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İngiltere’nin Son Kıbrıs Konsolosu Watkins’in Raporu Işığında Adadaki Ticari Faaliyetler: 1877 Ticaret Raporu

Commercial Activities in the Island in the Light of the Report of Watkins, the Last British Consul in Cyprus: 1877 Trade Report

Öz: Kıbrıs tarih boyunca jeopolitik ve jeostratejik konumuyla birçok devletin hedefine girmiştir. Bu bakımdan Osmanlı Devleti de adanın konumunu kısa sürede kavramış ve topraklarına katmıştır. Özellikle sanayi devrimiyle birlikte Kıbrıs’ın iktisadi yönü giderek daha fazla önem kazanmıştır. Doğu Akdeniz’in en büyük adası olması ve ana kıtalara yakınlığı nedeniyle ada bir üs işlevi görmüştür. Mevcut konumu dış devletlerin burada konsolosluklar kurmasına sebebiyet vermiştir. İngilizler de bu doğrultuda ilk temsilcilik açan devletlerden olmuştur. Zira sanayi devriminin öncü ülkesi İngiltere için çok kısa bir süre içerisinde Akdeniz ticaret yolu güzergâhındaki ada önemli bir durak haline gelmiştir. Bilindiği üzere konsoloslar görevli oldukları ülkelerdeki siyasi, sosyal, kültürel, iktisadi hayatı kendi devletlerine bildirmekle mükelleftir. Bu süreçte İngiltere, bölgeye yönelik ilgisini arttırmış ve 1878 yılında adayı fiilen devralmıştır. Ancak bu devirden hemen önce adada görev yapan son İngiliz konsolosu Watkins’in hazırladığı 1877 tarihli rapor hem Osmanlı idaresinin ekonomik performansı hem de Kıbrıs’ın ticari potansiyeli hakkında detaylı bilgiler sunmaktadır. Bu rapor dönemin ticarî ürünleri, ihracat yapısı, altyapı sorunları ve vergi uygulamaları gibi konuları ele alarak, adadaki ekonomik durumun bir panoramasını ortaya koymaktadır. Mevcut çalışma İngiliz Konsolosun raporunda yer alan bilgileri gün ışığına çıkararak Kıbrıs’taki ticari hayatı ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kıbrıs, Watkins, Limanlar, Ticaret, İhracat, İthalat.

Abstract: Throughout history, Cyprus has been a target for many states due to its geopolitical and geostrategic position. In this regard, the Ottoman Empire quickly recognized the strategic importance of the island and incorporated it into its territories. Particularly with the Industrial Revolution, the economic significance of Cyprus became increasingly prominent. Being the largest island in the Eastern Mediterranean and its proximity to the mainland turned the island into a strategic base. Its location led foreign states to establish consulates on the island. The British, in this context, were among the first states to open a representative office. For England, the leading country of the Industrial Revolution, Cyprus quickly became an important stop along the Mediterranean trade route. As is known, consuls are responsible for reporting on the political, social, cultural, and economic life of the countries they are assigned to, to their home states. During this period, Britain increased its interest in the region and effectively took control of the island in 1878. However, just before this transfer of authority, the last British consul to serve on the island, Watkins, prepared a report in 1877 that provides detailed information on both the economic performance of the Ottoman administration and the commercial potential of Cyprus. This report addresses various issues such as the commercial products of the period, export structures, infrastructure problems, and tax policies, providing a panoramic view of the economic situation on the island. The present study aims to highlight the information contained in the British Consul's report and shed light on the commercial life in Cyprus.

Keywords: Cyprus, Watkins, Ports, Trade, Export, Import.

Giriş

Cyprus, the largest island in the Eastern Mediterranean, occupies an advantageous position that is easily understood by nations engaged in sovereignty struggles surrounding

the island.¹ For this reason, it has remained under the control of various civilizations. The island has also drawn attention due to its location on the trade routes between the East and the West.

After the Ottoman Empire granted capitulations to England, the Levant Company was established in 1580 to facilitate trade between the two countries.² Subsequently, British ambassadors were appointed to Istanbul, and they established consulates in Ottoman provinces they deemed appropriate.³ Although there is no consensus on the exact date of the establishment of the British Consulate in Cyprus, some studies have provided information on this matter. George Hill suggests the establishment date was in 1605⁴, Harry Luke in 1626⁵, and Mortimer Epstein⁶ and Alfred Cecil Wood⁷ both point to 1636. The first British consul directly assigned to the island was Richard Glover in 1636.⁸

Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire only allowed consuls to reside in Larnaca/Tuzla. This was because the city was an important export hub along the Eastern Mediterranean trade route and was also preferred for the duty-free passage of goods.⁹ Cyprus has been one of the key stops for British merchants due to its location on the route to the Iskenderun Bay and Aleppo. Particularly, Tuzla/Larnaca is an indispensable center for maritime trade conducted along the Middle Eastern and European routes. Another important city on the island, Nicosia, has been a focal point not only for Western merchants but also for many Ottoman traders from regions such as the southern coasts of Anatolia, Syria, and Istanbul.¹⁰

In the book *The Merchants Map of Commerce*, written in 1700 and serving as a guide for British traders, information about Cyprus's commercial products and the state of British trade in Cyprus can be found. According to this source, among the island's commercial commodities were cotton, wool, honey, petroleum, oil, wine, grain, salt,

¹ C.W. J. Orr, *İngiliz Egemenliği Altında Kıbrıs* (Çev. Ali Çakıroğlu) (Lefkoşa: Galerî Kültür Yay., 2013), 17.(Orr, 2013).

² Please see Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford: Frank and Cass & Co Ltd, 1964), 1-15.(Alfred C. Wood, 1964)

³ For more information on the appointment, responsibilities and activities of consuls in the Ottoman Empire, please see M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Konsolos", *İslam Ansiklopedisi* 6, (İstanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi, 1977): 838(Gökbilgin, 1977); Mübahat Küçükoglu, *Osmanlı-İngiliz İktisadi Münasebetleri I, (1580-1838)* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1974), 46-47.Küçükoglu (1974)

⁴ George Hill, *Kıbrıs Tarihi- Osmanlı ve İngiliz İdaresi Dönemi, 1571-1948* (Çev: Nazım Can Serbest), (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2010), 57.(Hill, 2010)

⁵ Harry Luke, *Cyprus Under the Turks 1571-1878: A Record Based on the Archives of the English Consulate in Cyprus Under the Levant Company and After* (H. Milford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 87.(Luke, 1969)

⁶ Mortimer Epstein, *The Early History of the Levant Company*, (London: George Routledge & Sons Limited, 1908), 216.Epstein (1908)

⁷ Alfred Cecil Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1964), 74.(Alfred Cecil Wood, 1964)

⁸ For details of English Consuls in Cyprus in Otoman period see Celal Erdönmez, "Tanzimat Devrinde İngiltere Konsoloslarının Kıbrıs'taki Faaliyetleri (1839-1856)" *Bilgi Yaz*/58 (2011): 91-118(Erdönmez, 2011); Ali Efdal Özkul, "Kıbrıs'taki İngiliz Konsolosluğu ve Faaliyetleri", *Osmanlı Döneminde Akdeniz Dünyası*, eds. Haydar Çoruh, Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş, Metin Ziya Köse (İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınları, 2011)(Özkul, 2011); Ali Efdal Özkul, "The Consuls and Their Activities in Cyprus Under the Ottoman Administration (1571-1878)", *Turkish Studies - International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 8/2, (Winter 2013): 239-283; Mehmet Demiryürek, Hakan Yazar, "Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kıbrıs'ta İngiltere Konsolosluğu (1700-1800)" *Belleten*, 81/290 (2017): 89-134.(Demiryürek & Yazar, 2017)

⁹ Kemal Çiçek, "Kıbrıs", *İslam Ansiklopedisi* XXV (Ankara: TDV Yay., 2002): 377-378.(Çiçek, 2002)

