

THE WILL TO CHANGE, THE RIGHT TO LAND:
DEVELOPMENT IN TURKEY’S TEA PRODUCTION



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THE WILL TO CHANGE, THE RIGHT TO LAND:
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The Will to Change, The Right to Land:
Development in Turkey's Tea Production

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Bogaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

Signature.....

Date

ABSTRACT

The Will to Change, The Right to Land:

Development in Turkey's Tea Production

This thesis studies the development of Turkey's tea production in its 100 years of history. The thesis focuses on the social, political, and economic changes created by the tea development project, which was initiated by the state, by examining the political actors, local and national dynamics in the process of its cultivation. Written from a historical perspective, the thesis offers an alternative approach to official history via oral history interviews with tea producers conducted during the field study in addition to using archival and parliamentary documents, providing a more comprehensive and grounded account of the history of tea cultivation in the region. As a reflexive sociological study using qualitative research methods, this thesis employs ethnographic research methods extensively, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and oral history interviews with 46 individuals over a six-month fieldwork period. The thesis, which reveals the crises created by the tea development project in the rural areas of Eastern Black Sea and the changes in the lives of producers, discusses the development project from the perspectives of rural life and gender, and critically examines the concept of development itself. The thesis analyzes the developmentalist front of the state in Turkey through the unique development story of the Eastern Black Sea Region. The research studies tea production chronologically and looks at the relationships of land, labor, and tea created between the people and the state in the region.

ÖZET

Değişmeye İrade, Toprağa Erişim:

Türkiye'nin Çay Üretiminde Kalkınma

Bu tez Türkiye'nin 100 yıllık çay üretimi tarihinde kalkınmayı inceliyor. Doğu Karadeniz bölgesinde devlet girişiyle başlatılan çay üretimi sürecindeki politik aktörleri, yerel ve ulusal dinamikleri inceleyerek çay kalkınma projesinin bölgede yarattığı sosyal, politik ve ekonomik değişim sürecine odaklanıyor. Tarihsel bir perspektif ile yazılan tez, arşiv ve parlamento belgeleri ve saha araştırmaları sırasında çay üreticileri ile yapılan sözlü tarih görüşmeleriyle resmi tarihe alternatif bir yaklaşım sunarak çayın yaygınlaşmasının tarihini bütüncül ve sahadan bir göz ile anlatıyor. Nitel çalışma metotlarını benimsenerek yapılan, refleksif bir sosyolojik saha araştırması olarak tasarlanan bu tez görüşülen 45 kişi ve 6 aya yayılan saha süreci ile, katılımcı gözlem, derinlemesine mülakat ve sözlü tarih görüşmeleriyle etnografik araştırma metotlarını kullanıyor. Çay kalkınma projesinin Doğu Karadeniz kırsalında yarattığı krizleri ve üreticilerin hayatlarındaki değişimleri ortaya koyan tez, kalkınma projesini kırsal yaşam ve toplumsal cinsiyet perspektiflerinden tartışarak kalkınma kavramının kendini de kritik bir yaklaşımla inceliyor. Çalışma, Türkiye'de devletin kalkınmacı yüzünü Doğu Karadeniz'in kendine has kalkınma hikayesi üzerinden bir analize tabi tutarken bu analizi çayın üretimini kronolojik olarak inceleyerek ve bölgede yaratılan halk ile devlet arasındaki emek, toprak ve çay ilişkilerine bakarak yapıyor.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ÇAYKUR: General Directory of Tea Enterprises

DP: Democratic Party

DOKA: Eastern Black Sea Region Development Agency

DPT: The State Development Agency

EBSR: Eastern Black Sea Region

GNAT: Grand National Assembly of Turkey

IMF: International Monetary Fund

JDP: Justice and Development Party

JP: Justice Party

MTF: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Treasury and Finance

RPP: Republican People's Party

TEKEL: General Directory of Tobacco, Salt, and Alcohol

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WB: World Bank

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

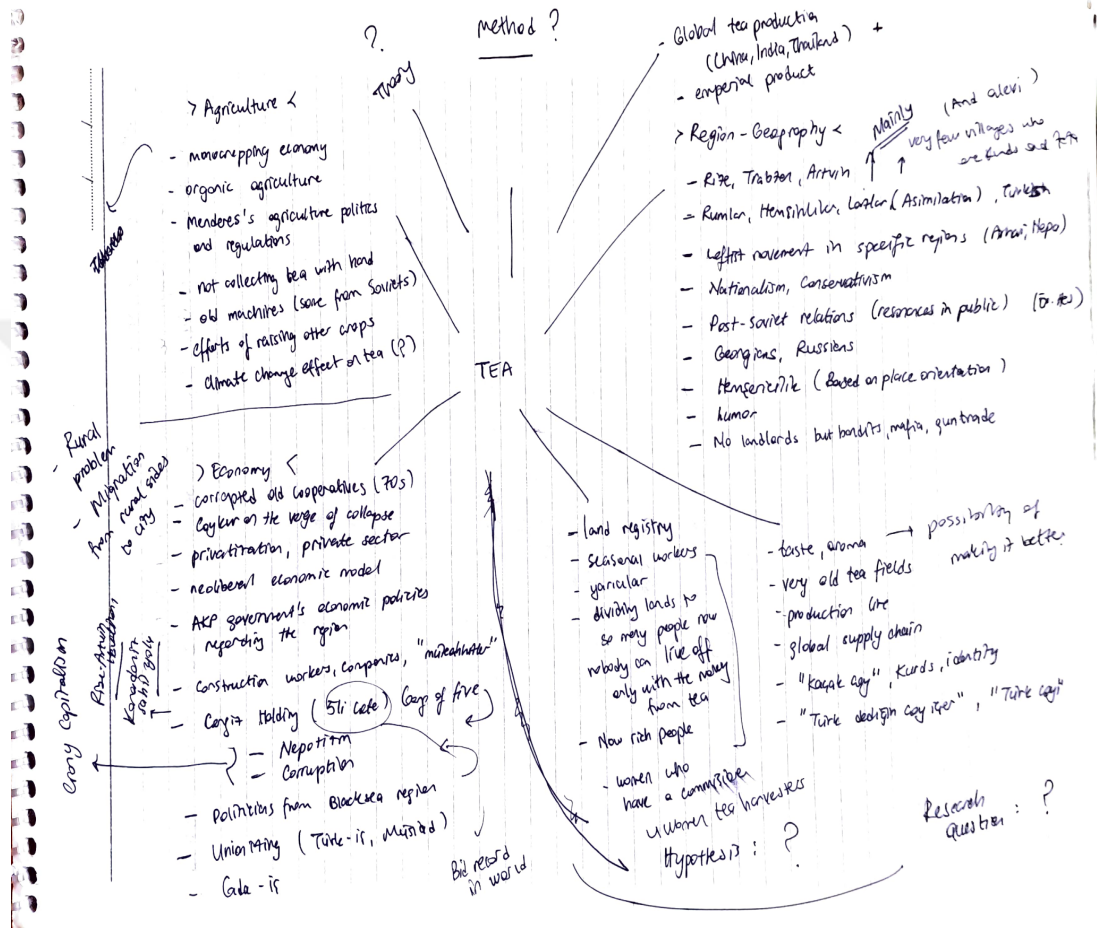


Figure 1. The tree of tea, drawn by the author in May 2023

The above image dates from around May 2023, i.e., 2 years before my thesis defense.

During my time as a master's sociology student at Boğaziçi University, one of the compulsory courses was Soc 504, where students must propose their thesis research proposals. At that time, I had not yet designed a research question, as the lower right part of the image shows, "Research Question:?" Hoping that it will create a better understanding for my upcoming presentation in the class, I prepared the above

diagram and drew that on the board: the tree of tea, a map for my thesis. This thesis focuses on the tea production in the Eastern Black Sea Region (EBSR) of Turkey. The research will examine the social and economic transformation of the area around the cities of Rize and Artvin on the EBSR, focusing on the cultivation, popularization, and industrialization of the tea plant as the dominant cash crop.

Looking back at this diagram after two years, now that I am in the writing stage, I can clearly see the pathway of my thesis, but I can also see the other roads that I could have chosen. Field sites occasionally create possibilities for more than one research project. While I was ready to focus on tea production under neoliberalism and the socio-economic life surrounding that, the multiethnic and multicultural structure of the region, as well as the unique history of tea production, provided me with immense knowledge beyond my research topic. Although it is hard to address every path I did not take here, I find it meaningful to mention how this thesis's research question developed.

First and foremost, this is a thesis that looks at tea production from a political economy perspective. The analysis of tea production and the actors in the field have been made through the lens of political economy. The intention was to focus on the Eastern Black Sea region and tea production within the theoretical framing of neoliberalism using the perspective of political economy since the economic relations surrounding tea production were highly vital and embedded for the region's people due to its prevalence, and political actors have been involved in the major issues in tea production since its cultivation times. Also, the locals' experience under the crisis of neoliberalism makes the political economy approach more comprehensive as it provides a multi-dimensional understanding of political and economic life in the region that is changed by this plant. Yet, occasionally, field sites

provide intriguing data that will change one's initial research question. In the case of this thesis research, I also encountered such a case in the field and shifted my initial association of the tea production with neoliberalism to developmentalism. Here, I want to provide a chronological mapping to show how the thesis research question was finalized. By doing so, I will also show why my research question is important and why this research had to follow this path.

In this introductory chapter of my thesis, I will first depict my research question and explain the theoretical framework choice made between neoliberalism and developmentalism. It will be followed by a methodology section where the theoretical explanations and methodologies will be provided, as well as demographic tables. Lastly, I will provide a summary of each chapter, which forms a map of the thesis.

1.1 Shaping a research question: Neoliberalism vs. Developmentalism

While the past two decades went under the rule of neoliberal policies in Turkey's economic, social, and political aspects (Erensü & Madra, 2020), agricultural production is no exception. The economic-based definition of neoliberalism I chose follows a particular part of the social science literature. Neoliberalism is a process that advocates prioritizing the free market and its existence above all other political decisions and increasing the dependence on market-based or market-like solutions not only on economic but also on political and social fronts (Erensü & Madra, 2020; Madra & Adaman, 2014; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Keyder & Yenal, 2013).

Neoliberalism is one of the major topics in social sciences literature after the 1990s, with the increasing focus on globalization, which makes it a wide phenomenon studied, from mass privatization of state-owned enterprises (SOE) (Öniş, 2011) to

practices of contemporary secularism reflection of historical trends of neoliberalism (Gökarıksel& Mitchell, 2005).

Yet, in its practitioners in the political arena, we have a much simpler map. On 24 January 1980, the minority coalition government led by Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel established a set of unexpectedly radical economic decisions that aimed at structural reform in Turkey's economy, making then-prime minister Undersecretary Turgut Özal responsible for their application (Pamuk, 2014, p.265). This set of decisions aimed at a more market-based and export-oriented economy instead of the interventionist and introverted model that has been in use since the 1930s (Pamuk, 2014; Boratav, 2011; Arıcanlı & Rodrik, 1990; Yalman, 2009). On 12 September 1980, the Turkish military forces executed a coup d'état that prohibited the worker unions, lowered the wages of workers, and mutilated the left political movements in Turkey, which have never recovered since then (Gürel et al., 2019, p.469).

While leftist movements have been brutalized, Özal's elected governments (1982-1989), after the coup, have implemented the neoliberal economic model fiercely. However, according to widely regarded scholars like Öniş, practices like privatization have been implemented much more fiercely by a newly built political party, the Justice and Development Party (JDP). After the 2001 crisis, the open space of the political scene in Turkey was filled by the newly established JDP. JDP, in its first five years, has shown the most market-oriented and market-based politics in the republic's history (Pamuk, 2014, p.287). What was created in the 1980s with the hands of the military junta and neoliberal politicians-economists has reached its peak success in the hands of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's JDP. Today, in the summer of 2025, Turkey is experiencing severe wildfires, while some of these

wildfires were caused by problems in electricity lines, where the construction companies (Birgün, 2025; Sağlam, 2025). At the same time, GNAT¹ passed a law legalizing the search for mining in protected areas “for the need of energy and the mining industry” (Bianet, 2025; Abayoğlu, 2025). During one of the debates in the parliament, the head of the industry commission, JDP’s Mustafa Varank, stated that “We did not build these power plants. We did not discover the coal deposits in this region. They were identified as mining sites in the 1980s. These power plants have been operating ever since.” (Cumhuriyet, 2025). At times, the political lineage of the post-1980s in Turkey shapes the above and below of the ground with its neoliberal ideologies in such a debilitating way the arguments become much clearer. The similar action from the same government is continues since the 1980s, which will create power for the state and companies, while also punish the voice of civil society and deprives the laborers from their rights by worse conditions and wages.

Neoliberalism’s destructive effects on the ecological sphere created massive demolition of nature and wildlife as well as displacement of settlements, thus ecological, economic, and social injustice in the Eastern Black Sea Region (Erensü, 2016; Adaman et al., 2016; Hamsici, 2010). Similarly, with the private sector entering the tea market, tea prices decrease, and ÇAYKUR [or Çay-Kur] (General Directory of Tea Enterprises) is no longer a protection for the producers (Genç, 2016). ÇAYKUR is the state-owned enterprise taken under the Wealth Fund in 2019, led by President Erdoğan himself. ÇAYKUR’s share in the tea industry is %49 percent, and the rest is divided among several private tea companies. ÇAYKUR decides the purchase price of tea harvested by kilogram yearly and has 47 regional factories. As the 2025 May tea price was declared as 25,44 Turkish Liras per 1 kg of

¹ While GNAT will be used as the acronym of the Grand National Turkish Assembly, the in-text citations will be given to its Turkish acronym TBMM, so through text I will use both interchangeably.

fresh tea leaves, producers showed their disturbance on the issue as well: "One kilo of fresh tea cannot buy a simit and tea" (evrensel, 2025a). From Artvin to Rize, the reactions toward the new tea prices have continued (Temiz, 2025; Nefes Gazetesi, 2025; evrensel, 2025b; Aksu Çelik, 2025; evrensel, 2025c); however, ÇAYKUR[or Çay-Kur] (General Directory of Tea Enterprises), the state-owned enterprise in Turkey/ state that decides the annual minimum fresh tea purchase price per kg each first harvest, did not change the price, and the reactions did not turn into protests. Similar reactions have occurred in 2024, more so the opposition party Republican People's Party(RPP) leader Özgür Özel had a Tea Rally in Rize where he criticized the annual tea prices and gave platform to a tea producer woman to talk from the rally bus and there was a symbolic coffin brought by the listeners to the rally as Özel responded to them saying "We don't want to see the nails being hammered into the coffin of producers." (gazete duvaR, 2024; Özgenç, 2024).



Figure 2. RPP's tea rally in Rize. Banner of RPP under the eyes of the banner of President Erdoğan that is constantly displayed in the center, saying: "We do not accept the fresh tea purchase price. We do not accept, we refuse." Photo by author²

² All photos in the thesis are taken by the author unless otherwise stated.



Figure 3. Two women attenders from İkizdere Environment Association, “You destroyed the forests and streams, now it's the tea?” and “We won the quarry; we will win the tea”³

Following these incidents and intakes from the field along with the relevant literature, I was certain about the effects of neoliberalism on the contemporary tea production, however, ÇAYKUR the state-owned-enterprise in Turkey that decides the annual minimum fresh tea purchase price per kg each first harvest, keeps the records of the tea fields, number of tea producers and publish annual tea reports is an exception in terms of neoliberalism. What is special about the tea production and the tea producers is that even though the state has been exercising mass-privatization of state-owned enterprises (SOE) since the 1980s but mainly after the 2000s countrywide (Öniş, 2011), tea has remained reasonably protected by the state. ÇAYKUR has not been privatized and still annually decides on the minimum price

³ The İkizdere Environment Association fights against a quarry attempt by Cengiz İnşaat in 2021. (Dağıstanlı, 2022).

for the fresh tea leaves produced by tea producers. It is one of the three SOEs not privatized in the agricultural sector (MTF, 2022). ÇAYKUR was founded in 1983 by separating from TEKEL (General Directory of Tobacco, Salt, and Alcohol) and owns 51% of the market share of the tea industry in Turkey (ÇAYKUR, 2019), owns 49 fresh tea processing factories as the above table shows.

Table 1. Çaykur and Private Sector Share in the Tea Market between 2015-2019

Yıllar	ÇAYKUR (ton)	ÇAYKUR (%)	Özel Sektör (ton)	Özel Sektör (%)	Toplam (ton)
2015	680.921	51	647.013	49	1.327.934
2016	687.515	51	662.485	49	1.350.000
2017	524.762	42	739.637	58	1.264.358
2018	750.328	51	730.206	49	1.480.534
2019	750.328	52	699.672	48	1.450.000

Kaynak: TÜİK

In addition to Çaykur being an exception, in the field, while focusing on tea production, I experienced how dominant the state presence in the region was, which was different from what I expected to experience under neoliberalization. In the literature that studies the post 1980 period of Turkey, especially the JDP period, scholars provide unique terms to explain the heavy state involvement with corporations and neoliberalism in the mass destruction, such as “embedded neoliberalism” (Van Apeldoorn, 2002; Crouch, 2009; Özdemir, 2023), “neoliberal populism”(Akçay, 2017), “neoliberal developmentalism” (Adaman et al., 2019), “state capitalism”(Öniş, 2019) and lastly “neoliberal statism” (Tuğal, 2022). This research addresses a more general view of Turkey’s transition under Erdoğan’s regime and the public orientations within that.

Although I find neoliberal statism much appropriate in general with the mega projects-driven economy and mass consent produced among the public, the fitting

problem in the case of tea production is much more related to the timeline. While all the above researchers depict a clear view of a massive transformation among the public after the 1980s, especially for the rural areas of Turkey, but in the case of tea producers, it is possible to argue that tea regions have gone under a more subtle “development” and Çaykur (the state) is the locomotive of the development since the beginning.

The popularization of tea cultivation in this periphery of Turkey created a regional change much earlier than the 1980s. Its introduction accomplished economic prosperity, and embedded it in the everyday relations of people, forming a new type of subjectivity. In the field, I experienced this tangible state of existence represented in producers repeated phrase of “Selling tea to the state”. The phrase epitomized the customer/provider role of the state in the region. As the state was both the buyer of tea and the major protector of the producer, it played a role as provider in the households in the region (Hann, 1990). Hann’s *Tea and Domestication of the Turkish State* (1990) show this exact relation. Although Hann conducted his fieldwork in the 1980s, I was finding similar patterns during the fieldwork over 50 years later and these patterns did align with the neoliberalism literature.

Çaykur is not a satisfactory entity for the producers, but it is much more embedded in the households of the region– “One pension from Çaykur in each house” -- that is exemplary in Turkey. My time in the field, both during the preliminary period (June 2023-August 2023) and the main field (May 2024-October 2024), made it clear to me that neoliberalism is one aspect of the greater dynamics that characterized and changed the tea production in the post-1980 period. What lies before in tea production’s 100 years of history in Turkey must be described with Turkey’s republican, egalitarian, rural, and populist policies, which all together lead

to a state-building, egalitarian foundational project and post-WW2 developmentalist politics that can be traced through the 1950s to 1980s in Turkey. These proofs from the field and literature eventually caused my thesis research topic to shift from neoliberalism in the post-1980 period to developmentalism in the entire republican project.

This thesis focuses on tea production in Turkey as a development project and puts the development projects at the core of state-building. Thus, the study follows Turkey's history in this trajectory by using political economy and development studies as theoretical frameworks. As such, this thesis asks:

- What are the social, political, and economic dynamics that created the tea development project in the Eastern Black Sea Region?
- How has this development project impacted the social and economic lives of the region's people?

This thesis will answer these questions partially, with each chapter showing the unique parts in the trajectory of the tea development project. The second question will be answered according to the first question, as the two questions together will create a total analysis of the initiation, continuity, and outcomes of this development project. While first question studies the reasons and dynamics that initiated the development project second question focuses on its outcomes.

Through these questions this thesis studies the development question and broadly how the development project of tea production in Turkey has been actualized in the Eastern Black Sea Region (EBSR). By doing so, it investigates how the tea development project changes social and economic structures in the region. Using a development framework and qualitative methodologies, my thesis provides a wide

and resourceful lens to the tea production in the EBSR as well as state-building in the Republic of Turkey.

1.2 Navigating the research: Methodological approach

This study was conducted with qualitative methods. We can categorize these to three qualitatively different sub-methodologies: first, interviews, second, participant observation, and third, archival documents. Interviews included both semi-structured in-depth interviews and oral history interviews. I will discuss the descriptive details of these interviews, demographic information of the informants, and the content of the interviews in Section 1.2.3. Field. Before passing on to describing my field, I want to explain the theoretical background and support of my methodological choices. In this methodology section, I will first explain why I chose qualitative methods, how I adopted a grounded theory method, which literature I followed in oral history interviewing and why I needed to use oral history interview methodology. Then I will move on with reflexivity and positionality as I discuss my position as a researcher in the field and address the relevant literature in this sense. Lastly, in the methodology section, I will describe the main characteristics of the field by the demographic tables to give a snapshot of my 6 months in the field.

1.2.1 Theorizing methodology

Sociological inquiry provides a well-situated understanding of a certain economic, political, and social phenomenon, where in this thesis I will be based on the relationalist approach (Emirbayer, 1997). Here, I study the relations that actors in the field built with each other and the emergent dynamics of power that actors built with the state and form their developmentalist subjectivities. As I wanted to understand how the macroeconomic and political economic decisions at the state level affect the

region's people and how this change can be tracked from contemporary to historical, qualitative methods seemed best suited to collect such data. In the preliminary period, I have reached out to some of my gatekeepers and had a rough idea about my sample size, and most importantly, I decided on many of the paths I would not be following in the above diagram. In this aspect, the constructivist grounded theory approach also suggests a similar approach to shape the research within the field. "Constructivist Grounded Theory rejects pure induction, naïve empiricism, and an unbiased, objective, and detached researcher position. Neither data nor theories are discovered but are constructed by the researchers because of their interactions with the field and its participants. Data are seen as co-constructed and always colored by the researchers' perspectives and situated in a particular socio-cultural context" (Thornberg&Keane, 2022, p.456).

Interviews were around 45-90 minutes, and the technique was chosen to give informants space to explain their own judgements and ideas regarding the state, development, and labor involved in tea. Although I had known a few of my informants prior to the research, the interview questions (see Appendix C and D) did not involve anything related to our personal relationship or their personal lives. With the contacts I knew personally, I did not ask life history questions, but focused on details of their relations with tea, whether it is a secondary income or first for them, or at what age they started tea plucking, and from those neutral and fact-oriented questions, I listened to their interpretations of their own lives. Similarly, for the informants I did not know prior to the interview, I did not delve into much detail about their lives but just focused on their experience with tea and followed up with questions, trying to uncover their interpretations of developmentalism and state policies in the region.

In the interviews especially with people who are above the age of 65, they provided a non-written history of tea production in the region. As I was simultaneously studying the history of the tea production and the region from the archives and literature, encountering the possibility of an informal history was very intriguing for me. Initially, I included these interviews as a part of the semi-structured interview data however, as I started to form the Chapter 2, which focuses on the archive documents on tea production and history of tea in the region, I realized these interviews are oral history interviews because they have such dense data on how a non-hegemonic class of people understand and remember their past, and shape their memory around this specific plant and its cultivation story in the region. Therefore, I decided to use oral history in addition to my archival resources to create a complete and comprehensive historical understanding of the tea production and its development in Turkey in my thesis. In their seminal book on oral history, *The Voice of the Past* (2017), Paul Thompson with Joanna Bornat state that traditional labor and economic histories are both shaped by the data sources, which are generally the dominant organizations and institutions in the field, such as trade unions or focus on trades and industries. Because some of these histories focus on large employment data which can be taken from these institutions only and must be use as part of a macro analysis which gives less attention to individual but more to what the sum of the data says. Further, they explain the role and meaning of oral history as:

In the most general sense, once the life experience of people of all kinds can be used as its raw material, a new dimension is given to history. Oral history provides a source quite similar in character to published autobiography, but much wider in scope. Oral historians, by contrast, may choose precisely whom to interview and what to ask about. The interview will provide, too, a means of discovering written documents and photographs which would not have otherwise been traced....by introducing new evidence from the underside, by shifting the focus and opening new areas of inquiry, by

challenging some of the assumptions and accepted judgements of historians, by bringing recognition to substantial groups of people who had been ignored, a cumulative process of transformation is set in motion. The scope of historical writing itself is enlarged and enriched, and at the same time, its social message changes. History becomes, to put it simply, more democratic. (pp.5-7)

While I am not a history student, my curiosity about historical sociology combined with the opportunity to do an oral history interview during fieldwork created this part of my methodology. As the oral history interviews have some limitations on validity, I balanced that with the archival documents in the history chapter of my thesis. The validity problem is no mere problem, according to Portelli. The first thing that makes oral history different is that it tells us less about events than about their meaning (Portelli, 1991). A person gives you a story about her mother-in-law, a distant memory, but has a lot of meaning, for me to check whether that story has occurred, neither possible nor meaningful. The meaning in that case is to see and understand why the informant is telling that memory and the relation to what she is building. This is not something that makes oral history less credible, according to Portelli (1991) and Thompson and Bornat (2017). Portelli suggests that there are no false oral sources, and this is basically a different form of credibility. He claims, “A cross-section of the subjectivity of a group or class may emerge. Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did. Oral sources may not add much to what we know, for instance, of the material cost of a strike to the workers involved; but they tell us a good deal about its psychosocial costs.” (1991, p.50) In that regard, similarly, my oral history sources also did not say anything new in the material sense of things, but their input makes my understanding and historical aspect of my thesis so enriched, which could never have been done with only GNAT law and bill documents and officer memoirs.

1.2.2 Navigating the Researcher in the Field: Reflexivity & Positionality

Reflexivity becomes important in this aspect. The researcher must understand their position in their research and how their personal decision connects to that research, as well, or in Bourdieu's definition, "psychoanalytic reflexivity." However, I follow Bourdieu and Wacquant's (1992) conversation and their critique of scholars who use this kind of reflexivity extensively.

"Wacquant: There is thus an intellectualist bias inherent in the position of the social scientist who observes from the outside a universe in which she is not immediately involved. For you, it is this intellectualist relation to the world, which replaces the practical relation to practice that agents have with the scholastic relation between the observer and her object, that must be objectivized to fulfill the requirement of reflexivity.

Bourdieu: We must go beyond description and raise the issue of the conditions of possibility of this doxic experience. We must recognize that the coincidence between objective structures and embodied structures, which creates the illusion of spontaneous understanding, is a particular case of the relation to the world, namely, the native relation." (p.73)

Of significance here is Bourdieu's invitation for researchers, or in this case, the sociologist, to go above and beyond accepting how their role and status in the structure creates their perception in their research and a certain illusion of understanding in the moment of research. My close contacts and localness to the region, but also being migrated years ago, created this limbic space for me that easily provides an illusion of understanding. Bourdieu's warning makes me aware of that space and my position as an insider/outsider as they constantly change. For instance, as women informants were talking about their struggles with precarity in education and tea plucking, I am an outsider, but as they talk about more cultural or economic references like a local song or market prices, or their children's school problems, I am more of an insider.

To position myself in the field as a local who grew up in the region, whose family is a tea producer (insider), and a researcher who has educated out of the region (outsider) required constant questioning and reflecting on my role and my connection to the topic, people, and the region. As I have stated in the beginning, I have tried not only “psychoanalytic reflexivity” but a constant evaluation of my position and my understanding, and my role in the field and research. During my fieldwork, I tried not to favor any “extraordinary” aspects; I followed only the most ordinary political, social, and daily life conversations around tea.

