipment. The conversion of the Konya Sample Field (Numune Tarlası)^{xviii} into an School of Practical Agriculture (Ziraat Ameliyat Mektebi), the establishment of a sample garden in Teke, the assignment of several middle school graduates to these gardens each year, the establishment of forges dedicated to repairing agricultural equipment in specific neighborhoods, and the reformation of farming chambers are all considered necessary. The response memorandum stated that while establishing a School of Practical Agriculture in Konya and a sample garden in Antalya would be beneficial, there are no resources available for their establishment. A blacksmithing and foundry branch was also established at the industrial school, which opened in the provincial center to train and educate the children of low-income families from the entire province in the repair of new agricultural equipment. It was suggested that the industrial school could train students capable of performing repairs until agricultural equipment became widespread enough to meet the province's needs. It has been stated that since the sickle and plough machines currently in use are simple tools and can be repaired by any blacksmith, there is no need for the state to spend money on establishing such blacksmiths for the time being (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

Again, as reported in the addendum, although the need for ploughs and sickle has been partially met and their use has begun, it is not possible for farmers to individually purchase and supply threshing and similar machines, as well as new

steam-powered agricultural tools and equipment. Despite the lack of qualified personnel to repair these tools and machines when they break down, it is still necessary to bring them to districts with extensive plains. As stated in the response memorandum, the widespread use of new agricultural equipment and the improvement of farming methods have long been considered. In this context, although a few merchants were encouraged to supply ploughs, barley, and sickles to the public at affordable prices and under favorable conditions, and bring in large numbers of such machines, it was not deemed possible to procure and collect threshing machines individually because they were expensive. Because the machinery was challenging to use and difficult to persuade a village to unite and purchase, a sample was presented to the public. Furthermore, permission was obtained from the Sultan for the purchase and shipment of four threshing machines to the districts of Konya, Ereğli, Aksaray, and Karaman, considered agricultural centers of the province, to be operated at a reasonable cost and on the account of Ziraat Bank (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).^{xix}

In the nineteenth century, it had a self-sufficient economy with its small-scale industrial and large-scale agricultural structure. A significant characteristic of Konya is its dominance in Anatolia in terms of joint-stock companies. Konya, which saw substantial growth in the number of joint-stock companies in the early 20th century, was the region where national corporatism was most prevalent during the Second Constitutional Era and where the first national bank initiative was established. By 1920, 19 of the 76 joint-stock companies in Anatolia were operating in the Konya province. Izmir was next with 11 joint-stock companies. Aydın, Bursa, and Kütahya each had three joint-stock companies (Toprak, 1995, pp.117).

2.4. Public Works Activities

In the addendum, it is stated that necessary measures should be taken to utilize river and floodwaters for land irrigation efficiently and to drain swamps. In the response memorandum, it was noted that areas where people could benefit jointly from the floodwaters were examined, and that the Sille land and vineyards in Konya

were being irrigated with the collected water. It was stated that the province would allow the cleaning of lakes and swamps that could be cleaned with small operations within three years, and that those that could be cleaned with large operations in more than three years should be submitted to the Sublime Porte (Bâb-ı Âli). To benefit from this, notifications were made to the provincial administrations, and it was announced that two lakes in Antalya and Ereğli had been cleaned, as indicated by a newspaper announcement (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).^{xx}

One of the most important public works projects in Konya was the transfer of water from Lake Beyşehir to the Konya Plain for agricultural use. The project was initiated in 1908 and completed in 1914 (Muşmal, 2015, pp.11). The report does not mention the project. Although the project was initiated six years after the report, the first ideas for this project emerged in the second half of the 16th century. The project resurfaced in the 19th century to meet irrigation needs during droughts and to control lake waters, which were damaging the environment and settlements during floods and causing illness and death due to mosquitoes breeding in the resulting swamps (Muşmal, 2015, pp.16-18). Population growth in Konya and its surrounding area in the second half of the 19th century, famines, and increased migration from other countries also played a significant role in the enthusiasm for the project (Muşmal, 2015, pp.23). The project's implementation would ensure agricultural sustainability, increasing production and productivity through the expansion of arable land. Furthermore, the establishment of well-organized villages and model fields, along with the adoption of modern agricultural methods, was targeted to promote the overall development of the region, and Ziraat Bank loans were also incorporated into this process (Kızılkaya - Akay, 2014, pp.72-73).

