

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE RUM ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE
IN THE TURKISH PRESS:
2005-2011**

**ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY
SOCIAL SCIENCES INSTITUTE
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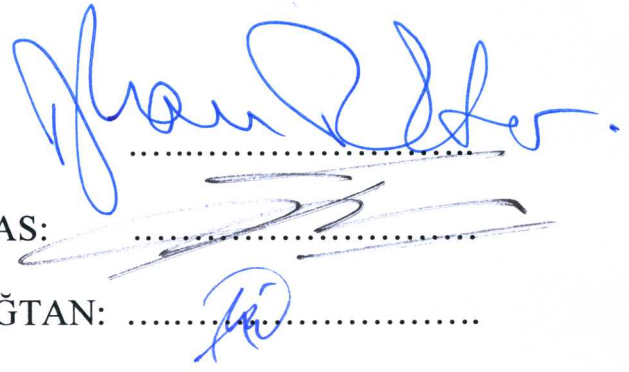
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KEY WORDS: Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, Turkish-Greek Relations, Turkish Press

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate perceptions and representations of the Turkish press towards the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate over the past six years, beginning in October 2005, when Turkey's EU accession negotiations were officially started and ending in 2011, by making a synopsis of the news reports in specific cases. Through the conduction of research in the newspaper archives of the institution, this study attempts to analyze the contextual facets of the issues faced by the Patriarchate, and to give an answer to the question: How Turkish Press represents the main problems faced by the institution? The issues of the organization of the Turkish press and its strength in Turkish society are also met.

Key Words: Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, Turkish-Greek Relations, Turkish Press

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Türk basınında Rum Ortodoks Patrikhanesi algısı ve sunuluş biçiminin Türkiye'nin AB katılım müzakerelerine resmi olarak başladığı 2005 Ekim ayından 2011 yılına kadarki dönemde nasıl şekillendiğini belirli örneklerin haber raporları üzerinden araştırılmasını amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma gazete arşivleri üzerinden yapılan araştırmalar doğrultusunda Patriakhane'nin maruz kaldığı sorunların bağlamsal yönlerini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır ve “Türk basını Patrikhane'nin karşılaştığı belli başlı sorunları ne şekilde sunmaktadır?” sorusuna cevap aramaktadır. Ayrıca Türk basınının yapısı ve Türk toplumu içerisindeki gücü konuları da bu çalışmada ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rum Ortodoks Patrikhanesi, Türk-Yunan İlişkileri, Türk Basını

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I would also like to offer my thanks to Mr. Lakis Vingas, the Representative of the Minority Foundations at the General Directorate of Foundations Assembly, Dr. Hercules Millas, writer, Mr. Michalis Vasileiadis, editor of *Απογευματινή* (a daily Greek-language newspaper published in Istanbul), and Mr. Dimitrios Frangopoulos, the ex-director of Zografeio Rum School in Istanbul. These gentlemen helped me to develop a better understanding of the central issues addressed my thesis.

Gratitude must be given to individuals from the Patriarchate who displayed kindness and were ready to help me at any time, especially Mr. Yorgo Benlisoy and Father Ioakeim Billis and. Also to Mr. Dimitris Mustaklis, head of the Press Office of the Consulate General of Greece in Istanbul, who provided me access into the system for translated reports of Turkish newspapers at the Greek Embassy of Ankara.

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Finally, I reserve special attention and thanks to my beloved family, especially my mother, who not only tolerated me, but also encouraged and provided me with moral support. I am sure that the completion of this study and of my Master's Degree will make them elated and proud. Moreover, I would like to thank my family for being really supportive to my decision to continue my studies in the United Kingdom. Last, I would like to thank all my friends and especially my friends Evangelia Lantza, Niki Christopoulou, and Eirini Athanasiou for being there for me and supporting me in all possible ways, especially when I had to revise my thesis during summer.

IRO PITTIDOU

Istanbul, September 2011

PREFACE

Writing and researching this dissertation was a fascinating process. While studying the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, an institution stranded for centuries, and one which carries with it powerful transformations of values during the Byzantine Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the modern Republic of Turkey, I found myself embraced by the rich history of Constantinople, and present day Istanbul. When examining aspects of Greek and Turkish relations through the interactions of media organizations with the institution, my study's interest peaked. Ultimately, this topic was chosen due to a strong desire to work on issues related to Greek and Turkish relations within media organizations.

Nevertheless, this dissertation presented me with more difficulties than expected. Working in the archives of the Turkish newspapers required a strong knowledge of the Turkish language, which I unfortunately do not have. Thanks to the Press Office of the Consulate General of Greece in Istanbul, and to the Press Office of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, I only had to translate a few texts on my own, mostly being headlines. However, I did find it disappointing that I could not study the Turkish books that related directly to the institution.

In this dissertation, I made an attempt to focus on a relatively untouched aspect of Greek and Turkish relations. My hope is that this work will address the questions of those who desire a deeper knowledge of how the Turkish Press has dealt with issues relating to the Patriarchate.

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PLACE NAME VARIANTS

The same places often have different names in the Turkish and Greek languages. Due to the fact that this MA Thesis was written for a Turkish institution, I used the modern Turkish variations when naming the places in my text. The following table is intended to help those readers who are not familiar with the distinctive names. The first column gives the modern Turkish version, the second shows the anglicized Greek, and the third one provides the names in Modern Greek.

Balıklı	Baloukli	Βαλουκλή
Büyükada	Prinkipos	Πρίγκηπος
Fener	Phanar	Φανάρι
Heybeliada	Halki	Χάλκη
Istanbul	Constantinople	Κωνσταντινούπολη
Kayseri	Kaisareia	Καισάρεια
Kurtuluş	Tatavla	Τατάβλα
Sümela	Sumela	Σουμελά
Yeniköy	Yenikoy	Νιχώρι

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Aim of the Study

Greece and Turkey is a proximate pair of nation-states that have a history of perceiving each other as national rivals. The “common fate” of sharing borders increases the likelihood of a Turkish-Greek conflict. In international relations, geographical proximity is used as a serious predictor of a war and conflict while it, “Endangers serious conflicts of interest between states.”¹ The long-lasting Greek and Turkish antagonistic relationship is rooted in the historical past and is dominated by a large number of disputes and tensions over a plethora of issues.

Understanding the causes of Turkish-Greek antagonism it is not an easy process, while it requires a complex and deep analysis from the past to the present. Their conflict can be seen as a collision of nationalisms, which has never stopped since “Tourkokratia,”² the period of the Ottoman rule in the Greek lands. The conflict continued with the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence in 1821, the Turkish War of Independence in 1923, and continues to exist today. Outbreaks such as the Istanbul pogroms of September 6-7, 1955, the deportation of Greeks in 1964 and 1974, the closure of the Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki) in 1971, the Turkish invasion/intervention in Cyprus in 1974, the Imia/Kardak Crisis in 1996, and the Öcalan Crisis in 1999, are the most characteristic paradigms, which continue to overshadow the bilateral relations.

¹ Stuart A. Bremer, “Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War: 1816-1965,” in *Classics of International Relations*, Edit. By John A. Vasquez, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996), pp. 234-235

² ‘Tourkokratia’ in Greek nationalist historiography is described as a historical event, which refers to a period from the 15th Century until the Greek War of Independence waged between 1821 and 1832 against the Ottoman Empire. For more information about ‘Tourkokratia’, see also: Millas, Hercules, “‘Tourkokratia: History and the Image of Turks in Greek Literature’”, *South European Society and Politics*, Volume 11 (1), March 2006, pp. 47-60

Nevertheless, relations between Greece and Turkey were not always in tension. Turks and Greeks and have been able to live peacefully together in certain periods.

Conflicts such as the ones between Turks and the Greeks are extremely complex and are not easily avoided. According to Ross Howard, an award winning journalist, educator, and media development consultant, “Conflict is a situation where two or more individuals or groups try to pursue goals or ambitious which they believe they cannot share.”³ In her study on the role of the media in Turkish-Greek relations regarding the Greek-Turkish conflict, Katharina Hadjudimos notes that there is a ‘special danger of escalation’. To a large extent it depends on the public opinion, which is often influenced and controlled by the mass media organizations. Thus, the conflict could at any time get out of the State’s control.⁴

This special relationship is a characteristic paradigm of a long lasting conflict, which, in a large extent, is based on stereotypical images of the national “other.”⁵ The hostility between the Turkish and Greek nations is reflected on their history writing, academic texts, literature, art, and media and is dominated by a large number of problems over a diversity of issues. As Herkules Millas, a prominent writer and professor points out, the Greek-Turkish conflict is being kept alive and fortified by the repetition of the negative

³ Ross, Howard, “Conflict Sensitive Journalism,” (Denmark: International Media Support and Impacts, 2003), p. 6. Available at: http://www.i-m-s.dk/files/publications/IMS_CSJ_Handbook.pdf

⁴ Hadjudimos, Katharina, “The role of the media in Greek-Turkish relations: Co-production of a TV program window by Greek and Turkish Journalists,” *Robert Bosch Stiftungskolleg für Internationale Aufgaben* (1998/1999), p. 5
Available at: <http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/pdf/Greek-Turkish-Media.PDF>

⁵ For more information on stereotypes and Greek-Turkish relations see Dissertation: Pasamitros Nikolaos: *Stereotypical Images and Enemy Perceptions in the Greco-Turkish Conflict: Is it possible to change stereotypes?*, Brussels: The University of Kent in Brussels, (2007)
Available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/?p=5263>

“other,” who is presented as carrying some historical and irreversible negative characteristics.⁶

In recent years, the bilateral relationship has been improved and “the other” is supposed to be analyzed on a different basis, but is still receiving the blame for tension.⁷ The devastating earthquakes that hit Turkey and Greece in 1999 positively contributed to the public opinion atmosphere. After the earthquakes, a rapprochement followed in their bilateral relations, which held a large number of contacts between representatives of the whole spectrum of the society. Representatives included were politicians, journalists, businessmen, members of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), scientists, academics, students, etc.

Undoubtedly, the media in Greece and Turkey play an important part in bilateral relations. The history of the Turkish-Greek- conflict has shown that the media can almost create a conflict. Take the case of the Imia/Kardak crisis in 1996,⁸ which is one of the most characteristic examples of how decisive the role of media can be in the escalation of a crisis. Hadjidimos underlines, “The crisis over the island of Imia/Kardak is a ridiculous but most convincing example of how the media brought Greece and Turkey to the brink of war.”⁹ In her study on, “Greek Media In The Eyes of Turkish

⁶ Millas, Hercules, “Greek-Turkish Conflict and Arsonists firemen,” *New Perspectives On Turkey*, Istanbul, 2000, pp. 173-184

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ For more information on Imia/Kardak Crisis, see: Research Report: Arapoglou, Stergios, *Dispute in the Aegean Sea: The Imia/Kardak Crisis*, (Alabama: Air Command and Staff College Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, 2002). It includes the Greek and Turkish Positions, as well as the E.U and U.S positions. Available at:

<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA420639>

⁹ Hadhidimos, 1998/1999, p.8

Media,” Burcu Sunar argues, “The Imia/Kardak crisis may also assumed to be a crisis between the Turkish and Greek media apart from being a crisis between states.”¹⁰

Greek-Turkish relations are outlined by a large number of important issues. First being the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate based in Istanbul (Constantinople),¹¹ which is the head of the Greek minority¹² of Istanbul, and the spiritual Orthodox institution of Christians around the world. The Patriarchate is a religious institution, carrying the historical power in the transformation of values within three different states, the Byzantine Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the modern Republic of Turkey. It is internationally acknowledged that during the centuries, the Patriarchate has spread Christianity, modulated the Byzantine tradition, and cultivated the Greek-Orthodox tradition.

Since the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate is the focal point of the Rums of Istanbul, special attention is paid to its position within Turkey. During its long and tormented historical existence, it has been treated as a victim of the politics of “reciprocity”¹³ between Greece and Turkey. Under Turkish rule, the Patriarchate has been the object of political and religious persecution. The fact that the Treaty of Lausanne, which determined a new era in the field of Turkish-Greek relations, does not make a clear reference to the status of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, leads to the main problems faced by the institution, which are as follows:

¹⁰ Sunar, Burcu, *Greek Media In The Eyes of Turkish Media: A study of News Reports*, (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2009), p.54

¹¹ The institution uses the title “Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople” and not of Istanbul

¹² Also called as Constantinopolitan Greek community or Rums of Istanbul

¹³ See Macar, Elçin, ‘A victim of Reciprocity: The Greek Patriarchate of Istanbul’ in *Reciprocity: Greek and Turkish Minorities. Law, Religion and Politics*, edited by Sanim Akgönül, Istanbul Bilgi University Press (2008), p. 143-150

- ❖ Problems with the estates
- ❖ The non operation of the Theological School of Heybeliada
- ❖ The non recognition of the legal status of the institution

The aim of this work is to analyze the context of the issues faced by the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate and to present how the Turkish Press (electronic and hardcopy/Turkish and English-published) reports these issues. The motivation of this work and what deserves a deeper analysis is a focus on the idea that the press may play a considerable role in homeland politics. Therefore, the newspaper reports will be the focal point of this thesis.

In the past, the Turkish media used to approach the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate aggressively without recognizing its past and not accepting its presence within Turkey. Nowadays, this attitude has been making a gradual positive change and taking on a more respectful tone. Several academic publications,¹⁴ and a large part of the Turkish press shown in the articles of prominent journalists and writers, deal with the Patriarchate and the problems it faces.

This Master thesis aims to examine the changing perceptions of the Rum Patriarchate during the last six years, beginning from 2005, and reaching today. The main focus behind this work is that the changing perception of the Patriarchate in the Turkish Press over the last years will not be meaningful unless Turkey is determined to transform its

¹⁴ See the last publication in the Turkish language, edited by Aktar, Cengiz, *Ekümenik Patrikhane*, (Istanbul: İletişim, 2011)

vision in social, political, cultural, and economic terms for European Union membership.

Regarding the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate and the Greek minority of Istanbul, during the period of 2005 through 2011, the most important developments that took place are as follows:

- ❖ 2007: The decision of the European Court of Human Rights about the, Fener Rum Lisesi (Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή)
- ❖ 2008: The New Foundations Law No. 5737
- ❖ 2010: The returning of the Orphanage of Büyükada (Prinkipos) to the Patriarchate
- ❖ 2010: The Divine Liturgy that took place after almost nine decades at the Soumela monastery in the Black Sea province of Trabzon which also repeated in 2011
- ❖ 2011: The official visit of Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey Bülent Arınç to the Fener, who became the highest-level Turkish official to visit the Patriarchate since a 1952 visit by then-Prime Minister Adnan Menderes.¹⁵

Furthermore, this work aspires to present the history of the Rum Patriarchate under the Turkish Republic, starting in 1923, when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk founded the modern State. Historical background is very important for an analysis of the role of the institution in Turkey because it provides a better understanding of why the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate is such an important issue in the bilateral relations. Moreover, the

¹⁵ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 03/01/2011
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-considers-reopening-orthodox-seminary-2011-01-03>

thesis will pay special attention to the ‘mutual steps’ and the ‘politics of reciprocity’¹⁶ between the Rum Orthodox minority of Istanbul and the Muslim minority of Western Thrace.