In her book *Reflexive Ethnography* (2008), Carol Aull Davies says, “We cannot research something with which we have no contact, from which we are completely isolated. All researchers are to some degree connected to, a part of, the object of their research. And, depending on the extent and nature of these connections, questions arise as to whether the results of research are artefacts of the researcher’s presence and inevitable influence on the research process.”

Anthropologists are known to have approached their field in this way since they spend a longer period in their field with their informants, and participant observation is a major part of their research, which provides them with insights into daily life, the gems of the ordinary days. As I knew exactly what an ordinary day was in the region from my mother’s routine, together with already having a basic level of understanding and disillusionment regarding the ways things work in daily life, my task was a bit different. I tried to see things for the second time with an open eye and ask very mundane questions to individuals I had known for years. Some of these conversations resulted in learning new local songs from grandmothers and reminiscing about their memories from the past.

A research can be rewarding and eye opening for the researcher in many aspects, I learned many things from my fieldwork that are not related to the thesis but my existence in my informants life in that 5 days or 2 hours does not have to be rewarding or does not change anything, when I started to imagine them as kind people who are helping me I become much more relaxed in the field. Otherwise, what are the informants getting from that research? A good anecdote from the field itself, one day while interviewing an informant, he answered a phone call saying, “Hi, I will come in a while, irem has some homework, she is asking us some questions about tea.” Indeed, this thesis was my homework. The most fulfilling role for me was that I was a student who was from the region that is trying to become a researcher. However, this does not render the meaning of the sociological research itself. Still, this research’s main value is the social and economic dynamics changed in the lives of the region by the tea development project. To explain this research question is important because not only does it have a value in the literature, but also it has a major impact on the regions’ people's lives.

1.2.3 Unpacking the Data: Descriptive Details of The Field

To have a more tangible map of the field after the theoretical background on the methodology, I will now move on to the description of the fieldwork. This qualitative research has taken place in Rize and Artvin in the EBSR between May 2023 and October 2024. I used a combination of semi-structured interviews, oral histories, participant observations, and archival research. During this fieldwork, I conducted 50 interviews, countless visits to different parts of the region, and numerous daily talks and interactions with residents. The interviews constituted the primary fieldwork data, together with archive sources. For the archives, I used the facilities of the Rize

Public Library, specifically the City Books Selection (*Kent Kitaplığı*). In addition to this, I have covered Turkish parliament (GNAT) documents and ÇAYKUR publications, agriculture books on tea, and memoirs of old public workers in tea production in Turkey.

Table 2. Gender Distribution of the Informants

Gender	#
Woman	27
Man	19
Total	46

Table 3. City Distribution of the Informants

City	#
Artvin	13
Rize	33
Total	46

Table 4. Age Distribution of the Informants

Age	#
22-40	10
40-55	22
55-65	5
65+	9
Total	46

In the above tables, the age, gender, and city-wise distribution of the participants can be seen. As I have mentioned above, I applied the semi-structured interviewing technique in the interviews, some of which were also oral history interviews with a set of questions, yet the conversations were free-floating in how informants wanted to continue. Oral history interviews and semi-structured interviews intersect in certain informant cases, especially for the 9 people who are above the age of 65. The

readers can see the question sheets in the Appendix A section. 27 of these interviews were conducted with women, and 19 with men. Some of these interviews were recorded, but the rest were not due to logistical problems or informants' requests. I also took handwritten notes, some examples of which can be found in Appendix C. The interviewers included 46 tea producers, 2 seasonal migrants, 4 Çaykur factory workers, 3 Çaykur officials (agricultural department and HR heads), one official in the Rize Trade Chamber, and 2 retired Çaykur officials (both agricultural engineers)⁴. The age of the interviewees ranges between 21 to 85. These interviews happened on three different visits, so 4 of the informants were interviewed 3 times on other visits, 3 of them were interviewed 2 times, and the rest of them were interviewed only once. These interviews were conducted after the consent text was written, and the informant was well-informed that the data would be used anonymously in the research. Informant names made anonymous in the thesis. In the preliminary phase and field phase, I also conducted numerous interviews with the locals as part of my daily life there, which are excluded from these 46 interviews. These 46 interviews are the number of distinct sources of the field data.

The sampling method was done as snowball sampling. Since I knew some of the gatekeepers, I reached out to them first in the preliminary period and moved forward with their contacts. Being from the region, I had the opportunity of knowing many gatekeepers; however, that was not always an advantage. Sometimes it made it harder to have an outsider look at the research because many things have a certain similarity to me, and some of my informants were saying, "you already know this." To prevent that, I tried to explain to them how I need to have it on record. One major advantage of being from the region is that building trust through the sample was

⁴ The numbers do not check when added because almost all informants are tea producers and worker/officer/etc. Thus, tea producers are not mutually exclusive.

easier for me, although I have encountered people who have doubts about the research and do not want to talk. Many wanted to help, share their ideas, and show affection to me. Once again, I am indebted to them for this research.

An extraordinary quote that depicts everything the researcher wants to say is tremendous, or to make small justifications on arguments, a nice quote is very convenient, but life is all about mundanity. Daily life is not filled with dramatic, chaotic events all the time; there are not always social movements, migrations, protests, fights, or revolutions. Most days are like the others. That is when I started to realize what is interesting in the “mundanity” of daily life. Not chaos, not a specific event, not an attack, a protest, a resistance, a movement, a revolution, a war. Fair to say this is an ethnography of the ordinary. Development projects are no mere quick events or movements or revolutions, but it is a slow change over decades that creates massive social, economic, political, and geographical changes. That is also why, together with reflexive ethnography, I made use of oral history methods, which allowed me to move back and forth across time to study this development project.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

To understand how the tea development project came to be, this thesis will first start with setting a historical and descriptive stage of the region and tea production.

Chapter 2 will provide the first period of the 100 year history of tea production in Turkey from 1924 to 1950s, as this period will define the first tea cultivation efforts, popularization of tea plant among the regions locals and rise of the industry while also giving critical connections with the two important political parties of the period the founding party RPP and the first developmentalist political party DP. Building these connections and using the GNAT documents, as well as oral history interviews

with the region's locals, this chapter will provide the bridge in the developmentalist project in Turkey's state building, while also addressing the strength of the populist political parties. Thus, we will have a clear image of the historical context in which this development project came to be and how different political actors shaped this process and benefited from it.

Building upon this, Chapter 3 will start with more theoretical debates on development and whether the case of tea production in Turkey can be considered a successful development. Doing so, the chapter will discuss the outcomes of development projects both in rural areas and in the EBSR to critically approach how we measure development. Specifically in this chapter, we will use the field data and literature focusing on the region to understand the social and economic outcomes of the tea development project in the EBSR. The comparison of the data from two cities, Artvin and Rize, will provide insights in terms of the transition that has occurred with the tea production, as the cities' locals provided a characteristic difference in their understanding of how tea production changed. This chapter will connect the contemporary field to the historical context given in Chapter 2 and will explain how the region's people created a certain developmentalist subjectivity through tea production. This chapter will aim to show the problems that are created by this development project in the region and why we should not simply consider it as successful. The aim of this chapter is to show the pitfalls of the tea development project in the region.

Chapter 4 will focus on women's empowerment and labor in the development projects. Many women tea pluckers are unpaid family laborers who traditionally do not own any land. Although tea is now 100 years old, this is still an important issue. Women's unpaid labor and experienced land discrimination's relatively unchanged

situation in the region is also a failure of the development, but it must be studied separately as another chapter because it is as well paved the way for the success of this development project. This chapter will focus on the role of Eastern Black Sea women and state's regulations to make tea development project possible while their labor and land rights are exploited. It will also discuss how these women perceive themselves as workers/farmers and whether development can empower women. This chapter will focus on the interviews with women tea pluckers. By doing so, it will give the last piece of the development puzzle in the region.

In the conclusion chapter, we will give a circle view of this development argument where the state and parties with their political intentions (Chapter 2), the transition of the public and setbacks of the development (Chapter 3), women's empowerment and exploitation under development (Chapter 4). After summarizing the thesis's main argument in a concise way, this chapter will end with the implications and limitations of this research.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIOHISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEA PRODUCTION IN THE EBSR



Figure 4. Morning dew in the tea leaves, a tea garden in Rize

One of the most essential historical problems in Turkey is poverty. This thesis will analyze a “triumphant” story of development that has successfully surpassed economic deprivation in one of the peripheries of Turkey. It studies the most important economic and social phenomenon in Turkey's Eastern Black Sea Region (EBSR): tea. Although it is a success over poverty, this unique story contains multitudes inherited in the definition of development that need to be addressed, and dynamics unique to the region require further study. As we have mentioned in the introduction, this chapter will be the historical background chapter for the tea development project.

The history of tea cultivation in the EBSR is also the history of Turkey's struggles to build a national economy. The region's social and economic development around tea production is a story of monetary success, but, more importantly, it was the example of the republican efforts to support regional development in the peripheries of Turkey as part of its nation-building project. This chapter argues that after the tea industry was built from nothing in the 1940s, the following era(s) of the 1950s and 1980s to the current days are the story of how this national industry changed within the general patterns in the political climate of Turkey under the influence of global capitalism and neoliberalism.

After the 1950s, during the golden age of capitalism and in the 1980s, the neoliberal era leading to privatizations in Turkey had a massive influence on its economy, adapting the small and big industries to larger economic trends; however, the tea industry followed a different path. While the new governments demolished significant state monopolies in agriculture and sold state-owned enterprises to private companies, tea remained mostly in state control, which protected producers' and workers' rights in the tea economy compared to sugar beets, hazelnuts, or cotton, other cash crop national productions in Turkey. While the thesis will follow this unique trajectory and provide insights from the fieldwork in the following chapters, it must mention the region's transformation in the last 100 years in more detail. The historical framework will provide an understanding of the social and economic structures in the development history of tea production and the current state of growth and labor relations in the area.

Tea production in Turkey has reached its 100th birthday one year after the republic itself in 2024. During the 100 years of history in the region, tea has become a staple crop and is essential to consumption. Turkey is the most tea-consuming

country globally, with an average of 3.16 kgs per person annually (Çaykur, 2023). Almost all local tea is consumed nationwide, making tea a non-export good. Similarly, not every citizen of Turkey consumes local brands when they are brewing their tea; the common idea is that Kurdish citizens consume Ceylon tea, commonly called “kaçak çay,” illegal tea among the public (Yıldız, 2024). The consumption practices, socio-economic change in EBSR, and the state’s efforts to create regional development upon tea production go hand in hand; therefore, taking things chronologically is a good approach to contextualize the research puzzle of this thesis.

This chapter will provide a historical and practical framing of tea production in Turkey. In research projects focusing on the world's peripheries and a specific market, labor and social relations around one commodity such as this one, meticulous explanation of details, sometimes the most mundane ones, becomes quite noteworthy. Whilst it puts a certain amount of extra work on the researcher and gives hints regarding the mainstream assumption of common knowledge, I seek to contextualize the political history and technical details of tea production. This chapter will use the parliament documents, state officials’ memoirs, and oral history interviews. I limit the chronological period of history to 1924-1950, covering tea cultivation's first and second efforts in Turkey. This period is significant as it helps to understand the more contemporary relationship with tea. The 1924-1950 period describes the creation of this development project and by doing so we will understand the actions of the actors (state, local and political) in the field during the process of this development while post-1950s periods will be addressed in the subsequent chapters, with the hypothesis and field data when it is required.

Focusing on the period of 1924-1950 is also important because it is the foundational period of the modern Turkish state. This thesis argues that development

projects are central to how we understand state-building. I argue that approaching state-building through political economy and development studies literature necessitates articulating the history of tea production and its relationship to state-building. Thus, this history chapter demonstrates the ways the republic implemented the tea project with the intention of creating prosperity and economy in an impoverished corner of the country. This ultimately also serves to legitimize the new regime and widen its support among the public in the country's peripheries.

Thus, the development started and continued with poverty alleviation (specific to development) and regime justification (general to state building), but while doing so, created many complex social, economic, and political issues. Moreover, engaging with archival documents and oral histories highlights the equivocal nature of the development of the tea industry in Turkey. In the process, this chapter explores the ways developmentalist "success" is formed rather than dehistoricizing and decontextualizing it. While in the next chapter we will address the concept and critique of "development" itself, this chapter will start by focusing on how the Republic of Turkey implemented this plan of the tea development project in the EBSR. In this sense, this chapter has a very practical value but also provides the first stage of the thesis's argument about development.

2.1 Setting the historical context: Tea production in the EBSR

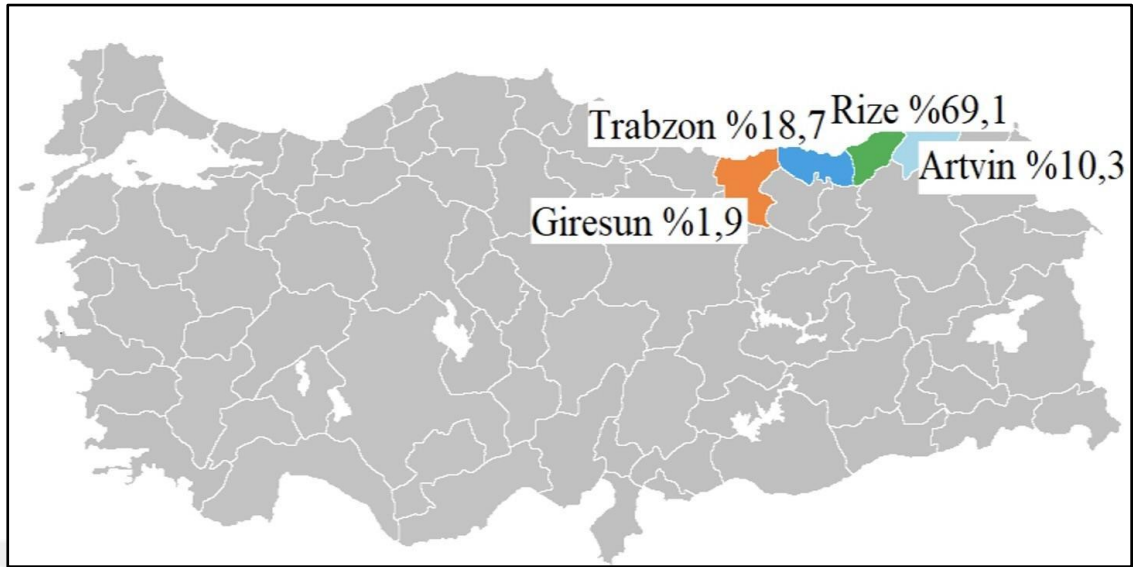


Figure 5. Tea production percentages of the cities in the EBSR, (Erkal, 2024)

The EBSR is a geographically mountainous province with a humid and rainy climate. The area is relatively unsuitable for agriculture, where few products can be grown due to its climate and soil structure. Houses are scattered around the landscape because of the sloping terrain. Historically, these fundamental obstacles to livelihood caused migration to the country's metropolitan regions. In the early republican period, mostly men migrated to nearby cities and more significant urban areas in Turkey, and back then, the USSR (the Soviet Socialist Republic), such as Moscow, Istanbul, Samsun, Ankara, etc. (Biryol,2012). Also, becoming a sailor and going on trips for months was common among young men. Under these circumstances, women take care of their lands and their families, trying to survive on the money sent by their husbands, and they become the leaders of their households. While there were no cash crops for mass production, people lived on subsistence farming. Corn, collard, hazelnut, cherry laurel(karayemiş), and fruits like wild apple(demirelma),

persimmon, American grapes⁵ and hemp for clothes are indigenously grown in the region. Families generally had one cow for their milk to make butter, yogurt, and drink. They mention occasionally selling extra products in the city bazaar, women walking miles away from the villages with no roads to make pocket money. Like many other peripheries of Turkey, the eastern black sea region was in an impoverished socio-economic position in the early years of the republic, following the independence war.

With the casualties of the war and amidst problems left by the empire's reluctance/weakness to reach the countryside, the republic focused on ways to legitimize the new regime and projects of development, stability, and security. To control the borders and create an organic relationship between the new state and its subjects, the republic used different strategies, including coercion and/or consent. The EBSR was one of the regions where many bandits were against/running away from the central government, dwelling around the villages, so much so that it became a security problem (Zihnioğlu, 1998;). After the central government realized the threat of bandits to the people and the state, it started its efforts to provide a solution. According to one of core people who lead the tea development project in 1930s with Zihni Derin, who known as the father of Tea, Asım Zihnioğlu's memoir, at a commission meeting in the capital, Ankara, in 1921, the official of the Ministry of Treasury suggested beginning a project that would create job opportunities in the region and, therefore, occupy people. He indicated that employment must be established to sustain security in the area and keep people busy and disciplined. Such a project will not only secure order in the region but might also create economic growth. The commission liked this idea and appointed the official Zihni Derin as the

⁵ This grape is a version of Isabella grapes, but it known as American grape, or black grape among the people I have talked to. This type is now endemic to the region and has a beautiful distinct smell.

region's commissioner to find possible industry ideas for creating jobs (Yurtoğlu, 2018; Zihnioğlu, 1998).

Looking at the earlier reports regarding the region in the archives of the Ministry of Economy, Derin finds a report regarding the early efforts to grow tea in the Ottoman Empire. The first tea cultivation efforts started in Anatolia in 1888. Seeds brought from China were planted in Bursa, but it was unsuccessful. After the October Revolution and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, aka the dissolvment of the Caucasian front in WW1, Kars, Artvin, Ardahan, and Batum were reinstated as Ottoman lands. After that, a commission, including Ali Rıza Erten, a commissioner in the agriculture ministry and later a parliament member and minister in the CHP governments, visited Ardahan, Kars, Batum, Artvin, and Rize for agrarian trials. In this visit, Erten also examined the tea production in Batum and the similarities in climate between the more western parts of the region. In a report submitted in 1918 by Erten, Rize province was considered suitable for tea cultivation due to its sub-tropical climate, which is like that of Batum.

According to Saraçoğlu, for the first time, Hulusi Karadeniz tried growing a tea plant and became successful in 1920 And become successful, yet this effort did not turn into trials or cultivation efforts (İnal, 2021), but Zihnioğlu also mentions that Zihni Derin saw some locals who have grown tea plants in their gardens out of curiosity for gardening. Regardless, none of these early efforts did not lead to a conclusion since the officials did not consider Erten's report in a serious manner and supported the project economically until the commission that sent Zihni Derin to the region to create an economic opportunity to suppress the security problems in 1921. Therefore, the start of the tea trials was rooted in the fears of security and maintaining state existence in the country's peripheries. Poverty alleviation becomes

a secondary reason, almost a bonus, for the development project to exist. To categorize the periods of tea production, I name these early trials in Bursa and trips to EBSR as Turkey's level zero for tea cultivation.

2.2 Navigating in the chronology: History of tea production in the EBSR

In this section, we will investigate different steps of tea production in Turkey; each cultivation level will provide a coherent story of the more extensive social and economic dynamics in Turkey during that period. In this section, I will use documents from the GNAT, secondary archive sources, reports on tea cultivation, and oral histories from fieldwork to explain the history of tea production in Turkey. Each period will pave the way for building political and social connections between this plant and the state's existence in the region.

2.2.1 Level I: First meeting of tea and Rize (1924-1934)

The commission in 1921 agreed with Zihni Derin on his idea to provide economic development in the region to sustain security. 1921 was also the year when the Treaty of Moscow was signed between the USSR and the Ankara Government, which defined the current eastern borders of Turkey. So, an essential step in the securitization of EBSR was completed. Derin visited the region in 1923 and made observations. While visiting the local gardens, he saw tea plants in the form of trees brought by residents with gardening hobbies from Batumi to Rize. Realizing the tea plant can grow in the region and finding Ali Rıza Erten's earlier report on tea cultivation in EBSR, Derin decides to start tea trials in Rize. To secure the area and create economic growth, the commission finds what it is looking for and is supported by the Turkish Parliament. The parliament passed the enactment of Law No. 407(See

Image 5) in 1340, which states they would support tea, hazelnut, orange, and tangerine cultivation in Rize province and the Borçka district of Artvin (TBMM, 1340). The document of this law states that the government will provide the first plants of tea and tangerine, and there will be no taxation taken from the cultivated fields for the next ten years.



Rize vilâyetiyle Borçka kazasında fındık, portakal, limon, mandarina ve çay yetiştirilmesi hakkında kanun

No.
407

BİRİNCİ MADDE — Rize vilâyetiyle Artvin vilâyetinin Borçka kazası dahilinde mevcut arazideki çalılık ve kızıl ağaçların ziraat fen memurunun vereceği rapora nazaran kat ve kaliyle yerlerine arazinin istidadı tabiiyesine göre fındık, portakal, limon, mandarina ve çay ve emsali nafi fidanların garsına eshabı mecburdur.

İKİNCİ MADDE — Hükûmet, vilâyetin en müsait bir mahallinde bir çay ve mandarina fidanlığı tesis ve idaresini ameli bir mütehassısa tevdi eder.

ÜÇÜNCÜ MADDE — Gars olunacak fidanları Hükûmet meccanen ita eder.

DÖRDÜNCÜ MADDE — İşbu kanunun tarihi neşrinden itibaren altı ay zarfında Hükûmet tarafından icabeden tetkikatı fenniye bilicra garsiyat mıntakaları tesbit ve eshabına tebliğ olunur. Bu ameliyenin ikmalini müteakıp eshabı tarlalarını ihzar ve nihayet üç sene zarfında garsiyatı ikmale mecburdur.

BEŞİNCİ MADDE — Miadında garsiyat yapılan araziden on sene müddetle arazi vergisi istifa olunmaz.

ALTINCI MADDE — İşbu kanun tarihi neşir ve ilânından itibaren meri-yüliçeradır.

YEDİNCİ MADDE — İşbu kanunun icrasına Dahiliye, Maliye ve İktisat vekilleri memurdur.

29 cemaziyelâhir 1342 ve 6 şubat 1340

<i>Meclis Heyeti Umumiyesince kabulü</i>	:	<i>Doksan altıncı içtimanın ikinci celsesinde</i>
<i>Cumhuriyet riyasetine tebliği</i>	:	<i>7 . II . 1340 tarih ve 3/182 No. lu tezkere ile</i>
<i>Berayi neşir ve ilân kanunun Başvekâlete tebliğ edildiğini miş'ir Cumhuriyet Riyasetinden mevrut tezkerenin tarih ve numarası</i>	:	<i>12 . II . 1340 ve 6/146</i>
<i>Müzakeratı ihtiva eden zabıt ceridelerinin cilt ve sayfa numaraları</i>	:	<i>Cilt Sayfa</i> <i>5 217,279:280,466:491,627:661,681:691, 696:697</i>

Figure 6. The Law No.407. This is the first law ever passed by the TBMM regarding tea production (TBMM, 1340). This law was followed by Law No. 1029 on May 16, 1927, stating 3 years the duration of the tax-free output in the 4th article of Law No.407 increased to 6 years (TBMM, 1927)

Derin revisits Batum, this time to see the USSR tea gardens and tea production facilities. After his visits, Derin purchases 500 thousand tons of tea seeds and hires a Soviet gardener to look after the new tea gardens that will be built on 70 acres of “abandoned”⁶ land that used to be owned by the local Greeks (Yurtoğlu, 2018). Zihni Derin did not stay in the field but put the gardener in charge of the tea cultivation and returned to Ankara. Although the seeds were grown into tea saplings and distributed to the local people, due to the lack of familiarity among the public towards tea plants, the government’s failure to inform and convince the locals to risk growing this plant, and the future brought these first trials into a failure and tea did not prevail in the area.

One important note from this era is the proof of how the tea cultivation project was conducted, together with prevailing tea consumption. Before the 1920s, Tea consumption in Anatolia was mainly done with the hands of Ottoman traders who brought tea from China, Russia, and Europe. We see the significant influence in the emphasis on the tea trade with the Russian Empire, like relations with Batum of the Soviet Union after the republic. So much so that even the word for larger tea brewer, *semaver*(*samovar*), comes from the Russian words for *samyi*(self) and *varit*(to brew). Tea trade roads were studied in terms of tea’s ability to connect distant countries with trade routes. Ansel-Derinbay states that tea was not a standard part of Turkish cuisine and family kitchens until the 1920s (2024). She suggests that tea became a part of the food culture in the late Ottoman period (Ansel-Derinbay,

⁶ While in the article I am referring the word that have chosen is abandoned, I want to state that in the lands in the today’s eastern black sea region once Pontic Greek people also lived, many died in the Pontic Greek genocide done by Turkish and Ottoman authorities and the ones who stayed alive forced to migration in 1924 in the Greek-Turkish population exchange, therefore the lands where not abandoned. In the thesis, I am not talking in detail about the Pontus Greek people or the genocide, yet the first place of tea production’s connections to this tragedy in the region’s history should not be overshadowed.

2024). The push that created today's tea consumption rates happened during the republican period, starting with the tea cultivation efforts.

During my fieldwork, several informants born in the 1940s mentioned they used to drink linden tea at breakfast. They mentioned the tea drinking as Turkish tea, known as the staple of the food today, began to appear in their households in the 1950s-1960s. In an oral history interview, Zahide (85) told the story of her father, who had drunk tea for the first time. According to her story, locals who cultivated their tea for the first time (around the late 1930s) were curious about this product. After drying and fermenting it, they brewed it in a pan and drank it from soup cups, not *ince belli*. When I asked her why they drank it from the soup cups, she replied, "Because nobody knew how to drink it, how could we know? they (the state) bring something to us that we don't know." Today, Turkey is first in the world in tea consumption, with 3.16 kg per person, followed by 2.19 kg in Ireland and 1.94 kg in the UK. Not only a matter of consumption amount but also tea is a cultural image for Turkey, the red drink has an iconic value with its irreversible place in the lives of the country's people. How can a country with a history of tea production of 100 years become the most significant tea consumer? How is a non-existent tea culture now an undeniable part of the cultural image of Turkey with *ince belli* teacups and *tavşan kanı* color?

Although this thesis does not focus on the place of tea in Turkish food culture or international image, the state's efforts to popularize tea consumption are intertwined with the story of developing a national tea industry. While discussing the history of tea production, we will also briefly discuss the place of tea consumption in the media and state policies. The first is a 1929-dated bill stating that 1 gr of tea is added to the military's daily rations next to bread, butter, sugar, and dried vegetables

in Kars, Erzincan, Hakkari, Bayezid, and Van (Yurtoğlu, 2018; TBMM, 1929). However, in 1929, the country's tea production was insufficient for its consumption. In 1932, by Law No.2054, the TBMM states that the government will control, arrange, and manage the export of tea, sugar, and coffee (TBMM, 1932; Resmi Gazete, 1932). With this move, the state aims to limit the existing swap between imported tea, sugar, and coffee, with the surplus local goods to be prepared for the economic crisis.



**Çay, şeker ve kahve ithalâtının bir elden idaresi hakkında
1/391 numaralı kanun lâyihası ve İktisat ve Bütçe
encümenleri mazbataları**

T. C.
Başvekâlet
Muamelât müdürlüğü
Sayı 6/1602

12-VI-1932

B. M. M. Yüksek Reisliğine

Çay, şeker ve kahve ithalâtının bir elden idaresi hakkında İktisat vekâletince hazırlanan ve İcra Vekilleri Heyetinin 9-VI-1932 tarihli içtimasında Yüksek Meclise arzı kararlaştırılan kanun lâyihası esbabı mucibesile birlikte takdim olunmuştur.

Muktazasının ifasına müsaade buyurulmasını rica ederim efendim.

Başvekil
İsmet

Esbabı mucibe

Şiddetini gittikçe artıran iktisadî buhran karşısında müşkülâta maruz kalan ticarî mübadelelerimizde muvazeneyi muhafaza ve ihracat maddelerimize yeni mahreçler temin etmek için azamî derecede sarfı gayret edildiği ve ticarî vaziyetin istilzam ettiği tedbirin bilâteahhur ittihaaz ve tatbikindeki zarureti kendisini ne derece kuvvet ve şiddetle hissettirdiği malûmu devletleridir.

