Inspired by the studies of Bruno Latour, the article aims to illustrate the ways in which policymaking is being made within a ‘heterogeneous network’ of humans and non-humans. Through an analysis of a controversy, it argues that the policymaking process is a more complicated and multidimensional process, which cannot be simply comprehended within the framework of predetermined roles and structures. Specifically, the article ethnographically investigates the policymaking practices of the Turkish tobacco regulatory agency, which was established in 2002 in return for a loan provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Key words  policymaking, Latour, experts, cigarettes, Turkey

Introduction

When regulatory agencies were consecutively established under the directives of the international financial institutions after the 2001 economic crisis in Turkey, they were evaluated either as global entities that faithfully perform standardised international policies or as local institutions that stick to national bureaucratic culture. Though these explanations can be identified with two opposing arguments, such as with globalisation or localisation perspectives, both of them share a common denominator: they both start from a pre-existing order in which the actors pursue their self-interests. In other words, in either case, policymaking practices are explained by overarching fixed structures. However, when I was doing research on the anthropology of the state, I started to wonder if the policies of the regulatory agencies are solely a reflection of either global or local interests. Or is it possible to see a different story if we do not first start from the ‘social’? How can we explain the uncertainties and ambiguities in the policymaking processes of these institutions? Moreover, what sort of ethnographic method can we apply to expose various decisionmaking policies that are being constituted through a myriad of relations between multiple actors?

Actor-network-theory (Callon 1999; Latour 1987, 1996a, 1999a, 2005a; Law 1999) seemed to me the appropriate method that could answer these questions by providing ‘a toolkit for telling interesting stories about, and interfering in, those relations’ with its receptivity to ‘the messy practices of relationality and materiality of the world’ (Law 2009: 142). Grounded in empirical case studies, actor-network theory aims to describe ‘many local places where the global, the structural, and the total [are] assembled’ (Latour 2005a: 191). A good number of anthropological issues are nowadays seen as being formed in ‘global assemblages’ (Collier and Ong 2005). Studying global interconnectedness co-present with local situations requires multi-sited research designs (Marcus 1995, 1998) that reinforce the importance of relationality and fluidity involving a multitude of actors. Rather than comparing readily definable entities with recognisable boundaries, a multi-sited ethnography creates juxtapositions...
among a ‘variety of seemingly incommensurate sites’ and examines their connections (Marcus 1998: 17). Like the science studies that abandon the ‘identity-dominated cultural analysis’ (Rabinow et al. 2008: 39), this ethnography, as noted by Rees, is no longer primarily concerned with ‘society’ and ‘culture’, but rather with the examination of the ‘making’ of emergent forms of the rationalities, institutions and assemblages (2008: 93). Discarding the pre-existing discourses about naturalised categories, Marcus calls for a more complicated fieldwork design, seeking to configure the analysis of manifold ties among diverse sites previously considered to be unconnected (1998: 14).1 Thus, by following different people, things, metaphors, stories, biographies and conflicts, a multi-sited approach has an affinity with Latour’s studies, which tackle the issue of ‘tracing the associations’ (Latour 2005a). Correspondingly, drawing from both actor-network theory and multi-sited ethnography, this research aims to offset natural categories or a priori assumptions about the field, and seeks to disclose the hidden connections among different sites.

Based on a two-year period of fieldwork, this paper analyses the policymaking practices of the Turkish tobacco regulatory agency, which was established in 2002 in return for a loan provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. It ethnographically investigates the policymaking process through an analysis of a controversy. The controversy was about the purchase of hard-box cigarette packing machines of the Turkish state-run tobacco monopoly. The political debates about the purchase of machines led to a technical investigation of the conditions of the machines. In the end, a decision was made about the machines; however, as the controversy revealed, the final verdict was made in an environment of uncertainty and ambiguity, a fact that contradicts the assumptions that the regulatory institutions generate the desired policies with their predetermined agendas.