The readers of this study should raise the following questions: How does the Turkish press position itself in the issues faced by the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate? What are the real reasons of the changing perceptions of the Patriarchate in the Turkish Press in the past few years?

B. Literature Review

Literature on Greek-Turkish relations is abundant and easily accessible. However, this literature is mostly about politics or history. Undoubtedly, the Turkish-Greek literature suffers from a lack of studies that combine International Relations with Media and of more specialized studies. For example, there is no academic work dealing with the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate and the role of media, even though the historic institution often lies in the front pages of the newspapers in Greece and Turkey, as one of the most important issues in the bilateral relations, and also often appears as a reciprocal issue with the, “Mufti case” in Western Thrace.

Another issue is that the literature about Turkish-Greek relations is mostly written by Greek or Greek authors, so it can prove challenging for a young researcher from Greece

¹⁶ ‘Reciprocity’ refers to a concept in international relations that encourages the parties to make mutual steps towards specific issues. For example, in Greek-Turkish relations the case of Patriarchate in Istanbul is often associated with the case of election of mufti for the Muslim minority in Western Thrace

or Turkey to collect the “right” sources and write an objective essay, as the Greek and Turkish literature can sometimes be characterized as biased or ethno-centric.

Hercules Millas is a prominent scholar who has contributed significantly to the improvement of perceptions of Greeks in Turkey and of Turks in Greece. Millas is a Constantinopolitan Greek, as he was born and raised in Istanbul. He holds a PhD in political science from the University of Ankara on, “The image of Greeks in Turkish Literature - a comparative study of nationalism and identity” (1998). He is the editor of a number of books on the historical, social, and psychological aspects of Greek-Turkish relations, as well as a large number of articles. His works are accepted as image and stereotype studies. He believes that the media in both countries reproduce negative perceptions of the national ‘other’, meaning Greeks for Turkey and Turks for Greece. His articles related to this study are, “*Tourkokratia: History and the Image of Turks in Greek Literature*” (2007), “*Greek-Turkish Conflict and Arsonist Firemen*” (2000), “*A Silenced Aspect of the ‘Peace Journalist’: His/Her National Identity*” (2006), “*History writing among the Greeks and Turks: Imagining the Self and the Other*” (2008), “*Perceptions of Conflict: Greeks and Turks in each other’s mirrors*” (2009) and “*The Images of Greeks in Turkish Literature: Fictions and Memoirs*”, in *Oil on Fire* (1996).

Concerning the Greek-Turkish relations, Alexis Alexandris’s book, “The Greek Minority of Istanbul and the Greek-Turkish relations: 1918-1974,” published in 1983 will be used. The book examines, among others, the relationship between the Patriarchate and the Turkish government, and the fortune of the institution and of the Greek minority, according to the fluctuations of the bilateral relations.

Doğan Tılıç, is another important scholar, whose work is very useful in this thesis, as it is one of the few comparative studies in the field of Greek-Turkish media. Tılıç is a Turkish journalist and a supporter of Greek-Turkish friendship. His book “*Utaniyorum ama Gazeteciyim: Türkiye’de ve Yunanistan’da Gazetecelik*,” can be translated in English as, “*Journalism in Greece and in Turkey- I am ashamed, but I am a journalist.*” The book, also translated in Greek,¹⁷ was published in 1998 and is based on his doctorate survey for Department of Sociology of Middle East Technical University (Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi). It deals with the journalism and mass media communication in Turkey and Greece, as well as the mission of mass communication among the core issues of politics and media relations. According to the writer’s research, the objectivity and neutrality concepts in the field of journalism, which are offered by the liberal pluralist theory, are seen as theoretical constructs that do not reflect reality at all. The liberal theory is not reflected in today’s situation in Greece and Turkey because the economy is under the rules of capitalism. As a result, Tılıç tends to believe that journalists in both countries became alienated to the media industry because of the oligopolistic structure of the ownership phenomenon. The writer also deals with nationalism as one of the most powerful ideologies and social movements. Finally, he points out that both the Greek and Turkish Governments, in order to distract their attention from the interior problems, tends to reproduce nationalistic sentiments. They ensure that against the threat of any exterior enemy, people will forget the interior problems.

¹⁷ Published from Papazisi Editions

Concerning the history of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, Malamati Valakou-Theodoridou's book, *"The Legal Framework of the Ecumenical Patriarchate within the International Community"*¹⁸ will be used. Malamati Valakou-Theodoroudi is a Professor in the department of Law at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. Her book was published in 2001 and is based on her doctorate survey for the Faculty of Law, Economics and Political Sciences of the University. It is an important tool for handling various issues relating to the institution. The writer pays special attention to the history of the Patriarchate after the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

"Reciprocity, is the word most frequently uttered by Greece and Turkey with regard to their Muslim and non-Muslim minorities, respectively," according to Kurban and Tsitselikis.¹⁹ Their report, "A tale of Reciprocity: Minority Foundations in Greece and Turkey" (2010), is very important in an attempt to understand how the project of "reciprocity" works out. An important work dealing with reciprocity is a publication of Istanbul Bilgi University press, *"Reciprocity: Greek and Turkish Minority, Law, Religion and Politics"* (2008) edited by Samim Akgönül.

Dr. Ioannis N. Grigoriadis, an assistant professor at the department of political science in Bilkent University in Ankara and a research fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) is a prominent Greek scholar, whose work is of importance in this thesis. His following works: *"On the Europeanization of Minority*

¹⁸ The original title of the book *"The Legal Framework of the Ecumenical Patriarchate within the International Community"* is *"Το Νομικό Περίγραμμα του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου στο πλαίσιο της Διεθνούς Κοινότητας"*, (Thessaloniki: Sakkoula Editions, 2001)

¹⁹ Kurban, Dilek and Konstantinos, Tsitselikis, "A tale of Reciprocity: Minority Foundations in Greece and Turkey", TESEV: 2010, p. 6

Available at: http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DEMP/ENG/vakiflar-tr-grc-ing.pdf

Rights Protection: Comparing the Cases of Greece and Turkey” (2008), “*Redefining the Nation: Shifting Boundaries of the ‘Other’ in Greece and Turkey*”(2011), “*Islam and Democratization in Turkey: Secularism and trust in a divides society*” (2009), “*Greek and Greek Cypriot views of Turkey’s Accession to the European Union: On the Endurance of a Spectacular Shift*” (2008), “*Mutations of Turkish Nationalism: From Neo-Nationalism to Ergenekon Affair*” (2010) (together with Irmak Özer) will be cited.

“*The Role of the Media in Greek-Turkish relations*” (1998/1999), is a work by Katharina Hadjidimos, a Greek journalist, and is another important work concerning the Greek and Turkish media. In this work, it is reported how the mass media influences the societies and how public opinion and journalists in both countries reproduce the stereotypes representing the national, ‘other.’

Burcu Sunar, a research assistant and PhD candidate at the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Istanbul University was another important source due to her distinct focus on specifically the Turkish Media. The book, “*Greek Media in the Eyes of the Turkish Media,*” published in 2009, is based on the MA thesis of Sunar for Bilgi University and deals with the question of how the Greek media were reflected in the Turkish media via a research in the archives of *Hürriyet*. Sunar’s work was not only important due to its content, but it was also helpful in increasing knowledge of how to write a MA thesis on media and Greek-Turkish relations.

The work may also be said to have borrowed one of its main motifs from Umut Özkirimli and Spiros Sofos’s concept of the nationalistic imagination of the, ‘other.’

“Tormented by History, Nationalism in Greece and Turkey,” (2008) is the first comparative study of the nationalism in Greece and Turkey and it is grounded in an extensive critical review of the popular and scholarly literature on Greek and Turkish nationalisms. Both Turkey and Greece have been historically posited as the ‘other’ in their respective nationalistic imaginaries, each being seen from the outset as being at the antipodes of the survival of the national and historic ‘other.’

C. Methodology

1. Concerning Archival Research

In order to investigate how the Turkish press presents the issues related to the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate an archival research in the newspapers was conducted. Working in the Turkish newspapers requires a strong knowledge of the Turkish language, which I unfortunately do not have. Thus, the research made using the online system of the Press and Communication Office of the Embassy of Ankara brought me in the Consulate General of Greece in Istanbul. The system provided me all the reports of Turkish newspapers translated into Greek, by the Press Office of the Greek Embassy. The keyword used while doing research was Turkey-Patriarchate, between the dates October 3, 2005 and March 1, 2011.

Nevertheless, due to time limitations, the newspaper articles were selected according to the importance of their reporting. Furthermore, this work does not categorize the

newspapers according to their political orientation or their circulation, but according to the issues faced by the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. Turkish newspapers that will be presented in this work are *Hürriyet*, *Taraf*, *Zaman*, *Milliyet*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Radikal*, *Habertürk*, *Yeni Çağ*, *Posta*, *Sabah*, *Akşam*, *Vatan*, *Takvim*, *Bugün*, *Yeni Şafak*, *BirGün* and *Türkiye*.

Moreover, this work will also take into consideration the two English-language dailies based in Turkey (*Hürriyet Daily News* and *Today's Zaman*), recognizing the fact that the Turkish-language and the English language editions could vary, and that the second periodical is not simply a translated edition of the first one, as many people tend to believe.

The starting point of this research was chosen to be October 2005, when Turkey's EU accession negotiations were officially started in accordance to the decision taken at the Luxembourg Intergovernmental Conference of October 3, 2005. 'Europeanization', which will be analyzed further later in this thesis, is a term to explain various phenomena and processes of change.²⁰ It is the main framework through which we can analyze the changing perceptions of Turkey as a candidate state, towards minority and other social issues.

²⁰ Johan, P. Olsen, "Europeanization" in Michele Cini (ed.) , *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 334

2. Methodological Framework

a) Which method and why?

According to Bertrand and Hughes, two (between others) of the ways you may see your research are:²¹

- I. As producing understanding of the meaning/content of the text (content analysis) or
- II. As producing understanding of the discourses operating within the text (discourse analysis).

Which method a researched should follow is a difficult issue. It depends on two things:

- I. The research question and
- II. The quality of the material

This thesis, based on the newspaper articles, will apply Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its methodological framework. This means that the chosen news reports were critically examined in order to be positioned into the right position of the discursive game. Moreover, the quality of the material used for this work is good and is considered reliable, as it comes from the Press and Communication Office of the Greek Embassy of Ankara. Aim of this dissertation is to try to show the hidden motivations and hidden messages behind texts written for the Patriarchate and to focus on the way and on the tone Turkish journalists write about the Rum Patriarchate (qualitative approach). It is quite difficult to clearly say what Discourse Analysis is, but it could be said that it is the analysis of language beyond the sentence. DA plays gives emphasis on the meaning of

²¹ Bertrand, Ina and Peter Hughes, *Media Research Methods: Audiences, Institutions, Texts*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 215

particular words used in a newspaper text. According to Richardson, all types of words carry connoted in addition to denoted meanings.²²

Thus, this study will apply specifically Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to explore how the Patriarch, the Patriarchate, and the issues related to it, are constructed and presented by the Turkish press. Moreover, this study will examine whether press coverage of the Patriarchate on the Turkish press use of a discriminatory discourse against a non-Muslim minority, this of Rum minority, in reporting.

b) Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse analysis (CDA), a specialized form of textual analysis within the social sciences is the analysis of the language or the study of texts. Critical Discourse Analysis is a special approach in Discourse Analysis (DA). James Paul Gee asserts that “Discourse Analysis considers how language, both spoken and written, enacts social and cultural perspectives and identities.”²³ Originally, the word discourse comes from the Latin word, *discursus*, which means conversation, speech. DA is a qualitative type of analysis which relates to the examination of language. Language can tell us a lot about society and media. The study of discourse views language as a powerful tool, a form of social practice and focuses on the ways social and political domination are reproduced by texts. Texts in the newspapers do not only inform the society, but also

²² Richardson, E. John, *Analysing Newspapers, An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 47

²³ Gee, James Paul, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), taken from the abstract of the book

shape perspectives by wider processes within a society. Discourse analysis can be applied in every text.

Analyzing the media language can be tricky but it provides a useful insight within the society, since media are one of the major components of it. Nowadays, mass media are an ongoing force in modern society. Bertrand and Hughes agree that Discourse Analysis “focuses on the structure of written or spoken texts, attempting to understand how participants constitute a world in the course of their linguistic interaction”. DA is used for the analysis of texts like newspaper reports.²⁴ DA sets out to analyze how the audiences perceive different messages. The recipient of the message plays important role in this kind of analysis, while he is interested in the process of making meaning, rather than just in the meaning itself.²⁵

From a Marxist position²⁶, Discourse Analysis in media studies is “an analysis of the hierarchies established within communication, allowing some levels of communications (usually those of the dominant ideology) to take precedence over others in any social context”.²⁷ Historically, Marxism has offered an analysis of the media of mass communication that has sought to emphasize their role in the social reproduction of the status quo”.²⁸

²⁴ Bertrand and Hughes, 2005, p.94

²⁵ Ibid., p. 174

²⁶ Marxism is the intellectual, socio-political framework derived from the teachings of Karl Max (German philosopher and sociologist)

²⁷ Bertrand and Hughes Richardson, p. 255

²⁸ See “Marxism and Mass Communication Research” in Stevenson, Nick, *Understanding Media Cultures*, (London: Sage, 2002), p. 9

c) Advantages and Disadvantages of Discourse Analysis

According to Bertrand and Hughes, the powers of DA are that it provides a way:²⁹

- ❖ *To understand the deeper structure of any text*
- ❖ *To consider interpersonal interaction between speakers;*
- ❖ *To position discourses within a larger communication (and ultimately social) context.*

Discourse analysis, as it is already mentioned before, can be applied on every text and situation. One more advantage of this kind of analysis is that it brings together social and linguistic analysis of discourse, which is very important in the examination of social phenomena. DA is a theory which is capable to deal with a range of social sciences.

In discourse analysis on the other hand, even if the material of the research is reliable, it is difficult to talk about reliability, because as it is already analyzed before, the analysis of the texts (newspaper report is the case of this work) in Discourse Analysis is subjective and a matter of interpretations. What the researcher perceives as reality is the outcome of a constructive process of his/her interpretations, so it may not be objective and reliable.