Umumî buhran icabı ve buna çaresiz olmak üzere alınan tedbirlerin neticesi olarak muhtelif memleketlerde bazı mühim ticaret maddeleri için tatbik olunan karşılıklı ithalât ve ihracat sisteminin memleketimizde de tatbiki zamanı hulûl etmiştir.

Şeker, kahve, çay gibi halkın devamlı itiyat ve ihtiyaçlarına tekabül eden ve ticaret ve tediye muvazenemizde dokuz milyon liraya yakın mühim bir mevki işgal eyliyen maddelerin gerek ihrac edildikleri memleketlerdeki istihsal ve ticaret şartlarının mütekâsif bir vaziyet arzemesinden, ve gerekse bu memleketlerin, ihracında müşkülâta maruz kaldığımız bazı maddelere betahsis tütünlerimizi aynı şerait dahilinde mübayaa etmek hususunu gösterdikleri imkân ve kabiliyetlerden azamî derecede menfaat temin eylemek düşüncesinden mülhem olarak karşılıklı ithalât ve ihracat usulünün bu üç madde hakkında tatbikinde fayda mütalea edilmiş ve bunlara taallûk eden ticaretin bir elden idaresini temin için merbut kanun lâyihası tanzim edilmiştir.

Aneak devamlı bir takip ve dikkata ihtiyaç gösteren karşılıklı ithalât ve ihracat usulünün tatbiki, ticarî ve malî teşkilâtı tamamlanmış olan yerlerde hususî teşebbüsler marifetile ierası kabil ise de, memleketimiz iktisadî teşkilâtı henüz bu tekemmül derecesini ihraz etmiş olmadığından bu tedbirden umulan müsbet neticelerin tamamlanması tahakkukunu temin için şeker, çay ve kahveye munhasır ithalâta taallûk eden işlerin Hükûmet tarafından idaresinde zaruret mülâhaza edilmiş ve işbu zaruret lâyihasının birinci maddesinin maksadı vazını teşkil eylemiştir.

Hükûmetçe birinci maddede zikredilen salâhiyet istimal edildiği takdirde şeker, kahve ve çayın yalnız memlekete bir elden ithali işi takas komisyonuna tevdi edilecek ve komisyon ithalât komisyoneusu vaziyetinde kalarak her hangi bir kâr elde etmek ve memleket dahilinde perakende

Figure 7. No. 1/391 Bill “regarding the state monopoly on the export of tea, coffee, and sugar,” (TBMM, 1932)

Çay, şeker ve kahve ithalinin bir elden idaresi hakkında kanun

(*Resmî Gazete ile neşir ve ilânı: 6/VII/1932 - Sayı: 2143*)

No.
2054

Kabul tarihi
2 - VII - 1932

BİRİNCİ MADDE — Halen mevcut vergi ve resimlere ilâveten malî bir menfaat gayesi takip edilmemek şartile Hükûmet çay, şeker ve kahvenin memlekete ithali işlerini bir elden idare ettirmeğe mezundur.

Ancak işbu maddeleri memlekete ithal etmek isteyenlere, ithal edecekleri maddelerin kıymetine muadil olarak Hükûmet tarafından tayin edilecek türk malı çıkarmak şartile mezuniyet verilebilir.

İKİNCİ MADDE — 31 mayıs 1932 tarihine kadar yapılmış mukavelelere müsteniden gelecek şeker, kahve ve çay ile işbu kanunun tarihi neşrinde gümrüklere gelmiş bulunan şeker, kahve ve çay bu kanun hükmüne tâbi değildir.

ÜÇÜNCÜ MADDE — Bu kanun neşri tarihinden muteberdir.

DÖRDÜNCÜ MADDE — Bu kanunun hükümlerini icraya İcra Vekilleri Heyeti memurdur.

3 temmuz 1932

Cumhuriyet Reisliğine yazılan tezkerenin tarih ve numarası : 3 - VII - 1932 ve 1/391
Bu kanunun neşir ve ilânının Başvekilliğe bildirildiğine dair Cumhuriyet Reisliğinden gelen tezkerenin tarih ve numarası : 3 - VII - 1932 ve 4/500
Bu kanunun müzakerelerini gösteren zabıtların cilt ve sayfa numaraları : Cilt Sayfa
9 146,422,443:455

Figure 8. Law No. 2054 (Resmi Gazete, 1932)

2.2.2 Level II: Building an industry in rainy mountains (1935-1950)

After the first decade of tea production efforts, tea was not yet popularized. This was partly caused by the fact that it takes 4-5 years after the tea is planted in the ground to flourish enough to be gathered and processed. Farmers do not have any financial income from tea during this period. To understand the perspective of the farmers who lack belief in tea, we must remember this crop is utterly new to local people, and arable land in EBSR is not like the fertile plains of Anatolia. Locals were subsistence farmers with small gardens in these highlands, strictly for staple crops, corn, collards, and hazelnuts. To grow the tea plants provided by the local state agricultural agency; they must rip their crops (most generally corn) already in the field or at least open up space (from thorn bushes) for tea plants. These situations made it hard to persuade people. The lack of central government officials in the region, limited logistics of the local tea garden built by Zihni Derin, and the other reasons mentioned above caused the first decade of tea production efforts to fail. In the 1939 dated bill in the TBMM, the failure of the trial is explained in the following words:

Within the scope of the permission and authority granted by this law, orange and mandarin cultivation has developed significantly, but tea cultivation has not been able to develop to this day due to the inability to establish tea drying factories in the region, the difficulty and unfamiliarity of manual tea processing, and the lack of assistance to the public in the purchase and sale of dry tea and the organization of land cultivation.

Bill No. 1/218, 1939, TBMM

In 1935, following the visit of Prime Minister İsmet İnönü to the region and the botanical garden where tea is raised, the second effort of tea trials started. With İnönü's support to prevail in tea production endeavors, the Ministry of Agriculture, Muhlis Erkmén, visits the region and provides reports on the social, economic, and natural conditions in the northeastern coast from Samsun to Rize (Yurtoğlu, 2018).

During my fieldwork, many locals described tea as something brought by Zihni Derin and İsmet İnönü. Although İnönü has a negative reputation among conservative citizens, as in most of EBSR, İnönü is remembered with his support and initiation of the second efforts of the tea production trails in the region. After İnönü's visit, the government concentrated more on tea. One of the reasons for this is similar to the beginning of securitizing the region and reducing the dependency on export goods in tea, sugar, and coffee consumption. Amid WW2, the Turkish state was trying to make maneuvers to protect the newly built, very fragile national economy.

This year, our agency conducted experiments on drying tea leaves using the latest methods in Rize, as well as conducting chemical analyses of dried tea. and has conclusively determined that it is possible to cultivate authentic and delicious tea comparable to Indian and Chinese teas in this region. It has also concluded that if 30,000 decares of tea gardens are established for the public, the country's tea needs could be fully met. For this purpose, as explained in the relevant provisions, it is necessary to assist the impoverished local population through financial loans and to establish 3 -4 tea drying factories within the region and to centralize the production, sorting, blending, packaging, and sale of dried tea. For this purpose, a draft tea law has been prepared.

Bill No. 1/218, 1939, TBMM

Reestablishing tea production after taking tea, coffee, and sugar export into a state monopoly was appropriate to this approach. In the following quote, the state aims to build a larger economy with factories by focusing on sales and classification, in addition to tea cultivation efforts. This era of tea production in Turkey starts with an altogether different approach to creating a national product around this staple crop. As we quoted above, Ansel-Demiray, tea was not a traditional part of the cuisine in Anatolia at the beginning of the 20th century. Further, tea was a part of a high culture in the world. Although the history of drinking tea goes back centuries to East Asia, the European meeting happened under colonialism. It is known that the first arrival of tea to Europe was with the hand of Portuguese sailors in the 17th century, which led colonizer companies like the East India Company to get involved

in larger tea trades to Europe. As tea's history in Europe is a part of the history of colonization, the fact that tea consumption is a part of the high society culture is not surprising. Tea became part of aristocratic culture from tea hours to popular Teapots made with Chinese porcelain.

The disparity between the conditions of how tea is brought to Turkey and how it is brought to Europe is striking. The difference in the consumption culture was only more apparent at the beginning. As we have told, tea's introduction to Europe was via high society and colonial traders; however, in Turkey, tea was part of nation-building and, as even the TBMM document states, a development for Turkey's "fukara"(impoverished) people. So, it is built within a developmentalist rhetoric rather than being part of the high culture. Although tea does not belong solely to a high culture today, it is a main staple for countries from the UK to China; it is essential to emphasize the beginning of consumption. Recalling Ansel-Demiray's work on the late Ottoman tea trade, she also states that tea traders were among the city elites of the society. However, the Republic of Turkey aimed to turn economic and social stratification in the public; tea became a local crop, a symbol of EBSR, and a national drink, a perfect example of this shift from the Empire to a Republic.

British anthropologist Chris Hann makes a similar differentiation after his fieldwork in Rize in the 1980s. In his essential work, Hann mentioned that tea in the global market was an exquisite taste before, and in 19th-century Europe, it symbolized an aristocratic food culture yet Turkish tea was an egalitarian drink like the new democratic republic claimed itself to be(Hann,1990). The archive and oral histories I collected from the field also led in a similar direction. While there is almost 40 years between this research and Hann's fieldwork in the region, the

similarities between this thesis's findings on tea's egalitarianism and developmentalism are striking.

As the graph below shows, the import amount of tea increased from 1923 to 1950; while the state was trying to build a national tea industry, the consumption amounts circulated over the years, but over 25 years, the imports increased by more than a third.

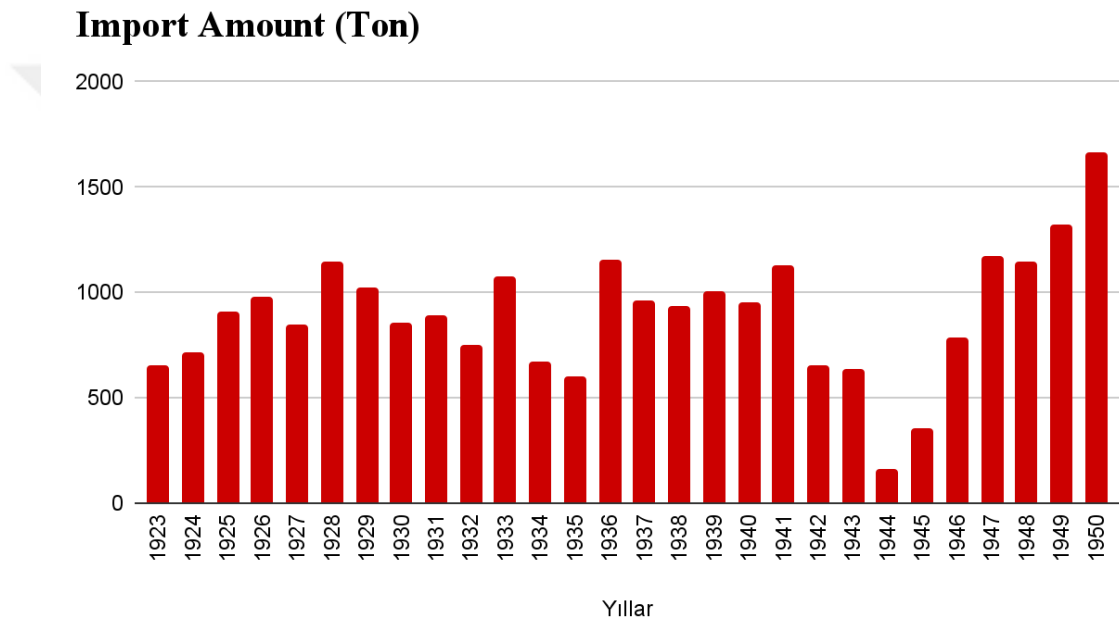


Figure 9. Import Amount of Tea Between the Years of 1923-1950⁷

As we have stated this second time in tea production efforts, the state had much more support, and the promised significant monetary outcome persuaded local people to adopt the plant in their gardens. The Tea Law No. 3788 was passed after Derin's lobbying efforts in Ankara in 1940(see Images 4 and 5). It stated that in the first five years of the plantation, the tea, fertilizer, and tea seed would be given freely(Article

⁷ Resource: The above graph is derived from the statistical data used by Nadir Yurtoğlu, who cross-referenced from IGM statistical journals between 1932 and 1950.

4), and State Agricultural Enterprises Institution were entrusted with purchasing the grown fresh tea leaves, establishing tea factories, processing the tea leaves, drying, fermenting, and threshing them, packaging them, selling them and having them sold(Article 10). The tea leaves must be sold at the state-decided price (Article 11) passed by the parliament (TBMM, 1940).



Çay kanunu

(Resmî Gazete ile neşir ve ilânı : 2/IV/1940 - Sayı : 4474)

No.
3788

Kabul tarihi
27 - III - 1940

BİRİNCİ MADDE — Bu kanunda yazılı hükümler İcra Vekilleri Heyetinin tesbit edeceği muntakalarda tatbik olunur. Bu muntakalarda kurulacak veya kurulmuş olan çay bahçelerinin Ziraat vekâletinin tesbit edeceği teknik esaslar dairesinde kurulması ve bakılması mecburidir.

İKİNCİ MADDE — Çay bahçesi kuracaklar ziraat idaresinden ruhsatname almak mecburiyetindedirler.

ÜÇÜNCÜ MADDE — Çay bahçesi kurulacak arazi üzerindeki ağaç ve ağaççıklar köklendirilerek çay bahçesi haline tahvil olunabilir.

DÖRDÜNCÜ MADDE — Ziraat vekâleti, çay bahçesi kuracak olanlara:

A) Çay tohumu veya fidanını, kimyevî gübre ve mualeceyi ve yeşil gübre tohumunu, bahçeye tohum ekiminden veya fidan dikiminden itibaren beş sene müddetle parasız verir.

B) Çay bahçesinin beher beş arı veya beş yüz ağacı için birer sene ara ile üç defada yirmişer liraya kadar faizsiz para ikraz ettirir. Bu paranın ikraz şekli, şartları, zaman ve mikdarı vekâletçe tesbit olunur.

BEŞİNCİ MADDE — 30 000 dekar çay bahçesi kuruluncaya kadar bahçe kuracaklara dördüncü maddenin (B) fıkrası hükmünce vukubulacak ikrazat Ziraat bankasıca yapılır. Bu ikrazat bir milyon lirayı geçemez. Her malî sene içinde ikraz edilen para Ziraat vekâletinin müteakib sene bütçesine konulacak olan tahsisattan Ziraat bankasına faizle birlikte ödenir.

ALTINCI MADDE — Ziraat bankası tarafından bahçe sahiblerine ikraz edilen para, bunların Devlet ziraat işletmeleri kurumuna satacakları yaprak bedelinden kesilmek suretile ödetilir. Ödeme muamelesi bahçeye tohum ekildiğinin veya fidan dikildiğinin altıncı senesi iptidasından başlayarak beş senede nihayet bulur.

Devlet ziraat işletmeleri kurumunca borçlulardan kesilecek paralar Ziraat bankası vasıtasile Hazineye teslim edilir.

YEDİNCİ MADDE — Devletin hüküm ve tasarrufu altında olup umumun menfaatine tahsis edilmiş olmayan ham toprak ve çalılık gibi yerlerde çay ziraatı vücutte getirmek isteyenlere beş dekarı geçmemek ve topraksız ve az topraklı olanlar sırası ile tercih edilmek üzere vekâletçe tesbit edilecek şartlar dairesinde çay ziraatı yapmak müsaadesi verilebilir.

Bu müsaadeyi istihsal eden eşhas tarafından bu suretle vücutte getirilmiş olan çay bahçeleri kendilerine veya mirasçılara bedelsiz ve harçsız olarak temlik olunur.

SEKİZİNCİ MADDE — Bir taraf arazi vermek ve diğer taraf çay bahçesi kurmak ve sonra paylaşmak şartile iki taraf arasında yapılacak noterlikçe müssadık mukavelenamelerin tanzimini müteakib tapu kaydine şerh verilir ve son-

Figure 10. The Tea law, (TBMM,1940)

Asım Zihnioğlu was the Ministry of Agriculture commissioner in the region after 1938 who spent decades in Rize to cultivate and popularize tea and made field trips to India to learn how to enhance and develop tea production in Turkey. In his

memoir, he and his colleagues visited villages, starting from the ones closer to the coast, to present tea plants and convince people. He states how hard it is for them because many men were abroad as *gurbetçis*⁸ to provide an income for their families. Zihnioğlu mentions how they visited mosques in *Cuma* prayer⁹, but no men can be found in some villages.

During my fieldwork, I realized I am in the villages which Zihnioğlu mentions in his memoirs about the locations their efforts of tea production. Almost 80 years later, I was in the villages they visited. These thoughts became more fruitful when one of my participants, Fahriye (82F), told a story about her father-in-law. Her father-in-law, Kasım was born in approximately 1916-1917. The story takes place in his youth, around the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 40s. He was trying to convince her mother, Ayşe (1898? -1970), but the matriarch, who had seen two world wars and was left with four orphans after her husband died on the Caucasian front in WW1, was careful about this new plan. We should remember that these people have experienced poverty, famine, and war; another famine was not so far away during the Second World War. Fadime did not want to pluck the corn from the fields because she did not know how this new plant would provide food for them. The only way for Kasım to persuade his mother was to trick her by saying, “Mother, the gendarme will take me to jail if we do not grow tea,” which was a white lie. The threat of her only son, i.e., the man of the house, to be put in jail, made her step back and accept the idea of growing tea in their gardens.

⁸ People from the region who went for working to other cities.

⁹ A weekly prayer in Islam done every Friday must be done with the community in the mosque, traditionally all men because it is not obligatory for women.

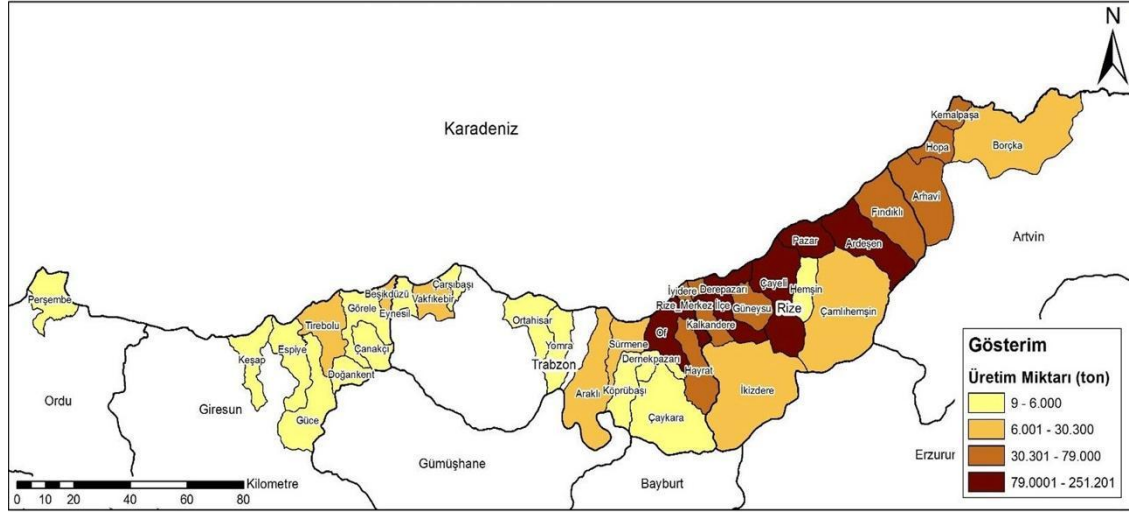


Figure 11. The tea production amounts of the districts in the EBSR

By 1940, there was an area of 30,000 hectares for tea cultivation from Araklı (one of Trabzon's districts) to the Soviet border. Agriculture Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*), another state-owned business, provided interest-free loans to producers. In a workshop by Zihni Derin, the first processed tea was obtained. After the state took over the monopoly of tea production and domestic sales in 1942 and the first tea factory opened in 1947, tea production became part of the General Directorate of Monopoly (TEKEL) (Çaykur, 2022). So, the state ensured the people that they would be giving them the seeds, fertilizer, and all the necessary means to produce tea, as well as guaranteeing them that they would buy this tea from the producer and give loans to them with no interest if needed in the process of adapting tea. The state single-handedly built a Turkish tea industry by creating both the means of production and the changing consumption behaviors.

After the 1940s, the field by hectare in which tea is seeded has grown immensely. Year by year, the villagers adapt the plant and turn their fields into tea gardens.

The Graph of the Amount of Field Allocated to Tea Gardens(Dec) and Planted Tea Gardens (Dec) between 1939-1950

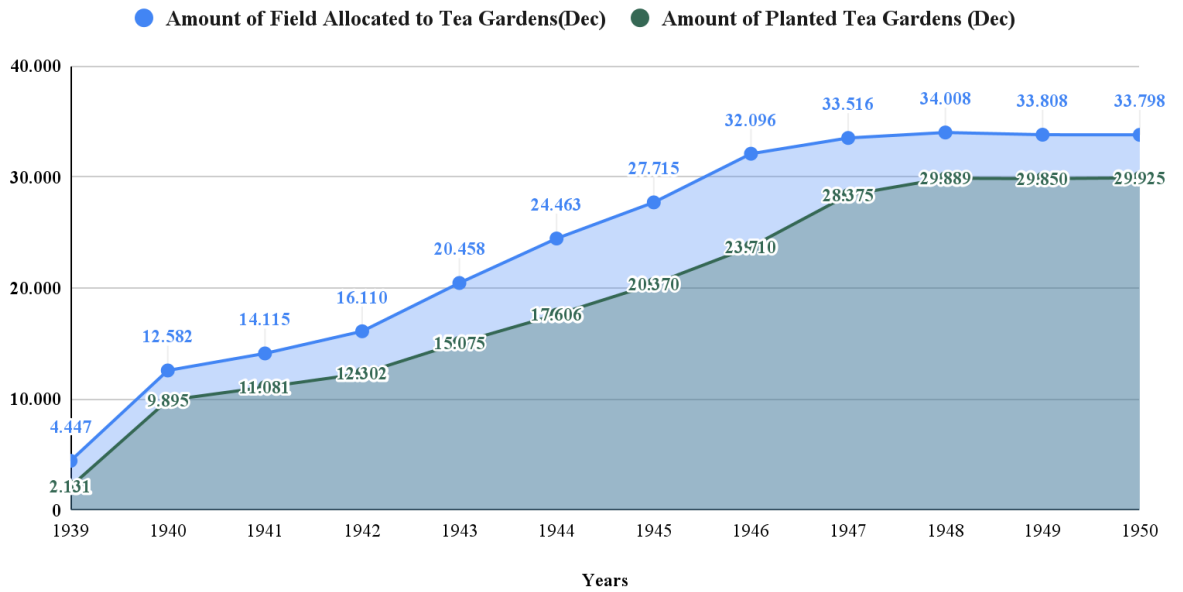


Figure 12. The Amount of Allocated and Planted Tea Fields Between 1939-1950¹⁰

There were also severe deforestation and the buying of new lands to plant more tea. My interlocutors mentioned their efforts in the 50s to make tea gardens by tilling the soil on hillsides like a terrace to seed the tea. With this new plant making a lot of money, they started to enhance their grabbing of the land. It is evident now that almost every piece of free land was planted with tea in the 40s and 50s, and still, some are planting new fields; as one of my participants said, “Tea, green gold, a very good job for all of us.”-[Maide]

¹⁰The data of Yurtoğlu (2018) visualized by the author.

The graph of amount of collected fresh tea between 1939-1950

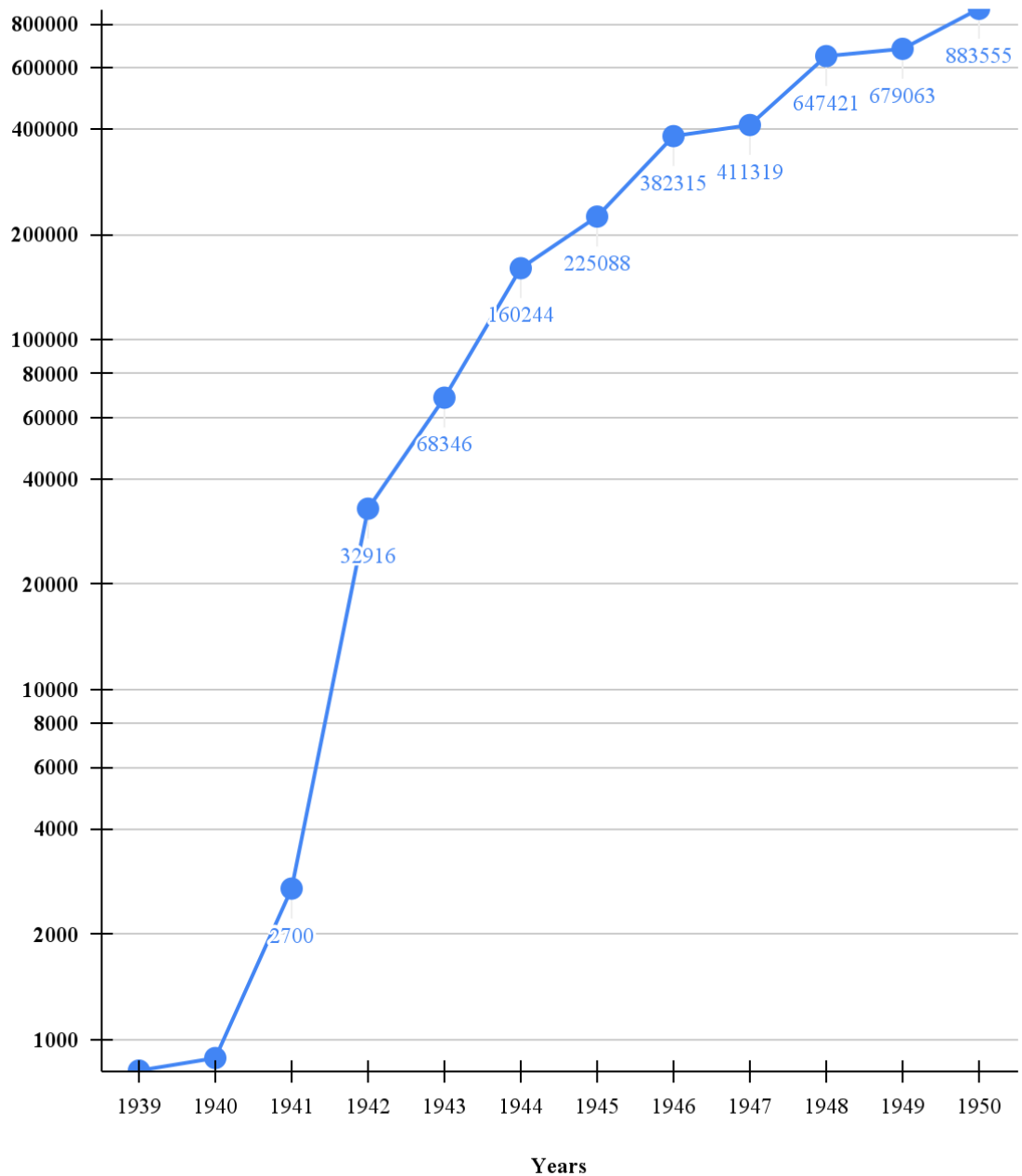


Figure 13. The Amount of Plucked Fresh Tea Between 1939-1950¹¹

¹¹ The data of Yurtoğlu (2018) visualized by the author.

