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Habits of the Market: Commercial Networks, Regional Finance, and Resistance in the Ottoman Tobacco Trade (c. 1860-1925)

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Habits of the Market:

Commercial Networks, Regional Finance, and Resistance in the Ottoman Tobacco Trade (c. 1860-1925)

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Kaleb Herman Adney

2024

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Habits of the Market:

Commercial Networks, Regional Finance, and Resistance

in the Ottoman Tobacco Trade (c. 1860-1925)

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Kaleb Herman Adney

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor James L. Gelvin, Chair

This dissertation is an analysis of the tobacco industry in the late Ottoman Empire and in the post-Ottoman Aegean Region. In particular, it traces the development of the political economy of tobacco in Macedonia, Thrace, and the surrounding region, which incorporated tobacco producers and merchants into trans-regional commercial networks and global financial flows. The most prominent merchants of the late Ottoman period were all involved in ongoing processes of urbanization, financialization, and industrialization in the region. These processes created political-economy dynamics that provided opportunities for some commercial actors while

limiting the potential for social advancement amongst others. In response, social actors often engaged in subterfuge and smuggling while they became enmeshed in cycles of violence and warlordism in the countryside. Illegal commerce and banditry became commonplace. Ultimately, the potential opportunities provided by the tobacco trade transformed the tobacco-producing lands of Macedonia and Thrace into the core of competing national economy projects of the Committee for Union and Progress, the Bulgarian government under Tsar Ferdinand I, and the Greek government after World War I under the auspices of the League of Nations plan to exchange the populations of Greece and Turkey. In this way, while this dissertation primarily analyzes the "tobacco question" in the late Ottoman and post-Ottoman Aegean Region, it also attempts to demonstrate the ways that tobacco played into the broader "eastern question" and the multiple crises (i.e. sectarian violence and competition between national economy projects) affecting the southern Balkans in the early twentieth century.

The dissertation of Kaleb Herman Adney is approved.

Sarah Stein

Kent F. Schull

Christine Philliou

Sebouh David Aslanian

James L. Gelvin, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2024

In memory of my brother Konnor James (1992-2024)

\+ *Memory Eternal*

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The list of people who supported me on this journey is long. I feel privileged to have met so many brilliant souls over the past eight years. On top of that, there are those who played a role in shaping me intellectually prior to my entrance into the PhD program. There are also those who had an influence on me in other significant ways that are worth mentioning. Combined, these groups of people are numerous, and I will surely forget to mention some of them by name. This section could never properly address the contributions of each friend and colleague along the way and will inevitably fall short in expressing the depth of my gratitude. Still, I would like to make a good faith attempt to recognize them and praise them for their kindness.

First, I would like to profusely thank my dissertation committee, which has been a constant support. My committee chair, James Gelvin, has been the model advisor. He has been a source of inspiration over the years in terms of his own thought-provoking scholarship, his efforts to bring me into the fold of Middle Eastern studies, and his patient, critical eye in reading my own writings. Having come from a working-class background without many role models for pursuing a higher education, it always felt like Jim saw something in me that perhaps I never saw myself. For that — and for so much more — I am grateful. Likewise, Sarah Stein has graciously reviewed and critically responded to my research and writing many times while always resourcefully finding ways to support my work in the field through her many networks and connections. She gave me many insights into the field of Jewish history and the history of Salonica in particular. The amount of time that she spent reading and responding to my work through the years deserves an entire acknowledgements section of its own. Sebouh Aslanian has not only been an encouragement to me for many years, but he has also become a true friend. In addition, Sebouh is someone whose thought world has been and continues to be inspiring for my own creative processes. I am grateful

beyond measure for his support during my long stay at UCLA, both before, during, and — in foreseeable ways — after the PhD program.

My external committee members are some of the most distinguished scholars in the field of Ottoman history and some of the finest people I have had the pleasure of working with. Christine Philliou has, in some ways, provided a roadmap for pursuing the kind of scholarship that interests me. Her pioneering works in Greek-Ottoman studies have had a profound impact on the field of Hellenic studies, Middle Eastern studies, and Turkish history. Her willingness to engage with my scholarship and provide her critical support are deeply appreciated. Kent Schull has been a role model for me over the years in two significant ways. First, his engagement with the field of Ottoman history has been tireless. Evidence for this has been the way that his critical responses to my own work have been thoughtful considerations of the field itself as much as they were critiques of my own arguments and writing. Second, Kent has also provided constant camaraderie and support through the unexpected ups and downs of grad school. His friendship and guidance over the years have laid the foundation for an ongoing working relationship.

Apart from my committee, there are so many professors at UCLA that have been critical to my intellectual formation. Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Nile Green have both been thought partners periodically over the years and their intellectual work is nothing short of inspiring. Muriel McClendon, Teófilo Ruiz, and Mary Momdjian have all been anchors during my experience at UCLA in ways that they probably aren't even aware of. Benjamin Madley, Caroline Ford, Peter James Hudson, Kevin Terraciano, and Lynn Hunt have all made me rethink my own historical sources even though I have only had limited interactions with each of them. Although Miloš Jovanović, Choon Hwee Koh, and Jared McBride are all relatively new faculty at UCLA and so my path only crossed with theirs very briefly in that context, their presence has been felt by me

and many others in the department. I hope to maintain a professional relationship with each of them in the years to come. The late Richard Hovanisian helped to foster a burgeoning interest in genocide studies which had first been encouraged by Cheryl Barkey of Cabrillo College in Santa Cruz, CA years before I went to UCLA.

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VITA

Education

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"Tobacco and the Social Lives of Credit — Global Credit Markets and the Supply Chain of Oriental Tobacco," in Juan Carmona-Zabala ed., *Commodities in History: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Case Studies* (Rethymno, Crete, Greece: Institute for Mediterranean Studies - IMS, 2023), 299-334.

"Institutional Finance, Interconnected Markets, and Trans-Regional Networks: The Political Economy of Ottoman Tobacco in Macedonia and Thrace (c. 1880-1900)" in Fehmi Yılmaz, ed., *Mehmet Genç anısına Osmanlı iktisat tarihi çalışmaları* (İstanbul, Türkiye: Güngören Belediyesi, 2023), 599-624.

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Co-authored with Michael O-Sullivan, "Capitalism, Growth, and Social Relations in the Middle East: 1869-1945," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 23 August 2023).

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Introduction
The Tobacco Trade in the Late Ottoman Empire: History and Historiography
—

Oriental Tobacco and the Eastern Question: An Overview

At a 1911 conference held in Kavala — the most important tobacco-exporting port city of the Ottoman Empire during the last three decades of the empire's control over the southern Balkans — merchants presented "the tobacco issue" as "the thing which occupies the most important place in the social, economic, and agricultural life of our country."[1] Similarly, over a decade later in the winter of 1923-1924, İbrahimpaşazade Hüseyin Hüsnü — the Kavala representative for the Turkish government on the League of Nations' "Mixed Commission for the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Population," — would claim that "our villagers' tobacco [i.e. tobacco owned by Muslims in Macedonia] constitutes the most important and problematic of our issues" and that tobacco itself "is the villagers' most valuable source of wealth."[2] The problem of tobacco's exchange value within the context of the Greek-Turkish population exchange was based on multiple interrelated factors and gave rise to speculative ventures amongst commercial actors in that context.[3] However, the important role that tobacco played in the social relations of late Ottoman and post-Ottoman Macedonia and Thrace did not emerge from the war years alone. Instead, it was preceded by decades of scaffolding and commercial network building that made Ottoman tobacco part of a broader set of political crises in the southern Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean more generally.[4]

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[1] *Kavala tütün kongresi: tütün meselesi hakkında ittihaz edilen mukarrerat* [*Kavala Tobacco Congress: Proceedings that deal with the issue of tobacco*] (Salonica: *Yeni Asır Matbaası*, 1327 [1911]), 3.
[2] Kavalalı İbrahimpaşazade Hüseyin Hüsnü, Unpublished Diary (1923), 30-31.
[3] Kaleb Herman Adney, "'Müslümanlar gittiğinde kelepir [tütün] karşılacaktır' — Emtia spekülasyonu ve 1923-24 Türk-Yunan nüfus mübadelesi" ['Avec le départ des Musulmans il y aura des kiélépures' — Commodity Speculation and the 1923-24 Greek-Turkish Population Exchange], in *Toplumsal Tarih Dergisi* no. 356 (August 2023), 60-65.
[4] Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* Second Edition (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 54-61. For broader global context on the geopolitics of the moment, see Marvin Suesse, *The*

Due to the fact that they are conceptual as much as physical, the boundaries between Asia and Europe have been debated by geographers and historians for centuries. In the eighteenth century, the Swedish cartographer Philip Johan von Strahlenberg considered the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea to be natural points of division between the Tartar lands (and by extension Asia) and Europe. He also believed that the division of the Eurasian continent was a cultural issue — related to the supposedly natural division between "Asiatic" peoples and "Europeans" — more than it ever was a geographical one.[5] During the nineteenth century, especially following the First and Second Serbian Uprisings (c. 1804-15) and the Greek Revolution (c. 1821-30), territories of the Ottoman Empire in the Morea and in the central Balkans were subsumed into a European discourse that championed the Christian history of the region. Proponents of this discourse also selectively incorporated Balkan peoples (Greeks in particular) into an imagined European heritage that extended to ancient times.[6]

In this context, the 'Eastern Question' — a phrase used by European statesmen as shorthand for the crisis of waning Ottoman power — was discussed amongst European diplomats

Nationalist Dilemma: A Global History of Economic Nationalism, 1776-Present (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 76-120.

[5] In his case, this was relevant to the question of whether or not Russians were European or not. Philip Johan von Strahlenberg, *An Histori-Geographical Description of the North and Eastern Part of Europe and Asia; but More Particularly of Russia, Siberia, and Great Tartary; Both in their Ancient and Modern State* (London: W. Innys and R. Manby, 1736), 105-126. See Lars Johanson, "Turkic Studies in the Swedish Empire 1632–1718," in Éva Á. Csató, Gunilla Gren-Eklund, Lars Johanson, and Birsel Karakoç (eds.) *Turcologica Upsaliensia: An Illustrated Collection of Essays* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020), 34-46. Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, "Eastern Europe," in Diana Mishkova and Balázs Trencsényi (eds.) *European Regions and Boundaries: A Conceptual History* (New York and Oxford: Berghan Books, 2019), 188–209. See also Diana Mishkova, "Balkans / Southeastern Europe," in Diana Mishkova and Balázs Trencsényi (eds.), *European Regions and Boundaries: A Conceptual History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 143–65.

[6] See, for example, Ilse Schoep, "Building the Labyrinth: Arthur Evans and the Construction of Minoan Civilization," in *American Journal of Archaeology* 122, no. 1 (2018): 5–32. On the Serbian Uprisings, see Marko Attila Hoare, *Serbia: A Modern History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2024), 37-64. Wayne Vucinich (ed.) *First Serbian Uprising, 1804-1813* (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982). On perceptions of the Balkans during the years of crisis, see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 89-115. See also, Thanos Veremis, *Βαλκάνια: ιστορία και κοινωνία, Ένα πολύχρωμο υπόδειγμα εθνικισμού [Balkans: History and Society, A Multi-faceted Model for Nationalism]* (Athens: Alexandria Press, 2016), 23-34.

and public figures as the result of a long-lasting historic clash between the "despotic" regime of the Ottoman dynasty and its freedom-loving peoples in Southeastern Europe.[7] The Eastern Question, although distinct from the geographical considerations of Strahlenberg and others, shares with them an intellectual framework that presents cultural identity as the motor of political progress.[8] The eastern-*ness* of Ottoman social and economic structures was of course also baked into the Eurocentric Marxian concept of oriental despotism.[9] Cash crops like tobacco also became subsumed over time into the Eastern Question both rhetorically and literally through the creation of institutions designed to undergird European finance.

In a benign manner, tobacco grown throughout the European territories of the Ottoman Empire became known to European consumers as "oriental tobacco" during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries due to the fact that Macedonia and Thrace were still under Ottoman control. As such, they were considered "Asiatic" in some abstract and inexplicable way. In this sense, the connection between the Eastern Question and oriental tobacco appears superficial. The nickname oriental tobacco was also used to describe strains of tobacco produced throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and the broader Middle East, not only the tobacco grown in the southern Balkans. In the late nineteenth century, Egypt, Syria, Greece, and Anatolia — especially its Black Sea and Aegean coastal regions — were all producers of the so-called oriental tobacco consumed in Europe and its colonial outposts in the broader occident including the Americas, the Caribbean,

[7] Frederick Anscombe points out that this perception was based on theoretical interpretations of the sultan's political power and the patronage of the sultanate over its people. In practice, restrictions to despotism shaped political life in the provinces. Frederick F. Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age" in *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012): 576 and 603.
[8] James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History, Fifth Edition* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 42-55.
[9] Massimiliano Tomba, *Marx's Temporalities*, trans. Peter D. Thomas and Sara R. Farris (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 67-73.

and South Africa but also in East Asia, including in Japan.[10] Compared with these other Mediterranean production centers, the southern Balkans — especially the triangle of tobacco-producing territory between Kavala, Siroz, and İskeçe — were more important as a hub for tobacco cultivation and exportation on the global stage from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries.

The importance of the southern Balkans, especially the Ottoman provinces of Selânik and Edirne (corresponding to much of what had constituted historical Macedonia and Thrace in the ancient world), were based on the fact that they were incredibly productive agricultural centers and that their climatological conditions and the soil itself provided an ideal environment for growing tobacco. Both of these facts are attested to in the writings of early modern Ottoman and European travelers. The use of tobacco alongside alcohol and coffee in the Balkans are also mentioned in the writings of the Ottoman travel-writer Evliya Çelebi and Lefebvre in earlier centuries as well.[11] Tobacco had originally been introduced to the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century after decades of European exploration of the Americas and had become commonplace by the seventeenth century. Throughout the Ottoman Empire, debates over the permissibility of tobacco use intensified, especially in the seventeenth century. At that time, some Islamic legal scholars issued *fatwa*s against smoking it while some Sufi scholars, on the other hand, praised its

[10] Chrysoula Anagnostopoulou, "'Βιομηχανία σιγαρέττων εν Σάμω': Όψεις της επιχειρηματικότητας του καπνεμπορικού οίκου των αδελφών Μ. και Σ. Καραθανάση στη Σάμο (1887-1916) ['Cigarette Industry in Samos': Aspects of Entrepreneurship of M. and S. Karathanassis Brothers Tobacco Company (1887-1916)]" in *Πρακτικά 1ου Επιστημονικού Συνεδρίου: Ο καπνός στην ιστορία: οικονομικές, κοινωνικές και πολιτισμικές προσεγγίσεις – Καβάλα, 7-9 Δεκεμβρίου 2018 [Proceedings of the 1st Academic Conference: Tobacco in History: Economic, Social, and Cultural Approaches – Kavala, 71-9 December 2018]* (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and the History of Tobacco, 2020), 225-237.

[11] Aleksandar Fotić, "The Introduction of Coffee and Tobacco to the Mid-West Balkans," in *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 64, no. 1 (2011): 89–100. James Grehan, "Smoking and 'Early Modern' Sociability: The Great Tobacco Debate in the Ottoman Middle East (Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries)," in *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (2006): 1352–77. On Coffee and the enduring connections between Egypt and Macedonia during the eighteenth century, see Eyal Ginio, "When Coffee Brought About Wealth and Prestige: The Impact of Egyptian Trade on Salonica," in *Oriente Moderno*, Nuova serie, Anno 25 (86), Nr. 1 (2006), 93-107.

alleged medicinal and spiritual benefits. Ottoman sultans vacillated between these two extremes, sometimes outlawing it and sometimes encouraging its production.[12] By the nineteenth century, tobacco had become a staple crop in the economy of the Eastern Mediterranean region and Ottoman Macedonia was the preeminent site of its production as well as one of the most important points of origin for the global tobacco market that emerged in that period.[13] Egypt, the Black Sea region, and Istanbul were all important in this process too and, by the twentieth century, the tobacco trade along the Anatolian coastline near Izmir and on the island of Samos had developed significantly as well.[14] Although only some of these places were Asian or oriental (arguably none of them were), by the nineteenth century tobacco from this part of the world had become 'eastern' within the global trade in tobacco that was oriented predominantly towards Europe in the West.

Beyond the fact that the heart of tobacco production and exportation for the 'oriental' tobacco trade was not Asian — but rather more African and European — nor was it in any other

[12] Grehan, "Smoking and 'Early Modern' Sociability." For a fascinating rebuttal of tobacco's critics based in arguments about humoral theory written in Arabic, see 'Abd al-Ghanī ibn Ismā'īl Nābulusī, *al-Sulḥ bayna al-ikhwān fi ḥukm ibaḥāt al-dukhān* [*The Ikhwān Resolution on the Permissibility of Smoking*], British Library: Oriental Manuscripts, MS 19547, in *Qatar Digital Library*.

[13] For a similar trajectory, including early modern debates and an explosion of tobacco as business, see Allan M. Brandt, *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 19-44. See also, Neşe Erim, "Tütünün ticari bir mal olarak ortaya çıkışı: 1600-1900," in Emine Gürsoy Naskali (ed.) *Tütün Kitabı* (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2007), 34-44.

[14] Rellie Shechter, *Smoking, Culture, and Economy in the Middle East: The Egyptian Tobacco Market, 1850-2000* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006). Hiyām Ṣābir, *al-Dukhān wa-al-mujtama' al-Miṣrī fī al-niṣf al-thānī min al-qarn al-tāsi' 'ashar, 1848-1914 M.* (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 2018), 92-194. Filiz Dığıroğlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi: Trabzon Reji İdaresi, 1883-1914* (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007), Necmettin Aygün, "Trabzon'da Tütün Tüccarı (1826-1827)," in *Karadeniz İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 2020; (28): 317-340. Mehmet Akpınar, "Akçaabat'ta Tütün Üretimi ve Reji İdaresinin Tütün Üreticilerine Yönelik Uygulamaları", in *Dünden Bugüne Akçaabat Sempozyumu* (Akçaabat, Trabzon : Akçaabat Belediyesi, 2014), 227-247. Ali Karaca, "Osmanlı imparatorluğunda Reji ve tütün kaçakçılığında Trabzon örneği: Bir yabancı sermaye serüveni," in *Tütün Kitabı*, 56-85. Can Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912)* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Can Nacar, "Labor Activism and the State in the Ottoman Tobacco Industry," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 46, no.3 (2014): 533-551; Can Nacar, "The Régie Monopoly and Tobacco Workers in Late Ottoman Istanbul," in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no.1 (2014): 206-219; Can Nacar, "Tütün İşçileri, Tüccarlar ve Kırık Camlar: 1905 Kavala Grevi," in *Toplumsal Tarih*, 213 (2011), 38-42. Mustafa Özçelik, 1930-1950 arasında tütüncülerin tarihi (TÜSTAV: İstanbul, 2003); Zehra Kosova, *Ben işçiyim* (TÜSTAV: İstanbul, 1996). Egemen Yılgür, *Tütüncülerin Tarihi* (TÜSTAV: İstanbul, 2020). Tiğince Oktar, "Osmanlı Devletinde Reji Şirketinin Kurulmasından Sonraki Gelişmeler," in *Tütün Kitabı*, 45-55.

sense fundamentally 'oriental' as a crop (given its American origins), it was still wrapped up in a consumer's rhetoric of abstraction and fetishization of the Orient.[15] This rhetoric went beyond the term 'oriental' itself. Thus, 'Turkish' tobacco was used to make 'Egyptian' cigarettes even on Greek islands like Samos.[16] Tobacco products became imbued with the orientalist imagery of camels and sultans, pharaohs and snakes, and very often idealized half-naked women who belonged to the imaginary harem of the presumably male smoker. Imagery and rhetoric though are of secondary concern in a study of the commercial networks and practices that made tobacco a source of value for Ottoman subjects. Other historians have analyzed the element of propaganda baked into the Ottoman and Egyptian tobacco industries.[17] However, the orientalist imaginary that made the port-city of Kavala into the "Mecca of tobacco" in modern Greek is worth considering alongside the more pernicious dynamics of the so-called "Eastern Question."[18] Contrary to existing works that emphasize propaganda, my research suggests that tobacco's integral role in the eastern question had less to do with rhetoric than commercial networks.[19] I argue that tobacco became a core component of the Eastern Question and the related crises in Macedonia and Thrace because of political economy and market dynamics that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries within the Ottoman Balkans.

On the surface, the Eastern Question was a term invented in European political discourse to describe the political and economic instability of the Ottoman Empire. On a deeper level, the term was a pretext for the designs of European states for Ottoman territories in Europe, Asia, but

[15] On this fetishizing tendency, see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 49-72.
[16] Anagnostopoulou, "'Βιομηχανία σιγαρέττων εν Σάμω.'"
[17] Rellie Shechter, *Smoking, Culture, and Economy*, 45-64.
[18] Iōannēs Vyzikas, *Kavala, H Mekka tou Kapnou: Kavala 19ou-20ou aiōna oi anthrōpoi tou kapnou, tomos B'* [*Kavala, the Mecca of tobacco: Kavala 19th and 20th century, the people of tobacco, Volume 2*], (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and the History of Tobacco, 2010), 2-31.
[19] Basil C. Gounaris, "Preachers of God and martyrs of the Nation: The politics of murder in ottoman Macedonia in the early 20th century / Pasteurs de Dieu et martyrs de la nation: la politique du meurtre en Macédoine ottomane au début du XXe siècle," in *Balkanologie: Revue d'études pluridisciplinaires*, Vol. IX, no. 1-2 (2005), 31-43.

also in Africa.[20] Discussions of the Eastern Question during the nineteenth century were often laced with the rhetoric of sickness and disease. With shocking frequency, politicians, diplomats, merchants, and journalists in Europe referred to the Ottoman Empire as the "sick man of Europe" due to the concurrent 'infections' of political corruption and financial incompetence that it allegedly suffered.[21] Beyond the generic political crisis of the Ottoman Empire described as the Eastern Question, a series of rebellions, wars, and nationalist skirmishes in the 1870s was described similarly as the "Great Eastern Crisis." This specific "crisis" — experienced first in Herzegovina and then in Bosnia and Bulgaria before boiling over into full-scale war between Serbia and Montenegro on the one hand and the Ottoman Empire on the other — was part of the more general "question" for European powers in the sense that it reiterated the need for political change in the Ottoman domains.[22] The terminology of questions and crises presumed the need for answers and resolutions, to be pursued under the auspices of Europe.[23] Tobacco cultivation continued to expand rapidly throughout Macedonia and Thrace in the 1860s and 1870s.

During those years, the successful Ottoman commercial networks that would dominate the political economy of tobacco were established through strategic use of both Austrian and Ottoman

[20] On Ottoman attempts to thwart European plans and to develop African territories for their own uses, see Frederick Walter Lorenz, "The "Second Egypt": Cretan Refugees, Agricultural Development, and Frontier Expansion in Ottoman Cyrenaica, 1897–1904," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (2021), 53, 89–105.
[21] Renée Worringer, "'Sick Man of Europe' or 'Japan of the Near East'?: Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36, no. 2 (2004): 207–30.
[22] Alexis Heraclides and Ada Dialla, "The Bulgarian Atrocities: A Bird's Eye View of Intervention with Emphasis on Britain, 1875–78," In *Humanitarian Intervention in the Long Nineteenth Century: Setting the Precedent* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 148–68. Hoare, *Serbia*, 201-232.
[23] This was not limited to the late nineteenth century and had become part of European political discourse earlier on. The First and Second Serbian Uprisings and the Greek Revolution contributed to this perception because of the Ottoman retaliation in the "cutting of the knezes," the massacres at Belgrade, the murder of religious and political figures in the Greek Orthodox community in 1821, and the massacre at Chios in 1822. Hoare, *Serbia*, 37-64. On the massacre at Chios and the background developments which took place on Samos, Hydra, and other islands, see Mark Mazower, *The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe* (New York: Penguin Press, 2021), 131-163. On the context of the crisis in Bosnia, see Anna Vakali, "Conspiracy under Trial: Christian Brigands, Rebels and Activists in Bosnia during the Tanzimat," in Ramazan Hakkı Öztan and Alp Yenen (eds.) *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 151-177.

privileges. This is not, therefore, merely a story of foreign domination of the tobacco industry. Nevertheless, oriental tobacco was also subsequently integrated into the Eastern Question through European attempts to manage the financial crisis in the empire after Ottoman bankruptcy was declared in 1875. The political economy which preceded this financial crisis was re-configured in its aftermath during the 1880s and 1890s around many of the same commercial networks that had emerged triumphant in the 1860s and 1870s. It was both of these factors — first, the emergence of local commercial networks that dominated much of the tobacco industry and, second, the integration of Ottoman finance into a European-controlled repayment apparatus — that made oriental tobacco a forum for the Eastern Question and its multiple overlapping crises. This is true as much for the class-based fissures in the Aegean region as it is for the diplomatic response to Ottoman bankruptcy; tobacco provides insights, therefore, into multiple layers of the Eastern Question in terms of the distorted European interpretation of Ottoman politics and in terms of the real social fissures present in Ottoman society.

While the European discourse of the Eastern Question relied on oriental backwardness to explain the empire's political and economic instability, the truth was more textured. Ottoman Europe — so-often referred to in the nineteenth century as *la Turquie en Europe* — was a crucial locus of political activity and economic production rather than of mere decline and civilizational underdevelopment, in spite of what European diplomats and financiers claimed. Likewise, the political movements that contributed to destabilization of Ottoman control in the empire's European territories were shaped by the economic circumstances that surrounded them. This included smuggling rings and bandits who made good money. Bandits and warlords also funded rebellious political activities through the purchase of arms and explosives.[24] By no means was the

[24] Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Tools of Revolution: Global Military Surplus, Arms Dealers and Smugglers in the Late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908," in *Past & Present*, Volume 237, Issue 1, 1 November 2017, 167–195. Idem, "The

superstructure of sectarian or nationalist politics in the Balkans, or in the broader Eastern Mediterranean for that matter, determined solely by the economic base of the Ottoman Empire's agricultural economy. Still, economic circumstances in the Ottoman Empire and, more directly, the commercial practices and financial institutions of Ottoman merchants played a major role in creating the circumstances for political rebellion in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The political mobility of commercial actors in Macedonia and Thrace also contributed to the development of business networks, including those which operated clandestinely. Oriental tobacco, in short, was a sector in which Ottoman crises were made worse by the commercial activities of Ottoman subjects, the Ottoman state, and European financiers. Oriental tobacco, in short, did not merely share a rhetorical lineage with the Eastern Question. Pulling back the curtain also reveals that the instability and 'sickness' inherent in discussions of the Ottoman political system were perhaps more fitting to discussions of the political economy of tobacco in the Ottoman Empire. This is true for the empire as a whole but is especially relevant to the history of tobacco in the southern Balkans and in the Aegean Sea. Furthermore, in three stages — through integration into global finance, the rise of sectarianism and warlordism, and through territorial disputes in the post-Ottoman period — the tobacco trade became synonymous with the Eastern Question.

Problems in the tobacco trade were legion during the late nineteenth century. In general terms, it was an industry that revealed the huge discrepancies between the commercial elite of Salonica — many of whom enjoyed extensive networks in Egypt and in Central Europe — and less successful merchants throughout Macedonia and Thrace from at least the 1850s. Credit likewise constituted a major source of tension between urban creditors and the merchants and

Bulgarian Connection: the Young Turks in Exile and the Making of Radicalism in Ottoman Europe, 1895–1897," in *New Perspectives on Turkey* (2024), 1–20.

peasants who relied on them.[25] Nationalist movements and sectarian tendencies, especially the ongoing intra-Christian struggle between Slavic speakers and Greek speakers, undergirded the disputes of markets and territories central to tobacco production and exportation. The restructuring of the tobacco trade following Ottoman bankruptcy in 1875 and the subsequent establishment of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (the OPDA) in 1881 only served to deepen these crises rather than to alleviate them. The OPDA cooperated with a subsidiary, the Régie Company, to ensure that tobacco revenues were efficiently routed to the creditors of the Ottoman government.[26] Furthermore, because of the international cooperation between Ottoman and European actors to control tobacco in the Balkans and in Anatolia, a reactionary black-market trade in tobacco expanded significantly. While the chapters of this dissertation address each of these issues in turn, they also deserve their own introductory historical and historiographical remarks to contextualize the arguments presented in each of the separate chapters to follow.

Historical Context and Historiography

The development of the Ottoman tobacco industry was tied to broader industrial and agricultural projects taking place in Macedonia and Thrace during the nineteenth century. Some of the figures who were key to the region's commercial and infrastructural transformation were also deeply invested in tobacco, especially in the second half of the century. Of course, tobacco was also not the only industry that mattered. Some tobacco merchants solidified their position within the local and regional political economy by diversifying their holdings within a number of

[25] Kaleb Herman Adney, "Tobacco and the Social Lives of Credit — Global Credit Markets and the Supply Chain of Oriental Tobacco," in Juan Carmona-Zabala (ed) *Commodities in History: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Case Studies* (Rethymno, Crete, Greece: Institute for Mediterranean Studies - IMS, 2023), 299-334.
[26] Murat Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Control in the Late Nineteenth Century* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 17-62. Ali Coşkun Tünçer, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870-1914* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1-28.

other industries simultaneously. Tobacco, flour and bread products, mining, ceramics, and textiles were among the most important for both export merchants and domestic producers in and around Salonica. One of the most important families to the development of these industries was that of the Allatini Brothers. As other historians have pointed out, their dominance of the commercial and financial life of Salonica can hardly be overstated.[27] Their place in the tobacco industry — in Salonica but also in Kavala, Drama, and İskeçe — was part of a broader commercial portfolio which gave them access to market networks and political privileges not often enjoyed by less prominent merchants in the rural towns that dotted the hinterlands of Macedonia and Thrace.[28] To exemplify the Allatinis' long-standing role in the tobacco industry in particular, it is worth considering both this broader portfolio of commercial interests and the political history of their dominance within the tobacco trade.

Their market networks in the Austro-Hungarian domains and the political privileges bestowed on them by both the Ottoman and the Austrian governments as a supplier to the Austrian tobacco monopoly were key to the Allatini family's commercial success. Solomon Allatini in particular shipped large quantities of tobacco on Austrian steamships throughout the 1860s and early 1870s. New Ottoman legislation on tobacco from 1874 privileged Austrian exporters and suppliers of the Austrian tobacco monopoly even more than an earlier code from 1862. This

[27] Sotirios Dimitriadis, *The Making of an Ottoman Port-City: The State, Local Elites and Urban Space in Salonica, 1870-1912* (London: unpublished dissertation, 2013), 37-80.

[28] Evanghelos Hekimoglou, *The "Immortal" Allatini: Ancestors and Relatives of Noemie Allatini-Bloch (1860-1928)* (Thessaloniki: Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki, 2012). Paris Papamichos Chronakis, Οι έλληνες, εβραίοι, μουσουλμάνοι και ντονμέ έμποροι της Θεσσαλονίκης, 1882-1919: Ταξικοί και εθνοτικοί μετασχηματισμοί σε τροχιά εξελληνισμού [The Greek, Jewish, Muslim, and Dönme Merchants of Thessaloniki, 1882-1919: Class-based and Ethnic Transformations in the Course of Hellenization], (Rethymno, Crete: unpublished dissertation, 2011), 81-108. See also Emilie Themopoulou, *Salonique (1800-1875): conjoncture économique et mouvement commercial* (Paris: unpublished dissertation, 1994). On the Allatinis' role in Jewish education in Salonica, see Devin Naar, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 139-188. Kaleb Herman Adney, "International Elites in Ottoman Salonica — The Commercial and Diplomatic Portfolios of the Hadjilazaro Family," in Erik Blackthorne-O'Barr and Burhan Çağlar eds., *Levantines of the Ottoman World* (İstanbul, Türkiye: Ibn Haldun University Press, 2023), 195-222.

provided the Allatinis with additional advantages via-a-vis the growing tobacco trade as shown in chapter one. The Ottoman declaration of bankruptcy in 1875 led to a number of changes in the tobacco industry as well as a number of other industries including salt mining and fisheries culminating in the creation of an administrative entity tasked with managing Ottoman finances: the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (the OPDA).

In 1881, the OPDA was established as a means of ensuring that the Ottoman government repay its massive debts to foreign creditors in Europe that had been steadily rising since the Crimean War of 1853-1856 with the Russian Empire. Tobacco revenues were incorporated into this apparatus but in 1883 the OPDA opted to hire out their administration of them to a third party. La Société de la Régie cointéressée des Tabacs de l'Empire Ottoman, or the Régie Company as it was more commonly known, which was formed with German, Austrian, and Anglo-French financial backing, bid for and won this contract, which gave it the sole right to collect tobacco revenues on tobacco produced and sold within the Ottoman Empire for the next thirty years. In addition to its role as the revenue collector in the Ottoman tobacco trade, the Régie Company also provided credit to cultivators and placed restrictions on tobacco transportation and sales in order to curb smuggling, which became a massive enterprise during the late nineteenth century. The 1881 establishment of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration and, two years later, the 1883 establishment of the Régie Company put the domestic tobacco industry and its revenues into the hands of a foreign corporation thereby changing the relationship of most local tobacco merchants to the industry.[29]

[29] For a novel look at the OPDA and its formation, see Daniel Stolz, "'Impossible to Provide an Accurate Estimate': the Interested Calculation of the Ottoman Public Debt, 1875–1881," in *The British Journal for the History of Science* (2021), 1-17.

However, the Allatinis belonged to a small contingent of commercial elites that managed to circumnavigate the dictates of the Régie Company and establish a working relationship with the company. This is demonstrated by the legislative apparatus that surrounded the Régie Company in its initial years of operation. The Cahier des Charges, for example, was a piece of legislation which clarified the much-debated role of the OPDA and the Régie Company, the revenue-collector and monopoly-holder for the domestic tobacco industry contracted to the OPDA and the Ottoman government. With the benefit of hindsight, Raphael Attias wrote in 1925 that this 1883 legislation faced "numerous and important exemptions." To Attias, the most notable exemption was a dispensation given to the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. (the firm of Lazaro Allatini the son of Moise Allatini) by the Ottoman sultanate in 1895. This dispensation had allowed the Commercial Company to store and process its tobacco in its own warehouses prior to export. Whether Attias was aware of it or not, however, the Allatini Brothers had enjoyed unique privileges vis-a-vis the tobacco trade since well before the establishment of the Régie Company which preempted this arrangement.[30] In June 1883, the Austrian embassy and the Régie Company agreed that the Austro-Hungarian monopoly would continue to receive and process its tobacco in its own warehouses as it had done from 1863 thereby creating an exemption for Austrian suppliers such as the Commercial Company. According to Louis Rambert — the director of the Régie Company after 1901 — this is how the Régie had continued to deal with brokers who supplied the Austro-Hungarian monopoly until the twentieth century. To quote Rambert: "While remaining the primary suppliers of the Austro-Hungarian monopoly, they [the Herzog Company and Commercial

[30] Raphael Attias, *Le monopole du tabac en Bosnie et Herzégovine: etude sur les différents modes d'imposition du tabac et plus particulièrement dans ces deux provinces* (Geneva: Imprimerie Jent, 1925), 43. E. Pech, *Manuel des sociétés anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Constantinople: Gérard Frères, 1911), 162 and 252.

Company of Salonica Ltd.] also engaged in the trade of leaf tobacco with other clients; their business expanded."[31]

The Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. had in fact expanded so much that the situation had decisively shifted in its favor as opposed to that of the Régie Company by the turn of the century. The British consul general to the Ottoman Empire in Salonica, John Elijah Blunt, wrote in 1897 that the Austrian-Lloyd Company visited Kavala two times per week and shipped almost 260,000 British pounds worth of merchandise to Austria-Hungary, most of which was tobacco. In 1894, 37% of the registered merchandise shipped from Kavala went to Austria-Hungary while nearly 28% went to Ottoman domains. In 1895, however, Austria-Hungary's role became even more outsized in terms of Kavala's total exports accounting for over 44% of exported goods. Meanwhile, the share of every other importer of goods — including domestic shipments to other provinces of the Ottoman Empire — declined. In other words, the Austrian supply chain became the primary avenue by which tobacco left Macedonia. As chapter one explains, it did so by means of the trans-regional Austro-Ottoman commercial networks, primary amongst them being those of the Allatini Brothers, as well as the Herzog Company based in Kavala.[32]

Clearly, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian political connections were crucial in helping the Allatinis to dominate so much of the tobacco industry in the late Ottoman Empire. However, their role in the political economy of Salonica was not limited to agricultural products like tobacco. Their enterprise in credit and banking as well as industrial production of flour products and ceramics were equally important aspects of their broader commercial portfolios. Their

[31] Louis Rambert, *Rapport du Directeur Général sur la séance de la Chambre des Députés du 7/20 Février 1909* (Galata, Istanbul: Imprimerie Gérard Frères, 1909), 36. For a deeper discussion of this, see Kaleb Herman Adney, **"**Institutional Finance, Interconnected Markets, and Trans-Regional Networks: The Political Economy of Ottoman Tobacco in Macedonia and Thrace (c. 1880-1900)" in Fehmi Yılmaz, ed., *Mehmet Genç anısına Osmanlı iktisat tarihi çalışmaları* (İstanbul, Türkiye: Güngören Belediyesi, 2023), 599-624.
[32] John Elijah Blunt, *Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance: Turkey, Report for the Year 1895 on the Trade of the Salonica Consular District* (London: Annual Series No. 1837, 1897), 9-12.

contributions to these sectors were also tied up in market dynamics and Hamidian political projects to modernize Salonica.

As other historians of Salonica have pointed out, the Allatini Flour Mill was contracted with the Ottoman government to supply its garrisons with bread and other provisions throughout the final decades of Ottoman rule.[33] This had also contributed to the Ottoman government's favoritism of the family as they sought to transform their mill into a major competitor on the international market for flour products milled mechanically. Alongside the Allatinis' efforts to expand their flour-milling activities, they became involved in public works and construction projects that made them even more central to the modernization and development of the city. They made great strides in urban construction within Salonica proper, predominantly depending on iron girders imported from Belgium, sandstone from France, stone from Mt. Olympos, and bricks made locally. According to consul general Blunt, "All new buildings consist largely of perforated bricks, manufactured here, and which are of very good quality."[34] Due to a series of fires which burned down much of the city center during the 1880s and in 1890, the Allatini brickworks factory had become the main provider for local construction projects by the 1890s.

Their role in the construction of the city, the development of industry, and in supporting the Ottoman military allowed the Allatinis and their partners to avoid risks and some of the transaction costs associated with enterprise in the region. As a result, they enjoyed strategic exemptions and privileges unavailable to other merchants. The Allatinis petitioned the Ottoman government in June 1884 for exemption from customs duties on "machinery and tools" imported

[33] İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2014), 42-43.
[34] John Elijah Blunt, *Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance. Turkey. Report for the Year 1887 on the Trade of Salonica.*, *Annual Series No. 254.* (London: 1888), 9.

from Europe (likely a Hoffman kiln for brick-making) and this exemption was honored.[35] Later on, in 1890, the Allatini Brothers were the subject of a report conducted by the Council of Ministers in which they had apparently also requested that they not be charged customs duties on brick-making materials because they were involved in the advancement of local industry and their bricks were being used to make aqueduct piping. The report states that the brick factory dealt in foreign chemicals and domestic raw goods. The raw goods were not subject to taxation "in the interest of advancing industry" whereas the chemicals were subjected to a 2% customs duty as imports.[36]

Perhaps it was because of the intersection of these factors between the flour and ceramics industries, both being forums of private enterprise that bolstered Ottoman military operations and administrative projects, that the Allatini Brothers established a joint-stock company in 1897 — the *Société Industrielle et Commerciale de Salonique* — subsequently approved for incorporation under Ottoman law in 1898, which combined their efforts in both brick and ceramics production and flour milling under a common set of by-laws.[37] Although the Allatini Brothers formed the company with the Mizrahi and Morpurgo families — other prominent Jewish commercial elites in Salonica — Edward Allatini became the *Société* president and would eventually serve simultaneously as president of the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd, which had already been incorporated in 1895 in London.[38] Even in the late 1920s, after Ottoman rule had long been overturned, the Commercial Company was still supplying Reemtsma — a prominent German

[35] Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry's Ottoman Archives, BOA hereafter), Ş.D., No. 5, Group Code: 505, 13 May 1884; See also Alaadin Tok, "İmparatorluğun Son Döneminde İstanbul'da Tuğla Üretimi ve Ticareti (1839-1914)," in Feridun M. Emecen, et al. eds. *Osmanlı İstanbulu: III. Uluslararası Osmanlı İstanbulu Sempozyumu, Bildiriler* (İstanbul: İstanbul 29. Mayıs Üniversitesi; İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2015).
[36] BOA, A.} MKT.MHM., No. 20, Group Code: 501, 11 September 1890.
[37] E. Pech, *Manuel des Sociétés Anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Constantinople: Gérard Frères, 1911), 277-279.
[38] *Ibid*., 250-252.

tobacco firm — with sizable shipments of Macedonian tobacco.[39] By 1936, Reemtsma had become the industry leader partly as a result of these longstanding connections to local suppliers like the Allatinis.[40] The operations of the Allatini commercial networks did not only expand northwards into Austria but were also actively pursued through the establishment of a sister company in Egypt called the Salonica Cigarette Company, established in 1903. As late as 1920, Juda Perahia — a purchasing agent and salesman for both companies — was traveling to Egypt on business for the Allatinis.[41] The Allatinis staying power was bolstered by diverse commercial and financial portfolios including the management of their own bank, the Banque de Salonique.[42] However, the commercial networks that dominated tobacco in the late nineteenth century were not exclusively Jewish, even though the Jewish commercial elite in Salonica played a significant role in the industry.

Greeks also constituted a significant wing of the regional commercial elite that also benefited significantly from the surge in tobacco during the final decades of Ottoman rule. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, Greek-speaking merchants had maintained large commercial networks in cities through which tobacco passed along the central European supply chain. These cities included Trieste, Vienna, and Dresden. Trieste, for its part, had become a central node of tobacco transportation from Kavala thanks to the activities of the Austrian Lloyd shipping company from the middle of the nineteenth century. Dresden, on the other hand, became the hub

[39] Archivio Storico Assicurazioni Generali (Historical Archive of Assicurazioni Generali, hereafter ASAG), Corporate Heritage and Historical Archive, Direzione centrale, Segreteria organizzazione, Grecia Salonicco Sub-Agenzie (OGG001042022), 10-11.
[40] Juan Carmona-Zabala, "Underfunded Modernization: Tobacco Producers and Agricultural Policy in Interwar Greece," in *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Volume 39, No. 1 (May 2021), 191-214.
[41] Judah Perahia (Alexandria) to the Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique), 27 July 1920, folder 6, box 19, Judah Perahia Collection (JPC), Ben Zvi Institute (BZI). The Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique) to Judah Perahia (Alexandria), 28 July 1920, folder 6, box 19, JPC, BZI The Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique) to Elie Levy and Judah Perahia (Alexandria), 14 October 1920, folder 6, box 19, JPC, BZI.
[42] E. Pech, *Manuel des Sociétés Anonymes*, 137.

of oriental tobacco processing within the German cigarette industry and relied on raw material from Macedonia up through the interwar period.[43] Greek-speaking Ottoman merchants relied on their market networks in Germany and the Austro-Hungarian domains to accumulate capital by means of ad-hoc credit arrangements built on trust and kinship. Historians have likewise shown that Greek-speaking Ottoman merchant networks were central to the expansion of supply chains for yarn, tobacco, and wool within the Habsburg Empire in earlier centuries.[44]

The expansion of Greek Orthodox tobacco-trading networks had reached new heights by the end of the nineteenth century when a large portion of the tobacco traders operating out of Kavala, Drama, İskeçe, and Siroz were Greek-speaking Ottoman subjects, some of whom were affiliated with European governments or enjoyed extraterritorial status. The commercial activities of Greek merchants also seem to have been a constant thorn in the side of the Régie Company since many were quite ambitious in circumnavigating its territorial and administrative domains. By 1895 the smuggling rings in the Thracian and Macedonian countryside predominantly "belong[ed] to the Hellenic nation" according to reports by the Ottoman Ministry of Police, established in 1870. The ministry's statistics indicated that "there were, indeed, Turkish smugglers;

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[43] Juan Carmona-Zabala, *State Expansion and Economic Integration: A Transnational History of Oriental Tobacco in Greece and Germany (1880-1941)* (University of San Diego: Unpublished Dissertation, 2018), 35-90.

[44] Olga Katsiardi-Hering, 'The Allure of Red Cotton Yarn and how it Came to Vienna: Associations of Greek artisans and merchants operating between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires,' in Suraiya Faroqhi and Gilles Veinstein (eds.) *Collection Turcica Vol. XV: Merchants in the Ottoman Empire* (Paris, Louvain, and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2008), 97-132. Katerina Papakonstantinou, 'The Pondikas Merchant Family from Thessaloniki, ca. 1750-1800,' in *Ibid*, 133-150. Given the well-established networks of Greek-speaking tobacco merchants active both in the legal and in the illegal tobacco trade around Kavala and the broader region, efforts to establish commercial representatives and agencies specific to the interests of non-Greek Christians was perhaps predictable. In June 1897, the Istanbul-based Bulgarian diplomat Mr. Marcoff requested permission from the Grand Vizier Halil Rifat Pasha to assign commercial agents to Kavala and Siroz (Serres). The agent assigned to Siroz was Pantelej Urumov who seems to have become involved in the Bulgarian nationalist movement at some point and would be pictured as a notable figure in the village of Veles within the 1919 publication of *Macedonia Illustrated*, a Bulgarian nationalist publication which claimed unequivocally that "Macedonia is Bulgarian" and that this had been the case "from most ancient times down to our own days." Although the specific responsibilities of Pantelej Urumov as "commercial agent" in Siroz are not explained in detail, it seems safe to assume that Bulgarian diplomacy aimed to strengthen the position of Bulgarian merchants within the commercial life of Kavala, Siroz, and the surrounding region. BOA, A.MTZ (04), 5 June 1897, No. 6, Group Code: 45. *Macedonia Illustrated* (Sofia: State Printing Press, 1919), V and 80.

nevertheless, their presence was negligible compared to that of the Greeks."[45] Sources fail to confirm the specific ratio of Greek 'smugglers' to those of other ethno-religious groups and, even if that information was available it would be highly unreliable given the nature of this paralegal activity and the changing political circumstances. In any case, the trope of local Greek bands dominating much of the Aegean smuggling routes seems to roughly align with many of the Ottoman and international reports on violence and inter-communal skirmishes.[46]

Given the limits placed on merchants in Macedonia and Thrace after the establishment of the Régie Company in 1883, the activities of smuggling rings increased significantly. Smuggling had already become an institution by the time the Régie was established and it was addressed in Ottoman legislation from the previous decade. Still, the operations of the Régie Company and the privileges it afforded the Allatinis and the Herzogs fundamentally transformed smuggling from an issue of criminal behavior into a matter of economic control. In other words, merchants operating according to the conventions of Ottoman trade and commerce were now accused of smuggling at a greater rate than before over minor infractions of Régie policy. In the event, many preferred to avoid the paperwork and registration processes of the Régie altogether, which only made the problem worse. As chapter two demonstrates, some merchants faced the Régie head on over its restrictive policies and petitioned the Ottoman government to allow them to continue operating in spite of accusations made against them. Régie policies and merchants' responses to those policies contributed to a culture of resistance both to international finance and to Ottoman governance. Sometimes this resistance appeared directly confrontational while at other times commercial actors preferred avoidance and continued operating as smugglers.