Tracking conflicts has become one of the established methods used in anthropology of law (Marcus 1998) and science studies (Turner 2001).2 According to Latour, the cartography of controversies is today a full research method that exposes the discussions surrounding a technique or scientific fact that has not yet been determined.3 They indicate uncertain situations, which are not yet stabilised or closed. In a sense, the analysis of controversies makes it possible to observe ‘what is happening inside’ before the final decisions are made, and before disagreements are ‘black boxed’. Moreover, they include not only human actors but also ‘natural and biological elements, industrial and artistic products, institutional and economic institutions, scientific and technical artifacts’ by which ‘the most heterogeneous relationships are formed’ (Venturini

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1 See Hine (2007) on how science and technology studies have made use of multi-sited ethnography. According to Hine, both approaches are very careful about the fact that the superimposition of the methodological stances upon the situations would yield to straightforward linear stories and do injustice to the world as an inherently messy and complex place (2007: 663).

2 Several studies from different disciplines, such as communication, international relations, anthropology and political science, have employed ‘following the conflict’ technique (see for several examples Besel 2011; Bueger 2011; Ginsburg 1989; Rademaker 2009). Also by adopting a political science perspective, I examined the translation processes of regulatory agencies in Turkey through the analyses of two controversies elsewhere (see Kayaalp 2012).

3 For more on controversies in Science Studies, see the website http://www.mappingcontroversies.net. ‘Mapping Controversies on Science for Politics’ (MACOSPOL) is an EU project and a joint research study that brings eight partner teams in science, technology and society across Europe together. Following Latour’s studies, the project aims to map out and analyse scientific and technical controversies.
This study thus examines the way the machine controversy evolved, how it was settled and how a decision was made within a fluid heterogeneous network. I argue that an analysis of a controversy makes it possible to unfold the involvement and interaction of a variety of actors, and their negotiations, conflicts and resistance with each other, and lucidly illustrates that the regulatory process is a highly complicated and multidimensional process, which cannot be simply comprehended within the framework of predetermined duties and responsibilities of the agency.

There is an inclination to situate regulatory agencies in dichotomies between public and private governance, or between regulation and deregulation, but such a dichotomising approach is ‘far too crude to be truly helpful for thinking through regulatory options’ (Riles 2011: 226). Studies adopting such a deterministic perspective simply exhort the explanations that consider agencies make decisions with clear insights and fixed policies. First of all, such an approach granting full agency to the institutional actors leaves little room for the role of other actors in the policymaking process. In such a world, there would be no surprises or unintended consequences but the straightforward implementation of clearly defined policies. It is, however, pertinent to note here that what I am proposing is not simply the blending of global policies with the local bureaucratic culture, yielding to basically hybrid policies. Such an argument still bears the traces of essentialised assumptions about global and local settings. I argue that those studies relied on certain presuppositions that inevitably fail to investigate the ‘present’ of the policymaking process because they focus on the functioning of institutions merely in abstract time. However, in practice, regulatory practices take place through the temporal negotiations of actors in real time. As Rees rightly observes, ‘anthropologists are increasingly studying timely phenomena with tools developed to study people out of time’ (Rabinow et al. 2008: 10). What is more needed in the anthropology of the contemporary is to study the processes of interaction, rather than the end results of the processes. In that sense, the Latourian analysis of the ‘making’ of the decisions gains significant importance to expose what is really happening on the ground in real time.

The sociological certainty that draws all its strength from a priori assumptions about the existence of social and institutional realms crumbles when it comes to analysing experiences on the ground. As will be shown in this case study, the actors involved in the policymaking process confront uncertainties in the legal and technical realms, and respond to them in various ways. Beyond the seemingly bureaucratic rationalisation logic, there lies a messy world governed by uncertainties. In this specific case, the ambiguity of the related law, the uncertainty about the responsibilities of the regulatory agency and the confusion about the status of the machines were all retrospectively ‘black-boxed’ factors behind the apparently well-thought out and clear-cut decisions.

