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"They Left Behind Institutions in Financial Jeopardy": Central Anatolian Waqfs in the Wake of the Great Flight

The years of the late 16th into the 17th century were characterized by the harsh Celali rebellions and ensuing social turmoil in the central provinces of Anatolia. The years spanning 1603-1608 saw mass population movements called "The Great Flight". In fear of rebellions, villagers took refuge in safer locations, such as fortifications, mountain villages and sheltered in conglomerated villages. Some migrated to the western provinces far from the Celali movements. Life and earning the means to maintain that life were certainly difficult for the migrants but it could not have been easy for those who remained in their homelands as well, whether peasant or townsmen. Mass migrations and flights meant a loss of population, including laborers, cultivators and taxpayers. Thus, they brought about a food shortage for the remaining populace and revenue loss for the institutions which drew taxes mainly from the rural population and their products. Among these institutions which experienced financial difficulties in the wake of Celali movements were the wagfs. Since these charitable endowments were provisioning the towns, employing townsmen in various capacities, feeding and giving pecuniary aid to the needy and supporting economic and commercial life in town, their financial troubles affected and spread over the economic and social life of the entire town. Although the Celali rebels and bandits primarily plundered unguarded rural areas and let villagers flee, urban economies and commerce collapsed and living conditions deteriorated in the towns. As the regular functioning of waqf institutions ceased and they fell into financial distress due to mass migrations, the dire straits in daily life were further exacerbated for the townsmen. This paper looks at the effects of Celali-led migrations and flight for the Anatolian waqfs and shows that their effects persisted as some wagfs failed to recover or managed to recover only partially in the following decades.

In the six-century history of the Ottoman state, migration was a ubiquitous phenomenon leading to demographic shifts, fundamentally affecting and changing the social fabric and economic order. Researchers of early Ottoman history, in their quest to explain the foundation and development of the state, showed how the small Ottoman principality owed its growth to the semi-nomadic Turcoman tribes who immigrated to the fertile arable lands and pastures in the Marmara basin and the eastern Balkans, but also to the learned men and men of letters who sought

posts in the nascent state apparatus.¹ The migrant population enlarged the human pool available for the military, amplified productive capacity, and widened the tax base. As the state extended its borders into Balkan territory, the state aimed to populate the annexed lands and establish administration in the Balkans. Besides voluntary migration, forced displacement and population transfer were policies aimed at the sedentarization of semi-nomadic groups for financial and security reasons. The waqf system was considered another effective tool for colonization and Islamization of the Balkan lands. The waqf institutions formed the nucleus of future settlements at this early phase of frontier expansion and played a pioneering role in newly emerging towns.²

The waqfs, large imperial waqfs in particular, were multi-functional institutions indeed. They were deliberately used to support urban development by providing public and municipal services, provisioning towns and invigorating urban economies and commerce.³ Many Anatolian towns prospered thanks to the waqf system. However, the Anatolian provinces were devastated from the late 16th century through the first decades of the 17th century by the widespread banditry and rebellions collectively known as the Celali rebellions in Ottoman historiography. The Celalis besieged towns for extended periods and pillaged them and the countryside. The Anatolian peasantry in unguarded villages left their lands and fled to safer areas – to highland villages and distant towns, and sought shelter in fortifications and in larger villages which culminated in the formation of conglomerated villages.⁴ Nomadic tribes who had become sedentary decades ago returned to their nomadic lives in the latter half of the 16th century, while some joined to Celali rebels.⁵ Eventually, Celali events led to mass migrations known as "the great flight" between the 1603 and 1608.⁶

The large-scale peasant migrations and flight in the Celali period did not attract the attention of Ottoman demographic historians until the late 1990s due to their obse-

¹ KÖPRÜLÜ 1986; AKDAĞ 1995; KAFADAR 1995; WITTEK 2012.

Among many others, see the following publications emphasizing charitable institutions as a vehicle for the settlement policies of the early Ottoman state, BARKAN 1942a: 279-304; Idem 1942b: 354-365; KIEL 1990; LOPASIC 1994: 163-186. For the role of waqfs in urbanization, also see BARKAN 1962-63: 239-296; ÜLKEN 1971: 13-37; FERNANDES 1981: pp. 144f; BAKHIT 1982: pp. 115-118.