Norman Fairclough, is one of the founders of Critical Discourse Analysis. Fairclough argues that media messages are the primary way a society receives information. For the purposes of this research for exploration of the implications between language used in the Turkish press and the political-social complex structures of the Turkish state,

²⁹ Bertrand and Hughes, 2005, p. 94

‘Media Discourse’³⁰ in which Fairclough focuses on the practices of media discourse in relation to wider social and cultural processes, is a major work in the studies of DA, helpful in the understanding of the power of media language. The writer argues that Discourse Analysis is applied to clarify the ways in which the mass media transfers messages and meanings and how they construct differing versions of reality. For Fairclough, language is a powerful medium. Language and discourse are closely aligned, but though language is a component of discourse, it can also include almost any form of communicative action.

‘Analyzing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis’, a work of John E. Richardson, contributed in the understanding of the political and ideological implications of language use in the press. The book offers the theoretical understanding on how newspaper reports work while it offers a useful guidance to the critical analysis of media, considering its power and effects. According to Richardson, CDA is a **constructivist, interpretative and contextual approach**.³¹

With reference to Critical Discourse Analysis, this work adopts the communication constructivist approach. Constructivism is a theory that, “Stresses the central role of interpretative processes in human interaction,”³² by assuming that there is no ultimate shared reality (CDA offers interpretations of the meanings of texts). What someone perceives as reality is the outcome of a constructive process of his/her interpretations.

³⁰ Fairclough, Norman, *Media Discourse*, (London: E. Arnold, 1995)

³¹ Richardson, 2007, p.15

³² Delia, Jesse G., “Constructivism and the Study of Human Communication,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Vol 63 (1), Feb. 1977, pp. 66-83

Interpretation defined as the ‘‘process of understanding or seeking for meaning, by relating information to a broader intellectual framework’’.³³

Therefore, reality depends on the personal understanding of individual and may not be objective. Constructivism in communication is a basic theory. ‘‘Applied to the study of human communication, it leads to the conception of meaning as a product of a socially shared code and individual interpretative processes.’’³⁴ Richardson assumes that ‘‘CDA argues that textual meaning is constructed through an interaction between producer, text and consumer rather than simply being ‘read off’ the page by all readers in exactly the same way’’.³⁵

Ruth Wodak is a distinguished professor in Discourse Studies at Lancaster University.

Together with Norma Fairclough, go over the main principles of CDA as follows:³⁶

1. *CDA addresses social problems*
2. *Power relations are discursive*
3. *Discourse constitutes society and culture*
4. *Discourse does ideological work*
5. *Discourse is historical*
6. *The link between text and society is mediated*
7. *Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory*
8. *Discourse is a form of social action.*

³³ Bertrand Ina and Hughes, 2005, p. 257

³⁴ Delia, 1997, p. 66-83

³⁵ Richardson, 2007, p. 15

³⁶ Fairclough, N. and Wodak, R. Critical Discourse Analysis, in Teun A. Van Dijk (ed.), *Discourse as Social Interaction: Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, Vol. 2, (London: Sage, 1997), pp. 271-280

Teun Adrianus van Dijk is one of the prominent scholars in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis. His contribution to the field of the psychological analysis of written texts was very important. His work in CDA focused especially on the study of the discursive reproduction of ideologies by the 'symbolic elites' (politicians, journalists, etc) and the study of news in the press.

d) Language and Power

Linguists and social analysts all agree that language play a major role in the framing of ideological consciousness, as a powerful tool, through which mass media organizations can transfer messages to society or to social groups. Power, which derives from language, is a central notion in CDA. Critical Discourse Analysts believe that controlling discourse is a form of power. Mary Talbot, Karen Atkinson and David Atkinson state that ‘Power is exercised through language in ways which are not always obvious’.³⁷ James Paul Gee argues that ‘Language-in-use is a tool, used alongside other tools, to design or build things. Whenever we speak or write, we always and simultaneously construct or build seven things or seven areas of "reality" or seven "building tasks" ’ Seven items are as follows:³⁸

1. *Significance*
2. *Activities*
3. *Identities*
4. *Relationships*
5. *Politics (the distribution of social goods)*

³⁷ Talbot Mary, Dr. Karen Atkinson and David Atkinson, *Language and Power in the Modern World*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p. 5

³⁸ Gee, 2005, pp. 10-13

6. *Connections*

7. *Sign Systems and knowledge*

Through language represented feelings, thoughts and ideas. It is not only the spoken or written language but also the things represented by certain words, known as signs. Signs are usually linked to a meaning, which is not written or spoken but comes from the representations of each individual. Hall defines representation as “the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the “real” world of objects, people and events, or indeed to the imaginary world of fictional objects, people and events”.³⁹

Hercules Millas also worked on ‘Fiction versus Memoirs’. Millas states that “The demarcation line between fiction and memoir become apparent. In texts that are heavily influenced by nationalism, the difference is not in the style, nor in the context. It is in the meaning given to the narration”.⁴⁰

e) Mind Control and Control of Public Opinion Through Discourse

“If controlling discourse is a first major form of power, controlling people's minds is the other fundamental way to reproduce dominance and hegemony”.⁴¹ As it is already mentioned, mass media are powerful tools, capable to transfer messages, to reproduce

³⁹ Hall, Stuart, Representation, Meaning, and Language. In S. Hall (ed.), *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, (London: Sage in association with the Open University, 1997), p.17

⁴⁰ Millas, Hercules, “The Image of Greeks in Turkish Literature: Fiction and Memoirs”, in *Oil on Fire? Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in South-Eastern Europe* (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996)

⁴¹ Dijk, Teun A. Van, Critical Discourse Analysis in Deborah Shiffrin, Deborah Tannen and Heidi E. Hamilton (ed.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 357

national, political, social, etc ideologies and to manipulate the masses. Manipulation, according to Teun A. Van Dijk, is one of the crucial notions of Critical Discourse Analysis.

*“Socially, manipulation is defined as illegitimate domination confirming social inequality. Cognitively, manipulation as mind control involves the interference with processes of understanding, the formation of biased mental models and social representations such as knowledge and ideologies. Discursively, manipulation generally involves the usual forms and formats of ideological discourse, such as emphasizing Our good things, and emphasizing Their bad things”.*⁴²

Texts in the newspapers do not only inform the society, but also shape perspectives by wider processes within a society. A usual tendency of people in Greece and Turkey is that they have formed an opinion regarding their perceptions. Media organizations have an enormous power to form national stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions of the ‘other’ and in influencing negatively the public opinion.

The reproduction of national stereotypes through media is consistent with what Michael Billig considers about media. He argues that media have a major role in the reproduction of nationalism.⁴³ Nevertheless, recipients might vary in the way of thinking and assimilating the media messages. That is to say that reading the same text recipient X and recipient Y, does not mean that they have the same interpretations. What plays important role is the education, the age, the gender, the culture, etc. So,

⁴² Dijk, Teun A. Van, ‘Discourse and Manipulation’, *Discourse & Society*, Vol 17 (2), 2006, p. 359

⁴³ Billig, Michael, *Banal Nationalism*, (London: Sage, 1995), p. 19

influencing mind is a big issue and due to space limitations of this thesis, it cannot be analyzed further.

To sum up, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as described above, is a constructivist, interpretative and contextual approach, which plays special attention on the power abuse by what Teun Adrianus van Dijk calls 'symbolic elites' (politicians, journalists, writers, etc). CDA also focuses on the strategies through which media organizations attempt to control people's mind aiming the control of the public opinion in modern states.

*Findings of the archive research are going to be analyzed on the basis of the above theoretical approaches.

D. Scope of the Study

The work consists of six chapters:

- ❖ The first one is a small presentation of the history of the Greek-Turkish conflict, covers the methodological framework and is also the literature review of the study.
- ❖ In the second chapter, there is a summary of the history of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate in the Turkish Republic starting from the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which determined a new era in the field of Greek-Turkish relations.
- ❖ The third chapter analyzes the main issues faced by the Patriarchate (estates-Theological School- legal status/ Ecumenical character) and presents the positions of both sides.
- ❖ The focus of the fourth chapter is on the Turkish press and attempts to analyze the reasons of the transformation in the way press presents the Patriarchate-relates issues.
- ❖ The fifth chapter is based on the archival research of the newspapers regarding the main issues analyzed in the previous chapter.
- ❖ The last chapter summarizes the findings of the study.

II. THE HISTORY OF THE RUM PATRIARCHATE UNDER THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

Introduction

The Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, a religious institute in Istanbul has had a long and tormented historical existence. It has been victim of the politics of ‘reciprocity’⁴⁴ between Greece and Turkey. Through its passage from Byzantium to the Ottoman Empire and from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic, many things have changed. Yet the institution continues to look for opportunities to build bridges with other churches and faiths. In this chapter, there is an examination of the role of the Patriarchate under the Turkish Republic, beginning in 1923 when the Republic was founded. Under Turkish rule, the Patriarchate has frequently been the object of political and religious persecution. As a starting point was chosen 1923, as this was when the Treaty of Lausanne began a new era of Greek-Turkish Relations and was a landmark in the history of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate.

The Treaty of Lausanne led to the official proclamation of the Republic of Turkey and to the international recognition of the newly formed State, with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the Republic’s first President and Ankara as the new capital. Through the treaty, the Patriarchate enjoyed certain religious and administrative privileges. The Treaty, signed on July 24, 1923 is described such:

“The Treaty of Lausanne was signed on 24 July 1923 and was ratified by the Turkish Grand Nationals Assembly a month later. This treaty was generally

⁴⁴ Macar, Elçin, ‘‘A victim of Reciprocity: The Greek Patriarchate of Istanbul’’ in *Reciprocity: Greek and Turkish Minorities. Law, Religion and Politics*, edited by Sanim Akgönül, Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press (2008), pp. 143-150

acclaimed as the greatest diplomatic victory of nationalist Turkey. Throughout the negotiations the Turkish delegation manifested a rigid determination to abolish all foreign controls over the finance, economy, judicial system, minorities and territory in Turkey. Almost all the Turkish objectives were attained and as a result a sovereign, republican, secular and homogeneous Turkish state was acknowledged by the international community.”⁴⁵

During the Conference in 1922-1923, the Turkish officials were determined to expel not only the Patriarchate, but also all the Greeks living in Turkey. They did not want any non-Muslim elements in the newly created State. The founders of the newly formed modern Turkish republic believed that the institution was supporting Greek-territorial aspirations in Asia Minor.⁴⁶ Later, the Treaty of Lausanne changed the status of the Patriarchate within the new Turkish Republic by limiting its role as purely religious with no political rights. However, this decision did not affect its international standing and did not deprive the right of remaining in Istanbul. Nevertheless, the text of the Treaty does not make a clear reference to the status of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, and therefore there is no written provision of its legal status. Therefore, as the status of the Patriarchate was not clearly defined in the Treaty of Lausanne, there is not a commonly used name referring to the institution. Thus, it has been known and reported in the news reports by various names: ⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Akexandris, Alexis *Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, (Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992), p. 103

⁴⁶ Yannas, Prodromos, “The Soft Power of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,” *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 20: 1 (2009), p. 80

⁴⁷ Stavrides, Vasil. Th., “A Concise History of the Ecumenical Patriarchate”, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, Vol. 45, (2000), p. 57

- ❖ The Church and Bishopric of Byzantium
- ❖ The Church, the Bishopric, the Archbishopric and the Patriarchate of Constantinople
- ❖ The Patriarchate of new Rome
- ❖ The Great Church of Christ
- ❖ The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
- ❖ Istanbul Rum Patriarchate – İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi
- ❖ The Church of Fener

The way the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate has been treated by the Turkish State over the decades varied according to the political circumstances and the relations between Turkey and Greece. The modern Turkish state was not always against the existence of the Patriarchate within Turkish territory, especially during the period of 1930-1952, as it was during the Lausanne Peace Conference in 1923. Then the Patriarchate was treated as, “a Greek hostile institution that was able to destabilize the Turkish State, for the benefit of the Greek State.”⁴⁸ At this time the Turkish delegation in Lausanne was trying to remove it from Turkey.

Nowadays, the Patriarchate’s image in Turkey has improved as a result of the development in the relations between Ankara and Athens and of the development in the relations between Ankara and Europe. Nevertheless, Ankara still does not acknowledge the international and ecumenical role of the Patriarch Bartholomew and of the

⁴⁸ Theodoroudi Balakou, Malamati, *The Legal Outline of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the International Community* (Thessaloniki: Sakkoulas, 2001), p. 33
 The original title of the book is: Θεοδορούδη Βαλάκου, Μαλαμάτη, *Το νομικό περίγραμμα του Οικουμενικού Πατριαρχείου στο πλαίσιο της Διεθνούς Κοινότητας*, (Θεσσαλονίκη: Εκδόσεις Σάκκουλα, 2001).

Patriarchate, even though it is an institution with global effect. Manson argues that “Being Ecumenical and being based in a Muslim country gives the Ecumenical Patriarchate a uniquely supranational perspective.”⁴⁹ The main problems that are faced by the Patriarchate are as follows: The non-operation of the Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki); the non-recognition of the legal status and of the “Ecumenical” character of the Patriarch and the Patriarchate, and the property rights (loss of properties).⁵⁰ It should be mentioned that from 1923 to 2006, the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, its foundations, and minority Greeks of Istanbul have filed over 10,000 cases in the Turkish courts, but have only won approximately 20 of them.⁵¹

Until recently, one of the most important problems faced by the institution was that no official dialogue existed between the Turkish authorities and representatives of the Patriarchate. Nevertheless, the relation between the institution and the officials has begun changing over the last few years, due to the improvement of Greek-Turkish relations and to the ‘Europeanization’ of Turkish politics.⁵² As the Organization ‘Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’⁵³ states, “Without the solution of many of these problems, Turkey will not be demonstrating the religious freedom necessary to enter the European Union.”⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Manson, Whit, “Constantinople’s Last Hurrah: Turkey and the Ecumenical Patriarchate”, *World Policy Journal*, Vol. 18 (2), 2001, p. 62

⁵⁰ See Chapter V-A of this thesis

⁵¹ Report: *Religious Freedom: The Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul*, Warsaw Poland: Organizations for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, 2006, p.3, available at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/21595>

⁵² Including the way Turkey treats the non-Muslim minorities.

⁵³ ‘Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’ is one of the Organizations under the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. For more information visit <http://www.archons.org/>

⁵⁴ Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, “2006 Memorandum on the Problems faced by the Ecumenical Patriarchate”, available at http://www.archons.org/pdf/issues/E.P._Problems_faced.pdf

A. 1923 to the 1950's:

Despite the important decrease in the number of Rums in Istanbul due to the expropriations of 1922-1923 and even with the seizing of Greek properties, the community managed to survive. In June of 1924, Istanbul had 1,065,866 inhabitants of whom 656,281 were Muslims and 279,788 were Rums.⁵⁵

Before the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkish nationalists attempted the expulsion of the institution via its replacement with the Autocephalous Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate (Bağımsız Türk Ortodoks Patrikhanesi).⁵⁶ Finally, in 1922, a year before the Lausanne Peace Conference, the Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate was founded in Kayseri (Καισάρεια). This unrecognized Orthodox Christian denomination has a strong following from Turkish nationalists. It was created and organized by Papa Eftim (Efthymios Karahissaridis), the general representative of the Turkish Patriarchate, who had both the support and approval of the newly formed Turkish State.⁵⁷ The Turkish Orthodox Patriarchate was a determining factor in shaping the relations between the Rum Patriarchate and the Rum minority of Istanbul with the Turkish state. Papa Eftim caused a number of serious problems in the running of the Patriarchate.