**Regulating under uncertainty**

After two consecutive severe financial crises (November 2000 and February 2001), a new wave of far-reaching economic restructuring began in Turkey. While the 1980s are accepted as the first generation economic liberalisation, the year 2001 is accepted as the beginning of the second generation economic reforms in which the ‘transnational mobility of capital and global production networks were far more pronounced than before’ (Cizre and Yeldan 2005: 389).
generated an emergency situation in which a series of sweeping neoliberal policies were implemented to fix the collapsed economy. To receive the necessary loans from the IMF and the World Bank, the government hastily enacted a number of laws, publicly known as ‘15 laws in 15 days’. The tobacco law was one of them. It was ratified in January 2002 and introduced the elimination of support purchases, the alteration of tobacco marketing systems, privatisation of the state tobacco monopoly and the establishment of a tobacco regulatory agency.

Before the enactment of the tobacco law, the monopoly not only controlled the production of tobacco, but also bought most of the product to support the cultivators as a government policy. The international financial institutions were concerned about the existence of the monopoly: an institution guaranteeing a minimum price and purchase of all tobacco and thus inhibiting the development of the free market. Consequently, the tobacco regulatory agency was established to take over the state-run tobacco monopoly’s previous regulating role in the market. The agency, in contrast to the monopoly, is neither the buyer of tobacco nor the manufacturer of cigarettes but an independent institution to regulate the sector. This sort of regulation in the tobacco sector, imposed by the international financial institutions, has been regarded as the prerequisite for a competitive market economy, which aimed at diminishing the role of the state and its intervention in the market.

I carried out a multi-sited (Marcus 1998) ethnography from September 2005 to March 2008, which took place from the vast tobacco fields to fancy rooms of multinationals, run-down offices of the tobacco monopoly, cubicles of the regulatory board, formal corridors of the Assembly, dusty archives in libraries and the front seats of tobacco experts’ cars in which we travelled to villages. During the course of fieldwork, I was stunned to see that none of my informants from the tobacco sector had a clue why the tobacco law was enacted and the agency established. There were no explanations, except that the agency was established in line with its commitments to international financial institutions. The short-cut explanation was that ‘the IMF wanted it!’ When I talked to the people working at the agency, I was also surprised to learn that even they did not know the reasons for the foundation of the agency. The buzzwords of the neoliberal era, such as efficiency, competition and liberalisation, which were
widely used in the reports, speeches and interviews, turned out to be abstract, empty concepts in colloquial conversations. Although neoliberal economics is implicitly regarded as a model through which liberalisation policies are constructed, in reality there was no real consensus about which particular policies the agency had to undertake. While discussing pension reform in Mexico, Schwegler (2008) points out bureaucrats’ different accounts of policy processes and demonstrates the incoherence in their explanations. In a similar vein, in spite of an assumed consensus about the functioning of the tobacco regulatory agency, the reality seems to be that its functioning is based on very ambiguous processes and ad hoc practices. The bureaucrats at the agency create decentralised improvisations beyond the rationales of state-centric or so-called global standardised policies. The deployment of these practices is constituted through ambiguity and speculation while blurring the boundaries between public and private, state and market, and regulation and deregulation.10

One of the reasons of this ambiguity is arguably the brevity of the tobacco law, which consists of only 12 articles.11 As one of the chief experts in the agency frankly confessed, the agency could have unlimited power or no power at all, depending on how the law was interpreted.12 Therefore, it was hard to envisage the possible policies of the agency. As Türem suggests in the case of the Turkish competition agency, ‘the question as to why the agency is doing what it is doing has not been clearly answered’ (2011: 121). The practices of the agencies seem to be undertaken in an environment of uncertainty. The decisionmaking, at least in the case of the tobacco agency, is often executed in response to the expectations of other actors in the sector, which makes it difficult to predict the policies beforehand.