For the importance of waqf institutions to the Ottoman economy see, BARKAN 1964: pp. 236-237; YEDİYILDIZ 1984: 5-41; HOEXTER 1997: pp. 328f; GERBER 1988: pp. 139f., 149-185. For waqfs' role in capital formation, see, İNALCIK 1969: pp. 132-135.

⁴ GÜLTEN 2012: 161-169.

⁵ GÜLTEN 2019: 128-154.

For these rebellions and their effect on the Ottoman economy and society see GRISWOLD 1983; AKDAĞ 1995; ÖZEL 2012: 184-202. Idem 2016; POLAT 2013: 57-82; Idem 2013: 35-50.

ssion with the survey registers and their lackadaisical approach to the other archival sources. The use of diverse sources in migration studies, such as court records, survey registers of extraordinary taxes, tax farming registers, registers of financial decrees and registers of imperial decrees, enabled historians to find answers to a larger set of questions. The social and economic dimension of the migrations, how the migrations reshaped the lives of those who remained, whether their life deteriorated or recent circumstances raised opportunities for them, and how the migrant families struggled to begin a new life are still questions researchers have yet to answer.

The waqf account books, the main archival source of this paper, contain the records of financial transactions of the waqf institutions and may give us insight into the changing daily living conditions of the people who did not migrate and remained in their homeland. The present paper examines two large dynastic waqfs, the waqf of Sultan Bayezid II and the waqf of Hatuniyye, and focuses on the Anatolian towns of Amasya and Tokat, the respective locations of these waqfs. These two towns hosted a number of waqfs, some quite large, thus the preliminary results in this paper may be extended with the inclusion of the other waqfs.

How the waqf institutions contribute to and enhance our knowledge about conditions in towns after the migrations and flight of people can be explicated through an understanding of their function in the economy and society, and by showing the way that waqfs operated, collected, and distributed their income.

The waqfs were charitable institutions. The founders endowed their private property such as houses, shops, bathhouses, arable land, vineyards and orchards, and money in the case of the cash waqfs, to charitable purposes. The range and size of charitable services rendered by waqfs varied and depended above all on their financial capacity. However, not all of the income accrued from endowed properties was allotted to a charitable aim in many waqfs. Though they had the financial capacity for more, many waqfs were content with fulfilling simple charitable activities, while the rest of the income was returned to the founders. In spite of this, these waqfs founded by the ordinary public were numerous and they built fountains, wells, prayer rooms, assigned houses or emoluments for school teachers, preachers or students, etc. Again, cash waqfs, though most of them were endowed with modest assets, were active in the small-scale credit market and surely helped to maintain the daily routine of commercial life. Unfortunately, historians know much less about their individual histories as they left behind no or only sporadic documents.

⁷ ÖZEL 1993; FAROQHI 1998: 163-183; ÖZ 2000; ÖZEL 2004: 181-205.

⁸ JENNINGS 1973: 168-216; ÇIZAKÇA 1995: 313-354.

The waqfs founded by dynasty members and high-ranking state servants were much larger institutions and correspondingly, they had a more pronounced impact on Ottoman economy and society. They provided the towns with social, religious, educational and health services by building and operating public kitchens, mosques, schools and higher education centres, hospitals, bathhouses, aqueducts, waterways and fountains. They extended these services to the countryside by constructing and maintaining schools, mosques, prayer rooms, and bridges.

These larger waqfs functioned as institutions of wealth distribution. ¹⁰ Disabled persons (*malul*), the old, the poor and needy (*garib*) were served meals from the waqf public kitchens and received pecuniary aid from the waqf budgets. Retired waqf personnel and state servants were paid their retirement pension from these waqfs. Thus, these waqfs functioned as social security institutions. They provided employment for skilled and unskilled persons in various capacities to perform charitable services and for the upkeep of service buildings, thus they transferred regular income to the employees in the payroll. ¹¹ Therefore, not only the continuation of all these charitable services but also the livelihood of many families was dependent on the well-being of the waqfs.

In a similar vein, the welfare of towns, in the sense of their economic and commercial development, was closely linked with the financial well-being of the waqfs. ¹² The waqfs created the infrastructure of urban economies by building retail shops and workshops. They supported urban economic and commercial activity through salary and wage payments and by purchases of foodstuff and supplies. ¹³ Some large waqfs invested their considerable funds in the credit market, thus, they could be active in this market much more than the cash waqfs.

