

TOBACCO SMUGGLING IN THE BLACK-SEA REGION OF THE OTTOMAN
EMPIRE 1883-1914

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EMPIRE 1883-1914

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ABSTRACT

TOBACCO SMUGGLING IN THE BLACK-SEA REGION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE 1883-1914

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This study aims at introducing the tobacco smugglers after the foundation of the Régie Company. It examines the changes in the tobacco sector after 1883 and researches the relationship between the increase of smuggling and the Régie Company.

Ottoman tobacco producers faced a new company, which controlled their mainstay crop in 1883. The Régie Company was a well-organized administration controlling the revenues from tobacco. The company also had its own security force namely *kolcu*. Kolcus were the keystone to the company's success to control tobacco cultivation and gain more money. Tobacco producers and merchants who had problems with this new system created their own responses. As one of those responses, number of tobacco smugglers rapidly increased. Many people from different areas of the economy attended to the smugglers to make more money. In addition, many farmers were forced into smuggling because of the Régie's maltreatment toward them.

The Ottoman government also tried to fix the problems between the company and the people in tobacco sector, but it did not develop new ideas to change the situation. The government defined smuggling in a different manner from the company. While the government accepted the professional tobacco traders who sold their crops illegally as smugglers, the company designated as smugglers those who cultivated tobacco without licenses, people who minced tobacco in their home-

factories, people who sold equipments for home-factories, and people who trafficked contraband.

Under such a contradictory definition, the Ottoman government did not find a compromise. The government also did not create a new alternative administration because of the agreements between the Ottoman Public Debt Administration and the State. It also used the company as a monetary source and took advances if there were fiscal problems. The Régie Company continued to control the Ottoman tobacco sector from 1883 until 1925.

Keywords: Smuggling, The Régie Company, Ottoman Empire.

ÖZ

OSMANLI DEVLETI'NDE KARADENİZ BÖLGESİ'NDE TÜTÜN KAÇAKÇILIĞI 1883-1914

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Bu çalışmanın amacı Reji şirketinin kuruluşundan sonra artan tütün kaçakçılığını tanımlamaktır. Bu tanımlama için Reji Şirketinin kuruluşundan sonra tütün sektöründe ortaya çıkan değişikliklere ve bu bağlamda artan kaçakçılık ile Reji şirketinin ilişkisine değinilecektir.

Osmanlı tütün üreticileri 1883 yılında kendi yaşam alanlarını denetleyen bir yapı ile karşılaştılar. Reji şirketi iyi örgütlenmiş yapısıyla tütün üretiminin ve ticaretinin belirli kurallar çerçevesinde yapılmasını sağlamaya çalıştı. Şirket ayrıca tütün üretimi ve ticareti üzerinde etkin denetim sağlamak için *kolcu* olarak bilinen silahlı güvenlik güçlerine sahipti. Kolcular şirketin başarısının arkasındaki en önemli etkenlerden biriydi. Sektörde ki değişikliklerden olumsuz etkilenen, üretici ve tüccar alternatif yapılanmalar içerisine girerek tütün sektöründe var olmaya devam etti. Alternatif yapılanmaların bir örneği olarak, 'kaçakçılık' bu dönemde oldukça popüler hale geldi. Farklı toplumsal gruplar daha fazla kazanç elde etmek veya Reji'nin onları sektör dışına itmesinden dolayı doğrudan kaçakçılığa yöneldi veyahut kaçakçı olarak kabul edilen toplumsal gruplarla işbirliğine gitti.

Osmanlı hükümeti bu problemi çözmek istese de Reji ile tütün sektörünün paydaşları arasında bir orta yol bulamadı. Bunun en temel nedeni hükümet ile Reji'nin kaçakçılık tanımının farklı olmasıydı. Osmanlı Devleti'ne göre, kaçakçılık şehirler arasında izinsiz ve silahlı şekilde dolaşarak hem güvenlik zaafiyetine neden olan hem de kaçak ticaret yapan gruplar için kullanılmalıyken, Reji şirketi, izinsiz

retim yapan iftiden, izinsiz satıř yapan tccara kadar bir ok reticiyi ve tccarı kaakı olarak kabul etmekte ve Osmanlı hkmeti buna aıka karřı ıkmaktaydı. Hkmet, gvenlik zaafiyetine ve bazen de lmlere neden olan bu grupları ayrıca eřkiya olarak kabul ederken, Reji řirketi kaakı olarak kabul ettięi tm toplumsal grupları aynı zamanda eřkiya olarak kabul ederek devlet desteęi olmadan kaakılıęın dolayısıyla da eřkiyalıęın bitirilemeyeceęini iddia ediyordu.

Byle bir durumda orta yolu bulamayan hkmet, idareyi deęiřtirecek alternatif bir yapıyı da daha nceden Duyun-i Umumiye ile imzaladıęı anlaşmalardan dolayı kuramadı. Hkmet ayrıca řirketi maddi krizler karřısında hızlıca avans alabileceęi bir kurum olarak grmekteydi ve bu yzden bir ok olumsuzluęa gz yummak zorunda kalmıřtı. Bu řartlar altında Reji řirketi ttn sektrn 1883 yılından 1925 yılına kadar kontrol etmeye devam etti.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ttn Kaakılıęı, Reji řirketi, Osmanlı Devleti.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES

BOA, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul, Türkiye

[Prime Minister's Archives Istanbul, Turkey]

| | |
|--------------|--|
| BEO | Bab-ı Ali Evrak Odası [<i>Document Bureau of the Sublime Porte</i>] |
| DH. MKT. | Dahiliye Mektubi Kalemî [<i>Ministry of Internal Affairs, Scribe's Office</i>] |
| DH. TMİK. S. | Dahiliye Tesrî Muamelat ve Islahat Komisyonu [<i>Reform Comission, Internal Ministry</i>] |
| İ. HUS. | İradeler Hususî [<i>Special Decrees</i>] |
| MV. | Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları [<i>Minutes of the Council of Ministers</i>] |
| ŞD. | Şura-yı Devlet Tasnifi [<i>Council of State</i>] |
| Y.A. HUS. | Yıldız Sadaret Hususî Maruzat Evrakı [<i>Grand Vizier's Special Reports, Yıldız Palace</i>] |
| Y. EE | Yıldız Esas Evrakı [<i>Basic Documents, Yıldız Palace</i>] |
| Y. MTV. | Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı [<i>Various Miscellaneous Reports, Yıldız Palace</i>] |
| Y. PRK. AZJ. | Yıldız Arzuhal ve Journaller [<i>Petitions and Spy Reports, Yıldız Palace</i>] |
| Y. PRK. EŞA. | Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Elçilik, Şehbenderlik ve Ataşemiliterlik [<i>Documents of Embassy, Consulate, and Army Attaché, Yıldız Palace</i>] |

CHAPTER I

1. Introduction

1.1. Outline of chapters

The aim of this thesis is to analyze tobacco smuggling in the Black-Sea region of the Ottoman Empire between 1883-1914. This research consists of four chapters as structured below:

Chapter 1 covers the research objectives, introduction, literature review, research methodology, and research background. The introduction includes a brief history of tobacco in the Ottoman Empire, the articulation of Ottoman economy with the modern capitalist world system, and its implication for society. The literature review contains brief critical assessments of the most important books and articles on tobacco smuggling in late Ottoman history. Research methodology outlines the historiographical interpretations that inform the studies discussed and points to the positions adopted in this thesis. Karen Barkey and Eric Hobsbawm's analyses and approaches are particularly important in this part. Finally, the research background focuses on the materials on which the thesis relies and the main questions that the thesis tries to answer.

Chapter 2 discusses the process that entailed the foundation of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA) and the Régie Company. This chapter introduces the reader to the conditions that the Ottoman society faced and how these institutions were established. In addition, it explains the impact of OPDA on the economy of the Black-Sea region and the changes in the tobacco sector. The chapter also focuses on the population of the area, the number of areas where tobacco was grown and the number of people who made a living in the tobacco sector.

Chapter 3 provides a brief survey of smuggling activities, and their effects on society and politics. The chapter aims at explaining why people turned to contraband. It also tries to explain the organization of contraband, daily lives of people involved in contraband, and their relationships with state officials, farmers, and bandits. In addition, the chapter explores the sale of illegally crops, the routes smugglers used in Anatolia, and the response of the Régie Company and the

government to smugglers. The chapter analyzes the police force of the Régie Company with emphasis on the company's policies toward tobacco farmers and tobacco merchants. Finally, the chapter specifically articulates the social and political implications of the formal and informal tobacco sector.

Chapter 4 will summarize the issue and discuss about the selected folk songs about smugglers. Furthermore it outlines the main findings of the thesis, discusses their historiographical implications and suggestions about prospects of future research on contraband trafficking.

1.2. Introduction

The tobacco plant is of the genus *Nicotiana*, one of the larger divisions of the family Solanacea.¹ It originated in America and moved to Europe via the geographical expedition of Christopher Columbus and his compatriots. It was first used as an ornamental plant and then as medicine. Eventually people began to consume it for pleasure and to satisfy their addiction. European merchants introduced it to the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. Like other empires, the Ottoman Empire prohibited the use of tobacco after a short time for many economic and religious reasons. Yet, a fatwa legalized the consumption of tobacco in 1646. The newly appointed Şeyhul-Islam Bahai Efendi, himself an addict issued the fatwa.² After that time, it became a very special and attractive source of revenue for the Empire. The influence of tobacco over the economy rose day by day and in the nineteenth century, tobacco was one of the most prominent crops of Ottoman agriculture. The invention of cigarettes³ and the quality of Ottoman tobacco increased the importance

¹ Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence*, Routledge, New York 1995, p. 2; Filiz Dıġıroġlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi Trabzon Reji İdaresi 1883-1914*, Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv Araştırma Merkezi, İstanbul, 2007, p. 15.

² Fehmi Yılmaz, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Tütün: Sosyal, Siyasi ve Ekonomik Tahlili 1600-1883*, Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, Marmara University, the Institute of Turkic Studies, İstanbul, 2005, p. 19.

³ For the success of Camel as a mixture of American and Turkish tobacco, see Goodman p.102.

of oriental tobacco in the world-market. For instance, tobacco leaf exports from the empire increased more than three-fold between 1881 and 1911.⁴

The ‘oriental’ tobacco or ‘Turkish blend’ as Europeans called it had a better taste than American tobacco and Europeans turned to Ottoman tobacco, creating a rising demand for it. The nineteenth century was the critical for the development of the tobacco production in the Ottoman territory. Also called “the longest century of the Empire”, the nineteenth century is one of the most complex eras of Ottoman history, marked by efforts to respond to the challenges of the modern era and fundamental social, political, cultural and economic changes. The Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA) was one of the major organizations that emerged in this era and had a profound effect on not only state finances but also economic production patterns in the Empire.

Two words mark late Ottoman history: Chaos and change. These two words shed light on the attempts of a country requiring to catch up with the new world. Western Europe dominated the new world. The Ottoman Empire as a traditionalist structure made an effort to understand and copy the West. The Empire changed its structure, culturally and socially. International actors dislocated the local ones. Remarkable shifts took place in its local, socio-economic and cultural structures.⁵ The traditional state system was updated after European model.⁶ In the late nineteenth century, the people of the Ottoman Empire lived under the combination of modernity and tradition, which caused a kind of chaos not only in their daily lives but also in the State. The Public Debt Administration and the Régie Company are examples of the West European penetration of the Empire. Their establishment changed life in the rural areas dramatically.

The Public Debt Administration was one of the most effective corporations in the Hamidian era. After the economic failure of the State, the Ottoman government

⁴ Can Nacar, *Tobacco Workers in the Late Ottoman Empire: Fragmentation, Conflict, and Collective Struggle*, Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, Binghamton University State University of New York, the Department of History, New York, 2010, p.1.

⁵ Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire (1881-1908) Reactions to European Penetration*, New York University Press, New York, 1983, p. 15.

⁶ Quataert, p. 16.

reached an agreement with its creditors to establish the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in the form of corporation. Its aim was not only to collect revenues but also to teach the Ottomans how to establish a modern financial system. After its foundation, OPDA encouraged the formation of few sister companies for the collections and administration of certain specific revenues. The Régie Company is one of these and it had the opportunity to collect the taxes levied on tobacco in the domestic economy.

Tobacco under the control of the Régie Company's monopolization undermined the traditional trade networks and caused turmoil.⁷ Hence, farmers, merchants, and soldiers became involved in tobacco smuggling, because tobacco had an important value. The story of tobacco smuggling in the Ottoman Empire did not start with the establishment of the Régie Company. According to article three of Regulations of the Régie Company, the government should help this company to stop tobacco smuggling.⁸ The existence of such an article in the formative regulations of the Régie Company indicates that tobacco smuggling predated it in the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the Régie Company is one of the milestones in the history of tobacco smuggling. After its foundation, smuggling increased because tobacco was one of the most appropriate crops to generate cash despite risks. Thus, the smuggling of tobacco is an important social symbol to understand the ordinary people even in today as in the days of the Régie. Those who participated in such enterprises wished themselves and their activities to remain anonymous as much as they possibly could.⁹ On the other hand, the Régie Company as a foreign enterprise gave the smugglers a motive to start an informal trade in the Hamidian era.¹⁰ This is important because in order to evaluate both historical and contemporary manifestation of smuggling, it is essential to understand the legal regimes of the place.¹¹

⁷ Quataert, p. 18.

⁸ Düstur 1st Tertip, v. IV, Dersaadet 1302 p. 332.

⁹ Alan L. Karras, *Smuggling: Contraband and Corruption in World History*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, New York, 2010, p. vii.

¹⁰ Quataert, p. 19.

¹¹ Karras, p. viii.

The informal tobacco trade system is the main subject of this thesis. How did the “smugglers” organize themselves? How did they find, blend, and sell tobacco? Why did the farmers cooperate with traffickers of contraband tobacco? What did the State, the provincial officials and the Régie Company do to prohibit people from trafficking contraband?

Tobacco smuggling was a contested issue between the Régie Company and the State. Different interpretations of smuggling were at the root of the issue. Illicit tobacco traders who were armed and worked together in groups of hundreds of were popularly called *Ayingacı groups* or *Barhane* in the Empire. The Ottoman Archival sources indicated that the government considered these people to be bandits because they caused security problems in the provinces and decreased the revenues of the State. However, the Ottoman government clearly differentiated smugglers from those tobacco producers, tobacco merchants, and manufacturers and sellers of equipment for tobacco production who carried on their activities without receiving permission from the Régie. According to the Régie agreements, these people were smugglers and not different from itinerant tobacco peddlars who traveled from place to place to sell tobacco illegally. The government disagreed with the company and worked to defend their rights. At the same time, the government agreed with the definition of the company to the illicit traders as bandits and used its military power to prevent smuggling and to establish its authority in the provinces. The Régie Company also supported this idea and argued that smuggling was one of the preoccupations of bandits in the provinces and the State should prevent smuggling. In fact, some of the people whom the company labeled as smuggler-bandits were merchants who sold their products illegally. Since the gendarmes and other Ottoman military authorities tried to stop them, they caused security problems in many provinces. Shepherds, bandits, many villagers, and some district governors supported and assisted tobacco smugglers who resisted the monopolization of the main source of their livelihood. Since, this situation challenged and undermined the authority of the government among the people in general, it accepted smugglers as bandits. Yet, the lack of accord between people and the government and the ineffectiveness of provincial governors in many instances made it difficult to develop a permanent solution to the problem of smuggling. More important, central government did not

have sufficiently deeply penetration and effective authority in the provinces to forbid people from trafficking contraband tobacco and similar illegal activities.

1.3. Research Methodology

To write about trafficking of contraband tobacco from the eyes of the tobacco producers and illicit tobacco traders do not mean to defend, protect, or laud their activities. It is an effort to define them from a different perspective. For this reason, the primary purpose of this study is to understand how ‘tobacco smuggling’ worked in the Black-Sea region of the Ottoman Empire. Social historians of tobacco in the Ottoman Empire approach the topic in terms of the social conflict they believe it involved. Interpretation of smuggling as a social reaction to the Régie Company is dominant in academic discussions of the issue among historians.¹² Almost all of the existing studies focus on the Régie Company, what the State did, what kind of economic and technological changes occurred, and finally how the people reacted to these changes and developments. I contend that most of these studies look into tobacco smuggling as a means to understand the Régie Company. Furthermore, these studies, in general try to answer why people became smugglers whether they dealt in salt, tobacco, or another item. No one has tried to explain how ‘smugglers’ organized themselves, how they obtained tobacco, how they blended different crops, and how they marketed and sold their items.

The relationship between ‘the smugglers’ and other social groups is another important problem that remains inadequately addressed. Scholars should try to explain who the smugglers were. Existing academic works tend to focus on meta-narratives of social history and focus on the relationship between the Régie Company police force (*Kolcu*) and the smugglers. They do not shed light on how a group of smugglers found their guns, the products in which they dealt customers, and

¹² For a general discussion about the smuggling activities of tobacco, see Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration* New York University Press New-York 1983, p. 13-41. Filiz Dıġıroġlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi Trabzon Reji İdaresi 1883-1914*, Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv Araştırma Merkezi, İstanbul 2007, p. 103-128. Fatma – Suat Doġruel, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Tekel*, Tekel Yayınları, İstanbul 2000, p. 61-107. Oktay Gökdemir, *Aydın Vilayeti'nde Tütün Rejisi*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, İzmir 1994, p. 72-100.

who helped them. Furthermore, almost all of the studies argue that the company established the kolcu system to pursue and arrest illicit tobacco traders. Yet, the kolcu's main task was to oppress farmers who cultivated tobacco without permit. This study aims at addressing these inadequately answered questions and offering a social and economic history of tobacco smuggling. This effort will also shed light on daily lives in the rural nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, for a study of tobacco smuggling in the late Ottoman Empire should help us understand how the rural population reacted to the ongoing changes around them.

From the State's and Régie's point of view the illicit tobacco traders were bandits. The government commonly used the term *müsellah serseri* and *eşhas-ı müselleha*.¹³ Two different approaches dominate social science studies on bandits in the Ottoman Empire. The first one is Eric Hobsbawm's interpretation of bandits as social protestors.¹⁴ Hobsbawm invented the concept of social bandits in his *Primitive Rebels* published in 1959. He elaborated his argument in *Bandits* published in 1969. His term social banditry explains bandits as primitive rebels who resisted the changes that challenged their livelihood. The second approach is Karen Barkey's explanation of bandits as local despots.¹⁵ It is a response to Hobsbawm's theses. To explain what Hobsbawm and Barkey stated, I will compare three Turkish novels about bandits and smugglers namely Yaşar Kemal's *İnce Memed* (Memed, My Hawk) published in 1955¹⁶, Kemal Tahir's *Rahmet Yolları Kesti*.¹⁷ (Rain Closed The Roads) published in 1957, and Refi' Cevad Ulunay's *Dağlar Kralı Balçıklı Ethem* (also published in 1955).¹⁸ All of these novels are written from the perspective of the bandits. Kemal Tahir and Cevad Ulunay also gave details about the relationship between bandits and smugglers. Both of them leave the impression that some bandits supported smugglers just as some bandits were involved in smuggling while still

¹³ BOA, Y.PRK.DH 14/35, January 3, 1908, Kanunievvel 21, 1323.

¹⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, The New Press, New York, 2000.

¹⁵ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1994.

¹⁶ Yaşar Kemal, *Memed, My Hawk*, translated by Eduard Roditi, The New York Review of Book New York 2005, Originally published by Collins and Harvill Press, London, 1961.

¹⁷ Kemal Tahir, *Rahmet Yolları Kesti*, İthaki Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011.

¹⁸ Refi' Cevad Ulunay, *Dağlar Kralı Balçıklı Ethem*, Arba Yayınları, İstanbul, 1995.

others clashed with smugglers. Yaşar Kemal's protagonist reminds one of Eric Hobsbawm's arguments about bandits and Kemal Tahir's views bring to mind Karen Barkey's ideas. In fact, Hobsbawm and Barkey published their work after Kemal Tahir and Yaşar Kemal published their novels. I argue there are some similarities on their vantage point to the issue. Kemal Tahir wrote his story in response to Yaşar Kemal's representation of bandits as leaders of social resistance against the landlords.¹⁹ As for, Cevad Ulunay's novel, which is overlooked, it offers alternative explanation in the definition of the smuggling, bandits, and kolcus.

In *Memed, My Hawk*, the protagonist Memed, is a farmer. He symbolizes the peasants who are oppressed by landlords. Memed loves a girl but the landlord also desires to marry her. Memed and the girl escape from the village. Eventually, Memed joins the bandits in the mountains and starts to fight against the landlords. The lord, *Abdi Ağa* wants to stop him because Memed's main aim is to change the mind of peasants.²⁰ In Memed's opinion, all farmers should have their own lands and resist landlords toward this end. This motive is similar to those of the social bandits discussed by Eric Hobsbawm. According to Hobsbawm, rebels in nineteenth-century empires had primitive characters. They were the voice of local people but harbingers of the first revolutionaries of the modern era. *Memed, My Hawk* is the story of such a rural hero and enemy of landlords. He takes from the rich and gives to the poor. In other words, he is an Ottoman Robin Hood.

Kemal Tahir's novel offers a very different picture. He explains bandits as people filling in the void of authority in local areas where the state authority wavers. According to Tahir, government authorities, or bandits in the absence of government authorities, oppressed the peasants. He also explains the relationship between bandits and bureaucrats. Like Barkey, he sees bandits as toys of urban elites. He also creates a character that desires to become a famous bandit. According to Tahir, the main aim of this young man in the novel was to acquire power. Tahir points to the ignorance of bandits to explain how clever urban elites manipulated them. Tahir gives many clues about the relationship between smuggling and bandits. His knowledge of the social history of the late Ottoman Empire enchanted many people, including the owner of

¹⁹ Special thanks to Ahmet Özcan for his thought provoking article namely "Eşkiyanın 'Adi' Şiddetinin Siyasallığı ve Yasa Yapıcı Mirası", *Kebikeç*, no: 34/2012, p. 7-23 and his guidance to develop my ideas.

²⁰ Özcan, p. 8.

this thesis. He gives such details about tobacco smuggling as the people's desire for smuggled tobacco and the importance of horses for smugglers. According to him, a smuggler always chooses the best horse possible and for this reason bandits always desire to get a smuggler's horse. Indeed, the tobacco smugglers of the Province of Trabzon used horses from Canik, because those horses were stronger and sprightlier than others were.²¹

Karen Barkey explains bandits similarly.²² According to her, bandits were pragmatic people who used the gaps in the system and conducted themselves to gain more power. In this relationship, they unwillingly served the wishes of provincial elites because they supposed to conduct power. She argued they gained more power in the provinces when the State lost its control over society. According to Barkey,

Bandits did not come together of their own will; they were brought together by societal elites for the interests of these elites. Banditry was thus an artificial social construction that became a threat, was used as a pseudo-threat, or was co-opted into the governing machinery of the state depending on the needs of the ruling class. Its rebellion did not represent collective action in the traditional sense since it did not attempt to destroy the social structure of society; it simply wanted to derive as much utility from society as possible. It manipulated the interstices of the system, having no proclaimed ally or enemy and no significant ideology.²³

Barkey's observations on banditry depend on conditions that a long crisis generated in the Empire in the seventeenth century. Generalizing her ideas about the bandits to all periods of the Ottoman history would be misleading. Besides, Barkey appear to reify the State or State elites, who, she holds controlled bandits virtually at will.

Eric Hobsbawm does not differentiate between peasants and bandits because he, similar to Yaşar Kemal describes bandits as peasants who rebelled against authority.

²¹ Ahmet Yüksel, "Türkiye'de Tütüncülerin Kaçakçılışma Sürecinde Kolculuğun Baskısını İki Kolcunun Tercüme-i Halinden Anlama Denemesi", *Kebikeç*, no: 34/2012, p. 185-199.

²² Karen Barkey understood Kemal Tahir's novel as an example of social banditry. See Barkey, p.180; Özcan, p. 12.

²³ Barkey, p. 152.

The point about social bandits is that they are peasant outlaws whom the lord and state regard as criminals but who remain within peasant society, and are considered by their people as heroes, as champions, avengers, fighters for justice, perhaps even leaders of liberation and in any case as men to be admired helped and supported.²⁴

Neither Hobsbawm nor Barkey deal with tobacco smugglers as a separate group. Their perspectives are not very helpful to explain trafficking of contraband tobacco. Armed smugglers might have bandits but in general, they were more complex individuals than those that Karen Barkey or Eric Hobsbawm's interpretations suggest. For instance, they were not social bandits reacting to suppression. Many tobacco producers and tobacco merchants criticized smugglers because they placed a strain on tobacco producers and tobacco merchants. At the same time, many tobacco producers sold their crops to smugglers to gain more income. They did not mind dealing with smugglers although they were well aware that the government and the Régie Company considered tobacco smugglers as bandits. Tobacco smugglers acted against a monopolistic foreign company but which was, in a sense, a partner of the Ottoman government. This situation, too adds to the complexity of the business of tobacco smuggling and of the attitudes of the people who joined the ranks of tobacco smugglers. Thus many social scientist who build their arguments according to the two paradigms or approaches indicated above explain bandits and smuggling sometimes as social revolutionaries and sometimes not. We should take into consideration a group of smugglers could be bandits, burglars, or social protestors at the same time. They could simply be farmers as well, farmers who desired to add to their income and took risks for that end.

Cevad Ulunay's novel opens a new path for scholars who look for alternative explanations. In Ulunay's *Dağlar Kralı* the main character *Balçıklı Ethem* is a bandit who controlled the Asian districts of greater Istanbul's as well as Gebze and Çınarcık. He is one of most famous bandits in Istanbul. One of his main aims is to eliminate the Rum bandits of Şile. One day a man escapes from jail while the gendarmes are transporting him to prison. He finds Ethem and joins the gang. This man is very clever and begins to guide Ethem. He becomes a famous bandit in Istanbul in a short time. After a short time, he decides to change his life and leaves

²⁴ Hobsbawm, p. 20.