Table 7 shows that the second effort has found an audience among the public, and tea production increased very highly, especially between 1940 and 1944, by rising 200 times. The 26 years between 1924 and 1950 were a substantial period for tea production and the Turkish Republic. The republic built itself with great efforts and aimed to create a national economy, reaching the country's peripheries. The 1950s, however, were a period when many new transformations occurred. First and foremost, the only political party, RPP's reign with the nation's foundational father, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and first prime minister and second president of Turkey, İsmet İnönü, was challenged by the DP (Democratic Party). The leader of the Democratic Party was Adnan Menderes, whose development policies were discussed extensively during his period and after that.

From the 1950s to the present day, there has been a long period to engage with the laws and transformations in tea production. This provides a strong background for the hypothesis in the following chapter, so that these terms will be most appropriate for the study in subsequent chapters. In this way, we will both provide an organic relationship between the history of tea production and the theoretical frameworks of rural development, neoliberalism, and women's labor. By doing so, we'll have a contextual framework for the primary hypothesis and provide a link from the history to the fieldwork data. Additionally, stopping the chronology of tea history from 1950 in this first chapter is valid because, by the 1950s, we had provided information regarding how tea production was established. Also, the arguments regarding the nation-state and creating consumption were thoroughly emphasized in this chapter. Therefore, without losing focus, we are ending the chronology here. In the last section of this chapter, we will give a descriptive account

of tea production. This section will help an uninformed reader to understand the seasonal routines, agricultural facts, and know-how of tea production.

2.3 From field to teacups: A brief introduction to tea production journey

In this section, I will explain the journey of tea leaves from gardens to teacups, who the current actors are in Turkey's tea industry, and how the economic growth of the tea industry has changed over the years. This section will help the uninformed reader to get acquainted with the local political, social, and economic dynamics with my effort to provide ethnographic data. Major tea companies' dynamics with the workers to local names for the tea materials will offer a grounded way, whilst I will try to build my thesis from the field to a hypothesis.

2.3.1 Land, labor, tea: Harvesting the leaves

Tea or *Camelia Sinensis* is an evergreen plant in subtropical and tropical climates. Originally from China, the tea harvest season shows differences between its most dominant producer countries. While China, Japan, and India have longer harvest seasons, the season is around 6 months in Turkey. These 6 months are divided into four tea seasons, separated by 15-20 days each. During these 6 months, for some farmers, the tea plucking part could be 1 month in total, depending on the decay of their field. The first season generally starts in the middle of May, in the eastern part of the region (Kemalpaşa and Hopa of Artvin), the factories and collection places (*alımyerleri*) stay open during the seasons and give around 2 weeks' breaks between seasons. The last tea season happens around the middle of September to October. While the May tea is the most valuable and fresh, the 4th season's tea is generally less efficient than the other three seasons. In some years, due to the climate and farmers' different timelines of harvests, it might not even happen.

May tea is considered the most valuable since it is the first tea after the winter, commonly believed to be cleaner and fresher since it is the first to be given. When we look at the revenue, many farmers say the second season, around the middle of June and July, is the largest harvest. Yet, we see in the belief of many locals and officials who defined the may tea as the most valuable, the coming of spring and leaving winter behind, reaching to the time of year when the soil will be giving has a symbolic meaning for rural communities, still in this quasi-rural way of living people hold on to these beliefs. The fourth season of tea is on climate, based on the least sunny period, and the plants were already tired from the first three harvests, but additionally and symbolically, it is just before winter starts. While May is when farmers are filled with the expectation of income that they will receive in the next 6 months, September is the harbinger of the 6 months without tea. As I will discuss in the following sections and chapters in detail, the current state of tea farmers is a unique occasion; tea is not and cannot be their only income anymore. Therefore, these feelings with the starts and ends of the tea season are not an absolute experience for all tea producers. What I want to emphasize here is the difference in the scenery in the region in on-tea and off-tea seasons; during harvest season, the area becomes lively, people become more mobile, travel more, work more, while the winters pass with waiting, whether you are a tea producer or not. That is how central tea is to the region's social and economic life.



Figure 14. The difference between harvested tea bushes and unharvested ones

Now, let us focus on tea farming in a regular year, which starts with fertilizing. The agriculture of tea does not require pesticides in Turkey due to the climate, which is a positive feature for Turkey's tea since it is free from heavy chemicals and helps environmental sustainability. However, since the plant needs the nitrogen given to its leaves, farmers apply NPK(Nitrogen-Phosphorus-Potassium) to their fields in April. This nitrogen-based fertilizer helps tea leaves to grow, yet the debates around the side effects of the overuse of this fertilizer in the soil for the past 60 years are diverse. Certain areas in the tea region have been separated for organic tea farming, and the fertilizers used in these fields are also organic. After the first fertilization, the soil starts nurturing, and wild plants grow with tea. Before tea leaves ripen for plucking, the gardens must be cleaned to avoid wild plants blending with tea leaves. Cleaning the fields of wild plants, mostly ferns, was done by women cutting the grasses from the field with sickles and bringing them back home to feed the family's cow. However, today, many farmers use grasscutters and wild plants to turn into organic mulch for the tea bushes. When the new, fresh green tea leaves become

separable from the dark green tea bush, the fresh tea leaves are ready for plucking within two weeks.

Tea plucking has specific standards; for instance, only the bud and the following leaf are considered imperial plucking, while the bud and the three leaves are named average plucking. The standard in Turkey is the bud and the following two leaves (*iki buçuk yaprak çay*), which in the global tea industry is known as fine plucking and is considered an excellent quality harvest. While the efforts in Turkey start with two leaves and a bud, it becomes very challenging to maintain this standard. As the tea industry expands in the region, the control and regulation of the quality harvest become harder and perhaps unwanted. Plucking more than two leaves, sometimes reaching five, is the norm today. This creates concerns regarding the status of Turkey's tea in the global market. Today, Turkey's tea is not considered one of the quality tea brands like Darjeeling tea or Japan's green tea, yet in its early years, ÇAYKUR officials' training visits to India showed them that the 1950s tea in Turkey is quite comparable to the denser, more aromatic teas of India. Turkish tea is not considered good quality in the common standards based on aroma, plucking, and processing quality. Yet, the region's tea is still consumed widely in the country due to its wide adaptation in consumption habits.

In the ideal plucking, tea leaves must be picked by hand, which takes much longer than using tools. After the 1980s, a type of scissor with a bag (*çay makası*) for tea picking began to be sold in the region. Çay makası makes the workers' job much easier and increases the amount of harvest because it requires extra attention to pluck two leaves and the bud with the makas. In large production countries, various mechanized tools, from scissors to tractors, are now used to collect the main harvest.

In the last few years, some producers in Turkey have begun to use a chargeable tea-cutting machine similar to grass-cutting machines.

The use of *makas* and the more recent tea engine were studied as a step in the commodification of the tea plant by researchers, respectively, Genç (2010) and Karaçimen and Değirmenci (2019). In the researchers' work on tea production, they defined the production process of tea in terms of Marx's analysis of commodification. They stated how the extensive use of the *makas* makes tea from subsistence farming part of the commodity chain. Their critique has points, but we should not look at the history of tea production simply in terms of the transformation of peasantry into capitalist subjects; but rather as a developmental plan aimed at economic growth and strengthening the state's position in the region. Karaçimen and Değirmenci's states that how the producers' approach tea farming only for income and not having any organic relationship with the plant causes deforestation. Yet, I think this argument is ahistorical because, in comparison to China, India, or Japan, tea has never been an endemic plant in the region. As I have quoted the region's people, the product is so new that locals did not even know how to grow or consume it. Therefore, the people did not have any organic relation to the plant even though it became commercialized, because the tea plant's commercialization is not a matter of commodification; it was a matter of time. The state was already planning to plant tea as a commercial product in the region, which may have created land overuse if tea became a cash crop. Even so, deforestation or cash crop arguments must be different in the case of tea, because after all tea plant is a bush that does not require trees to be cut down, or result in soil erosion. The tea plant was a project implemented in the region as exactly as it was planned, to alleviate poverty in the region, sustain state existence in the periphery, and later create a new mass consumption product for the

public as well as a practical tool for different governments (and later political parties) to use for their legitimization in the region. It is common and possible for a development project to have multiple agendas and implications the interesting consequence in the case of tea production is how it is entangled in the life of the people and how the setbacks it creates can bring questions for the idea of development itself.

Additionally, although using scissors or a machine makes the process faster, one should be careful about the commodification argument, as the labor of tea plucking has more complex dynamics. Firstly, hand plucking is much harder than plucking with scissors. If hand plucking shows the opposite of commodification of the tea plant, then plantation workers in India, Kenya, or Sri Lanka must be in much better socio-economic conditions than tea producers in the EBSR, which will be a huge generalization and false. This logic is problematic. Tea producers in the EBSR have rights on their lands, and a say on their products, their bargaining power was gained through years because their product was always a commercial product, if it were to become a commodified identity or a commercialized product through years, then we should have expected small numbers of capitalist farmers, aghas and consequently, landless laborers, many wage laborer tea pluckers but in the case of tea producers we see a much egalitarian social group divisions, a small family business farming.

I will continue to discuss other researchers' works in the area in the upcoming chapters, but I want to re-emphasize that the story of tea production is not something started outside of the capitalist value systems; it is embedded in the ideals to create a national economy and GDP-based economic growth via a development project. Tea

production was born as a commercial product. For now, I will continue giving details regarding the process.

2.3.2 Industrial step: Processing tea and major actors

After *makas* or engines harvest the tea fields, producers bring their tea to the collection places (*alım yerleri*). These places could belong to ÇAYKUR or private sector tea factories. At the same time, some private tea companies could also go directly to the producers' fields to take their tea, depending on the amount or the bargain they made with that producer. However, bringing your tea to the *alımyeri* is the most common way. While in the plucking part, women are dominantly working for the logistics, it is mainly left to the men of the families. This gendered division in labor will be discussed in Chapter 4, so I will leave it with a mention. In the *alımyerleri* experts(*ekisper*) wait to document the tea purchased from the producers(*müstahsil*).

Ekisper is also responsible for the quality of the purchased tea leaves; while two leaves and a bud long stopped demanding, they must carefully check any peduncles to ensure they do not get mixed with tea leaves. Many producers told me in the field that while some years *ekisper* is highly meticulous and forces them to carefully separate any longer tea leaves with peduncles from the tea bags, most years they do not even look at the tea inside the bags carefully. ÇAYKUR *ekisper* more carefully and generally applies the quota limitations of that season determined by ÇAYKUR. In private companies, there is no such quota. The quota application aims to force the producers to extend their tea harvest days by selling small amounts of tea to ÇAYKUR. In this way, ÇAYKUR's factories and *alımyerleri* will not be pushed further than their daily limits; therefore, they have to wait some tea leaves after

purchase from the producer without processing. While this unprocessed tea waits in the trucks brought to factories, the leaves get drier every minute, and the efficiency decreases substantially. Since it is already purchased from the producers, it creates extra costs for ÇAYKUR. Although valid in economic terms, this application created a lot of tension between the producers and ÇAYKUR. Although this one, like many tensions between ÇAYKUR and the producer, fades away in one way or another, it is essential to mention these details in the production chains.

After trucks filled with tea leaves collected from all over the region are brought to the factories, the black tea production processes start. Tea factories are multi-story buildings with each floor dedicated to one step of tea. First, the tea leaves go through withering. In this step, the aim is to fade the tea leaves by evaporating some of the water in the leaves to make the leaves easier for the next step in the process, twirling. In Turkey, withering is done artificially via creating an air at the appropriate temperature and dryness passing through mobile transformers called traf. In the withering trafs, tea leaves become dry, shivering, and bend without breaking the leaf's stem. At this point, leaves went to twirling trafs. In the factories, withering is on the highest floor, and leaves drop down to the twirling floor after 6-7 hours. Twirling machines work in circles and basically cut, tear, and curl the leaves to expose the essence of the leaves, preparing the leaves for reaction with oxygen. The next step is oxidation, where tea gains its aroma. Several oxidation reactions expose the polyphenols that give it its taste. The next step is to dry the leaves to protect the exposed flavor, evaporate the remaining water, and make them suitable for storing and packaging. In the last step, tea leaves are separated from the garbage separation machines with the tea fibers and other mixed herbs while collecting. Then, the leaves

were classified depending on their quality and placed under tea crushing machines, which created the last form of the packaged black tea.

There are six types of tea in ÇAYKUR named with numbers from 1 to 6; the best quality tea is number 2, and the one dropped from the sieves in the first classifications. The one under the sieves called *elekaltı* is not usually sold in the national market, but locals ask for that tea from the factories. It has a better taste since its pieces are bigger and there is less dust in *elekaltı* tea. Very recently, I encountered in ÇAYKUR's gift shops that they are selling a tea named *elekaltı* tea, so it seems to be ÇAYKUR trying to adapt new marketing tactics for tea, which includes matcha detox teas, and several differently named tea packages, "Ayasofya", "Gap", "Mezopotamya", "Dolmabahçe", etc, in the gift shops. In the above paragraphs, I have told the story of black tea production, but the region is also home to green, organic, and white tea production. Organic and green teas are collected in similar ways but processed differently. White tea is the imperial plucking and should consist only of the bud of the new May tea leaves. It has a high reputation and is branded with the president Erdoğan and ÇAYKUR officials' efforts. However, it is not a standard production and is especially expensive in consumption, giving its right to presidents and emperors.

One can see the difference in the earlier egalitarian efforts to make tea a staple part of the consumption in every household of Turkey against coffee, and today's efforts for more luxurious and exquisite brandings of new teas. Both of these efforts, created with the hand of the state, show the change in the developmentalist discourse towards a more capitalist sense. This is not a mere comparison between founder RPP and populist authoritarian JDP governments; it is also the organic outcome of developmentalist agendas solely focusing on economic growth. Even

though the two governments and regimes adopted very different discourses and policy language, the main economic idea is to provide economic growth to a region, ultimately creating subjects freed from poverty for the better and seeking life's luxuries.

To start as a small workshop and build an industrial sector in the peripheries of the country was, without a doubt, one of the economic dreams of the Republic of Turkey. A dream that the Turkish state aspired to implement in every part of the country. However, this developmentalist ambition falters or halts when we consider the neoliberal turn in the Turkish economy in the post-1980s. However, upon a closer look, the trajectory of the tea development project is a history of how the development project in the state's core has entangled with different periods and economic turns within global patterns of neoliberalism. To follow this trajectory and bring out more contemporary discussions, we must turn to examining the formulation of the concept of development and considering the particularities of this context. The next chapter will thus help us to understand how development has changed over time and the processes through which it created its subjects in the region today. Chapter 3, starting with a theoretical take on the concept of development, will be linked to the contemporary image of the tea producers and the social, economic, and political outcomes of the tea development project today.

CHAPTER 3

DOES THE STATE PLUCK TEA LEAVES?



Figure 15. Tea gardens in Borçka, Artvin

“Why are some countries poorer than others, and what can be done to raise the standard of living for everyone?” Viterna and Robertson (2015) start their article on the leading directions for the sociology of development with this question. In many ways, this question is the central problem of what can be broadly described as development studies, a field that is more relevant than ever in our uncontrollably globalized and frighteningly unequal world. This chapter starts by addressing a more general literature on development studies. It will discuss the concept of development and dependency. These discussions will provide the theoretical basis to understand the contemporary data from the field, as well as question what is described as success in development and the pitfalls of these descriptions. However, this is just the

theoretical and necessary step to understand the problems created by the tea development project. The previous chapter gives a historical background of the burgeoning tea cultivation process in the EBSR and the state's initiatives to execute regional development plans. This chapter will focus on the more contemporary situation of this development project and will explore the "success" of this development. Although the establishment of the tea industry created economic growth in the EBSR, other socio-economic development factors, such as outgoing migration or education statistics, were not parallel with this economic growth.

Turkey's regional inequalities are one of the main contributing factors in the development plans of the state, namely, the western provinces in comparison to the eastern provinces of Turkey have had a higher level of development in share of national income, education levels, and health expenditures (İncekara and Kılınç Savrul, 2011). This unequal distribution of welfare between the eastern and western parts of Turkey needs further addressing; however, the EBSR with tea production broke this dynamic. The poverty alleviation was successful, and the cities (Trabzon, Artvin, Rize, Giresun, Ordu, Gümüşhane; T90 in TURKSTAT subgroups) were at relatively higher development levels, although the region is in the Eastern part of Turkey (STB, 2017).

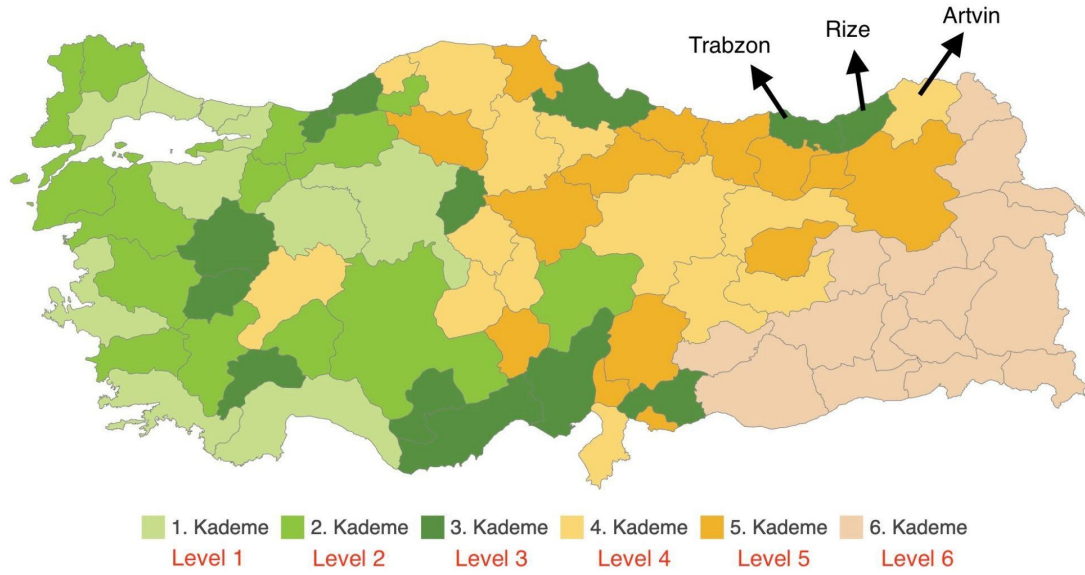


Figure 16. Socio-Economic development levels of the provinces of Turkey. Source: İLSEGE Reports, by Turkey's Ministry of Industry and Technology (STB, 2017)

As the above graph shows, Trabzon and Rize, which together produce 87.8% of tea in Turkey, have Level 3 socio-economic development in countrywide comparison (STB, 2017), while Artvin has Level 4. Rize, Trabzon and Artvin still continue outgoing migration, and Trabzon is a metropolitan municipality, which provides a great gap to link the socio-economic development in Trabzon to only tea production. As the statistical data in the development index here shows, a grounded approach from the field is required. To come up with an induction from the statistical data provided with the socio-economic development index might lead to taking a correlation as a causation. Therefore, this chapter will approach the “success” of the tea production in the region cautiously by placing it into conversation with the qualitative data from the field and using development studies literature that shows the problems, implication, and practices of development projects, agents, and actors who are implementing them.

To recall the main research questions of the thesis, “What are the social, political, and economic dynamics that created the tea development project in the Eastern Black Sea Region?” and “What is the outcome of this development project on the social and economic lives of the region's people?” The last chapter has provided a partial answer to the first question by showing the actors and their approaches to the tea development project. This chapter will provide a partial answer to the second question by showing the problems that are created despite the poverty alleviation that has become successful through the development project. Doing so, this chapter will show how the social and economic life in the region changed irreversibly by the tea production, but not all for the better, and therefore, we should not simply take development projects as a success based on their economic growth. The snapshot of the complex dynamics that are in play in the EBSR will be a contribution to the literature that critically engages with development projects/agencies and developmentalist states.

In the last chapter, we left the historical chronology of tea production in the 1950s; here we will continue from there on. This new era is the early steps of the developmentalist state-building projects in Turkey and data from the field will show how people remember the political parties from 1950s to onwards especially Adnan Menderes’s Democrat Party(DP)(1950-1960), Süleyman Demirel’s Justice Party(JP)(1964-1981), Turgut Özal(1983-1989) and Mesut Yılmaz’s(1991-2002) Motherland Party(MP) and most recently Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s Justice and Development Party(JDP)(2002-current). In the last chapter, we have used the parliament documents, official memoirs, archive documents, and oral history interviews to follow the trajectory of the tea cultivation efforts in the region and came to the year 1950. However, in this chapter, we will only use the semi-structured

in-depth interviews, which in part highlight the significance of following these political parties as interlocutors mentioned their policies in their region and specifically in relation to tea production. Therefore, this chapter will also refer to the history of tea production, but through informants' experiences.

The chapter starts with a quick definition of development and then move on to the field itself. It analyzes the characteristics of tea producers, problems created by the tea development project, and the irregularities in tea harvests and purchases because of the political interference. Lastly as a concluding debate this chapter will discuss the role of producers in the politics' involvement in the tea production to inform the further research.

3.1 Theorizing development

To modernization theorists, development has an end goal, and the reaching point characteristically in the shape of Western societies based on their schools, media, technology, parliaments, and industrial economy (Viterna and Robertson, 2015). For some to define development in terms of progress is inevitable; however, to design the future goal in comparison to already established hierarchies rooted in the current inequalities in the world is simply unjust. This is the initial step of a never-ending cycle of the discourse of the underdeveloped vs. developed binary.

Defining development in exact words and certainty is a compelling task, where many social scientists and international organizations like the UN have started to use a multi-dimensional human development index to measure development after the 2000s. Although GDP-based development measurement methods were not as trustworthy as they used to be they are still conventional. Economist Amartya Sen's Capabilities Approach was an important step towards a change in this pattern; in his

approach, Sen defines development as a person having the freedom, i.e., the capabilities that allow them to lead a life that they enjoy, and in this case, poverty will be the deprivation of these capabilities rather than just the lack of income (Sen, 2000). Sen and the UN's new human development index is a relatively new way to measure the development of countries, where the history of development projects depicts less comprehensive measurement methods of socio-economic development levels of countries and more complex dynamics that display the inner destructive power of development projects.

In the post-war period of the 1950s, many Latin American countries, similarly to Turkey, adopted heavily state-involved industrialization models for development. "When the accumulation and expansion of the capital cannot find its essential dynamic in the system, that system is regarded as dependent" (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p.). Latin American dependency theorists Cardoso and Faletto further explain that "almost all contemporary national economic systems are articulated in the international system", yet the relationships between the countries and which country has what is a topic of question. "While some national economies need raw material produced by unskilled labor, or industrial goods produced by cheap labor, others need to import equipment and capital goods in general; While some economies become indebted to the financial capital cities of the world, others are creditors.... bankers need clients as much as clients need bankers" (p. xxi) As Cardoso and Faletto emphasizes in their book *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, the dependency of Latin America is not an underdevelopment in itself but a consequence of the capital accumulation from the world's peripheries to its core which many dependency scholars (Evans, 1979; Frank 1969) and World-System theorists (Chase-Dunn, 1975; Wallerstein, 1974) also agree upon. Similarly, Turkey

and many peripheries of the world in this post-war period followed the state-involved industrialization development methods, which first created positive outcomes but, in the long run, created various crises for different countries.

This peripheral emphasis is quite important in development studies because it shows the unequal relationships in the global capitalist commodity chains and how development projects could end up creating poverty and more crises. Sociology of development scholars state that they are often marginalized in the field of development studies, although sociological inquiry has been fundamentally engaging with the questions of development since the beginning of the discipline itself (Hooks, 2016). Very similarly, anthropology, also with the discipline's enduring questioning of modernity and appreciation of local knowledge, modifies the understanding of development in social sciences. Both disciplines, with their commonality in methods, more specifically: fieldwork with a grounded theory, challenge the normativity of the idea of development with what is provided by the relationships between people, state, nature, animals, and the society in the field. Specifically, this chapter aims to contribute to this literature by following what sociology and anthropology of development literature.

3.2 The field: Setbacks of development

Arturo Escobar's important work, *Encountering Development*, studies how the post-1950s policy makers and economists' promise of abundance, the discourse of development, produced the exact opposite of it: massive underdevelopment and impoverishment while producing the concept of "third world" and amplifying backwardness (1994). The idea of development has almost a unified opinion upon its requirement and its value; not only for developed countries but also for people of the

“third world,” or to be more specific, peripheries of the world. As today’s Turkey does not generally define among Third World countries due to its GDP per capita rate classified as upper-middle-income status (World Bank,2024), in 1924, when tea cultivation efforts started in the EBSR, the region’s people were in great deprivation, which the parliament documents and oral history interviews have shown in Chapter 2. Third world or Global south, as terms, depict a social, political, and economic description rather than a geographic location of the countries. Theories in this field have improved to describe how international financial institutions (IFIs) interfere with their own neoliberal economic agenda in developing or underdeveloped states and, similarly, how these state institutions seize their power among their citizens via the funds and support gained by these international organizations. Turkey’s developmentalist agenda in the EBSR with tea production was an example of this.

3.2.1 Interlocutors: Analyzing the socioeconomic life of the tea producers



Figure 17. ÇAYKUR Center Building, Rize. Below the building name, the famous quote of Atatürk is written, “The real owner and master of Turkey is the peasant, who is the true producer”

In the 1927 Census, the first one in the history of the republic, 75,8% of the population was living in rural areas, as currently 93,4% is living in the city or district centers (TURKSTAT, 2023a). The tea development project has started and continued as a rural development project. Hobsbawm famously stated, “For 80 percent of humanity, the Middle Ages ended suddenly in the 1950s; or perhaps better still, they were felt to end in the 1960s....The most dramatic and far-reaching social change of the second half of this century, and the one that cuts us off forever from the world of the past, is the death of the peasantry....With the exception of Britain, peasants and farmers remained a massive part of the occupied population even in industrialized

countries until well into the twentieth century...Only one peasant stronghold remained in or around the neighborhood of Europe and the Middle East -Turkey, where the peasantry declined, but in the mid-1980s, it remained an absolute majority.” (Hobsbawm, 1994, pp. 288-9, 291).

Discussing the peasants in the context of comparisons between market vs. non-market and economic vs. non-economic forms of exchange was a traditional dichotomy in rural sociology (Vanhaute, 2014, p.314). The modernist view expects the number of rural dwellers to decrease and small-producer farming/subsistence farming to vanish, to be replaced by industrial farming. Teodor Shanin defined the peasantry as having four essential facets. “The family farm as the basic multi-functional unit of social organization, land husbandry and usually animal rearing as the main means of livelihood, a specific traditional culture closely linked with the way of life of small rural communities and multi-directional subjection to powerful outsiders” (Shanin, 1973, p.). Shanin’s analytical definition provides a framing for the initial case of the tea producers and the rural life in the EBSR.

An earlier work in the region by Chris Hann, who has conducted his fieldwork in the late 70s, defines different social groups in the region as mainly he defines the locals, as small-scale producers, where there are also landless sharecroppers (1983, 1990, 2001). Michael Meeker’s work on the region, which does not specifically focus on the tea production, also shows a strong ulema group, especially in the of district of Trabzon, where aghas and hocas are respected among the public (Meeker, 2001). Meeker’s fieldwork started from the 1960s and onwards, while Hann’s fieldwork is later, and Hann specifically states how his informants state there are no aghas in villages that have more economic or political power than they do. Hann describes this phenomenon as tea production creating an egalitarian public

in the region (1990). But what Meeker describes is a form of cultural power. In the oral history interviews, my informants did not define the people they called *aghas* back in their time as people with capital power as well, further some of the *aghas* had very poor successors. Thus, we can say that peasantry in the EBSR in general was a small-scale family farming after tea production became the main income of the families in the 1950s.

