

THE GLOBAL HISTORY OF THE
OTTOMAN AND TURKISH TEA TRADE

A Ph.D. Dissertation

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By Esra Ansel

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

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ABSTRACT

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This study aimed to write the global history of a commodity, namely tea, that was consumed in the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey but not produced locally and imported from various places such as China, Russia, Europe, South Asia and Japan. This research attempted to write the history of a product and how it connected people, places, and continents from a global framework, using primary sources in multiple languages, including documents from the Ottoman and Republican State Archives, British Trade Reports, Trade Statistics, advertisements, travelogues, and contemporary newspapers. Rather than presenting a single linear narrative, the current dissertation gives multiple viewpoints and insights based on a critical review of the sources and making connections that other scholars had not considered.

Keywords: tea trade, tea importations, global, Late Ottoman, Early Republican Turkey

ÖZET

OSMANLI VE TÜRK ÇAY TİCARETİNİN KÜRESEL TARİHİ

Ansel, Esra

Doktora, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Owen Robert Miller

Haziran 2023

Bu çalışma, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun son döneminde ve erken Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinde tüketilen ancak yerel olarak üretilmeyen ve Çin, Rusya, Avrupa, Güney Asya ve Japonya gibi çeşitli yerlerden ithal edilen çayın küresel tarihini yazmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu çalışmada Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Arşivi belgeleri, İngiliz Ticaret Raporları, Ticaret İstatistikleri, seyahat günlükleri, çağdaş gazeteler ve gazete reklamları gibi farklı dillerde üretilen birincil kaynakları kullanarak bu ürünün tarihini; ve çayın insanları, yerleri ve kıtaları nasıl birbirine bağladığını küresel bir çerçeveden yazmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu tez tek bir doğrusal anlatı sunmak yerine, kaynakların eleştirel bir incelemesine dayanan ve diğer araştırmacıların dikkate almadığı bağlantılar kuran çoklu bakış açıları ve içgörüler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: çay ticareti, çay ithalatı, küresel, Geç Osmanlı, Erken Cumhuriyet Türkiye

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The opening sentence of Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* can also be used to define these past six years. “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” It is true that these past years have not been very easy. We have been through a global pandemic, a disastrous earthquake, an economic depression and many more. It was also a personally challenging period. However, I also had the pleasure of working on a topic that I find most exciting with a great advisor on a wonderful campus. I drank tons of tea while writing this dissertation, including Earl Grey, Oolong, Souchong, Pu-erh, and Jasmine Green Tea, which made it all the more enjoyable to write about its commerce. Despite all the challenges of research, academia and life, I am grateful to have been able to work on this topic which I enjoyed so much.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Literature Review	4
1.2 Contribution and Aim of the Dissertation	10
1.3 Sources	11
1.4 Outline	14
CHAPTER II: TEA FROM THE EAST CHINA SEA TO THE BLACK SEA	19
2.1 A Brief History of the Sino-Russian Tea Trade	22
2.2 Different Geographies, Different Preferences for Tea	26
2.3 Different Trade Routes, Different Tastes in Tea	28
2.4 Tracing Russian Tea Trade from the Ottoman Archival Documents	32
2.5 Tea Smuggling	34
2.6 Russian Tea Production in Hankou	36
2.7 Russian Tea Cultivation During the Tsarist Regime	37
2.8 Short-lived Ottoman Sovereignty in Batum	40
2.9 Tea Cultivation Under the Soviet Regime	42
2.10 Chinese Teas in the Ottoman and Turkish Tea Markets	45
2.11 Russian Tea and Samovars in the Ottoman and Turkish Tea Market	48
2.12 The Role of Persians in the Spread of Tea Consumption in the Ottoman Empire and Their Relation With Tea	53
2.13 Conclusion.....	57
CHAPTER III: TEA IMPORTS FROM THE ATLANTIC OCEAN	60
3.1 The Impact of the Crimean War on the Ottoman Tea Trade and Consumption	61

3.2 European Forerunners of Tea Trade	64
3.3 Tea Imports from France	73
3.4 Tea Imports from Germany and Austria	75
3.5 Tea Imports from the Netherlands	76
3.6 Britain- Predominance in Importing Tea into the Ottoman Empire	78
3.7 Challenges of Importing Tea to Constantinople	82
3.8 Conclusion	86
CHAPTER IV: TEA FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD	87
4.1 The History of Tea Cultivation in South and Southeast Asia..	89
4.2 Ottomans' Cooperation with the Muslims of South Asia and Southeast Asia.....	91
4.3 Trade Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Indian Ocean World..	93
4.4 Intensification of Relations during Abdülhamid II's Reign	97
4.5 Tea Imports from the Indian Ocean World to the Ottoman Empire	99
4.6 Indian Tea Imports in the Ottoman Empire According to British Consular Reports	103
4.7 Colonial Teas during the First World War and the Early Republican Era	104
4.8 Colonial Teas from Southeast Asia in Turkey after the Monopolization of Tea by the Turkish State.....	110
4.9 Conclusion.....	115
CHAPTER V: TEA FROM THE SEA OF JAPAN	117
5.1 A Brief History of Japanese Tea Culture	119
5.2 History of Japanese Tea Exportations	124
5.3 Japanese Tea in Universal Exhibitions	128
5.4 Ottomans' First Contact With Japanese Tea	130
5.5 Diplomatic Relations with Japan	133
5.6 Commercial Relations with Japan	141
5.7 Diplomatic and Commercial Relations With Japan During The Early Republican Period	147
5.8 Records of Japanese Tea in the Early Republican Sources	149
5.9 Conclusion	151
CHAPTER VI: TEA MERCHANTS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND EARLY REPUBLICAN TURKEY	153
6.1 The Non-Muslim Tea Traders of the Ottoman Empire	154
6.2 Creating a 'National Economy' and the Birth of Turkish-Muslim Tea Trading Companies	161

6.3 Mustafa Nezih Bey and The Albayrak Tea Company	167
6.4 Tracing the Tea Traders of the Early Republican Period from Trade Yearbooks (Ticaret Salnameleri) of the 1920s	176
6.5 Conclusion	178
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION	179
BIBLIOGRAPHY	185
APPENDICES	200
Appendix 1	200
Appendix 2	204



CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

No other production of the soil has, in an equal degree, stimulated the intercourse of the most distant portions of the globe, nor has any other beverage, with equally unalloyed benefit, so commended itself to the palates of the people of the more civilized nations, or become so much of comfort.¹

Bugün ki, *fayf oklok ti*² yani saat beş çayı hemen her evde kabul edilmiş gibi bir şeydir.³ [Today's *fayf oklok ti*, that is, five o'clock tea, is something that is adopted in almost every house.]

Gideon Nye Jr., an American merchant and vice-consul who spent years in Canton, China, wrote these lines about tea in his book *Tea and the Tea Trade* in 1850 New York. Leaving aside the benefits and taste of this product, the fact that it “stimulated the intercourse of the most distant portions of the globe” remains valid to this day since, in our present time, tea is the second most consumed beverage in the world after water but only produced in a limited number of places around the globe due to the climactic conditions it requires. It is particularly valid with the history of the tea trade during the Late Ottoman and early Republican periods, which is the topic of the present dissertation.

¹ Gideon Nye Jr of Canton, *Tea and the Tea Trade*, Third Edition (New York: Geo W. Wood, 1850), 1.

² Five o'clock tea.

³ “Çay Kurabiyeleri”, *Süs*, sayı 47 (3 Mayıs 1340/13 Mayıs 1924) see in “*Osmanlı Hanımları Mutfakta*” *Osmanlıca Kadın Dergilerinde Yemek ve Mutfığa Dair Makaleler*, ed. Abdullah Uğur, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2019), 181.

The second quote above is taken from a women's magazine named *Süs* from 1924, during the early Republican period, suggesting that tea has become a part of the daily life of the average Turkish family. It had not been the case a hundred years earlier, as sources from the 1830s and even 1850s suggest.

As the largest tea-consuming population on earth today, according to the most recent studies of 2023, Turkey surpassed even the English, the Irish, and Russians in per capita tea consumption. "According to sources, each Turk consumes approximately 1,300 cups (3.16kg) of tea annually. That translates to 3-4 cups daily, with the number of cups expected to rise to 10 during the freezing winter."⁴ Given the circumstances and the beforementioned data, today, from the average Turkish citizen to the most well-informed Turkish person, the history of tea in these lands is something that is taken for granted as if tea existed from the beginning, that the Ottomans and Turks produced and consumed tea for centuries. However, historical data suggests otherwise. Compared with the history of coffee on these lands, the history of tea is relatively much more recent, global, and complex than people tend to think.

There are few references to the existence of tea in the Ottoman Empire during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as the registers of the palace kitchen cellar from 1710 during the reign of Ahmed III that listed tea among many other items such as coffee, sugar, and cinnamon.⁵ Evliya Çelebi also mentions *çay* and *çay şerbeti* as a

⁴ "Tea Consumption by Country 2023" in <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/tea-consumption-by-country> Date of Access: 02 April 2023.

⁵ BOA, MAD.d. 18759 (H.29.05.1122-M.26.07.1710). The date of this document was mistakenly given as 1777 in several popular sources about tea. Although no mention was made specifically of this document, it was noted that there was a palace cellar register from 1777. Evliya Çelebi also relates his experience and impressions of tea when he encountered this beverage during his travels in Anatolia during the seventeenth century.

beverage consumed in Anatolia several times in his travelogue that he penned during the seventeenth century.⁶

However, the popularization and spread of tea consumption occurred during the nineteenth century, in its second half, to be more precise. The Ottomans, introduced to tea primarily by the Russians and Europeans, had no tea production of their own in the empire and had to import this product from other places such as China, Russia, Europe, America, South Asia, and Japan. The story of the importation of tea to the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Republican Turkey involved people from all over the world, ethnicities, and backgrounds. That being said, the global history of the Ottoman and Turkish tea trade was not just a socio-economic history. However, it perforce involved histories of diplomacy, politics, and culture as well.

Since the time frame of this study coincided with the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it also coincided with the transformations of communication and transportation technologies such as the telegraph, printing press, railways, and steamships.⁷ Just as significantly, it also coincided with the opening of new routes and roads, such as the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the Trans-Siberian railway

⁶ Marianna Yerasimos notes that he vowed that he never drank tea or *çay şerbeti* even though tea was among the beverages that he mentioned numerous times throughout his travelogue. She also relates that at the time of Evliya tea (*çay* or *çay şerbeti*) was largely used together with a sherbet made with star anise (*badyan şerbeti*). See, Marianna Yerasimos, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi'nde Yemek Kültürü Yorumlar ve Sistematik Dizin*, (Istanbul: Yapıkredi Yayınları, 2019), 203-204.

⁷ “The first crucial event of that century was noted as being the invention of the telegraph in 1206 (1791-92). Apart from certain political and military developments inside and outside the Ottoman Empire, the others are as follows: The invention of the lithography press in 1215 (1801-02), the steamship in 1222 (1807-08), the railway in 1240 (1824-25), the opening of the Suez Canal in 1286 (1869-70), the establishment of a tramway in Istanbul in 1288 (1871-72), the opening of Galata Tunnel in 1290 (1873-74), and the construction of the railway in Anatolia in the same year.” See in Ömer Koçyiğit, *The Travel of Ideas in the Age of Steam and Print: The Ottoman Caliphate versus Wahhabism and Mahdism*, Leiden, 2020, 2.

network that opened to service in 1904. Thanks to these new technologies in the age of steam and print, the global trade of tea became more accessible and convenient. Months of the journey via land routes with camel caravans or sailing ships via oceans were reduced to days with much shorter and safer travels with railways and steamships. Increased accessibility led to a decrease in prices, leading to the popularization and spread of tea consumption in these lands. Not only was the trade itself made possible and more manageable by these technologies, the study of the tea trade also relies heavily on these technologies. The present dissertation made use of diplomatic correspondence, which included telegraphs, newspapers that listed steamship lines and their schedule, the names of the steamships that the tea companies used to transport their commodities, railways that carried loads of tea and tea merchants from China to Russia and reports of trade and commerce written by consuls to disclose these networks of railway and steamship routes and the commodities that these vehicles carried. This thesis is a story of how tea connected continents, countries, and people around the globe, with the Ottoman Empire and Turkey at its center.

1.1. Literature Review

Existing literature about the history of Turkish tea is very limited despite the popularity of the topic. While one may find numerous non-scholarly sources on tea culture and the history of Turkish tea, scholarly sources on the history of Ottoman and Turkish tea are almost non-existent.

The three most popular and most-cited sources on the history of Turkish tea are Mustafa Duman's *Çay Kitabı: Türk Kültürü'nde Çay*, Deniz Gürsoy's *Demlikten Süzülen Kültür: Çay* and Kemalettin Kuzucu's *Bin Yılın Çayı: Osmanlı'da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*.⁸ Özge Samancı, a renowned scholar who writes extensively on Turkish and Ottoman food culture, wrote about Kemalettin Kuzucu's book.

This very detailed book explains the introduction of tea in the late Ottoman Empire and its expansion in Republican Turkey. Kuzucu also explored the cultural value of tea and teahouses in Turkey.⁹

Even though this book can be considered the most scholarly book on the history of tea on these lands, with the use of archival materials and newspapers printed in Ottoman script, its sources are limited only to a selection of documents from the Ottoman State Archives (BOA) and a collection of newspaper advertisements in Ottoman Turkish. Furthermore, the book's content was divided into eight chapters, most dealing with topics other than the tea trade. *Bin Yılın Çayı* narrated the entrance of tea to the Ottoman Empire, tea in everyday life, how to prepare tea and the utensils used for its preparation, the teahouse as a new social space, and tea as reflected in Turkish literature in seven of its eight chapters. These parts that deal primarily with the tea and teahouse culture were based chiefly on research in literature. The section about the tea trade in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey is limited to only the book's third section. The third chapter is, on the whole, the most scholarly part

⁸ Mustafa Duman, *Çay Kitabı* (Istanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2005), Deniz Gürsoy, *Demlikten Süzülen Kültür: Çay*, (Istanbul, Oğlak Yayıncılık, 2005), Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı: Osmanlı'da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü* (Istanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2012).

⁹ Özge Samancı, "Ten Years in Ottoman-Turkish Food Historiography", *Food and History Revue de l'Institut Européen d'Histoire de l'Alimentation*, Volume 10, Issue 2: Studia alimentorum 2003-2013. Une décennie de recherche / A Decade of Research (July 2012), 239. 233-242.
<https://doi.org/10.1484/J.FOOD.1.103317>

of the book, where the author has employed several archival documents from the Ottoman Archives and made use of Ottoman newspapers. The chapter starts with general and statistical information about tea imports to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, which was limited to ten pages. The following section was allocated to the tea merchants in Istanbul and consisted of twelve pages. It was again based on archival documents and newspaper advertisements. However, both this part and the previous section contained some errors in the information, some of which are referred to in the text or footnotes in the following chapters. The documents used in the text rarely go beyond just an inventory of documents and names of tea merchants and companies. Needless to say this book lacked a global or international approach to the topic and sources in other languages.

Kemalettin Kuzucu produced other sources on the history of tea in Turkey. Apart from the beforementioned book, he also wrote book chapters and articles on the history of Ottoman and Turkish tea. Still, these sources focus on tea production and culture, not tea trade and importation.¹⁰ Among these works, his article “Türkiye’de Çaycılığın Tarihi Gelişimi,” which was printed in *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi*, may be considered worthy of

¹⁰ For his works and publications on tea in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, see, for instance, Kemalettin Kuzucu, “Türkiye’de Çaycılığın Tarihi Gelişimi” in *Ehlikeyfin Kitabı*, ed. Fatih Tıǧlı, (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınevi, 2004) 221-246; “Tea as a New Flavour in the Ottoman Culinary Culture” in *Turkish Cuisine*, ed. Arif Bilgin and Özge Samancı, (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2008), 243-259; “Aktar Dükkânlarından Mutfağa Türk Çayının Öyküsü” in *İstanbul Mutfağında Ahenk ve Lezzet*, ed. Banu Kutun and Nilgün Yavuz (İstanbul: İstanbul Ticaret Odası, 2021), 73-80; “Meşrutiyetten Sonra Osmanlı Basınında Çay”, *Türk Kültüründe Ayrıntılar: Çay Sempozyumu*, İstanbul, Türkiye, 8 - 09 Kasım 2001; “Osmanlı Döneminde Çay Tarımı Faaliyetleri”, *1. Rize Sempozyumu*, Rize, Türkiye, 16 - 18 Kasım 2006, cilt.1, 111-116; “Osmanlı’nın Son Döneminde Uluslararası Kaçakçılığa Konu Olan Tokat Çayı’nın Serüveni”, Tokat Sempozyumu, Tokat, Türkiye, 1 - 03 Kasım 2012, cilt.1, 183-196; “Tarihi ve Folklorik Yönleriyle Kültürümüzde Kıtılama Çayı”, 3. Uluslararası Türk Şöleni Türk Kültürü Sempozyumu Bildirileri, İstanbul, Türkiye, 19 - 21 Mayıs 2012, 309-317; “Türkiye de Çaycılığın Tarihi Gelişimi”, *Türk Kültürü İncelemeleri Dergisi*, 2003, 75-96; “Osmanlı da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürünün Gündelik Hayatı Zenginleştiren İnanılmaz Güzellikleri”, *Tarih ve Düşünce*, vol.12, 2003, 12-23; “Türkistan Erzurum Sivas Hattında Bir Çay Sohbeti”, *Hayat Ağacı*, vol.15, 2010, 30-37; “Çayı Yetiştirmek İçin Önce Ekmedik Yer Bırakmadık ve Nihayet Rize de Karar Kıldık”, *Habertürk Tarih*, vol.25, 2010, 10-14; “Türkiye nin İlk Çay Tiryakisinin Kaleminden Çay Tarifleri ve Çayın İncelikleri”, *Yemek ve Kültür*, vol.28, 2012, 76-83; Seyyid Mehmed İzzet Efendi, *Çay Risalesi*, ed. Kemalettin Kuzucu, (İstanbul: Eşik, 2014).

attention for this dissertation. The first few pages of the article have a slightly international approach to the history of Turkish tea. However, his arguments are scarcely backed up by substantial evidence but remain mostly presumptions.

Previously produced books on tea culture and its history in Turkey that also Kemalettin Kuzucu refers to in his works are the beforementioned *Demlikten Süzülen Kültür: Çay* that Deniz Gürsoy wrote in 2005 and Mustafa Duman's *Çay Kitabı* which was also published in 2005. Deniz Gürsoy's book, marketed as "the first copyrighted book on tea in Turkey," was reprinted with slight revisions in 2019 with the same title. Similarly, Mustafa Duman made some revisions to his book and reprinted it as "a coffee table book" in a hardcover edition with colorful images in 2011, this time entitled *Bahçeden İncebel Bardağa Türk Çayı*.¹¹ Deniz Gürsoy's and Mustafa Duman's bibliographies lack original material except for a few printed primary sources. However, we should remember that these are not academic works but popular books of culture that also claim to include the history of tea in Turkey. It is natural for the beforementioned authors to write their books based on research primarily on secondary sources. As for the content of these books, similar to Kemalettin Kuzucu's outline, they recount types of tea and how to brew them, renowned tea addicts, famous tea gardens, tea in other countries, and semi-mythical and narrative history of the Ottoman and Turkish tea. Even those sections related to the history of Turkish tea are predominantly about the production of tea rather than its trade and importation.

The content and outline of these books bring to our minds a printed primary source that all three studied and cited in their books. That source is none but the Çaycı Seyyid Mehmed

¹¹ Mustafa Duman, *Bahçeden İncebel Bardağa Türk Çayı*, (Istanbul: Yapıkredi Yayınları, 2011).

İzzet Efendi's *Çay Risalesi* that he printed in 1878. The treatise on tea that Mehmed İzzet Efendi, a renowned tea addict of his time (thus his nickname *Çaycı*), penned was reprinted in modern Turkish, edited by Kemalettin Kuzucu, who also wrote an introduction to the book entitled "the brief history of Tea" and İzzet Efendi's life story.¹²

Çay Risalesi (*The Treatise on Tea*) starts with a preface where Mehmed İzzet Efendi, quite similar to the present introduction, explained the sources¹³ that he used, the outline and content of his work, and last but not least, his aim and motivation in writing this treatise.

As a tea enthusiast and due to the nature of his sources, the majority of this treatise is composed of the medicinal properties and how to prepare different types of tea. In the introduction of his work, he also dealt with the roots of the word tea (*çay*), in which parts of the world the tea plant (*camellia sinensis*) can be found and grown naturally, and in the second chapter, the semi-mythical history of how tea was discovered in China. If one thinks of it, authors who wrote treatises on tea as a plant and product during the nineteenth century mostly stressed the medicinal qualities of the plant and the beverage.

About ten years after the publication of *Çay Risalesi*, renowned Turkish physician Dr. Besim Ömer wrote two treatises on pleasure-inducing substances: tobacco (1304-1886/87)

¹² Seyyid Mehmed İzzet Efendi, *Çay Risalesi*, ed. Kemalettin Kuzucu, (Istanbul: Eşik, 2014).

¹³ He explains in the preface of his work that he "gathered information by reading the originals or translations of works written by ancient and contemporary Muslim, Christian, and Jewish physicians in Arabic, Persian, and French." (kadim ve çağdaş Müslüman, Hristiyan ve Musevi hekimlerin Arapça, Farsça ve Fransızca kaleme aldıkları eserlerin asıllarını ya da tercümelerini okumak suretiyle bilgi topladım.) The works he cited are as follows: Nureddin b. Mehmed b. Abdullah's (who is also known as Aynü'l- Melik Şirazi) work in Persian called *Elfaz-ı Edviyye* (1038), *Mahzen-i Edviyye* (1183) by Mir Hüseyin Han Ukaylî Ulûv Horasanî again Persian language, Seyh Ali el-Kusî's work entitled *Nağmetü'n-Nây fî Şerh-i Nağmetü't-Tây*, the chapter on tea from the book *Müfredat-ı Tıb ve İlmi Tedavi* that the famous French physicians Doctor Trousseau and Bouchardat wrote, and Ottoman Professor of Medicine who taught at the Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane translated into Ottoman Turkish, and lastly texts about tea collected from contemporary French sources on Medicine and translated into Ottoman Turkish by Ottoman physicians Doctor Raif and Bekir Bey.

and opium, coffee, and tea (1305-1887-1888).¹⁴ He introduced these products and their historical roots in his works and discussed their health benefits and harms as a medicinal doctor. Recently, Aylin Koç Giannopoulos and Zuhâl Kültürâl edited a book entitled *Dr. Besim Ömer'in kaleminden Tütün Kahve ve Çay*. This book, printed in 2021, includes a Latinized version of Dr. Besim Ömer's studies on tea, coffee, and tobacco.¹⁵

Ali Rıza Saklı's book entitled *Türk Çayının Dünü ve Bugünü* offers its audience a well-researched and well-written work about the production of tea, its history during the early Republican years, years of the state monopoly and liberal economy years after 1984 carefully substantiated by archival materials. While he also successfully introduces the key people who put their mark on the development of tea cultivation and production, such as Ali Rıza Erten, Zihni Derin, Asım Zihniöğlü, and Mustafa Hulûsi Karadeniz, statistical information, figures, and documents substantiated the book. However, the Late Ottoman tea experimentations section remains the shortest, and it is impossible to find any information on tea in the Ottoman Empire before its production and experimentations. And yet, it is pretty natural since its main objective is to portray a complete story of the "Turkish" tea, in other words, tea produced in Turkey, not tea imported to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. The latter topic remained undiscovered and unwritten until today except for the short section in Kemalettin Kuzucu's book *Bin Yılın Çayı*.

¹⁴ *Mükeyyifat ve Müskirattan Tütün* (1304) and *Mükeyyifat ve Müskirattan Afyon, Kahve, Çay ve Esrar* (1305).

¹⁵ *Dr. Besim Ömer'in Kaleminden Tütün, Kahve ve Çay*, ed. Zuhâl Kültürâl and Aylin Koç Giannopoulos, (Konya: Palet Yayınları, 2021).

1.2. Contribution and Aim of the Dissertation

Foreigners who visited Constantinople in the first half of the nineteenth century agreed that the Ottomans were coffee drinkers first and foremost. They observed that tea consumption was minimal, and it was a product hard to find or, when found, quite expensive to afford for ordinary people. It is, therefore, one of the principal aims of this dissertation to find out what happened in between to make tea a more popular and accessible item in the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. Another objective of this study is to discover the sources of tea supply in these lands; in other words, it is necessary to ask questions such as “From where and how the Ottomans and the Turks imported tea?”

As we have seen so far, scholars have neglected to write a complete history of tea in the Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey using original primary materials, especially the period before tea production on Ottoman and Turkish soil. Existing literature about the topic is either popular history works not adequately supported by original materials, instead based on research in secondary sources, or scholarly works concentrated on tea production rather than the tea importations to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey.

This dissertation contributes to filling the noticeable gap in the existing literature about the tea trade in the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. Additionally, while questioning the sources of the tea imports destined for the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, the present work has a global focus, taking the Ottomans and Turks at its center, partitioning the study into geographical regions chronologically and meaningfully as possible such as China, Russia, Europe, South Asia, and Japan to put it simply. In doing so, this study’s sources

and languages have been enriched, leading to the discovery of some original links that hitherto remained unimagined.

1.3 Sources

By the nature of its topic, namely the tea trade in the Late Ottoman and Early Republican eras, it was inevitable that a majority of the sources used and explained in detail in this thesis are documents from the Ottoman and Republican State Archives. While a small portion of these documents has been cited in Kuzucu's works, most of them are used for the first time in literature or in a unique way complemented by other sources. Since a good percentage of the documents were *Hariciyye*¹⁶ documents written in French and occasionally English, they were left out in the works of most Turkish scholars who preferred to translate only documents written in Ottoman-Turkish script. Apart from this evident pool of sources which the audience would expect to see, this study made use of travel literature from the 19th and 20th centuries, contemporary printed primary sources about tea and its trade, contemporary scientific journal articles about tea, contemporary newspapers, and magazines, trade statistics, British Foreign Office documents, Trade and Commerce Reports written by the British consuls in the Ottoman Empire, unpublished dissertations, trade yearbooks, brochures and even receipts of tea trading companies. With a closer look at the bibliography, the audience may discover that the present study benefits

¹⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

from sources in different languages, including Turkish, English, Ottoman Turkish, French, and German, which is fitting given that it attempts to present a global story of the Ottoman and Turkish tea trade. On the other hand, language is also a limitation since using more sources in other languages might open new windows and enrich this study.

The topic presents other problems in terms of the accessibility of sources. The business archives of the Ottoman and Turkish tea trading firms have been sold in auctions throughout the passing years, and they are now in private collections, which are difficult to reach. The author of this dissertation was fortunate to benefit from her private archive, which included company brochures, receipts, and other materials.

What is more frustrating is that we lack shipping registers or reliable statistical data on the Ottoman Empire's tea trade in the Ottoman State Archives. The only statistical data about the Ottoman tea trade can be gathered from the *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ticaret Muvazenesi 1878-1913* [*Trade Balance of the Ottoman Empire 1878-1913*], which was printed in 1939 by the Turkish Republican State.¹⁷ The credibility of the figures and statistical data in this source has been questioned by scholars such as Charles Issawi and Şevket Pamuk formerly. Thus, when evaluating data from this source, 'Value of the main import items by groups and % ratios in total imports (in gold lira account) - Coffee and tea imports,' to be careful and complement it with other sources such as trade and commerce reports by the British consuls and Ottoman trade journals was a great necessity.

¹⁷ *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ticaret Muvazenesi 1878-1913* [*Trade Balance of the Ottoman Empire 1878-1913*], Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü, Neşriyat Serisi No.132, Tetkikler Serisi No.73, ed.Celal Aybar (Ankara:Zerbamat Basımevi, 1939).

Additionally, since most of the Ottoman consulates in, for instance, South Asian places were shut down during the First World War, consular archives in the South Asian cities such as Bombay, Madras, or Colombo were transferred to other states' consulates such as the United States, Netherlands, and Sweden during the afterwar era. Although their fate is unclear, they are probably in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives. Although getting permission to conduct research at this archive is difficult, there is still hope for future research.

Existing studies on the Ottoman trade according to consular reports (*şehbender raporları*), such as the one published by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, *Şehbender Raporlarına Göre I. Dünya Savaşı Öncesi Osmanlı Ticareti* and a master's thesis entitled "20. Yüzyılın Başlarında Osmanlı Şehbenderlerinin Ticaret Raporları" written by Tuğrul Arık in 2009 are both silent on the Ottoman-Southeast Asian trade.¹⁸ While most of the sources on Ottoman-Southeast Asian relations focus on early modern trade relations, the majority of the sources on the modern era focus on their political and religious relations. On the tea trade, we cannot think of a single source that deals specifically with imported tea from Southeast Asian cities such as Calcutta, Bombay, Java, Madras, and Colombo. Even Kemalettin Kuzucu settles for pointing out that specific traders imported their teas directly from India, Java, and Ceylon. He does not even use the word Southeast Asia and looks at the whole issue from the perspective of Istanbul, where most of these imported teas ended up eventually.

¹⁸ *Şehbender Raporlarına Göre I. Dünya Savaşı Öncesi Osmanlı Ticareti*, ed. Bayram Nazır, (Istanbul: Istanbul Ticaret Odası Yayınları, 2010), Tuğrul Arık, "20. Yüzyılın Başlarında Osmanlı Şehbenderlerinin Ticaret Raporları" [The Trade Reports of Ottoman Consuls in Early 20th Century], unpublished masters thesis, Marmara University, 2009).

1.4. Outline

The adjectives “Ottoman” and “Turkish” were employed in the title of this dissertation to designate the geography rather than to describe the “Turkishness” or “Ottomanness” of the tea itself. Before this region became self-sufficient in producing tea, the Ottomans and the Turks imported tea from other parts of the world. This dissertation was produced within a global framework and separated the research into geographical regions while carefully maintaining a strict chronologic order.

It was only natural to begin the second chapter with China because the Latin name for the tea bush, *Camellia Sinensis*, refers to the plant’s roots and specifies China as its homeland. It was also significant to begin the account with a brief history of Russian tea imports from China because the Ottomans did not acquire tea directly from China but rather through the mediation of Russian tea merchants.

The original overland route crossed numerous regions and included individuals of numerous ethnicities. The tea transported overland was known as caravan tea and was popular in Russia, Central Asia, Tibet, and Persia. In contrast to the Europeans, who used words such as *thé* and tea and imported their tea via a marine route, the Ottomans received their tea by this overland route and adopted the name *çay*, which is akin to the Russian word. Not only the Russians but also the Azeri and Persian peoples were credited with the popularization of tea in the Ottoman lands. Therefore, the second chapter also seeks to enlighten their brief history with tea and questions their contributions to the spread of tea consumption in these lands.

The importance of Ottoman ports, particularly Constantinople, as transshipment locations for goods bound for Russian ports like Odessa expanded with the development of transfer technologies and new commercial routes like the Trans-Siberian Railroad and steamship transfers via the Suez Canal.

This chapter also aims to comprehend the significance of the Black Sea and the Caucasus for both Russian trade and production as well as that of the Ottoman Empire and, later, the Turkish Republic. It will argue that in part because of the brief Turkish presence in Batum in 1918, the Russians' knowledge of tea cultivation in the Caucasus contributed to the development of Turkish tea production in the Black Sea Region. Last but not least, it will assert that the volume of commerce was greater in reality than indicated in official sources like British trade reports and Ottoman trade statistics since bilateral tea smuggling was not documented in the official trade statistics. This research demonstrates continuous tea smuggling over the Russo-Ottoman border with the help of travel literature and Ottoman State documents.

As evidenced by statistics on Ottoman imports and British consul reports, the third chapter recounts how the British gradually took control of the Ottoman tea trade until the First World War after the Russians lost their advantage in trade with the Ottomans to them in the middle of the nineteenth century, particularly after the Crimean War. The investigation of these re-importations of tea from Europe and America in the second half of the nineteenth century is covered in the third chapter. It also looks at the circumstances before the Crimean War and how the arrival of British troops in Late Ottoman Istanbul affected the Ottoman tea market and the Ottomans' interest in this commodity. This chapter argues that European tea trading companies used non-Muslim merchants as intermediaries. Although tea also

entered from other European sources, such as the Netherlands, France, and Northern Germany, Britain was the largest tea importer to the Ottoman Empire.

As time passed and colonial tea production in South Asia developed, direct tea commerce with these regions became viable. The fourth chapter of the thesis looks at the diplomatic and trade relations between South and Southeast Asia and the Ottoman Empire within the Tanzimat period, the reign of Abdülhamid II, the later years of the empire, and the early Republican period. While the intensification of these relations and innovations in transportation facilitated an increase in trade between these regions, this chapter argues that local tea dealers and trading firms began importing tea directly to Ottoman ports, including Trabzon, without the assistance of European intermediaries and businesses. According to the sources evaluated in this chapter, the quality and quantity of tea imported from the Indian Ocean World were far superior to that imported from Europe and Chinese tea.

The fifth chapter investigates the evaluation of the diplomatic and trade relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Japanese Empire during the late nineteenth century. However, they were never guaranteed with a mutual and official agreement between the two empires but facilitated via the efforts of a few people from both parties, including Abdülhamid II and, most importantly, a Japanese merchant named Yamada Torajiro, who was also a master of Japanese tea ritual. Torajiro, who opened a Japanese store named *Nakamura Shoten* in Constantinople, acted as an unofficial Japanese consul in the Ottoman Empire and sold Japanese items and tea at this shop. He was also known to have performed tea ceremonies for the Ottoman Sultan and the ruling elite. As sources suggested, he was instrumental in importing tea seeds and saplings into the empire.

This last geographical chapter explores how the Ottomans met Japanese tea and how it was imported and sold into the Ottoman Empire. It argues that although the first interest in Japanese tea started during the Tanzimat period, then during Abdülhamid II's reign, the Empire succeeded in importing Japanese tea, its share in the tea trade remained small and insignificant compared to tea imported from Russia, Europe, and South Asia. However, this section also concludes that the Ottoman Sultans were inspired by the Japanese tea culture to pursue researching and growing tea in Turkey. The Ottoman Empire received the knowledge of Japanese tea cultivation, seeds, and saplings from Japan. These things helped pave the way for Turkish tea production in the Black Sea region after Ottoman experimentation with tea cultivation at the turn of the twentieth century.

With the aid of original materials, including Ottoman archival documents, newspapers, company brochures, and even receipts, the sixth chapter of this dissertation begins with general statistical data about the tea trade in the Ottoman Empire. It then introduces Ottoman tea companies and merchants, who were predominantly non-Muslims. Next, it explains the rise of economic nationalism and nationalist tendencies of the Late Ottoman governments and their acts which facilitated the birth of a Turkish-Muslim bourgeoisie. After introducing some of these newly established Turkish-Muslim tea companies, this chapter looks into the career steps and achievements of Mustafa Nezih Bey, who was the owner of the *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayları* and scrutinizes the company with the help of various primary sources ranging from Ottoman and Republican State Archives, trade yearbooks, encyclopedias, company brochures, advertisements and newspaper articles. Mustafa Nezih Bey established this company during the Armistice period and successfully continued to import teas from various regions of the globe until the monopolization of the

tea trade by the Turkish State in 1942. Therefore, this section constitutes a valuable case study to demonstrate the birth of a Turkish-Muslim tea trading company that dominated the sector until the monopolization of trade. The sixth chapter ends with an evaluation of the trade yearbooks of the 1920s and argues that despite the increasing number of Turkish Muslim tea companies or merchants, the non-Muslim and foreign tea traders did not disappear but turned into intermediaries and were listed in these yearbooks as tea commissioners.

CHAPTER II: TEA FROM THE EAST CHINA SEA TO THE BLACK SEA

Tea is becoming a favorite drink in Turkey, not instead of coffee, but of the sherbet and cooled drinks that are handed to guests, it comes generally from Russia, and although a trifle dear on account of the carriage, is extremely good, when properly made. And this was the tea I was drinking.¹⁹

The homeland of the tea plant *Camellia Sinensis* is East Asia. All tea varieties we know today originate from the tea shrub naturally grown in southwestern China. Until the second half of the nineteenth century, when the English and the Dutch started to grow tea on their colonial plantations in South and Southeast Asia, all the tea-drinking populations of the world²⁰ had to buy and drink Chinese tea. The tea drinkers in the Ottoman Empire were no exception. However, they were not directly buying it from the Chinese. The Ottoman Empire and the Chinese Empire settled no diplomatic or trade relations. Until they had the alternative to buy from the British and other European tea trading firms in the nineteenth century, they were buying their tea mainly from the Russians, who were buying their teas from China using an overland route through *Kiakhta*.²¹ This overland route of great distances between China and Russia, where caravans of camels or oxen

¹⁹ Oswald Parry, *Six Months in a Syrian Monastery* (London: Horace Cox, 1895), 86.

²⁰ Except for the Japanese. The details of their relation with tea will be discussed in the fifth chapter.

²¹ A border city between Russia and Mongolia, located on the Kyakhta River.

carts carrying loads of tea, was also known as “the Tea Road.” Hence, before the tea trade of the Ottoman Empire and Russia became a Black Sea affair, it was primarily an overland trade between the peoples of Central and East Asia, namely the Chinese, Russians, Mongols, Tibetans, and other peoples of Central Asia.

Tea drinkers from the seventeenth century on²², the Russians had to obtain their tea primarily from the Chinese or Europeans, such as the British and the Dutch, since they did not produce tea in their territories until the late nineteenth century. And yet they did not entirely emulate the Chinese or European ways of tea drinking; in other words, they did not drink tea with Chinese or European porcelains but preferred mostly glassware and *samovar*.²³ Two objects associated with Russian tea culture, such as the samovar and the tea glass, have become the norm in Turkish tea culture. British trade reports, parliament papers, nineteenth-century travel literature, and Ottoman archival documents attest to the importance of Russian tea and tea traders in the sales and distribution of tea in the Ottoman Empire. Unlike the Europeans who first imported tea from the port of Amoy in the Fujian Province of China and called this beverage *tea*, *te*, *thé* or other variations of the Amoy word *t'e*, the Russians who imported tea via an overland route and used the word *ЧаЙ* pronounced as [chai] derived from the Mandarin word *ch'a*.²⁴ The Turkish adoption of the word *çay* is also an indication of Russian influence.

However, rather than the Russian influence on Turkish tea culture, this chapter seeks mainly to understand the centrality of the Caucasus and the Black Sea Region for the

²² Though, at first, it was a luxury commodity only the royalty and aristocracy could afford to buy. The masses and the working class started to drink tea in the 1840s.

²³ Russian tea-urn. Derived from the Russian words *samyi* meaning “self” and *varit* meaning “to boil.”

²⁴ Helen Saberi, *Tea: A Global History*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2010), 8.

Russian and Ottoman tea trade and later production, especially around Batum. This chapter will argue that the Russian know-how of tea production in the region played a significant role in the Black Sea tea production during the Late Ottoman and early Republican eras. This chapter will argue that the Black Sea was important not only for the Ottoman tea trade but also for the Russian transit tea trade, especially after the opening of the Suez Canal since the Ottoman documents showed that Constantinople was used many times as a transit port for teas destined for Odessa or other Russian cities. Moreover, in addition to the legally taxed tea trade between the two countries, illegal tea trade or smuggling between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was frequently noted in Ottoman documents and other sources such as travelogues.

To understand the Russian contribution to the Ottoman and Turkish tea trade, it is imperative first to study the history of the tea trade between China and Russia. The present chapter will deal with the evolution of trade routes to transport Chinese teas to Russia, the Russian tea factories in China and tea trading firms, the tea varieties that Russians preferred, tea production around the Black Sea (Batum and other regions) during the Tsarist and Soviet periods, smuggling of tea, Russian and Chinese tea imports to the Ottoman Empire and later Turkey, the history of Azeri and Persian peoples relations with tea and last but not least the contribution of these people from various backgrounds and ethnicities to the consumption and spread of tea in the Ottoman Empire and later Turkey such as White Russian, Crimean, Azeri and Persian immigrants, and Muslims from Kazan and Dagestan.

As the first chapter of the present dissertation, it will also clarify the global nature of the Ottoman and Turkish tea trade. Today, tea in Turkey is taken for granted as something

very local and peculiar to the Black Sea. In reality, the story of the Chinese and Russian tea imports involved a colorful prism of people from different ethnicities, backgrounds, geographies, countries, and continents. Studying the important centers of the Chinese-Russian tea trade, such as Kiakhta, Hankou, Vladivostok, Nizhny Novgorod, St.Petersburg, Odessa, and Batum, one may also realize this is the story of the evolution of transportation technologies such as the clipper ships, steamships, and railroads. Routes used for tea importation varied along with these developments, such as the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway in 1904. And that these centers were no less important for the Ottoman and Turkish tea trade, and they were also mentioned in the Ottoman documents.

2.1 A Brief History of the Sino-Russian Tea Trade

Even though we can trace back the Chinese tea exports to at least the tenth century, and in some sources,²⁵ it was noted that tea constituted 40% of China's exports to Russia, it was, in fact, an inter-Asian trade between the Song Empire and the nomadic tribes outside the Song Empire's northwestern border. Long before tea was drunk in Russia, it was already an essential drink for the people in Central Asia, the Mongols, and Tibetans. For instance, during the eleventh century, the Chinese paid tea as tribute to the Khitans living on the northern steppe and exchanging tea for horses on the Tibetan border.