During the period 1928-1930 a number of positive settlements were achieved. On October 30, 1930, the Greek Prime Minister, Venizelos, visited Ankara. Together with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, he signed the Treaty of Friendship (Treaty of Ankara) that

⁵⁵ Alexandris (1992), p. 142

⁵⁶ Also referred as the Turkish Orthodox Church (Türk Ortodoks Kilisesi)

⁵⁷ See Psomiades, Harry J., "The Ecumenical Patriarchate under the Turkish Republic, The first ten years", *Balkan Studies*, Vol.2, 1961

regulated, “The exchange of communities and the possessions left behind.”⁵⁸ The Treaty also included the Protocol for the limitation of Naval Armaments.⁵⁹ The Greek–Turkish rapprochement aimed to clearly laying out the problems faced by Greece and Turkey in their disagreements concerning the Lausanne Treaty, as well as to provide a better atmosphere for the activities and processes of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. Greeks continued to constitute the largest single non-Muslim minority in Istanbul. In 1935, the Greek Orthodox population of Istanbul was estimated at 125,046 of which whom 108,725 declared Greek as their mother language.⁶⁰

Patriarch Photios II ⁶¹ ascended the Patriarchal Throne in 1929. The Patriarch after Photios II was Benjamin I,⁶² who came to power in 1936. There were two important developments that took place during his patriarchy: The death of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1938 and the Second World War (1939-1945), in which Turkey kept a neutral stance.⁶³

Patriarch Athenagoras, the 268th Patriarch, ascended the Throne in 1948.⁶⁴ He graduated from Halki Theological School and before being a Patriarch served as Archbishop of America. Athenagoras Spyrou was the first Patriarch who had an American citizenship before his election. However, because of his good relations with Turkey and Greece and insistence of the US Department of State, the authorities gave

⁵⁸ Müftüler –Bac, Meltem, *Turkey's relations with a changing Europe*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997, p. 65

⁵⁹ See Hatzivassiliou, Evanthis, “The 1930 Greek-Turkish Naval Protocol,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 9 (1), 1998, pp. 89-111

⁶⁰ Alexandris (1992), p. 191

⁶¹ Patriarch Photios II remained on the Patriarchal Throne from October 7, 1929 to December 29, 1935

⁶² Patriarch Benjamin I remained on the Patriarchal Throne from January 18, 1936 to February 17, 1946

⁶³ Theodoroudi Balakou, 2001, p.55

⁶⁴ Patriarch Athenagoras remained in the Patriarchal Throne from November 1, 1948 to July 7, 1972

him his Turkish citizenship documents when his aircraft arrived at Istanbul airport. Both Turkish leaders and the society favored him. This was also reflected in Turkish press. “Athenagoras was indeed a commendable figure combining genuine piety with appropriate measure of political astuteness.”⁶⁵

From the beginning of his Patriarchy, Athenagoras had contacts with Turkish leaders⁶⁶ and managed to win the sympathy not only from the Rums of Istanbul, but also of the Turkish public opinion, by aspiring to transform the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate into promoter of Greco-Turkish peaceful co-existence.⁶⁷ He remained in the Patriarchal Throne for twenty-four years and his contribution to the history of the institution was extremely important.

B. 1950's to the 1970's:

The peaceful chapter of the Greek-Turkish relations came to an end when the Cyprus issue erupted. Therefore, were created several problems in the bilateral relations. In an attempt to put pressure on Greece, the Turkish State forced Patriarch Athenagoras, “To take disciplinary measures against Greek prelates under his jurisdiction who had meddled in politics in connection with Cyprus.”⁶⁸ The emergence of the political conditions in Cyprus, the lack of obedience of Patriarch Athenagoras according to Turkish demands (the Patriarch could not have taken such a political decision, due to

⁶⁵ Alexandris (1991), p.245

⁶⁶ One month after his election he visited Ismet İnönü

⁶⁷ Alexandris (1992), p.247

⁶⁸ *The Times*, September 4, 1954, quoted in Alexandris (1992), p. 253

the non-political character of the Patriarchate established by the Treaty of Lausanne),⁶⁹ as well as the news of a bombing at Atatürk's house in Thessaloniki,⁷⁰ led to the pogroms against the Greek minority living in Istanbul on September 6 – 7 in 1955.⁷¹

On the night of September 6, 1955 a horrible event was caused by fanatical crowds that attacked the properties and business of Non-Muslim minorities, mostly those of the Greek minority. The outcome of the pogrom was horrid: 4,214 residences, 1,004 shops, 73 churches, 26 monastery schools, two monasteries and one synagogue were destroyed. 59 percent of that which was destroyed belonged to the Greek minority, 17 percent to Armenians, 12 percent to Jews, and 10 percent to Muslims.⁷² Furthermore, with the exception of theft and major damage of a number of churches, the result for the Rum Patriarchate was the desecration of Patriarch graves in Balıklı (Baloukli) Greek Orthodox Cemetery, and the death of a priest.⁷³ The events of September 6-7, 1955 can be seen as one more attempt to terrorize the once “vivid” Greek Orthodox minority. The Turkish government, under Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, denied responsibility for the events.

In the late 1960's the Turkish State developed a new approach toward the issue of minority foundations' acquisition of new properties through the creation of bureaucratic obstacles.⁷⁴ During Athinagoras's patriarchy and at the height of tensions over Cyprus,

⁶⁹ Alexandris (1992), p.253

⁷⁰ *Radikal*, 06/09/2005 <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=163380>

⁷¹ Sometimes referred to as 'Septemvriana'

⁷² Özkırımlı Umut and Spyros A. Sofos, *Tormented by History, Nationalism in Greece and Turkey*, (United Kingdom: HURST Publishers Ltd, 2008), p. 171

⁷³ Macar, 2008, p. 144

⁷⁴ Presentation: Cengiz Orhan Kemal, Minority Foundations in Turkey: Evaluation of their legal problems, Oral presentation for the working-level meeting of foreign Embassies, organized by the Dutch Embassy in Ankara on April 4, 2003

the institution faced several problems. The most important being both the closure of the orphanage of Büyükkada in 1964 and the massive deportation of the Greeks of Istanbul in 1964-1965, due to the Cyprus issue. As Özkırımlı and Sofos underlies, “The exodus of the Constantinopolitan Greeks, clearly indicates that the Muslim-Orthodox symbiosis in Istanbul, that began in 1923 with the Lausanne agreement, has failed.”⁷⁵ In the crisis of 1964-1965, for the first time the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that it considered the Patriarchate to be within the framework of the bilateral relations and “reciprocity.”⁷⁶ The expulsion was followed by additional measures taken against the Patriarchate in an attempt to weaken its standing within the Turkish State and its influence and importance internationally. Two metropolitans of the Patriarchate were deported, the Patriarchates’ newspaper, *Apostolos Andreas*, and its’ magazine, *Orthodoksia*, ceased to be published due to the shutting down of the Patriarchal printing office,⁷⁷ threatening policies were released, Orthodox ecclesiastics were forbidden to enter and teach in Greek minority schools, the Orphanage of Büyükkada (Prinkipos) was shut down, the press campaign against the Patriarchate continued, a police cabin was placed in front of the Patriarchate, and the church of St. Nikolaos was also shut down by the police.⁷⁸

Available at:

http://www.rightsagenda.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=293:aliasminority-foundations-in-turkey-an-evaluation-of-their-legal-problems&catid=84:aliasminority-rights&Itemid=123

⁷⁵ Alexandris, Alexis, *Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, Centre for Asia (Athens: Minor Studies, 1992), p. 296

⁷⁶ Macar, 2008, p. 144

⁷⁷ For more details on the shut down of the Patriarchal printing office, see Diakofotakis, George, *The Ecumenical Patriarchate after Lausanne: Religious Freedom Issues*, Athens: Sakkoula Editions, (2007), pp. 79-81.

The original title of the book is: Διακοφωτάκης Γεώργιος, *Το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο μετά τη Λωζάννη, Ζητήματα Θρησκευτικής Ελευθερίας*, (Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Σάκκουλα, 2007).

⁷⁸ Macar, 2008, pp. 144-147

One of the most outrageous measures against the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate and the entire Christian world was the closure of the Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki) in 1971. This was done according to a decision made by the Constitutional Court of Turkey and it prohibited the operation of privately owned institutions of higher education in Turkey. The Halki Seminary, founded in 1844, was the main theological school of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Over the years, the school has educated hundreds of the Churches' religious leaders, including twelve Ecumenical Patriarchs.⁷⁹ Although the School was providing high school education and vocational training, the Turkish authorities decided it was necessary to close it. However, the legal framework of the Constitutional Court that was taken into account in 1971 is no longer valid. The new legal framework, according to the European Convention of Human Rights, allows the operation of private institutions of higher education.⁸⁰

Since 1971, and despite occasional promises by Turkish authorities, the School remains closed. According to 2010 Progress Report,⁸¹ "The Halki Greek Orthodox seminary still remains closed, although there have been positive statements by senior government officials on the possibility of re-opening it."⁸² The re-opening of the school appears to be one of the most important issues of bilateral relations, and the one issue concerning the Patriarchate that is reported on the most in the Turkish Press.⁸³ As Prof. Aktar mentions in the newspaper *Taraf*, "The Theological School of Halki was actually a

⁷⁹ Documentary, "The Green Patriarch," (Becket Films, 2009)

⁸⁰ *Ta Néa*, 11/07/2010 <http://www.tanea.gr/default.asp?pid=2&ct=1&artid=4583827>

⁸¹ which examines the developments that have been completed in Turkey for their acceptance into the European Union

⁸² European Commission Turkey 2010 Progress Report Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf

⁸³ See Chapter VB

victim of the tension caused by the Cyprus issue. From the '50s to the outbreak of Cyprus crisis, Turkey and Greece treated minorities as 'hostages.' The Turks of Western Thrace and the Greeks of Istanbul were the victims of a diplomatic instrument of revenge called "reciprocity."⁸⁴ According to Kurban and Tsitselikis, "Reciprocity, is the word most frequently uttered by both Greece and Turkey in regards to their Muslim and non-Muslim minorities, respectively."⁸⁵

C. 1970's to 1991

In 1972, Patriarch Athinagoras, died and Patriarch Demetrios I⁸⁶ ascended the Throne. The problems faced by the Patriarchate continued to exist. The closure of Halki Theological School led to a lack of theological education for those who wished to enter the priesthood and to be among the upper hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. Moreover, the Patriarchate has faced serious barriers in staffing the institution and in carrying out the administrative and spiritual responsibilities. Meanwhile, due to the Court of Cassations' decision in May of 1974, the Turkish State confiscated a large number of minority properties. Also, the invasion/intervention to Cyprus in the summer of 1974 led to the terrifying of the Greek Orthodox minority in Turkey. Thus, the bilateral relations during the decade of 1970 deteriorated.

⁸⁴ Aktar, Ayhan, ''İlginç zamanlar, Heybeliada Ruhban Okulu nasıl açılır?'' *Taraf*, April 13, 2009 Available at: <http://www.taraf.com.tr/ayhan-aktar/makale-heybeliada-ruhban-okulu-nasil-acilir.htm>

⁸⁵ Kurban and Tsitselikis, 2010, p. 6

⁸⁶ Demetrios I remained on the Patriarchal Throne from July 16, 1972 to October 2, 1991

D. 1991 to 2002:

His All Holiness, Bartholomew I,⁸⁷ Archbishop of Constantinople New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch,⁸⁸ is undoubtedly in a class all by himself. As the spiritual leader of Orthodox Christians around the world, he has been very active internationally and he always tries to build bridges and define ways to dialogue with other churches and faiths, including other Christian sects, Muslims and Jews. He was included in the list of the 100 most influential people of 2008 of the *Time Magazine*.⁸⁹ Patriarch Bartholomew I has been working very hard to have the institution be granted with a legal status within the Turkish Republic and to revitalize the Ecumenical movement around the whole world.

When Patriarch Bartholomew ascended the Throne in 1991, he faced several problems concerning the institution and the Greek minority of Istanbul. After the Treaty of Lausanne, the Orthodox minority of Istanbul experienced waves of deportation⁹⁰ during the periods of 1922-1923, 1955-1959, 1964-1968 and 1974-1979. Thus, the flock of the Patriarchate had dramatically decreased and the conditions in Turkey had also been significantly deteriorated. Furthermore, The Patriarchal building, the Greek Orthodox churches and the Greek Orthodox cemeteries in Istanbul had been constantly made a target by unknown parties.

⁸⁷ Patriarch Bartholomew remains on the Patriarchal Throne from November 2, 1991 until today.

⁸⁸ The official title recognized by the Turkish State is: Bartholomew I, Patriarch of the Fener Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul

⁸⁹ http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/time100/article/0,28804,1733748_1733757_1735535,00.html

⁹⁰ Most of them were deported, but a part of them migrated as they followed their relatives who were deported

E. 2002- today:

Since the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan came to power in 2002, the conditions under which the Rum Patriarchate exists within the Turkish Republic have changed. It can be noted that the government of AKP has shown good will in some of the issues. Moreover, a large part of Turkish journalists/writers and independent Turkish thinkers have strongly raised their voices against the policies of the Turkish State against minorities.

It can be said that, except for the latest rapprochement between Greece and Turkey in 1999, another reason for the changing attitude in Turkey toward the Patriarchate could be the efforts to fulfil the political, the Copenhagen Criteria,⁹¹ (including the human rights) of accession to the European Union, which any applicant country must fulfil. The European Commission via the annual progress reports “warns” the Turkish authorities that every form of the violation of human rights and freedoms of minorities living within the country could mean their non-accession to the European Union. Europe demands that Turkey establish fair conditions for all its citizens, independent of religious, political, and social ideology. Thus, Turkey tries to improve on its relations with the Christian world.