(1) “There is nothing but tea here. If we didn't have tea, these lands would be useless, all woods. We made everything with tea money. Always with tea money. We opened our business with tea money. Whenever we sold something in our business, we benefited from the tea money.”-[Kemal]

(2) “Everything used to be done with tea money. We had weddings with it, bought houses with it, and sent our children to school with it. Everything was done with it. There was nothing else but tea and a cow in the barn.”-[Zahide]

(3) “I was a tea plucker, of course. I had two tons of tea [in the field]. I picked it myself. All by myself. There were cows in the barn and children. There were no electronic devices like there are now. Life was very difficult back then. So, I created all I have achieved today with those two tons of tea. My husband was a seasonal worker. Thanks to the tea, thanks to the tea factories that were ours [she refers to the fact that ÇAYKUR is the state and it worked for us, i.e., the producers]. He worked there seasonally. Was that enough to support a family? No, it wasn't.” [Zehra]

Here, while we see the pattern of how tea used to be the primary income of the region's people and the core of their economic well-being, there is a lot to unpack in Zehra's quote. First, to begin with, as she says, “I had two tons of tea,” she refers to the fact that they have a tea field that gives a maximum of two tons of fresh tea leaves in each harvest season. To understand whether 2 tons is a good income, let us make a calculation. The 2025 fresh tea price is 25,44 Turkish Liras for 1 Kg in ÇAYKUR, so a producer who sells 2 tons of fresh tea leaves to ÇAYKUR in the May harvest will get 50.880 Turkish Liras. There are 3 harvest seasons in a year and a late 4th season. Since we will not measure any possible problems that may cause to tea not to reach exactly 2 tons in the harvest, and a late harvest is much smaller,

assume that the 4th harvest will be 1 ton instead of 2. So in the whole year, say Zehra plucked and sold 7 tons of fresh tea leaves. If she sells these teas to ÇAYKUR, she will get 178.780 Turkish Liras. When divided by 12, it will be a monthly 14.898 Turkish Liras. A person who sells 10 tons of tea annually, where the majority of the tea producers are in this percentage, gets an income that is equal monthly 21.200 Turkish Liras monthly. These amounts are less than the minimum wage. Obviously, these are ÇAYKUR prices; private sector prices would be/could be much lower than these amounts.



Figure 18. The statue right in front of the ÇAYKUR center building, Rize, depicting Atatürk and the citizens of Turkey, is written “Long Live the Republic!”

While from the 50s to today the what could have been done with this amount of money has drastically changed, Zehra’s and Kemal’s account shows that tea is economically valuable for them, not just because they are producers, but also

because it is the source of their other incomes since tea harvest on its own is not enough to sustain the household for the whole year.

Zehra mentions her husband was working in ÇAYKUR as a seasonal worker as ÇAYKUR hires workers in the factory to process the teas in the harvest seasons, which used to be a 4-month occupation with income and insurance, and increased to 6 months after the years of continuous efforts of the ÇAYKUR workers' unions in 2018. When I spoke to the ÇAYKUR workers, seasonal workers, or retired seasonal workers, they all stated how they were also tea producers. So, tea is the primary income of the house yet bringing this income from two different sources because being a producer with an amount like 3-5 tons is not enough to maintain a household. While Kemal mentioned that they were trying to use the tea money to use in different areas and create job opportunities for themselves.

Another important detail is that Zehra mentions ÇAYKUR as their factory. ÇAYKUR, being the household income, comes in two ways: as the customer of the producers and the employer of them, withholding this unattainable space in the livelihoods of people.

(4) “We sell to Çaykur. Because my husband works there, our livelihood comes from there, so we think we should because we should support our state’s tea.” (Nedime)

(5) “When you sell to the private sector, they give you a payment term. You sell the tea today, but the private sector pays less than the government, and you get your money six, seven, or eight months later. Plus, there's inflation, so that money loses value. The government used to give payment terms too, but that improved. Now, you harvest the tea, sell it, and after the season ends, Çaykur pays immediately.” (Adnan)

(6) “The private sector used to make us suffer a lot; they pay much less than the government, but they set a quota. Once the quota is full, I can’t burn the tea on the bush; I have to sell it, so I’m forced to go to the private sector, which pays less than Çaykur. That’s the problem.” (Kadir)

(7) “Some larger private companies pay quickly, so I’ve been selling to them for years. I haven’t experienced any payment delays, though that used to be a major issue. It was also an issue with the government, but back then inflation

wasn't high, so we weren't affected much. This year, we sold the tea and received payment from the government next year, but the money from the previous year was already gone. If something like that happened now, the money would just disappear." (Yusuf)

(8) "We sell to Çaykur, of course. I worked there for years. Çaykur's worst tea is better than the private sector's best tea." (İrfan)

Although the reason they sell their tea or the company they sell their tea can change now, all the above quotes show the interconnected relationship between people and the tea production via ÇAYKUR and the state. While I pick these quotes from several people, I could have easily written any name under some of them given the repetitiveness of the quotes and the shared experience among the regions' people. Interlocutors share many common experiences regarding tea production. The most common themes of struggles in our conversations were the transition of the payment term problem, quota-allocation-appointment situations, seasonal worker problems, how today they are not engaging with tea production as they used to and finally ÇAYKUR's importance and its role in these issues.

But is this connectedness enough for the region's people to continue living in rural areas without participating in internal migration or urbanization? Between 1950 and 1980, Turkey's status as the last standing peasantry declined strikingly. Although the majority stayed as peasants until the mid-1980s, the demise or transition period of the peasantry in Turkey was hidden in these 30 years. This situation shows us that even a development project that has managed to become indispensable for the related groups of society is not interested in doing anything more than adjusting the incomes of households. Politicians use this interconnectedness to gain votes and supporters, while today's rural EBSR is under question of becoming a remote area or the ecological destruction in Turkey's neoliberalism.



Figure 19. A private sector tea company's shops



Figure 20. The same private sector tea company's campaign "In exchange for your deferred payment for fresh tea; Samsung brand white goods, mobile phones, and televisions." The photos depicts that the company makes the producers' deferred payments as Samsung brand products, not as immediate cash payments

3.2.2 Ruins of tea: Looking at the mirror of development

When we investigate the meaning of development for the region's locals, we see the impacts of political parties quite vividly. For the better or the worse, the signature of the state with the name of the DP-AP-Motherland-JDP governments is alive in the minds of the informants. Thus, when we look at the picture of tea development project, current and past, we are also gaining insight into what producers think the state and the political parties of different periods did or did not do for the region.

The oldest informants were born around the 1940s, whose childhood was spent in an era without tea production and Turkey's austerity measures, as some of them recalled it, famine. While a younger generation born in 70s has contributed with the stories they have heard about Menderes's DP from their families.

(9) "My husband knew the famine. Menderes brought rice with ships; we didn't know rice or white flour before; we have never eaten it" (Fahriye)

(10) "DP provided plastic pipes to people, with which people dig ditches for water, and they can bring water resources to their houses. Menderes brought water, Demirel brought electricity, and Özal brought roads." (Feride)

Feride, as she gave the above quote, told me that this is what she has always been told and what she has always heard, although she does not see these things as gifts from these politicians, but a required infrastructure for remote areas, therefore the state's job. So, I deduced it is a commonly used phrase and asked a few other interlocutors about it. Many did not contradict the existence of this phrase, while a few said they had not heard it, and opened political debates over it. Some people agree that Menderes, Demirel, and Özal have brought these things in their own political terms and connect these deeds to them. The phrase is significant as a perfect depiction of the developmentalists' legacy of these political parties. It shows the ways these infrastructural changes because of rural development policies are cornerstones

in people's minds. Many of my interlocutors are rural people who grew up in remote areas and experienced different phases of this development project; therefore, their memory is also the bearer of the developmentalist discourses and parties. While today's rural dissolution started in the hands of the Menderes-Demirel-Özal triangle, Erdoğan represents the peak of this developmentalist political epitome. In the last 20 years the rural sides of Turkey experienced a mass-urbanization similar to Öniş's(2011) conceptualization of JDP's mass-privatization after 2002.

One of my interlocutors, Kemal(60), who has lived in a village in Rize for his entire life, was by far the most critical and accusatory voice regarding rural-to-urban migration. When we were doing the interview, he said the state caused today's exodus from the rural side. When I asked why, he replied:

(11) "The state did not want it. They thought, "I will take them[the citizens] under control better in cities. I cannot control you in the villages, they thought. It is now up to them. The most of all, AKP wanted to move people from the villages to the cities. They said live comfortably, I will take care of you. I will give you natural gas for free....they brought natural gas to this city too, but they brought it to the districts. If they have brought natural gas to the villages, thirty or forty percent of the villagers would not go to the city. They[the state] did not make the investment they made in the cities in the villages....There is no investment in this village.[Referring to his village] Natural gas can come to this village. It is three times more expensive to heat in the village compared to the city. Many more things can be done in this village. If the roads were to be improved a little more, if natural gas came, the population of this village would increase. It would increase. This village is connected to the [city] center. A school, like a college, could open to revitalize our village. Like a technical high school. Not like a university. The state has never made any investment in the villages. It has not invested in the villages for 20 years. It has moved the development from the villages to the cities. It has canceled the villages. It is doing the same thing in every village in Turkey. There has been no investment in the villages."

Kemal's description is quite important and well put, as he reveals the duality between the initial developmentalist parties' projects of improving life on the rural side, where Menderes's DP effects can be understood in the locals' memories, and how their antecedents, JDP's plans, although it is a developmentalist discourse, are

failing the rural side. The case of losing schools, post offices, and family health centers from the village centers, and massive heating problems, is the failure of the rural development dream. Thus, the rural sides are returning to being underdeveloped once again at the hands of the state.

Kemal's idea of the state's control being easier in the cities is intriguing, but more complementary is his thought of seeing city life as somewhat dependent on JDP, so when one leaves his village and ways of living becomes dependent on the comfort that will be provided by the JDP. Although the comfort-giver is not always JDP, in the case of development and improvement in rural regions, a dependency on a more "modern" and comfortable life is always the case. This dependency between the developer and the underdeveloped creates a constant cycle where the underdeveloped constantly stays in a lesser position in the hierarchy. Escobar says that development discourse creates an irreversible state of being underdeveloped and developed (1994). Doing so, developed and underdeveloped are connected to each other as underdeveloped will always have to be developed, i.e. the cycle of development.

Similar to the dependency theory emphasizes the connectivity between the peripheries and the core countries in development projects by stating the peripheries produce an inherent cheap labor, or minerals etc. that will be used by the core countries which creates the accumulation of capital from peripheries towards the core countries, Escobar states a more theoretical connection in the various acts of development: "the creation of a domain of thought and action." He divides his analysis into three axes: the theories and objects that shape the knowledge of development, "the system of power that regulates its practice; and the forms of subjectivity fostered by this discourse."(p.10) By doing so, development creates a

domain of thought and action where there is a “developed”, a “developer,” and an “underdeveloped.” To become developed, i.e., modern, the underdeveloped, i.e., the backward rural locals, must depend on the developer and follow their lead. In the case of “developing” countries, this developer is the state. Kemal’s description of the JDP’s policy to take citizens under their control by actively supporting their decision to leave for cities and discouraging life in rural areas is a critical example of this condition, where he is not alone.

(12) “You earn more money from tea farming than from other agricultural products. I see it as a gift for the region. In winter, only one family remains in the village, out of 30 households. They all go to the city. They all have two homes. One in the city and one in the village. The government closed the schools in the village. It's not urbanization, it's de-villageization.” (Yusuf)

Like Kemal’s criticism, Yusuf also provided a change in the rural areas in the Eastern Black Sea region. Their shared disappointment at the government closing the schools in rural areas is related to how the tea development project is implemented. Let us look at these informants more particularly, Yusuf and Kemal are in their 50s, so born around 1965, and went to middle and high school during the 1980 military coup in Turkey. As part of a generation who went miles to their schools, one could not stay in education due to the coup, and one had to leave their village to become a teacher. Schools and health facilities opening in their villages means life is coming to the mountains. With my experience in the field, where I have shown by the informants, the abandoned buildings of the primary schools and desolate village centers, their responses become a snapshot of the decline of this development dream and their disappointment with it. Inevitably, locals’ participation in this decline is also driven by the opportunities of the development. During one of the interviews, while I mistakenly assumed about Zeynep, an important distinction came to the surface.

Irem: I know you prefer living in the city.

(13) Zeynep: I don't prefer living in the city. I have more general reasons...

The thing that drives me to the city is transportation. First is transportation, second is my child's future. I don't want transportation to be a problem for my child's future. I'm doing this for myself first. What's the second reason?

Heating, I use a lot of gas. When the price is high, it's difficult in the winter. I love the village. I'm a person who loves the garden.... It's more difficult, yes.

Compared to the city center... everything is at your fingertips in the city center. We harvest our tea with my husband on weekends, on our days off.

We don't have much tea anyway. Two maybe two and a half tons. [Rize]

As Zeynep states, the many problems that Kemal and Yusuf stated, she also depicts

the angle of these parameters that affect the current contributors of people's flow to

the cities, and thus, in their words, de-villagization. While Zeynep talks about her

son's education and gas prices, she also gives a detail about their amount of tea.

Today 67% of the producers have 1-5 decares tea fields (ÇAYKUR, 2019), which

gives 2-5 tons of tea; tea production itself does not demand them to be in the villages

as well. This is also another important contributor to them leaving the rural areas and

becoming disillusioned with the tea development project. As we have defined earlier,

tea production on its own is not enough as a main income.

(14) "The future of tea is not looking good; fertilizer prices have completely spiraled out of control. The daily wage is now as low as 1,000 lira. The current conditions are difficult." (Mert)

(15) "Of course, our elders used to say that in the past, we could buy land in Rize and build a house with the money from tea. But that's not the case now; tea doesn't generate that kind of income. I haven't thought of tea as a source of income for the past 20 years. There's no income that can be used as capital [to invest]." (Nermin)

(16) "We are small tea farmers. I have 2 tons of tea. Nermin has 4 tons of tea. But there are those who produce 30-50 tons of tea. It's good for them. But not for us. Those with 30-50 tons of tea... They usually hire workers to harvest it." (Zeliha)

(17) "There would be plenty of tea if there were more tea fields, but they have been divided up, and there is nothing left. It has become a side income." (İrfan)

Additionally, the factory workers provided the problems in Çaykur's system, while their position as the producer/worker allows them to gain more than one income from tea, it also creates more than one precariousness from the tea development project.

(18) Working at the factory doesn't cover the minimum wage. With ÇAYKUR's new raise and the night shift raise, it's now 18,000 lira (2023). If you work in the private sector, you work without a union. Union members have many rights; the rights granted by the state cannot be revoked. At ÇAYKUR, you get three days' pay during the holiday. (İrfan)

(19) The union makes money off the workers' backs. When the union sits down with the government, they say, "When I give you a job, what will you give me in return?" When there's no harvest in winter, the government doesn't give you anything. Make them produce bags. ÇAYKUR can employ its own workers, but they only work for six months during the season and then are let go. Every household has a Çaykur retiree; there are 47-48 factories. (Metin)

While they describe the problems in the Çaykur system, their demand to work in the off-season so that they can have a steady income is an exemplary depiction of how the locals demand a much more active and continuous planning that is concerned with their livelihood, and conditions. What tea development project has been created in the region is the failure of a great idea that the ruins of which leaves people meddling in disappointment and different precariousities. As one of the informants describes, "This tea production is like treading water." Thus, in its destination, tea production is in this limbic position of being a blessing and a burden.

3.2.3 Tea actors at crossroads: Interference of politics with tea production

While the scale of being underdeveloped is very wide and tea producers consider themselves well off compared to tea plantation workers or seasonal migrants per se, the construction of rural work/life as underdeveloped is a much greater discourse than tea producers' land ownership as small family farmers. Therefore, their position

as non-capitalist farmers who adapted tea production as a small-scale farming in the last 100 years was a topic of the underdeveloped/developed dichotomy.

James Ferguson's *Anti-Politics Machine* (1990), focusing on the rural development projects led by the World Bank in Lesotho, makes compelling arguments on the naivety of thinking that development in itself always creates good, i.e., solves poverty. Similar to Escobar, Ferguson also uses a Foucauldian discursive analysis and criticizes the idea of development and who is more developed and who is underdeveloped defined by the policy makers in the IFI (International Financial Institutions), by stating that the development goals were not designed together with the countries that are aimed at. Ferguson claims that development is an anti-politics machine, and it makes problems like poverty non-political issues, and by implementing development projects, it depoliticizes poverty and increases the social control of the state (1990). As the poverty alleviation focus of development projects only addresses the economic welfare, the social, political, and regional aspects of the crisis in the region are ignored. Therefore, even though the region's impoverishment rooted in deeper dynamics in the state's actions or national/local structures these will be ignored and development project will directly focus on a poverty alleviation program, by doing so it will not address the causes of the problem but its consequences; thus, making poverty an encapsulated problem without its reasons which are political.

Similarly, Tania Murray Li's *The Will to Improve*, which is an inspiration for this thesis's title mentions this critical relation of addressing the political cause of being underdeveloped. Li, in her use of governmentality, is quite similar to Ferguson, and all three anthropologists, Escobar, Ferguson and Li can be defined as coherent. Li provides a lot of space to the conflicts between "the will to improve" and the

hierarchies created by the development discourse discussed above. These clashes come from the efforts of NGO workers, local people, and policy makers; Li shows that although the capitalist system and control mechanism are very much there, there is entanglement, and the relations between state, NGOs, experts, and locals are not straightforward.

Li also emphasizes the role of experts in the field who have the knowledge in the development process, directly quoting Ferguson's *Anti-Politics Machine* (1990). In this part, I want to directly quote Li where she provides how the experts in the development projects only focus on the technical part of their jobs, which ends up causing depoliticization of the poverty. "For the most part, experts tasked with improvement exclude the structure of political-economic relations from their diagnoses and prescriptions. They focus more on the capacities of the poor than on the practices through which one social group impoverishes another. This feature led James Ferguson to describe the apparatus of planned development as an "antipolitics machine" that "insistently repos[es] political questions of land, resources, jobs, or wages as technical 'problems' responsive to the technical 'development' intervention." Antipolitics of this kind are subliminal and routine. Experts are trained to frame problems in technical terms. This is their job. Their claim to expertise depends on their capacity to diagnose problems in ways that match the kinds of solutions that fall within their repertoire. Yet the practice of excluding or, as Ferguson put it, "reposing political questions" in technical terms is itself an intervention with far-reaching effects." (pp.7-8)

During my fieldwork, I have talked to some experts in ÇAYKUR who showed quite similar attitudes; further, they criticized the people for not following the exact agricultural regulations and politicizing the bargaining relationship between

the state and the producers they stated how their words will not take into account[as experts] and how people[managers] should have been separated politics from their job. For instance, a retired agricultural engineer, Sümbül, describes the process of how they were trying to teach the villagers to use fertilizers in the following way:

(20) For example, they are also encouraged to give fertilizer. They give the producer the fertilizer, and the producer goes and pours it into the stream. Because he doesn't know, of course. We couldn't stop it[the overuse of fertilization] later. For example, the producer we told to give more than 60 kilos per acre was giving 250 kilos. Such strange figures came out...Of course, now the producer does not want to do much, not to deal with the garden. This is the case with any tea producer.

While Sümbül's first description was on the more expert side and she was suggesting how people were not listening to the development experts' suggestions, but the following quote shows her experience with the political interference with the tea production. Her subsequent comment shows the corrupted bureaucratic relations in the region. Although she still insists on adopting an anti-political way of focusing on the development even if it was not an option in the beginning.

(21) Our issues were not only about the tea. It was decided that it would be better if tea ekisper were to be chosen from more educated people. Because we had many problems with ekisper in selling tea. You are hiring ordinary people and temporary workers. This person does not see himself as belonging to Çaykur. Because there are locals there, he favors his neighbors.... If you say even a little thing to the the ekisper even a little, he immediately runs to the politician. So, we had such problems. When necessary, the ekisper could have the manager [of ÇAYKUR] get fired, but the manager could not have the ekisper get fired. Çaykur is a very political institution. The fact that this politician got involved in the business caused it not to be able to recover and run properly. Of course, politicians caused these things.

Some producers have shown similar concerns regarding the quality of tea production, as today's purchasing standards of ÇAYKUR are criticized for being disconcerted and politically influenced in their processes. As they described similar memories of the past on the political interference with the tea procurement one of the informants further described the current situation and JDP's involvement.

(22) “You can make chipboard with tea right now. I looked in the truck today and saw that the tea was all wood. They've collected a kilo, obviously. Politics is about pleasing the citizens, doing whatever it takes to get votes... Ekisper no longer have the task of controlling the tea. Let's say an Ekisper doesn't accept wood or bad tea. The producer is calling the JDP district chairman in Borçka. He's calling the ekisper, saying “choose a new place for yourself to work.” JDP district chairmen are above the district governor and the provincial governor in the district. You're paying the same amount for both (well-collected tea and poorly collected tea). Is that fair? It sounds like a complaint, but it should be addressed now; it's like a spider's web. I've moved past the stage where the state is suffering losses; I've reached the point where I see the tea and know it can't be made into tea from this material. Grass, weeds, wood (the part below the green leaves of the tea plant)... last year's tea is also being mixed in with it. They're making us drink tea that we wouldn't even spread under a cow.” (Kadir)

Although expert's criticism of the producers and the exploitation is correct, to accuse only producers of the exploitations or the wrongdoings in the tea plucking processes would be an unjust take and a blind analysis of the development project. It is a systematic exploitation of the system to the benefit of the governments and the encouragement of the political parties to people to do the same thing for themselves. As this type of behavior has been spread like “a spider's web,” to depoliticize its causes and reduce the actions only to the producers' tendency to cheat, exploit, or, more innocently put it, to think of themselves would be an understatement. To look further for the causes of this self-serving behavior, one must ask with all the information provided in this chapter, could the developmental dynamics in the region influence such behavior?

3.4 Friend or foe: Discussing the subjects of development

The aim of this chapter was to approach development with a more critical lens and to show the problematic outcomes of the tea development project in the social, economic, and political life of the EBSR people. Doing so, this chapter has provided a critical example of defining “success” of a development. While so far this has

managed to be done, the provided information requires us to address the behaviors of the producers to exploit their relations with the political parties. Although this is an important part of the field and a repeatedly raised question, there is not enough data to make an argument on such account. Thus, this section will not be a part of the analysis but a discussion that will advance further research and address the needed gap in this section.

As the state was both the buyer of tea and the major protector of the producer it had a role as provider in the households in the region (Hann, 1990). Hann depicts this exact relation. Hann conducted his fieldwork in the 1980s. Hann's argument in the book is that while the Turkish state has accomplished the tea development project in the region, the state created a more egalitarian society as the older power-holding families became less of and the class cleavages were lost among the people. By doing so, the state became the breadwinner in the houses of the region's people; thus, the Turkish state is domesticated (Hann, 1990). Hann's argument is intriguing because domestication does not mean subordination, or that people have any overt power over the state; on the contrary, it shows the populist core of the developmentalist discourse. To return to Sömbül's quote regarding "ekisper's could have fired the manager of Çaykur but not the other way around", this is not an actual power in the sense of the ekisper or locals, or the local politicians, but the political party in the government. In the literature, this relationship and the people's adaptation to exploiting the power have been studied as a consent-coercion mechanism of the state (Gürel et al., 2019). Gürel et al. (2019) define the rise of JDP's power in the rural areas of Turkey by using a Gramscian theoretical framework, and in their analysis, they focus on the hazelnut producers' resistance and strikes, and tea producers' negotiation in the ballot. Gürel et al. state that while

for the hazelnut producers the state uses coercion mechanisms with armed forces, for tea producers they use consent creation mechanisms with rallies and politicians in the ballot box to insert state power and existence.

Other research on tea production, discusses state existence and intervention in the tea industry. One of these contemporary works studies the JDP government's involvement in the industry and the state's allowing to irregular migration for the agricultural labor in tea thus contributing to the unequal labor relations in the tea labor while also showing strong relations with the major private sector companies in the tea industry (Karaçimen&Değirmenci, 2025). Similarly, İnal and Saraçoğlu discuss the strong state existence in the region focusing on the nationalism and nation-state building via tea production in the region. They state that the economic intervention strategies employed by the governing body of Turkey to bolster its nationalist dominance throughout Anatolia also created an opportunity for rural and provincial communities to advocate for their interests with the government, allowing them to impact its policies (2022). In the case of tea production, İnal and Saraçoğlu states that the existence of Çaykur and its not-privatization strengthen the nation-state existence in the region and people connects their livelihoods with the state existence. Thus, a stronger relation between the nation state and its citizen subjects is built. These research articles both suggests a top-down way of state power/existence insertion in the region.

As we have discussed in the introduction, Turkey's current regime has been described by many names, from embedded neoliberalism to state capitalism by the scholars. To recall Cihan Tuğal's description, neoliberal statism is much appropriate to Turkey with the mega projects-driven economy and mass consent produced among the public (Tuğal, 2022). Tuğal's characterization of neoliberal statism and general

approach of Gramscian theory broadly encapsulates (Gürel et al, 2019), (Karaçimen&Değirmenci, 2025), and (İnal&Saraçoğlu, 2022)’s specific work on the region. Hann’s characterization of the state is rather different, because his theoretical framework is political economy, and other scholars are using different frameworks.

While I take the above scholars’ work seriously, the uniqueness of the development project and the emotions embedded by the people in the project prevent me from claiming that it is only about consent creation. To answer the question of at what percentage are producers guilty from the exploitation of the system and at what percentage the state and its interventionist policies are guilty would be a hard task. Surely, it is not the task of this thesis. However, I think what Hann’s argument on the class cleavages is interesting in a particular sense is that it defines the initial process of the state entrance in the domains of the public from the perspective of the households. While populist policies and consent creation also try to depict the people’s relationship with the state, Hann’s account does a different thing. Although today the tea production cannot be the only breadwinner, thus the state cannot be domesticated in the sense of the argument of Hann, in its early days, as also described by the informants, it was possible for the state to infiltrate through the cracks of poverty and spread everywhere.

While the loss of the collectivist approach in their lifestyle and working in more than one job to sustain a living is precarious, it is also an open space for the individuals to become more risk-taking agents. The state providing cash inflows to the region in tea production seasons with the harvest payments, in the case of middle range producers, especially before their fields have not been divided, was a capital formation that encouraged producers to invest in other businesses. There are many who have taken this opportunity and grown their businesses thus owning a stable

lifestyle in the region. Although this chapter discussed the problems of development, as we saw in the beginning, these problems exist even though these cities are well-off in the general criteria for Turkey. So, what the state has done here is almost to experiment with a free-market capitalism that “gives people opportunities” as development projects do. Although this argument and discussion are beyond the scope of my thesis, I think that when we focus on the consent of the people in the EBSR and in the cases of development projects implemented by the states, we miss the point of how connected the developmentalist agendas and liberal agencies are. Therefore, the further studies must consider this gap in mind.

3.5 Conclusive remarks

Since this is the densest chapter in terms of quotations and theory, it requires its own finishing touch. In this chapter, we investigated the “success” of the tea development project in the EBSR. While critically approaching the concept of development, we have provided a snapshot of the field. The field has shown the pitfalls, failures, and problems of the tea development project and in general provided a glance at its social, economic, and political outcomes. Lastly, we discussed the role of the producers’ involvement in this failure and informed the further research.

The next chapter will study yet another failure of the development project, which was also the required force for its rise: women’s unpaid family labor and undistributed land rights. The next chapter will close the cycle of the question of the success of the tea development project by showing the historically exploited workforce for its existence.