²⁵ For instance, see. Jahar Sen, "Politics of Tea in Central Asia" *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 42 (1981), 589.

Existing literature about the Russian tea trade traces the origins of tea drinking in Russia to the early seventeenth century. The earliest official records of tea indeed belonged to this period. 1638 is extensively portrayed as the first appearance of tea in Russia when the emissary of Tsar Michael I, Vasili Starkov, was dispatched to the Mongol Khan and was forced by the Altyn Khan to bring back tea to Russia as a gift to the tsar.²⁶ In reality, Tyumenets, a Cossack who was sent to the same Mongol ruler in 1616, is known to be the first Russian to taste tea there and bring the first specimens of tea to Moscow with him.²⁷

Both Russian emissaries described their experience of drinking this hot curious beverage called “chai” in their reports.²⁸ The tea they drank was prepared in the Mongol way, which means the tea leaves were boiled in water, and warmed milk and butter were added to the hot mix. Starkov, who did not care for the tea, almost annoyed the Mongol Khan by refusing his gift of two hundred packets of tea to the tsar. Although tea made its way to Russia and was consumed medicinally by Tsar Alexei Michailovich, as his British physician Samuel Collings suggested, it was still a rarity. However small, there was still a demand for tea in Russia, as the 1679 treaty between China and Russia suggests. Whereas the 1679 treaty guaranteed regular tea supplies from China via camel caravans, the Treaty

²⁶ In return for the gifts sent by the Russian tsar, the Mongol Khan forced Starkov to accept his gift of 200 packets of Chinese tea.

²⁷ Recent literature gives credit to Tyumenets as the first who drank and brought back tea to Russia. See, for instance, Takako Morinaga, “Tea Drinking Culture in Russia” *Journal of International Economic Studies* (2018), No.32, 60 and Alexander Trapeznik, “Samovars: The Art of Tula Metal Workers” *New Zealand Slavonic Journal*, Vol.46 (2012), 94-95.

²⁸ Tyuments reported that his mission “drank warmed milk and butter, unknown leaves and another fine unknown leaf”. Starkov noted that “he was served a beverage made from a leaf as of something new and unknown, something he had neither seen nor heard of. They call it ‘chai’. It consists of leaves, I know not whether from a tree or herb, they are boiled in water, to which a little milk is added”. See, Trapeznik “Samovars: The Art of Tula Metal Workers”, 94-95.

of Nerchinsk (1689) between Russia and China marked the creation of the Tea Road between these entities. The Manchu Empire and Russia later signed the Kiachta Agreement in 1727, legally defining their official trade ties that went through Kiachta and demarcated their borders. As Chinyun Lee remarked in his article, “A further agreement in 1768 saw Kiachta evolve into a commercial center.”²⁹

The tea trade between China and Russia rose throughout the eighteenth century, yet it was still a luxury beverage confined to the nobility. Trapeznik notes that “supplies were becoming increasingly plentiful, and by 1796 Russians were drinking more than 61,000 camel loads of tea every year.” Existing literature agrees that during the reign of Catherine the Great, the Russian tea trade began to flourish, and Russians came to understand the value of tea as a commodity. When the Kiachta tea market was shut down for security reasons around the border between Russia and China, Russian merchants obtained tea from European tea traders to meet the demand. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Kiachta market was shut down about ten times, and Russians imported tea from European sources such as England, Denmark, Amsterdam, Lübeck, and Hamburg to the western ports of Russia. As tea drinking grew more popular among the nobility and spread to the wealthy merchants as a sign of wealth during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, so did the production of samovars and European-style Russian porcelains. However, unlike in Europe, tea-drinking was primarily a private pastime in Russia since people tended to drink tea at their homes rather than in cafés or teahouses.

²⁹ Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok: Russian Merchants and the Tea Trade” *Region*, Vol.3, No.2 (2014), 196.

However, taverns also served tea in Russia, where merchants met with their business associates over tea.³⁰

During the first decades of the nineteenth century, drinking tea as a habit started to spread to ordinary Russian homes, including workers and farmers, due to the availability of tea and the decrease in its price. Not only tea itself but also *samovars*³¹ found their way to Russian homes during the nineteenth century, from the poorest to the richest. Even though the first *samovar* factory in Russia, located in Tula, was opened in 1778, it was still a luxury product in the eighteenth century, as a product made of precious metals. It took at least a few decades before samovars gained popularity and reached average Russians' homes. To illustrate tea consumption in Russia during the nineteenth century with numbers, we may benefit from the statistical information we can find in the books that Mr. Montgomery Martin and Gideon Nye Jr. wrote on the tea trade during the first half of the nineteenth century. Both authors listed the quantities and values of tea imported to Russia between 1824 and 1827. Gideon Nye Jr estimated the tea imports between these years "on average, 144,097 poods, of the value of 5,671,726 roubles; or in English weight and money 5,187,496 lbs., value 248,346 sterling." He added, "In 1832, the import into Russia was 179,474 poods or 6,461,064 lbs."³² Lastly, Mr. Martin estimated tea consumption in Russia in 1847 at 10,000,000 lbs. We may observe,

³⁰ Takako Morinaga, "Tea Drinking Culture in Russia," 65.

³¹ Tea urn, also see definition of the term in Audra Jo Yoder's unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Audra Jo Yoder, "Tea-time in Romanov Russia: A Cultural History 1616-1917", Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, 2016. ; "A samovar is a metal urn-shaped vessel featuring a charcoal brazier in its base and, above this, a central interior chimney or tube through which hot air travels and heats the water chamber.

³² Gideon Nye Jr., *Tea and the Tea Trade Parts First, Second and Third*, (New York: Geo.W.Wood, 1850) 47-48.

therefore, a constant rise in tea consumption in the first half of the nineteenth century in Russia.

The London Times reported that in 1867 there were approximately seven hundred tea shops in St. Petersburg alone.³³ In his travel accounts, entitled *From the Levant, the Black Sea, and the Danube*, published the following year in 1868 in London, Sir Arthur Arnold recounted that there were various teas more delicate and expensive in the principal tea shop in Odessa than the ones sold in England. He reported that the prices of teas such as Kiachta tea, Red Tea (*Krasnenky*), aromatic Black Lansing, and others varied from one rouble to ten roubles per pound. Sir Arnold also praised the samovar as “quite worthy of adoption in England and advantageous due to its fuel economy.” More importantly, this account proved that by 1868 tea was a natural part of Russian life; as he said, “with the Russians tea is an institution, the one necessity of life, it is what coffee is to the French.”³⁴

2.2 Different Geographies, Different Preferences for Tea

It is necessary to identify what we mean by “average Russians.” When using this term, the present research generally refers to the people living in European Russia in the cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg and their vicinity. As the Russian Empire stretched

³³ “The Russian Tea Trade”, *The London Times*, September 18, 1867.

³⁴ R.Arthur Arnold, *From the Levant, the Black Sea and the Danube*, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1868), 207-208.

over a vast territory, including Siberia and Central Asia, people tended to have different tastes and preferences in tea. Very crudely, China sold four varieties of tea: green, brick, tablet, and *Bohea*. European Russians preferred primarily *bohea* tea, also known as “Wu-Yi tea,” which refers to loose black tea grown in the Wu-Yi Mountains of the Northern Fujian region in China. Brick and tablet tea was consumed for centuries in Central Asia. During the nineteenth century, brick and tablet tea started to be preferred in the Caucasus and Siberia, whereas green tea was mostly preferred in Turkestan.³⁵

Even during the nineteenth century, when there were alternative sources and varieties of tea, people tended to hold on to their traditional preferences and tastes. Tibetans, for instance, still preferred to buy and consume Chinese brick tea of inferior quality to Indian Assam tea of much higher quality, at least according to the British colonial deputies.³⁶ The latter competed with Peking to procure tea for Tibet. Both empires were looking for ways to guarantee the sale of their teas to the Tibetans.

The Russians, who gained experience in the inter-Asian tea trade and understood the volume and importance of the tea trade in Central Asia, started to make their way into producing and selling brick and tablet tea. Russian tea trading firms built the first tea factory in Hankou³⁷ in 1873, followed by three others in 1873, 1878, and 1892.³⁸ Russian merchants settled in Hankou together with their families and formed a small Russian

³⁵ Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok: Russian Merchants and the Tea Trade,” 196.

³⁶ Such as Waddell and Lamb in Jahar Sen, “Politics of Tea in Central Asia” Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1981, Vol.42, (1981), 590.

³⁷ Hankou was amongst the most significant commercial ports in China. It is located in central China, where modern-day Wuhan is located today. It stands north of the Han and Yangtze Rivers, where the Han flows into the Yangtze.

³⁸ “Tea Bricks and Hides: Hankou's Early Industrialization.”

<https://hankoutowuhan.org/s/hankou/page/matches-tea-bricks-and-hides> Access date: March 24, 2022.

community there. Hankou tea production and merchants flourished until the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 when the Bolsheviks abruptly cut the international tea trade since they considered it something very imperial.

Apart from the politics of tea, the taste, preferences, and prices of tea depended largely on the trade routes as they evolved through time, especially throughout the nineteenth century. Sources suggest that whether the tea was imported overland or by the sea and the length of the journey contributed to the taste of the tea and its price.

2.3 Different Trade Routes, Different Tastes in Tea

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the main route of tea imports from China to Russia was the overland route via Kiachta, known as the Tea Road. “Tea carried by camel or oxen carts over the Gobi Desert to Kiachta was called “overland tea” or “caravan-tea.”³⁹ The alternative route was a sea route where *clipper ships*⁴⁰ carried tea from Canton via the Cape of Good Hope to London, where it was re-distributed to Europe, including Russian cities such as St.Petersburg and Moscow. The sea voyage was very long, and the route was very complicated regarding navigation. However, it was an

³⁹ Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok: Russian Merchants and the Tea Trade”, 197.

⁴⁰ “The clipper was a large, very fast mid-nineteenth-century sailing ship in which cargo capacity and efficiency were sacrificed for speed. Because of their speed, clippers were suited for long-distance trades in valuable commodities such as tea. The fast ships built for the China trade in New England in the 1840s were progenitors of the clipper ship. In moving tea from China, speed paid, since the first cargoes to reach British ports could yield higher prices.” The “Clipper” article in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History*.

agreeable alternative to the Caravan tea whenever the Kiahta market was unavailable.

Buying tea from London tea houses or other tea trading firms in Europe and transferring it to Russian ports, where it was re-distributed to other Russian cities, was also marked in Ottoman documents.

Many academic and nineteenth-century primary sources suggest that the taste or quality of the “overland tea” surpassed the “sea-borne tea.”⁴¹ They suggest that while the tea leaves lose flavor during the long journey over the hot and humid Indian Ocean, the desert climate and “the aroma of smoke from campfires along the way” enhanced the taste of the “caravan tea.” Hence, the Russians preferred the smoky, rich aroma of the caravan-tea over the Canton tea, even though it was more expensive than the latter. The high price of caravan tea could be due to its superior quality and exorbitant transfer costs. Trapeznik notes that:

Though the sea journey was the long way round, it was a much cheaper route. The transport costs overland from Kiachta was five and a half times higher than by sea within China, the expense of transporting tea to the border would be eight times that of getting it to the nearest port.⁴²

Both Canton tea and Caravan tea were dispersed throughout Russia. However, their first stop and meeting place was at the grand bazaar in Nizhny Novgorod. The fair in Nizhny Novgorod was like a global fair where all kinds of goods from Europe, Russia, Siberia, Central Asia, China, Persia, Armenia, and Caucasia were traded. “During the winter,

⁴¹ See, for instance, Alexander Trapeznik, “Samovars: The Art of Tula Metal Workers”, 96; Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok: Russian Merchants and the Tea Trade”, 197; R. Arthur Arnold *From the Levant to the Black Sea and the Danube*, 208; H.D. Seymour, M.P, *Russia on the Black Sea and Sea of Azof* (London: John Murray, 1855), 318.

⁴² Alexander Trapeznik, “Samovars: The Art of Tula Metal Workers”, 97.

around 50,000 camels carried overland tea from Kalgan outside the Great Wall to Kiachta. From there, it was transported by sledges to fairs in Siberia and spread throughout Russia.”⁴³

The overland tea trade via Kiachta thrived until the second half of the nineteenth century. Martha Avery noted in her book *The Tea Road* that the tea trade in Kiachta peaked in 1824.⁴⁴ The transport of tea overland drawn by oxen, horses, or camels continued until the first decades of the twentieth century but fell considerably. The overland tea trade was risky due to delays, theft, droughts that led to camel starvation on the road, the misconduct of the Chinese and Mongolian carriers, the length and expensiveness of the journey, and so on.

After the Opium Wars and the Convention of Peking in 1860, China opened numerous trading ports to Western powers, particularly the British. While the opening of new trading ports decreased the importance of the Kiachta trade, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 brought the end of the Clipper Ships and overthrew Kiachta as the main center of the Russian tea trade. Without losing time, Russians started importing tea from Canton to Odessa via the Suez Canal beginning in 1869. With the opening of the port of Odessa⁴⁵ for the tea trade during the 1870s, the Black Sea gained much importance for the Russian tea trade. As Alexander Trapeznik states in his article, “Regular sailings to Odessa started in 1880 and soon after included stops at Canton and Shanghai.”⁴⁶ With the

⁴³ Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok”, 197.

⁴⁴ Martha Avery, *The Tea Road: China and Russia Meet Across the Steppe*, (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2014), 7.

⁴⁵ The port of Odessa was founded in 1794 during the reign of Catherine the Great to unite eastern goods with the West and vice versa.

⁴⁶ Alexander Trapeznik “Samovars: The Art of Tula Metal Workers”, 97.

shortening of the voyage, tea imports peaked, and tea became a much more accessible and affordable product for ordinary Russians and reached the lowest classes. However, shortening the sea voyage by approximately 3500 nautical miles was not enough since the sailing ships could not pass through the new route, and the steamships were a necessity.

Odessa benefitted from the Russian fleet and German steamers chartered by the fleet to help with the tea trade and carrying goods between Odessa and Vladivostok. With the inclusion of Odessa as a tea trading port, the length of the journey between the European cities of Russia and Siberia diminished significantly from 320 days to 65 days.⁴⁷ The steamers stopped at tea-producing centers such as Hankou, Fuzhou, and Ceylon, and from Odessa, tea was distributed to other Russian cities like Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Nizhny Novgorod.

When we look at the British newspapers, we can see that the reports claim a decrease in the overland tea while there was an increase in the tea shipments from London in the late 1870s and early 1880s. On the contrary, from the mid-1880s, they complained that the Russian and German ships that imported Chinese tea directly to Odessa now surpassed the English ships via London, thus creating “a new danger to British commercial interests.”⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok”, 207.

⁴⁸ See for instance, “The Russian Overland Tea Trade” *Supplement to the London and China Herald* May 8, 1868, “Russia and the China Tea Trade. An English Grievance”, *The Edinburgh Evening News*, January 17, 1882, “The Russian Tea Trade” *The Morning Post*, August 29, 1885: “Hitherto a large proportion of the tea supplied to the Russian markets has reached its destination in English ships via London but the direct trade with Odessa has enormously increased during the past four years. In 1880 only 4,845,453 lbs. went direct to Odessa, but last year no less than 11, 681, 140 lbs. were shipped to that port in Russian and German vessels”.

While Odessa outpaced Kiachta during the 1890s, with the completion of the Trans-Siberian railroad⁴⁹, Vladivostok surpassed Odessa and others as the new center for the Russian tea trade. One of the motivations for building the Trans-Siberian railway was to reduce transportation costs and transit time for tea imports, besides the political and cultural motives behind such as the Russification of Siberia. Thanks to the railway, the tea and the merchants could reach Moscow from Vladivostok in just a week which would be almost a year-long journey overland. “By 1901, 27.7 million kg of leaf and 24 million kg of brick tea was imported via the Trans-Siberian railway.”⁵⁰

As a result of the developments in transportation and the opening of new routes and ports both in China and Russia, such as the opening of the Suez Canal, the completion of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the journey of tea to Russia became shorter, safer, and cheaper, making tea in Russia more affordable and accessible.⁵¹

2.4 Tracing Russian Tea Trade from the Ottoman Archival Documents

Sources suggest that Russian ships loaded with European tea stopped at Constantinople and proceeded to Black Sea ports such as Odessa before it became the major tea-trading port before the opening of the Suez Canal. A series of *Hariciyye* documents from 1863,

⁴⁹ “The Trans-Siberian Railroad is the longest railway on earth. From Moscow to Vladivostok, it is more than 9,288 km, passing through eight time zones, fourteen provinces, three regions, two republics, and one autonomous region of the Russian Federation.” Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok”, 209.

⁵⁰ Alexander Trapeznik “Samovars: The Art of Tula Metal Workers,” 97.

⁵¹ <https://liu-tea-art.com/2020/05/01/hankou-hankow-tea-in-the-german-tea-history/> Access date: April 6, 2022.

for instance, relates to such a case. They consisted of correspondence between the Turkish Consulate in Odessa, the Turkish envoy in St. Petersburg, and an Ottoman tea merchant named M.C. Scanavi. They suggest that a Russian ship named *Odessa*⁵² embarked from London, stopped at Constantinople port, and was destined for Odessa. The most intriguing part of this correspondence is that the tea destined for a merchant named Mr. Traclidi in Odessa was shipped from Constantinople by an Ottoman tea merchant named Mr. Scanavi.⁵³

Two other documents dating from the 1880s and 1890s, in other words, after the opening of the Suez Canal and the establishment of Odessa as the leading Russian port for the tea trade, talk about a Russian ship named *Moskova*, which stopped at Constantinople on their way. The first document from 1884 indicates that the ship came from Vladivostok, laden with tea, and went directly to Odessa.⁵⁴ The other document from 1891 indicated that the same Russian ship named *Moskova*, laden with tea, was detained at the Bosphorus for fourteen hours. The Russian ambassador claimed the ship was destined from Odessa to Nizhny Novgorod Fair to claim the prize as the first to bring tea shipment to the fair and asked for compensation from the Ottoman State.⁵⁵

⁵² The steamship *Odessa* has been acknowledged as the beginning of the Russian steamship existence in the Black Sea with its first line between Odessa and Crimea in 1833. The same year with the establishment of the Black Sea Shipping Company the Russians started regular shipments between Istanbul, Odessa and other Black Sea ports. See, Mesut Karakulak, *Osmanlı Sularında Rus Vapurları, Buharlı Çağında Rus Vapur ve Ticaret Kumpanyası (1856-1914)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020), 7-11.

⁵³ BOA, HR.SFR.1.5/3 (09.03.1963).

⁵⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.ZB.2/70 (12.10.1301-05.08.1884). “Rusya... Kumpanyası Vapurlarından Moskova nam vapur çay hamulesiyle bugün Vladivostok ceziresinden Dersaadete gelerek doğruca Odessa’ya gittiği.”

⁵⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.TKM.22/31 (30.01.1309-05.09.1891) “Rusya Sefiri Mösyö Nelidof Moskova vapurunun Nizni Novgorod Panayırı’na çay hamulesini hamil olduğunu ve boğazda on dört saat tevkifi hasebiyle ilk çay hamulesini getirene mahsus mükafatdan mahrum kaldığını beyan ile tazminat talebinde ısrar eylemektedir”.

Although no mention was made of tea, documents suggest that the Ottoman State had a mercantile agent named Monsieur Plad in Vladivostok at the turn of the twentieth century. He was decorated with a *Mecidiye* medal in 1906 and promoted as the honorary proxy consul of the Ottoman State in 1908. Considering that the Trans-Siberian railroad was already completed in those years, we might safely assume that the Ottoman State bought tea from Vladivostok via the agency of the mentioned *Mösyö Plad*.⁵⁶

2.5 Tea Smuggling

Sources also suggest that a significant amount of tea entered Russia illegally, besides legal tea importations from the before-mentioned sources and routes. Instances of tea smuggling between Russia and the Ottoman Empire abound in the Ottoman State Archives. If we keep in mind that these are records of the tea smugglers that were either arrested or executed by the Russian Cossack soldiers, with the addition of those who succeeded in going unnoticed, the volume of the smuggled tea grows even more extensive. In one of these cases, nine people from Erzurum, Pasinler, without passports, were arrested on the border while trying to smuggle tea to Russia in 1900.⁵⁷ In another case, an Ottoman subject known as Ömer Bin Osman was executed on the border by the Cossack soldiers while trying to smuggle tea bales into Russia.⁵⁸ In another scenario, an

⁵⁶ BOA, BEO.3447/258471, BOA, BEO.2966/222449.

⁵⁷ BOA, DH.MKT.2408/138 (04.06.1318-29.09.1900) “Pasaportsuz Rusya’ya çay götürmekte oldukları halde hududdan geçmeden evvel derdest olunan Pasinler kazasından dokuz kimse...”

⁵⁸ BOA,HR.SFR.1.156/84 (21.09.1910), BOA.HR.SFR.1.186/62 (20.05.1911)

Ottoman soldier named Imam bin Abdurrahman from *Bingöl Kiğı* succeeded in passing the border. Still, he was arrested in one of the Russian villages while selling smuggled tea and tobacco. Though he was released later and sent to Kars, his smuggled goods were confiscated, and he was sentenced to pay a cash penalty.⁵⁹

Tea smuggling was not a unilateral but a bilateral activity between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. It was reported, for instance, that a group of Yezidis was smuggling tea from Russia, and they were shot from a distance by the Ottoman soldiers assuming they were Armenian bandits.⁶⁰

Frank Scudamore, an English war correspondent of the *Daily News*, a fluent-Turkish speaker who reported the Armenian massacres in the region at the end of the nineteenth century, also recounted smuggling activity between Russia and the Ottoman Empire at the time in his writings. He reported that he met a man who was a native inhabitant of Muş, spoke fluent Kurdish, Turkish, Armenian, and Persian, and was smuggling tea across the Russian frontier. This man was coming across the Russian border at night and returning with a light cargo of smuggled tea. According to Scudamore, this man claimed that he was not afraid of the dangers of this business and that “the business was not much more precarious than it was profitable despite the vigilance of the sentries on both sides.”⁶¹

⁵⁹ BOA. BEO.2951/221325 (12.10.1324-29.11.1906) “Yirmisekinci alay üçüncü taburun üçüncü bölük efradından Kiğılı İmam Bin Abdurrahman Rus köylerinde tütün ve çay satmakda iken Ruslar tarafından derdest olarak Kars’a gönderildiği ve üzerinde derdest olunan kaçak eşyanın ceza-ı nakdî olan dört yüz manat virilmedikçe neferin iade idilmeyeceği ve tekrarına meydan virilmemesi...”

⁶⁰ BOA, DH.TMIK.M.96/49 (16.07.1318-09.11.1900)

⁶¹ Frank Scudamore, “The Armenian Troubles, Protraction of the Inquiry, Fresh Casualties, Story of Another Eyewitness” *Daily News*, May 7, 1895.

2.6 Russian Tea Production in Hankou

Although over 98% of the tea consumed in Russia was imported tea during the Tsarist regime and the first decade of the Soviet period⁶², commercial tea cultivation began in the 1890s, and production of brick and black tea at the Russian factories in Hankou started a few decades earlier.

With the Treaty of Beijing (1860), the Russians gained a strip of land on the Pacific coast, where they established Vladivostok as a naval base and trading port. In addition to this, Russia earned the right to trade inland in China. Instead of waiting for Chinese and Mongol merchants to transfer tea from Hankou to Kiachta⁶³, Russian merchants decided to establish their business at the source of the tea. So they arrived at Hankou in 1862 and opened the first Russian tea factory there in 1863. The first Russian tea company founded in Hankou in 1863 was *S.W.Litvinoff&Co*, followed by *Tokmakoff*, *Molotkoff&Co*. in 1866, and *Molchanoff*, *Pechatnoff&Co*. in 1877.⁶⁴ These factories employed Chinese workers and used the latest technology to produce brick tea. While J.K Panoff, who operated the latter company (*Molchanoff*, *Pechatnoff&Co*), was a relative of Tsar Nicholas I⁶⁵, Tokmakoff Company invited Tsar Nicholas II and entertained him (then the

⁶² Robert M.Bone “Soviet Tea Cultivation”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Jun. 1963), 172.

⁶³ Hankou tea traveled from Hankou to Fancheng, from there to Kalgan and Urga (Ulaan Bator), and from there to Kiachta. Chinyun Lee “From Kiachta to Vladivostok”, 198.

⁶⁴ Chinyun Lee, “From Kiachta to Vladivostok”, 199.

⁶⁵ <https://hankoutowuhan.org/s/hankou/page/matches-tea-bricks-and-hides>

Grand Duke Nicholas Alexandrovich) at their 25th anniversary in Hankou.⁶⁶ Pechatnoff had the largest factory in Hankou and was probably the biggest in the world at the time. By 1908, for instance, it was employing around 2000 Chinese workers at its factories.⁶⁷ There were other tea trading and producing Russian firms in China, particularly in Hankou, such as K. and S. Popof, which we will discuss in more detail in the next section.

During the First World War, Russian-owned tea factories peaked; however, they came to a halt with the Bolshevik Revolution due to their apparent relations with the Tsarist regime. By 1916, Russia was the most significant consumer of Chinese tea, buying %60 of their tea. Russians may own the factories, but the product was still Chinese tea produced by the before-mentioned Hankou companies.

2.7 Russian Tea Cultivation during the Tsarist Regime

Russians started experimenting with tea cultivation already in the 1830s in Sohum, Zugdidi, and Ozurgeti at botanical gardens.⁶⁸ They imported tea saplings from China and planted them in Georgian towns and Crimea, but these experimentations were interrupted by the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. After the war, the Russian state attempted to import tea saplings from China and plant them in the coastal region from Sohum to

⁶⁶ Chinyun Lee, "From Kiachta to Vladivostok", 199.

⁶⁷ <https://hankoutowuhan.org/s/hankou/page/matches-tea-bricks-and-hides>.

⁶⁸ Resul Turan, "Çarlık Rusyası Döneminde Batum Vilayeti (1878-1914)" Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (Istanbul University, 2019), 172.

Batum. In their vast geography, Russians discovered that this humid subtropical region was the most suitable climate for tea cultivation. Seeing that the tea shrubs planted in Chakva, located 20 km from Batum, flourished quickly, a Russian entrepreneur named Konstantin Popov decided to establish tea plantations in Chakva and near towns in Batum. Hence, commercial tea cultivation started in 1893 when the K.S. Popov tea firm found tea plantations in today's Georgian Republic in towns such as Chakva, Salibauri, and Kapreshumi. As a tea trader with years of experience and owner of several tea factories in China, Konstantin Semenovitch Popov invested heavily in time, effort, and money in the tea business. He went several times to China, Japan, and other South Asian tea plantations to study tea cultivation and comprehend the details of this business, bought vast land plots, imported many tea seeds and saplings, and specialists in the tea business from China.

One person named *Liu Jun Zhou* (刘峻周), in particular, catches our attention as the right-hand man of K. Popov. Although in Russian tea history, he is known by the name *Lau John Jau*, in the Ottoman documents, he is referred to either by *Laou Djen Djaou* or *Lao Çen Çao*. Laou, who studied tea at a young age, was already an assistant manager of a tea factory in China when Popov met him in Ningbo, a major port city in China, in 1888. Popov invited him to Chakva to make him the head of his tea department in 1893. Laou gladly accepted the job, brought ten Chinese specialists along, and worked for Popov until 1901. He successfully organized the manual tea production at the plantations and the factory in line with traditional Chinese ways. In 1901, he left his position at

Popof Tea Company and started working as the Director of the Chakva tea factory, which belonged to the Russian State.⁶⁹

The Russian State and other entrepreneurs in the tea business followed the footsteps of Popov and opened several other plantations in Western Georgia. The state also sent missions to Southeast and East Asia to study tea cultivation and invited foreign specialists to revive tea cultivation in Georgia. By 1906, 67 people engaged in tea cultivation in the Batum area; by 1910, plantations in the region rose to 94.⁷⁰ As an agency of the Russian state, *Udelnoe Vedomstvo*⁷¹ was among the most significant producers of Russian tea in Batum, which had the largest factories and plantations of tea beside the Popof company.

“By 1913, several plantations with a total acreage of 2,235 acres produced tea leaves for the national market. However, their production only accounted for less than 1 percent of all the tea annually consumed in Tsarist Russia.”⁷² Even though tea production increased annually, World War I caused all the small tea factories to put up their shutters. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 hammered the last nail in the coffin of tea production in the region. Last but not least, with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Batum was handed over to the Ottoman Empire in March 1918. Thus, the remaining tea plantations and factories were also in the hands of the Ottomans.

⁶⁹ “History of Georgian Tea” https://moychay.com/articles/gruzinsky_chay_Georgian%20tea Access date: April 9, 2022.

⁷⁰ Resul Turan, “Çarlık Rusyası Döneminde Batum Vilayeti (1878-1914)”, 178-179.

⁷¹ The Russian term means “specific office” in English. It was a special state office responsible for the cultivation and production of tea.

⁷² Robert M. Bone “Soviet Tea Cultivation,” 161.

2.8 Short-lived Ottoman Sovereignty in Batum

The Ottoman Empire lost Batum following the disastrous Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, which they captured during the seventeenth century. The re-occupation of the lost regions known as *Elviye-i Selase* (the three *livas*⁷³), which included Kars, Ardahan, and Batum, after the victorious military campaign in the formerly tsarist Transcaucasia at the beginning of 1918 was welcomed in the Ottoman public opinion and created a euphoria. Statesmen started to work diligently to re-integrate and improve these regained territories, especially Batum since it became an important naval base and trade hub under the Tsarist administration. The inclusion of Batum into the Ottoman Empire after 40 years was greeted with great enthusiasm by the politicians and entrepreneurs who saw this as a chance to increase Ottoman trade and commerce. It was also seen as an opportunity to improve and develop agriculture and cultivate new cash crops in this humid subtropical region. Thus, project proposals started to pour in.

One of these proposals was to establish an Ottoman agricultural company named *Trabzon Nümune Çiftliği* that would build a model farm in the Batum region under the administration and protection of the greater Trabzon Province. New cash crops such as tea, mandarins, bamboo, and many other agricultural products were to be cultivated in this model farm. A series of documents from the Ottoman State Archives comprised the company's bylaws and telegraph correspondences among its founders, Ottoman

⁷³ An Ottoman administrative unit, an alternative term for *sancak*, below the province level, see in Etienne Peyrat. "The Ottoman occupation of Batumi, 1918: a view from below", *Caucasus Survey*, 2016, 4 (2), 2.

administrators, and bureaucrats.⁷⁴ According to these documents, the person who offered the proposal was an agricultural engineer, an Ottoman Greek subject known as Mr. Xenocrate Stratigopoulo. Most of these are telegraphs exchanged between “Istrati Gopulo Kranokrati,”⁷⁵ the agricultural engineer formerly a member of the Trabzon city council, and the Trabzon Mayor, Barutçuzade Hacı Ahmed Efendi. The telegraphs from August and September 1918 suggest that the city council accepted Stratigopoulo’s proposal, and he was called immediately to sign the contract and get to work. Stratigopoulo was to arrive with a couple of specialists and engineers, their families, and more interestingly, with ten Chinese workers to cultivate tea, bamboo, and other precious saplings at the model farm. For their transfer via the renowned ship *Gülcemal*, the purchase of the seeds and saplings, and the employment of these Chinese workers, the mayor ordered that they be paid 200 liras, which did not suffice, and Istrati Efendi had to ask for more. In November, Stratigopoulo wrote to the Ottoman prime minister to complain that things were not working as they wished; the tea saplings and seeds would be spoiled due to delay in action. How could he know that this land would get lost again in a short time?

As stated earlier, with the occupation of Batum in 1918, the tea factories and plantations also went into the possession of the Ottomans. Since 1901 the before-mentioned Chinese specialist *Laou Djen Djaou* has been working as the head of the Russian tea factory in Chakva, Batum, near the Trans-Siberian railway, and living there with his family for years.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ BOA, A.DVN.MKL.65/41 (15.02.1337-20.11.1918).

⁷⁵ The Ottoman transliteration of Xenocrate Stratigopoulo.

⁷⁶ BOA, HR.SYS.2453/43 (25.05.1918). “Laou Djen Djaou, member de l’association des sujet Chinois engagé par le Gouvernement Russe comme administrateur d’une fabrique de thé dans les propriétés

When he found himself under the Ottoman administration, he asked for permission to leave Chakva with his family and go to Russia. Several documents attest to his request for permission to leave Batum.⁷⁷ The correspondence between the Ottoman State's Ministry of Interior and Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Denmark Legation in Istanbul inquired into under which circumstances Laou and his family could leave his home in Batum for Russia. They suggest that he was allowed to go to Russia. If he would leave for Europe via Istanbul, it was recommended that he use a route via Bulgaria, Austria, and Germany; in other words, the central power countries that lost the war.⁷⁸

As these examples can demonstrate, even though the Ottomans thought they had the opportunity to re-integrate Transcaucasia into their administration, thus increasing its trade and production, it was a very short-lived experience. "The defeat of the Central Powers by the end of autumn 1918 and the withdrawal of Ottoman forces from the Elviye-i Selâse by January 1919 did not leave much time for this reintegration project to be pursued."⁷⁹

2.9 Tea Cultivation under the Soviet Regime

dominiales de Tchakvine, vivant avec sa famille à Tchakva, localité sise dans le district de Batoum à proximit  de la ligne du chemin de fer transcaucasien."

⁷⁷ BOA, HR.SYS.2453/43 (25.05.1918), BOA.HR.SYS.2457/66 (02.09.1918), BOA.DH.EUM.5S-ŞB.72/31 (18.10.1918), and BOA.HR.SYS.2460/10 (10.10.1918).

⁷⁸ BOA, HR.SYS.2460/10 (20.10.1918). "Bat m'da bulunan  in tebaasından Laou  en  ao'nun Bat m'dan Rusya'ya hareketine m saade idilecektir. Fakat İstanbul tarihiyle Avrupa'ya 'azimet itdiđi takdirde Bulgaristan, Avusturya ve Almanya'dan ge mesi hususunda â'id olduđu sefaretlerce te'mini mukteza olduđundan icr -i ic b  b bında emr ve ferm n hazret-i men leh l emrindir".

⁷⁹ Etienne Peyrat. "The Ottoman occupation of Batumi, 1918: a view from below" *Caucasus Survey*, 2016, 4 (2), 3.

The First World War interrupted the experimentation and cultivation of tea both in the Ottoman and Russian Empires. While in the Ottoman case, it was still more of an experimentation, in the Russian case, the tea cultivation in and around the Batum region grew and flourished quite well. Still, it could not meet the demand for tea in Russia, and the market was still dependent on imports.

However, tea imports were too interrupted by the great war. Importing tea from Europe was out of the question, so Russians had to resort to going back to their traditional ways of importing tea, that is, transferring tea overland from China. Since there were problems with railway transportation in Siberia, it created problems with the tea supply, which increased as the war progressed. There were tea shortages which created popular unrest among the ordinary Russian people. For instance, soldiers fighting in the army could get tea only on special occasions or when there was an epidemic disease within the army, such as cholera. By then, the majority of the Russian soldiers were conscripted from the peasant class, and even in the peasant houses, tea was an item consumed daily. Thus, they expected to have tea in their rations, but their loyalty to the Tsarist regime decreased when their expectations and needs were unmet.⁸⁰

The shortage of tea supplies also increased tea smuggling, fraud, and adulteration. People started to drink whatever herbs they could find and boil; greedy merchants began to color and mix other herbs and sell fake tea as authentic tea. Drinking counterfeit tea instead of

⁸⁰ Audra Jo Yoder, "Tea Time in Romanov Russia: A Cultural History, 1616-1917" Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2016), 206-207.

authentic tea was not a novelty but a custom Russians already resorted to in times of scarcity. A herbal tea known as “*Koporskii chai*” or “*Ivan chai*” was made from the leaves of a local plant (*Kiprei*) that one could find in rural areas in European Russia. “*Koporskii chai* was very similar to real tea and produced by rolling and drying leaves of the *Kiprei* plant. The problem of counterfeit tea began in the 1820s and is often mentioned in administrative documents.”⁸¹

Apart from the hardships that World War I created and the loss of Transcaucasia to the Ottomans, the importation and production of tea in Russia suffered greatly from the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. As stated earlier, the prominent tea importers and producers had good relations with the Tsarist regime, even the tsars themselves. However, the Soviet administration was also aware of a massive demand for tea. It was consumed daily by all levels of Russian society. Importing the needed tea from abroad was a significant burden on the Russian treasury. Hence, there was an urgent need to develop tea cultivation to increase the crops and meet the national demand. Starting from the 1920s, the Soviet administration put great emphasis on local tea production, accelerated tea cultivation, and expanded tea plantations in various regions. Until the German invasion of Russia during World War II, the Soviets “planted 130,000 new acres of tea, and its acreage expanded by an average of 11,000 acres per year.”⁸² They also rehabilitated some old tea plantations active during the Tsarist period.

⁸¹ Audra Jo Yoder, “Tea Time in Romanov Russia: A Cultural History, 1616-1917”, 70.

⁸² Robert M. Bone “Soviet Tea Cultivation,” 161.

While most tea plantations were located in Western Georgia, the Soviet administration also planted tea in other areas, such as Krasnodar Krai⁸³ and the Azerbaidzhan Republic, during the 1930s. However, they only constituted a small portion of the tea produced in Soviet Russia. 92 percent of all Russian-produced tea was planted in Western Georgia, which had the most suitable climate for tea cultivation.⁸⁴ Robert M. Bone relates in his article about Soviet Tea Cultivation that

In the first two decades of Soviet rule, annual harvests of tea leaves and the production of processed tea expanded from zero to slightly over 110 million pounds of tea leaves and 19.4 million pounds of processed tea in 1940. Almost all of this tea was grown and processed in western Georgia.⁸⁵

2.10 Chinese Teas in the Ottoman and Turkish Tea Markets

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the Ottomans could drink Chinese tea thanks to European or Russian merchants that imported tea from China via the sea or overland routes during the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century. Before the nineteenth century, there were a few references to Ottomans having tea in their larder or utensils for preparing and serving tea.

There were two possibilities for an Ottoman to access Chinese tea in the Empire before the nineteenth century. One should belong to the Ottoman royal family or the high elite to have that luxury product in the pantry or live in the eastern provinces and be introduced

⁸³ Located in South Russia in the North Caucasian Region.

⁸⁴ Robert M. Bone "Soviet Tea Cultivation," 165.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 171.

to tea consumption by the Russians, Bukharans, Azeris, or Iranians.⁸⁶ Since tea was imported from China with the help of multiple agents that used a hazardous overland journey, which could take up to three years, it was very expensive and thus a luxury product. Until new routes and technology were discovered, and tea began to be commercially produced in other parts of the world in the second half of the nineteenth century, sources agreed that tea that could be found in the Ottoman Empire was very costly. Even after that, since it was still an imported item not produced locally, at least not in the commercial amounts that met the national demand, tea remained a luxurious and expensive good until the second half of the twentieth century. Travelers that visited the Ottoman Empire in the first and second half of the nineteenth century complained about the high price of tea in the Ottoman market.

However, since new kinds of tea grown in different regions of the world appeared in the Ottoman and Turkish markets, and Chinese teas became more available thanks to new routes and technological developments in logistics, tea prices changed accordingly.

According to *Stamboul Piassa Gazetta*'s issues of 1924 and 1925, Chinese teas were the cheapest tea variety in the market. Indian teas followed it, then teas grown in Java and Ceylon as the most expensive regional variety. Teas also varied according to how it was prepared, which leaves of the tea shrub were plucked, when, and so on. While flower tea was the most expensive type, *akkuyruk*⁸⁷ and *altunbaş*⁸⁸ followed it in price while surpassing all regional varieties.

⁸⁶ It is possible to find documents that talk about Iranian tea merchants who were mostly peddlers or owners of tea houses in Istanbul during the late Ottoman era. See, for instance, BOA, Y.PRK.ŞH. 1/64 (14.11.1882), BOA, HR.UHM. 56/26 (28.10.1909), and BOA, DH.EUM.EMN. 47/6 (13.01.1914).

⁸⁷ A valuable white tea species that joins the tea blend to enhance its flavor.

⁸⁸ High-quality loose leaf tea produced by the top saplings of tea trees.

While Chinese tea was imported via foreign tea companies or multiple agents in the Ottoman period and early Republican years, a shortage of Chinese teas in Turkey surfaced after the Great Depression of 1929. To remedy the economic depression, the Turkish government adopted the Clearing System to close and balance the foreign trade deficit.⁸⁹ This system only allowed importation from certain countries to which it exported. There were no trade agreements between China and Turkey then, and China did not buy from Turkey, so the Turkish government stopped importing tea from China. The same understanding and rules were also valid for India and Ceylon at the time. Hence, there was a severe scarcity of tea around the early 1930s. Turkish newspapers from 1935, for instance, were full of articles that complained about the absurdity of this rule and the scarcity of decent tea in the market.⁹⁰ The Chinese sent an ambassador to Ankara in 1935, and they established trade relations between the two countries. According to a recent study, while $\frac{1}{8}$ of all global foreign trade was made via mutual clearing agreements in 1937, in Turkey, it was %78, and in 1938 foreign exchange made via clearing agreements rose to %83.⁹¹ A great example that attests to the existence of a mutual clearing agreement between China and Turkey can be found in the Republican Archives. According to a document from 1939, a Turkish tea trading company (*Albayrak Mustafa Nezih ve Mahdumları*) imported tea from China; in return, China imported Turkish cigarettes.⁹²

⁸⁹ The Clearing System is known in Turkish literature as “Kliring Sistemi” often described as “malımı alanın, malını alırım” which can be translated as “I will buy from whoever buys from me”.