Istanbul. He takes a nickname, and goes to Bursa and then moves to Konya. He applies to the Régie Company for a suitable job. The director employs him as kolcu. The twist here is that he used to protect tobacco smugglers when he was a bandit in Istanbul. After he joins the Régie Company, he becomes the most dangerous kolcu for smugglers. He first fights other kolcus because they do not try to prevent smuggling. He realizes that kolcus co-operated with the smugglers. For instance, kolcus light a fire on the roads and when smugglers see the light, they change their way. He informs the company of this situation and the company promotes him to the position of master kolcu. After that, he becomes the most effective kolcu in the prevention of smuggling.

Ulunay's views of bandits and smugglers are different from Yaşar Kemal's. Like Kemal Tahir, Ulunay explains bandits as people who oppressed the weak. In addition, he holds that a bandit's main urge was to seek power. In his novel, the bandit who guided Ethem and who helped the smugglers become the most effective power of the Régie against smugglers. According to him, bandits symbolized the continuity of the old social structure. They were against the changes in the system. A bandit should protect and support smugglers, protect some people and destroy others. However, a kolcu should prohibit people from contraband. Ulunay leaves one with the impression that whether bandit or kolcu doing one's job right mattered most. When this was the case, when a person performed according to the role that was expected of him, people praised him as mythologized the best of them.²⁵ For this reason the character of Ulunay who guided Ethem became the subject matter of a popular myth whether as a bandit or as a kolcu. He was good at whatever his job was. His story suggest that explaining bandits or smugglers as social protestors or people who oppress the vulnerable in the society is to save the day. It is not important if they were social protestors like Robin Hood or tyrants. The important thing is that they did their job right, true to images associated with that job.

This thesis argues that, these people were not heroes but they also did not regularly oppress people. Instead of focusing this issue, and creating a Robin Hood or tyrant from a bandit or a smuggler, this thesis will try to explain how they worked and why they continued in such an occupation. Smugglers were not homogenous groups. If we were to adopt the Régie's perspective, we would recognize that

²⁵ As a similar comparison see Özcan, p.7-25.

“smugglers” included a very broad range of people. On the one hand, there were tobacco producers and owners of tobacco shops who sold their crop without paying taxes. Likewise, many peasants cultivated and sold tobacco illegally because of the harsh conditions imposed by the Régie Company. On the other hand, there were also groups composed of hundreds of people who stored, blended, and sold tobacco illegally. This thesis differentiates these two different groups of “smugglers” to explain the reaction of the government and the Régie Company against smuggling. This study also strives to understand if there was a social protest dimension (and other motives) to smuggling activities which aimed at making a living fundamentally.

An examination of the folk songs about smugglers included in *Ayınacı Türküleri* would suggest smugglers were patriots. One can read these songs as an illustration of the invention of a tradition. For example, Régie kolcus killed five tobacco smugglers in 1885. These people were from a well-known family in the village including the *ağa* (landlord) of the village. After their death, the villagers created the elegy called *Karaşar Zeybeği* to lament the death.²⁶ Why the villagers sing a song for the death of these men? Perhaps the villagers hated Régie kolcus. Perhaps they wanted to honor these people because they were from an *ağa* family. Perhaps, because they were afraid of the *ağa*'s family and wanted to be on their better side.²⁷ One can think of other explanations of the villagers' behavior. Scholars who believe smugglers were social protestors explain such songs as an expression of the sadness of villagers in the face of such repressive situations. This school tends to represent all crimes involving smugglers as a social protest of sorts.²⁸ However, explaining smuggling activities as social protest does not clarify the issue. I argue that the songs, rather than the act of smuggling as such, manifest moods of social protest. People, felt desperate because a foreign monopolistic company controlled a major source of their livelihood (whether in production and trading) and their

²⁶ Süleyman Şenel, “Ayınacı Türküleri,” *Tütün Kitabı*, Emine Gürsoy Naskali, Kitabevi İstanbul, 2005, p. 365.

²⁷ A verse of the song: Zeybekleri yaylalarda bastılar/Çepkenimi çam dalına astılar/Beş kardeşi bir tahtada kestiler/Öldürmen Hüseyin'i kıymayın Ali'ye/Kelleleri bahşiş gitti valiye. Quoted from Süleyman Şenel, “Ayınacı Türküleri,” *Tütün Kitabı*, p. 368.

²⁸ Özcan, p. 13.

government failed or seemed unable to protect their economic interest. Out of this desperation, they expressed their protest discursively.

1.4 Literature Review

Social scientists working on Ottoman history do not address the smuggling issue directly. Scholars who write about the Régie Company or the integration of the Ottoman Empire into the modern economic systems explain the smuggling issue as a reaction of the society to changes in traditional economic relationships. Donald Quataert's thought-provoking book, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration* is a case in point.²⁹ Quataert's wrote his book in 1983. It continues to influence discussions about the Régie Company in the context of the issues of late Ottoman history. The second chapter of the book is about the Régie Company, smugglers, and their relationships with the government. Quataert explains the roles of these three groups. By way of conclusion, he compares the social resistance to tobacco monopolies in the Ottoman Empire and in Iran. His main argument is the merchants and ulema supported the popular boycott against the foreign (British) tobacco monopoly. The boycott forced the government to revoke the agreement that had created the monopoly but in return for a huge indemnity. The consequent financial instability further undermined Iran's sovereignty. According to Quataert, the Ottoman workers did not have any support from the ulema and merchants and the resistance to the Régie Company was not as effective as in Iran but this may have helped avoid direct foreign intervention the deepening of the financial problems and [further] compromise of Ottoman sovereignty.³⁰

Quataert's interpretation of contraband traffic is the smuggling of tobacco increased at the time of the Régie Company because of two factors. First, the Régie Company was a foreign element in the state. Quataert mentions how Hodja Hasan agitated the people in Giresun against dealing with a foreign Christian company that

²⁹ For a review of Quataert's book, see Engin Deniz Akarli (1986). "Review of Donald Quataert 'Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reactions to European Economic Penetration'", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, v. 18, p. 391-393.

³⁰ Quataert, p. 39.

the Régie Company was in his discourse.³¹ Yet, there is no evidence that people heeded the agitations of this religious man. Quataert does not mention any other specific example of the projection of smugglers as symbols of popular resistance against the penetration of foreigners into the tobacco sector. Popular resistance implies cooperation and organization among the people in general.³² Quataert's discussion of smugglers does not provide evidence showing tobacco smugglers were involved in such a movement.

Quataert's second argument is that growing tobacco did not bring an adequate income to farmers because the prices offered by the Régie Company remained too low and the company did not provide additional facilities such as storehouses.³³ This is an important observation. It explains why a farmer would join the smugglers or cooperate with them. However, it does not explain the smuggling networks, which involved not only farmers but also many people from society such as soldiers, bandits, and even provincial administrative officials in certain places.

Another vital study on smuggling is Filiz Dıġıroġlu's book on the Trabzon Régie Administration 1883-1914. Her third chapter is on reaction to the Régie's practices and its measures against them. It focuses on smuggling and the Régie's response to it in Trabzon. She argues that scholars who study tobacco smuggling in late Ottoman history should first identify the term smuggling. Dıġıroġlu questions explanations of tobacco smugglers as social protestors.³⁴ According to her, tobacco smuggling did not start with the foundation of the Régie Company and for this reason it would not be possible to explain smuggling in terms of social resistance against a foreign monopoly. In addition, Dıġıroġlu explains the role of tobacco merchants, provincial rulers and State officials in tobacco smuggling. Like Quataert, she also argues that smuggling increased because of the Régie's maltreatment of tobacco producers and tobacco merchants.

³¹ Quataert, p. 39.

³² Akarlı, p. 392.

³³ Dıġıroġlu, p. 70-77.

³⁴ Dıġıroġlu, p. 105.

Dıđırođlu also holds that the government did not stop tobacco smuggling because of its provisionist outlook and policies³⁵, using a term first introduced by Mehmet Gen. ³⁶ Mehmet Gen uses the term to describe the policies that the Ottoman government adopted to assure the provisioning of necessities in urban centers. According to Dıđırođlu, provisionism reflects a commitment to the basic wellbeing of society, and it was for this reason that the government protected the rights of tobacco producers against the company. She argues the basic means of livelihood for these people was tobacco cultivation and consequently the government allowed them to sell their crop illegally.³⁷

Dıđırođlu's argument may appear to be a questionable generalization, but she implies the company and the State had different approaches to smuggling and bandits. The company accepted as smugglers those who cultivated tobacco without the required license. The State argued that, smugglers were those people who traveled to many cities and villages to sell contraband tobacco. For instance, the Rgie Company tried to remove the crops that were grown without permission in Yanya in 1904. However, the government argued that the tobacco crops had already matured and the farmers had begun to blend their crops. If the governor allowed the uprooting of crops of the farmers would be unable to grow another crop this late in the season. Hence, the government prevented the Rgie Company from ripping out the tobacco crop grown without permit.³⁸ According to the Rgie Company, growing tobacco without permission was smuggling. Yet, the State held growing tobacco had to be treated differently from trafficking contraband. It is my contention that, Dıđırođlu's point indicated above the State's commitment to its subjects' wellbeing should help explain why it adopted a different position about the meaning of smuggling compared to the Rgie Company, Her point also helps us understand why the tobacco producers rebuffed the Rgie's low prices and sold their plants to

³⁵ Dıđırođlu, p. 106.

³⁶ According to Mehmet Gen, Ottoman economy based on three pillars namely fiscalism, traditionalism and provisionism. See Mehmet Gen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluđu'nda Devlet ve Ekonomi*, tken Neřriyat, İstanbul, 2009.

³⁷ Dıđırođlu, p. 106.

³⁸ Mehmet Temel, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Son Dneminde Ttn Politikası ve Artan Ttn Kaakılıđı", *Toplumsal Tarih*, April 2001, p. 5-6.

someone else. However, we still need to explain the formations of ‘*barhane*’, which was the local name of smuggling groups that consisted of hundreds of smugglers and bandits.

Dıġıroġlu’s book is one of the best on smuggling. She gives the names and activities of the best-known smugglers in Trabzon and explains how the State’s inactivity diminished their effectiveness in the rural areas.³⁹ Her views about the pacification of smugglers are similar to the ideas of Karen Barkey⁴⁰. Barkey notes the state pacifies/neutralizes bandits in three different ways, namely, by destroying them, giving them an official position, or playing them against each other. Moreover, Dıġıroġlu makes a distinction between bandits and smugglers in the first part of her third chapter. She explains the differences between the definition of the State and the Régie Company of the term bandit. These distinctions are crucial. They help explain why the State did not accept the Régie Company’s requests to consider tobacco farmers as smugglers. In addition, Dıġıroġlu shows us how modernization developed along with the centralization of the State.

Oktay Gökdemir’s dissertation also gives crucial data about the Régie Company, tobacco smugglers, and the position of the government.⁴¹ He writes about the Aydın Régie Administration. His research is based on not only Ottoman archival sources but also the documents of the Régie Administration and local newspapers. Hence, he provides new information on such matters as the numbers of kolcus in the Province of Aydın, the distribution of these people by gender and specialization and the expenditures of the company for surveillance and security in the selected cities of the Empire.⁴² These data help scholars to create an alternative definition about the Régie kolcus. He also uses the folk songs about tobacco smuggling such as “Çökertme Türküsü” and tries to explain how people created myths. He tends to interpret these songs as proof of smuggler’s innocence. However, unlike Dıġıroġlu, he does not try to define the term smuggling. For this reason, while he criticized the

³⁹ Dıġıroġlu, p. 108.

⁴⁰ See Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, Cornell University Press, New York, 1997.

⁴¹ Oktay Gökdemir, *Aydın Vilayeti’nde Tütün Rejisi*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, İzmir, 1994.

⁴² Gökdemir, p. 105, 106.

kolcus' massacres of tobacco producers, he justifies the job smuggling because he explained all clashes between tobacco producers and the Régie kolcus as the clashes between smugglers and the security forces.⁴³ Hence, he argues that smuggling was the only effective way of resistance for tobacco producers to a foreign company that controlled and restricted their livelihood.⁴⁴ His interpretation is similar to the arguments of Quataert and Dıġıroġlu. He also discusses the reasons behind smuggling and argues that the Régie Company's maltreatment was the main problem that increased tobacco smuggling. In addition, he focused on the role of the provincial administrators. According to him, the Régie Company's success depended on the assistance of provincial administrators. For example, he explains how tobacco cultivation was prohibited in the Karput Island because most of the producers sold their crops to smugglers.⁴⁵ Similarly, Dıġıroġlu mentions how the authorities considered the prohibition of tobacco cultivation in Rize. These examples point to the limitations of the ability of the company and the government to establish and exert their authority in the country.

Mehmet Kılıç's master thesis is another study sheds light on smuggling in a different region of the Empire.⁴⁶ He focuses on the importation of tonbaku (water-pipe tobacco) from Iran into the Ottoman Empire. In his fourth chapter, he tries to explain the smuggling in Iraq, Yemen, and Hejaz. His main argument is that the Tonbaku monopoly of Iran affected the attitudes of the Shiite Ulema and merchants. Their co-operation increased smuggling day by day. He also argues that the state did not prevent smuggling because it could not pay for the cost of expanding its security forces. The solution of the Ottoman government and the Tonbaku Monopoly was to decrease the price charged for tonbaku in order to compete with smugglers.⁴⁷ His study explains the financial and economic background of smuggling. While he builds well-developed arguments about illicit trade across the Ottoman-Iranian

⁴³ Gökdemir, p. 108.

⁴⁴ Gökdemir, p. 82.

⁴⁵ Gökdemir, p. 87.

⁴⁶ Mehmet Kılıç, *Importation of Ottoman Tonbaku From Iran and Its Implications: 1891-1914*, Unpublished Master Thesis, Boġazici University, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Istanbul, 2008.

⁴⁷ Kılıç, p. 70.

border and in many provinces of the Empire, he skips a careful explanation of the notions of smuggling and smuggler. Apart from this criticism, his work is a valuable contribution to the field and helped to the formation of this study.

The ‘Smugglers’ whom the government called “bandits” were a part of the Ottoman society. Social scientists know little about their organization and how they conducted their work. The government initiated reforms to westernize its social, cultural, and economic system. The consequent changes disrupted traditional structures. Smuggling emerged as a major issue in such an environment. For this reason, smugglers’ activities were not only a means to earn a livelihood but also a resistance to the capitalist relations of production.

I choose the term ‘the informal/illicit traders of tobacco’ to describe the smuggling groups that consisted of hundred of people. The tobacco producers who lost even the little power they had in the markets and began to look for alternative opportunities. They began to sell their crops to the smugglers or directly joined the smuggling groups. The government must have been aware of the tensions and therefore differentiated tobacco producers who cultivated tobacco without permission from armed tobacco traders who caused security problems in the Empire. Tobacco, as a valuable crop, that generated significant income for its producers and traders. This value may have been the most crucial motivation of people to continue illicit trade, in tobacco products despite its high risks.

1.5. Research Background

This research is based on primary sources such as Ottoman archival documents and documents of the Régie Company. There exist hundreds of documents directly refer to smuggling activities in the Black-Sea region. Reports prepared by senior Ottoman officials and the Régie Company administrators provide a helpful framework within which to combine the available information. In addition, oral and written sources from villages and towns in the Black-Sea region shed light on the everyday life of ordinary people.

The thesis takes into consideration the relevant secondary sources as well, such as articles, theses, and books. Various local and international analyses related to smuggling activities provide statistical information about the number of smugglers

and the effects of the socio-political implications. Although there are no books written on smuggling networks, a number of articles address the topic. Newspapers and folk songs provide some clues about the paths of smugglers and their effects on society. Thus, this study is depends on governmental and international reports, oral, and written local sources, in addition to articles, journals, books, and works related to the tobacco smuggling in Late Ottoman history.

The main questions that the thesis tries to answer are the following. Who were the tobacco smugglers in the Black-Sea region? What was the relationship between the Régie Company, the State, and the local actors? How did the State and the company react against smuggling? What was the role of Régie kolcu system? How did smugglers organize themselves? While trying to answer these and similar questions, I should be able to develop ideas also on historiographical perspective that can best explain the smugglers' place in society.

CHAPTER II

2. The Effect of Imperialism

2.1. A Brief History from the Tanzimat to the Ottoman Public Debt Administration

The most important economic process of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the economic integration of different nations and regions into the capitalist world system dominated by Western European countries.⁴⁸ The Ottoman Empire joined this system in the nineteenth century. During this period, "liberal" notions of progress dominated worldviews in Europe at large.⁴⁹ Another feature of the period was the rise of the centralized modern bureaucratic state systems –as a facilitator of coordination and economic progress, among other reasons.

The Ottoman State signed free-trade treaties with the major European states in 1838-41 and initiated a new series of reorganizational reforms known as the *Tanzimat* in 1839. The *Tanzimat* marked the period from 1839 to 1876. Although, social scientists still discuss when the *Tanzimat* period ended, 1876 is a reasonable suggestion because reforms shifted to the Palace from the Sublime Porte (*Bab-ı Ali*) in 1876.⁵⁰ The *Tanzimat* era saw vital socio-economic developments occurred although these developments also induced the virtual bankruptcy of the State.⁵¹ Nothing obstructed the achievement of the *Tanzimat* reforms more than insufficient economic resources.⁵² The State did not have sufficient tax-income to finance new

⁴⁸ Emine Kıray, *Osmanlı'da Ekonomik Yapı ve Dış Borçlar*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1993, p. 13.

⁴⁹ Quoted from the MTS 503 Late Ottoman History Lecture Notes of Professor Engin Deniz Akarlı.

⁵⁰ Carter V. Findley, "Tanzimat", *The Cambridge History of Turkey, v.4 Turkey in the Modern World*, Reşat Kasaba, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, p. 11.

⁵¹ Findley, p. 60.

⁵² Carter V. Findley, *Turkey Islam Nationalism and Modernity*, Yale University Press, London, 2010, p. 106.

reforms.⁵³ The reason for the lack of resources was due to the Ottoman economic system,⁵⁴ which depended on agriculture where productivity level remained low. In addition, as part of its financial problems, the government could collect agricultural taxes such as aşar and agnam only irregularly.⁵⁵

One of the main aims of the *Tanzimat* Edict was to abolish all monopolies in the Empire. Although, there were crucial transformations in every age of Ottoman history, the *Tanzimat* marked the end of the old-classical regime and the beginning of a new system. The *Tanzimat* elite initiated profound changes in most of the traditional Ottoman practices such as those in taxation, and governance, as well as the economic structure. However, the re-institutionalization of the state ran into fiscal problems leading to the foundation of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration.

The Ottoman government organization underwent crucial changes in the nineteenth century. The process began with the efforts to build a new military order (*Nizam-ı Cedid*), continued via the elimination of the Janissary corps, and reached a new turn with the Edict of *Tanzimat*. The *Tanzimat* Edict proclaimed the need for administrative and fiscal change. The emphasis was on streamlining and strengthening the central government organization. In economic matters, a free market economy was accepted in general. The edict underlined the need to abolish all monopolistic (*Yed-i Vahid*) practices or privileges.⁵⁶ The creation of a more modern central government and a more liberal economy called for large investments. The Finance Officials tried to find some solutions but all of these were short-range solutions such as returning to the *iltizam* system, debasement of coins (*tağşiş*) and printing of paper money (*kaim*).⁵⁷ In 1854, the Crimean War led to extraordinary expenditures. The Ottoman leadership looked for new opportunities and borrowed

⁵³ Kıray, p. 15.

⁵⁴ Edhem Eldem, “Bağımlılık ve Gelişme Arasında Bir Kurum: Osmanlı Bankası” *Türkler Ansiklopedisi*, Hasan Celal Güzel & Kemal Çiçek & Salim Koca, Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, Ankara, 2002, v. 14, p. 416.

⁵⁵ Eldem, p. 416.

⁵⁶ Donald Quataert, “Tanzimat Döneminde Ekonominin Temel Problemleri” *Tanzimat Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, Halil İnalcık & Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu, İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011, p. 732.

⁵⁷ Eldem, p. 416.

from international money market to close the gap in the treasury. This was the beginning of foreign debt in the Ottoman Empire.

A country can borrow from abroad in order to combat economic backwardness but if the original borrowing does not result in the development of productive capacity at home at sufficient levels to service the external debt, then the net effect of such external borrowing is unfavorable to the economy of that country.⁵⁸

From 1854 to 1874, the State took on fifteen foreign loans but the leaders of the *Tanzimat era* did not succeed to increase the productive capacity of the country at a level commensurate with the ever-rising interest rates of its debts. The economy and hence government revenue grew but this growth lagged behind the rising expenditures. Sultan Abdulmecit reluctantly agreed to a government to loan of 5.5 million Ottoman liras in 1854.⁵⁹ This loan was to finance the war.⁶⁰ However, the money was not enough to meet the costs of the war. For this reason, the state borrowed another large sum from a company, the Rothschild Brothers. This debt was a turning point in the Ottoman Empire, because the State permitted two foreign inspectors to check the use of the money.⁶¹ This was the initial step in European involvement in the management of debt payment. The borrowing of money continued because the economic measures of the *Tanzimat era* did not create sufficiently high productive capacity and the economy remained weak. The Ottoman Empire accepted the foundation of the Ottoman Bank with European help in order to find creditors that were more suitable and to create a reliable banking and finance systems. This attempt did not solve all of the fiscal problems, as the state continued to borrow in order to pay older debts.

⁵⁸ Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Problem of External Pressures, Power Struggles, and Budgetary Deficits in Ottoman Politics Under Abdulhamid II (1876-1909): Origins and Solutions*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, the Department of Near Eastern Studies, New-Jersey, May 1976, p. 148. Also see Engin Deniz Akarlı, "Economic Policy and Budgets in Ottoman Turkey 1876-1909", *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 28 No: 3 1992, p. 443-476.

⁵⁹ Biltekin Özdemir, *Osmanlı Devleti Dış Borçları: 1854-1924 Döneminde Yüzyıl Süren Boyunduruk*, Maliye Bakanlığı Strateji Geliştirme Başkanlığı Yayınları, Ankara, 2010, p. 49.

⁶⁰ Özdemir, p. 50.

⁶¹ Özdemir, p. 50.

The State deferred the payment on its debts. The Ottoman treasury went practically bankrupt because it had to pay very high levels of interest in 1876. It was no longer possible to manage the finance by borrowing new loans. The State was indebted internally as well. In 1879, it established the *Rusum-i Sitte İdaresi* to service its internal debt and put it under the responsibility of the *Galata* Bankers, the state's main internal creditors. This unit administered the revenues from six most reliable sources namely the taxes from tobacco, salt, stamps, spirits, fisheries, and silk. This successful arrangement in debt payment inspired the arrangements made to organize the payment of the state's external debt. After a series of negotiations, the government, the representatives of its external creditors (European holders of Ottoman government bonds) and the Galata bankers agreed to the establishment of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA) in 1881. The government put certain revenue sources, including the six sources indicated above, and their management under the responsibility of OPDA. A seven-member executive committee ran OPDA. One member represented the Dutch, Belgian and British bondholders. Five members represented the French, German, Austrian, Italian and Ottoman creditors, respectively. The seventh member was assigned to the Ottoman Bank.⁶² Thus, the European creditors of the Ottoman government gained the right to control a significant part of Ottoman tax revenue and to influence the production and distribution patterns of the sources of these revenues, including the tobacco sector.

Europeans understood that the institutionalization was the basic principle of a liberal economic system and the Ottoman Empire should improve its technology, bureaucracy, and finances. Hence, they desired to directly control the revenues. Having a more suitable and stable market for their products and money to pay for them would create a win-win situation. This was the history of dependency and development in the Ottoman Empire. In this context, dependency did not have necessarily negative consequences. Dependency on European markets also provided many opportunities for the Ottoman economy.⁶³

⁶² Donald C. Blaisdell, *European Financial Control In The Ottoman Empire*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1929, p. 90.

⁶³ See Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisinde Bağımlılık ve Büyüme*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005.

In brief, what caused the foundation of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration was, not only internal reasons such as the creation of a central system without a powerful finance branch, and the abolition of monopolies that created less powerful merchants who could not compete with their Europeans competitors, but also external reasons such as foreign debt, the great depression and European interests.

Consequently, a state desiring to westernize its system while abolishing all monopolies gave the right to manage its main revenues as a monopoly to foreign creditors. However, the Ottomans saw OPDA as a lesser evil than the establishment of an international committee that controlled Ottoman resources and finances, as it was the case in Egypt.⁶⁴ After that time, OPDA was like a poniard in the Empire's chest. If the state rid itself off this poniard, it would die in a short time. However, the State learned how to live with a poniard in its chest. In fact, OPDA provided some opportunities to the State. The statistics show, after a short time, OPDA employed more officials than the Ministry of Finance. Furthermore, OPDA, which controlled more than a quarter of Ottoman revenues, showed the Ottomans how to create a modern system in financial administration and tax management.

2.2. Tobacco from Tanzimat to the Régie

The history of tobacco production from *Tanzimat* to the establishment of the Régie Company reflects the economic and social processes that the state desired to change in the *Tanzimat era*. In this part, I will focus on changes in the taxation of tobacco and the effects of illicit trade on the transformation of the taxation system. The State tried to establish a State monopoly over tobacco because tobacco's addictive nature makes its taxation of rates that yield high revenue possible.

As argued above, one of the main aims of the *Tanzimat* was to regulate taxes. There were fixed (*maktu*) taxes before the *Tanzimat*.⁶⁵ After the *Tanzimat*, the State changed these fixed taxes with the tithe, *-öşür-* and tried to collect it regularly. In addition to the tithe, there were some taxes such as the *zer'iyye resmi* or the *humus*

⁶⁴ Akarlı, p. 184.

⁶⁵ For the changes in taxation of tobacco before *Tanzimat*, see Fehmi Yılmaz, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Tütün: Sosyal, Siyasi ve Ekonomik Tahlili 1600-1883*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Marmara University, the Institute of Turkic Studies, İstanbul, 2005.

öşür in the 1850's, but these taxes were not suitable in accordance to the treaties with the Europeans. Hence, the State abrogated the taxes except tithe but in 1856, license fee *-Ruhsatiye resmi-* was added to the tithe.⁶⁶ Since the Crimean War destroyed the finances of the State, the State doubled this new tax and requested that all peasants who grew tobacco to pay it. It was not helpful for the State because the price of tobacco rapidly increased. More importantly, people turned to smuggling activities to escape these taxes.