CHAPTER 4

“ÇAYELİNDEN ÖTEYE”: BURDEN OF DEVELOPMENT ON WOMEN’S SHOULDERS

A common stereotypical association with the women of the EBSR is their bravery, toughness, and strength. Imageries of women carrying wood on their backs, wearing their traditional clothes, the magnificent green scenery in the background, are almost a non-debatable cover picture for EBSR-related news, aiming to show a combination of underdevelopment, authenticity, and strength. As we have discussed, the underdeveloped is in a constant relationship with the development project and therefore the developed. The construction of the rural women as in need but strong, uneducated but naturally knowing is a part of the construction of the third world as “underdeveloped.” This narrative provides a powerful lens to implement development policies worldwide, whether it is the earlier development policies that devalorize women or the most contemporary ones that claim to empower women. In the case of tea production, we see the transition of the different eras of development policies addressing women and how the Turkish state was following the worldwide development policy trends and institutions (DOKA, 2011, 2015, 2024). The transition in Turkey’s development policy in the region toward women, which is only in the planning phase, shows the transformation within the discourse of the development of women.

Recall that the dependency scholars suggest that the accumulation of capital from the periphery that provides cheap labor towards the core countries that take the goods created by that cheap labor and their own wealth, creates not only an exploited periphery but a core country dependent on the periphery and vice versa. Women’s

exploitation is quite like this dynamic in the case of the tea development project. While the unpaid labor of women and discrimination against women's land rights is convenient for tea development projects to thrive upon, women's social status remains underdeveloped since they have stayed dependent on tea work. Therefore, their unpaid labor and undistributed land rights will be the final step we will address in the history and current situation of the tea development project.

As Naila Kabeer in her book *Reversed Realities* (1994) explains, the gendered hierarchies in the development projects saw women as “poor women” who needed help and encapsulated their role in the household economy by taking the main actor of the development as the man of the house. Kabeer's book is a foundational text in development studies, and although it was published in 1994, her critiques are still relevant. In a more contemporary work, Mao et al. (2025, p.) explain, “Even as it is constructed as deficit places in need of interventions, the countryside tends to be romanticized and idealized. It is often imagined as pure, close to nature, and somehow more authentic than cities – a form of exoticization often done by those in power to those who are deemed undeveloped and primitive.” The construction of the rural side as a spatial being and rurality as in “underdeveloped but authentic” imagery is very similar to the construction of rural women, especially in the case of the EBSR because of the abovementioned similarities on the praise of strength, power, being close to nature and soil. The labor that makes them create these images is the main labor force that creates the locomotive of the tea development project. Unpaid, unsecured, landless labor of the EBSR women was the exploited workforce on the road that led tea cultivation efforts to turn into a tea industry.

To have a complete understanding of how this tea development project can become a “success” in the country’s periphery, how it is nourished, who was the owner of the “cheap labor” in the context of tea development project and how in its contemporary positions it is creating social, economic and political problems with its rural and gender dimensions; the analysis must focus on the overshadowed role and undercast prominence of rural women in development projects by investigating the case of tea production and the women of the EBSR. Additionally, as Naila Kabeer and Mao et al. depict very well, the disregard or the praise of women in the development projects in the “underdeveloped” regions is intrinsic to the construction of the discourse of development.

In the early chapters of the thesis, we have discussed that the tea development project has provided poverty alleviation in the region, but this success eventually caused other setbacks. We also emphasized the role of the state and major political actors in the development processes and showed the contemporary situation in the tea development project and potential causes of the setbacks in the development project. In this chapter, we will study the gender dimension of the tea development project and discuss the approaches adopted in this manner. Since the tea development project historically or contemporarily did not have a specific plan for women of the tea producer households, the contemporary problems of the women tea pickers in the region will provide a grounded approach on a policy and case study basis. Nevertheless, following the general critique of this thesis, whether adapted as a policy or not, the discourse and the idea of the development of women will be critically evaluated through the chapter. The failure of the state development policies to adopt a gender perspective will be included in the analysis as an additional dimension.

While describing the field data, this chapter will use the semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with women, and the contemporary snapshot of the field will be discussed under the required unpaid labor of women and their undistributed land rights in the EBSR, which contributed massively to the growth in the tea development project. The chapter will address the experiences of women of EBSR by showing their perspective on the transition under the tea development project. As Chapters 2 and 3 have discussed the setbacks of development in the region more broadly, such as rural remoteness, new forms of precarities, and politicization of the tea regulation processes, this chapter will study the tea development project from a gender studies perspective with an attempt at feminist methodology.

4.1 Development vs. women

When we compare the Eastern Black Sea Region Development Planning Agency Reports (DOKA) between the different periods, we can see the reluctance and very contemporary shift towards the gender appropriate developmentalist discourse —that is, even in that form is criticized in this thesis. We have described that the development policies and agencies that are implementing the plans are creating a discourse that is eventually failing the precarious community that is supposed to be creating welfare. The overall GDP-imposed, poverty alleviation model of development homogenizes the local livelihoods and creates more setbacks and problems in the long run than it solves and creates welfare. We have discussed that the international development agencies are describing a technocratic set of solutions in the underdeveloped countries and reducing complex problems to depoliticized technical issues (Ferguson,1990). While doing so, these institutions created

measurement techniques, as the case of the earlier GDP-based methods which have been replaced by human-development index methods of measurement.

Similarly, with the radical critiques on the development literature and the rise of the sustainability literature, the UN adapted a more inclusive and well-informed generalization on the understanding of development planning among international organizations. One of these techniques is the UN's sustainable development goals of 17, which starts with "no poverty" and continues with "zero hunger," "gender equality," "climate action," etc. The current sustainable development goals determined by the UN clearly indicate the requirement of gender equality (SGD5), quality education (SGD4), and good health and well-being(SGD3)(UN, 2015). While in the case of the tea development project, these goals are not prioritized or emphasized even remotely. These measurements and the goals of development agencies are still a topic of debate and critique in the development studies literature, due to their vastly liberal way of setting goals and sustainability's turn into an empty signifier.

In the social democratic view, adapting these measurements and keeping up with these techniques provides an adjustment in the lives of people in underdeveloped regions, yet, as we have discussed so far, this is not always the case. However, since the state development agencies usually do not discuss the revisionist vs revolutionary nature of social democracies (Luxemburg,1999[1900]), their rejection or delay of new, more inclusive or gender-based goals of development shows the government/state's national and local priorities in the region. In the case of the tea development project, we see an exact example of this situation. Regardless of the efficiency of the UN's sustainable development goals, we see the state's reluctance to prioritize women.

To show more concrete examples, the Eastern Black Sea Region Reports prepared by Turkey's Ministry of Industry and Technology between 2010-2028 can provide insight. These reports are the successors of Turkey's infamous 5-year development plans by the State's Development Agency (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı) (DPT). In these reports, Turkey is divided into subregions similar to the census groups and "...prepared within the framework of the Urban Planning Law to determine the socio-economic development trends of the region, the development potential of settlements, sectoral targets, and the distribution of activities and infrastructure.”(DOKA, 2024) These reports are made for the Eastern Black Sea Region, NUTS 2 TR90(Artvin, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Ordu, Rize, and Trabzon) The first of these plans was made for 2010-2013, the second is for 2013-2024, and the last one has recently been published for 2024-2028.

While the first two reports mention the gap between the education levels of men and women in the rural parts of the region especially in the older generations(DOKA, 2011, 2015) and how the employment and education of women must be encouraged they do not have a specific policy addressed on the local conditions of women's work or the causes of elder women's lower participation in the formal education. Until 2024 report we do not see a particular mention of tea or agricultural work of women as well. In the 2024 report, they mention the labor of women under the “Goals” part subtitled, “Informal Employment of Women Will Be Prevented” followed with “Contributions will be made to ensure that women working in home-based and agricultural sectors are covered by social security. Awareness campaigns will be conducted on social security for women working in home-based and agricultural sectors. Awareness campaigns will be conducted to enable women working in these sectors to organize and benefit from social

protection opportunities more easily” (DOKA, 2024). As this paragraph shows, although we see a shift in the discourses of the planning agencies, we do not see a specification of the type of agricultural labor which also makes it easier to dismiss it as a labor. The Eastern Black Sea region is not only home to tea production; in hazelnut production, there are many seasonal workers who have even more precarious conditions than tea picker women in family farming. These reports, even when they are moving towards the gender appropriate discourse based sustainable development goals they still do not address or depict the essential problems, let alone offer a well-informed solution.

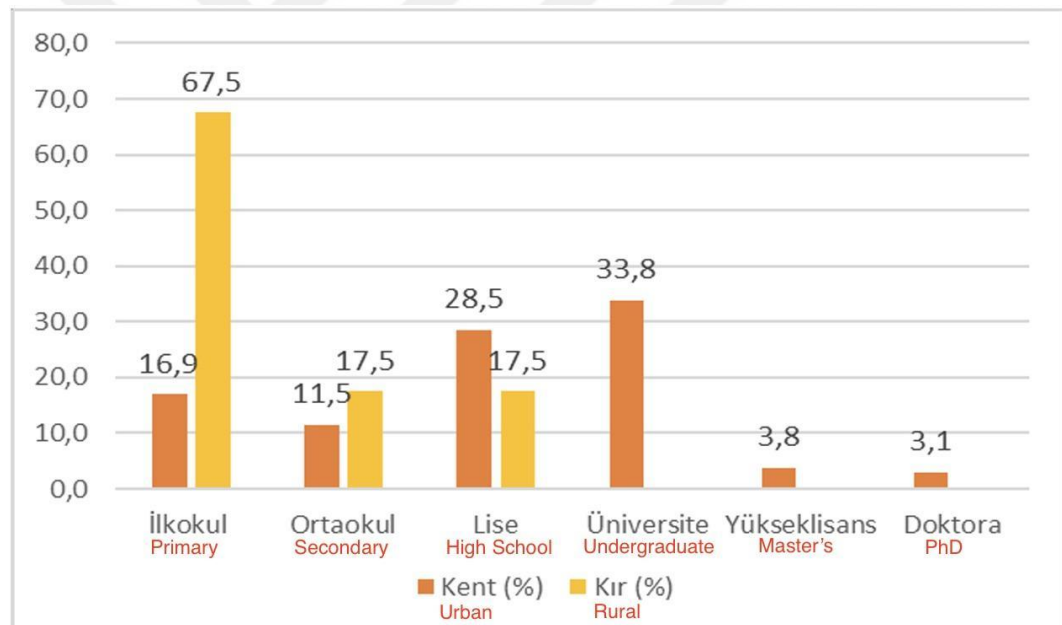


Figure 21. Comparison of the Education Levels of Rural and Urban Women in TR90, (DOKA, 2018)

Another report by DOKA, focusing specifically on women’s status and integration into the development processes in the TR90 region, as the above graph shows, a major difference between the education levels of rural and urban women of the region (2018). The results of this graph are quite extraordinary, as they show no

significant percentage of rural women who have an education above high school. Once again, we must remember that NUTS 2 TR90 includes Artvin, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Ordu, Rize, and Trabzon, and tea-producing cities are Trabzon, Giresun, Rize, Artvin, and Ordu. Thus, apart from the Gümüşhane population of 142.617(DOKA, 2024), all of the cities in TR90 are tea-producing cities. While the amount of production varies, as we have already mentioned, more than 65% of the producers live in Rize, the reports' measurement of the general population's education levels could give an insight into the field data where the 67.5% of rural women having only primary education is a very significant amount that cannot be missed or explained with the non-coinciding parts of the data.

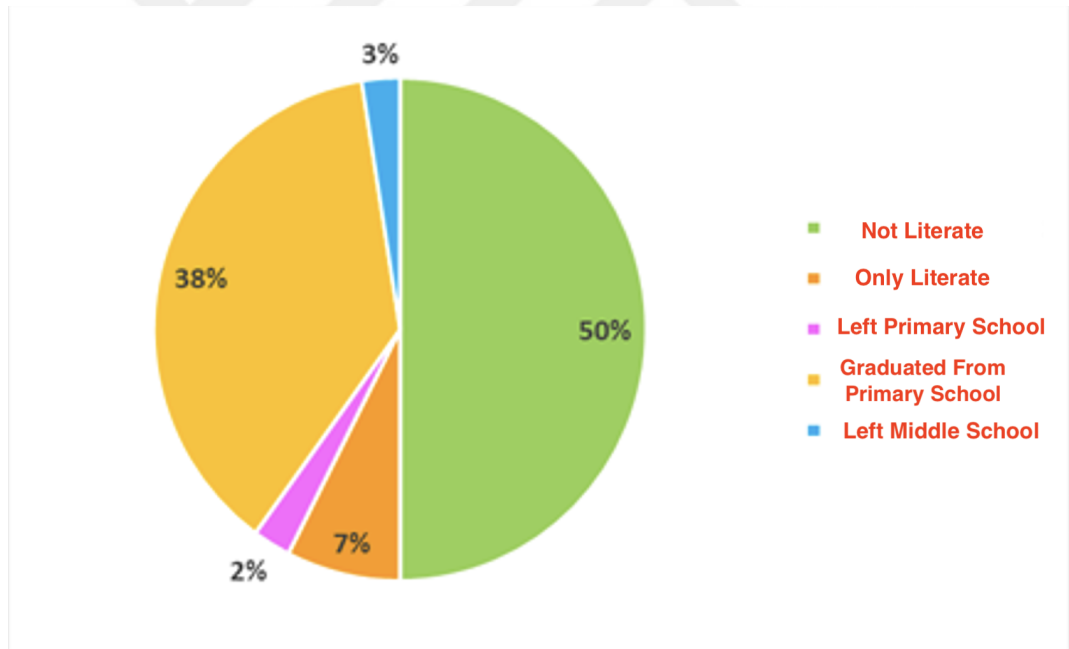


Figure 22. The Distribution of the Rural Women's Mothers' Education Levels, (DOKA, 2018)

When we look at the above graph, we see that, in addition to the rural women's own lack of opportunity to have education, the situation of their mothers is much more dire. We see that in this 150 people sample research, earlier generations show 50% of

illiteracy, since this research was conducted around 2018, possibly today their ages range around 70-80. What these two statistics shows, although being conducted on the whole NUTS TR90, in the 100 years of the tea development project, rural women's education, a strong characterization of socio-economic development, is not prioritized. Also, these reports do not specifically inform about any major phenomena in the region. Nevertheless, the inductions from the development reports are not enough to make these judgements; thus, the field and interviews with women will inform this chapter's analysis.

To provide a more grounded approach, the field data will be provided in two sets: describing the labor of women and their land relations. In this way, the experiences of women with the tea development project will be revealed and provided through their lens, which will provide an insight into the meanings of the above statistics.

4.2 The field: Following the daily life of the EBSR women

In this section of the chapter, while studying the women of the field, we will focus on two important aspects of their lives and precarities: labor and land. While informing about their daily routines, livelihoods, and work lives, we will see this historical workforce in the region and how its exploitation has an entangled relationship with the actualization of the tea development project. More importantly, we will see how women see this development project and the future of their labor and rights.

This section will follow the story of women's labor in the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey. It is based on my fieldwork interviews with 26 women in Rize and Artvin in the Eastern Black Sea. In this chapter, different from other chapters, the quotes will be in conversational format more often. This is due to most of the women

informants in this thesis knowing each other and holding the interviews together, so in some cases, there were two to five people together. These crowded conversations were expected and considered before the fieldwork. This chapter then uses a combination of in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and oral history interviews. Since they were talking together on a few voice records, some transcripts show their dialogue with each other. When I thought their conversation stream was more helpful to show certain things to prove my arguments, I kept those conversations as they are without picking the quotes.

The age gap between my informants and me is, on average, 25 years, which I think has an influence on their compassionate and open attitude towards me, together with the fact that I had very trusted gatekeepers in the region, and on occasion, I met people who are friends, relatives, or neighbors of each other. I have interviewed each woman interlocutor 1-1, also, thus having a private space to listen to their stories, but when they were talking to each other, I also listened, and if they allowed me, I recorded their conversation and asked several questions. On those crowded days, we were either in their homes or their workplace during their break time.

As I discuss in the introduction chapter in length, the fact that I am local to the region is a contributing factor to my appropriation to the field, but more so, it is because I am a person of the rural working class. While my socio-economic group provides an insight and attire for me in discussing the issues, such as failures of development, struggles of rural life, politics of EBSR, or in general, Turkey as a woman who grew up in the rural side, my connections with the women informants reflected a different societal condition. It is an attempt at feminist methodology where the position of the researcher is to critically engage with the exploitation and discrimination that the region of women has historically faced. Reflectively, I am a

part of a generation of women with higher years in schools, outgoing migration to metropolises, and leaving tea plucking jobs in the rural areas, while two generation before, many girls were not allowed schooling after middle school education, and they were the designated tea pluckers. Therefore, my position as the insider/outsider shifted more than it had with other informants during my interviews with rural tea picker women.

This situation ended up with my role being more active during the interviews. Although my contribution to the conversations as a researcher was less, and I was occasionally approving, leading, or not approving with what the informants said during the interviews, with women informants, this approving rate was a little bit higher because our interviews generally started from the point of agreeing to their rights and listening to their problems. To recall Charlotte Aull Davies, “Not only the personal history of ethnographers but also the disciplinary and broader sociocultural circumstances under which they work have a profound effect on which topics and peoples are selected for study. Furthermore, the relationships between ethnographers and informants in the field, which form the bases of subsequent theorizing and conclusions, are expressed through social interaction in which the ethnographer participates; thus, ethnographers help to construct the observations that become their data,” (2008, p.5). While my factual position as a researcher, as asking questions, was given as Davies states, the social interactions I had with the informants informed the analysis, and my engagement and time with them constructed my observations, which have become the data of this chapter. Since the time I spent with the women informants, especially tea plucker informants, was more extended and in a much friendlier setting, it required addressing the construction of the ethnographer’s observations.

Although with tea picker women, my approach was more as an insider, during my time in the field, I spent time with a group of women who had different occupations. Some of these women are tea pluckers in their own tea gardens—which on the land registry its mostly belongs to their husbands or fathers—, some are wage laborer tea pluckers who worked in other's tea fields, workers of public institutions, part-time crafts teachers at community education centers, small business owners and women who work/ed in ÇAYKUR as different levels from an entry level job *ekisper* to a PhD level job—which is considered as development expert in this thesis. As can be expected, women who belonged to a lower socio-economic group, workers of the public institutions, wage laborers/*yarıcı*- tea pluckers, and tea pluckers in their own tea gardens have a major intersection set. Many of these women work as tea pickers in their family tea fields while also being workers in public institutions or private companies.

With the workers in public institutions, some I spend their workdays helping with their work, taking their breaks of cigarettes, coffee, food, with some others I spend the afternoon routine, taking their kids from school, walking their usual path after work. With the ÇAYKUR *ekisper* similarly, I spent the workday as she traveled between two tea purchase points and inspected tea purchases, which informed the earlier chapters as well. Part-time crafts teachers were more on an interview basis as their schedule did not allow me to spend my day with them. Small business owners allowed me to conduct an interview as they greeted their customers in between, and I was able to spend time in their stores as well. While for wage laborers and tea pluckers who work in their family field, I mostly visited them in their home settings because I knew the routine in the tea plucking, but I went with some of them on their tea harvest days so that I could include the routine in my fieldwork period as well.

While with the others, I have mostly participated in their gatherings with their neighbors or conducted 1-1 interviews. However, since I was living in a village in Rize for the past 1 year, even after my fieldwork period finished, our interactions continued. Therefore, my observations were not limited to my interview data or one year of harvest.

I want to emphasize why I did not prioritize going to the tea fields to pluck tea, as I have mentioned below. This was mostly caused by the fact that I have already plucked tea with my family during harvest seasons multiple times since my childhood. Thus, I knew how much of a physically demanding job it was and how little opportunity one would have for interviewing women while they are plucking tea. To cover the tea field area with a maximum efficiency, you will get in a fair distance from each other in the field so that one person get say the 5 lines(*set*) of tea bushes up to the ash tree(*dişbudak*) and the other get the 5 lines(*set*) over the terrace (*kaşın üstündeki*). While doing so, tea pickers are separated from each other, and the sounds of scissors or, in the last two to three years, the tea plucking engine, make it harder to have conversations.

One may ask how often they gave breaks? Although my experience will be the average of only the 30 women whom I saw picking tea in the past 20 years, the breaks are not very often, except one in the midday for food. Apart from that, they just catch their breath while emptying their scissors and sit for a while after emptying their bags. Thus, to interview them in the gardens would be a hard task for me and a bother for them, but the participant observation was valuable and informative. Although being very familiar with the process, I tried to take notes as a researcher and try to document the details to an uninformed audience. So, how is one day of tea plucking spent? In the next sections, as I depict the field data more explicitly, I will

give more descriptive details about one whole day on the tea gardens and the labor of tea picking. The diverse labor practices of women will be followed by their relationship to the tea land.

4.2.1 Women of labor

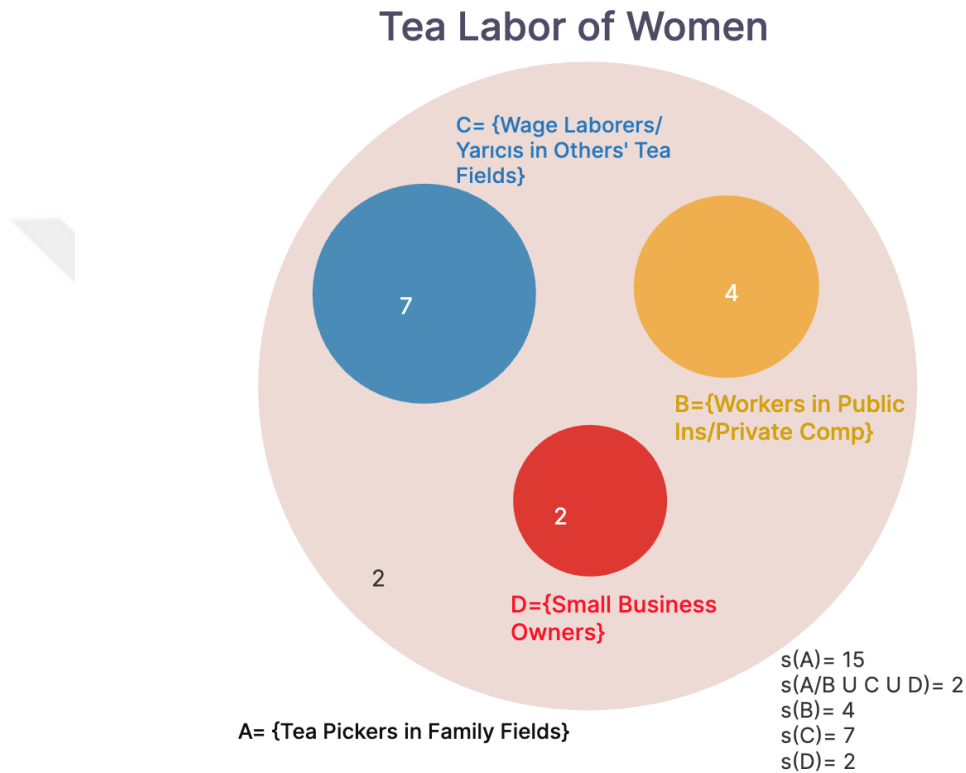


Figure 23. Venn Diagram of the Overlap Between Tea Picker Women and Women in Other Occupations

Although I have interviewed 26 women in total, the above diagram shows 17 who are tea pickers in their family fields. The 9 women who are either not tea pickers anymore due to their age, one of the ÇAYKUR officials, craft teachers in the community centers, or are not working. Although their interviews were used throughout the thesis and this chapter as well, I did not include them in the above diagram because I wanted to emphasize the work of being a tea picker and worker,

wage laborer/*yarıcı*, and small business owner, as they were the most contemporary and prominent groups in the field.

As it can be seen in the diagram, 15 women who have different jobs on their own are also working as unpaid tea pickers in their family tea gardens. Unpaid family work of women is very common in agriculture, but the definition of family business makes it harder for women to receive the just payment and recognition of their work. Since the tea production is a small family agriculture business, it is common for family members to work on tea production and not take daily wages. In return, the payment of the tea harvest will count as family income. However, in agriculture, we cannot see an equal division of labor between women and men, similarly in small family farming. In general, women are the manual laborers, whether paid or unpaid, and the issue of return and recognition of their work equally raises many questions.

It is possible to support the gender inequality in agricultural labor with data available in the literature. Women were 42% of the 4 million 866 thousand persons employed in agriculture in 2022, whereas 32% of the 30 million 752 thousand persons employed in total in Turkey (TURKSTAT, 2023b). A study estimated that in Turkey, the female employment rate in agriculture in 2021 was 22.3%, and the male employment rate was 14.8% (World Bank, 2023a; 2023b). TURKSTAT's definition of employment includes self-employed and unpaid family workers, whereas the World Bank (WB) excludes self-employed and unpaid family workers. This distinction in operationalization between WB and TURKSTAT indicates an acceptance in Turkey's economics of seeing the conditions of unpaid family work and self-employment as employment. This action increases the rate of employment in the country by including all the farmers, small-scale producers, business owners,

and unpaid family workers in the category of employees without having the rights or conditions of one. Interpretations of the national statistical institution in Turkey are patriotic, if not elaborate. Nevertheless, the studies show that the estimated number of females contributing family workers in all sectors in 2021 is 19.3%, while the number of males contributing family workers is % (World Bank, 2023c; 2023d). We see in these statistics the fact that women are entering the family workforce almost five times more than men.

In her research regarding unpaid family work in Turkey, Kocabiçak states that the share of women in unpaid family work in agriculture was 76% between 2010 and 2019 (Kocabiçak, 2022). Recall that 67% of the tea producers own 1-5 decares of fields, but when it is compared to less than 10 decares, 95% of the tea producers own lands of less than 10 decares. Only 5% of the producers are not small-scale producers (ÇAYKUR, 2019). Thus, it means that small-scale dominated the rural EBSR, where unpaid family work was almost extensively conducted by women in lands that they generally do not own. While at the beginning of this section we started with more modest amounts of percentages due to the rural-to-urban migration and agrarian change, agrarian sectors are not high employment sectors anymore; however, at the end, we see that as a statistical fact that the people who are still doing farming and not getting any payment are women even more so, in the case of the EBSR.

Tea production was far away from being an exception to this general categorization in rural areas, while tea production and the EBSR are a unique exception to the general socio-economic development of Turkey's rural areas in a "successful" manner. This contradictory structure, with the general socio-economic development of the region compared to Turkey's other peripheries, but the shared

experiences in the agriculture of women's unpaid labor and indiscriminate labor rights, reveals a more important dynamic about the tea development project. It is, in fact, another setback created by the development policies that to achieve economic growth, it relied on constant unpaid and unrecognized labor of women.

Only 5 of these 17 women have a high school diploma, and 4 of these are in a younger generation (30-35), while the rest of these 17 women's age ranges between 30-55. The rest of the 12 are not allowed to be schooled further than primary school and become an immediate part of the tea picking job in their family garden as children. When I asked the ages, they started tea plucking, they said 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12.

(23) "Once, when I was eight years old, we all went to pick tea together. But we left early in the morning. I was sleepy. I've always loved sleeping. (Laughs) I fell asleep on the tea field." (Fahriye)

(24) "I have always worked in the gardens in the house. I started plucking when I was 9 years old. Boys don't work in the tea fields; they are the preciouses of the houses."- [Melike]

(25) "I started when I was 10 years old, we picked with my mother and my sisters, we did not have much tea anyway. My father sold the tea, and we picked it from the gardens." [Selvi]

As the accounts of women show, while their ages change, many informants' experiences show a general pattern of working in tea fields with their sisters and mothers. They define their brothers' involvements in the tea field as partial until they found an occupation for themselves or they went to school, while since many households have an occupied father somewhere, the fathers are generally involved in the carrying part of the tea harvest. The occupation of fathers might be interesting since employment is not always a given opportunity, yet we must recall that, tea harvest season is also the tea processing season. Therefore, tea factories, tea purchasing locations, lorries carrying tons of tea leaves to tea factories, and all of the

other occupations related to the economy are in the high business period at the same time. As one of the women tea workers in ÇAYKUR factories described it, “we go to hibernation for 6 months” (Beyhan Akgün, 2024). So, during the harvest season, the region is alive in a very vivid way, but this can only partly explain the men’s not participating in the work in the fields.