The large waqfs derived their income mainly from taxes levied on the rural population and agricultural production. Taxes collected in cash were spent for salaries, wages, stipends and pensions, and for purchases of any kind of materials from local markets needed for the daily operation of these institutions. In-kind tax collection was either sold to wholesalers who in turn transported the grain to the

SHEFER 2003: pp. 121-143. The waqfs provided municipal services, see RAYMOND 2002a; Idem 2002b. Also see YEDİYILDIZ 1982: 1-27. For the public services and constructions undertaken by the waqfs in the cities see MARCUS 1989: p. 304-313.

BAER 1997: 264-297; SINGER 2002a: pp. 143-44; Idem 2002b: 10, 483-490. For waqf public kitchens as social welfare agency, see GERBER 1983: pp. 44f; PERI 1992: 171-185.

¹¹ For the employment capacities of the waqfs see BARKAN 1962-63: p. 25.

Hoexter stressed the interdependence between the waqfs and the local economy, HOEXTER 1997: pp. 328-39.

For their purrchasing power see BEHRENS-ABOUSEIF 1994 pp. 145f.

local markets or the waqf institutions carried the grain to their storehouse whence they redistributed it by serving meals, and they put the surplus on the market. In this way, waqfs with wide rural lands supported the provisioning of towns.

The financial health of these waqfs was dependent on agricultural production and population. When production declined after depopulation, the waqfs experienced financial hardship. As their budgets shrunk, they curtailed or ceased to perform certain charitable services and reduced the employment in case of severe crises. The recipients of stipends and pensions were the first to be cut from the payroll since as a rule they were paid from the budget surplus. The disruption of waqf activities due to flight and migration affected the provisioning of towns and the livelihoods of many persons and their families who were either employed by waqfs, entitled beneficiaries of these waqfs or their trading partners. Unfortunately, seeing these effects of depopulation through all of the waqfs in a town is not likely due to the lack of archival sources. However, the two large waqfs covered in this paper illustrate some good samples to depict conditions for the remaining urban population.

The Celali devastation of the late 16th and early 17th centuries led to the dissolution of the rural order and demographic fluctuations. The Anatolian countryside was depopulated as the peasantry fled or moved to safer regions, and agricultural production thus declined.¹⁴ Commerce was interrupted due to unsafe roads and urban economies were paralyzed. The state lost its tax revenues or was unable to collect and safely transfer such revenues to the central treasury.¹⁵ Peasant migrations, roaming bands of brigands and the Celali rebellions severely affected the waqfs, in particular those which derived their income from agricultural lands. One of these waqfs was the waqf of Sultan Bayezid II in Northern Anatolia and another was the waqf of Hatuniyye in the central Anatolian town of Tokat. Bayezid II's waqf was the largest waqf of Anatolia and the Hatuniyye waqf was the largest in the town of Tokat in the 17th century. The both wagfs were performing the aforementioned functions and services for their respective towns. The Celaliled migrations and the dispersal of peasantry drove the waqfs into financial crisis which disrupted their regular functioning. This implied many hardships for the living conditions of the town dwellers.

The revenue sources of the waqf of Bâyezîd II came in the form of agricultural holdings scattered throughout the various districts of central Anatolia. In 1595, revenues originating from the waqf properties in the current financial year were

¹⁴ ÖZ 1999: 787-794; Idem 2000.

¹⁵ DARLING 1996; ÖZEL 2005; CABAR 2018.

approximately 1,300,000 akça, a small silver coin in use during this period. Revenue sources were marshalled by tax farming, and looking at the increases in contractual values for some of the tax farming regions one can notice that agricultural conditions were sound in the waqf villages and the revenue expectations from tax farming units were 70,000 akça higher than the previous year.

The waqf spent much of its income in the town economy of Amasya. It paid about 240,000 akça for the salary of its 161 employees.¹⁷ These people included skilled and unskilled persons employed in full and part-time jobs. It seems that many positions in such large waqfs did not require full time employment. In any case, many persons and their families were dependent for their livelihood on their employment in the waqf or the waqf supported the livelihood of many persons working part-time at its branches.