The State established the first tobacco monopoly in 1861-2. The report of Fuad Pasha is very informative about changes in tobacco related taxes.⁶⁷ The main goal of the State was to control and gain money from all processes related to tobacco in the market. In 1862, Tobacco Regulations (*Duham Nizamnamesi*) prohibited the importation of tobacco and established a state monopoly over tobacco production and sales. However, the illegal trade of tobacco was not clinched. The government tried to stop smuggling by controlling the entrance of the cities and countries.⁶⁸ Another new rule was to dispossess smugglers of tobacco and to reward the people

⁶⁶ See Fatma-Suat Doğruel, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Tekel*, Tekel Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000.

⁶⁷ BOA DH-İD no: 32866/2, 21 February 1862, 9 September 1278. Quoted from Coşkun Çakır, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Maliyesi*, Küre Yayınları, İstanbul 2001.

“... Devlet-i ‘Aliyyeleri için mesârîfın açığını kapatmak ve düyûnunu tesviye etmek zımında iki memba-yı sahiha müracâ`at etmek lazım gelüb bunun birisi tezyîd-i vâridât ve diğeri istikrâz maddeleridir. Memâlik-i şâhânelerinde umum vergü şahsa nisbet olundukda takriben âdem başına kırk beş kuruş düşüb İngiltere’de üç yüz ve Fransa’da iki yüz elli kuruşdan ziyade olduğu umûr-ı maliyyeden (malumeden) olarak şahıs üzerine ziyade vergü düşmesi servet-i ahâlinin alâmeti olmağla vergü-yi şahsi az olan yerlerde vergüsü ağır olan yerlere nisbetle tarh olunmak lazım gelmez ise de memâlik-i şâhânelerinin bazı yerlerinde vergünün tarh usûlü hakkında ıslahat-ı lâzimeye teşebbüs olunmakla beraber ekser taraflarında bu usul mükemmel bir halde bulunmadığı ya’ni pek çok yerlerde vergünün miktarı dün olduğu cihetle tahammülü olan yerlere âid olmak üzere vergü-yi umûminin zamâime kabiliyyeti olduğu misillü vâridât-ı öşriyyenin bir çoğu mültezimler ellerinden kurtarılarak onlara â’id olan kâr ve temettu ile beraber doğrudan doğruya ahâli üzerine ihâle kılınmış olduğu ve evrâk-ı sâhiha ve patent gibi her devlette vâridât-ı külliye veren şeylerin nizâmâtı tecdîd ve ıslâh kılındığı cihetle bunlardan vâridât-ı külliye hâsıl olacağı misillü mu’ahharan düvel-i mütehâbbe ile müceddeden `akd ve tanzim kılınmış olan mu`âhedât-ı cedide-yi ticaret iktizaâsınca tütün ve tuz maddeleri yed-i vâhid usulüne girüb bunun ihtiyacât-ı zaruriyyeden bir şey olmayub sırf sefâhate müte`allik olmasıyla her devlette bundan vâridât-ı külliye istihsal olduğu cihetle memâlik-i şâhânelerinde dahi emr-i zira`ate hâlel vermeyecek suretle sarfiyât-ı dahiliyyesinde memleketin müsait ve mütehammil olduğu yolda rüsûmat alınarak ibtidâ-yı emirde düvel-i sâirenin istihsal ettiği derecede olmaz ise de yine bir külliyyatlı âaridat istihsal edeceği ...”

⁶⁸ Metin Ünal, “Tütünün Dörtüzyüz Yılı”, *Tütün Kitabı*, p. 23; Dıġıroġlu, p. 22.

who reported the smugglers.⁶⁹ When this attempt did not create the expected revenue for the State, it gave the tobacco monopoly to a local company under the control of two Galata bankers namely Zarifi Efendi and Hristaki Efendi.⁷⁰ The local company had right to collect tobacco revenues from the many districts of greater Istanbul and some cities in the Marmara region. Many people including Namık Kemal criticized this new company,⁷¹ but Istanbul Régie Company, did not make the extravagant profits for which Namık Kemal accused it. Its managers chose to exit the tobacco sector because they did not gain the expected revenues.⁷²

When the Istanbul Régie Company failed, the officials decided to collect all tobacco crops in the *Rüsumat* (Revenues) storehouses and give it to traders after they paid the tax.⁷³ The first monopoly was established when these attempts did not solve the problem of contraband trafficking. They created the tobacco monopoly because the State officials thought that, tobacco smuggling would be prohibited if the State bought all tobacco crops directly from the producers and sold it to merchants. In 1874, the government promulgated a new regulation to allow everyone who desired to grow tobacco in the Empire.⁷⁴ The most important measure that this regulation introduced was the obligation to put band-rolls on all tobacco packages. Thus, the

⁶⁹ Dıġıroġlu, p. 22, *Düstur* v. 1 n. 3 p. 364.

⁷⁰ Haydar Kazgan, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Şirketleşme*, Creative Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 1999, p. 106.

⁷¹ For a criticism of the Istanbul Regie Administration see Namık Kemal's article in *İbret* v.30/18 October 1872; Mustafa Nihat Özön, *Namık Kemal ve İbret Gazetesi*, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 1998, p.143-148; İsmail Kara, Nergis Yılmaz Aydoġdu, *Namık Kemal Osmanlı modernleşmesinin meseleleri 1*, Dergah Yayınları, İstanbul, 2005, p. 157-162.

“Avrupa tezgahlarında fenn-i hukuk öğrenenler; bu ne demek efendim, üç beş kişiden mürekkep bir şirket teşkil etsin, İstanbul'da ticaretiyle ve tütün çıkan eyalette ziraatiyle meşgul olan onbinlerce ve belki yüzbinlerce âhrâr-i beşeri hizmetkarlık nâmında olan esâret-i sâhîhâya mecburiyet halinde bulundursun. Tütünü Petro eksin, Mariçe toplaşın, Yanko kurutsun, Manol bohçalasın, Zahari İstanbul'a getirsin, Kostaki ayırsın, Mihail kıysın, Panayot destelesin; bunların cümlesi mâhsûl-i saylarıyla karınlarını doyurmaya muktedir olmasın; Zarifi, Hristaki ellerin sıcak sudan soğuk suya sokmadıkları halde tütün sayesinde milyonlarca para kazansın. Böyle şeyler hukukun hangi kâ'idesine tevâfuk eder diyorlar...” Özön, p. 148.

⁷² Dıġıroġlu, p. 26; Kazgan, p. 106.

⁷³ Dıġıroġlu, p. 22 notes 60.

⁷⁴ Kazgan, p. 107; BOA İ.MM no: 2048, 6 July 1873; Doğruel, p. 53.

so-called “Band-roll” System began. According to the new regulations, cigarettes packaged without a band-roll would be treated as smuggled tobacco.⁷⁵ The Band-roll system continued for five years until the foundation of the Rüşum-i Sitte (Six Revenues) Administration. When, the State still could not pay its internal debt to creditors known as the *Galata Bankers*, the government offered these creditors to control the tax revenue from six basic products. Thus, the *Rüşum-i Sitte* Administration began to control the taxes on tobacco. Unlike the earlier schemes, this new arrangement managed to control smuggling and established an efficient administration that created more suitable and secure market conditions for merchants and villagers. The producers chose to sell their products officially in order to avoid the risks of involvement in illicit activities.

According to officials of the Rüşum-i Sitte Administration, smuggling occurred because the state recognized the right to freedom of growing tobacco, did not control the areas in which tobacco are grown regularly and the co-operation between the state officials and smugglers.⁷⁶

Although the administration succeeded to reduce tobacco smuggling, there were still large groups of smuggles in the Empire. The administration blamed the provincial governors for their clandestine co-operation with the smugglers. The State itself admitted to the corruption of the Ottoman officials. This is why Europeans desired the foundation of a more powerful and better-organized corporation than the *Rüşum-i Sitte* Administration.⁷⁷

The *Rüşum-i Sitte* Administration was more successful than the earlier arrangements concerning the taxation of tobacco sales. However, the lack of adequate technology prevented it from building as effective a tax system as needed to make the most of the six revenue sources under its charge. In addition, the lack of a modern security force and the weakness of central authority in many cities enabled

⁷⁵ Dıġıroġlu, p. 27; BOA İ.MM no: 2048, 6 July 1873; Doġrueel, p. 53.

⁷⁶ Dıġıroġlu, p. 29.

⁷⁷ Many articles that appeared in European newspapers about Ottoman finances backed this view. As an example of the desire for European control over Turkish finance and for the success of Rüşum-i Sitte Administration see “A new experiment in Turkish Finance”, *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art*, October 9 1880, British Periodicals, p. 452.

smuggled to continue to be engaged in contraband trafficking. In 1881, the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA) was founded and the *Rüsum-i Sitte* Administration was abolished. The Ottoman Public Debt Administration paid all of the internal debts of the State. Then, the tobacco revenues were put under its control. The bondholders of OPDA realized the need for more effective control over tobacco sales in the Ottoman Empire and decided to establish a specialized organization to control this crop in 1883.⁷⁸ This Organization was called *Société de la Régie Co-interésée des Tabacs del'Empire Ottoman (Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l Menfaa Reji Şirketi)* or simply, the Régie Company. It controlled nearly 140,000 tobacco farmers planting tobacco on 192,000 decares of land in the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁹

2.3. Société de la Régie Co-interésée des Tabacs del'Empire Ottoman

The Régie Company controlled the tobacco revenue from 1883 to 1925. The *Rüsum-i Sitte* Administration had showed that the Ottoman Empire had sufficient crops and raw materials but not enough properly trained people to control and develop this resource.⁸⁰ The Ottoman State was poor not because it lacked resources but because of the mismanagement of its resources.⁸¹ Furthermore, the State did not raise enough

⁷⁸ The Times published the revenues of OPDA from 1881 to 1883 and argued there was not enough gain from tobacco and salt because of illicit trade. See “The Turkish Debt”, *The Times*, Friday, 2 March 1883 p. 3, Issue 30757, column B.

⁷⁹ Hüseyin Avni Şanda, *Yarı Müstemleke Oluş Tarihi*, Gözlem Yayınları, Ankara 1932, p. 86; According to Régie General Manager -Lui Ramber-, the square measure of tobacco farms before the Régie Administration was 152.000 decares. See Hayri Mutluçağ, “Düyun-i Umumiye ve Reji Soygunu”, *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, no: 2, p. 37.

⁸⁰ For a new in European press about the success of *Rüsum-i Sitte* and demand for a new tobacco monopoly see “The Financial Question in Turkey”, *The Pall Mall Gazette* (London, England), 2 September 1881 Friday, Issue 5154.

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“We know that the six indirect contributions assigned to the Galata Bankers have yielded under Mr. Hamilton Lang’s able administration nearly one and half million sterling during the first year’s trial, and that their yield will undoubtedly increase in the future. If this revenue could be set free for the bondholders by buying out the Galata Bankers, who have the first lien on it, there would be a certainty of a small but perfectly secured dividend being obtained on the Ottoman Debt.”

⁸¹ Akarlı, p. 146.

revenue from its sources because it lacked the infrastructure needed to manage them as efficiently as possible.⁸² The success of the *Rüsum-i Sitte* officials in managing the revenue sources put under its authority kindled foreign creditors desire to manage tobacco sales. OPDA took charge of the *Rüsum-i Sitte* but after a short time, its directors decided to put the task of controlling the tobacco revenue into the hands of a new company that would have the required expertise, personnel and technology to manage and improve the tobacco sector. An agreement was signed to establish the Régie Company and the Régie Company was officially founded.⁸³ Although the Régie Administration was formally established in 27 May 1883, it went into action in 14 April 1884.⁸⁴ The company had the right to buy, produce and sell tobacco, and to collect the taxes due on tobacco production in places where the Band-roll system was enforced, except in Eastern parts of Rumelia.⁸⁵

The agreement included twenty-nine articles. The first article was about the founders and creditors of the company. They were the “*Credit Anstald from Vienna*”, “*Banker S. Bleichröder*” and, “*The Ottoman Bank and its collaborators*.”⁸⁶ Article 7 explained what the state would earn from the tobacco monopoly. The Régie Company would pay 750,000 Ottoman liras to OPDA every year as a fixed annual fee. After the payment of this fee and the dividend, the rest of the revenues of the company would be divide among the government, the Régie and OPDA in accordance with the ratios indicated on the chart below.

⁸² Akarlı, p. 146.

⁸³ This study will not explain each article in the Régie Company agreement. It only explains the important articles of the agreement. For the whole parts of the agreement, see *Düstur v. IV*, Dersaadet, 1302, p. 332-348.

⁸⁴ Tiğınç Otkar, “Osmanlı Devletinde Reji Şirketinin Kurulmasından Sonraki Gelişmeler”, *Tütün Kitabı* p. 45; Ramazan Balcı & İbrahim Sırma *Memalik-i Osmaniyyede Osmanlı Anonim Şirketleri*, Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarih Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2012, p. 34.

⁸⁵ Otkar, p. 46.

⁸⁶ *Düstur*, v. IV p. 332; Gökdemir, p. 35; Dıǧıroǧlu, p. 32.

Table 2. 1. Revenue Sharing of Tobacco Monopoly

| Income /lira | Ottoman Public Debt Administration % | Ottoman Empire % | Régie Company % |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1-500,000 | 35 | 30 | 35 |
| 500,000-1,000,000 | 34 | 39 | 27 |
| 1,000,000-1,500,000 | 30 | 52 | 18 |
| 1,500,000-2,000,000 | 20 | 70 | 10 |
| 2,000,000- + | 15 | 75 | 10 |

Source: BOA, İ.MM. Nr: 3367 Quoted from Diğiroğlu, p. 34

As explained in the introduction, the State would help the Régie Company to prohibit tobacco smuggling. However, the Régie would choose the officials whose job would be to combat smugglers although the Ministry of Finance would designate their uniforms.⁸⁷

According to article 11, the main job of the Régie Company was to collect all taxes in all provinces except the Province of Mount Lebanon (*Cebel-i Lübnan*) and Crete.⁸⁸ Article 14 promulgated two important points related to tobacco farmers: first, the farmers would have to obtain a license to grow tobacco, and second, a farmer had to have a farm larger than half decare to be able to obtain license to grow tobacco.⁸⁹ Another article concerning the farmers, article 16, stated that, the Régie Company would build storehouses to keep the tobacco crops of the farmers safe for two years. The farmers would not pay rent to the Régie Company for the first six months for this service but do so for each subsequent six months. If the owner of the products did not sell them in two years, the Régie Company would organize an auction and if no one desired to buy the product, the Régie Company would buy it.⁹⁰ If the farmer did not accept the price given by the Régie, two or three referees would meet to set a new price and the Régie would buy the product at this new price.⁹¹ Finally, the company would provide credit without interest to farmers who desired to

⁸⁷ Düstur, v. IV p. 334 article 7; Gökdemir, p. 36.

⁸⁸ Mehmet Hakan Sağlam, *Osmanlı Borç Yönetimi Duyun-i Umumiyye 1879-1891*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2007, p. 170.

⁸⁹ Düstur, v. IV p. 334 article 14; Sağlam, p.172.

⁹⁰ Düstur, v. IV p. 334 article 18; Sağlam, p. 174; Gökdemir, p. 38.

⁹¹ Düstur, v. IV p. 334 article 19; Sağlam, p.175; Gökdemir, p. 38.

improve their tobacco growing techniques and equipment.⁹² Another regulation was prepared soon after to define the mutual responsibilities of the farmers and the Régie officials.⁹³

According to Edgar Vincent's report in 1882, which was published by many European newspapers, the proposed system of tobacco monopoly in the Ottoman Empire was similar to that of the Régie Company of Italy. There were two key points for its successful operation. First, the company had to prohibit the growing of tobacco for personal consumption. Hence, the agreement forbade licenses to farmers whose field was smaller than half a decare. Second, the company should need assistance to stop the contraband issue.⁹⁴ In another report, Mr. Bourkeabout supported the ideas of Edgar Vincent's ideas stating "a régie is the only practical means largely increasing the tobacco revenue, and of successfully combating the extensive system of contraband which prevails in Turkey"⁹⁵

In fact, the Ottoman government had begun to implement most of the measures included in these articles and the Régie's agreement under the Band-roll system and the *Rüsum-i Sitte Organization*. The Régie Company did not invent them. Likewise, The government had been concerned about improving the farmers' conditions and the technology available to them if in order to increase its revenue from the tobacco sector. In short, the traditional ways in the tobacco sector had already begun to dissolve early in the second half of nineteenth century. There was continuity between the Tobacco Regulations (*Duhan Nizamnamesi*) of 1862 and the agreement that regulated the Régie Company.

The Régie Company, however, established a creative and effective administration in many provinces of the Empire. It built a factory in Istanbul and Izmir in 1884 and in Samsun, Aleppo, Adana, Damascus, Beirut, and Manisa shortly

⁹² Düstur, v. IV p. 334 article 15; Sağlam, p.172; Dıġıroġlu, p. 34.

⁹³ This new articulation and its implications will be analyzed in chapter three. For the new agreement, see Düstur, 1st Tertip, v.1 n.5 p. 696.

⁹⁴ Mr. Vincent's Report on "The Turkish Debt", *The Times*, 30 October 1882 Monday, p. 4, Issue 30651, column B.

⁹⁵ Mr. Bourke's Report on "The Turkish Debt Settlement", *The Times*, 12 January 1882, Thursday, p. 7, Issue 30402, col. F. The new also included a brief of the agreement between the State and the Régie Company.

thereafter.⁹⁶ The Régie Administration established offices where tobacco was grown. In addition, the company had almost in each district an official whose job was to oversee the tobacco sector and to report on the smuggling issue. For instance, according to yearbooks of the Trabzon Province, the Régie Company did not have any inspector in districts such as Atina, Hopa, Gümüşhane, Çarşamba, Terme, Fatsa or the villages of Gümüşhane such as Torul, and Şiran in 1892.⁹⁷ Yet, the annual report of 1898 indicates the Régie Company employed at least one employee in each of these places even if there was not a great development on the tobacco sector.⁹⁸ Evidently, one of the main jobs of the company was to report and to control the tobacco trade in the State. Hence, the company put its employees in strategic places.

The company established a branch in the Province of Trabzon in 1883. Its aim was to govern the local tobacco sector. Hence, the provincial headquarters of the company was not in the center of Trabzon but in the city *Canik*. The branch had a director, an accountant and his assistant, cashier, (*sandık emini*), an appraiser (*muhammin*), his two lieutenants (*muhammin muavini*, *muhammin mülazımı*) a storekeeper and his assistant (*ambar memuru ve refiki*), an agricultural clerk and his two assistants (*ziraat katibi ve muavini*), inspector on the commercial warehouse and two guards working under him (*tüccar ambar müfettişi ve 2 muhafızı*), and two clerks for the tithe (*aşar katipleri*).⁹⁹ The districts in which there was a tobacco factory, such as *Bafra*, also had tobacco experts.¹⁰⁰ In 1884, the Régie Company employed 4,500 people. The number of its workers reached 5,602 in 1887 and 8,800

⁹⁶ Vedat Eldem *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun İktisadi Şartları Hakkında Bir Tetkik*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara 1994, p. 77; Melda Yaman Öztürk, Nuray Ertürk Keskin, “Osmanlı’da Yabancı Yatırımlar Deyun-i Umumiye ve Tütün Rejisi”, *Memleket, Siyaset, Yönetim* v. 6 n. 16. 2011, p. 133; As a vital study about the tobacco workers in the Régie warehouses and factories see Can Nacar, *Tobacco Workers in the Late Ottoman Empire: Fragmentation, Conflict, and Collective Struggle*, Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, Binghamton University State University of New York, the Department of History, New York, 2010.

⁹⁷ Salname-i Vilayet-i Trabzon 1310/1892.

⁹⁸ SVT 1316/1898.

⁹⁹ SVT, 1322/1904, “*Akçaabad Reji Da’iresi*” p. 317.

¹⁰⁰ SVT, 1322/1904, “*Bafra Reji Dairesi*” p. 347.

in 1889¹⁰¹. There were 13,969 people working for the Tobacco Régie Company in 1911.¹⁰² From 1886 to the end of the Régie's tobacco monopoly, most of its employees worked in the Régie Police Force.

The Régie Company became an important and prestigious company. Transferring to the Régie Company for many officials who worked for The Ottoman Public Debt Administration and the Ministry of Finance was like a job promotion.¹⁰³ For instance, the salaries of the Régie's provincial managers were higher than the salaries of the many government employees in managerial positions. According to Nusret's *Tütün Meselesi* published in 1910, the salary of first class head managers of the Régie was between 6,000-7,500 liras; and 4,000-5,500 liras for the second-class managers.¹⁰⁴ Although, Kazgan states that the high-ranking Régie officials received higher salaries than those of the ministers. Nusret's statistics and the information in Namık Kemal and Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's memoir, however, suggest that Kazgan's statement is an exaggeration. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the Régie Company paid high salaries and provided social prestige to its employees, especially to its managerial personnel. Régie had more than a hundred personnel in high managerial positions and most of them were foreigners.¹⁰⁵

In its first years, the Régie did not gain the expected revenue. The single most important effect of this situation was the problem of Egypt. Until 1884, there was an agreement between the Ottoman and Egyptian governments according to which Egypt would import tobacco only from the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰⁶ However, after the Régie Company was established, two important changes occurred in the tobacco sector of Egypt. First, 450 private tobacco factories were shut down in the

¹⁰¹ Öztürk, Keskin, p. 143; Quataert, p. 16.

¹⁰² See the table in Eldem, p. 141.

¹⁰³ Kazgan, p. 114.

¹⁰⁴ Nusret, *Tütün Meselesi*, Zaman Matbaası, Selanik 1326, p. 337; Mehmet Akpınar, *Reji İdaresi (1908-1925)*, Unpublished Master thesis, Karadeniz Technical University, the Department of History, Trabzon, 1998 p. 60.

¹⁰⁵ Kazgan, p. 114.

¹⁰⁶ Parvus Efendi, *Türkiye'nin Mali Tutsaklığı*, edited by Muammer Sencer, May Yayınları, İstanbul, 1977, p. 159.

Ottoman Empire and most of these producers moved their companies to Egypt.¹⁰⁷ Second, Egypt, which was one of the best markets for Ottoman tobacco, protested the foundation of a tobacco monopoly and began to import tobacco from other countries.¹⁰⁸ Hence, the Régie Company did not make the expected revenues from the exportation of Ottoman tobacco to Egypt, gaining only 90,000 Ottoman liras instead of 150,000 Ottoman liras from tobacco exports to Egypt in its first year.¹⁰⁹ The Company solicited support from the Palace to protest the new tobacco deal between Egypt and Greece, but the political atmosphere was not suitable to support the company.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, the Porte worked on canceling the new deal between Egypt and Greece because Egypt was one of the most crucial markets for Ottoman tobacco.¹¹¹ The Ottoman Public Debt Administration resolved the problem by accepting the following terms. First, it would provisionally bear 100,000 sterling for the losses (which were estimated at 210,000 sterlings) that the Régie sustained in Egypt during the past two years. Second, it would bear one half of the rest of its losses during the last two years. Finally, it would reduce export duties from ten to five piastres per oke.¹¹²

2.4. The Relationship between the Régie Company and the State

Many people in the Empire viewed the Régie Company as a problem. Many officers wrote about the need to dissolve the Régie Company and to establish a state monopoly. In addition, as explained below, many peasants from different provinces

¹⁰⁷ A.D. Novıçev, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Yarı-Sömürgeleşmesi*, Onur Yayınları, Ankara, 1979, p.89; Donald Quataert gives different numbers for closing factories. According to him, approximately 300 factories were closed. See Quataert, p. 17.

¹⁰⁸ Parvus Efendi p. 159.

¹⁰⁹ Kazgan, p. 113.

¹¹⁰ For a new about the Régie's protest to the new deal between Egypt and Greece see *Liverpool Mercury* (Liverpool, England), 23 April 2884, Wednesday, Issue 11320. Sourced from the British Library, Gale Document Number: Y3204263690.

¹¹¹ *Birmingham Daily Post* (Birmingham, England), 28 April 1884, Monday, Issue 8057. Sourced from the British Library, Gale Document Number: BC3201035078.

¹¹² "The Turkish Tobacco Régie", *The Times*, 11 March 1886, Thursday, p. 5, Issue 31704, column E.

sent to Istanbul petitions complaining about the harsh conditions imposed by the Régie. Neither the state officials, nor the people liked and supported the Régie Company's policies. The representative of British bondholders at OPDA, Adam Block explains the position of the Régie as follows, "the monopoly is not popular ... The Government is much to blame for their indifference, but as in England smugglers have the sympathy of the people, and the Government cannot but act with leniency."¹¹³ However, the technological developments introduced by the Régie helped improve tobacco production and preservation.

The revenues from the tobacco sector increased during the 1900s although smuggling problem persisted. The company was one of the important resources to which the Ottoman government could turn to receive an advance in order to deal with an urgent fiscal problem. The Régie and the State had a shared interest in the elimination of smuggling because the State took a certain percentage of the returns of the Régie Company. In addition, as explained above, a certain percentage of the revenues went to the Ottoman Public Debt Administration to pay for foreign debt, which the government was eager to eliminate as quickly as possible to secure its future.¹¹⁴ Despite these benefits, the company was the object of continuous criticism for its monopolistic hold over one of the most important crops in the Empire. Many people advised alternative solutions instead of a foreign monopoly over tobacco. According to these people, the losses did not match the gains. For instance, the revenue from tobacco before the company was 737,466 Ottoman liras in 1882.¹¹⁵ Although, there were developments in the tobacco sector, such as new storehouses, and possibilities of receiving credit without interest, the revenues of the government did not increase until 1902.¹¹⁶ The main reason of the stagnation of the revenues was the problem of infrastructure. The company made investments to develop the conditions in the sector. Improvements in infrastructure affected revenues positively

¹¹³ Quoted from Angelos Chotzidis, "Fighting Contraband in the European Provinces of the Ottoman Empire (1881-1912): European Bondholders vs Ottoman Smugglers and Peasants", presented in the panel namely *Greece and The Changing International System* in London School of Economics, London, 3 June 2011, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ Akarlı, p. 185.