The report provides extensive information on roads constructed and planned between Konya districts, revealing that road transportation is challenging. The distance between districts is vast, and roads between some major centers are either nonexistent or inadequate.^{xxi} To this end, some roads have been constructed, while

others are in the planning stages or are already underway. Bridges are also under construction on some of the roads (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).^{xxii}

The report describes the Aksaray-Niğde road as a key trade and export route, noting that it becomes impassable during rainy seasons due to its muddy conditions, which hinder shipping. Although macadam roads have been built in the surrounding areas of Aksaray to drain the extensive marshland created by the Karaçay River, draining the accumulated water and draining the marsh requires extensive technological processes and significant financial resources, and these requirements have not been met. However, some of the region's leading agriculturalists were encouraged to undertake this work themselves, and as a result, the drainage of the swamp waters began. Furthermore, in recognition of the importance of the Aksaray-Niğde road, an excellent macadam road was completed from Niğde to Nevşehir, and attempts were made to extend it to Aksaray (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The construction of the highway connecting Burdur to the Isparta-Dinar highway has been completed through a tender process, and a road connecting Burdur to Antalya is also underway (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903). Although numerous streams flow into Lake Eğirdir in the Eğirdir district, the lake's waters have been blocked, preventing the water from flowing freely and accumulating, which has invaded the surrounding cultivated land and hindered the production of fruit in the mulberry groves (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

It has been reported that the Ereğli district has bad air due to the swamp around it, that the way houses are built and the ways of earning a living in the region do not comply with sanitary rules, and that malaria is constantly seen in the autumn, that fish also suffer significant losses, and that although there is a lot of fruit, it can only be used to a limited extent. Although the province had attempted to drain the swamp, the costs were too high to be met by aid or cash road taxes, and thus, only some sections could be partially cleaned. A highway was built towards Karapınar to partially drain the swamp, thereby mitigating the damage as much as possible. Eucalyptus seeds, which purify the air, were sent to the region to cultivate these trees

and to limit the effects of harmful vapors rising from the swamp. However, this measure was insufficient to dry hundreds of thousands of acres of hamlets. It was stated that the region would later be annexed to the Çukurova Imperial Farm (Çukurova Çiftlikat-ı Hümayunu), given its status as a highland, and that necessary actions would be taken based on the findings of engineers sent from the Ministry of the Imperial Military Farms (Çiftlikat-ı Askeriye-i Şahane Nezaretı) and the province to clean the swamp. It has been reported that the air quality in the Iğın district is poor due to the presence of swamps in and around the town, and that a cleaning process has been initiated with permission received from the Ministry of Public Works (Nafia Nezaretı) (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

The report also considered making the Kızılırmak River navigable. It was reported that Koçhisar would be one of the districts that would benefit from this. However, since the majority of the Kızılırmak flows through the provinces of Sivas, Ankara, Kastamonu, and Trabzon, making it navigable falls under the jurisdiction of the relevant state departments, and no action has been taken (BOA, BEO, 28.09.1903).

Conclusion

Following the Tanzimat reforms, commissions were established at various times and in multiple fields to determine reforms to be implemented in the Ottoman Empire. One of these was the commission established under the order dated August 23, 1316 / September 5, 1900, to identify the necessary means to address deficiencies in security and public order and to increase the wealth and prosperity of the people. The commission, which documents indicate had a staff of four to five people and was tasked with reporting its observations and investigations, was responsible for the provinces of Kastamonu, Adana, and Konya, as well as their affiliated districts. This article examines the commission's report, which covers topics such as agriculture and animal husbandry, industry, capital, technology, and public works for Konya and its affiliated districts. Although the documents state that one of the

reasons for establishing the commission was to strengthen security and public order, the report primarily covers the economy and related issues.

Although both the commission report and the memorandum, as well as the response memorandum prepared by the Konya Governorship, address Konya province and its districts in a single itemized manner, they demonstrate a holistic approach. For economic progress, the interrelationships of agriculture, livestock, industry, and trade are considered, while the importance of capital, technology, transportation, and education is emphasized.