During the years of 2000-2010, the Greek-Turkish relationship dynamic can be characterized as unusual and complicated. On one hand, there were historic meetings of

⁹¹ As ‘Copenhagen Criteria’ referred to the standards that make clear if a country is able or not to access to the European Union. For more information, visit http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/the-policy/conditions-for-enlargement/index_en.htm

representatives from all areas of society and on the other hand there was the fixed official policy in Athens and Ankara, which did not change. Repeated promises are given for an agreement about the issues faced by the institution, such as the re-opening of the Theological School of Halki. Yet still no arrangement or solution has been made. Over the last decade, provoking actions by State authorities and acts of vandalism (like the homemade bomb exploded in the garden of the Patriarchal building⁹² and the extensive damages of approximately 100 graves in the Balıklı Greek Orthodox cemetery in Istanbul, which is the final resting place of the Patriarchs⁹³) have caused several problems in the regular operation of the institution. The most obvious being the assassinations plot of Patriarch Bartholomew, which has been merged with Ergenekon case.⁹⁴ During an interview on November 26, 2009 in *Sunday's Zaman*, Bartholomew said that, "Dark forces planned to use minorities to overthrow the government, as revealed in the investigation into Ergenekon."⁹⁵

⁹² European Parliament

Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=QT&reference=H-2004-0278&language=LT>

⁹³ European Parliament

Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+WQ+E-2009-4532+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=MT>

⁹⁴ 'Ergenekon' is a Kemalist alleged ultra-nationalist organization in Turkey with ties to the country's military and security forces. According to Grigoriadis and Özer, (2010), "Ergenekon is the fruit of cooperation between the Turkish State and far-right extremists." It is responsible for several terrorist attacks and deaths in Turkey and is an alleged extension of the "deep state" (derin devlet). One of the categories against the organization is the attempt to overwhelm the AKP government, plans of murdering the Turkish Prime Minister and representatives of the minorities in Turkey, including Patriarch Bartholomew, the Armenian Patriarch Moutafian, and the representative of Alevi community. Ergenekon is also considered responsible of the murder of the Armenian journalist Hrant Dink on January 19, 2007. Dink was the editor of the Armenian newspaper *Agos* and a prominent member of the Armenian minority. For more information about the Ergenekon affair, see Grigoriadis, Ioannis N. and Irmak Özer, "Mutations of Turkish Nationalism: From Neo-Nationalism to the Ergenekon Affair", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. XVII, No 4, Winter 2010, pp. 101-113

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Patriarch Bartholomew has had a large number of meetings with Turkish officials and Turkish journalists. This is something that seemed impossible two and three decades ago, when the Greek-Turkish relationship was rather tense. He has also had a number of official meetings with international political or religious personalities during which he received honours as head of a State. Even more, he has totally enhanced his international reputation. Foreign governments and international organizations completely recognize his international personality.⁹⁶ Moreover, since Patriarch Bartholomew's ascension to the Throne in 1991, a large number of important leaders have visited the seat of the Patriarchate in Fener.⁹⁷ One of the most important meetings was that of Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in June 2004.⁹⁸ President Barack Obama received the Patriarch at the White House in November of 2009, as a reciprocal visit to the one the U.S. President made in April of the same year. President Obama has urged the Turkish government more than once to take additional steps to re-open the Theological School of Halki, "As a symbol of its commitment to religious freedom."⁹⁹

In the last five years the most important events regarding the Patriarchate are as follows:

❖ On January 9, 2007 the European Court of Human Rights issued its judgment condemning Turkey for violation of article 1 of Additional Protocol 1 of the European Convention On Human Rights (protection of property) in the case of Fener Rum Erkek

⁹⁶ Yannas, 2009, p.86

⁹⁷ Leaders such as the President of the European Parliament, Borel in November of 2004, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel in November 2006, Pope Venedict XVI also in November of 2006, etc.

⁹⁸ Here the Pope apologized for the Fourth Crusade, which led to the Latin occupation of Constantinople between 1204-1261

⁹⁹ *Hurriyet*, 19/12/2010

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=relationship-with-turkey-more-important-than-ever-us-president-obama-says-2010-12-19>

Lisesi Vakfı (Πατριαρχική Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή/Great School of the Nation), which is under the protection of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. This decision is important, as it was the first time Turkey condemned a decades-long practice and the relevant court decision of 1974, on which minority religious foundations are not recognized as the owners of real estate obtained after 1936.¹⁰⁰

❖ On February 20, 2008, the Turkish Assembly ratified the New Foundation Law No. 5737, which addressed for the first time the issue of returning confiscated properties to the foundations from which they have been seized.¹⁰¹

❖ On August 15, 2010 Patriarch Bartholomew celebrated, after almost nine decades, the Divine Liturgy of the Dormition of (the Virgin) Theotokos at the Sümela Monastery in the Black Sea province of Trabzon.¹⁰²

❖ On November 29, 2010, Turkey returned the Orphanage of Büyükkada to the Patriarchate, after a ruling by the ECHR. It is the first real estate that has been registered in the name of the Rum Patriarchate. This was considered an indirect recognition of the legal status of the institution by Turkish authorities as it, “Implies an implicit recognition that the owner (the Patriarchate) exist in law.”¹⁰³

❖ On August 15, 2011 Patriarch Bartholomew granted permission for the second religious ceremony at the Sümela Monastery.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Available at: <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Geographic+Regions/South-Eastern+Europe/Turkey/International+Obligations+for+Turkey/Greek+Minority/>

¹⁰¹ Kurban and Tsitselikis, 2010, p. 17

¹⁰² <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=orthodox-christians-hold-historic-mass-in-sumela-monastery-in-turkey-after-88-years-2010-08-15>

¹⁰³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),

Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4d5144942.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.sabahenglish.com/Travel/2011/08/16/second-mass-held-at-sumela>

Conclusion

Even though things have changed, the Patriarchate's position at this moment within Turkey is still a difficult one. The Turkish government considers that it ‘‘only serve for the spiritual needs of the Greek Orthodox Minority in Istanbul’’.¹⁰⁵ Though, the changing perceptions of the religious minorities have been the direct affect of Turkey's approach closer to the EU and their determination to democratize the state institutions.

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/greek-orthodox-patriarchate-in-phanar.en.mfa>

III. MAIN ISSUES FACED BY THE RUM ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE

Introduction:

Before examining how the Turkish press presents the main issues faced by the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, it is useful to first briefly analyze the context of these problems and present both Turkey and Patriarchate's position. The problems are as follows:

- ❖ The Estates
- ❖ The Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki)
- ❖ The Legal Status and the Ecumenical Character of the Patriarchate

A. The Estates

Today in Turkey, minority/community foundations (*vakıf*) and properties have become of major importance, as they are fundamental for the survival and continuity of its minorities.¹⁰⁶ The Treaty of Lausanne has arranged the legal frameworks of minority protection and rights in Greece and Turkey in 1923. In regards to minority protection in the Treaty of Lausanne, Kurban and Tsitselikis mention that ‘‘norms reminiscent of the Ottoman *millet*¹⁰⁷ system merged with the principles of modern minority protection.’’¹⁰⁸

First, it should be determined what is considered as a foundation (*vakıf*). According to the ‘Directorate General of Foundations in Turkey,’ ‘‘*Vakıf* is an inalienable religious

¹⁰⁶ Kurban and Tsitselikis, 2010, p. 7

¹⁰⁷ The *millet system* can be defined as the organizational framework of the relations between the Ottoman Empire and its religious communities. See Grigoriadis, ‘‘Redefining the Nation: Shifting Boundaries of the ‘Other’ in Greece and Turkey,’’ *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47 (1), January 2011, pp 167–182,

¹⁰⁸ Kurban and Tsitselikis, 2010, p. 8

endowment in Islamic law, typically denoting a building or plot of land for Muslim religious or charitable purposes.”¹⁰⁹ In other words, *vakıf* is a system of donation in favour of a building, a mosque, a church, etc, which is often translated in English with the word, “foundation.” These foundations have roots in the system of the Ottoman Empire, where the only means to own property was to establish foundations.¹¹⁰

The foundations in Turkey are under the administration and control of the General Directorate for Foundations (GDF), which is contingent upon the Prime Ministry. GDF is the organization, which enables the administration, activities, and control of the foundations; the registration, protection, and maintenance of the movable and immovable foundation culture entities inland and abroad; operation and evaluation of the foundation entities economically.¹¹¹

The fact that the Turkish State does not acknowledge the legal status of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, implicates its property rights from owning real estate. The Patriarchate, as well as the other religious institutions of the non-Muslim minorities, has no right to own real estate. Only the foundations do it so. Thus, constrainedly, the only solution is the registration of the properties in the name of real persons, which includes the possibility of trials, as well as the loss of properties.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry, Directorate General of Foundations
Available at: <http://www.vgm.gov.tr/>

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Sesli, Faik Ahmet , ‘‘Foundation administrations and foundations landownership in Turkey from past to present’’, *African Journal of Business Management*, Vol. 4(9), 2010 , pp 1769-1774

¹¹² Diakofotakis, 2007, pp.70-71

Several minority foundations (*vakıf*) are still characterized as “seized” (*mazbut*),¹¹³ and any requests for these properties, including even churches, to be returned to their rightful owners have been rejected. According to a 1974 Turkish Supreme Court of Appeals (*Yargıtay*) decision, property donated after 1936 to religious foundations whose constitutive document does not explicitly mention the right to acquire property is not recognized as the property of such foundations.¹¹⁴

From 2005 and on, three cases are considered the most important in regards to the estates that are associated to the Patriarchate:

1. The decision of January 2007, when the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) issued its judgment condemning Turkey for violation of article 1 of Additional Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (protection of property) in the case of "Great School of the Nation" (Fener Rum Erkek Lisesi Vakfı) which is under the protection of the Patriarchate.
2. The returning of the Patriarchal Orphanage on Büyükada in November of 2009,¹¹⁵ to the Patriarchate, after a ruling for the church in the European Court of Human Rights.
3. Within the framework of the ‘Europeanization’¹¹⁶ and in an effort to modernize its minority laws according to the European standards,¹¹⁷ President Abdullah

¹¹³ A vakıf is declared as “seized” (*mazbut*) when there is no Management Committee (natural persons). Since the “occupied” vakıf falls under the total and exclusive control of the Directorate General Foundations, the risk of confiscation of property increases significantly.

¹¹⁴ Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Available at: <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Geographic+Regions/South-Eastern+Europe/Turkey/International+Obligations+for+Turkey/Ecumenical+Patriarchate/>

¹¹⁵ Decision of European Court of Human Rights on June 15, 2010 ruled Turkey must return the Orphanage

¹¹⁶ According to Grigoriadis, ‘Europeanization’ is understood as a diffusion of European norms and ideas, defined by the European liberal democratic paradigm

¹¹⁷ See Copenhagen Criteria

Gul, a strong supporter of European reforms, enacted a new law in February 2008, which has been indicated by the European Union. In the meantime, major improvements also took place regarding the international legal protection of minority rights in the country.¹¹⁸“The new Foundations Law No. 5737¹¹⁹ was the direct result of the fact that Turkey was accepted as a candidate member of the European Union, and thereby initiated a series of reforms in an effort to harmonize its legislation with the EU legislation.”¹²⁰ It enhances the property rights of non-Muslim minorities while allowing religious institutions (*vakıf*) to regain some of their properties confiscated in the past by the Turkish state. The Turkish authorities have acquired the property belonging to the Christian communities, mainly the Greek Orthodox. The law also allows the establishment of foreign institutions within the Turkish territory.

The European Union welcomed the New Foundation Law, but called upon Turkey to establish a coherent legal framework that allows all religious groups unrestricted freedom to operate in a predominantly Muslim, but secular country. The law was adopted with 242 votes out of 314 parliamentarians¹²¹ and opened the way for the return of Greek Orthodox, Armenian and Jewish property seized by the Turkish state since 1974. Turkey has been criticized several times by the European Commission’s annual

¹¹⁸ See Grigoriadis, “On the Europeanization of Minority Rights Protection: Comparing the cases of Greece and Turkey”

¹¹⁹ All the articles of the Law no. 5737 will be found in: <http://www.vgm.gov.tr/icerikdetay.aspx?Id=168>

¹²⁰ Speech: “The Specific Religious Freedom Issues and Concerns of the Greek Orthodox Community”, Mr. Laki Vingas, Representative of the Greek Orthodox Community and Council Member of the General Directorate of Foundations Representative of the Non Muslim Foundations, Istanbul, Turkey “Religious Freedom: Turkish Bridge to the EU”, November 16, 2010

¹²¹ Newspaper *Απογευματινή*, (Daily Greek-language newspaper published in Istanbul), 18/02/2008

progress reports.¹²² In 2010, Turkey's progress report mentions that there has been no improvement in the situation of the Greek minority, which still faces problems concerning the properties. The European Union has asked Turkey to return many of the properties "belonging" to the Greek community in Istanbul, years ago, while several court cases between the Turkish State and minority religious foundations are still under way. The report includes important references to issues regarding the Patriarchate, the Theological School and the issue of the properties of the Greek minority in Turkey.

With respect to minority property rights, implementation of the February 2008 Law of Foundation, reports that: "The law has been implemented, albeit with some delays and procedural problems. The Foundations Council¹²³ acknowledged these problems and tried to speed up procedures. However, this law does not address the issues of properties seized and sold to third parties or of properties of foundations merged before the new legislation was adopted. Turkey needs to ensure full respect of the property rights of all non-Muslim religious communities."¹²⁴

In the end of August 2011, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced ahead of a dinner in Istanbul marking the break of the Ramadan fast that Turkey intend to return hundreds of properties that were confiscated from religious minorities since 1936. Moreover, promised to pay compensation for properties that were seized and later sold

¹²² The annual Progress Reports of the European Commission examines the developments that have been made for a country's accession into the European Union,

¹²³ The 'Foundations Council' is the highest decision-making body of the General Directorate of Foundations (GDF) which aims to ensure the democratic participation of foundations in decisions that concern them. The Council's duties include the following: Decisions for public benefit on exportations and dispositions of real estate and charitable real property, oversights of the budgets of the Directorate General and Operational Directorates and draft regulations and by-laws concerning the Directorate General and foundations. (From the "The Specific Religious Freedom Issues and Concerns of the Greek Orthodox Community," by Mr. Laki Vingas).

¹²⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf

to other parties.¹²⁵ The landmark decision is of historical importance, since it means a change in Ankara's view of non-Muslim minorities in Turkey.

1. Turkish Position

Justice and Development Party (AKP) is the most minority friendly government in power for the entire Turkish Republican period. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan seems to be more sympathetic to Turkish non-Muslim minorities and will to move to further steps towards the minority rights in Turkey. On this direction, from 2002 when he came to power he had enacted number of measures.

In August 2011, in the announcement of the return of hundreds of properties that were confiscated from religious minorities of the properties, he stated in front of the representatives of the city's Christian and Jewish communities, including Patriarch Bartholomew:

“The Turkish Government decided, through a decree signed on 22 August 2011, to change the already existing law regarding the vakıfs and return the confiscated ones. The decree refers to the real estate property that had been denoted in 1936 according to the law that was in force at that time. Compensations will also be provided for the vakıf property that had been devolved to the Turkish State and then were re-sold to third parties. This new regulation however, does not include the mazbut vakıf that have been devolved to the Turkish State together with their property and management.”¹²⁶

¹²⁵ *The New York Times*, 28/08/2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/29/world/europe/29turkey.html>

¹²⁶ <http://www.medyarazzi.com/haber/20110829/378936/0/basbakan-erdogan-cemaat-vakiflari-iftarina-katildi.html>

2. Patriarchate's Position

The Rum minority of Istanbul and the Rum Patriarchate always fight for the properties that have confiscated over the years. The most important development that took place in regards to the minority properties is the returning of the orphanage of Büyükkada. According to the Patriarchate Spokesperson, “the returning of the orphanage was an explicit recognition of the legal status of the Patriarchate,”¹²⁷ as it was the first time the Turkish State acknowledged the Patriarchate as a legal entity within the modern Turkish Republic.