¹¹⁵ Parvus Efendi, p. 159.

¹¹⁶ Parvus Efendi, p. 160.

after 1902. However, the government's share from tobacco revenues in 1883-1914 remained lower than the original expectations.

Table 2.2. The Government's Share from Tobacco¹¹⁷

| Year | Government's income (in Ottoman liras) | Year | Government's income (in Ottoman liras) |
|--------|---|---------|---|
| 1885-6 | 650,000 | 1902-4 | 871,346 |
| 1886-7 | 688,000 | 1905-6 | 811,623 |
| 1887-8 | 700,850 | 1906-7 | 800,479 |
| 1888-9 | 732,428 | 1908-9 | 920,469 |
| 1890-1 | 738,286 | 1910-11 | 913,702 |
| 1896-7 | 701,696 | 1911-12 | 946,852 |
| 1898-9 | 700,000 | 1912-13 | 916,538 |

Source: Parvus Efendi, *Türkiye'nin Mali Tutsaklığı*, edited by Muammer Sencer, İstanbul: May Yayınları, 1977.

Overall, the State developed an ambivalent attitude toward the Régie Company. The State sometimes supported the policies of the company in the provinces but at other times, it supported tobacco producers or illegal tobacco traders who consisted of a few people. It was an act. The memoirs of Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, Lui Ramber, and Hüseyin Kazım Kadri as well as some of Namık Kemal's letters give an idea about the State's views of the Régie Company.¹¹⁸

Lui Ramber became the general manager of the Régie Company in 1900 and continued to work for the company until 1916.¹¹⁹ Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil and Namık Kemal also worked for the company. Since these people were employers of the Régie Company, their main tendency may have been to defend it against criticism. Nevertheless, when we use their memoirs and letters in conjunction with archival and other sources, they show us the factors that influenced the State's attitude towards the Régie.

From its first years, people had prejudices about the tobacco monopoly. A letter of Namık Kemal addressing the government in İstanbul illustrates this point.

¹¹⁷ Parvus Efendi, p. 160. The government's share also included the share of OPDA.

¹¹⁸ For detail information, see Lui Ramber, *Abdülhamit Dönemine Ait Gizli Notlar*, edited by Ömer Hakan Özalp, Özgü Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011. Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Kırk Yıl*, Özgür Yayınları, İstanbul, 2008. Hüseyin Kazım Kadri, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyet'e Hatıralarım*, edited by İsmail Kara, Dergah Yayınları, İstanbul, 2000. Feyziye Abdullah Tansel, *Namık Kemal'in Mektupları*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, Ankara, 1986.

¹¹⁹ Ramber, p. 28.

He talks about the prejudice of the State officials against the Régie employees and requests the fair trial of a person who worked for the Régie Company.¹²⁰

According to Ramber, government officials and Other Ottomans turned the Régie into a scapegoat for the problems they encountered. He recounted that the Ministry of Finance requested advances frequently and the Régie Company felt obliged to give advances when the State asked.¹²¹ Interestingly, Ramber noted that while his main concern was to secure the assistance of gendarmes against tobacco smugglers, even the Minister of Finance smoked smuggled tobacco. He wrote in his diaries that, the minister smoked this illegal tobacco especially when Ramber attended official meetings at the Porte.¹²²

Smoking smuggled tobacco had of course symbolic meanings. The minister of finance desired to show the power of the State but he also desired to use the smuggling issue as a trump card in the government's negotiations with the Régie.¹²³ Indeed, as this study explains in Chapter III, the minister was bluffing when he tried to intimidate the Régie administrator. The control of smuggling tobacco depended on the government's ability to maintain law and order in its territories for the sake of public wellbeing. However, the government did not have sufficient power and means to fulfill these goals effectively. Hence, the Finance Minister's attitude was probably a bluff against the company.

Halid Ziya joined the Régie administrators in meetings with government officials in his capacity as translator of the Régie. He argues, State officials kept them waiting for hours for a five-minute session.¹²⁴ He also states in his diaries that the State officials and many others who were against the company were working to build public support for the liquidation of the Régie Company.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ TDV İSAM, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa Evrakı, 13/861, 22 Mart 1300.

¹²¹ Ramber p. 176, 18 May 1901. "The new Finance Minister requested 200,000 Ottoman liras as advance"; 28 June 1902, p. 148; 24 April 1903, p. 176.

¹²² Ramber p. 199, 25 May 1902.

¹²³ For the state's position against tobacco smugglers, see Chapter III.

¹²⁴ Uşaklıgil, p. 757.

¹²⁵ Uşaklıgil, p. 558 "pek aşikar bir hakikat vardı: Saray, hükümet, halk İdarenin ortadan kaldırılmasını bekliyordu."

The State officials also worked to prevent the integration of the Régie Company with the common Ottoman people. Two important examples should illustrate this point. One is the confiscation of Régie goods that had an Ottoman coat of arms on them because the government did not allow the company to use the Imperial Insignia (*Arma-i Şahane*).¹²⁶ Indeed the State not only blocked the use of Ottoman coat of arms but also prevented the spread of impressions the Régie was an Ottoman company. The company wanted to use imperial insignia to prove it was one of the main parts of the Ottoman government in the hope to win the support of the people. In addition, the Régie Company produced cigarettes with such brand names as Ramadan, sacred month for Muslims, to cultivate good relations with the population. Moreover, the company showed an interest in social problems, as the second example should illustrate. The Régie Company made efforts to help poor people in Istanbul. It threw a ballroom party on the Princess Island Prinkipo (*Büyükada*) in 1893. The funds raised in the party would be distributed to poor people. Sultan Abdul Hamid II made an effort to hamper attendance to this party.¹²⁷ Nadir Özbek emphasizes the Sultan's reaction to the party because such events undermined moral values. However, the Sultan's reaction was probably due also to his unwillingness to support an activity organized by the Régie Company. Moral concerns might have been a factor but because the organizer of the event was the Régie, the Sultan probably became doubly sensitive for the State's kept nipping the Régie's effort to win the support of the public.

The Régie Company kept looking for solutions to smooth its relations with the public and the State. The Régie administrators stated that the society did not support the company because of the Ottoman government's unwillingness to provide protection. They blamed the State for the lack of support they needed to fulfill the role conferred upon them.¹²⁸ One day, the Régie administrators invited Halid Ziya to

¹²⁶ Ramber, p. 159; Selim Deringil, *Simgeden Millete II. Abdulhamid'den Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2009, p. 73.

¹²⁷ Nadir Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Sosyal Devlet Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet 1876-1914*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2011, p. 262.

¹²⁸ For a new about the meeting of Régie Administrators see "The Manchester Guardian (1828-1900) 15 December 1897" *Historical Newspapers: the Guardian (1821-2003) and the Observer (1791-2003)*, p. 8.

their general meeting. They asked Halid Ziya how they could diminish the hatred of Muslims against them. Halid Ziya answered the company had to have more Turkish employees. If they did so, they could solve the problems with the State officers and the people alike.¹²⁹

Some state officials kept looking for new opportunities to replace the Régie Company. The Minister of Internal Affairs prepared a report about how the State could create a new system instead of the Régie Company. However, according to the agreements that led to the foundation of the Régie Company, the Ottoman Public Debt Administration would have to run the new tobacco monopoly if the Régie was abolished.¹³⁰ Moreover, there was not an alternative offer from different companies to manage the tobacco monopoly. In 1902, the State decided to not abrogate the Régie Company.¹³¹ An American entrepreneur offered a new deal for exclusive rights to operate tobacco cultivation and sales in the Ottoman Empire on 9 February 1908.¹³² The offer was better than the Régie Company's, but the State did not find a suitable way to accept it. Actually, the Sultan knew that nobody could make much profit from tobacco if the State did not prevent smuggling. Hence, within six days, on 3 February 1908, the Sultan sent a memorandum to the provinces asking the governors to take the necessary measures to obstruct tobacco smuggling.¹³³

After the 1908 coup d-etat, the new assembly also questioned the Régie Company and searched for the possibility to establish a new office to manage the tobacco monopoly.¹³⁴ Most of the people in the assembly supported the establishment of a state-run tobacco monopoly. The cartoon "the Ottoman Milk Cow" below illustrates that the main aim of the government after 1908 was to create state monopolies over the main sources of tax incomes. The deputies argued that

¹²⁹ Uşaklıgil, p. 828.

¹³⁰ Mutluçağ, p. 37.

¹³¹ Mutluçağ, p. 39.

¹³² Hayri Mutluçağ, "Reji İdaresinin Satın Alınması İçin II.Abdulhamid'e Yapılan Rüşvet Teklifi", *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi*, no. 2, 1967, p. 40.

¹³³ BOA, Y.PRK.DH. 14/35, 3 February 1908, 21 Kanunisani 1323.

¹³⁴ Mehmet Akpınar, "II.Meşrutiyet Meclisi'nce Reji'nin Sorgulanması", *Osmanlı Ansiklopedisi* v. 3 p. 614.

international companies made money from their resources and now it was time for the state to benefit from its own resources. However, as in the Hamidian Era, the new regime was in urgent need for cash and turned to the Régie for a substantial advance to pay the needs of the army during the Balkan Wars.¹³⁵ The Régie Company succeeded to extend its rights over the Turkish blend and reached a new agreement with the State. The Company gave 1,700,000 Turkish liras as advance with 5% interest to the state in 1913.¹³⁶ Thus, the company continued to control Turkish tobacco crops until 1925.

Figure 2. 1. The Ottoman Milk Cow



Source: Palmira Brummet *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911*, Albany: State University of New-York Press, 2000 p. 172.

The discussions above should illustrate the negative attitudes of the government towards the Régie Company. Chapter III describes the attitudes of Ottoman society in general towards the Régie Company in order to provide a fuller

¹³⁵ Cemal Paşa, *Hatıralar*, prepared by Alpay Kabacalı, İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010, p. 58. "...Mösyö Weyl, Reji imtiyaz müddetinin 15 yıl daha uzatılması şartıyla hükümete 1,5000,000 lira borç vereceğini vaat ediyor ve Maliye Nazırı Rıfat Beyle Dahiliye Nazırı Talat Bey, vekiller heyeti kararı ile bu teklifi kabul ediyorlardı."

¹³⁶ Mehmet Akpınar, "Reji Uygulamasına Trabzon Örneği", *Trabzon Tarihi* p. 551; Hayri Sevimay *Cumhuriyet'e Girerken Ekonomi*, Kazancı Hukuk, İstanbul, 1995, p. 329.

picture. The generally partial pictures that scholars and authors draw of the Ottoman Régie is a hurdle this thesis tries to overcome. According to some memoirs, the main reason of the increasing tobacco smuggling was clandestine support of the government.¹³⁷ It is not a baseless allegation, but its implications are questionable. In fact, the political atmosphere was affecting the decisions of the people. The State is an abstraction of various interacting forces, developments, and individuals. Hence, it is not possible to expect a fixed, predetermined reaction from the State. In general, the Ottoman elites' dislike of the Régie's monopoly over tobacco was normal because one of the most reliable sources of government's revenue was under the control of foreign investors. The government wanted to stop this but fiscal and other problems prevented it from achieving this goal.

The comic –Leaping the Tobacco Régie - illustrates this situation. While the government was discussing the creation of a state monopoly over tobacco in the Assembly, the Régie's advance during the Balkan Wars secured the extensions of the Régie's tobacco monopoly. The cartoon published in *Kalem* criticizes this situation and shows Grand Vizier İbrahim Hakkı Paşa as the athlete hurdling over the Régie's tobacco monopoly.¹³⁸ However, this dislike in itself does not prove that the government supported the smugglers. As argued above, rationally speaking, an increase in the Régie's revenues would help the Ottomans pay back their foreign debt and have a free hand to shape their future. Sultan Abdul Hamid's memorandum about tobacco smugglers explains this situation best.¹³⁹ This document will be analyzed in Chapter III to explain why the State as well disliked tobacco smugglers and desired to diminish the adverse effect of smuggling on tobacco revenues.

¹³⁷ Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil also argued that the government helped the smugglers. See Uşaklıgil, p. 728.

¹³⁸ Palmira Brummet, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2000, p. 178.

¹³⁹ BOA.Y.PRK.DH. 14/35, 3 February 1908, 21 Kanunisani 1323. Quoted from Abdülhamit Kırmızı, *Abdülhamid'in Valileri*, Klasik Yayınları, İstanbul 2008, p. 238.

Figure 2. 2. Leaping the Tobacco Régie

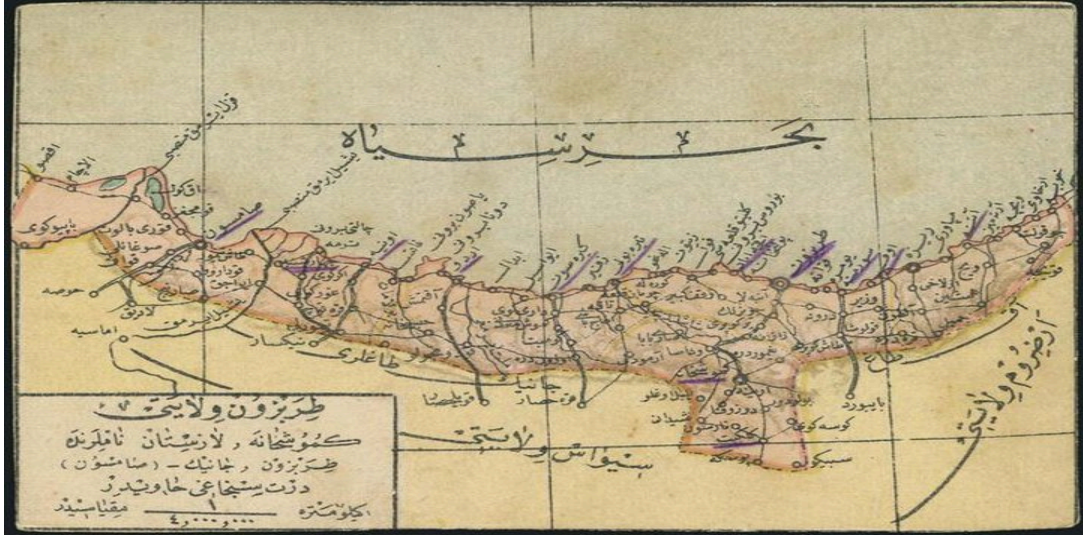


Source: Palmira Brummet Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908-1911, Albany: State University of New-York Press, 2000 p. 179.

2.5. The Province of Trabzon

Each Ottoman Province was constituted of a group of sub-provinces called – *sancaks*-. Each sub-province had its own districts –*kazas*- and sub-districts –*nahiyes*- and villages –*kura*-. The main duty of the governor of a province was to oversee the administration of its sancaks. The officials in charge of sancaks were responsible to the provincial governor and to the Ministry of Internal Affairs through him. Senior Bureaucrats of the Ministry of Internal Affairs oversaw the work of governors. He worked under the Grand Vizier who represented the Sultan and was responsible to him. The Imperial council led by the Grand Vizier, appointed the governors but with the Sultan’s approval. The administrative system of Trabzon operated within this bureaucratic hierarchy.

Figure 2.3. The Map of Province of Trabzon



Source: *Osmanlı Atlası, XX.Yüzyıl Başları*, edited by Rahmi Tekin & Yaşar Baş, İstanbul: OSAV 2003.

The Province of Trebizond (Trabzon) was in the northeast of the Ottoman Empire, on the shores of the Black-Sea in the north, and neighboring the Province of Erzurum on the east, Russia on the northeast, and the Province of Sivas on the south and the Province of Kastamonu on the west.¹⁴⁰ According to the 1892 Almanac of Trabzon, it included four *sancaks* namely Trabzon, Canik, Lazistan, and Gümüşhane. The Sancak of Trabzon was the main sancak of the Province and its districts were Akçaabad, Giresun, Ordu, and Tirebolu, Of, Sürmene, Görele, and Vakfikebir. The *kazas* of Canik were Samsun, Bafra, Çarşamba, Fatsa, Ünye, and Terme. Lazistan's *kazas* were Rize, Atina, and Hopa. Lastly, Gümüşhane's *kazas* were Şiran, Torul, and Kelkit. The province covered an area 22,558 square kilometers in 1911.¹⁴¹ Its population was 1,056,293 in 1885, 1,164,827 in 1897, 1,342,778 in 1906, and 1,122,947 in 1914.¹⁴² Trabzon was a port city that connected Erzurum, Bitlis, and other southern provinces to the Black-Sea. In addition, Trabzon was a gate for foreign and native merchants who did business in Tabriz and Iran or

¹⁴⁰ Şakir Şevket, *Trabzon Tarihi*, prepared by İsmail Hacıfettahoğlu, Trabzon Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, Ankara, 2001, p. 80.

¹⁴¹ Abdülvahap Hayri, *İktisadi Trabzon*, prepared by Melek Öksüz, Serander Yayınları, Trabzon, 2008, p.14.

¹⁴² Stanford Shaw, "The Ottoman Census System and Population", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.9 No.3 1978, p. 325-338.

in Russia and other parts of the Black Sea region. Trabzon had a sufficiently robust economy to maintain a steady population. Travelers wrote about the importance of trade in Trabzon. For example, Baron Julius Von Minutoli who visited Trabzon as a traveler in 1860 underlined the importance of trade in the city.¹⁴³ In addition, the 1875 Almanac gives the list of companies engaged in trade between Trabzon and Istanbul.¹⁴⁴ However, after Russia constructed the railways connecting Poti and Tiflis and the Caucasus and Iran to Europe, and after the establishment of the Suez Canal, the importance of Trabzon in transit trade decreased.¹⁴⁵ Many Europeans preferred these new routes. The importance of Samsun increased as an alternative port because Samsun had a more suitable location than Trabzon for products exported from and imported to Anatolia. In other words, the decline of the Ottoman Empire's effectiveness in transit affected Trabzon adversely but the growing integration of Anatolia into world economy contributed to the rise of Samsun as an important port. For instance, the almanacs of 1885 indicate that, while Trabzon's exports including transit goods coming from Iran totaled to 519,990 Sterling Pounds; the Samsun's export amounted to 595,000 Sterling Pounds. In 1890, these numbers were estimated at 695,155 Sterling Pounds for the port of Trabzon and 1,033,455 for Samsun.¹⁴⁶ Table 2.3 compares the value of trade at major ports of the Province of Trabzon. The decrease in the volume of regular trade between Tabriz and Trabzon probably made the Ottoman government slacken the security measures on this route, judging by the escalation of illicit trade on it.

¹⁴³ İlhan Pınar, *19. Yüzyıl Anadolu Şehirleri: Manisa, Edirne, Kütahya, Ankara, Trabzon, Antalya, Diyarbakır, Konya, İzmir*, Akademi Kitabevi, İzmir, 1998, p. 117. "Trabzon is an important trade center. Ruble plays a crucial role in the trade between Trabzon and Russia. While, the Austrians, the French and Turks were providing a connection between Istanbul and Trabzon, the Russians operated the trade between Batumi and Trabzon. Of course smuggling takes an important part in this trade."

¹⁴⁴ SVT 1875/1296 p.88; The days, the stations and the origin of ships quoted from Kudret Emiroğlu, *Trabzon Vilayet Salnamesi*, Trabzon İli ve İlçeleri Eğitim, Kültür ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Vakfı, Ankara, 1993, c. 7, p. 235.

¹⁴⁵ A. Üner Turgay, "Port-Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean 1800-1914, Fall, 1993", *Trabzon in Review, Fernand Braudel Center*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 435-465, p.452.

¹⁴⁶ Turgay, p. 453.

Table 2. 3. Trade of the Major Ports of the Province of Trabzon in 1889 (in £)

| Country | Trabzon | | Samsun | | Giresun | | Rize | |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports | Exports | Imports |
| United Kingdom | 4,955 | 228,065 | 43,235 | 81,245 | - | 18,500 | - | 29,150 |
| Ottoman Empire | 260,805 | 176,900 | 344,915 | 210,350 | 11,580 | 58,000 | 41,710 | 30,230 |
| Austria-Hungary & Germany | 27,085 | 134,645 | 41,755 | 68,535 | 77,500 | 21,000 | - | 32,400 |
| France | 68,760 | 126,785 | 88,660 | 21,950 | 25,520 | 2,800 | - | 10,320 |
| Russia | 37,010 | 73,720 | 3,060 | 24,200 | 56,940 | 7,280 | 3,362 | 6,030 |
| Rumania & Bulgaria | 4,260 | 19,720 | - | - | 2,650 | - | 910 | 1,280 |
| Greece & Italy | 2,700 | 28,880 | 11,300 | 39,985 | 7,190 | 12,820 | - | 790 |
| Other Countries | 12,225 | 34,505 | 9,045 | 25,645 | 5,850 | 14,610 | - | 11,200 |
| Total | 417,800 | 823,220 | 541,970 | 471,910 | 187,230 | 135,010 | 45,980 | 141,400 |

Source: Great Britain, The House of Commons, Accounts and Papers, LXXXV

(1901): 759 Quoted from A. Üner Turgay, *Port Cities of the Eastern Mediterranean*¹⁴⁷

Tobacco was first cultivated in Akçaabad in the eighteenth century.¹⁴⁸ Although, we do not have the evidence to determine the exact starting date of tobacco cultivation in the province, Bijişkiyan who was a traveler, reported about tobacco farms that existed in Trabzon in 1817.¹⁴⁹ The tobacco farmers exported 1,200,000 kilograms of tobacco according to Almanacs of 1877 and 1878. Tobacco production increased to approximately 3,000,000 kilograms in Akçaabad in 1914.¹⁵⁰ The Régie Company went into action in Akçaabad on 3 August 1886 and established warehouses to keep the tobacco produce safe.¹⁵¹

Tobacco was the major cash crop of the Province of Trabzon. Bafra, Çarşamba, and Akçaabad were the places where tobacco was cultivated intensively. Tobacco was grown in many other places as well, including Atina, Rize,

¹⁴⁷ Quoted from Turgay, pp. 435-465.

¹⁴⁸ İbrahim Güler, “XVIII. Yüzyılda Trabzon’un Sosyal ve Ekonomik Durumuna Ait Tesbitler”, *Trabzon Tarihi Sempozyumu Bildirileri: 6-8 Kasım 1998*, Kemal Çiçek, Kenan İnan, Hikmet Öksüz, Abdullah Saydam, Trabzon Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, Trabzon, 2000, p. 327-351, p. 339; Şakir Şevket, p. 87 “Mervidir ki duhân mahsûlü Trabzonca en evvel işbu nâhîyenin Sera Deresi kâriyesinde icâd olunmuş imiş.”

¹⁴⁹ Dıġıroġlu, p. 43.

¹⁵⁰ Muzaffer Lermioġlu, *Akçaabat Tarihi*, Kardeşler Basımevi, İstanbul, 1949, p. 18.

¹⁵¹ Lermioġlu, p.19.

Gümüşhane, Samsun, and Livane. The Almanac of 1898 indicates that people grew tobacco on 100,000 decares and estimates the total production to be 10,000,000 kilograms for 1898. Bafra and Samsun produced 6,000,000 kilograms of tobacco. Akçaabad, Yomra and Maçka grew 4,000,000 kilograms.¹⁵² One-third of the production was exported and the rest was sold in the internal market.¹⁵³ In 1909, tobacco farmers of Trabzon earned approximately 10,000,000 kurushes for 2,855,000 kilograms tobacco and farmers in Samsun and Bafra gained around 58,000,000 kurushes for 5,744,000 kilograms of tobacco. Because, the products of Bafra were more valuable than Akçaabad and Maçka's products, tobacco farmers of Samsun and Bafra received about ten kurushes per kilo while the farmers of Trabzon gained only three and a half kurushes. However, the farms in Akçaabad and Maçka were more productive than Bafra according to the statistics of 1909. The table below shows that the average size of the cultivated area in Samsun was larger than the area cultivated in Trabzon. This is because while the Régie Company was eager to pay for development in Samsun, it did not try to improve the farmers' condition in Trabzon. The main aim of the company was to improve the yield of farms that were larger than ten decares. However, the company was unhappy about the productivity of tobacco fields in both Samsun and Trabzon, because it was lower than the countrywide average. For this reason, it used the kolcus to control tobacco cultivation and shopkeepers and tried to increase the cultivation. There were many complaints of farmers about the Régie Company because of kolcus and Régie's attitudes toward them. Chapter III will shed light on these complaints and explain that farmers cooperated with smugglers or participated in illicit tobacco cultivation and sales mostly because of the harsh conditions they faced. The statistics in the almanacs are official numbers based on government records. They exclude smuggled tobacco. If we added those figures as well, the significance of tobacco for the Province of Trabzon would be clearer.

¹⁵² SVT 1898/1316, p.201; Dıġıroġlu, p. 44.

¹⁵³ SVT 1898/1316, p.201; Dıġıroġlu, p. 44.