In spite of the erratic nature of the policymaking process, there is a tendency to describe regulatory agencies working with a designated agenda for the benefits of either the state or the private sector. This does not of course mean that the practices of these institutions can be placed outside of the political domain or devoid of power relations. On the contrary, as many studies argue (Bayramoğlu 2005; Günaydın 2000; İslamoğlu 2002; Ozel, 2012; Ozel and Atiyas 2011; Sezen 2003, 2007; Sönmez 2004, 2011), the common characteristics attributed to the regulatory agencies, such as autonomy, neutrality, transparency or objectivity, are all disputable. It is certainly true that we
cannot expect regulatory agencies, or any sort of institution, to undertake their policies in an apolitical setting. This argument, however, should not be extended to a point that these bodies are merely pursuing the interests of a certain party. Such a deterministic approach oversimplifies the decisionmaking process through attributing all the power to the human actors working with predetermined agendas and possessing full control to generate the desired policies.

Drawing from the works of Latour, I argue that the policymaking practices of the agency are not determined by any overarching structures or by actors holding interests. The occurrence of controversies illustrates the fact that any pre-ordering attempt is doomed to fail, and the decisionmaking process is continuing endlessly through a myriad of interactions between various actors. Latour’s anthropology abandons all a priori social explanations that are used to explain society. All the well-known social categories (such as class, ethnicity and gender) are rejected on the grounds that such distinctions may be the result of analysis but not its departure. In other words, Latour is ‘against “the social” as a sui generis kind and as a prior explanatory resource rather than an achievement to be explained’ (Oppenheim 2007: 474).

Latour (2005a) replaces a ‘sociology of the social’ with a ‘sociology of associations’ by switching from meta-theoretical explanations to empirical case studies. In the ‘sociology of associations’, the focus is being shifted from the groups of mere humans to assemblages of humans and non-humans. Agency is extended to non-human actors: to bacteria (1988), automatic door closers (1992) and public transport systems (1996b). ‘The missing masses’ that have been ignored so far in social sciences are included in the study of networks. This democratisation of actors reasonably brings about the criticism of the idea that human beings are granted full power over non-humans. Here what Latour proposes is the exploration of the inextricable interwoveness between different actants. According to him, the actions can not be reduced to ‘what “intentional”, “meaningful” humans do’ (2005a: 71), or to social structures, but they emerge from a variety of interactions and reciprocal transformations of human and non-human actors. Action, in short, is ‘not a property of humans but of an association of actants’ (Latour 1999b: 182; italics in original). Therefore, as a method, Latour suggests tracking multiple associations and investigating their interaction in a network.

In a similar vein, this research illustrates how the regulatory decisions are being made within a heterogeneous network of both human and non-human actors. Hard-box cigarette packing machines gathered around themselves ‘a different assembly of relevant parties’ and they ‘trigger new occasions to passionately differ and dispute’ (Latour 2005b: 15). These machines are not the perfect examples of Latour’s actants, which work, break or stop against the will and control of human beings. They hold, however, an extremely important role in terms of creating an assembly of heterogeneous actors: the related parties were not limited to the institutions and companies but also included bureaucrats and private sector stakeholders, experts, cigarette machines, and technical reports. The regulation process has evolved with struggles and conflicts through the formation of coalitions and counter-movements among these actors.