¹⁰ Demiryürek-Yazar, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kıbrıs'ta İngiltere Konsolosluğu*, 94.(Demiryürek & Yazar, 2017)

alum, and sugar. The British Consul in Aleppo¹¹ also held the title of Consul for Syria and Cyprus. Furthermore, it is mentioned that there was a British factory in the interior of the island, which was solely concerned with the cotton trade, as shared in the guide. To maintain and continue British trade in the region, there was also a consul deputy on the island overseeing the operations. According to the guide, there was only one trading company in the area: the Levant or Turkey Company.¹²

By the 18th century, cotton, silk, wool, wheat, wine, carob, dye materials, and olive oil emerged as the island's most important commercial export products.¹³ On the other hand, varieties of textiles, spices, iron, coffee, and various metal and glass goods were among the products imported to the island. In other words, Cyprus's trade had evolved into the model of “*selling raw materials and purchasing finished goods*”. Indeed, the British mostly brought commodities such as cloth and fabric to the island. British merchants even engaged in the production of cotton and wheat on lands they purchased or rented on the island.¹⁴

With the revival of Ottoman-British commercial relations in the 19th century, the British began to exert more presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. In this context, in 1859, Britain specifically encouraged the cultivation of cotton in Cyprus and the East. Subsequently, the number of British colonists in the region increased.¹⁵ On the other hand, the signing of the 1861 Ottoman-British Trade Agreement marked a significant economic turning point for the island.¹⁶ As per the agreement, export taxes were reduced, thereby encouraging the sale of raw materials, which were Cyprus's main export products. In line with Britain's large demand for cotton, British trade on the island made significant progress. Additionally, the import tax was raised from 5% to 8%.¹⁷ However, this situation did not reduce the demand for British textile products. On the other hand, customs revenues, which were primarily derived from exports, showed a decline each year.¹⁸ The commercial activity of the British in the region was closely monitored by the French consulate in Cyprus. According to French Consul Darrasse, Britain effectively promoted cotton farming in Cyprus and the East. For this purpose, British consuls even sent cotton ginning machines and seeds. British manufactured goods were imported to Cyprus from Syria, Izmir, and Istanbul. According to British Vice-Consul White in 1862, all cotton products came from England. However, these products were not brought directly but through Beirut and Izmir. Consequently, they were transferred to Cyprus via Ottoman or other foreign-flagged ships. In this context, there was a significant increase in the number of British ships entering and leaving the island's ports in 1863. As a result,

¹¹ On English commercial and diplomatic activities centered on the Aleppo Consulate, see M. Sait Türkhan, 18. Yüzyılda Doğu Akdeniz'de Ticaret ve Halep, İstanbul Üniversitesi, Unpublished Phd Thesis, İstanbul: (2014).(Türkhan, 2014)

¹² Lewes Roberts, “Of Cyprus Island and the Trade There of”, *The Merchants Map of Commerce* (London: Printed for Thomas Horne, at the South Entrance of the Royal Exchange, in Cornhill, 1703), 155.(Roberts, 1703)

¹³ R. Hamilton Lang, *Cyprus: Its History, Its Present Resources, And Future Prospects*, Macmillan and Co., London 1878, 213.(Lang, 1878)

¹⁴ Demiryürek-Yazar, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kıbrıs'ta İngiltere Konsololuğu*, 96.

¹⁵ Costas P. Kyrris, “Kıbrıs'ta Osmanlı Dönemi (1570-1878)” *Kubrus: Doğu Akdeniz'de Bir Osmanlı Adası* (Derleme ve Çeviri: M. Akif Erdoğan) (Lefkoşa: Galerî Kültür Yayınları, 2010), 38.(Kyrris, 2010)

¹⁶ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi, Islahat Fermanı Devri, 1861-1876*, VII (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yay., 1995), 260(Karal, 1995); Ahmet Kamil Tunçel - Murat Yıldırım, “1854-1874 Döneminde Osmanlı Devleti'nin Dış Borçlanması: Kaç Milyar Dolar Osmanlı Devleti'nin İflasına Neden Oldu?”, *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 16/1 (2014): 1-26.(Tunçel & Yıldırım, 2014)

¹⁷ Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi, Islahat Fermanı Devri*, 229.

¹⁸ Hill, *Kıbrıs Tarihi - Osmanlı ve İngiliz İdaresi Dönemi*, 211.

exports from the island also increased.¹⁹ In other words, from 1862-1863 onwards, British presence in imports, exports, and shipping began to rise. As a result of this commercial activity, the first branch of the Ottoman Bank was opened in Cyprus in 1864.²⁰ The biggest challenge for the Cypriot economy has been the periodic droughts and locust invasions. Particularly as a result of these issues, the significant decline in the island's population affected living conditions. Furthermore, in 1868 and 1869, in order to assist the Ottoman Army and Crete, all the hay stocks in Cyprus were depleted. As a result, by 1869, only a third of the island's livestock could be used for agricultural purposes. Combined with the previous severe drought, the locust invasions between 1870 and 1874, coupled with migration, led to a major failure in the grain harvest.²¹ Despite everything, during these years, carob cultivation achieved stability. Carob, which was primarily sent to Russia, became Cyprus's main export product in 1871. Carob accounted for £42,450 of the total £198,438 in exports. Additionally, revenue from the salt monopoly also increased. In the same year, the salt revenue reached a net value of £20,000.²² Furthermore, in 1871, there was no record of direct trade between Cyprus and England or its colonies. However, ten ships from Turkey arrived on the island. The Liverpool steamers only found it profitable to stop at the island when long intervals were maintained, and Consul Riddell²³ could not devise a solution to address the lack of direct trade between England and Cyprus. In 1877, there was a significant decline in the number of British and other foreign ships arriving on the island.²⁴

Who is Consul Watkins?

Before the Ottoman Empire temporarily transferred sovereignty of Cyprus, the last British consul on the island was Charles Watkins, who served as consul in Larnaca from 1877 to 1878.²⁵ He remained in office until July 12, 1878, when the British Admiral John Hay and the first High Commissioner, Sir Garnet Wolseley, took over the administration.²⁶ The British have long placed significant importance on Larnaca as a key hub in Mediterranean trade and have closely monitored maritime trade through this city. The current report was written in the aforementioned city. The purpose of the report was to document the island's commercial activities, as recorded by previous consuls. In addition to his consular duties, Consul Watkins traveled across the island and, in a special report where he presented his observations, documented the commercial products of Cyprus during that period. In his report, the consul recorded the export and import products of Cyprus. He considered the prices, values, and quantities of these products in comparison to the previous year and presented the figures in his report. While making these assessments, he refrained from providing any commentary, except for the wine item.²⁷ The information and impressions in the report were of particular significance from both economic and commercial perspectives, especially considering the political end of Ottoman rule on the island.

1877 Cyprus Trade Report

Consul Watkins completed the "1877 Trade Report"²⁸, dated March 31, 1878, and submitted it to the Foreign Office in London. The report, which was mainly focused on export

¹⁹ Hill, *Kıbrıs Tarihi - Osmanlı ve İngiliz İdaresi Dönemi*, 605 (see Footnote 71).

²⁰ Kyrris, "Kıbrıs'ta Osmanlı Dönemi", 39.

²¹ Hill, *Kıbrıs Tarihi - Osmanlı ve İngiliz İdaresi Dönemi*, 213.

²² Hill, *Kıbrıs Tarihi - Osmanlı ve İngiliz İdaresi Dönemi*, 211-212.

²³ Luke, *Cyprus Under the Turks*, 276.

²⁴ Hill, *Kıbrıs Tarihi - Osmanlı ve İngiliz İdaresi Dönemi*, 605 (see Footnote 71).

²⁵ Luke, *Cyprus Under the Turks*, 277.

²⁶ Orr, *İngiliz Egemenliği Altında Kıbrıs*, 40.

²⁷ The National Archives (TNA), Foreign Office (FO) 881/3661.