[45] BOA, Y.EE, 2 February 1894, No 22, Group Code: 112, 2.
[46] Glen W. Swanson, "The Ottoman Police," in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Jan.-Apr. 1972, Vol. 7, No. 1/2, 253. This also aligns with documentation from the early twentieth century in which a large portion of those who smuggled tobacco from Anatolia and Macedonia into Egypt were either politically or ethnically Greek.

Beyond the resistance of merchants-cum-smugglers, opposition to Régie policy also became part of the political culture of reform and revolution that shaped the early twentieth century, especially in Macedonia. At the heart of the tobacco trade was a series of contested credit relations that manipulated the processes of value creation and value extraction. Debt dependency in the countryside was experienced locally in seasonally specific credit arrangements. These arrangements reflected the dominance of the urban financial and commercial apparatus by elite Ottoman subjects with connections to western and central European commodity markets. Unfortunately, much of what was experienced by debtors in these arrangements is not demonstrable during the late nineteenth century given a paucity of sources related to such credit transactions in the countryside.[47] Still, a number of publications from shortly after the 1908 constitutional revolution of the Committee for Union and Progress (the CUP) — the revolutionary government that overthrew sultan Abdülhamid II in 1909 and gained complete control of Ottoman politics by 1913 — and some personal correspondence from purchasing agents of the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. reveal the central credit arrangements between merchants and peasant-cultivators.[48] They also reveal the moral claims which became narrativized in response by critics

[47] While Ottoman commercial court records certainly provide information on credit arrangements, most are agreements made between merchants and money lenders or banks. Commercial disputes between individuals were very common within the court notices of the legal verdicts made on commercial disputes (Ottoman: *iʿlamat sicillatı*). However, the petitions filed at court over unpaid debts in particular (*protesto defterleri*) were dominated by a few financial institutions not by individual creditors.# The Imperial Ottoman Bank was the most regular registrant of *protesto*s followed by the *Banque de Salonique* after its establishment in 1888. The *Banque de Salonique* was itself incorporated under Ottoman law in Istanbul by the Allatini Brothers with their own capital and that of their financial partners in some of the most important Austrian, Hungarian, and French banks of the time. From the court's extant notices of missed payment, the Ottoman Bank emerges as the most active complainant against its debtors. For example, from the petitions filed for unpaid debts in the Ottoman commercial court (*protesto*s) between 25 June 1891 and 8 September 1891, the Ottoman Bank accounted for 25.7% of the complaints filed for unpaid debts. Banque de Salonique, for its part, accounted for 22.8% of these complaints filed against debtors during the same period of time. See Ιστορικό Αρχείο Μακεδονίας (Historical Archive of Macedonia, hereafter IAM), Εμποροδικείο Θεσσαλονίκης (Selânik Ticaret Mahkemesi/Commercial Court of Selânik, hereafter STM), *Protesto Defterleri* 1888-1891, Δ20.3.3, Case Nos. 46-82, (25 June 1891 - 8 September 1891), 364-400. Credit provided to the peasantry seems to be less commonly documented though some exceptions include the documents of Elias Eliades described below.

[48] Nadir Özbek, "Defining the Public Sphere During the Late Ottoman Empire: War, Mass Mobilization and the Young Turk Regime (1908–18)," in *Middle Eastern Studies* Vol. 43, No. 5 (2007), 795-809.

of those credit arrangements. As chapter three demonstrates, the CUP used the opportunity presented by tobacco cultivators' dissatisfaction with available credit markets and merchants' dissatisfaction with the Régie Company in general to advocate for a state-led development program under CUP leadership.

In this context, money lending was central to two important stages in the annual production of tobacco well into the twentieth century. On the one hand, merchants in towns such as Drama, Siroz, Cuma-i Bala, İskeçe, and elsewhere relied on banks and patrons in Salonica and Kavala to provide them with credit prior to the season of loose-leaf tobacco auctioning, which took place in the spring.[49] This provided them with the means of building up an inventory for shipment abroad later in the year. A number of documents from archival collections from the Banque de l'Orient on commercial activities of the tobacco merchants Kyros Anastassiou and Elias Eliades attest to this dynamic.[50] Such entrepreneurial credit caused the relationship between creditors in Salonica and their merchant-clients in the towns of Macedonia and Thrace to revolve around debt and obligation. On the other hand, debt dependency was also crucial to the relationship between merchants of all types and the peasants who contracted with them over future harvests.

Contracting over future harvests was reflective of a second set of transactions over tobacco harvests which took place separately from loose-leaf auctions. In these contracted agreements, purchasing agents and independent merchants borrowed from banks and patrons in the regional commercial centers in order to purchase the tobacco of future harvests. This "contracted tobacco" (Tr. peyli tütün) was priced in accordance with its projected value at a discounted rate to the

[49] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı [Proceedings of the Drama Tobacco Merchants' Conference]* (İstanbul: Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası Matbaacılık Osmanlı Şirketi, 1326 [1910]), 29-30.

[50] For example, in November 1911 Kyros Anastassiou appealed to representatives from the bank to lend him 400 Ottoman lira ahead of the tobacco auction to take place in the following April. See IAM, Τράπεζα Ανατολής AEE: TRAP, Folder No. 258, Group Code. 128; page 2: 30 November 1911.

merchant, much like what Beshara Doumani describes in nineteenth-century Palestine.[51] The merchant, in turn, lent money to the contracted cultivators (Tr. peylemiş), whose livelihood depended on ready access to cash prior to the planting season. The disputes over tobacco pricing which enveloped Kavala, Drama, and İskeçe at the beginning of the twentieth century and broke out into massive unrest amongst tobacco cultivators and workers alike were caused by disagreements about the quality of the tobacco which had been contracted from previous seasons in this manner. In both cases — auctioned and contracted tobacco — the countryside was disadvantaged due to a concentration of capital in the urban core of Salonica and Kavala.[52]

The Second Constitutional Era, which lasted from 1908 to 1918, was a period of political tension amongst Ottoman subjects. Proponents of various models for national development debated the empire's political and economic future under the leadership of the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP). The ways in which provincial representatives of the CUP framed their policy initiatives to appeal to the peasantry provide a useful window into the political and moral economy of international finance during the initial years following the 1908 revolution. The tobacco industry of the southern Balkans provided a forum for related debates amongst cultivators and merchants. By 1908, tobacco had been at the crossroads of local economic development and European financial domination for nearly three decades and the region was primed for debates about the agricultural credit market and the customs regime, especially considering that the

[51] Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995), 54–181. See also İrfan Kokdaş, "Land Ownership, Tax Farming and the Social Structure of Local Credit Markets in the Ottoman Balkans, 1685–1855," in *Financial History Review* 24, no. 1 (2017): 53–81. Svetla Ianeva, "The Commercial Practices and Protoindustrial Activities of Haci Hristo Rachkov, a Bulgarian Trader at the End of the Eighteenth to the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century," in *Oriente Moderno* 25 (86), no. 1 (2006): 77–91. Stefania Ecchia, "Informal Rural Credit Markets and Interlinked Transactions in the District of Late Ottoman Haifa, 1890–1915," in *Financial History Review* 21, no. 1 (2014): 5–24.

[52] Costas Lapavitsas and Pinar Cakiroglu, *Capitalism in the Ottoman Balkans: Industrialisation and Modernity in Macedonia* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2019). Adney, "Tobacco and the Social Lives of Credit."

domestic tobacco monopoly was set to expire in 1913. In this context, proposals for state-led development were meant to satisfy the varying moral demands of agriculturalists and merchants throughout the southern Balkans. These discursive challenges to the status quo in the Ottoman tobacco industry constitute one of the many ways that imperial subjects rebelled against political-economy dynamics that disrupted their lives and livelihoods. Beyond the financial and socio-economic fissures revealed by analysis of the tobacco trade, other communitarian boundaries can also be traced by looking at the development of this industry.

Sectarian fissures, which periodically overlapped with broader nationalist movements and formed the basis for interstate rivalries after Ottoman collapse in the Aegean region, were another source of tension within the Ottoman tobacco trade. Primary among these was the ethno-sectarian conflict of Slavic- and Greek-speaking Christians throughout the late nineteenth century, which escalated significantly in the twentieth century. From the 1870s officially but with roots in prior decades, the Bulgarian and Macedonian Slavs of Macedonia, Thrace, and throughout the southern Balkans had locked horns with Greek speakers who were committed to the universal claims of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople over Orthodox Christianity in the Ottoman Balkans.[53] According to one Patriarchal apologist, for example, "until around 1860" there had been no distinction between Orthodox Christians in the Balkan Peninsula. According to him, setting aside Serbs living along the Danube and Croats along the Adriatic, "in almost all the other parts of the Peninsula, Orthodox (ορθόδοξος) and Greek (Έλλην) are synonymous."[54]

Clearly, on a certain level, this is an exaggeration given that Slavic speakers had long been predominantly Orthodox and had long cultivated traditions unique within the Balkans and more

[53] Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties*, 19-47.

[54] Ioannes Choidas, *Hē historia tēs Makedonikēs hypotheseōs* (Athens: Estia, 1908), 118. This interpretation is not strictly national but reflects the author's commitment to the Eastern Roman Christian identity above and beyond specific ethnonational distinctions.

broadly amongst Orthodox Christians worldwide. Nevertheless, there is truth to the claim insofar as Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire all belonged to the administrative and religious Ottoman category of Rum (Gr. Ρωμαίοι, Tr. Rum). There was also a history of Serbians, Bosnians, and Bulgarians being incorporated into Ottoman political and administrative circles (echoing the earlier relationship between the Byzantine Empire and its vassals in the region) from at least the fourteenth century.[55] Partly because of this reality, nationalism in the Balkans amongst Christians had been tempered until the establishment of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) in 1893. After that point — and especially after that organization's terrorist bombing of the Ottoman Bank in Salonica in 1903 — the rivalry between Macedonian, Bulgarian, and Greek nationalists became more intense and attacks between them became more frequent.[56]

The tobacco industry became a forum for disputes between these groups as they competed over market networks, territory, and employment. After 1903, violence came to define sectarian competition over networks and exclusivist hiring practices only made things worse.[57] After the First Balkan War in 1912-13, competition between these sectarian communities transformed into a conflict between two national economy projects as shown in chapter four. With Bulgarian occupation of the tobacco heartland in and around Kavala, violence only escalated. This was not only relevant to the experience of Greek- and Slavic-speakers but to Jews and Muslims as well, who became enmeshed in Bulgarian territorial expansion during World War I. Bulgarian efforts

[55] For example, see Giancarlo Casale's discussion of Sokollu Mehmet Pasha in *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 117-151. Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 1-21. See also Christine Philliou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2011). On Islam in this context, see Tijana Krstić, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011). Sanja Kadrić, "The Islamisation of Ottoman Bosnia: Myths and Matters," in A. C. S. Peacock (ed.) *Islamisation: Comparative Perspectives from History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 277-295.

[56] Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties*, 209-288.

[57] Can Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912)* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 11-12 and 50.

during World War I to turn the Macedonian and Thracian tobacco trade into the beating heart of greater Bulgaria's national economy demonstrate that the political economy of tobacco shaped the political aspirations of the post-Ottoman states much as it had for many of the region's commercial actors during Ottoman rule. Rather than merely being a forum for disputes between sectarian actors and nationalist movements, the tobacco trade became generative of political projects such as Bulgarian expansion, Ottoman revanchism, and later on Greek resettlement policies in the wake of the Greek-Turkish population exchange as discussed in the epilogue to this dissertation.

Bulgarian aggression in Macedonia during 1916 and 1917 included concerted efforts to dominate the tobacco trade and to transform it into an exclusively Bulgarian industry. This followed on the heels of the Bulgarian annexation of Thrace during the Second Balkan War and reflected Bulgarian ambitions for obtaining the territories of the stillborn Treaty of San Stefano in 1878.[58] The maximalist territorial demands of Bulgaria having been overturned by the Treaty of Berlin in July of the same year, the decision of Bulgaria to go to war with its allies of the First Balkan War and to subsequently enter into alliance with the Central Powers in World War I can be seen as an attempt to revive the momentum lost over thirty years earlier in 1878.[59] With this in mind, the case could certainly be overstated for tobacco's role in the political conflict after the Balkan Wars. Still, the activities of the Bulgarian military in seizing the moveable and immovable property of tobacco merchants as well as its massacres of peasant-cultivators in tobacco-producing villages highlight the centrality of tobacco to their annexation plans for Macedonia. Likewise, Bulgarian attempts to frame Thrace as the heart of Bulgarian tobacco since 1914 show that this was not isolated from previous and contemporaneous efforts to make tobacco into the core of the

[58] Stillborn because it was replaced by the Treaty of Berlin. See Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires. The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (Cambridge–New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 14-18.
[59] Richard C. Hall, "Bulgaria in the First World War," in *The Historian* Vol. 73, No. 2 (2011), 300-315.

Bulgarian national economy. Greek and Turkish disputes over property in 1923-1925 reveal a similar set of dynamics.[60]

In response to Bulgarian (and German) aggression in the Balkans, the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine and the subsequent Paris Peace Treaty were unfavorable to Bulgarian ambitions. Notably, it was not only the condemnation of Bulgaria's exploits in Macedonia but the presence of Bulgarians (including Slavs purported to be Bulgarian against their own will) in Thrace that was challenged by both treaties. In this context, the League of Nations made its first concerted policy effort towards the "ethnic unmixing" of peoples in the southern Balkans. Such demographic engineering would lay the foundation for ethnic cleansing between Turkey and Greece as well.

The trade in oriental tobacco and the so-called Eastern Question developed in tandem during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[61] This was not merely rhetorical. The political economy of tobacco became a subject of moral debate and the centerpiece for projects aimed at advancing the Ottoman, Bulgarian, and Greek national economies. In this context, the "ethnic unmixing" of the southern Balkans became central to imagining tobacco's future much as

[60] Property disputes in Turkey amongst refugees also reveal the restructuring of political economy in the Turkish Republic as shown by Elinor Morack and others. On the Ministry of the Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement, see Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922–1934* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 125-178. For more on the problematic politics of compensation, see Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State: The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017), 249-322; idem, "Refugees, Locals and 'The' State: Property Compensation in the Province of Izmir Following the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange of 1923," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 2.1 (2015): 147-166. On the issue of labor in the post-exchange years, see idem, "Turkifying Poverty, or: the Phantom Pain of Izmir's Lost Christian Working Class, 1924–26," in *Middle Eastern Studies* 55:4 (2019), 499-518. For a recent perspective on the Refugee Settlement Commission in Greece, which took on some of the same duties, and issues related to agricultural labor and land in Macedonia, see Ραϋμόνδος Αλβανός, *Σλαβόφονοι και Πρόσφυγες: Κράτος και Πολιτικές Ταυτότητες στη Μακεδονία του Μεσοπολέμου* [*Slavic-Speakers and Refugees: State and Political Identities in Macedonia in the Interwar Period*] (Θεσσαλονίκη: Επίκεντρο, 2019), 45-74.

[61] This is not to say that the Eastern Question emerged during the late nineteenth century as its roots were in the inter-imperial competition over the Mediterranean beginning in the mid-eighteenth century and it became linked to European attempts at balancing Eastern Mediterranean powers during the Greek Revolution and the subsequent Anglo-Ottoman alliance against Egypt's Mehmet Ali and Ibrahim Pasha. Still, the Eastern Question continued to dominate discussions amongst European diplomats over the future of the Ottoman Empire and its Christian populations in the Balkans. It was tobacco that stood at the heart of the post-Ottoman conflict over these territories, which demonstrates ironically that not all blame for violence in the region could be laid on the Ottomans.

it had become a core component of solutions provided by the League of Nations for the Eastern Question and its many crises. In this sense, responding to the social fissures of late Ottoman society, reformists, nationalists, and international observers all began to see ethnic cleansing as a means of negotiating a new future for the Balkans and Anatolia. In doing so, they sought to reconstitute the political economy of tobacco in national terms that would fit within the national economies of Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey in the 1920s.

Theoretical Framework

The business culture of tobacco merchants in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ottoman Empire was defined by patronage, capitulations, and the provision of debt. The ways in which commercial privileges and market networks were secured by some simultaneously limited the opportunities available to other merchants and cultivators who occupied a lower place in the social hierarchy. Political economy shapes the world of social actors whose role within regional agriculture and industry is important to their quotidian experience. The coordination of commercial activities by various social groups within a specific set of historical circumstances — another way of framing political economy — also reflects the assumptions, convictions, and dispositions of those groups on the international stage and within the context of global capitalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[62] Pierre Biourdieu's concept of habitus and the social fields which interact within it have been a helpful reference point for thinking through these considerations of political economy in the Ottoman tobacco trade.

Habitus refers to Bourdieu's conceptual apparatus which acts as a frame for understanding social fields and the decisions made by individual actors within them. In his words, "The

[62] Peter Jackson, "Pierre Bourdieu, the 'Cultural Turn' and the Practice of International History" in *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (January 2008), 155-181.

individual, the subjective, is social and collective. The habitus is socialized subjectivity, a historic transcendental, whose schemes of perception and appreciation (systems of preferences, tastes, etc.) are the product of collective and individual history." Thus, the "socialized subjectivity" of commercial actors refers to the ways that individual commercial actors and commercial networks belong to specific social worlds such as the world of the transnational elite, the transcendent smuggler, and the restricted peasant.[63] Throughout this dissertation, habits, as opposed to habitus, refer to the decisions made by social actors in response to social and economic realities which take place in specific cultural milieus and social hierarchies. The codification of social common sense or, put differently, the normative approach to social decision-making that is common amongst human societies informs our reaction to the social fields within which we find ourselves.[64] Bourdieu himself comments on the overlap between this conception of habitus and Karl Polanyi's analytical conception of "embededness," both of which reject the notion that an abstract economy exists apart from the social world in which economic transactions take place.[65] Drawing on the theoretical framework of habitus, the following chapters demonstrate that market networks overlap with factors of identity such as class, ethnicity, and religion to inform the social fields of commercial actors and thereby create new habits and new cultural institutions amongst them. In other words, the habits of nineteenth century capitalism in the eastern Mediterranean contributed to the upending and transformation of many of the social and political norms that defined late

[63] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy*, Translated by Chris Turner (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2005), 211.
[64] Karl Maton, "Habitus" in Michael Grenfell (ed.) *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* (Stocksfield, United Kingdom: Acumen Publishing, 2008), 49–66.
[65] Bourdieu, *The Social Structures*, 1-2. On the question of the abstraction of the economy, see also Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 80-122.

Ottoman society prior to the dynasty's collapse and the emergence of new nation-states in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and Palestine.

Whether consciously or not, commercial actors were predisposed to engage in financial and commercial activities that were essentially second nature within their historical context. Smuggling, to take but one example, was a common-sense response to being relegated to the lower rungs of the commercial order through regulations and privileges that favored those merchants with institutional banking connections in western and central Europe but who remained loyal to the Ottoman dynasty. It is perhaps no surprise then that Greek speakers in the Ottoman Empire constituted the largest constituency within the tobacco smuggling rings of the eastern Mediterranean, at least according to commentary of the Régie Company. Just as the objective and observable patterns of social life codify our daily experience with the world, the social realities embedded within a specific socio-economic sphere can reify ideas about belonging and identity. Although the tobacco trade did not singlehandedly create the social categories with which historical actors in the Eastern Mediterranean identified, it did reify some of those categories in significant ways. Thus, the merchants who became "smugglers" in the reports of the Régie Company throughout the 1880s and 1890s, the Bulgarians and Greeks who fought over tobacco land in the early twentieth century, and the Muslim peasant-cultivators of Macedonia all became further invested in their sectarian and national identities through their historical experiences in the Ottoman tobacco trade. Ultimately, the tobacco trade was not merely a stage for political factionalism but was generative of the social dynamics of conflict that dominated during the decade of war between 1912 and 1923.

Research Overview and Primary Source Material

This dissertation has been prepared with reference to many different kinds of source material from a large number of institutions and archives. Initially, this project was meant to look much different from its current form and there are a number of themes and historical questions that have been bookmarked for further exploration in my future book project.[66] Still, the four chapters of this dissertation reflect a years-long research effort that took me to Turkey and Greece many times and, unexpectedly, to Israel/Palestine and Great Britain. Originally, my primary-source base revolved around the Historical Archive of Macedonia (IAM), located in Thessaloniki, Greece. This collection boasts an impressive set of Ottoman *sicil*s, including both *şeriat* and *nizamiyye* records. In particular, IAM hosts one of the few near-complete collections of Ottoman commercial court records from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which offers profound insights into the economic life of late Ottoman Salonica and the appeals cases that ended up in Salonica from elsewhere (usually the towns of Drama or Siroz). This dissertation benefitted from a large number of these sources. Chapters one and two in particular include reference to a number of cases raised in the commercial court of Salonica. Still, systematic exploration of this massive source base (tens of thousands of pages) would require a dedicated research project implementing text-recognition technology.

A salve for the pain of utilizing commercial court records was provided by the Prime Ministry Archives (BOA) in Istanbul, Turkey. The BOA's well-organized, searchable database and its highly knowledgeable and professional personnel made it possible to scour its multiple collections for documents relevant to the tobacco trade in the southern Balkans, the Eastern

[66] These include another chapter on smuggling and violence in the 1890s; a chapter on commercial networks that relied on Egypt as an exit strategy for the increasingly volatile conditions in Macedonia and Thrace; a chapter on tobacco in Samos and Izmir; and a chapter dedicated to speculation and the national economy projects of Turkey and Greece during and after the Greek-Turkish population exchange.

Mediterranean, and Egypt. The most relevant collections turned out to be from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, both of which issued reports on the commercial actors involved in tobacco throughout the Southern Balkans, the Aegean Sea, and into Egypt.

I spent a small amount of time in the National Archives of the United Kingdom in Kew Gardens at Richmond. Although the time I spent there was limited, I found a number of records on key actors in the story of Ottoman tobacco. In particular, foreign office records on the controversies surrounding the life and commercial activities of Jack Abbot provided insights on the discrepancies between commercial actors' expectations of the Ottoman government after the Crimean War. This, in turn, helped me to trace the commercial networks that, from roughly the 1840s, were ascendant on the global market for exports from the southern Balkans, including but not limited to tobacco. The story of Jack Abbot also provided a window into the ways that the Ottoman government tempered the demands of Levantines and favored commercial elites that it perceived as more loyal through strategic legislation on tobacco production, customs, and export.

Thanks to the suggestions of Eyal Ginio, Sarah Stein, and Rinette Seidner, I also made an exploratory trip to Israel to read and document the personal collection of Juda Perahia housed in the Yad Ben Zvi Institute in Jerusalem. Juda's personal letters and business records are a rare glimpse into the trials and tribulations of Sephardic Jews in the southern Balkans from the early to mid-twentieth century. Juda's extensive personal and market networks stretched from Austria to Egypt and beyond. The collection in his name at the Yad Ben-Zvi Institute is testament to the historical experience of the interwar political economy of tobacco but also to the Sephardic experience of ethnic cleansing in the region, first as observers and later as victims. Juda and his brother Shemtov's commentary on the Greek-Turkish population exchange are as tragic as the loss of Shemtov and other family members during the Nazi occupation of Greece. This collection, as a

result, has more potential than what I have used it for here. Nevertheless, it provided me with extensive data — collected from both business and personal correspondence between Juda and Shemtov — on economic performance in the World War I years and prices and speculation trends during the years of the Greek-Turkish population exchange. Furthermore, this collection also shed light on the severing of connections between Egypt and Macedonia during World War I as demonstrated by Juda's commercial venture in Alexandria in 1920. Only some of this is analyzed extensively here but it informs my interpretation of both IAM and BOA records and will have a larger footprint in my future book project.

Memoirs and personal collections also provided a number of insights and helped to fill in gaps of institutional collections in Turkey, Greece, Israel, and the United Kingdom. Two people in particular expanded my horizons and opened up a host of new questions by providing me with material from the personal collections of their families. Ahmet Çullu first brought to my attention the Ottoman Turkish memoirs of his grandfather Kavalalı İbrahimpaşazade Hüseyin Hüsnü, who came from a tobacco-trading family active in Kavala. His activism on behalf of tobacco workers in Kavala led him to become an official arbitrator between the League of Nations and the Muslim community of Kavala and the surrounding region during the Greek-Turkish population exchange of 1923-24. His memoirs are phenomenal not only for their insights into the exchange itself but also for their clear and concise analysis of market conditions, speculation, and property confiscation during the Greco-Turkish War and the subsequent population exchange. Certainly not without its biases, the memoirs themselves reflect a depth and an intimacy with the tobacco-producing Muslims of the southern Balkans that is unmatched in the formal institutional reports found in state archives. Emile Spierer, likewise, gave me images and documents related to his

family, in particular Hermann and Charles Spierer whose careers shed light on the tobacco trade during World War I and the Greco-Turkish War.

Apart from these, online repositories (especially Hathi Digital Trust) and the UC library system provided countless reports and memoirs from the late Ottoman and post-Ottoman periods in many different languages including Turkish, Arabic, Greek, French, Spanish, Italian and German. Likewise, *Assicurazioni Generali* — the Italian insurance company — responded to specific inquiries providing relevant primary sources that detail transactions and accounts of tobacco merchants in the 1920s. Sources like these have given texture to my analysis of the tobacco trade in the late Ottoman and post-Ottoman periods.

In all of these instances, the sources used have not been interpreted at face value but have been analyzed as windows into broader cultural realities. In many ways, this dissertation is a straightforward social and economic history of Ottoman tobacco. However, to the extent that it succeeds in analyzing the political economy of tobacco, it is intended to shed light on broader questions about illegality, including smuggling and banditry, and ethnic cleansing. An analysis of the political economy of tobacco was originally the goal of this dissertation. In conducting that analysis, however, it became clear that the dynamics of political economy discussed in chapters one and two were in many ways the impetus for state-led development in the Second Constitutional Era and competing national economies in the post-Ottoman Balkans, discussed in chapters three and four, respectively. As a result, I have ventured to make two more ambitious claims than what I had originally intended with this research. First, the political economy of tobacco shaped the multiple crises experienced in the final years of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. Second, the late Ottoman Empire relied on Macedonian and Thracian tobacco as the centerpiece of a national economy project. Post-Ottoman states also pursued national economy projects which, in the event,

incorporated ambitious demographic engineering policies in addition to mere re-structuring of the tobacco industry itself.

Outline and Chapter Schemata

The following pages are an attempt to present the convoluted story of tobacco's rise to prominence in the Ottoman Empire and of how it became central to the political economy of the Ottoman Balkans. Furthermore, I trace the connections between this economic story and the tensions which emerged amongst the peoples of the Balkans. This is not a story of economic determinism or a simplistic interpretation of the Marxian base and superstructure. Rather, it is the history of a commercial sector that became politicized due to a system of Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian privileges that facilitated trans-regional commercial networks to dominate tobacco across the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa, and Central Europe on the one hand and "international financial control" on the other.[67] Subsequently, it undergirded new sectarian and national tensions making it not merely a forum for political disputes but a motivating factor for geopolitical conflict and territorial disputes in the post-Ottoman period as demonstrated by the national economy projects of Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

In chapter one, I analyze the response of merchants in Salonica and Kavala to the free-trade agreements made between the Ottoman and British Empires and the commercial expansion of the premier tobacco firms in the southern Balkans during the period from 1856 to 1875. This chapter tells a compelling story about the centrality of Ottoman institutions to successful commercial endeavors. In particular, it highlights the ways that Ottoman administrators placed controls on the activities of merchants they defined as "foreign." Still, a number of Ottoman merchants with extensive European and trans-Mediterranean networks were able to circumnavigate these controls

[67] Tünçer, *Sovereign Debt*, 1-28 and 53-78.

while investing in the emergent tobacco trade. The Allatini Brothers in particular positioned themselves to benefit from an expansion of the local tobacco trade and its incorporation into a global commodity chain. The Allatinis also contributed to the development of a number of industries based in the port-city of Salonica — the provincial capital of the Salonica *vilayet* — all of which contributed to the economic development of Macedonia and Thrace. Apart from this important history of the institutional factors which allowed for commercial success of select merchant networks, the chapter provides a crucial background for understanding the political economy of tobacco prior to the announcement of Ottoman bankruptcy in 1875.[68]

Chapter two, on the other hand, traces developments in the Ottoman tobacco trade after the declaration of bankruptcy. In particular, it analyzes the local reception of the Régie Company in Salonica and Kavala after its establishment in 1883. Many historians have written about the policies of the Régie Company and its relationship to the broader Ottoman debt restructuring process that took place under the Ottoman Public Debt Administration. However, few have provided deeper analysis of the ways that local historical actors responded to the initial policies of the Régie in legal or political terms. This chapter responds to both of these issues by tracing the legal and political networks used by critics of the Régie and the strategies they utilized to respond to its aggressive policies in the southern Balkans. The Régie attempted to expand the terminology of 'smugglers' to anyone that traded tobacco without its permission. Merchants with personal networks in the Ottoman legal system and European consulates allowed them to challenge this assertion. Still, the conflict between those who opposed the Régie and those who cooperated with it simultaneously undergirded the commercial networks of Salonica elites while entrenching the activities of other merchants within a paradigm of smuggling.

[68] Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt*, 103-180.

In some ways, chapter three shifts the focus away from the background of the dissertation to its foreground. It does so both chronologically and thematically. First, in chronological terms, chapter three sets aside the nineteenth century and focuses exclusively on the discursive and political response to decades of "international financial control" within the Ottoman tobacco industry. In particular, it demonstrates that between 1908 and 1912 the revolutionary government of the Committee for Union and Progress sought to transform the tobacco industry into a core component of its economic development plan. It relied on appeals to the moral economy of both peasant-cultivators and merchants in Macedonia and Thrace to do so. The chapter represents a thematic shift in the sense that it places emphasis on responses to the political economy of tobacco, or at least perceptions of that political economy, rather than on the actual dynamics of political economy. This chapter was also submitted in 2023 to *Turkish Historical Review* and is set for publication, though altered in form and with different emphasis, as a peer-reviewed research article in 2024.

Chapter four provides an overview of the developments which created and sustained sectarian tensions between Greeks and Bulgarians in the tobacco industry prior to the collapse of Ottoman rule during the First Balkan War. It also analyzes the transformation of this sectarian rivalry into a full-blown territorial dispute led by the states of Greece and Bulgaria. By focusing on the Bulgarian military occupation of Macedonia, the chapter demonstrates that the tobacco lands of the southern Balkans became a core component in the national economy project of the expansionist Bulgarian state. The tobacco trade demonstrates that the region transitioned from a political economy of warlordism — defined by paramilitarism and illegal commerce — to a wartime political economy of state-led national economy projects. Tobacco-producing territories were central to the development of state-led policies of economic nationalism. Both before and

after Ottoman collapse, tobacco was a motivating factor in the activities of militant actors; the period following the Balkan Wars, however, transformed these activities into an organized and coherent policy, which laid the foundations for demographic engineering between Greece and Bulgaria. The epilogue demonstrates that this wartime experience and the subsequent competition over land between Greece and the Ottoman Empire from 1919 to 1922 also created the conditions of possibility for ethnic cleansing between those two states as well. Far from a trivial consumer good, tobacco had become serious business throughout the late Ottoman period and would become highly politically charged during the post-Ottoman period as a result.

Chapter One

Tobacco Legislation and Commercial Privileges in the Ottoman Balkans (c. 1854-1875)

Introduction

In October 1860, a certain Lazaros Pelagides who enjoyed Greek consular protection had imported some tobacco from an unspecified location in the hinterlands of the district of Drama to the provincial town of Siroz (contemporary Serres in Greek Macedonia), where he resided, in order to process it and deliver it to market. He first brought it to the customs house to be inspected and to pay the tax upon arrival as all tobacco merchants were expected to do when receiving new product. A few days later, he was taken aback when he returned to the customs house to present the tobacco before shipping it to his clients and the tax was demanded yet again. Apparently he had failed to present the original certificate testifying that he had in fact paid the tax. After a direct appeal to the provincial Administrative Council and assistance from the Greek consulate, the tax agent seems to have dropped the matter and allowed Pelagides to freely transport the market-ready tobacco leaves.[69]

Anti-climactic as this case turned out to be, what it demonstrates is the manner in which regular surveillance and tax collection had become central to Ottoman commercial life by the 1860s. In particular, the provincial governments sought to implement regularized taxation policies throughout the empire as a whole. Given its high market value, tobacco was one of the industries that the Ottomans attempted to standardize in the 1860s. Pelagides, like all tobacco exporters, was expected to pay a fee that was standardized in theory. In reality, a system of layered and conflicting privileges allowed for some merchants and commercial elites to avoid the supposedly universal customs duties imposed on tobacco exporters and domestic merchants.

[69] Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry's Ottoman Archives, BOA hereafter), HR.MKT, 08 Rebîülâhir 1277, No. 95, Group Code: 352, 1-2.

As a result, conflicting commercial trends and economic policies emerged during the period between 1854 and 1875. One trend was a shift to universal Ottoman policies towards merchants and industrialists which sought to increase state revenue when possible while avoiding the high social costs of tax collection. In general, this approach lent itself to a general Ottoman tendency to shy away from earlier interventionist state policies in favor of a hands-off approach to a supposedly self-directed economy.[70] This lent itself to Ottoman patronage of commercial elites and industrialists who enjoyed access to the financial resources and political privileges of western Europe and contributed to many of the difficulties faced by Ottoman manufacturers and industrialists during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. As Donald Quataert puts it, "Sharing the common fate of nations in the nineteenth century, Ottoman manufacturers competed under conditions that increasingly were framed by the international economy."[71] As such, those who straddled the divide between European finance and local industry were well-positioned to avoid the difficulties facing their counterparts that enjoyed more limited financial and industrial capacity. In particular, the integration of world commodity markets and rising European demand for industrial intermediates such as raw silk, cotton, and tobacco leaves from the Ottoman Empire contributed to the accumulation of capital by Jewish, Greek, and Levantine merchants with access to regional and international market networks.[72] During this period, there was also significant

[70] M. Safa Saraçoğlu, "Economic Interventionism, Islamic Law and Provincial Government in the Ottoman Empire," in Kent F. Schull, M. Safa Saraçoğlu, and Robert Zens, eds. *Law and Legality in the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 65-91.

[71] Donald Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 15. See also Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

[72] Şevket Pamuk and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "Ottoman De-Industrialization, 1800–1913: Assessing the Magnitude, Impact, and Response," in *The Economic History Review*, February 2011, Vol. 64, No. S1 (February 2011), 178. For a discussion of the Levantine experience and what constituted Ottoman European commercial culture in this context, see Kaleb Herman Adney, "International Elites in Ottoman Salonica: The Commercial and Diplomatic Portfolios of the Hadjilazaro Family" in *Levantines of the Ottoman World: Communities, Identities, and Cultures*, Erik Blackthorne-O'Barr and Burhan Çağlar (eds.) (Istanbul: Ibn Haldun University Press, 2024), pp. 195-222.

growth in credit markets centered in western Europe which facilitated the growth of Ottoman public debt beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century.[73]

Another tension was embodied in the Ottoman government's desire for control over the commercial activity of its domains and its commitments to a *laissez faire* approach to the economy after the Treaty of Balta Limanı in 1838, signed between the British and the Ottomans to allow for greater commercial privileges for European merchants operating in the Ottoman domains.[74] Although the Ottomans implemented policies like this to promote industry and to appease European commercial actors, an intra-societal struggle emerged in the Ottoman domains as a result between local actors that tried to leverage contemporaneous circumstances to their advantage. In short, the wealthiest and most prominent merchants of the tobacco industry had to successfully navigate Ottoman policies by appealing not only to the privileges bestowed on them from foreign creditors and governments but also by outmaneuvering one another in maintaining domestic commercial networks and securing Ottoman legislative advantages.

As a result of these circumstances, the expansion of the Macedonian and Thracian tobacco trade in the 1860s and 1870s mostly benefited a select group of prominent merchants in the region who enjoyed access to extensive commercial networks and benefitted from Ottoman tax policies (rather than being burdened by them) from at least the 1850s. The combination of market networks on the one hand and privileges bestowed by the Ottoman government on the other was key to the success of prominent tobacco magnates in the region. The result was two types of "uneven" growth in the mid-to-late nineteenth century: First, there was a decrease in the number of serious

[73] Ali Coşkun Tüncer, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870–1914.*

[74] Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Sources of Wealth and Its Social and Political Implications in Nineteenth-Century Damascus," in *Oriens* 37 (2009), 253–69; Jean Batou, "L'Égypte de Muhammad-'Ali Pouvoir Politique et Développement Économique," in *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 46, no. 2 (1991), 401–28.

competitors at the highest levels of financial control and commercial development in the tobacco industry and second, Ottoman tax policies disadvantaged local merchants whose capital was limited and whose transaction costs were high.[75] These trends accelerated the discrepancies between upper-class commercial elites and middle-class merchants. Such material aspects of Thrace and Macedonia's commercial culture shaped the tobacco industry for decades to come. These realities also laid the foundations for the tobacco trade to be dominated by a few commercial elite families with a mastery over Ottoman legal and political institutions that simultaneously enjoyed access to European commercial, financial, and political privileges in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The political economy of tobacco was premised on both long-standing European privileges and newly formulated Ottoman advantages granted to elite commercial agents in the region. A newly instated legislative framework for the tobacco trade reflected the convergence of these different privileges and their place in the broader political economy of the southern Balkans and the Aegean Sea. As the tobacco trade expanded and became integrated into a global commodity chain in the nineteenth century, the relationship between merchants and Ottoman tax officers — and between merchants themselves — changed significantly. Merchants also responded to Ottoman tobacco legislation of 1862 and 1874 by leveraging European and Ottoman economic and political networks, only some of which were successful. By strategically relying on these networks and privileges and sometimes by circumnavigating tobacco legislation, a sub-group of merchants rooted in Salonica consolidated their control over much of the industry. Transaction

[75] According to Şevket Pamuk, some historical "changes in formal institutions" within the Ottoman (and later the Turkish) economy "were designed more to support the interests of certain groups than to bring prosperity to all" thereby contributing to uneven economic growth over time and uneven distribution of wealth and privileges amongst those living in the empire. See Şevket Pamuk, *Uneven Centuries: Economic Development of Turkey Since 1820*, (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018), 2.

costs in the tobacco trade were therefore unevenly absorbed thereby shaping and framing the political economy of tobacco prior to the 1880s.

*Mültezim*s, International Agreements, and the New Tax Regime

During the era of Ottoman reforms in the middle of the nineteenth century, taxation was a point of contention throughout the empire. Macedonia and Thrace were no exception. Early efforts to do away with tax-farming as part of the reform efforts of 1839 had failed in the short-term and tax-farming was reinstated in 1841.[76] Tax-farming (*iltizam*) was later on officially abolished in 1856 with the *İslahat Fermanı*.[77] The official abolition of the office did not, however, remove the social typology and tax officials who called themselves *mültezim*s continued to operate in a limited capacity throughout Macedonia and Thrace, albeit in a different set of political and legal circumstances. Tax-farming, while not disappearing completely in spite of its official abolishment, would gradually dissipate over the long-term in the face of increased private landholdings and the bureaucratization of revenue collection following the 1858 Land Code.[78] In the 1860s, *mültezim*s

[76] In fact, the fiscal crisis brought on by the 1839 shift to salaried tax-collecting employees (*muhassıl*s) in place of *mültezim*s would in some cases strengthen the position of the latter when they were reinstated in 1841. See Alp Yücel Kaya, "In the Hinterland of Izmir: Mid-Nineteenth Century Traders Facing a New Type of Fiscal Practice" in *Collection Turcica Vol. XV: Merchants in the Ottoman Empire* (Paris, Louvain, and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2008), 261-280. See also: M. Safa Saraçoğlu, *Nineteenth Century Local Governance in Ottoman Bulgaria: Politics in Provincial Councils*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 14-43.

[77] James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History, Fifth Edition* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020) 169-172.

[78] Ottoman land policy and the transformation of *miri* (or state-owned) land and *vakıf* holdings (properties set aside as religious endowments) into private landholdings took place in different ways depending on the dynamics of provincial governance and local political economy. In any case, the general trend was the integration of property disputes and property claims into the pluralistic legal framework of *Tanzimat* institutions such as the courts system and provincial administrative divisions. See Nora Barakat, "Regulating Land Rights in Late Nineteenth-Century Salt: The Limits of Legal Pluralism in Ottoman Property Law" in Kent F. Schull, M. Safa Saraçoğlu, and Robert Zens, eds. *Law and Legality in the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 108-128. The proliferation of *tapu* title deeds issued between 1860 and 1910 in Ottoman Bulgaria is an indication of the increasing centrality of the Ottoman government in guaranteeing property rights. See Anton Minkov, "Ottoman Tapu Title Deeds in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Origin, Typology and Diplomatics" in *Islamic Law and Society* Vol. 7, No. 1 (2000), 65-101.

were still engaged in the collection of taxes and brought unpaid taxes to the attention of the Ottoman provincial government and the relevant tax councils. In the tobacco-producing provincial towns near Kavala in the sub-districts of Drama and Siroz, this led to legal conflict between merchants and the Ottoman administration within the provinces of Selânik and Edirne. Some merchants, however, remained unscathed by the increased strictness of Ottoman tax policies and their interactions with *mültezim*s serve to highlight their privilege within this growing industry.

While the role of *mültezim*s was in flux after 1856, Ottoman tax policies towards merchants with foreign privilege had also been a source of conflict since the 1830s with the increased circulation of British and French capital in the Eastern Mediterranean. This was also tied to larger questions of how the Ottoman and Egyptian governments would handle questions of nationality in the Eastern Mediterranean throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.[79] Disagreements over the commercial privileges of non-Ottoman subjects added yet another layer to the tension between tobacco merchants and Ottoman bureaucrats. Extant memoranda sent to Ottoman bureaucrats in Macedonia and Thrace clarifying the percentage of taxes to be collected on merchandise and appeals made by merchants citing the conditions outlined in the Treaty of Balta Liman speak to this ongoing tension.

The Treaty of Balta Liman had established precedent in 1838 for merchants who enjoyed European capitulatory protections to avoid much of the taxation imposed on merchants within the Ottoman Empire. The treaty was designed to ensure free trade for British merchants and those who enjoyed British capitulatory privileges but extended to merchants affiliated with other European powers as well.[80] Disagreements about the terms of this treaty and the implications of European

[79] Will Hanley, "What Ottoman Nationality Was and Was Not," in *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (November 2016), 277-298.
[80] Joel Beinin, *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 45. Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* Second Edition (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge

protections more generally would contribute to tensions between merchants and the state in the late 1850s and 1860s. These tensions also gave impetus to new legislation which would clarify the expectations for tobacco merchants and bureaucrats.

The Sublime Porte issued legislation specific to tobacco in 1862 and in 1874. However, even prior to this, the Grand Vizierate and the provincial governments of the Selânik and Edirne provinces communicated with one another on the issues of customs duties and capitulatory privileges. It would seem from a petition written to a certain customs agent named Süleyman in 1858 that the duties for exporting tobacco and for transporting it to provincial marketplaces within the empire were both subject to a 12% customs fee. According to the document, this was not the case for tobacco shipped to Istanbul which would not be taxed until arrival in the capital according to an entirely separate tax regime. The 12% on exports and domestically sold product were rejected by a number of regional merchants. A number of merchants protested the tax and would avoid it by claiming to have paid their duties in Kavala when they were demanded in the hinterlands.[81] The conflict between a prominent Levantine merchant with roots in Aleppo and Salonica but who operated out of Kavala and Yenice (Genisea) will more clearly demonstrate the historical dynamics at play.

John "Jack" Abbot was one of the first merchants to set up shop in Kavala in 1858 (following the Allatini Brothers earlier in the 1850s) for the purposes of tobacco exportation. Abbot was heir to a significant legacy of Levantine merchants in the Aegean and the broader Eastern Mediterranean.[82] His family originally came to the Ottoman Empire as British subjects

University Press, 2005), 125. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 76 and 90-91. İlkay Sunar, "State and Economy in the Ottoman Empire," in Huri Islamoğlu (ed.) *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 81.

[81] BOA, A.}MKT.DV, No. 37 Group Code: 135, 27 Cemâziyelâhir 1275, 1.

[82] Iōannēs Vyzikas, *Kavala, H Mekka tou Kapnou: Kavala 19ou-20ou aiōna oi anthrōpoi tou kapnou, tomos B'* [*Kavala, the Mecca of tobacco: Kavala 19th and 20th century, the people of tobacco, Volume 2*], (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and the History of Tobacco, 2010), 33.

and then integrated into the Greek Orthodox community by marriage. His grandfather, Bartholomew Edward Abbot, became rich in Salonica by investing in the leech industry of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Bartholomew seems to have been the first family member to settle in Salonica (while other members of the family continued to operate out of Aleppo) and his sons continued exporting medicinal leeches to Great Britain upon his death in 1817.[83] Bartholomew's grandson John "Jack" Abbot became a prominent businessman having allegedly initiated his own career in leech-harvesting by murdering the Jewish owner of the finest leech-farm in the region.[84] This story is likely apocryphal but still speaks to important historical perceptions of the family as predatory and calculating. He ventured beyond parasitic worms in mid-century, however, and started investing in tobacco production in the 1850s and perhaps earlier. By 1858 he had headquarters in Kavala and was purchasing tobacco from peasant-cultivators in Yenice.[85] He seems to have done quite well in and around Kavala and by 1860 was selling large amounts of tobacco to customers in Europe.

In addition to extensive commercial activity, it is well known that members of the Abbot family were "large landowners and moneylenders to the state and others."[86] Abbot acted as a creditor to landlords and notable families in and around both Salonica and Kavala. He did so throughout his career and, in one case, did not hesitate to impoverish a widow when her late husband's debt went unpaid.[87] As late as the 1870s, Jack Abbot was still demanding repayment of

[83] Leeches were commonly used for medicinal purposes at the time and were sold throughout western Europe in the nineteenth century.
[84] Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 155. This story may or may not be factual but the existence of such a tale demonstrates the reputation he had garnered for himself in local society.
[85] Vizikas, p. 33.
[86] Costas Lapavitsas and Pinar Cakiroglu, *Capitalism in the Ottoman Balkans: Industrialisation and Modernity in Macedonia* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2019), 136.
[87] See for example the dispute between him and the late Suleiman Aga who apparently owed him around 32,000 piastres at his death and which Mr. Abbot sought to extract from his widow. The National Archives of the UK

money lent to Muslim landowners.[88] Abbot's entrance into the tobacco trade coincided with a general decline in the family's commercial success, however, and was tainted by the reputation of Jack Abbot, the family member who would become most invested in tobacco.

Although Abbot was, in many ways, integrated into local culture both linguistically and culturally (he used both Turkish and Greek for business and legal interactions and he belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church), he maintained British capitulatory protection to conduct his commercial endeavors. This placed him under the legal auspices of the British Consulate in Salonica represented by the Vice Consul of Kavala, John Frederick Albany Maling (appointed in 1857). Under British protection he was supposed to enjoy access to provisions of the 1838 Treaty of Balta Liman which technically prevented the Ottoman authorities from collecting any taxes in towns inland from port-cities (like coastal Kavala, Keramoti, Porto Lagos, or Salonica) prior to the final shipment from the port used to export goods.[89] The total taxable amount was not allowed to exceed three percent of the total value of the exported goods thus protecting British or British-affiliated merchants from arbitrary or excessive taxation.