**Cigarette machines**

During the fieldwork, I accompanied tobacco experts on their trips to several villages, towns and cities. The Tobacco Experts Association, established in 1948, was highly
political and active in terms of defending the interests of the profession. Sometimes our
visits were undertaken for technical purposes, such as to the tobacco fields to report on
the condition of the current year’s crop, and sometimes to the offices of the tobacco
monopoly in various cities to inform other experts about developments in the sector.
One of our longest trips lasted more than ten days and included towns and cities from
central Anatolia to the Black Sea region, ending with a visit to the biggest cigarette
factory of the tobacco monopoly. After meeting with other experts and visiting the
factory, the long day ended with a dinner party thrown in honour of the experts in a
big nightclub/restaurant. As the only female at the table with about ten tobacco
experts, I was fairly uncomfortable with the atmosphere, including the high volume
of the music, the tobacco experts’ conversations with each other, which entirely
ignored my presence, and worst of all, the inebriated officer on the other side of the
table, who was the general director of the factory. When he asked the chief engineer
to come and sit next to him, the tension at the table intensified. Anxious heads turned
to them because everybody at the table knew that they did not get along. In addition to
the conflict of interests over certain promotions as well as divergence in political
stances, their crucial disagreement happened to be over a recent scandal about the
machines that were bought for the monopoly’s factories. After ten minutes, the two
men’s inaudible conversation turned into a loud disagreement, followed by yelling,
screaming and cursing at each other. When other experts left their chairs and tried to
calm them down, the general director of the factory unexpectedly turned to me and
started to tell me about the ‘realities of the scandal’. My status surprisingly shifted from
that of a non-existent woman to an outsider who could impartially judge who was right
and wrong. As I was unable to understand what he was saying and was unaware of the
details of the scandal at the time, I decided to research this incident in the following
days. My investigation would now rely on gossip, speculation, newspaper clippings
and informal talks (as the most ‘objective knowledge’), since formal interviews on this
issue were either prohibited or sidestepped.

The experts’ argument was about the tobacco monopoly’s purchase of hard-box
cigarette packing machines. In the 1990s, the tobacco monopoly had a very established
place in the Turkish and world market as the fifth largest cigarette producer (Tekel
1999). Having been the only tobacco company in the country for years, the monopoly
did not develop any market strategies. As a Philip Morris officer explained to me, the
monopoly’s market strategy was ‘a joke’. With investments of multinational cigarette
manufacturers in Turkey, the tobacco market had become more competitive and the
monopoly administration felt the need to update its current technology. As a result,
the monopoly administration signed an agreement with a Spanish company to buy
eight hard-box cigarette packing machines in June 2004 for its biggest factory in Tokat.
The total cost of the machines, 13.8 million Euros, was scheduled to be paid off over
four years.

The controversy about the machines first started in the Turkish parliament when a
deputy13 questioned the status of the purchased equipment after speculation that the
machines were not brand-new, and he submitted an interpellation to the Minister of
Finance for possible corruption. The Minister responded stating that the machines,
according to the law, must be ‘new and unused’, and the inspection of such conditions

13 Dursun Akdemir from the True Path Party was the deputy who brought the issue to the Parlia-
ment on 30 September 2004 (interpellation number 7/3739).
is primarily undertaken by the tobacco agency.\textsuperscript{14} In other words, the Minister simply put the tobacco regulatory agency in charge even though checking the state of equipment is not originally defined under the agency’s responsibility. After being assigned by the task, the agency sent its experts to the factory to inspect the machines. The experts reported that the purchased machines were not actually brand-new and they had to be returned to the exporting country within the following 60 days.\textsuperscript{15} This decision triggered a huge row between the monopoly and the regulatory agency.

The monopoly and the agency, the two sides of the controversy, tried to support their claims by resorting to technical reports written about the condition of the machines. The first report written by the tobacco agency experts in November 2004 stated that ‘the chassis and skeleton of the machines are old and used; the machines were overhauled and repaired’ and it also added that the machine parts were all derived from other machines. The second report, requested by the monopoly from the engineers of the Istanbul Chamber of Industry, was written in December 2004 and it declared that ‘no evidence is found that the machines were used’. And, lastly, Istanbul Technical University wrote the third report upon the request of the customs office in July 2005. This last report was perplexing: ‘some experts determined that the machines were produced before the date of their announced date of production’, but ‘the machines are new and unused’. In other words, machines might have been manufactured before the indicated date, but were not used.\textsuperscript{16} These three reports and three groups of expert teams evidently contradict each other.