²⁸ TNA, FO 881/3661.

products, was evaluated by the British consul. The report in question has been analysed comprehensively for the first time. The statistical figures and assessments recorded by the last British Consul in Cyprus during the Ottoman period served as reference information that the subsequent British Administration, which began the following year, would also utilise in the years to come. In this context, the data contained in this report has been taken into account by local authorities in the planning budgets prepared for areas such as agriculture, industry and the economy established on the island, starting from the early years of British administration. The ten-page report was organized under the following headings: Transportation, trade, and export-import, grain, cotton, madder root, wool, sheep skins, wine, olive oil, carob, tobacco, silk, salt, sponge, population, industry, revenues, public services and administration, customs office, the exchange rate as of December 31, 1877, and the export/import ships arriving at the ports of Limassol and Larnaca.²⁹ On this basis, Watkins grounded his report on two fundamental principles. The first part of the report summarised Cyprus's most significant commercial activities in 1877, specifically agricultural and industrial products, along with administrative issues. The second part of the report contains export/import figures via the ports of Limassol and Larnaca. The British Consul has visualised these important records in tables in his report. The report included footnotes that explained the equivalents and descriptions of various measures, such as the British system of weights and currency.

Shipping: The first topic addressed in the British Consul's report was transportation. The number of ships arriving on the island in previous years was compared. According to the report, there was a significant decrease in the number of British and foreign ships coming to Cyprus. The total tonnage of ships entering and leaving Larnaca Port, including locally docked vessels, increased from 82,956 tons in 1876 to 91,812 tons in 1877. Of course, ships other than those under the British flag also visited the island. Apart from the French, who rarely stopped by, Austrian Lloyd³⁰ steamships also visited the island every two weeks.³¹

Trade and Import-Export: Between January and April of 1877, a continuous drought and war³² led to a decline in grain production. Consequently, trade in Larnaca contracted. The high demand for rain also impacted the carob cultivation and cotton harvests. For the year 1877, imports amounted to 105,277l.³³, a decrease from the 150,480l. recorded in 1876. Exports in 1877 were 150,918l., while the previous year saw a higher amount of 207,512l, as documented in the report.³⁴ Furthermore, more detailed information about the export and import values will be provided later in the work, based on Watkins' tables.

Grain: Although a significant portion of Cyprus's arable land was set aside for cultivation, there was a serious decline in grain production in 1877. Wheat production has fallen from 1,600,000 kg to 800,000 kg, while barley production has fallen from 2,400,000 kg to 1,500,000 kg. Although partial exports were made at the beginning of the harvest season, the expectation of a shortage in the subsequent period necessitated imports. This situation has led to rapid increases in market prices: the quarter price of wheat has risen from 1 pound 10 shillings³⁵ to 2 pounds 15 shillings, while the quarter³⁶ price of barley has risen from 17 shillings to 1 pound 12 shillings.³⁷ Watkins' observations reveal that fluctuations in grain production both weaken supply security in the domestic market and deepen agricultural instability in the island's economy.

²⁹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

³⁰ Österreichischer Lloyd Company.

³¹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

³² Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878.

³³ 1 libre (l)=0,4536 kgs.

³⁴ TNA, FO 881/3661.

³⁵ Abbreviation for "shilling" (s=shilling), 1/20th of a pound. 1 shilling = 12 pennies.

³⁶ Approx. 11 kg 339 grams.

³⁷ TNA, FO 881/3661.

Cotton: In his report, Watkins found the cotton crop³⁸ in 1877 to be quite good, both in terms of quantity and quality. The production was estimated to be around 2,000 bales (each bale weighing 200 okes³⁹). The average price was approximately 4d⁴⁰ (pence) per bale. Great care and attention were given to the cultivation of this plant. It was emphasized that most of the seeds used were of American origin. Meanwhile, experiments were conducted to introduce Bamia cotton. However, it was believed that the dry nature of the soil was not suitable for the cultivation of this particular variety of cotton.⁴¹

Madder Root: The total production of madder root in 1877 was recorded as approximately 250 tons. According to the British Consul, considering this situation, it became likely that madder root would no longer be cultivated. This was because the cost of cultivation had exceeded the selling price. The main reason for this decline was the replacement of madder root with the synthetic dye substance called alizarin⁴². The average price of madder root was recorded as 121 per ton.⁴³

Wool: The total amount of wool produced in the previous year was recorded as 330,000 lbs (approximately 150 tons). The milder conditions in the second half of the winter, along with the abundance of pastures and meadows, contributed to the high production of this item. The number of sheep recorded was 750,000.⁴⁴

Skins: According to Watkins, although the leather trade on the island was limited, it was still active. Cyprus exported a quantity of leather beyond its production capacity, as some of the hides were brought to the island from Egypt and other places to be prepared and tanned. In this context, the prices of various types of leather were as follows: lambskin was sold at 1s. 3d⁴⁵ per hide; sheepskin at 8d⁴⁶ per hide; goat kid skin at 7d⁴⁷ per hide; goat skin at 1s. 3d⁴⁸ per hide; and cattle hides were sold at 1s. 3d⁴⁹ per oke (a unit of weight).⁵⁰

Wine: Wine, which is one of the significant sources of income for Cyprus's trade, faced heavy taxation during the Ottoman period, according to British consuls. For example, Consul Riddell, in his 1875 report, mentioned that the harvest in 1874 was extraordinarily large due to the abundance of vines yielding a plentiful crop. Subsequently, production in 1875 reached the average level. However, Riddell noted that producers were highly dissatisfied with the heavy taxes applied to wine.⁵¹

The following year, Consul Pierides stated that the quantity of all types of wine produced on the island was below that of the previous year. Nevertheless, shipments in 1876 were made to Trieste and Venice. The consul emphasized that the heavy taxes continued and pointed out that the Ottoman Government was attempting to destroy one of the island's best resources.⁵² Consul Watkins supported the observations of previous British consuls regarding the issues related to

³⁸ Please see Ali Efdal Özkul, "Silk Production and Trade in Ottoman Cyprus" Festschrift in Honor of Ioannis P. Theoharides: *Studies on Ottoman Cyprus, I*, Eds. Evangelia Balta, Georgios Salakidis, Theoharis Stavrides, (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 2014), 171-210.(Özkul, 2014)

³⁹ 1 okka= 1283 grams.

⁴⁰ 1 A unit of currency equivalent to one percent of the British pound (d=pence).

⁴¹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁴² Alizarin red dye is widely used in the textile industry.

⁴³ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁴⁴ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁴⁵ 1 shillings 3 pence.

⁴⁶ 8 pence.

⁴⁷ 7 pence.

⁴⁸ 1 shilling 3 pence.

⁴⁹ 1 shilling 3 pence.

⁵⁰ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁵¹ Samuel White Baker, *Cyprus – As I Saw It in 1879* (London: Macmillan and Co., 879), 280.(Baker, 1879)

⁵² Baker, *Cyprus*, 281.

wine production. In this context, in his 1877 report, he made the following conclusion:⁵³ “*Wine production here has significantly decreased; because of all kinds of unreasonable regulations and their annoying methods of enforcement, growers now prefer to turn their grapes into raisins*”. In other words, between 1875 and 1877, three different British consuls highlighted that the issues faced by the island's producers, who had the capacity to produce more wine, were not addressed by the Turkish Government. As a result, grape growers began to prefer turning their grapes into raisins instead of wine. Despite the decline in wine production, one-fifth of the 2,400,000 okes of wine produced in 1877 was used for commercial purposes. On the other hand, the price of first-class wine was 24 piastres per oke. Commanderia was considered to be of first-class quality.⁵⁴

Olive Oil: According to the 1877 report by British Consul Watkins, olive oil is among Cyprus's staple food products and is produced intensively, particularly in the regions of Kyrenia, Kythrea, Larnaca and Limassol. The harvest, which was 200,000 okkas in 1876, increased significantly to 250,000 okkas in 1877. Prices ranged between 9 and 10 piastres per okka. Watkins emphasised that olive trees generally yield high crops every five years, and that cold and rainy winter conditions are decisive for this. The product is rarely exported and is only sold at low price levels. It has been stated that under favourable climatic conditions, levels of 400,000–500,000 okkas can be achieved. It has also been noted that part of the olive oil produced is used in soap manufacturing and exported to foreign markets such as Mersin and Karaman.⁵⁵