According to a report by the British Vice Consul of Kavala in February 1859, there were around 80,000 acres of land in Macedonia on which tobacco was grown. Compared with the 420,000 acres dedicated to various cereals, the total cultivable land dedicated to tobacco production was significant but not dominant.[90] Although the total amount of raw tobacco shipped to Great Britain in 1858 was only about one third of the total from 1857 and about half the average for the decade of the 1850s, its total production and export would continue to increase especially

(henceforth TNA), FO 295/2 pp. 52 and 75. By March, 1860 apparently the debt had been paid off on condition that Mr. Abbot would allow the widow to live out her days on one of the farms; see p. 119.

[88] The inheritors of the deceased Rashid Effendi, for example, were refused ownership of his estate until his outstanding debts were delivered to Abbot. BOA, HR.SYS, No. 33, Group Code: 2939, 2 August 1872.

[89] Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 166.

[90] TNA, FO 295/2, 60-73

in the 1860s.[91] More importantly, its aggregate value was significantly greater than all other exports combined constituting about 92% of the total value of exported goods, listed as GBP 1,064,000.[92] Despite the fact that it was not the most commonly cultivated of the potential agricultural products, it was still far more important in terms of market value in the late 1850s and would only continue to become more dominant in terms of its physical footprint in regional agriculture. Tobacco, during this period, was readily integrated into consumer markets of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and western European markets.[93] The fact that tobacco was not sold exclusively during harvest season also made it possible for tobacco exportation to remain a profitable enterprise in spite of destructive weather patterns in 1859. That year, the "golden-leafed *Yenidgeh* (sic.)," a particular strand of oriental tobacco (En. *Yenidje* Tr. *Yenice*) grown in Iskeçe (modern-day Xanthi in the administrative region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace in northern Greece), "suffered much damage" from inclement weather thereby slowing down but not completely halting the tobacco trade.[94]

Abbot's position as a wealthy British-protected merchant with a significant Levantine pedigree did not shelter him from the weather or from intrusions of the Ottoman bureaucracy. He, like other tobacco merchants at the turn of the decade, sought to find ways around the conditions that had an effect on the trade. At the same time, a robust historiography of Ottoman reforms (Tr. *Tanzimat*) in the nineteenth century shows clearly that administrative institutions and bureaucratic practices brought Ottoman subjects into more direct contact with the Ottoman state during the

[91] *ibid*, p. 79
[92] *ibid*, p. 81
[93] Basil C. Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia: Socio-Economic Change and the Railway Factor* (New York: Colunbia University Press, 1993), 87-130; Lapavitsas and Cakiroglu 76-81.
[94] TNA, FO 295/2, 115

1860s.[95] As part of the centralized policies adopted by the Ottoman government during the Tanzimat era (c. 1839-1876), tobacco taxation became an increasingly contentious issue between merchants like Abbot and the local tax collectors and provincial bureaucrats that he interacted with.

In the late 1850s and early 1860s, Abbot became involved in a dispute with tax officers of the village of Poroî in the Ottoman district of Siroz (in between modern-day Serres in Greece and Strumica in North Macedonia) which would have a profound effect on his trajectory in the tobacco trade. He claimed that the tax officers of Poroî had violated the Treaty of Balta Liman in demanding a certain number of allegedly excess fees from him in 1857. The Ottoman translation of the British consul's report claims: "although the customs duty on merchandise needs to be paid at the port where the goods are loaded onto a ship, the aforementioned office demanded to take the customs duties at the villages where the merchandise was purchased." Specifically the report mentioned articles two and four of the treaty to make the case that Ottoman customs officials were illegally profiteering from British-protected merchants whenever they requested permission slips and that all fees collected prior to arrival at port and loading the merchandise onto ships were extrajudicial.[96]

Abbot's insistent reliance on the official treaty of 1838 did not immediately rectify the situation and the cooperation of Ottoman officials was not guaranteed in spite of the lofty goals of the original treaty. When the British Consul of Salonica wrote to the office of the *kaimmakam* (district head) of Siroz on behalf of Mr. Abbot requesting immediate attention regarding the issue

[95] See Karen M. Kern, *Imperial Citizen: Marriage and Citizenship in the Ottoman Frontier Provinces of Iraq* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011). Aron Rodrigue, "From Millet to Modernity," in Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson (eds.) *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States, and Citizenship*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 238-261. Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and the Education in Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1999).
[96] BOA, BEO 02/08/1273 (Rûmi), File No. 183, Group Code: 53, p. 20.

of reparations, the *kaimmakam* responded that he had not found any official by the name of Ali Bey whom Mr. Abbot had charged with the alleged corruption. He added that the consul himself would need to provide evidence for the related expenses that Abbot would accrue and for which he requested payment.[97] It seemed that Ottoman officials were either uninterested in assisting Mr. Abbot to rectify this matter, that Abbot's claims were baseless, or that Abbot himself had been swindled by a third party. Although details remain unclear, the debates over Abbot's activities and the response of the provincial government to his claims provide insights into the broader commercial sphere that he operated in and the limits of his commercial privileges.

Abbot's reliance on local connections did not always bear the kind of fruit he hoped for. In the original conflict, his agents were a certain Kara Mustafa and Dimitrios both operating locally in Poroî on his behalf. The relationship he had with these men seems to be limited and we have no indication that they were part of his immediate family network or that they were loyal to him or his interests. The British consul, on the other hand, worked for the sake of Mr. Abbot to demonstrate that singling out tobacco for excess taxation went against the rules of conduct beneficial to "states on terms of mutual friendship (*düvel-i mütehabbe*; i.e. states which were not at war with one another)."[98] The Abbot case would drag on for years to come. In particular, he remained at odds with the Ottoman bureaucracy in the villages near Kavala where he purchased tobacco from local cultivators.

In 1859, upon receiving word of the ongoing conflict between this prominent merchant of Salonica and the provincial Ottoman authorities, the Office of the Grand Vizier wrote to the Governor of Salonica to demand that the issue be dealt with immediately. According to that letter, Abbot had allegedly failed to provide the appropriate customs duties to the *mültezim* of Kavala,

[97] *Ibid*.
[98] *Ibid*. p. 19

Halim Bey, from as early as 1855 for a different load of tobacco collected at Yenice. In that case, it seems that the tobacco was not deposited at the customs office for the purpose of weighing it and assigning value prior to the writing up of an exchange agreement. In the 1860s and 1870s, failure to demonstrate the specific weight of a tobacco load would keep merchants from transporting their product to market.[99] Allegedly, Abbot was here bound by agreement with the *mültezim* Halim Bey (*mültezimin müteahidi Jack Abot*) to provide a set deposit for the inspection and authorization of the transported goods.[100]

By 1860, Mr. Abbot's case had reached the governor of Salonica to whom he complained of unnecessary bureaucratic interference in his business affairs.[101] From his perspective, the legal precedent of Balta Liman ought to have left him free to transport and ship his product at will. The governor did not agree and continued to insist that he pay his backlogged customs duties. His relations with local customs agents prior to 1862 were apparently not improved when he also refused to comply with new tobacco legislation established in that year. Given that Levantine merchants like Abbot could effectively contest customs duties using outdated treaties, the Ottoman government was forced to develop tobacco-specific tax legislation to deal with the issue head on as the industry grew in response to global demand.

Towards a Standardized Tobacco Policy: The 1862 and 1874 Tobacco Codebooks

Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, the Ottoman government applied new regulations to various commercial activities as part of its shift towards what Safa Saraçoğlu has called a newly standardized "socio-legislative sphere." With the printing of yearbooks, new codebooks, and

[99] See for example, the dispute between an Austrian subject, Stavraki Efendi, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1864: BOA, HR.H 07/09/1870 (Gregorian) File No. 379, Group Code: 19, p. 1
[100] BOA, A_}MKT.MVL. 30/01/1276 (Hicrî), File No. 109, Group Code: 83
[101] BOA, A_MKT.MHM 05/01/1277 (Hicrî), No. 189, Group Code: 5

commercial legislation (through legal publications like *Düstur* and *Ceride-i Mehakim*), the Ottoman government attempted to provide provincial bureaucrats with a normative lens through which to interpret and apply Ottoman law.[102] The tobacco trade was an object of some of these legislative efforts as it had not been standardized at the beginning of the 1860s in spite of ongoing conflicts between those who brought tobacco to market and those who monitored its transportation and sale. As demonstrated by the example of Jack Abbot, commercial practice was often at odds with the expectations of an expanding bureaucracy and there was general confusion about the role of Ottoman customs agents and foreign governments.

The exchange between a customs officer, the *mültezim* Süleyman Bey of Drama, and the Grand Vizierate in 1858 further demonstrates some of the questions still unresolved at that time regarding tobacco taxes and transportation. During the late 1850s, according to this exchange, the provincial bureaucracy had two clear expectations that tobacco merchants refused to comply with. First, the provincial bureaucracy expected that set taxes would always be paid irrespective of capitulatory privileges. Second, the provincial bureaucracy expected that these taxes would be paid in particular places depending on the final destination of the tobacco. Merchants transporting their tobacco to cities outside the Ottoman Empire were expected to pay a 12% export tax. The customs office was to impose this 12% tax on merchants transporting tobacco between Ottoman cities as well (with the exception of Istanbul). Tobacco on its way to Istanbul was subject to a separate tax scheme and required a special permission slip (an *ilmühaber*) explicitly indicating its point of origin and its final destination.[103]

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[102] Saraçoğlu, *Nineteenth Century Local Governance in Ottoman Bulgaria*, 14-43; Avi Rubin, *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1-17; on the codification of Tanzimat regulations and the legislative framework of the era see Hifzi Veldet Velidedeoğlu, *Kanunlaştirma Hareketleri ve Tanzimat* (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940), cited in E. Attila Aytekin, "Peasant Protest in the Late Ottoman Empire: Moral Economy, Revolt, and the Tanzimat Reforms," in *International Review of Social History* Vol. 57, No. 2 (august 2012), 196.

[103] BOA, A.}MKT.DV, No. 37 Group Code: 135, 27 Cemâziyelâhir 1275, 1.

Customs duties of 10-12% were standard practice from at least 1818 when the Ottoman Empire and European powers agreed to institute measures aimed at establishing free trade within the well-protected domains including Egypt under Mehmet Ali.[104] In 1838, the treaty of Balta Liman established the expectation that customs duties for foreign merchants ought to remain below 3% in theory. In practice, the profitability of certain industries such as tobacco and salt gave impetus to maintain a higher rate on customs duties for these industries. This was partly due to the fact that from early on in the development of the tobacco industry, both foreign creditors and the sultanate itself understood that the collection of these customs was potential collateral for sovereign debt.[105] In the case of tobacco, this created a set of conflicting expectations which fueled tensions between merchants and Ottoman customs agents.

Such tensions, especially over the fees for transporting and selling tobacco, highlighted the need for clearer legislation on tobacco. The need for clarity was reified by the obvious profitability of Ottoman tobacco as the amount destined for exportation continued to expand, especially during the American Civil War which increased demand for Ottoman tobaccos in place of their American counterparts.[106] The effort to provide a standardized legislative framework for the tobacco trade was also part of the broader trend to standardize commercial policies which encouraged economic growth and increased imperial revenue. The need for increased imperial revenue was not an

[104] Louis Bréhier, *L'Égypte de 1798 à 1900* (Paris: Ancienne Librairie Furne, Combet et Cie, 1901), 111; cited in Pascale Ghazaleh, "Trading in Power: Merchants and the State in 19th-century Egypt," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (2013), Vol. 45, 71-91. This was similar to the Nanjing Treaty formalized between China and the British Empire in 1842 in that its primary aim was to protect the activities of foreign merchants in the Ottoman domains. See Reşat Kasaba, "Treaties and Friendships: British Imperialism, the Ottoman Empire, and China in the Nineteenth Century" in Journal of World History , Fall, 1993, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall, 1993), 216-219.

[105] The Ottoman bureaucracy explained this perspective in explicit terms to British consular representatives when asked for restrictions on British merchants' activities to be lifted or loosely enforced. TNA, FO 76.

[106] Rellie Shechter, *Smoking, Culture, and Economy in the Middle East: The Egyptian Tobacco Market, 1850-2000* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2006), 24.

abstraction either as sovereign debt had begun shaping Ottoman economic policy already by the late 1850s following the conclusion of the Crimean War between 1853 and 1856.[107]

In 1862, the Ottoman government published legislation specific to the tobacco industry in order to curtail unauthorized transportation of bulk tobacco domestically and to standardize the procedures of tax collection and the amount paid upon delivery to domestic markets or upon export to foreign lands. The 1862 codebook (*nizamnâme*) designated tobacco as a commodity subject to direct government oversight and which required special permission slips and tax receipts. Significantly, the codebook stated that its articles were "fixed and applicable to everyone without exception whether they be Ottoman subjects or foreigners." This explicit designation undermined the sort of challenge that Jack Abbot and others had posed to the Ottoman government's taxation practices and its provincial bureaucrats. His constant invocation of the articles of Balta Liman and consular protection held little meaning in the context of a growing legislative paper-trail which described tobacco in special terms and applied unique regulatory measures to its production and sales.[108]

The codebook outlined the fees that a merchant was expected to pay. These included a Tobacco Transportation Fee designed to prove that merchants had purchased the tobacco from a legal supplier and that they could trace its origin from the original point of purchase. They were also expected to identify the first port, city, or village to which they had transported it. A valid permission slip, by proving that this payment had been made, functioned as an exit ticket at the customs office through which the merchant was supposed to pass through. Presumably as a

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[107] Ali Coşkun Tünçer, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870–1914.*

[108] *Memalik-i Mahruse-i Şahane'de husula gelen duhanın suret-i inhisarda emaneten keyfiyyet idaresiyle bunun için ta'yin kılınan nuzzar ve mudiran ve memurunun veza'if-i mürettebe ve harekat-i muktaziyelerini mübeyyen nizamnamedirki ahkam münderecesi gerek devlet-i aliyye ve gerek düvel-i ecnebiyye teba'asından olsun bila istisna herkes hakkında mer'i ül-icra olması mukarrerdir* (Istanbul: Matbaa-ı Âmire, 1862).

response to the claims made against corrupt customs officers in the 1850s, the 1862 codebook explicitly stated that no extra fees should be charged and clarified further that the amount of tobacco, where it was from, and the Tobacco Transportation Fee all needed to be explicitly provided upon arrival at the Customs Office.[109]

In the most prominent tobacco-exporting port-cities of "Izmir, Alexandretta, Beirut, Latakia, Salonica, Kavala, Trabzon, and Samsun" the merchant had to pay this fee directly to the Customs Office. In other towns or villages, the merchant would need to provide the payment and permission slips to Istanbul by post within 11-61 days depending on the distance of the place of purchase from the town or village to which it was delivered. The amount paid was also variable in accordance with the value of the tobacco itself (i.e. more expensive tobaccos paid the transportation fee at a higher rate). The rate of indirect taxation was almost the same as the tobacco's value creating a situation wherein the consumer paid a final price for tobacco that was nearly double its original value. This was, of course, a great risk for entry-level merchants who, if they paid these fees up front, would run the risk of significant monetary loss or bankruptcy in the case of the inevitable hiccups *en route* to market.[110]

This codebook represented the first empire-wide attempt by the Ottoman government to curtail the amount of tobacco transported without explicit permission and to keep track of the amounts of tobacco sold, an effort which would culminate in statistical registers in the yearbooks of the Edirne province beginning in 1870 (see Table 1); a similar set of statistical data is strikingly absent in the yearbooks of the Selânik province, in spite of the centrality of Kavala (and other

[109] This transportation fee was also outlined in a separate publication: *Duhan imrariye tezkereleri hakkında nizamnamedir / Réglement sur le permit de transport (Imrariye Teskeressi) des tabacs* (Istanbul: Matbaa-ı Âmire, 1862). See also Filiz Dığıroğlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi: Trabzon Reji İdaresi, 1883-1914* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007), 22-24.

[110] The rates were, from lowest to highest, 6 kurush for tobacco sold at 7.5 kurush per okka or lower, 12 kurush for tobacco sold at prices from 7.5 to 15 kurush per okka, and 24 kurush on tobacco sold from 15 kurush and above. See *Memalik-i Mahruse-i Şahane'de husula gelen duhan*, 4.

cities within the Selânik province) to the tobacco trade. Perhaps this was a reflection of the fact that, just a year prior to the publication of this codebook, in 1861, the sultanate banned the importation of foreign tobacco and established a new bureaucratic wing specifically for administering tobacco with a special division tasked with recording the collection of local tobacco taxes.[111] As a result, statistical data become more readily available both to foreign and domestic administrators of the tobacco industry from that point on.

A data table from 1874 held in the Yıldız Palace statistical records demonstrates that throughout the 1860s and at the start of the 1870s, the province of Selânik remained the dominant tobacco-producing province of the empire with Samsun coming in at a distant second place. 1,683,607 okkas of tobacco were exported from Selânik in 1862 compared with 802,904 in Samsun during the same year. Samsun had begun gaining ground on Selânik by 1874 when 3,837,584 okkas of tobacco passed through its customs houses compared with 4,972,670 in Selânik.[112] Although we know from other documentation of this time that merchants in the Aydın province were actively developing western Anatolia for tobacco cultivation, Izmir was listed alongside Jeddah, Baghdad, Diyarbekir, and other cities and provinces which either produced no tobacco at all or which the Ottoman government had no data for.[113] It is clear from the rapid growth in tobacco exports from Selânik (more than doubling in volume during the 1860s) that the customs houses had become central to keeping tabs on tobacco exportation and increasing provincial revenue from such exports.[114]

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[111] BOA, A_}MKT.MVL, No. 22, Group Code: 146, 13 Zilkade 1278; See also Filiz Dığıroğlu, *Trabzon Reji İdaresi*, 1-30.

[112] BOA, Y.EE, No. 50, Group Code: 24, 12 Muharrem 1290.

[113] One letter from a merchant in Xanthi/Iskeçe to a client in Izmir gives detailed instructions on how and when to sow tobacco seeds for best results based on the assumption that western Anatolia and Thrace share similar seasonal patterns. See BOA, Y.EE, No. 6, Group Code: 27, 28 Cemâziyelâhir 1290.

[114] One potential explanation for the lack of data on Izmir is that tobacco cultivation there was still in its initial stages. The tobacco (and tobacco seed) transported to the Aydin province often came from Salonica, Kavala, and neighboring villages therefore inflating the data collected for Selânik while Izmir still hosted none of its own

Revenue from the tobacco tax (see Table 1) was also significant in the Edirne province (upwards of 1,127,239 kurush), especially from the town of Filibe (Plovdiv).[115] Unfortunately however, commercial court records from Edirne which might shed light on the supply chains from İskece, Cuma-i Bala, and other towns with connections to Filibe are not readily available. We have only a limited perspective on commercial, financial, and bureaucratic practices (such as moneylending, property seizures, and litigation over taxes) in the cities of Gümülcine, Iskeçe, and Yenice across the provincial border just east of Kavala.

Such data were collected thanks in large part to the stipulations of the 1862 codebook which required that the merchant specify the amount of tobacco he was transporting and, if the amount shipped was shown to exceed the amount specified in the receipt of payment for the Tobacco Transportation Fee, he would be charged for the difference. The codebook was, in this way, designed to warn would-be tax evaders and smugglers of the fees they would accrue by not following the rules. The transportation fee was a significant imposition on merchants with limited liquidity to begin with. To make matters worse for them, the codebook required that "Upon purchasing tobacco directly from its cultivators, proprietors shall deposit the requisite transportation fee at the first city, town, or sizable village that the tobacco passes through which is ultimately destined for exportation."[116] Paying these taxes prior to sale was a significant

tobacco customs officers to my knowledge. On the transportation of tobacco from Salonica to Izmir, see the case of Fişekçizade Abdi Efendi who sold each *okka* of the highest-quality tobacco for 26.5 kurush destined for Izmir but was entangled in a legal dispute with a shop-owner named Shalom who rented space to him and who had disallowed him access to the tobacco he had paid a storage fee for. As a result, much of the tobacco was allegedly ruined before Abdi Effendi could ship it to Izmir. Ιστορικό Αρχείο Μακεδονίας (Historical Archive of Macedonia, hereafter IAM), Εμποροδικείο Θεσσαλονίκης (Selânik Ticaret Mahkemesi/Commercial Court of Selânik, hereafter STM), Δ20.2.3., Case no. 328, 23 Kanun-u Evvel 1289 (4 January 1874), 130 and IAM, STM, Δ20.2.4. Case No. 10, 23 Kanun-u Sani 1289 (4 February 1874), 5.

[115] *Salname-i Vilayet-i Edirne*, 1287 (1870), 152-153.

[116] *Memalik-i Mahruse-i Şahane'de husula gelen duhan…* 5

transaction cost for merchants, some of whom already had to borrow their start-up capital from banks or moneylenders at high interest rates.[117]

Table 1 - Income and expenses of the Edirne Provincial Tax Administration in 1285 (1868/1869)[118]

Administrative Branch	Customs:	Tobacco Tax:	Spirits Tax:	Salt Tax*:	Total:
Edirne Office	—	415,771	1,285,031	—	1,700,802
Gallipoli Office	1,956,682	132,559	277,712	—	2,366,953
Tekirdağ Office	1,734,466	107,278	229,237	—	2,070,982
Burgas Office	1,788,487	14,389	227,439	—	2,029,317
Filibe Office	18,378	393,300	1,508,749	—	1,920,429
Islimiye Office	—	63,942	456,389	—	520,321
Total†:	5,498,013	1,127,239	3,983,557	3,738,831	15,347,645‡

***** The salt tax was collected as *esman* or 1/8 of the value of the product.

† The sum-total (*yekûn*) of taxes collected in the province of Edirne in the financial year of 1285 (1868/69).

‡ This does not account for the 2,820,024 kurush of provincial expenses reducing the net revenue to 12,527,621.

[117] Furthermore, it was unclear what the customs office should do when tobacco, for one reason or another, remained unsold as was the case in Vodina and Karaferye in 1866. See A_}MKT.MHM, No. 44, Group Code: 362, 29 Rebiülahir 1283. The construction of this customs office in 1868 fits a more general trend of newly constructed customs offices in port cities of the empire; see Şennur Kaya, "Bazı Liman Kentlerindeki Örnekler Işığında *Tanzimat Dönemi ve Sonrasında İnşa Edilen Gümrük Binalarının Mimari Özellikleri*," in *Istanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 4 (2010), 73-92.

[118] *ibid.*, 152-153. This table does not include columns from the original for the salt mines wherein for obvious reasons no tobacco tax information was provided. As a result, the salt-tax total is an amount gathered from categories which are not listed here. A similar chart was included by Haluk Kayıcı in Mustafa Tanrıverdi (ed.) *Tarih Boyunca Gümrükler* (Istanbul: Hiperyayın, 2019), 112.

Apart from the significance of the codebook that I have already highlighted, a document from the grand vizier's office also makes it clear that the purpose of the codebook was, above all, to standardize the payment of sales taxes. As such it was to be widely distributed and its contents made known to anyone engaged in tobacco sales of any kind including "snuff, cigarettes, or chewing tobacco" and regardless of whether their products were "domestic or foreign." Whether upon delivery to tobacco shops in the major export ports or during exchange at village markets, "from the start of June 1862" merchants would be expected to pay the tax or provide proof of payment in order to legally sell or export their product.[119]

Commercial court records from Salonica (including cases original to that court as well as appeals which ended up there from Kavala, Drama, and other towns within the province of Selânik) provide us a glimpse into the ways in which the codebook was applied in cases of unpaid or underpaid taxes and what this meant for tobacco merchants in the region. In 1869, a tobacco merchant named Konstantin (the Slavic version of Constantine or Konstantinos) was called to court for not paying the appropriate amount of taxes on 33 bails (*denk*s; literally half of a horse load) of tobacco some seven years prior. Konstantin was a merchant of snuff (an *enfiyeci*), which is a kind of tobacco that is typically snorted not smoked (a habit which was more common in the nineteenth century prior to the mass production of cigarettes), and because of a consistent lack of liquid assets he found himself at court more than once. He claimed to be unable to pay the 1869 amount on the grounds that he had incurred too many losses on the market. The court case against him, raised by the customs office (an abnormal litigant), demonstrates that the Ottoman bureaucracy had assumed an offensive rather than a defensive position against negligent merchants by the late 1860s thereby becoming more aggressive in seeking to resolve cases of unpaid taxes.

[119] BOA, A.}MKT.MHM No. 66, Group Code: 242, 12 Rebiülahir 1279.

This unique case also shows that the legislation of 1862 had become a standard-bearing point of reference. As the document points out, "The voucher he gave to the customs office seven years ago failed to cover the costs associated with the tax on thirty-three bales of tobacco," making it clear that the disputed payment was part of a concerted effort to retroactively apply the codebook with the added formality of a court hearing. It seems no coincidence that this and other claims against merchants corresponded with the period between the fiscal year of 1862 and the year of the court case (1872 in this instance). Whereas Konstantin, as an Ottoman subject, faced the court without the intervention of a foreign consul, merchants with capitulatory protections were sometimes able to circumvent the high costs of legal procedures.[120]

By the late 1860s, cases from Kavala had become more prominent in the court records of Salonica likely due in part to the establishment of a new customs house there in 1868.[121] Likewise, provincial reports on commercial activity often highlight problematic cases in Kavala during the expansion of tobacco in the 1860s and 1870s. The case of a Kavala-based merchant (*pazergan*) named Stavraki sheds light on the relationship between merchants with foreign privileges and Ottoman tobacco legislation. Documentation from the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Stavraki describes him as Austro-Hungarian subject. His name, which is the diminutive of the Greek name Stavros, indicates Greek Orthodox roots. He was active in the tobacco trade directed towards central Europe in the early 1860s.

On 12 June 1864, Stavraki seems to have shipped a moderate load of tobacco from the port of Kavala, perhaps on one of the Austrian Lloyd Company ships which had by then become a common sight in this part of the Aegean Sea.[122] The shipment consisted of 18 bales of unprocessed

[120] IAM, STM, Δ20.2.1. Case No. 60, 8 Şaban 1286 (13 November 1869), 34.
[121] BOA, A.}MKT.MHM No. 29, Group Code: 432, 8 Şevval 1285.
[122] Basil C. Gounaris, "Salonica" in *Review* (Fernand Braudel Center), Fall, 1993, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Fall, 1993), 502; Gelina Harlaftis; Vassilis Kardasis "International shipping in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea: Istanbul

(*safi*) tobacco totaling 736.5 *okka*s. Some twelve days later, on 24 June 1864, a much larger load of 124 bails consisting of 6,759.5 *okka*s were again loaded onto ships at the port of Kavala. Stavraki had apparently failed to demonstrate the basic requirements of a certificate (a *şehadetname* in the bureaucratic jargon of the tax offices) — these included the company name, the number of bales on board, and the weight of the product. As a result, in 1870 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted the Austro-Hungarian Consulate in Kavala to resolve the issue. In the interim, however, Stavraki had unfortunately passed away leaving his heirs and the Austro-Hungarian consulate in a legally delicate situation.

From the perspective of the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was the responsibility of the consulate to pay off the late Stavraki's debts. A nested accusation here was that the Austro-Hungarian government had aided Stavraki in avoiding full payment of the export taxes on all tobacco destined for foreign lands (*düvel-i ecnebiyye*). The legality of demanding payment from the deceased's representative consulate was, however, questionable. The documentation does not indicate that the consulate caved and it is likely that Stavraki's debts to the Ottoman state remained unpaid. The exportation of tobacco was at the heart of many similar conflicts between local people, their representative consulates, and the Ottoman provincial administration. The fact that Stavraki took a great deal of debt to the grave demonstrates that the high transaction costs of the tobacco trade were not always solved with consular protection. Instead, debt and insolvency in the face of

as a Maritime Centre, 1870–1910" in Sevket Pamuk and Jeffrey G.Williamson eds., *The Mediterranean Response to Globalization Before 1950* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 245-249; and Filiz Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan: Tütün Üretimi, Ticareti ve Reji (1883-1912)," in Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies, XLIII (2014), 230. Austrian Lloyd was accompanied in Salonica and Kavala by French steamships from Messageries Maritime and by Italian steamers of Marc Frassinet Pére et Fils according to the British consul J.E. Blunt writing about the increase in steam shipping in the Aegean in the early 1870s. See Great Britain, Parliament, "Salonica: Report by Consul Blunt on the Trade of Salonica for the Year 1873." in *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* Vol. 67 (1874), (London: HMSO), 1611.

an increasingly rigid Ottoman tax scheme were a common experience amongst tobacco merchants operating out of Kavala and the surrounding towns and villages.[123]

One more case will demonstrate the significance of the 1862 codebook to the commercial activities of tobacco merchants in Salonica, Kavala, and the surrounding region in terms of standardized paperwork and necessary measures for legal transportation. In 1869, the commercial court tried Yanni Hadji Lazaro, a commercial elite of the mid to late nineteenth century whose family would become notable in early Greek-era commercial politics as well.[124] Although Yanni provided his signature on the necessary paperwork for transportation, the Hadji Lazaro Brothers, presumably Yanni's sons including the future prominent textiles merchant Perikles Hadji Lazaro, had apparently not all provided a signature for the transportation slip. The discussion at court therefore centered on whether or not Yanni Hadji Lazaro's signature alone was enough to legally represent the group of family merchants when his signature was clearly representative of the family firm. A seemingly trivial point, questions like this were central to bureaucratic reform in the empire and particularly to the regulation of the tobacco trade. In addition, proof that the export tax had been paid or a willing recognition that the exporter was still liable for it was among the most important demands made by the tax offices in accordance with the tobacco codebook of 1862.[125]

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[123] BOA, HR.H. No. 19, Group Code: 379, 7 September 1870.

[124] The Hadji Lazaro Family was well integrated into Ottoman commercial culture throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and became an important part of Greek commerce during the Hellenization of Salonica. According to Evangelos A. Hekimoglou, the family were also well-established as owners of agricultural estates in the region, "Enthúmion Hatzēlazárou: to érgo enós lēsmonēménou prokrítou tēs Thessaloníkēs," in *Makedonikḗ Zōḗ* 293-295 (10-12.1990), 23-25, 44-46, 42-43. As Paris Papamichos Chronakis points out, Kleon Hadjilazaro would follow in the footsteps of his father Perikles becoming a prominent merchant and the director, for a time, of the *Banque d'Orient.* See Paris Papamichos Chronakis, *Οι έλληνες, εβραίοι, μουσουλμάνοι και ντονμέ έμποροι της Θεσσαλονίκης, 1882-1919: Ταξικοί και εθνοτικοί μετασχηματισμοί σε τροχιά εξελληνισμού* [The Greek, Jewish, Muslim, and Dönme Merchants of Thessaloniki, 1882-1919: Class-based and Ethnic Transformations in the Course of Hellenization], (Rethymno, Crete: unpublished dissertation, 2011), 12-13 and 115-118.

[125] IAM, STM, Δ20.2.1, Case No. 1, 5 Şaban 1286 (10 November 1869), 1.

The standardization of transport practices and tax rates was in many ways phase one of an attempt by Ottoman statesmen to control tobacco revenues and direct more of them to the imperial coffers. Phase two, which marked a shift towards even more intrusive state policies, would begin in 1874. Whereas the 1862 codebook focused on the expansion of measures aimed at collecting taxes and fees throughout transportation and exportation, a second codebook published in the spring of 1874 underlined the limitations on tobacco cultivation and sales and the need for more robust surveillance measures in the fields, ports, and transportation routes where tobacco trading took place.[126] Ottoman bureaucrats had never been able to gain full control over the flow of tobacco under the conditions of the 1862 codebook and the system of preemptive transportation taxes outlined above. As a result, conflict between tobacco merchants and Ottoman customs agents had become commonplace. The customs duties specified and outlined in 1862 in some ways incentivized illegal exportation of tobacco and did not provide the Ottoman provincial governments with a tighter grip on the trade itself.

The 1874 legislation sought to encourage registered tobacco cultivation and to inform cultivators and merchants of the commercial activities which were sanctioned by law. It made clear that the trade as a whole would enter a new phase of stricter and more systematic oversight. The Grand Vizierate also went to great effort to distribute this codebook widely, publishing 300 copies in Greek, 300 in Turkish, and 170 in Armenian before presumably sending them to provincial administrators who would publicize the expectations outlined therein to local and regional

[126] It is not a coincidence that this codebook along with a number of letters and reports on tobacco sales and production are part of the Papers of the Yıldız Palace collection at the Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul. This is a collection that represents some of the themes and topics that interested Sultan Abdülhamid II personally in the years leading up to the end of his reign in 1909. Other materials he collected included reports on the specific techniques employed by peasants in Izmir, Thrace, and Macedonia to cultivate tobacco. See BOA, Y.EE, No. 6, Group Code: 27, 28 Cemâziyelâhir 1290. He was also deeply invested in American tobacco-growing techniques as demonstrated by correspondence with the Highlander Tobacco Company of South Carolina, translated into Ottoman Turkish for his personal interest: BOA, Y.PRK.HR. No. 6, Group Code: 83, March and April 1883.

merchants.[127] Central to the 1874 codebook, therefore, was surveillance; cultivators and merchants were to provide estimates of how much land, how many tobacco plants (or rather rows of staked plants), and the number of dry-leaf bunches that they produced in a given planting season. Although the original stipulation that plots for cultivating tobacco should not be smaller than one *decare* was to be revoked and smaller plots of land were allowed, the stipulations of the codebook dealing with registration and surveillance remained intact throughout the 1870s and early 1880s.[128] A letter from the provincial government in Crete to the Grand Vizierate requested a copy of the codebook written in Ottoman Turkish since apparently, at its initial printing, the Greek version was more widely distributed.[129] Such a request indicates that Greek merchants were specifically targeted in the publication of this new codebook but that Turkish-speaking provincial administrators also anxiously anticipated the legislation.

The 1874 codebook laid out the expectation that cooperation between the Administrative Council, the *kaimmakam* (the governor of a regional unit), and the customs office was essential to keeping tabs on tobacco production and sales. Most importantly, the district tax officer and the *kaimmakam* were to establish the value of the tobacco in their district during harvest tobacco season to ensure it corresponded to the taxes collected there. The primary mechanisms used to establish this information were twofold. First, merchants and cultivators were free to sell their tobacco and negotiate price at will but were first required to deliver it to the customs office which provided them with the necessary paperwork to move freely with their product in tow. Second, surveillance teams were established (made up of members of provincial governments) to keep tabs on tobacco farms and on the roads from fields to port-cities like Kavala.[130]

[127] BOA, A.}MKT.MHM, No. 37, Group Code: 476, 3 Cemâziyelevvel 1291.
[128] *Parartēma tōn Othōmanikōn kōdēkōn* (Istanbul: Typois Aphōn, 1873).
[129] BOA, A.}MKT.MHM, No. 37, Group Code: 476, 3 Cemâziyelevvel 1291.
[130] *Duhan Nizamnamesi*, BOA, Y.EE, No. 11, Group Code: 27, 1-13, 29 Zilhicce 1291.

"*For the Profit of Monsieur Allatini*" — Austrian Privileges and Ottoman Networks

In spite of the seeming rigidity of this new tobacco legislation, it was only selectively enforced throughout Macedonia and Thrace. This reflects some peculiarities in the regional political economy and demonstrates the privileged position enjoyed by tobacco's most prominent financiers. One of the families most central to tobacco production and provincial commerce and industry during these years was the Allatini family. The Allatinis — a prominent Sephardic Jewish family based in Salonica — came to play an enormously important role in the development of the tobacco industry during the 1860s and would continue to occupy a central position within it well into the twentieth century. In fact, the family and its commercial partners continued to trade tobacco until the tragic developments of World War II, which uprooted and decimated the historic Jewish community of Salonica and broader Macedonia.

The Allatinis' place in the expansion of tobacco production was premised on a long history in the region and their dominance within the financial and commercial institutions of the second half of the nineteenth century. They had roots in Salonica (and in Italy) dating back to the Iberian expulsion of 1492.[131] During the late 1850s and 1860s, the family enjoyed Austrian protection for their commercial endeavors and they enjoyed access to networks extending southwards into Egypt, west as far as Marseilles and London, and deep into Rumelia (and later Bulgaria) and the Austro-Hungarian domains further north. They also had extensive commercial ties to financial partners and clients in Istanbul, which seems to have been especially helpful in avoiding customs.

[131] Richard Ayoun. 'Allatini Family' in Norman A. Stillman *et al.* eds., *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World,* accessed May 21, 2020. https://referenceworks.brillonline.com:443/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world%252Fallatini-family-SIM_0001570.

The Allatini family's active development of commercial networks in the Austro-Hungarian domains is demonstrated from the earliest records of their tobacco exportation. The Ottoman tobacco that the family purchased in Salonica, Kavala, and the surrounding towns and villages as far north as Filibe was often destined for Austrian consumers or industrialists. The Viennese market had historically been supplied since at least the eighteenth century with high-quality tobacco from the Hungarian territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire by Greek-speaking Ottoman merchants.[132] By 1859, however, the amount of tobacco shipped from the ports of Salonica and Kavala to the Austrian domains (mainly to Trieste) had increased significantly as would tobacco transported to Austria via Rumelian land routes.[133] The Allatinis became well integrated into this commodity chain and made use of an industrial labor force in Austria that was quite advanced relative to that of Kavala and Salonica at mid-century. Of course, this would change in the 1870s and 1880s as Salonica, Kavala, and İskeçe all became hubs of factory labor. For the time being, however, the Allatinis made the most of their Austrian connections to build up a supply line of raw tobacco. This was destined for the Viennese (and by extension western European) market, "some of which" — according to an Austro-Hungarian report on Salonican trade from 1876 — "is for the Austrian and Hungarian tobacco monopoly."[134]

In spite of their affiliation with the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the family played a major role in the commercial and financial development of Salonica and the surrounding region throughout the nineteenth century. They were deeply rooted in Ottoman political and commercial life and can't be reasonably considered foreigners. The Ottoman government had for decades

[132] Katerina Papakonstantinou, "The Pondikas Merchant Family from Thessaloniki, CA. 1750-1800," in Suraiya Faroqhi and Gilles Veinstein eds., *Merchants in the Ottoman Empire* (Paris: Peeters, 2008), 141-143.
[133] İsmail Arslan, *Selanik'in gölgesinde bir sancak: Drama (1864-1913)* (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2010), 265-268.
[134] "Rauchtabaks, welche theils für die österreichische und ungarische tabakregie," See *Mittheilungen der k. und k. österreichisch-ungarischen Consulats-Behörden* (1876), 334.

recognized them as an exemplary model of a loyalist cadre of commercial elites which, although benefiting from commercial networks and privileges in Europe, was ultimately loyal to the Ottoman Empire. In the 1880s and 90s, other merchants would call this loyalty into question during and shortly after the Ottoman-Habsburg annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878,[135] their prominence in Ottoman Salonica is demonstrated by the following anecdote.

On 23 April 1877, a Ladino newspaper called *La Epoka* reported that an "Italian ship arriving from Istanbul (*vapur Italiano arivava de Kospole*)" had brought members of the Allatini family to the port. The ship landed at midday on a Thursday and was greeted by numerous "friends and relatives" of the "generous family" that stood aboard waiting to disembark. A great portion of the Jewish community, including students from the local branch of the Alliance Israélite Universelle (IAU), joined the crowd and a band composed of musicians from the local Italian opera theater played songs to accompany the Allatinis into the premises of the city. The crowd welcomed the Allatinis for a variety of reasons but the most notable of these was the coming of the Jewish Community's president, Carlo Allatini, with his wife, Ida, the daughter of another local notable Shlomo Fernandez, a highly successful insurance agent of the city. The incident clearly demonstrates the social prestige enjoyed by Carlo and the Allatinis in general. More specifically, it points to their role in two major institutions within the Jewish life of the city: the Alliance school and the Jewish Community.[136]

Moises Allatini, the preeminent heir of the family's estate in the mid-nineteenth century and Carlo's father, had established the Allatini flour mill in Salonica in 1858. His younger brother,

[135] See chapter two.

[136] *La Epoka*, "El Aribo de la Honorable Familiya Allatini" ("The Arrival of the Honorable Allatini Family"), Apr. 23, 1877. For more on the Fernandez family, see Hubert Bonin, "Un outre-mer bancaire en Orient méditerranéen: des banques françaises marraines de la Banque de Salonique (de 1907 à la Seconde Guerre mondiale)," in *Revue Historique*, T. 305, Fasc. 3 (627) (Juillet 2003), 567-602. Many thanks to David Bunis for generously pointing me in the direction of this Ladino source.

Solomon, perhaps through connections to Moises' father-in-law who had descended from tobacco merchants, began to export tobacco sometime in the middle of the nineteenth century. As early as the 1760s, the Istanbul and Salonica Tobacco Customs Tax-farm struggled to effectively collect customs duties from well-connected merchants like Moises' father-in-law.[137] By the mid-1860s, Solomon along with his brothers Moises and Darius were well-established in the tobacco trade and would maintain a privileged position within that industry for decades to come. Solomon appears in historical records as a prominent tobacco exporter, both to Austria and the United Kingdom. In the 1850s, he operated out of Salonica, Kavala, and to a large extent out of Sofia and Filibe, where his exports eventually found their way onto the Austrian and British markets and, to a lesser degree, those in France, Italy, and Egypt.[138]

The Allatinis were not confined to the tobacco trade or to export markets although they managed branch houses in Marseilles and in London. Tobacco was only one of the many goods that they invested in during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. They became wealthy through a combination of local and regional banking, flour-milling, brick-making, and by producing other goods which were both exported and sold on the domestic market. Statistics provided by the Allatini Brothers to the British consul of Salonica, J.E. Blunt for the year 1872-1873 show that their most valuable exports were grains (including wheat and barley), wool, cotton, leeches, timber, tobacco, and other goods. They also invested in domestic industries for local construction and consumption rather than for the international market (such as bricks). For that year, tobacco was by far the most prominent *export*, quantitatively-speaking, as the Allatinis shipped out around 19 million lbs. of the miniature *basma* leaves (a local variety still used as a condiment to Virginia-

[137] İrfan Kokdaş, *When the Countryside is Free: Urban Politics, Local Autonomy, and the Changing Social Structure in Ottoman Salonika, 1740-1820* (Binghamton University: Unpublished Dissertation, 2013), 40.
[138] BOA, HR.MKT No. 60, Group Code: 193, 22 Şevval 1273.

and Latakia-based pipe tobaccos in the twenty-first century) as compared with cotton and wool coming in at a distant second and third with 2.7 million and 2.6 million lbs., respectively. According to this same report, they shipped predominantly to Austria, England, Russia, Egypt, and Moldova-Walachia.[139]

The Allatinis therefore had become deeply involved in regional tobacco production from an early period in its development. From at least the 1850s, the Allatinis were exporting tobacco in partnership with the Modianos, another elite family from Salonica. Similar to the experience of other merchants at the time, the Allatinis found themselves at odds with certain customs officers who demanded the delivery of taxes they didn't believe they needed to pay. In an 1857 report submitted to the district governor (*kaimmakam*) of Sofia (in modern-day Bulgaria), the Allatinis and Modianos complained that a customs-house employee in the subdistrict of Cuma (*Cuma kazasında*) demanded a fee for exporting tobacco into Austro-Hungarian lands.

In response to this customs officer's demand, the merchants mobilized the Austrian consul to petition on their behalf against this purported fee. The petition makes it clear that, apart from a standard 12% tax on the merchandise, no other fees should be applied. Other fees such as those requested by the Cuma customs officer were apparently premised on the product being sold and consumed within the empire. The Allatini and Modiano product, however, was destined for factories in Austria where it was to be processed and sold on foreign markets. In this manner, the Austro-Hungarian consul succeeded in canceling out the amount purportedly owed.[140]

The extensive market networks maintained by the Allatinis in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in the Ottoman Empire (in particular in Istanbul) gave them a competitive edge over

[139] Great Britain, Parliament, "Salonica: Report by Consul Blunt on the Trade of Salonica for the Year 1873." in *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers* Vol. 67 (1874), (London: HMSO). 1620-1621.
[140] BOA, HR.MKT, No. 60, Group Code: 193, 22 Şevval 1273.

tobacco merchants like Jack Abbot who exported to the London market exclusively and over those who operated solely within the regional domestic market. In addition, however, the privileges granted to the Allatinis by the Austro-Hungarian government strengthened their position vis-a-vis prominent merchants of Salonica, Kavala, and the surrounding region well into the 1860s and 1870s. In 1866, a British lawyer writing on behalf of Abbot argued that the Austro-Hungarian Empire had secured an abnormal set of allowances for the Allatini Brothers to transport tobacco duty-free from their shops in the Ottoman Empire to factories in the Austro-Hungarian domains in order to prepare and process it for the market.

It is unclear whether the Ottoman administration allowed the Allatinis this privilege because of confidence in the Allatini family as loyal contributors to Ottoman industry or if it did so out of a fear of British expansion into the region by seemingly predatory capitalists like Jack Abbot. Nevertheless, the privilege was rhetorically justified as a dispensation for the Austro-Hungarian tobacco monopoly, the Tabakregie, which required a near constant supply of tobacco for its industrializing workforce. The Austro-Hungarian government did in fact guarantee such a privilege for the Allatinis through negotiations with the Ottoman government in 1863 thereby providing an enduring exception to the generalized legislation of 1862 "for the profit of *monsieur* Allatini." On this foundation, the Allatini Brothers were able to operate largely outside the framework of Ottoman legislation from 1863 onwards and to avoid many of the transaction costs that other merchants absorbed. As such, they enjoyed a unique set of privileges in the tobacco trade born out of their access to Austrian markets and their explicit (and legal) circumvention of Ottoman customs.[141] By 1869 and possibly before, more tobacco went from Kavala to Austria then to any other foreign land much of it carried out by clients and personnel of the Allatini Brothers.[142]

[141] BOA, Y.EE, No. 112, Group Code: 29, 23 Zilkade 1282.
[142] Arslan, *Selanik'in gölgesinde bir sancak*, 269.

The fact that the Allatinis enjoyed such a particular set of advantages over other tobacco merchants in the Selânik province was reinforced by their many connections to clientele and business partners in Istanbul, which provided another layer of protection from regional administrators since it was not necessary to pay taxes on tobacco destined for Istanbul until arrival. A letter dated 12 June 1866 to a certain Sadik Effendi of Istanbul demonstrates just one of the Allatinis' Istanbulite business partnerships. In it, Moises and Solomon Allatini lament the fact that a recent get-together with Sadik Effendi in Salonica had been too short, they reassured Sadik: "*pour votre tabac soyez tranquille, vous l'aurez sans faute* (as for your tobacco, don't worry, you will have it without fail)," adding that the legal memo required for the transportation of tobacco destined for domestic sale or exportation (Tr. *tezkire*, Fr. *teskeré*) had already been written up.[143] In a follow-up memorandum dated July 17, Solomon informed him that the highest quality tobacco available was on its way. They added a note on a mutual friend between the two parties with whom they conducted extensive business in Salonica: "*notre commun et respectable ami Akif Pacha se porte bien* (our mutual and honorable friend Akif Pasha is doing well)" after establishing that the final price per *okka* of tobacco sold from Porto Lagos would be 85 piasters.[144] Such personal connections supported the Allatinis' efforts to build market networks.