Table 2. 4. Statistics about Tobacco Production in the Selected Cities of the Province of Trabzon in 1909¹⁵⁴

| | Tobacco Farms (Decare) | Tobacco Production (Tone) | Tobacco Price (Krs) (1000) | Average of Price/Tone | Yield Kg/Hectare |
|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Rize | 2,500 | 2 | 9 | 3,897 | 9 |
| Samsun | 88,280 | 5,744 | 58,206 | 10,133 | 708 |
| Trabzon | 30,199 | 2,855 | 10,012 | 3,507 | 1,028 |
| Country-Wide | 523,374 | 31,237 | 193,481 | 6,194 | 649 |

Source: *Osmanlı Dönemi Tarım İstatistikleri 1909, 1913, 1914 Tarihi İstatistikler Dizisi c.3* prepared by Prof. Tefik Güran

Table 2. 5. Statistics about the Population, The Number of Farms and The size of the Farms

| City | Population | Cultivated Area (Decare) | Farmers (House) | The farms little than 10 decares | The Farms between 10-50 decares | The farms more than 50 decares | Average size of the farms |
|--------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rize | 158,790 | 164,240 | 22,558 | 18,430 | 2,986 | 1,142 | 7.3 |
| Samsun | 257,223 | 1,002,321 | 50,101 | 9,605 | 29,836 | 10,660 | 20 |
| Trabzon | 352,944 | 880,350 | 54,922 | 22,081 | 23,841 | 9,000 | 16 |
| Country-Wide | 8,092,400 | 32,307,801 | 1,107,815 | 291,001 | 535,249 | 281,575 | 29.2 |

Source: *Osmanlı Dönemi Tarım İstatistikleri 1909, 1913, 1914 Tarihi İstatistikler Dizisi c.3* prepared by Prof. Tefik Güran, p. 28-29

¹⁵⁴ The nation wide section in the table covered the cities of Turkish Republic and not all the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Also the data were calculated in accordance to the *tithe* that is collected from farmers. The Ministry of Agriculture firstly calculated the tobacco production and then the area that tobacco farms covered. These calculations were based on the *tithe* tax. See Güran, p. XVIII

CHAPTER III

3. The Illicit Tobacco Trade

3.1. The Definition of Smuggling

This chapter analyzes the concept of crime in late Ottoman Empire. It examines the attitudes of the people, the government, and the Régie Company towards smugglers in the Empire. As it will be explained, all of these actors defined the smuggling according to their own interests and for this reason this chapter will differentiate these actors as different elements. In addition, the chapter looks into the security problem in the provinces where the smugglers caused chaos confusion. A discussion of the role of the Régie police forces (*kolcu*) and the gendarmerie aims at completing the picture. Finally, the chapter examines the function of the governors of the Province of Trabzon. All of these notions should help us understand the role of illicit tobacco traders in a specific province of the Empire. This chapter also summarizes the problems between the Régie Company and tobacco farmers in an effort to establish how the company's policies affected the people's choices about joining or supporting smugglers.¹⁵⁵

Nowadays, there is a tendency to study social definition of the concept of crime in the Ottoman Empire among historians.¹⁵⁶ It is the result of watching history by using a microscope instead of a telescope. In other words, the change in modern historiography oriented young generations to do research on societies instead of states. In addition, historians, unlike sociologists, shun meta-narratives. Meta-narratives call for generalizations. However, the postmodern challenge in modern historiography, showed the need to simplify details to explain some estimations. For

¹⁵⁵ The problems between the Régie Company and tobacco farmers were expatiated in the studies of Fatma-Suat Doğruel, Donald Quataert, Filiz Dıġıroġlu, Oktay Gökdemir, Mehmet Akpınar and many others. Almost all of the archival sources were used in their thesis. Hence, the events written about the problems between the farmers and Tobacco Régie mostly quoted from these scholars. This chapter will not focus on these problems. It only explains problems to show the link between smugglers and farmers.

¹⁵⁶ Nadir Özbek, "Tarihyazıcılıġında Güvenlik Kurum ve Pratiklerine İlişkin Bir Deġerlendirme", *Jandarma ve Polis Fransız ve Osmanlı Tarihçiliġine Çapraz Bakışlar*, Noémi Levy, Nadir Özbek, Alexandre Tourmarkine, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2009, p. 1.

this reason, we should not forget that the generalizations in this study are only some informed guess about the social life in a province of the Empire.

Historians who focus on the security problem, social control of society, and the concept of crime have studied the police system, and the gendarme, as the state's basic means of control, and on the acts of thieves and bandits as examples of crime and clash within the society.¹⁵⁷ However, Ottoman historians have neglected to study the Régie Police Force, which employed about 7,000 people. Furthermore, no study focuses directly on illicit tobacco trade as an example of security problem or tobacco smugglers as actors involved in such problems. There are helpful documents that refer to tobacco smugglers in the Ottoman Archives. However, scholars who wrote about smugglers do not try to create a theoretical framework within which to explain the preoccupation or crimes of these people. Most of the extant studies are descriptive works. The aim of this chapter is to explain these smugglers in an effort to shed light on issues of social control and the concepts of crime. In addition, the chapter analyzes the Régie Police Force from the same vantage points.

To do this, this thesis benefits from the ideas of Michel Foucault about jails, social control, and the concept of crime but without underestimating the critiques of Foucault to avoid a Euro-centric view. Foucault's many arguments do not explain well the situation in the Ottoman Empire. In addition, Foucault's main aim was to show how a state constitutes its control over society, but this chapter is interested in the society's bypassing of a state's social control.¹⁵⁸ In other words, this chapter tries to explain the attitudes of the society instead of the state.

The illegal tobacco trade had become a significant economic activity after a conflict emerged between the peasants and the Régie Company because the Company's policies unwittingly promoted a prolonged illicit trade in the Ottoman Empire. The company accepted as smuggled tobacco the tobacco that professional bandits, traded in, was the tobacco that producers cultivated without a license and tobacco that the producers did not deliver to the warehouses timely. Hence, the

¹⁵⁷ For a thought-provoking study about these concepts see Noémi Levy, Alexandre Tourmarkine, *Osmanlı'da Asayiş, Suç ve Ceza 18.-20. Yüzyıllar*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul 2007.

¹⁵⁸ Özgür Sevgi Göral, "19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Suç, Toplumsal Kontrol ve Hapishaneler Üzerine Çalışmak", *Osmanlı'da Asayiş Suç ve Ceza 18.-20. Yüzyıllar*, Noémi Levy Alexandre Tourmarkine, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2007, p. 21.

problem of smuggling in the Empire was not only a security problem. It was also about the criminalization of certain activities of farmers by a monopoly that controlled the cultivations and sales of one of their vital crops. For this reason, there is a connection between these farmers and professional smugglers. Sometimes the smugglers bought their products or helped them to sell the cultivated tobacco. At the same time, these professional illicit traders oppressed farmers and threatened their lives because the small trade in which the farmers involved in their villages was also a problem for their well-organized smuggling system.

Smugglers were armed people (*eşhas-ı müsellaha*) or armed vagabonds (*müsellah serseri*) in the eyes of the State. However, these people did not see their job as a smuggling activity. They bought and sold their goods in many places like traders. This was the natural reaction of many local merchants, peasants, some officers and even some soldiers to the monopolization of merchandise. Monopolization aimed at increasing government revenues and even improvements in the production of that merchandise. While the Ottoman Tobacco Régie contributed to developments in production, it did not make as much profit as estimated because many farmers chose to sell their crops to smugglers. The reasons behind this preference were the Régie's artificially low prices, the warehouse problem, license problem, and the Régie's maltreatment of farmers.¹⁵⁹

The agreement called *Zürrâ'ın Rejiye ve Rejinin Zürrâ'a Karşı Olan Hukuk ve Vezâifine ve Ahkâmı Cezâiyye Dair Nizamnâme* organized the roles of farmers, tobacco merchants and the Régie Company in December 27, 1886. Yet, most of the articles of these agreements were not implemented properly. The massacres by Régie kolcu also increased the sympathy of farmers for illicit traders. Ottoman archival sources shed light on the reasons why people smuggled. The main criticism that emerged in these archival materials is the Régie's attitudes toward farmers. Moreover, the important studies about this subject addressed the Régie's attitudes toward farmers to explain why people smuggled.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ For some complaints of the farmers, see BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ no: 27/10; BOA.Y.PRK.AZJ no: 53/70 BOA.ŞD no: 363/23; BOA.ŞD no: 1849/1; BOA.ŞD no: 1842/7; BOA.ŞD no: 1841/14; BOA.ŞD no: 1841/16; BOA.DH-İD no: 95/76.

¹⁶⁰ Three important theses that are written about the Régie Company by Oktay Gökdemir, Filiz Dıġıroġlu, and Mehmet Akpınar also argued the problems between the farmers and the Régie were main factors of smuggling.

3.2. The Problem of License

The keystone of the Régie agreement was article 22. According to it, landless farmers and farmers who did not have more than half decare of land could not grow tobacco. The Régie desired to prevent cultivation for personal consumption.¹⁶¹ In addition, farmers needed to obtain a license to cultivate tobacco every year. The licenses were valid only for a year.¹⁶² The farmers who wanted to continue to cultivate tobacco next year were required to renew their license. If the farmers stopped cultivating tobacco, they had to notify the company.¹⁶³ Régie officers and kolcus controlled these licenses to find the farms where tobacco was cultivated without permit. The penalty for unlicensed cultivation was forty Ottoman kurushes as for each *kıyye*.¹⁶⁴ In addition, the company would confiscate these crops. The Régie Company did not want to issue licenses to farmers who had a record working with smugglers and the farmers whose crop was of poor.¹⁶⁵

Each Farmer had to write petition for the lands for obtain a license.¹⁶⁶ They had to specialize the borders of their lands. Theoretically speaking, the Régie Company issued the licenses without a fee but in practice, the farmers had to pay money to the headmen of the villages and petition-writers. They also paid stamp-fees.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ Quataert, p. 13.

¹⁶² “...Ruhsat tezkeresi yalnız i’tâ olunduğu senenin mahsûlu için mu’teberdir...” see the article six in the agreement – Zürrâ’ın Rejiye ve Rejinin Zürrâ’a Karşı Olan Hukuk ve Vezâifine ve Ahkâmı Cezâiyye Dair Nizamnâme.

¹⁶³ “Zürrâ’ın Rejiye ve Rejinin Zürrâ’a Karşı Olan Hukuk ve Vezâifine ve Ahkâmı Cezâiyye Dair Nizamnâme.” (ZRRZKHVACDN) *Düstur*, 1st Tertip, v.1 no.5, p. 698.

¹⁶⁴ Article 42 in the ZRRZKHVACDN

¹⁶⁵ BOA, BEO 2043/153162, 1 April 1904, 19 March 1320.

¹⁶⁶ “Zürrâ’ zirâ`at ruhsatnâmesini istihsâl etmek için mevki`ine göre mevsimi zirâ`atin idrâkından nihâyet bir aya kadar reji memûrine bir numaralı varakaya merbut (1) işaretili nümûne veçhile bir isti`dânâme i`tâ idecek ve işbu isti`dânâmede duhân mahsûlüne hasredeceği arâzinin mevki`ini vusa`atini ve mümkün mertebe hudûdunu dahi gösterecektir.” See the article five in the ZRRZKHVACDN.

The rate of literacy was very low in the villages and districts. Farmers, who desired to cultivate tobacco, needed help to write the petitions to obtain a license and they paid money to this assistance.¹⁶⁸ In addition, the company requested a pecuniary guarantee or a cosigner who was a well-known person and appointed by community council, criminal record as well as good conduct from farmers.¹⁶⁹ If the farmers cultivated tobacco without permit in earlier, the company did not give license for cultivate tobacco to them. The company did not give licenses in a short time, the farmers who waited for license looked for a solution. Ottoman government argued that, the company had to respond to license request within eight days.¹⁷⁰ If the Régie Company did not explain the result of the license request in eight days, it would have to accept the applicant as a licensed cultivator.¹⁷¹ The company mostly refused to give licenses to tobacco producers in the many districts of Trabzon. Hence, many farmers from Ordu, Tirebolu, and Giresun migrated to Russia.¹⁷²

Most of the farmers could not take a license for tobacco cultivation in time and because of this, their crops were accepted as smuggled tobacco. The Régie Company wanted to uproot the tobacco that was cultivated without a license. While, the government wanted the company to give licenses in time¹⁷³ the provincial governments intervened to prevent the ripping of tobacco crops in many places, because the government tried to prevent clashes between the Régie Company and farmers.¹⁷⁴ In addition, because smuggled tobacco caused a decrease in tobacco

¹⁶⁷ “Tütün zer` edecek ahali tarafından reji idarelerine verilip oralardan hükûmât-ı mahalliyeye olunan `arz-ı hallerin derkenarına üçer kuruşluk pul vaz`ı...” in BOA, ŞD 337/6 14 December 1891, quoted from Dıġıroġlu p. 62.

¹⁶⁸ Nusret, *Tütün Meselesi* p. 17 “...Osmanlı köylüsü daha okuyup yazmaktan bi-haberdir. Mesâhe hesapları dahi yalnız kendince ma`lûm olan bir takım ölçülere istinâd eder. Ale`l-ekser köyde öyle muntazâm istida` tânzim edebilecek iktidarda adam bulunmaz. Zavallı köylü kasabaya gidecek bir `arz-ı halciye beş on kuruş vererek `arz-ı hali yazdıracaktır.” Gökdemir, p. 62.

¹⁶⁹ *Talimatname*, İstanbul 1311, p. 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Talimatname*, İstanbul 1311, p. 19.

¹⁷¹ BOA, İ.HUS no: 49, 2 August 1895, 21 July 1311.

¹⁷² Dıġıroġlu, p. 65.

¹⁷³ BOA, DH.MKT 1531/90, 11 August 1888, 30 July 1304.

revenues of the State, the government tried to prevent people from cultivating tobacco without a license. In other words, the government was a balance-point between the Régie Company and the farmers. While it requested to the company to give licenses in time, it also tried to teach farmers how to adapt to the new conditions in tobacco sector. For instance, Aubyneau who was the director of the company stated, the government did not help the company to remove the crops of farmers who did not have licenses. The company would tolerate this situation in Adana and Ankara but threatened to close its office in Bursa (Hüdavendigar) if the government did not help the company in a week.¹⁷⁵

The provincial governments acted as brokers between the Régie and the farmers. For example, the Régie Company requested to rip out the tobacco cultivated without licenses in Akçaabad. However, the government argued, the source of the problem came from the Régie's unwillingness to give licenses in time and for this reason the provincial governments should find the farmers who cultivated tobacco without license and accepted these crops as legal products.¹⁷⁶ Another reason behind this decision was the premium quality of the tobacco cultivated in Akçaabad. The government focused on the losses in revenue and stated these people were free to cultivate tobacco without license but the Régie Company did not have to buy their crops.¹⁷⁷ The government adopted a similar position in many provinces of the Empire and argued that the Régie should accept the tobacco cultivated without license as legal or illegal according to the quality of the crop.¹⁷⁸ As explained in the document the government desired to export these crops but it also promoted the smuggling issue because it did not help the Company to stop the production that was accepted to be illegal in accordance with the Régie agreements. This attempt also shows the inability of the provincial governments to control the society.

¹⁷⁴ BOA, DH.MKT 2077/104, 5 December 1896, 23 Teşrinisani 1312; BOA, DH.MKT 1714/128, 6 April 1890, 25 March 1306.

¹⁷⁵ Dıġıroġlu, p. 67.

¹⁷⁶ Dıġıroġlu, p. 68.

¹⁷⁷ BOA, MV no: 35/1, 20 January 1888, 8 Kanunisani 1303.

¹⁷⁸ Gökdemir, p. 65.

Kadri Bey, the Governor of Trabzon also stated that they worked hard but failed to prevent smuggling. His solution, too, was to allow the people to cultivate tobacco in Akçaabad without permission and then to help or force them to export their crops. This was the only solution of a provincial governor whom the smugglers and tobacco farmers called “cruel.” The government did not succeed in controlling its society. Yet, the government worked to prevent clashes between the Régie Company and the people in the Hamidian era. For this reason, it helped the tobacco cultivators of Akçaabad and Rize who cultivated tobacco without permission.¹⁷⁹

Tobacco farmers did not only consist of people from the lower classes of the Ottoman society. In many places, the district governors, soldiers, and merchants had tobacco fields. These people as well faced the problem of license, which tended to be more complex in many places than it was the case in Akçaabad. For example, the Régie kolcus ascertained the smuggled tobacco in Arapgir and Elaziz. However, the district governor did not allow the Régie police forces to take the crop because the district governor was the owner of the tobacco farms. The company asserted its right to seize smuggled tobacco but it did not succeed to get these crops. The company made an effort to gain support from Istanbul against the district governor of Arapgir.¹⁸⁰

The Régie Company delayed the request of licenses because it did not want to give licenses to all farmers who desired to cultivate tobacco.¹⁸¹ Its main aim was to keep cultivation and hence production at optimum levels in view of its interests. If the company gave licenses to all farmers, the production would increase and the Régie would have to buy all of these crops. The company would have to increase its capital investments and the companies’ revenues would decrease.¹⁸² The Ministry of Finance also stated that the Régie Company did not try to improve the conditions of farmers but worked for its own interest.¹⁸³ In brief, Régie’s attitudes towards farmers

¹⁷⁹ There was a similar problem in Rize. For a detail information see Dıġıroġlu p. 63.

¹⁸⁰ BOA, DH-İD 95-1/56 1912.

¹⁸¹ BOA, ŞD 1841/16 1 October 1887, 19 September 1303, “... ruhsâtnâme virmeyerek ekserimizi duhân zirâ`atinden mahrûm itmekle...”

¹⁸² Ali Karaca, “Osmanlı İmparatorluġunda Reji ve Tütün Kaçakçılıġında Trabzon Örneġi: Bir Yabancı Sermaye Serüveni”, *Tütün Kitabı*, p. 70.

regarding the license problem promoted the smuggling issue in the Province of Trabzon. Merchants and professional smugglers bought the tobacco grown without license. They paid higher prices to farmers than the Régie Company. Farmers who could sell their crops to them were fortunate.

3.3. The Warehouse Problem

Warehouses were very crucial for tobacco farmers. Farmers cultivated millions of kilograms of tobacco in a year. Some of this crop was for export and some for the internal markets. Farmers needed warehouses to keep their tobacco safe and fresh. The regulation about the mutual responsibilities and rights of the Régie and the farmers determined the warehouse system. The provincial governments and the Régie officials would specify when farmers would transport their crops to the warehouses.¹⁸⁴ When farmers were ready to transport their crops, they would report to Régie officials and the Régie workers or headman of the villages would help farmers transport their crop.¹⁸⁵ According to the Régie agreement, the company would build warehouses in places that cultivated more than 100,000 *kıyyes* of tobacco. However, the farmers protested the Régie Company because it was unwilling to construct warehouses in places that met this condition. Instead, the company demanded farmers to transport their crops to the warehouses that already existed in those districts that were the main centers of tobacco cultivation. The Régie's main aim was to decrease its expenditures and to prevent cultivation that exceeded its demand. Farmers had to transport their crops in a limited time to locations determined by the company.¹⁸⁶ An article in the newspaper *Feyz* states that the company confiscated tobacco that delivered to the warehouses late. Furthermore,

¹⁸³ 1322 Senesine aid olarak Reji Muamelatı Hakkında İcra Olunan Teftiřatı Natık Müzakere ve merbut rapor suretidir, Mahmud Bey Matbaası, İstanbul 1326, p. 4. "... Reji Őirketinin tütün zirâ`atını tahdid eylemek ve kendi ihtiyâcâtından ziyâde tütün yetiřtirilmesini men` eylemek için her nev`i tedâbir-i gayri-meřrû`iye tevessül eylediđi hükümet-i seniyyece ma`lûm olmasına mebni ..."

¹⁸⁴ Article 20 in the ZRRZKHVACDN.

¹⁸⁵ Article 21 in the ZRRZKHVACDN.

¹⁸⁶ Akpınar, p. 56.

it fined some of these farmers for dealing in smuggled tobacco because they did not have a license.¹⁸⁷

The lack of warehouses caused other problems as well between the farmers and the Régie Company. While the farmers wanted the construction of warehouses close to places where tobacco was cultivated, the company built them in cities where it could sell the crops more efficiently.¹⁸⁸ Consequently, the farmers paid more money to transport their crops to the warehouses. In addition, many farmers criticized the company because the company did not pay the cost of tobacco crops upon delivery and kept the crops in warehouses for a long time.¹⁸⁹ The government argued that the farmers cooperated with the smugglers because of these negative attitudes of the company. For this reason, the government worked to defend the farmers' rights and warned the company to stop creating conditions that favored contraband.

The tobacco farmers of the sub-districts of Kadı in Samsun wanted a warehouse in order to keep their crops safe. However, the company argued that their place was not at a distance, more than ten hours away from the nearest tobacco warehouse in the region and hence rejected the farmers' request.¹⁹⁰ The provincial government accepted the farmers' request and wanted the Régie Company to build a new warehouse.¹⁹¹

The farmers of Kandıra in Izmit also desired a warehouse in 1912 but, significantly, both the government and the Régie Company rejected their request. The government stated that these people had transported their crops for about thirty years to warehouses in Izmit and Sapanca. The company's monopoly would end in 1914 and for this reason it was unnecessary to ask for a new warehouse.¹⁹² This

¹⁸⁷ Feyz, 15 Ağustos 1322 p. 2 “.... vakt-i muâyende Reji ambarlarına indirilmiş tütünlere kaçak nâzarıyla bakarak hem müsâdere itmekde ve hem de en ağır derecede cezâ-i nâkdi almakda....”

¹⁸⁸ Dıġıroġlu, p. 72.

¹⁸⁹ BOA, BEO 166043/2214, 14 November 1903, 1 Teşrinisani 1319.

¹⁹⁰ BOA, DH.MKT 1387/45; BOA, ŞD 1839/11, 20 February 1887, 8 February 1302; Dıġıroġlu, p. 70.

¹⁹¹ Dıġıroġlu, p. 71.

¹⁹² BOA, DH-İD 95-2/15, 18 September 1912, 5 September 1322; Akpınar, p. 58.

document also showed the desire to end the foreign tobacco monopoly in the Ottoman Empire.

The problem of licenses and warehouses were the most persistent problems between the Régie and farmers. In addition, the farmers criticized the low-prices of the company and the attitudes the Régie officials towards them. For instance, the farmers of Akçaabad criticized the company due to low prices.¹⁹³ In fact, the company did not pay sufficient money for tobacco crops. Parvus Efendi offers data that indicated how the company paid low prices for tobacco but sold it at high profits. For instance, while the company paid 10.3 kurushes for one kilogram of tobacco it sold it 30 kurushes in 1913.¹⁹⁴

Another cause of complaint for the farmers involved the experts, who assessed the tobacco crop to decide the suitable price for it. The farmers of Akçaabad state that they waited for five months and the company did not send an expert to assess their crops.¹⁹⁵ The farmers of Manisa faced the same problem.¹⁹⁶ Despite its original promise, farmers criticized the company because it did not extend credits to them without interest. They argued that an Ottoman lira was equal to 109 Ottoman kurushes. The company paid the farmers in accordance with that calculation. Yet, when the farmers paid their debts the company accepted an Ottoman lira to be 108 Ottoman kurushes. The *Feyz* newspaper addressed this problem, telling its readers that the Régie made unearned gains from this difference in rates and the farmers lost a part of their earnings. According to the news, the Régie gained 27,410 Ottoman kurushes from the cultivation of 2,987,709 kg tobacco in Trabzon.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ BOA, DH-İD 95/76, 1914 “.... Reji dairesince doksan kuruşa aldığı bir mala bu sene kırk-beş veya elli kuruş veriyor ve bundan fazlaya kat'iyen almam diyor ...” Quoted from Akpınar, p. 54.

¹⁹⁴ Parvus Efendi, p. 161.

¹⁹⁵ Dıġırođlu, p. 75.

¹⁹⁶ Ahenk, 14 December 1895 “.... Beher kıyyesi geđer akçe ancak on iki kuruşa mal olamayan tütün mahsûlümüzün Reji İdaresince o da “lütfen” denilerek üç dört kuruşa alınmak istenmesi ve bu kadardan fazla fi'at takdir edilmemesi”... “Biz böyle üç dört kuruşa mal satacak olursak borçlarımızı ne ile öder nasıl bunun altından kalkar sonra da idâre-i mâ`işetimizi hangi menbâdan temin edebiliriz...” Quoted from Gökdemir, p. 71.

¹⁹⁷ Akpınar, p.62.

Overall, the increase in tobacco cultivation was a problem for the Régie Company. The Régie Company worked to prevent many people from tobacco cultivation. The government also did not desire to lose its tax revenue from tobacco taxes and allowed these people to cultivate tobacco sell it to whomever they desired. The company tried to decrease its costs and stabilize its revenue. This is because, if the Régie's revenue increased, its ration of profit would decrease while the government's increased. Hence, the company did not make enough effort to prevent smugglers and it unwillingly promoted tobacco smuggling within the Empire.¹⁹⁸ Under these circumstances, the roles of the Régie police and the state should be re-defined. Smuggling was only the reference point of the company against the State's and the society's criticisms. The company used the state's inability to control society to justify its attitude. The company behaved according to its imperialist orientation and interests while the State did not find any alternative solution to the problems.

3.4. Tobacco Smuggling

The word smuggler will refer to professional itinerant and armed tobacco traders in this chapter. The Régie's view of smuggling had different emphases. According to the Régie, smugglers were cultivators of tobacco without licenses,¹⁹⁹ people who minced tobacco in their home-shops,²⁰⁰ people who sold the equipment used in the home-shops,²⁰¹ and people who trafficked contraband.²⁰² All of these acts were of the nature of a crime against the State. In other words, some of them were criminal acts of lower class people against the market system while some others were the professionalization of a criminal act via the monopolization of a mainstay crop. While this thesis differentiates these two groups in Chapter I, it also argues that the crimes of these two groups have many connections. Without idealization of the criminal attitudes of the lower classes, one can argue, based on Ottoman archival

¹⁹⁸ For a document of Agop Pasha that argued the company's attitudes promoted the tobacco smuggling, see BOA, İ.DH, no: 94682, 10 January 1891, 29 Kanunievvel 1306.

¹⁹⁹ Article 44 and 50 in the ZRRZKHVACDN; Dıġıroġlu, p. 103.

²⁰⁰ Article 45 in the ZRRZKHVACDN; Dıġıroġlu, p. 103.

²⁰¹ Article 46 in the ZRRZKHVACDN; Dıġıroġlu, p. 103.