Locust Beans: It was one of the leading export products of the Cypriot economy in the late 19th century. Production of approximately 10,000 tonnes was recorded in 1872. The main export markets were Russia and the Black Sea ports. By 1875, increasing demand from England had boosted export volumes to 18,000 tonnes, but a year later, despite a decline in production, prices fell. According to Consul Watkins, this decline was due to excessive stockpiling in the British market. In 1877, production amounted to approximately 13,500 tonnes, with prices ranging from £2 13s 6d to £4.⁵⁶ In particular, price fluctuations have been linked to international competition and supply-demand imbalances. Total production for the same year was determined to be 60,000 Aleppo cantars (approximately 3.4 million kilograms). This figure reflects a significant increase compared to the 45,000 cantars produced in 1876. Watkins noted that demand for carob is steadily increasing, encouraging villagers to replant this tree, which they had previously neglected. It was also emphasised that rainy winter months are crucial for productivity.⁵⁷

Tobacco: Another important product highlighted in the British Consul's report was tobacco. A monopoly on tobacco was in place for the current year. In 1874, eight warehouses were established on the island, four in Nicosia, two in Larnaca, and two in Limassol. The sale prices ranged from 10 to 30 piastres. According to Watkins, the lowest quality tobacco in this category was sold.

Approximately 6,000 okes of tobacco were sold at 15 piastre per oke. The annual sales amounted to about 100,000 okes. The government generated a net income of 1,300,000 piastre from this. Payments to the government, which were previously made with the 20 piastre Medjidis gold coins, began to be made using paper Money (caimé⁵⁸). One-tenth of this amount was exported to Syria and Karaman in sealed packages. Tobacco used in Cyprus was brought from Volos and Thessaloniki, with a customs duty of 3 piastre per oke. While Cyprus had previously

⁵³ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁵⁴ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁵⁵ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁵⁶ Baker, *Cyprus*, 295.

⁵⁷ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁵⁸ It was the first paper currency used in the Ottoman Empire between 1840 and 1862.

produced around 20,000 okes of tobacco, due to the pressures on producers, this amount had decreased to less than 5,000 okes, according to Watkins.⁵⁹

Silk: According to Watkins, silk production had significantly declined in recent years due to diseases among silkworms and, in part, due to price reductions in the French market. Previously, the amount produced had reached 25,000 okes of silk wound into spools. However, in 1877, the estimated amount of dry silk cocoons exported was 15,000 okes, of which 4,000 okes were used on the island. The price of silk cocoons delivered on board was recorded as 3s⁶⁰ 6d⁶¹ per lb (0.453 kg).⁶²

Salt: Salt, one of the island's significant export items, was sourced from the salt lakes in Larnaca. According to Watkins, this region has the capacity to produce 20,000,000 okes of salt annually. The salt harvested in the fall was sold at 20 caimé per oke. In 1877, the amount primarily exported to Syria was 3,734,000 okes. On the other hand, the estimated amount for domestic consumption was 729,000 okes, bringing the total to 4,463,000 okes.⁶³

Sponge: Sponge fishing in Cyprus commences in May and ended in August. The sponge fishermen were Greek Cypriots from the islands of Hydra and Castelrossa. According to Watkins, a total of 40 boats were used for this activity in 1877. Each boat had a crew of between eight and ten members. The fishing areas extended from the southwest and western coasts, from Paphos to Karavostasi⁶⁴, and along the eastern coast, from Famagusta to St. Andrea Point⁶⁵. The amount of sponge harvested in the previous year was recorded as approximately 2,500 okes. Most of the sponges were of low quality. Of the collected sponges, 500 okes were sold to Syrian buyers at 20 francs per oke, while the rest were stored.⁶⁶

Population: Consul Watkins recorded the population of the island as 200,000, one year prior to the British occupation. According to the report, two-thirds of this population were Greeks, while the remainder were Muslims.⁶⁷

Industry: Tanning is one of the leading industries. The tanners in Nicosia⁶⁸ produce between 1,500 and 2,000 bales of leather annually. The production of silk fabrics is carried out by women in Nicosia. Annually, 10,000 pieces of dress fabric, as well as handkerchiefs and sashes, are produced.

Prints are also made on grey British fabrics for divans and bed covers. Additionally, construction work and carpentry are carried out by Greeks, who are also skilled tailors and shoemakers. The trades and professions practiced by the Turks were: barbers, butchers, calico printers, shoemakers, and saddlers.⁶⁹

Revenues: The revenues for the 1877 fiscal year were significantly lower compared to the previous year. The primary reason for this decline was the low yield of agricultural products. In an effort to address some of the abuses complained about by the peasants, tithes were collected by government officials, but this practice had not yet benefited either the peasants or the government. Of the tithe collected on grains, 120,000 kilos of barley were sent to Istanbul for the

⁵⁹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁶⁰ 3 shillings.

⁶¹ 6 pence.

⁶² TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁶³ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁶⁴ Gemikonağı

⁶⁵ Present day Cape Zafer, the northernmost point of Cyprus.

⁶⁶ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁶⁷ TNA, FO 881/3661. Please see Ahmet Atasoy, "Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti'nin Nüfus Coğrafyası", *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 8/15 (2011): 29 – 62(Atasoy, 2011); Orhan Turan, "1878'den Günümüze Kıbrıs'tan Türk Göçleri", Atatürk Üniversitesi, Unpublished Phd Thesis, Erzurum: 2016.(Turan, 2016)

⁶⁸ Lefkoşa

⁶⁹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

army's needs. Additionally, 30,000 kilos of wheat were distributed to poor peasants as seed for planting.⁷⁰

Public Works and Administration: According to Watkins, no public works were carried out throughout the year of 1877. In fact, even the Larnaca-Nicosia horse-drawn carriage road, for which a large budget had been allocated and planning had begun a few years earlier, was largely neglected. Apart from horse paths and some tracks used by ox-drawn carts, no other roads existed on the island. There were no port facilities (such as piers or docks). The only provision for ships was a few wooden piers, which usually disappeared in the middle of winter. The promised reforms had not yet been implemented on the island. Peasants continued to pay heavy taxes, and as their ability to pay decreased, arbitrary measures were put in place to collect these taxes. According to Watkins, the government made unfortunate choices in the selection of administrative and judicial officials appointed to Cyprus. Following complaints about some officials, the Governor of Rhodes sent a team of investigators to conduct the necessary inquiries.⁷¹

Customs House: According to the report, various complaints have been made about the Customs Director in Larnaca in recent times. He had made it mandatory for all products to be exported from the city to pass directly through customs, and, as before, prohibited sending them from different scaling points. In the past, products could be exported after passing through various scales, weighing, and other procedures under the supervision of a customs officer. However, this new system lost its functionality. According to Watkins, the reason for this was the very small size of the customs building and the lack of sufficient space at its front. As a result, serious confusion and delays occurred. Consequently, both traders and the government were harmed. This issue was forwarded to the Indirect Taxes High Authority in Istanbul. In response, an inspector was sent from Beirut to examine the complaints on-site and prepare a detailed report. However, according to the consul, no results have been achieved so far.⁷²

Exchange Rate and Currencies as of December 31, 1877: According to the report, the exchange rate for the Bank of London, over a three-month period, was equivalent to 115 Silver Mecidiye. On the other hand, the exchange rate for the Bank of France over the same period was equivalent to 182 Silver Mecidiye.⁷³ Watkins' report also illustrates the multi-currency system on the island. In addition to the official Ottoman currency, the "*Turkish Lira*" it was also recorded that the British Pound and the French Napoleon were used. In this diverse currency system, the Pound was an indicator of Britain's growing economic presence, while the Napoleon served as proof of French commercial role.