In addition to regular employees on the payroll, the waqf paid a monthly allowance to 54 beneficiaries in the town. ¹⁸ They were paid about 180.000 akça annually, a considerable sum. These persons usually consisted of retired waqf personnel, the poor and needy in the town and sometimes retired state servants. With these payments, certain large waqfs functioned as social security and social welfare institutions. Thus, a total of 414,240 akça was spent for the salary and stipend payments by the waqf of Bayezid II. In other words, this amount of money was distributed to the persons affiliated with the waqf, who in turn spent their earnings in the town's economy.

The disbursements of the large waqfs were significant to the town economy and commerce. Through their disbursements the waqfs distributed their income in the town economy. The total outlays of Bayezid II's waqf were roughly 800,000 akça in 1595. The highest share in this sum consisted of kitchen expenses of ca. 725,000 akça. The waqf spent 200,000 akça to buy flour, 190,000 akça for meat, 90,000 akça for rice, 50,000 akça for wheat, 45,000 akça for honey, 40,000 akça for clarified butter and spent the rest for other foodstuffs. The substantial part of the revenues delivered to the waqf from tax farmers was spent on the market to buy these foodstuffs, which supported grain wholesalers, herdsmen, butchers, and grocers.¹⁹

See the account book of the waqf of Bayezid II for the year 1595 housed in the "Maliyeden Müdevver" section (hereinafter MAD) of the Ottoman Archive in Istanbul, MAD 5265.

¹⁷ MAD 5265.

¹⁸ MAD 5265.

¹⁹ MAD 5265.

The waqf made miscellaneous disbursements for waqf services and the upkeep and repair of buildings. These disbursements included the purchase of all manner of materials, such as candlewick and wax for illumination, brooms, mops and buckets for cleaning, paper and fee payment for legal transactions by judges, the purchase of cauldrons, plates and dishcloths for the kitchen, expenses for repairs and construction materials such as roof tiles and nails. The waqf also made paid wages to porters, construction workers, architects, candlelighters, millers and town criers. Thus, the waqf funnelled considerable cash to various craftsmen and merchants in the town.²⁰

The financial status of the waqf was sound in the years following 1595. The revenues coming from tax farmer sources increased continuously from year to year. The waqf paid salaries regularly and disbursed stipends to beneficiaries from its budget surplus. It operated the waqf kitchen and covered all expenses. The financial picture of the waqf changed dramatically in 1598-99, when a major earthquake damaged waqf buildings. Though the earthquake also shook the waqf financially by causing enormous repair costs, the income from agricultural lands continued to increase and exceeded one and a half million akça in 1601.²¹

When it came to the year 1605, the rural income of the waqf declined to approximately 1,330,000 akça. The waqf could collect only 555,000 akça of its rural income and a considerable portion, 790,000 akça, remained uncollected. This year fell precisely in the period known as the great flight (1603-1608) in which the rebellious Celali armies roamed through Anatolia and masses of peasants migrated or fled. The number of taxpaying populace in the district of Amasya declined by 80% in 1643, based on a comparison of taxpayers registered in the survey register of 1576 and the avariz register of 1643. The town population of Amasya declined by roughly 60% in the same period. The figures showing the severity of depopulation did not differ in the adjacent districts, whence the waqf of Bayezid II derived its rural income. In the neighbouring district of Bozok, the number of taxpayers also declined by 80% between 1576 and 1642.²⁴

As the income figures declined, waqf disbursements shrunk accordingly. Kitchen outlays were 945,000 akça in 1601 and now fell to 380,000 akça.²⁵ The waqf

²⁰ MAD 5265.

²¹ ORBAY 2009: 63-82.

See the account book of the waqf of Bayezid II for 1605, MAD 674.

²³ ÖZEL 2016: p. 117f.