²⁰² Article 44 in the ZRRZKHVACDN; Dıġıroġlu, p. 103.

documents that the Régie's attitudes induced tobacco farmers' trafficking of contraband, as already indicated above. Professional smuggler groups differed from tobacco farmers engaged in illicit tobacco cultivation in that the professional smugglers harmed not only the government and the Régie Company but also many villagers, because they plundered many villages and oppressed farmers in order to acquire their crops. The government used the term –smuggling- for mostly the people who joined contraband traders. Official documents and officials called them bandits or wankers. A note of Sultan Abdul Hamid II shows how the State identified illicit tobacco traders. According to this document, two problems occurred in the provinces because of smugglers. First, the revenues of the government decreased because the farmers chose to sell their products to smugglers. Second, the smugglers caused a security problem in the provinces.²⁰³ The Sultan stated that idle and vagrant groups survived on smuggling important products such as guns, gunpowder, and tobacco.²⁰⁴

The smuggling in the Ottoman Empire was mostly like a school for bandits.²⁰⁵ Consequently, the State argued, tobacco smugglers were also bandits of sorts because they broke the law and harmed the peace in the provinces. As an example of this argument, the government asked from the provincial rulers to stop the contraband of the leader of a smuggling group in Bafra. His name was Tütüncüoğlu Yani. He and his friends broke the peace in Bafra. The government asked the help of the Régie police force to restore security in Bafra.²⁰⁶

²⁰³ BOA, Y.PRK.DH 14/35, 3 January 1908, 21 Kanun-i Sani 1323.

²⁰⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.DH 14/35, 3 January 1908, 21 Kanun-i Sani 1323 “...Anadolu-i şâhâne vilâyâtında hâsılât-ı inhisâriyenin esbâb-ı tedennisi herkesçe ma`lûm olduğu üzere bir takım işsiz güçsüz ve yersiz yurtsuz serserilerin martini tüfenklerini ve derece-i kifâyede mevâdd-ı nâriyeyi hâmilen çeteler teşkiliyle Bahr-i Siyâh sevâhilinden başlayarak dahil-i vilayete doğru silah barut dinamit kabilinden eşya-yı memnu ile kaçak tütün nakl ve ticaretini kendilerine bir mâişet-i gayr-i meşru ittihaz etmelerinden ibarettir...” Quoted from Abdülhamit Kırmızı, p. 239.

²⁰⁵ Sabri Yetkin, *Batı Anadolu'daki Eşkıyalık Olaylarının Yapısal İncelemesi: XIX. Yüzyılın Son Çeyreğinden Balkan Savaşına*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, İzmir 1995, p. 99. Also, see Sabri Yetkin, *Ege'de Eşkiyalar*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2003.

²⁰⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 2058/99 leaf 1. “Bafra havâlisinden öteden beri `avânesiyle beraber icrâ-yı şekâvetle ahâliyi ihdâr ve tütün kaçakçılığı ile de iştigâl itmekde olan eşkiyâdan Tütüncüoğlu Yani'nin reji kolcuları tarafından sûret-i itlâfına dâir...”

Many smugglers dealt in not only tobacco but also salt, gunpowder, and guns. Smuggling was problem not only in the Black-Sea region. Smugglers sold their products in almost every city of the Empire.²⁰⁷ In addition, most of the smugglers in Trabzon were like professional traders who sold tobacco to Anatolian cities and bought salt from these cities to sell back in Trabzon.

According to the Régie Company, smugglers were bandits. The Régie Company desired to explain these people as bandits because it did not want to focus on smugglers without the help of the government. The Régie's association of smuggling with banditry implied that there was a security problem in the provinces and the State should help to provide public security for all people. The company also considered that the smugglers consisting of 300-500 people caused serious security problems and the Ottoman army should help the company to prevent the smuggling. Although, the company argued that the government did not provide support to prevent smuggling, the situation in the provinces was different. The attitudes of local governments against smugglers were the main determinant factor in the provinces of the Empire. In addition to this, although the company looked for support from government, the Ottoman documents show that the company did not focus on the prevention of smuggling. The company's problem was with the tobacco farmers instead tobacco smugglers. For this reason, the company's attitudes against society increased the tobacco smuggling. The government also did not provide security in the provinces because of not only the lack of enough power of the government, but also the unwillingness of the government to prevent people from smuggling in Hamidian era. After the 1908 coup d'état, there was a critical transformation and the government helped the Régie to prevent smuggling in the provinces, but the effect of local governors continued to determine the vantage point of the State against the company and the smugglers.

Tobacco smugglers sold their products in almost all districts of the Empire. Even in Istanbul, clashes between smugglers and police occurred. Although, smugglers included many people from different ethnic and religious groups, the Ottoman archival sources mostly called tobacco smugglers of the Trabzon Province

²⁰⁷ As an example of the smuggling in a different city see *İkdam* 3 August 1901(?) "Geçen çarşamba günü Urla'dan altı sa'ât mesâfede deniz üzerinde tütün kaçakçıları ile reji kolcuları arasında bir müsâdeme vuku'a gelmiştir. Sabahleyin saat dörtde içlerinde tütün bulunan iki yilkın kimesne rejinin iki kayığa yanaşib kolcuların reisi kaçak tütünleri teslim talebi etmiş ise de kaçakçılar bu tâlebe tüfenk atarak cevâb vermişlerdir..."

as Laz smugglers. There were also the terms such as Georgian smugglers and Cherkes smugglers were also used but the so-called Laz smugglers dominated tobacco smuggling in Anatolia. For instance, although there were many people from different ethnic groups, the smugglers who were arrested in Niğde were called Laz smugglers.

Table 3.1 List of Tobacco Smugglers Identified in Niğde

| City | District | Neighborhood | Name | Arrested Or Fled | # of People |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Trabzon | | Boztepe | Ali, son of Bekircan | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Argaliya | Mithat, son of Huseyin | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Rankariye | Ahmed, son of Kara Huseyin | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Yomra | Vakif | Karabet | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | Dimitri, son of Haralampos | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | İmamkızıoğlu Ali | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | Kemal, brother of Ali | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | Tütüncüoğlu Ali | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | Ali, son of Kara Hasan | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Gümüşhane | Kelkit | Hozbirik | Dursun or Tosun | Arrested in Niğde | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Boztepe | Osman, brother of Ali | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Kavak | Mehmet Ali | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Kavak | Hüseyin and fellow fighters | Fled | 6 |
| Trabzon | | Mariya | İsmail | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | Yomra | Vakif | Melkun, son of Menal | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | Çakırlı | Horalı | Cobanoğlu Süleyman | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | Maltul, neighbor of Dimitri | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Seradere | Hüseyin, son of Malber | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | Pulathane | Huzhoron ? | Sergeant Mehmed | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Divranos | Mehmed, son of Hazval | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Divranos | Osman | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Divranos | Kalleman ? | Fled | 1 |
| Trabzon | | Divranos | Somel | Fled | 1 |
| Gümüşhane | | Haşoza | Süleyman | Fled | 1 |
| People who were unidentified | | | | | 25 |
| | | | | | 55 |

Source: BOA. DH.MKT 1567/78 Leaf 1.

The Table 3.1 shed light on certain point about tobacco smugglers. First, the table 3.1 which gave the names and origins of these people indicated that ten of them were arrested in Niğde thanks to the great effort of the Governor of Niğde, Efgan Bey. He learnt who escaped from the clash between the smugglers and the soldiers after the inquiry. Although there were fifty-five smugglers, the governor identified only thirty of them.²⁰⁸

The table 3.1 indicates that there were many people from different districts and different ethnic groups in the band. It is possible that the seed group started its journey in *Seradere* and other people joined it when the group arrived other villages. In addition, most probably, people from the İmamkızıoğlu family led the smuggling group. Ali was one of the famous tobacco smugglers of Trabzon. Although he was arrested in Niğde, other Ottoman documents and some memoirs as well refer to him or another Ali from the İmamkızıoğlu family. For example in 1909 İmamkızıoğlu Ali and his friends transported their tobacco to Erzurum.²⁰⁹ This document shows us that the certain people who were known as smugglers did not quit smuggling. Many people from İmamkızıoğlu were arrested in Niğde, Trabzon, and Erzurum but they continued to sell their products because they did considered their work not an illegal activity but normal business. Furthermore, it is also possible that such a group was the composed of different smuggling groups in Trabzon. For instance, according to the inquiries of arrested smugglers in Niğde, Huseyin from Kavak village had six men in the group. One can argue that Huseyin was the leader of a small smuggling group and joined them. Furthermore, the most important clue of the gathering of different small tobacco smuggling groups is that while the arrested people gave the names and districts of others, none of them was able to recognize twenty-five people. More importantly, three smugglers who escaped from Niğde were arrested in the Province of Ankara.²¹⁰ It shows us that, these three people were not from Trabzon or they did not care about the clash and continued tobacco smuggling in other cities of

²⁰⁸ BOA, DH.MKT 1567/78, leaf 4, 13 November 1888, 1 Teşrinisani 1304.

²⁰⁹ BOA, DH.MKT 2767/75, 15 March 1909, 2 March 1325 “Akçaâbadlı İmamoğlu `Ali ve Yanbâşoğlu Mustafa ile `avânesiyle müsellah kırk-sekiz yük tütünle Gümüşhane'den Bayburd sancağına giderek oradan da Erzurum cihetine geçecekleri...”

²¹⁰ BOA, DH.MKT 1567/78 leaf 4, 13 November 1888, 1 Teşrinisani 1304.

the Empire. Both of these results imply one conclusion; the State did not have enough control over Anatolian Peninsula.

When these smugglers were seen in the city of Niğde, the local governor asked backup force to arrest them. Approximately one hundred cavalries and the Régie kolcus came from the cities of Adana, Niğde, Kayseri, and Konya.²¹¹ However, when these people arrived Niğde, they argued and the smugglers receded to Kozan. When the governor of Niğde investigated the situation, he learnt the smugglers were hiding in caves in a village. The village had a Greek Orthodox population and was famous for hiding bandits.²¹² The governor went to the caves with thirty cavalry forces. Laz smugglers succeeded to escape from the governor. First, they opened fire on the soldiers but after a few hours, they accepted to submit. There were three rounds of negotiations to determine the conditions of their surrender. The Laz smugglers agreed to surrender but after dawn. That night the smugglers escaped. As a result, the local governor captured ten smugglers who were listed in the table, eight shepherds, eleven rifles, ten poniards, six guns, four swords, and sixty-one-dens of tobacco.²¹³ The arrest of shepherds indicates that not only bandits but also shepherds were guides for the Laz smugglers.

This event illustrated that first; the Régie police force and the cavalries called in from different cities were unwilling to combat smugglers. For this reason, the kolcus and cavalries argued the smugglers escaped to the mountains of Kozan. The effort of the provincial governor of Niğde indicates that the government desired to stop the contraband. Hence, it collected approximately one hundred people from different cities as quickly as possible. Second, villagers were willing to hide the smugglers. Although, this village had a reputation for being a bandit safe house, their help to smugglers indicates that many villagers were willing to open their house to

²¹¹ BOA, DH.MKT 1560/78 leaf 1, 2 November 1888, 21 Teşrinievvel 1304 “Tütün kaçakçıları olan Lazların takibine Konya vilâyetinden vûku` bulan iş`âr üzerine buradan da kûvve-i zabita sevk olunduğu evvelce `ârz edilmişti şimdi Niğde mutâsarırılığından alınan telgrâfnâmede mezkûr kaçakçılar Niğdeye altı saat mesâfede ka`in mağaralarda müttehâz oldukları halde bizzat üzerlerine varılıb altmış yedi denk tütün ve eslihâlarıyla beraber on nefer Laz ve sekiz hayvan derdest edildikleri ve bâkiyyesi gece tütünlerini terk ile Kayseriye firâr ettikleri ve Adana süvârileriyle i`ade olunduğu bildirilmekle `ârz-ı malûmât olunur fermân fi 21 teşrin-i evvel 304.”

²¹² BOA, DH.MKT 1567/78, leaf 2-3, 4 November 1888, 23 Teşrinievvel 1304.

²¹³ BOA, DH.MKT 1567/78, leaf 2-3, 4 November 1888, 23 Teşrinievvel 1304.

the bandits and smugglers. The caves in Anatolia were like natural homes for smugglers and bandits. Yet, in many villages, the houses of peasants had a room for guests. A traveler who travelled around Anatolia stated he stayed with tobacco traders who had guns in a village of Konya.²¹⁴ It is possible the people in general show smugglers as traders who sold tobacco products that were higher quality and cheaper than the Régie's. Finally, the effort of the provincial governors to arrest them purified the role of the provincial governors. While the governors of Niğde and Trabzon worked to prevent smuggling, the commander of gendarme Faik Bey in Bolu protected the Laz smugglers who provided tobacco for mineworkers in Zonguldak and Ereğli.²¹⁵

The illicit tobacco trade was not only the job of professional tobacco smugglers. The state officials and soldiers also took part in the trafficking of contraband in many cities. A decree was sent to the provinces to stop these attitudes.²¹⁶ The Régie Company stated that, its revenues decreased because of the attitudes of soldiers and state officials. The decree reminded the provincial officials that the government was the company's partner and hence assisting it served the interest of the state. In addition to unwillingness to assist the efforts to prevent smuggling, some soldiers took part in contraband trafficking. This situation suggests that the people in general did not consider tobacco smuggling as a shameful act and hence the smugglers could go about their business as if there were ordinary vendors.

One of the main tasks of the government was to provide security and order in the provinces. According to the government and the Régie, tobacco smugglers caused perturbation wherever they went. One of the major tobacco trade routes started in Akçaabad and Rize, continued in Sivas, Kayseri, Niğde, Adana, and reached the Mediterranean Sea. A second route connected Trabzon, Erzincan, Elazığ, Antep, and reached Aleppo. Laz smugglers caused security problems in these cities. For example, in 1887, the central government informed the Governor of Trabzon that armed Laz smugglers used the route from Trabzon to Arapgir and because the provincial officials did not have sufficient manpower to be able to stop

²¹⁴ Bela Horvath, *1913 Anadolu*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları İstanbul 2010, p. 53.

²¹⁵ BOA, BEO 1595/119571, leaf 1, 4 November 1900; 21 Teşrinisani 1316

²¹⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 913/8, leaf 1, "...memûrin-i hükümetden bâz'ıları ahâli ile beraber kaçak tütün istimâl ve asâkir-i şâhânedan dâhi bir çoğu `inde emsâl eylediklerinden..."

the smugglers. The government asked the governor to prevent the armed Laz smugglers from using that route.²¹⁷

A third route that the smugglers used connected Trabzon to Iran. Armed Laz smugglers frequented this route as well. Apart from the first and second routes, the smugglers went to Erzurum, Van, and Iran via this route. Like other routes, the smugglers confronted district police and the Régie kolcus in the third route. Several documents complain about the clashes between the smugglers and the district police. For instance, sixteen Laz tobacco smugglers clashed with the kolcus and the district police in Tazegül village of Erzurum in 1884. Since the smugglers killed one of the district police –Zabtiye İsmail-, the government requested the arrest of these people as quickly as possible. Smugglers escaped from the village without taking their 830-kiyyes of tobacco.²¹⁸ The event occurred one year after the foundation of the Régie Company. The company had not completed its restocks in the provinces of the Empire. Hence, this document indicates that the tobacco smuggling undermined public security before the establishment of the company.

Illicit traders used the sea routes as well. The Laz smugglers used two different routes on the Black-Sea. The first one connected Trabzon to Ereğli and Istanbul and the other route connected it to Russia.²¹⁹ Georgian Smugglers as well were involved in the illicit tobacco trade in the Black Sea. These people sold guns, rifles and gunpowder in addition to tobacco.²²⁰ The Régie Company bought ships known as guard ships or police boats to control the Black-sea. Some of the workers in these boats were Régie kolcus.²²¹ The smugglers did not transport their crops to the ports. They chose alternative places to carriage their tobacco. Although the company's guard ships captured some of the famous illicit traders, it did not succeed

²¹⁷ BOA, DH.MKT 1397/40 leaf 1, 2 February 1887, 21 Kanuni-sani 1302.

²¹⁸ BOA, DH.MKT 1346/45 leaf 1, 6 December 1884, 24 Teşrini-sani 1300.

²¹⁹ As examples of the tobacco smuggling by the sea-route, see BOA, DH.MKT 1429/71; BOA, DH.MKT 1522/5, 16 June 1888, June 4, 1304.

²²⁰ BOA, DH.MKT 545/59, leaf 1, 21 July 1902, 8 July 1318 “Gürcü muhâcirlerinden Sinoplu Süleyman ve beş nefer arkadaşı Sinoblu Seyyid Reisin kotrâsıyla otuz aded Yunan martini tûfengi ile bir mikdâr fişengi Akçay iskelesine ihrâç ve Niksâra nâkl ile oradan aldığı otuz denk kaçak tütün ile kotrâya `avdet eylediği haber verilmesine...”

²²¹ Dığıroğlu, p. 122.

to stop trafficking contraband by the sea-route. Namık Kemal stated that smugglers in Crete and Lesbos Island had certain deceptive tactics. For instance, smugglers started out in small crafts that did not transport tobacco but attracted the attention of the attention of the Régie's ships. As the Régie's ships pursued them, boats that carried tobacco took off in different directions to deliver their precious cargo.²²²

3.5. A Story of an Illicit Tobacco Trader.²²³

The tobacco smuggling did not end with the Régie Company, as it did not start with it either. The people of certain villages that had earned reputation for producing tobacco smugglers continued to be engaged in illicit tobacco traffick. Yusuf was from such a village. Although nobody knew the exact year of his birth, according to him, he was born in Artvin in 1923. When he was fifteen he began to sell tobacco in many cities in the vicinity such as Erzurum, Ardahan, Kars, and Van. He did this job for about twelve years. Although, the conditions were changed in Turkish Republic, his story as an example of a trafficker who played a little role in smuggling issue should help us understand the daily life of a tobacco smuggler, the conditions he faced, the continuity, and changes in the government's attitude toward smugglers, the role of women in smuggling, and the relationship of smugglers with other villagers and other smugglers.

Yusuf was from a small village called Yukarımaden (Hod-ı Ulya). His family had come from Caucasia and settled in Yukarımaden and Aşağımaden (Hod-ı Süfla). Initially his family had settled in Yukarımaden. Yet, after the Russians captured their village in World War I, most of the family moved to Aşağımaden or cities. Yusuf's family moved to Kayseri and returned after the war. They did not have enough fields for cultivation because of the terrain. Farmers of two Maden villages mainly cultivated tobacco and corn. Yusuf, of course, did not remember the Régie Company but he knew much about the many negative events his family experienced after the foundation of the Régie Company. He learnt from his father that the Régie did not allow them to cultivate tobacco because their farms were smaller than a decare. His

²²²Tansel, p. 474.

²²³ This story depends on the results of oral history study with Yusuf Batman (1926-....).

family began to cultivate and sell tobacco illegally. He argued that they were only farmers trying to make ends meet and survive.

They sold not only their own produce. Since they did not have enough land to grow tobacco in large quantities in the village, they bought tobacco in the villages of Rize and Ardanuç as well. Tobacco producers from those villages transported their crops to a predetermined place usually somewhere in the summer grounds up in the mountains out of the reach of kolcus. The smuggling groups went there to buy the produce. Then they returned their village. The second process started in the villages. It was the stage where women played a major role. They minced and blended tobacco according to its quality and packaged the products. Then the story of professional tobacco traders begins. Yusuf was one of them. His adventures shed light on the situations they faced.

One day, Yusuf and his two friends went to Erzurum to sell tobacco. The weather was rainy and they had to use the mountain routes to avoid kolcus. When they arrived the village of their destiny, he realized that their crop had become wet in the rain. The villagers put them up. They re-dried and blended their products in that village. During that time, the kolcus came to the village looking for them. According to Yusuf, a kolcu could easily understand where the smugglers hid. Yet, kolcus never arrested him thanks to the co-operation of villagers. He told that a tobacco smuggler never sold his products by going door to door in a village. If someone did this, nobody would buy tobacco because this might be a tactic of kolcus to find out who bought smuggled tobacco. Instead, a smuggler directly went to the headman or *ağa* of a village. The headmen hosted the smuggler in his home. He called a child from the village. The child went around all houses in the village to distribute tobacco. After the villagers bought their need, they paid the child. Finally, the headman or *ağa* gave the money to the smuggler after taking his commission. According to Yusuf, sometimes the smugglers exchanged tobacco for salt or other vital products that they sold in their village. Otherwise, they took money and returned home with it.

Yusuf also remembered that a smuggler of their village was terrified when he saw a kolcu or another smuggling group. Laz smugglers traveled in larger groups than other and they were not afraid of the kolcus and other Turkish security forces. In addition, the Laz smugglers had certain villages entirely for themselves. Other

smuggling groups avoided these villages because nobody would buy tobacco from them in these villages that were under the monopoly of Laz smugglers. Furthermore, other smugglers were afraid of the kolcus because they were dangerous and, according to Yusuf, they would not wait a court decision to punish a smuggler. If a kolcu arrested a smuggler, he could easily kill him.

Yusuf's adventures are part of Turkish history. Smuggling did not end in a day. Yusuf's experience gives us an idea about the continuation of the smuggling issue and how it influenced people's lives. It also shows us that there were conflicts between smugglers as well. Yusuf is alive and has been living in Istanbul for the last twenty-five years. Whenever he hears something about the Régie Company, tobacco smuggling, and the kolcus, he becomes upset and begins to talk about his memoirs. He acknowledged that smuggling was illegal but he justifies it by arguing that it was the only way of survival for many. He takes pride in avoiding arrest by the security forces, whether the police, kolcu or gendarmes. This feat had made one of the most famous tobacco smugglers of his village. He holds that people in the village told many stories about his legendary escaped from the kolcus. His example gives an idea about how people mythologized the smuggler as they did some bandits.

3.6. The Role of Provincial Governors in the Tobacco Smuggling

The number of tobacco smugglers rapidly increased after the foundation of the Régie Company and the provincial rulers worked to stop the illicit trade to provide security. Kadri Bey was one of the famous provincial governors who worked to stop the illicit tobacco trade within the province. He governed Trabzon eleven years, from 1892 to 1903 without any change in his duty. The Régie Company and the government supported Kadri Bey against the illicit tobacco traders. His solution to stop contraband was classified in three ways. First, Kadri Bey desired to prevent smuggling thanks to his despotic attitudes against smugglers. He did not provide a fair trial for many people who trafficking contraband. Instead, he used his own ways. For instance, the most known punishment of Kadri Bey was the method of coffee. When he interrogated someone, he told his men to serve the guilty a coffee. The sugar was a code for penalty and if Kadri Bey requested coffee with sugar, he wanted his men beat the guilty black and blue. The criminals who were beaten were

hospitalized and were treated in hospital at least ten days. The affect of beating was determined in accordance with the rate of sugar in the coffee. If he requested coffee without sugar, he wanted his men beat the smugglers softly.²²⁴ He also exiled some smugglers to other cities. Many people complained about Kadri Bey to Şakir Pasha because Kadri Bey exiled them. They argued that Kadri Bey punished them because they wanted to resolve the problems between the Régie Company and the tobacco farmers.²²⁵

As a second tactic, Kadri Bey sought the help of villagers or other smugglers to stop contraband in the province. For instances, one day the Imamkızıoğlu family of Akçaabad prepared a *barhane* which was a tobacco smuggler group and moved on the Erzurum road. Kadri Bey first warned them and argued the government would help them to sell their crops at affordable price. However, they rejected the request and continued smuggling. Kadri Bey, sent word to the villagers of Mesahori that if they stopped the Imamkızıoğlu's group and bought them in for questioning, they could confiscate and keep the group's guns, tobacco, beasts of burden, and money. Their only job was to bring these smugglers in for questioning. The villagers played their role and captured Imamkızıoğlu and his followers.²²⁶

Although Kadri Bey released these smugglers, there are important points in this story. First, Kadri Bey argued, if they went back, he would help them to sell their crops at affordable prices. It showed the main problem of these people was they failed to gain money from tobacco. For this reason, the provincial government guaranteed the money of their products. Second, because they rejected the proposal, we can assume these people did not trust the rulers of provinces or they always gained much more money than the Régie's offer. The third implication was the role of villagers in smuggling. Although the village Mesahori was famous for tobacco smuggling, they accepted the offer of Kadri Bey and captured another smuggling group. It seems they did the job because of the money, guns, tobacco, and beasts of burden (which Kadri Bey told them to keep) or because they desired to stop another smuggling group in the market. The brightest point in the story was the government's ability to manipulate a group of villagers who were famous for

²²⁴ Ramber, p. 132, Dıġıroġlu, p. 90.

²²⁵ BOA, ŞD 1848/26, leaf 2, 3 September 1895. Quoted from Dıġıroġlu, p. 89.

²²⁶ Hüseyin Kazım Kadri, p. 63.

smuggling against another illicit tobacco trader group. This was the second solution of Kadri Bey to stop contraband.

The third and last strategy of Kadri Bey was to give positions to the smugglers. Although, the government did not desire to choose Régie Kolcus members from among tobacco smugglers, Kadri Bey, requested the Régie Company to employ some smugglers as kolcus. He employed smugglers to serve in his own retinue as well, because these smugglers were reliable and fearless people.²²⁷ The Régie police forces chosen from among smugglers guided the gendarmes in chasing of tobacco smugglers. More importantly, these former smugglers knew where the smugglers cultivated or bought it, how they blended it, and which farmers helped them. For this reason, Kadri Bey wanted the Régie Company to employ some smugglers as kolcus without hesitation.

Kadri Bey generally did not provide support for the smugglers. In the Anatolian cities of the Empire, many provincial governors supported smugglers clandestinely. Kadri Bey worked hard to stop contraband but with partial success. A letter he wrote in 1899 to the district governor of Akçaabad in response to the tobacco farmers' criticism of his policies against illegal tobacco trade provides an idea about the reasons of his failure.

I will explain what this smuggling is: For eight years we have done everything to prohibit these people from smuggling ... Some of them were arrested, some were exiled; we seized their tobacco, guns, and pack animals ... Moreover, some of these people were executed to set an example ... None of these measures stopped people of your district from smuggling. From now on, we have two choices; we can keep all of these families in jail or we can exile them. However, taking any of these roads would disrupt the existing conditions and public good, and probably be unjust as well. So, here is the result; from now, in every place of your district people are free to cultivate tobacco. However, they should not be able to sell even an okka of their crops to the Régie Company, a local trader, or anyone living in the province. Nobody in Trabzon will buy their tobacco.²²⁸

²²⁷ As an example of the offer for new jobs to smugglers see Hüseyin Kazım Kadri, p. 63.