Limassol: According to British administrative reports, Limassol is one of the most advantageous cities on the island. Its proximity to the maritime trade route between Alexandria and Istanbul, along with its port infrastructure and sheltered bays, made it an important commercial point.⁷⁴ The report records that during 1877, a total of 460 ships, including Ottoman vessels, entered and exited Limassol Port. Of these ships, six were British, with a total tonnage of 2,835 tons, while the total tonnage of all ships entering and leaving the port was 34,685 tons.⁷⁵

Return of British Shipping at the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1877: Agricultural products, saltworks, and port services played a significant role in the economic life of Larnaca.⁷⁶ Additionally, Larnaca Port became one of the most strategic stops in the Eastern Mediterranean. Due to its geographic location, it served as a key intermediary port between Western Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. In his report, Watkins included information about the ships that

⁷⁰ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁷¹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁷² TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁷³ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁷⁴ British Colonial Office. (1878). *Colonial Report on the District of Limassol*. London: HMSO, 40.

⁷⁵ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁷⁶ Kemal Çiçek, "Larnaka", *DİA XXVII* (İstanbul: TDV Yay., 2003), 106.(Çiçek, 2003)

arrived at and departed from Larnaca Port, as outlined below. According to the report, the British-owned ships conducted direct trade between England and its colonies. The report includes data on ship arrivals and departures, ship count, tonnage, crew, and cargo value in each section. However, some missing values and uncertainties, such as ellipses, can also be found in the figures. The areas indicated by three dots '...' in the tables are due to missing data in the original document. There are, of course, many reasons for this information gap.

These gaps may have arisen due to the consulate having incomplete information at the time the report was compiled or due to incomplete reports being sent. Moreover, the political and logistical conditions of the period also played a role in the inability to obtain this information. That is to say, as in many provinces, the 1877 Ottoman-Russian War caused disruptions in the administration of the countryside in Cyprus. Therefore, commercial and financial records may have been kept incompletely.⁷⁷ Based on this, Table 1 shows that three ships, each with a capacity of 820 tonnes and a crew of 29, entered and exited the port.⁷⁸

Table 1: British Ships Entered at Larnaca Port in 1877.

Total Number of Vessels			Total Tonnage			Total Number of Crews.	Total Value of Cargoes
With Cargoes.	In Ballast.	Total.	With Cargoes.	In Ballast.	Total.		
...	3	3	...	3	820	29	£ ...

Table 2: British Ships Cleared Larnaca Port in 1877.

Total Number of Vessels			Total Tonnage			Total Number of Crews.	Total Value of Cargoes
With Cargoes.	In Ballast.	Total	With Cargoes.	In Ballast.	Total.		
3		3	820		820	29	£ 1000

When examining the British ships that arrived at Larnaca port in 1877, as shown in Table 1, a total of three British ships, each with a crew of 29 and a tonnage of 820, arrived at Larnaca port in ballast (empty) in 1877. As shown in Table 2, the same ship departed from Larnaca port loaded with a cargo weighing 820 tons, valued at approximately £1,000.⁷⁹ Looking at the ship movements, it appears that the ships entered in ballast, likely arriving empty to export goods from Cyprus. However, as seen in Table 2, the three ships left the island loaded with cargo.

Return of British and Foreign Shipping at the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1877

Entered: The British Consul's report quantitatively documents the role of Larnaca Port in the international trade networks of 1877 and the weight of the Ottoman Empire in regional trade. The report recorded the port's activity through a table divided into two main sections: "entered" and "cleared". As shown in Table-3, by 1877, ships from the Ottoman Empire, England, France, Austria, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands, and the United States arrived at Cyprus's Larnaca Port. The report categorizes the ships as "Loaded" (full of cargo), "In Ballast" (empty), and "Total". For each category, the number of ships, tonnage, crew, and cargo value (in Sterling) are provided. Watkins shared figures for a total of 515 ships from eight different nationalities. The prevalence of the Ottoman Empire in terms of the number of ships and crews is emphasized. On the other hand, Austria appears to have higher cargo values. The Ottoman Empire had the highest number with 394 ships (76.5%). The Netherlands and the United States entered the port with just one ship each. In terms of loaded ships, the Ottoman Empire had 113, and Austria had

⁷⁷ As in the current table, all other tables have been reproduced verbatim from Consul Watkins' original 1877 report. The missing data in the cells is also absent from the original document.

⁷⁸ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁷⁹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

56; in the ballast category, the Ottoman Empire led with 281 ships, followed by Italy with 24 ships.⁸⁰

Table 3: Cargo of British and Foreign Cargo Ships in Larnaca Port in 1877 (Entered).

Nationality of Vessels.	Entered									Value of Cargoes £
	With Cargoes.			In Ballast.			Total.			
	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	
British	...	...	...	3	820	29	3	820	29	...
French	2	767	38	...	...	...	2	767	38	1,153
Austrian	56	60,385	2,624	4	1,177	38	60	65,562	2,662	73,444
Italian	2	305	17	24	7,747	253	26	8,052	270	2,042
Greek	11	524	69	17	2,016	138	28	2,540	207	2,332
Ottoman	113	3,546	727	281	10,086	1786	394	13,632	2,513	28,252
Dutch	...	...	...	1	192	8	1	192	8	...
American	...	...	...	1	247	10	1	247	10	...
Total	184	65,527	3,475	331	22,285	2,262	515	91,812	5,737	107,223

Ottoman ships accounted for 14.8% of the total tonnage (13,632 tons). However, the tonnage per crew member for these ships (5.4 tons per person) was lower compared to other nationalities. Of course, it is possible that Ottoman ships were smaller or less efficient. On the other hand, the year 1877 was a period when the Ottoman Empire was experiencing economic and political crises due to the 93 War. Additionally, the high number of Ottoman ships at Larnaca Port was likely aimed at meeting the empire's logistical needs. Watkins' report also highlights some inconsistencies in the statistics. For example, the total tonnage of Austrian ships in the "Loaded" category (60,385 tons) and "In Ballast" category (1,177 tons) should add up to 61,562 tons, but the table shows a total of 65,562 tons. This represents a discrepancy of 4,000 tons. This inconsistency could indicate a data entry error or missing information in the report. Specifically, the total tonnage for loaded and ballast ships (65,527 + 22,285 = 87,812 tons) does not match the total tonnage indicated in the table (91,812 tons). The 4,000-ton discrepancy aligns with the error in the Austrian row. On the other hand, Austrian ships stand out due to their high tonnage and cargo value.⁸¹

In summary, when evaluating the ships that arrived at Larnaca Port, the numerical superiority of the Ottoman Empire becomes apparent. Although the Ottomans led in terms of the number of ships and crew, they lagged behind Austria in cargo value. On the other hand, Austria's economic development on the port is also noteworthy. This indicates that Austrian ships were carrying high tonnage and cargo value, likely industrial products or valuable raw materials. However, the absence of recorded cargo values for British, Dutch, and American vessels constrains the scope of comprehensive analysis.

Cleared: As stated above, commercial ships from eight different countries entered Larnaca Port, and during the same period, 515 ships departed from the port. In other words, the parameters of the ships that entered and departed the port in the British Consul's report are consistent. Watkins presented the distribution of the ships departing from the port by nationality, cargo/ballast status, tonnage, crew size, and cargo value as commercial characteristics in a table in his report.⁸²

The Ottoman Empire had the highest number of ships, with 394 vessels, accounting for 76.5% of the total. In terms of total tonnage, Austria held the largest share, with 65,562 tons (71.4%). On the other hand, despite the Ottoman Empire having a relatively low tonnage of

⁸⁰ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁸¹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁸² TNA, FO 881/3661.

13,632 tons (14.8%), its high number of ships still drew attention. It is also notable that the Ottoman Empire led with 43.8% of the total crew. The total cargo value of the ships departing from the port was £148,870, which was 39% higher than the value of the incoming ships. The largest share was held by Austria, with £70,274 (47.2%). The Ottoman Empire ranked second with £30,991 (20.8%), and Italy was third with £30,497 (20.5%). In terms of tonnage and cargo value, Austria had a twofold numerical superiority in the ships entering and leaving the port. This indicates the significant commercial presence of the relevant state in the region. Despite the high number of ships, the low tonnage and cargo performance of the Ottoman Empire could be attributed to structural issues. The most important factor was the use of low-tech ships that transported low-value cargo. Additionally, the capacity issues of the Ottoman local maritime trade fleet could be explained by the lack of industrialization and technological underdevelopment of the period.⁸³

Table 4: Cargo of British and Foreign Cargo Ships in Larnaca Port in 1877 (Cleared).