By the mid 1860s, the Allatinis were already a centerpiece in the financial and commercial advancement of the tobacco industry in spite of the increased efforts of the Ottoman government

[143] BOA, Y.EE, No. 113, Group Code: 29, 12 June 1866; See also their business letters to Sadik Effendi regarding a load of tobacco to be sent to Istanbul via Austrian steamship on behalf of a certain Fernand Charnaud and another regarding a shipment of tobacco from the Port Lagos (to the east of Kavala and Keramoti and just southeast of Xanthi and Genisea), BOA, Y.EE. No. 117, Group Code: 29, 3 July 1866 and BOA, Y.EE, No. 14, Group Code: 28, 17 July 1866.

[144] BOA, Y.EE, No. 14, Group Code: 28, 17 July 1866; This *ami Akif Pacha* was likely none other than Mehmet Akif Pasha whose place in the tobacco industry was clearly already enshrined in light of this letter. As we will see, however, his son Hasan Akif would become an even more crucial component of the tobacco industry in years to come and who would establish a tobacco factory on Yeni Cadde in Salonica; See IAM, STM, Δ20.2.6, Case No. 24, 14 Eylül 1297 (26 September 1881), 28-31.

to control this regional industry. The exclusive position of the Allatini family in the tobacco industry was the result of their exclusion from the legislative expectations imposed on other tobacco merchants in 1862 and 1874. Their extensive partnerships in Istanbul and in Central Europe also seem to have played a significant role in securing these unique privileges from the Ottoman government and therefore allowing them to out-perform Levantine competitors such as Jack Abbot. This competition between the most prominent tobacco magnates of the 1850s and 1860s was explicit. For example, Jack Abbot's 1866 attempt to acquire an exception to the 1862 legislation demonstrates this competition by explicitly invoking the exceptional Allatini privilege for duty-free export to Austria. Not only was there a demonstrable set of exceptions to Ottoman policy which allowed the Allatinis to build and maintain a successful tobacco export enterprise but there was a keen awareness on the part of other merchants to this reality. Other merchants between the 1880s and 1910s would charge the Ottoman government with unfair policies as a result indicating that this awareness remained potent for tobacco merchants in Macedonia and Thrace. Jack Abbot and the Allatinis remained in competition with one another for at least the next 6 years and probably longer.

In 1872, in fact, a case closed which Allatini and Co. had raised against Jack Abbot for failure to pay 10,000 francs owed to the company in 1870.[145] Apparently in that case the bills of exchange were drawn up in Salonica but payable in Marseilles and Abbot never fulfilled his end of the bargain. Whether Abbot was low on cash at this point in light of the general economic crisis of the mid-1870s or held out hope that the British imperial government would secure for him the privilege of duty-free exportation — as the Austrian government had done for the Allatinis —

[145] This may have been part of a general strategy on behalf of the Allatinis as they would bring debtors to court in 1874 as well with the threat of property-seizure if they could not recover the money they had lent. See, for example, IAM, STM, Δ20.2.4, Case No. 23, 3 Mart 1290 (15 March 1874), 18.

remains unclear.[146] The case, carried out by the Supreme Consular Court of Constantinople (UK) ruled on 13 June that the defendant (i.e. Abbot) was still liable for the money owed. This payment of 10,000 francs may not have been the final nail in the coffin of Abbot's commercial endeavors but it had become clear by this time that the tobacco industry would continue to expand without him and that the Allatinis would remain in a very good position to benefit from it.[147]

Conclusion: Legislation and Selective Interventionism as Elements of Political Economy

This chapter has demonstrated that integration of the tobacco industry into a new legislative framework in the 1860s and 1870s was the result of conflicting expectations on the part of merchants and bureaucrats. The apparent privileges provided by treaties like Balta Liman and more generally by European capitulations did not guarantee the cooperation of the Ottoman bureaucracy nor did they guarantee access to the commercial networks of regional tobacco merchants. Instead, the most successful tobacco merchants were those whose activities were sanctioned by the Ottoman government by virtue of their connections to Ottoman, Egyptian, and European market networks. As a result, commercial elites who enjoyed Ottoman exceptionalism were able to avoid the high transaction costs imposed on merchants exporting tobacco for direct sale in foreign markets or transporting their product to Ottoman marketplaces. This information indicates that tobacco legislation, although significant in shaping certain outcomes in the tobacco trade, was part of the broader political economy of tobacco rather than a mechanism which completely

[146] On the general crisis, see Şevket Pamuk, "The Ottoman Empire in the 'Great Depression' of 1873-1896," in *The Journal of Economic History* Vol. 44, No. 1 (Mar., 1984), 107-118 and Murat Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Financial Control in the Late Nineteenth Century* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2010), 35-54.
[147] *The Law Times Reports* Vol. XXV (London: H. Cox, 1872), 746-748.

transformed it.[148] Tobacco legislation, in other words, was not experienced in a uniform manner by merchants operating in the Ottoman Empire.

Ottoman historians have recently made the case that the Ottoman state embraced a *laissez faire* policy to economic growth that reinforced the problematic legacy of foreign domination over Ottoman finance and limited domestic growth in the face of the robust capitulatory privileges bestowed on many non-Muslim merchants in the empire.[149] These conditions were the backdrop, for example, to the national economy project of İbrahim Hilmi and others. Eyal Ginio has masterfully described this project as an interventionist policy which emerged in response to decades of internationalism.[150] Coşkun Tüncer has demonstrated, however, that throughout the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire learned from the mistakes of Egypt and continually adjusted its economic policies to mitigate the effects of being subordinated to international financial agencies and institutions.[151]

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[148] Although I am sympathetic to the argument made by Filiz Dığıroğlu, E. Attila Aytekin, and others that economic histories of the Ottoman Balkans and Anatolia are too often narrowly focused on export markets and macroeconomic trends. In their view, this perspective imposes limits on the potential development of an economic history of the region that takes into account the experience of cultivators and peasants; in the words of Aytekin, "scholarly interest in those who engaged in agriculture has been less than adequate." However, it is also true that tobacco during mid-century was a crucial export good and an agricultural good that sheds light on many aspects of international relations and regional political economy. As a result, there is no obvious way to bypass a discussion of tobacco exportation without also ignoring many of the factors which helped to shape the political economy of the region and social relations. Indeed, Dığıroğlu is aware of this since, in spite of her desire to focus on the domestic market, she states: "Tobacco became the most important export item of Kavala's trading volume which increased every year (Tütün Kavala'nın her yıl artan ticaret hacmi içinde en önemli ihracat kalemi halini almıştır)." See Filiz Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan: Tütün Üretimi, Ticareti ve Reji (1883-1912)," in Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies, XLIII (2014), 227-231 and E. Attila Aytekin, "Peasant Protest in the Late Ottoman Empire: Moral Economy, Revolt, and the Tanzimat Reforms," in *International Review of Social History* Vol. 57, No. 2 (august 2012), 191.

[149] M. Safa Saraçoğlu, "Economic Interventionism, Islamic Law and Provincial Government in the Ottoman Empire," in Kent F. Schull, M. Safa Saraçoğlu, and Robert Zens, eds. *Law and Legality in the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), 65-91.

[150] Eyal Ginio, The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and Their Aftermath (1912-1914) (London: Oxford University Press, 2016), 183-227.

[151] Ali Coşkun Tüncer, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870–1914* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

The tobacco legislation presented here demonstrates that, from at least the 1860s, the Ottoman government was attempting to institute policies which would increase revenue and limit the power of foreign merchants. The various loopholes and exceptionalism demonstrated by some of the above case studies (especially the Allatinis) show that such efforts were piecemeal. Nevertheless, such efforts to standardize and reformulate the political economy of tobacco constituted a shift towards an interventionist policy, albeit limited to this particular industry and selective about who received privileges within it.

The accumulation of capital in the early nineteenth century by families like the Allatinis and the Modianos put them in a unique position to benefit from tobacco from the first years of its wide-scale cultivation in Macedonia and Thrace. Upon entering the tobacco trade on sure footing, the Allatinis in particular continued to benefit from access to European and Ottoman markets and exceptional privileges allotted to them by the Ottoman government. This dynamic would shape the tobacco industry for decades to come and would allow them to avoid many of the transaction costs associated with legal fees and customs duties that most other merchants absorbed. Likewise their domination of banking and their extensive financial networks in Salonica would also allow them to avoid the pitfalls of local credit markets and to operate in a completely separate commercial realm from most local and regional tobacco merchants.

This chapter has shown that the Ottoman Empire instituted policies to control and curtail tobacco sales when it was convenient and beneficial to do so. It also demonstrates that certain well-connected merchants could leverage commercial networks and political privileges to circumnavigate such policies. The tobacco industry prior to Ottoman bankruptcy in 1875 was not merely one of the many alleged economic spaces that European capitalists dominated and which the Ottomans lost their grip over. Instead, the Ottoman tobacco trade demonstrates that Ottoman

policies and foreign capitulatory privileges were themselves experienced in various ways depending on the place of individual merchants within the regional and imperial political economy. It was not sufficient for a merchant to be 'foreign' in general terms; instead, successful navigation of the Ottoman tobacco trade during the 1860s and 1870s required tactful employment both of domestic Ottoman and European privileges, networks, and capital. Following the declaration of Ottoman bankruptcy in 1875, some of the opportunities and risks of operating in this commercial space would change but, ultimately, similar dynamics emerged as a select group of commercial elites — some of whom were the same individuals as those described in this chapter — came to dominate the post-bankruptcy tobacco trade as well.

Chapter Two

Ottoman Bankruptcy and the Régie Company on the Aegean Coast (c. 1875-1900)

Introduction

The Régie Company, known officially as *Société de la Régie Co-Intéressée des Tabacs de l'Empire Ottoman*, was at odds with Kallistos Theofilides in 1887 for failing to register his tobacco exports properly in 1884. The company was founded in 1883 to administer tobacco revenues in the Ottoman Empire after the 1875 declaration of bankruptcy in the empire and the subsequent integration of high-yield sources of public revenue into a debt-repayment program for European creditors to the Sublime Porte. This program was instituted through the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (i.e. the OPDA). Régie representatives apparently had locked Theofilides' shop doors in Kavala after confiscating all of the tobacco there in response to his alleged negligence. Theofilides, however, had extensive commercial and political networks in Kavala that allowed him to lean on consular employees of the Russian Empire and France to reopen his shop. The Régie Company, in turn, appealed to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs before taking him to the commercial court of Kavala. The court dismissed the case because it was "contrary to the law" while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned Theofilides for not cooperating with the demands of the Régie Company given its official hold on the domestic tobacco monopoly since 1883. These divergent responses exemplify the uneven integration of the Régie Company into the fabric of local society in the Aegean port-city of Kavala and its surrounding hinterlands.[152]

This chapter fills an important lacuna within the scholarship on industries subjected to regulation by the OPDA after 1881 by analyzing the local legal, political, and commercial response

[152] T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı, Osmanlı Arşivi (hereafter BOA), Hariciye Nezareti Hukuk Kısmı Evrakı (HR.H.) 75/27.1-2, 5 September 1887; BOA, HR.H. 84/75.1, 22 Eylül 1303 (4 October 1887).

to the Régie Company in eastern Macedonia. The Régie's activities and ambitions, which are outlined in numerous company-produced manuals and codebooks, are distinct from the provincial experience of its establishment as shown by the case of Theofilides. On the one hand, the production and export networks for tobacco in Macedonia — already bifurcated between commercial elites in Salonica and small-scale local merchants in the countryside by the 1870s — played a significant role in undermining the Régie Company's efforts to control tobacco in the countryside (see chapter one). On the other hand, the central role played by the Salonica commercial court in arbitrating appeals brought there by the Régie's disgruntled Macedonian representatives allowed for the Régie and its partners in Salonica to gain greater control over the regional industry as a whole. I argue that the integration of the Régie into local society caused divergent reactions amongst commercial actors and, over time, contributed to an entrenchment of political economy dynamics which favored a few notable families based in Salonica and Kavala. These are the commercial actors who would eventually claim the lion's share of tobacco profits by the 1890s.

The paper trail left behind by merchants and bureaucrats in Macedonia — primarily within the legal records of the Ottoman commercial court of Salonica and in petitions to the Grand Vizierate in Istanbul — reveals important aspects of Macedonia's political economy. Disputes over credit transactions and unpaid customs duties were commonplace in the court records of the 1870s and 1880s. Likewise, petitions to the Sublime Porte reveal the frustration of many merchants in Macedonia who felt trapped by the dictates of international finance and the OPDA. During the 1870s and 1880s, local financiers and merchants responded to the fiscal and political crises facing the Ottoman Empire (i.e. Ottoman bankruptcy, international financial control, and the Russo-Ottoman War) by entrenching themselves in international financial networks or by

circumnavigating the political and legal mechanisms put in place to control and litigate their commercial transactions. This continued even after the Régie was established in 1883 with supposed hegemony over the domestic tobacco trade and tobacco export revenues.

The Salonica commercial court was a key institutional player in the region as a forum for appeals between merchants and creditors both before and after 1883. This administrative structure also overlapped with commercial networks in a way that pitted the elites of Salonica against their counterparts in Kavala and Drama. Regional commercial actors on either side of this divide were not passive to the fiscal crisis nor were they disengaged from the legal reforms of the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Commercial court records in Salonica and petitions written to the Sublime Porte demonstrate the agency of economic actors in Macedonia and the divergent paths they took vis-a-vis the Régie Company and the Ottoman Public Debt Administration throughout the 1880s and 1890s. The extent to which the basic terminology surrounding the tobacco trade and market activities of commercial actors changed during this period reflects a concerted effort on behalf of the Régie Company and its partners in Salonica to create a legal discourse against merchants in the Macedonian countryside. In particular, diachrony reveals that smuggling (Tr. *kaçakçılık*) came to dominate this narrative in ways that it had not previously. At the same time, the invention of such a discourse de-incentivized both peasants and merchants in the countryside from cooperating with the Régie, thereby reinforcing the discursive mechanisms that it used against them in the process.

Historiography

Historians of the Régie Company and the Ottoman tobacco industry have highlighted the unique role of exporters, especially in relation to the Egyptian and Greek markets.[153] Separately,

[153] Rellie Shechter, *Smoking, Culture, and Economy in the Middle East: The Egyptian Tobacco Market, 1850-2000* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006). Filiz Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan: Tütün

scholarship on commercial law in the Ottoman Empire has emphasized the creation of a legal system between 1839 (when a Ministry of Trade was established) and the 1880s (when management of public debt was transferred to the Ottoman Public Debt Administration) which combined elements of the 1807 French *Code de Commerce* and aspects of syncretic Ottoman legal practices that differed according to region and community. By 1850, the Ottoman Empire had begun implementing a commercial code (the *Kanunname-i Ticaret*) which delineated the applications of commercial law. Commercial law, although distinct in practice, came to constitute a part of the broader *nizamiyye* legal system developed between 1864 and 1879. As such, it became a crucial component of non-*Şeriat* legal practice in the Ottoman Empire.

Still, relatively few studies have critically analyzed legal disputes within these provincial courts or made legible the distinctions between legal theory and its practice within the empire. No study, to my knowledge, has implemented commercial court records from the southern Balkans into an analysis of the tobacco trade or the OPDA and its affiliates such as the Régie Company during the nineteenth century. Outlining the history of the OPDA and its subsidiaries in the provincial *nizamiyye* courts system therefore responds to multiple historiographical issues. Avi Rubin, Mafalda Ade, Nora Barakat, and Aviv Derri have provided some of the most important analyses of case studies from *nizamiyye* courts and, in Ade's case, from the Ottoman commercial court of Damascus, Syria, in particular.[154] Similar to Barakat's study of litigation involving the

Üretimi, Ticareti ve Reji (1883-1912)," in *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, XLIII (2014), 227-272. Filiz Dığıroğlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi: Trabzon Reji İdaresi, 1883-1914* (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007), 93-100.

[154] Avi Rubin, *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Mafalda Ade
"The Ottoman Commercial Tribunal in Damascus and the Use of Testimony and Evidence in Mixed Cases in the 19th Century," in *Quaderni Storici* Fascicolo 3 (dicembre 2016), 649-672. See also Stefania Ecchia, "Informal rural credit markets and interlinked transactions in the district of late Ottoman Haifa, 1890-1915," in *Financial History Review* 21.1 (2014), 5–24. İrfan Kokdaş, "Land Ownership, Tax Farming and the Social Structure of Local Credit Market in the Ottoman Balkans, 1685-1855," in *Financial History Review* 24.1 (2017), 53-81. Aviv Derri, "Imperial Creditors, 'Doubtful' Nationalities and Financial Obligations in Late Ottoman Syria: Rethinking Ottoman

Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA) at the Court of First Instance in the Ottoman district of Homs, the numerous cases from the commercial court in which the Régie Company was involved reveal some important features of how the region's political economy developed during the 1880s.

First, a significant discrepancy emerged after the Régie's establishment in 1883 between its policies and the business practices of the region's merchants. This is most evident in instances where export merchants challenged the Régie's right to control their activities. To be clear, merchants had already been using turbulent political and economic circumstances in the empire to their advantage well before the Régie's establishment. The court cases after 1883, however, took on new significance as a result of the opportunities and challenges posed to merchants in light of the new domestic tobacco monopoly. Second and related to the first point, the absence of Régie litigation against the most prominent tobacco exporters in Macedonia, namely the Allatini Brothers and their partners, undermined the Régie's claims to objectivity in its policy-making. Furthermore, the commercial and legal networks of the Allatini Brothers overlapped to a significant degree with those of the Régie Company itself thereby making it convenient for them to cooperate with one another in pursuit of shared interests.

Third, local commercial courts — rather than favoring the Régie because of their agreement with the OPDA and the Sublime Porte — were differentiated according to the specific local political economy to which they belonged. Over time, commercial elites in Salonica joined league with the Régie Company based on their own commercial interest thereby deepening the bifurcation between those who cooperated with and those who rebelled against the Régie. This

Subjecthood and Consular Protection," in *International History Review*, Vol. 43 (2021), No. 5, 1-20. Nora Barakat, "Underwriting the Empire: Nizamiye Courts, Tax Farming and the Public Debt Administration in Ottoman Syria," in *Islamic Law and Society* 26 (2019), 374-404.

distinction simultaneously became synonymous over time with the dual tobacco market, itself discursively divided between legal and illegal sectors (i.e. legitimate merchants, or *tüccar*, and illegitimate smugglers or *kaçakçı*).

Whereas the historiography of legal disputes in Ottoman commercial courts over the role of international financial institutions is relatively limited, the historiography of petition-writing and smuggling are quite developed. Histories of Ottoman petition-writing and the *Tanzimat*-era institutions which facilitated petitioning have demonstrated the increased importance of speaking the language of reform. Ottoman subjects became fluent in this language relatively quickly thereby gaining a voice in the political process and in legal disputes. Pluralization of the *Tanzimat* reforms on the local and provincial level allowed for negotiation of the terms with which they were applied.[155] Understanding and utilizing the language of reform extended beyond the reform period itself and played a major role in shaping the rhetoric of opposition to the OPDA and the Régie Company in the 1880s.

Histories of the tobacco industry in the Ottoman Empire have by no means neglected the issue of smuggling.[156] However, the term has often been taken for granted as a self-explanatory descriptor of illegal commercial activities carried out by brigands and bandits. Alternatively, a history of brigandage and banditry has argued that these categories basically reflect economic

[155] Historiographically, this is especially demonstrable amongst non-Muslim communities and by the peasantry in various provincial settings. For example, see Masayuki Ueno, "For the Fatherland and the State: Armenians Negotiate the Tanzimat Reforms," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45, no. 1 (2013): 93–109; E. Attila Aytekin "Peasant Protest in the Late Ottoman Empire: Moral Economy, Revolt, and the *Tanzimat* Reforms," in *International Review of Social History* 57, no. 2 (2012): 191–227; and Milen V. Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance: Subaltern Commentaries on Ottoman Reform, 1864-1868," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46, no. 4 (2004): 730–59.

[156] Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reaction to European Economic Penetration* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 13-40; Filiz Dığıroğlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye*…, 103-115; Mustafa Batman, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Tütün Kaçakçıları, Kolcular ve Reji Şirketi (1883-1908)," in *Şekâvet, Hıyânet, İsyan Geç Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Eşkıyalık* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2023), 115-132.

structures rather than being shaped by non-economic factors such as ideological conviction or religious belief.[157] As shown by Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, however, smuggling of Macedonia's strategic commodities such as weapons was not merely reflective of economic processes but instead aligned with broader cultural proclivities — themselves shaped by nineteenth-century governance — and was itself constitutive of political movements, especially those of nationalist actors.[158] Smuggling in the Macedonian tobacco sector during the 1880s was reflective of the regional political economy, which favored commercial elites in Salonica. At the same time, subterfuge also provided the Régie Company, the Ottoman government, and smuggling merchants themselves with a basis for new forms of social organization which simultaneously reflected local commercial networks and embodied rebellion against international financial control.[159] By the end of the nineteenth century, the Régie Company and its predominantly Jewish partners in Salonica had become synonymous with international financial control in the tobacco sector. Greek and Bulgarian Christians, on the other hand, had become the assumed guilty party in instances of smuggling according to internal Régie documentation. The largely Muslim peasantry, for its part, was implicated in smuggling rings to a limited extent but would become subsumed into a broader nationalist discourse that highlighted their suffering at the hands of European financiers over and above their involvement in illegal activities.

Background — OPDA and the Régie Company

The Régie Company was formed in 1883 following a turbulent eight years of fiscal crisis in the Ottoman Empire. After the sultan declared bankruptcy in 1875 the Ottoman government

[157] Sabri Yetkin, *Ege'de Eşkiyalar* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayinlari, 1996).
[158] Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Tools of Revolution: Global Military Surplus, Arms Dealers, and Smugglers in the Late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908," in *Past & Present* 237:1 (2017), 167- 95.
[159] Ali Coşkun Tünçer, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870-1914* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1-28.

eventually came to an agreement with its lenders to establish the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA), which served to guarantee a number of revenues for the repayment of the empire's foreign debt. Tobacco revenues were included among those guaranteed for the repayment of public debt. The tobacco industry was, at least hypothetically, a rich source of revenues collected from tobacco cultivators, merchants, shop-owners, and exporters. Although a number of economic and financial historians have written histories of the OPDA and the crucial role that the Régie Company played in drawing tobacco into the realm of global finance as a result, few have written about the actual process of the company's provincial establishment and the reception of the Régie by local commercial actors. Many histories of the company or of the OPDA have exaggerated the Régie's role within the Ottoman Empire or have focused exclusively on the long-term results to Ottoman finance wrought by Régie activities.[160]

The Régie Company's control over domestic tobacco was, for the most part, poorly received. Nevertheless, merchants experienced the company's establishment in the Ottoman Empire differently depending on their role within various provincial political economies. As Can Nacar has shown in the case of Istanbul, the Régie had a relatively high degree of control over tobacco processing and sales since the city itself was not a site of tobacco-cultivation nor was it a tobacco export hub. The fact that the majority of tobacco processed in Istanbul was designated for the domestic market and that the Régie was the key operator of local factories gave the company significant control over the local industry there.[161] In contrast, the Régie Company's role in the

[160] Murat Birdal, The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Control in the Late Nineteenth Century (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 17-62. Ali Coşkun Tünçer, *Sovereign Debt…*, 1-28 and 53-78. As for studies that discuss smuggling as a response to the Régie Company, there has been little discussion of the emergence of smuggling as a strategy tied to the broader provincial political economy. Still, these studies are useful discussions of the general attitude of many merchants towards the Régie Company. See Mehmet Akpınar, "Reji uygulamalarına bir tepki: Tütün Kaçakçılığı," in Hasan C. Güzel, Kemal Çiçek, Salim Koca (eds.) *Türkler Ansiklopedisi* (Yeni Türkiye: Ankara, 2002), 305-312.

[161] This does not negate the significant challenge posed by workers who protested the company's policies. Can Nacar, Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912)

Black Sea region remained highly contested by local merchants as Filiz Dığıroğlu has demonstrated.[162] In Macedonia and Thrace — and specifically in the tobacco-processing centers of İskeçe, Drama, and Kavala — the company's reception was highly contentious throughout the entirety of the period between 1883 and 1912.[163] Many commercial actors refused to adhere to its policies or to register their tobacco with the company throughout the period. Most of these were subsequently labeled as smugglers by the Régie and by the Ottoman government itself.

Tobacco had already become a significant source of revenue for export merchants in cities like Salonica and Kavala prior to the establishment of the Régie Company.[164] In contrast to Istanbul, much of the tobacco processed in Kavala and its hinterlands was not exported as finished cigarettes but as raw-leaf tobacco. A Régie factory was established in Kavala in 1892. However, the town never became a center of cigarette making and would continue to operate as a predominantly export-oriented tobacco supply center. As for Salonica, the Régie Company did operate a cigarette factory there, which employed many Jewish women and played a major role in a gendered process of social differentiation within the city.[165] Still, for the region as a whole it was exportation of raw tobacco which accounted for most export activity in the tobacco trade.

The Régie had a complicated relationship with the export merchants of Salonica, Kavala, and the surrounding villages and towns. On the one hand, the local merchants were free to continue

(Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Can Nacar, "Labor Activism and the State in the Ottoman Tobacco Industry," in International Journal of Middle East Studies, vol. 46, no.3 (2014): 533-551; Can Nacar, "The Régie Monopoly and Tobacco Workers in Late Ottoman Istanbul," in Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East 34, no.1 (2014): 206-219; Can Nacar, "Tütün İşçileri, Tüccarlar ve Kırık Camlar: 1905 Kavala Grevi," in Toplumsal Tarih, 213 (2011), 38-42;

[162] Dığıroğlu, *Memalik-i Osmaniye*

[163] Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde." Ebru Boyar, "Public Good and Private Exploitation: Criticism of the Tobacco Régie in 1909" in *Oriente Moderno* 25 (86), no. 1 (2006), 193-200.

[164] Kaleb Herman Adney, "Tobacco and the Social Lives of Credit — Global Credit Markets and the Supply Chain of Oriental Tobacco," in Juan Carmona-Zabala ed., *Commodities in History: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Case Studies* (Rethymno, Crete, Greece: Institute for Mediterranean Studies - IMS, 2023), 299-334.

[165] Gila Hadar, "Jewish Tobacco Workers in Salonika: Gender and Family in the Context of Social and Ethnic Strife," in Amila Buturovic and İrvin Cemil Schick, eds., *Women in the Ottoman Balkans: Gender, Culture and History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 127-152.

exporting raw tobacco and snuff (i.e. tobacco that is snorted not smoked) provided that they do so through the proper channels and pay the relevant fees. In particular, export merchants had to pay all customs to the Régie instead of directly to the government according to article 11 of the company's 1884 codebook, the *Cahier des charges*. The Ottoman state continued to collect the agricultural tithe but gave the Régie rights to all other duties. Equally important was the stipulation that although "export trade remains free… exported tobacco must pass through the warehouses of the Régie, like all other [tobacco]."[166] These stipulations and the efforts of regional Régie employees contributed to tensions between local export merchants and the company throughout the 1880s and 1890s.

As for cultivators, the *Cahier des charges* specified that authorization from the Régie was required prior to sowing tobacco and in cases where no Régie agent was available locally, the cultivator was obligated to seek out the local council (*ihtiyar meclisi*) which would in theory contact the closest Régie representative on their behalf. In cases where the cultivator obtained official permission in this manner, the Régie was obligated to provide interest-free advance payments to facilitate the expansion of tobacco-producing lands. These loans, the codebook specifies, did not obligate the cultivators to sell domestically or to the Régie. However, article 15 required that all loans be repaid prior to delivery of the raw goods to the foreign purchaser in case of export. This effectively limited the ability of most cultivators to sell raw tobacco to foreign clients without the prior approval of the Régie; after all, without money for cultivating the fields, they were unable to pay back their Régie loans prior to being paid by their clients. Merchants with access to European finance and with broad financial networks in western and central Europe prior

[166] Société de la Régie Co-Intéressée des Tabacs de l'Empire Ottoman, *Cahier des Charges* (Imprimerie Osmanié, Constantinople, 1884), 16-19.

to the implementation of Régie credit mechanisms in Macedonia were at an obvious advantage in this regard.[167]

Records from the commercial court in Salonica demonstrate that there were a variety of responses to the Régie Company in Macedonia and Thrace between 1883 and 1900. The company provided opportunities for entrepreneurs whose best efforts during the 1870s and early 1880s had not protected them from the commercial instability that accompanied the Panic of 1873, Ottoman bankruptcy in 1875, and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. Nevertheless, appeals that ended up in Salonica from tobacco-producing towns and villages like Drama and Kavala demonstrate that merchants and entrepreneurs also sought to exploit the Régie to their own advantage and confronted the company by relying on local political and legal networks in both towns. Financial instruments and commercial networks gave merchants some agency in response to tobacco's integration within the international financial structure. Still, the extensive commercial networks established by merchants in the period prior to Ottoman bankruptcy continued to shield the commercial elite of Salonica from challenges to their export activities. The result was a deepening divide between the commercial elite of Salonica and small-time merchants of the countryside, who often became enmeshed in tobacco smuggling to avoid engagement with the Ottoman legal system or international financial networks.

Commercial Courts at Odds — The Régie Company in Drama

In October 1886 an important legal dispute was registered between a tobacco merchant named Lukas Grigoriades and the representative of the Régie Company in the Macedonian town of Drama. The case revolved around the unpaid customs duties of Grigoriades, the value of which was significant. Around 3,000 Ottoman Lira were allegedly owed on customs for tobacco sent to

[167] *Ibid.*, 20

Germany and Great Britain earlier in 1886, presumably following the auctioning season which usually took place between April and June. Having been dissatisfied with the ruling made in the Drama commercial court, Régie representatives appealed the case in Salonica, where they were represented by the influential Sephardic Jewish lawyer Haim Feraggi.[168] Furthermore, Mr. Alfred Loir, director of the Salonica branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank from 1879-1890, vouched for the Régie's claims on an official surety bond (*kefaletnâme*).[169] Mr. Loir was also listed in the Salonica Yearbook as a "foreign member" of the Chamber of Commerce (*Ticaret Odası*) alongside Isakino Fernandez-Allatini, a member of the region's most notable tobacco-exporting family, the Allatinis.[170] In Feraggi's testimony on behalf of the Régie Company, he depicted Grigoriades as a smuggler whose exploits should be considered nothing short of criminal. According to Feraggi, Grigoriades' actions deserved swift condemnation and punishment. The court's discussion of the original case in Drama and its appeal in Salonica, however, tell a story which is more nuanced than the Régie's black-and-white narrative of law-enforcing revenue collectors on the one hand and rum-running bandits on the other.

Although it is true that Grigoriades did not consider himself to be a smuggler, this is hardly the most compelling reason to interrogate such a narrative to begin with. More telling is the fact that the Administrative Council of Drama — an arm of the provincial Ottoman government which

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[168] Haim Feraggi was also listed in the 1886 Salonica Yearbook (*Salnāme-i Selānik*) as a member of the Ministry of Education. He, along with another lawyer named Yorgaki Ertas Effendi, were probably responsible for legal education in the province. *Salnāme-i Selānik IX*, 1303 [1886], 85. See also Naim Güleryüz, *Toplumsal Yaşamda Türk Yahudileri* (İstanbul: Gözlem, 2012).

[169] This *kefaletnāme*, like its counterparts in other legal cases, was produced by the Salonica Public Notary (*Selānik Mukavelāt Muharrirliği*) for the purposes of bail or surety by a third party in an appeals case. It was described in this case as "one of the conditions of appeal (*şeraʿit-i istināfiyye cümlesinden*)." Mr. Loir's signature was accompanied by that of Auguste Routh who was the bank's inspector between 1880 and 1890 before being promoted to assistant manager. John Karatzoglou, *The Imperial Ottoman Bank in Salonica, The First 25 Years: 1864-1890* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2003), 19-20.

[170] *Salnāme-i Selānik IX*, 105. The Chamber of Commerce had been established in 1882 and served to consolidate much of the wealth in Salonica within the hands of the city's elite. For more on this, see Sotirios Dimitriadis, *The Making of an Ottoman Port-City: The State, Local Elites and Urban Space in Salonika, 1870-1912* (SOAS, University of London: Unpublished Dissertation, 2013), 74.

was meant to be an arbiter of similar legal disputes — rejected the Régie's claims against Grigoriades based on two interconnected points. First, the Administrative Council in Drama argued that article no. 92 of the 1873 *Tobacco Codebook* had authorized the arbitration of cases like this by the Administrative Council itself. This much is true. Although in Istanbul the political and legal entities responsible for arbitrating these cases were unique, the *Tobacco Codebook* specified that in the provinces the Administrative Councils would determine the appropriate penalties for engaging in illegal commercial activities or avoiding customs duties.[171] Second, and stemming from the council's purported authority over legal repercussions, the original case presented in Drama against Grigoriades did not account for the fact that the Administrative Council considered his two legal representatives (Tr. *vükela*; a certain Vasilaki and Dimitri) to be "respectable members" of local society. This information was used to discount any claims against Grigoriades made by the Régie.

The Administrative Council in Drama had argued that it held jurisdiction over cases involving local tobacco merchants and that, due to the local reputation of the defendant's legal team, it would not consider the claims of the Régie against Grigoriades. Furthermore, the council argued that the Régie would need to pay for the legal expenses and market losses incurred by Grigoriades due to the delay this dispute caused in his shipping schedule. These were points that helped to sideline the Régie Company and to undermine its capacity to control tobacco exports in Macedonia. Precisely because of this threat, the Régie rejected the Drama ruling outright and appealed for its cancellation in Salonica claiming that it had been made "in contrast to the law."[172] In the appeal session, Haim Feraggi argued on behalf of the Régie Company that the company

[171] *Duhan Nizamnamesi* (Matbaa-i Āmire: Istanbul, 1391/1874), 22. Also available here: T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı, Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Yıldız Esas Evrakı (Y.EE.) 11, Group Code: 27, 1-13, 29 Zilhicce 1291.

[172] "*İʿlām-i müsteʾnif bihi usūl ve kānūnʾa muhālif bulunduğundan feshi istidʿā ʿibarettir*."

duties required it to cooperate with the Sublime Porte to ensure the complete delivery of all tobacco revenues that went uncollected. The Régie and the Sublime Porte were in league according to this logic and stood together in opposition to the Drama Administrative Council for the sake of ensuring the speedy repayment of Ottoman public debts. Based on this argument, the company was able to extract some of the customs duties owed by Grigoriades.[173]

How is it possible that a case could have such drastically different outcomes in two different commercial courts, each of which were, in theory, subjected to the same legal codes? How could the role of the Régie in Macedonia be understood in such different ways by the Drama Administrative Council and the Salonica Commercial Court? To begin answering these questions, two aspects of commercial life in Macedonia require some explanation. First, the relationship between the provincial commercial court of Salonica and its subsidiaries in the tobacco-producing towns of Macedonia must be analyzed to make sense of the boundaries and connections between them. Second, it is necessary to establish the ambitions of the Régie Company and the factors that limited its purported right to collect revenue from tobacco producers and tobacco merchants. By analyzing these aspects of the commercial and legal landscape of Macedonia, we can begin to make sense of the process whereby Macedonian tobacco entered into the purview of European finance through a convoluted set of legal interactions between the port-city of Salonica and smaller towns such as Drama and the port-city of Kavala.[174] In short, legal and financial discrepancies between provincial towns and the port-city of Salonica contributed to a culture of smuggling in the countryside. This approach puts center stage the local and regional reception of the Régie

[173] Historical Archive of Macedonia (hereafter IAM), *Selānik Ticaret Mahkemesi*/Commercial Court of Selānik (hereafter STM), *İlam Sicili* 1886-1887, Δ20.2.9, Case No. 201 (30 January 1887), 119-126.
[174] Kaleb Herman Adney **"**Institutional Finance, Interconnected Markets, and Trans-Regional Networks: The Political Economy of Ottoman Tobacco in Macedonia and Thrace (c. 1880-1900)" in Fehmi Yılmaz, ed., *Mehmet Genç anısına Osmanlı iktisat tarihi çalışmaları* (İstanbul, Türkiye: Güngören Belediyesi, 2023), 599-624.

Company and the Ottoman Public Debt Administration as an ongoing process during the 1880s, which provided opportunities for some commercial actors and significant challenges for others.

The commercial court of Salonica provided an important forum for disputes between merchants in the southern Balkans. Throughout the empire, the establishment of Ottoman commercial courts (and more broadly *nizamiyye* courts in general) was fraught with tensions between creditors, merchants, and tax farmers. The commercial court in Salonica in particular came to prominence as a legal forum during a period of warfare (the Russo-Ottoman War, c. 1877-78), sectarian tensions (especially between Greek- and Slavic-speaking Christians), and a global financial crisis (c. 1873-1875). At the same time, European banks had begun to play a more direct role in local commercial affairs by the 1870s and many local and regional commercial actors had embraced this trend by integrating their own financial resources into European financial networks and incorporating firms to pursue their commercial interests.

The 1864 establishment of the Salonica branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank was a watershed moment for commercial banking in Macedonia. The limited number of banking houses and *sarraf*s active prior were usually one-man operations and offered little in the way of large-scale investment opportunities for their clientele.[175] A partnership between Alfred Loir — the Imperial Ottoman Bank's chief accountant from 1872 to 1879 and subsequently its director from 1879 to 1890 — and the Allatini family also established a direct link between the tobacco trade and the banking sector. Mr. Loir and Hugo Allatini, the son of the tobacco merchant Solomon Allatini, were founding members of *Le Circle de Salonique* in 1873. This club served as the stomping grounds for the "city's new masters" following decades of slow-but-steady development in Macedonia and "a shift of power within the city from the old elites to the new commercial

[175] Karatzoglou, *The Imperial Ottoman Bank*, 7

class."[176] The 1888 establishment of the *Banque de Salonique* was also an important event but mostly served to solidify the Central European financial networks of the Allatini and Modiano families and to consolidate them into a corporate form. In fact, apart from the Salonica-based Allatini Brothers firm, the founding partners of this bank were all central and western European banks. Between 1888 and 1890, Mr. Loir would also serve as an administrator for the *Banque de Salonique* while simultaneously directing the Salonica branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank. In 1893, the *Banque de Salonique* came to an official agreement with the Régie Company (itself established with financing from the Imperial Ottoman Bank) to act as a Régie supplier for the domestic market while continuing to export tobacco abroad, mostly to Austria. The Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd., which was founded by Lazaro Allatini, would take over this *Banque de Salonique* contract upon the company's establishment in 1895.[177]

In contrast to these commercial elites, tobacco merchants with less robust commercial and financial networks leveraged local networks and relied on political circumstances to avoid customs duties and to circumnavigate litigation. These efforts were limited in their effectiveness unless they were coupled with significant legal representation on both the local and the regional level. For example, some merchants in predominantly Slavic-speaking parts of western Thrace used the Serbian and Bulgarian uprisings and the Russo-Ottoman War between 1877 and 1878 as an excuse not to pay their debts or respond to legal claims against them. One such merchant, Anton Velhikov (*sic.*), was required to pay for 99 bales of tobacco in 1882 which had apparently gone unaccounted for over the previous 3 years. The merchant who initially took him to court in Kavala was Hasan Akif, a prominent *Dönme* (Jewish convert to Islam) tobacco merchant in Salonica. Velhikov's

[176] Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims, and Jews, 1430-1950* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 218

[177] *E. Pech, Manuel des Sociétés Anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie (Constantinople: Gérard Frères, 1911),* 33, 137-140, and 250-252. Adney, "Tobacco and the Social Lives of Credit," 317.

appeal was denied given that he was unable to furnish a security bond (*kefaletname*), indicating that his legal networks in Kavala were limited.[178] Another case from April 1884 also involving Hasan Akif shows that legal disputes over outstanding tobacco debts took on a deeper significance after the establishment of the Régie Company in 1883.

Hasan Akif, in the 1884 case, was the legal representative of Hasan bin Abu Bakr who used Hasan Akif's factory for storage. A third party, Molla Recep, had apparently not followed through on an agreed-upon purchase agreement from 1874 (ten years prior) and Abu Bakr took him to court in order to obtain the 10,200 *kuruş* of losses associated with the now-aged tobacco, nine bales in total. In seeming recognition of the fact that Molla Recep would be unable or unwilling to pay this amount, Akif argued that recently established requirements for the Régie Company to purchase unsold tobacco on the market would result in less total debt owed by Molla Recep. In other words, Akif wanted to sell Abu Bakr's tobacco to the Régie at a lower price than its original value and collect the difference from Molla Recep. Molla Recep's legal representative, for his part, argued that the case should be transferred to the İskeçe commercial court since that was the defendant's base of operations. This was rejected on the grounds that the original transaction had taken place in Salonica and that the tobacco was still physically in that city. This case reveals two important trends. On the one hand, it underlines the desire of merchants to use the establishment of the Régie to their own advantage. On the other hand, it shows that, in the face of Régie efforts to control the tobacco industry, rural merchants like Molla Recep petitioned for hearings in the towns they lived and worked in, likely because of the personal networks they maintained therein.[179]

As shown in the second of these Hasan Akif cases and in the 1886 Grigoriades case, legal challenges to merchants that did not cooperate with the Régie Company were filtered through local

[178] IAM, STM, *İlam Sicili* 1882-1884, Δ20.2.6, Case No. 24 (26 September 1882), 28-31.
[179] IAM, STM, *İlam Sicili* 1884-1885 Δ20.2.7, Case No. 72 (8 April 1884), 72-73.

circumstances in Ottoman Macedonia. The extent to which merchants' local networks were incorporated into the legal and political apparatus of their provincial towns seems to be an important component in determining whether or not local commercial actors could resist the demands of the Régie. By the mid-1880s, Drama and Kavala had both become contentious sites of encounter between the Régie Company and export merchants. In addition, the Drama branch of the Régie Company did not function optimally throughout the first decade of its existence making the execution of its policies more difficult and strengthening the resolve of its opponents. For example, one of the branch's employees was Çaprazoğlu Iagkos Anastasiades who was accused of concealing transactions from higher-ups in the Régie administration including from the company director in Istanbul, Frank Auboyneau.[180] Although Anastasiades was listed as the company's purchasing agent in the 1886 Ottoman yearbook, this obfuscates an ongoing legal dispute between him and his employer from May 1885 to August 1886.[181] By the time of the Grigoriades' case hearing in October 1886, the Régie Company had gained a reputation in Drama as inefficient and internally fractured. By that time, Anastasiades had been removed from his post and the company was represented in Drama by a temporary employee. Perhaps because of these inefficiencies and the distrust they fostered, the Régie had replaced all of its staff in Drama besides the warehouse manager by the time the 1890 Salonica yearbook was published.[182]

Perhaps in part because of these changes to local staffing, the Régie was able to effectively halt the sale of tobacco by a group of cultivators in Drama who had refused to cooperate with the company because of its low-bid offers for their raw-leaf tobacco in 1890. As a result of the dispute, the cultivators attempted to sell their tobacco directly to the Austrian Tobacco Monopoly, which

[180] *Salnāme-i Selānik* X, 307. IAM, STM, *İlam Sicili* 1885-1886, Δ20.2.8, Case No. 67 (15 August 1885), 35-37.
[181] IAM, STM, *İlam Sicili* 1886-1887, Δ20.2.9, Case No. 11 (30 March 1887), 172-177.
[182] *Salnāme-i Selānik* X, 190.

was an active purchaser of Macedonian tobacco that worked closely with the Allatini Brothers and, after 1895, with Lazaro Allatini's Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. The justification offered by the Régie for halting the sale of this tobacco was not unlike that offered against Grigoriades four years prior. The company claimed that the Drama cultivators could not sell their tobacco to the Austrian Tobacco Monopoly because they did not have a permission slip to transport it. In contrast to previous decades, the agency of peasant cultivators in selling their tobacco freely and the ability of merchants to export without interference were being obstructed by the actions of the Régie Company in spite of its official policies in *Cahier des Charges* which theoretically allowed for free export of tobacco. The convergence of this contradictory approach on the one hand with the agreements made between the Régie Company and commercial elites in Salonica on the other hand altered the rules of the export game entirely and shaped the possibilities for legal tobacco trading throughout the late 1880s and the 1890s.

Smugglers and Consuls — The Régie Company in Kavala

On 2 September, 1886 a group of tobacco merchants wrote a petition to the Office of the Grand Vizier in Istanbul. In it, they requested that the official policy of the sultanate towards the Régie Company be reconsidered in light of the latter's recent behavior towards tobacco exporters operating in the porty city of Kavala. From the perspective of these merchants, the Régie was not acting in good faith but was, seemingly on a whim, pursuing a policy that "could serve no other purpose but to ruin us completely." The crux of the issue was paperwork much as it had been in Drama for people like Lukas Grigoriades. Permission slips and transportation fees were crucial to Régie company policy and caused a great deal of friction between local merchants, smugglers, and the Régie's surveillance teams (i.e. *Kolcu*s). Likewise, these entrepreneurial petitioners in Kavala complained that the Régie Company refused to accept the export certificates that "have always

been accepted by the imperial customs office, the administration of the Six Indirect Revenues, and even by the Régie itself until a month ago." Hyperbolic as it was, this letter emerged from a larger set of complaints by businessmen in Kavala.[183]

The establishment of the Régie Company in the Ottoman Empire in general and in the province of Salonica in particular caused a number of issues for local bureaucrats and merchants alike. Conflicts over pricing were especially volatile since the Régie Company was obligated to purchase any and all tobacco products that would be circulated within the domestic market. A merchant in Salonica referred to as Yannaki, for example, presented a petition to the commercial court on 22 April 1885 over 4,600 kilograms of snuff tobacco which the Régie was obligated to purchase. Even though Yannaki did not explicitly oppose the sale itself, he took issue with the price offered by the Régie Company and requested that an appraiser re-evaluate the tobacco to determine its true worth. Ottoman institutions, especially the commercial court, played a major role in arbitrating these sorts of disputes between Régie officials and local merchants.[184]

Conflict between the Régie Company and the business community of Kavala demonstrates a similar development there between the establishment of the company in 1883 and the turn of the century. Throughout the empire, the establishment of the Régie Company as both a creditor and a revenue collection agency was fraught from the start. In Kavala, this was especially so. Many of the merchants who operated out of Kavala during the 1880s entered into direct conflict with the Régie over export rights and with the Ottoman central government over its financial policy and sovereign debt repayment plan. Petros Vulgarides and Kallistos Theofilides are two such

[183] Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (The Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, BOA hereafter), HR.TO, 2 September 1886, No. 30, Group Code: 530, 1-4.
[184] General State Archives (Greece), the Historical Archive of Macedonia (hereafter GAK-IAM), Commercial Court of Salonica, (hereafter STM), Δ20.2.7, Case No. 14, 22 April 1885 (10 Nisan 1301), 277-279.

merchants that played a key role in opposing the Régie during the early years of its operations in Macedonia and Thrace.

Petros Vulgarides (1842-1911) functioned as the Kavala representative for the French consul from at least 1876.[185] Likewise, he represented the Russian consulate between 1868 and 1897.[186] He was active not only in the tobacco trade but, according to a commercial court record from Salonica, he also traded barley and possibly other agricultural goods during the late 1870s.[187] He had been preceded in his political post by his father-in-law Petros Vardas, who was also active in the Kavala tobacco trade and had moved from Salonica to Kavala in the early 1850s to export tobacco alongside the Allatini Brothers and Jack Abbot. His son, Konstantinos, who managed the Kavala branch of the Amsterdam-based company Tabacus, would replace his father in service to the French consulate after the latter's death in 1907. It is worth noting that the Herzog family, well-known magnates of the tobacco industry, established Tabacus in 1890.[188]

Vulgarides was, therefore, not only a French and Russian consular employee but he, along with these members of his extended family, were long-standing and prominent members of the business community in Kavala. He apparently owned land in the city as demonstrated by his sale of a plot to the Lazarine Sisters in 1909 shortly before his death.[189] As such, he was deeply invested in protecting the interests of entrepreneurs in the region who sought to develop the tobacco industry and to expand the commercial portfolios of local merchants.