²²⁸ The Turkish version of Kadri Bey's answer:

Bu kaçakçılığın ahvâl-i gâribesini biraz daha izâh edeyim: Buraya geldiğim sekiz sene müddet zârında bu adamlara karşı ittihâz edilmedik bir şey kalmadı. Her ne yapılmak lazım ise yapıldı. Tenbih edildi, tekdîr edildi. Bâz'ıları müddetlerle hapsedildi. Bir takımını sürüldü. Bir takımını kaçakçılığa giderken tütünleri, silahları zâbt olundu. Bir takımın hayvanları itlâf olundu. Hatta bir takımını diğerlerine ibret olmak üzere vurdurulup itlâf edildi. Bir takımını tütün zirâ'atinden men edildi. Bir takımın hâneleri, zâbtiyelerle askerlere konak edildi. Bir

This letter is a confession of the government's inability to control the illicit tobacco trade. The solution was to prohibit people selling their tobacco. However, because the provincial government did not succeed to control its own society, Kadri Bey implied the government would provide social control over this people and for this reason to work for the prevention of smuggling was akin to running one's head against a brick wall. In addition, the punishment in the letter involved all tobacco farmers in Akçaabad, leaving one with the impression that Kadri Bey thought all tobacco farmers of Akçaabad attended or supported the tobacco smugglers.

Although Kadri Bey did not succeed to stop illicit trade in the province, he was successful to diminish the effect of smugglers in Trabzon. After his death, the revenues of Régie in Trabzon rapidly decreased. Hence, the government and the Régie Company showed Kadri Bey as a model for other provincial rulers. Sultan Abdul Hamid II claimed after Kadri Bey, none of the provincial rulers punished the smugglers. Instead of punishment, most of the rulers praised them and for this reason the smuggling increased.²²⁹

takımı yek diğerine müteselsilen kefil edildi. Bunların hiçbirisinden zerre kadar fâ'ide olmadı. Şu yazılan bunlar hakkında yapılan müâmelenin onda biridir. Bunlardan başka bir çok şeyler yapıldı. Yine asla tesiri görülmedi. Zannedersem bundan sonra da yapılacak bir şey kalmadı. Bir yapacak var ise o da dün yazılan tahrirâtta beyân olunduğu gibi ya `umûmi birden çoluk çocuk hâ'islere bırakılmak ve yahut olduğu gibi hepsi de başka kazalara nakl-i hâne edilmektir. Bu iki suretin icrâsı da hâl ve maslâhata ve belki adalete muvâfik değildir. Onun için mev'zû-u bâhs olan köylerin tütün mahsûlünü bütün serbest bırakmak ve Reji idaresinden bir okkasını bile aldirmamak tedbirlerinden başka yapacak birşey yoktur. Bu karar ve bunu sekiz senelik tecrübesi üzerine kat'iyen vermiş olduğum bir karardır. Bunun bozulması mümkün değildir. Eğer Akçaâbat hükümeti kaçakçıların birçok planlarını, düzenlerini üşenmeyip dinlemeye haves ediyorsa, istediği kadar dinlesin, bir çok beyhûde müzâkereler etsin. Lakin vilâyet bundan sonra boş söz dinleyemez. Kararını kati` olarak vermiştir. Ondandır dönmez. Verilen kararı tekrar yazayım da biz orasını anlamadık demesinler. İşte karar budur: Akçaabat'ın Sera ve Ayagorgor deresinde bulunan bütün köylerin tütün mahsûlü bu günden itibaren serbesttir. Ashâbı bu tütünleri nereye isterlerse satabilirler. Fakat Reji idaresine satamazlar. Yerli tüccara satamazlar, vilayet dahilinde bulunan kazalarda, köylerde ahâliye satamazlar, eğer bunu yapmaya cesaret eden olursa Allah hakkı için pek fenâ müâmele görecektir ve canı yanacaktır. Buraları kendilerine etrafiyla anlatılsın. İnşallah önümüzdeki zirâ'at zamanı geldiğinde dahi onlarla tekrar konuşacağız. Vilâyetin bu kararına karşı ellerinden ne gelirse onu yapmakta dâhî serbesttirler. Şikayet etsinler, hükümete karşı gelsinler, ne isterlerse yapsınlar, vesselam. 6 Teşrinievvel 1315 Vali-i Vilâyet Kadri. Quoted from Kudret Emiroğlu, "Trabzon'da II. Meşrutiyet'te tütün rejisi ile mücadele", p. 34-35.

²²⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.DH. 14/35, 3 January 1908, 21 Kanun-i Sani 1323 "...Trabzon Vali-yi esbâkı Kadri Bey'in vefatını muteâkip vilâyet-i mezbure ile Erzurum'da ibtidâ eden işbu ahvâl-i asayiş-şikenane mütecâsirlerinin bir güna cezaya hedef olmamaları ve bilâkis

Table 3.2 Tobacco Revenue of Trabzon, Erzurum, Bitlis, Van²³⁰

| Year | Revenue (Ottoman liras) |
|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1902 | 102,600 |
| 1903 | 81,700 |
| 1904 | 69,700 |
| 1905 | 66,600 |
| 1906 | 56,800 |

Source: BOA.Y.PRK.DH 14/35, 3 January 1908. Quoted from Abdülhamit Kırmızı *Abdulhamid'in Valileri, Osmanlı Vilayet İdaresi*, Klasik Yayınları İstanbul 2008 p. 238

Overall, the government's definition of smuggling did not show parallelism with the definition of the company. While the company accepted people as smugglers who did not behave in accordance with the Régie agreement, the government differentiated the tobacco farmers and professional illicit tobacco traders and desired to terminate the harmful effects of tobacco smugglers who were armed and visited many cities to sell their crop. The Ottoman government relied on its cavalry and police as well as the Régie police to prevent smuggling. However, historians debate the role of the Régie kolcus in campaigns against smuggling. This issue calls for some elaboration.

3.7. The Régie Police Force

The term *kolcu* precedes the Régie Company. The Ottoman government adapted a surveillance or kolcu system to prevent smuggling in the provinces before the establishment of the Régie Company. Although many authors, who wrote about the Régie kolcu system, explained the regulation of *kordon bölükleri* as the regulation of the kolcu system, the *kordon bölükleri* was different from the kolcu system. The regulation of kordon bölükleri indicates that the government established this force to help the Ottoman police in 1886²³¹ and added it to the kolcu system.²³² The Régie

kaçakçılık yüzünden pek ziyade müteneffi` olmaları sayesinde yevmen-fe-yevmen izdiyad ve iştidad eylemiştir..." Quoted from Kırmızı, p. 239.

²³⁰ The Régie's revenues did not include the revenues of Canik.

²³¹ Düstur, v. 1 n. 5 p. 733; Halim Alyot *Türkiye'de Zabıta: Tarihi Gelişim ve Bugünkü Durum*, E.M.G Polis Akademisi Türk Polis Tarihi Araştırmaları Merkezi, no.1, Ankara 2008, p. 249; Ahmet Yüksel, "Türkiye'de Tütüncülerin Kaçakçılığa Sürecinde Kolculuğun

Company paid their salaries and their main duty was to control and protect the boundaries of the provinces to prevent smuggling.²³³ The company also paid for the guns of the *kordon bölükleri*.²³⁴ It was firstly established in four cities including Izmir and Istanbul, which have well-developed tobacco markets. The *kordon bölükleri* survived until June 27, 1931. The province of Trabzon was not one of these cities, where the government established a *kordon bölük* in accordance with the 1886 regulation. Yet, the term -kolcu- was used for the Régie police forces in Trabzon earlier than 1886.²³⁵ Hence, the *kordon bölükleri* was not part of the Régie kolcus but they worked with kolcus and gendarmes. The important point in the establishment of this department is why a government who had its own police and military forces in addition to the Régie polices forces needed it. The clarification of this point calls for an explanation of the main role of the kolcus

The main job of the kolcus was to stop contraband, arrest smugglers and seize smuggled goods. However, the job of kolcus changed after the foundation of the Régie Company. Each Régie kolcu had a uniform, boot, waterproof coat, cavalry saber, belt, and badge.²³⁶ The kolcus made a group of state officials who inspected tobacco production. Another duty of the Régie kolcus was to check illicit tobacco trade, as the kolcus did before the foundation of the Régie. Ottoman archival sources indicate that the company generally asked for help from the government to capture professional illicit traders. Company requested help because of two reasons. First, neither the Régie Company nor the provincial governments had enough manpower to prevent smuggling, hence obliging them to co-operate against illicit trade. Second, the company wanted its surveillance force to inspect and control tobacco cultivation primarily, instead of pursuing contraband trafficker.

Baskısını İki Kolcunun Tercüme-i Halinden Anlama Denemesi”, *Kebikeç* no.34, Ankara, 2012 pp. 185-199.

²³² Alyot, p. 250.

²³³ Alyot, p. 252.

²³⁴ Alyot, p. 251.

²³⁵ As an example of a clash between Régie Police forces and tobacco smugglers in Erzurum see BOA, DH.MKT 1346/46 23 December 1884, 5 Kanunievvel 1300.

²³⁶ Régie Co-Intéressée Des Tabacs De l’Empire Ottoman, Liste: Constantinople, Galata 1905, p. 15.

Many peasants complained about the unacceptable attitudes of the Régie kolcus. As for the smugglers, they cringed away from the Ottoman soldiers who did not cooperate with smugglers but not from encountering kolcus. The smugglers knew that the kolcus were dangerous for only tobacco farmers and shopkeepers. Although, many soldiers joined directly the smuggling, if a commander of soldiers refused to collaborate with smugglers, the smugglers only solution was to avoid their power. The Ottoman archival sources also show that the Régie kolcus did not pursue tobacco smugglers because once the smugglers exited from the city centers; the kolcus had little chance to catch them.²³⁷ Most of the clashes between the smugglers and kolcus occurred because the smugglers chanced on the kolcus while they were passing through a village or district. Apart from these chance meetings, the Régie kolcus helped the Ottoman troops pursue smugglers because the kolcus lived in the provinces and knew the terrain, its roads, and villages better than the Ottoman soldiers.

The government accepted the Régie kolcus as its officials but in general left their selection to the company within certain conditions. First, a person who desired to become a kolcu should be a citizen of the Ottoman Empire and should not have a criminal record. The government wanted the Régie Company to choose people who were respected and well known in their neighborhood. In view of the tensions between the Ottoman government and Armenian organizations, the government did not want the company to hire Armenians as kolcus. This concern is understandable because the kolcus carried guns and rifles.²³⁸ The company did not fully observe these restrictions. For instance as indicated above the Governor of Trabzon chose many smugglers to work as Régie kolcu. Furthermore, the company chose Armenians as Régie kolcus in some districts of Anatolia. When clashes emerged between Armenian bands and government forces in certain places, the State wanted to learn the numbers, positions and the role of Armenians who worked as state officials. Kadri Bey responded to this query by stating that there was an Armenian kolcu whose name was Hamparsun in Ordu.²³⁹ This can be an exception but

²³⁷ BOA, DH.MKT 2767/75 leaf 2, 5 June 1908, 22 June 1324.

²³⁸ BOA, İ-DH 1295-6/102462, 12 November 1891, 5 Teşrinisani 1307.

²³⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.UM 35/126, 6 October 1896, 24 September 1312. Quoted from Süleyman Bilgin, Ali Mesut Birinci, Sezgin Demircioğlu, Recep Karakaya, *Arşiv Belgelerine Göre*

evidently, the company did not fully abide by the general regulations for the selection of kolcus. There is no clear evidence of when the Régie kolcus began to carry arms. In the beginning of the company, the government did not allow them to use guns. However, after a while they began to use guns. Yet, the government did not pass a regulation allowing kolcus to bear arms even in 1910.²⁴⁰

The government mostly used its own gendarmes and cavalries instead of Régie kolcu to stop contraband. It unwillingly deployed its soldiers against tobacco smugglers. In fact, the government held that the struggle against tobacco smugglers was not the job of gendarmes or cavalries but of the police and the Régie kolcu in the provinces. However, the police and Régie kolcu struggled against smuggling only in the center of districts, villages, and cities. In such a situation, the smugglers used the ridgeways and succeeded to save their goods. Because the kolcus did not prevent smuggling the government unwillingly sent its military powers to stop contraband. After almost all conflicts between Ottoman military powers and smugglers, the government regretted that this effort deranged the order in the provinces.²⁴¹ It repeated its position that the pursuit and arrest of smugglers was a task not for the Ottoman military but for the gendarmerie and the kolcus.²⁴²

Under these circumstances, the company constituted its own police forces. The kolcus mainly worked in cities, which had many tobacco farms or tobacco shops. Kolcus rose to higher or better positions in the company according to their performance and seniority. If a kolcu was successful in his job, he could apply to work in other departments in the company.²⁴³ In addition, the company could move old kolcus to new departments. The old kolcus could themselves apply for the transfer to a different department because they were no longer as effective to control

Trabzon'da Ermeni Faaliyetleri 1850-1923, Trabzon Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları 2007 v. 1 p. 177.

²⁴⁰ BOA, İ.HUS No: 128, 19 June 1910, 6 June 1326 "...zaten kolcuların silâh taşımaya kanunen selâhiyetleri olmamasıyla devletçe bir çare düşünülmesi muktezâ-yı irâde-i seniyye cenâb-ı hilâfetpenâhiden olmağla..." Quoted from Gökdemir, p. 110.

²⁴¹ BOA, DH.MKT 1565/96, 19 November 1888, 7 Teşrini-sani 1304; BOA, DH.MKT 1800/24 17 January 1891, 5 Kanunisani 1306.

²⁴² BOA, BEO 2178/163300 "...tütün kaçakçılarının derdesti için mûâveneti askeriye taleb olunmuş ise de bunların takibi jandarmaya `âid bulunduğundan..."

²⁴³ BOA, DH.MKT 131/28, 31 July 1893, 19 July 1309.

the tobacco fields and tobacco shops. A case in point is Mahmud Aga. He desired to transfer to a new department in the company. He had worked for the Régie since 1885. He rose to the rank of master cavalry kolcu and worked as a kolcu until 1923. He was sixty in 1923 and he was no longer able to work as kolcu because of his age. He requested to work as a warehouse guard. The company accepted his request and he began to work as a warehouse guard after he worked as Régie kolcu for thirty-eight years.²⁴⁴

The company also changed the department of kolcus who were heartthrobs and popular with the public. For instance, the company changed the department of Ali Rıza Efendi who worked for the Samsun Régie Company. He was working as a kolcu, and the company reassigned him to be an agricultural clerk.²⁴⁵ The company desired to make the most of its personnel. Ali Rıza Efendi was highly respected and popular among farmers. The company desired to benefit from his popularity to enhance its authority and good image among the farmers of Alaçam. In many districts of the Empire, tobacco farmers had many problems with the Régie Company because of the unsuitable behavior of the kolcus.²⁴⁶ The company wanted to address these problems by using its personnel effectively.

As an example of the organization of Régie Police Force, the table below illustrates the numbers and places of kolcus in the Province of Aydın, which had approximately 1,000 Régie kolcus in 1897.²⁴⁷ The company employed kolcus effectively. At least four kolcus served on each kolcu team that worked in a district. The numbers of kolcus increased in accordance with the increase of tobacco production in the places.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁴ Yüksel, p. 195.

²⁴⁵ Yüksel, p. 197.

²⁴⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 1623/117 the document is about the unsuitable behavior of the Régie kolcus.

²⁴⁷ Gökdemir, p. 105.

²⁴⁸ For the distribution of Régie Kolcus in Izmir as an example see Gökdemir p. 106.

Table 3.3. The Régie Police Force in the Province of Aydın in 1897²⁴⁹

| City | Position | Number |
|---------|--------------|--------|
| İzmir | Master Kolcu | 26 |
| | On foot | 359 |
| | Mounted | 65 |
| | Female Kolcu | 37 |
| | Inspector | 4 |
| Aydın | Master Kolcu | 9 |
| | On foot | 54 |
| | Mounted | 49 |
| Saruhan | Master Kolcu | 13 |
| | On foot | 149 |
| | Mounted | 95 |
| Denizli | Master Kolcu | 8 |
| | On foot | 21 |
| | Mounted | 48 |
| Mentese | Master Kolcu | 6 |
| | On foot | 71 |
| | Mounted | 30 |
| Total | | 1,044 |

Source: Cente D'accueil Et de Recherche Des Archives Nationales 207 AQ 318 Quoted from Oktay Gökdemir *Aydın Vilayetinde Tütün Rejisi* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Dokuz Eylül University, the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, İzmir 1994, p. 105.

The Régie Company raised the idea of expanding the kolcus by increasing the numbers of kolcus in the provinces of the Empire. The company captured 314,000 kg smuggling tobacco in 1897 by expending 188,000 Ottoman liras for 6,701 Régie kolcus. Although there was an increment in expenses and the number of kolcus in 1907, the company captured less tobacco than 1897. It spent 252,000 Ottoman liras for more than 6,701 kolcus to seize 221,000 kilograms of tobacco. Donald Quataert argued that the smuggling increased rapidly from 1894 to 1908 or the company needed more manpower to control and capture those who smuggled tobacco.²⁵⁰ Yet, the Régie did not paid much more for kolcus who served in districts where smugglers were especially active. Instead, it spent significant sums for kolcus who worked in places where they had a concentration of tobacco shops or tobacco

²⁴⁹ Gökdemir, p. 105. Gökdemir gives the total number of 948. I think this is a miscalculation because the total numbers of the workers add to 1044.

²⁵⁰ Quataert, p. 22.

farms. Hence, one can also argue that the company was successful because it prevented the cultivation or sale of smuggled tobacco. For this reason the amount of smuggled tobacco generally decreased year by year.

Table 3.4 Measures of Tobacco Smuggling in Selected Years²⁵¹

| Year | Tobacco Seized (1000s of kgs) | Surveillance Expenses (1000s of liras) | Number of Surveillance Personnel (Kolcus) |
|------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| 1896 | 259 | 164 | 6522 |
| 1897 | 314 | 188 | 6701 |
| 1898 | 238 | 208 | 6343 |
| 1899 | 197 | 205 | 6533 |
| 1900 | 211 | 230 | |
| 1901 | 233 | 237 | |
| 1902 | 234 | 254 | |
| 1903 | 212 | 258 | |
| 1904 | 232 | 255 | |
| 1905 | 183 | 255 | |
| 1907 | 221 | 252 | |

Source: Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reactions to European Penetration*, New York University Press, New York 1983 p.22

The table above illustrates the nationwide surveillance expenses of Régie Distribution of the expenses by selected cities can simplify the picture. The company paid more money for surveillance in Istanbul, Izmir, Samsun, Selanik, and Bursa. These cities were the main trading centers of the Empire. Furthermore, thousands of farmers cultivated tobacco in the cities of Izmir, Samsun, and Selanik. The company paid less money to control tobacco in Trabzon, Aleppo, Kavala, Yanya, Beirut, and Konya which were the main markets for smuggled tobacco.²⁵²

The Régie kolcus engaged in combat with tobacco smugglers in many cities.²⁵³ The definition of their position in the company was to prevent smuggling.

²⁵¹ The expenses for surveillance, which explained by Quataert, are different from the data given by Oktay Gökdemir.

²⁵² For the expenses in the cities see Gökdemir, pp. 101-105.

²⁵³ Oktay Gökdemir's dissertation explained the clashes between the Régie kolcus and tobacco smugglers in the Province of Aydın. Gökdemir collected the news from newspapers and showed how kolcus tried to prevent smuggling.

Yet, as explained above, the Régie interpreted smuggling differently from the State. Hence, the kolcus mainly checked and controlled the tobacco farmers and tobacco shops. Most of the clashes between professional illicit tobacco traders and the Régie kolcus occurred because the kolcus ran into illicit traders. Approximately five to ten tobacco smugglers were involved in most of these encounters. When a group consisted of a larger number of armed people, the kolcus asked for help first from the local police and the gendarmes. If the support they could provide was inadequate to deal with smugglers, the company requested the help of Ottoman military. Otherwise, the kolcus controlled focused on farms, houses, and tobacco shops. For this reason, the company selected not only men but also women as its surveillance personnel.

The Ottoman government recognized the right of farmers to proceed against the kolcus if the kolcus behaved against the agreements. For instance, if a Régie kolcu entered a house to check tobacco products without permission and did not find any smuggled tobacco, the owner of the house could file a complaint against the kolcu. In such situations, people in the house often transported their illegally grown tobacco to their neighbors' houses. The kolcus needed a search warrant with a clear date and had to enter a house accompanied by a district officials and gendarmes or police.²⁵⁴ Since the government accepted kolcus as government officials, as indicated above, Nizamiye courts had the authority to hear the cases against Régie kolcus.²⁵⁵ If there was a clash between farmers and kolcus, farmers had the right of litigation. For example, a farmer –Cedidoğlu Ali- presented a case against a kolcu because the kolcu injured him. According to Cedidoğlu Ali, he was working with his mother in the tobacco fields of Hacı Osman Efendi, when the kolcus came to rip out the tobacco crops on grounds that it was planted without licenses. Ali tried to explain that there was a pending application to the government for a suitable solution and the kolcus and Régie officers should wait for the decision of the provincial government. However, the kolcus continued to rip out the tobacco crops and because Ali desired to stop them, Hüseyin stabbed him. In the court, Ali proved his claims with the help

²⁵⁴ BOA, DH.MKT 1739/77, 2 July 1890, 20 June 1306.

²⁵⁵ BOA, BEO 351/26295, leaf 1-2, 16 January 1894, 4 Kanunisani 1309.

of five witnesses, although the kolcus rejected his claims.²⁵⁶ The court sentenced Hüseyin to a week of imprisonment for injuring a farmer and a small fine for court expense.²⁵⁷

To prevent conflicts between farmers and the Régie kolcus, the government instructed the Régie that its officers should not rip out the tobacco without the permission of the government. They should determine the fields in which tobacco was grown without license and obtain from the government a permit to rip out these crops. But they should then demand as punishment from the cultivators forty kurushes for each *kıyye* of illegally grown tobacco.²⁵⁸ For this reason, in Goleoğlu Huseyin's trial, the court blamed Mıgırdâc Efendi, the company's agricultural clerk for allowing kolcus to remove tobacco.²⁵⁹

The kolcus had problems with the owners of tobacco shops as well while controlling the tobacco products in the shops. The government wanted to stop the kolcus' harmful behavior and generally protected the shop owners. In addition, the government expressed its concern that these problems occurred in the center of cities where the tobacco shops existed and might cause perturbation in the city.²⁶⁰ The Régie Company sequestered the goods of the tobacco shops if they carried the tobacco of farmers who did not have the requisite license to grow tobacco. For instance, the company accused an owner of a tobacco shop whose name was Dimidi, for buying 3,660 kilograms of tobacco grown without licenses from eighteen tobacco farmers. Dimidi rejected the claims and argued that because the farmers did not have enough warehouses they commended their products to his shop five months ago. The court heard witnesses who were farmers of the villages such as İlyas, Kara Samsun, and Körcuma. The court acknowledged Dimidi's claim.²⁶¹

²⁵⁶ BOA, ŞD.1842/7 11 November 1899, 29 Teşrinisani 1305.

²⁵⁷ BOA, DH.MKT 131/28 31 July 1893, 19 July 1309.

²⁵⁸ Dıġıroġlu p. 107.

²⁵⁹ BOA, ŞD.1842/7 11, November 1899, 29 Teşrinisani 1305.

²⁶⁰ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 8/1, 21 June 1896, 9 June 1312.

²⁶¹ BOA, ŞD 1841/12, 18 January 1904, 5 Kanunisani 1319.

Overall, the kolcus did not pay as much attention to professional illicit traders because they focused on controlling farmers and tobacco shops. Hence, while the numbers of farmers who cultivated tobacco without a permit decreased, the numbers of professional tobacco smugglers increased by the hundreds. The kolcus effectively prevented farmer from cultivating tobacco for their own consumption or to sell in their own village. However, the farmers continued to sell tobacco with professional smuggling groups. The kolcu system forced farmers to join contraband traders. Although, the main job of kolcus was to pursue and arrest the smugglers who consisted of hundreds of people the kolcus focused on tobacco farmers and shops as indicated above. It was for this reason that the government allowed establishment of the *kordon bölükleri*. Kolcus and gendarmes did not put an end to professional tobacco trading in the province of Trabzon. Hence, the provincial governments turned to the military forces in many cases. Smugglers transported 680 yüks of tobacco in the Erzurum road alone in three months because the government failed to stop them.²⁶² The Ottoman government wanted to resolve the problems that emerged between farmers, shopkeepers and the company but it failed to create an alternative system because of the lack of manpower and financial hardship in the Empire. Under these circumstances, the company suppressed hundreds of farmers who cultivated tobacco in small farms but supported those who had large tobacco fields. These changes in the sector increased tobacco smuggling in the Ottoman Empire.

²⁶² BOA, DH-İD 124-1/44, 20 December 1908, 7 Kanunuevvel 1324.

CHAPTER IV

4. Conclusion

This study has aimed at investigating the tobacco smugglers in the Black-Sea region of the Ottoman Empire from 1883 to 1914. It tried to shed light on the roles of the Ottoman government, the provincial officials, the Régie Company, and its security forces. It examined the tobacco smugglers to understand the changes taking place in people's daily lives in the provinces of the Empire.

The Régie Company was one of the reasons for the increase in tobacco smuggling in the period under survey. After 1883, tobacco producers faced new conditions as the Régie's attitudes dislocated traditional relations. Indeed, as this thesis argued, the Ottoman Empire tried to establish a tobacco monopoly ever since the enactment of the *Duhan Nizamnamesi* in 1862. However, the government did not achieve to create institutions such as warehouses, and credits for farmers for development in tobacco sector. After the foundation of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, the bondholders argued that they could make more money if they brought the tobacco sector under the direct control of a specialized sister company. With such arguments, the Régie Company was established. After its foundation, the company's policies gave a new twist to the meaning of smuggling. According to the Régie Company, all people in the tobacco sector who disobeyed the Régie agreements were smugglers. This position contributed to the increase of conflicts between tobacco producers and the Régie Company day by day. Farmer in Trabzon never understood why the company would persecute them as 'smuggler' for growing tobacco as it suited their interests.