Another fieldwork conducted in Hopa, Artvin, in a village among small-scale tea producers, shows that men’s participation in the production starts in the selling phase (Yılmaz Uzun, 2019, p.58), similar to my observation and experience in the field. The author explains this phenomenon in two ways: one stating that men are the ones who have driver's licenses, and the second is that men are the owners of the tea notebooks (çay defteri), in other words, land. This phenomenon, raised by Yılmaz Uzun, was not particular to Hopa, Artvin. This pattern of men’s involvement in the job in logistic parts was common in my fieldwork as well, mentioned by both women and men interlocutors alike.

Research on the literature shows that men’s labor in agriculture has been more on the commercial and bureaucratic side of production, while women have done labor-intensive and repetitive jobs. A field study shows that after tobacco sorting machines were introduced in Bafra, Samsun, in 2008-2009, men started to use these machines even though they had not touched tobacco leaves before. Women sorted tobacco leaves by hand when tobacco sorting was demanding and laborious but were excluded from production after the introduction of the machine (Yaman, 2021, p.144). During my fieldwork, I have observed a similar pattern in the introduction of the tea cutting engine, as men of the households who were not interested in the tea harvest before, whether they were on the off days or workdays when their wives were in the field, became so eager to get into the field. I have

witnessed dialogues between couples where husbands were explaining how the new machine is very dangerous, so they must be the ones who will be cutting the tea this harvest. Or men who started calculating the income that they can get from being a *yarıcı* now, because the tea engines can be an opportunity for them to work easily. Some of the discussions I witnessed women were asking their husbands to just leave them alone and continue carrying their tea to the purchase point as usual. I saw some of these discussions between couples resolving by men being more involved in the tea plucking with the new tea cutting machine. So, although I have not encountered with a huge amount of data, tea production case also shows support on the favor of the argument that suggest men becomes more involved with the job when they consider it requires more skill, or it is more technical.

(26) “We are considered unskilled laborers in this system because we have no education, no skills, and no craft. You don't need any talent to harvest tea; you just go to the tea fields and do it.” (Feride)

(27) “As long as I know myself, I am making my own money[*harçlık*], I can always work for myself, always. I started to pluck tea when I was 6 years old, my mom says.” (Çiğdem)

The above quotes depict an almost black and white version of informants' take on how they see their work. Interestingly, both Feride and Çiğdem are very confident women in their skills of survival and create a livelihood for themselves, while they also have a similar take on their skill sets and lack of education. Here I quoted them using these phrases to show the situation more vividly, but the names are interchangeable for these two informants. Many women were very realistic in their take on themselves, as they see their lack of formal education as a loss asset obliging them to work in manual jobs very similar to the definition of unskilled labor. While at the same time, their force major, the natural power in the field, and experience were making them very confident in their skills. Although it is a rightful confidence,

this is also creating a more positive construction of their workload by emphasizing their power rather than their unpaid labor, discriminated rights and precarity.

Whereas in the first place, their power comes from the necessities of the conditions, the urges to create a livelihood.

Naila Kabeer states that “to be made relevant to the analysis of power, the notion of choice has to be qualified in several ways. First, choice necessarily implies the possibility of alternatives, the ability to have chosen otherwise. There is a logical association between poverty and disempowerment because an insufficiency of the means for meeting one's basic needs often rules out the ability to exercise meaningful choice.” (1999, p.437) While in the case of Feride and Çiğdem, like many other women in the field who emphasized their power to me, we cannot claim empowerment. Because their job as tea pickers is not a consequence of several choices that led to today, it is a deprivation of choices that is predestined for them, which could have been described easily as fate, since breaking its patterns required the passing of generations. Feride and Çiğdem’s mother, Zahide, who is in her 80s, was also one of the informants. When I was interviewing her, she described her daughter's work in the fields with a lot of emotion, tearing up.

(28) “Now I look at my granddaughters, and I remember the heavy tea bags I used to put on my daughters' backs when they were their age, and the narrow paths they walked along with those bags on their backs. I wonder how I could have trusted such small children, how I wasn't afraid they would fall and hurt their heads, what they went through. My daughters gathered all the tea from these mountains, without roads or cars. What we went through. How we made it from those days to today.” (Zahide)

While Zahide’s account shows how, within time, their perception of what a 10-year-old girl is physically able to do changes, she depicts to us a harsh fact of working-class life in rural areas because while now she is scared to put her granddaughters in the same working conditions, back then she had no choice for her daughters. She

shows that living in a condition where you are trying to sustain a livelihood versus where you have your basic needs would force you to have a completely different mentality on the safety, health, and, in general, well-being of oneself and their family.

Also, with a lot of emotions, she emphasizes the bond and the sacrifice between the generations of women. She is praising her daughters' abilities to survive and thrive under those hard circumstances, but furthermore, she is saying that without the suffering of those young girls working in those fields, the granddaughter will not be able to go to their school today, i.e., having a life where their basic needs are met. This idea keeps women praising their strength and endurance in the tea work, more importantly, it keeps their hard work continuing. Generational empowerment wishes from mothers to daughters have a special place in their bonding but in the midst of this trauma bonding we must not miss the responsible actors and the development system that is causing women to create an idea of empowerment for themselves and their daughters when their rights of education disrupt, their labor being used and rights being undervalued. The development project and the state policies in the region that created this "fate" of women must be held accountable.

During its first cultivation i.e. Republican statism periods tea development project focused on creating the required labor for poverty alleviation thus, required the unpaid labor of women in family tea gardens and did not focus on creating a social, cultural and economic capital for women. The efforts of the republican state until the 1950s to build a national economy were persistent in the region, yet this support system did not exist in the case of creating a social development for the rural

women of the region, neither with education nor via other facilities, because the aim was focused on poverty alleviation.

Shetty discusses the homogeneity of Third World women in the development policy agendas and development discourses: she states that this will be a failure for development policies because of their lack of focus and nuance on the local realities. As James Ferguson (1990) claims that development institutions ignore the local realities and conditions and mandate a set of homogeneous problems that adopt a technocratic solution-based approach, where, similarly, gender empowerment discourses on women create a homogeneous, deprived figure of women that legitimize development interventions (Shetty, 2021). Thus, building on Shetty and Ferguson, we can conclude that to describe women only as agents who need poverty alleviation strengthens creates a legitimization for development projects, and strengthen the argument of poverty alleviation as women propose as in need. But then since the idea of development is too technocratic and depoliticized (Wilson,2006) these complex problems and “needs” address in a very technocratic way and the development project simplifies the complex socio-economic problems into formulaic technicalities (Venugopal, 2022) which ends up creating more problems than solving them. The next section will focus on the land rights of women and describe how the formulaic technicality of the development, and furthermore the aimed discrimination of rural women’s land rights in Turkey has been performed in the EBSR.

4.2.2 Land of women



Figure 24. Picture of a tea picker woman

Around 6 a.m., we woke up and started walking towards the tea gardens with Feride. The fields are not very close to the house, but not very far away either. After a 30-minute walk on the hills and small pathways, we reach the tea gardens where she will pluck her tea. She has been picking tea from these hills since she was married to her husband, almost 30 years ago. These tea fields do not belong to her and, funnily enough, neither to her husband (on the paper) because of the complicated land divisions. Since people used to give their land by their words and not by a notary, and the generations have passed, the official land divisions are complicated. Yet, the right to that land and tea garden belongs to a man, as it is for sure. While she walks toward her garden, she carries her scissors, bags, new tea engine, food, and water on her back.

Today is neither rainy nor sunny so we do not seek for a car, not every time we find a car anyway. We walked from the main road and stairs for a while, and we reached the tea fields. Around the tea fields the tea bush lines are generally dug as stairs, making very narrow terraces. To reach her own land, we must climb the slippery trail which are sometimes the borders between the land of other families. As we try to reach the space, we carry our bags and spare scissors, water bottles, foods and raincoats and *teris*- which you will be pouring your tea leaves into at the end of the day. These fields usually have abandoned old houses in them owned by the field owners which are used for leaving these items when you go to the field for picking your tea. After we dropped off our load, we were ready to go into the field. We start picking tea from our lines, until midday, as the scissors bag fills up with tea leaves, we pour them down to the bags. When the bags fill up, we start carrying them toward the hills or down the hill depending on where we are in reference to the place, we put the *terisler*. When the *teris* filled with tea it's tied down and depending on where the closest car road is you either leave it in the place or throw it down over the hill to the road so that the car that will be coming to take the tea will take them. Since in the hills and steps car roads are not very common, throwing *teris*, or sending them with a ropeway is very common. Both have safety risks since the bags weigh 100-150 kg in general, so with that speed of rolling it can harm someone very easily. This routine continues until Feride decides we have picked enough tea today, most experienced tea picker women easily collect 300-400 kg of tea leaves in a day. She calls her husbands to come and take the teas from the road to sell them in the *alımyeri*(ÇAYKUR) and we walk back home. As sometimes these days become more crowded and longer or weather becomes rainier so the task becomes harder, additionally depending on their land the hardship of the job can change

tremendously. The tea field of the size around 3 decares that I spend the day with Feride is the geographically hardest part of their lands because it is further, higher, soil structure is more inclined, has denser forest cover and landslides and floods have caused cliffs to form. However, she has different fields where transportation is easier, and geography is calmer. Nonetheless, these are not her lands. In one of the dialogues Feride defined these lands that we went together in the following way:

(29) Zehra: We are still not free. We have no financial freedom, for example. Let's say I will take you to court and let's say I will get an alimony...if it happens. We are in a pitiful state. I tell young people, get an insurance number. If you get money tomorrow, you will invest it and retire.

Feride: When I argue with my husband, I say that the state gives you land after you've worked it for twenty-five years. I say that I've been working this land for twenty-five years, so the state should give it to me. But it's just talk. In reality, if something like that happens [divorce etc.], who will it go to? It is his [the husband's] property, his place.

Zehra: That's right, the state will drag you through the court corridors for five to ten years and then you'll be the one to leave.

As Feride and Zehra describe the land problems of women in a very critical way, I find their dialogue a striking start on the contemporary struggles of the EBSR women's land discrimination problems. Feride as a woman who has worked in his father's and husband's tea fields since she was child was emphasizing a very important right while Zehra mentions the access to justice as she recently got into trials with the brothers for her father's inheritance. Although I could not find the particular law or regulation that Feride mentions in the above quote, the law that discriminated against them to own lands is an article from Civil Law(1926-2001) that was effective until 2001. In the original 1926 document, it says for the agrarian land:

“Article 598 – If one of the heirs objects to the allocation or if there is more than one applicant, the judge decides on the allocation by taking into account local customs and, if there is no custom, the status and reputation of the heirs, and orders the sale or distribution. The heir who wants to take over the management personally may request that all the assets be allocated to him in preference. If none of the sons of the deceased wants to take over the

management personally, his daughters or their husbands may request that the assets be allocated to them, provided that they are capable of operating the property.” (Velidedeoğlu, 1970)

Kocabiçak criticizes the common belief in the Turkish civil code (1926-2001), granting all women the right to land ownership, and states that the Turkish civil code discriminated against rural women in inheriting land (2018). She argues that the Turkish civil code acted differently toward urban women; to urban women, the civil code simultaneously provided education, employment, and land ownership under male dominance. In this entangled case, the first wave of feminist movements could not become helpful due to a lack of competence in demanding the rights of women together with different agendas (2018, p.123). In her article, Kocabiçak beautifully depicts a commonly known wrong fact in the 1926 Turkish Civil Code, and states how, for agrarian lands, land ownership is not directly inherited by daughters, as they are given to sons. What is more interesting is that this law was only repealed in 2001.

With the land divisions among family members, each generation gets fewer hectares of land, making a living out of only tea production becomes impossible. Bina Agarwal states that women’s access to land ownership and control of property helps to close the gender gap in women’s economic welfare, social position in society, and empowerment in general (Kocabiçak, 2018; Agarwal, 1994; Agarwal, 2003). Kocabiçak and Dildar’s (2025) article states that their cross-country panel data analysis shows that gender based legal discrimination towards women in the inheritance of agricultural land leads to their obligation in unpaid work in agriculture, limiting their access to education. Like Naila Kabeer (1999)’s argument on the emphasis of having choice when discussing the existence of the power women not having land ownership compelled them to unpaid work in agriculture thus obliging them with the work of tea picking.

Article 598 is a very clear representation of the state's developmentalist view on the periphery's women and how they are nothing but mere workforce on the newly built tea development project. While it was obvious that the agrarian labor had been done by women, why does the civil code discriminate against them? The dynamics is not much different than the proletariat and a factory. A factory is a place that creates products with the labor of workers, but it is not owned by workers; women work in small scale family farms all the time, with all of their means, but they are not allowed to own them. In the previous chapter, it was discussed that dependent economies are created when the accumulation of capital in one economy is directed towards another. Some countries supply cheap labor; women, in this case, become this cheap labor for a tea development project.

The dynamics of women's land ownership in the region are a very intriguing case in this aspect. Although the agrarian land ownership was discriminated against for women until 2001, even if it was allowed, it was not traditionally accepted among families in the region due to religious or traditional structures. During my time in the field, many men defined this condition as, "women have their rights in their husbands' houses." Yet, women, as could be expected, think rather differently. While they explained the hypocritical nature of the expectations from them, they were also talking about more than just land relations. When we were talking with Çiğdem regarding these topics, she was frustrated about people being manipulative about how daughters should act towards their families about these land issues, and how their words are threats and have the potential to affect one subconsciously.

(30) "I think everybody should get what they deserve. Women are inevitably in the background. They say when you go to your father's house [from your husband's house to visit them], it's enough for them to smile at you. What does that mean? If you get your part from the heritage, will they not smile at you? Does your relationship end? It's a threat. They are suggesting you'll take

your share, but you'll not be happy, such a threat, literally. Subconsciously, they say you will not be happy." (Çiğdem)

While women who have been under the shadow of this discriminatory land registrations emphasized this widely, one who has taken legal action was more open about it.

(31) "Men? Because men are brute force. Women, we Atatürk gave it [the rights] to us but we couldn't take it. We, women, couldn't take our rights. We didn't speak out. We were always crushed, crushed, crushed. We are still in the same situation. We haven't really gotten over it. Today, sometimes, look, some people go to the city and get a job. They work but they are in low-level jobs because they didn't go to school. They are cleaners, dishwashers, babysitters because they weren't educated. They are there. It's a little better now but I don't know if we should say a century or 150 years we need [to equalize]. But women need to do something. They need to speak out. I regretted it a lot at the time. When my father died, I could have sat in the same chair that my brothers sat in in my father's shop. I would have sat there very well. It was my right. Why didn't I? Because my mother said, "Oh, if you take land from your brothers, you can't come to your father's house. I won't come. I want my financial situation to be good, and then I won't come. What will I do if I come to their door? The brother who tries to crush me is not a brother anyway." (Zehra)

Zehra's monologue gives the researcher a lot to unpack. First, she starts with how Atatürk gave them equal rights, which is a common misconception, as we have stated at the beginning of the chapter with Kocabıçak's article; rural women's rights to land were discriminated against in the Civil Law until 2001. However, Zehra's common misconception is not actually a misconception. In the region, it is known that women's right to land has been discriminated against by religious authorities or traditional values. However, the Civil Law, which has put the opposite of the religious authorities and traditions as the face of modernity and improvement, shows the same discriminatory politics when it comes to rural women's rights to land which would come as a surprise to many women whether they think highly of Atatürk or not.

What rural women will be doing with their land is that they will not become unpaid laborers on their husbands' or fathers' lands, tea gardens. In case of having land of their own, they would not have to work as wage laborers. The development project of tea could not have been possible without the exploitation of women.

Without unpaid labor of women, cheap labor, such a development project is not applicable since the women would have been empowered more or so in a real sense with being offered with a real choice. As the studies show, having a payment for the work or land ownership indicates a change in women's socio-economic status.

Therefore, both their discrimination of land rights and unpaid labor are strong factors for women to stay and continue with tea picking jobs through the tea development project.

4.2.3 Politics and women

While we have discussed the state's reluctance to adopt a complex approach on the real problems on underdeveloped regions and instead brought a predesignated technical set of solutions, we have seen that how political parties and their influence in the local dynamics also uses development policies. In the discussion section of Chapter 3, we have discussed the effects of the political parties and their agendas while using developmentalist discourse and the locals' reactions to this. Here, there are again points to discuss on the political parties' behaviors to create voting support or consent and how they use or not the development project in this sense. Like Chapter 3 this debate must be a part of the discussion as it does not have enough data and is both informed by the history of political parties in Turkey, but also tries to advance further research. Yet, on the contrary to Chapter 3, the gender perspective

shows a more critical angle on how women become immediate responders when it is required by a political agenda.

Developmentalist political parties, according to an informant, did not address the women's work life or livelihoods until they recognized them as a major group of voters that could change the dynamics in the ballot box. While I was following their work lives in the rural sides and in the cities, women were showing the experiences of urbanization or in the informants' words villagization that we have discussed in Chapter 3. Thus, they were also explaining their reason to live in the villages or the city centers some I have already provided in Chapter 3. While women's accounts on the developmentalist flow to the cities showed expected caregiving attitudes and prioritization of families, there is also one dialogue that how JDP's policies did address specifically to the women when their political agenda required it.

(32) İrem: Why wouldn't someone want to live in a village?

Zehra: Life is difficult. Women want to socialize now. That's it. If I leave, my child can get a better education. They can grow up in a more social environment. That's also a factor. Women have realized certain things and are looking for solutions. For me, this is a rebellion against the darkness. The influence of things... The influence of phones... Of course, of course. Social media has an influence on these things. Phones. I think politics has a lot of influence too.

Feride: Politics, they couldn't come to power without women.

Zehra: Let's give women something so they'll be on our side. Exactly, exactly.

Feride: The inclusion of women in politics began with Erbakan's door-to-door politics. That's what I think.

Zehra: That's why.

Feride: Because there was such a need for women.

Zehra: He (Erdoğan) is continuing this door-to-door approach.

This time, the men couldn't block the women's way because they wanted us to be seen. They were a little embarrassed.

İrem: Because of what?

Feride: Because of their stupidity.

Zehra: They also forced their wives to take a place somewhere in order to secure a place for themselves.

İrem: Then politics is also bringing women out of the home.

Zehra: The woman's number, the need for that number... population.

Feride: That's what I think. Erdoğan abandoned Erbakan's politics for that reason.

Zehra: The old Islamists... stopped and thought about women. We always focused on men, and we won't get anywhere with that. Then we'll be like republicans. What should we do? We'll put women forward. Let's put women forward. Let them be the face of politics.

Zehra and Feride think that when Erdoğan's JDP recognized the significant voting bloc of women that can influence the electoral outcomes, they slipped away from their earlier more conservative political lineage and adopted a more liberal approach. Erdoğan himself was saying to his fellow JDP party members after the party's first days in 2003 about some of its members' background in Milli Görüş/Erbakanism tradition including Erdoğan himself, "But now we've left that dress behind. We consider ourselves the continuation of the DP" (Milliyet, 2003). As these similarities and importance connotations in discourse have a significance this must need further study on the gender perspective of development in the EBSR.

As well as women's empowerment and the way women describe themselves as powerful, the political parties define themselves as powerful and the media defines themselves as powerful vs. real empowerment. This topic requires further study since while women's strength is obviously a great force and their pride in themselves is valuable, the problematic construction of this pride has been mentioned.

Nevertheless, the women empowerment literature also has problems with homogenizing the women's experience, third world and rural life. Thus, even the detailed solution suggestions are not working in the case under the development projects. As per finishing this discussion, I will leave it in a more radical note by saying the problem is not on the wrong or incomplete implementations of development, but the development and in general the idea of social democracy.

4.3 Conclusive remarks

In this chapter, we have discussed the tea development project from a gender perspective with an attempt at a feminist methodology. The chapter was focused on the women's place in development projects, as well as development discourse on women. This chapter studied the development reports focused on the NUTS 2 TR90 in Turkey and analyzed their text and prioritization of women in policy and gender equality (SDG-5) goals. While doing so, the chapter continued to adopt a critical lens toward the idea of development and followed the earlier chapter's arguments on the development as an anti-politics machine.

To create more grounded analysis the chapter provided the field data, with interviews from 26 women focusing on their labor of tea and land rights. These interviews showed the on-field experience of the tea picker women as well as the general women experience in the EBSR on how they have been cast aside during the development project although their workforce and sacrifice were required in each step. Doing so, the chapter investigated women's understanding of their own strength and critically engaged with the literature on women empowerment.

Lastly, the chapter provided a discussion on the political parties' engagement with the women of the region to conceive political consent and votes for their electoral candidates and how women perceive this approach from political parties. The discussion part although does not have enough concrete data for analysis emphasize the DP-JDP connections which is brought up through the thesis while describing the developmentalist lineage in the post 1950s politics of Turkey.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the tea production in Turkey's Eastern Black Sea Region has been discussed in length with the aim of understanding and thinking about the idea of development and the Turkish state's developmentalist front. With the aim of providing a holistic view of the tea development project, which covers each period in Turkey's history, the thesis has aimed to provide the resemblances between the state-building in Turkey and the implementations and consequences of the tea development project in the EBSR. By providing the archival documents, oral history witnesses, a contemporary snapshot of the ruins of development, gender, and the rural perspective of the development, the thesis has aimed to describe a holistic picture of the dynamics at play. Each chapter of the thesis focused on studying this development project from different aspects.

In Chapter 2, we have described the historical transition of tea production from its first cultivation in 1924 to its widespread cultivation in the region until 1950. Through this era, the thesis has described the statist policies of the Republic and the founding party RPP, and the first developmentalist political party DP, with the initiation of a free market economy. While using oral history interviews, tea industry officials' memoirs, and GNAT documents, this chapter provides a comprehensive historical and descriptive background in the history and contemporary knowledge regarding tea production in the EBSR. Additionally, this chapter the entangled relations between the official actors and development mechanisms by showing the political actors and state mechanisms involved in the initiation of the tea development project.

Chapter 3 begins by critically engaging with the idea of development and the implementation of the development policies. This chapter, while providing a snapshot of the field and the setbacks of the tea development project in EBSR, makes us to reconsider the idea of success in tea development project. The accounts of the informants, provides important descriptions of the rural dissolution, political interference in tea production, and the diverse situation of the income sources of tea producers. Additionally, the chapter provides insight into the ways political actors utilize/interfere in the developmentalist political discourse in Turkey, by showing how this might be a factor in the relationship built between the state and the tea producers. Lastly, the discussion sections delve into other researchers' work in the region and critically engages their work while also situating the field data.

In Chapter 4, we have discussed yet another setback of the tea development project, but from a gender perspective. During the fieldwork, it has come to the surface that women's labor and land rights require their own block of analysis in the thesis. First, because of its density, and second, because of its place in the development project. While women are also influenced by the development project's setbacks, their precarity is much deeper; thus, Chapter 4 has studied their work and land ownership conditions separately. In this chapter, it is argued that women's unpaid labor and discriminated land rights are contributing factors to the exploitation of labor in the tea development project. This chapter also provided women's understanding of empowerment and analyzed how the interference of the development project created a disrupted and false sense and discourse of empowerment for tea picker women, which pushed them back into precarious work.

By focusing on the different dimensions of its implementation, continuations, transformation, and outcomes, this thesis has provided a detailed, historical, and

comprehensive analysis of the tea development project in the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey. While the project comes to a full circle by providing a mirror to the development project, considering the ambitious character of this research and the broad nature of the development project, and the era its spread, there are a few limitations that require addressing.

5.1 Limitations

The unrepresentative nature of the qualitative studies creates a limitation for this study to form a more generalizable argument, although providing a strong and dense analysis with the field data. While I have provided and supported the qualitative arguments with statistical data and other research that has representative quality, this research's field is not an exact representation of the EBSR people or women tea pickers. Although it provides the other important features of social research by showing a more detailed explanation of the accounts of people, as an ethnographic study this data and sampling method cannot be described as representative.

Second, as I am a local to the region, my experiences in the field as a researcher oscillated between being an insider and an outsider. This might have created some problems in terms of positioning of the researcher and bias. However, as I have critically stated in the introduction chapter, I approached these possibilities using a reflexive methodology and adapted the relevant scholars' work to prevent any harm in the process of analysis.

I have not managed to find private sector factory owners or more politically powerful people in the region to conduct interviews. For the latter, I must say I had my reservations as I was not sure how the approach would be, and I wanted to take the perspective from the lens of the public, not from the politicians. Yet, their

approaches might have informed the political dynamics in the region over tea production.

Although having a large sample of informants, I have used a smaller group while using quotations. This was partly caused by the structure and the existence of other methods in the thesis. To not disrupt the arc of analysis, I had to choose the quotations more carefully, therefore, some informants' quotes did not find place in the thesis. Nevertheless, our conversations were informative and useful for me and contributed to the writing process of this thesis.

5.2 Implications

What this thesis provides with the analysis of the tea development project is broadly stating that globally or nationally, the development projects are not ideal solutions to the complex sociological, economic, and political problems like poverty. Creating a technical solution for a complex problem causes many more problems in the long run. As it has already been discussed, the international development agencies are informing on more gender inclusive and comprehensive development project methods to address the problems of underdevelopment. However, these methods categorically approach development as a hierarchical phenomenon and cast aside the regional and local dynamics. Also, they are widely criticized in the development studies literature as well where some of these critiques are the basis of the theoretical framework of this thesis (Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1994; Li, 2007; Mitchell, 2002; Sachs, 1992).

As their solution offerings vary from universal basic income to more solidarity-building options like grassroots organizations, it is undeniable that the idea of modernity and required transformation towards that modernity is the core force

that leads actors in the field to be a participant in this development. The idea of development is appealing yet its connection and embeddedness with today's neoliberal economy must also be discussed carefully. While this thesis provides an analysis of Turkey's actions on its longest rural development project, it shows how each step taken for the development project is eventually embedded in the greater neoliberal economy of the country. Thus, the first implication of the thesis is more theoretical and focuses on the literature.

The second implication of this thesis follows the first theoretical implication, but it is more practical and focuses on the problems in the EBSR. One of the major problems in the EBSR that this thesis shows are the land regulations and unpaid labor of women. The regulations must be made to create gender equality in land divisions in the region and policies must address the unpaid labor in agriculture. Another important issue is, the current rural development policies are not socially, economically and ecologically well-adjusted and needs urgent reassessment. The urgency of this situation can be explained through the current crisis in Turkey as well. We see an ecological destruction in the rural sides and heavy urbanization policies both mentioned through the thesis.

In these two examples, we see immediate steps must be taken in the rural areas of Turkey to protect the rural livelihoods as well as the people living there. However, today the mining law is passed by the parliament as Turkey's rural lands become increasingly precarious in the hands of neoliberal statism (Tuğal,2022) and its destructions. As recent years show, villagers have gone through many struggles while confronting these highly valued companies and the police forces who protect them. The set of policies that will inform the active and well-established lives of rural people in their lands will also make them stronger when resisting for their

livelihoods and villages. Whether it is wildfires, rural development policies leading to urbanization, or mining laws, the destruction of the livelihoods of many people, animals, and plants cannot be protected without the involvement of locals who wish to stay and live there voluntarily. Fair pay in agriculture jobs, equal land rights for women, preventing unpaid family labor, providing social security regulations are the initial block of policies. Second step would be incorporating the rural livelihoods and rural development plans with local actors and grassroots organizations. For all these measures to be considered and a change to be to happen there is a need of cooperation between the actors.