⁹⁰ “Piyasada Çin Çayı Kalmadı” *Akşam Postası*, May 5, 1935, “Çay İhtiyacı” *Akşam*, July 12, 1935, “Çay Meselesi” *Cumhuriyet*, July 16, 1935.

⁹¹ Levent Özkardeş, “Cumhuriyetin İlk Yılları ve 1929 Ekonomik Buhranında Dış Ticaretin Yönetimi” *Gümrük ve Ticaret Dergisi*, (2015) (6), 34.

⁹² BCA, 30-18-1-2/ 86 - 30 – 7 (09.04.1939) “İstanbul’da Albayrak Mustafa Nezih ve Mahdumları firması tarafından Çin’den ithal edilen çay bedeli olarak Cumhuriyet Merkez Bankası’na yatırılan 698.77 lira

In the late 1930s, the same Turkish tea company *Albayrak Mustafa Nezi* claimed they were importing Chinese teas directly from their source. The advertisements claimed these teas were transferred directly from China by ships via the Suez Canal.⁹³ To increase their credibility, they even gave the names of the ships (“Galilea”) with which they transported their teas from China.⁹⁴

2.11 Russian Tea and Samovars in the Ottoman and Turkish Tea Market

Sources suggest that the British took over the leadership of the Russians in the Ottoman tea imports in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁹⁵ However, Russian tea and *samovar* culture had made their mark on the Ottoman and Turkish tea culture, and sources attest to their continued existence in the market.

According to consular reports such as *the Report on the Trade of Erzurum for 1891*, Russian imports to the Ottoman Empire included *samovars* to Van which “showed a

mukabilinde İnhisarlar Umum Müdürlüğünce Çin’e sevk edilen sigaralar için tanzim olunan menşe şahadetnamesi nüshasının, teslim esnasında Şanghai’da zuhur eden harp dolayısıyla, Çin Gümrükleri tarafından tasdik edilemediği anlaşıldığından Cumhuriyet Merkez Bankası’nda mezkur müdürlük namına bloke olarak kalan bu paranın diğer bütün noksanları tamamlamak kaydıyla ve menşe şahadetnamesi ibrazına lüzum gösterilmeksizin tediye edilmesi...”

⁹³ *Cumhuriyet*, April 12, 1931, *Cumhuriyet*, April 17, 1931, *Akşam*, May 13, 1933, *Akşam*, May 14, 1938, *Son Posta*, June 2, 1938, *Akşam*, June 4, 1938.

⁹⁴ *Akşam*, May 02, 1938, *Tan*, May 03, 1938, *Son Posta*, May 04, 1938, *Akşam*, May 05, 1938, *Cumhuriyet*, May 10, 1938.

⁹⁵ See for instance *Dünden Bugüne Türkiye ve Rusya Politik, Ekonomik ve Kültürel İlişkiler*, ed. Gülten Kazgan, Natalya Ulçenko (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2003), 39. “Osmanlı saraylarında Rus porselenlerinin yerini İngiliz ve Fransız porselenleri aldı ve Rus usulü yerine artık İngiliz usulü çay içilmeye başlandı. Çin ve Uzakdoğu çaylarını özel olarak harmanlayıp teneke kutular içinde Osmanlı ülkesine pazarlayan Rusların yerine de İngiliz tüccarlar, müstemlekelerden getirdikleri çaylarla Osmanlı çay tüketimini karşılamaya çalıştılar.”

steady increase,” as noted by the acting consul Charles Hampson to the Marquis of Salisbury. Without referencing his sources, Kemalettin Kuzucu claimed in his book that on the eve of the First World War, in Istanbul, twenty-eight family companies sold Russian goods such as tea, sugar, and *samovar* besides other products such as flour, oil, carpets, and dishes.⁹⁶ He also stated that during the Armistice period, *Milonidis* Shop, located in *Sadikiye Han*, sold the teas produced by the Russian *Visovski* Factory in wholesale and retail.⁹⁷

It is possible to find singular tea transfers from Russia using the consular privileges among the Russian ambassadorial correspondence at the Ottoman State Archives. In 1865, for instance, a crate of tea from St. Petersburg was sent via the Russian post to Odessa to Mr. Felix Robert, the Vice Consul of the Ottoman Empire in Odessa, only to be received in Constantinople by his excellence Vitali Bey. The document stated that its customs duty until Odessa was paid upfront. Those to Constantinople should be paid by his excellency Mr. Felix Robert. If they could not find His Excellence Vitali Bey, they could address the shipment to the *1^{er} traducteur de la Sublime Porte*.⁹⁸

A pair of documents from 1883 is another example of tea importation to the Ottoman Empire in small quantities. They were addressed to the Ottoman ambassador in St. Petersburg, Şakir Paşa, and were signed by someone named Ali Rıza. He should probably be Ali Rıza Mümtaz Paşa, the chief clerk of state affairs who also served as the royal

⁹⁶ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı Osmanlı'da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*, 154.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 152.

⁹⁸ BOA, HR.SFR.1.12/27 (19.06.1865). *Mütercim-i Evvel* or *1^{er} traducteur de la Sublime Porte* refers to the Ottoman bureaucrat as the head of translation of the Translation Bureau (Tercüme Odası), which worked as an organ of the Ottoman government.

treasury minister during Abdülhamid II's reign.⁹⁹ He requested a swift delivery of the best quality green and white tea packed carefully within six or seven tin boxes.¹⁰⁰ Since it was not a commercial but a personal tea delivery, we might think it could be destined even for the Sultan himself.

Even though statistical data that gives information about the volume, quantity, and value of Russian tea imports into the Ottoman Empire is wanting, documents that show the entry of Russian teas produced in Transcaucasia into the Empire abound. These Russian teas grown around the Batum region were referred to as *Rusya Çayı* or *Kafkasya Çayı* in the documents, which was popularly known as *Moskof Çayı*.¹⁰¹

Documents regarding the Caucasian teas dealt with controversial issues such as whether they were genuine teas, could pass the customs and be sold in the Empire as tea, or should be named after their original name. These documents suggested that they were tested at customs and were found unhealthy.¹⁰² Furthermore, the before-mentioned teas from Caucasia were sent to the Imperial Medical School and tested there to be found harmful once again. Following these tests and the ban on their import to the empire, the Russian Embassy wanted to clarify this issue by stating that those teas were not harmful

⁹⁹ Rûveyda Okumuş, "A Statesman in the Ascendant at the Reign of Abdülhamid II: Reshid Mumtaz Pasha (1856-1928)", *Hazine-i Evrak Arşiv ve Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2020, Cilt: 2, Sayı: 2, 114.

¹⁰⁰ BOA, MB.İ.122/192 (29.06.1883) "Petersburg Sefiri Şakir Paşa Hazretine, Yeşil ve Akkuyruk cinsinden olmak ve en alasından olmak üzere altı yedi kutu mikdarında çayın ...", BOA, HR.SFR.1.77/19 (02.07.1883) "Je prie votre Excellence de m'expedier sans retard et soigneusement emballes dans des boites en fer blanc six a sept accoues de la meilleures qualite de thé varieties verte et Ak Kuyrouk. Ali Rıza".

¹⁰¹ The term *Moskof Çayı* was widely used in the Ottoman language by the populace and in the documents that it entered the *Ottoman Kitchen Dictionary* (Osmanlı Mutfak Sözlüğü) written by Priscilla Mary Işın. "*Moskof Çayı*: (Eng.Caravan Tea) Rusya Üzerinden İthal Edilen Çay [tea that was imported via Russia]", Priscilla Mary Işın, *Osmanlı Mutfak Sözlüğü*, (İstanbul:Kitap Yayınevi, 2010), 76.

¹⁰² BOA, BEO.1134/85024 (22.05.1898), BOA, BEO.1138/85341 (09.06.1898), BOA, BEO.1141/85550 (14.06.1898), BOA, BEO.1159/86876 (15.07.1898).

but different (or inferior) to Chinese teas. Yet, they were freely sold and consumed throughout the Russian Empire, and the ban on their import to the Ottoman Empire should be lifted. They claimed that this ban was also against the concept of free trade. In the following months, documents suggest that the Ottomans continued to discuss this issue. The Ottoman State offered the favor (*iltimas*) of providing a sales license for these teas, lifted the ban on their import, and claimed that they were not harmful but only of inferior quality and could be sold with their proper name *Kafkas Çayı*. Audra Jo Yoder argued in her unpublished dissertation that “the tea grown on the Black Sea coast was not very good, but almost everyone involved had a vested interest in its success and sought reasons to praise it.”¹⁰³ Another topic of discussion was whether Caucasian tea was of the same variety as Tokad tea, in which case the ban on Tokad tea should also be lifted.¹⁰⁴

Just as Caucasian teas found their way into the Ottoman market, Caucasian and other Muslim refugees (such as Kazan Turks) that came to the Ottoman Empire from the Russian Empire were, in one way or another, influential in the popularization of tea and samovar in the Ottoman lands. Some were even tea merchants themselves, and some sold tea at crowded maidans or mosque courtyards in the capital city.¹⁰⁵ One of the influential members of the Turkish nationalist movement, Yusuf Akçura’s family, was also embedded in the tea business. On his mother’s side, his grandfather was a well-

¹⁰³ Audra Jo Yoder, “Tea Time in Romanov Russia: A Cultural History, 1616-1917”, 214.

¹⁰⁴ BOA, DH.MKT.2103/71 (08.09.1898), BOA.DH.MKT.2120/94 (20.10.1898), BOA.DH.MKT.2121/3 (20.10.1898), BOA, DH.MKT.2165/103 (08.02.1899), BOA,DH.MKT.2175/58 (08.03.1899), BOA, DH.MKT.2175/86 (08.03.1899), BOA,DH.MKT.2181/28 (22.03.1899), BOA, DH.MKT.2419/103 (25.10.1900).

¹⁰⁵ Salahaddin, for instance, a refugee from Kazan, petitioned to get a license to sell tea in the courtyard of the Nuruosmaniye Mosque, promising to share half of his income with children of martyrs and veterans in 1900. See BOA, DH.MKT.2421/125 (29.10.1900). Another refugee from Crimea named Ibrahim sold tea in the courtyard of Fatih Mosque see BOA, MVL. 365/57 (25.01.1861).

established tea merchant in Kazan (*Abdurreşid Yusuf*) who imported tea from China.

After his father passed away, his mother married another man who was a wealthy Turkish tea and samovar merchant from Dagestan (*Dağıstan*).

Sermet Muhtar Alus (1887-1952), a well-educated Istanbulite and journalist, wrote in his articles in the Turkish newspapers that tea was already known and constituted a significant part of people's daily lives from Caucasia, Azerbaijan, and Dagestan before the late nineteenth century. In Caucasian households, he noted that samovars were lit at dawn and put out when people went to bed.¹⁰⁶

Late Ottoman Wars, especially the First World War and the Independence War, also played a massive part in introducing tea and samovars to regular Ottoman and Turkish soldiers. For one thing, tea became a part of their rations, especially during epidemic outbreaks such as cholera. But also, Turkish soldiers were offered Russian tea in return for cigarettes by the Russian soldiers.¹⁰⁷ The tea consumed by the Russian soldiers during the great war is known to be Caucasian tea produced locally by Russian producers. In addition, there is also documentation on purchasing samovars and sending them to the military fronts in the Ottoman archives.¹⁰⁸

Last but certainly not least, the arrival of the White Russians to Istanbul after the Bolshevik Revolution substantially impacted the city's financial and social life.¹⁰⁹ White

¹⁰⁶ See Sermet Muhtar Alus, "Gördüklerim Duyduklarım", *Akşam*, March 16, 1944, Sermet Muhtar Alus, "Dünden, Bugünden", *Amcabey*, February 26, 1944.

¹⁰⁷ *Kumandanım Galiçya Ne Yana Düşer? Mehmetçik Avrupa'da M.Şevki Yazman'ın Anıları*, ed.Kansu Şarman, (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2006), 24-218.

¹⁰⁸ See, for instance, BOA, ML. EEM.125/34 (28.04.1890), BOA, HH.İ. 76/13 (26.02.1890).

¹⁰⁹ Charles King notes in his book *Pera Palas'ta Gece Yarısı Modern İstanbul'un Doğuşu* that only with the fleet of commander Wrangel 185.000 people who ran away from the civil war that broke out in Russia

Russians contributed significantly to popularizing tea, samovar, and European-style patisseries. These Russian patisseries that grew like mushrooms in every part of the city, especially around Beyoğlu, quickly became popularized and replaced the traditional *muhallebici*. *Petrograd* and *Nisuz* were the most popular among these places, whose reputation has survived until today.¹¹⁰

2.12 The Role of Persians in the Spread of Tea Consumption in the Ottoman Empire and Their Relation With Tea

Sources suggest that tea traders from Persia and Azerbaijan operating in Istanbul and Anatolian cities such as Trebizond and Erzurum have played an important role in dispersing tea consumption among people with limited means. Deniz Gürsoy seems to agree with this idea since he states that tea consumption in Istanbul has become widespread thanks to the tea houses (*çayhaneler*) opened by Persians and Shiites from Azerbaijan. He also adds that “the fact that the price was so low that people can buy four glasses of tea at the price of one cup of coffee should have played a part in its dispersal.”¹¹¹ A document from the Ottoman State Archives informs us about Persians who owned tea houses or shops in Bayezid whose possessions went missing in 1859.¹¹²

arrived in Istanbul and inflated its population by twenty percent. See Charles King, *Pera Palas'ı Gece Yarısı Modern İstanbul'un Doğuşu*, tr. Ayşen Anadol, 2nd edition, (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2016), 97.

¹¹⁰ Bülent Bakar, “Beyaz Rusların Sosyal Hayata Etkileri” *Esir Şehrin Misafirleri Beyaz Ruslar* (Tarihçi Kitabevi, 2012), 203-204.

¹¹¹ Deniz Gürsoy, *Demlikten süzülen kültür: Çay*, (İstanbul: Oğlak Yayıncılık, 2005), 44.

¹¹² BOA, HR.MKT.321/75, (H.13-01-1276-M.12.08.1859).

According to Kemalettin Kuzucu, Turkmen of Bukhara played an essential role in introducing the beverage, dissemination of its consumption, and its trade. He refers to some archival documents which give no more information but barely inform us about the presence of three such people who came from Bukhara and were dealing with the tea trade in nineteenth-century Istanbul such as Hayrullah, a trader from Bukhara who resided in Sumbullu Han. For some reason, his belongings were confiscated by the Ottoman government, and in his chest, a certain amount of tea was found, according to a document Kuzucu mentions. A certain Hacı Niyazi from Bukhara, who happens to be a tea trader, and another tea trader from Bukhara, Hacı Hudaverdi Efendi, were among the names mentioned by Kuzucu.¹¹³

Tea was introduced to northeastern Persia before coffee was introduced, probably as early as the thirteenth century by the Mongols. Although it is not sure what kind of tea they were introduced to, people in the northeastern provinces of Persia started to consume tea quite earlier than in the other regions. What about the other regions of Persia and their history with tea?

Roughly from the sixteenth century onwards, in other words, from the Safavid period on, Persia has been acquainted with tea. Just as in the Ottoman case, it was not consumed by the wider public, but its consumption was somewhat limited to the elites. Since tea was reaching Persian territories overland routes, tea prices were high. However, that is not the only reason the populace did not consume it. Tea was not an easily accessible drink in terms of supply, and the favorite beverage in Persia was coffee. Coffee kept its position

¹¹³ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı: Osmanlı'da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*, (Istanbul:Kapı, 2012), 145.

against tea up until the nineteenth century. It was in the Qajar Period (1796-1925) when tea became more widespread, known, and consumed among the populace in Persia during the nineteenth century. The second introduction or re-introduction of tea in Persia was made through international maritime trade routes. Persia was integrated into an international market and trade network Russia and Britain dominated during the nineteenth century.¹¹⁴

Charles Issawi suggests that “ in the Qajar period, with the imports of samovars from Russia, tea drinking little by little came into the general use in Persia. The gifts of tea sets and samovars sent to Qajar vizier Amir Kabir stimulated his interest and desire in starting the propagation of the art of samovar making.”¹¹⁵ Rudi Mathee argues that the conversion from coffee to tea in Persian society should be sought in the increased contact of the country with the outside world, especially Britain and Russia, which became their trading partners in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁶ Russia was very influential in this sense throughout the first decades of the nineteenth century since many Russian merchants were living and actively trading in the new Qajar capital, Tehran, and many other significant cities in Qajar Persia, such as Tabriz, Rasht, and Ardabil. Russia’s dominant position as the leading actor in Persia’s tea trade remained until the 1830s. However, circumstances started to change in favor of the British after the Ottoman Empire opened its ports to foreign ships (especially to the British with the Baltalimanı Agreement signed in 1838) and after the Anglo-Persian Commercial Treaty was signed in 1841.

¹¹⁴ Rudi Mathee, “From Coffee to Tea: Shifting Patterns of Consumption in Qajar Iran,” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (University of Hawai Press, Fall 1996), 202.

¹¹⁵ Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of Iran, 1800-1914*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 294

¹¹⁶ Rudi Mathee, “From Coffee to Tea: Shifting Patterns of Consumption in Qajar Iran,” 222.

The establishment of steam navigation between Istanbul and Trabzon and the revival of the Trabzon-Tabriz route in the 1830s and 1840s was a turning point for the British tea trade in Persia. “Britain wanted to revive this trade route since it was looking for a shorter channel, which would not only facilitate the inflow of British goods such as manufactured textiles and tea but also make it possible to export silk and other Persian products by reducing their cost of transport.”¹¹⁷ Armenian, Greek, Persian, and British tea traders imported British tea to Iran via the Trabzon-Tabriz route over Erzurum. “Tabriz and Khoi, Persia’s gateways in the northwestern province of Azerbaijan, became the busiest entrepot markets for transit trade from Trabzon and Georgia.”¹¹⁸ Ottoman archival documents about the maintenance and restoration of roads along the route between Tabriz and Trabzon show us the importance given to this route of international transit trade by foreign states since these documents mention that the Ottoman officials have received petitions and notice from foreign states about the safety and maintenance of this route. They also state that “ the importance of this route which passes through Trabzon and Erzurum and reaches Khoi and Tabriz, grew due to the closure of the Transcaucasian road by the Russians.”¹¹⁹

As a result of the revival of this route and the decline of the Russian trade in the second half of the nineteenth century, “a growing volume of tea began to be imported by Qajar Persia from England and British India.”¹²⁰ According to Matthee, the Turco-Russian War of 1877-78 also decreased the appeal of Russia as a trading partner. Although Russia

¹¹⁷ Charles Issawi, “The Tabriz-Trabzon trade, 1830-1900: rise and decline of a route”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan. 1970, p.18.

¹¹⁸ Matthee, Rudi, “From Coffee to Tea: Shifting Patterns of Consumption in Qajar Iran,” 225.

¹¹⁹ Yusuf Sarıınay, *Osmanlı-İran ilişkileri: Arşiv belgelerinde*, (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık, Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, 2010), 170-224.

¹²⁰ Rudi Matthee, “From Coffee to Tea: Shifting Patterns of Consumption in Qajar Iran,” 226.

would gain some of its share in the trade, most of the tea imported to Qajar Persia by the turn of the twentieth century was of British origin. He suggests that British Indian tea surpassed the popularity of Chinese tea even in Central Asia. The value of tea imports from Britain to Persia reached 96,600 pounds in 1887. In the same period, we see a tea-consuming society in Persia and the first attempts of the Qajar government to cultivate their own tea in Persia. While at the beginning of the nineteenth century, tea drinking was a luxury habit limited to a high social profile, from top to bottom, a consumption movement took place in the 1850s due to the proliferation of tea houses or coffee houses serving tea. This development and the substantial rise in tea consumption by the populace in the 1870s were both tied to the increase in tea supply, which was an outcome of the boom of the British tea trade. But yet, the dissemination of tea consumption at every level of society, even to the poorest living deep in the country realized in the 1930s when the local plantations of tea established in Gilan gave their first substantial production.

2.13 Conclusions

The title of this section is in plural form since this chapter leaves us with multiple conclusions rather than a single central argument.

It was imperative to start the main chapters of this dissertation with China since it designated the only source of tea for a very long time for the Ottomans and the rest of the world. Since the Ottomans could not buy tea directly from the Chinese as there were no

diplomatic or trade agreements between the two empires, the Ottomans had to rely on another source to buy tea. Until the second half of the nineteenth century, this source was Russian tea merchants who bought tea from China and sold it to Russians and its neighbors, such as the Ottomans, Persians, and Central Asians.

Russian tea or tea that arrived via the mediation of Russian merchants was known as *Karavan Çayı* (Caravan tea), *Moskof Çayı* (Muscovite Tea), *Kafkas Çayı* (Caucasian Tea) or later *Popof Çayı* (Popof Tea) in the Ottoman tea market and literature. As new routes and technology evolved in time, the accessibility and the prices also changed with it. As the time of the voyage and the cost of transfer of tea decreased, so did the prices, making it possible for the masses to buy and consume tea.

Just as the Ottomans bought Chinese tea at first, had no local cultivation, and tried to establish tea farming in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, so did the Russians and the Persians. Even though they were latecomers in tea cultivation, like the Ottomans, Russians, and Persians contributed to the popularization and spread of tea consumption in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the capital city and the eastern provinces.

Additionally, the Black Sea Region and Ottoman ports were just as important for the Russian tea trade as transit ports, especially after the opening of the Suez Canal and the abandonment of the caravan tea trade overland.

Last but not least, although records show that compared to the tea trade with Britain and its colonies in South and Southeast Asia, the value and volume of the tea imports from Russia remained smaller percentage in total. However, archival documents and travel

literature also attest to tea smuggling between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Thus, it means the volume of tea imports, if one adds those that went unnoticed and unrecorded, was much bigger than imagined.



CHAPTER III: TEA IMPORTS FROM THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

People that lived in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire acquired a taste of tea much earlier than the rest of the Empire due to its proximity to other tea-consuming societies, such as the Russians and Persians, who began to produce their own tea more or less at the same time as the Ottomans experimented with tea cultivation, and relatively later than the British and Dutch established tea farms in their colonies in the East Indies. As explained in the previous chapter, they also imported the tea they consumed from China or via European firms until the twentieth century.

Foreign travelers who visited Constantinople in the first half of the nineteenth century suggest that as late as the 1830s, the Ottomans were still a coffee and sherbet-drinking population and were not accustomed to consuming tea. So when did the Ottomans in Istanbul and western provinces get acquainted with this beverage? The introduction of Istanbulite Ottomans to tea coincided with the second half of the nineteenth century and the aftermath of the Crimean War (1853-1856), to be more precise.¹²¹ While the Europeans that came to Istanbul during the war created a demand for tea in the Ottoman market, they

¹²¹ “Çayın Yüzüncü Yılı. Avrupaya çay nasıl girdi? En çok nerede çay içilir? Bizde çay ne zaman taammüm etti. Şark vilayetlerinde çay merakı”, *Akşam*, 29 Kanunisanı 1339 (29.01.1939). It was indicated that during the Crimean War, the British soldiers who came to Istanbul during the Crimean War drank tea every morning and that with this war tea trade began in the Ottoman Empire.

also introduced Ottomans to this beverage. Tea was also used increasingly and extensively in diplomacy during this period. Thus, the first Ottoman tea trading merchants and firms started to import tea via the agency of European companies or, from the Americans, from the other side of the Atlantic. Even though we encounter sources pointing at tea imports from Italy, France, Netherlands, Germany, Britain, and the United States, both Ottoman and British consular sources agree that the British had the largest share in tea imports to the Ottoman Empire.

3.1 The Impact of the Crimean War on the Ottoman Tea Trade and Consumption

As an expert on Ottoman trade and finance, Haydar Kazgan underlined the importance of the Crimean War (1853-1856) in terms of its effects on international trade relations rather than its political outcomes. According to Kazgan, after the war, British tea traders, who finally got rid of the competition of the Russian porcelains and East Asian tea, blended and sold by the Russians, started to import tea from their colonies and dominate the Ottoman tea market. The Ottomans, as a result, began to drink tea in the British way other words in French and English porcelains rather than in the Russian way.¹²²

Indeed, nearly 400,000 British and French soldiers and their families came to Constantinople during the Crimean War (1853-1856) and contributed to an increase in tea

¹²² Haydar Kazgan, “Tarih Boyunca Osmanlı-Rus Ticareti ve Sanayi Devrimi ülkelerinin Ticaret Politikaları”, *Dünden Bugüne Türkiye ve Rusya Politik, Ekonomik ve Kültürel İlişkiler*, ed. Gülten Kazgan and Natalya Ulçenko (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2003), 39.

consumption in the Ottoman Empire.¹²³ British soldiers and their families increased the demand for tea in the Ottoman market during this period. They introduced tea drinking to the Ottomans, an overwhelmingly coffee-drinking population. Josiah Brewer, who stayed in Constantinople in 1827, noted in his travel book that was published in 1830 that “tea is only the luxury of the Franks. Coffee closes the meal of everyone, from Sultan to the meanest slave.”¹²⁴

Numerous sources, such as letters, memoirs, and biographies the British wrote during the Crimean War, suggested that tea was a luxury item in the Ottoman market, costly and hard to find. They often repeated in these sources that British officers brought their tea and asked their families to send them more from Britain or ordered tea from British tea trading firms such as Fortnum and Mason.¹²⁵ For instance, British General Daniel Lysons, who stated that tea was very dear and not easy to find during the Crimean War, ordered tea from Fortnum and Mason after he finished the tea he had brought.¹²⁶

We also know that during and after the Crimean War, the Ottoman Sultan Abdulmecid and the Turkish ruling elite attended balls and banquets at foreign embassies where tea was served, among other things. In addition, the socialization of the wives of British diplomats and high-ranking British officers with members of the Ottoman elite families increased the popularity of tea among the Ottoman populace.

¹²³ While the number of British soldiers who joined the Crimean war was 97,864, the French were 309,268 in number. “Crimean War. Chapter I. Loss Of Life In Different Ways”, *Advocate of Peace (1847-1884)*, New Series, Vol. 1, No. 7 (July 1869), 106-107.

¹²⁴ Josiah Brewer, *A Residence at Constantinople in the year 1827* (New Haven: Durrie and Peck, 1830), 111.

¹²⁵ The Ottoman Empire promised to afford the British with their subsistence in the Treaty of Military Aid to the Sublime Porte (signed in 1854). Since tea was an expensive imported item for the Ottomans, the British soldiers were provided with coffee beans instead of tea.

¹²⁶ Daniel Lysons, *The Crimean War from first to last* (London: Elibron Classics, 2004), 150.

The diaries of a diplomatic wife and the Constantinople diaries of Lady Layard may give us a clue about how influential these relations can be. As the wife of the British Ambassador, she was in relations with other ambassadorial cliques but also with “a small coterie of ‘westernized’ Muslim women such as Princess Nazli, granddaughter of Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt, Mme Hilmi Pasha, daughter of Kamil Bey, and Mme Kazım Bey.”¹²⁷ Lady Layard tells in her diaries that she was having tea with Safvet Pasha, Ahmed Vefik Pasha, and some refreshments with the Turkish ladies I have mentioned. Lady Hornby, the wife of Edmund Hornby, the British diplomat who commissioned a loan of 4 million sterling pounds to the Ottoman State during the Crimean War, narrates a similar story. She states in her letters that a Turkish gentleman was ambitious to see an English lady make tea.¹²⁸

During this period of increased international relations with European powers, we see that tea and tea services started to be used as gifts and gestures of goodwill in international diplomacy. For instance, a document suggests that the French emperor Napoleon III sent a Sevres porcelain tea set to the Ottoman grand vizier Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa in 1860.¹²⁹ By the same token, the Ottoman Sultan ordered in 1861 a silver tea service to be sent as a

¹²⁷ Enid Layard, *Twixt Pera and Therapia: the Constantinople diaries of Lady Layard, 1843-1912*, Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010, p.13.

¹²⁸ Lady Hornby, *Constantinople During the Crimean War*, (London, 1863), 281.

¹²⁹ BOA, İ.HR.178/9778, (H.01.02.1277-M.19.08.1860), “Fransa Elçisi Mösyö Dö la Valt Haşmetlü İmparator hazretleri tarafından savb-ı çâkerîye olarak Sevr nâm Saksonya-Faber teba’ası ma’ mûlâtından bir çay takımı getirüb i’tâ itmiş olmağla...”.

gift to Sir James Redhouse¹³⁰, who wrote the renowned Ottoman Turkish-English lexicon, which is considered in current literature “a product of the Crimean War.”¹³¹

During the Tanzimat period, we see the first sign of interest in the agricultural production of tea in the Ottoman Empire. A document from the Ottoman State Archives that was produced in 1873 during the reign of Abdulaziz and addressed to Mehmed Raşid Paşa, the minister of Foreign Affairs, states that a particular blue book that contained reports on tea production in Japan and drawings of this subject by a Japanese artist was shipped from London.¹³² We may presume that Abdulaziz, who was invited by Napoleon III to visit the Universal Exhibition in Paris (1867) and who went to European capitals such as Paris, London, and Vienna on his imperial trip to Europe in the summer of 1867, nurtured a personal interest in tea and probably ordered research on its cultivation.

3.2 European Forerunners of Tea Trade

¹³⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.58/25 (12.12.1861) In the archive catalog, it was incorrectly referred to as “ the invitation to tea service and celebration of Mr. Redhouse by the Sultan” (“Padişah ve Saray: Padişahın yeni Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlüğü dolayısıyla Mr. Redhouse’u çay servisine daveti ve tebriki”). In reality, Sultan Abdulaziz did not invite Mr. Redhouse to tea but ordered a gift of silver tea service to be sent to Sir James Redhouse. We learn from the documents that the silver tea service, valued at £100, was delayed in delivery due to a delay in payment.

¹³¹ Candan Badem called the famous dictionary “another product of the Crimean war”. See Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War* (Brill, 2010), 332.

¹³² BOA, HR.SFR.3.197/061 (07.08.1873) “J’ai l’honneur d’informer votre Excellence que, par le courrier d’aujourd’hui, j’ai expédié sous bande, à l’adresse de votre Excellence, un Blue Book qui vient d’être présenté au Parlement et qui contient des Rapports relatifs à la production du thé au Japon et illustré de desins d’après un artiste indigène”.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans who became acquainted with tea. By a quirk of fate, it was also a Portuguese who introduced tea to the English Royal Household. This was no one but “Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II who had returned from exile among the tea-drinking Dutch in 1660.”¹³³ This couple, the King and the Queen of England, initiated the popularity of drinking tea in England and Europe. However, the Dutch dominated the tea trade until the 1670s since “the first cargo of tea arrived in Europe in 1610 with the Dutch East India Company, which was established in 1602. This company started to import tea to Europe on a regular basis from 1637 on.”¹³⁴

It was also the Dutch East India Company that first provided Americans, such as people living in New Amsterdam (later New York), with tea. Americans started to drink this beverage in the afternoon as a habit from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, a habit they embraced before the British invented “afternoon tea.” The first time the British learned about this East Asian beverage was when an official of the East India Company, Mr. Wickham, mentioned it in 1615. Queen Elizabeth bestowed the privilege to the East Indian Company of having a monopoly over the Eastern trade of the Kingdom.¹³⁵

Italian and Portuguese missionaries and travelers started to write about this curious beverage they encountered in East Asia already in the second half of the sixteenth century.¹³⁶ However, in the seventeenth century, the Dutch started transferring tea from Macao in China and from Hirado in Japan to their colony in Java and transshipped it to Europe. They guaranteed trading privileges from the Japanese emperor, and thus they first

¹³³ *Tea: East and West*, ed. Rupert Faulkner, (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 2003), 90.

¹³⁴ Stephan Reimertz, *Çayın kültür tarihi = Vom genub des tees*, (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 1998), 115.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ William H. Ukers, *All About Tea*, (New York: Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Company, 1935), 23-28.

controlled the tea business between the East and the West. Even the first tea imports of the English East India Company to England were provided by the Dutch at Java. In the 1660s, the tea trade was in the hands of the Dutch, while the English imported relatively small amounts of tea to England. East Indian Company imported 50kgs of the best quality tea in 1644, and 50kgs in 1700, and the amount imported tripled in 1800. In the eighteenth century, they succeeded in competing with and even surpassing the Dutch East India Company and dominated the East Asian Tea Trade. In 1675, a coffeehouse in London, Garway's Coffeehouse, began to serve tea for the first time. "The first direct cargoes of tea from China began to arrive in Britain in the 1720s."¹³⁷ It was succeeded by a fast ship called the Clipper, which could be loaded with 500 tons of tea and make it to China in three months.¹³⁸

In the meantime, "tea made its way to the European Continent, but only aristocrats, monarchs, and society's wealthiest consumers could afford this status symbol."¹³⁹ While the German, French, Flemish, Swedish, and other countries' companies satisfied the demand for tea in the European markets, the Honorable East India Company increasingly grasped the tea trade during the eighteenth century. "From only a few hundred pounds in the 1690s, by 1757, the company imported twelve million pounds a year and stored another seventeen million in its London warehouses."¹⁴⁰

The amount of tea sold in England rose considerably in 1783, and in 1784 with the Commutation Act, which reduced the heavy duties on tea from %100 to %12.5, the sales

¹³⁷ Alan Macfarlane and Iris Macfarlane, *The Empire of Tea*, (Overlook Books, 2004), 74.

¹³⁸ Stephan Reimertz, Çayın kültür tarihi = Vom gēnub des tees, 83.

¹³⁹ Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 47.

¹⁴⁰ Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire How Tea Shaped the Modern World*, 55.

of tea rose to 15 million pounds in 1785.¹⁴¹ Tea consumption in England grew so much during the eighteenth century that “the Parliament required the Honorable East India Company to keep a year’s supply always in stock.”¹⁴² Tea became a nationwide necessity commodity at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Its consumption increased together with the population of the British Empire. Since the prices went down in the eighteenth century, especially in the second half, tea was drunk even in the poorest homes. Even though the British had a monopoly over the tea imports from China, the Canton region needed more tea. China, on the other hand, was quite a problematic partner in trade. First, “the best quality of tea was never sold to foreigners; it was reserved for the emperor of China and the high court.”¹⁴³ Also, the fact that the Chinese were making a profit from this tea business drove the British mad. Moreover, reactions arose in China since they got opium from the British in return for the tea they provided. Hence, the first Opium War, or the Anglo-Chinese War, broke out in 1839 and lasted until 1842. After this critical date, the British started to search for an alternative source of tea; in other words, they started to look for ways to cultivate their own tea. Having annexed Assam in 1826 and had control over a large area in India, the British had already realized they had the perfect climate and lands to produce their own tea. However, they lacked the know-how to transplant and cultivate the plants and produce tea from freshly plucked tea leaves. Although a local type of tea plant (*Camellia Assamica*) was discovered in Assam in 1823, they wanted to bring and transplant *Camellia Sinensis*, the Chinese tea. At the same time, the task was dangerous

¹⁴¹ Michael Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China 1800-42*, (Cambridge University Press Library Edition, 2008), 3.

¹⁴² Ibid., 3.

¹⁴³ Laura C. Martin, *Tea: The Drink that Changed the World*, (USA: Tuttle Publishing, 2007), 133.

since the Chinese government strictly prohibited the transfer of tea plants from Chinese territory, and any foreigner who tried to do so would be severely punished.

A Scottish man, a member of the Horticulture Society, Robert Fortune, who already went to China to study tea plants in 1843, was hired by the East India Company in 1848 to complete the dangerous mission of transferring tea plants and seeds to transplant them in India. Sarah Rose narrates the story of Robert Fortune in her book, *For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History*. Fortune, in the end, managed to transfer “twenty thousand tea plants and partitioned them into four ships just in case to minimize the danger of losing them all but also hired eight Chinese tea experts to advise the British during the transplantation and processing stages.”¹⁴⁴

Erika Rappaport states that “while the other (European) nations certainly enjoyed their tea, Britain was by far the greatest market for the Chinese imports at this time. Great Britain imported 40.000.000 pounds annually in 1834, all of which came from China”.¹⁴⁵ On the other hand, Montgomery Martin noted that tea exported from Canton by the Dutch to the Netherlands decreased considerably in the first half of the nineteenth century. For instance, in 1818, they imported 90,535 chests. In 1829 they imported only 26,392 chests; in 1830, no Dutch ships were sent to China.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Laura C. Martin, *Tea: The Drink that Changed the World*, 160-162.

¹⁴⁵ Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton University Press, 2017), 115.

¹⁴⁶ Montgomery R. Martin, *The past and present state of the tea trade of England and of the continents of Europe and America*, (London: 1832), 31.

Montgomery R. Martin, who wrote a pamphlet in 1832 entitled *The Past and Present State of the Tea Trade of England and of the Continents of Europe and America*,¹⁴⁷ argued that “even though the Portuguese and the Dutch were the first to introduce the consumption of tea, the demand for tea in these places, was not even half as much as it was fifty years ago (1780’s).”¹⁴⁸ His work on the tea trade of England includes statistical data on the tea trade of England and other European states and America. Martin endeavored in his book to prove that free trade does not produce an increase in demand and consumption by comparing and contrasting the constantly increasing imports and consumption of tea in England and the decreasing tea consumption in Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Prussia, France, and America. He notes that after 1817 Dutch and American tea traders imported tea in an atmosphere of free competition and provided others with tea for low prices. Still, it did not guarantee increased consumption in these places.¹⁴⁹

Even though Europe lacked local tea production, tea was increasingly imported from China and the tea plantations of the East Indian colonies to Europe. From there, it was transshipped to the Ottoman Empire. According to Stephan Reimertz, who wrote *Vom*

¹⁴⁷ Its full title is *The past and present state of the tea trade of England and of the continents of Europe and America: and a comparison between the consumption, price of, and revenue derived from tea, coffee, sugar, wine, tobacco, spirits, etc.* The author, namely Montgomery Martin, was a Renaissance man who had served the English as a civil servant, worked as a surgeon, botanist, and naturalist, and traveled to many colonies, including India, Mombassa, Mauritius, Madagascar, Indian Ocean islands and served as the treasurer of the island of Hong Kong. He wrote extensively on the history and trade of the British colonies. He worked closely with the statistics of the trade and production of these colonies with the help of official documents. He was also among the founders of the Statistical Society of London (1834), the Colonial Society (1837), and the East India Association (1867).

¹⁴⁸ Montgomery R. Martin, *The past and present state of the tea trade of England and of the continents of Europe and America*, (London, 1832), 28-29.

¹⁴⁹ The date of this work (1832) is particularly important to understand its arguments and purpose. In 1834, the British East India Company lost its trading functions and became an agent of the British Government. In 1832, there were heated debates in the British Parliament about the Honorable East India Company and its rights in China trade. Until 1834, the Company kept “the sole exclusive right of trading, trafficking and using the business of merchandise into and from the dominions of the Emperor of China, as far as British subjects were concerned (even after the India trade was opened to private British merchants in 1813)”.

Genuss Des Tees Eine Kulturgeschichte, “the bourgeoisie living around the North Sea, such as in Britain, the Netherlands, and Northern Germany, became addicted to tea, and it became a popular drink during the nineteenth century.”¹⁵⁰ According to Ottoman official documents and trade reports that consuls wrote, they became not only the places that consumed tea the most in Europe but also Europe’s main importers of tea to the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to these sources, we may say that the Ottoman Empire imported tea mainly from Britain, the Netherlands, cities such as Hamburg and Bremen in northern Germany, and occasionally from France.

Britain had the highest percentage of tea importations into the Ottoman Empire, especially from the second half of the nineteenth century. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the British competed with the free traders of the Dutch and the Americans in the tea trade. The Ottoman Empire was also among the customers of American free traders. Even though the United States and the Ottoman Empire had signed a Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in 1830¹⁵¹, “the American-Ottoman commercial relations were not only based on the treaty of 1830 alone but also on the English convention of 1838.”¹⁵² Thus, the Americans were using British patents and British commercial firms to represent them.¹⁵³ Despina Vlami notes that “the only way for American merchants and ship owners to avoid paying customs duties imposed by the Ottoman authorities was to obtain protection from

¹⁵⁰ Stephan Reimertz, *Vom Genuss des Tees Eine Kulturgeschichte*, (Leipzig: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1998), 31.

¹⁵¹ A second Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between the United States and the Ottoman Empire was signed on February 25, 1862.

¹⁵² Leland J. Gordon, “Turkish-American Treaty Relations”, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol.22. No:3, (Aug 1928), 711-712.

¹⁵³ Despina Vlami, *Trading with the Ottomans The Levant Company in the Middle East* (London: IB Tauris, 2015), 152.