²⁴ ÖZ 1999

²⁵ MAD 674.

kitchen did not function fully or perhaps it was closed for a certain part of the year. Stipend payments were drastically reduced to 44,000 akça from the previous 100,000 akça. These figures point to a disruption in the regular functioning of the waqf which was now not able to perform certain services. But the same figures imply worsening conditions for town dwellers as well. There was also a decline in the waqf's miscellaneous outlays, through which the waqf injected considerable sums into the town economy.²⁶

In the following year, the waqf could not even collect revenues over 730,000 akça. Kitchen outlays further declined to 324,000 akça. Salary payments were delayed. The problem was not simply a result of difficulties in collection. As the peasantry migrated, the total annual income of the waqf declined permanently to approximately 800,000 akça.²⁷

Over years, agricultural production recovered to a certain degree as the peasants returned to their land. However, the waqf could not perform certain services in the years when the waqf employees, town dwellers and beneficiaries most needed them. Actually, even more than two decades later than the peasant migrations and flight, waqf revenues were below a million akça. Although the kitchen began to function as before, the contraction of the waqf budget and the ensuing reduction in the outlays still were reflected in certain expenditure line-items. For instance, the number of beneficiaries and stipend payments to them never reached the pre-depopulation level.

The waqf of Bayezid II was generously endowed, funnelling considerable income and employing many persons in Amasya. Thanks to the geographical breadth of its rural holdings, the waqf survived. But the other influential waqfs in the town of Amasya, especially those dependent on agricultural revenues for their budget, were very likely unable to cope and were forced to cease their operations.

The waqf of Hatuniyye in Tokat, another town close to Amasya, was smaller than Bayezid II's waqf with almost half of the latter's budget, about 500,000 akça in 1593. It was still in the category of immense waqfs. The waqf, composed of a higher education centre (madrasa), a big mosque and a public kitchen (imaret), was one of the wealthiest waqfs in 16th-century Anatolia and most likely the richest one in Tokat. The waqf had vast agricultural holdings making it an indispensable part of the regional agricultural economy, and the waqf budget wholly consisted of rural taxes.²⁸

²⁶ MAD 674.

²⁷ MAD 674.

²⁸ AÇIKEL 2017: 1-16.

The waqf of Hatuniyye supported commercial activity and economic development in the town of Tokat. It funnelled agricultural revenues into the town economy and transferred purchasing power to a large section of its employees and beneficiaries through salary and stipend payments. Its redistributive function and charitable activities were disrupted when the waqf suffered a great financial loss due to the Celali-led flight of peasants. Between 1601 and 1620, the Tokat countryside lost about 48% of its taxpayer population due to Celali activity in the region, which was followed by a further decline at the rate of circa 30% up to 1650.²⁹

In 1593, the wagf disbursements were approximately 430,000 akee.³⁰ A total of 78 wagf employees and 14 stipend holders were paid about 115,000 akce from the waqf budget. These beneficiaries were needy people such as the poor, widows without a livelihood and retired waqf officers. Kitchen outlays were 270,000 akçe, of which largest portion was spent for meat and wheat purchases. In 1610, after the great flight, the waqf income sharply declined to approximately 119,000 akçe.³¹ The financial deterioration continued as revenues further declined to 78,000 akçe in 1612. The mosque's staff of twenty was reduced to thirteen in 1612. In 1593, the waqf had employed twenty people in another office, which included the trustee (mütevelli) and his scribe. They were paid about 35,000 akçe per year. Their number declined to only six persons and the total payment fell to approximately 22,000 akçe. The employees in the waqf kitchen declined in number. In fact, the public kitchen of the waqf was not operating in those years. The total amount of kitchen outlays was about 270,000 akee in 1593. In the accounting period of 1614, covering about nine months, some expenditure records for the kitchen reappeared. However, the total amount was only 5,820 akce. This means that the kitchen was not serving meals regularly but it was perhaps cooking for some special occasions such as feasts and for guests.

The financial collapse of the waqf affected beneficiaries more than any other group of waqf employees.³² There were 14 beneficiaries registered in 1593 who were paid about 20,000 akçe annually. A note written at the end of the 1610 account book informs us that the distribution of the budget surplus to waqf beneficiaries was forbidden by imperial decree until the waqf's financial situation improved. Thus, the number of beneficiaries was radically reduced to two in 1610, whereas the town population showed an almost 20% increase between 1601 and 1642.³³ The

²⁹ ACIKEL 2002: 348-358.

³⁰ See the account book of the waqf of Hatuniye for the year 1593, MAD 2076.

³¹ ORBAY 2018: 29-44.

³² ORBAY 2018.