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[185] Vasilēs Ritzaleos, "Ē ypothesē tou evraiou pragmatognōmona kapnōn Razon: Sykofantia aimatos kai diacheirisē kriseōn stēn Kavala tou 1894 [*The case of the Jewish tobacco expert Razon: Blood libel and risk management in Kavala, 1894*]" in *Chronika: Ekdosē tou Kentrikou Israēlitikou Symvouliou tēs Ellados* [Annals: A Publication of the Central Jewish Council of Greece], No. 213 (January-February 2008), 18-25.

[186] Christina Varda, *Sta ichnē tēs oikogeneias Varda* [*On the trail of the Vardas family*], (Athens: Unpublished Manuscript, 2011), 77.

[187] On his involvement in the Barley trade, see GAK-IAM, STM, Δ20.2.5., Case No. 97, 25 6 February 1879 (Kanun-u Sani 1294), 7.

[188] Christina Varda, *Sta ichnē tēs oikogeneias Varda*, 63.

[189] Velika Ivkovska, *An Ottoman Era Town in the Balkans: The Case Study of Kavala*, (New York: Routledge, 2021), 111-114. In reality, he did not sell the land for money; he was compensated with an alternate plot.

Vulgarides, like Vardas before him, had worked to expand access to French and Russian market networks for Ottoman merchants. His position as a local representative for the French consulate located in Salonica was in many ways an extension of his respectable reputation amongst Kavala's business community. Both Petros and his wife Maria Vulgarides were also founding members of some of the most important Greek Orthodox philanthropic societies established in Kavala in the 1870s. His political affiliations and status amongst Greek Orthodox merchants were crucial to his own commercial endeavors and to his activism in the years following the establishment of the Régie Company. It is perhaps unsurprising then that from the first year of the Régie Company's operations in the region Vulgarides was in direct conflict with the Régie over the company's right to control and mediate the exportation of local tobacco in and around Kavala. Vulgarides continued to export tobacco to Russia and to Central and Western Europe throughout the 1880s in spite of the Régie's (increasingly aggressive) opposition to him. He was not alone in doing so and he would continue to face restrictions and accusations from the Régie Company throughout the period.[190]

In a set of letters addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example, the Régie accused Vulgarides of exporting 150,000 *okka*s of tobacco without having provided a permission slip (*şehadetname*) to the Régie Company in the late summer of 1888. The Régie claimed to have a right to this permission slip based on the 1875 *Tobacco Codebook* which was printed nearly a decade before the inauguration of the company but which was designed to regulate the rules on tobacco transportation, exportation, and customs collection. Based on the fact that Vulgarides and the Régie Company officials clearly understood the jurisdictional rights of the company

[190] Iōannēs Vyzikas, *Kavala, H Mekka tou Kapnou: Kavala 19ou-20ou aiōna oi anthrōpoi tou kapnou* [*Kavala, the Mecca of tobacco: Kavala 19th and 20th century, the people of tobacco*], (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and the History of Tobacco, 2010), 37 and 67-69.

differently, the Régie defamed him claiming that his exports were conducted by "engaging in trickery" and dishonest behavior.[191] Although the French Consulate in Salonica supposedly carried out a report on his behavior, it seems that he continued to sell tobacco for years to come as would members of his family such as his son Konstantinos and, later on, his nephew-in-law Evgenios Iordanos.

Another prominent member of the tobacco-exporting business community in Kavala was the aforementioned Kallistos Theofilides who was also known as the "baron" Theofilides. Theofilides exported tobacco to the Russian Empire throughout the 1880s and enjoyed Russian subjecthood. His extraterritorial privileges and prominence in the business community of Kavala provided him with access to market networks in the Russian domains and political protection in disputes with the Ottoman government and with the Régie Company. On 5 September 1887, the Régie Company petitioned the Ottoman government to intervene in a dispute that had emerged between him (and by extension the Russian consulate) and the Régie. Both the dispute itself and the political response from the Russian and Ottoman governments shed light on the utility of extraterritoriality and the political nature of commercial activity in Kavala during the early years of European financial interference. By extension, the episode reveals more about the nature of the conflict between the Kavala business community and the sultan's public debt arrangements.

According to reports presented to the Ottoman government by the Régie, Theofilides had twice failed to submit a permission slip for tobacco exported to Saint Petersburg in 1884. On account of this failure, the Régie called Theofilides to task for this mis-step in order to justify "seizing the tobacco located at his Kavala shop in a legal manner and sealing the doors there." However, Russian consular employees (presumably with Petros Vulgarides among them)

[191] *"İkaʿ eylediği hile"* BOA, HR.H, 1 Eylül 1304 (13 September 1888), No. 21, Group Code: 83, 1-2.

apparently re-opened the doors allowing Theofilides to access his shop again. In response to this, the Régie Company reported the consulate's behavior to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which requested that the doors be locked up again to prevent Theofilides from processing or exporting his merchandise.[192] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had clearly aligned itself with the Régie.

When the Régie raised an official legal case against Theofilides, however, the commercial court in Kavala pointedly rejected it because it was "contrary to the law," which presumably meant that it was not filed in accordance with one of the stipulations for submitting a case laid out in the *Principles of Commercial Proceedings* (*Usûl-i muhakame-yi ticaret*), first published in 1861. The Régie memorandum sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that this was because two of the court's temporary members were local representatives of the Russian consulate. Whether this was the precise reason for the claimant being denied the legal procedure or whether this rejection was rooted in Theofilides' connections to other merchants actively opposed to the Régie remains unclear. In any case, the fact that the staff of the commercial court in Kavala and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Istanbul responded in completely different ways indicates a significant discrepancy between central policy and regional practice.[193] Beyond that discrepancy, Russian interference in Kavala commercial affairs echoes the response of the administrative council and the commercial court in Drama during the same time period. As in the case of Griogriades in Drama, Theofilides in Kavala relied on local political connections and export networks in eastern and central Europe to circumnavigate the dictates of the Régie.

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[192] *"Teofilidi'nin Kavala'da kain mağazası durunundaki tütünler usul ve nizami dairesinde taht-ı hacze aldırılarak mezkur-u mağazanın kapıları temhir olunduğu halde."* BOA, HR.H, 5 September 1887, No. 75, Group Code: 27, 1-2. This was not the first time that tobacco had been locked up to keep its owner from accessing it. In 1874, for example, a certain Fişekçizade Abdüllah Efendi had hired a shop-proprietor in Kavala named Shalom to store his tobacco while it dried. Because of a financial dispute between the two, Shalom sealed the doors of the shop and prevented a sale to a third party from taking place. The tobacco had since spoiled and its potential market value was lost. See GAK-IAM, STM, Δ20.2.4., Case no. 10, 23 Kanun-u Sani 1289 (4 February 1874), 8.

[193] *"Mugâyer-i nizâm olduğundan* and *mugâyeret-i nizâmiyyeye mebni."* See BOA, HR.H, 22 Eylül 1303 (4 October 1887), No. 84, Group Code: 75, 1.

Another document from 15 October 1887 provides even more details on the events in 1884 and the behavior of local officials and merchants towards the Régie. According to this letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the provincial government of Salonica, Theofilides was to ship a load of tobacco to Odessa. Whether or not this was the same tobacco that was ultimately destined for Saint Petersburg is unclear. He would first load the product onto a ship in the bay of Kavala "with the help of some armed men" [*müsellah adamlar istihdâmıyla*] and under the supervision of a Russian consular guard [*Rusya kavası*]. Régie officials, upon hearing this news from an unspecified informant, sent police officers [*zabıtadan adamlar*] to the port to confront Theofilides and the porters working on his behalf. However, by the time they arrived, the baron's men were finished loading the tobacco onto the ship. Since the document specifies that the loaded boat was a steamboat [*vapur*] this work would not be easily undone. Smaller row boats or barges [*kayık*s or *limbe*s, respectively] would have already been retired after completing their trips between the shore and the steamboat itself, which sat in deeper waters some distance from the harbor.

In fear of an outbreak of violence between the two parties, another police officer and three Ottoman gendarmes came to the scene at which time the situation seems to have de-escalated.[194] The 1886 and 1887 letters complaining of the Régie's policies in Kavala were followed by years of unrest and disputes of this sort. Likewise, the letters of complaint would not absolve these issues or prevent the Régie from continuing to intervene in export markets.

When Vulgarides and Theofilides faced accusations in 1886 and 1887 of smuggling and trickery from the Régie, their response was not to deny these accusations. Instead, as we have seen, they employed their representative consulates and appealed to the good graces of their peers in Ottoman bureaucratic entities (such as the commercial courts in Drama and Kavala) to take an

[194] *"Nizâʿ ve ihtilâf olmadığı."* BOA, DH.MKT, 3 Teşrinievvel 1303 (15 October 1887), No. 1454, Group Code: 77.

openly confrontational approach. They also cooperated with a number of other entrepreneurs in Kavala to petition the Ottoman government to intervene on their behalf and to restrict the interventions of the Régie Company. Unfortunately for them, the Régie Company proved a longstanding challenge to their commercial interests given its "participation (*iştirak*)" with the Ottoman central government and the entanglements of the Régie with the most powerful networks of Salonica and Kavala's commercial elites — the Allatinis and the Herzogs.

Kavala tobacco exporters had become critical of Régie policy for the ways the company had extended its reach into the export market by means of surveillance, customs-collection, and registration practices. More generally, merchants and cultivators in the Salonica and Edirne provinces made numerous complaints about these issues during the 1880s.[195] Vulgarides and his fellow tobacco merchants in Kavala, most of whom were affiliated in one way or another with European consulates, complained of the specifics of Régie policy and the sultanate's failure to help them secure the right to export tobacco. Indeed, their pointed critique requested economic salvation from the sultan who alone could save "the many lives which moan under the yoke of such a Society [i.e. The Régie Company] which is clearly hostile to trade, to agriculture, and to the empire's entire population." Such rhetoric doubled as a critique of the government's financial policies which prioritized obligations to foreign creditors over the successes of local merchants.[196]

This point is demonstrated more clearly in a separate letter written six months later in 1887 to the Grand Vizierate wherein Kavala's businessmen explicitly criticized the Sultan for his seeming passivity. After complaining that "We were, in fact, mistaken to address your excellency instead of avenging ourselves for inspector Schwartz's [a Régie inspector's] insult against our honor and dignity," the merchants continue: "Your excellency can not see the uprising on the

[195] See for example, BOA, DH.MKT, 28 Mart 1303 (9 April 1887), No. 1411, Group Code: 8.
[196] BOA, HR.TO, 2 September 1886, No. 30, Group Code: 530

horizon from a population defeated by the Régie" the misdeeds of which comprised a breach in the contract between the sultanate, OPDA, and the Régie Company.[197] Whereas, the Grand Vizierate's response is not readily available, documentation from the subsequent two-year period suggests that the struggle between the signatories and the Régie administration (in particular the aforementioned inspector Schwartz) continued.

In both the 1886 and 1887 petitions, the majority of the signatories belonged to the Greek Orthodox community but some Jewish merchants also signed on including members of the Benveniste and Fernandez families. Greek Orthodox signatories also included Nestor Gianaclis who operated a significant operation trading tobacco between Kavala and Egypt and Petros Vulgarides' father-in-law Petros Vardas.[198] Vulgarides and others continued to challenge the Régie over their right to export tobacco to Europe into the 1890s.

By February 1888, Theofilides received temporary permission from the Kavala commercial court to export tobacco again in spite of ongoing appeals from the Régie Company. Although Régie officials feared that this "would destroy the Régie's rights," Theofilides, Vulgarides, and others continued to face accusations of trickery and subterfuge.[199] Until at least 1892 provincial officials in Salonica reported the complaints of Theofilides to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In these complaints the "continuation of Régie transactions which are contrary to the law" were the main subject matter. Theofilides and many of his fellow tobacco merchants continued to openly challenge the jurisdictional rights of the Régie to restrict exportation well into

[197] BOA, HR.TO, 14 March 1887, No. 77, Group Code: 530
[198] Rellie Schechter, *Smoking, Culture, and Economy in the Middle East: The Egyptian Tobacco Market, 1850-2000* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2006), 27-64.
[199] BOA, DH.MKT, 11 February 1888, No. 1484, Group Code: 118, "*Müvakkat icrâ ile tütünlerin sevk ve ihrâcına mahkemeden karâr verildiği…*" and "*Reji'nin hukûkunu pâyimal edeceği…*"

the 1890s in explicit ways rather than merely by means of subterfuge.[200] Nevertheless, with the hegemony of the Régie company and its partners — the Allatinis and the Herzogs — over the tobacco trade becoming increasingly obvious, the number of smugglers reported by the Régie grew significantly in the late 1890s and into the new century.

Conflict between local merchants in Kavala and the Régie Company embodied the frustration of many tobacco merchants with the new arrangement between the Hamidian regime and its creditors. Whereas, *monsieur* Vulgarides and the *baron* Theofilides had directed their ire at the Régie itself and petitioned the Ottoman government to intervene on their behalf, other merchants sought to reduce competition by sabotaging the efforts of merchants that operated outside of their ethno-religious networks. Throughout the region, but especially in Kavala and İskeçe, the expansion of production within the industry made competition amongst merchants and entrepreneurs especially volatile. These conflicting pressures created differing models for political activism, some of which were violently separatist in nature and which reflected the larger "eastern crisis" of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire.

Conclusion

By the turn of the century, the Régie Company had clearly established itself as an important commercial actor in the political economy of Macedonia. The challenges posed by local administrative councils and commercial courts such as those in Drama and Kavala would continue but by 1895 the Régie's commercial and legal networks in Salonica were deeply integrated with those of the city's commercial elites. At first, the process by which the Régie gained limited control over the tobacco trade had been contingent on local political and commercial networks in places like Kavala and Drama. Throughout the 1880s, the company built up its own networks in Salonica

[200] BOA, BEO, 19 Teşrinisani 1308 (1 January 1892), No. 8579, Group Code: 115, "*Reji'nin mugâyer-i nizâm muʿâmelâtının devamı*."

which allowed for it to effectively appeal court cases with assistance from legal experts like Haim Feraggi and Mr. Alfred Loir. It also expanded its hold over Macedonian tobacco through agreements with commercial elites like Lazaro Allatini and Pierre Herzog. It would seem, at first glance, that efforts to limit tobacco sales in Drama and Kavala were based on the Régie's own protocols and codebooks. A diachronic analysis of the Régie's establishment in Macedonia, however, demonstrates that these only came to have an effect on the region following its alignment with elite legal and financial networks in Salonica. Through agreements with the Herzog Company in 1890, the Banque de Salonique (the Allatini Brothers' bank) in 1893, and the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. in 1895, the Régie stipulations on tobaccos cultivation, sales, and export became officially integrated with the commercial interests of the commercial elite of Salonica.[201]

Even then, given the ongoing refusal of merchants and peasants in Drama, Kavala, and other tobacco-producing towns and villages in Macedonia to cooperate with the Régie, this effect was limited. The response to Régie policy in Macedonia by merchants in Kavala and Drama for example led to an increase rather than a decrease in the number of alleged 'smugglers.' Rather than being a haphazard crime, by the late 1880s smuggling had become a category of commercial activity separating non-compliant exporters from the commercial elites of Salonica who entered into official agreements with the Régie Company.[202]

The establishment of the Régie and its multifaceted reception within eastern Macedonia gives some context for the subsequent rebellious activities of many tobacco merchants against the Régie Company. Smuggling as well as instances of violence against the Régie and its partners are indicative of dissatisfaction with the company's inequitable policies. The legal and commercial

[201] Louis Rambert, *Rapport du Directeur Général sur la séance de la Chambre des Députés du 7/20 Février 1909* (Galata: Imprimerie Gérard Frères, 1909), 29-44; E. Pech, *Manuel des Sociétés Anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Constantinople: Gérard Frères, 1911), 250-252.
[202] Adney, **"**Institutional Finance," 608-612.

landscape described here demonstrates that commercial actors developed an antagonistic relationship with the Régie in part because of tension between administrative councils, legal experts, and commercial actors in the tobacco-producing towns of Macedonia and those of commercial elites in Salonica.

The role of the Salonica commercial court as an appeals court and the presence of the province's most important financial and commercial networks there — especially those of the Ottoman Bank, the *Banque de Salonique*, and the Régie Company — created a roadmap for the Régie to challenge rural opposition to its policies and the local political and legal challenges to them in Drama and Kavala. This process was uneven and variegated but the emergence of large networks of smugglers throughout the region must be understood as reflective of the consolidation of legal and commercial power over the tobacco industry within the city of Salonica. Partly as a result of these developments, Drama and Kavala both became hubs for smuggling and for other challenges to the hegemony of the Régie and the commercial elites of Salonica. The tensions which emerged as a result tore at the social fabric of late Ottoman Macedonia and Thrace and drove wedges between the region's religious and ethnic communities including the region's Ladino-speaking Sephardic Jews, Greek- and Slavic-speaking Christians, and various Muslim communities which increasingly relied on "Turk" as a marker of ethno-religious identity.

Chapter Three

Credit Markets and Moral Economy in Ottoman Macedonia and Thrace (c. 1900-1912)

Introduction

In November 1900, the Muslim community of Drama wrote a complaint to the Grand Vizierate in Istanbul that the Régie Company, the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd., and the Oriental Tobacco Trading Company (i.e. the Herzog Company) had cooperated to offer disadvantageous lending terms to cultivators in Macedonia.[203] Such nefarious collaboration is not demonstrable in the historical record but these companies certainly controlled many of the vectors that determined pricing in the tobacco trade by the turn of the century. This control gave the impression of corruption. It may have been for related reasons that the Banque de l'Orient gained significant traction as another bank of choice amongst tobacco merchants, especially Greek merchants, in the towns and villages which supplied Kavala after 1904.[204] By 1910 and 1911, the apparent domination of the credit market and the tobacco supply chain by these three companies would result in a num-ber of complaints filed against all three parties. It also became the basis for a movement to disallow the Régie from obtaining a renewal of its thirty-year concession, which was set to expire in 1912.

This movement organized conferences in Drama and in Kavala with support from Macedonian and Thracian representatives of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).[205]

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[203] BOA, DH.MKT, 18 October 1900, No. 65, Group Code: 2429, 1. E. Pech, *Manuel des Sociétés Anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Constantinople: Gérard Frères, 1911), 34.

[204] Correspondence between Elias Eliades and Hasan Akif, among others, signifies that the Banque de l'Orient gained traction in the tobacco trade after 1904. See, for example, IAM, Τράπεζα Ανατολής, Folder No. 116, Group Code 329, pages 34 and 35: 6/19 September 1908 and 4/17 September 1908.

[205] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı* [*Proceedings of the Drama Tobacco Growers' Conference*] (Istanbul: Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası Matbaacılık Osmanlı Şirketi, 1326/1910), 10-12; *Kavala tütün kongresi: tütün meselesi hakkında ittihaz edilen mukarrerat* [Kavala Tobacco Congress: Proceedings that deal with the issue of tobacco] (Salonica: Yeni Asır Matbaası, 1327 [1909]), 1.

These efforts would have concrete results, such as an increase in the amount of loans provided to cultivators by the Ottoman Empire's agricultural bank (Ziraat Bankası).[206] However, the Balkan Wars and World War I would bring many of these discussions to a rapid halt in the context of Macedonia and Thrace, which would enter into a protracted set of wars lasting for the better part of a decade. Still, the period immediately preceding the Balkan Wars is crucial for understanding the ways that political representatives of the CUP interpreted the needs and desires of the peasantry on the one hand and the merchant class on the other. It was clear that apparent cooperation between the Régie Company, the Commercial Company, and the Herzog Company, as well as limited access to credit amongst cultivators, had become major sources of frustration in the countryside. The question that this chapter attempts to answer though is what the CUP and its constituents imagined to be potential solutions to these problems and what new political economy dynamics they saw as reasonable alternatives to the system in place during the final decade of Régie operations in Macedonia and Thrace.

The tobacco sector in the Balkans at the turn of the twentieth century was a contentious economic space as shown by recent social histories of the industry during and after Ottoman rule.[207] The 1908 Constitutional Revolution of the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP)

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[206] BOA, BEO 25 March 1912, No. 301437, Group Code: 4020, 1-2. Filiz Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan: Tütün Üretimi, Ticareti ve Reji (1883-1912)," in *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, XLIII (2014), 241

[207] Dığıroğlu, Filiz, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan: Tütün Üretimi, Ticareti ve Reji (1883-1912)," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, XLIII (2014), 227-272; Idem, *Memalik-i Osmaniye Duhanları Müşterekü'l-Menfaa Reji Şirketi: Trabzon Reji İdaresi, 1883-1914* (İstanbul, Türkiye: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2007), 61-129; Can Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912)* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 47-134; Idem, "Labor activism and the state in the Ottoman tobacco industry," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 46, no. 3 (2014), 533-551; Idem, "The Régie monopoly and tobacco workers in late Ottoman Istanbul," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 34, no.1 (2014), 206-219; Idem, "Tütün İşçileri, Tüccarlar ve Kırık Camlar: 1905 Kavala Grevi," *Toplumsal Tarih*, 213 (2011), 38-42; Hadar, Gila, "Jewish tobacco workers in Salonika: gender and family in the context of social and ethnic strife," in *Women in the Ottoman Balkans: Gender, Culture and History*, Amila Buturovic and İrvin Cemil Schick (eds.) (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), pp. 127-152; Arslan, İsmail, "19. Yüzyılda Balkanlar'da Bir Liman Şehri: Kavala," *History Studies*, 2, no. 3 (2010), 25–38; Quataert, Donald, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908:*

ensured that the sector also became a forum for policy debates regarding the future of the Ottoman economy. During the first few years of the Second Constitutional Era, those active in the tobacco sector — both peasant-cultivators and merchants — challenged policies that had privileged commercial elites and international finance for the previous three decades. In doing so, the revolution and its political aftermath revealed some of the fault lines of Ottoman society in the Balkans and the ways in which different segments of society envisioned national progress. Members of the CUP took differing positions on state-led reform policies and on the establishment and administration of financial institutions. These positions, in spite of their fundamental differences, demonstrate the common concerns of the CUP and its constituents in relation to the Ottoman tobacco sector.[208] CUP members throughout the southern Balkans engaged in a shared discourse of state-led economic development that reflected the moral economy of tobacco merchants and peasant-cultivators in the port-city of Kavala, the nearby town of Drama, and the surrounding hinterlands.[209]

The moral economy paradigm has been presented by historians and anthropologists in a variety of ways since the implementation of the concept by E.P. Thompson in his famous *Past and*

Reaction to European Economic Penetration (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 13-40; Boyar, Ebru, "Public good and private exploitation: criticism of the tobacco régie in 1909" *Oriente Moderno*, 25 (86), no. 1 (2006), 193-200; Neuburger, Mary, *Balkan Smoke: Tobacco and the Making of Modern Bulgaria* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2013), 43-107.

[208] On the tobacco sector in the Eastern Mediterranean in general, see Shechter, Rellie, *Smoking, Culture, and Economy in the Middle East: The Egyptian Tobacco Market, 1850-2000* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2006); Petmezas, Socrates, "Οι βαλκανικές κοινωνίες την εποχή του καπνού ή αλλιώς το πρόβλημα της εθιστικής εξάρτησης από ένα παγκοσμιοποιημένο προϊόν [Balkan societies in the tobacco era or the problem of being addicted to a globalized product]" in *Πρακτικά 1ου Επιστημονικού Συνεδρίου: Ο καπνός στην ιστορία: οικονομικές, κοινωνικές και πολιτισμικές προσεγγίσεις – Καβάλα, 7-9 Δεκεμβρίου 2018 [Proceedings of the 1st academic conference — tobacco in history: economic, social, and cultural approaches – Kavala, 71-9 December 2018]*, A. Palikidis, Angelos (ed.) (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and the History of Tobacco, 2020), 38-65; Carmona-Zabala, Juan, "Underfunded modernization: tobacco producers and agricultural policy in interwar Greece," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (May 2021), 191-214.

[209] *Zürra'* are referred to throughout this chapter as cultivators and peasant-cultivators interchangeably. I avoid the term peasant in favor of the more descriptive peasant-cultivator but I do refer to the peasantry when discussing *zürra'* as a coherent social group. I use 'the peasantry' in this historical context to refer to the agricultural community of the southern Balkans, which consisted predominantly of agricultural laborers of modest social status and limited economic means.

Present article "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the 18th Century." In this seminal piece from 1971, Thompson framed moral economy as "simple responses to economic stimuli" and "compulsive" interventions by an unorganized peasantry that "cannot be described as 'political' in any advanced sense," by which he meant it was not expressed through the formation of political parties.[210] In his book *Customs in Common*, Thompson elaborates on the concept to claim that it was a signifier for the "*mentalité*" or "political culture" of the working population in Edwardian and Tudor England.[211] James Scott, for his part, was largely responsible for popularizing the phrase moral economy amongst anthropologists in the late 1970s and by the 1990s was analyzing popular responses to political economy and critiques of state policy that relied on culturally constituted knowledge — much like Thompson's use of the *Annales* terminology of *mentalité*.[212] Thus, the concept of moral economy has long inhabited an ambiguous cultural space that was at once reflective of political convictions but not ideologically determined. Without attempting to clarify that ambiguity, this chapter relies on the term to describe the popular responses to the tobacco monopoly operating in the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the twentieth century and the Hamidian financial policies that accompanied it.[213]

As David Griffith has shown in the context of American tobacco, the idea that work contributes to "socially beneficial outcomes" has motivated popular responses to political

[210] Thompson, E. P. "The moral economy of the English crowd in the eighteenth century," *Past & Present*, no. 50 (1971), 76–136.
[211] Idem, *Customs in Common* (London: Penguin Books, 1993; originally published in 1991 by The Merlin Press), 260.
[212] Sivaramakrishnan, K. "Introduction to 'Moral economies, state spaces, and categorical violence,'" *American Anthropologist*, 107, no. 3 (2005), 325–26.
[213] Moral economy has had an afterlife distinct from the British Marxists and the American anthropologists that made it an intellectual institution in the 1970s. For helpful commentary on this historiography, see Brass, Tom "Moral economists, subalterns, new social movements and the (re-) emergence of a (post-) modernized (middle) peasant," *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 19 (1991), 173-205; Fontaine, Laurence, "Reconsidering the moral economy in France at the end of the eighteenth century," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft*, 26 (2019), 45–74.

economic realities.[214] The CUP, in promoting its own political agenda, reacted to and leveraged the popular attitudes of the peasantry in Drama and the merchant class in Kavala. Each of these groups had different ambitions but they shared an interest in promoting a state-led economic development model. The tobacco sector of the late Ottoman Balkans reveals that, to an extent, the developing discourse of a national economy relied on conflicting notions of economic advancement which were tied to the aspirations of local communities of merchants and peasant-cultivators. The extent to which the peasantry and the merchant class in the southern Balkans experienced the tobacco industry in political terms is not a question that this chapter addresses. It is clear though that CUP representatives attempted to leverage the experience of both groups (peasant-cultivators and merchants) to promote a state-led development program. Moral economy — understood as experiences, responses, and convictions of the peasantry and the merchant class in the southern Balkans — was central to CUP policies on state-led reform of the tobacco sector.

CUP activism in this region exemplifies the way that tobacco became part of a political debate over financial policy in the Ottoman Empire. Central to this debate was the role of the state in economic development in the region and in the empire as a whole. Congresses (Tr. *kongre*) organized by members of the CUP in both Kavala and Drama gave voice to a rising tide of criticism against the Régie Company and the financial and administrative apparatus that surrounded it.[215] Such congresses were CUP-led events organized with the aim of solving policy issues pertinent to the concerns of Muslim and Christian cultivators as well as Jewish, Christian, and Muslim merchants throughout Macedonia and Thrace. The relevant policies debated at these congresses revolved around the production and marketing of tobacco, which was one of the Ottoman Empire's

[214] Griffith, David. "The moral economy of tobacco." *American Anthropologist* 111, no. 4 (2009): 432–42.
[215] Whether or not such congresses took place in other tobacco centers such as İskeçe, Siroz, or even Salonica remains unknown. However, I have not discovered any relevant proceedings indicating that this was the case.

most valuable raw goods and the lynchpin of a major commodity chain that produced tobacco and cigarettes for global consumption.[216]

The speeches and debates which took place at these two congresses in 1910 and 1911 were a response to decades of frustration in the region with Ottoman financial policies.[217] The companies which remained relatively privileged in parallel with the expansion of the Ottoman tobacco monopoly, the Régie Company, also took a vested interest in the proceedings of both congresses. These included representatives of the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd., the prominent tobacco-exporting company of the Allatini Brothers, and the Oriental Tobacco Trading Company (i.e. the Herzog Company). Such elite firms also received significant criticism at the events themselves. In general, the proceedings demonstrate a lack of consensus over some of the commercial and financial questions about the future. Attendees disagreed about what would come after the disbanding of international financial control (IFC) as embodied in the Régie Company.[218]

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[216] Adney, Kaleb Herman, "Tobacco and the social lives of credit — global credit markets and the supply chain of oriental tobacco," in *Commodities in History: Theoretical Reflections and Empirical Case Studies*, Juan Carmona-Zabala (ed.) (Rethymno, Crete, Greece: Institute for Mediterranean Studies - IMS, 2023), pp. 299-334; Carmona-Zabala, Juan, "Four regimes of value in the history of Greek tobacco, 1871-1981," in Ibid, pp. 61-92; Lemontzoglou, Tryfonas and Juan Carmona-Zabala, "Evolution of the crop composition of Greek agriculture before EEC accession: evidence from seven representative crops in 52 districts," in *Ibid*, pp. 259-295*;* Alexis, Nikos, "From national chain(s) to global networks: competition and adaptation in the Greek cigarette industry (1950-1980)," in *Ibid*, pp. 335-366; Stergiopoulos, Dimitrios, "The establishment of EOK and state economic policy in the postwar Greek tobacco sector," in Ibid, pp. 367-398; Neuburger, *Balkan Smoke*, 1-10; Mustafa Batman, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Tütün Kaçakçıları, Kolcular ve Reji Şirketi (1883-1908)" in *Şekâvet, Hıyânet, İsyan: Geç Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Eşkıyalık*, Yalçın Çakmak and Ahmet Özcan (eds.) (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2023), pp. 115-132; Anagnostopoulou, Chrysoula, "'Βιομηχανία σιγαρέττων εν Σάμω': Όψεις της επιχειρηματικότητας του καπνεμπορικού οίκου των αδελφών Μ. και Σ. Καραθανάση στη Σάμο (1887-1916) ['Cigarette Industry in Samos': Aspects of Entrepreneurship of M. and S. Karathanassis Brothers Tobacco Company (1887-1916)]" in Πρακτικά 1ου Επιστημονικού Συνεδρίου [Proceedings of the 1st Academic Conference], 225-237.

[217] This frustration was expressed throughout the Hamidian period by economic thinkers who proposed protectionist measures and criticized foreign control of Ottoman finances. See Kılınçoğlu, Deniz, *Economics and Capitalism in the Ottoman Empire* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2015), 42-84 and 127-159.

[218] As other historians have demonstrated, earlier criticisms of the major benefactors of the tobacco industry emerged, some of which took on an anti-Semitic tone. See Ritzaleos, Vasilis, "Η υπόθεση του Εβραίου πραγματογνώμονα καπνών Ραζόν - συκοφαντία του αίματος στην Καβάλα του 1894 [The Case of the Jewish Tobacco Expert 'Razon': Blood Libel and Crisis Management in Kavala, 1894]," *Χρονικά: Έκδοση του Κεντρικού Ισραηλιτικού Συμβουλίου της Ελλάδος* [*Chronicles: Publication of the Central Jewish Agency of Greece*], No. 213 (January-February 2008), 18-25. On international financial control (IFC), see Tünçer, Ali Coşkun, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870-1914* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

Nevertheless, there was widespread discontent with the Régie Company and Ottoman financial policies in the Hamidian era and CUP representatives in both Kavala and Drama were committed to establishing state-led alternatives within the commercial and agricultural spheres.

The CUP branches that organized these congresses shared a set of rhetorical norms that were akin to what Ottoman nationalists described contemporaneously as the "national economy" (Tr. *milli iktisat*), although they did not use this phrase themselves at the congresses.[219] The notion of the national economy was not merely rhetorical but reflected the development of the system of nation-states in Europe and beyond during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[220] The political and commercial actors present at these events expressed a commitment to designing and executing a political economy for the Macedonian tobacco sector that would reflect more clearly the moral economic demands of its inhabitants. More generally, the congresses themselves became a space for sophisticated debate over financial transactions, credit mechanisms, and economic-development policy, all of which revolved around a discourse of moral economy that condemned European credit and Hamidian financial policies. At the core of the discussions held at these congresses were the roles of cultivators and merchants in strengthening and enriching the "nation" (Tr. *millet*) against alleged foreign incursion. Given that Drama was a zone of cultivation and Kavala was a center for the processing and exportation of tobacco, the ratio of emphasis on the needs of cultivators and merchants in each place was different. Nevertheless, the role of the state

[219] Aktar, Ayhan, "Economic nationalism in Turkey: the formative years, 1912-1925," *Boğaziçi Journal: Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1-2 (1996), 263-290; Idem, "Homogenising the nation, Turkifying the economy: the Turkish experience of population exchange reconsidered," in *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*, Renée Hirschon (ed.) (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), pp. 79-96; Ginio, Eyal, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and Their Aftermath (1912-1914)* (London: Oxford University Press, 2016), 183-227; Toprak, Zafer, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat: 1908-1918* [National Economy in Turkey: 1908-1918], (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1982); Çetinkaya, Doğan, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest, and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2014), 160-203.

[220] Suesse, Marvin, *The Nationalist Dilemma: A Global History of Economic Nationalism, 1776-Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 44-75.

in revitalizing the economy for the sake of both groups was a common refrain for participants at both events.

Historiographical Debates and the Tobacco Congresses

Although this chapter is not about nationalism per se, it does analyze components of a national economy discourse. In doing so, it builds on and responds to significant trends within the historiography of late Ottoman nationalism and CUP policy. Some historians have pointed out the significant ways in which the integrated global economy drew peasants and workers into new modes of political existence. Nationalism and sectarianism both became culturally acceptable modes of organizing society in part through this process. In one historian's formulation, they were born out of a "social system that was apposite" to the politicization of identity.[221] According to significant works in recent decades, nationalism took root amongst some communities in the Ottoman domains as urban industries and trans-national political movements both posed critical challenges to the notion of local rural identities. New industrial and agricultural sectors undergirded new social experiences that bolstered the conceptual apparatus of the various 'nations' to which these historical actors supposedly belonged.[222] Within the tobacco industry of the Ottoman Balkans, the agricultural and rural nature of the tobacco industry remained its defining

[221] Gelvin, James, "Modernity and its discontents: on the durability of nationalism in the Arab Middle East," *Nations and Nationalism* 5:l (1999), 74; Makdisi, Ussama, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (University of California Press, 2000), 1-14.

[222] Lyberatos, Andreas Kosmas, "The nation in the Balkan village: national politicization in mid-nineteenth-century Ottoman Thrace," *Turkish Historical Review*, 7:2 (Oct. 2016), 167-93; Öztan, Ramazan Hakkı, "Tools of revolution: global military surplus, arms dealers and smugglers in the late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908," *Past & Present*, Volume 237, Issue 1 (November 2017), 167–195; Crews, Robert, "Trafficking in evil? The global arms trade and the politics of disorder," in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, James L. Gelvin and Nile Green (eds.) (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2014), 121-142; Livanios, Dimitris, "'Conquering the souls': nationalism and Greek guerilla warfare in Ottoman Macedonia, 1904–1908," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 23 (1999), 195-221; Gingeras, Ryan, "Beyond Istanbul's 'Laz underworld': Ottoman paramilitarism and the rise of Turkish organised crime, 1908-1950," *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (August 2010), 215-230; Masters, Bruce, "The political economy of Aleppo in an age of Ottoman reform" *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 53, No. 1/2, (2010), 290-316.

features during this time while the rising tide of nationalism had been taking root in the region, albeit in fits and starts, for decades.[223]

The towns and villages that supplied the global market with oriental tobacco from Macedonia and Thrace remained multi-communal in significant ways such that Jews, Christians, and Muslims still imagined a shared future both in political and in economic terms even in the final years of Ottoman rule.[224] Still, tensions rose over the relations between religious and ethnic groups (even if impressionistic in some cases), especially in terms of how the Muslim peasantry related to non-Muslim financiers and export merchants. The proceedings of the tobacco congresses demonstrate that CUP appeals to the moral economy of the peasantry were rooted in national terms that distinguished between 'Muslim Turks' and foreign finance. At the same time, the party was theoretically and rhetorically committed to a state-led development policy that would benefit all Ottoman subjects, regardless of religious or ethnic identity. This contradiction was perhaps reflective of the ambiguity of nationality in popular terms during the late Ottoman period more generally.[225] The historiography of Ottoman nationalism has reflected that ambiguity as well. Some historians have framed late-Ottoman urban cosmopolitanism as a vector for secularism in spite of the communitarian boundaries of late Ottoman society while others have demonstrated that non-Muslims strategically vacillated between various political discourses.[226]

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[223] Furthermore, what is often framed as nationalism is a more convoluted anti-imperial form of warlordism that morphs into various competing nationalisms in the early twentieth century. See Malešević, Siniša, "Wars that make states and wars that make nations: organised violence, nationalism and state formation in the Balkans," *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie / Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (2012), 31-63; Blumi, Isa, *Reinstating the Ottomans* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 95-124.

[224] Arslan, İsmail, *Selanik'in Gölgesinde bir Sancak: Drama (1864-1913)* (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2010), 235-284.

[225] Hanley, Will, "What Ottoman Nationality Was and Was Not," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (November 2016), 277-298.

[226] Campos, Michelle, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011); Mansel, Philip, *Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010). In a different approach, Julia Phillips-Cohen has shown that some Sephardic Jews in the Ottoman Empire also actively embraced an Islamic Ottomanism when "civic" Ottomanism was inaccessible to them. See Phillips-Cohen, Julia, "Between civic and Islamic Ottomanism:

The Ottoman nation, in the moral economic discourse of tobacco cultivators and tobacco exporters in the southern Balkans, was imagined at once as a social entity exploited by European finance which deserved to take control of its destiny; a persecuted Islamic community pitted against an economic system impossibly biased towards Christian Europe; and an entrepreneurial business collective inhabiting a space between Europe and Asia with a vision for massive economic growth. In short, multiple visions of the nation and its economic potential emerged amongst tobacco merchants in the southern Balkans during the Second Constitutional Era. Such differing perspectives reflected a variety of social experiences amongst tobacco merchants, peasant-cultivators, and administrators of the CUP apparatus. They show just some of the many ways that the nation, although purported to be a social and political entity, was also economically fractured during the period in question. Repairing these fractures was the duty of the state according to CUP representatives at the congresses in Drama and in Kavala, even though they did not agree on the specifics of what the state should focus on in its policies. At the core of these differing interpretations of state responsibility was a moral argument that framed the peasantry and Ottoman merchants both as victims to the ravages of international finance. The state-led responses proposed by CUP members would hypothetically rectify this scenario.[227]

Jewish imperial citizenship in the Hamidian era," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44, no. 2 (2012), 237–55. More generally, the work of Christine Philliou has demonstrated the ways that Phanariot notables strategically leveraged their identity and resources within the changing political landscape of the nineteenth century. See Philliou, Christine, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010).

[227] Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, the centrality of the state in this discourse seems to be a feature which actively undermines the possibility of an Ottoman national economy rather than providing for its development. This is because the role of the state in supporting a national economy naturally leads to questions about what the nation is to begin with. Disagreements over what constituted the Ottoman nation dovetailed with the expansion of neighboring states such as Bulgaria and Greece (with their own state-administered national economies) thereby making a pan-communal Ottoman national economy impossible. This reality was solidified with the rising tide of forced migration and ethnic cleansing after the Balkan Wars.

It seems that representatives of the CUP attempted to engage peasant-cultivators in the expanding public sphere, wherein state policy and the ambitions of non-state actors could be reconciled with one another and redirected by the party.[228] The policies proposed at the Drama congress — the first of the two congresses — were practical attempts to address these issues couched in the terminology of pan-Ottoman nationalism with a special emphasis on the needs and aspirations of the Muslim peasantry. Whether or not the Kavala congress was actually convened as a direct response to the earlier Drama congress or not is unknown. It can be seen, however, as a response to the anti-European rhetoric of the Drama congress, which had taken aim at the Régie Company and its affiliates in Macedonia and Thrace. In the event, Kavala representatives of the CUP placed greater emphasis on the need for a coherent state policy that would allow them greater commercial freedoms. To borrow from Nadir Özbek's description of the National Defence Committee, "even though the initiative" for these congresses "came, without any doubt, from Unionist circles," they were still meant to "embody national unity."[229] Attempts to integrate provincial subjects into a participatory public sphere required that CUP representatives address their major concerns and directly respond to the perceived moral economy of tobacco cultivators. In doing so, CUP representatives toed the mark between appealing to Islamic principles and the alleged 'Turkish' identity of Balkan cultivators while promoting a coherent Ottoman patriotic identity based on cosmopolitanism and cooperation amongst Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Regardless of these variations in tone and differences in specific policy approaches, the state under the CUP leadership was presented as a driver of economic reform and an arbitrator of problematic commercial relations in the rural countryside.

[228] On the expansion of the public sphere, see Özbek, Nadir, "Defining the public sphere during the late Ottoman Empire: war, mass mobilization and the Young Turk regime (1908–18)" *Middle Eastern Studies* 43:5, 795-809.
[229] *Ibid.*, 801.

Ottoman intellectuals had been debating the question of economic development throughout the late nineteenth century. Although "national economy" had not yet been transformed into a full-fledged policy framework, protectionism and interventionism had become powerful rejoinders against the international economic and financial order in the decades preceding the CUP revolution.[230] While CUP representatives in Kavala and Drama made reference to ideas that ran parallel to this intellectual trend amongst economic thinkers in Ottoman society, within the context of the tobacco sector they also sought to settle scores between the Muslim peasantry and the Jewish and Christian financial elite of Salonica. This attempt to put the needs of the peasantry on the front burner was not, however, based on some altruistic interest in their needs or desires per se. Instead, the members of the CUP who implemented the rhetoric of an Islamic *umma* pitted against international finance did so both for the party and in pursuit of their own personal interests as tobacco merchants. Economic policy debates, therefore, were far from abstract in the wake of the CUP revolution. Proponents of Ottoman protectionism integrated rhetoric and imagery of the Muslim peasant into an idealistic roadmap of resistance to the Régie Company and international financial control.[231]

The arguments advanced by participants at the congresses in both Kavala and in Drama reflected two economic models for the post-Régie future, each with different aspirations, that emphasized the role of the state in serving the needs of tobacco merchants and cultivators. Both perspectives emphasized a rejection of the financial policies of the previous Hamidian era which had integrated the empire's most important industries and the collection of their revenues into the realm of international finance.[232] Where they differed was in their vision for state involvement

[230] Kılınçoğlu, *Economics and Capitalism*, 42-159.
[231] Tünçer, *Sovereign Debt*, 1-28 and 53-78.
[232] Birdal, Murat, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Financial Control in the Late Nineteenth Century* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010), 103-127.

within the industry in the post-Hamidian period. Unionists in both cases saw the CUP as a spearhead for invigorating the economy and establishing sovereignty over it. They both argued for interventionist policies to undermine the role of international finance and bolster the Ottoman state as the arbiter of economic relations. In Drama, this was especially pertinent to discussions over the future of the credit market and the supportive role of the state in the agricultural sector. In Kavala, the discussions centered instead on the state's economic role in collecting customs duties regardless of whether the ruling party was autocratic or constitutional.

Although the Régie Company was an important part of the congress debates, a number of other more general discussions over social relations and credit within the tobacco sector took place. In a sense, these discussions were a challenge to the political economic order which had privileged a commercial elite in Salonica for decades.[233] The proposals of the CUP representatives at each congress relied on moral arguments couched in terms of Ottoman economic development and political progress. At the core of these debates was the relationship between cultivators and merchants and the role of each within the commodity supply chain. Although space was given during both events to communicate the needs and desires of peasant-cultivators, these historical actors were, for the most part, subsumed into the rhetoric of nation-building shared with other CUP administrative and political projects. What emerged then was a curious blend of near-Marxian interpretations of the creation of surplus value and an emphasis on the centrality of merchant networks in transferring wealth back into agricultural communities. Additionally, these debates were imbricated in the CUP's broader rhetorical framing of the empire's economic standing vis-a-vis Western and Central Europe. A mainstay in this framing was the characterization of peasant-

[233] Adney, "Tobacco and the Social Lives of Credit," 299-334; *idem*, **"**Institutional Finance, Interconnected Markets, and Trans-Regional Networks: The Political Economy of Ottoman Tobacco in Macedonia and Thrace (c. 1880-1900)" in *Mehmet Genç anısına Osmanlı iktisat tarihi çalışmaları* [*Ottoman Economic History Works in memory of Mehmet Genç*], Fehmi Yılmaz (ed.) (İstanbul, Türkiye: Güngören Belediyesi, 2023), 599-624.

cultivators in Macedonia as pious Muslims who were the backbone of the empire's national character.

In spite of their central role in protecting and preserving the integrity of the nation and the economy (*iktisat*), the financial and economic policies discussed at these congresses were largely centered on local communities and their specific needs and the potential moral superiority of any future economic development plan that would destabilize international finance in the region. Debates emerged over what specific organizational form or financial entity could potentially replace the Régie Company; how the government would regulate and arbitrate the transactions between merchants and peasant-cultivators; and how creditors, especially state-run institutional banks, could provide much-needed credit for an industry which was largely cash-poor. On all of these points, tangible policy changes were introduced to improve the efficiency of tobacco exportation in general and to improve the lives of the peasantry in particular. In Drama, however, the latter was emphasized while in Kavala, CUP representatives and merchants focused more of their attention on the former.

"The government and the nation are not such different things"[234] — Rıza Bey, Tahsin Bey, and the Drama Tobacco Growers' Congress of 1910

The CUP's efforts to improve economic and financial policy in Macedonia required extensive discussion of the tobacco sector given its outsized role in the regional economy of Selânik, Edirne, and throughout the southern Balkans more generally. CUP organizers of tobacco congresses in the second constitutional era emphasized the agricultural nature of the Ottoman Empire in order to appeal to the majority of congress attendees who came from rural areas. At the Drama congress, the problems which afflicted cultivators took center stage. The CUP leadership

[234] "Hükümet ve millet başka başka şeyler değildir." *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 8.

that framed tobacco reforms as a solution to the problems of the peasantry also had its own interest in undermining the contemporaneous political economy of tobacco.

Rıza Bey and Tahsin Bey were elected (supposedly through popular vote) as president and vice president of the Drama congress, respectively. Their election was the foundation for a concerted effort to secure popular support for the state-led development of the tobacco sector under CUP leadership.[235] Their vision gained traction amongst peasant-cultivators and some small-scale merchants partly because they presented government and national interests as overlapping and mutually supportive components of a coherent policy. In the words of Tahsin Bey, the administrative governor (*mütassarıf*) of Drama: "in order to become wealthy, the government of course wants the people to be wealthy."[236] As in other policy decisions — such as with the abolition of an imperial surveillance network — distancing the CUP from any and all policies that mirrored those of the Hamidian regime was of crucial importance to the CUP organizers of the Drama congress.[237] This meant that appeals to the interests and the moral convictions of the peasantry, regardless of their sincerity, were part of a strategic effort to recruit popular support for the party.