Britain, a country that had signed capitulation agreements with the Porte.”¹⁵⁴ In the first decades of the nineteenth century, American cargo ships that traded with the Ottoman Empire brought chests of tea to the ports of Constantinople. For instance, in 1810, the cargo ship *America* brought 15 chests of tea to Constantinople, a small amount if we compare it with the amount of coffee and sugar carried by the same ship.¹⁵⁵

Since tea was carried to the rest of the world via sea transport¹⁵⁶ and most of the foreign trade was made at significant port cities, Ottoman tea imports from Europe can be traced from consular reports of major port cities such as Constantinople, Smyrna, Trabzon, and Salonica. Tea was distributed from these great ports to various Ottoman cities as there was no direct trade with European countries in hinterland cities.¹⁵⁷ Erzurum is an exception from the 1830s since it was on the Trabzon-Tabriz route, a crucial route for Persian transit trade.¹⁵⁸ So much so that in the later decades of the nineteenth century, local merchants from Erzurum ventured to establish direct tea trade with Britain.

However, consular reports on the trade and commerce of the great port cities can be misleading without complementary sources such as the Ottoman archival documents and travel literature from the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. Looking at the consular reports alone, we might conclude that Constantinopolitan ports did not import tea until

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 151.

¹⁵⁵ The cargo ship *America* carried 600 bags of sugar, 218 bags, 25 bales and 2 barrels of coffee, and 50 bags, 40 bales of mocha coffee).

¹⁵⁶ Russia was an exception in this regard since Russians were getting their tea from an overland route; hence it was called “caravan tea.”

¹⁵⁷ For instance, the British Vice Consul Hampson reported on the trade of Konia and stated that “as there is no direct import trade with foreign countries (in Konya), all goods were being purchased from firms in Constantinople.” So, the 2 tons of tea that were imported to Konia in 1903 (and valued at 350 £) were purchased from firms in Constantinople.

¹⁵⁸ We often see in the primary sources that the amount of tea that was destined for the Persian transit trade often surpassed the tea that was destined for the Ottoman market.

1900. It was not listed among the import items of Constantinople not because it was not imported but because these reports listed articles over 100,000 £ in value, and until 1900 tea was imported with a lower value than 100,000 £. In the report of 1900-1901 on the trade and commerce of Constantinople, the British consul listed tea among the chief articles imported from foreign countries into Turkey during that year, with a value of over 100 000 £. While tea was imported 105,000 £ in value, it was pretty much overshadowed by coffee which was imported 545 000 £ in value. Consul Waugh, in his report on the trade of Constantinople, noted that in 1905 consumption of tea in Constantinople was about 5000 cases, all of which arrived via Port Said, Marseilles, Trieste, and a small quantity from London.

One of the reasons we do not see more tea imports at Constantinopolitan ports was explained by the same British Consul in Constantinople, Consul Waugh, in his reports on the trade and commerce of this particular city.¹⁵⁹ According to his reports, traders preferred to trade directly with other port cities such as Trabzon, Samsun, Smyrna (İzmir), Salonica, and Beyrout because it was difficult and expensive for some time to import goods to Constantinople. It lost its charm as a distributing center for many reasons, such as difficulties put by the Turkish police, travel restrictions, and dues on all levels of trade operations. While Consul Waugh noted the difficulties of importing goods to the ports of Constantinople more than once in his reports, we see numerous documents in the Ottoman archives which dealt with these difficulties, such as high storage taxes charged on British tea imports.

¹⁵⁹ Consul Waugh's reports on Constantinople trade and commerce spanned from 1900 to 1907.

To overcome some of the difficulties (such as restrictions on traveling to Constantinople), Britain and other foreign countries' tea trading firms chose to establish business partnerships with local non-Muslim merchants and recruited their agents from among them. They particularly preferred to employ local Greek merchants as their agents. Their long-established existence in international trade and shipping in the Mediterranean and their language abilities made them advantageous and worthy of British protection. For instance, while Twinnings had an agent in Constantinople (N.P. Mouchtouris) and another agent in Samsun (A.zâde &Frere)¹⁶⁰, Komvopoulos was Lipton's agent in Constantinople.¹⁶¹

3.3 Tea Imports from France

As mentioned, France was among the first countries to acquire a taste for tea as early as the seventeenth century. However, it was adopted by the elite, the aristocracy, and the royalty. "Louis XIV became devoted to the luxury and heightened its symbolism by brewing his tea in a golden teapot." According to the numbers Montgomery Martin offers us in his book, the tea imports from China to France were above 4,000,000lbs in quantity in the years 1783-1784, decreased to 353,333lbs in 1802, and during 1820s tea imports decreased even further. Yet, France continued to import tea, and French companies re-

¹⁶⁰ HR.SFR.3.708/60 (14.09.1914).

¹⁶¹ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı Osmanlı'da çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*, 152. Kuzucu indicates that according to a newspaper advertisement (İkdam, Feb.6, 1895), B.Komvopoulos was referred to as the only dealer who sold Lipton tea in the Ottoman Empire.

exported some of this tea imported from China. We can find documents in the Ottoman state archives that attest to French-imported tea in the Ottoman Empire.

The first record pointed at France is a notification sent by a tea merchant Mehmed Tahir from Constantinople to *Mr. Dokros* and Co. from Marseille in 1900.¹⁶² Although we occasionally encountered French firms that imported tea to various Ottoman ports, such as Trabzon, Tripoli, and Constantinople, their share in the Ottoman tea trade was the smallest. According to the Trade Report of the Trabzon for the year 1909, the smallest quantity and lowest value belonged to France in the share of tea imports to Trabzon.¹⁶³ It is quite natural for a country that lacked tea production in its colonies and had a population that preferred coffee over tea to fall behind countries such as Britain and the Netherlands, countries with tea plantations in their colonies and monopolized tea trade from the beginning.

A series of documents suggest that in 1904 some French companies imported tea from Britain to the ports of Tripoli. Still, Ottoman officials detained them at customs because they were considered colored and mixed with noxious ingredients. The customs officials kept the teas at the customs for a long time until the arrival of an analytical chemist. The French Embassy, as a result, wanted compensation to be paid by the Ottoman State for the losses of the aforementioned French traders.¹⁶⁴

According to the report of the year 1909-1910 on the trade and commerce of the Trabzon Vilayet by Consul Longworth, the total tea imports to this port for the Anatolian distribution

¹⁶² BOA.HR.TH.247/88 (13.10.1900).

¹⁶³ Report on the Trade and Commerce of the Trebizond Vilayet for the Year 1909, By Mr. Consul Longworth, 15-16.

¹⁶⁴ BOA.BEO.2426/181876 (05.10.1904), BOA.BEO.2473/185423 (01.01.1905).

valued at 13,810 sterlings and only five sterlings were the value of the tea imports from France.

3.4 Tea Imports from Germany and Austria

According to F.W. Reinhold Elfeld, the Ottoman consul in Bremen, this city in northwestern Germany exported food products and beverages to the Ottoman Empire, and tea was among these items.¹⁶⁵ German tea trading firms partnered with local Ottoman merchants, such as the Ottoman Greek tea merchant Athenais Klotaridis. Klotaridis was a merchant from Constantinople who imported tea from Hamburg via a German firm named *G.W.A Westphal Sohn und Co.* We learn from documents that in 1896 he ordered 229 kg of Souchong tea (a Chinese tea variation) for 4.40 Francs per kilo. Even though the German firm informed him that they embarked the tea on the ship *Murillo*, belonging to the navigation firm *Thomas Wilson und Sohn*, the ordered tea arrived much later than expected and stayed at customs for too long. The tea that was ordered by Klotaridis soon deteriorated by the humidity at the customs, and charges began to accumulate so much that he resorted to calling off the partnership with *Westphal und Sohn* and sent the German firm a notarized notification claiming that their partnership dissolved and all customs charges belonged to their firm.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ *Şehbender Raporlarına Göre I. Dünya Savaşı Öncesi Osmanlı Ticareti*, 104-105. The food and beverage products that were imported from Germany during the years 1911-1912, other than tea, were beer, coffee, wine, tobacco, dried fruits, grain, and rice.

¹⁶⁶ BOA, HR.UHM.20/16 (14.03.1896), BOA.HR.TH.171/107 (26.03.1896). In the latter document, Klotaridis was referred to as Atanaş Flotaridi and the German firm as Jeme Avestafalon Kumpanyası. When we read this document and compare it with the first one, we understand that his name was Athenais Klotaridis, and the name of the firm is G.W.A Westphal und, Sohn. The Ottoman scribe most probably wrote what he heard, as it happens often.

Occasionally we also see documents that suggest tea was traded between the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires. For instance, certain brothers who engaged in Fiume's tea and coffee trade applied for a permit to embellish their shop in Fiume¹⁶⁷ with the Ottoman coat of arms.¹⁶⁸ Similarly, Colbus Manil, who was a subject of the Austrian Empire, applied for authorization to put his trademark symbol on the packages of coffee, tea, and cocoa that he imported from Austria and sold in Constantinople.¹⁶⁹

Documents show that the Ottoman Empire continued to import tea from German tea trading firms. In 1904, the Ottoman custom house in Tripoli detained the teas that German firms sent on the basis that they were synthetically colored and not pure. Since these teas were detained for too long (eight months) at the customs, they were damaged by high humidity ("şiddet-i harâret-den nâsi halel"). When they were proved to be pure, contrary to the results of the tests, the German Embassy asked the Ottoman government to pay compensation for their loss of 135 francs and 90 cents.¹⁷⁰

3.5 Tea Imports from the Netherlands

¹⁶⁷ Fiume, a city located in the northern tip of the Kvarner Gulf in the northern Adriatic, belonged to the Habsburg Empire at the time. It is now called Rijeka and is a city in modern day Croatia.

¹⁶⁸ BOA, HR.TH.265/75 (06.03.1902) In the catalogue these brothers were referred as "Dezinger" Brothers and in the document itself they were written as "Deyeniger" Brothers. I assume that these brothers were in fact Ottoman subjects who happened to have a tea and coffee shop in Fiume and the name derived from a misunderstanding of a German translation. Since "der jenige" is a demonstrative pronoun in German.

¹⁶⁹ BOA, ZB.362/114 (05.05.1903).

¹⁷⁰ BOA, HR.TH.321/86 (25.07.1905).

The earliest document that suggests the Ottoman Empire imported tea from the Netherlands dates from 1870. It was claimed in this document that the Ottoman customs detained the sugar and tea that were imported to the Ottoman ports by Dutch merchants (Mr. Moreau and Co. from Amsterdam and Mr. Voeg and Co. from Rotterdam¹⁷¹). They sent a notification to the Ottoman government on that account via the Netherlands Embassy.¹⁷²

Later during the First World War, the Ottomans resorted to importing tea from the Netherlands when there was a tea shortage because they lost their principal partner in the tea trade (Britain). However, that was not an easy task to accomplish. At first, the Ottoman Government contacted the Embassy in Hague and asked to purchase 20.000 kg—of tea from the Netherlands. According to a document that W. Doude Van Troostwijk signed, the request for this tea purchase was denied since the Dutch merchants were unwilling to export tea abroad, which would cause their business to decline. Later the Ottoman Ambassador Nusret Sadullah Bey (Ayaşlı) sent a note about a Dutch commissioner from Amsterdam named *Goldwurm* who claimed that he could smuggle the needed 20 000 kg of Java tea from the Netherlands and deliver the tea to someone whom the Ottoman government would choose in Germany. He requested 7.5 florins for each kilo of the smuggled tea worth 2 florins. Even though the Ottomans warned him about the expense of his business, he stated that he would not do it for any less than the mentioned amount. Nusret Bey indicated that he was against this purchase, considering its costliness. Still, it was up to the Municipality of Constantinople (*Şehremaneti*) to decide whether to engage

¹⁷¹ “Amsterdamlı Mösyö Moro ve şurekası ile Roterdamlı Mösyö Vog ve Şurekası”.

¹⁷² BOA, HR.TO.187/17 (14.09.1870).

in business with this commissioner, who expected an answer in four days.¹⁷³ Unfortunately, we do not know the rest of this story.

According to a document from 1920, we understand that in 1914 the Ottoman Empire imported tea from the Netherlands via the agency of a Dutch firm based in Amsterdam named “Plat Van Hozde” (*Plate et Van Heusde*). However, the Ottoman officials in Constantinople¹⁷⁴ detained 747 kg of tea imported by Van Heusde and gave these merchants a receipt of 20.252 guruş. The document states that after the peace, this firm should be paid according to Van Heusde’s prices.¹⁷⁵ It was probably an order set before the war broke out. When the delivery arrived in Constantinople, the consignment was confiscated by the Ottomans according to the policy of War Taxes (*tekalif-i harbiye*).

3.6 Britain- Predominance in Importing Tea into the Ottoman Empire

If we look at the imports to the Ottoman Empire between 1878 and 1913, we will see that Britain has the highest percentage.¹⁷⁶ Britain (including British colonies) does not lose its place at the top when we look at the values and volume of tea imports rather than imports to the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁷³ BOA.HR.İD.1274/11 (22.01.1916).

¹⁷⁴ “İstanbul Vilayeti Tekalif-i Harbiye Komisyonunca”.

¹⁷⁵ BOA, DH.İ.UM.4/5 (24.02.1920).

¹⁷⁶ *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Ticari Muvazenesi 1878-1913*, ed. Celal Aybar, T.C Başvekalet İstatistik Umum Müdürlüğü Neşriyat No:132, Tetkikler Seri No:73 (Ankara: Zerbamat Yayınevi, 1939), 47.

The earliest document that suggested the Ottoman Empire imported tea from Britain was dated 1859. According to this document, the Ottomans imported 86 okes of tea from Britain in that year. While the lowest value for the imported tea was indicated as 2112 £, the highest value was 161 90 £.¹⁷⁷

The British Consul General in Smyrna, Consul Cumberbatch, stated in his report on the trade and commerce of Smyrna of 1897-1899 that “a large portion of the imported tea to this region with a value of 10.000 sterlings was transshipped via Britain which was originally from China and India.”¹⁷⁸ Similarly, we learn from reports written by the British consuls on the trade and commerce of other significant Ottoman port cities, such as Constantinople and Trabzon, that tea imports from Britain often came in the first place. For instance, a report by the British Consul Waugh on the trade of Constantinople and Districts from 1907 stated that out of 114,488¹⁷⁹ sterling pounds of tea imports, 90,057 sterling pounds of tea was coming from the United Kingdom (including India).¹⁸⁰ According to the report of the year 1909-1910 on the trade and commerce of the Trabzon Vilayet by Consul Longworth, the total tea imports to this port for the Anatolian distribution valued at 13,810 sterlings¹⁸¹ and the lion’s share was the imports from the United Kingdom valued 12,575 sterlings.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ BOA, HRS.SFR.3.58/25 (24.08.1859) In the same document where £=167 Piastres, the lowest value for coffee from West Indies and Brazil was 113,449 £, and the highest was 226,343£. The lowest value for mocha was 151,260£, and the highest was 277,307£. While tea was shipped in okes, coffee, and mocha were shipped in 100 okes, according to this document.

¹⁷⁸ *İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporlarına Göre İzmir Ticareti (1864-1914)*, (İzmir Ticaret Odası, 1998), 145.

¹⁷⁹ All countries’ tea import values from March 14, 1905, to March 13, 1906.

¹⁸⁰ Turkey: Report on the Trade of Constantinople and District for the year 1907 By Consul Waugh, 4.

¹⁸¹ 3,770 cwts.

¹⁸² 3,390 cwts. United Kingdom was followed by tea imports from Russia with a value of 360 sterlings, while tea directly from India and France constituted a small portion of tea imports to the Trabzon port (40 sterlings and 5 sterlings respectively). Consul Longworth noted that “other countries” imported tea of 830 sterlings value to this port. See graphic no.

Consul Cumberbatch, in his report of 1897 on Smyrna's trade, indicated that tea consumption increased every year even though coffee was still preferred over tea.¹⁸³

Heathcote-Smith, the British Consul in Smyrna during 1912, also notes that the importation of tea from Britain to the Ottoman Empire was growing. However, it was still not very significant in terms of value and quantity. According to his report on the trade of Smyrna, in 1905, 57 tons of tea were imported, whereas, in 1912, tea was imported 180 tons and 14,000£ in value.¹⁸⁴

Münci Fikri Bey, the Ottoman consul (*başşehbender*) in London during 1906, advised the Ottoman merchants who wanted to trade with Britain. He advised them to visit England and English factories claiming that this travel and accommodation (including food expenses) was quite affordable. He added that those eager to travel to Britain should get a recommendation letter from the chamber of commerce of their vilayets. He advocated that merchants who got a recommendation letter from their vilayets would be assisted by the Ottoman consulate in London, including recommendation letters addressed to English factory managers.¹⁸⁵

Similarly, an Armenian merchant, Misak Vasiyan Efendi from Erzurum, applied for a recommendation letter from his vilayet to engage in direct trade with London and import tea to Erzurum in 1910. The governor of Erzurum wrote to the Ottoman Consulate in London in his favor. The governor stated in his letter that during his time here, he only witnessed the cooperation and good conduct of merchant Misak Vasiyan, and he was

¹⁸³ *İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporlarına Göre İzmir Ticareti (1864-1914)*, 145.

¹⁸⁴ *İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporlarına Göre İzmir Ticareti (1864-1914)*, 298.

¹⁸⁵ *Şehbender Raporlarına göre Dünya Savaşı Öncesi Osmanlı Ticareti*, 50.

trustworthy. We also learn from this document that the Ottoman consulate in London was asked to provide him with the names of two successful companies engaged in the tea trade.¹⁸⁶

Undoubtedly, the importance of trade in Erzurum rested on two major factors. One was the British trade and commerce in the Black Sea, and the other was the revival of the Trabzon-Tabriz transit trade route. “Originally, English vessels were granted the privileges of commerce in the Black Sea with an act of 1799, and this act was confirmed by the Treaty of 1809”.¹⁸⁷ The British commercial presence was further strengthened by the Commercial Convention of 1838, and around the same time, the Trabzon-Tabriz route started to be revived. Consul Longworth reported that “there were 733 miles of roads in this vilayet, of which scarcely 370 miles are properly macadamized and fit for carriage traffic. The Trabzon-Erzurum Highway was the only one with a permanent though a small body of overseers and navvies. Its importance lies in being the transit trade route to Persia”.¹⁸⁸

The position of Trabzon as an international trading port was so crucial for the British that “it was represented by a vice-consul who was carrying a political and strategic position.”¹⁸⁹ In their yearly reports on the trade and commerce of Trabzon, these consuls gave statistical data about the imports from Britain destined for the Anatolian trade and Persian transit trade separately. The volume and quantity destined for the Persian trade often surpassed those destined for the Anatolian trade.

¹⁸⁶ BOA, HR.SFR.3.619/23 (18.05.1910).

¹⁸⁷ Emine Zeytinli “A British Merchant in Turkey: Freeman of the Levant Company and Consul, Donald Sandison at Bursa, 1795-1868”, *Tarih Dergisi* (2018), 42.

¹⁸⁸ Report on the Trade and Commerce of the Trebizond Vilayet for the Year 1901 By Consul Longworth.

¹⁸⁹ Emine Zeytinli “A British Merchant in Turkey: Freeman of the Levant Company and Consul, Donald Sandison at Bursa, 1795-1868”, 43.

3.7 Challenges of Importing Tea to Constantinople

The British Consul Waugh indicated in two of his reports of the years 1901 and 1904 on the trade and commerce of Constantinople that buyers of tea who used to come here from the cities such as İzmir (Smyrna), Trabzon, Samsun, Salonica, and Beyrout decided to engage in direct trade due to the many difficulties they encountered in Constantinople and the costliness of passing the imported articles in transit through Constantinople. In both of these reports, he argued that travel restrictions of the Ottoman police handicapped the Constantinopolitan trade for local merchants from Anatolia. He stated that visiting the capital for Armenian merchants was “almost impossible.”

It was also very expensive due to daily increasing customhouse charges on all operations. For instance, for tea imports, the charges per ton, say 22 cases of 100lbs. landed on the quay, a merchant had to pay approximately 115,85 piastres.¹⁹⁰

The British incessantly complained about the high storage charges called *ardieh* (*ardiye*).¹⁹¹ We see these complaints in the trade reports of the consuls, Ottoman Foreign Office documents, and The British Foreign Office Confidential Print for the Middle East. Waugh argues in his report that “merchants should be warned against allowing goods to lie in the Turkish Customs house. The storage charges are extremely high and soon swallow up the

¹⁹⁰ 25 piastres for steamers landing charges, Quay dues between 33-50 piastres, 10 percent additional quay dues on cargo landed from steamers not berthed at the quay between 3-35 piastres, handling charges (droit de manutention) 10 piastres, portorage to merchants store (say 2 piastres per case) 44 piastres make a total of 115,85 piastres.

¹⁹¹ The Ottoman Turkish word *ardiye* أرضية means (customhouse) storage in English and *dépôt* (de la douane) in French.

value of the goods. Eight days are allowed from the date of the arrival of goods, and beginning from the ninth day charges storage called ardieh.”¹⁹²

According to a group of Foreign Office documents from the Ottoman State Archives, the British Embassy asked for an exemption of ardieh tax in 1886 in the name of a British tea firm defrauded by its fictitious customers who were supposed to buy their tea packages in Constantinople. In 1884 a particular person named Benadi from Constantinople ordered a British tea firm to send tea packages to Constantinople for a group of alleged Persian buyers who did not exist in reality, as it turns out. When the fraud was discovered after some time passed, the British wanted to reship the tea packages to London, which were stored at the customhouse in Constantinople. The British firm entrusted the issue to Mr. Donald and Mr. Morton, agents of a shipping company. However, the customhouse refused to give them the necessary permission to reship all the tea packages back to London. At first, the Ottoman custom administration permitted the re-shipment of 191 packages of tea. So, the British Embassy sent a note to the Porte relating to the deposit made to customs of the remaining 128 tea packages belonging to this British firm in London, packets of which were still charged with duty. The British Embassy asked the Ottoman government to exempt these tea packages from duty charges and let them re-embark to England.¹⁹³

Another document that looked like a separate case of dispute over high storage tax between the Ottoman custom house and the local trading agent of a British tea trading company

¹⁹² Report on the Trade of Constantinople for the year 1902 by Vice Consul Waugh, 21. “On packets weighing up to 4 cwts, ½ d a day; from 4 to 8 cwts, 1d; from 8n to 12 cwts., 1 ½ d; from 12 to 16 cwts., 2d; from 16 cwts. to 1 ton 2 ½ d; on packages weighing over 1 ton, 3 d a day”.

¹⁹³ BOA, HR.TH 64/46 (16.10.1886), BOA, HR.HMŞ.İŞO.158/72(16.10.1886), BOA, HR.TH.70/97 (05.02.1887).

turned out to be related to the case after careful reading.¹⁹⁴ According to this document, a local merchant from Constantinople (this time, he was written as *Biazi*, not *Benadi*) ordered 319 cases¹⁹⁵ of tea from Britain, these tea cases waited for a very long time at the custom house, and they wanted to re-ship them to where it came from. Thanks to this document, we learn that the Ottoman government decided to charge them a storage tax for only sixty days instead of more than 70.000 guruş storage tax considering their losses over a long time.

Similarly, in 1873 another local Greek merchant from Constantinople named Manulaki imported 114 crates of tea from Britain and refused to pay his storage tax in its entirety. He only paid half the necessary sum¹⁹⁶, and the Ottoman custom house detained his tea.¹⁹⁷

Various sources suggest that the Ottoman customs management took its job very seriously and followed every trade operation very closely to prevent any case of fraud, epidemics, and smuggling at their ports. For example, in 1904, the Ottoman government warned the British Embassy when ships in service of the British Embassy that carried tea, sugar, candle, and other items passed without notifying the Ottoman customs even though the Ottoman Foreign Office previously favored them with an exemption of customs tax.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴ BOA, MV 9/29 ((13.04.1886).

¹⁹⁵ 191 packages of tea that were permitted to be sent back to London plus 128 packages of tea still at the storage of the custom house equals the same amount (319).

¹⁹⁶ 14.022 guruş.

¹⁹⁷ The “infamous” Manulaki was known to call himself “Saray-i Hümayûn Cenâb-ı Mülûkâne Çaycibaşısı” (the official tea purveyor of his Majesty the Sultan). According to Manulaki, he obtained permission from zabita to erect an imperial monogram over his tea shop. However, it was later discovered to be far from the truth. See BOA, Y.MTV.68/27 also see Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909*, (London: IB Tauris, 1999), 34.

¹⁹⁸ BOA, HR.TH.308/66 (06.09.1904).

On October 4th, 1904, Lord Lansdowne, the British secretary of state for Foreign Affairs (1900-1905), communicated to Musurus Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador in London, certain complaints on the part of the British commerce against the Ottoman administration. These were “the stamp law, customs complaints (non-recognition of the British Pharmacopœia, treatment of safes and tinned goods, detention of tea and confectionary on pre-text of noxious ingredients), shipping complaints, excessive and unnecessary quarantine, and excessive sanitary dues.”¹⁹⁹

Numerous documents from the Ottoman State Archives indicated that such an incident occurred at the Tripoli customs in 1904. According to these documents, teas that some German and French firms imported from Britain arrived at Tripoli customs and were detained since customs officials considered them not pure tea.²⁰⁰ Samples from each tea variation were sent to the Imperial School of Medicine (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane*) to be examined. The Embassies conducted their own examination of the teas in question and warned the Turkish government that if the results of these examinations did not arrive in three weeks, they would ask for compensation for their losses.²⁰¹

On the same subject, the British vice-consul in Smyrna, Heathcote Smith, indicated in his report on the Smyrna trade of the year 1910 that “according to the Ottoman custom regulations, all edible and drinkable goods²⁰² must be in good and healthy conditions. Moreover, tea and coffee should be without any colorants and noxious ingredients”.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ FO+424_209_5, also see FO+424_207_5, lists the same complaints, such as “detention of tea at Tripoli and confectionery at Constantinople on the pretext of noxious ingredients.”

²⁰⁰ “Gayr-i sâhî ve telvîn idilmiş” (impure and mixed).

²⁰¹ BOA.ŞD.2747/50 (11.08.1905), BOA.HR.TH.323/29 (27.08.1905).

²⁰² “me’kûlât ve meşrûbât”

²⁰³ *İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporlarına Göre İzmir Ticareti (1864-1914)*, 263.

3.8 Conclusion

As the pioneers in the international tea trade and introducing the other Europeans to tea, the Portuguese and the Dutch lost their advantage in the tea trade between Europe and East Asia during the nineteenth century, especially in its second half when the British succeeded in producing massive amounts of tea in their East Indian Colonies.

Increased military, diplomatic and social relations with the Europeans during the Tanzimat Era, especially after the Crimean War (1853-1856), increased the demand for tea in the Ottoman market due to increased foreign population in the Empire, particularly in Constantinople and other port cities but also increased the exposure of the Ottomans especially the ruling elite to the tea consuming Europeans. When the Russians lost their advantage in trade with the Ottomans to the British in the mid-nineteenth century, particularly following the Crimean War, the British increasingly got hold of the Ottoman tea trade until the First World War, as statistics of the Ottoman imports and British consul reports showed us.

While the trade statistics of the British consuls in the Ottoman port cities and Ottoman archival documents pointed out that the Ottoman Empire imported tea from Northern Germany, France, Austria, Italy, America, and the Netherlands, the biggest slice of the cake still belonged to the British.

CHAPTER IV: TEA FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN WORLD

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in an age of steamship and telegraph, the relations between the Indian Ocean World and the Ottoman Empire were brought together closer than ever. These places, which were geographically thousands of miles apart, were drawn closer to each other after the introduction of iron, steel, and steamships during the 1830s and 1840s, with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and thanks to the new technologies of communication such as telegraphs and proliferation of newspapers. The contribution to this closeness of the Ottoman merchants living and trading in the Indian Ocean World, Muslim communities in these regions, and the Ottoman consuls appointed to these politically and economically important cities was no less significant.

This chapter proposes that we first try to understand the context of the Ottoman Empire's relations with the South Asian and Southeast Asian places under colonial rule and look at the tea trade in a broader world rather than in isolation. In this way, every document related to the tea trade between the Ottoman and Southeast Asian ports makes more sense when evaluated with contextual information.

The history of tea in South and Southeast Asia does not go as far back as Chinese or Japanese tea. The Dutch and the British, who developed a taste and addiction to tea during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries²⁰⁴, depended entirely on the Chinese tea market, whose high prices emptied their state treasuries. So they decided to experiment with tea cultivation in their colonies in South and Southeast Asia. The British also devised a solution to cope with the flow of silver coins from the state treasury.

Exchanging tea for opium, they grew in their Indian colonies. While experimentation and production of tea began in this part of the world in the first half of the nineteenth century, tea production in massive amounts on plantations in India, Ceylon, and Batavia only started around the 1860s. In Eastern India, there were more than fifty businesses growing tea by 1860. Still, more than 70% of the teas offered for sale in London in 1879 came from China. By 1900, however, Black tea from India and Ceylon made up the majority of the market when China's stake had drastically decreased to 10%.²⁰⁵ Before going into details about how South Asian tea ended up in the Ottoman market, let us briefly explain how tea cultivation began in this part of the world.

²⁰⁴ The consumption of tea in England, for instance, “from 1784 to 1795, inclusive, 12 years, increased 350 percent!” but as the duty on the tea imports increased, and the prices rose with them, the consumption decreased due to the expensiveness of the product. However, the population was already addicted to tea, from the richest to the poorest, since tea and dry bread were the only sustenance for the poor. “From the beginning of the 19th century until 1845, 1,385,949,566 lbs. of tea had been sold in England.” See in Gideon Nye Jr. of Canton, *Tea and The Tea Trade*, Third Edition, New York: 1850), 16-18. Montgomery Martin noted the quantity of tea exported from Canton by the Dutch as 5,334,000 lbs. According to Martin 90, 535 chests were sent from China to the Netherlands in 1818 and 26, 392 chests in 1829, see in Montgomery R. Martin, *The past and present state of the tea trade of England and of the continents of Europe and America*, (London, 1832), 29-31.

²⁰⁵ Bishnupriya Gupta, “The History of the International Tea Market, 1850-1945”. *EH.Net Encyclopedia*, edited by Robert Whaples. March 16, 2008. URL <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-history-of-the-international-tea-market-1850-1945/>.

4.1 The History of Tea Cultivation in South and Southeast Asia

The British laid the seeds for the Indian tea in Assam in the first half of the nineteenth century and made it a great success in a few decades. By the end of the nineteenth century, the British established large plantations of tea throughout India, such as in Assam and Darjeeling, which reached up to half a million acres. To guarantee the profits made by tea production in India and that the labor legislation remained as they wanted, they also established an organization called The Indian Tea Association. Thus, eighty-five percent of the profits went to Britain, and only fifteen percent remained in India.²⁰⁶ Although China suffered considerably from the competition of Indian Tea production, the main rival of the British tea plantations in India were the tea plantations set up in Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka).

“By the 1880s and 1890s, Indian and Ceylon tea dominated the world markets.”²⁰⁷

Although it had its own administrative structure, Ceylon became a British crown colony in 1802. The island, which has been under the control of the British East India Company since the 1790s and used to depend on the coffee and cinnamon trade, started to produce tea by a quirk of fate when a fungus of coffee spoiled the crops. It was as late as 1867 when the first commercial tea was produced on the estate of a Scotsman in Ceylon. Erika Rappaport indicated in her book that even though “the start-up costs were high, growers could profit more quickly since tea was plucked year-round in Ceylon rather than

²⁰⁶ Laura C. Martin, *Tea: The Drink that Changed the World*, 166.

²⁰⁷ Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton University Press, 2017), 138.

seasonally as it was done in India and China.”²⁰⁸ In the end, Ceylon could rival India's tea production and quality.

Just as the British looked for ways to take the *Camellia Sinensis* out of China and cultivate it in their colonies and finally managed to smuggle it with the help of a Scottish botanist named Robert Fortune, as told in the previous chapter, the Dutch also guaranteed its tea to plant it in their colonies thanks to a Dutchman named Jacobson.

Whose father was a coffee and tea broker and who himself worked for the Netherlands Trading Company as their expert tea master in Canton somehow managed to smuggle 7.000.000 tea seeds and Chinese workers with planters and tea makers among them.²⁰⁹

The first tea plants and seeds were smuggled from Japan in 1824. They were “sprouted at a botanical garden in Batavia under the chief commissioner of agriculture,”²¹⁰ who was no one but Jacobson himself. As a result of their endeavors, the first commercial sample of Dutch tea was produced in Java in 1828. The production continued to expand thanks to privately-owned British and Dutch plantations and the backing of the colonial government starting from the 1860s. “The Dutch tea industry was thus a multinational project with several forms of production such as green and scented teas grown by the small-holders for local markets and the plantation-grown black tea that dominated the export trade.”²¹¹

²⁰⁸ Ibid.,143.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.,111-112.

²¹⁰ Erika Rappaport, *A Thirst for Empire How Tea Shaped the Modern World*, 111-112.

²¹¹ Ibid.

4.2 Ottomans' Cooperation with the Muslims of South Asia and Southeast Asia

In the mentioned timeframe, there was a shifting economic power or a highly competitive economy between the Europeans and Muslims (Ottoman or non-Ottoman, such as Arab, Indian, and Javanese). While the former kind of merchants had the backing of their colonial states and technological superiority, the latter had been involved with the Indian Ocean trade for centuries and had accumulated money and experience. Rather than “accepting their fate and remaining passive and inert”²¹² in the face of the challenges of a changing economy and technology, they tried to adapt to the new circumstances and searched for the support of Muslim power, in other words, cooperation with the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II, as the head of the Muslim umma, was already eager to reinforce the relationship with the Muslims in South and Southeast Asia. Apart from the already exhausted subjects in the literature, such as *the Relief Movement* and *the Khilafat Movement*, what were some of the consequences of this relationship? Since the chapter will deal with complaints of the Ottoman merchants and the opening of Ottoman consulates in the following pages, it will briefly introduce two other results of this closeness. One of them is the support of the Ottoman Sultan to help the Muslim merchants in their pilgrimage traffic between Hedjaz and India. While the transport of pilgrims between South Asia and the Holy Lands had been in the hands of Muslim shipowners and merchants, in the late nineteenth century, they were losing the upper hand to the technologically advantageous British steamers and shipping companies. Thus,

²¹² Takashi Oishi, “Muslim Merchant Capital and the Relief Movement for the Ottoman Empire in India, 1876-1924”, *Journal of the Japan Association for South Asian Studies*, Vol. 11 (1999), 79.

Abdülhamid II decided to lend them Ottoman steamers of the “*Idâre-i Mahsûsa* (The Special Branch), which was the Imperial Shipping Line of Steamers directly managed by the Sultan.”²¹³ Firstly he appointed an Ottoman merchant residing in Hedjaz to inspect the situation, to contact merchants from several South Asian cities such as Bombay, Karachi, and Calcutta, and appointed an agent for *Idâre-i Mahsûsa* in each city. The steamers were sent to transport goods as well as people. However, this proved an expensive venture for the Ottoman State since they had to renovate these ships with equipment fit for the British shipping regulations.

Another outcome of this closeness was a desire among the Muslim South Asians and Southeast Asians to provide an Ottoman education for their children. In other words, we may say that economic cooperation brought about cultural and intellectual cooperation in a sense. “For instance, in 1911, the Young Muslim Association of Bengal proposed to the Ottoman government, and one of the articles of the proposal was to send Indian Muslim children to Constantinople to be boarded and educated for free.”²¹⁴ In Dutch East Indies, the Ottoman consul of Batavia, Kamil Bey, arranged a program of scholarships in 1898 for the children of indigenous Muslim families to get an education in Constantinople at *Mekteb-i Şahane* (Galatasaray Lyceum) and *Mülkiye Mektebi* (The Civil Service School).²¹⁵ Even though more Malaccan and Javanese parents had requested the admission of their sons to Constantinopolitan schools, and indeed Kamil Bey intended to send thirty more students from Batavia, it was denied by the foreign Minister Tevfik Bey

²¹³ Takashi Oishi, “Muslim Merchant Capital and the Relief Movement for the Ottoman Empire in India, 1876-1924”, 89.

²¹⁴ Takashi Oishi, “Muslim Merchant Capital and the Relief Movement for the Ottoman Empire in India, 1876-1924”, 90-91.

²¹⁵ Frial Ramadhan Supratman “Rafet Bey the Last Ottoman Consul in Batavia during the First World War, 1911-1924” *Studia Islamika Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies*, Vol.24, No.1 (2017), 36-37.

because there was a lack of funds for their scholarships. When the Dutch authorities realized that these schools were not tekkes but modern educational institutions and overcame their fears of Panislamism, they allowed more students to go to Constantinople. In the end, in 1899, seven more students from Java were sent to Constantinople, this time to study at the *Aşiret Mektebi* (The School of Tribes), which offered free boarding and tuition.²¹⁶

4.3 Trade Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Indian Ocean World

The period when the trade relations began to intensify between South Asia and the Ottoman Empire roughly coincided with the period when the importation and consumption of tea flourished in the Ottoman Empire. During Sultan Abdulmecid's reign, especially during and after the Crimean War, trade in South Asia and Southeast Asia and tea importation increased compared to the earlier periods. During this period, not only trade but also religious and political relations were getting intensified. Shamshad Ali argues that "the British had emphasized the Caliphal position of the Ottoman Sultan to the Indian Muslims and in doing so they had two motives: to ensure Muslim allegiance to their rule in India and to build an Anglo-Islamic block against Russia, their great rival in

²¹⁶ Jan Schmidt, *Through the Legation Window 1876-1926 Four Essays on Dutch, Dutch-Indian and Ottoman History*, (Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut Istanbul, 1992), 91-94.

Asia.”²¹⁷ Thus, they sent “a great number of Indian Muslims to Crimea ‘to aid their brethren in faith’ and magnified the role of Turkey in the eyes of the Indian Muslims.”

In the nineteenth century, a sizeable Ottoman merchant community in India was already active in trade between the Ottoman and Indian ports. However, the British officials at ports and customs were creating hardships for the Ottoman merchants for some time, such as disobeying trade agreements and creating irregularities in tax tariffs.²¹⁸ When the complaints and the need for an Ottoman consul who would act on behalf of the Ottoman merchants began to multiply, the governor of Jeddah wrote to the government in *Bab-i Ali* about the requests of Ottoman merchants in distress and the need for an honorary Ottoman consul in Bombay. He even recommended someone to take the position, an Ottoman merchant, the *şeyhü'l-tüccar* (the head of merchants) Hacı Habib Yusuf.²¹⁹ Hence, the Ottoman government found this request appropriate and assigned this man as the first Ottoman consular agent in Bombay in 1848. This position was created for the trade to be appropriately managed and purely for economic reasons. It was not until 1870 that we saw someone sent from the capital (or other sehbenderhanes of the Ottoman State throughout the world) with a salary as the appointed and official Ottoman sehbender in Bombay. The first honorary consuls (*fahri sehbenders*) were local Ottoman merchants, already wealthy and active. They were not receiving salaries from the state, and “they were using their own offices or houses as there was not an official Ottoman Sehbenderhane until the establishment of Bombay Ottoman Consulate General in 1870”

²¹⁷ Shamsad Ali, “The Ottoman Caliphate and the British Imperialism in India”, *Proceeding of the Indian History Congress*, Vol 54 (1993), 740-741.

²¹⁸ Diren Çakılcı, “Hindistan’da Osmanlılar: Bombay Osmanlı Şehbenderliği”, *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, C25/Güz (2015), 85.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 84.

during Abdulaziz's reign.²²⁰ Diren Çakılcı argues that during Abdulaziz's reign, the reciprocal trade intensified between Bombay and the Ottoman Empire, and that is why negotiations began to finally establish the Ottoman consulate. However, the Sultan was probably aware of the need for an Ottoman Consulate in India. He was willing to establish one since the India Office had given a feast in honor of the Ottoman Caliph during his visit to London in 1867.²²¹

“The salary for the Ottoman Consul General in Bombay was 10.000 gurus and the highest amount paid to an Ottoman Sehbender throughout the world, including European cities between 1885-1902.”²²² One of the Consul Generals in Bombay appointed by the center with such a salary was the famous statesman and poet Abdülhak Hamid. In his letters that he wrote in Bombay, he complaints about money shortage, and as the Ottoman official in Bombay in the middle of the high society, he was expected to employ “fifteen servants, three carriages and five animals,”²²³ which meant the on-going expenses of this business were high but necessary to elevate the honor of the Ottoman State. To this end, he says that he borrowed money, which means 10.000 gurus for Bombay may not be considered high. Alternatively, there is also the possibility that he was not good at managing his expenses, and this high sum was a sign that the Consulate General in Bombay was significant in the eyes of the Sultan and the government, as was argued by Diren Çakılcı.

²²⁰ Ibid., 93.

²²¹ Ali, Shamsad, “The Ottoman Caliphate and the British Imperialism in India,” 742.

²²² Çakılcı, Diren, “Hindistan’da Osmanlılar: Bombay Osmanlı Şehbenderliği”, 92.