The Grand Vizierate, along with several ministries and the Konya Governorship, heavily criticized the commission, alleging that it had prolonged its work to collect salaries and allowances unfairly, and that it had behaved in a manner unbecoming of its officials in the places it visited. However, the Grand Vizierate, following an investigation commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior, reported that no such situation existed, that no complaints had been filed against the commission, and that the report covering the three provinces had been completed and submitted. Nevertheless, given the tension between the commission and the Konya Governorship, it is worth noting that the information provided by both parties in the report should be treated with a degree of caution.

As stated in the report, Konya and its districts, which have been an important agricultural center during the Ottoman Empire as they are today, generally have fertile soil, except for some rocky areas. Many different crops, especially grains, are cultivated in fields, vineyards, and gardens. In the early 20th century, the administrative division of Konya province encompassed all or part of the districts of the present-day provinces of Niğde, Nevşehir, Isparta, Burdur, Antalya, Kayseri, Aksaray, and Karaman, thus offering a rich variety of products. However, serious problems remain in areas such as capital, technology, education, transportation, shipping, and irrigation. Although efforts have been made to address these deficiencies, the desired level has not been achieved.

Efforts were made to obtain a large portion of capital from Ziraat Bank. However, the bank was inadequate in terms of both the number of branches and the capital accumulation. A significant problem was that the Bank's regulations did not allow for capital increases. With the rise in economic activity towards the end of the 19th century, the number of domestic and foreign credit institutions, in addition to Ziraat Bank, increased. Entrepreneurs sought to overcome the capital shortage in purchasing modern agricultural equipment. Merchants were encouraged to buy plows, barley, and sickles at affordable prices and favorable terms, and large numbers of such implements were brought in. However, due to the high cost and difficulty of purchasing steam-powered machines individually, villagers were encouraged to join forces to buy them. Nevertheless, owing to the scarcity of entrepreneurs, this endeavor stayed very restricted in scope. Although some projects were undertaken to build roads, drain marshes, and divert lake waters to agricultural lands, many projects were either partially realized or remained unfinished due to limited capital.

Nevertheless, a significant project aimed at developing agriculture by channeling Lake Beyşehir into the Konya Plain was initiated in 1908 and completed in 1914. The main developments in Konya's capitalization process occurred during the Second Constitutional Era. During this period, Konya was the region with the highest rate of national corporate activity in Anatolia and the first to initiate a national bank. With 19 of the 76 joint-stock companies in Anatolia located in 1920, Konya stood out among regions with developed agriculture, industry, and trade, such as İzmir, Bursa, and Aydın.

At the time the report was written, technology in Konya and its districts was quite inadequate. Agriculture and industry were carried out using traditional tools and equipment. In addition to the fact that modern agricultural machinery is costly, the number of trained personnel required for its use, repair, and maintenance is extremely low. In addition, an attempt was made to purchase threshing machines in the districts of Konya, Ereğli, Aksaray, and Karaman, which are the agricultural

centers of Konya Province, through Ziraat Bank, on the condition that they would be operated on behalf of the bank.

The report stated that education was necessary for the development of agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as the dissemination of new agricultural equipment. However, it was deemed unreasonable to establish a farming school in every district or to employ an agrarian graduate in every location. Nevertheless, some efforts were made within the framework of the governor's rules, utilizing existing resources, and by legislation. The Hamidiye Industrial School (Hamidiye Sanayi Mektebi), opened in the provincial center of Konya, played a significant role in education. In addition to providing training in various industrial branches, the school also built a forge to teach the arts of blacksmithing and foundry, as well as the repair of agricultural tools and equipment. Master artisans were brought from the Imperial Naval Shipyard (Tersane-i Amire) to provide training for children and assist the public with repairs.

Endnotes

ⁱ In the *Konya Vilayet Salnamesi* for the year 1317 / 1901-1902, Konya is described as the largest province in Anatolia. Its borders are stated to be Ankara to the north and northeast, Hüdavendigâr to the northwest, Aydın to the west, Adana to the east, and the district of İçel of Adana and the Mediterranean Sea to the south, see *Konya Vilayet Salnamesi* (1317 / 1900, pp.49). According to the *Salname*, the total population of Konya Province was 1,047,236, of which approximately 970,000 were Muslims (pp.60). Ten years later, in 1910, the population increased slightly to 1,000,088, see Gündüz (2008, pp.244).