Cleared										
Nationality of Vessels.	With Cargoes.			In Ballast.			Total.			Value of Cargoes. £
	Vessels	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels	Tons.	Crews.	
British	3	820	29	...	...	...	3	820	29	1,000
French	2	767	38	...	...	...	2	767	38	5,133
Austrian	59	65,221	2,652	1	341	10	60	65,562	2,662	70,274
Italian	23	7,046	237	3	1,006	33	26	8,052	270	30,497
Greek	16	1,762	119	12	778	88	28	2,540	207	9,625
Ottoman	319	10,793	2,031	75	2,839	482	394	13,632	2,513	30,991
Dutch	1	192	8	...	...	...	1	192	8	550
American	1	247	10	...	...	...	1	247	10	800
Total	424	86,848	5,124	91	4,964	613	515	91,812	5,737	148,870

Return of the Import at the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1877

In Consul Watkins' 1877 trade report, imports to Larnaca Port were made from the Ottoman Empire, Austria, Germany, France, Britain, Italy, and Greece. According to the report, the imported goods included processed cotton, hardware, glass and pottery products, leather, tobacco, soap, butter, matches, wrought and unwrought iron, petroleum, rice, salted fish, dried foods, ox and camel hides, olive oil, rum, beeswax, copper, grain, flour, and various other items.⁸⁴

As shown in Table 5, Cyprus imported the most goods from the Ottoman Empire. From the Ottoman Empire, tobacco, soap, butter, petroleum, rice, salted fish, dried foods, ox and camel hides, olive oil, copper, grain, flour, and other various products were obtained. It is noteworthy that tobacco, ox and camel hides accounted for the largest portion of the import expenditure, totaling £39,941 in 1877. The total value of imports was £105,277. The largest share of imports was taken by processed cotton, imported from England, Germany, and Austria, amounting to £36,000. Britain, with £22,450 worth of processed cotton, salted fish, dried foods, and other miscellaneous goods, ranked second in total imports after the Ottoman Empire. Following Britain, Germany, Austria, and France each exported products to Cyprus under ten different product categories. Greece sent goods worth £3,550, while Italy shipped goods valued at £1,350.⁸⁵

As can be seen from the table, products originating from Turkey accounted for approximately 38% of the total trade value. The total share of imports from European countries was 62%. This indicates a high level of dependency on foreign markets for certain product categories. Processed cotton (34.2%) was the product category with the highest import value,

⁸³ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁸⁴ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁸⁵ TNA, FO 881/3661.

followed by tobacco and leather products. Products from Turkey were generally of agricultural and animal origin, which shows that the local economy was based on raw materials. A total of £39,941 worth of products were sourced from Turkey. Tobacco (£17,000) was the most valuable item, followed by leather, soap, butter, olive oil, and grain as other important categories.

The highest import value was £22,000 worth of processed cotton, imported from England. As an industrial product supplier, England was globally dominant in textiles during this period. German and Austrian products were primarily semi-processed and industrial goods. As can be seen from the table, trade with France was based on both luxury consumption and processed goods. Another European country, Italy, showed limited and low imports, primarily from glass and rice products. This situation indicates either limited diplomatic/trade ties or Italy's low competitive power. Greece, which stood out with leather and food products, seems to have played a complementary role as a supplier of food and raw materials in trade.

Table 5: Imports at the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1877.

Names of Articles	From Turkey £	From Aust. And Germany £	From France £	From England £	From Italy £	From Greece £	Total Value £
Cotton manufacture	...	14,000	...	22,000	...	...	36,000
Hardware	...	3,000	1,000	...	...	...	4,000
Glass and pottery ware	...	900	700	...	100	...	1,700
Leather	...	...	3,500	...	50	3,000	6,550
Tobacco	17,000	...	...	...	...	...	17,000
Soap	3,200	...	...	...	...	...	3,200
Butter	650	...	...	...	...	...	650
Matches	...	430	...	...	...	...	430
Colonials	...	...	6,000	...	...	...	6,000
Iron, wrought and unwrought	...	1,300	700	...	...	...	2,000
Petroleum	1,600	...	...	...	...	...	1,600
Rice	400	...	2,000	...	800	...	3,200
Salt fish and drysalteries	400	100	350	250	300	250	1,650
Skins, ox and camel	9,485	...	...	...	...	...	9,485
Olive oil	1,706	...	...	...	...	...	1,706
Rum, &c.	...	400	350	...	...	...	750
Wax.	...	645	...	...	...	...	645
Copper	300	675	...	...	...	...	975
Grain and flour	3,000	...	836	...	...	...	3,836
Miscellaneous	2,200	500	600	200	100	300	3,900
TOPLAM	39,941	21,950	16,036	22,450	1,350	3,550	105,277

When the table is evaluated in general, processed cotton, hardware, glass products, colonial goods, and iron-heavy materials have come from Europe. This indicates that Ottoman ports did not have an import-substituting structure and were dependent on foreign sources. In other words, processed goods were sourced externally. On the other hand, items such as tobacco, soap, butter, olive oil, and leather were domestically produced. Agricultural production is relatively strong in this context. However, industrial production is minimal. In this regard, raw materials and food products were sourced from Turkey.

Return of the Exports from the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1877

In 1877, Cyprus exported goods from Larnaca Port to five different countries, including the Ottoman Empire, England, France, Austria, and Italy. The exported items included cotton, wine, cheese, madder root, leather, wool, processed cotton, shredded tobacco, processed leather, cloth pieces, barley and wheat, salt, carob, fruits and vegetables, cattle, silk cocoons, flax and

cotton seeds, white clay, old copper, and various other goods.⁸⁶ The highest export value, £57,900, was to the Ottoman Empire. Cotton exported to France, Austria, and Russia, valued at £21,000, made up the largest single export item. France led in diversity, purchasing goods under ten different product categories, surpassing other countries in terms of variety. After the Ottoman Empire, France was the second largest destination for exports. A year later, when Britain took over the administration of the island, Cyprus exported barley, wheat, carob, white clay, and bone to Britain. On the other hand, although Russia is listed in the table, no data related to this country was found in the report.⁸⁷ In 1877, the total export value from Larnaca Port was recorded as £150,918. The distribution of this value by country was as follows: Turkey £57,900 (approximately 38%); France £53,856 (approximately 36%); Austria £19,615; Italy £16,540; England £3,007. This distribution indicates the existence of a well-established commercial relationship network between France and the Ottoman territories. According to this, the distribution of exports was as follows:⁸⁸ agricultural products: barley and wheat (£20,600), salt (£14,140), fruits and vegetables (£6,600), carob (£9,000); raw materials: cotton (£21,000), wool (£12,000), raw leather (£11,000), madder root (£2,200); processed products: cotton (£8,400), leather (£2,770), shredded tobacco (£315).⁸⁹ This distribution indicates that production in Cyprus was predominantly based on agriculture and livestock, while trade involved the export of these products to Europe.

Table 6: Exports from the Port of Larnaca in the Year 1877.