²²³ İnci Enginün, *Abdülhak Hamid’in Mektupları* (İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 1995), 300. “Onbeş uşak, üç araba, beş hayvan kullanmağa mutlaka mecburiyet. Olmazsa Osmanlı Devleti halkın gözünde piyade kalmış olur. Bizde ise para olmadığından borç ediyoruz”.

Abdulhak Hamid was followed by Ismail Zuhdu Bey, an able statesman who was the former Ottoman sehbender in Batavia (present-day Jakarta in Indonesia). As the new Ottoman Consul General in Bombay, Ismail Bey proposed to the Ottoman Government that new honorary consulates (*fahri şehbenderlikler*) should be opened in other South and Southeast Asian cities such as Calcutta, Madras, Karachi, and Colombo as these places are important centers for the Ottoman trade.²²⁴ It is curious that he also mentioned Calcutta and Colombo since these places already had honorary consuls. Shortly after the Ottoman government assigned a sehbender to Bombay, the Ottoman State assigned someone named Hacı Mehmed to Calcutta again in 1848 to satisfy the needs of the Ottoman merchants.²²⁵ Similarly, during Abdulaziz's reign, the Ottoman Ambassador to London, Kostaki Musurus Pasha, drew attention to the need for an Ottoman consulate in Colombo by stressing a considerable Ottoman merchant community. Thus, in 1864 a local elite called Hüseyin Aba Marikar was assigned as the Ottoman honorary consul in Colombo.²²⁶

Aside from guarding the economic interests of the Ottoman merchants and the safety of trade between Bombay, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, the sehbenders were apparently sending out *defters* (registers) about the import and export statistics of Bombay as expected from a sehbender. A Hariciyye document from Tercüme Odası stated that in 1871 a report of two years of import-export statistics was sent out to Istanbul from Bombay.²²⁷ However, the real defter is unfortunately missing.

²²⁴ BOA, HR.SFR.3.335/78. (17.08.1887)

²²⁵ BOA, İ.MSM.30/833 (03.05.1848).

²²⁶ Durmuş Akalın, "Relations with Ceylon Isle Muslims in the Late Period of Ottoman Empire," *Belgium*, No:10, (Summer 2015), 1365.

²²⁷ BOA, HR.TO.329/67 (31.07.1871).

4.4 Intensification of Relations during Abdülhamid II's Reign

Even though the diplomatic and trade relations with India and other places in Southeast Asia started to increase during the Tanzimat period, they intensified even more during Abdülhamid II's reign. An increase in the number of consular correspondence alone is a good sign for this increase in relations of trade but also and, more importantly, political and religious relations. Henry Layard, the British Ambassador in Constantinople between 1877-1880, "remarked that Abdülhamid II was especially sensitive on his position and authority as Caliph. The Caliphate was the key to implementing many of his domestic and foreign policies. Hence, his actions were guided by his ambition to wield power and influence over the Muslims in various parts of the world."²²⁸ It is even suggested in various sources that he launched the journey of the Ottoman frigate Ertugrul to the Japanese Empire not to intensify the relations with the Japanese Empire as was expected but to increase the loyalty and devotion amongst the Muslim communities in India and Ceylon. The frigate indeed had stopped at Indian Ocean ports such as Bombay, Colombo, and Singapur on its way to Japan in 1899. It was welcomed by the Muslim population in these cities, which showed a great interest to the Ottoman frigate and its crew.

Before Abdülhamid II's reign, there were four Ottoman consulates in South and Southeast Asia: Bombay, Calcutta, Colombo, and Singapore.²²⁹ Abdulhamid opened new

²²⁸ Ali, Shamshad, "The Ottoman Caliphate and the British Imperialism in India," 744.

²²⁹ "The Ottoman consulate in Singapore was opened in 1864 during Abdulaziz's reign. Sayyid Abdallah al Junied, a Singapore-based Hadrami, became the honorary consul". See Rashed Chowdhury, "Pan-Islamism and Modernisation During the Reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, 1876-1909" (unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, McGill University, 2011), 251.

Ottoman consulates to operate in other Southeast Asian cities. What was proposed by Ismail Zuhdu Bey in 1887 was completed in 1891 with the establishment of Ottoman consulates in Madras in 1890 and Karachi in 1891. In addition, he answered the complaints of “*Hadrami* merchants living in Batavia (the capital of Dutch East Indies on the island of Java, today’s Jakarta in Indonesia) who claimed that the Dutch colonial authorities mistreated them in 1873.”²³⁰ The Dutch also mistreated Ottoman merchants who frequented the island of Java for trade purposes, and they also petitioned the Ottoman State to open a consulate in Java. It was indicated in this petition that some merchants coming from Jeddah with Ottoman passports were ill-treated by the Dutch officials as soon as they embarked on the island, they were arrested and expelled from the island.²³¹ It was argued in the petition that this incident showed that possessing an Ottoman passport had no importance in the eyes of the Dutch officials.

Abdulhamid opened an Ottoman Consulate in Batavia in 1883 and appointed consuls as it was an honorary consulate and an official Ottoman consulate such as the one in Bombay. Moreover, “When the Ottomans wanted to appoint a new consul in Singapore in 1901, the British allowed them to officially declare him a consul and, for the first time, to appoint an Ottoman subject to the post. Thus, the Ottoman consulate was upgraded from an unofficial honorary consulate to a full-blown consulate.”²³²

²³⁰ Ibid., 246.

²³¹ BOA, HR.T0.545/90 (24.03.1914), “Şöyle ki Cidde’den ticaret kasdıyla Cava’ya gelen ve 9,10, 11,12 ve 61 numarolu Osmanlı pasaportlarını hâmil olan birkaç nefer tebaa-ı seniyyeleri daha iskeleye çıkar çıkmaz Felemenk me’murları tarafından enva’i eziyete ma’rûz kalmışlardır ki Osmanlı pasaportunun hâ’iz-i itibâr olmadığını ‘alenen söylemekle beraber tebaa-ı merkûm kullarına zincir takub ilkâ itmişler...vapurla Cava arazisi hâricine çıkarılmışlardır”.

²³² Rashed Chowdhury, “Pan-Islamism and Modernisation During the Reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, 1876-1909”, 252.

Correspondence among the Ottoman Consulate in Colombo, The Ottoman Embassy in London, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Constantinople multiplied during Abdülhamid II's reign thanks to his Pan-Islamist policy and technology of telegrams. There are numerous documents about the assignment of new consuls and donations made by the Muslims in Ceylon to help the Ottoman State in various projects, such as the Hijaz Railway and its military efforts in the Italo-Turkish and Balkan Wars. Fortunately, not all correspondence concerns the Ceylon Muslims praying for the Ottomans, donating money for their causes, or celebrating the Caliph's birthday (or his enthronement). There are also documents about trade in the Ottoman State Archives.

4.5 Tea Imports from the Indian Ocean World to the Ottoman Empire

An Ottoman-Turkish firm *S. Cilali* (later *Şevki Hüsameddin*), which was established in 1869, had a tea store and a candle factory in Istanbul, Tahmis, and claimed to have a stock of Ceylon, Indian, Java, and Chinese teas purchased in origin that could be sold in wholesale or retail.²³³ The number of tea traders who claimed they were importing tea “directly” from India, Ceylon, Java, and China can increase. The newspaper advertisements of these tea trading companies advocated that some of these grand firms imported tea directly from Southeast Asian cities where tea of the highest quality was

²³³ Two receipts belonging to this firm from 1931 and 1936 show us that their store remained at its original site Tahmis, no:57, and it kept its trademark which was an elephant. However, the name (and most probably the company owner) had changed to *Şevki Hüsameddin*. They both had the same inscription on these receipts: “Menşe’lerinden celb edilen Seylan, Hindiye, Cava ve Çin Çayları transit olarak bulunur.”

produced. For instance, a tea trader Pagopoulos claimed that his firm imported their teas specifically and directly from China, Java, and India in an advertisement in the newspaper *Sabah*.²³⁴ Sarraf Aleksi claimed similarly that he was importing his tea from China, India, and Java directly.²³⁵

One document sent by the Ottoman consul in 1901 suggests that tea was being imported from the Colombo ports to the Ottoman ports. Still, he complained that nobody asked the consul for a *sıhhiye patenti* (bill of health) to import tea from Ceylon.²³⁶ At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were recurring cholera outbreaks in the Indian Ocean World, and it was a severe concern for the Ottomans since numerous correspondence and sources attest to this subject.²³⁷ The Ottoman State was so cautious that in 1904 the British complained to the Ottoman Ambassador in London about the “excessive and unnecessary quarantine, excessive sanitary dues and detention of tea and confectionery on the pretext of noxious ingredients at the Ottoman ports.”²³⁸

Two different sets of documents in the Ottoman State Archives refer to another consular problem written by the Ottoman consul in Colombo concerning the tea trade.²³⁹ These documents include a correspondence among the Ottoman Consulate in Colombo written by the Ottoman Consul Mohammad Macau Markar, the Ottoman Ambassador in London

²³⁴ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı Osmanlı'da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü* (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2012), 151. The mentioned newspaper is dated from October 26, 1903 (5 Şaban 1321). “Çin ve Cava ve Hindistan’dan doğrudan doğruya ve suret-i mahsusada getirtmiş olup cins ve neviine göre muhtelif fiyatlarla fûruht edilmekte olan çaylarımızın...”.

²³⁵ Ibid., 150.

²³⁶ BOA, BEO.1696/127175 (30.07.1901), “Seylan’dan çay ve diğer mahsulat ihrac olunmakda ise de bu gibi emti’a için şimdiye kadar bir sıhhiye patenti almak üzere hiç kimse tarafından müracaat yapılmamıştır”.

²³⁷ Çakılcı, Diren, “Hindistan’da Osmanlılar: Bombay Osmanlı Şehbenderliği”, 98. See also, BOA, Y.MTV.32/61 (08.05.1888), BOA.HR.SFR.3., 335/85 (25.11.1887), BOA.HR.SFR.3.325/36 (16.11.1886).

²³⁸ FO+424 209 5- Confidential Print “Proposed Resumption of Commercial Negotiations with Turkey.”

²³⁹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.548/8 (29.08.1904), HR.SFR.3.571/31 (11.05.1906).

Musurus Pasha, and Tevfik Paşa, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Constantinople. It all began on June 30, 1904, when Consul Markar wrote to Musurus Pasha stating that “an important tea trading firm from Colombo is going to import tea to the port of Trebizond, and it is the first time that this firm is going to import tea to a port in the Ottoman Empire.” According to Markar, this trading firm wanted him to give them a printed document relating to this kind of shipment which is tea. As the consul did not possess such a document explicitly printed for the shipment of tea, he said to them that he was ready to affix his visa on the merchandise manifest for Trebizond, and it was decided as such. However, he asked the Ottoman Ambassador in London to send him a printed document specific to tea shipment if the firm decided to continue their trade and shipping tea to Trebizond or any other Ottoman port, or if not, he asked Musurus Pasha to let him know “whether his visa alone in accordance with the 10th order of the Tariff (certificate of origin) would be enough”. On July 27, 1904, Musurus Pasha forwarded this subject to Tevfik Paşa and asked for his guidance. Tevfik Paşa responded to him on August 22 and said: “It would suffice for the consul to comply with the 10th article of the consular instructions, the certificate of origin issued to the exporters of this product”. Finally, Musurus Pasha informed the Ottoman consul in Colombo on August 29 about what was to be done (which was only a rephrasing of Tevfik Pasha’s letter). Unfortunately, we do not know the name of this firm that shipped tea to Ottoman ports or whether they continued to do so in the coming years.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, according to a table of “Turkish rates of duty and their incidence on principle articles of Indian Merchandise exported to Turkish

ports”²⁴⁰ from 1902, the Indian Government proposed to Lord G. Hamilton, the British secretary of State for India, the rate of duty in piasters per 100kg of tea was 130.00 which was the second-highest rate after silk. It was also added that.

Even on the revised figures, the incidence of the duties on tea and coffee was still very high, and they hoped a reduction might be possible. Furthermore, they thought that a moderate rate on tea at least might well be conceded by Turkey, as the revenue to be derived from the taxation of that article was not important.

There were times when tea was not imported as a trade item but gifted to the Ottomans from the Indian Ocean World. A couple of documents, for instance, suggest that tea as a product and a source on tea cultivation in the Indian Ocean World was gifted to the Ottomans.²⁴¹ In 1901, a civil servant of the Dutch colonial administration in Batavia, a certain Mr. Hobbes, sent the Ottoman Foreign Ministry a book on the agricultural methods of tea (and other products such as coffee and tobacco) in Batavia. He sent a letter with the book that kindly requested that his book would be presented to the Sultan. “As the issue has been assigned to the Council of Investigation and Inspection, it is understood that the said work deals with the cultivation methods of products such as coffee, tea, tobacco, cinchona, and indigo, as well as the administrative organization of the island of Java.”²⁴² After clarifying the book's content presented by Mr. Hobbes, the minister of education also stated that this work was found harmless. Thus it was suitable

²⁴⁰ FO+424_207_2, (Confidential Print from the Indian Government to Lord G. Hamilton (Calcutta, December 11, 1902).

²⁴¹ BOA, MF.MKT.595/28 (18.12.1901), BOA, Y.A.HUS.424/26 (20.01.1902).

²⁴² *Ottoman Southeast Asian Relations Sources from the Ottoman Archives*, ed. Ismail Hakkı Kadı and A.C.S. Peacock (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 546-548.

to be presented to the Caliph. However, we do not know whether it was really presented to Abdülhamid II, whether he read the book, or what he made of it.

Another example presented itself after the outbreak of the First Balkan War on October 31st, 1912, when Mr. W. Skinner, the secretary of the Indian Tea Association in London, wrote to his excellency the Ottoman Ambassador in London that “they would like to send 100 small boxes of tea for the use of the Turkish Field Hospitals and they would like to put the following inscription on the cases in Ottoman-Turkish script: “ ‘Pure Indian Tea’ presented by the Indian Tea Association.”²⁴³ Since they did not know the Turkish language, they kindly asked the ambassador that the writing should be translated into Turkish characters and sent as soon as possible to allow them an earlier shipment of the teas.

4.6 Indian Tea Imports in the Ottoman Empire According to British Consular Reports

Consul General Cumberbatch noted in his report on Izmir (Smyrna) trade that imported tea valued at 10.000 Sterlings came to Smyrna port mainly from India or China via Britain has been steadily growing even though coffee was still preferred over tea.²⁴⁴ In 1912, the value of the imported tea to Smyrna increased to 14 000 Sterlings and

²⁴³ BOA, HR.SFR.3.676/39 (31.10.1912).

²⁴⁴ İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporlarına Göre İzmir Ticareti (1864-1914), (İzmir Ticaret Odası, 1998), 145.

amounted to 180 tons, according to Consul General Heathcote Smith's report.²⁴⁵ The 1905 trade report of Izmir noted that India sent mostly jute bags, rice, cotton, and tea to this port.²⁴⁶

The same year's trade report on Constantinople (1905) written by Consul Waugh reported on "the Indian Import Trade to Constantinople" that tea consumption was 5,000 cases, all of which came to this city via Trieste, Marseilles, mostly Port Said and a small quantity via London.²⁴⁷ Consul Longworth confirmed that Indian goods had to undergo transshipment at Port Said in his report on the trade of Trebizond for the year 1905.²⁴⁸ Consul Longworth also noted that tea imports from India far surpassed the tea that came via the United Kingdom in his report on the trade of Trabzon for the year 1908.²⁴⁹

4.7 Colonial Teas during the First World War and the Early Republican Era

The outbreak of the First World War proved financially catastrophic for traders on all sides. The businesses of local traders of the Indian Ocean World that sold goods to the Ottoman Empire, the British firms that sold South Asian and Southeast Asian products to the Ottoman Empire, and the Ottoman subjects/merchants living and trading in the

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 298.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 203.

²⁴⁷ *Report on the Trade of Constantinople and District for the Year 1905*, By Mr. Consul Waugh, 14.

²⁴⁸ Report on the Trade and Commerce of the Trebizond Vilayet for the Year 1905, By Mr. Consul Longworth.

²⁴⁹ "Imports of Principal Articles to the port of Trebizond during the Year 1908: Tea from the United Kingdom, Quantity: 1,690cwts, 5,484 £; tea from India, Quantity: 4,250 cwts, 14,483 £) in The Report on the Trade and Commerce of Trebizond Vilayet for the Year 1908, Mr. Consul Longworth, 14.

British colonies in South and Southeast Asia were all seriously harmed. The fact that the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain entered the war on opposite sides disrupted the trade between the Ottoman Empire, Britain, and its colonies. For instance, a document from 1914 that slightly predates the entrance of the Ottoman Empire to the First World War suggests that the Ottoman Empire requisitioned the teas imported by the British firm Twining and Co.²⁵⁰ The firm argues that a consignment was sent to their agent at Constantinople to N.P. Mouchtouris and another parcel of tea in consignment were sent to their agent at Samsoun, A.zâde&Frere, and both consignments were requisitioned by the Ottoman government. The firm states that they forwarded the matter to the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Sir Edward Grey, who told them the Turkish government should pay for the tea in question. Hence, they kindly ask for their “claim to be satisfied either in London or Constantinople.” It seems that they could not hear from the Turkish Ambassador since they wrote again on September 21st to remind them of the issue and stated that they “should be greatly obliged for a reply.” Whether the matter was resolved and Twinning&Co could get their payment for the teas in question is still unclear due to lack of evidence.

An interesting document of *Istanbul Murahhaslığı*²⁵¹ suggests that an Ottoman tradesman from Indochina sent a petition to the district governor of Gerede for compensation for his losses due to his expulsion during the First World War and his imprisonment in Egypt.

²⁵⁰ HR.SFR.3.708/60 (14.09.1914) The letter that was signed as R. Twinning&Co and addressed to Tevfik Paşa, the Turkish Ambassador in London, dated September 14th, 1914. The Ottoman Empire entered the war with the Black Sea Raid when Yavuz and Midilli (Goeben and Breslau) bombarded Russian ports on October 29th, 1914.

²⁵¹ Hariciye Nezareti Dersaadet Murahhaslığı served as the Istanbul Office of the Foreign Affairs Ministry between the years 1922-1928. Even though the new Turkish Government was established in Ankara, all the embassies and consulates were in Istanbul and in contact with this office.

This Ottoman subject named Hacı İbrahim owned a hotel and a teahouse in Indochina in the city of Rangoon. The British officials forced him to leave the country and his belongings during the First World War, and later he was imprisoned in Egypt for five years. Hacı İbrahim wrote a petition to the district governor of Gerede and “request the restitution of his losses caused by his expulsion from Rangoon by English policemen in 1914.”²⁵² In his petition that he wrote in 1923, he argues that he entrusted his hotel and teahouse to someone called Ibrahim the Iranian and that in these places, he had to leave his goods worth 350 pounds. He asked for compensation of this amount but also the amount resulting from the trade of his hotel and teahouse while he was absent, either from Iranian Ibrahim or those who were responsible for his expulsion.²⁵³ Additionally, he advocated that on his way from Aden to Egypt, the British captain and commander of the steamboat seized four pairs of pearl and ruby earrings that he carried with him. Hence, he requests compensation for his losses either in kind or value, which he suggested is valued at 175 British pounds. He requested that all his losses be restituted to him and that the perpetrators are punished for imprisoning him and his losses these past nine years. It is understood that the district governor forwarded this issue to the Hariciye Nezareti Istanbul Murahhaslığı since this office recorded the document. However, we do not know whether this Hacı İbrahim was a fraud or whether he could get payment for his losses again due to a lack of further evidence.

²⁵² *Ottoman Southeast Asian Relations Sources from the Ottoman Archives*, ed. Ismail Hakkı Kadı and A.C.S. Peacock, 994-995. See also BOA.HR.İM.85/44 (09.10.1923).

²⁵³ BOA.HR.İM.85/44. He also mentions that he had a sherbet shop that had goods valued at 20 pounds. Moreover, he argues that he “deposited 23 bejeweled rings; 75 Siamese stones; 150 rubies; 16 pearls; three hundred dirhams of lapis lazuli; 1600 roubles; and 24 British pounds (being the value of the eight sacks of sugar) to a merchant called Yusuf Avad who had a shop near the police station.”

Since Britain and the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War on opposing sides, the Ottoman Empire had to close its consulates in South Asian cities under British control, such as Bombay and Madras. The last Ottoman sehbander in Bombay, Halil Halid Bey, left the office in May 1914, and when his deputy was arrested by the British, the Ottoman State did not appoint someone new to Bombay.²⁵⁴ As we can understand from a correspondence of *Hariciye Nezareti Istanbul Murahhaslığı*²⁵⁵ dating 1924, the Turkish interests in Bombay were entrusted to the Consulate of the Netherlands in Bombay after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in 1922.²⁵⁶

Similarly, the Swedish Consulate in London was responsible for Turkish interests in England. On January 28, 1924, the Consul of the Netherlands wrote to the Minister, Plenipotentiary for Sweden in London, asking for guidance concerning Turkish interests. He stated that they “held an amount of 100 Roubles for eventual expenses in connection with the affairs of the former Ottoman Consulate in this city”. He also added that they held “two sealed parcels and a few flags in the chancery of their consulate, that they had no objection to keeping them further, and if the Turkish State wanted them delivered, it would cost at most 10 or 15 roubles.” The Swedish consul forwarded the subject to the Swedish legation in Istanbul, and they asked the Delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Hariciye Nezareti Istanbul Murahhaslığı*) for their opinion of the subject while attaching a copy of the letter written by the Consul of the Netherlands in Bombay. The

²⁵⁴ Diren Çakılcı, “Hindistan’da Osmanlılar: Bombay Osmanlı Şehbenderliği”, 90.

²⁵⁵ It is also referred as “Délégation du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, En Ville” in correspondence written in French by the consulates and by the Office itself as “Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Délégation à Constantinople, Bureau des Affaires Politiques-(Gouvernement de la Grande Assemblée National de Turquie)”.

²⁵⁶ BOA,HR.İM.106/52 (31.05.1924), “Bombay’da Türk menafı’ını himâyeye me’mûr Hollanda konsolosundan mülga Osmanlı İmparatorluğu şehbenderhanesine ait bakiye...ayrıca gönderilmiş diğer iki adet mühürlü paket ile bayrak ve sa’irenin bir müddet daha muhafazasına”.

Turkish side decided to keep the parcels and flags in Bombay at the Consulate of the Netherlands for a while and asked the amount to be sent to the bank in Ankara in the name of the Ministry of Finance.²⁵⁷ Similarly, on April 6, 1923, the legation of Sweden in Constantinople wrote to Dr. Adnan Bey (Adivar), who was acting as the head of *Istanbul Murahhaslığı* at the time, and informed him that the archive of the closed Ottoman consulate in Madras was going to be taken over by the Swedish Consulate in Madras from the American Consulate whose consul was invited to discharge the before mentioned archives by its State Department. The Swedish Consul in Constantinople also added that an inventory of this archive was drawn up upon their request and would be attached to the delivery. The Swedish Consul in Madras informed them that the costs for confiscating the objects would be Lstg—15 (15 Pound Sterling) per year, which the Turkish Government would pay. On May 23rd Dr. Adnan Bey responded that their note was taken well and the annual sum of 15 Lstg. would be paid to the Swedish legation by the *Banque Ottomane*.²⁵⁸

Not all Ottoman consulates in South Asia were closed during the First World War. As the Netherlands remained neutral during the war, the Ottoman State could preserve its consulate in Batavia (in Dutch East Indies). It was previously mentioned that the Netherlands was keeping the interests of the Turkish Government in Bombay after the First World War. However, during the war, the Dutch were suspicious of the actions and views of Rafet Bey, the last Ottoman consul in Batavia, and “supported the British because they considered that the Ottoman and the German consulates in Batavia were

²⁵⁷ BOA,HR.İM.106/52, “mebaliğin doğrudan doğruya Maliye Vekaleti vezne-i ‘umumi müdüriyyeti namına bankadan alınacak hesabına”.

²⁵⁸ The Ottoman Bank. See BOA. HR.İM.73/38 (14.05.1923).

spreading anti-colonialism among the Muslims of the Dutch East Indies.”²⁵⁹ Thus, with the pressure of the British and the Dutch, the Ottoman State had to correct its jihad declaration in June 1915 by stating that “it did not include the Muslims of the Dutch East Indies.”²⁶⁰

While before the First World War, non-Muslim and foreign merchants were dominant in Ottoman tea importations, during the war, Ottoman Muslim tea trading firms started to dominate the tea imports to the Ottoman Empire, some of which continued their trade during the Republican Era, such as the *Şafak Çayı* and *Albayrak Mustafa Nezh Çayı*²⁶¹ until the monopolization of the tea production and importation by the Turkish State in 1942. One possible explanation may be the cancellation of the Capitulations formerly given to European traders during the First World War. With the abolition of these privileges, “which basically protected the commercial rights of non-Muslim traders in Ottoman lands, the situation of the non-Muslim subjects deteriorated in Ottoman regions due to their close commercial relations with the European traders in exports and imports.”²⁶² We should remember that the British were already complaining about the high duty rates on Indian tea, which was imported to Ottoman ports even before the abolition of the Capitulations²⁶³. Looking closely, the tea prices after the war might tell us

²⁵⁹ Frial Ramadhan Supratman “Rafet Bey the Last Ottoman Consul in Batavia during the First World War, 1911-1924”, 47.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ *Albayrak Mustafa Nezh* had several shops in Istanbul. It claimed to have again Indian, Ceylon, Javanese, and Chinese teas on its tin and paper boxes produced explicitly for the firm but also on the booklets that came with the packages, which will be discussed in further detail in the following chapters. Albayrak tea company also advocated that they import tea from Bombay to the Ottoman Empire for the first time. See in Kuzucu, Kemalettin, *Bin Yılın Çayı Osmanlı’da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*, 155-156.

²⁶² Frial Ramadhan Supratman “Rafet Bey the Last Ottoman Consul in Batavia during the First World War, 1911-1924”, 43.

²⁶³ FO+424 207_2, (Confidential Print from the Indian Government to Lord G. Hamilton (Calcutta, December 11, 1902).

something. According to *Stamboul Piassa Gazetta (Istanbul Piyasa Gazetesi)*, Chinese tea, which used to be expensive during the nineteenth century due to its long caravan journey on land, became the cheapest kind in the Ottoman tea market²⁶⁴, followed by Javanese tea, while Indian tea and Ceylon tea were the highest in prices respectively.²⁶⁵ The prices of tea produced in British-controlled South Asian territories are higher than the Chinese tea and Javanese tea under Dutch patronage. The prices might be the outcome of the political situation as well as the quality of the products of each region.

4.8 Colonial Teas from Southeast Asia in Turkey after the Monopolization of Tea by the Turkish State

The Republic of Turkey continued to import tea from the Indian Ocean World, whether directly from the before mentioned places such as Bombay, Calcutta, Colombo, and Java via local merchants' shipments or through the agency of British firms and associations. After the Turkish state passed a law named *Kahve ve Çay İnhisarı Kanunu* on May 20, 1950, which made tea production and importation a state monopoly.²⁶⁶ From 1942 until 1984, State Monopoly Administration managed all imports and sales of tea and coffee in

²⁶⁴ Between December 3, 1924 and February 28, 1925 it was 350-240 guruş (okkası). At the end of February in 1925, prices for all kinds of teas went higher about 10 guruş each. It might be due to a temporary drought in South Asia which probably led to a decrease in tea production.

²⁶⁵ Javanese tea approx. 360-310 guruş, Indian Tea approx. 370-360 guruş and Ceylon Tea approx. 410-350 guruş.

²⁶⁶ “Her nevi kahve ve çayın istihlak için Türkiye’ye sokulması, Türkiye dahilinde yetiştirilen yeşil çay yaprağının işlenmesi, kurutulması ve bu maksatla yaş çay yaprağının satın alınması Devlet İnhisarı altındadır.”, see in *Kahve ve Çay İnhisarı Kanunu*, Kanun No.4223 (Istanbul: TC İnhisarlar Umum Müdürlüğü, 1942).

Turkey. We see that during this era, tea continued to be imported by agents of the Turkish state selected by the government from these places.

After the normalization of relations between India and the Turkish Republic, the prices of Indian tea imports to Turkey stabilized and most probably significantly decreased. A document from the Turkish Republican Archive, which is a report produced by the Minister of Customs and Monopolies, Tahsin Coskan, and was presented to the Prime Ministry of Turkey on April 28th, 1947, makes us think so.²⁶⁷ It has been five years since the government had declared tea production and importation would be under state control, and in the meanwhile, tea production in the Rize region had been growing steadily. The Minister stated in this report that this year (1947), it was expected that the General Directorate of Agricultural Enterprises²⁶⁸ would deliver 150 tons of tea (dried) to the State Monopoly Administration²⁶⁹ and that it was 93 tons last year with a price of 1160,60 kuruş per kilogram. A commission inspected the tea production in Rize, and this year, the price for a kilogram of green tea leaves would be 180 kuruş. Since a kilogram of dried tea is produced from 4.200 kgs of green tea leaves, the General Directorate of Agricultural Enterprises would pay 756 kuruş for green tea leaves this year. The minister presents some more calculations and shows that the State would pay 890.760 liras more for 150 tons of teas produced in the Rize region (in other words, 890.760 liras less if they buy the same amount of tea from India). Additionally, he stated that the control of the United Kingdom over the production of Indian teas and the obligation to get a license for

²⁶⁷ BCA, 030.10.181.250.17(28.04.1947), The date of the document (April 28, 1947) is only a few months before India declared its independence (October 15th, 1947).

²⁶⁸ *Devlet Ziraat İşletmeleri Kurumu.*

²⁶⁹ *Tekel İdaresi.*

tea importation from the Indian government had been abolished at the time. More importantly, all the calculations showed that importing the needed tea from India rather than from the Rize region would be more profitable for the Turkish State.

Another document proves that the previously mentioned report of the Minister of Customs and Monopolies has been seriously studied and approved by the Council of Ministers since the following month, on May 5, 1947, the Council of Ministers decided to pay allowance to Salih Adil Başer, the trade attaché of Turkey in New-Delhi to buy tea from India in the name of the *Tekel Genel Müdürlüğü* (State Monopoly Administration).²⁷⁰

We see that this practice continued in the following years. In other words, the State Monopoly Administration continued buying tea from South and Southeast Asia. For instance, in 1950, the Council of Ministers set up a special committee to be sent to India, Pakistan, and Ceylon to buy tea.²⁷¹ This committee consisted of three members. Nevzat Korur, working under the Ministry of Customs and Monopolies as a member of the Inspection and Audit Committee, Memduh Moran as a Sales Expert at State Monopoly Administration; and someone called Kemal Uslu, who was indicated as *çay eksperti* (tea expert). Their mission was to attend auctions organized by local tea-producing firms in places such as Calcutta, Colombo, and Chittagong to inspect these tea centers, to find out from which firms the Turkish State would buy tea, which firms offer the most suitable conditions of sale and finally to make contracts with these firms. The document, a

²⁷⁰ BCA, 030.18.01.02.113.30.1 (05.05.1947).

²⁷¹ BCA, 030.18.01.02.122.37 (18.04.1950).

summary of a Council of Ministers' decision, clarifies their mission and suggests that an allowance is to be paid to the committee members during their trip.

Again another set of documents from 1954 suggests that the Turkish State continued the practice of buying tea from Southasia and Southeast Asia to this date.²⁷² It includes two letters sent to the State Monopoly Administration and Prime Ministry of the Turkish Republic by a tea trading firm of Colombo, *A.E.M. Sulaman Brothers*, and a report written by the Minister of Customs and Monopolies to the Primeministry informing them about the letters of the company *A.E.M Sulaman Brothers* and the background story behind these letters. A.E.M Usoof, who was a partner of this firm, wrote in his letter of September 28, 1954, that even though they wrote on February 19th and June 8th, they have not received any response from the State Monopoly Administration, in fact, they have not heard from the Administration since November 19th, 1953. In his letter, Usoof wrote that they reorganized their firm and were in a perfect position to provide all the tea the Turkish State needed. They are now able to deliver considerable amounts of Ceylon tea to various regions around the globe. He stated that the teas would be packed under their oversight and made ready for shipment. He added that General Oversight Limited Company in Geneva or another firm could be appointed to oversee the shipments if necessary. He guarantees that there will not be any complaints in their future business. The letter states that they want the Turkish Monopoly Administration to continue to be their client in the future. However, the real reason that they were repeatedly writing to the administration was the fact that they were asking for the collateral deposit to be paid back to the firm. They offer a discount of £4350 to be subtracted from the total sum of

²⁷² BCA, 030.01.78.489.11 (10.12.1954).

£13.850, which was given previously to the Turkish Monopoly Administration as a collateral deposit. In October 1854, the firm forwarded this issue to the Turkish Prime Ministry and a copy of their previously mentioned letter to the administration. We learn the details and the background story from the Minister of Customs and Monopolies report that he wrote and sent to the Prime Ministry on December 10th, 1954. According to this report, the shipment of teas was not the same as the promised sample. Thus, the Monopoly Administration terminated the contract with this firm, confiscated its collateral of £13.850, and applied to the arbitration in London with a specimen of the tea shipped by the firm. The business deal was examined by a referee according to the London arbitration regulations and sentenced the firm to pay £39,000 in compensation. The minister stated in the report that this decision was still under registration by the Supreme Court of London on that day. On the other hand, the firm continuously insisted on settling the issue peacefully and offered at first £3850 and raised it to £4350 in return for their collateral deposit. The Minister stated in the report that a committee sent to India and Ceylon to arrange imports of tea was also entrusted with conducting an investigation of this firm and contacting them. That was indicated as the reason why they did not respond to the letters of the firm. The committee, entrusted with contacting the firm and investigating its credibility, informed the ministry that it was in poor financial condition and was about to bankrupt. As a result, the ministry has concluded that according to the business contract and statutory provisions, the return of the collateral deposit was impossible and ordered the administration to write the required response to the firm.

4.9 Conclusion

The Ottoman Empire laid the groundwork for trade relations with South and Southeast Asia during the Tanzimat period when four Ottoman consulates were opened in Bombay, Calcutta, Colombo, and Singapore during these years. Diplomatic and trade relations between the Ottoman Empire and these regions intensified even more during the reign of Abdülhamid II, who tried to make the most of his title as “the Caliph of the Muslims.” During his reign, the number of Ottoman consulates increased, and the relations with South and Southeast Asia were strengthened on many levels, such as education.

While during the Tanzimat and the following few years, the Ottomans imported most of their tea via the European companies and their agents in the Empire, as years passed by and colonial tea production in South Asia flourished, direct tea trade with these places became possible. As new transport technologies made the journey shorter, telegraphs made communications easier, and local tea traders and tea trading companies started to import tea directly to the Ottoman ports, such as Trabzon, without the agency of European mediators and companies. Tea imported from the Indian Ocean World surpassed the tea imported via Europe and Chinese tea both in quality and quantity, as sources showed us.

Even after the proliferation of tea cultivation in the Black Sea Region in Turkey and the passing of the Monopolization Law in 1942 that brought all tea and coffee imports under the management of the State Monopoly Administration, Turkish state officials went to India, Pakistan, and Ceylon to buy tea from local producers and tea auctions in places

such as Calcutta, Colombo, and Chittagong as documents from the Republican State Archives showed us.



CHAPTER V: TEA FROM THE SEA OF JAPAN

It is only fitting to end the geographical chapters of this dissertation with Japan due to the lateness of its diplomatic and trade relations with the Ottoman Empire, which began only during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Even then, the Japanese-Ottoman relations were not entirely official, not bound and protected by treaties signed between the two empires. The renowned historian Selçuk Esenbel coined a term (*twilight diplomacy*) for this period of direct but not official relations between these powers. However, the lack of trade agreements and official diplomatic representation could not stop the exchange of goods between these two Asian empires. Though in marginal amounts, Japanese tea was among the items imported from Japan and sold in late Ottoman Istanbul. The sale of tea and other Japanese goods and the unofficial diplomatic representation of Meiji Japan was realized at the only Japanese shop in Late Ottoman Istanbul, the *Nakamura Shoten* in the Pera-Beyoğlu area, thanks to the efforts of its manager Yamada Torajiro. Yamada constitutes a key figure in the history of Japanese-Ottoman and later Japanese-Turkish relations. He played a central role in popularizing Japanese tea in Constantinople as a master of the Japanese tea ceremony himself.

Nakamura Shoten and Yamada will be discussed in the following subsections of this chapter in more detail.

More often than not, existing literature ascribed the Ottomans' first contact with Japanese tea to Abdülhamid II's period, in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In reality, their first encounter with Japanese tea occurred in the Tanzimat Era, during Sultan Abdulaziz's reign. Thus, this chapter will trace back to this earlier period to enlighten when and how the first sparks of interest in Japanese tea were shown in the Ottoman Empire.

The present chapter will finally deal with the establishment of official diplomatic and trade relations between the Japanese and Turkish governments after the First World War and the Lausanne Treaty. With the help of newspapers and documents from the Republican Archives, it will help the reader to understand the development of tea imports from Japan during the early Republican period.

As a result, the final section of this chapter will conclude that the importation and the sale of Japanese tea in the Ottoman period was marginal in terms of its volume and value compared to the teas imported from Europe, South Asia, Russia, and China. However, this does not mean that Japanese tea was inconsequential for the development of tea culture and cultivation in Turkey. While Yamada and his Japanese store *Nakamura Shoten* created a favor of Japanese tea among the Ottoman palace entourage and the political elite, the importation of the know-how of Japanese tea cultivation, Japanese tea seeds, and saplings contributed to the agricultural development of Ottoman and Turkish tea. Before delving into the history of Japanese tea in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish

Republic, the present chapter will briefly examine the history of Japanese tea culture and its exports to other countries.

5.1 A Brief History of Japanese Tea Culture

We associate today tea very closely with Japan and almost assume that the tea plant was of local origin in Japanese islands. However, until the eighth century, it remained a plant that originated and grew only in southwestern China. While some sources trace the introduction of tea in Japan to the ninth century²⁷³, William Wayne Farris stated in his book *A Bowl for a Coin: A Commodity History of Japanese Tea* that “tea was introduced for the first time in Japan around 750.”²⁷⁴ Okakura Kakuzo, in his most famous book, *The Book of Tea*, mentions that “the Japanese Emperor offered tea to one hundred monks at his palace in Nara as early as 729.”²⁷⁵ While this offering of tea by Emperor Shomu in 729 might be a unique case, tea was, by and large, adopted by the Buddhist monks in China. The entrance of tea as a plant and beverage into Japan coincides with the time the scholar Lu Yu (733-803) wrote *the Classic of Tea* (Chajing) around 760. As it is widely known, the Japanese Zen monk Saicho brought back some seeds and planted them in Japan. Still, it was principally Eisai (1141-1215), the Zen Buddhist monk, that propagated the tea culture in Japan and planted new tea seeds in three different places in Japan, including somewhere near today’s Kyoto. These men not only brought back seeds to

²⁷³ See for instance, Nurten Öztürk, “Çayın Tarihçesi, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Japonya’da Çay Kültürü”, *Osmanlı Sarayı’nda Japon Rüzgarı*, TBMM Milli Saraylar Yayını, 2013, 64.

²⁷⁴ William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, the University of Hawaii Press, 2019, 7.

²⁷⁵ Okakura Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea*, Putnam’s Sons, London, and New York, 1906, 41.

grow but also the product itself to be consumed by the Japanese. While Saicho brought black brick tea from China to Heian Japan, Eisai brought powdered green tea (matcha) to Kamakura Japan.²⁷⁶

Farris argues that the Sinophilic leaders at the Japanese court “looked to China for the latest elite culture in the eighth century” As in almost every other country, tea began to be consumed only in royal and elite households, primarily for medicinal purposes. Even though the plant started to spread across the Japanese islands, ordinary people preferred more nutritional and essential goods and switched from tea cultivation to growing other crops. However, Buddhist monks, especially those who traveled to China, made preparing and consuming tea a part of their daily rituals. In addition, its popularization in elite circles increased and began to be perceived as an act of generosity and hospitality. Gift exchange in Japanese society contributed to the spread of the herb. However, it took the 1300s for consumption to spread to the broader masses. Between 1300-1600 tea production proliferated throughout Japan and became a profitable business to grow tea on their lands for farmers who “seek to pay their taxes or trade for a profit.”²⁷⁷ The farmers who cultivated the lands and produced tea also readily became consumers of their products. Hence, we see the beverage’s downward spread in Japanese society.

Around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Japanese tea ceremony culture was constituted under the patronage of the shoguns, primarily under three influential leaders such as Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Ieyasu Tokugawa. The creation of the Japanese tea ritual as an art form and the development of its utensils, such as the bamboo

²⁷⁶ William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, 21.

²⁷⁷ William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, 35.

whisk to prepare the powdered green tea (matcha) and unique designs of the tea cups and separate tearooms where this ceremony took place were shaped and coded in this era.