When the new foundations law finally adopted in February 2008, the representatives of the Greek minority complained because the new law failed to address the issue of compensation, a significant factor for a number of properties that have been resold to a third party after government expropriation. Additionally, they complained because it failed to provide for the creation of new minority foundations and for the return of “seized” non-Muslim minority foundations.

In regards to the development of August 2011, Patriarch Bartholomew and the representatives of the Greek minority expressed great satisfaction for the decision to be given back the properties that were confiscated from religious minorities since 1936. “Better late than never” Bartholomewhe exclaimed, and added: “If Turkey considers itself a State of law, everything must be done in a context of justice and not lawlessness.”¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Interview with Mr. Dositheos Anagnostopoulos, the spokesperson of Ecumenical Patriarchate, conducted on May 2011, at Fener

¹²⁸ <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-satisfied-Bartholomew-I-hopes-for-the-reopening-of-the-Halki-School-22546.html>

B. Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki Seminary)

The Theological School was founded in 1844 as a monastery of the Holy Trinity. It was established to meet the educational, religious, and spiritual needs of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul and of the Orthodox Christian Community in general, by providing training for new priests. During the years the historic Seminary was in operation, 930 people graduated, including some of the church's political leaders and twelve Patriarchs.

The operation of the school has passed through a number of organizations. Thus, its history is divided into four periods. These periods are:¹²⁹

- ❖ 1844 to 1919: four high school grades and three theological grades
- ❖ 1919 to 1923: high school grades were discontinued and the school operated as a five grades academy
- ❖ 1923 to 1951: the old seven-grade system is restored
- ❖ 1951 to 1971: it operated with three high school grades and four theological grades for theological studies.

On January 12, 1971 the Turkish Constitutional Court by No. 1971/3 decision, determined the closure of all private-owned schools of higher education in Turkey, which had been established by the law of 1965.¹³⁰ Thus, the law of 1965 was abolished and all private schools of higher education, including the Theological School of Heybeliada, closed. The decision made in order, “to quell some of the chaos and it was

¹²⁹ Halki Theological School Graduates Association
Available at: <http://www.estiahalkis.org/en/schoolhistory.htm>

¹³⁰ Diakofotakis, 2007, p. 98

not directly aimed at the Halki Theological School,”¹³¹ whose operation was protected by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 as part of the minority rights granted under the Treaty. Meanwhile in 1982, the Turkish Constitution changed. According to the new Constitution, the establishment and operation of high religious schools in Turkey was banned. Thus, the issue transformed into one that was constitutionally based. Since 1971, when the National Education Directorate of Istanbul carried out the closure of the School, many promises have been made by the Turkish senior government officials for the re-opening of the Seminary.

In reality, there has been no serious progress towards this development and the school still remains closed. The European Union and the United States of America have frequently criticized Turkey for not allowing the operation of the historic school. The issue is also pointed out in 2.2 paragraph in the Turkey’s 2010 Progress Report, concerning the Human Rights and Protection of Minorities, as an important implementation of Turkish European perspective. The Progress Report states that, “Turkish legislations do not provide for private higher religious education for individual communities and there are no such opportunities in the public educational system.”¹³²

Even though the School has remained closed for exactly 40 years,¹³³ it is in immaculate condition and everything is ready to enroll new students again. Since its closure, the young men who will to study theology, enter the priesthood, or to be among the upper

¹³¹ *Hürriyet Daily News*, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/domestic/11457790.asp>

¹³² European Commission, Turkey 2010 Progress Report

Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/tr_rapport_2010_en.pdf

¹³³ From 1971

hierarchy of the Orthodox Church, had to go abroad, usually to Greece, in one of the main Theological Schools in the cities of Athens or Thessaloniki.

The issue of Theological School was a reciprocity issue between the Christian minority of Istanbul and the Muslim minority of Western Thrace. During the last few years though, it appears as a reciprocity issue between the Christian minority of Istanbul and the Muslims of Athens. The re-opening of the Theological School of Halki is always in the spotlight, not only in the Greek and Turkish mass media, but also in the international news agencies. This is because of the important international status of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. The issue is on the main agenda of all the meetings between Turkish and Greek representatives, and also discussed in the meetings of important foreign politicians who visit Greece and Turkey. Barack Obama, President of the United States, on his first official visit in Turkey in November of 2009, addressed Turkey's Grand National Assembly and urged Ankara to re-open the historical Orthodox School in order to show its support to the freedom of expression. "Freedom of religion and expression lead to a strong and vibrant society that only strengthens the state, which is why steps like reopening the Halki Seminary, will send such an important signal inside Turkey and beyond."¹³⁴ President Obama stressed the need for re-operation of Halki Seminary and for the protection of the rights of the Patriarchate.

¹³⁴ English Edition of newspaper *Καθημερινή*, April 7, 2009
Available at http://archive.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_politics_100002_07/04/2009_106121

1. Turkish Position

In 2004, during the celebrations for the 550th anniversary of the Greek School in Fener, the former Education Minister Hüseyin Çelik¹³⁵ pointed out that he did not see any reason why the Theological School of Heybeliada could not be opened.¹³⁶ He has also stated that, “If there is a political will the school could re-open in 24 hours.”¹³⁷ During an interview in *Kriter* magazine, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that, “The seminary issue requires a multidimensional process. We need to examine it in detail for both legal regulations and the education system. The related ministers and institutions have been studying possible approaches.”¹³⁸

One of the latest proposals of the Turkish Education Ministry was to induct the Theological School into a Turkish University System by attaching the school to a University, like Istanbul University or the Marmara University. Another proposal was for the Theological School to be established as a private University, under the auspices of a foundation, such as the way Koç University was established under the auspices of the Vehbi Koç Foundation.

According to the official Turkish stance, in order School be able to operate with the pre-1971 status, changes to certain laws will be required. On the other hand, the government is afraid that in granting permission for the Halki School to re-open, Islamic Religious schools will also open and this could be a risk in the secular State. Nowadays in

¹³⁵ Remained in office in the period of March 2003 to May 2009

¹³⁶ *Hürriyet Daily News*, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/domestic/11457790.asp>

¹³⁷ Organization Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Available at: http://www.archons.org/pdf/issues/E.P. Problems_faced.pdf

¹³⁸ See <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=pm-erdogan-asserts-turks-rights-in-greece-in-return-to-halki-seminary-2010-01-04>

Turkey, secularism, and the fear of Islamization is an important issue. Secularism is undoubtedly a basic element of politics.¹³⁹

2. Patriarchate's Position

Patriarch Bartholomew and the Christian community around the world desire the re-opening of the Seminary in order to carry out its world-wide mission and the administrative responsibilities of the Patriarchate. Most Orthodox bishops in Europe are graduates from Halki, and all recent Patriarchs, including Bartholomew, the current holder of the seat.

In regards to the closure of the school in 1971, Mr. Anagnostopoulos, the Patriarchate Spokesperson states: "Closing of Halki School was a legal mistake. The school was established by the law of 1974. It was a business school for people who will to become priests and was established under the Ottoman Empire in 1844."¹⁴⁰

In regards to the Turkish proposals for the School, he answers: "In a secular state like Turkish Republic, wearing the religious garment in a high education institution, is banned. Furthermore, in the Turkish education system the participation of both genders is commanded. That means that everyone, man or woman, Muslim or Jew, or even atheist will have the chance to study in the Theological School. This is impossible! The

¹³⁹ According to Grigoriadis, the fear about Islamization of the modern society is associated with the transformation of the Turkish political Islam, which allowed for a liberal critique of Turkish secularism. See Grigoriadis, Ioannis N. "Islam and Democratization in Turkey: secularism and trust in a divided society" Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey, *Democratization*, Vol. 16, No. 6, December 2009, pp. 1194–1213

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Mr. Anagnostopoulos

Theological School is actually a monastery. It needs only faithful men who wish to be priests. What we ask is to reopen under the 1951 status, which was acknowledged by the Turkish Government, according to which the Theological School is under the control of the Education Ministry of the Turkish Republic. It is not a Patriarchal School, as they say. It is an official institution of the Turkish Republic, whose spiritual jurisdiction lies with the Patriarchate and the synod. This is what we ask.”¹⁴¹

In regards to the reciprocity issue, Mr. Anagnostopoulos argues: “It is a huge mistake to talk about reciprocity. Firstly, we do not ask for something new in order to be said that something new has to be given also in Western Thrace. We simply ask to be given back what belongs to us and this is the operation of Theological School. It is not fair to deprive someone’s right and after 40 years to say that if you want your rights back, you have to do something else.”¹⁴² Turkey asserts that ‘mutual steps’ should be taken from both sides and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan asserts Turks rights in Western Thrace in return for Halki Seminary.¹⁴³ “They say that a mosque was to be built in Athens as a counterbalance to the re-opening of the Theological School. This proposal is a mistake. We shouldn’t be compared to the Muslim society of Athens. According to the Treaty of Lausanne, we are compared to Muslim minority of Western Thrace.”¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 04/01/2010

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=pm-erdogan-asserts-turks-rights-in-greece-in-return-to-halki-seminary-2010-01-04>

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Mr. Anagnostopoulos

C. The Legal Status and the Ecumenical Character of the Patriarchate

The issue of the non-recognition of the legal status and of the Ecumenical character of Patriarchate is of major importance, not only in the bilateral relations, but also universally.

The issue of the Ecumenical title has been the reason of long debates in Greece and Turkey and is always an issue in the bilateral relationship. Interestingly, the title ‘Ecumenical’ is acknowledged and used by the rest of the world, except for Turkey. ‘Ecumenicity’ refers to the leadership role of the Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul) among Orthodox communities in creating a supranational perspective of unity and understanding in the Orthodox world, or “ecumene.”¹⁴⁵

Another issue is this of non legal status of the Patriarchate. Even though the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) makes no explicit reference to the status of the Patriarchate, it should be mentioned that according to Article 40 of the Treaty, “Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities shall enjoy the same treatment and security in law and in fact as other Turkish nationals. In particular, they shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein.”¹⁴⁶

In other words, the Peace Treaty on which modern Turkey was founded, by referring the expression, “religious institution,” might also have meant the Patriarchate. Meaning it

¹⁴⁵ Yannas, 2009, p.77

¹⁴⁶ Official Site of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Available at: www.mfa.gr/NR/rdonlyres/.../0/1923_lausanne_treaty.doc

should be protected and recognized not only internationally, but also within Turkey. Though, as this issue was not clearly defined, the status of the Patriarchate is an issue of contention in bilateral relations that has remained unsolved since 1923.

1. Turkish Position

Turkish authorities hesitate to accept the title 'Ecumenical', because of the extraterritorial privileges the Patriarchate might grant. "Being ecumenical and being based in a country which is not Christian but Muslim, will spontaneously give to the Patriarchate a unique supranational perspective that Turkey should value."¹⁴⁷

In the official website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is written:

- ❖ *The presence of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul for centuries is a testimony to the long tradition of religious tolerance in Turkey.*¹⁴⁸
- ❖ *...the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate only serves for the spiritual needs of the Greek Orthodox Minority in Istanbul.*¹⁴⁹
- ❖ *Six metropolitans who lacked Turkish citizenship were appointed to the Patriarchate's Holy Synod in 2004. Turkish authorities did not make it an issue, although the members of the Holy Synod had always been Turkish citizens until then.*¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Manson, Whit, "Constantinople's Last Hurrah Turkey and the Ecumenical Patriarchate", *World Policy Journal*, Summer 2001, Vol. 18, p. 62

¹⁴⁸ Official Site of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, available at:
<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/greek-orthodox-patriarchate-in-phanar.en.mfa>

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

- ❖ *Considering that the Patriarchate is a Turkish institution and the Patriarch has to be a Turkish citizen, the usage of the title of “Ecumenical” is incongruous with the agreement reached during the Lausanne Peace Conference.*¹⁵¹

2. Patriarchate’s Position

According to the spokesperson of the Patriarchate: “The fact that Turkey does not recognizing Patriarchate’s legal personality is a ‘thorn,’ a difficult and weird issue which creates a lot of problems to the institution. Universally, it is recognized as a part of the public or religious law.”¹⁵²

According to Mr. Anagnostopoulos, the problems of the non-recognition are as follows:

- ❖ It cannot appoint staff and pay salaries (since it does not legally exist).
- ❖ It could not establish property (before the returning of Büyükada Orphanage).
- ❖ It cannot send official mail to the Government.

Despite the fact that the Turkish authorities still do not acknowledge the institution, they are flexible towards the staffing and operations issues. The Rum Patriarchate also employs people appointed by Aya Yorgi vakfi. The building is only officially recognized as Aya Yorgi Vakfi (Aya Yorgi is classified as foundation/vakfi, while the Patriarchate is not), which is a small foundation unable to justify the employment of all the people working at the Patriarchate (approximately 60 people). If the Treaty of Lausanne had determined the issue, nowadays we would not have all these problems.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Interview with Mr. Anagnostopoulos

However, the Turkish government still appeals the secular personality of the modern State and the challenge of the status of the Ecumenical Patriarchate continues.

Conclusion:

In this chapter we examined the main issues faces the Patriarchate, presenting both Turkey and Patriarchate's positions.

In regards to the estates, the important developments of the last years demonstrate that in the near future new steps will have to be taken towards the issue of minority foundations and properties. Even though, no progress towards the re-opening of the Theological School have been done, bearing in mind that Turkey aims to Europeanize its politics in terms of human rights, both the international community and the Patriarchate believe that in the near future, the School will be able to re-operate. In regards to the status of the institution, the non-recognition of the legal identity of the Patriarchate has been the source of long debates. In regards with the title, 'Ecumenical', the Patriarchate argues that it is a purely religious title and it has nothing to do with the rules and the creation of a 'new Vatican in Fener'. Patriarchate should not been considered as 'an institution which serves for the spiritual needs of the Greek Orthodox Minority in Istanbul'¹⁵³, but on the other hand, is has to be respected and acknowledged as an important religious institution for the Orthodox Christians around the world.

¹⁵³ Official Site of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Available at: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/greek-orthodox-patriarchate-in-phanar.en.mfa>

IV. THE TURKISH PRESS

Introduction

The way media in Turkey presents the Greek-Turkish relationship and the Greek minority-relates issues, is becoming a more interesting field of study. In contrast with the past, when Turkish media used to approach the above issues aggressively, nowadays, this attitude has changed for the positive.