The Drama Tobacco Congress took place in August 1910 when both cultivators and merchants were anxious about the future of the industry due to the turbulent economic realities of the preceding decades. According to the introduction for the proceedings of the congress, the town of Drama hosted this two-day event "on account of its centrality to the tobacco merchants' districts." The event had been organized to debate the future of the tobacco industry as a whole and to propose alternatives to the troubled social relations within the industry. Drama, which is situated around 35 kilometers to the northwest of the port-city of Kavala, had become a major site

[235] *Ibid*., 16.
[236] "Hükümet zengin olmak için ahalinin tabiʿi zengin olmasını ister." *Ibid*., 9.
[237] Akıncı, Arda, "'We do not want spies anymore': the abolition of spying after the Young Turk revolution," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Spring 2022), 231-254.

for tobacco cultivation and processing thanks to the many tobacco-producing villages which surrounded it. It was also a major supplier to foreign markets via Kavala by the beginning of the twentieth century. At the same time, the CUP had a significant foothold in Drama, Kavala, and nearby Serres and İskeçe. As a result, the aforementioned Tahsin Bey and the member of parliament Dramalı Rıza Bey hosted the event at the CUP headquarters in Drama. Representatives for merchant communities and for peasant-cultivators in all of the major tobacco-producing towns and villages of the Edirne, Selanik, and Kosovo provinces were present and a number of press officials reported on the discussions for reading audiences in Istanbul and Salonica.[238]

To the mind of Tahsin Bey, the intent of such a gathering was to arbitrate the tensions that had emerged between tobacco cultivators (*zürrāʿ*) and merchants (*tüccar*). To justify and make sense of this arbitration process, he presented responsible and efficient processing of raw goods, especially tobacco, as key to "both the disbursement and trade of the product as well as to ensuring the felicity of the nation." In this way, as a supposedly "neutral" party, the government was well-positioned to pursue its primary goal of "eliminating misunderstandings" which led to drawn-out legal battles between the various parties involved in harvesting, processing, and marketing tobacco. Furthermore, within this rhetorical framing, Tahsin Bey presented the "government" and the "nation" as integral parts of a political whole that fundamentally needed to pursue a unified economic strategy in order to make the most of this profitable yet fractured industry. In seeking out such a strategy, he presented "the harmony between supply and demand" as "the balancing scale for evaluating the price of tobacco." This may have been a reference to Rıza Bey's earlier claims made in parliamentary sessions against the Régie Company for not acting in accordance with the "principles of economy." Rıza Bey specifically made this claim when the Régie

[238] "Tütüncü kazalarına vazʿiyet ve merkeziyet iʿtibar ile Drama'da." *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 3-7.

complained of seasonal prices but refused to request a third-party arbiter (*mihman*) to establish a fair price based on the quality of that year's tobacco. According to Rıza Bey, this refusal constituted negligence of the Régie's duties as specified in its own policies. Tahsin Bey's claims about the cooperation between the state, as a "non-partisan" entity (*bi-taraf*), and its citizens reflect a commitment to state-led economic interventionism.[239]

While Tahsin Bey remained relatively diplomatic in his approach, Rıza Bey, the Drama Member of Parliament who helped organize the conference spoke in decidedly more militaristic terms. Invoking the concept of "economic warfare," Rıza Bey called for a strengthening of the political and economic weaponry of the Ottoman nation in order to battle against foreign firms which sought to dominate the tobacco industry.[240] More specifically, Rıza Bey called to mind a

[239] Boyar, "Public Good and Private Exploitation," 195; "Talep ile ʿarz arasındaki ahenk tütünün takdir fiyatına mizandır." *Ibid*., 10.

[240] Far from being an outlier, Rıza Bey was building on a well-established concept in CUP circles by referencing the need to engage in economic warfare. See Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*, 111-119; Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat*, 183-226; Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat*, 69-128; Os, Nicole A.N.M. van, "From Conspicuous to Conscious Consumers: Ottoman Muslim Women, the Mamulat-ı Dahiliye İstihlakı Kadınlar Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi, and the National Economy," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 6, no. 2 (2019): 113–30; Üngör, Uğur Ümit, and Eric Lohr, "Economic Nationalism, Confiscation, and Genocide: A Comparison of the Ottoman and Russian Empires during World War I," in *Journal of Modern European History / Zeitschrift Für Moderne Europäische Geschichte / Revue d'histoire Européenne Contemporaine* 12, no. 4 (2014): 500–522. Economic warfare was not exclusively the domain of Turkish nationalists. See Tasos Kostopoulos, "'Land to the Tiller': On the Neglected Agrarian Component of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement, 1893–1912," *Turkish Historical Review* 7 (2016): 134–166. Economic warfare was also not limited to the rhetorical sphere for the late Ottoman Empire, in which banking became a theoretical tool amongst Islamic financial reformers as well. See Michael O'Sullivan, "Paper Currency, Banking, and Islamic Monetary Debates in Late Ottoman and Early Saudi Arabia," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 63 (2020): 243–285; Conlin, Jonathan, "Debt, Diplomacy and Dreadnoughts: The National Bank of Turkey, 1909-1919," in *Middle Eastern Studies* 52, no. 3 (2016): 525–45. For general background on Ottoman economic policies, see Fleet, Kate. "Ottoman Commercial History." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History.* 28 Jun. 2021; Adney, Kaleb Herman, and Michael O'Sullivan. "Capitalism, Growth, and Social Relations in the Middle East: 1869–1945." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History.* 23 Aug. 2023; Chaudhry, Kiren Aziz. *The Price of Wealth: Economies and Institutions in the Middle East* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Davidova, Evguenia, ed. *Wealth in the Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Balkans: A Socio-Economic History*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016; Pamuk, Şevket. *Uneven Centuries: Economic Development of Turkey since 1820*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019; Tuncer, Ali Çoşkun. *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870–1914*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015; Onur Yıldırım, "Piyasalar ve Kurumlar: Esnaf Loncaları," in *İktisat Tarihinin Dönüşü: Yeni Yaklaşımlar ve Tartışmalar*, ed. Ulas Karakoç and Alp Yücel Kaya (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2021), 271–302. For more on trade wars and economic warfare in a macrohistorical sense, see Oermann, Nils Ole, and Hans-Jürgen Wolff, *Trade Wars: Past and Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 1-54; Nicholas Mulder, *The Economic Weapon: The Rise of Sanctions as a Tool of Modern War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022). Although not the kind of economic warfare which relies on civil

recent speech made in parliament in which "the Assembly of the Ottoman Navy," which had only recently been constituted, was presented as a policy response to the conviction that "peace is armed and war is the result of being unarmed." Here Rıza Bey presented the ability of the state to protect its citizens as a matter of geopolitical strategy and the economic sphere as one of the many battlefields for control over resources and wealth within the empire. The state, in this formulation, was absolutely responsible for directing economic development and financial reform. As such, "preserving and safeguarding the well-protected domains [i.e. Ottoman territory] from foreign aggression and expected interference" were for him "national duties" not just in terms of military strength but also economically.[241] Foreigners, for both Tahsin Bey and Rıza Bey, constituted a nebulous category within this paradigm. The term seemingly referred both to European financiers and to local commercial elites who were affiliated with foreign financial entities regardless of their place of birth or origin. Economic development and economic warfare had both become rhetorical devices designed to promote commercial networks of merchants and suppliers affiliated with the Committee for Union and Progress. Furthermore, the state under CUP leadership was presented as the entity that would lead the charge for nationalization of the tobacco industry through direct intervention in the credit and commodity markets of the southern Balkans.

Many of the social tensions in the region were presented during this two-day event as the natural result of the troubled policies of the Régie Company and the Ottoman government over the previous three decades. However, what emerged from the debates of the congress itself were conflicting ideas about how to fashion an economic future for Macedonian and Thracian society

participation as discussed in this chapter, Andreäs Riedlmayer still provides insights into the kind of trade wars that the Ottomans engaged in during earlier centuries. Andreäs Riedlmayer, "Ottoman-Safavid Relations and the Anatolian Trade Routes: 1603–1618," Turkish Studies Association Bulletin 5, no. 1 (March 1981), 69-128.

[241] "Donanma cemiyetinin maksad teessüsü sülh müsellah, harb gayri müsellah esaslarına müstenittir" and "Memalik-i mahruse-i Osmaniye-yi taʿarruzat-i hariciyeden ve müdahalat-i melhuzeden muhafaza ve sıyanet fera'iz-i milliye." *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 12-13.

that would benefit all of its members. The discussions, although practically rooted in the political economy of tobacco, came to pit differing notions of the Ottoman nation against one another. On the one hand, Rıza Bey presented economic warfare as essential to the expulsion of European influence and control. On the other hand, export merchants, many of whom were well-connected with central and western European market networks and/or enjoyed political privileges because of their European connections, considered economic development via profiteering to be mutually beneficial to both peasant-cultivators and to their own commercial interests.

Daoud Levi, son of the famous journalist and publisher Sa'adi Besalel a-Levi, wrote for the *Journal de Salonique* on 14 August 1910 of the preparations underway for the congress which was set to convene the following day.[242] "The town of Drama appears quite lively in preparation for the Tobacco Growers' Conference, which is to open tomorrow (Sunday); a huge crowd of residents from all of the *sancak*'s major towns have arrived here. The few hotels of the town are refusing people which the local inhabitants, famous for their hospitable spirit, are receiving in their homes." The organizers, namely Tahsin Bey and Rıza Bey, were to be praised in Levy's estimation for their selfless focus on developing the tobacco industry and improving the lives of the rural population. In the case of Tahsin Bey, Daoud saw his allegedly democratic and progressive approach to politics as worthy of emulation, adding "*Ab uno disce omnes*."[243] Levi reported that, by a measure of 33 votes, Riza Bey was elected president and Tahsin Bey was elected vice-president by a measure of 31 votes.[244]

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[242] See, *A Jewish Voice from Ottoman Salonica: The Ladino Memoir of Sa'adi Besalel a-Levi*, Aron Rodrigue and Sarah Abrevaya Stein (eds.), Translation, Transliteration, and Glossary by Isaac Jerusalmi (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).

[243] This alleged Virgilian quote is meant to convey learning of a general principle from a specific instance. However, here it seems to be used to describe Tahsin Bey as worthy of emulation. In other words, it seems to be intended literally as "from one learn all." In any case, it is rhetorically tied to Daoud Bey's conviction that the CUP leadership in Drama was pursuing the betterment of society as a whole by placing the needs of the peasantry at the forefront of its policies.

[244] *Journal de Salonique*, 14 and 16 August 1910.

Left out from Daoud Levi's account was Rıza Bey's own background in the tobacco trade. This was a significant part of Rıza Bey's political formation and a major motivating factor for the active role he came to play in criticizing the Régie Company and Ottoman financial policy vis-a-vis its international creditors. According to an official announcement printed in Greek and both signed and sealed by four business partners in Drama — including Rıza Bey, Raif Bey and the latter's two sons — the Raif Bey Sons and Rıza Bey company was founded in 1898 for local business in trade and agriculture.[245] Throughout the 1890s, he had apparently worked extensively with the M.L. Herzog Company (also known as the Oriental Tobacco Trading Company), providing it with high quality tobacco from his own çiftlik in Kavala until a falling out over pricing in 1901-1902. He had also been vocal within parliamentary proceedings about the alleged corruption of the Régie Company in Drama and the surrounding region and in 1909 he had appealed for its abolishment to the Minister of Finance.[246] In particular, he claimed that it had fallen short of its responsibilities to local peasant-cultivators in terms of lending, warehouse construction, and purchasing tobacco at wholesale (*ikrazat, inşaat, ve mübayaat*).[247]

A number of other important contextual details are absent from Levi's account of the congress on the pages of the *Journal de Salonique*. Among these are the fact that most of the participants were nominally Muslim (nearly 80%) and represented "cultivators" (nearly 89%) — itself a vague category that encompassed families engaged in agricultural labor as well as *çiftlik* owners and absentee landlords — rather than trading houses or export merchants.[248] Among the companies and merchants represented were the M.L. Herzog Company, the Commercial Company

[245] Ιστορικό Αρχείο Μακεδονίας (Historical Archive of Macedonia, hereafter IAM); AEE TRAP 1.01. 202 — 1 August 1898.
[246] *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, No. 1, Session 1, Vol. 4 (1909).
[247] Boyar, "Public Good and Private Exploitation," 194-199.
[248] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 4-6

of Salonica, and Haci İbrahimpaşazade Hüseyin Hüsnü from Kavala; Elias Eliades and a few others from İskeçe; and the Drama director for the Régie Company, Angelides Effendi. Immediately, it is clear from this information that Rıza Bey had some personal grievances to air within the context of the congress itself against the Régie and its affiliates. In addition, the framing of the event as a forum to address disputes between "local" Muslim cultivators and "foreign" merchants was clearly polemical and confrontational given that many of the merchants active in the region were Ottoman subjects with connections to central or western Europe. These factors contributed to making the congress a forum for promoting a type of Ottomanism that called for cooperation amongst its communities but which highlighted the centrality of Islam, agricultural labor, and Turkish identity to the nation-building project. Indeed, references to "economic warfare" for the good of the "nation" are sprinkled throughout the text while the value of labor was framed in explicitly Islamic terms.[249]

Rıza Bey's centrality to the congress in Drama in 1910 reflects his vociferous opposition to the Régie Company and its policies in Macedonia and Thrace. The year beforehand, in 1909, he had raised a number of complaints within parliament against the company over alleged abuses of its privileges as the domestic monopoly holder. In that context, Rıza Bey made a forceful argument for reorganizing the tobacco sector such that no international financial entity was privileged over

[249] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 4-6 and 10; Rıza Bey opened his speech at the congress with a line in Arabic from Surat an-Najm in the Quran — "اَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْاِنْسَانِ اِلاَّ مَا سَعٰى" (En. "Each person will only have what they strive towards"). He went on to argue that human labor had instilled tobacco with value and granted Macedonia and Thrace a source of immeasurable wealth. Perhaps knowing that his audience was made up of both revolutionary unionists and a sizable number of religious counter-revolutionaries, this Quranic reference is hardly surprising. In using it, he explicitly advocated for a form of "economic warfare" which would protect the interests of Ottoman Muslims in the tobacco-producing regions of the southern Balkans against European financial control. On the counter-revolution in Siroz and Drama, the archival collection of Angelos Anninos is especially revelatory. See Άγγελος Άννινος (Angelos Anninos), ΕΛΙΑ 3/97, Folder 2.5, Εκθέσεις και αναφορές διαφόρων (1891-1909) [Various Reports and References (1891-1909)], in particular, sub-folder 3 has a collection of documents related to an Islamic students' movement which took root in the Macedonian town of Siroz (contemporary Serres) after the revolution of the Committee for Union and Progress.

and above the needs of local tobacco cultivators and traders. Nevertheless, the congress in 1910 was intended to "gather both parties [i.e. merchants and cultivators] in one place" to find resolution over the misunderstandings and the many points of contention between them.[250] His criticism of the Régie Company and his turbulent relationship with the Herzog Company did not prevent Rıza Bey from recognizing the important role that exporters played in creating international demand for local oriental tobacco, or in the words of Tahsin Bey: "We are of course indebted to the merchants since they are the ones who advertise Ottoman tobacco and introduce [it] to Europe."[251] Nevertheless, Rıza Bey's comments were to illuminate the experience of peasant-cultivators and find ways of satisfying their primary demands and, in doing so, recruit a broader popular support base for the CUP. It is true, as shown in the archival record mentioned above, and as argued by Ebru Boyar, that Rıza Bey condemned the Régie in part due to his own "personal experiences" with the Régie and the Herzog companies.[252] However, the proceedings of the Drama congress also demonstrate his ambition for the CUP to pursue a policy of financial interventionism.

The congress gave a forum for "cultivators" — which as mentioned above was a category that included representatives of the agricultural communities of the Selânik, Edirne, and Kosova vilayets — and merchants to express their grievances. Cultivators, for their part, made eight demands at the Drama congress that were meant to improve the efficiency of tobacco cultivation, sales, and exportation. These eight demands can be grouped into three main categories. First, cultivators complained of various inconsistencies in their transactions with merchants. These included discrepancies in the units of measurement used to purchase tobacco and disputes between local systems for measuring weight and that used by the Régie itself. Second, they complained of

[250] "Tarafeynin bir arada toplanmasi." *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 8.
[251] "Biz tüccara tabiʿi medyunuz. Zira osmanlı tütünlerini iʿlan ettiren, Avrupa'ya tanıttıranlar bu tüccardır." *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 9-10.
[252] Boyar, "Public Good and Private Exploitation," 200.

processes which contributed to spoilage of tobacco. Most of these had to do with storage and transportation, which were processes that cultivators for the most part had little control over but which they could still be held accountable for when disputes arose over the quality of the tobacco delivered during transactions with merchants and lenders with whom they were contractually obligated. At the heart of this particular issue was the point of delivery; the parties agreed that cultivators' homes could operate as the point of delivery provided that three separate inspections of the tobacco, by both government representatives and merchants, take place to objectively determine its weight and quality.[253]

Third, standardization of the relationship between debtors and creditors in the tobacco sector was a crucial feature of cultivators' demands. Attendees successfully proposed the explicit acknowledgement in writing by both cultivators and merchants of the legal framework and financial ramifications of their transactions. This included the establishment of clear and concise rules to be printed in each agreement made between cultivators and purchasing agents as well as the production of a receipt upon each purchase made. More important than putting these points in writing was the establishment of standards that would apply to the terms of agreement between cultivators who borrowed from merchants with their future crops as collateral. Given that advance purchases of this sort were common practice and they had led to a number of disputes between cultivators and tobacco companies, including the Commercial Company and the Régie Company, this emerged as a point of contention between merchants and peasant-cultivators within the congress proceedings.

An indication of how important the resolution of this last issue was to both merchants and cultivators was the fact that it took up multiple sessions over the two-day period of the congress.

[253] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 16-25.

Other issues discussed at the congress were resolved relatively quickly and usually within a single session. The published proceedings describe the credit advances as "the core of the tobacco trade."[254] Multiple factors complicated these transactions including routine disputes over the quality of the tobacco which was eventually delivered in fulfillment of agricultural credit agreements. As Can Nacar and others have demonstrated, these disputes coincided with price gouging on the part of merchants in early twentieth-century Iskeçe and Kavala thus compounding the issue and emphasizing its importance within the context of the second constitutional period.[255] According to Murat Birdal, the Régie replaced all other credit arrangements within the Ottoman tobacco sector when it was established in 1883.[256] But, at least in Macedonia and Thrace, this was not the case. Other credit arrangements continued to coexist alongside Régie advances as the tobacco congresses of 1910 and 1911 make clear. Ebru Boyar likewise demonstrates that non-Régie *pey* (i.e. advance payments), which contracted peasant-cultivators to deliver their product in future, accounted for over ten times the amount of annual credit paid to cultivators by the Régie itself. In both the Drama and the Kavala congresses, merchants and cultivators discussed alternative arrangements that could replace the Régie while also allowing cultivators and merchants to avoid "usurers."[257] A common theme in these proposals though was direct state intervention in the credit market.

Another related issue was the complicated relationship between auctioning and credit in the tobacco sector. According to the proceedings of the Drama Tobacco Congress, and as confirmed by documentation on seasonal tobacco auctioning in the early 1920s, merchants would

[254] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 27.
[255] Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 80-93; Nacar, "Labor Activism and the State," 533-551; Nacar, "Tütün İşçileri, Tüccarlar ve Kırık Camlar," 38-42; Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan," 236-250.
[256] Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt*, 136.
[257] Boyar, "Public Good and Private Exploitation," 195.

often purchase loose-leaf tobacco directly from peasant-cultivators in the early spring after that tobacco had cured over the winter from the previous harvest.[258] This loose-leaf tobacco was described as "unbound" tobacco (Tr. *açık*; literally "open") and was highly sought after by merchants whose bidding wars elevated prices during the purchasing season. A second round of purchases took place later in the year, during the summer and fall, in which contracted tobacco was delivered to purchasing agents in fulfillment of agreements made in the previous year(s). This second round of seasonal purchases consisted of the trade in "contracted" tobaccos (Tr. *peyli*) and often was more contentious than that of the spring season since disputes over the quality of that tobacco were baked into the credit arrangements made earlier on. While merchants purchased *açık* tobacco at the prices arranged during the auction season, they looked for reasons to devalue *peyli* tobacco later in the year. This allowed them to leverage their agreements with cultivators and maximize the discrepancy between its exchange value on the international market while minimizing the actual amount spent at auction. This had been a source of contention for years. Although it was difficult to imagine the tobacco industry functioning without advanced payments given the cash-poor nature of Macedonian agriculture, attendees of the congress made suggestions to circumnavigate this problem.[259]

As an example, a group of attending merchants and cultivators from the village of Pravişte (Gr. Pravi; later Eleftheroupoli) suggested "the complete removal of the principle of *pey* (or advanced deposit) which is the reason for a cultivator's product to leave his hands without an

[258] Correspondence between Judah and Shemtov Perahia, who worked for the Commercial Company in Xanthi and Drama during the Greek-Turkish population exchange, show that seasonal bidding wars took place over the price of loose-leaf tobacco. For example, Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Commercial Co. (Salonica), 6 April 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection (JPC), Ben Zvi Institute (BZI) and Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Commercial Co. (Salonica), 14 April 1923, folder 7, box 8, JPC, BZI.
[259] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 26-30.

agreement over the true value of his tobacco."[260] The actual value of the future tobacco crop could not be determined until the crop itself was delivered, at which point each party was incentivized to claim that it was worth more or less than the original amount agreed upon. In addition, peasant-cultivators at the congress suggested the explicit printing of all terms of agreement made between merchants and cultivators at auction in order to mitigate any misunderstandings or disputes over the value of loose-leaf tobacco. The most ambitious suggestion, however, was for the establishment of a state-run joint-stock company which would fund the operations of peasant-cultivators and administer the sale of raw tobacco to export merchants. This suggestion, which gained much popular support amongst attendees of the Drama congress, moved beyond the scope of individual agreements made between cultivators and the merchants and/or creditors that they transacted with. The goal was apparently to implement systemic improvements to the credit markets available in the tobacco-producing hinterlands of Macedonia and Thrace. At the same time, suggestions for such changes to the financial infrastructure of the region occupied an important place within discussions of economic development more generally during the entirety of the Second Constitutional Period. The main question which remained relevant after the conclusion of the Drama congress, therefore, was whether such a project would indeed be beneficial to the critical mass of tobacco producers in the region, not to mention the merchants who exported their product. For that reason, debate over this issue continued in the following two years before the close of Ottoman imperial rule in the Balkans and took center stage in the Kavala Tobacco Congress of 1911.

"The thing which will advance agriculture, industry, and trade is competition"[261] — Kavalalı Hüseyin Hüsnü, Evgenios Iordanou, and the Kavala Tobacco Congress of 1911

[260] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 83-87.
[261] *Kavala Tütün Kongresi: Tütün Meselesi Hakkında İttihaz Edilen Mukarrerat* [*Kavala tobacco congress: proceedings that deal with the issue of tobacco*] (Salonica: Yeni Asır Matbaası, 1327 [1909]), 4.

The Kavala Tobacco Congress took place less than a year after the Drama congress in April 1911 and, like the Drama congress, was organized and hosted by the Committee for Union and Progress, this time by its Kavala branch. The men who were elected "by secret vote" as president and vice president were Ağa Bey of Drama and Hüseyn Hüsnü of Kavala. They were both CUP members as one would expect but they were not necessarily of the same mentality as Rıza Bey and Tahsin Bey in terms of their vision for economic development. While the relations between merchants and cultivators were certainly highlighted at this second congress – much as they had been at the first – the most thoroughly discussed issue was the role played by the Régie Company. Its role as the domestic monopoly holder allowed it to control a great deal of tobacco production and sales in Ottoman domains but did not prevent the most prominent exporters, such as the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd and the Oriental Tobacco Trading Company, from exporting tobacco to European markets. With the 30-year agreement between the Ottoman government, the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, and the Régie Company set to expire in 1913, the Kavala conference attendees sought to establish an alternative that would serve "to ensure the felicity of hundreds of thousands of compatriots (*vatandaş*) who toil… and to increase the wealth and esteem of the nation's treasury (*hazine-i millet*)." With the proceedings of the Drama congress in recent memory, the congress attendees considered methods of rectifying the interests of the state and the "nation" as separate entities.[262] Still, participants considered the role of the state to be crucial to economic development, albeit in a more restricted manner than their Drama counterparts.

The Kavala Tobacco Congress was hosted in Kavala because of the city's centrality within the supply chain of oriental tobacco, namely at the processing and exportation stages. Similar to

[262] *Ibid*., 1.

proceedings at the Drama congress, each district had a committee of merchants and agricultural representatives which had penned letters voicing their demands for new policies in a future with no domestic tobacco monopoly. It was taken for granted throughout all of the reports presented and proceedings recorded at the conference that none of the attendees was in favor of renewing the Régie's contract after it expired in 1913. In the words of Adil Bey, one of the Kavala merchants present, anyone who might advocate for renewing the contract of the Régie Company "must be blind" not to see its abolition as "the correct course of action." Furthermore, unlike at the earlier Drama congress, there was no Régie representative at the Kavala congress indicating that the company saw no reason to participate in an event so openly hostile to its operations.[263]

At the start of the proceedings, representatives were encouraged to share the content of the letters and reports they had prepared. Although, according to the proceedings, letters from Pravişte, Drama, and Kavala representatives were all read to the attendees, only the letters written by the Drama and Kavala representatives are included in the written proceedings. In any case, the extant letters and the deliberations during the congress itself reveal a great deal about the aspirations of Kavala merchants. Both the Drama congress and the Kavala congress hosted debates over cultivators' access to credit in a hypothetical post-Régie era. The Kavala congress, for its part, also centered around implementing a sustainable policy for customs collection that would allow lending and auctioning to continue while benefiting the state treasury and the merchants of Kavala and the surrounding region.

The arguments of both agricultural and merchant representatives at the Kavala congress were based on claims that the value of tobacco had the potential to regenerate the national treasury. The agricultural representatives from Drama, for example, wrote that "the tobacco issue occupies

[263] *Ibid*., 4.

the most important place in the social and economic life of our land" and demanded that the new political regime of the Committee for Union and Progress ensure that cultivation and industrial production be unhindered by economic favoritism, restrictions to enterprise, or cronyism.[264] Others emphasized the centrality of agricultural labor to the tobacco sector more specifically and the necessity of dependable credit supplies to facilitate this labor. Calling to mind the rhetoric of Rıza Bey from the Drama congress, the Pravişte agricultural representative Mustafa Bey claimed that "Agriculture is the mother of the tobacco trade. As for cultivators, they need money to cultivate tobacco."[265] It was with this explanation that Mustafa Bey took his position on the contentious issue of the credit market available to cultivators and the role of the state in reforming it. Needing money was an explicit reference to the limited credit and uneven terms of lending within the industry. Mustafa Bey, in short, wanted to see the establishment of a financial entity of some sort that would allow the state to provide direct funding to cultivators in place of banks, private lenders, and opportunistic merchants. Many attendees, however, disagreed with this approach or at least downplayed its importance within the grand scheme of reform in the tobacco sector.

An alternative argument, presented on the first day of the congress by Evgenios Iordanou, framed the Régie Company and any state monopoly or state-led development efforts as a hindrance to the economic vitality of the empire as a whole. In particular, Iordanou claimed that the reorganization of the tobacco industry around the pre-Régie banderole system – a revenue-collection scheme which revolved around state-issued packaging – would redeem the state treasury from much of its financial duress. Instead of relying on the state to generate streams of fair credit arrangements for cultivators, this system would supposedly rely on the tobacco sector to generate revenue for the state instead. By requesting that the banderole system be revived, he and his

[264] *Ibid*., 4.
[265] *Ibid*., 3.

supporters claimed that the CUP could simplify the process by which customs were collected and prevent the numerous paperwork discrepancies which plagued the industry as whole and led to numerous court cases. The banderole system itself, as Murat Birdal has explained, presented a relatively simplistic process by which tobacco was wrapped and sealed with a casing — a banderole — to be provided by the local Ottoman administration. As part of this system, the *mürüriyye*, or transportation fee on tobacco, was imposed only on tobacco destined for the domestic market but not on exports. Re-establishing this practice would be beneficial in obvious ways to export merchants given the Régie requirements for a permission slip (*şehadetname*) and payment of the *mürüriyye* fee even on exported tobacco between 1883 and 1912.[266]

A separate letter written on behalf of Kavala-based merchants was equally clear on the banderole issue, claiming that "If the banderole system had remained current until now, the benefits to the nation and to the government would surely be greater than those experienced at present."[267] It was precisely because of the establishment of the monopoly that, according to the authors, around 750,000 Ottoman Lira were no longer in circulation within the Ottoman economy but benefited firms that operated in Egypt and in Europe instead. The reinstatement of the banderole system, they argued, would lower the transaction costs for local merchants making it "the most beneficial means of improving this situation for the nation." To make its case more convincing, the committee of Kavala merchants presented a detailed chart demonstrating the estimated 2.41 million Ottoman Lira which the government would collect on raw tobacco and cigarettes under the banderole system. This was likely poignant for attendees given the large percentage of tobacco revenues which were still earmarked on a yearly basis for the Ottoman

[266] Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt*, 130-165.
[267] *Kavala Tütün Kongresi*, 2-4.

Public Debt Administration and for the Régie Company in accordance with the Régie's original 1883 contract.[268]

This document was signed by Iordanou and its other authors, one of whom was Hüseyin Hüsnü, who had already become a significant actor within the Kavala tobacco industry and would take on a central administrative role for the Ottoman government during the Greek-Turkish population exchange in the following decade. In late March 1910, for example, Hüsnü had been instrumental in establishing the *Kavala Tobacco Workers Felicity* organization (*Kavala Tütün Amelesi Saadet*), formed to give voice to tobacco workers' demands in hopes of dissuading them from emigrating to the United States in search of work. This concern was shared by numerous merchants in Kavala who recognized the significance of both agricultural and industrial labor in the local tobacco industry and the strategic need to address the concerns of the laboring poor. It is worth mentioning that Hüsnü would become a confidant of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and remained a prominent businessman in Turkey after the establishment of the Republic. He also became president of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce and was instrumental in the establishment of İş Bankası, a foundational financial entity for Muslim Turkish enterprise in early Republican Turkey. During the transfer of Muslims from Kavala to Turkey during the Greek-Turkish population exchange in 1924, he oversaw the exchange process and represented Turkey on the Kavala Population Exchange Commission.[269] In terms of the state's involvement in the tobacco sector, Hüsnü agreed with the propositions of Iordanou and other Kavala merchants regarding the banderole system. He would continue to argue for private enterprise for years thereafter, even in

[268] E. Pech, *Manuel des Sociétés Anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Constantinople: Gérard Frères, 1911), 30-37.
[269] *Kavala Tütün Kongresi*, 3; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (The Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, BOA hereafter), DH.İD, No. 4, Group Code: 132.

1924 when the Turkish state was debating the nationalization of the monopoly that had belonged to the Régie Company.[270]

For their part, Evgenios Iordanou's family had been involved in the Kavala tobacco industry since the early days of the city's expansion.[271] Iordanou would play a significant role in organizing the Kavala Tobacco Congress and advocating for the abolishment of the Régie. Although his hopes of a future Kavala that was not dominated entirely by the Régie or by elite Austro-Hungarian suppliers such as the Commercial Company were partially realized, the decade of warfare and market disruptions which followed the Balkans Wars had a profoundly negative effect on tobacco merchants and cultivators alike. Evgenios Iordanou would go on to become a founding member of the Liberal Party under Greek rule and the mayor of Kavala between 1918 and 1920. He would also maintain a close relationship with Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos during the interwar period. At the end of Ottoman rule, however, he aligned himself with the CUP in hopes of establishing an economic policy that would benefit the Kavala business community and simplify bureaucratic and legislative processes required of it.

Hüsnü and Iordanou had aspirations of an unrestricted business community protected from an overly interventionist state policy. As such, they de-centered the question of agricultural credit — so crucial to the earlier Drama congress — and focused most of their attention on crafting an argument in support of a state-led banderole system with limited control over commercial

[270] Hüsnü, Kavalalı İbrahim Paşazade Hüseyin, *Tütün Meselemiz: İnhisarcıların İddialarına Cevap* (İstanbul: Amedi matbaası, Teşrin-i Sani 1340 [October 1924]).

[271] The Vardas and Vulgarides families were deeply involved in the early tobacco trade in Kavala. One of Petros and Eleni Vardas' daughters would also marry into the Grigoriades family, which was a tobacco-exporting family residing in Kavala as well. This daughter, Domna, would give birth to a girl in 1878 named Eleni (after her grandmother) who would go on to marry Evgenios Iordanos. Christina Varda, *Στα ίχνη της οικογένειας Βάρδα [On the Trail of the Vardas Family]*, (Athens: Unpublished Manuscript, 2011), 63-77; Ivkovska, Velika, *An Ottoman Era Town in the Balkans: The Case Study of Kavala*, (New York: Routledge, 2021), 111-114; Vyzikas, Ioannis, Καβάλα, η μέκκα του καπνού: Καβάλα 19ου-20ου αιώνα οι άνθρωποι του καπνού *Kavala 19ou-20ou aiōna, oi anthrōpoi tou kapnou* [*Kavala, the Mecca of Tobacco: Kavala 19th-20th Century, Tobacco People*], (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and the History of Tobacco, 2010), 37 and 67-69.

activities. In other words, they still emphasized the role of the state but within a limited bureaucratic framework rather than in a hands-on financial reform policy. In their view, the CUP would invigorate the economy in Ottoman Macedonia and Thrace by instituting the banderole system rather than a state-run credit market and a joint-stock agricultural company as suggested their colleagues. Competition was central to the vision of these tobacco merchants and they rightly believed that it had been restricted due to the policies of the Régie monopoly and the dominance of Austro-Hungarian commercial networks over much of the export market. Nevertheless, the Ottoman government under the leadership of the CUP pursued a policy which prioritized the need for new streams of credit within the countryside while carefully avoiding any significant restrictions on the entrepreneurial activities of merchants. Their efforts can be seen as an attempt to satisfy the divergent roadmaps for economic development in the southern Balkans that Drama and Kavala representatives pursued.

"For the benefit of the nation and the homeland"[272] — Cooperative Credit and the Financial Infrastructure of the Nation

At both of the tobacco conferences in Drama and in Kavala the future of financial infrastructure and the potential sources of credit available to cultivators and merchants in the tobacco sector were a topic of debate. Amongst agricultural representatives and their merchant counterparts, the credit market remained a significant issue that shaped both the possibilities for development of the tobacco industry as a whole and the ongoing confrontations between purchasing agents and cultivators. Conflict of this sort had become endemic within the Macedonian and Thracian system of seasonal tobacco auctioning and the advanced payment process for *açık* and *peyli* tobacco. It was no surprise then that the infrastructure of credit had become a major source of tension. Proponents of various financialization models presented their

[272] *Kavala Tütün Kongresi*, 3.

policy plans as central to the development of a robust national economy. In this sense, the rhetorical devices presented at both congresses were reflective of the nationalist rhetoric of the CUP more generally. Social differentiation between commercial elites, modest local merchants, and peasant-cultivators was also clear within the policy options presented by the attendees. Differing proposals for national banking and cooperative credit were presented in similar terms but were ultimately reflective of different economic and political objectives.

The representatives of the commercial firms and agricultural representatives at both the Drama and Kavala congresses condemned the activities of the Régie Company over the three decades since its establishment in 1883. According to an unnamed commentator amongst the attendees in Kavala, "The evil of the Régie is obvious." An agricultural representative from Sarışaban (Chrysoupoli) added that the whole premise of a monopoly was a calamity (*felâket*) for merchants and cultivators alike. While the attendees all seem to have agreed on the dangers of reinstating the Régie monopoly in the region after 1913, there was a diversity of opinions about the proper path forward for the tobacco industry and the role that the state would play moving forward.[273] The differing moral economies of rural Drama and urban Kavala seem to have played a role in the crafting of different rhetorical strategies in each of the tobacco congresses.

The Drama congress provided a forum for Tahsin Bey and Rıza Bey, effectively the local leadership of the CUP, to suggest a model for financialization that leveraged the resources of local society without relying on foreign commercial networks or European credit. The "agricultural company" that they suggested was to function as a state-led creditor and administrator of the tobacco sector as a whole. It was therefore the basis for a broader and more ambitious national financial infrastructure. From this perspective, according to Tahsin Bey, the establishment of a

[273] *Ibid*., 2.

"national bank (Tr. *milli banka*)" was necessary for the advancement of the entire regional economy. Tahsin Bey framed this conceptual national bank as part of the needed infrastructure for a healthy economic system throughout the southern Balkans and, more broadly, the empire as a whole. In particular, he pointed to the precedent of "Hungary, Bulgaria, and other countries" to demonstrate that this was not his idea nor was it unreasonable to think it would contribute to economic development and the advancement of agriculture. In spite of this framing, Tahsin Bey's understanding of the "national bank" was also conditioned by his understanding of regional precedent in the Ottoman Balkans.[274]

In particular, he pointed to the establishment by Midhat Pasha of credit cooperatives (Tr. *manāfi' sandığı*) in the Tuna province during the 1860s, adding that "the late Midhat Pasha" had established such cooperatives in Tuna "in order to make the people accustomed to thrift (Tr. *iktisat*)."[275] Specifically, Tahsin Bey advocated for the establishment of a "company treasury" for the national bank funded by donations from the attending cultivators of the Drama congress itself. Although he claimed that hardship and sacrifice were inherent traits in a trade-oriented economy, it was the effort and generosity of attendees that would, in this manner, lay "a profound base for the future security of the peasantry." To make his argument more compelling still, Tahsin Bey pointed out that it was on the basis of such credit cooperatives that administrators had established the first branches of the Agricultural Bank in 1868. Although the congress itself allowed for Tahsin's initial proposal of creating a financial entity specifically organized around providing

[274] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 34-35.

[275] *İktisat* means economy but in the context of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries this term was often used to describe a set of activities designed to control saving and spending within individual households. Another way of explaining this is to use the more common English term for such activities, 'thrift,' which is equivalent to what is being described in the proceedings of the congress. More generally, "political economy" was used throughout the nineteenth century to refer to national or imperial budgeting and the like. See Mitchell, Timothy, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2002), 80-122.

credit to tobacco cultivators, it was Tahsin Bey's conviction that the collection of donations from attendees would allow for its official formation. In other words, the proposal itself was an appeal to attendees without access to international financial markets to take greater responsibility for the advancement of a credit market which they could enjoy propriety over and the subsequent development of financial infrastructure in the region.[276]

Another indication of Tahsin Bey's belief in a state-led economy was his insistence on emulating foreign banks in terms of the roles and responsibilities of the proposed financial entity. After explaining that "all banks" have a "director, an accountant, a treasurer, etc." he criticized the lack of oversight and representation within the credit markets of the Ottoman Balkans as an indication of a lost sense of honor (Tr. *namussuzluk*). Although it remains unclear what aspects of the credit system he was alluding to specifically, it was his conviction that: "If this weak morality persists, neither we nor the government can make progress." According to Tahsin, the solution to this apparent corruption was to have a central organization that worked in cooperation with the CUP to ensure the security of funds and the protection of debtors. Still, there was confusion over whether the entity – be it a bank, a credit cooperative, or some other kind of joint-stock company – would be founded with branches for each *kaza*, *sancak*, or *vilayet*. Rıza Bey, for his part, proposed that it be organized at the *liva*, or county, level.[277] In short, the creation of a new state-led and cultivation-oriented credit market would embody the moral economy of Macedonian cultivators according to Tahsin Bey.

The end result of all this deliberation was that a "joint-stock company" by the name of "The Mutual Assistance Fund for Cultivators and Merchants" would be founded in order to support cultivators whose livelihood depended on access to affordable credit. The establishment of this

[276] *Drama Tütüncü Kongresi Mukarreratı*, 34-35.
[277] *Ibid*., 34-37.

entity was not legally ratified and no by-laws were produced at the congress itself. As a result, it remains unclear how far these plans developed before the eruption of the First Balkan War just over two years later in October 1912. What is known is that in December 1911, around eight months after the conclusion of the Kavala congress, the Agricultural Bank officially doubled the amount it would lend to cultivators in the region from 5,000 to 10,000 *kuruş*.[278] Within less than a year, the region would fall to Greek advances and would subsequently become enmeshed in Greek-Bulgarian territorial disputes.[279] Nevertheless, this increase in the amount of credit provided by a state-run entity, the Agricultural Bank, represented a tempered version of the interventionist policy advocated by Tahsin Bey and Rıza Bey in 1910. The banderole system was not reinstated nor was "The Mutual Assistance Fund for Cultivators and Merchants" established before the end of Ottoman rule in the Balkans.

The vocal opposition to the Régie voiced at both congresses and the efforts by attendees to grapple with inherent issues in the regional credit market partially incentivized this injection of new credit into the agricultural sector of Drama and Kavala. The broader issues surrounding the administration of the tobacco sector and the troubled social relations within it would continue into the interwar period. Although these issues would play a major role in shaping the experience of émigré Muslims and Pontic refugees during the Greek-Turkish population exchange, for a brief moment in the Second Constitutional Era CUP debates reoriented its financial policies toward the needs of the countryside.[280] Although these financial debates don't allow for a coherent political

[278] BOA, BEO 25 March 1912, No. 301437, Group Code: 4020, 1-2; see also Dığıroğlu, "Selanik Ekonomisinde Unutulmuş Bir Alan," 241.
[279] Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat*; Hall, Richard C., "Bulgaria and the origins of the Balkans Wars, 1912-1913," in *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications*, M. Hakan Yavuz and Isa Blumi (eds.) (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2013), 85-99; Hacısalihoğlu, Mehmet, "The Young Turk policies in Macedonia: cause of the Balkan Wars?" in *Ibid*, 100-131.
[280] Alvanos, Raymondos, *Σλαβόφωνοι και Πρόσφυγες: Κράτος και πολιτικές ταυτότητες στη Μακεδονία του μεσοπολέμου* [*Slavic Speakers and Refugees: State and Political Identities in Macedonia During the Interwar Period*] (Επίκεντρο: Αθήνα, 2019), 49-54; Carmona-Zabala, "Underfunded Modernization," 196-204.

conclusion about the nature of Ottoman nationalism in general, they demonstrate the ways in which the moral economy of rural Drama and urban Kavala overlapped and, equally importantly, how they differed. The tobacco sector of the late Ottoman Balkans reveals that, to an extent, the developing discourse of a national economy relied on conflicting notions of economic advancement which were tied to the convictions and aspirations of local communities of merchants and peasant-cultivators.

Conclusion

The development of the Ottoman tobacco sector was intimately linked to political and economic transformations of the Ottoman Empire as it became tied to the global financial system. That said, because the empire's integration into this system was as an indebted producer of raw goods, it provoked a variety of responses amongst those who grew, sold, and marketed tobacco. The market opportunities that it offered gave impetus to various interpretations of the economic potential and financial policies of the tobacco-producing heartland of the empire in the southern Balkans. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many tobacco merchants and cultivators opposed Ottoman economic policies that had prioritized the needs of the central treasury and its European creditors over and above the long-term development of the imperial economy or the needs of agriculturalists. In the wake of the 1908 revolution, administrators and businessmen associated with the Committee of Union and Progress in Salonica, Kavala, İskeçe, and Drama mobilized to reform Ottoman approach to economic development and its financial policies, which, according to them, did not serve "the will" or "the welfare" of "the nation." Ottoman and Republican historians have written extensively on the national economy and the centrality of domestic policy, including economic policy, to the nationalism of figures such as

Mehmet Ziya Gökalp.[281] This attempt to appeal to the tobacco-producers of the Macedonian countryside was part of the broader CUP effort "to establish relations with almost all political organizations" in Macedonia.[282] However, the commercial and political networks of the CUP-affiliated tobacco congresses in Drama and Kavala during the Second Constitutional Period reveal an intra-societal conflict rooted in political economy and alternative visions for the economic development of the region. In spite of the militant rhetoric of "economic warfare" and "the strength and power of the nation" against foreign elements, many of the actual issues highlighted in the Drama and Kavala conferences were central to economic conflicts between local and regional Ottoman actors, not merely with the Régie Company as an intrusive European financial apparatus.

This reality is the product of two interconnected aspects of the tobacco industry. First, the business culture of the southern Balkans was not confined to specific political affiliations or to a particular brand of nationalism per se. Instead, bureaucrats and businessmen alike were primarily motivated by their opposition to decades of policy that privileged both European finance and an elite group of local merchants with extensive commercial networks in Central and Western Europe. This provided a rhetorical baseline for commercial critiques of Hamidian financial and economic policies over the three decades prior. Second, the rhetorical devices implemented by CUP affiliates at these conferences were drawn from a longer lineage of opposition to the domestic tobacco monopoly, the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, and the favoritism of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman governments towards elite tobacco firms. What this indicates is that the rhetoric of "national economy," local business culture, and provincial financial infrastructure was rooted in regional political economy. As such, the intra-societal conflict over commercial resources and market opportunities deserve more significant analysis within discussions of the second

[281] Gingeras, Ryan, *Eternal Dawn: Turkey in the Age of Atatürk* (London: Oxford University Press, 2019), 152-170.
[282] Hacısalihoğlu, "The Young Turk policies in Macedonia," in *War and Nationalism*, 103.

constitutional period. Although this does not negate the intellectual lineage of the Turkish, Greek, Bulgarian, and Macedonian nationalisms in circulation at this time or the ideas circulating regarding the "national economy," it indicates that the social relations of the credit and labor markets are equally significant to the development of social movements in the region.

The tobacco congresses in Drama and in Kavala took place in the pivotal years between the 1908 constitutional revolution and the outbreak of the First Balkan War in 1912. This was not only a crucial period of transition in hindsight but for contemporaries as well. Participants in both congresses looked forward to the conclusion of a thirty-year contract between the Ottoman government, the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, and the Régie Company that had undergirded discontent amongst the majority of tobacco merchants and peasant-cultivators in Macedonia and Thrace, not to mention throughout the rest of the empire. In anticipation of the 1913 expiration of the Régie Company's domestic monopoly rights, CUP representatives advocated new economic models for the region. The nature of credit relations — both local credit arrangements and more broadly the relations between the Ottoman Empire and European finance — and the role of the state in economic development constituted the most important points of debate for participants in the two congresses in 1910 and 1911, respectively. How CUP members discussed these issues in each context, however, was different based on the contextual circumstances of each congress.