Three tea masters, Murata Juko, Takena Joo, and Sen Rikyu, created and matured the Japanese tea ceremony, known as the *chanoyu*, “the way of tea.” The development of teaism in Japan was somewhat simultaneous with the development of the art of flower arrangement known as *Ikebana* which constituted a part of the ritual and “was subordinated to the total scheme of decoration of the tea room.”²⁷⁸ While the first two masters started to shape the tea ritual, Sen Rikyu refined it further. Not only were there rules for the ceremony itself, but there were also the proper utensils, the right size, lightning and the entry of the tearoom, and the right surrounding of the tea house such as the tea garden. Rikyu considered harmony, respect, purity, and tranquillity to be the first principles of *chanoyu*, *the way of tea*.²⁷⁹

Having long and carefully performed tea ceremonies by the tea masters such as Sen no Rikyu in specially designed tea rooms was a matter of prestige for the patrons, who were military leaders who appreciated this high art form and promoted its development. For the elite or commoners who wanted to climb socially, receiving tea education from the masters and training to perform tea ceremonies was also a way to distinguish themselves from the rest of the population. The tea enthusiasts were also collectors of fine items, especially precious Chinese tea utensils. Sen no Rikyu and Toyotomi Hideyoshi are great examples who socially climbed thanks to the *chanoyu*. Both were from humble origins.

²⁷⁸ Okakura Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea*, 140.

²⁷⁹ Sōshitsu Sen, *The Japanese Way of Tea From Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyu*, University of Hawai'i Press, 1998, 170.

While the father of the former was a seafood merchant, the latter came from a farmer family. However, in 1585, the two of them, as the tea master Rikyu and his patron victorious warlord Hideyoshi, who united Japan and became its de facto ruler, served the Japanese Emperor tea at Hideyoshi's castle. The emperor granted Rikyu the title "Grand Master of Tea." Hideyoshi wanted to expand his prestige and authority through tea ceremonies even further. The following year (1586), he commissioned a tea room gilded with gold and walls covered in red brocade. He invited all tea ceremony practitioners with a promise that he would personally serve them tea. It was a means to show everyone his great golden tea house and collection, thus his cultural prestige and wealth.²⁸⁰

Tea consumption at tea ceremonies and tea parties and the act of tea exchange as a gift continued. However, tea was also adopted by the lower classes, and tea shops and cultivation prospered and spread around the islands of Japan. From the fourteenth century forward, numerous tea shops were opened in big cities such as Kyoto and Nara and even in the countryside in poor peasant villages. There were two kinds of tea shops. One type was more permanent with a roof on top, and the other was more temporarily built for special occasions such as festivals or pilgrimages. Between 1400 and 1600, Japan witnessed the mushrooming of tea shops, but also fields and patches where tea was planted and grown for local consumption, trade, and tea tax. The patches were mostly on mountains where tea was produced in patches of land, sometimes on very steep or poor soil. Temples continued their tea production mostly on mountain patches too. Around 1600, tea cultivation spread throughout all the regions of the archipelago where the plant

²⁸⁰ Cathy Kaufman, "A Simple Bowl of Tea: Power Politics and Aesthetics in Hideyoshi's Japan, 1582–1591", *Dublin Gastronomy Symposium*, 2018 Food and Power, 4.
<https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1125&context=dgs> Access Date: January 21, 2023.

could be farmed, in other words, where it was geographically and climatically suitable for tea farming.²⁸¹

Since northeastern Japan was not suitable for tea cultivation, it was left out of tea production. The internal tea trade compensated for the need for tea in these northern areas. Tea consumption was expanded to this territory quite late, around the 1600s, when tea merchants shipped loads of tea to the cities of the north, and their inhabitants found it to their liking. “Then, between the early 1700s and 1850, the same populace of northern Japan learned to grow their tea, despite the hostile climate.”²⁸² During the Edo or Tokugawa Period (1603-1867), tea has become a commodity of mass production and consumption throughout Japan. Around 1800 even the northeastern region shared the same habit of daily tea drinking with the rest of the archipelago. The tea shops and brands presented “an almost unending variety.” The product of some regions and brands were considered superior to others, and there was great competition.

Tea cultivation and processing underwent significant changes during the Meiji Period (1868-1912) after Japan opened its ports to the outside world after 250 years of seclusion. To increase mass production, the Japanese commissioned specialists to study tea cultivation and improve productivity in farming and processing tea leaves. Japan started to export most of its locally produced tea to other countries after the 1880s.

²⁸¹ William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, 66-89.

²⁸² William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, 75.

5.2 History of Japanese Tea Exportations

During the sixteenth century, Japan welcomed Dutch merchants and Iberians, mostly Portuguese missionaries, for nearly a century. Although in small amounts, Japanese tea was exported to the Netherlands and England as early as the 1600s. In fact, Europe's first encounter with Japanese tea occurred in 1610 when the Dutch sent the first boxes of Japanese green tea to the Netherlands. Five years later, the English East India Company mentioned purchasing Japanese tea to be sent to England. Later in 1664, the same company sent King Charles II some Japanese tea as a gift, but as the English developed a taste for black teas from China and later India and Ceylon, we did not see Japanese tea importation to the country until the Meiji Restoration.

In 1635 with the *Sakoku* Edict and 1639 Seclusion Act, the Catholic Portuguese were dismissed from the archipelago, Catholicism was banned, Japan was secluded, the Japanese were forbidden to leave the country, and foreigners were forbidden to enter the country. There was only an exception for a limited amount of international trade at the port of Nagasaki situated on Kyushu island, one of the main islands of Japan located in the southwest. Only the Dutch and the Chinese were allowed to trade with the Japanese merchants in the Nagasaki harbor. The Dutch were allowed to stay in Dejima, an artificial island connected to Nagasaki, since they were not keen on spreading their religion as the Portuguese. The Dutch lost its privilege when Commodore Matthew Perry and the American ships came to Japan, forcing it to open itself to international trade and diplomatic relations again in 1858. Following the Treaty of Amity and Trade between the

United States and Japan, other European countries wanted to sign similar agreements with Japan. As soon as the relations opened with the West, England shipped six tons of Japanese tea from Nagasaki in 1858. However, the leading target country of Japanese tea exportation became the United States. A shipment of tea from Japan to the US in 1862 was applauded in the American press due to its quality, fineness, pureness, delicacy, and flavor.²⁸³

The trade agreements with European countries made sure to open Japanese ports to Western trade. Three of these “treaty ports” were most important, particularly for the tea trade, Nagasaki, Kobe, and Yokohama.

Contemporary sources from the beginning of the twentieth century indicate that tea was among the principal products and exports of the country. However, compared to other tea-producing countries such as China, India, Ceylon, and Java in total tea exports, Japan was surpassed by the first three. Japan’s tea exports were only above Java’s, with 15.450.000 kg, which amounts to some eight or nine million yen yearly (or 27.500.000 Francs).²⁸⁴

Yukimasa Hattori stated in his dissertation about the foreign commerce of Japan since the Meiji Restoration that Japan cannot hope to compete with these countries in the tea trade since they have a superiority in climate and soil for tea cultivation, but also Japan mainly

²⁸³ Robert Hellyer, “Quality as a Moving Target: Japanese Tea, Consumer Preference, and Federal Regulation on the US Market,” *Imitation, Counterfeiting and the Quality of Goods in Modern Asian History*, ed. Kazuko Furuta and L. Grove, Springer Singapore, 2017, 93.

²⁸⁴ C.A. Guigon, *Manuel du producteur et de l'importateur. Le thé, histoire, cultures, préparations, pays producteurs, importations, statistiques générales, prix, classifications et mélanges*, Paris 1901, 235-237. According to this source, China exported 242.857.120 kg, British India 68.506.130 kg, Ceylon 44.117.905 kgs and Java only 2.000.000 kgs. Also, see, Yukimasa Hattori, *The Foreign Commerce of Japan Since the Restoration: 1869-1900* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1904), 36.

exports green tea rather than black tea which does not appeal to European taste but instead appeals to American taste. According to renowned specialist Robert Hellyer, Americans preferred black tea in the colonial period. However, after the liberation from Britain, they started to choose green tea, which they considered “a more refined and elite beverage.”²⁸⁵

Even in America, sources agree that Chinese tea imports slightly exceeded North America’s Japanese tea imports at the beginning of the twentieth century. Japanese tea exports in the United States suffered from decreases in sales in the market and experienced ups and downs in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Ceylon and the Indian tea lobby, which created a negative image of the Japanese tea producers in the US press, achieved impressing American consumer behavior who started to buy black teas from Ceylon and India and started to question the quality and pureness of the Japanese green tea.

Among the chief customers of Japanese tea exports, Canada started to favor Ceylon tea over Japanese green tea at the turn of the twentieth century. The success of Ceylon tea in the face of Japanese tea in Canada (nearly %40 increase in Ceylon and the same amount of decrease in Japanese tea) was attributed again to the “sums of money spent in advertising and to the reduction made in the cost by the application of machinery in its production.”²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Robert Hellyer, “Quality as a Moving Target: Japanese Tea, Consumer Preference, and Federal Regulation on the US Market,” *Imitation, Counterfeiting and the Quality of Goods in Modern Asian History*, 95.

²⁸⁶ Yukimasa Hattori, “The Foreign Commerce of Japan Since the Restoration: 1869-1900”, 37.

To compete with other tea-producing countries, Japan also decided to produce black tea and increase the quality and productivity of its green tea throughout the Meiji Period. To consider that Japan only exported powdered green tea would be misleading and far from the truth. The Japanese empire exported mainly raw tea (*aracha*), steeped leaf tea (*sencha*), coarse steeped tea (*bancha*), powdered tea (*matcha*), and “jeweled dew” (*gyokuro*). To respond to criticism of poor processing conditions, specialists and tea experts (*chashi*) visited tea farms and reprocessing facilities and taught the workers more scientific and practical procedures. In the meantime, mountain patches and border fields of tea gave way to more extensive plantations on flatland. Tea fairs, organizations, and symposiums on tea processing and the tea industry started to be formed domestically in Japan in the 1870s, and manuals for scientific tea cultivation started to be published around the same time. An excellent example of the publication of various periodicals about tea production is *An Illustrated Explanation of Tea Processing (Seicha Zukai)*, published in 1871 by Japanese officials. This illustrated book contained advice on everything from planting seeds to storing the finished product and described processing.²⁸⁷

The annexation of *Formosa*²⁸⁸ after the Chino-Japanese War in 1895 strengthened the Japanese hand in the international tea trade since it has one of the best soils for tea production, and the Formosan Oolong has been considered universally “the choicest tea grown in the world.”²⁸⁹ The Japanese tea exports reached a climax during the First World

²⁸⁷ William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, 137-141.

²⁸⁸ Taiwan. Formosa stayed under the control of the Japanese Empire until the end of the second World War.

²⁸⁹ Yukimasa Hattori, “The Foreign Commerce of Japan Since the Restoration: 1869-1900”, 37.

War when the British imported Japanese green teas when they could not find the black teas to which they were accustomed.²⁹⁰

5.3 Japanese Tea in Universal Exhibitions

Another opportunity for promoting Japanese tea to increase its exports in the international market was to attend universal exhibitions in the late nineteenth century. Meredith Martin argues, “These universal exhibitions were not only arenas for European powers to assert their commercial and colonial dominance but also provided vital opportunities for powers outside of Europe to compete for European market share and to stake important political, cultural, and territorial claims.”²⁹¹

Even though the Japanese Empire participated in the London International Exhibition of Industry and Art of 1862, there is not much information about this exhibition. Five years later, French King Napoleon III wanted to surpass the grandeur of the London Exhibition in variety and size. For the first time, we started to see national pavilions erected at the universal exhibitions. When the Tokugawa Shogunate, on the brink of its collapse, wanted to attend the Paris Exhibition in 1867, they invited merchants and Japanese domains to participate in the exhibition. Whereas only two Japanese domains responded to the call, they acted on their own and showed their disloyalty to the Shogunate in front

²⁹⁰ William Wayne Farris, *A Bowl for A Coin A Commodity History of Japanese Tea*, 132.

²⁹¹ Meredith Martin “Staging China, Japan and Siam at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867”, *Beyond Chinoiserie: Artistic Exchange between China and the West During the Late Qing Dynasty*, ed. Petra tenDoesschate Chu and Jennifer Milam, (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

of the eyes of the world. However, the only merchant who responded to the call of the Shogunate and showed up at the Paris Exhibition was another story.

It is unclear whether the decision to promote tea at the Paris Exhibition of 1867 was taken by the Tokugawa Shogunate, who attended the exhibition one year before the end of 260 years of rule. It was a Japanese tea merchant from the southern island of Kyushu, known as Shimizu Isaburo, who erected a teahouse at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867.

The tea house consisted of three parts, a tea room where tea and liquor were served, an adjacent room where three geishas displayed traditional Japanese attire, drank tea, smoked and played cards, and another room that functioned as a shop where Japanese goods made of bronze and ceramics were sold.²⁹² The teahouse was a great success and made 65000 francs by attracting European and American visitors. This amount was equivalent to the sales generated by the Shogunate's exhibits.²⁹³ It is also unclear whether the Japanese tea itself or the "Japanese damsels" attracted significant attention from the crowd. These "oriental" demoiselles and the teahouse also drew the attention of the European press.

The Illustrated London News announced the names of these three *geishas* who drank tea at the teahouse (O-Kane, O-Soumi, and O-Sato) and covered a detailed description of their appearance, gestures, and the room.²⁹⁴ *The Pall Mall Gazette* recounts that "the tea house was built of bamboo and some choice white wood, and has its little counter at

²⁹² Elena Morina Urosa, "Japan and the World Exhibitions as a Cultural Tool for Diplomacy during the Meiji Period", Dissertation for International Relations Dept. at the Comidas Universidad Pontificia, Madrid, 2019, 30.

²⁹³ Masaki Morisawa, "The Paris International Exposition of 1867", *The Gale Review A Blog From Gale International*. <https://review.gale.com/2017/04/13/the-paris-international-exposition-of-1867/> Acces date: January 24, 2023.

²⁹⁴ *Illustrated London News*, 16 November 1867.

which tiny cups of tea, with sugarplums to sweeten it, are retailed; and also a tearoom where both tea and liquors are supplied to the guests.”²⁹⁵ A Japanese observer, Shibusawa Eiichi, later wrote about his observation of the teahouse at the Paris Exhibition in 1867, “they are very much the object of interest, since not only are they exotically attired, but they are the first Oriental women who have ever come to Europe. The crowd, forbidden to enter the room, jostled with one another and peered at them intently through spyglasses.”²⁹⁶

While we do not see any teahouse or tea ceremony at the World Exposition of Vienna in 1873 and the World Exposition of Philadelphia in 1876, it is again in Paris that the Japanese chose to build a teahouse for the World Exposition of Paris in 1878. On this occasion, the Japanese government opted to construct a tea house designed following traditional Japanese architecture and built with natural wood, where the Japanese explained the tea ceremony in their national attires.²⁹⁷

5.4 Ottomans’ First Contact With Japanese Tea

Ottomans’ first encounter with Japanese tea and its culture was nowhere but the Universal Exhibition of Paris in 1867, where Sultan Abdulaziz and his immediate entourage of sixteen people²⁹⁸, including his son Yusuf Izzettin Efendi and his nephews Murad Efendi

²⁹⁵ The Pall Mall Gazette, 14 August 1867.

²⁹⁶ Shibusawa Eiichi’s book published in 1928, quoted from Angus Lockyer, “Japan at the Exhibition, 1867-1877: From Representation to Practice”, *Senri Ethnological Studies*, vol.54, 67.

²⁹⁷ Elena Morina Urosa, “Japan and the World Exhibitions as a Cultural Tool for Diplomacy during the Meiji Period”, 36.

²⁹⁸ E. Mignot, *Le Sultan Abdul Azis à l'Exposition universelle de 1867 à Paris :notice pour accompagner la médaille commémorative*, Paris: 1867. Dr. Necdet Gök relates in his article that the according to the list

(his heir apparent) and Abdulhamid Efendi (later Abdülhamid II) attended the opening ceremony and visited the exhibition. More Ottomans came to Paris to visit the exhibition than the beforementioned sixteen people who officially accompanied the Sultan. The Ottoman State Archives abounds with documents about people who sought permission to visit the Paris Exhibition, such as the Berlin Ambassador or other Ottoman officials who applied for permission to come to Paris for the exhibition with their wives and children.²⁹⁹ The semi-official Ottoman newspaper *Ceride-i Havadis* related that so many people traveled from Constantinople to Paris to see the exhibition that no seats were left on the French steamboat.³⁰⁰ For those visiting the universal exposition in Paris, the French Embassy in Constantinople printed 300 guidebooks explaining where to stay, where and what to eat, which places to visit, and how to go to the Exposition Universelle in Paris.

The Ottoman Sultan and his entourage probably have seen the tea pavilions of China and Japan who participated in this exhibition besides Siam. They may even have tasted their first sip of Japanese tea. What makes me confident to make this assumption is that Sultan Abdulaziz ordered the translation of a booklet about tea cultivation in Japan a few years later. A document from 1873, addressed to Mehmed Raşid Pasha, the minister of Foreign Affairs, suggests that a particular blue book that contained reports about tea production in

given to the French Embassy it was 56 people accompanied the Sultan on his way to Paris. Necdet Gök, "The Travel of Sultan Abdulaziz to Europe - In The Light of the Notes of Halimi Efendi", *Turkish Area Studies Review*, 33-38.

²⁹⁹ See, for instance, BOA.HR.MKT.115/45 (30.07.1855), BOA.İ.HR.150/7925 (01.12.1857).

³⁰⁰ Ruznamçe-i Ceride-i Havadis, nr. 628, s.2509 (Gurre Z. 1283/6 Nisan 1867 Cumartesi) in Aziz Tekdemir, "1867 Paris Sergisi Ve Sultan Abdülaziz'in Sergiyi Ziyareti", *Trakya Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, Cilt: 3, Sayı: 6, Temmuz-2013, 12.

Japan and drawings by a Japanese artist was shipped from London.³⁰¹ I presume that Abdulaziz, who was invited by Napoleon III to visit the Exposition Universelle of Paris in 1867 and went to European capitals such as Paris, London, and Vienna on his imperial trip to Europe in the summer of 1867, nurtured a personal interest in tea and probably ordered research on its production.

Additionally, this blue book, which is a report published by the British government covered in blue, should be the beforementioned scientific publication about tea production, *An Illustrated Explanation of Tea Processing (Seicha Zukai)*, published in 1871 by the Japanese government. The British, who were also obviously interested in tea and tea cultivation (in their colonies), ordered this Japanese periodical to be translated into English. Thanks to the British Parliament, the Ottoman State could get a hold of this manual about tea production. However, this borrowing of know-how of Japanese tea cultivation was indirect, not from the Japanese government itself but from a third party involved. The crossing of the roads at the Paris Universal Exhibition was a fact. Be that as it may, the Ottoman Sultan and his immediate circle's first acquaintance with Japanese tea was a highly probable theory that remains unproven with solid proof until this day. A discovery of a new document might prove that this highly plausible event indeed took place.

The actual transfer of Japanese tea seeds and saplings into the Ottoman Empire, which can be proven with documents, took another 20 years and happened during Sultan

³⁰¹ BOA, HR.SFR.3.197/061 “J’ai l’honneur d’informer votre Excellence que, par le courrier d’aujourd’hui, j’ai expédié sous bande, à l’adresse de votre Excellence, un Blue Book qui vient d’être présenté au Parlement et qui contient des Rapports relatifs à la production du thé au Japon et illustré de desins d’après un artiste indigène”.

Abdülhamid II's reign. Records from the Ottoman State Archives talk about transferring tea seeds and saplings to be cultivated at model farms and fields in the empire.³⁰²

Together with those, a manual for tea cultivation was presented that we can actually read in Ottoman Turkish. It makes one wonder whether this short prospectus was the translation of the beforementioned Blue Book that the Ottoman State came to its possession in 1873, was it produced with the help of that manuscript, or is it something entirely new? Whatever the answer, this transaction happened not within the boundaries of official diplomatic and commercial relations with Japan but due to the personal request of the Ottoman Sultan from Yamada Torajiro, who was acting as a de facto Japanese diplomat and tradesman in late Ottoman Istanbul.

The following sections of this chapter will highlight the diplomatic and trade relations between the Japanese and the Ottoman Empires during the Late Ottoman Era.

5.5 Diplomatic Relations with Japan

Just as the Ottomans' first encounter with Japanese tea started during Sultan Abdulaziz's reign, the first interest in the Ottoman Empire, the intention to establish diplomatic

³⁰² See, for instance, BOA, BEO.501/37541 (25.10.1894), and BOA, Y.PRK.OMZ.1/84 (23.04.1895) “Atufetlu Efendim Hazretleri, Saye-i terakki-vaye-i hazret-i hilafetpenahi nümune çiftlik ve tarlalarında tecrübeten zira’ ile yetiştirilmek üzere Japonya’dan celb olunub bir mikdarı atebe-i felek-mertebe-i hazret-i mülukhaneye ‘arz olunan çay tohumunun suret-i zira’ ve tımarı hakkında kaleme alınan tarifname leffen takdim kılındı. Çay yetiştirilmesi hakkında derdest-i tertib bulunan risale...”. The other pages of the document which includes the beforementioned tarifname/risale was transcribed in Kemalettin Kuzucu’s book *Bin Yılın Çayı* and can be found in the appendices.

relations, and the first approaches of the Japanese took place around the same time in the 1870s. When the Japanese prince Iwakura Tomomi led a diplomatic mission in 1871 to rescind unequal treaties signed with the United States and European countries, he advised Secretary Fukuchi Genichiro of the Japanese Foreign Office to go to the Ottoman Empire and collect information. Genichiro went to Constantinople with Mokurai Shimaji and prepared a report on the general conditions of the Ottoman Empire. Shimaji later wrote a book about his impressions of Constantinople during his tourist visits to the Galata Tower, Topkapı Palace, Hagia Sophia, and Sultan Ahmet Mosque.³⁰³ However, since there were no diplomatic ties between the two empires, it was impossible to gather detailed information. It was also stated by the Japanese Foreign Minister Terajima Munenori to Prime Minister Sanjo Sanami that Prince Iwakura Tomomi intended to visit the Ottoman Empire as well when he visited many countries on his diplomatic mission in 1871. Still, the visit was not realized for the same reason, the lack of diplomatic relations. Thus, the Foreign Minister advised Prime Minister Sanjo Sanami to approach the Ottomans and start diplomatic ties.³⁰⁴ Hiroshi Nagaba asserts that it was in 1875 that the Japanese government officially signified its intention to establish diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire.³⁰⁵ After Munenori submitted the proposal to the Prime Minister and the cabinet approved it, he also wrote to Minister Ueno, who was in London at the time representing Japan, and advised him that he should approach the Ottoman ambassador in London “discreetly to insinuate to him that it would be desirable for them

³⁰³ Hiroshi Nagaba, “Japan And Turkey Historical Process For Diplomatic Relations,” *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs*, Volume 2, Issue 3, (1997), 2.

³⁰⁴ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, (İstanbul: The Japan-Turkey Friendship Centenary Program Committee, 1991), 16-18.

³⁰⁵ Hiroshi Nagaba, “Japan And Turkey Historical Process For Diplomatic Relations,” 1.

to enact an agreement of friendship between the two countries.”³⁰⁶ The Japanese envoy in Britain approached Musurus Pasa, the Ottoman ambassador in London, to initiate diplomatic relations; however, soon after, the Ottoman Sultan on the throne was changed twice.

Still, the Japanese were keen on their interest in the Ottomans and the Near East. The Foreign Ministry formed a mission led by an official of the Ministry, Yoshida Masaharu, to collect extensive information and study the circumstances in the Near East and the Ottoman Empire. The mission, known as the *Yoshida Mission*, went to the Near East in 1880, stayed in places such as Busehr, Tehran, and the Caucasus for a while, and finally arrived in Constantinople in 1881 with a warm welcome by the Ottomans. The new Sultan, Abdülhamid II, who granted an audience to the mission, showed enthusiasm and encouragement for a possible Ottoman-Japanese friendship agreement in the near future. The comprehensive report on the circumstances of the Middle East and the Ottoman Empire was presented to the Japanese envoy in St. Petersburg, who approached the Ottoman ambassador, Admiral Sakir Pasa in St. Petersburg and “submitted him a detailed questionnaire on the judiciary, the legislative, administrative, and commercial systems of the empire, in particular to the application of the most favored nation clause.”³⁰⁷

According to Selçuk Esenbel, the ambassador feared that the Ottoman Empire might end up signing another capitulatory agreement, was actually intent on eventually dismissing

³⁰⁶ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 18.

³⁰⁷ Selçuk Esenbel, “The Japanese Interest in the Ottoman Empire,” *The Japanese and Europe*, Bert Edström (ed.), Richmond, Surrey, Japan Library (Curzon Press Ltd), 2000, 114. It is possible to read the questions (in English translation) submitted by the Japanese envoy in the questionnaire and the answers given by Sakir Pasa, the Ottoman Ambassador in St. Petersburg, in Umut Arık’s book, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, between pages 19 and 21.

capitulations. Şakir Paşa firmly declined the prospect of signing a treaty with Japan since it “would injure the Ottoman government’s partial liberation from the treaty privileges gained with the 1856 Treaty of Paris.”³⁰⁸ According to the former ambassador of the Turkish Republic in Tokyo, Umut Arık, who wrote a comprehensive book on Turkish-Japanese relations, the Ottomans desired an agreement of friendship with Japan to establish trade relations, so applying the most favored nation clause was acceptable in the commercial field but not in other aspects, particularly not in the judicial field. Arık stated that the Europe-oriented Japanese politicians thought it was neither urgently required nor necessary for Japan to sign such an agreement with the Ottoman Empire, which they considered an Asian country.³⁰⁹

Since Arık based his arguments on the memoirs of Şakir Paşa and the works of Japanese historians, such as Chishu Naito, I think it would be wise not to turn a blind eye to his remarks. In conclusion, we may say that both countries were after removing the capitulatory agreements with the Western powers and felt it was not urgent to sign an agreement with each other at that point. Indeed, after the first few years of more fervent European-oriented reform years of the Meiji restoration, the Japanese cultivated more interest in Asian countries and invested more in their relations with the Ottoman Empire. The case was not lost on the level of the emperors of both parties at any rate. In 1887, the nephew of the Japanese emperor, Prince Komatsu, and his wife, Princess Komatsu, visited the Ottoman capital, where the Sultan warmly received them. Prince Komatsu offered gifts from the Meiji Emperor to Sultan Abdülhamid II, such as “the Grand

³⁰⁸ Selçuk Esenbel, “The Japanese Interest in the Ottoman Empire,” 115.

³⁰⁹ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 21-23.

Cordon of the Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum” and “The Magic Lacquer Plume Box.”³¹⁰ The prince also delivered a letter from the Japanese emperor.

Abdülhamid II, delighted with this royal visit and the gifts sent from the Japanese emperor, wanted to return the visit and bear some gifts of his own to the Meiji emperor to build warm relations with the Japanese empire. The Sultan commissioned Captain Osman Bey (soon to be appointed Admiral Osman Paşa) to carry a letter from him and the Ornate Grand Order of the Ottoman Empire to the Japanese emperor. He embarked on this mission on July 14th, 1889, with the frigate Ertugrul and a crew of more than 600 people on board. After many intermissions at various places in South Asia with a significant Muslim population, the frigate arrived in Japan and presented the letter and the gifts to His Imperial Majesty. Sources mention that he and his retinue were welcomed at the Japanese court and requested to deliver his speech in Turkish when he decorated the emperor. However, on September 15th, 1890, they set sail to return home despite warnings of the approaching typhoon season, and on September 18th, the warship sunk in heavy weather when it hit the reefs near the Oshima Lighthouse. Only 69 people survived this wreckage.

The Japanese government commissioned two Japanese cruisers, Kongo and Hiei, to carry the Ottoman sailors who survived the Ertugrul incident. These cruisers brought not only the Ottoman survivors but also greetings, gifts, and, again, a letter from the Meiji Emperor to the Ottoman Sultan, who gave reception ceremonies and banquets in honor of the Japanese officers and sailors. Abdülhamid II also decorated the officers with the

³¹⁰ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 25-26.

Second Grade of the Order of the Sultan Abdulmecid.³¹¹ An Ottoman document dated January 07th, 1891, states that Sultan Abdülhamid II gave a banquet at the *Gümüşsuyu Barracks* and that there should be preparations to provide them with their favorite dishes for the following banquets, which was noted as “fish, rice, and meat” by the Ottomans.³¹²

As it is not the intention of this study to evaluate the mission of Ertugrul, and there are already numerous sources about the Ertugrul Frigate and its mission, I will suffice to say that in one way, the Ertugrul Incident indirectly led to the commencement of Japanese-Turkish trade relations and importation of Japanese tea into the Ottoman Empire. I will clarify this connection in the following paragraph.

As this tragedy brought the two countries closer, the incident found great coverage in the Japanese newspapers, and campaigns announced in these publications collected donations for the families of the Ottoman survivors. In 1892, the collected sum of donations was brought by a young Japanese businessman, Yamada Torajiro, who acted as a de facto diplomat and established unofficial trade relations between the two countries with the help of his store Nakamura Shoten in the Beyoglu area. Yamada himself was a master of the Japanese tea ceremony and sold tea, among many other Japanese items, at his store. However, Yamada and Nakamura Shoten will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

³¹¹ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 39.

³¹² BOA, Y.PRK.MYD.10/9 “ Japonya zabitan ve neferatına irade-i seniyye-i hazret-i padişahi mucib-i aliyyesince selamlık resm-i aliyyesinden sonra Gümüşsuyu Kışla-ı Hümayununda it’am itdirildiği gibi...” and “ta’am idecek olan on yedi zabıt ve iki yüz yedi nefer için iktiza iden tedarikatın icrası ve neferatın en ziyade sevdikleri ta’amları balık, pilav ve etden ibaret olduğu ma’lum-ı alileri olmak üzere...”.

Sources suggest that Count Aoki Shuzo persuaded Yamada Torajiro to come to Constantinople to deliver the donations to the Ottomans. Count Aoki, who was the envoy of the Japanese empire to the German empire, requested special permission from the Japanese foreign minister Inamoto to go to the Ottoman Empire “to study the efforts underway for lifting the capitulations.”³¹³ However, under this apparent motive, his real intention was to “pursue the aim of establishing diplomatic relations between the two Empires which had arrived to a high level of maturity.”³¹⁴ When he was authorized to reach out to the political authorities in the Ottoman Capital and was granted an audience with the Ottoman Sultan, he found himself in the position bound by a promise to Abdülhamid II “to serve as the intermediary for the signature of a treaty between the two countries.”³¹⁵ A document reveals that Abdülhamid II decorated Count Aoki with the Order of Osmaniye of the First Class during his visit to Istanbul in 1893.³¹⁶

Feeling bound to honor his promise, Count Aoki rolled up his sleeves and started working for a mutual friendship and trade agreement between these two powers. Communiques and drafts for a joint Ottoman-Japanese Declaration were exchanged between the parties. While these proposals continued to be exchanged with numerous deletions and revisions, no concrete conclusions could be reached. Especially the third article that included the most favored nation clause constituted a significant problem. It was suggested to delete

³¹³ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 42.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 43.

³¹⁶ BOA, HR.TH.148/13 (16.10.1894). “Japonya devletinin Berlin Sefiri Kont Aokiye 29 Şevval 1310 tarihinde ihsan buyrulan birinci rütbeden Osmanî ve müşarünileyhanın sefaret-i mezkure ataşe-militeri Majo Rukuki Hima(?)’ya ...’de ihsan buyrulmuş olan üçüncü rütbeden Mecidî nişan-ı zişanları mukaddema mabeyn-i hümayun-i mülukane canib-i ‘aliyyesinden ita kılınmış olduğu cihetle bu kerre vürud iden zât-ı ‘alilerinin mümaileyhaya ita kılınmak üzere Berlin Sefaret-i seniyyesine irsali ”. Also see, Count Aoki’s letter of thanks for the decoration of “La Grande Croix de Son Ordre del’Osmanié” which apparently surprised him, BOA, HR.TO.538/62 (19.05. 1893).

all juridical privileges and related treatment from the article and leave only those related to trade issues. Negotiations continued without bearing any fruit in most of the 1890s.

However, troubled by international and military crises, the Japanese and the Ottoman Empire interrupted their negotiations in 1898. The Japanese victory over their shared enemy, the Russian Empire, in 1905 sparked great interest and joy among the Ottoman intellectual and political elite, who admired their glorious victory and successful reforms that the Ottomans should emulate. In other words, they should modernize without losing their religion and national identity or character, just as the Japanese succeeded in doing.³¹⁷ Even though both parties were enthusiastic about establishing trade and diplomatic relations, the international atmosphere and the negotiations did not allow the signing of the agreement. The Great Powers, notably the Russian Empire, feared this potential and secret agreement that could happen at any moment between the Japanese and the Ottoman Empires.

Moreover, the Ottoman Empire suffered political instability at various times due to turmoil in the Balkans and other territories. The negotiations for a treaty between the two Asian empires resumed in 1909 due to the conservation of friendly relations and the enthusiasm of many years to establish diplomatic and commercial relations. However, the treaty could not materialize as the Japanese insisted on the treatment of “the most favored nation clause,” which did not please the Ottoman government, who perceived that as capitulatory. At a certain point, the Japanese put an end to their representations which bore no fruit. After all, there was only one Japanese national who insistently remained in

³¹⁷ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 51-53.

the Ottoman Empire, named Nakamura, and engaged with trade in the European quarter of the Ottoman capital, Pera (Beyoğlu area).³¹⁸

5.6 Commercial Relations with Japan

As previously mentioned, Yamada Torajiro first came to Istanbul after the tragic incident of the wreckage of the *Ertugrul* frigate to deliver the donations collected by the Japanese newspaper *Jiji Shimpō* in 1892. However, before him, journalist Noda Shotarō from the mentioned newspaper came to Istanbul and delivered the first installment of the collected money (around 4000 yen) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sait Paşa. Upon the request of the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II, Noda started to give Japanese lessons to the students at the Military Academy. Yamada handed the second sum of the collected donations to Sait Paşa and took over the Japanese lessons at the military school from Noda.³¹⁹ Some sources tend to confuse these two Japanese men for each other. For instance, Noda Shotaro embraced Islam and became the first Muslim Japanese in 1891.³²⁰ However, in some sources, Yamada Torajiro was inadvertently portrayed as the first Muslim Japanese, which he was not. Actually, these two Japanese met in Istanbul in 1892, and Noda was very helpful in his introduction to influential people. The scholar

³¹⁸ Ibid, 62.

³¹⁹ Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera”, *The Crescent and the Sun Three Japanese in Istanbul* Yamada Torajiro, Ito Chuta, Otani Kozui, co-ed. By Selçuk Esenbel, Miyuki Aoki Girardelli and Erdal Küçükyalçın, İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2011, 33.

³²⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK.72/21 (14.10.1308-23.05.1891), “Saadetlü Efendim Hazretleri, Dün Japonyalı Noda Efendi bendelerinin şeref-i İslamı kabul eylediği...”

Nobuo Misawa asserts that Noda practically wrote a petition for Yamada to the Ottoman Imperial Court to help him establish his trade business in Constantinople.³²¹

On his way from Yokohama to Istanbul, he stayed in Egypt for a while. He had audiences with the political elite since his primary motivation was establishing trade relations with the Near East and the Ottoman Empire. When he returned to Japan briefly, he delivered a lecture about the circumstances of Egypt and Turkey that reflected the Japanese motives to establish commercial relations in these regions.³²²

When he returned to the Ottoman Empire during the summer of 1893 on Foreign Minister Enamoto Takeaki's advice, his main aim was to open his store *Nakamura Shoten* with his business partner Nakamura Kenjiro who was in the textile business. Since the trade relations between Japan and the Ottoman Empire were not secured with a trade agreement, the Ottoman authorities promised to "provide the necessary convenience to enable him to increase the trade between Japan and the Ottoman Empire," as a Foreign Affairs document shows us.³²³ Before opening his shop in partnership with Kenjiro Nakamura, he exhibited various Japanese goods imported from Japan at the Chamber of Commerce of Constantinople since he established good relations with the Chamber and its Secretary General Spirakis Alexandritis.³²⁴ So, what were these Japanese items that he

³²¹ Nobuo Misawa, "The First Japanese Who Resided in the Ottoman Empire the Young Journalist Noda and the Student Merchant Yamada," *The Mediterranean World*, 21(Tokyo 2012), 63.

³²² Selçuk Esenbel, "A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, 'Japon Mağazası' of Pera", 33.

³²³ BOA, HR.TH.135/60 "Osmanlı ile Japonya arasındaki ticaretin tezyidi için gelecek olan Mösyö Yamada'ya gereken kolaylığın gösterileceği."

³²⁴ Selçuk Esenbel, "A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, 'Japon Mağazası' of Pera", 33-35. Nobuo Misawa argues that he even lodged at Spirakis' home for a while when he returned from Japan in 1893. Nobuo Misawa, "The First Japanese Who Resided in the Ottoman Empire the Young Journalist Noda and the Student Merchant Yamada," 64.

managed to exhibit at the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce? Japanese goods such as silk, porcelain, tea, and wooden objects were authorized to be displayed in one of the Chamber's rooms. It is no coincidence that Count Aoki wanted to reapproach the Ottomans to sign a friendship and trade agreement in 1893. Selçuk Esenbel asserts that Aoki felt confident to start the negotiations for the trade agreement since Japanese people of business were active in trade between the two countries at the time.³²⁵

When the only Japanese store (*Nakamura Shoten*) in Ottoman Istanbul was eventually opened, Yamada had to transfer the shop's ownership to the Nakamura family and acted only as the manager of the Nakamura Shoten store in Pera. Thanks to the Ottoman law pertaining to the display of sample goods that went into effect in 1890, the Nakamura Shoten could perform as a commercial museum (*ticari müze*) without the need for protection by the Trade Agreements for a long time.³²⁶

The Japanese store's first address was on the Grande Rue de Pera at the Hazzopoulo Passage and later moved to other places on the Grande Rue de Pera.³²⁷ According to Selçuk Esenbel, “the store later moved to *Cite de Pera*³²⁸, and its addresses were as follows: K. Nakamura as Maison Japonaise Depot General No. 186 Grand Rue de Pera,

³²⁵ Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera”, 35.

³²⁶ Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera”, 34.

³²⁷ Nobuo Misawa, “Japanese Trade Exhibition (1929-1937) Japanese Traces in Istanbul”, *Journal of Istanbul's Culture and Art*, (Issue 7), March 2010, 39. (Nobuo Misawa gives this address in his article: no 81 at the time, no 91 on the Grand Rue de Pera in our time)

³²⁸ Known as “çiçek pasajı”.

and 19 Passage Hazzopoulo, Nakamura K. Articles du Japon, Cité de Pera, 13 Pera and Ralli Han 17,18, Sirkeci.”³²⁹

Around 1899-1900, documents suggest that the Japanese Foreign Affairs asked the Ottoman Government to offer protection to Yamada, a Japanese trader and resident of Istanbul, for a long time as there was no Trade Agreement between the two countries.³³⁰

Around the same time, Nakamura Eiichi came to Istanbul to work at the Japanese store.

Around 1905- 1906 when both Yamada and Nakamura Kenjiro returned to Japan to deal with other businesses, he took over the management of the Nakamura store.

Nakamura Shoten remained active until the outbreak of the First World War and acted as the only bridge between the two empires for their commercial and diplomatic relations.

Japanese and Ottoman governments gave Nakamura Shoten special permission to import items to their lands. A Kobe correspondent from *The Japan Weekly Mail* reported in

September 1904 that Nakamura Shoten had been granted special permission to import

tobacco from the Ottoman Empire.³³¹ While Yamada Torajiro, through Nakamura Shoten,

imported tea, silk, porcelain, lacquerware, screens, handicrafts, and mineral waters from

the Japanese Empire through this store, he also exported tobacco, dried food, leather, rock

salt, wool, and parchment from the Ottoman Empire into Japan.

³²⁹ Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera”, 35.

³³⁰ BOA, HR.İD.2096/9 (m. 07.10.1899), “Japonya tüccarından Mösyö Yamada'nın iki devlet arasında bir muahede mevcut olmamasından dolayı himayesiz bulunduğu bahisle Osmanlı hükümeti tarafından himayesi ricası” also, see, BOA, Y.MTV.201/21 (h.05.12.1317-m.06.04.1900) “Uzun senelerden beri İstanbul'da mukim Japon tüccarlarından Yamada'nın Osmanlı Hükûmetince himayesi hakkında Japonya Hariciyesi'nin vaki iltimasına verilecek cevap hakkında Hariciye Nezaretî'nin istizanı.”

³³¹ “A Summary of News,” *The Japan Weekly Mail A Review of Japanese Commerce*, September 10, 1904, 273. The news also stated that “the (tobacco) import is estimated at two or three hundred thousand yen per year.”

Some items sold in the store were lavishly decorated following the Japonisme taste. “The majority of its customers were the Sultan and the members of the Ottoman dynasty who were enthusiastic about the Japanese manufactured goods, household artifacts, and decorative goods.”³³²

Yamada Torajiro also worked on personal orders to please the Sultan and the royal family, who were his main customers and foreign buyers who wanted to import Ottoman goods. As the governor of Taiwan wanted to import Ottoman pomegranates, he became an intermediary to make it happen. Similarly, when the Ottoman Sultan wanted to import persimmons, tea seeds, and tea saplings into the Ottoman Empire, he managed the persimmons to be transferred to the Yıldız Palace and the tea seeds and saplings to Trabzon region to develop tea cultivation and experimentation in the Ottoman Empire.³³³

Yamada was also a master of the Japanese tea ceremony thanks to his education and family connections. Although he was initially from the Nakamura-Muramatsu family, he was adopted by the Yamada family to perpetuate the family lineage. Yamada Soju, the seventh master of the tea ceremony of the *Sohenryu* Tea Ceremony School, did not have children and adopted Yamada Torajiro with the blessing of his own family, the Nakamura-Muramatsu family. After Yamada Soju passed away, Yamada Torajiro became the eighth master of the *Sohenryu* Tea Ceremony School. Following Yamada, his eldest

³³² Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera”, 38.