As the sources showed, the company's main aim was to make money, as much money as possible. According to Régie agreement, the company would pay 750,000 Ottoman liras to OPDA every year. In addition, the company would also pay a predetermined share from its revenues.²⁶³

The company wanted to increase the revenues in determined Ottoman liras. To do this, while the Régie was gaining more money, the Ottoman government and OPDA took fixed shares of the revenue. The Régie Company as a well-organized administration developed the tobacco sector in some cities such as Bafra, but at the

²⁶³ See the table on p. 29

same time, it forced many producers to join into the contraband traffickers by refusing to buy their products. The aim of the company was to make money as much as possible. To do this, it tried to prevent the decrease in the market price of tobacco. The company employed kolcus to prevent smuggling but in specific places where high quality tobacco was cultivated. The kolcus also controlled the tobacco shops in big cities to prevent them from selling smuggled tobacco.

Although, the main task of the kolcus was to pursue illicit tobacco traders who caused security problems in the provinces, they did not want to get into a conflict with these people because the illicit traders were armed and not afraid to kill kolcus. Instead, kolcus oppressed small tobacco producers and tobacco shopkeepers. In other words, kolcus were the control mechanism of the company over the means of production. Therefore, the villagers resisted and mythologized illicit tobacco traders in folk songs while condemning the kolcus. For instance, a folk song namely *Kolcu Türküsü* tells not only the story of smugglers but also shows how people disliked kolcus.²⁶⁴ Smugglers speak in the song. According to the story, the song was written after the smugglers killed the masterkolcu. In the first verse, the song gives the name of masterkolcu and in the last couplet; it tells that they will kill this man.

In fact, as argued above, the Régie Company did not pay much attention to illicit tobacco traders. It used the smuggling issue as a trump card against the government. Whenever, the government objected to the company and argued that the money that came from company was very low, the general director of the Régie stated that professional smuggling groups were the cause of the decline in the revenues of the company. For this reason, the government tried to prevent smuggling with the help of its own security forces. At the same time, the government tried to safeguards the rights of tobacco producers against the company. However, fiscal problems prevented the success of measures against contraband. Another reason of this failure was the assistance of some provincial officials to smugglers. When Kadri

²⁶⁴ Kolcu Türküsü: Vara vara vardıg başa/Sırtımızı verdik dağa/Kolcubaşı Hacı Ömer Ağa/Beyler habarınız olsun. / Ankara'dan gider ekin/Yükümüzün bir kefin/İçinizde yok mu hekim/Beyler habarınız olsun. / İstanbul'dan gelir ipek/Elimizde yağlı tüfek/Biz bu ilden nasıl gidek/Beyler habarınız olsun./ Üç yük tütün kıyılacak/Ankara'ya kuyulacaka/Kolcubaşı vurulacak/Beyler habarınız olsun. Quoted from Süleyman Şenel, "Aydınacı Türküleri", *Tütün Kitabı*, p. 369

Bey was the governor of Trabzon, smuggling rapidly decreased because he did not co-operate with tobacco smugglers.

Finally, the government argued the illicit tobacco traders were bandits of sorts. According to the government, when the illicit tobacco traders caused death, attended a clash, or broke the peace in the provinces, the government accepted them as bandits. The Régie supported this idea and claimed that, tobacco smugglers should be seen as bandits in all conditions. In this context, this study has indicated that Karen Barkey and Eric Hobsbawm's definition of banditry did not adequately explain smugglers' situation. Barkey states, when a person became a bandit he no longer remained a villager. According to Hobsbawm, a bandit was a primitive rebel from among villagers. The illicit tobacco traders caused security problems in the provinces. They, too, oppressed villagers while fighting state officials and other smugglers. However, they were villagers. They lived in the villages of Trabzon and had the characteristics of villagers. In addition, this study is an attempt to differentiate an illicit tobacco trader who traveled alone in the villages from *barhane*. While the first one of them was the criminal attitudes of the lower class, the second one was the professionalization in smuggling and banditry. Although, Yusuf was an example of a smuggler who traveled alone in Anatolia, many myths were created for the illicit tobacco traders consists of hundreds of people such as the Imamkızıoğlu family.

This study argued that we need a different perspective to explain or interpret smugglers as bandits. They are mythologized not because the others loved them. The ordinary people in the provinces were afraid of smuggler but they also admired them because smugglers made real some of the dreams of the ordinary people. In addition, -from Weberian perspective- the charismatic leadership of the smuggling groups affected the society. The villagers hated kolcus, but they did not have enough power to resist against them. However, when a villager saw kolcus' fear of the Laz smugglers, he respected them. For this reason, Barkey's and Hobsbawm's arguments about the bandits do not help to explain the banditry of these people and the attitudes of others against them.

The thesis also tried to differentiate the actors in smuggling activities. The illicit tobacco traders' role was different from a cultivators' or shopkeepers' role. The illicit tobacco traders whom the state accepted them as bandits were not only a

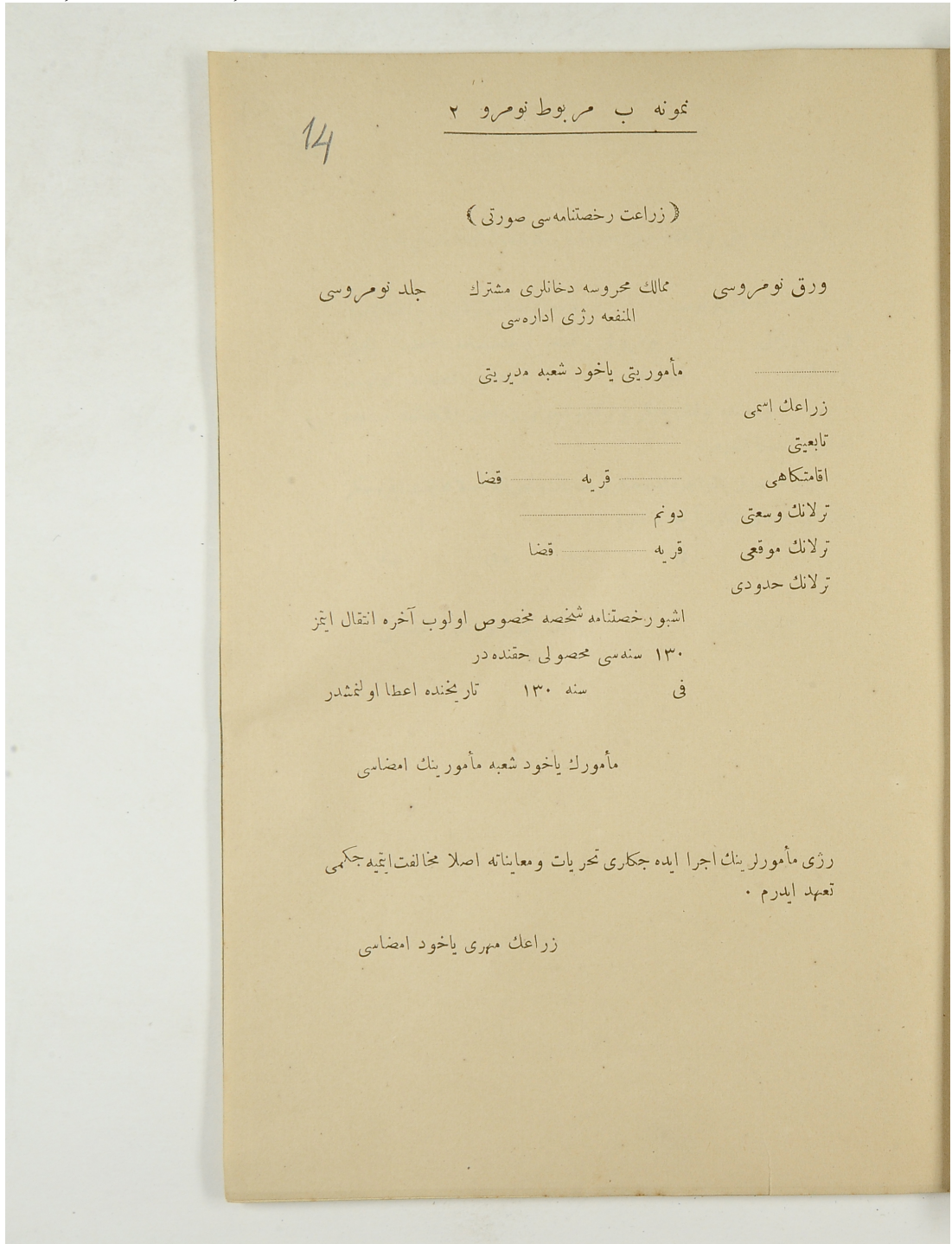
threat for the government and the Régie Company but also were a threat for a villager who joined contraband alone. For this reason, this study tries to create different explanations of the illicit activities of these actors. However, it was only an attempt to create a path for further studies.

Overall, this study finished its story in 1914, even before. However, it should be kept in mind that, the Régie Company's and kolcu's role during the World War I, and the National Struggle is a black hole of Turkish history. This study aims to create a background for new studies such as the role of the Régie during World War I, and the National Struggle. In addition to this, even the Régie ended in 1924, the kolcu system continued for years. This study is also an attempt to create a background for studies that will be about kolcu system. Scholars who desire to study these subjects should clarify the roles of kolcus in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic to complete the picture. Without conceptualizing the kolcu system, scholars may not find a suitable way to define smugglers.

As a final sentence, let me add that when the Régie Company ended, illicit tobacco traders became professional traders who controlled the internal tobacco market in Anatolia. Tobacco producers who did not deal with the company joined them. In such a situation, the smuggling continued and the State did not find a lasting solution to the problem.

APPENDICES

BOA, A.DVN.MKL, 28/7 Leaf 14



A Copy of License for Tobacco Cultivation

22

نمونه ر مربوط نومرو ۱۰

(نقلیه رخصتنامه سی)

ورق نومروسی ممالک عثمانیه دخانلری مشترک المنفعه
رژی ادارهسی جلد نومروسی

مأموریتی یاخود شعبه مأموریتی

زراعت اسم و شهرتی

توتونلرک کلدیگی محل

کیده چیگی محل ایلاری

کیلو اعتبار یله توتونلرک مقداری

مارقه سی

دنک یاخود بالیه لرک عددی

ایشو نقلیه تذکره سی یالکز بردفعه ده مخصوص و مدت ایچون
معتبردر ۰ رژی مأمورلری یاخود محافظه به و قیغاک زجرینه مأمور اولان
سائر بالجه حکومت مأمورلری طلب ایتدیگه حاملی طرفندن ابراز اولتیق
لازمکاور

نقلیه تذکره سی اولقسزین نقل ایدیلان بالجه توتونلره رژی اداره سنک
زراعه وزراعت رژی اداره سنه قارشو اولان حقوق ووظائفی واحکام
جزایه یی مبین اولان ماده نظامیه موجبیجه قساق نظر یله باقیله رق در عقب
ضبط و مصادره اولنه چیق ونظامنامه ده مندرج اولان مجازات دخی بشقه جه
اجرا قلنه چقدر

فی سنه ۱۳۰

مأمور یاخود شعبه مأموری

A Copy of Transportation License

21

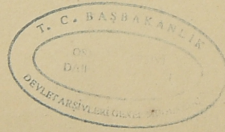
نمونه ذ مربوط نومرو ۹

﴿ انبار مقبوض علم و خبری صورتی ﴾

ده توتون زراعی یا خود تاجری دن
بالیه توتون الدیغمی و هر بالیه ننگ اوزری علامت قارقه اولوق اوزره
نومرو دن نومرو به قدر رقرو حرفلری ایله مرقم
ایدوکنی و فی تاریخنده مرقوم طرفندن و ریش اولان تسلیم
علم و خبرینک ظهرنده کی جدولده کوسرلدیکی و جهله بونلرک مجموعی غیر صافی
اوله رق قیه و زنده بولدیغنی و بوندن ماعدا رژی انبارلرینه
وضع ایدلمش اولان توتونلرک حسن محافظه سیچون مصارف و مسؤلیتی کندوسنه
عائد اولوق اوزره لازمکلان بالجهله تقیداتی اجرایه مجبور اولان رژی اداره سی
مذکور توتونلرک فیره سندن و یاغین و یا خود اسباب مجیره سارهدن مذکور
انبارده ظهور ایده جک اولان نقصان و یا ضرر و زیانندن مسؤل اولیه جغنی مبین
اشبو مقبوض علم و خبری امضا و اعطاقلندی

مشترک المنفعه رژی اداره سنک مجلده

کائن انبار مدبری



A Copy of Warehouse Delivery Form

| دولت‌نوردی | سودی | نسیب‌نوردی | مکان | تاریخ | موضوع |
|------------|------|------------|----------|-------|------------------|
| ۱۵۹ | ۴۰ | علی | اکو اولی | ۱۳۱۰ | طبریز و دیه حبیه |
| ۷ | | | | | |

طبریز و دیه حبیه

در روزی اسباب این است که در روزی قوی می‌کنند با نگردها تا قیفی در روزی از آن
 مقرر شده است که در روزی قوی می‌کنند با نگردها تا قیفی در روزی از آن
 معادله‌های لازم در روزی بکنند و در روزی قوی می‌کنند با نگردها تا قیفی در روزی از آن
 هر چه در روزی قوی می‌کنند با نگردها تا قیفی در روزی از آن

An example of tobacco smuggling by the sea-route

The Prince of Bulgaria passed yesterday through this city *incognito* on his way to Darmstadt to attend the wedding of his brother, Prince Louis of Battenberg.

TURKEY.

ATHENS, APRIL 27.

Previous to the departure of the Austrian Crown Prince from Constantinople, the Sultan formally promised his Imperial Highness that the junction of the Ottoman with the European railways should be completed by the period stipulated in the Vienna convention. By special orders of the Sultan, the Council of Ministers has since devoted greater attention to the study of the convention proposed by Baron Hirsch. The Sultan has received a telegram from the Emperor of Austria thanking him for his assurances of friendship.

The Egyptian Government has not yet replied to the observations of the Porte concerning the tobacco convention concluded by Egypt with Greece. The Turkish communication to Egypt was not based on the protest made by the Ottoman tobacco regie, which was not recognised by the Porte, but on petitions received by the Sultan from Egyptian tobacco manufacturers, which stated that the introduction of Turkish tobacco leaves was not detrimental to their interests, while the importation of Greek cigarettes would prejudicially affect their industry.

The Ottoman Government continues to raise objections to the transport of parcels by the British Euphrates Navigation Company.

Earl Granville refuses to agree to the Porte's demand for the reconsideration and modification of the international arrangements with respect to the Black Sea life-boat and rocket service. His lordship declared that the service is satisfactory, that it would be disturbed by the changes, and that a further discussion of the matter is inad-

The concern of the Porte about the deal between Egypt and Greece

FOREIGN NEWS.

We have received the following telegrams through Reuter's Agency :—

THE TURKISH TOBACCO RÉGIE.

CONSTANTINOPLE, MARCH 9.

An agreement has been arrived at between M. Auboyneau, Director-General of the Tobacco Régie, and the Administration of the Public Debt, in favour of the following modifications in the Tobacco Convention as far as regards Egypt :—

(1) The Administration of the Public Debt will provisionally bear £T100,000 of the losses sustained by the Régie in Egypt during the past two years, and which are estimated at £T210,000.

(2) The Administration of the Public Debt will further take over provisionally one-half of the losses which may be incurred during the two ensuing years.

(3) The export duties called Reftie, levied on tobacco destined for Egypt, will be reduced from 10 to 5 piastres per oke.

The advances which the Administration of the Public Debt has to make to the Régie upon this basis will be reimbursed to the former from the future profits of the Régie.

MARCH 10.

The Council of Administration of the Tobacco Régie has rejected the terms of settlement regarding Egyptian tobaccos concluded between M. Auboyneau, Director-General of the Régie, and the Administration of the Public Debt. The negotiations have consequently been resumed.

CONVERSION OF RUSSIAN LOANS

The negotiations between The OPDA and the Régie to solve the problem of Egypt.

THE TURKISH TOBACCO RÉGIE.

VIENNA, JAN. 17.

Advices from Constantinople state that, Herren Geschele and Swiedeneck and M. Devaux, directors of the Tobacco Régie, having arrived at the conclusion during their conferences in this city that the principal cause of the defective working of the Régie was negligence on the part of the Ottoman officials in not affording proper assistance against smuggling, delegates representing parties interested will proceed to Constantinople in a fortnight and hand to the Porte an *ultimatum* expiring on the 13th of March next demanding the appointment of special gendarmes for the prevention of smuggling and also the immediate adoption of measures to obviate the losses sustained by the Régie in Egypt.

They will further ask that a circular be sent to the provincial authorities ordering them to afford earnest co-operation to the agents of the Régie and to take other measures. Otherwise, the latter will no longer make the annual payment of £750,000, and the persons interested in the Régie will appeal to Austria, France, and Germany to exercise diplomatic pressure on the Porte.

In the event of liquidation becoming nevertheless necessary, those interested propose to request the great Powers to convene an international financial commission in conformity with the Treaty of Berlin, and also to warn European capitalists not to invest money in Turkey.

A New about the Régie Company

SIR E. VINCENT ON TURKISH
FINANCE.

CONSTANTINOPLE, DEC. 28.

Sir Edgar Vincent has prepared for the Sultan a full report upon the financial position of the Ottoman Empire, the presentation of which was announced by telegraph on the 26th inst.

The report enters, in the first place, into a careful examination of the budgets of recent years, severely criticizing the want of method shown in their preparation and the absence of control over expenditure.

The receipts from all sources since 1890 have averaged a total of £117,600,000, while the expenditure, ordinary and extraordinary, amounted to £118,600,000, showing an average deficit of £1,000,000. Of the expenditure about £2,130,000 is assigned to the service of the International Commission of the Public Debt. The Commissioners are allotted certain sources of revenue and collect the proceeds through their own officers. Sir E. Vincent awards the Commissioners high praise, and shows that, while their revenues grew steadily from 1890, even recent events have only reduced them by some £15,000. The report takes no further account, therefore, of these specially assigned revenues, nor, on similar grounds, of the tributes payable by Egypt, Samos, Eastern Rumelia, and Mount Athos, amounting to £1,130,000. When these sums have been deducted the ordinary revenue amounts to £114,350,000 and the ordinary expenditure to the same figure, while there has been an extraordinary expenditure creating the above-mentioned deficit of £1,000,000.

Sir Edgar Vincent's report on Turkish Finance

لیست متصرفین و مالداران در شهرستان تبریز

| ردیف | نام و نام خانوادگی | توضیحات |
|------|--------------------|---------|
| ۱ | محمد علی | تاجر |
| ۲ | علی | تاجر |
| ۳ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۴ | علی | تاجر |
| ۵ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۶ | علی | تاجر |
| ۷ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۸ | علی | تاجر |
| ۹ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۱۰ | علی | تاجر |
| ۱۱ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۱۲ | علی | تاجر |
| ۱۳ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۱۴ | علی | تاجر |
| ۱۵ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۱۶ | علی | تاجر |
| ۱۷ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۱۸ | علی | تاجر |
| ۱۹ | محمد | تاجر |
| ۲۰ | علی | تاجر |

کدام خان صاحب ملک در تبریز است که در این لیست نام برداری نشده است

The List of Tobacco Smugglers

SALI
1
TENNÜZ
1 9 5 2
7 Karuş
No. 3330

IDARE YERİ :
TRABZON İSTİBAL
BARIŞIYI NO. 5

TELEFONLAR :
İstibal : 35
Sahip evi : 345
Yazıhanesi : 346
İstibal : HALK
Yürüklüğü : 34

H A L K

GÖNLÜK SİYASİ GAZETE — TRABZON

Sahibi: Mehmet Karamanlı
Neşriyat İdarisi: İsmail İsmailoğlu
Yayıncı: İsmail İsmailoğlu
Genel Müdür: Ali Kalkan
Genel Müdür Yardımcısı: İsmail İsmailoğlu
Yazıhanesi: Trabzon
Yayıncılık ve İstibal: Trabzon

Hükümet kuvvetleriyle müsademe eden kaçakçılar

Jandarmaların sargısından kurtulan elli kaçakçı müsademe yerinde bir yaralı, bir esir, 17 at, iki merkep, bir maviye, bir dürbin ve 5000 kilodan fazla tütün bırakarak kaçtılar

Çarşamba günü sayımız Mağla mahallesinden aldığı, kağıtlarla hükümet kuvvetleri arasında cereyan eden müsademe hakkında bildiren, bu haber hakkında aldığı emri malınan da açıklanmıştır.

Mağla (Çul) 75 at ve elli atlı, Trabzon Karlı, Hacıoğlu ve Akçaba Zankary köylü kaçaklarından mücadde kabile 17-6-1952 günü akşam saat 24 de Mağla'nın Arıcak köyünde yoluna çıkılan Olasun derin ve aldan Mağla Jandarma komutanlığına haber alınmış ve her an için beklenen Jandarma komutanı Ahmet Yalı derhal teşkil ettiği 25 kişilik müfessir ile bölgeye yerine inmiş ve aynı zamanda Trabzon'dan da yardım istemiştir. Gereğince Mağla Trabzon'dan 10 kişilik bir müfessir ve elli atlı bir maviye, bir dürbin ve 5000 kilo tütün bırakarak kaçtılar.

Çarşamba günü sayımız Mağla mahallesinden aldığı, kağıtlarla hükümet kuvvetleri arasında cereyan eden müsademe hakkında bildiren, bu haber hakkında aldığı emri malınan da açıklanmıştır.

Bu sırada kaçakların ön ajanslarında bulunan bir çanta hükümet kuvvetlerini daimi stop altında tutarak diğer arakçılarının kumandanını temin etmiş ve bu sırada kendilerinde muhtelif yerlerden üç yara almıştır. Jandarma kuvvetleri müfessirine verdiği kesin emir üzerine istanbul kaçaklarını anlayan kaçaklar, hayvan aradıkları yerleri hemen hepini kırıp bırakarak at-

larına atıp araziden belli bir süre önce sığınmışlardır.

Müsademe yerinde kalan yaralı Karlı köyünden 35 yaşlarında Şakir oğlu Halil müsademe sırasında aldığı yaraları tedavi edilmeden yarım saat sonra ölmüştür. Kaçaklardan Zankarya köyünden Ali Mesum adında biride yakalanmıştır. Kaçaklar müsademe yerinde 96 çavanda 5-10 kilo havan kıyımı kaçak tütün 15 at, 2 merkep, 1 maviye ve bir dürbin bırakmışlardır. Derhal vaka yerine gidilen Mağla Sevezi ile hükümet tabih işap eden tabikileri yaparak düğümlenmiş teslim etmişlerdir.

Son dakikada aldığı bir haber göre, müsademe de yaralı Karlı köyünden Karlı köyünden Şakir oğlu Halil adında yerinde yaralı olarak bulunduğu kurşunla yaralandığı ve 75 atlıdan mücadde olan bu parhananın Karlı Hacıoğlu köyünden Bekir Altın olduğunu ve bu işi onun tertiplediğini ve parhanaya baş olduğunu söylemiş ve yine yakalanan, Zankarya köyünden Mesum oğullarından Ali Mesum'dan parhananın Bekir Aliye ait olduğunu beyan etmiştir.

Diğer taraftan geçen gün alına göre müsademe kaçakçı muvaffak olan kaçaklardan bazıları yaralı oldukları halde bir tabanlık de olduğu söylenmektedir.

1952 yılında tütün kaçaklığı ile ilgili gazete haberi.

verilen fahiş maaşlarla bir ve iki ve üç ve dört ve mukarrer bir numaralı defterde mukayyid bahislerin ve... harcamalarla kesb-i masrafların yekünü ayda yedi yüz liraya balığ olduğu anlaşılıyor. Bu tahkikatımızda - doksanbeş karyeyi ve yetmiş bin küsur nufusu camii olan Akçaabat kazasının memurin-i şeriyeye mülkiye maliye adliye dahilîye zabıtasının senevi aldıkları maaşların üç mislini o kazada bulunan Reji müdürü masarif-i idare namıyla israf eder olduğunu ve bir kaza kaymakamına bin küsur kuruş maaş tahsis bulunduğunda halde o kazanın Reji müdürüne bunun iki misli maaş verildiği [bir sözcük okunamıyor] olunca Reji'nin hazine ile olan müşterek menfaati kuru bir laftan ibaret olduğu tahakkuk eder. Bir defterdar kararsız imzasız bir santimin sarfından ihtisab ettiği şu sırada Reji... bilakis binlerce kuruş rey-i hodile sarf

etmekten çekinmediği gibi bu cümleden olarak ayda beş bin kuruşa yakın maaş alan Trabzon reji Nazırı hiç bir işi olmadığı halde her hafta Akçaabat'a giderek bol harcırahlar ahziyle menfaatin kimlere aid olduğunu isbat ediyor... imdi ey karin-i kirama sorunuz... hasılı sekte yüz bin küsur liraya balığ olan israflar acaba kimin kesesinden çıkıyor? Bu israfat... temettuat-ı bakiye namına sadra şifa verecek meyanda bir şey kalmadığından acaba hangi hazine mutazarrır oluyor. O kese o hazine bizim ise Rejinin tuttuğu bu meslek... bütün Osmanlıların yüreğinde uyanması lazım gelen hiss-i nefretin izalesi için ne tedbir düşünüyoruz. Rejinin... muamelat ve icraat-ı zalımanesini hükümet-i mahalliyemiz mene kadir olamayacağından bilbahis yakında küşad edilecek olan millet meclisinin nazırı basiretine arz olunmak üzere ne gibi vesalik

مجلس شورای عالی

وزارت معادن و صنایع معدنی

مجموعه پروانه و الویه بزمقصره

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تاریخ: ۲۶

ری اداره سی قریه جدید ابو شکرک المقتد اولیای هاکمه شکره ده مأموریه هلوونده

بعضی ری معاملات نظامات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات

موضوعه الهام ایدر بر قیامه نوتونه اسمعی و عاکر شاهانه ده دخی بچوخی

اندره اتقال اولیای و بوابه قیامه تعلیمات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات و تعلیمات

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A document about the role of state official in the smuggling activities

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