Participants in both conferences voiced their concerns for the profitability of the tobacco sector, both for those who harvested tobacco and for the entrepreneurs who invested in factories and exports. On this point, a fundamental disagreement arose between those who wished to remove barriers to trade and those who saw the restriction of trade and its strict regulation as a key to the well-being of the peasantry. Central to this discussion was what entity or system might replace the

Régie Company upon its abolishment. Some — especially from among the cultivator representatives present from Sarışaban, Drama, and other towns near Kavala — expressed their interest in potentially establishing an "agricultural company." This company would essentially take over the responsibilities of the Régie Company but would answer directly to the government rather than acting as a separate entity. Proponents of this plan, such as Arif Bey, the editor of the newspaper *Yeni Asır*, saw this as a means of disallowing unfair bargaining and auctions on raw tobacco in the countryside that disadvantaged cultivators who often operated on credit. Others proposed credit cooperatives and an end to the institution of advanced payment, recognizing the troubled relations inherent within the local credit market. However, a number of entrepreneurs and some peasant-cultivators (especially peasant-cultivators from the town of İskeçe) saw private credit and seasonal auctioning as the key to total development of the industry and its profitability for all parties. Integral to each of these various models was an emphasis on increasing the profitability of the industry as a whole for "the nation" rather than foreign financiers or commercial elites who allegedly siphoned profits out of local circulation.

In Drama, the centrality of debt bondage in the countryside encouraged CUP representatives to address the concerns of the peasantry and to prioritize advocating for solutions to the region's financial instability such as state-led banking and mutual assistance models. In Kavala, the needs of exporters seemed to take precedence such that, even while the Régie was heavily criticized, CUP representatives focused on solving issues related to customs duties and exportation rather than credit. Likewise, whereas in Drama the congress proceedings highlighted the role of cultivators in creating value through labor, the proceedings in Kavala emphasized the potential of tobacco to contribute to the reinstatement of Ottoman imperial prestige on the geopolitical stage. These divergent foci reflect the differing moral economies of Drama and Kavala

in the early Second Constitutional Era, both of which reflected aspects of the political economy of tobacco in the southern Balkans. The differing emphases of each congress demonstrate two interrelated points. First, the economic concerns of the constituents in both cases were tied to their place in the commodity chain as predominantly agricultural suppliers (Drama) and export merchants (Kavala). Second, in spite of these differences, state-led economic development was the cornerstone of financial, commercial, and agricultural reform proposals at both CUP conferences.[283]

[283] In post-Ottoman Turkey and in Greece, many of these discussions would take on a new form during and after the population exchange of 1923-1924. Ultimately, in northern Greece, the activities of the Refugee Settlement Commission between 1923 and 1930 and the Agricultural Bank of Greece after 1930 would change the dynamics of trade and credit in ways that merchants and cultivators had advocated for already before the Balkan Wars. See Alvanos, *Σλαβόφωνοι και Πρόσφυγες*, 49-54. However, even in the 1930s, agricultural loans were limited in their capacity to transform the standard of living amongst the peasantry. Carmona-Zabala, "Underfunded Modernization", 196-204. In Turkey, the experience of uneven development within the tobacco industry led Hüseyin Hüsnü (the Turkish representative of the Mixed Commission for the League of Nations in Kavala during the population exchange) and others to challenge the monopoly system within the context of the new Turkish Republic and to advocate for state protection of Turkish merchants' interests. See Kavalalı İbrahim Paşazade Hüseyin Hüsnü, *Tütün meselemiz: inhisarcıların iddialarına cevap* (Amedi matbaası: İstanbul, Teşrin-i Sani 1340 [October 1924]). At the same time, the tobacco industry in both Greece and Turkey would become a forum for Communist and Socialist activism after the exchange, leading to sustained labor movements in Izmir, Istanbul, and Kavala for decades to come. Mustafa Özçelik, *1930-1950 arasında tütüncülerin tarihi* (TÜSTAV: İstanbul, 2003); Zehra Kosova, *Ben işçiyim* (TÜSTAV: İstanbul, 1996). Ioannis Vizikas, *Χρονικό των εργατικών αγώνων* (Kavala: Municipal Museum of Kavala, 1994); Ioannis B. Ioannides, *Το καπνικό στην Καβάλα: μαρτυρίες και στοιχεία από το καπνεμπόριο και την καπνεργασία* (Kavala: Municipality of Kavala, 1998).

Chapter Four

The "Tragedy of İskeçe" and the Bulgarian "Friendly Occupation" — Tobacco, Territory, and the Eastern Question (c. 1903-1919)

"On the north and east of Saloniki [sic.], western Bulgaria is shut off from the Aegean by a strip of Hellenic territory annexed by Greece after the Balkan Wars. Measured from the Vardar valley on the west to the Greco-Bulgarian frontier on the east, it has a length of about 115 miles. Its average breadth from south to north is about 50 miles. Containing the port of Kavala and the towns of Drama, Seres, and Demir Hissar [sic.], a large proportion of this section of country, in addition to being strategically important, is also rich. The Bulgarians, who, for these reasons, desired to reconquer it, were also favorably placed for the accomplishment of their object [sic.]. They already held the Rhodope Mountains lying to the northeast, and they had an excellent line of advance by way of the Struma valley and a secondary means of communication by the Mesta valley route… The chief question to be decided is the true nationality of the peoples inhabiting doubtful or disputed areas."[284]

— Henry Charles Woods, 1918

"If the Bulgarian Government engages in international trade, it shall not in respect thereof have or be deemed to have any rights, privileges, or immunities of sovereignty."[285]

— Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine, article 161 (1919)

Introduction

In 1918, Henry Woods wrote that the Kingdom of Bulgaria had been committed to the annexation of Macedonia over and above any other potential military goal in the southern Balkans. He claimed that this was as a result of the richness of the region.[286] Although he failed to describe or clarify what was meant by the 'richness' of Macedonia in this account, the centrality of tobacco to the regional economy was certainly a major component. Attempts to control the land and resources of Macedonia were baked into the activities of the brigands, bandits, and smugglers

[284] Henry Charles Woods, "The Balkans, Macedonia, and the War," in *Geographical Review* 6, no. 1 (1918): 30-34.
[285] In addition to the treaty itself, a number of documents are held by the *British Online Archives* which provide information on the implementation of Bulgarian disarmament clauses and reparations to Greece. See "Records relating to the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1919," at *British Online Archives* (https://microform.digital/boa/collections/86/volumes/632/records-relating-to-the-treaty-of-neuilly-sur-seine-1919)
[286] Henry Charles Woods, "The Balkans," 30.

operating in the tobacco trade during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tobacco-producing lands also became central to territorial disputes between Balkan states after the collapse of Ottoman rule in Macedonia and throughout World War I. The tobacco trade, as a result, provides some insights into the transition from warlordism — understood as a system of political economy sustained by paramilitarism and illegal commerce — to the wartime opportunism of developing states that aimed to create national economies by taking control of tobacco-producing territories.[287]

As recent scholarship on Macedonia has shown, the split between Greek-speaking Patriarchists (members of the Greek Orthodox Church based in Istanbul) and Slavic-speaking Exarchists (members of the Bulgarian Orthodox, which split from the Greek Orthodox Church in 1870) was a major source of theological and social disturbance amongst the Orthodox Christians of Macedonia and Thrace. Beyond that, however, it was also at the center of vicious disputes over school and church properties.[288] Likewise, Can Nacar has demonstrated that this conflict bled into the tobacco industry in a number of ways thereby limiting the cooperative capacity of labor unions in the cities of İskeçe, Kavala, and Salonica. More specifically, Greeks and Bulgarians clashed over employment opportunities in the factories of İskeçe and Kavala as a result of Greek efforts to monopolize the workforce in factories there.[289] Sources from the early twentieth century reveal that the intercommunal violence which occurred between Greeks and Bulgarians was partly motivated by material factors such as access to market networks and employment.

The idea that violence between these communities reflected concrete nationalist agendas has been disputed by historians of the Ottoman and post-Ottoman Balkans. Siniša Malešević,

[287] James Gelvin, *The New Middle East* Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023), 67-70.
[288] İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2014), 48-78.
[289] Can Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912)* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 11-12 and 50.

Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, and İpek Yosmaoğlu (among others) have all demonstrated in different ways that violence between late Ottoman subjects in the Balkans was incentivized by the absence of state power on the one hand and increased inter-imperial competition over the fate of the Balkans on the other.[290] According to this logic, the nineteenth century Balkans were only violent in disorganized ways and rebellion remained largely apolitical until the outbreak of the Balkan Wars.[291] Nationalist agendas would, at that point, be subsumed into full-scale nation-building projects led by states that had gained independence from the Ottomans and/or expanded their sphere of influence and territorial control. For this reason, prior to the Balkans Wars, paramilitaries and smuggling rings were commonplace in the tobacco-producing regions of Macedonia and Thrace. This reality would not come to an end abruptly but the dynamics would shift significantly as the Bulgarian and Greek states became invested in building national economies with Macedonian tobacco at their core.

With the complete collapse of Ottoman control over the Balkans in 1912, territorial disputes between Greece and Bulgaria revolved around the tobacco trade and access to tobacco-producing lands and tobacco surplus. This mirrored the competition amongst Greek and

[290] Malešević, Siniša, "Wars that make states and wars that make nations: organised violence, nationalism and state formation in the Balkans," *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie / Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (2012), 31-63; Blumi, Isa, *Reinstating the Ottomans: Alternative Balkan Modernities, 1800-1912* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 95-124. Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Tools of Revolution: Global Military Surplus, Arms Dealers and Smugglers in the Late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908," in *Past & Present*, Volume 237, Issue 1, 167–195. Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties*, 1-48. See also, Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires. The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (Cambridge–New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1-106.

[291] I use apolitical here to refer to a phenomenon that British Marxists discuss using different terminology such as primitive rebellion and banditry. See Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Norton, 1965), Idem, *Bandits* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, [1969] 2000). For alternate interpretations of banditry and rebellion, see Stephanie Cronin, "Noble Robbers, Avengers, and Entrepreneurs: Eric Hobsbawm and Banditry in Iran, the Middle East and North Africa," in Stephanie Cronin (Ed.), *Crime, Poverty, and Survival in the Middle East and North Africa: The Dangerous Classes since 1800* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2020), 81-104. See also Murat Metinsoy, "Rural Crimes as Everyday Peasant Politics: Tax Delinquency, Smuggling, Theft and Banditry in Modern Turkey," in *Ibid*, 135-154.

Bulgarian[292] merchants and smugglers during the previous decade. This chapter demonstrates, therefore, that the tobacco industry was not merely a forum for political conflict rooted in sectarian or nationalist convictions that were somehow preconceived or self-evident. Instead, the political economy of tobacco — within the context of highly competitive market conditions associated with the Hamidian-era controlled economy — was also generative of conflict and competition in the region. In the same way that the political economy of tobacco incentivized the moral economy of state-led development (Chapter 3), it likewise gave impetus to the sectarian tensions between Greek- and Slavic-speaking Christians of the period leading up to the Balkans Wars. Even more consequentially, the political economy of tobacco motivated the territorial disputes between Greece and Bulgaria during World War I and laid the foundations for demographic engineering in Macedonia, culminating in the Greek-Bulgarian population exchange of 1919 and later on in the Greek-Turkish population of 1923-24.[293]

The "Tragedy of İskeçe" — a murder in 1907 which followed years of skirmishes between Greek and Bulgarian tobacco merchants in and around the town of İskeçe (contemporary Xanthi) — demonstrates some of the dynamics at play in the period immediately preceding the Balkan Wars. In particular, the murder and its aftermath show that the sectarian divide between Patriarchist and Exarchists — both of which were adherents to clashing sects of Orthodox Christianity —

[292] Greek and Bulgarian here are both broadly defined. Other epithets such as Macedonian, *Rum*, Slav, etc. could all be considered within the same context.

[293] The experience of demographic engineering amongst Greeks and Bulgarians is most effectively explored by Theodora Dragostinova. For example, see Theodora Dragostinova, "Navigating Nationality in the Emigration of Minorities between Bulgaria and Greece, 1919–1941," in *East European Politics and Societies* Volume 23, Number 2 (Spring 2009), 185-212. See also Ραϋμόνδος Αλβανός, *Σλαβόφονοι και Πρόσφυγες: Κράτος και Πολιτικές Ταυτότητες στη Μακεδονία του Μεσοπολέμου* [*Slavic-Speakers and Refugees: State and Political Identities in Macedonia in the Interwar Period*] (Θεσσαλονίκη: Επίκεντρο, 2019). On the Greek-Turkish population exchange, see Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922–1934* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006); Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State: The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017). More recently, in commemoration of the centennial of the Lausanne Treaty, a number of works have been published. See, for example, Jonathan Conlin and Ozan Ozavci (eds.) *They All Made Peace – What is Peace?: The 1923 Lausanne Treaty and the New Imperial Order* (Richmond, CA: Gingko, 2023).

shaped the tobacco trade. It also shows that the tobacco trade itself facilitated and encouraged competition between the communities over resources, networks, and land. In contrast, the Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia during World War I shows a novel set of dynamics in which the full power of the state, vis-a-vis the military, was employed in the Bulgarian attempt to conquer and control Macedonia. In this context, a full-fledged state program to incorporate this region into a Bulgarian national economy — through a 'friendly occupation' — differed from the more haphazard and unorganized efforts of merchants to compete against well-established Jewish and Greek commercial networks in the decade prior.

Historical Background and Historiography

The Ottoman provinces of Selânik and Edirne — corresponding roughly with historic Macedonia and Thrace — were a zone of political competition between ideologues who imagined different futures for the region since the Treaty of San Stefano and the subsequent Congress of Berlin in 1878. At the same time, following its declaration of bankruptcy in 1875 the Ottoman state had only limited persuasive capacity or political power there. As a result, bandits and rebels took matters into their own hands by relying on a second-hand commodity chain for weapons and explosives to engage in strategic violence while engaging in subterfuge of other goods as well.[294] Such was the case with the tobacco trade which became a space of competition between smugglers on the one hand and the security personnel, merchants, and bureaucrats affiliated with the Régie Company on the other. The period between 1881 — when the Ottoman Public Debt Administration had been established — and 1908 only deepened the crisis of political legitimacy for the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. This is demonstrated by the rise of large smuggling networks and the

[294] Öztan, "Tools of Revolution."

inefficiencies of the Régie Company to control domestic tobacco trading or tobacco exports. Violent skirmishes between Greek and Slavic speakers became more commonplace throughout the early twentieth century as a result of competition for resources such as land, property (especially churches and schools), and tobacco.

As İpek Yosmaoğlu has argued, violence itself created new recruits for competing national causes towards the end of the nineteenth century. At the same time, the integration of the southern Balkans into the global market brought rural peoples increasingly into the urban sphere while inter-imperial competition created a large second-hand arms trade there.[295] By the twentieth century, the tobacco industry also became a forum for such conflict. Beyond that, the industry itself shaped the overall ambitions of sectarian actors. After all, control of the tobacco lands and nationalization of the industry were central to Bulgarian and Greek disputes over Macedonia and, later on, to the demographic engineering of the Muslim and Christian populations of Anatolia and Macedonia during the Greek-Turkish population exchange of 1923-24.

Because of this, although tensions had already been intensifying over the previous three decades, the Ilinden Uprising (1903) — an organized rebellion against the Ottoman Empire in Macedonia carried out by the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) and the Supreme Macedonian-Adrianople Committee (SMAC) — brought Macedonia onto the international stage vis-a-vis the European press.[296] The tobacco trade rested at the heart of skirmishes between Slavic and Greek speakers during the final years of Ottoman rule in the Balkans and of territorial disputes between Greece and Bulgaria after the collapse of Ottoman rule there in 1912. The violence which erupted in eastern Macedonia and western Thrace and later on

[295] Andreas Kosmas Lyberatos, "The Nation in the Balkan Village: National Politicization in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Thrace," in *Turkish Historical Review* 7 (2016), 167- 93. Öztan, "Tools of Revolution."
[296] Ryan Gingeras, "Between the Cracks: Macedonia and the 'Mental Map' of Europe," in *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne Des Slavistes* 50, no. 3/4 (2008), 341–58.

the territorial disputes between the Bulgarian and Greek states during World War I were rooted in the political economy of tobacco. As the empire gave way to nation-state projects in the wake of both Balkan Wars, competition over resources became subsumed within the ambitions of both Greece and Bulgaria for territorial expansion. This competition over resources — once relegated to intra-religious skirmishes amongst Orthodox Christian sects in the Ottoman and Habsburg Balkans — took on significant geopolitical implications within the context of World War I.[297] Likewise, it became a significant part of the struggle within both countries to establish a robust "national economy" with sufficient resources for its own self-reproduction.[298]

At the time it took place, the "Tragedy of İskeçe" — an interesting case study in its own right — was at the core of a struggle for communitarian economic development within the empire amongst Slavic- and Greek-speaking Christians. Much as in the inter-religious violence which took place between Muslims and Armenian Christians in eastern Anatolia during the early twentieth century, economic factors played a significant role in framing the actions of competing groups in the Balkans as well.[299] In like manner, the struggle between Orthodox Christian factions in the southern Balkans continued to evolve and eventually became a core component of the

[297] This is not to deny the significance of other kinds of conflict in the region as well which had gained traction in the late nineteenth century as peasants in Bosnia-Herzegovina had mounted a full-scale rebellion against Ottoman tax collectors and Islamic conservatives rallied against the Committee for Union and Progress in places like Siroz (contemporary Serres in Greece).

[298] Historians have demonstrated that Bulgaria and Turkey made significant efforts to establish a "national economy" during and immediately after the Balkan Wars. Eyal Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and Their Aftermath (1912-1914)* (London: Oxford University Press, 2016), 183-226. Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat: 1908-1918* [National Economy in Turkey: 1908-1918] (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2014, first published in 1982). Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest, and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2014), 160-203.

[299] Üğur Umit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), 61-164. Nesim Şeker, "Demographic Engineering in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Armenians," in *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 3 (2007), 461–74. Alp Yenen and Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Age of Rogues: Transgressive Politics at the Fron-tiers of the Ottoman Empire," in Alp Yenen and Ramazan Hakkı Öztan (eds.) *Age of Rogues: Rebels, Revolutionaries and Racketeers at the Frontiers of Empires* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 3-52. Duncan Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Revolutionary Movement, 1893-1903* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), 31-69.

territorial disputes of the Second Balkan War and World War I. As reflected in the international press and in Hapsburg reports on the region, the allegiance of the region to a particular political entity continued to be hotly contested amongst inhabitants of Macedonia and Thrace as well.[300] In both instances — that is, both before and during the decade of war starting in 1912 — economic hegemony was a significant motivating factor in the political violence which took place amongst Greeks and Bulgarians in the first two decades of the twentieth century. 1912, however, was the turning point at which tobacco became subsumed into the struggle of Greece and Bulgaria to build sustainable national economies.

Recently, some historians have argued that the acquisition of sophisticated weaponry from Habsburg Austria and Romanov Russia fueled an arms race in the Balkans that, in turn, compounded the nationalist violence which provoked the Ilinden Uprising and the Balkan Wars.[301] In line with this argument, this chapter proposes that competition over agricultural resources (both raw and manufactured) in general, and the tobacco trade in particular, contributed to the nationalist movements which preceded the Balkan Wars and the territorial disputes between Greece and Bulgaria which followed in their wake.[302] At the same time, Bulgarian interest in developing its tobacco industry incentivized a transition from mere extraction of the industry's resources to more sustained development efforts. Central to these efforts was Bulgarian reliance on the prominent Jewish tobacco merchant Charles Spierer. Efforts to exploit Spierer for the Bulgarian expansionist

[300] Ryan Gingeras, "Between the Cracks," 341–58. Gábor Demeter and Krisztián Csaplár-Degovics, "Social Conflicts, Changing Identities and Everyday Strategies of Survival in Macedonia on the Eve of the Collapse of Ottoman Central Power (1903-12)," in *The Hungarian Historical Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2014), 609-649.
[301] Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Tools of Revolution." Dimitris Livanios, "'Conquering the Souls': Nationalism and Greek Guerilla Warfare in Ottoman Macedonia, 1904–1908," in *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999), 195-221.
[302] This argument is also similar to that made elsewhere by Tasos Kostopoulos and Andreas Kosmas Lyberatos who point to the agricultural nature of the Macedonian economy as a source for its limited growth capacity and the tensions this provoked. Tasos Kostopoulos, '"Land to the Tiller": On the Neglected Agrarian Component of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement, 1893-1912', in *Turkish Historical Review* 7 (2016), 134-66. Lyberatos, "The Nation in the Balkan Village."

cause were ultimately a failure but they represent an important aspect of the warfare between Greece and Bulgaria over the tobacco-producing agricultural zones of eastern Macedonia and western Thrace.

The "Tragedy of İskeçe" and Sectarian Tensions in the Southern Balkans

According to a 1907 report written by the Ottoman Grand Vizierate, the İskeçe-based tobacco merchant Ilya Georgiev (aka Ilya Hadji Georgi) had been receiving threats from Greek bandits since 1904. In the beginning of July 1905, for example, the leader of a "band of Greek rebels (*yunan şakavet çetesi*)" had written him a letter threatening to take Georgiev's life. Georgiev had been a prominent merchant in the *sancak* of Drama, especially the port-city of Kavala to the east of Salonica, and an upstanding member (*mu'teberandan biri*) of the Bulgarian community therein.[303] He was seemingly a statistical aberration in that most middle-class merchants belonged to the Greek Orthodox community or the large Sephardic Jewish community of Salonica and Kavala.

In spite of several alleged attempts on his life, Georgiev continued to do business in the province of Selânik and in some of the tobacco-producing towns of western Thrace. Finally, however, he fell "victim to Greek agitators" on 1 June 1909 when he was shot in broad daylight on the streets of İskeçe (contemporary Xanthi in Greece).[304]. Various accounts described him as an "upright merchant" who was hardly deserving of such an ill fate.[305] Georgiev had been especially active in Drama and İskeçe. Although little concrete evidence on the case is available,

[303] Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministerial Office, BOA hereafter), BEO. 09/05/1323 (Hicrî), File No. 196487, Group Code: 2620
[304] *Ibid*. For a similar incident, see also Can Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912),* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 86.
[305] BOA, BEO, 09/05/1323 (Hicrî), File No. 196487, Group Code: 2620.

based on contextual evidence surrounding the event it seems that his opponents sought to limit his participation in the tobacco trade. This could very well have been reflective of the broader anti-Bulgarian sentiment amongst Greek merchants who sought to limit the participation of Slavic speakers in the tobacco trade and in tobacco production.[306] The typically tri-weekly periodical *Journal de Salonique* deemed this incident the "Tragedy of İskeçe" giving the impression that it was a unique event.[307]

Nevertheless, the murder was part of a broader set of disputes between Greeks and Bulgarians both in İskeçe and beyond and was linked to sectarian violence with a longer lineage.[308] In this instance, the tobacco trade was central to the dispute between Greek and Bulgarian merchants since the İskeçe tobacco industry was a hotbed for Greek-Bulgarian conflict. More specifically, the incident was part of a clash between the two groups over market networks and economic opportunities available to them.

The "Tragedy of İskeçe" and similar disputes between tobacco merchants raise questions about the nature of inter-communal violence in the Macedonian and Thracian countryside in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The identities of most of the "Greek agitators" that murdered Ilya Georgiev on the streets of İskeçe on 1 June 1909 remained unknown during the final years of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. The murder, however, became the source of ongoing communal tensions between Greek and Slavic speakers in İskeçe and in nearby Drama. These

[306] Nacar, *Labor and Power*, 119.
[307] Saadi Levy (Director), "La Tragédie de Xanthie: Meurtre en pleine rue," in *Journal de Salonique* June 3, 1909.
[308] Tolga U. Esmer, "Economies of Violence, Banditry and Governance in the Ottoman Empire around 1800," in *Past & Present*, no. 224 (2014), 163–99. Frederick F. Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age," in *The Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 3 (2012), 572–606. İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties*, 209-294. Keith Brown, *Loyal Unto Death: Trust and Terror in Revolutionary Macedonia* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013).

tensions reveal not only ethno-communal tensions in general but also the economic motivations for the skirmishes between them.

While a certain Mihalis – one of Georgiev's killers and the only member of the group to be arrested – was in the possession of Ottoman authorities, the investigation uncovered records indicating that he had passed through Salonica and Kavala on his way to İskeçe, as part of a premeditated plan. The decision — made by a band of loyalists to the Greek Orthodox Patriarch in Istanbul — to threaten and kill a prominent Bulgarian tobacco merchant was not a chance event or an isolated incident. Instead, the murder was exemplary of the violence which had become endemic to the region by the early twentieth century. As an example, in the same week as Georgiev's murder, reports arrived at the Grand Vizier's office that Greek rebels had also murdered a Bulgarian wool merchant in nearby Pravişte. As this demonstrates, control over trade was at the heart of the sectarian tensions in late Ottoman İskeçe. Furthermore, the Georgiev incident had an immediate afterlife which reveals a more detailed account of the commercial concerns of the two communities. Reports on the murder and on Greek violence more generally "quickly agitated the Bulgarians" according to the Grand Vizierate and caused public demonstrations in the region. The event of Georgiev's murder took on a specific cultural significance for residents of his hometown, Drama. Their reaction to this violence indicates a great deal of material tension between the local Patriarchist (*Rum*/Greek) and Exarchist (*Bulgar*/Bulgarian) communities.[309]

In Drama, tensions between the two communities intensified following the transfer of Georgiev's body there to be entombed at a local cemetery presumably affiliated with his family. The funeral provided fertile ground for the expression of Bulgarian discontent with Greek banditry.

[309] BOA, BEO. 09/06/1327 (Hicrî), File No. 268824, Group Code: 3585, 1

In a letter from 1911 addressed to the Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, representatives from a Greek Orthodox social committee in Drama complained of harassment throughout the Second Constitutional Era rooted in this discontent. The communal mourning which accompanied Georgiev's funeral rites had apparently been the perfect opportunity for some Bulgarians to express resentment against their Greek neighbors. After all, the rebels who had threatened Georgiev back in 1904 had sent their initial letter to him from Drama which meant that there was likely some overlap between his murderers and his commercial competition. In all likelihood, the people who wanted Georgiev dead were well-known in the relatively small town. The protests in Drama, however, also reflected the social relations between Greek merchants and the Bulgarian workers and peasants still active in the industry.[310]

The social hierarchy of the tobacco trade in Drama was alluded to in the terminology and actions of those who protested the murder of Georgiev and Greek dominance over local tobacco. The writer who penned the 1911 letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople highlighted that those gathered had "dared to hurl harsh insults at us, calling us *pimps* (*kârhaneci*)" and thereby smearing their personal honor and the integrity of the Greek community as a whole. The use of *kârhaneci* appears to be clever metonymy, whether actually utilized by the Bulgarian protesters that day or added later on by the letter-writer. In one foul swoop, it communicates both the vulgarity associated with brothels and sex-trafficking but also equates the exploitation of working peoples with factory-labor since a *kârhane* doubled as the term used for organized workplaces and factories. A *kârhaneci*, as such, could also be a reference to a factory owner who exploited the labor of its workers. Women were obviously implicated in this *double entendre* as well since they

[310] BOA, DH.MKT. 17/05/1327, File No. 68, Group Code: 2833.

had become increasingly well-represented in the workforce within the three decades prior, both as loose-leaf tobacco sorters and as cigarette rollers.[311]

In any case, it is important to note that Bulgarian Christians were not the only group who expressed their anger on that day in June 1909. The Committee for Union and Progress (CUP), the recently installed political regime after the 1908 constitutional revolution, also supported the Bulgarian protests. However, given that CUP boycotts were not systematically directed at Greeks until after 1910, it is likely that the CUP did so to strategically appease Bulgarian protestors.[312] Still, a broader Bulgarian sentiment in Macedonian society against Greek bandits and brigands was prevalent throughout the period.[313]

According to the 1911 letter written to the Patriarch of Constantinople, "Even the local commander of the gendarmerie in Drama, Fehmi Efendi" joined in the anti-Greek demonstration "from the middle of the marketplace." Furthermore, the protestors had gained access to the balcony of the local office of the CUP, from which they overlooked the Metropolis of the Greek church, the symbolic heart of the Patriarchist community. In spite of the fact that the newly installed constitutionalist regime was tacitly complicit in the 1909 anti-Greek demonstrations of Bulgarians in Drama, broader anti-Greek protests and boycotts throughout the Aegean region were barely on the horizon. After a short-lived boycott of Austrian and Bulgarian goods in 1908 and early 1909

[311] Donald Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reaction to European Economic Penetration* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 13-40. Gila Hadar, "Jewish Tobacco Workers in Salonika: Gender and Family in the Context of Social and Ethnic Strife," in *Women in the Ottoman Balkans: Gender, Culture and History*, edited by Amila Buturovic and İrvin Cemil Schick (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 127-152.
[312] Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks*, 39-159. Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat*, 183-226.
[313] It was later on during World War I and its aftermath that Turkish nationalism would become more aggressively anti-Greek. Ayhan Aktar, "Homogenising the Nation, Turkifying the Economy: The Turkish Experience of Population Exchange Reconsidered," Renée Hirschon, ed., *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), 79-96. Ellinor Morack, "Fear and Loathing in "*Gavur*" Izmir: Emotions in Early Republican Memories of the Greek Occupation (1919-22)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49 (2017), 71-89.

following the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria's declaration of independence, attention turned to protesting Greek political control in Crete which would reach critical mass in 1910. The summer of 1909 was therefore a period of convergence for the anti-Greek sentiment amongst Bulgarian protesters and the attempts of the CUP to reestablish Ottoman control in Macedonia.[314]

The Ottoman report on the incident reiterated that much of the yelling and cursing at the Greek community had taken place from the balcony of the CUP's branch office in the direction of the Greek Orthodox metropolitan offices of the city. On the one hand, the fact that the CUP office and the gendarmerie were actively involved in the anti-Greek heckling of 1909 shows that the local government sought to appease the protesters. This indicates that the local branch of the CUP discouraged ethno-religious violence between the Patriarchist and Exarchist communities. The generalized terminology of "the Greeks" and "the Bulgarians" used in the documentation, however, also indicates that these national categories had by then become commonplace.

Anti-Greek protests in Drama seem to have reflected the perception that Greek tobacco merchants and factory owners exploited the labor of workers and peasants, at least some of whom were Bulgarian. In İskeçe in particular, however, the Greek community had successfully convinced the major tobacco merchants to stop hiring Bulgarian workers altogether by that time.[315] In light of this fact, anti-Greek heckling may have also been intended as a criticism of Greek separatism and attempts by some Greek merchants to homogenize both the workforce and tobacco exporters. In either case, it was clear that the Bulgarian protesters in Drama had collectively interpreted Georgiev's murder as yet another addition to the long list of anti-Bulgarian actions taken by Greek tobacco merchants in eastern Macedonia and western Thrace. The 1911 letter to the Patriarch of

[314] BOA, DH.MKT. 17/05/1327, File No. 68, Group Code: 2833. Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks*, 160-203.
[315] Nacar, *Labor and Power*, 11-12 and 50.

Constantinople is naturally conditioned by the writer's bias and by a desire to win the sympathies of the church hierarchy. At the same time, its language highlights the demonstrators' critical and aggressive tone and the various social factors which motivated their claims.

This social turbulence and the Patriarchist reports of anti-Greek activities amongst Bulgarians in Drama were the immediate precedent to a 1912 Greco-Bulgarian treaty, which was negotiated in the wake of the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911. Between May 1911 and May 1912 Bulgaria and Greece discussed the possibility of a regional war and eventually agreed to mutual support if conflict erupted between the Balkan states and the Ottoman Empire. Crucially, however, they did not agree on the distribution of Macedonian or Thracian territories in the event of Ottoman collapse or retreat leaving the door wide open for economic competition over tobacco-producing lands in the aftermath of the First Balkan War. This oversight festered throughout the First Balkan War while the Bulgarians took control of most of western Thrace including İskeçe. It also undergirded Bulgarian aggression in the Second Balkan War, which reflected disputes over Macedonia between Greece and Bulgaria.

Brigandage in the Late Hamidian Era

Tobacco being a rural agricultural industry, its production and transportation were subjected to conflicts in the countryside, which had become endemic by the early twentieth century as shown by the "Tragedy of İskeçe." Clashes between rebel bands, often referred to in Ottoman and European newspapers alike by the Turkish word for gangs (Tr. *çete*) was not limited to the tobacco industry. Instead, they had become a part of the broader political landscape in the wake of the İlinden Uprising in 1903. The Ilinden Uprising itself was the culmination of a Macedonian and Bulgarian political movement against Ottoman rule in the Balkans which some historians have

characterized as both a nationalist movement and an episode of class conflict in the Balkans.[316] While the İlinden Uprising may have been a catalyst for increased violence within the context of escalating nationalist tensions, the sectarianized relationship of Greek and Slavic speakers was already decades in the making by the turn of the century and had been intensified by two significant factors in the 1870s.

The first of these was that the cohesion of the Orthodox Christian community in the southern Balkans had been undermined by the movement to establish a church hierarchy in the Balkans that would serve Slavic speakers there without joining the well-established historical Serbian church.[317] In addition, although the Serbian church would seek to extend its influence in Macedonia after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78, it was arguably much more invested in maintaining its hold within the confines of the historic Kingdom of Serbia than it was in expanding its reach further south.[318] In any case, the movement to establish a Bulgarian church which would provide Slavonic services and Bulgarian education to Orthodox Christians in Macedonia, Thrace, and Bulgaria culminated in a sultanic decree (Tr. *firman*) in 1870. This decree granted permission for a Bulgarian Exarchate (i.e. an autonomous church structure) to be established which would not belong to the jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople as all clergy and faithful in the southern Balkans had before this moment. Neither would this new church answer to the Patriarchate of Serbia, the regional church with historical precedent amongst Slavic speakers

[316] Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430-1950* (New York: Knopf, 2004), 238-254.

[317] James Pettifer, "The New Macedonian Question," in *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (Jul., 1992), 477-480. Michael Antolović, "Modern Serbian Historiography between Nation-Building and Critical Scholarship: The Case of Ilarion Ruvarac (1832-1905)," in *The Hungarian Historical Review* 2016, Vol. 5, No. 2, 332-356. As Antolović shows, Serbian orthodoxy became a critical component of Serbian nationalist writings of the nineteenth century, whether or not these were true to the practice of medieval and early modern Serbian spirituality. For more on modern Serbia, see Marko Attila Hoare, *Serbia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024).

[318] Florian Riedler, "Communal Boundaries and Confessional Policies in Ottoman Niš" in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 61, No. 4 (2018), 726-756.

between the thirteenth and the nineteenth centuries.[319] For this reason, the primary Orthodox Christian factions at odds with one another in the context of nineteenth-century Macedonia and Thrace are often referred to in shorthand as Exarchists and Patriarchists, or less precisely as Bulgarians and Greeks.[320]

The 1870 proclamation paved the way for the establishment of an autonomous Bulgarian church in 1871 following six months of meetings organized by the Bulgarian National Congress in Istanbul. In 1872, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople condemned this new administrative designation as an expression of a dogmatic heresy that it called *ethnophyletismós* (i.e. tribalism).[321] The immediate result was numerous conflicts over property-ownership, church administration, schooling, and the like.[322] The decision also resulted in the politicization of religious identity – insofar as it institutionalized ethnic differences among Ottoman Christian communities – and preceded decades of intense violence.

The second factor which deepened the sectarian divide between Greeks and Bulgarians in the 1870s was the Russo-Ottoman War in 1877-1878, and the numerous territorial losses that befell the Ottomans as a result. The war fueled political ambitions amongst political activists throughout the Balkans. In the aftermath of the war and as a result of the Treaty of San Stefano, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania gained independence while Bosnia-Hercegovina obtained autonomy

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[319] Sergej Flere and Rudi Klanjšek, "Serbian Orthodox Religiousness: An Empirical and Comparative Portrait" in *Review of Religious Research*, Sep., 2008, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Sep., 2008), 35-48.
[320] İpek K. Yosmaoğlu, "Counting Bodies, Shaping Souls: The 1903 Census and National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia" in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 38, no. 1 (2006), 55–77.
[321] *Macedonia Illustrated* (Sofia: State Printing Press, 1919), 1. Ioannēs Choïda, *Hē historia tēs Makedonikēs hypotheseōs* (Athens: Estia, 1908), 118-146. Dimitris Stamatopoulos, "The Bulgarian Schism Revisited," in *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 24/25 (2008/2009), 105-125. Dimitris Stamatopoulos, "Orthodox Ecumenicity and the Bulgarian Schism," in *Etudes Balkaniques LI/1: Greece, Bulgaria and European Challenges in the Balkans* (Sofia: Institut d'Etudes balkaniques & Centre de Threcologie, 2015), 70-86. Dimitris Stamatopoulos, "The Splitting of the Orthodox Millet as a Secularizing Process," in *Griechische Kultur in Südosteuropa in der Neuzeit. Beiträge zum Symposium in memoriam Gunnar Hering* (Wien, 16.-18. Dezember 2004), 243-270. See also the *Methodist Quarterly Review* articles from 1870 to 1874 reproduced online by Matthew Namee in his blog *Orthodox History*: https://orthodoxhistory.org/2020/02/18/the-bulgarian-schism-began-150-years-ago/.
[322] Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties*.

under Austrian oversight.[323] San Stefano, which was signed in March 1878, granted Bulgaria a hugely expansive new set of territories including the massively important tobacco production zones of Macedonia and Thrace. However, the subsequent renegotiation of those terms in the Treaty of Berlin three months later in the summer of 1878 limited Bulgarian territorial gains significantly. In particular, Bulgaria's hold on significant tobacco-production zones were limited to Eastern Rumelia with Plovdiv as its economic and political capital.[324] Macedonia and Thrace, the heartlands of tobacco production, would prove elusive. At the same time, in the wake of the war, Bulgaria gained autonomy in a crucial step towards its eventual independence thereby pushing forward the momentum of Bulgarian nationalism.

It was in this politically loaded context that armed bands roaming the countryside became an even more commonplace feature than they already were in previous decades. They would remain active well into the twentieth century. Geopolitical competition and the expansion of Russian and Austrian influence in the region certainly did not de-escalate the situation.[325] At the same time, as Ramazan Öztan has argued, the global arms race served to intensify competition between rival nationalist groups in the Balkans for the remainder of the nineteenth century.[326]

The prevalence of armed rebel bands was a defining feature of both the political and the economic environment in Macedonia and in Thrace. British traveller and member of parliament Henry Lynch, in his 1908 five-part pamphlet arguing for the intervention of the European Great Powers in the military administration of Macedonia observed that:

> "The ubiquity of the bands, the heavy catalogue of crimes due to open violence, and the impunity with which such crimes are often and, perhaps, usually committed — are all

[323] *Ibid.*, 25
[324] Mary Neuburger, *Balkan Smoke: Tobacco and the Making of Modern Bulgaria* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2013), 49.
[325] Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908—1918*, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[326] Öztan, "Tools of Revolution."

> features of the continuing gravity of the situation. Go where I might — to Salonika, to Serres, to Drama, to Usküb, to Küprüli, to Prelepe, to Monastir, and from Monastir to the outlying regions about Lake Okhrida [*sic*.] — ask whom I happened to meet, foreign officers or Turkish governing authorities, it was impossible to discover a district free from bands, while there were few in which the *Mutessarifs* or *Kaimakams* could not give you a long list of them (22)."

While the observations of Lynch were certainly colored by his interventionist goals, Ottoman politicians likewise highlighted the breakdown of social relations amongst the inhabitants of Macedonia because of the prevalence of armed gangs roaming the countryside. One such commentator was Hasan Tahsin Pasha, the lieutenant general of the VIII Provisional Corps during the First Balkan War and the surrender of Salonica to Greek troops. Prior to his post in the First Balkan War, however, he was made the governor-general of the vilayet of Yanya in the western Balkans. There he observed that "numerous Greek local bandits had completely disrupted the tranquility of the country" and that "in the terrifying Balkans one needs a guide to go from village to village." He also pointed out that Albanian bands had been formed throughout the province allegedly to protect the property and livelihood of the local Muslim inhabitants.[327]

Hyperbolic as they may have been, the descriptions of M.P. Lynch and general Tahsin were not far off from local newspapers like the *Journal de Salonique*, which had regular sections dedicated to brigandage (Fr. *brigandages*) and violence.[328] As such, periodicals regularly highlighted the chronic countryside violence between Greeks and Bulgarians in particular. In one issue of the *Journal* from 6 February 1910, the biweekly publication gave almost an entire page to the People's Federative Party (Bulgarian Section) for its appeal to end inter-communal violence in Macedonia. This political party had been originally founded by left-leaning members of the

[327] Hasan Tahsin Paşa, *İzhâr-ı Hakîkat: Selanik'in esbâb-ı sükûtu hakkında vesaik ve müretteb sekizinci Kolordunun esbâb-ı inhizâmı, Ferik Hasan Tahsin* (1913), 1-2.
[328] For example, the 23 March 1905 issue alleged that some Bulgarian "evil-doers" killed the "daughter of a teacher." *Journal de Salonique*, 23 March 1905, 1.

Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), which had been advocating a much more confrontational and violent approach to political revolution in the Balkans. In its announcement, the People's Federative Party called on its supporters to devote special energy to diverting any and all resources that may be used to violent ends. According to them: "Illegal fighting" gave provincial governors "the ability to exact tyranny and violence in the name of public security" because they possessed "the state's force of arms."[329]

This public announcement was perhaps too little too late as the years between 1903 and 1910 were among the most violent in the region's modern history. This violence would continue for the better part of the next decade and would only get worse after the eruption of the Balkan Wars and World War I. Greek and Bulgarian business communities and the bands with whom they cooperated would continue to come into conflict over the market networks and purchasing power available to them in the region around Kavala, Drama, Siroz, and İskeçe up to and during the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and, subsequently, during World War I.

The political economy of tobacco in some ways framed the violence between Bulgarians, Macedonians, and Greeks even if these categories were evolving social concepts at the time. In this sense, tobacco was a generative force for the violence between Greek and Bulgarian commercial actors who were responding to the long-standing limitations to their commercial activities due not only to the Régie Company's monopoly over domestic tobacco but because of the outsized role played by Salonica's commercial elites in the export market (see chapter 2). Basil Gounaris has framed the prevalence of violence in the early twentieth century as being less idealized or ideological than often presumed. Instead, he points out that much of the murder and plundering which took place in early twentieth-century Macedonia was opportunistic and driven

[329] *Journal de Salonique*, 6 February 1910, 2.

at least partially by economic concerns.[330] The Tragedy of İskeçe (i.e. the murder of Georgiev), also demonstrates that similar dynamics were at play amongst economic actors in the tobacco trade who engaged in violence partly because of their commercial interests and market networks.

Macedonian Tobacco and Bulgaria's "Friendly Occupation" during World War I

The conclusion of the Balkan Wars limited Bulgaria to Western Thrace, east of Kavala. Claims to Macedonia, however, would become crucial to Bulgarian actions taken during World War I. The Bulgarian government was clearly dissatisfied with the terms imposed by the Treaty of Bucharest in 1913 and its loss of claim to Macedonia and of some of its territory in Thrace, including the city of Edirne to Ottoman forces.[331] As Henry Charles Woods observed: "It was certain, therefore, that they [the Bulgarians] would give no support [to Serbia, Greece, and Romania] without the promise of a large section of southern Macedonia and also as a secondary condition the restoration of a section of the Dobrudja and at least part of the then Turkish Thrace."[332] Beyond its immediate context in the Second Constitutional Era then, the murder of Georgiev and the Greek-Bulgarian competition over markets and resources would feed into interstate rivalries in the post-Ottoman period as well.

Bulgaria's annexation of western Thrace during the Second Balkan War fueled expansion within the Bulgarian tobacco industry. At the same time, frustrations over the country's derailed attempts to take control in Macedonia gave impetus to its aspirations further west, especially in Kavala, Drama, and Serres. Simultaneously, self-proclaimed Bulgarian tobacco companies

[330] Basil C. Gounaris, "Preachers of God and martyrs of the Nation: The politics of murder in ottoman Macedonia in the early 20th century / Pasteurs de Dieu et martyrs de la nation: la politique du meurtre en Macédoine ottomane au début du XXe siècle," in *Balkanologie: Revue d'études pluridisciplinaires*, Vol. IX, no. 1-2 (2005), 31-43.
[331] Henry Charles Woods, "The Balkans," 21-25.
[332] *Ibid*., 26.

established themselves in İskeçe. One such company, *Ksanti* (Bg. *Ксанти*), called itself "the first Bulgarian tobacco factory" on its cigarette boxes produced for market in 1914.[333] From at least 1892 if not earlier Macedonian and Thracian tobacco had been presented to international audiences at agricultural and trade fairs further north in Plovdiv as "Bulgarian." However, *Ksanti* was likely the first to make a similar claim in İskeçe itself, where tobacco had previously been marketed as Oriental, Turkish, or even Egyptian.[334]

(Figure 1: Signing of the Treaty of Bucharest, 1913; from the collection of the author)

[333] From the personal collection of the author; see image 2.
[334] Neuburger, *Balkan Smoke*, 43-77.

(Figure 2: Cigarette box from the firm *Ksanti* (Bg. *Ксанти*) claiming to be "the first Bulgarian tobacco producer" in Xanthi, previously known as İskeçe under Ottoman rule, 1914; from the collection of the author)

The city had only recently, in August 1913, become a Bulgarian territory according to the Treaty of Bucharest. Although this political status would not last beyond October 1919 when Allied administrators handed it over to Greek control after the First World War, the Bulgarian government made a concerted effort between 1913 and 1919 to transform the city and its tobacco industry, thereby making its commercial culture more resolutely 'Bulgarian' in the process. Likewise, the Bulgarian invasion of eastern Macedonia in 1916, including Kavala and Drama, highlighted Bulgarian interest in leveraging tobacco to its advantage. The Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia during World War I is therefore especially revealing of the significance of material factors in the ongoing Greek-Bulgarian sectarian-cum-national conflict, which transformed into a formal war between states in the years following Ottoman collapse in the region.

The sectarian tensions exemplified by the "Tragedy of İskeçe" were not the direct cause of the territorial dispute over Macedonia and the Bulgarian occupation of the region during World

War I. However, like the claims made by Slavic-speaking protesters in Drama in 1909, Bulgaria's actions in Macedonia reflected the fact that the political economy of southern Macedonia was defined by the tobacco trade. Bulgarian efforts to conquer the southern parts of Macedonia (i.e. the territories of Macedonia that were not controlled by Serbia at the time) revolved around control of tobacco production and the wealth and infrastructure surrounding it. The tobacco industry was not, therefore, merely a stage on which the geopolitical dispute between Greece and Bulgaria was acted out. Instead, it was a contributing factor to the tensions between the two countries and a source of potential growth for the national economies of each country. The actions taken by the Bulgarian government during World War I demonstrate a coherent policy of leveraging tobacco lands and the major tobacco-producing firms to the advantage of the Bulgarian Kingdom under King Ferdinand I.

Political conflict was nothing new in Macedonia and, since the 1870s, violence had increased between Greek, Bulgarian, and Macedonian nationalists. By the 1890s, Macedonia and Thrace had become a breeding ground for sectarian violence, especially though not exclusively amongst Christians. Usually these were characterized by ethno-religious and national categories. The Administrative Council records of Selânik for example are filled with reports of attacks carried out by rebel bands characterized by ethno-religious epithets. However, the intensity of the bloodshed amongst Christians and between Christians and Muslims reached new heights during and after the Balkan Wars (1912-1913).[335] In villages around Serres and Drama, massacres of Greek peasants and the military engagements between Greek and Bulgarian troops would be the subject of a large report conducted by the Carnegie Endowment in 1914. This parallels the well-known Bulgarian atrocities committed against Serbians under Bulgarian occupation in northern

[335] Eyal Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat*, 1-71.