Using the second report as evidence that the machines were brand-new, the monopoly administration applied to the court for the suspension of execution, i.e. returning the machines to Spain. Upon the rejection of their application, they went to a superior court. Later the machines were shipped back to Spain and several officials of the monopoly were sent to court. The high-ranking officials of the monopoly vehemently criticised the verdict on the grounds that it would leave the monopoly behind its competitors and open the way for the cigarette multinationals to dominate the market. The general director of the monopoly, who signed the agreement to import the machines, blamed both the regulatory agency and the cigarette multinationals for causing a huge loss to the state exchequer. According to him, the cigarette multinationals Philip Morris and JTI were ‘playing a big game here’ and ‘trying to destroy [the monopoly]’ (Bayer 2005a). This argument was followed by a series of accusations that the regulatory agency was in alliance with, and even bribed by, the multinational cigarette manufacturers. Several journalists claimed in their columns that this verdict would not only scare away foreign investment but also damage state earnings (Uluc\textsuperscript{\textvisiblespace} 2005; Ayaydn 2005). Having already been critical about the establishment of a regulatory agency under commitments made to the IMF and the World Bank, this perspective assumed that the agency was basically established to facilitate the interests of the private sector. Several tobacco experts I have interviewed also stated that misconduct and corruption might have taken place, but the involvement of the regulatory agency in this case was wrong since what the monopoly was doing, corrupt or not, had a nationalistic purpose, i.e. strengthening the position of the tobacco monopoly vis-\`a-vis

\textsuperscript{14} The answer of the Minister of Finance, Kemal Unak\textsuperscript{\textvisiblespace} tan, on 3 November 2004 (number 7/3739).

\textsuperscript{15} The new tobacco law was unclear about the conditions of the equipment. According to the source article, only prospective cigarette companies intending to establish new factories should have brand-new equipment. On the other hand, the situation about investing in old machinery for existing cigarette companies, including the monopoly, is not specified in the law.

\textsuperscript{16} For details, see Bayer (2005b).
the multinational cigarette companies. According to this argument, the regulatory agency, as an institution of the Turkish state, should have been on the side of the monopoly. The pretext of the incident was what the bureaucrats and politicians had done might have been wrong, but the end result of the ‘corrupt action’ would have been for the benefit of the entire nation. The regulatory agency was blamed for not loving the country enough. 17

The ambiguity of the related tobacco law, the lack of knowledge about the functioning of the regulatory agency and the on-going confusion about the status of machines have made it too difficult to set a clear itinerary about the regulation. Although there was no clear requirement that the agency had to check the status of the machines bought for factories, the agency later on would be called to take action. Subsequently, another responsibility of the agency would be defined during a controversy. What I am trying to say is that the policy has come to the scene following the practices of several actors in a heterogeneous network, including the tobacco monopoly, multinational manufacturers, the Ministry of Finance, the tobacco experts, the hard-box cigarette packing machines and technical reports. As Mosse (2004) argues, institutional practices are not always driven by policies, but instead practices are generating policies. Simply put, the policy is not initiated according to a predesigned model but is an outcome of the practices. The consistency attributed to the policy is constituted in retrospect through political acts of composition (Latour 2000). Therefore, the policy is made through a process with the involvement and interaction of a different range of actors rather than as a ‘ready-made policy’ of either national or global order.

Assessment

When I visited the Ankara office of one of the biggest multinational cigarette manufacturers on a crisp winter day, a surprise was awaiting me. I had got used to the half-hearted and hasty interviews with the companies’ representatives, which provided me with nothing more than I could have learned from newspapers. I was amazed to see two company representatives for Turkey as well as the company’s Middle East regional director ready to conduct a two-hour interview. Though they were fairly timid about their policies, standards, blends and market strategies (in short, anything about their company), they were brave in their statements about the government, other cigarette companies and particularly about the tobacco regulatory agency. The company representatives reiterated several times that the tobacco sector must be regulated ‘for the predictability and stability of the market’. However, what people understood by regulation, they continued, was different from one to the other. Their approach towards regulation was more like tailoring the laws in a way that would make ‘everybody in the sector play according to rules’. It was basically a technical regulation that would facilitate the functioning of the free market. In this respect, the agency did not know how to regulate the market, because their operations were concentrated on policies of banning 18 rather than of regulating. The representatives stated that the agency’s

17 One of the most striking points about this row is the revelation of faultlines and struggles within the state bureaucracy (Herzfeld 2005). The state is not a homogenous, monolithic and uniform apparatus in which all actors work in harmony with each other.