As last measure of implications of this thesis suggests a change in the discourse. The discourse on the rural vs urban life, with rural being backward, fetishization of rural life as authentic, and entitled demands towards rural people to stop their migration to urban cities, stay in their villages, and continue production for the city, are just three subtitles in the problems of the construction of rural people.

Therefore, this thesis offers three implications: first, the embeddedness of the idea of development in the neoliberal economy and capitalist thinking must be emphasized. The idea of development is entangled to the capitalist structures of our modern world. Second, the policies focusing on developing the livelihoods in the rural sides with the consideration of the local life must be adapt widely. This must be done with the direct and active participation of the local people, but it also requires further attention considering this might be influenced easily by the local and national political conditions. And lastly, we must reconstruct the meaning of rural livelihoods in the discourse of daily life and policy, because the lines between the nature and city is not that certain as the rural and urban. Focusing on the conservation of the livelihoods of humans, forests, animals as well as the memories of people is a more

rewarding task than continuing the current divisive mindsets. This will not be a romanticization of “underdevelopment” but stopping the fetishization of “development.” We must question and rethink the common goal of reaching the modern developed life and furthermore continue to consider what developed is, as this thesis has been discussing since the beginning.



APPENDIX A

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL



T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (Sbinarek)



Sayı : E-84391427-050.04-186813
Konu : 2024-48T Kayıt Numaralı Başvurunuz
Hakkında

03.07.2024

Sayın Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Sinan ERENSÜ

Tez danışmanlığımı yürüttüğünüz öğrenciniz İrem Kopuz'un "Land, Labor, Tea: The Interplay of Neoliberalism, Gender, and Environment in Turkey's Tea Production" başlıklı projesi ile Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (SBİNAREK)'e yaptığımız 2024-48T kayıt numaralı başvuru 28.06.2024 tarih ve 2024/05 sayılı kurul toplantısında incelenmiş ve projeye etik onay verilmesi uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya on-line olarak katılımıyla ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. Onay mektubu tüm üyeler adına Komisyon Başkanı tarafından e-imzalanmıştır. Bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Saygılarımızla,

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Işıl ERDUYAN
Kurul Başkanı

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

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APPENDIX B

LONG QUOTES IN TURKISH

(1) “Burda çaydan başka birşey yetişmez. Çay olmasaydı bu topraklarda bir şey olmazdı hep ormanlık olurdu. Her şeyi çayla ettik, işimizi çay parasıyla kurduk, sermayemiz bitti mi bir şey sattık mı çay parasıyla geçindik-[Kemal]

(2) Her şey çay parasıyla yapıldı, düğünü onunla yapardık, ev onunla alınır, çocuklarımızı onunla okula yolladık. Bir çay bir de ahıra sığır ondan başla bir şey yok idi. -[Zahide]

(3) Çaycılık yapıyordum tabii. Ben iki ton çayım var. Onu kendim topluyordum. Tek başıma. Ahırda ineğin olurdu, çocukların olurdu. Şimdiki gibi elektronik eşyalar yoktu. Hayat zordu o zamanlar çok. Yani iki ton çayla ben bu işleri yaptım. Eşim mevsimlik işçi. Çay sayesinde çay fabrikaları bizim olduğu için. Orada mevsimlik çalışmıştı kocam. Bir aile geçindirmek için bu yeterli miydi değildi. [Zehra]

(4) “Çaykur’a satıyoruz çünkü kocam orda çalışıyor, bizim maaşımız ordan geliyor. Düşünüyorum yani devletimize destek olmalıyız. Nedime

(5) “Çayı özele sattığın zaman, sana bir vade veriyor. Çayını bugün alırlar ama özel hem devletten daha az para verir hem de parayı altı, yedi, sekiz ay sonra alırsın. Şimdi bir de enflasyon var, para hepten hiçbir şey oluyor. Devlet de eskiden vade verirdi, sonra o düzeldi. Artık çayı bitirip Çaykura sattın mı, bir ay sonra Çaykur hemen ödemeyi yapıyor. (Adnan)

(6) “Özel sektör eskiden bize çok zorluk çıkarırdı; devletten çok daha az öderlerdi. Ama şimdi kota belirlendi, kota dolduğunda, çayı dalında yakamam; mecbur satacağım, bu yüzden Çaykur'dan daha az ödeme yapan özel sektöre gitmek zorunda kalıyorum. Sorun bu.”(Kadir)

(7) “Bazı büyük özeller hızlı ödeme yapar, o yüzden onlara satıyorum. Ödeme gecikmesi yaşamadım, ama önceden büyük sıkıntıydı. Devlette de sıkıntıydı, ama o zamanlar enflasyon yüksek değildi, o yüzden etkilenmiyorduk. Bir yıl çayı satardık sonraki yıl parayı alırdık, önceki yılın parası çoktan gitmiş olurdu. Şimdi böyle bir şey olsa, o para yok bir senede enflasyonla yok olur.(Yusuf)

(8) Çaykura satıyoruz tabii, ben de Çaykurda çalışıyorum yıllardır. Zaten bugün kim ne derse desin Çaykur'un en kötü çayı bile özel sektörün en iyi çayından daha iyidir. (İrfan)

(9) Kocam kıtlığı bilirdi, Menderes gemilerle pirinç yollamı biz o zamandan önce pirinci beyaz unu bilmezdik, yememişidik. (Fahriye)

(10) Demokrat parti insanlara plastik borular getirdi hark kazıp evlerine su döşesinler diye. İşte şey denir, Menderes su getirdi, Demirel elektrik getirdi Özal yol getirdi. (Feride)

(11)Devlet istemedi. Şehirleri de iyi kontrol altında alırım sizi diye. Köylerde kontrol edemem sizi yani. Artık ondan bağlı bir şey. AKP burada en büyük etken... köyden insanları şehirlere taşımak istedi. Rahat yaşayın, ben sizi bakarım. Doğalgaz bedava veriririm size.Getirdi(bu şehre de) ama ilçelere getirdi. Köylere doğalgaz getirse köyün insanının yüzde otuz, yüzde kırkı daha şehire gitmez. Şehirlere yaptığı yatırımı köylere yapmadı. Bu köy merkeze bağlı en iyi köydü. Bu köyde yatırım yok. Bu köye doğalgaz gelebilir. Bu köye çok şeyler daha yapılır. Yollar biraz daha düzelse, doğalgaz gelse bu köyün insanı fazlalaşır. Artar yani. Bu köy merkeze bağlı bir köy. Bu köye bir tane yüksekokul ayağında bir okul gelmesi lazım. Köyümüz canlanması için. Meslek lisesi gibi. Üniversite gibi değil. Köylerde yatırım devlet hiç yapmadı. 20 yıl köylerde yatırım yapmadı. Köylerdeki kalkınmayı şehirlere taşıdı. Köyleri iptal etti yani. Türkiye genelinde hangi köydeyse aynısını yapıyor. köylere hiçbir yatırım olmamıştır.(Kemal)

(12) Tarımdaki diğer ürünlere göre daha çay tarımından daha çok para elde ediyorsun. Bölge için 1 nimet olarak görüyorum. Kışın tek bir aile kalıyor mahallede, 30 haneden. Hepsi şehre gidiyor. hepsinin iki evi var. Şehirde 1 köyde 1. Devlet köydeki okulları kapattı.Kentleşme değil, köysüzleştirme. (Yusuf)

(13)İrem: Ben şeyi biliyorum senin şehirde yaşamayı tercih ettiğini.

Zeynep: Ben şehirde yaşamayı tercih etmiyorum. Daha genel sebeplerim...benim şehire yürüten şey zaten ulaşım. Baş birincisi ulaşım, ikincisi de çocuğumun geleceği. Çocuğumun geleceği için ulaşım sıkıntı olmasın ileride. İlk kendim için şey yapıyorum. İkincisi nedir? Yakıt, yakıtım çok. Yüksek bir meblağ da şey olunca. Yani kışın zor oluyor. Hepsi köy seviyorum ya. Bağ bahçeyi seven bir insanım. Daha zor, evet. Merkeze nazaran Merkezde herşey elinin altında. Çayı eşimle beraber yapıyorum hafta sonları, izin günlerimizde. Biz zaten çok da bir çayımız yok. İki-iki buçuk ton.

(14) Çayın geleceği iyi değil, gübre fiyatları tamamen çığrından çıkmış durumda. Yevmiye en düşük günlük 1000 liraya geliyor. Şu an ki şartlarda sıkıntı. (Mert)

(15)Tabii büyüklerimiz şey diyorlardı, eskiden biz çay parasıyla Rize'den Arsa alıp ev yapabiliyorduk. Şu an öyle bir şey yok yani, çayın öyle bir geliri yok.Yani ben 20 senedir çayın çok böyle bir gelir getirdiğini düşünmüyorum. Yani bir sermaye olarak kullanılabilecek bir gelir yok. (Nermin)

(16)Biz küçük çaycılarız. Benim 2 ton çayım var. Nermin'nın 4 ton çayı var. Ama bunu 30-50 ton çay yapanlar var. Onlar için güzel.Ama bizler için değil. 30-50 ton çayı olanlar... Genellikle işçiyle toplatıyorlar onları. (Zeliha)

(17)“Çaylık çok olsa tamam ama bölüne bölüne bir şey kalmadı. Yan gelir oldu. (İrfan)

(18)Fabrikada çalışırken asgari ücretle yetişmiyor, ÇAYKUR'un yeni zammı, gece zammıyla beraber 18.000 lira oldu(2023). Özel sektörde çalışsan sendikasız çalışırsın, Sendikalının hakkı çok fazla, devletin verdiği haklar geri alınmaz. Çaykur'da bayramda 3 yevmiye alırsın. (İrfan)

(19)Sendika işçinin sırtından para kazanıyor. Sendika devletle masaya oturduğu zaman, sana ben kadro verdiğimde sen bana ne vereceksin, kışın mahsül yok hiç dediğinde devlet bir şey vermiyor sana. Torba üretimi yaptır. Çaykur kendi işçisini çalıştırabilir, sezonlukta 6 ay çalıştırıp bırakıyor. Her evde bir Çaykur emeklisi var, 47-48 fabrikası var. (Metin)

(20)Örneğin gübre verilmeye de teşvik ediliyor. Üreticiye gübreyi veriyorlar, üretici gidiyor dereye döküyor yani. Bilmediği için tabii. Daha sonra da önünü alamadık. Mesela dönüme 60 kilodan fazla verme dediğimiz üretici 250 kilo veriyordu. Böylesine acayip rakamlar çıktı. ...Tabii, şimdi üretici istiyor ki ben fazla bir şey yapmayayım, bahçeyle uğraşmayayım. Hangi çaycıyla konuşsanız bu böyle.(Sümbül)

(21)Çay eksperliğinin böyle daha eğitilmiş insanlar tarafından çayın alınmasının iyi olunacağına karar verildi. Çünkü eksperlikte çok, çayın satımında çok sorunlarımız vardı. Sıradan insanları alıyorsunuz, geçici işçi üstelik bu. Bu kendini çaykura ait görmüyor. Çünkü orada mahallelisi var, bilmemesi var. Onun kendine göre kayırıyor, kendi kafasına göre bir şey yapıyor. Çünkü ekspere azcık değdin mi hemen koşuyor politikacıya. Yani bu tür sıkıntılarımız vardı. İcabında eksper müdürü aldırabiliyordu da, müdür eksper aldırta mıyordu. Çok politik bir kurum Çaykur. Bu politikanın işe karışması, bir türlü toparlanamamasına, doğru dürüst yürütememesine de neden oldu yani.(Sümbül)

(22)Çayla şu an sunta yaparsın, bugün kamyonda elimi daldırdım baktım çay hep odun. Kilo işi toplamışlar belli yani. Siyaset vatandaşı memnun etmek, oy için ne olursa olsun...eksperlerin çayı kontrol etme görevi kalkmış. Bir eksper diyelim ki odun, bozuk çay almıyor. Müstahsil Ak parti borçka ilçe başkanını arıyor. O da eksper arıyor, bilmem nerden kendine yer beğen diyor. Ak parti ilçe başkanları ilçede kaymakamın ilde valinin önünde. İkisine(iyi toplanmış çaya da kötü toplanmış çaya da) aynı parayı veriyorsun, hak mıdır? Şikayet gibi ama olmalı artık, örümcek ağı gibi sardı. Devlet zarar ediyor aşamasını geçtim, çayı görüyorsun bu malzemeden çay olmaz noktasına geldim. Ot, eğretili, dip(çayın yeşil yaprak kısmının altındaki odun)...geçen senenin çayı da kaynıyor ona. İneğin altına serilmez dediğimiz çayları bize çay olarak içiriyorlar. (Kadir)

(23)Bir kere 8 yaşındaydım, hep beraber gittik çay toplamaya. Ama sabah gidiyruk erken. Benum da var uykum. Uyumayı oldum olası çok severim. (Gülüyor) Çaylığın düzünde uyumuşum. (Fahriye)

(24)Hep çayda çalıştım, 9 yaşında başladım, erkekler çaya gitmez. Uşaklar ocak güğümüdür(Melike)

(25) 10 yaşındayken başladım, annemlen kızkardeşlerimlen toplardık zaten çok çayımız yoktu. Biz toplardık babam da çayımızı satardı. (Selvi)

(26) Biz vasıfsız emek oluyoruz, çünkü eğitim zanaat bir şeyimiz yok. Çayı toplamak için özel bir beceriye ihtiyacınız yok bahçeye girip topluyorsun.(Feride)

(27)Kendimi bildim bileli harçlığımı çıkarmışımdır, hep. Annemin dediği 6 yaşında çay toplamaya başlamışım. (Çiğdem)

(28)Şimdi torunlarıma bakıyorum, onların yaşındayken kızlarımın sırtına verdiğim o ağır çay torbaları, o kızlarımın o torbalar sırtlarında yürüdüğü o dar yollar aklıma geliyor. Şu kadarcık çocuklara onları nasıl güvendim diyorum, nasıl bir yerden düşüp başlarını yararlar diye korkmadım, neler yaşadılar. Kızlarım bu dağların bütün çaylarını topladılar, yol olmadan araba olmadan, neler çekmişiz. Ne günlerden bugünlere gelmişiz. (Zahide)

(29)Zehra: Hala özgür değiliz ki. Maddi özgürlüğümüz yok mesela. Ben senle düşeceğim mahkemelere de alacağım bir nafaka da eline gözüne dursun.Bizim acımacak halimiz var. Ben şimdi gençler o kadar diyorum ki. Bir sigorta numarası al. Yarın bir gün elinize bir para geçirse yatırıp emekli olursunuz

Feride: Ben şimdi eşimle kavga ettiğim zaman diyorum ki devlet bir araziyi yirmi beş sene işleyip baktığın zaman veriyor, diyorum ki bu araziyi de ben 25 senedir çay işleyip bakıyorum devletin bunu bana vermesi lazım. Ama lafta. Gerçekte öyle bir şey olsa[boşanma vs.] kim gidecek, onun[eşinin] mülkü, onun mekanı.

Zehra: Aynen öyle, seni bir beş on sene süründürür mahkeme koridorlarında devlet sonra gidecek olan sensin.

(30)Bence herkes hak ettiğini almalı. Direkt baba evinden ayrılırken onu mu alıyorsun? Hak ettiği için. Kimse kimseye keyif bağışlamamalı. Bunu niye getirdin sen? Toplumda erkekler ön planda olduğu için. Kadınlar ister istemez ikinci planda. Babanın evine gidince sana gülsünler yeter. Ne alaka? Mal aldın mı gülmeyecekler mi sana? İnsan ilişkisi mi bitiyor yani? Böyle de bir tehdit var ortada. O da resmen bir tehdit yani. Alırsın ama gidip gelemezsin. Mutlu olamazsın. Sana bakmazlar. O da bilinçaltı, psikolojik tehdit.(Çiğdem)

(31)Erkekler mi? Erkekler kabagüç olduğu için. Kadınlar biz Atatürk bize verdi de biz onu alamadık. Biz kadınlar onu alamadık haklarımızı. Ses çıkarmadık. Hep ezil ezil ezil ezil. Hala aynı durumdayız. Çok üstelememişiz yani. Bugün bazen, baksana bazı insanlar şehre inip işe giriyor. Çalışıyor ama okumadığı için alt düzey işlerde. Temizlikçi, bulaşıkçı, bebek bakar. Yani okutulmadığı için bunlar yani. Bunlar var. Şimdi biraz daha iyi ama bize artık bir yüz yıl mı lazım, 150 mi desem bilemedim. Ama kadınların bir şeyler yapması lazım. Seslerini çıkarmaları lazım. Ben çok pişmanım zamanında. Babam öldüğü gün o kardeşlerimin, erkek kardeşlerimin oturduğu koltuğa

ben de oturabilirdim babamın dükkanına. Gayet de güzel otururdum. Hakkımdı. Ne için? Annem, aman kardeşlerinizden mal alırsanız baba evine gelemesiniz. Gelmeyeyim. Benim maddi durumum iyi olsun gelmeyeyim. Ne yapacağım kapılarına gelip de. Beni ezmeye çalışan kardeş kardeş değil ki zaten.(Zehra)

(32)İrem: Köyde neden yaşamak istemez insan?

Zehra: Hayat şartları zor. Kadın artık sosyalleşmek de istiyor. Bu. Yani. Gidersem çocuğum oradan daha rahat okutabilirim. Daha sosyal bir ortamda yetişir. Bu da var. Yani artık kadın bir şeyleri fark etmiş, çare arıyor. Bu da benim için bir isyansı karanlığa kaldı. Şeyin etkisi... Telefonlarının etkisi... Ya tabii, tabii. Sosyal medyanın bunların için etkisi var. Telefonun. Ben siyasetin etkisinin de çok olduğunu düşünüyorum.

Feride: Siyaset, kadınsız iktidara gelemeler.

Zehra: Kadına bir şeyler verelim ki bizden yana olsunlar. Aynen, aynen.

Feride: Erbakan'ın kapı kapı siyasetiyle başlamıştır kadının siyasete dahil edilmesi. Ben öyle düşünüyorum.

Zehra: O yüzden.

Feride: Kadınlara böyle ihtiyaç olduğu için.

Zehra: Kapı kapıyı bu(Erdoğan) devam ettiriyor yani.

Bu ettirdi bu sefer adamlar da biz de şey görünelim diye kadınların önünü kesemediler. Biraz utandılar yani.

İrem: Neyden?

Feride: Davarlıklarından.

Zehra: Onlar da bir yerlerde yer edinebilmek için kadını kendi karısını bir yere tıkkardı.

İrem: Kadını biraz da siyaset dışarı çıkartıyor.

Zehra: Kadının sayı olması, o sayıya ihtiyaç duyulması nüfus.

Feride: Ben öyle düşünüyorum. Çünkü Erbakan'ın siyasetini o sebepten bıraktı(Erdoğan).

Zehra: Eski İslamcılar... kadınlar için durup şey düşündü biz hep adamlara oynadık bununla bir yere gelemeyeceğiz. O zaman cumhuriyetçi gibi olacağız. Ne yapalım? Kadınları öne atacak. Aşağı indi. Halkın arasına indi.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH

1. Where do you live? (Village-city center)

A. If not permanent;

- a. Where do you stay and how often? What are the reasons for this?
- b. What are the main differences between these locations?
- c. Is there a reason why you prefer not to stay in one place permanently,
and if so, what is it?
- d. What do the characteristics of these places mean to you?

B. If it is fixed (village or city)

- e. Why do you prefer to stay here?
- f. What are the negative and positive aspects of staying here?
- g. Have you always stayed here? How has it changed during your lifetime?
- h. Have you ever thought of leaving here?

2. How old are you?

3. What do you do for a living?

4. How many years of education did you receive?

5. Do you have tea? Who collects it?

6. If there were no tea, would you come to the village/live in the village?

7. Do you know any migration stories from your relatives or family, and if so, what are they? (old/new)

8. How would you describe your relationship with this geography?

9. If you were given/bought 5 acres of land today, what would you use that land for?

10. Would you like to leave Rize?

11. What do you think about the region's climate and nature?

12. Which geographical feature has the greatest impact on your life? (rain, sloping hillsides, etc.)

13. (If applicable) Would you like your children to live in the village?

14. How financially secure do you feel?

[15 and onwards for women participants only]

15. Do you work in other tea gardens?
16. How much is your daily wage?
17. How does this wage contribute to your household economy? What do you buy with this money?
18. Do you do part-time work? Are you considering doing so?
19. Before you got married, who picked tea for your family? Who picks tea for you now?
20. Do you own any tea gardens with a license and title deed in your name?
21. At what age did you start picking tea?
22. Until what age can one continue picking tea?
23. Do you see new opportunities in tea?
24. Do your children pick tea? Would you like them to pick tea?
25. In which part of tea production are men involved? Do you think their work is difficult?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN TURKISH

1. Nerede oturuyorsunuz? (Köy-şehir merkezi)

A. Sabit değilse;

- a. Hangi aralıklarla nerelerde kalıyorsunuz? Bunun sebepleri neler?
- b. Bu lokasyonların birbirlerinden temel farkları neler?
- c. Birinde devamlı kalmayı tercih etmemenizin bir sebebi var mı, varsa nedir?
- d. Bu yerlerin özellikleri size ne ifade ediyor?

B. Sabitse (Köy ya da şehir)

- e. Neden burada kalmayı tercih ediyorsunuz?
- f. Burada kalmanın negatif ve pozitif tarafları neler?
- g. Hep burada mı kalıyordunuz? Sizin yaşadığınız süreçte nasıl değişti
- h. Hiç buradan gitmeyi düşündünüz mü?

2. Kaç yaşındasınız?

3. Ne iş yapıyorsunuz?

4. Kaç yıl eğitim aldınız?

5. Çayınız var mı? Kim topluyor?

6. Çay olmasaydı köye gelir miydiniz/ köyde yaşar mıydınız?

7. Akrabalarınızdan ailenizden bildiğiniz göç hikayeleri var mı, varsa neler? (eski/yeni)

8. Bu coğrafya ile ilişkinizi nasıl tanımlarsınız?

9. Bugün size 5 dönüm arazi verilse/satın alsanız, o araziye ne yapmak için kullanırsınız?

10. Rize'den gitmek ister misiniz?

11. Bölgenin iklimi, doğası için ne düşünüyorsunuz?

12. Coğrafi özelliklerden sizin hayatınızı en çok etkileyen hangisi? (yağmur, eğimli yamaçlar vs.)

13. (Varsa) Çocuklarınızın köyde yaşamasını ister misiniz?

14. Ekonomik olarak kendinizi ne kadar güçlü görüyorsunuz?

[15 ve sonrası sadece kadın katılımcılar için]

15. Başka çay bahçelerinde çalışıyor musunuz?
16. Günlük yevmiye ne kadar?
17. Bu yevmiye ev içi ekonominize nasıl katkı sağlıyor? Bu parayla ne alıyorsunuz?
18. Yarıcılık yapıyor musunuz? Yapmayı düşünüyor musunuz?
19. Evlenmeden önce ailenizin çayını kim topluyordu? Şimdi çayınızı kim topluyor?
20. Çay bahçelerinden ruhsatı tapusu sizin üzerinize olan var mı?
21. Kaç yaşında çay toplamaya başladınız?
22. Çay toplamaya kaç yaşına kadar devam edilebilir?
23. Çayda yeni imkanlar görüyor musunuz?
24. Sizin çocuklarınız çay topluyor mu? Toplamalarını ister misiniz?
25. Erkekler çay üretiminin hangi kısmına dahil oluyor? Sizce işleri zor mu?



APPENDIX E

INFORMANT TABLE

#	Gender	Age	Name	City	Notes
1	W	72	Sümbül	Rize	Retired Agricultural Engineer, Çaykur, Development Expert Informant
2	M	74	Tosun	Rize	Retired Agricultural Engineer, Private Tea Factory Manager, Industry Expert Informant
3	W	45	Çiğdem	Rize	Tea Plucker, Worker, Tea Producer Informant
4	M	60	Kemal	Rize	Tea Producer, Husbandry Owner, Tea Producer Informant
5	W	53	Feride	Rize	Tea Plucker, TPI
6	W	46	Selvi	Rize	Tea Plucker, TPI
7	W	55	Melike	Rize	Tea Plucker, Wage Laborer, TPI
8	W	82	Fahriye	Rize	Retired Tea Plucker, TPI
9	W	52	Maide	Rize	Tea Plucker, Wage Laborer, TPI
10	W	40	Nedime	Rize	Tea Plucker, TPI
11	M	51	Tekin	Rize	Tea Producer, Small Business Owner, TPI
12	M	50	Metin	Rize	Tea Producer, Yarıcı, Retired Çaykur Worker, TPI, Çaykur Worker Informant, Yarıcı Informant

13	M	40	İrfan	Rize	Tea Producer, Yarıcı, Seasonal Çaykur Worker, TPI, Çaykur Worker Informant, Yarıcı Informant
14	W	60	Sevim	Artvin	Tea Producer Informant
15	M	82	Ali	Artvin	Beekeeper, Tea Producer, TPI
16	M	70	Cemil	Artvin	Tea Producer, TPI
17	M	50	Yusuf	Artvin	Teacher, Tea Producer, TPI
18	M	70	Adnan	Artvin	Retired Çaykur Ekisper, Tea Producer, Çaykur Ekisper İnfornant, TPI
19	W	24	Merve	Artvin	Seasonal Agriculture Worker, Seasonal Worker Informant
20	W	23	Nazlı	Artvin	Seasonal Agriculture Worker, Seasonal Worker Informant
21	M	33	Mert	Artvin	Tea Producer, Commissioner, TPI
22	M	50	Kadir	Artvin	Teacher, Tea Producer, TPI
23	W	40	Nevin	Artvin	Tea Plucker, TPI
24	W	50	Nergis	Artvin	Tea Plucker, TPI
25	W	80	Neşe	Artvin	Retired Tea Plucker, TPI
26	M	80	Murat	Artvin	Retired İmam, Tea Producer, TPI
27	M	52	Aziz	Rize	Tea Producer, Full Time Çaykur Worker, Çaykur Worker Informant, TPI
28	W	46	Nükhet	Rize	Çaykur Ekisper, Çaykur Ekisper Informant

29	M	55	Turan	Rize	Private Sector Ekisper, PS Ekisper Informant
30	W	46	Melek	Rize	Tea Plucker, TPI
31	W	31	Zeynep	Rize	Tea Plucker, Worker, Tea Producer Informant
32	W	30	Ebru	Rize	Tea Plucker, Worker, Tea Producer Informant
33	W	52	Halide	Rize	Tea Producer, Small Business Owner, TPI
34	W	40	Sultan	Rize	Tea Producer, Small Business Owner, TPI
35	W	65	Zehra	Rize	Retired Tea Plucker, TPI
36	W	80	Esra	Rize	Tea Producer Informant
37	M	80	Hulusi	Rize	Tea Producer Informant
38	M	50	Harun	Rize	Rize Chamber of Commerce
39	M	50	X	Rize	EBSR Development Agency (DOKA) Expert Informant
40	M	30	Y	Rize	EBSR Development Agency (DOKA) Expert Informant
41	M	50	Veli	Rize	Çaykur Operation Manager, Çaykur Expert Informant
42	M	55	Ahmet	Rize	Agriculture Engineer, Çaykur, Çaykur Expert Informant
43	W	40	Zeliha	Rize	Tea Plucker, Tea Producer, Worker, TPI

44	W	40	Nermin	Rize	Tea Producer, Administrator, TPI
45	W	40	Elif	Rize	Tea Plucker, Worker, TPI
46	W	85	Zahide	Rize	Retired Tea Plucker, TPI



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