³³ AÇIKEL 2017.

largest part of this increase in town population rose particularly after 1610 with the coming of people from nearby settlements to take shelter in the large town.³⁴

These two waqfs owed their large budgets to the taxes levied on agricultural production and population in their endowed lands. Thus, their financial crises came with the dispersal of taxpayers. They could not perform their function, crucial to the town economy and town dwellers. When the food prices soared in the central Anatolian regions due to rebel movements and following migrations, the waqfs were not able to operate their kitchen and serve meals to the needy. Neither were they able to collect and transport grain to the town to relieve the grain market. In the years that living conditions got worse, especially for low-income households, the poor and pensioners, the waqfs could not continue to support their livelihood by making stipend and pension payments or by employing them in part-time jobs. As a consequence of rebellions and migrations, daily business in the town economy and commerce curtailed. The waqf disbursement were cut, making the situation worse for artisans and merchants. There were a number of smaller waqf institutions in the town centres of Amasya and Tokat and also in the villages.³⁵ These waqfs were also important to urban economic and social life, since they provided an array of charitable and municipal services though at a smaller scale. The adverse effects of the flight of taxpaying agricultural producers might have been felt much more heavily by these minor waqfs, some of which would have not survived.36

Examining the waqfs and the change or disruption in their functions reveals the mechanism through which peasant flight showed their effect on charitable institutions, and also on town economy and society. This is true also for the towns which received migrations since the waqfs in these towns had to increase their disbursements to create jobs and to increase social assistance for the newcomers.

³⁴ Idem.

³⁵ ABDİ-ZADE 2007.

For some instances of decline in charitable and religious institutions due to the Celali devastation, see KARADEMİR 2017: pp. 293, 302.

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"ZA SOBOM SU OSTAVILI INSTITUCIJE U FINANCIJSKIM NEPRILIKAMA": SREDNJOANADOLSKI VAKUFI NAKON "VELIKOGA BIJEGA"

Godine na prijelazu s kraja 16. u 17. stoljeće bile su obilježene žestokim pobunama dželalija i iz njih proisteklim društvenim previranjima u središnjim pokrajinama Anadolije. U razdoblju od 1603. do 1608. godine došlo je do masovnog preseljenja stanovništva znanog kao "Veliki bijeg". U strahu od pobuna, seljani su se sklanjali na sigurnija mjesta poput utvrda, planinskih sela i zaštićenih seoskih aglomeracija. Neki su odselili u zapadne pokrajine, daleko od dželalijskih ustanaka. Migrantima je zacijelo bilo teško tako živjeti i privređivati za život, ali nije bilo lako ni onima koji su ostali u svojim domovima, bilo na selu ili u gradu. Masovne migracije i bjegovi podrazumijevali su gubitak stanovništva, pa tako i radnika, poljoprivrednika i poreznih obveznika. To je dovelo do nestašice hrane za preostale stanovnike i gubitak prihoda za institucije koje su poreze namicale uglavnom od seoskog stanovništva i poljoprivredne proizvodnje. Među institucijama koje su se nakon dželalijskih ustanaka našle u financijskim teškoćama bili su i vakufi. Kako su te dobrotvorne zadužbine opskrbljivale gradove, zapošljavale građane na različitim dužnostima, davale potrebitima pomoć u hrani i novcu te u gradovima podupirale gospodarstvo i trgovinu, njihove financijske neprilike utjecale su i odrazile se na sve dijelove gospodarskog i društvenog života cijeloga grada. Iako su dželalijski pobunjenici i razbojnici pljačkali ponajprije nezaštićena seoska područja, a seljane tjerali u bijeg, posrnula su i gradska gospodarstva i trgovina, a uvjeti života u gradovima pogoršali su se. Kako su vakufi uslijed masovnih migracija prestali s redovnim radom i zapali u financijske teškoće, nad svakodnevicu stanovnika gradova nadvili su se još crnji oblaci. U ovome članku razmatra se kako su se migracije i bijeg što su ga izazvali dželalije odrazili na anadolske vakufe te se dokazuje da su posljedice bile trajne jer se neki vakufi nisu nikad uspjeli oporaviti ili su se u desetljećima koja su uslijedila oporavili tek djelomice.

*Ključne rije*či: vakufi, Veliki bijeg, migracija, 17. stoljeće, osmanska Anadolija *Key words*: waqf, Great flight, migration, 17th century, Ottoman Anatolia.

Kayhan ORBAY Middle East Technical University Ankara Turkey

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