18 The company representatives explained this with a specific example. The incessant changes in the taxation policy let several groceries make up ‘fake’ price increases. The multinationals wanted to inform smokers about their prices by giving advertisements in newspapers so that consumers would not fall into the price traps of several sellers. However, their attempts were prevented by the agency on grounds that any sort of advertisement on tobacco was illegal.
personnel were not competent enough and their market vision was restricted to the traditional bureaucratic administration:

They are trying to regulate a sector that they don’t know anything about. The board is very incompetent. On the other side, the employees of multinationals know the sector very well but they are not represented on the board. If there were a few people from the multinationals on the board, the sector would not be like this.

I heard the same comments whenever I interviewed anyone from the cigarette multinationals. As being regulated, multinational cigarette manufacturers would like to be the regulators, too. Adamantly supporting the argument that their presence on the board would sustain a truly effective regulation, they seemed to be unaware of how this idea might be problematic. All of the officials I interviewed legitimised their argument on the basis of the ineffectiveness of the regulatory agency: ‘Every year, the European Union directorate informs the regulatory agency about certain issues but the people at the institution don’t know what to do with this [information].’ According to the multinationals, the strong bureaucratic tradition with its uncreative and monotonous way of functioning – such as doing paperwork, running daily errands, working in a hierarchical order – has overshadowed the effective performance of the regulatory agency. The major obstruction stemmed from the old bureaucratic understanding of the personnel, who were accustomed to working in an uncreative, non-risky and passive environment. Fraught with the bureaucratic culture from their earlier experiences, they were unable to catch up with the speed and spirit of the free market economy.

This was the approach of the multinationals. However, even several employees working in the agency complained about the lethargic and submissive attitude of members on the regulatory board. The tobacco law might be short in length, but for them it was flexible enough to work well in the sector if desired. The board could have been more actively engaged in the sector if the members of the board were different. They considered the agency to be an institution that lacked a genuine vision of the free market economy and that was still devoted to the state-controlled economy. In other words, the state tradition was infused in the agency.

On the other hand, government officials, especially the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Finance, have treated the regulatory agency with scepticism since the institution was established under commitments made to the IMF and the World Bank. They have taken for granted that the agency would favour and facilitate the multinationals’ policies. They argued that the agency simply helped the multinationals to dominate the market through weakening the monopoly’s competitive power, as happened in the incident of abrogation of the sales of hard-box cigarette packing machines.

In conclusion, we can say that both perspectives have the problem of approaching the issue from the point of a priori fixed structures. They both assume more or less essentialised national and global frameworks. Yet, rather than explaining the operation of the agency with the interactions of pre-made structures at national and global levels, what we encounter is policymaking in an assemblage that involves different actors, spaces and temporalities. The role of the agency was not predetermined but, instead, its role has been defined and redefined according to the slippery relationships between

19 This might lead to ‘regulatory capture’, which means that the particular interests of regulated companies can capture the goals and interests of regulatory agencies.
different actors in the sector. The agency was carrying on its ‘duties’ on the basis of regular interactions between a multitude of actors. Under the pressure of massive uncertainty and ambiguity, the agency had to depend on its assessments of other actors’ actions in the market. When faced with a problem, the agency had no choice but to solve the problem by trial and error. In brief, its performance has been grounded in momentary practices. In opposition to the argument that policies are designed to be rational, structured and well thought-out ideas, the ethnographic research suggests that a myriad of interactions emerging in a heterogeneous network have a governing role in policymaking. When the activities of the agency are observed, what we encounter is an improvised version of policymaking that is being shaped through a series of interactions between different actors, rather than coherent, stable and straightforward systems of national policy or global governance.

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