³³³ For information on the connection between Taiwan and Turkish pomegranates, and the persimmons, see Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera,” 38. About the tea seeds and saplings, see BOA, BEO.501/37541 (25.10.1894), and BOA, Y.PRK.OMZ.1/84 (23.04.1895).

daughter, *Fujiko*, became the 9th and his eldest son, Yamada Shihō Saisohen, became the 10th master of this tea ceremony school.³³⁴

Yamada Torajiro is known to have performed the Japanese tea ceremony (*chanoyu*) in the *kencha*³³⁵ style for the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman elites at the Yıldız Palace. Selçuk Esenbel argues that these *chanoyu* ceremonies were probably the first encounters of the Ottomans with the Japanese tea ceremony. Although she may be right for most of the elite, as I suggested before in this chapter, Sultan Abdulhamid, as a royal prince, visited the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1867, where tea ceremonies were performed at one of the Japanese pavilions. It is highly plausible that he and his entourage witnessed one of those *chanoyu* ceremonies at the Universal Exhibition in Paris.

An Ottoman tea trading company, *Yavroyan and Isakolyan*, advocated in an announcement dating 1904 that just this once, they imported pure Japanese tea in their original boxes, which they advertised as “superior to others in taste, smell, and color.”³³⁶ The advertisement tells us a lot about the rarity of Japanese tea in the Ottoman market. We may safely assume that the imported tea mentioned in the announcement was realized thanks to the efforts of Yamada Torajiro too.

³³⁴ Selçuk Esenbel, “A Fin de Siècle Japanese Romantic in Istanbul: Yamada Torajirō and the Nakamura Shoten, ‘Japon Mağazası’ of Pera”, 24-45.

³³⁵ A special tea ceremony performed only for political leaders such as the Sultan, president, or emperor using special utensils for the occasion.

³³⁶ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı Osmanlı’da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*, 148-149.

5.7 Diplomatic and Commercial Relations With Japan During The Early Republican Period

When the First World War broke out in 1914, the hopes of establishing diplomatic relations between Japan and Turkey were abandoned and started again during the Lausanne Peace Conference that began in November 1922. After many sessions attended by the Japanese and the Turkish delegations, the Allied Powers and the new government of Turkey signed the treaty on July 24th, 1923. “In the meantime, the representative of Japan in Istanbul at the Straits Commission, Sadazouchi Uchida, was promoted to the rank of Ambassador on January 31st, 1923.”³³⁷ It was followed by the establishment of the Turkey-Japan Society (*Nippon-Toruko Kyokai*) on June 15th, 1925, and the appointment of Fuat Hulusi (Togay) as the first resident Turkish envoy to Japan on July 7th, 1925. As a reciprocation to the posting of Mr. Hulusi Fuat, the Japanese government assigned Mr. Obata Ukichi as the permanent charge d’affaires and envoy of Japan. Though he was sent to Istanbul and not to Ankara yet again, at this early stage, we know that other foreign states were hesitant to establish embassies in Ankara rather than in cosmopolitan Istanbul.

As it was the intention to establish trade relations between the two countries as early as possible, in November 1925, the Osaka Turkish-Japanese Trade Association was established. Torajiro Yamada was also a member of this Association and worked for its establishment and to further elaborate on the commercial relations. The honorary chairman of this Association was the Turkish envoy in Tokyo, Hulusi Fuat. The

³³⁷ Umut Arık, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 76.

Association organized a commemorative ceremony to honor the victims of Ertugrul and strengthen the friendship between the two countries in 1928. The approaches and negotiations for a trade agreement were speeded up during 1929, and *the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation between Turkey and Japan* was finally signed on October 11th, 1930.

While parties had to wait until 1934 to put this agreement into effect, some concrete steps were taken in the meantime to elaborate the trade relations by the Osaka Turkish-Japanese Trade Association. In 1929, the Association opened a *Japanese Commercial Museum*, also known as *the Japanese Trade Exhibition*.³³⁸ This commercial museum was located in Karaköy, very close to the Galata Bridge, and had four floors and ten showrooms to display traditional and modern Japanese goods and manufactures, which most probably included Japanese teas without a doubt.³³⁹ *Japon Ticaret Sergisi*, which remained active until 1937, published monthly reports of reciprocal trade between Japan and Turkey known as the *Bulletin Mensuel du Musée Commercial du Japon à Istanbul* (Istanbul Trade Exhibition Magazine). These magazines in the Japanese language included detailed reports and records of trade between Turkey and Japan between 1930 and 1937.³⁴⁰ Unfortunately, they are only available in Japanese libraries and are very limited in number. One sincerely hopes that the study of these journals will further elaborate and enlighten the history of trade between Japan and Turkey in the near future.

³³⁸ *Japon Ticaret Sergisi* in Turkish and *Musée Commercial du Japon à Istanbul* in French.

³³⁹ Umut Arik, *A Century of Turkish-Japanese Relations: A Special Partnership*, 97. Also see Nobuo Misawa, “Japanese Commercial Museum in Istanbul (1928-1937)”, *Annals of Japan Association for Middle East Studies*, Japan and the Middle East before World War II (Special Issue), 240.

³⁴⁰ Nobuo Misawa, “Japanese Trade Exhibition (1929-1937) Japanese Traces in Istanbul”, 43.

5.8 Records of Japanese Tea in the Early Republican Sources

Documents suggest that just as during the reign of Abdülhamid II, the Ottoman Empire imported tea seeds and saplings from the Japanese Empire to experiment with tea cultivation at various model farms, the new Turkish government adopted the same practice to improve tea farming in Turkey. The early Republican government continued to import various kinds of Japanese tea seeds via the initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture before and after signing the trade agreement with Japan (1930). These documents show that immediately after the establishment of permanent embassies in Japan and the Turkish Republic (1925), the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture started to import Japanese tea seeds through the agency of the Tokyo Embassy. These documents, which spanned between 1925 and 1929, attest that the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture, which formerly received only one kind of Japanese tea seed from Japan, found this insufficient for the purpose and asked for various other kinds of Japanese tea seeds to improve tea agriculture in Turkey.³⁴¹

Another document dates back to 1939 when the majority of the foreign trade was realized through Clearing Agreements. To remedy the economic depression after the Great Depression of 1929, the Turkish government adopted the Clearing System (*Kliring Sistemi*) to close and balance the foreign trade deficit. This system only allowed

³⁴¹ BCA, 543 / 44739 - 215550 – 8 (18.12.1925), BCA, 543 / 44739 - 215550 – 7 (09.06.1926), BCA, 543 / 44739 - 215550 – 5 (16.01.1927), BCA, 543 / 44739 - 215549 – 3 (13.06.1928), BCA, 543 / 44739 - 215549 – 1 (11.08.1929)

importation from certain countries to which it exported. Apparently, the Turkish Republic had signed a clearing agreement with Japan that did not include the trade of tea.

According to this document, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Trade Directorate wrote a missive to the Tokyo Embassy to include Japanese tea and cotton fabric to the quota lists and to add some new provisions to the agreement.³⁴² Eight months later, a few weeks after the Second World War broke out, the newspaper *Akşam* announced that there was enough stock for only four months of tea and coffee consumption in Istanbul. Apart from this legally imported and officially registered tea stock, it was rumored that tea and coffee were illegally stocked in massive amounts. The newspaper piece also announced that locally-produced Turkish tea was marketed as Japanese tea by fraud.³⁴³

Despite the scarcity or rarity of Japanese teas in the Turkish tea market, finding and consuming them was possible during the early Republican period. The thirteenth edition of the company brochure of *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayı*, printed in 1927, listed two types of Japanese tea among the types sold in the company shops or various places throughout Turkey. The brochure stated that *Kemon* and *Şinkilu*³⁴⁴ teas had more odor and less color than other types, and the company's tea blend number seven was made of these teas.³⁴⁵

³⁴² BCA, 543 / 44678 - 215575 – 19 (18.01.1939). “Tokyo Büyükelçiliğine, Merî Türk-Japon Anlaşmasına merbut listelerde yazılı bulunmamaları veya kontenjan listesindeki tahsisatın tükenmiş olması dolayısı ile memlekete ithal olunamayan Japon menşe’li pamuklu mensucat ile çayın listeye ithali ve anlaşmaya bazı yeni hükümler ilavesi hakkında İktisat Vekaletinden alınan tezkerenin bir sureti leffen takdim kılındı. Bu bâbda Japon hariciyesi nezdinde icab eden teşebbüsatta bulunularak neticenin inbasını rica ederim.”

³⁴³ *Akşam*, 24.09.1939.

³⁴⁴ This may be, infact, *Shincha*, as there is no variety named as *Şinkilu*. The transliteration of the brochure belongs to Tarih and Toplum Dergisi, 70th issue, October 1989, 60-61.

³⁴⁵ *Kutu ve Paketlere Mahsus Çay Pişirme Tarifesi: Hekimoğlu Ali Paşazade Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Büyük Çay Depoları*, On üçüncü tab’, Evkaf-ı İslamiyye Matbaası 1927 in *Tarih ve Toplum*, October 1989, (70th issue), 60-61. The brochure did not have Japanese teas listed among its varieties and blends of tea

5.9 Conclusion

Japanese Empire and the Ottoman Empire did not have diplomatic and trade relations on an official base. However, this did not impede the exchange between the two countries. These relations were realized thanks to a well-educated Japanese tradesman, Yamada Torajiro, whose Nakamura Shoten store functioned as a quasi-consulate. Yamada, a master of the Japanese tea ceremony, performed tea ceremonies for the Ottoman Sultan and Istanbulite elite. Moreover, he was instrumental in developing the tea trade and importing, selling, and popularizing Japanese tea in these lands.

Contrary to popular belief, it was during Sultan Abdulaziz's reign that the Ottomans first encountered Japanese tea and tea ceremony at the Paris World Exhibition of 1867 that the Ottoman Sultan, princes, and the ruling elite attended. Documents showed that Sultan Abdulaziz was interested in Japanese tea cultivation and asked for the translation of a booklet on the topic. In conclusion, the Japanese tea culture impressed the Ottoman Sultans to pursue studying and cultivating tea in Turkey.

Although imported and sold in the Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey, the masses did not consume Japanese tea as they consumed massive amounts of Chinese, Russian, or colonial teas. Japanese tea in the Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey remained largely a marginal product. However, the know-how of Japanese tea cultivation was imported together with Japanese tea seeds and saplings into the Ottoman

until the eleventh edition, that was printed in 1341 (1922/1923). It was not possible to locate the twelfth edition. It may or may not include Japanese teas.

Empire and later to Turkey. All these contributed first to Ottoman experimentation with tea cultivation at the turn of the twentieth century and later to Turkish tea production in the Black Sea Region.



CHAPTER VI: TEA MERCHANTS IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND EARLY REPUBLICAN TURKEY

The only statistics of the tea trade that the Ottoman Empire kept a record of started in 1878 and ended in 1913. In this data, we may see a steady increase both in the quantity of the product and its value. The data indicates, for instance, that the value of tea imports into the Ottoman Empire was 38.321 gold liras in 1879, reaching 245.829 gold liras in 1913.³⁴⁶

This lack of statistical data forces us to complement the picture with other materials. Fortunately, plenty of documents in the Ottoman archives and the newspapers talk about the tea traders and merchants in the Ottoman Empire, particularly those active in Constantinople, but not limited to them. While during the Late Ottoman years, most tea traders were non-Muslims, mostly Greeks, Armenians, and foreigners, the situation changed after the First World War. We started to see that Turkish-Muslim tea traders

³⁴⁶ Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ticaret Muvazenesi 1878-1913 (Ankara, 1939). Şevket Pamuk and Charles Issawi pointed out that the Ottoman import trade state statistics were inflated since they included the Persian transit trade imports in the Ottoman imports. However, it is possible to overcome this obstacle and see the difference between the tea imports destined for Anatolian trade and Persian transit trade thanks to the statistical information we can find in the British consular trade reports of Trabzon and Erzurum.

slowly infiltrated the tea trade and gradually took over the Turkish tea market from the hands of foreign and non-Muslim competitors. However, trade yearbooks from the early Republican years (the 1920s) showed that despite so many new Turkish-Muslim merchants and company names appearing in the tea trade lists, the foreign and non-Muslim ones did not disappear altogether; instead, became tea commissioners, the mediators between the Turkish tea merchants and the tea traders in the global tea market.

6.1 The Non-Muslim Tea Traders of the Ottoman Empire

Previous chapters have demonstrated that non-Muslim and foreign merchants, particularly the British, controlled the majority of the tea trade in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. As early as the seventeenth century, British merchants employed non-Muslim Ottomans as agents and intermediaries. During the nineteenth century, “Ottoman Christians and Jews took advantage of the status and privileges they enjoyed as Ottoman subjects and combined them masterfully with British and other European protection.”³⁴⁷ In this way, the British could “guarantee a stable source of revenue, developed a local milieu of reliable assistants and associates and established relationships of dependency and trust with local authorities a foreign environment that could be otherwise dangerous and hostile.”³⁴⁸ However, as we have seen in previous

³⁴⁷ Despina Vlami, *Trading with the Ottomans, The Levant Company in the Middle East*, (IB. Tauris, 2015), 159.

³⁴⁸ Despina Vlami, *Trading with the Ottomans*, 159.

chapters, the business was not immune to risks since we encountered many contentious and fraudulent cases in archival documents.

Prestigious tea trading companies like Twinnings and Lipton³⁴⁹ used to have agents or branch offices in Ottoman cities. The non-Muslim agents representing these firms were responsible for distributing the tea dispatched from Europe, Ceylon, and India. Twinnings had, for instance, an agent in Constantinople named *Mouchtouris* and another agent in Samsun known as *A.zade&Frere*.³⁵⁰ According to an advertisement in *İkdam*, published in 1895, *Komvopoulos* is the only distributor of Lipton Tea in the Ottoman Empire.³⁵¹

Sources also showed that the foreign tea traders preferred to establish partnerships with Greek traders rather than Armenians, who were also active in the Ottoman tea market. It was especially true for Armenian traders from Anatolia since they encountered difficulties visiting Constantinople, which was handicapped by police restrictions on traveling.

However, there were also prominent Ottoman tea trading companies established by Constantinopolitan Armenians with no such problems. Besides, there were also native Anatolian Armenians who preferred to engage in direct trade with Britain rather than depending on Constantinople for tea purchases, such as Misak Vasiyan from Erzurum.³⁵²

As Despina Vlami indicates in her book,

³⁴⁹ In a document from the year 1906, See BOA, HR.SFR.3.566/51 (14.04.1906), we see that the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs Musurus Pasha requests tea from Lipton. They responded and asked whether they could replace the type of tea blend he ordered with another type of blend. In the letterhead, we see that Lipton had offices in the UK, Ceylon, Calcutta, and factories and depots in many places in the UK and Russia. The list ends with this statement “and agents throughout the world.”

³⁵⁰ BOA, HR.SFR.3.708/60 (14.09.1914).

³⁵¹ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı Osmanlı'da Çay ve Çayhane Kültürü*, 152. See also, *İkdam*, nr.188, 10 Şaban 1312 (6 Şubat 1895), 4.

³⁵² BOA, HR.SFR.3.619/23 (18.05.1910).

From the late eighteenth century, Greeks were employed by European merchants as brokers, intermediaries, and shipmasters. Their knowledge of local languages, familiarity with Ottoman society, local contacts, and an ability to adjust to a vast range of opportunities gave the Greeks a distinctive advantage.³⁵³

Given the circumstances, it is no surprise that the Greek merchants were also prominent actors in the Ottoman tea trade. Besides the already mentioned *Komvopoulos* and *Mouchtouris*, other prominent Greek merchants importing and selling tea in Constantinople during the nineteenth century were *Pagopoulos*, *Athenais Kalotaridis*, *Fotaki Brothers*, *Biazi*, and *Manolaki*. While both *Fotaki Brothers* and *Pagopoulos* imported tea from China, Java, and India, the latter differed from the *Fotaki Brothers* since *Pagopoulos* imported only tea. In contrast, the *Fotaki Brothers* also sold other items, such as chocolates and samovars. Furthermore, according to documents from the Ottoman State archives, we can say that *Athenais Kalotaridis* was importing tea from Hamburg, Germany, whereas *Biazi*, *Komvopoulos*, *Mouchtouris*, and *Manolaki* were importing tea from Britain.

The most renowned among the Greek tea trading subjects was *Manolaki* or *Manulaki*. There are documents in the Ottoman State archives about *Manulaki* because he was involved in fraudulence. The first document regarding *Manulaki*'s tea business is from an earlier period (1873-1874), which suggests that the Ottoman customs officials detained the fourteen crates of tea he imported from London since he refused to pay his customs tax.³⁵⁴ The other document shows that he was still active in the tea trade during the 1890s and was probably thriving to the point that he called himself "the official tea purveyor of

³⁵³ Despina Vlami, *Trading with the Ottomans, the Levant Company in the Middle East*, 160.

³⁵⁴ BOA, ŞD.560/40 (20.05.1873).

his majesty the Sultan” (Saray-ı Hümâyûn Cenâb-ı Mülûkâne Çaycıbaşı) even it was far from the truth.³⁵⁵ According to the document, he claimed that he got permission from zabita to erect an imperial monogram over his tea shop (Abdülhamid II’s tughra, which was referred to in the document as “tugra-yı garra-yı hazret-i hilâfetpenâhî”) and later the State discovered that this claim was false. More importantly, he set an example to other tea traders petitioning to embellish their shops with the imperial Ottoman coat of arms.³⁵⁶ Selim Deringil refers to this incident by stating that “the matter of just where the official iconography could be displayed sometimes led to amusing incidents, one such being the case of Manolaki. Although the Ottoman equivalent for ‘Purveyors of fine teas to Her Majesty the Queen’ was to be found in the official almanacs, Manolaki evidently did not qualify.”³⁵⁷

We can see that the Ottoman State changed its policy on granting official permission to erect arma-i Osmânî (imperial coat of arms of the House of Osman) in documents from later years. This time (in 1894-95), Armenian tea traders Ohannes and Karabet, Ottoman tea traders located in Bagcekapusu³⁵⁸, asked for official permission to embellish their shops with both the imperial monogram and the coat of arms.³⁵⁹ Since they donated two hundred kilograms of tea to the Poorhouse (Dar’ül-‘aceze), an institution Abdülhamid II established to shelter the poor after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-79, their petition was found worthy of acceptance. They were granted permission to embellish their shop

³⁵⁵ BOA, Y.MTV.68/27 (28.09.1892).

³⁵⁶ Ibid. “Bunu emsâl ittihâz iderek bir takım esnaf arma-yı ‘âlî ile levha ta’likine teşebbüs ve istidasında bulunduklarından...”

³⁵⁷ Deringil, Selim, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909*, (London, I.B Tauris, 1999), 34.

³⁵⁸ “Celâl Bey Hânı 10 numero”.

³⁵⁹ BOA, Y.A.HUS.315/91(23.12.1894) , BOA, İ.DH.1319/44 (06.02.1895), BOA. DH.DACZ.2/62 (12.02.1895).

with the monogram of Abdülhamid II and the Ottoman coat of arms.³⁶⁰ After carefully investigating documents and newspaper advertisements, we can see that the beforementioned tea traders Ohannes and Karabet were the owners of the famous tea company Yavroyan and Isakolyan.³⁶¹ Popular history books introduce them as distinct tea traders, and most of the time, they were referred to in the documents either with their first names or their family names. However, *Bahcekapusu Celal Bey Hanı* No:10 was the exact address of Yavroyan Isakolyan Company and Ohannes and Karabet's tea shop. Moreover, some newspaper advertisements and a few documents referred to them by their full names (Ohannes Isakolyan and Karabet Yavroyan), which left no suspicion. Their donation of two hundred kilograms of tea to the Poorhouse (Dar'ül-'aceze) was not a singular event. It seems that the Yavroyan-Isakolyan partners were engaged in philanthropic activities such as donating money and tea to those in need. For instance, at the beginning of the twentieth century, two consecutive and destructive fires in a northwest- Aegean town called *Biga* burned down many buildings in 1901 and 1902, including houses, shops, a church, a mesjid, and even a government building. The Ottoman government, which had dire economic problems, authorized Sehremaneti to collect financial aid to help the fire victims. We see that tea trader Isakolyan Efendi paid 40 kuruş to the committee that the Sehremaneti founded to help the disaster victims.³⁶² According to the *Şûrâ-yı Ümmet*, an Ottoman political magazine published by the

³⁶⁰ Ibid., “tugrâ-yı garrâ-yı şehr-i yârî ve arma-i ‘Osmânî ile tezyînine müsâ’ade-i celile-i cenâb-i Sadâretpenâhileri şâyân buyurulmak bâbında”.

³⁶¹ Kemalettin Kuzucu introduces Yavroyan and Isakolyan as a company owned by Ottoman Greeks and later introduces Ohannes and Karabet distinctly as another pair of Armenian tea traders in his book *Bin Yılın Çayı*.

³⁶² Hüseyin Baha Öztunç, “20. Yüzyılın Başında Biga’da Yangın Afeti ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma”, *Belleten LXXXIII* (April 2018), 295-325.

members of the Committee of the Union and Progress, Yavroyan and Isakolyan donated 20 crates of tea to the military as a contribution to the aid campaign that the CUP organized after the declaration of the Second Constitution in 1908.³⁶³

It was one of the leading tea trading companies in Constantinople at the turn of the twentieth century. The Yavroyan Isakolyan Company was established in 1880 and quickly became prominent in the sector. The company continued to import teas from China, Java, Ceylon, India, and Europe into the empire in the twentieth century and sold them in various branch offices and shops in Constantinople. Their various shapes and sizes of tin tea boxes are in sales and auctions even today. Sources suggest they had a factory in Constantinople in the *Daye Hatun* neighborhood that produced their tin boxes.³⁶⁴

We see the company's name in newspapers during the cholera pandemic in the Ottoman Empire between 1910 and 1913. The medicinal use of tea against cholera was already in practice and encouraged by the State. For instance, documents suggest that the Ottoman State offered its soldiers tea and encouraged its subjects to drink tea during the cholera pandemic of 1893-1894.³⁶⁵ Similarly, during the cholera outbreak between 1910-1913, the Ottoman Palace physician recommended that officials and workers drink tea with lemon at least twice daily as a treatment against cholera.³⁶⁶ Yavroyan Isakolyan Company benefited from the epidemic. The Company used it as a marketing strategy by putting a

³⁶³ Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı*, 149.

³⁶⁴ BOA.ŞD.2388/10 (01.01.1922).

³⁶⁵ BOA.Y.MTV.70/183 (20.11.1893), BOA. A.}MKT.MHM.559/27 (25.08.1894), BOA.BEO.112/8338 (25.11.1892).

³⁶⁶ BOA, TS.MA.e.1065/44 (12.12.1912).

special anti-cholera tea (*Thé Anti-Cholérique*) on the market and advertising it in the newspapers.³⁶⁷

Yavroyan and Isakolyan continued importing and selling tea with their own names even after they dissolved their partnership. According to Kuzucu, the partners parted ways before 1914; since then, we started to see the name *Yavroyan* in newspaper advertisements without his partner. Similarly, Isakolyan continued to deal with the tea trade separately, according to a document from the state archives.³⁶⁸ Later, we presume Karabet Yavroyan left his business to his descendants since documents from 1922 suggest a new company name *Karabet Yavroyan Mahdumlari*.³⁶⁹

The Constantinople tea market had other Armenian tea traders, such as Avedis Alemian and Kevork Hovhanian's tea and confectionery shop in Tahmis, established in 1888. They imported tea from China, Java, India, and Ceylon and sold it with a *marque déposée*³⁷⁰ stamp.

As we have seen, most non-Muslim Ottoman tea traders were either Greek or Armenian. We can only find one exception through research in the Ottoman State Archives. A joint-stock company named *Ticaret Osmanlı Anonim Şirket-i Umumiyesi* was founded with a capital of 20.000 lira in 1912 by a Jewish subject, Samuel Leon, his partners, and shareholders.³⁷¹ Documents suggest that Samuel Leon (Emar or Ammar) was born as an

³⁶⁷ Şeyhmus Bingöl, "The Struggle Against Cholera in Istanbul in the summer of 1911 based on the Reports in Alemdar Daily News", *Lokman Hekim Dergisi* 2020; 10 (3): 360-377.

³⁶⁸ BOA.DH.EUM.2.Şb.41/14 (28.01.1917).

³⁶⁹ BOA.ŞD.2388/10 (01.01.1922), BOA.DH.İ.UM.19/1 (18.01.1922).

³⁷⁰ "Marque déposée" means "registered trademark" in English.

³⁷¹ BOA.BEO.3983/298723 (31.12.1911).

Ottoman subject in Smyrna on June 17, 1887.³⁷² Nevertheless, Samuel Leon and his shareholders were not exclusively dealing with the tea trade, and its importation constituted only a tiny portion of their business. The Company imported various other products besides tea and engaged in pharmaceutical production.³⁷³

6.2 Creating a ‘National Economy’ and the Birth of Turkish-Muslim Tea Trading Companies

As previously stated, the overwhelming majority of the tea traders until the First World War (1914-1918) and the Truce period (1919-1922) were mainly Ottoman Greeks and Armenians, who could not only speak the European languages but also shared a common faith with their fellow European merchants, namely Christianity. In addition, the non-Muslim tea traders benefited from the liberal economic atmosphere in the Ottoman Empire, especially after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, when the leaders and prominent figures of the Party of the Union and Progress advocated and encouraged private enterprise (*teşebbüs-i şahsî*), free trade (*serbestî-i ticaret*) and free competition (*serbestî-i rekabet*).³⁷⁴ During the nineteenth century, they also enjoyed commercial

³⁷² BOA.HR.SYS.2462/44 (19.05.1919) These letters were dispatched between the Ottoman Empire and the Spanish Embassy in Italy. He was required to present some paperwork for his business journey from Italy to Spain, which most likely doubled as a passport. He was born in Smyrna in 1887 as an Ottoman subject descended from a Jewish millet, per his records. (Italian original: “ suddito Ottomano, ma di nazionalità israelita”).

³⁷³ BOA, A.}DVN.MKL.67/13 (17.08.1920).

³⁷⁴ Zafer Toprak claims that non-Muslims benefited most from the liberal atmosphere after the proclamation of the Second Constitution (1908). They established new trade companies, including joint-stock companies, since they already had the capital to allow them to take control of the new business areas.

privileges the Ottoman Empire granted to European countries and their merchants. As a result, most non-Muslim Ottomans guaranteed protection from European countries, established partnerships, or acted as agents of great trade companies.

After the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), which radically changed the Ottoman Empire’s population to the point where Muslims made up three-fourths of the population in 1915, things began to shift. However, they barely controlled 15% of the capital and labor in the Ottoman economy, compared to 60% possessed by the Greek populace.³⁷⁵ According to Şevket Pamuk, “the Empire lost about a quarter of its population and more than 10% of its land in the commercially and agriculturally more advanced European provinces between 1911 and 1913.”³⁷⁶

Following the Balkan wars, *Ottomanism* left its place to Turkish-Muslim nationalism, eventually creating an economic awakening (*intibah-ı iktisadî*) in the Ottoman intellectuals’ minds. They realized that the inclusive Ottoman citizenship they tried to create was doomed to fail and replaced it with Turkish-Muslim nationalism. The Ottoman newspapers that increased in number after the declaration of Second Constitution in 1908 contributed to disseminating liberal ideas such as private enterprise and free trade and creating a new Turkish-Muslim entrepreneur class. However, during and after the Balkan Wars, Ottoman newspapers used a pejorative vocabulary when referring to non-Muslim

“In other words, constitutional liberalism made the powerful more powerful”. Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat 1908-1918* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2017), 160.

³⁷⁵ Mithat Kadri Vural, “Savaş Yıllarında Milli Bir Burjuvazi Oluşturma Çabası Olarak ‘Harp Zenginleri’ ve Buna Yönelik Eleştiriler”, *Journal of Modern Turkish History Studies* XVI/ 32 (2016 Spring), 111. According to this source, the Armenians held the %15 and the Jewish subjects held %10 of the capital and labor in Ottoman Economy in 1915.

³⁷⁶ Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and the European Capitalism, 1820-1913 Trade, Investment, Production* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 35.

merchants and foreign investors.³⁷⁷ The loss of Balkans ignited a sense of vengeance (“*intikam*”) ³⁷⁸ among the Muslim populace who held the non-Muslim Ottomans, especially the Greek subjects, responsible for the Ottoman defeat and their troubles in general. With that sense of vengeance that made its way into school curriculums and newspapers, Greek merchants were made a “scapegoat” and targeted with an economic boycott during 1913-1914. People had the misconception that the affluent Greek businessmen and merchants who gave to the Greek Navy during the Balkan Wars outclassed and vanquished the Ottoman Navy. A wealthy Ottoman-Greek businessman who donated the armored cruiser to the Greek State as a philanthropist gave the battleship Averof its name. The Ottoman Empire lost the Aegean islands due to Averof alone.³⁷⁹

The Averof Cruiser and the Balkan Wars provided the Muslim Ottomans with the ideal pretext to drive out their Greek rivals in order to gain control of the Ottoman trade. *The Way of Salvation for the Muslims (Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtulmak Yolu)* and other propaganda brochures served to support the economic boycott.³⁸⁰

This anonymous brochure, distributed for no charge, emphasized the necessity of posting a sign indicating whether a store is owned by a Muslim or a non-Muslim. According to *Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtulmak Yolu*, it was difficult to tell non-Muslim shops from those run by Muslims since non-Muslim merchants used names like Yakub, Necib, and Selim. For this reason, the booklet recommended its readers engrave their “real” Muslim

³⁷⁷ Taylan Esin, *Osmanlı Savaşı'nın İktisadi Aktörleri (1914-1919)* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2020), 219.

³⁷⁸ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2017), 163.

³⁷⁹ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918* (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2017), 164.

³⁸⁰ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*, 170.

names, such as Ahmed and Mehmed (together with their fathers' names, if possible), outside their businesses.³⁸¹

According to Zafer Toprak, distributing these free flyers was effective since Muslim entrepreneurs rapidly opened about 500 new stores in Istanbul.³⁸² The First World War and the associated conditions aided in the formation of Muslim business elites and organizations. In September 1914, the Ottoman government ended all financial, commercial, legal, and administrative privileges granted to foreign nations and their nationals and the capitulation agreements (*imtiyazat-ı ecnebiyye*). Throughout the conflict, there was a sustained economic boycott of non-Muslim and foreign businesses, and the Ottoman government promoted the use of native products. Newspapers were employed by the government and intellectuals of the Ottoman Empire to spread “national awareness” among the populace. Propaganda against foreign products was so intense that even drinking Nestle milk was treason against the homeland. While many regular newspapers, including *Tanin* and *İkdam*, devoted pages to promoting the national economy doctrine, some newspapers that arose in this period specialized in the economy and were dedicated to propagating national economy and national capital doctrines, such as *Ticaret-i Umumiye Mecmuası* and *İktisadiyyat Mecmuası*.

The re-location of Armenians and Greeks of Anatolia also contributed significantly to creating the national capital and the national merchant class. For instance, the Greeks of Thrace and Aegean's re-location in 1914³⁸³ created a vacuum in exporting and

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*, 171.

³⁸³ Taner Kerimoğlu, *İttihat-Terakki ve Rumlar (1908-14)* (Istanbul: Libra, 2009) 372-404 in Taylan Esin, *Osmanlı Savaşı'nın İktisadi Aktörleri (1914-19)*, 222. It was indicated that the re-located Greeks of Anatolia in this period reached approximately 130.000.

opportunities for those who sought to replace them, especially profiteers.³⁸⁴ According to a British intelligence report on the CUP's commercial endeavors, "the Armenian deportations had been a profitable source of wealth for CUP officials and their party funds, and the practical effect of the new commercial movement was to create something like a Muslim monopoly of trade."³⁸⁵ According to this report, "the word *milli* (national) virtually became a synonym for the CUP in the business sector."³⁸⁶

It makes perfect sense that we see the first Turkish-Muslim tea trade companies in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War and the period of Armistice, such as the *Bekirzade Hacı Emin Hasan*, *Şafak Çayı*, and *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih*.³⁸⁷ The latter two companies continued their business in the Turkish Republican period until the Turkish State monopolized the tea imports in 1942.

According to trilingual³⁸⁸ advertisements in the *Iktisadiyyat Mecmuası* published in 1916, *Bekirzade Hacı Emin Hasan Ticarethanesi* (Company) had a shop in Bahçekapı, Istanbul, and sold shoes, overshoes (*galoches*), military items, samovar, and perfumes besides tea.

Although the date of establishment was not sure³⁸⁹, the *Şafak Çayı*, *Şafak Çay Deposu*, or *Thé Chafak* became one of the famous tea companies in the early Republican era, namely

³⁸⁴ Taylan Esin, *Osmanlı Savaşı'nın İktisadi Aktörleri (1914-19)*, 26.

³⁸⁵ FO 371 41418528 in Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*, 681.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ Kemalettin Kuzucu also mentions Culfazoğlu Hacı Hüseyin, who was the only Muslim tea trader who imported tea to Trebizond in his book *Bin Yılın Çayı*, 154. However, he refers to Bekirzade Hacı Emin Hasan as "Tekirzade" Hacı Emin Hasan. He probably misread the Ottoman script since he was written as "Bekirzade" in the Latin alphabet in the advertisement of his company in the newspaper *Iktisadiyyat Mecmuası* (1916).

³⁸⁸ Ottoman Turkish, German and French. The dates of the advertisements in the *Iktisadiyyat Mecmuası* were as follows: 21.02.1916, 04.03.1916, 05.25.1916 and 06.01.1916.

³⁸⁹ Kemalettin Kuzucu suggests that Safak Tea Company became popular during the early 1920s in his book *Bin Yılın Çayı*, 155.

the late 1920s and 1930s as the dates of their advertisements from various newspapers suggest. Their advertisement in *Akbaba*, from October 8, 1928, claimed superiority over other teas with their scents, color, and prices.³⁹⁰ In September 1929, the Company advertised a competition for their label design which would take place in Beyoğlu Cinema *Asrı* on the Turkish newspaper *Milliyet*.³⁹¹ Although we do not know who won the competition for the design, we do know the lucky numbers that won prizes such as tea, teacups, and various other items in a lottery that *Şafak Çayı* organized in *Melek Sineması* in May 1931.³⁹² According to the advertisement in the newspaper *Vakit*, *Şafak* Company gifted a pocketknife to those who did not have a lucky number in the lottery. In another advertisement, the Company felt the need to announce that their manager Ahmet Şükrü Bey went to the Far East to buy scented teas.³⁹³

The advertisements in *Cumhuriyet* and *Vakit* encouraged the audience to be wary of their imitations and look for their original emblem.³⁹⁴ Their distinctive emblem was a small boy dressed in Chinese attire serving tea, and the trademark *Şafak Çayı* was written in a font that looked pseudo-Chinese. However, it is ironic that *Şafak Çayı* later imitated the design of the *Albayrak Mustafa Neziha* Tea Company's tin boxes, the oldest and most famous Turkish-Muslim tea trading company established at the end of the First World War.

³⁹⁰ *Akbaba*, nr.608, October 8, 1928 in Kemalettin Kuzucu, *Bin Yılın Çayı*, 155.

³⁹¹ *Milliyet*, September 27, 1929.

³⁹² *Vakit*, May 26, 1931.

³⁹³ *Milliyet*, 17.08.1930. "Şafak Çayı müessesesi müdürü Ahmet Şükrü Bey nefis kokulu çaylar mübayaası için Aksa-yı Şarka (the Far East) azimet etmiştir."

³⁹⁴ *Cumhuriyet*, July 27, 1931 and *Vakit*, August 30, 1931.

6.3 Mustafa Nezih Bey and The *Albayrak* Tea Company

Mustafa Nezih Bey, the founder and owner of the famous tea company *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayları*, had quite an extraordinary career and family background as a tea trader. He was a descendant of grand vizier Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, related to Hamamizade İsmail Dede Efendi and Mimar Kasım Ağa, a musical genius, a gifted carpenter, a well-educated intellectual, a patriotic and loyal civil servant, a director of education, and finally a successful tradesman. Sources suggest that he turned out to be an innovative businessman, and his tea company became a pioneer in many regards in Turkey's tea trade.

Mustafa Nezih Bey noted that he was born in Vefa, Istanbul, in 1874 in a historic home that belonged to his mother and grandmother and that his father, Şevket Bey, was an Ottoman bureaucrat (“Sadaret Kalemî mümeyyizlerinden”) in a brief autobiography he wrote in 1941 at his flat in Taksim.³⁹⁵ Mustafa Nezih Bey was one of the first graduates of the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye*,³⁹⁶ and after his graduation, he started to work in 1890 as a teacher at *Bursa İdadi Mektebi*.³⁹⁷ He was later appointed as the second master of this school in 1893 and then as the principal in 1894.³⁹⁸ In 1895, he was appointed as the

³⁹⁵ Mustafa Nezih Albayrak, “Terceme-i hâlimin Musikiye tealluk eden bazı kısımları” in *İstenografik Albayrak Notası* (Istanbul: Ahmet İhsan Matbaası, 1941), 3.

³⁹⁶ M. Salahaddin, “Nasıl Para Kazandınız? Mustafa Nezih Bey anlatıyor. Maruf Çay Deposu sahibi diyor ki: ‘Başkasını taklid etme, bırak, seni taklid etsinler’, *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931 In an interview with a journalist from the newspaper *Milliyet*, Mustafa Nezih Bey told that he graduated from Mekteb-i Mülkiye. *Milliyet*, 15.01.1964. In his obituary, he was described as “one of the first graduates of Mekteb-i Mülkiye.” His descendants confirm this information during their interviews. *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* was a school that was opened in 1858 to train civil servants in the Ottoman Empire, according to *İslam Ansiklopedisi*.

³⁹⁷ Mekteb-i idadi was equal to a middle school and high school in the Ottoman Empire. “308 senesinde Bursa İdadi Mektebi muallimliğine tayin edildim.” in *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931.

³⁹⁸ BOA,MF.MKT.196/111, BOA, MF.MKT.201/39, BOA,MF.MKT.251/26

headmaster of *Karahisar*³⁹⁹ *Mektebi-i İdadisi*. Later in 1897⁴⁰⁰, he was appointed as the headmaster of *Çatalca Mekteb-i İdadisi*, where he remained in office until 1906.⁴⁰¹ A document suggests that the Ottoman State honored him with *rütbe-i salise*⁴⁰² (third rank) for his office's accomplishments as the headmaster of *Çatalca İdadisi*.⁴⁰³ According to a document from 1909, he was the headmaster of *Kastamonu Mekteb-i İdadisi*.⁴⁰⁴ There was a lack of documentation in the following years, making it difficult to follow his career from the Ottoman State Archives. That gap, however, ended with his appointment to the position of *Halep Maarif Müdürü* (Director of Education of Aleppo) for the first two years of the First World War. He was relocated to Ankara after serving in Aleppo, where he worked as the Director of Education until leaving the civil service.⁴⁰⁵

His grandson recounts that when he was in Ankara, he was on good terms with the new Turkish government in Ankara and the Kemalists, particularly with Yahya Galip Bey, the Deputy Governor of Ankara. According to him, Yahya Galip Bey encouraged him to join the new Turkish Parliament. However, he told him he was not interested in politics and planned to engage with the trade after retirement.

³⁹⁹ Afyon (Karahisar).

⁴⁰⁰ BOA, MF.MKT.279/30, BOA, MF.MKT.332/80.

⁴⁰¹ BOA, MF.MKT.466/27, BOA, MF.MKT.777/59, BOA, MF.MKT.790/90, BOA, MF.MKT.825/79.

⁴⁰² "Rank is an expression used for the rankings and titles given to civil servants. The regulations required for the modernized bureaucratic staff started in the Mahmut II's period. In 1833, when the Kalemîye and the civilian class were united, four ranks of civil service were accepted, namely *ûla* (1st), *saniye* (2nd), *salise* (3rd), and *râbia* (4th). Thus, the rank of each civil service was determined." in Saadettin Baştürk, "According To Sicill-i Ahval Registers Ali Emiri's Sicil Record" *Electronic Journal of Social Sciences*, Spring-2013 Volume:12 Issue:45, 313.

⁴⁰³ BOA, MF.MKT.905/7.

⁴⁰⁴ BOA, MF.MKT.1134/50.

⁴⁰⁵ M. Salahaddin, "Nasıl Para Kazandınız? Mustafa Nezih Bey anlatıyor. Maruf Çay Deposu sahibi diyor ki: 'Başkasını taklid etme, bırak, seni taklid etsinler', *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931.