ⁱⁱ During the Ottoman period, the primary mining activities carried out in Konya were related to the extraction of silver, lead, salt, mercury, gold, and stone quarrying. The prominent regions in this sector included Bozkır, Bolkar (Bulgar Mountain, Niğde), Sıma, and Sille, see Buluş (2014, pp.46).

ⁱⁱⁱ In the 1851 memorandum, the Port of Teke was identified as one of two ports whose repair was requested due to their importance for the shipment of goods from Konya Province. However, in the 1880 memorandum, no mention is made of the Teke port. The memorandum states that maritime routes were particularly used for transporting goods from Konya Province, whose main commercial activities centered on agriculture and animal husbandry. Some products were shipped to Mersin and Silifke, while others were sent as far as the Port of Bursa, which lay at a considerable distance. The document calls for the construction of roads connecting the districts of Konya to Mediterranean ports, and in addition, emphasizes the necessity of grading the Bursa road into a proper macadamized road and the construction

of railways to connect Konya and its surrounding regional centers, see Muşmal (2007, pp.125-127).

^{iv} Some of the demands brought to the agenda in 1880 had already been expressed in previously prepared memoranda, while others were addressed for the first time in the 1880 memorandum, see Muşmal (2007, pp.132).

^v The integration of Konya into the railway network not only significantly facilitated the transportation of goods but also led to multifaceted transformations. A major revitalization occurred in trade and local markets. Swamps along the railway route were drained, mines began to be exploited, existing workplaces were expanded or new ones were established, trade became more diversified, and both exports and imports started to develop. Shops and workplaces, which had previously clustered around inns, caravanserais, and market areas, began to concentrate along the railway route. In addition, service-sector establishments such as hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues quickly spread around the station area, see Özönder (2003, pp.115).

^{vi} The memorandum dated 1880 states that a locust infestation caused severe damage to cultivated lands. In addition to the insufficient yield, it is noted that in some regions even seed grain and food supplies were unavailable, see Muşmal (2007, pp.12).

^{vii} Due to the general lack of irrigation facilities in the Province of Konya, a large portion of arable land remained uncultivated. At the beginning of the 20th century, only about 7% of the total land could be cultivated, see Muşmal (2007, pp.27).

^{viii} The first Chamber of Commerce in Konya was established in 1882, while the Grain Exchange (Zahire Borsası) began its operations in 1907 at the Wheat Market. Cereals such as wheat, rye, barley, chickpeas, lentils, vetch, sesame, and spelt were evaluated and traded on the exchange according to their types and qualities, see Keser (2008, pp.260).

^{ix} During the Ottoman period, Konya was one of the prominent carpet-weaving centers, with notable production hubs in Sille, Karapınar, Kavak, and Ladik. In addition to meeting local demands, carpets were also exported, see Buluş (2014, pp.37).

^x Although Konya and its surroundings have been an important saltpeter production center since the classical Ottoman period, neither this feature of Konya nor the saltpeter factory located there is mentioned. According to the *Konya Salnamesi*, the exact establishment date of this factory is unknown. It was managed under the iltizam system for a long time, but in 1289 (1872-1873), a major was appointed from the Tophane-i Amire, and the factory began to be operated by the state. The pure saltpeter extracted from the factory was transported by railway to the Tophane-i Amire (pp.86-87). During the Classical Ottoman period, the Karaman was the most important saltpeter production center in Anatolia. In the mid-17th century, the saltpeter production sites within Karaman included Konya, Akşehir, Larende, Kilisehisar, Develi, Kayseri, and Aksaray. Certain districts were responsible for supplying wood and saltpeter soil to these production centers, see İnce (2011, pp.21).

^{xi} Between the late 19th century and 1914, sericulture practiced in Antalya, Akşehir, Nevşehir, and Sille was ultimately abandoned due to lack of success, see Buluş (2014, pp.27).

^{xii} According to information provided by *Hakem*, a local newspaper of Konya, Karaviran Lake was connected to the Konya Plain in 1909, and the construction of water canals began, see Gündüz (2008, pp.385-386).