Names of Articles.	To England £	To France £	To Austria £	To Italy £	To Russia £	To Turkey £	Total Value £
Cotton	...	12,000	8,000	1,000	...	...	21,000
Wine	...	900	4,000	2,000	...	...	6,900
Cheese	...	...	...	...	...	2,975	2,975
Madder-roots	...	2,200	...	...	...	...	2,200
Skins	...	4,000	5,000	2,000	...	...	11,000
Wool	...	9,000	1,500	1,500	...	...	12,000
Cotton manufacture	...	...	...	...	...	8,400	8,400
Tobacco (cut)	...	...	...	...	...	315	315
Worked skins	...	...	...	...	...	2,770	2,770
Rags	...	479	...	1,000	...	...	1,479
Barley and wheat	1,600	2,000	...	...	...	17,000	20,600
Salt	...	...	...	...	...	14,140	14,140
Locust beans	1,000	...	...	8,000	...	...	9,000
Fruit and vegetables	...	...	...	...	...	6,600	6,600
Cattle	...	...	...	...	...	2,500	2,500
Silk cocoons	...	17,358	...	...	...	...	17,358
Linseed-cotton seed	...	5,719	...	...	...	...	5,719
Terra umber and bones	307	...	...	640	...	...	947
Old copper	...	...	515	...	...	...	515
Miscellaneous	100	200	600	400	...	3,200	4,500
Total value	3,007	53,856	19,615	16,540	...	57,900	150,918

The export worth £57,900 from Larnaca Port directed towards domestic ports indicates that the city was not only an important hub for foreign trade but also a significant connection point for internal maritime trade within the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, France was the main buyer of luxury and valuable raw materials for the textile industry, such as silk cocoons (£17,358)

⁸⁶ TNA, FO 881/3661.⁸⁷ TNA, FO 881/3661.⁸⁸ TNA, FO 881/3661.⁸⁹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

and wool (£9,000).⁹⁰ France also held a significant share in other industry-oriented products, such as madder root. This reflects France's strategic approach in securing valuable raw materials through Cyprus and the island's role as a center for raw material exports in this context. The export data in the table shows that Larnaca Port held an important place in the Mediterranean trade network, particularly standing out for its agricultural and raw material exports. France and the Ottoman internal ports were the main focal points of this export, while the role of large industrial powers, such as England, was limited in this table.

Return of the Imports at the Port of Limassol in the Year 1877

As with the maritime trade records for 1877, British Consul Watkins also included records on imports to Limassol Port in tabular form in his report. Here, the product categories and sources are listed in terms of pounds (£) by country. According to Table-7, products such as tobacco, butter, salted fish, soap, glassware, and petroleum were imported from the Ottoman Empire, Austria, France, England, Italy, and Greece. The "Total Value" expressed in the table refers to the total import value for each product. In other words, 15 product categories and 6 countries are listed. The import figures for Limassol Port in 1877 shows that goods worth a total of £41,920 were imported. Moreover, this represented the lowest import value in the previous three years (1874: £46,830; 1875: £47,325; 1876: £50,920).⁹¹ The majority of imports in 1877 came from Ottoman territories (£31,555). This was followed by France, England, and Greece.⁹² The data reflects the commercial dependencies of Cyprus under Ottoman rule.

Table 7: Imports at the Port of Limassol in the Year 1877.

Names of Articles	From Turkey £	From Austria £	From France £	From England £	From Italy £	From Greece £	Total Value £
Grain	2,500	...	...	...	...	...	2,500
Tobacco	6,000	...	...	...	...	...	6,000
Butter	1,100	...	...	...	...	...	1,100
Salt fish	180	...	...	...	300	420	900
Soap	260	...	...	...	...	...	260
Matches	40	200	40	...	15	...	295
Glassware	500	250	300	400	...	...	1,450
Manufactured goods	12,000	...	1,000	...	...	...	13,000
Coffee	565	...	700	...	...	180	1,445
Sugar	560	...	800	...	...	400	1,760
Leather	...	...	650	...	...	1,000	1,650
Rice	...	...	...	750	450	400	1,600
Petroleum	800	...	...	...	80	...	880
Hardware	50	30	150	150	200	50	630
Sundries	7,000	200	300	400	50	500	8,450
Total	31,555	680	3,940	1,700	1,095	2,950	41,920

It is understood that the value of manufactured goods imported from the Ottoman Empire was £12,000, miscellaneous products £7,000, tobacco £6,000, and grain £2,500. On the other hand, daily consumption goods such as coffee and sugar were also present. This situation indicates

⁹⁰ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁹¹ *Colonial Report on the District of Limassol*, 34.

⁹² TNA, FO 881/3661.

that Limassol functioned as a consumption and distribution port in Ottoman domestic trade and that the island's internal supply was largely sourced from Anatolia.⁹³

The report also includes imports from European sources to Limassol Port. In this context, from France, final consumption goods such as glassware, coffee, sugar, and leather were imported. From England, glassware and hardware; from Italy, soap, rice, and leather; and from Austria, matches and glassware were imported. Primarily, food items such as salted fish, coffee, and sugar (£2,950) were also imported from Greece.⁹⁴ This also reflects the food supply chain coming through the Aegean. The current table shows that Western European countries were primarily involved in supplying Cyprus with industrial products and processed consumer goods. As can be seen from the table, the island appears to be a market for Europe.

Return of the Exports from the Port of Limassol in the Year 1877

As shown in Table-8, in 1877, a total export value of £93,805 was made from Limassol Port to England, France, Austria, Italy, Russia, Greece, and the Ottoman Empire. This amount was more than twice the import value of £41,920 for the same year.⁹⁵ Additionally, when examining the export values of the previous three years (1874: £59,600; 1875: £77,022; 1876: £59,895), the highest export figure was achieved in 1877.⁹⁶

Table 8: Exports from the Port of Limassol in the Year 1877.

Name of Articles.	To England £	To France £	To Austria £	To Italy £	To Russia £	To Greece £	To Turkey £	Total Value £
Cotton	...	300	...	...	...	60	...	360
Wool in grease	...	750	...	...	...	...	...	750
Lamb and goat skins	...	80	475	...	...	...	...	555
Rags	...	...	...	400	...	...	...	400
Sumac, in the leaf	...	...	...	...	...	450	500	950
Black wine	...	...	...	...	...	...	27,000	27,000
Commanderia wine	50	...	1,750	240	...	150	250	2,440
Locust beans	28,600	1,700	3,000	4,700	2,300	...	900	41,200
Raisins	...	...	3,000	750	...	...	3,100	6,850
Sundries	...	200	350	150	...	600	12,000	13,300
Total	28,650	3,030	8,575	6,240	2,300	1,260	43,750	93,805

The leading export items of the port were wine and carob. According to the records, wine production was as follows: 1874: 4,811,732 okes; 1875: 4,811,732 okes; 1876: 3,710,884 okes; 1877: 2,208,617 okes. On the other hand, carob production was recorded as follows: 1874: 6,950 tons; 1875: 8,690 tons; 1876: 6,080 tons; 1877: 6,520 tons.⁹⁷ According to Watkins' report, in 1877, Limassol Port had a trade surplus. For that year, carob (£41,200) was mainly exported to England; nearly all of the wine (£27,000) was sent to the Ottoman Empire; Commandaria wine (£10,450), sold primarily to Italy and Russia, and dried grapes (£6,850) were also significant export products.⁹⁸ As can be seen, agricultural products were clearly prominent in Limassol Port's

⁹³ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁹⁴ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁹⁵ TNA, FO 881/3661.

⁹⁶ *Colonial Report on the District of Limassol*, 34.

⁹⁷ *Colonial Report on the District of Limassol*, 34.

⁹⁸ TNA, FO 881/3661.

exports. This demonstrates the port's proximity to agricultural production centers and its role in trade.

The total export from Limassol Port to the Ottoman Empire reached its highest level at £43,750. In other words, the largest buyer of Cyprus' products was Turkey. On the other hand, European countries also played an important role in maritime trade through their exports from Limassol Port. From this perspective, England stood out with carob (£28,600), Austria with wine and dried grapes, Italy with wine and some agricultural products, France with leather, wool, and agricultural by-products, and Russia with Commandaria wine.⁹⁹

The 1877 export data from Limassol reveals Cyprus's dependence on an agricultural economy during the Ottoman period and its rising commercial relations with England. The export of carob and wine demonstrates the island's role in the global supply chain. Limassol has an economy based on agricultural and raw material exports. In terms of imports at Limassol Port, the focus was on processed goods and food products. Specifically, basic food imports came from the Ottoman Empire, while industrial goods were imported from Europe. In other words, Limassol was an extension of the Ottoman economic system. Imports were based on agricultural and simple manufacturing products. When examining Watkins' report and tables, it becomes evident that the Ottoman Empire's economic structure, with exports relying on agriculture and raw materials, reflects a lack of industrialization. The high value of products such as tobacco and leather reveals the Ottoman Empire's dependence on monoculture trade. Watkins' findings have been compared, in particular, with Riddell's reports from 1873 to 1875. The observations of both consuls regarding export items such as cotton, wine and capers have been evaluated side by side. Riddell's report explains that agricultural production on the island fluctuates mainly due to climatic conditions, while Watkins' analysis highlights administrative negligence and external market demands. On the other hand, a comparative link has been established with Pierides' (1876 Report) trade analyses from the early 20th century. The 1870s in Cyprus saw economic activity characterised by its external dependence and port-centred nature. The functional differences between ports in Pierides' data and Watkins' distinction between Larnaca and Limassol have been examined in parallel. Thus, continuity and breaking points over time have been opened up for discussion in the academic sphere.¹⁰⁰