Macedonia.[336] The report gave detailed summaries of wartime atrocities based on interviews with villagers who survived the Balkan Wars in Greek Macedonia. The report demonstrated, for example, that around 600 bodies were collected from fields in the village of Doxato on one tragic day in 1913.[337]

Beyond the violence experienced in the tobacco-producing countryside, the major tobacco processing center of Kavala and its subsidiary towns also faced severe disruptions as a result of Bulgarian occupation.[338] The northern Greek town of Eleftheroupoli provides a few notable examples. The town was an Ottoman tobacco-producing center known in Turkish and Bulgarian as Pravişte and Pravishte, respectively (even in Greek it was known as Pravi until 1929). Its location provided Pravişte with a direct entry point into the supply chain of raw tobacco shipped to distant locations in Central Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East from the nearby port-city of Kavala. The town, which had 1250 'Turkish' and 1100 'Greek' inhabitants in 1900 according to the Bulgarian nationalist demographic statistician and educator Vasil Kunchov, featured prominently in a 1919 report on human rights violations committed by the Bulgarian Armed Forces during World War I.[339]

The report itself was carried out by the Interallied Commission in Eastern Macedonia and contained oral accounts of the Struma Operation of August 1916, in which the Bulgarian

[336] This was not limited to Bulgarian aggression but was part of the ongoing conflict between Balkan states. See Iakovos D. Michailidis, "Cleansing the Nation: War-Related Demographic Changes in Macedonia," in Katrin Boeckh and Sabine Rutar (eds.) *The Wars of Yesterday: The Balkan Wars and the Emergence of Modern Military Conflict, 1912-13* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2018), 326–43.
[337] Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Division of Intercourse and Education, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*, (Washington D.C., 1914), 71-109. On the experience of Muslim refugees, see Uğur Ümit Üngör, "Becoming and Unbecoming Refugees: The Long Ordeal of Balkan Muslims, 1912–34," in Peter Gatrell, and Liubov Zhvanko (eds), *Europe on the Move: Refugees in the Era of the Great War*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 304-327.
[338] Economic performance of the region also suffered significantly. According to Charles Spierer, yearly tobacco production in Macedonia decreased from 11 million kilograms before the war to 3.5 million kilograms in 1918. During the occupation, the Bulgarian regime nearly doubled the "tithe" collected from tobacco cultivators from the 11.5% imposed by the Greek government previously to 20.5% after June 1917.
[339] Vasil Kunchov, *Makedonia; Etnografia i Statistika,* (Sofia, 1900), 200.

government took control of Greek territories that had been recently acquired in the Second Balkan War of 1913. In one such account, a fifty-three year-old tobacco merchant by the name of Alcibiade Papoutsopoulos (sic.) recalled the invasion on 11 August 1916 as being a largely peaceful event followed by undue cruelty when Greek troops withdrew at the end of the month upon request from the pro-German King Konstantine I.[340] The withdrawal gave Bulgaria a *carte blanche* to expand its territorial control during the fall of 1916.

According to Papoutsopoulos, the Bulgarian troops forced Greek residents into corvée labor on various projects, deported the archbishop Germanos to Drama (also Bulgarian territory at this time), and confiscated furniture, musical instruments, and other expensive goods in Pravişte. In June of 1917 (nearly a year later), Papoutsopoulos was called to the office of a Bulgarian commander named Tambakoff and offered "freedom" from Bulgarian interference or harassment in his affairs for a hefty sum of 10,000 levs.

Apart from this, the Bulgarian authorities charged a levy of 60/100 Bulgarian *lev* on each *okka* of tobacco sold. Papoutsopoulos claimed that these increased transaction costs "disallowed me from continuing to work in tobacco." He adds, "Hassan Effendi, representing Gesimimin, and Koutsouk Ahmet Effendi, representing Charles Spierer, can give you relevant information."[341] Even pro-Bulgarian newspapers from Austria discussed the economic stagnation caused by the Bulgarian occupation and the Allied blockade of Kavala during World War I. One such newspaper, *Drogisten Zeitung*, while arguing that the occupation was largely a "friendly" one and that most exports were "left fallow due to the [Allied] blockade of the coast."[342] Obstacles to the continued

[340] *Rapports et enquêts de la commission interalliée sur les violations du droit des gens commises en Macédoine orientale par les armées Bulgares,* (Nancy, Paris, and Strasbourg: Imprimerie et librairie Berger-Levrault, 1919), 67-68.
[341] *Ibid*., 67-68.
[342] "Kavala: Die Tabakstadt," in *Drogisten Zeitung*, 20 Jänner 1917, 35.

operation of the tobacco industry proved highly problematic for Greek, Muslim, and Jewish tobacco producers as well as for the occupying Bulgarian military, which sought to collect revenue on tobacco. The Charles Spierer mentioned in Papoutsopoulos' account had been the director of the Commercial Company of Salonica Limited for an unknown period of time during World War I. His account in the report and his experience under Bulgarian occupation further shed light on the centrality of tobacco to the Greek-Bulgarian and the strategic approach of the Bulgarian military to the tobacco-producing lands of Macedonia.

(Figure 3: Ottoman map of the territories (in black) to be recovered following the defeat of the First Balkan War; the title above the map read "Revenge")[343]

[343] Ottoman "Revenge" map: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Maps_of_the_Balkan_Wars#/media/File:Ottoman_revenge_map_after_Balkan_wars.jpeg

(Figure 4: Ottoman map of the Balkan Peninsula, c. 1900; the map shows Ottoman territories in pink prior to the Balkan Wars)

(Figure 5: French map of the Balkan Peninsula, c. 1913; the map depicts Bulgarian gains made after the Second Balkan War with the Treaty of Bucharest in yellow and Greek acquisitions in Green)

The Commercial Company (est. 1895), for which Charles Spierer worked, had been the most important and most successful tobacco export company established during the Ottoman period (see chapter 2). Spierer also gave testimony to the Interallied Commission on the Bulgarian invasion and its impact on the tobacco trade. By his estimate, the tobacco stock in Kavala and Drama on the eve of invasion in August 1916 was around 15 million kilograms. This did not include the 1916 harvest which cultivators had only recently harvested. That harvest accounted for around 11 million additional kilograms according to Spierer. By Spierer's account, Bulgarian troops had left Greek merchants to conduct their business freely until June 1917 but targeted tobacco merchants with European national status and appropriated around 100,000 kilograms of their tobacco, which was subsequently sent to Bulgaria. After June 1917 this policy was reversed and Greek merchants faced direct reprisals and expropriation of their stock tobacco. Upon reestablishment of Greek control in Kavala and the surrounding region after the war, Spierer claims that there were by then around 1,000 Jews and 8,000 Muslims still living in the city but that tens of thousands of Greek men were allegedly deported to Bulgaria under the auspices of security measures. In his words:

> "At the end of June 1917, when war broke out between Greece and Bulgaria, the Bulgarians respected tobacco stock belonging to Greek merchants; they were content to take the stock belonging to merchants with foreign nationality (French, Italian, English); this seizure pure and simple was limited to a relatively minimal amount, around 100,000 kilograms, which was transported to Bulgaria. It was not until after June 1917 that the same process was carried out against Greek merchants.
>
> After the date indicated above [June 1917], Greek merchants were dispossessed of around 1.25 million kilograms of tobacco… this quantity could not be transported to Bulgaria in its entirety due to a lack of time and resources and [so] some of it was recovered after the armistice [the Armistice of Salonica, 29 September 1918]."[344]

[344] *Rapports et enquêts de la commission interalliée*, 167-169.

The wartime expulsion of Greeks and the confiscation of Macedonian tobacco took place simultaneously. This reflected Bulgarian interest in transforming the Macedonian and Thracian tobacco industry into a productive component of the Bulgarian national economy. This is made even more obvious through the experience of Charles Spierer and others affiliated with the Commercial Company of Salonica. Bulgarian troops directly interfered in the tobacco business of Charles Spierer by seizing his home and the company office of his brother Hermann Spierer et Cie. (Tr. Hermann Spierer ve Şürekası) in Drama.[345] Although it remains unclear when, some time between 1913 and 1916, Charles Spierer had begun working for his brother's company in addition to his concurrent position with the Commercial Company. which lasted until at least 1918 according to company correspondence from Judah and Shemtov Perahia, both of whom were purchasing agents for the Commercial Company. Spierer reported extensive market losses under Bulgarian occupation due to the confiscation and taxation policies of the Bulgarian military, not to mention the expulsion of much of the working population.[346]

By the following year, relations between Charles Spierer and the Bulgarian military had changed. The military had by then switched from an aggressive policy of confiscation to one of recruiting potential commercial allies from amongst the tobacco merchants with access to large consumer markets in central Europe. This of course does not mean that Spierer condoned the Bulgarian military occupation of the region. Given his outspoken condemnation of its activities, this seems unlikely. It is more probable that the Bulgarian military had by then come to terms with his centrality in the industry and had hoped to court him as a partner rather than distance him through aggression. Evidence of this is that on 15 August 1917 a gala was held in Kavala to honor

[345] Emile Spierer, *Histoires de famille Les Spierer* (Unpublished Manuscript, 2023), 56-64.
[346] *Rapports et enquêts de la commission interalliée*, 167-169.

King Ferdinand I of Bulgaria to which Spierer was personally invited.[347] An additional motive, as Emile Spierer and Dimitra Chatzidimitriou have pointed out, was that the tides of the war were turning against Bulgaria and its allies by the middle of 1917 in the face of an increasingly organized Greek resistance. This claim is likewise supported by two awards given to Spierer from the Bulgarian Red Cross in May 1917 and May 1918 for his financial support to Jewish orphans in Bulgaria. Ironically, this money was forcibly collected from Spierer by the Bulgarian military rather than being a mere philanthropic gesture. This indicates that the Red Cross awards were fabrications intended to minimize criticism of Bulgarian activities in Macedonia during the occupation.[348]

At the same time that the military tried to persuade Charles Spierer to cooperate with the Bulgarian occupation and increase its control of the tobacco trade, direct control mechanisms were put in place that reduced the autonomy of merchants and peasants throughout the occupied zone. Judah Perahia, an employee of the Commercial Company of Salonica is one example of these restrictions. Perahia, who had begun working for the Commercial Company sometime between 1909 and 1911 while living in Kavala, would eventually become one of the most important tobacco merchants alongside his brother Shemtov during the transition to Greek rule after 1919. Between 1916 and 1918, however, commercial activities were limited given the state of the market during World War I and the Austrian-Bulgarian blockade at the port of Kavala.[349]

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[347] *Ibid*.

[348] Spierer, *Histoires de famille*, 58-59.

[349] On Perahia's descriptions of "the crisis of the tobacco market" see the following correspondence between Judah Perahia and his associates: Judah Perahia (Alexandria) to the Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique), 27 July 1920, folder 6, box 19, Judah Perahia Collection (JPC hereafter), Yad Ben Zvi Institute: Jerusalem, Israel (BZI hereafter). The Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique) to Judah Perahia (Alexandria), 28 July 1920, folder 6, box 19, JPC, BZI; The Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique) to Elie Levy and Judah Perahia (Alexandria), 14 October 1920, folder 6, box 19, JPC, BZI.

(Figure 6: Charles Spierer at his desk; from the personal collection of Emile Spierer, the grandson of Charles)

(Figure 7: Bulgarian troops at the office and residence of Charles Spierer in Drama; from the personal collection of Emile Spierer)

(Figure 8: Bulgarian troops in front of the office and residence of Charles Spierer in Drama; from the personal collection of Emile Spierer)

(Figure 9: A photo of Judah Perahia from his passport to travel to Egypt in 1920 stamped in Greek by the Municipality of Kavala which was established in 1913 with the signing of the Treaty of Bucharest. Later one, Kavala would be occupied by Bulgarian troops between 1916 and 1918; from the Yad Ben Zvi Institute in Jerusalem, Israel)[350]

[350] Mayoral Office of Kavala to Juda Perahia, Passport for travel to Egypt, 2 May 1920, box 3, folder 8, JPC, BZI.

In order to move between Drama, Pravişte, and Kavala, Perahia had to obtain a Bulgarian-language travel permit from military authorities. Perahia's travel permit from 1918 was signed by Charles Spierer who had to vouch for its claim that Perahia was working for the Commercial Company at the time. In one such travel permit the 10th Mediterranean Division of the Bulgarian Army granted Perahia permission to travel between these three, all of which are less than 40 kilometers from one another. The permission granted was valid for no longer than 60 days demonstrating the fragility of commercial infrastructure in the region under Bulgarian rule due to transportation and communication restrictions.[351]

Clearly, the Bulgarian military occupation in Macedonia and Thrace was a catalyst for efforts to manipulate the tobacco trade in Bulgaria's favor. The concerted efforts made to control tobacco during the occupation also seem to indicate that tobacco and productive agricultural land more generally were not an afterthought but rather a motivating factor in Bulgaria's military operations in the region. Whether tobacco was the primary reason for Bulgaria's expansive military endeavors into the region surrounding Kavala is probably not demonstrable. That said, its strategies vis-a-vis Charles Spierer and others seem to indicate that it sought a long-term reorientation of the trade towards Bulgaria after coming to terms with the limits of a ransacking policy in 1916. Bulgarian officials, like Greek bandits a decade prior, hoped to limit the market share of their Greek and Jewish counterparts and increase Bulgarian control over the tobacco trade. The need for allies within the tobacco trade, however, prompted the Bulgarian government to seek out a more cooperative arrangement with prominent tobacco merchants such as Charles Spierer and the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd.

[351] Bulgarian Army, 10th Mediterranean Division to Judah Perahia, Permission Slip No. 3540, 8 August 1918, box 5, folder 2, JPC, BZI. Karl (Charles) Spierer to Bulgarian Army, Certificate, 26 September 1918, box 5, folder 2, JPC, BZI. Thanks to Svetlana Dinkoff for her help with the Bulgarian translation.

(Figure 10: One of the two Bulgarian Red Cross awards given to Charles Spierer, 1918; from the personal collection of Emile Spierer)

The Bulgarian government would not find such an ally in Charles Spierer nor among the Greek merchants of Kavala and the surrounding region. Spierer's testimony against the Bulgarian military to the Interallied Commission in Eastern Macedonia gives us some sense of how he interpreted the occupation and the numerous tragedies which accompanied it:

> "Evaluating the number of inhabitants who fled Kavala at the moment of the Bulgarian invasion to be roughly 10,000, one can maintain that [the population] was around 30,000 people when the Bulgarians occupied the town. According to what I have heard, when the Greeks re-took it there were around 12,000 people in Kavala, 8,000 of whom were Muslims and 1,000 Jews… Evaluating that, at most, the number of inhabitants who have gone back to Kavala is 4,000, in my opinion one can calculate… 15,000 inhabitants dead, mostly from hunger and consecutive epidemics resulting from poverty… It is the insufficiency of supplies because of the rigorous blockade of Kavala and the scarcity of the harvest which caused the most suffering and which, along with the hunger and consecutive epidemic infections, led to excessive death."[352]

[352] *Rapports et enquêts de la commission interalliée*, 167-169.

Greek-Bulgarian violence, according to Spierer, had transformed from localized sectarian skirmishes like the "Tragedy of İskeçe" into a larger regional tragedy throughout eastern Macedonia and western Thrace provoked further by wartime atrocities and military occupation.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented fits of violence between Greek and Bulgarian subjects of the late Ottoman Empire as part of the confused process of ethno-religious politicization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This process had roots in the *Tanzimat* period beginning in 1839. Ottoman subjects of Macedonia and Thrace also interacted with broader nationalist movements such as the Greek *Megali Idea* that emerged in the wake of the Greek Revolution earlier in the century, *Osmanlılık* or 'Ottomanism' which became a popular discourse amongst reform-oriented subjects of the empire, and variations of pan-Slavism which were discussed and written about in Macedonia as well as in Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Serbia. However, the countryside violence that became commonplace by the twentieth century was not strictly defined by the contours of these specific nationalist projects. Instead, violence took place in ad-hoc unorganized ways between Greek and Slavic speakers and it was also shaped by regional political economy. In the case of Macedonia, this political economy was defined by tobacco. The specific contours of the Greek-Slav divide were exaggerated and deepened by the 1870 *firman* signed by Abdülaziz in favor of a Bulgarian Exarchate and the diplomatic aftermath of the Russo-Ottoman war in 1877-1878. This included the momentum gained by competing strands of Bulgarian nationalism once Bulgarian autonomy was realized after the war.

While subjects of the empire expressed political affiliation in various and conflicting manners throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the lines demarcating communal boundaries were not set by well-organized and coherent ideological programs. Even

taking seriously the sectarian divide between Patriarchist and Exarchist factions of the Orthodox Church does little to explain the ways that violence became endemic amongst tobacco merchants and smugglers. The development of communal boundaries also reflected the political structures and commercial practices of the day. This includes the ways in which commercial opportunities were shaped by the personal and market networks available to specific groups of merchants. The large smuggling networks and middle-class merchant community were predominantly made up of Greek-speaking Christians and Sephardic Jews from Salonica and Kavala as well as a limited number of *Dönme* and Muslim merchants. As such, Bulgarians played a minor role in the mercantile side of the industry. On the other hand, the events described here as well as the work of other historians suggest that Slavic-speakers were well-represented amongst those engaged in factory-labor, especially in the towns of Drama and İskeçe, at least until 1907.

Rather than seeking to establish the 'objective' nature of Greek-Bulgarian relations, this chapter has been an attempt to contextualize the many perspectives on Greek-Bulgarian competition for tobacco lands and for hegemony within the tobacco industry after the collapse of Ottoman rule. A group of prominent cultural historians in the 1990s suggested interpreting history through the lens of 'practical realism' — a systematic approach to historical materials that seeks to explicitly deal with the limited capacity for historians' ideas to correspond with reality — which allows us to '"see' patterns in events that otherwise might remain inexplicable."[353] This chapter has sought to pursue that approach by analyzing the discursive apparatus employed by social actors in the period before 1912 and by trying to interpret the policies of Bulgaria in its occupation of Macedonia. The purpose of these discussions has not been merely to uncover objective details of Goergiev's murder nor to establish whether Greeks or Bulgarians were more violent in the

[353] Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margeret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), 247-261.

aftermath of Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars. Instead, the chapter has offered an exposé of the cultural significance of tobacco competition prior to the Balkan Wars and the intensification of violence in the tobacco-producing lands afterwards. In short, it has shown that the Balkan Wars and World War I transformed the sectarian divide between Patriarchists and Exarchists and the unsystematic violence that accompanied it into a state-led competition between the Bulgarian and Greek states over territories destined to play a role in their national economy projects.[354]

Revisionist histories of the early twentieth century have in recent years highlighted the cosmopolitanism associated with provincial urban centers like Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Salonica.[355] Labor historians in particular have underlined the central role that industries like tobacco have played in uniting a diverse population through organized labor and protest at a time when political violence was tearing apart empires in the name of national destiny. It is true, as Efi Avdela, Emine Tutku Vardağlı, and Can Nacar have written, that the working peoples in Ottoman Macedonia and Thrace were from various communities and that, as a result of cooperative labor and labor activism, a number of pan-communal organizations emerged in the twentieth century. These included the labor organization *Felicity* (*Saadet*/*Ευδαιμονία*) as well as the important pan-religious socialist organization *La Federación Obradera* of Salonica.[356]

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[354] The historiography of total war economies has demonstrated similar dynamics in other industries. See Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison, "The Economics of World War I: An Overview," in Stephen Broadberry and Mark Harrison (eds.) *The Economics of World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3-40.

[355] Michelle Campos, *Ottoman Brothers: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011). Julia Phillips Cohen, "Between Civic and Islamic Ottomanism: Jewish Imperial Citizenship in the Hamidian Era," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 44 (2012), 237-255. Philip Mansel, *Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010).

[356] Efi Avdela, "Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in Post-Ottoman Thessaloniki: The Great Tobacco Strike of 1914," in *Borderlines: Genders and Identities in War and Peace, 1870-1930*, ed. Billie Melman (New York: Routledge, 1998), 421-38. Emine Tutku Vardağlı, "International Tobacco Politics and the Question of Social Movements in the Middle East: A Comparative Analysis of Ottoman and Iranian Cases," in *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (July 2014), 606-621. Can Nacar, "Tütün İşçileri, Tüccarlar, ve Kırık Camlar: 1905 Kavala Grevi," in *Toplumsal Tarih*, No. 213 (September, 2011). Nacar, *Labor and Power*, 79-168. Filiz Dığıroğlu, "Selanik ekonomisinde unutulmuş bir alan: tütün üretimi, ticareti, ve Reji (1883-1912)," in *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, XLIII (2014), 227-272.

Nevertheless, this trend towards cooperation, especially amongst labor organizers, co-existed alongside outbursts of mutual sabotage such as assassinations and kidnappings, until the final dismemberment of the empire. The attempts at organized labor and cooperation were not, in the end, effective against the rising tide of sectarian and nationalist (i.e. separatist non-Ottomanist) violence. The ideals of Ottoman brotherhood advocated by the CUP in the Balkans and embraced on the streets of Salonica in 1908 were seemingly undercut both during and after the Second Constitutional Era (1908-1912) by outbursts of inter-communal violence. Territorial skirmishes transformed into geopolitical crises in the context of the Balkan Wars and World War I. Dominance within crucial industries such as tobacco played an important role in this process as the lives and careers of both Charles Spierer and Judah Perahia have shown.

The logic of inter-communal violence had by the early twentieth century come to mirror the normative language of Ottoman reports on outbursts of violence between "Bulgarians," "Albanians," and "Greeks." A half-century earlier, in 1859, the English Consulate in Drama had recorded that roughly 43,000 Christians lived in the *sancak* of Drama. At this time, the Slavic- and Greek-speakers of the region constituted the general category of "Christian."[357] As Arbella Bet-Shlimon has recently demonstrated in the case of Kirkuk, one of Iraq's most significant oil cities, ethnic and confessional identities often reflect the political economy of the region.[358] In the case of Ottoman Macedonia, the transformation of a singular Orthodoxy into a bifurcated politics of Exarchist and Patriarchist competition developed in tandem with the oriental tobacco industry. As a result, the generalized terminology of "Christian" used to describe Greeks and Bulgarians in 1859 did not carry the same political meaning by the turn of the twentieth century. By this time,

[357] İsmail Arslan, *Selanik'in gölgesinde bir sancak: Drama (1864-1913)* (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2010), 235-284.
[358] Arbella Bet Shlimon, *City of Black Gold: Oil, Ethnicity, and the Making of Modern Kirkuk* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019).

Greek, Bulgarian, and Turk had become more meaningful in describing what policies and national projects non-state actors were invested in within the territories of the southern Balkans. By the dawn of the twentieth century, the category of Ottoman Christian held no salient connotation but functioned rather as an umbrella term within which various communal affiliations and sectarian commitments could find provisory cover.

The political economy of tobacco gave material significance to the ethno-religious monikers of post-1870 Macedonia and provided the space within which late Ottoman subjects would negotiate and solidify their communal boundaries. This was exemplified by outbursts of violence and competition over labor and resources in İskeçe and the surrounding region after the Ilinden Uprising of 1903. The wartime atrocities of the period between 1912 and 1919 demonstrate that tobacco continued to be a generative force for violence and territorial disputes between the main state actors in the Balkans even after the collapse of Ottoman rule there. In this context, the efforts of the Bulgarian government during the occupation of Thrace and Macedonia were not only administratively significant. More importantly, they also constituted a key component of an ambitious program to develop a Bulgarian national economy with the tobacco industry at its heart. Although ultimately unsuccessful given the German and Bulgarian loss of World War I, the territories obtained in the wake of the Second Balkan War and during World War I would provide the space and resources to create this fleeting reality.

Epilogue
"There Won't be as Many Deals as We Thought"

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In 1920, Judah Perahia — a purchasing agent for the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. — was in Alexandria, Egypt attempting to expand the business networks of the Commercial Company and its sister firm based in Alexandria, the Salonica Cigarette Company. The correspondence he left behind on his time in Egypt reflected the multiple crises that faced both companies in the preceding decade. For one thing, the Balkan Wars, the Great War, and the ongoing Greco-Turkish War — the latter of which had broken out the year prior in 1919 — had all dampened the productive capacity and economic output of Ottoman and post-Ottoman territories in the Balkans, the Levant, and North Africa. Macedonia and Thrace were clearly implicated in this development as demonstrated by extreme decreases in the amount of exported tobacco sent from Kavala during these years.[359] Charles Spierer — the director for the Commercial Company during World War I — noted a drop from the yearly average of 11 million kilograms in exported tobacco prior to 1916 to roughly 3.5 million in 1918.[360]

While in Egypt with his business partner Elie Levy, Judah Perahia ran into a number of difficulties related to the broader economic crisis in the eastern Mediterranean directly after World War I. The mission itself was likely provoked by instability in the Central European market. Judah wrote to his superiors in Salonica that "the crisis in the tobacco market still continues" and that "merchants are considering an upcoming drop in tobacco prices." The Salonica branch responded

[359] The Perahia brothers represented the Commercial Company of Salonica in Drama and in Xanthi during the turbulent years of World War I, the Greco-Turkish War, and throughout the interwar period before Nazi invasion in 1941. Tragically, Shemtov was allegedly murdered in the infamous Auschwitz-Birkenau complex in Oświęcim, Poland whereas Judah was able to survive in an Athens hideout where he preserved the family correspondence and business records. This robust collection is held in Jerusalem at The Ben-Zvi Institute of Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

[360] *Rapports et enquêts de la commission interalliée*, 167-169.

to him in a condescending tone on 28 July 1920 making note of the fact that, after having "tobacco in Alexandria for two months, you have not achieved any results" and threatening "liquidation" of the entire mission. This was recognition of the failure of the mission from the vantage point of Salonica. The experience was significant in the career of Judah Perahia as it filled his return to Salonica and then Kavala with the feeling of dejection and hopelessness as correspondence between him and his brother indicates.[361]

Judah's time in Egypt, however, confirms two important aspects of his political vision for the region and the implications of tobacco's political economy more broadly. For one thing, he became unquestionably committed to the Zionist project in Palestine from the 1910s if not earlier. This Zionist conviction was potentially a reaction to the virulent nationalist violence which pitted Greeks against Bulgarians, Christians against Muslims, and Greeks against Turks in the years leading up to the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and the inter-communal violence which had become commonplace during the war years between 1912 and 1922. Indeed, he became the editor of the Zionist publication *Agudat Or Zion* in 1913 on the heels of the Balkan Wars and seems to have maintained his commitment to this cause until his death.[362]

Still, he maintained significant networks with Turkish-speaking peasants and merchants in and around Xanthi into the 1930s; Greek-speaking entrepreneurs in Salonica, Kavala, and Alexandria across the sea; and French- and German-speaking clients throughout Central Europe,

[361] Judah Perahia (Alexandria) to the Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique), 27 July 1920, folder 6, box 19, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute; The Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique) to Judah Perahia (Alexandria), 28 July 1920, folder 6, box 19, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute; The Commercial Co. of Salonica Ltd (Salonique) to Elie Levy and Judah Perahia (Alexandria), 14 October 1920, folder 6, box 19, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.

[362] Susy Gruss, *Las novelas de Judá Haim Perahiá*; for more on the nationalization process in the region and its relationship to economic integration into the world economy, see Andreas Kosmas Lyberatos, "The Nation in the Balkan Village: National Politicization in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Thrace," in *Turkish Historical Review*, 7:2 (Oct. 2016) 167- 93 and Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Tools of Revolution: Global Military Surplus, Arms Dealers and Smugglers in the Late Ottoman Balkans, 1878–1908," in *Past & Present*, Volume 237, Issue 1, 1 November 2017, 167–195.

especially Switzerland and Austria. At the same time, he sought to establish tobacco cultivation as a viable enterprise in Palestine in the wake of the Balfour Declaration, especially during his time in Egypt in 1920. In fact, in January 1921 his colleagues in the Société Internationale des Industriels, Fabricants & Commerçants — an LLC with its headquarters in Rome and with branches in London, New York, Buenos Aires, Barcelona, Madrid, Montevideo, Istanbul, and Salonica — requested his help in procuring tobacco seeds for cultivation in Palestine demonstrating that he was not alone in this ambition.[363]

On top of wartime disruptions to economic performance throughout the region in general, Perahia faced difficulties in accessing the commercial networks that had driven the expansion of tobacco during Ottoman times. Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia had upset the capacity for local commercial actors to purchase, transport, and sell tobacco on international markets as they had before the Great War. This disturbed the economic balance of Macedonia and neighboring Thrace. Judah Perahia and his brother Shemtov were at the forefront of a concerted effort to re-establish networks that had been upended during the 1910s. The apparent ease with which the Greek military landed at Izmir in May 1919 and subsequently expanded eastwards into Anatolia in the summer of 1920 appeared to be a saving grace in this political and economic context.[364] This constitutes the basis for the second important point confirmed by Judah's time in Egypt. In spite of the fact that he was a committed Zionist, he waxed eloquent over the opportunities of a unified commercial zone under Greek control in the Aegean Sea including the Greek mainland, Macedonia, the islands, and Asia Minor. This was reflective of the commercial needs and ambitions of the Perahias and

[363] Abr. S. Recanati & Co. (Salonique) to Judah Perahia (Cavalla), 19 January 1921, folder 4, box 11, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.
[364]

their partners in the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. regardless of what it may or may not have indicated about their politics.

The commercial networks of Judah Perahia, Charles Spierer, and the Commercial Company of Salonica Ltd. were dependent on the interconnectedness and interdependence of the eastern Mediterranean. This was true of other merchants to be sure. However, Slavic-speaking tobacco merchants in Macedonia and Thrace (albeit limited in number), the Turkish- and Slavic-speaking Muslim peasantry, and the Greek merchant class in Kavala and its hinterlands were all more easily subsumed into a coherent national economy project that fused economic development with an agenda of nationalist expansion. While these particular Jewish families (i.e. the Allatinis and the Perahias) were not explicitly tied to any of the national economy projects of the Bulgarian Kingdom, the League of Nations and the Kingdom of Greece, or the Committee for Union and Progress (and later the Turkish Republic), they experienced the fragmentation of Macedonia into a battle zone between all three over the years that led up to the Balkan Wars and World War I. The overarching storyline of this dissertation has been based around this trajectory. As such, it has been an attempt to show the ways that the political economy of tobacco was one of the most important preconditions for the violence and destruction of the second decade of the twentieth century in the southern Balkans. This should not be interpreted as an overly simplistic, deterministic, or causal argument based on the Marxian division of base and superstructure. Instead, the political economy of tobacco is an important environmental factor which is part of the background to a multi-faceted political and cultural transformation of the region which took on a life of its own.

While Macedonia's Muslim population was facing exile in eastern Macedonia in 1923, an influx of Greek Orthodox refugees from the Black Sea region had begun shifting the dynamics of

the labor supply in Macedonia.[365] Prior to this, political instability and market disruptions had already limited opportunities for merchants and increased demand for tobacco during the war years between 1912 and 1922 in the eastern Mediterranean. This drove prices up in the aftermath of this decade of warfare as merchants sought to fulfill the demand on central and western European markets as well as those in the United States, Japan, and elsewhere. As a result, bidding wars broke out on new-harvest tobacco in the harvest season of 1923 and 1924 while companies tried to come to terms with an increasingly agitated workforce.

At the same time, purchases of new-harvest tobacco had been interrupted by what Hüseyin Hüsnü called "economic factors" — namely, the Greek government's imposition of a massive new 20% customs duty on tobacco exports in 1923. Hüsnü claimed that this had discouraged American exporters, who had become increasingly active in the regional tobacco industry since the early twentieth century, from purchasing new-harvest tobacco directly from cultivators over the course of the previous spring and summer. Greek Orthodox merchants had allegedly followed suit leaving Muslim cultivators with an abnormally large amount of unsold tobacco stock in the fall of 1923 from the previous 1922 harvest.[366] Although merchants only temporarily halted purchases of tobacco in 1923 and 1924 (as they had also done in earlier years when disputes came up with peasants), Muslim peasants still had leftover tobacco stock to sell at the end of 1923 for a variety of other reasons.[367] The terms of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed in January 1923, were by the fall

[365] See for example, Κώστας Παλούκης, "«Ανεπεξέργαστα καπνά» και «ίδια μεροκάματα για ίδια δουλειά»: οι απόψεις των κομμουνιστικών παρατάξεων για το καπνικό ζήτημα (1927-1933)" ["Unprocessed Tobacco" and "Same Paychecks for the Same Job": Aspects of the Communist Factions on the Tobacco Issue (1927-1933)], in *Πρακτικά 1ου Επιστημονικού Συνεδρίου – Ο καπνός στην ιστορία: οικονομικές, κοινωνικές και πολιτισμικές προσεγγίσεις, Καβάλα, 7-9 Δεκεμβρίου 2018 [Proceedings of the 1st Academic Conference – Tobacco in History: Economic, Social, and Cultural Approaches, Kavala, 7-9 December 2018]*, (Kavala: Institute of Social Movements and Tobacco History, 2020), 287-304.

[366] *Ibid.*, 31.

[367] Can Nacar, *Labor and Power in the Late Ottoman Empire: Tobacco Workers, Managers, and the State (1872-1912)* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 79-92; Can Nacar, "Labor Activism and the State in the

of that year being converted from a theoretical framework for demographic engineering into a set of practical steps for a full-blown ethnic cleansing project.[368] As a result, towards the end of 1923 Muslim émigrés were in the impossible situation of needing to relocate to Anatolia with large amounts of tobacco or sell off their supply to purchasing agents at potentially discounted rates.[369] Other factors complicated the situation further.

One such factor was that the Greek government had accelerated a policy of confiscating large estates of Muslim absentee landlords (Tr. *çiftlik*, Gr. *τσιφλίκια*) in 1922 and 1923 making property rights seem fluid to many Muslim residents of eastern Macedonia.[370] More to the point, moveable property, especially beasts of burden and other agricultural supplies had apparently also been confiscated by Greek officials and stolen by bandits periodically throughout 1923. In spite of the guarantees in articles 8, 9, 10, and 16 of the Treaty of Lausanne on the secure transport of such property, there was a reasonable concern amongst Muslim merchants and peasants alike about the fate of their moveable and immoveable property.[371] Another complicating factor was the fact that the new harvest of 1923 was not ready for sale given that it needed to be dried and cured prior to being pressed into bales or spiral bundles (*denk*s or *pastal*s, respectively). This process, which took place in the winter (specifically in January according to Hüsnü), was a necessity prior to selling

Ottoman Tobacco Industry," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 46, no.3 (2014): 539-545; Can Nacar, "Tütün İşçileri, Tüccarlar ve Kırık Camlar: 1905 Kavala Grevi," in *Toplumsal Tarih*, 213 (2011).

[368] See Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement*, 105-188 and Ραϋμόνδος Αλβανός, *Σλαβόφωνοι και Πρόσφυγες: Κράτος και πολιτικές ταυτότητες στη Μακεδονία του μεσοπολέμου* (Επίκεντρο: Αθήνα, 2019) [Raymondos Alvanos, *Slavic Speakers and Refugees: State and Political Identities in Macedonia During the Interwar Period*, (Epikentro: Athens, 2019)], 45-60.

[369] Hüseyin Hüsnü wrote extensively on the issues with potentially transporting this tobacco given that the holds on even the largest transport ships taking refugees to Turkey were not sufficient to securely move such large amounts of tobacco without it spoiling.

[370] Georgios Kritikos, "The Agricultural Settlement of Refugees: A Source of Productive Work and Stability in Greece, 1923-1930," *Agricultural History*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (Summer, 2005), 329.

[371] "Greece and Turkey: Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations and Protocol, signed at Lausanne, January 30, 1923," in *League of Nations Treaty Series No. 807*, Articles 8, 9, 10, 11, and 16, pages 80-81; Hüseyin Hüsnü Diary, 40.

the tobacco on foreign markets. The value of this unprocessed new-harvest tobacco belonging to Muslims in Macedonia at the end of 1923 was estimated to be around 8 million *drachma*s.[372]

At the same time that Muslims in Macedonia strategized for their transition to a new life in Anatolia, tobacco merchants in Macedonia and Thrace attempted to recover from a decade of market interruptions in central Europe and the eastern Mediterranean due to near constant regional and global warfare between 1911 and 1922. While Jewish merchants like the Perahias continued to conduct business in the Greek context, Greek Orthodox cigarette manufacturers and exporters gained a greater share of the tobacco trade often with the support of German and American partnerships.[373]

In many ways, the Treaty of Lausanne offered a resolution to the competing national economies of the Bulgarian, Ottoman-cum-Turkish, and Greek governments. However, it did so not by evening the playing field between them or dividing the spoils. Instead, it resolutely placed the tobacco heartland in Greek hands by negating Bulgarian claims and legitimizing the ethnic cleansing of Macedonia's Muslim population. Shemtov Perahia — as a representative for the Commercial Company in Drama — provides a complementary perspective to that of his brother Judah for a number of reasons. Most importantly, unlike most of the villages near Xanthi, the villages surrounding Drama and the nearby town of Serres were subjected to the terms of the population exchange. This meant that the Muslim population was earmarked for exile and would be pushed out of their homes in the subsequent years. Because of this, Shemtov highlights the effects of the exchange on the lives of local Muslims. In particular, he wrote a number of letters in the months leading up to the exchange that show how Jewish entrepreneurs like himself along with

[372] *Ibid.*, 41.
[373] Juan Carmona-Zabala, "Underfunded Modernization: Tobacco Producers and Agricultural Policy in Interwar Greece," in *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 191-214.

the majority Greek Orthodox business community and American entrepreneurs sought to find deals within the circumstances created by the forced expulsion of the Muslim population.

Throughout March and April 1924, Shemtov wrote of numerous shipments of tobacco usually supplied to Drama by surrounding villages or purchased from suppliers in Serres and then sent by rail to Drama where his men would transfer the load to trucks to be delivered to Kavala. The shipments ranged in size from a few hundred to a few thousand bales at a time with around 480 bales per truckload on average according to one letter written by Shemtov in April 1923. Other times, tobacco remained in warehouses to dry and cure for a year or longer before being transported at all. It is for this reason, for example, that Shemtov requested the Kavala branch of the Commercial Co. to credit the Assicurazioni Generali in Trieste for insurance policies on tobacco stock held in warehouse no. 3 and warehouse no. 4 of a certain Emin İbrahim Parmaksız in Serres between 1923 and 1924.[374]

In early July 1923, Shemtov's chief employee Stavro was the bearer of bad news. Grasshoppers had ruined a significant amount of the tobacco crop that his men were growing outside the town of Drama. Shemtov even sent a tobacco leaf to Judah along with his letter to show him the bite marks. There would be no more than 600 *okka*s of tobacco produced on the modest plot belonging to Shemtov. Most of the tobacco marketed by the company was purchased from third-party cultivators but this smallholding produced a portion of the company's raw tobacco. For context, there were often single shipments of Commercial Co. tobacco that were over 1000 *okka*s in weight and some shipments were as high as 4000 *okka*s. The harvest — at 600 *okka*s — was not looking promising. Stavro suggested that, to rectify the situation, "the best thing to do would be to

[374] Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Commercial Co. (Kavala), 25 April 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute; Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Commercial Co. (Kavala), 4 April 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.

purchase tobacco from the boats since, with the departure of the Muslims, there will be a lot of deals (*kiélépures,* sic. Tr. *kelepir*)."[375]

The idea was simple enough: make low-ball offers to Muslims departing from the port of Kavala who needed to lighten their loads for the journey. With reports of some Muslims selling 30,000 *okka*s of stock tobacco before the exchange even began, this seemed like a reasonable proposition. Unfortunately for merchants like the Perahias, market demand and the legal apparatus that accompanied the exchange were a great deal stronger than expected making this an impossible solution. By the end of August 1923 Shemtov would admit candidly to Judah that, given legal protections allowing Muslims "to sell their tobacco freely…, there won't be as many deals as we thought."[376]

Shemtov was right. The establishment of the Mixed Commission, composed of Greek, Turkish, and 'neutral' members assigned by the League of Nations, made it difficult for merchants to turn a quick profit from either the moveable or immovable properties of refugees subject to the terms of the population exchange. However, with the impending transfer to Turkey of Muslims from Kavala and other Macedonian towns further inland, speculative ventures did not fizzle out nor did tobacco merchants submit so easily to the stipulations of the Treaty of Lausanne. Hüseyin Hüsnü wrote extensively about the issues facing Muslims who sought to liquidate their holdings prior to boarding ships headed for Turkey in the winter of 1923. One of the major issues that made it difficult for exiled Macedonian villagers to liquidate their properties was the Greek government's poorly timed increase on export duties for tobacco in 1923 which resulted in a

[375] Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Judah Perahia (Xanthi), 11 July 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.
[376] Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Commercial Co. (Kavala), 21 April 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute; this letter details the sales of stock tobacco by Cherifin Emin on behalf of the Kiazim Emin firm; Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Judah Perahia (Xanthi), 11 July 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute; Shemtov Perahia (Drama) to Judah Perahia (Xanthi), 29 August 1923, folder 7, box 8, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.

refusal by most American companies to purchase tobacco until the export duty was decreased to what they perceived as a normal level.

In a letter written by Judah on 24 March 1924 to Marc Tiano — his superior in Salonica — he reported on a sizable purchase of tobacco by the American companies Gary Tobacco Company and the American Tobacco Company. In it, Shemtov claims that "The Turks of the village [where the tobacco was purchased] are subject to the exchange" and that a feeling of unrest enveloped the air in expectation of "who knows what to break out in a fury." Although it was quite late in 1924 for these Muslims to still be in Macedonia, it is likely that the amount of unsold tobacco from 1923 had allowed them to stay after the winter-season processing and baling had taken place. In any case, the Americans had apparently paid 123 drachmas for "twenty [*okka*s of] tobacco." In contrast, he claimed that until recently in Gümülcine (i.e. Komotini in modern-day Greece) one could purchase much smaller quantities at prices which were less than half that paid by the Americans — between 50 and 60 drachmas. "However," he continued, "we notice a certain pretension on the part of the cultivators who have begun to demand upwards of 80 Drachmas." Around 400,000 *okka*s (just over 513,000 kilograms or roughly 565 tons) had allegedly already been sold that year and the letter itself was written at the end of March 1924 (i.e. before the work season was over).[377]

In the case of western Thrace, which was not subjected to the population exchange according to article 2 of the Treaty of Lausanne, credit arrangements between the company and its Muslim suppliers continued well into the 1924 purchasing season and thereafter. Judah Perahia clarifies though that his own company continued to make advance payments to "our cultivators" and that the total so far for the year was nearly 2.5 million drachmas. One such advance payment

[377] Judah Perahia to Marc Tiano, 24 March 1924, folder 1 box 1, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.

was made to "the Imam," a client that Judah wrote to periodically. It is unknown whether he was an actual imam for the Muslim community in Xanthi or if this was merely a nickname. He was certainly a Turkish speaker though and kept contact with Judah in that language using the Arabic script. In contrast, some Muslim tobacco merchants who were subjected to the population exchange in eastern Macedonia sold off their inventory at low prices knowing that a modest payment would beat no compensation at all if they felt it was impossible or dangerous for them to stay in Greece. Perahia himself made one such purchase of 432 *okka*s of *maxoul* tobacco (sic., Tr. *makhul*) and 81 *okka*s of higher quality *reina* tobacco at a very good price prior to writing Marc Tiano this letter.[378]

Speculation on tobacco stock became loaded with meaning in the 1920s' context of the Greek-Turkish population exchange, one of the most ambitious demographic engineering projects of the twentieth century. Although both refugee populations — "Greeks" and "Turks" — exercised agency by advocating for state protection of their properties and of their wages, the value of their labor remained negotiable throughout the period. Ultimately, the rhetoric of enterprising merchants in the context of the post-war Macedonian business culture justified seizing moveable property through appeals to speculation as the key to economic success. Both leading up to the historical ethno-religious transformation of both countries as laid out in the treaty and during the implementation of the population exchange itself, tobacco-producing villages in Eastern Macedonia were subjected to social and financial pressures that had been created through decades-long processes of urbanization, financialization, and industrialization.[379]

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[378] Judah Perahia to Mr. Abravanel, 19 March 1924, folder 1, box 1, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute; Judah Perahia to Marc Tiano, 24 March 1924, folder 1 box 1, Judah Perahia Collection, Ben Zvi Institute.

[379] Some of these have been explored in the large number of enlightening studies recently written in English on the population exchange analyzing the legal, economic, and institutional ramifications of the decade of warfare between 1912 and 1922 and the subsequent population exchange on Balkan Muslim refugees in Turkey and on Christian refugees from Asia minor in Greece. See especially Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations,* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Renée Hirschon, ed., *Crossing the*

A number of historians have analyzed the political-economy dynamics of settlement and the distribution of property in post-Ottoman societies, especially in Turkey and Greece. The studies these historians have produced provide a wealth of information about the socio-economic and cultural experiences of migrants, refugees, bureaucrats, and peasants. However, what this dissertation research has demonstrated is that, inasmuch as settlement and redistribution of moveable and immoveable property were tied to the political economy and management of strategic commodities, so the original moments of ethnic cleansing that drove tobacco cultivators and merchants from their homes in Macedonia were driven by political economy and opportunism. As chapter one demonstrated, the commercial networks that dominated tobacco in the second half of the nineteenth century were central to a reformulation of the political economy of Macedonia, Thrace, and the Aegean Region in general. This transformation was not limited to changes in the tobacco industry alone but was tied up with broader trends of urbanization, financialization, and industrialization. At the forefront of these developments were the most prominent Sephardic Jewish, Greek Orthodox, *Dönme*, Muslim, and Levantine families in Salonica and Kavala. Likewise, chapter two shows that the most important of these networks continued to dominate tobacco into the first decade of the twentieth century.

Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003); Elinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*, (Bamberg: Bamberg University Press, 2017); Ellinor Morack, "Fear and Loathing in "*Gavur*" Izmir: Emotions in Early Republican Memories of the Greek Occupation (1919-22)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49 (2017), 71-89; Ellinor Morack, "Refugees, Locals and "The" State: Property Compensation in the Province of Izmir Following the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange of 1923," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2015), 147-166; Uğur Ümit Üngör, "Becoming and Unbecoming Refugees: The Long Ordeal of Balkan Muslims, 1912–34," in Peter Gatrell, and Liubov Zhvanko (eds), *Europe on the Move: Refugees in the Era of the Great War*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 304-327; Ayhan Aktar, "Economic Nationalism in Turkey: The Formative Years, 1912-1925," *Boğaziçi Journal: Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1-2 (1996), 263-290; Haris Exertzoglou, "Children of Memory: Narratives of the Asia Minor Catastrophe and the Making of Refugee Identity in Interwar Greece," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2016), 343-366.

This reality created a credit market sustained by commercial 'habits' which increased the profitability of tobacco and solidified tensions and competition over the productive spaces in Macedonia and Thrace that lay at the heart of the Ottoman Empire's tobacco industry. These regions became central to national discussions of tobacco reform much as tobacco, in turn, became central to economic policy discussions amongst Ottoman reformers in the Committee for Union and Progress. Greek and Bulgarian nationalists also envisioned Macedonia as the core of their own post-Ottoman national economies. For this reason, Macedonia and Thrace — and the tobacco grown there — were contested by the victims and perpetrators of demographic engineering policies in the post-World-War-I era. Political and financial crises during the period between 1912 and 1922 incentivized tobacco merchants to speculate on tobacco (both stock tobacco and new-harvest crops), labor, and property in both new and old ways during the ethnic-cleansing process between 1923 and 1925. Tobacco had by then become a national commodity rather than an imperial one.

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Şûrâ-yı Devlet Defterleri (ŞD.d)

Tercüme Odası Belgeleri (HR.TO)

Yıldız Esas Evrakı (Y.EE)

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