^{xiii} The exhibition took place after the publication of the *Konya Vilayet Salnamesi* dated 1317 (1901). Although the report does not provide details about the exhibition, the *Salname* states that it would remain open from April 21 to the end of May 1317, and includes detailed information about the items to be displayed. These are listed as various types of woven products related to interior furnishings, such as carpets, prayer rugs, kilims, curtains, cecims,

pillow covers, chair covers, as well as slippers, framed artworks, and other textile goods (pp.97-101).

^{xiv} “Kaliçe” is a term used to refer to small carpets and prayer rugs, see Pakalın (1983, pp.151).

^{xv} Stewart states that in 1879 there was no bank in Konya, and that a few years earlier, funds known as “menafi” had been established in some areas by farmers for mutual assistance. He also notes that those who deposited money into these funds did not receive interest, see Şaşmaz (2002, pp.70). Toward the end of the century, however, the use of credit appears to have increased, along with a rise in both domestic and foreign credit institutions. Foreign companies were more frequently preferred despite offering high interest rates, as obtaining loans from them involved fewer bureaucratic procedures compared to local banks. As a result, between 1895 and 1914, the Konya branch of the Ottoman Bank was among the 18 least profitable branches. During the period from 1897 to 1908, İzmit, Ankara, and Konya were among the cities receiving the highest volume of agricultural credit. In Konya, the amount of credit provided by banks and certain institutions rose from 2 million kuruş in 1897 to 8.3 million kuruş in 1908, more than a fourfold increase, see Çolak (2014, pp.186).

^{xvi} Due to the arid climate of the Konya Province, agricultural yield varies depending on rainfall. For this reason, the amount of agricultural production reported in the Konya yearbooks may differ across certain periods. Another significant factor influencing this variation –after climate– is the continued use of traditional farming methods, despite the increasing attention given to agriculture, see Topkaya (2007, pp.114).

^{xvii} According to information provided by the *Konya Vilayet Salnamesi*, the first branch of the Ziraat Bankası in Konya was opened on June 19, 1896 (pp.74). During the 1910 meeting of the Provincial General Assembly, concerns were raised about the insufficient number of branches. Despite the increase in commercial transactions and economic activity in Niğde, Isparta, Burdur, and Nevşehir, it was noted that the absence of bank branches forced the local population and merchants to conduct business with profiteers at high interest rates. Accordingly, the Assembly recommended the expansion of bank branches, see Keser (2008, pp.289-290). Influenced by the idea of a national economy that emerged with the Second Constitutional Era, the number of joint-stock companies established with small amounts of capital increased. Some of these companies, which later accumulated substantial capital, began engaging in banking activities. In this regard, the city of Konya and its people became pioneers within the Ottoman Empire, see Atalay (2014, pp.178).

^{xviii} The Konya Sample Field was established in 1889 on an area of 805 hectares. In 1312/1896, an additional 11 hectares were incorporated following the completion of the remaining buildings. However, due to the absence of a permanent water source for irrigation, the expected benefits could not be fully realized. Nearly all of the modern agricultural tools and equipment of the period were available at the model farm (*Konya Vilayet Salnamesi*, pp.73).

^{xix} In a petition submitted by the Konya Governorship to the Sublime Porte on October 16, 1901, the acquisition of new agricultural tools and equipment was requested for the advancement and development of the region. The petition specifically requested steam-powered threshing machines, which had not previously been seen in Konya and whose importance was not widely understood or if understood, were too expensive for the public to afford. It was noted that the threshing process often extended until the end of October, as it depended on favorable winds, and that autumn rains frequently damaged the crops as a result. It was proposed that the procurement of four sets of fast and efficient threshing machines, along with chaff-separating equipment, to be used in the agriculturally important districts of

Konya, Karaman, Ereğli, and Aksaray, would encourage the public; it was also stated that the inhabitants of two or three villages could collectively purchase these machines, see Çolak (2014, pp.182).

^{xx} According to information provided by *Hakem* newspaper in 1910, the swamps in Karaman and Ereğli had not yet been drained and continued to pose a threat to the surrounding areas, see Gündüz (2008, pp.388-389).

^{xxi} Road transportation problems between the districts of Konya persisted in 1910. For instance, although the construction of a road between Konya and Antalya was considered during this period, no such road existed, see Gündüz (2008, pp.256-258).

^{xxii} The *Konya Vilayet Salnamesi* provides detailed information about the roads between districts and includes statistics regarding the extent of their construction (pp.95-96).

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