Mustafa Nezih Bey recounted how his interest in tea began and how he decided to enter the tea business during an interview with a journalist from *Milliyet*. He claimed to the writer that because his father, Şevket Bey, spent a considerable amount of time working in Erzurum, their family regularly drank tea, and he acquired a taste and affection for tea from an early age. He also mentioned that when he worked as a public servant in the Ottoman Empire, he could never get “good tea” and questioned how to fix the issue. He added that when brainstorming about what to do after retirement, he thought about entering into the tea business and said: “That is a business tailored for me!”⁴⁰⁶

In her interviews, his youngest daughter recounted that his father, Mustafa Nezih Bey, sold six houses, three of which belonged to her mother (Mustafa Nezih Bey’s wife, Pakize Hanım). Mustafa Nezih Bey’s grandson indicated that one of these houses was in Bursa, which his family bought for him during his service there. Mustafa Nezih Bey himself recounted his entrance to the business in his own words in the interview:

After I retired, I had nothing but a few hundred lira worth of obligations. In order to start my career, I sold a few of the houses I had inherited from my father. With my little money, I started a store in Beyazıt immediately. But initially, I was too terrified to deal only with the tea trade, so I began to offer other goods alongside the tea, such as sugar and rice. I did so for several months, but the demand for the tea I sold was very high.⁴⁰⁷

The date of the establishment of his tea trade company *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayı* is open to debate. After the monopolization of the tea trade by the Turkish State in 1942, the

⁴⁰⁶ M. Salahaddin, “Nasıl Para Kazandınız? Mustafa Nezih Bey anlatıyor. Maruf Çay Deposu sahibi diyor ki: ‘Başkasını taklid etme, bırak, seni taklid etsinler’, *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

Company had to give up the tea trade, focus on the spices trade and start to sell flour and spices. At that point, Mustafa Nezih Bey transferred the Company to his son Şevket Nezih Bey, and the Company's name was changed to *Albayrak Hububat Unları ve Baharatı*. This Company's advertisements and receipts gave 1916 as its establishment date and indicated its old name in these documents as "Eski Mustafa Nezih Çay Müessesesi." However, documents from the Ottoman State Archives suggest he served as the Director of Education in Aleppo in 1916 and then transferred to Ankara. Mustafa Nezih Bey confirmed this in his life story by stating that he was in Aleppo during the Great War and spent a few years there.⁴⁰⁸

This dissertation argues that the Company was established in 1917 for four reasons. Firstly, in the interview that Mustafa Nezih Bey gave *Milliyet* in 1931, he told the journalist that he retired 14 years ago, coinciding with 1917. Furthermore, we know that he started his business immediately after he sold multiple houses following his retirement. Secondly, the fifth edition of the brochure of *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayı* ("Kutu ve Paketlere Mahsus Çay Pişirme Tarifesi ve Çayların Envai'i") has the date 1339 (1920/21). It lists the Bahçekapı shop and the Beyazıt shop as the addresses of the Company. Since Mustafa Nezih Bey noted in the interview that he opened the shop in Bahçekapı three years after establishing his Company, the foundation date cannot be later than 1917⁴⁰⁹. Thirdly, in an advertisement from 1933 in *Akşam*, the Company stated

⁴⁰⁸ "Harb-i Umumi'de tarafımdan Halebde bestelenen...", "Harb-i Umumi'de Haleb'de bulunduğum ve orada da birkaç sene Arab musikisi ve usul ve edvarile meşgul olduğum sırada bestelediğim..." in Mustafa Nezih Albayrak, "Terceme-i hâlimin Musikiye tealluk eden bazı kısımları" in *Istenografik Albayrak Notası* (Istanbul: Ahmet İhsan Matbaası, 1941), 4.

⁴⁰⁹ "Çaycılığa başladıktan üç sene sonra, Bahçekapı'daki şubeyi tesis ettim." In M. Salahaddin, "Nasıl Para Kazandınız? Mustafa Nezih Bey anlatıyor. Maruf Çay Deposu sahibi diyor ki: 'Başkasını taklid etme, bırak, seni taklid etsinler', *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931.

that they participated in several international exhibitions in the past fifteen years⁴¹⁰. When we subtract fifteen years from 1933, we reach 1918. Considering that they could not participate in these exhibitions immediately after the Company started its business, we can assume that the foundation date can be approximately 1917. Lastly, his youngest child Nermin Hanım was born in Ankara in February 1917 when he was still the Director of Education.

The name he chose for his tea shop (*Albayrak*⁴¹¹) and the use of the Ottoman red flag with the crescent and the star in the newspaper advertisements⁴¹² was the very thing that suited the spirit of *milli iktisat* and the aspirations of the Ottoman intellectuals and politicians to create a Turkish-Muslim trade elite in the empire. Moreover, he combined the Company's name *Albayrak* which was a national and Islamic emblem, with his name Mustafa Nezih. It was exactly the kind of activities promoted by pamphlets such as "Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtulmak Yolu" to use Nezih's first name for his business, along with Mustafa's Muslim name.⁴¹³

As Mustafa Nezih Bey indicated in his interview in 1931, after a couple of months' trial of selling groceries such as flour and sugar alongside tea, he saw that the tea met with great interest and decided to focus solely on importing and selling tea with confidence. His first shop was in Beyazıt. Three years later, he opened the second shop in Bahçekapı, and in the years 1922-23, the Company closed the first shop in Beyazıt and opened a new one in Beyoğlu. However, Mustafa Nezih Bey later closed it and opened a new shop in

⁴¹⁰ *Akşam*, 1933.

⁴¹¹ Which means "red flag" in English. It is an allusion to the Ottoman flag which would be appropriated by the later Turkish Republic as well.

⁴¹² *İkdam*, 1923, *Milliyet*, 10.04.1931.

⁴¹³ Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*, 170.

Tahmis. The advertisements throughout the 1930s list the shops in Bahçekapı and Tahmis as their company shop and storehouse address.

According to the Company's brochures and a plethora of advertisements in different newspapers, the Company purchased the teas directly from India, China, Ceylon, and Java. They all allegedly travel through the Suez Canal, according to the advertising. With the heading "Rare Teas from the Far East," several specified the ships' names, destinations, and the tea varieties they brought. For instance, the Company claimed that the ship *Poelau Laut* brought back flower tea from Ceylon in a 1938 advertisement in the journal *Akşam*. Teas of the *Altınbaş* and *Akkuyruk* varieties were brought back from Java by the ship *Tawali*, the ship *Manaar* returned with Indian and Darjeeling teas from India, and the ship *Galilea* brought back Lapsang and Popof teas from China.⁴¹⁴

In many aspects, *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayları* was a trailblazer in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey's tea industries. When Mustafa Nezih Bey initially started in the tea industry, for instance, teas were sold in the open. He asserted that he was the one who first thought of selling teas in tin boxes and packets of various shapes and sizes. He also argued that he pioneered selling different tea blends by mixing scented and different kinds of teas and assigning numbers to each of these blends.⁴¹⁵ The Company also used experts to design their boxes and parcels, which featured Japanese women holding

⁴¹⁴ *Akşam*, 02.05.1938. "Yukarıdaki taze mahsul nefis çaylar mahallerinden sureti hususiyede alınmış ve doğrudan doğruya isimleri yazılı vapurlarla ticarethanelerimize gelmiştir."

⁴¹⁵ *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931. "Çaycılığa başladığım zaman, çay İstanbul piyasasında açık satılırdı. Çayı kutu ve paketler içinde satma fikrini ilk tatbik eden ben oldum. Sonra muhtelif çaylardan harman yaparak her birini ayrı numaralar altında piyasaya çıkarmağı düşündüm. Bu numaralı harman çayları derhal umumi bir rağbete mazhar oldu. Çaylarımın nefaseti karşısında kuvvetli rakiplerimi şaşkınlık aldı. Onlar da kokulu çayları harman yaparak kutular içinde satmağa başladılar".

parasols and cranes. Other companies, such as the *Şafak* Company, later imitated this design.

As mentioned, *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayları* participated in international exhibitions in England, France, Belgium, and Italy.⁴¹⁶ Their blends and teas, directly brought from China, India, and Ceylon, were much appreciated and awarded gold medals and diplomas.⁴¹⁷

It may be argued that the Company was unusually consumer-friendly and mindful of consumer rights. First of all, they assert that one of the several blends of their distinctive teas would suit their tastes. However, clients will be given free access to a variety of Albayrak teas until they find one that suits their tastes if they are not quite satisfied with the tea they purchased from the company.⁴¹⁸ Additionally, it is stated in several advertisements that people can purchase boxes and packages of Albayrak Mustafa Nezih tea from their corporate stores as well as numerous stores and supermarkets in Istanbul, Anatolia, and Thrace. Customers could order tea from the Company as long as they ordered at least 500g of tea if they were unable to visit their company shops or find their teas in their neighborhood grocers. They guarantee to mail these orders free of postage in the advertisements.⁴¹⁹ Retrospectively speaking, ordering goods to one's address sounds modern and a novelty for the 1930s.

⁴¹⁶ In cities such as London, Nice, Paris, and Florence.

⁴¹⁷ *Akşam*, 1933, *Son Posta*, 15.05.1933.

⁴¹⁸ *Kutu ve Paketlere Mahsus Çay Pişirme Tarifesi*, Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çay Depoları, 11th edition (Istanbul: 1341) author's collection.

⁴¹⁹ *Son Posta*, 02.06.1938, *Akşam*, 04.06.1938.

Additionally, *Kutu ve Paketlere Mahsus Çay Pişirme Tarifesi ve Çayların Envai*, a pamphlet with numerous editions in Ottoman Turkish and French, was created by Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Company. These booklets explained the company's many tea blends and offered advice on how to make good tea. The brochure's fifth and eleventh editions were printed in different printshops on different dates (1339 and 1341, respectively). They also gave different addresses for the company shops due to changes that were mentioned above. They both refer to the Company as *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Büyük Çay Depoları* and emphasize the aristocratic family lineage of the owner by referring to him as "Hekimoğlu Ali Paşazade Albayrak Mustafa Nezih." While in the fifth edition, the brochure stated that "everyone would like one of the tea blends and not necessarily all of them. It depends on their tastes", in the eleventh edition, it claims that the Company will provide other tea blends free of charge if a customer would not be satisfied with the tea that they bought. The most striking difference between these two editions is the French translation of the brochure's eleventh edition added to Ottoman Turkish. Mustafa Nezih Bey might have penned the translation since he received his education at *Mülkiye Mektebi*, where French language and translation courses were mandatory.

On occasion, we may notice that the same company is referred to under several names in brochures, commercials, shipments, and receipts. *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayı* (or *Çayları*), *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih (Büyük) Çay Depoları*, *Albayrak Çay Depo ve Mağazaları*, *Thé Nezih-Al-Bairak Maison de Thé*, following 1933 when his younger son Şevket Nezih joined his father in their business it is usually referred as *Albayrak Mustafa*

Nezih ve Mahtumu Çay Depoları or Albayrak Mustafa Nezih ve Mahdumu Çay Ticarethaneleri.

The Company published numerous advertisements in various publications and periodicals that catered to various readers, including wholesalers, merchants from Anatolia, proprietors of cafés and restaurants, and consumers who drank tea at home. The latter group's costs were highlighted in the commercials, along with the teas' higher quality and flavor, popular blend numbers, and health advantages. Additionally, the Albayrak firm politely advised them to constantly seek their brand from their neighborhood stores if they could not locate their teas. For other groups, the commercials highlighted the Albayrak teas' superior quality, uniqueness, and purity and the discounts and medals they had won at international exhibits.

The name of his company (*Albayrak*) was so deeply associated with Mustafa Nezih Bey and his family that when the Surname Law entered into force in 1934, he chose to take *Albayrak* as his family name.⁴²⁰ However, it was protested in the family since they taught that they should take the surname *Hekimzade* as an allusion to their lineage.

Despite all its success, the Company had to give up the tea trade and focus on the trade of spices and other groceries when the Turkish State officially monopolized tea production and trade in 1942. Mustafa Nezih Bey transferred the Company to his son Şevket Nezih Albayrak and opened a first-rate restaurant in Karaköy named *Saray Lokantası*, famous

⁴²⁰ *Haber Akşam Postası*, “Okuyucularımızın Soyadlarını Yazıyoruz” 29.11.1934, *Akşam*, “Az zaman içinde herkesin bir soyadı olacak” 29.11.1934.

for its seabass according to advertisements from Turkish newspapers such as *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet*.

The company name changed to *Albayrak Gıda Maddeleri Sanayii ve Ticaret Anonim Şirketi*, was known as *Albayrak Hububat Unları ve Baharatı* and retained only the shop in Tahmis. From 1942 on, we start to see the advertisements of Şevket Nezih Bey's Company and Saray Lokantası on the first pages of newspapers such as *Tanin*, *Cumhuriyet*, and *Milliyet*. However, unfortunately, despite all his confidence in his business mind and his tea company's successes, Mustafa Nezih Bey could not achieve the same success with his restaurant and had to close it down shortly after.⁴²¹

6.4 Tracing the Tea Traders of the Early Republican Period from Trade Yearbooks (*Ticaret Salnameleri*) of the 1920s

The businesses' names and addresses were documented under various professions in the *ticaret salnameleri*, commissioned and created by the Turkish Republic in the 1920s. The early Republican trade yearbooks show a different picture from the Ottoman documents, with the help of which we used to portray the Ottoman tea traders as mostly non-Muslims. All seventeen of the tea merchants featured on the list of traders from the trade

⁴²¹ M. Salahaddin, "Nasıl Para Kazandınız? Mustafa Nezih Bey anlatıyor. Maruf Çay Deposu sahibi diyor ki: 'Başkasını taklid etme, bırak, seni taklid etsinler', *Milliyet*, 13.12.1931. "Mesela ben bugün çaycılık yapıyorum. Yarın, başka herhangi bir ticaret işinin de aynı suretle uhtesinden geleceğime eminim. Kendimi methetmek gibi olmasın ama, elimden hiçbir iş kurtulamaz. Giriştiğim teşebbüslerde muvaffak olmamı biraz da yüksek tahsilime borçlu olduğumu unutmuyorum."

yearbook for 1924–1925, for instance, had names that might be classified as Turkish or Muslim.⁴²²

However, the yearbook featured foreign and non-Muslim names under the caption “tea import commissioners,” indicating that the Muslims did not replace them immediately, and the non-Muslims began to coexist with them as intermediaries. The list entitled “Çay İdhalat Komisyoncuları” included names such as *Beynelmilel Rus Şirketi* (International Russian Company), *Kanzuh Viyeda*, *Lafonten Edward ve Mahdumları*, *Vital ve Şurekası*, *Novil Sydney ve Şurekası*” and so on.

Additionally, a trade yearbook from a few years later, namely the trade yearbook from 1928, reveals that a third of Istanbul’s tea traders were still non-Muslim traders. The resurgence of non-Muslim names among tea traders may be due to the 1928 yearbook not including a separate list of “tea import commissioners.” This time, however, we see non-Muslim citizens of the Turkish Republic rather than foreign international companies, such as “*Anastas Sufanidis*, *Haçik Batumsanyan*, *Rafail Kanzug*, *Foti Balabani*, *Kirkor ve Artanyan*” and so on.⁴²³

Nevertheless, these yearbooks show continuity and coexistence in the Early Republican era tea trade. As was predicted, there were more Muslim-related names and businesses.

⁴²² *Türk Ticaret Salnâmesi* [Turkish Trade Yearbook]. D02948, 1340-1341/1924-1925. On page 244, names we see under the subtitle “çay tüccarları” are as follows: “Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çay Müessesatı, Ayyıldız Çay Pazarı, Ebu Talib ve Şeriği, İstanbul Ticarethanesi (Mahmud Faik), Baltacızade Hüsameddin Cemal, Hacı Hüseyin ve Şurekası, Hacı Hanefizade Tahir, Hacı Mustafa Mahdumları, Hasan, Ticarethane-i Biraderan-ı Hacı Resul, Kerimzade, Şevkizade İrfan, Ali Tevfik Çay Ticarethanesi, Fahri, Giridli Ahmed Sabri, Mehmed Hasan and Mehmed Ali”.

⁴²³ *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Büyük Ticaret Salnâmesi* = *Republique de Turquie Grand Annuaire Commercial*, Malûl Gaziler Neşriyat Şirketi D02947, 1927, 1. D02947, 1928.

For instance, all tea sellers mentioned in Izmir in the 1928 yearbook had Turkish-Muslim names.⁴²⁴

6.5 Conclusion

Due to their social connections to and employment by the European embassies, Ottoman non-Muslims—especially those in large, cosmopolitan cities like Constantinople—were the first social groupings to consume Western goods. Additionally, they were the ones who carried on trade and brought these items from the West into the Ottoman Empire. Since during the Late Ottoman Era, tea was imported mostly by British and European firms, a majority of the tea importers in the Empire consisted of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects.

The Turkish ruling elite gave more weight to creating a national bourgeoisie after the First World War and the emergence of economic nationalism. They helped to create Muslim traders by eliminating non-Muslim competitors through their deeds and legislation. Turkish and Muslim tea merchants acquired control of the importation of tea into Turkey, although they did not entirely eradicate foreign and non-Muslim enterprises and tea merchants, as trade yearbooks from the early Republican years reveal. They coexisted with non-Muslim tea sellers and international businesses that served as middlemen during the 1920s.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

The worst enemy of good historiography is believing that the past is proprietary. That is, to believe that the past “belongs to” one or the other community that claims a fundamental continuity between the people of another age and the people of the present. Yet the past is not beautifully packaged as “Turkish history,” “Armenian history,” or “Greek history.” Those who insist it is so are not historians but history dealers.⁴²⁵

The history of the tea trade has never been covered on a global or transnational scale in Ottoman and Turkish historiography. Hitherto, within Ottoman history, scholars have framed the history of tea within a narrow geographic and temporal ambit. While authors who wrote about tea in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey have mostly focused on Turkish tea production, they have sought to emphasize “Turkishness” in their publications’ titles and contents. This research focused on the connections between Europe, East Asia, South Asia, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire, later Turkey, through the trade and consumption of tea. The present study provided a more comprehensive and global account of the Ottoman and Turkish Tea Trade with the use of supplementary and additional sources in

⁴²⁵ King, Charles. *Pera Palas'ta Gece Yarısı Modern İstanbul'un Doğuşu*. Tr. Ayşen Anadol, (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2016), 11.

other languages or sources that others had long overlooked. In order to help the reader better comprehend the actual market dynamics, trade routes, traders, workers, and customers, this research attempted to provide them with numerous viewpoints rather than just one narrative. Therefore, reaching multiple conclusions and interpretations was inevitable rather than arriving at a single cumulative conclusion. This work is organized into regions based on the origin of the teas that came to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, paying close attention to the chronology and endeavoring to adhere to it as much as possible. It was, therefore, only reasonable for each chapter to contain one or more arguments and conclusions on its own.

Since China served as the Ottomans' and the rest of the world's sole tea supplier for a very long time, it was essential to begin the main chapters of this dissertation there. Due to the lack of diplomatic or economic agreements between the two empires, the Ottomans were forced to rely on a different source to purchase tea. Russian tea merchants, who acquired tea from China and sold it to Russia and its neighbors, including the Ottomans, Persians, and Central Asians, were this source until the second part of the nineteenth century.

The Russians and the Persians attempted to create tea growing in the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, much like the Ottomans, who initially purchased Chinese tea but had no local production. Russians and Persians, who were also latecomers to tea growing like the Ottomans, helped to popularize and promote tea consumption throughout the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the imperial capital and the eastern provinces.

Furthermore, after the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the cessation of the caravan tea trade, the Black Sea Region and Ottoman ports became just as significant for the Russian tea trade as they were for Ottoman tea importations, as records from the Ottoman archives showed.

Last but not least, despite data showing that the value and volume of the tea imports from Russia had a smaller share compared to the tea trade with Britain and her colonies in South and Southeast Asia. However, archival records and travel literature also provide evidence of tea smuggling between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. If one includes those that went unnoticed and unrecorded, it suggests the amount of tea imports were significantly more than imagined.

The following chapter, after introducing the brief history of tea consumption and importation in European countries and America from East Asia, and the establishment of tea plantations in their colonies, questions the contribution of the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the British soldiers that came to the Ottoman Empire to the consumption and popularization of tea in Constantinople. The main argument of the chapter is that increased military, diplomatic, and social ties with the Europeans during the Tanzimat Era, particularly after the Crimean War (1853–1856), increased the demand for tea in the Ottoman market due to an increase in the foreign population in the Empire, particularly in Constantinople and other port cities, but also increased the exposure of the Ottomans, especially the ruling elite, to the tea-drinking Europeans. As evidenced by statistics on Ottoman imports and British consul reports, the British gradually took control of the Ottoman tea trade until the First World War after the Russians lost their advantage in

trade with the Ottomans to them in the middle of the nineteenth century, particularly after the Crimean War.

The third chapter also concluded that even though the Ottoman Empire bought tea from America, Northern Germany, France, Austria, Italy, and the Netherlands, according to trade records kept by British consuls in Ottoman port cities and Ottoman archival archives, the British still held the largest share of the market.

The fourth chapter examined the increased diplomatic and trade relations between South Asia and the Ottoman Empire and followed the traces of direct tea trade between the Ottoman Empire and the Indian Ocean World with the help of documents from the Ottoman and Republican State Archives.

Whereas the Ottomans acquired most of their tea through European firms and their agents during the Tanzimat years, direct tea trading with these regions became feasible as time passed and colonial tea production in South Asia increased. Telegraphs made communication simpler as new transportation technologies cut travel time, and local tea dealers and trading firms began bringing tea straight into Ottoman ports like Trabzon without the aid of European intermediaries and businesses. According to our sources, tea imported from the Indian Ocean World has emerged superior to tea imported from Europe and Chinese tea in terms of quality and quantity.

Later on, Turkish state officials went to India, Pakistan, and Ceylon to buy tea from local producers and tea auctions in places like Calcutta, Colombo, and Chittagong, as documents from the Republican State Archives showed us, even after the proliferation of tea cultivation in the Black Sea Region of Turkey and the passing of the Monopolization

Law in 1942 that brought all tea and coffee imports under the management of the State Monopoly Administration.

The fifth chapter asserted that Ottoman and Japanese Empires did not formally maintain diplomatic and commercial ties. This situation did not, however, prevent communication between the two entities. These ties were made possible by Yamada Torajiro, a highly educated Japanese merchant whose Nakamura Shoten store served as an imagined consulate. Yamada, a master of the Japanese tea ritual, performed tea ceremonies for the Ottoman Sultan and the elite of Istanbul. In addition, he played a significant role in establishing the tea industry in these lands by bringing in, marketing, and selling Japanese tea.

The fifth chapter also claimed that the Ottoman sultans were inspired by Japanese tea culture to study and grow tea in Turkey. The Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey imported and sold Japanese tea, but the general populace preferred to drink copious quantities of Chinese, Russian, or colonial teas. In the Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey, Japanese tea was mostly a niche item. However, Japanese tea cultivation knowledge, seeds, and seedlings were imported into the Ottoman Empire and later into Turkey. These things helped pave the way for Turkish tea production in the Black Sea region after Ottoman experimentation with tea cultivation at the turn of the twentieth century.

The sixth chapter of this thesis claimed that most British and European companies imported tea during the Late Ottoman Era, while non-Muslim Ottoman subjects who served as agents or middlemen comprised most of the tea importers in the Empire.

After the First World War and the rise of economic nationalism, the Turkish ruling elite placed increased emphasis on establishing a national bourgeoisie. Through their actions and laws, they contributed to the creation of Muslim traders by driving out non-Muslim rivals. Although they did not completely eliminate foreign and non-Muslim firms and tea merchants, trade yearbooks from the early Republican years show that Turkish and Muslim tea merchants took control of tea imports into Turkey. They lived alongside non-Muslim tea traders and foreign companies that acted as intermediaries in the 1920s.

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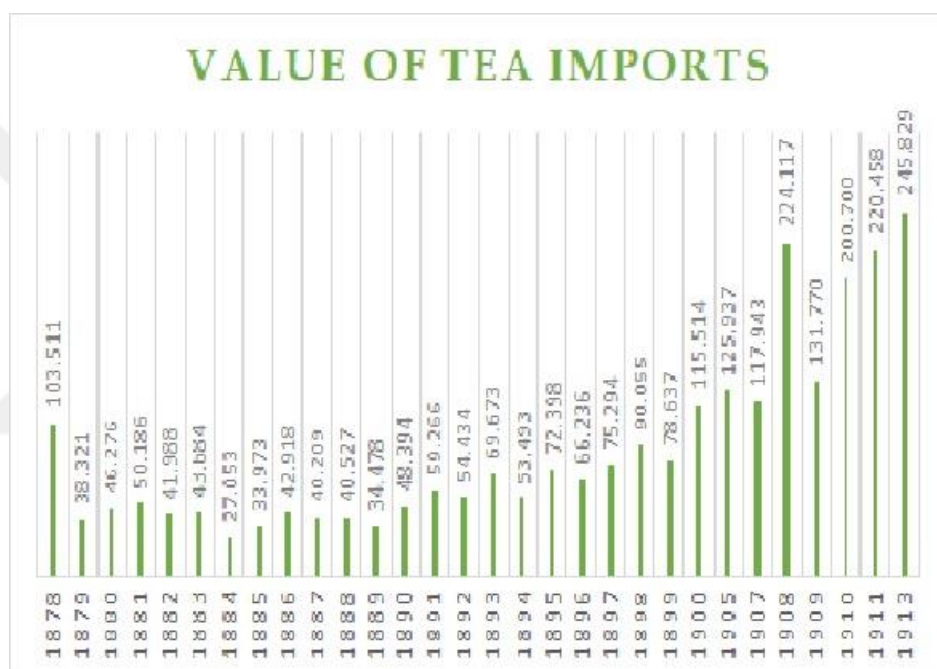
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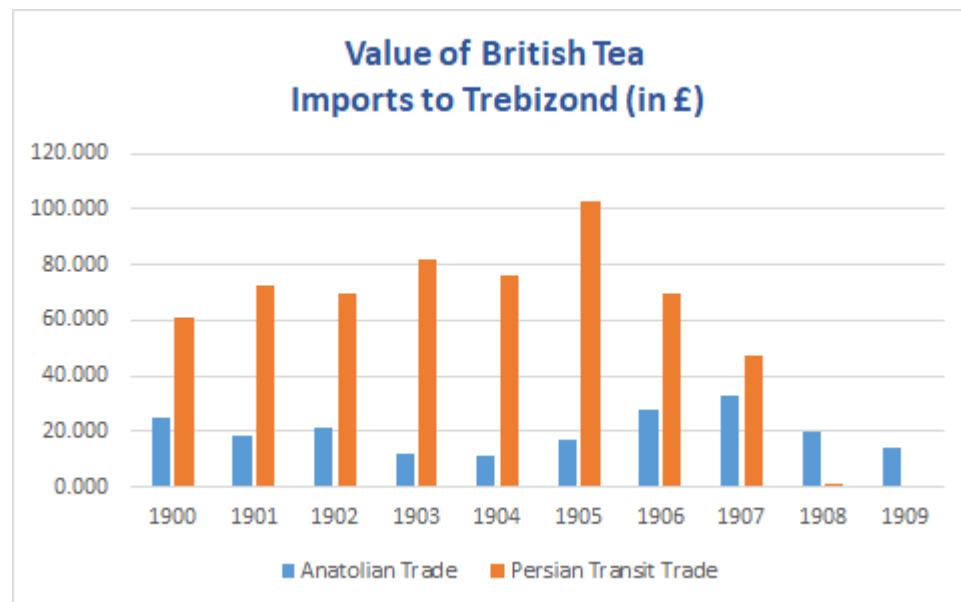
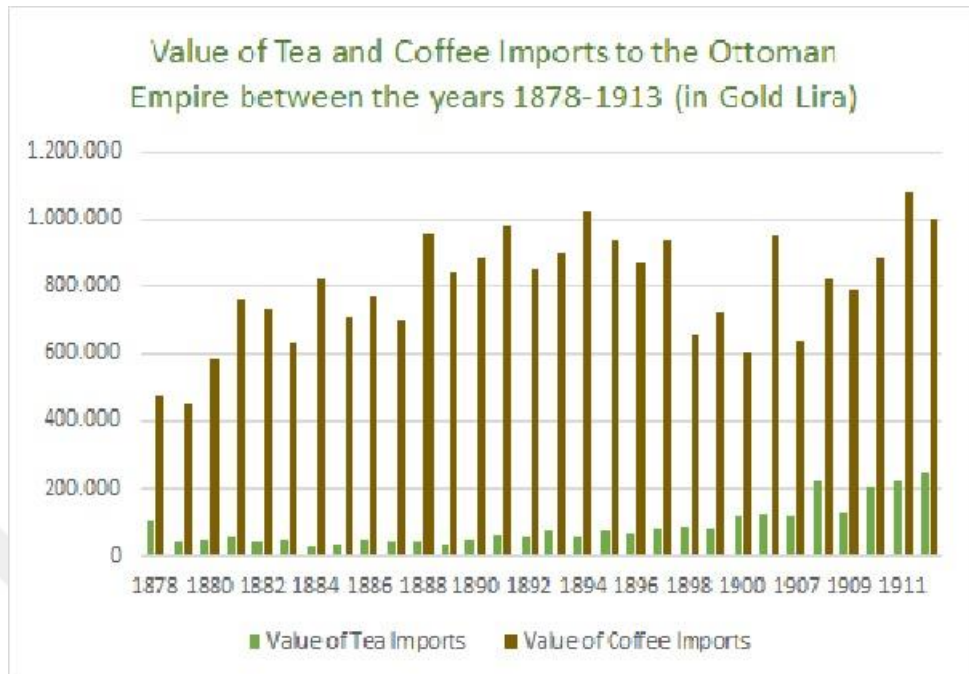
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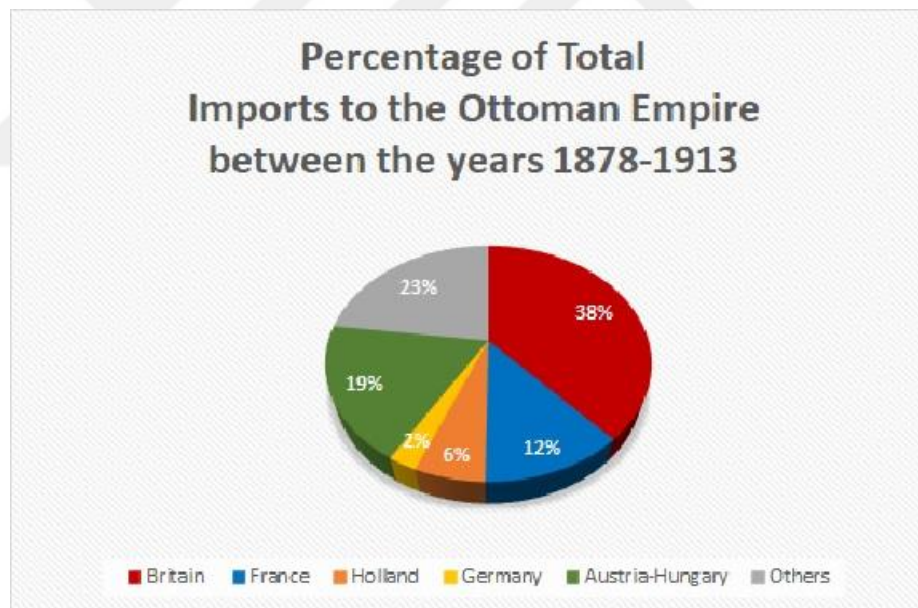
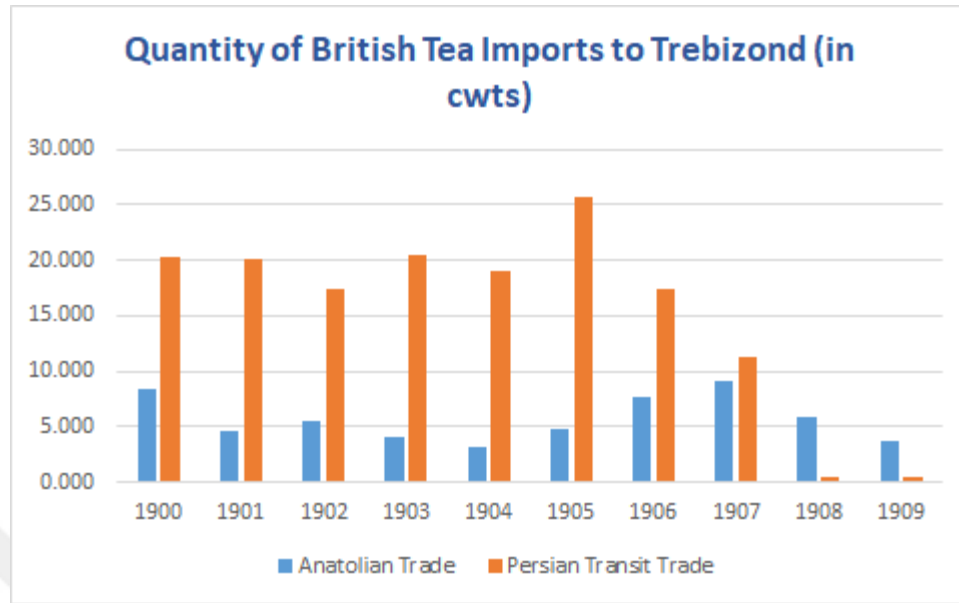


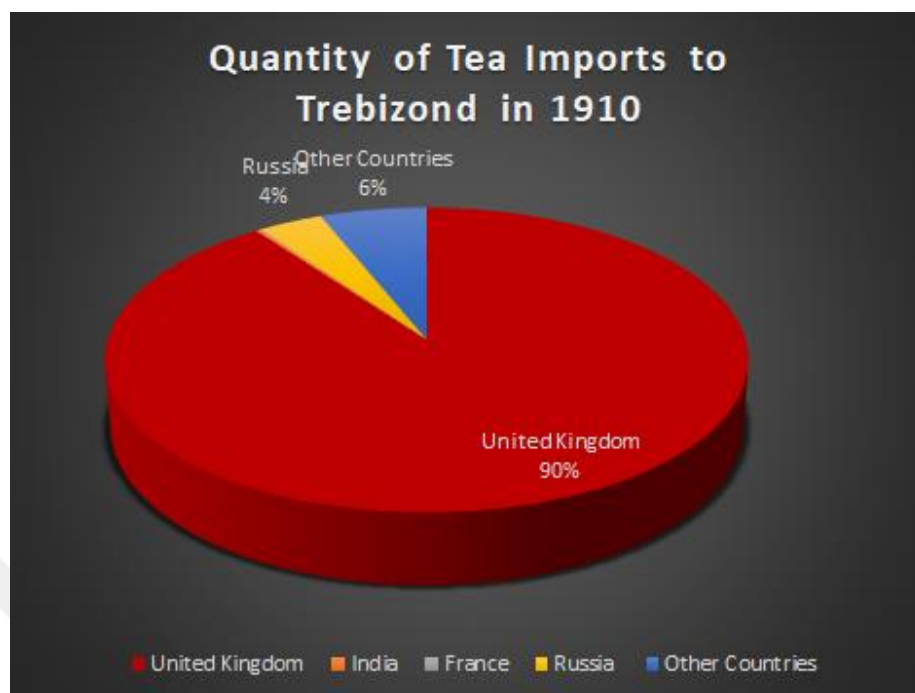
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Graphs based on data from the British Consular Reports and Ottoman Trade Statistics









Appendix 2: Various Photographs and Documents



A Multilingual advertisement of the Tea Company of Garabet Yavroyan and Ohannes Isakolyan



A newspaper advertisement of the *Albayrak Mustafâ Neziḥ Çayları* with the red flag



Tin boxes of *Albayrak Mustafa Neziĥ Çayları*



Some examples of various tea boxes of the company *Albayrak Mustafa Nezih Çayı*



Mülkiye Mektebi



Mustafa Nezih Albayrak- An old Ottoman bureaucrat, founder and owner of the company
Albayrak Mustafa Nezih ayları

THÉ " NEZIH-AL - BAIRAK "

MAISON DE THÉ

Stamboul Bagtché Capou 71

Pera : Galata Sera'i, . 271 .

MODE DE PREPARER LE THÉ

Pour bien préparer le thé, il faut strictement observer les trois conditions ci-bas :

1 - Mettre dans une théière vide de porcelaine une quantité suffisante de thé sec et après l'avoir laver avec de l'eau bouillante, verser immédiatement cette eau. La poussière du thé étant ainsi enlevée, mettre ensuite de l'eau bouillante jusqu'à la moitié de la théière, . pour permettre au thé d'être bien infusé par la vapeur ; faire bien attention de ne pas remplir la théière

2 - Pour ne pas laisser se refroidir le thé, mettre la théière sur le samovar, ou bien la maintenir chaude en la laissant enveloppée, de 15 à 20 minutes, avec un essuie-main bien propre ; pendant ce temps, les feuilles de thé submergent dans l'eau et le thé prend une couleur bien foncée qu'on peut modifier à l'aise en ajoutant, dans la tasse, de l'eau bouillie du samovar ou de n'importe quel autre récipient .

3 - L'eau à servir doit être bien limpide, de bon goût, sans odeur et bien bouillie ; de même, le sucre doit être de l'espèce cristallisée en cube ou conique ; le sucre en poussière donne au thé une couleur troublée .

Facilité remarquable — Notre Maison met à la disposition de l'honorable clientèle un assortiment varié d'exquis thés " *Nézih-Al-Bairak* " qui donnent pleine satisfaction, même aux personnes de goût très difficile et très délicat . Au cas où nos honorables clients ne seraient pas satisfaits des thés fournis par nos magasins, nous nous faisons un plaisir de les échanger par d'autres; assortis, à leurs choix .

قوٹى وياكتله مخصوص

چای پيشيرمه تعرفه سی

ملکیم اوغلی علی یاشا زاده

آل بایراق - مصطفى نزیه

بیوک چای ده پولری

استانبول : بغچه قیو بک اوغلی : جاده کیر

رخصت رسمیه یی حائز آتیکتلی (آل بایراق مصطفى نزیه)
قوٹو و پاکت چایلری استانبولک آناطولوی و تراکیانک
اکثر معتبر مغازه لرنده بولنور

اون برنجی طبی



شهزاده باشی : اوقاف اسلامیه مطبعه سی

۱۳۴۱



قولى وپاكتلره مخصوص
چاي پيشيره تعرفه سي
وچايلرك انواى

آل بايراق - مصطفى نيزيه

بيوك چاي دولري

استانبول : بايزيد ترامواى موقوفه نومرو ۳۰
باغچه قيو ترامواى باده سي درديجي وقف خان قارشو بنده نومرو ۷۱

مصطفیٰ نيزيه

راخت رسميه بي حائز آتيكتلى (آل بايراق مصطفى نيزيه) قولى
وپاكت چايلري استانبولك (بك اوغلى ، اسكدار ، قاضى كوى
بوغاز ايچى) وآناتولى و تراكيانك اكثرمعتبر
مغازه لر بنده صايلقده در .

حكيم اوغلى على پاشا زاده

مصطفیٰ نيزيه

باشمجي طبيعى

محمود بك مطبعه سي

۱۳۳۹

چای پیشرمه تعرفه سی

اوج صورتله چای احضار اولور . ساورله ایکی چایدانلق و بر چایدانلقه :

اولا - ای چای شهبه سز ساور و پورسلن (طوپراق) بر چایدانلق ایله تأمین اولنه بیلیر . پورسلن چایدانلق ایچنه مقدار کافی آتیلان چای ییقایه رق یاری به قدر قاینار صوایله املا ایتملیدر . چایدانلق سمارک اوزرینه قویدقد نصکره آتشك قوتی بر آزکسه لی فقط ولوجزنی اولسون صفومسته میدان ویرمه ملیدر . بویک سمارلرده چایدانلق آتیه اولان مسافه سی اوزاق اولدیغندن چای دایما کوزل پیشر . لکن کوچوک سمارلرده آتش قیزغین اولدینی وقت سمارله چایدانلق آره سنه دلیکلی برتنکه قویغنه مجبوری حاصل اولور . دها ای چای پیشرمک ایچون بخار و بره سمارل استعمال اولنمده در .

ثانیاً - ایکنجی درجه ده نفیس چای؛ بری پورسلن اولق اوزره ایی چایدانلقده پیشریله بیلیر . بونده ده مهور اصولی ممکن مرتبه تطبیق ایتمه لیدر . یعنی آلت طرفده کی صوی حوی بویوک چایدانلق ایچنه قاینادقد نصکره اوستنه (چای ایله صوی حوی) کوچوک پورسلن چایدانلقی وضع ایده رکن آلتده کی چایدانلقده قاینامه سنه فقط جزنی اولسون صفومامسته دقت ایتمک لازمدر .

ثالثاً - نک چایدانلقده شم التدارک مع مافیه بر آ زایچیله بیله جک چای حاضر لامق ایچون اول صوی قایناتوب هواسنی غائب ایتدکد نصوکره قرارینه کوره شکر آتیلیر و صوشکرلده قاینادیلر . صوکره چای بر قنجان ایچنده توزلردن صیجاق صوایله مان ییقایوب چایدانلق ایچنه آتیه رق دملتیلیر .