In this chapter we will analyze the reasons of the changing Perceptions of the Patriarchate in the Turkish Press over the last years, while issues like the media power, the composition of Turkish Press, the Commercialization of Journalism and the Role of Professional Journalists in Sensitive National Issues as well as the State-Biased Reflection of Greek-Related Issues in Turkish Press, will also met.

A. Media Power

Nowadays, mass media plays a major role in our lives. They provide us with important information about the political, cultural, social, and economic aspects of society. They are one of the most central powers in every society, while they are important instruments of inspection and reproduction of ideologies. Because of the improvement of mass media technologies and the appearance of advanced media such as the Internet, multi-media plays a more important role not only in daily life, but also as a part of a political process and a major factor in the formulation of foreign policy.

However, mass media functions can be crucial and influential. History of international relations has shown that media can stimulate the society toward violence and hostility and are able to create a conflict. It is often observed that mass media and journalists, rather than to appease public opinion, and make differences appear diminished, they tend to exaggerate in order to cause criminal consequences, panic, fear, and insecurity among the citizens of the states. Moreover, sometimes they can either create hostility between the citizens and the state or create a conflict between two states. Therefore, “The media’s impact on the escalation of conflict is more recognized than the media’s impact on peacemaking.”¹⁵⁴ In her study on the role of media in Greek-Turkish relations, Katharina Hadjidimos notes that, “The role of the media is a twofold one: it reflects and feeds public opinion thus creating a vicious circle concerning the perception of “the other.”¹⁵⁵

A. The Composition of Turkish Press

According to European Journalism Centre (EJC), the total number of newspapers currently circulating in Turkey is estimated to be 2,459.¹⁵⁶ 55 of these are national, 23 regional, and 2,381 local. Among the national dailies, *Zaman* (768,269), *Posta* (436,282), *Hürriyet* (412,061), *Sabah* (331,148), *Haber Türk* (229,259), *Star* (116,986), *Türkiye* (129,806) and *Milliyet* (140,632), are the major ones.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Bratic, Vladimir and Lisa Schrich, “Why and When to Use the Media for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding”, the Netherlands: European Center of Conflict Resolution, (2007), Available at: <http://www.gppac.net/uploads/File/Programmes/Awareness%20Raising/Issue%20paper%20Media%20and%20Conflict%20Prevention%20-%20final%20version.pdf>

¹⁵⁵ Hadjidimos, (1998/1999), p. 9

¹⁵⁶ European Journalism Centre (EJC), Available at: <http://www.ejc.net/media-landscape/article/turkey/#13>

¹⁵⁷ The number refers to the most recent (29.08.2011-04.09.2011) weekly sales report, according to <http://www.medyatava.com/tiraj.asp>

Turkey's media landscape is under the control of cross media groups. These groups are:

❖ Doğan Group, which is the largest and the most prominent of the media giants and one of the top industrial conglomerates, owning 70 percent of all Turkish media.¹⁵⁸ It owns numerous papers, including the second highest circulated *Posta* (436,282), which pays more attention to entertainment, the mainstream daily *Hürriyet* (412,061), the moderate-liberal independent *Milliyet* (140,632), which is considered as one of the most serious and influential in country, *Vatan* (114,248), the liberal *Radikal* (49,678) which is considered as one of the high-quality newspapers in Turkey and the one of two English-language dailies based in Turkey, *Hürriyet Daily News* (5,881),¹⁵⁹ which holds the largest foreign language circulation. *Hürriyet* is one of the most popular newspapers in Turkey. It could be characterized as nationalistic, with an exception of few liberal columnists, such as the prominent journalist Mehmet Ali Birand.

❖ Turkuvaz Group (Sabah Group) which is connected to AKP and owns among others: the fourth highest circulated mainstream *Sabah* (331,148) and the boulevard daily *Takvim* (109,601).

❖ Feza Group, which is the biggest selling and is known to be connected with the Islamic leader Fethullah Gülen. It owns the daily conservative Islamic newspaper *Zaman* (989,454), which is the first highest circulated in Turkey with approximately one-million sales and the English-published *Today's Zaman* (3,168). Both of them support the government. Fethullah Gülen is a provincial Turkish preacher and one of the

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.pressreference.com/Sw-Ur/Turkey.html>

¹⁵⁹ The second English-published is *Today's Zaman*, analyzed in Feza Group

most prominent writers and activists of twentieth-century Turkey or even of the Muslim world, living in the United States of America. His movement, the world's most influential and successful Islamic movement, is considered a modern expression of Turkish Islam. "It's an alternative elite within Turkish society, as in many Muslim societies, that can be modern, educated, and successful, but also religiously minded."¹⁶⁰ Gülen is extremely powerful in Turkey and has very high prestige and many followers throughout the world. Hercules Millas argues that, "If Fethullah Gülen wishes, he can definitely change the government."¹⁶¹ He supports the dialogue among the religions and has a good connection with both the Pope and the Patriarch.¹⁶² Millas also states that, "Gülen is the best supporter of Patriarch Bartholomew."¹⁶³

❖ Ciner Group, which owns the newspaper *Habertürk* (229,259), and is also quite popular.

❖ Çukurova Group, which owns the nationalist daily newspaper *Akşam* (110,885) and the boulevard paper *Güneş* (98,205).

❖ Albayrak Group, which is a business group and owns the Islamic-oriented conservative daily *Yeni Şafak* (104,037).

The liberal newspaper *Taraf* (50,589) is in a class by itself. It was founded in November 2007 by prominent journalists and intellectuals in order to support independent

¹⁶⁰ http://fethullah-gulen.idcnj.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=207:the-global-imam&catid=83:op-eds&Itemid=199

¹⁶¹ Interview with Mr. Hercules Millas, conducted on May 2011

¹⁶² For more information visit <http://www.fethullahgulen.org/>

¹⁶³ Interview with Mr. Millas

journalism and to undermine the monolithic nationalist discourse of the media. *Taraf* is read by a small, but important part of Turkish society and has a high prestige in Europe and West. It is the most liberal of all and the one that managed to uncover many ‘dirty’ stories in Turkish society, such as the role of the military in politics and the politicisation of the Turkish judiciary system. Consequently, although *Taraf* sells only 50,000 copies, it now plays a major role in the Turkish media landscape as it has managed several times to shape the politics and public opinion in Turkey. It can be said that *Taraf* and *Zaman* ‘ally’ in the struggle against the role that the military plays in Turkish politics.

Another popular newspaper is *Star* (116,986), which has a wide range of columnists with Islamic and liberal political orientations, *Türkiye* (129,806), *Bugün* (71,935) and *Milli* (48,665), which is another Islamic daily and known to be the voice of “*Milli Görüş*.”¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, the national daily *Cumhuriyet* (49,023), which is a centre-left newspaper and considered as the voice of Kemalists, was founded one year after the foundation of Turkish Republic in 1924 to support Atatürk's revolution.¹⁶⁵ *Cumhuriyet* is considered as one of the supporters of Ergenekon and of what we call the ‘deep state’ (*derin devlet*) in Turkey. Another newspaper this study is taking into consideration is the nationalistic newspaper *Yeni Çağ* (51,612).¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ “*Milli Görüş*” has been the ideology of a certain Islamic political tradition in Turkey

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.pressreference.com/Sw-Ur/Turkey.html>

¹⁶⁶ All information provided by <http://www.medyatava.com/tiraj.asp>

There are also newspapers of the officially recognized minorities.¹⁶⁷ *IHO* (HXΩ) and *Apovevmatini* (Απογευματινή) are published by Rums of Istanbul, *Agos*, *Jamanak* and *Nor Marmara* by Armenians and *Şalom* by the Jews.¹⁶⁸

Differences in newspaper reporting towards Greek-Turkish relations are outcomes of the different editorial positions and institutional self-understandings of the newspapers' own position. Moreover, there are a lot of columnists in Turkey, not "belonging" to an editorial position, but whose duty is just to write their opinions about a diverse pool of issues.

B. The Commercialization of Journalism

The role of journalists can be influenced by a large number of factors. One of them is the commercialization of the media organizations. Mass media are highly commercialized institutions that pursue profit. This is especially true in Turkey where the media landscape is under the control of cross media groups, like the Doğan group, an industrial conglomerate.¹⁶⁹ Thus, mass communication has become a venture field for corporations. The increased commercialization created vital problems against the public good, journalism and international relations, so media and journalism do not oblige the reproduction of sovereign virtues and ideas any more.

In his study on Journalism in Greece and Turkey, Tılıç mentions that the owners of journalistic networks, who are now businessmen, replaced the traditional family

¹⁶⁷ Since the Treaty of Lausanne

¹⁶⁸ European Journalism Centre (EJS)

¹⁶⁹ The Turkish economy is under the rules of capitalism

conformations and they do not play the role of ‘truth tellers.’ On the contrary, they are interested in influencing the masses and propagandizing for the authority of the political parties they work for. Consequently, mass communication is now evolved to a capitalist industry by the ‘victors of the market.’ One of the greatest dangers that the media in Turkey face is the pressure based on the financial interests of media giants. In her study on concentration of media ownership in Turkey, Christian Christensen writes that, “The situation in Turkish media is a combination of the hyper commercialization of the media with a traditionally ‘patron-client’ relationship between media and the state.”¹⁷⁰ One of the main trends of the Turkish journalism is the ‘tabloidization’¹⁷¹ of the news media, which is one of the results of harsh competition between media groups for ratings.

As a result of the commercialization of journalism, reports must ‘obey’ to the financial rules. This is quite hard, especially when journalists have to deal with sensitive national, ethnic or religious issues, like the Greek-Turkish disputes. Furthermore, professional journalists both in Greece and Turkey face a serious dilemma: the pressure in balancing between professionalism and national identity. Moreover, they often underlie the difficulty of being a conflict resolver.¹⁷² They claim that they hesitate to express their opinion because they are afraid of being characterized as “national traitors.”¹⁷³ Journalists should always take into consideration not only the interests of media owners they are members of, but also the information of the society, as objectively as possible. Thus, there is a big difference between what the journalists want to write and what they

¹⁷⁰ Christensen, Christian ‘‘Breaking the news: Concentration of ownership, the fall of unions and government legislation in Turkey’’, *Global Media and Communication*, Volume 3(2), p. 184

¹⁷¹ ‘Tabloidization’ refers to the trend in the style of journalism away from politics towards entertainment

¹⁷² Professionalism versus patriotism: some journalists claim that being a professional means to support the government’s perspective. This is a patriotic duty for them.

¹⁷³ Tılıç, 2000, p. 460

are oppressed to do. Journalists are oppressed not only by the authority of the media organizations and the masters, but also by their sources. They do not feel free inside these organizations.

Although, before accusing individual journalists, the role of editors should be taken into consideration. Moreover, it might be useful to mention the fact that there is a difference between the reporting of state media and private media. State media, due to political control are more conflicted when escalating in their reports, than private, commercial ones. Therefore, they tend to take the government's side in the reporting.¹⁷⁴ Although, this is not always the case and this does not have to do with the study of Turkish press.

C. The State-Biased Reflection of Greece-related Issues in Turkish Press

The Greek-Turkish conflict is a typical paradigm of long-lasting dispute based on stereotypical images of the 'other,' the enemy, characterized by introvert perceptions of reality and paranoid fears.¹⁷⁵ In his study on 'History Writing in Greece and Turkey' Hercules Millas explains the reason that caused the existence of the 'other.' "Each side fought its 'war of liberation against the other in order to establish its nation-state (in 1829 and 1922). Because of this unique coincidence both communities perceive the other as historical enemy, and the other operates as a constituent of a modern national

¹⁷⁴ Noerby Bent Bonde, Phd Proposal, "Mass Media and Journalism on the edge in Violent Conflicts-Media Freedom or Social Responsibility"

Available at:

<http://www.media-progress.net/downloads/Note%20on%20Mass%20Media%20and%20Journalism%20on%20the%20Edge%20in%20conflicts1.pdf>

¹⁷⁵ Pasamitros Nikolaos, 2000

identity.”¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, in his study on Perceptions of the Greek-Turkish Conflict Millas argues that, “The so-called ‘historical Greek-Turkish enmity’ is a relatively late product of nationalism and of the two states. The notorious hatred between Greeks and Turks is less a ‘historical’ phenomenon and more an outcome of recent national constructions.”¹⁷⁷

Press in both countries contributes to the maintenance of stereotypes and the prevention of traumatic experiences. The representation of the ‘other,’ has led to the creation of national stereotypes that have been accepted and finally adopted by both countries as the truth. In her study on the role of media in Greek-Turkish Relations, Katharina Hadjidimos writes that, “In Greece, there is the general notion of the Turks as a ‘Barbarian,’ uncivilised people, while the Turks perceive the Greeks as greedy for ‘lost territories’ and still supportive of the ‘*Megali Idea*’¹⁷⁸, the big idea.”¹⁷⁹

Newspapers in Turkey play a major role in the daily reproduction of national stereotypes and clichés. Greek-related issues tend to be presented in a rather nationalistic way and in line with the official state policies of the time.¹⁸⁰ The style professional journalists use in their reports, sometimes cultivates the negative

¹⁷⁶ Millas, Hercules “History Writing among the Greeks and Turks: Imagining the Self and the Other”, *Contested Nation- Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories*, Edit. Stefan Berger & Chris Lorenz, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008, p. 490

¹⁷⁷ Millas, Hercules, “Perceptions of Conflict: Greeks and Turks in each others mirrors”, in *In the long Shadow of Europe, Greeks and Turks in the era of Postnationalisms*, Edit by Anastasakis, O. K. Nicolaidis and K. Öktem, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2009, p. 96

¹⁷⁸ ‘Megali Idea’ (Μεγάλη Ιδέα) was an irredentist project of Greek nationalism. For more information about ‘Megali Idea’, see also Özkirimli and Sofos, p. 85, pp.108-9, 112-3

¹⁷⁹ See Hadjidimos (1998/1999)

¹⁸⁰ Tiliç, L. Dogan, “State biased Reflection of Greece-Related issues in Turkish Newspapers: From Being ‘The Other’ to ‘We’”, *Global Media Journal: Mediterranean Edition* 1(2), Fall 2006, Available at: http://globalmedia.emu.edu.tr/images/stories/ALL_ARTICLES/2006/fall2006/Fall_2006_Issue2/5Dogan_Tilicpdf.pdf

stereotypes and “fuels their ignition into violence.”¹⁸¹ Thus, the media not only creates evil images, but also encourages serious misunderstandings of complex situations. Furthermore, they often generate an atmosphere of fear, which is able to cause hysteria, by promoting scenarios of conflict, or even worse, of war.