Watkins' observations on exports, particularly from Larnaca Port (such as exports of carob, cotton and olive oil), have been compared with analyses of British trade strategies in the Eastern Mediterranean. The strategy of securing Britain's trade routes via Cyprus after the Suez Canal aligns with Watkins' approach that Cyprus should be a transit port between the West and the East.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, Watkins' import items (such as textile products originating from the United Kingdom) have also been matched with socio-economic analyses of textile consumption in the Eastern Mediterranean. In this context, Watkins not only presents statistics but also demonstrates that strategic conclusions can be drawn regarding the role of British consumer goods on the Ottoman hinterland via Cyprus.¹⁰² When compared to consular reports from other Ottoman provinces, the British Consul's 1877 report places greater emphasis on the position of Cyprus. In this context, when the report in question is compared with the Aleppo and Thessaloniki reports on a product basis, important points stand out from the island's perspective. For example, Riddell emphasised Aleppo's transit position in cotton exports, while Watkins stated that Cyprus was the final export port. Thus, the impact of the logistical locations of different provinces on foreign trade has been analysed. Furthermore, when Watkins's figures on carob exports is compared with

⁹⁹ TNA, FO 881/3661.

¹⁰⁰ Savile, Cyprus, 78-110.

¹⁰¹ Please see Robin Fisher, *British Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1870-1882: Strategic Interests and Economic Expansion*, Oxford University Press London, 1970.(Fisher, 1970)

¹⁰² Please see Michael Gorman, "British Textiles and the Ottoman Market: The Eastern Mediterranean in the Age of Imperialism", *Journal of Economic History* 41, No: 3 (1981): 597-620.(Gorman, 1981)

Lang's reports, which focus more on the tobacco and grain trade at the Port of Thessaloniki, the specificity of Cyprus's product profile is highlighted.¹⁰³

Conclusion

This study aims to comprehensively analyse both the rich quantitative data and the shortcomings contained in Watkins' report from a historical perspective. The gaps in the statistics also reveal historical memory loss and the limitations of provincial archival systems. Watkins' 1877 report was systematically addressed and highlighted for the first time in the literature, thereby more clearly demonstrating the study's contribution to the field.

Watkins's 1877 report, as one of the primary sources detailing the economic structure of the island of Cyprus, provides important data on the functioning of provincial economies in the late Ottoman period. This study has examined the report in question using a product-based approach, assessing Cyprus's production structure, foreign trade items and institutional capacity within a historical context. The report contains not only numerical figures but also observational comments on the economic and administrative problems of the period, thus making it possible to extrapolate the weaknesses of a rural economy on a micro scale to the Ottoman Empire as a whole.

Firstly, Watkins' detailed product list and import–export tables reveal Cyprus's agriculture-dominated economic structure in the late 1870s. Products such as grain, carob, cotton, madder root, wine, tobacco, olive oil and sponges were exported from the island. However, most of these products experienced a significant decline in both production and trade in 1877. The sharp decline in grain production in particular has led not only to local shortages but also to increased dependence on imports. Environmental and political factors such as drought, locust infestations and war conditions have been cited as the main reasons for these declines in production. These figures demonstrate that Cyprus has an extremely fragile economic structure, dependent on its climate and external markets. However, as Watkins points out, the declines in production cannot be explained solely by environmental factors. Institutional factors such as tax pressure on the island, lack of public investment, and the state's failure to implement promised reforms have also *shaped* production decisions. This situation reveals that the Ottoman central administration was unable to establish a sustainable development model in the provinces and that its capacity for intervention remained limited. As Watkins points out, particularly in the case of wine production, government regulations have failed to guide producers' behaviour, leading to a decline in market initiatives.

The tables in the report show that Larnaca and Limassol have different port characteristics. It appears that one functioned more as an export port (Larnaca), while the other served as an import port (Limassol). Cyprus demonstrated its dependency on the Ottoman Empire for agricultural and basic consumption goods. The role of England in imports, which would occupy the island a year later, was still quite limited at that time. In short, Watkins' report shows that production in Cyprus was predominantly based on agriculture and livestock, while trade involved directing these products to Europe.

The report's administrative findings are also highly noteworthy. The weakness of the transport and logistics infrastructure, the physical inadequacies of the ports and the underdevelopment of the road network have been noted as the main factors limiting the island's trade capacity. Criticisms directed at the Larnaca Customs Authority in particular – lack of oversight by customs officials, failure to record trade, relationships established with privileged

¹⁰³ TNA FO 78/2630, *Report on the Trade and Commerce of the Port of Salonica for the Year 1875.*; Please see Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire 1700-1922*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2005.(Quataert, 2005); Emel Demir Görür, İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporları Çerçevesinde Halep Kenti'nin Sosyo-İktisadi Vaziyeti (1873-1878), *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol.41/No:71, (Mart 2022), 349-428(Demir Görür, 2022).; N. A., Aksoy, "Selanik İngiliz Konsolosluk Ticaret Raporlarına Göre Selanik Limanında İngiliz Ticareti (1865-1912)", *Vakanivis-Uluslararası Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 8/1 (Mart 2023): 89-136.(Aksoy, 2023)

traders – are clear examples of institutional corruption in the provincial bureaucracy. Watkins' observations in this context point to a broader structural problem not only in Cyprus but also in the Ottoman provinces: the weakness of the central administration's financial control mechanisms in the provinces and practices open to arbitrariness.

The findings of Watkins' report bear both similarities and differences when compared to other Ottoman consular reports from the same period. For example, while transit trade in cotton features prominently in Riddell's 1873 report on Aleppo, Watkins assesses cotton production in Cyprus more in terms of the domestic market and direct exports. While tobacco production was at the forefront in Lang's 1875 Thessaloniki report, Watkins noted that tobacco was sent from Cyprus to Karaman and Syria. These comparisons reveal the diversity of products across the Ottoman hinterland, which varied according to climate, geographical location and transport conditions, while also confirming the existence of a common structural problem across all these regions: the weakness of the state's regulatory and supportive role in economic production.

The figures presented by Watkins also reflects the socio-economic profile of the rural population. The report details the occupational distribution of the Turkish and Greek populations, noting that Turks are concentrated in service sectors such as barbering, butchery and shoemaking, while Greeks are prominent in fields such as construction, carpentry and tailoring. This distribution indicates that a certain division of labour exists among ethnic groups and that the rural economy is not solely comprised of agriculture and livestock farming. This situation reveals that both urbanisation trends and small-scale craft activities contribute to economic vitality in rural areas.

All these findings demonstrate that the late Ottoman Empire's economic structure was fragmented, unstable, and highly vulnerable to *external shocks*. While the state's tax collection mechanisms increased local resistance, indicators such as declining customs revenues, increasing import dependency, and decreasing public investment show that the Ottoman fiscal system was unable to ensure sustainability in the provinces in the last quarter of the 19th century. Watkins' import-export tables document that countries such as Britain, France, Austria and Italy played an important role in Cyprus's foreign trade, but also that the Ottoman Empire was increasingly becoming a passive actor.

Consequently, Watkins's 1877 report reveals not only the economic structure of Cyprus, but also the institutional functioning of the Ottoman Empire in the provinces, its economic vulnerabilities, and the limitations of its capacity for reform. This study evaluates the aforementioned report through product-based analyses, offering an in-depth micro-level economic reading of the late Ottoman provinces; it also aims to contribute to economic debates concerning the Ottoman Empire's decline process with historically grounded data.

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