Nationalistic newspapers in Turkey also play an important role, as they are able to influence an important part of the society. The language and the terms, as well as the front pages used in the reports of nationalistic newspapers in Turkey, are not to describe an event, but are carefully chosen in order to stir up anti-Greek and anti-Patriarchate stereotypes. It is observed that journalists in Turkey often use evil language referring to the national ‘other.’ In her study on how *Hürriyet* reflects the Greek media, Burcu Sunar, writes that “...taking a look at how *Hürriyet* speaks of Greece, Greeks and the Greek Media, the common aspects of the text is that almost all refer to the Greek party as weak and portray them as if they are full of fear due to any action that may come from Turkey and the Turks.”¹⁸² One of the forms this phenomenon takes is what may be referred as “hate speech.”¹⁸³ According to Nafsika Papanikolatos, “Hate Speech” is a moment in the process of forming national identities and its intensity varies depending on historical, social and political circumstances, which may provide the conditions for establishing a more or less inflated national ‘self’ as against the ‘others.’”¹⁸⁴ In some of the reports, there is no respect for the religious importance of the institution and of the Patriarch. This phenomenon, which is observed more in the nationalistic newspapers

¹⁸¹ http://www.journalismethics.ca/global_journalism_ethics/conflict_sensitivity_in_practice.htm

¹⁸² Sunar, 2009, p. 54

¹⁸³ Different ethnic or cultural groups openly speak negatively to each other about difficulties or problems they are experiencing. Violence is encouraged to eliminate the blamed group.

¹⁸⁴ Papanikolatos, Nafsika, ‘Hate speech: (re)producing the oppositions between the national «self» and the «others»’ in Lenkova, Maria (ed): ‘Hate Speech’ in the Balkans, The International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, 1998, p. 12

and reports, will be examined in the Chapter 5. Thus, by using national stereotypes and hate speech a part of newspapers aim to influence the public opinion against the Patriarchate and of Greeks in general.

The language media chooses to use and the way they construct events can definitely play an important role in Turkish-Greek relations. The use of evil language and nationalistic stereotypes by mass media, had led Greece and Turkey to a, “near-war incident,”¹⁸⁵ like the case of Imia/Kardak in 1996, which is the most characteristic example of how decisive the role of media can be in the escalation of a crisis. The front pages of most of the newspapers pushed the politicians to react against the ‘other’ or even to move from peace to war. From the first minutes of the crisis, media covered the actions in a way that they tended to put pressure to both governments and politicians, in order to respond promptly to news accounts that are incomplete, without context and some of them totally wrong. Examples of this hostile and antagonistic behaviour are found in the reports of *Hürriyet* during the crisis: “Greece asking for a slap as in Cyprus,” and “Greeks dared to plant their flag on Bodrum’s Kardak rocks yesterday.”¹⁸⁶

Nationalism is one of the most powerful ideologies and social movements. In regards to Turkish and Greek nationalism, it can be said that both Ankara and Athens governments, in order to distract citizens’ attention from the interior problems, tend to reproduce nationalistic sentiments via media. They ensure that against the threat of any

¹⁸⁵ Lazarou, Elena, “Mass Media and the Europeanization of Greek-Turkish Relations: Discourse Transformation in the Greek press: 1997-2003”, Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe, LSE (2009), p. 7

¹⁸⁶ As quoted in Sunar, 2009, p.50

exterior enemy, people will forget the interior problems.¹⁸⁷ In the study of Tılıç, most of the Turkish journalists who were interviewed for the survey complained about the nationalism of the media organizations the work for. “The complaint was so big, that I observed that one by one, every journalist was trying to keep a distance, to approach critically even his own texts for issues related to national taboos.”¹⁸⁸

Grigoriadis and Özer argue that nationalism is one of the most enduring concepts in Turkish policy. Nevertheless, it is not a stable concept as it has gone through major alterations in the past thirty years.¹⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Millas states that many people in Turkey consider themselves as Turkish nationalists. Nationalism is not understood in the same way in as it is understood in the West. While in Turkey, ‘Ataturk nationalism’ is a constitutional requirement.¹⁹⁰

The fact that journalists cannot express themselves for national taboos is the proof of the nationalistic pressure and prejudices that derive both from the state and the society. Turkish society urges for the maintenance of a national identity. In his study on “Peace Journalism” in Greece and Turkey, Hercules Millas defines national identity as, “A complex phenomenon that it means much more than carrying a certain passport. National identity operates as a set of filters that control both what individuals see, perceive, select and pay attention to, and also what their feelings and their judgments are.”¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Tılıç, 2001

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Gregoriadis and Özer, (2010), pp. 102-111

¹⁹⁰ Millas (2008), p. 9

¹⁹¹ Millas, Hercules ‘A Silenced Aspect of the ‘Peace Journalist’: His/Her National Identity’, *Global Media Journal: Mediterranean Edition* 1(2), Fall 2006, p. 15

E. Discourse Transformation in the Turkish Press in regards to the Patriarchate-related issues

In contrast with the past, when Turkish Press used to approach the Rum Minority and the Rum Patriarchate hostilely, now this attitude has positively changed. The changing perceptions of the institution in the Turkish Press, is not the offspring of a single reason. On the other hand, it is the outcome of a number of factors.

Orhan Kemal Cengiz is a prominent lawyer and a newspaper columnist dealing with human rights and minority issues. In regards to the changing perceptions of the Patriarchate in the Turkish Press, he states: “There is neither one single press, nor one single perspective about the Ecumenical Patriarchate. There is a segment of the press, which is in favor of granting substantial rights to minorities in Turkey. Apart from them, for the others, basically nationalist newspapers with varying degrees, I would say they are less hostile to religious minorities nowadays rather than years ago, before changing their perspective. Hardcore nationalists still continue anti Christian campaign but this is not a popular subject amongst mainstream nationalist newspapers anymore”.¹⁹²

In my point of view following factors can be attributed to the changing perceptions of the Patriarchate in the Turkish press, after 2005:

¹⁹² Interview with Mr. Orhan Kemal Cengiz, conducted on September 2011

1. Europeanization of Turkish Politics

Since the recognition of Turkey as a candidate state in the European Council's Helsinki Conclusion in 1999 and moreover after 2005 when Turkey's EU accession negotiations were officially started, the social, political and economic structures of the state have been influenced with the notion of 'Europeanization'. Several studies on Turkey-EU relations, considers 'Europeanization' as a political procedure and analyzes its impact on Turkish politics in terms of political, social, and economic transformation.

Thus, after the Turkey's EU flirt started, Turkish society was forced to go through certain steps to meet the standards of the European Union. The way mass media deal with human rights and minority rights was one of the first issues Turkey was called to change. Thus, Turkey attempts to 'Europeanize' its norms in order to meet the criteria of the Union. As Grigoriadis states, 'Europeanization' is understood as a diffusion of European norms and ideas, defined by the European liberal democratic paradigm.¹⁹³

Firstly, we should define what Europeanization is. 'Europeanization', is a term to explain various phenomena and processes of change.¹⁹⁴ It is the main framework through which we can analyze the changing perceptions of Turkey as a candidate state, towards minority and other social issues. Kevin Featherstone and George Kazamias take Europeanization to mean 'adaptation to the European norms and practices'.¹⁹⁵ They

¹⁹³ Grigoriadis, Ioannis N. "On the Europeanization of Minority Rights Protection: Comparing the cases of Greece and Turkey", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 13 (1), March 2008, pp. 23-41

¹⁹⁴ Johan P. Olsen, "Europeanization" in Michele Cini (ed), *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 334

¹⁹⁵ Featherstone, K., G. Kazamias, Introduction: Southern Europe and the Process of Europeanization, in Featherstone, K. and Kazamias, G. (eds), *Europeanisation and the Southern Periphery*, (London: Frank Cass, 2001), pp 1-22

argue that the meaning of the Europeanization is related to the political, economic, and social modernization of a state.

One of the components of the Europeanization in Turkish policy is the transformation with the way press and media in general, deal with sensitive national issues like the minorities. It can be argued that in the last years, the Turkish press endorsed the Turkish candidacy in the European Union, by promoting democratization and respect of human rights, according to the 'Western standards.' Within this context, it can be said that the press in Turkey promoted a new role in society.

Before the notion of Europeanization influence the Turkish policy, Turkish press used to approach minority and Patriarchate-related issues aggressively. The transformation of discourse of the Turkish press was directed by principles coming from the idea of Europeanization. Thus, Turkish application to join the EU had a substantial impact on the perception of non-Muslim minorities in the Turkish press. Thus, these voices showing mistrust towards the notion of the Europeanization and of the European family.

The discourse transformation of the Turkish press with respect to the Patriarchate-related issues has often been treated as one of the major indications of Turkish policy Europeanization. The discursive transformation in the way Turkish media deal with minority issues seems to have occurred gradually, following the AKP government policy transformation towards minority rights in Turkish Republic.

In regards to AKP government, Orhan Kemal Cengiz, states:¹⁹⁶ ‘‘We have the friendliest government in the history of the Republic towards minority issues. I am personally not satisfied with the hesitated steps taken by this government to improve minority rights, but when I look at these steps in an historical perspective I can see some of them as a kind of revolution. This government has at least given an end to the deep rooted Unionist (*Ittihatci*) policy of strangling minorities with all possible means from every single angle. Government’s friendly approach also set the general tone in which minorities are handled and of course this is true for the press as well.’’

Europeanization has been a powerful lever increasingly influencing the transformation in Turkish politics since 1999. The general expression one can get examining the reports of the Turkish press in the minority issues is that Europeanization, has influenced the way journalists write. Nevertheless, despite the changing perceptions of the minorities in the Turkish society, there are still newspapers attempting to cultivate anti-minority feelings, promoting negative stereotypes in behalf of nationalistic ideologies.

2. Greek Support for Turkey’s EU Membership

Another reason of the discourse transformation of the Turkish Press towards Greek-related issues is the Greek support for Turkey’s membership into the European Union. Grigoriadis points out, the way Greece views the Turkish accession to the EU, is being

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Mr. Cengiz

totally different from the way other member states do’’¹⁹⁷ The shift occurred in the 1990’s, through the Europeanization of Greek foreign policy.

Greek Government, Greeks of Istanbul and Greek Cypriots tend to believe that if Turkey becomes a member state of the European Union, solutions to the main bilateral issues (Cyprus question, the Aegean dispute and the minority problems) will be achieved. As Grigoriadis mentions, both countries come to realize that both ‘‘Greek and Turkish national interests were no more seen as antithetical terms but were deemed reconcilable within the European Framework.’’¹⁹⁸

The continued Greek support for Turkey’s EU accession is merely based on the idea that Greece and Turkey are neighbours. The common fate of sharing borders increases the possibility of disputes between them, as it really happens. So, Greek state believes that if Turkey joins the Union, the possibility of conflicts will be reduced dramatically.

Turkish state acknowledges the fact that Greek state supports its EU membership and this is reflected in the way Turkish press presents the Greek-related issues, especially after 2005, when Turkey’s EU accession negotiations were officially started.

¹⁹⁷ Grigoriadis, Ioannis N., ‘‘Greek and Greek Cypriot Views of Turkey’s accession to the European Union: On the Endurance of a Spectacular Shift’’, in Meltem Müftüler-Bac and Yannis A. Stivachtis (eds.), *Turkey and the European Union: Dilemmas, Constraints and Opportunities* (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2008), p. 151

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 156

3. The rapprochement of 1999

The catastrophic earthquakes that shook both Greece and Turkey in 1999 are often used as a landmark for the improvement in the bilateral relations.¹⁹⁹ In the period followed the earthquakes, extensive press reports focusing on “friendship building” between Turkey and Greece was a daily phenomenon. Though the real change was not caused by the earthquakes but rather started before them, by large number of contacts between representatives of the whole spectrum of the society, including politicians, journalists, businessmen, representatives of Non Government Organizations (NGOs), scientists, academics, and students, who wished to share a better bilateral relationship. Thus, as Doğan Tılıç points out, “The change was neither due to drawing sentimentally closer with the experience of a common tragedy nor was it due to a sudden shift in the Turkish newspapers’ understanding of their neighbor. Rather, it was a consequence of changes in official policies. The atmosphere created among the public by the earthquakes certainly facilitated the shift and made it easier.”²⁰⁰

It is observed that after the 1999 rapprochement, the representation of the ‘other’ is totally different in comparison to prior to the 1999 situation in Turkish-Greek media. Thus, the discourse transformation of the Turkish press we now enjoy has its roots in the 1999 rapprochement, which is considered as a landmark as it marks a new era in the bilateral relations.

¹⁹⁹ For Greek-Turkish Earthquake Diplomacy, see Keridis, Dimitris, “Earthquakes, Diplomacy, and New Thinking in Foreign Policy”, *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol. 30 (1), Winter 2006, pp. 207-214

²⁰⁰ Tılıç, 2006

Conclusion

Turkish Press is being an interesting field of study. The fact that a total number of 2,459 newspapers currently circulated in Turkey, makes it more interesting. Though, being a journalist dealing with national sensitive issues like minorities is a difficult issue, especially when these issues related to rooted stereotypes. Nevertheless, in contrast with the past, where Turkish press has a totally different image, now the way dealing with national sensitive issues has changed.

In regards to the discourse transformation of the Turkish press (both hardcore and electronic) in Patriarchate-related issues, three factors play important role: the Europeanization of Turkish Politics; the Greek Support for the EU membership of Turkey; and the rapprochement of 1999.

V. ARCHIVE RESEARCH ON NEWS REPORTS CONCERNING THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE IN THE TURKISH PRESS: 2006-20011

Introduction

Written in Turkish periodicals and through the Turkish press' coverage of news reports concerning the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, archive research shows a focus on issues faced by the institution. Three cases have been chosen to be examined in this thesis, for an exploration on how Turkish press deals with the main issues faced by the Patriarchate: The estates; the Theological School; and the legal status of the Patriarchate.

This investigation focuses on important developments that occurred with these issues during the last years, beginning in October 2005 when Turkey's EU accession negotiations were officially started and reaching March 2011, when the archive research stopped. The analysis of the news reports is centered on headlines, sub-headlines, leads, and news texts.

The purpose of investigating the archive research is to explore how the Turkish press conducted itself toward the issues faced by the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate in the last five years. This work does not distinguish newspapers according to their political orientation or to their circulation, but rather according to the issues faced by the Patriarchate as was previously mentioned.

The writer decided not only to analyze the large circulation newspapers in Turkey, but also those with a small circulation. This is due to a belief that some of the small newspapers are able to affect an important part of society, which can in turn create serious problems. News reports that will be analyzed in this archive research come from the following newspapers: *Hürriyet, Taraf, Zaman, Milliyet, Cumhuriyet, Radikal, Habertürk, Yeni Çağ, Posta, Sabah, Akşam, Vatan, Takvim, Bugün, Yeni Şafak, BirGün* and *Türkiye*.

This study attempts to reveal how Turkish newspapers position themselves regarding one of the most important institutions within Turkey, the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, and how this position correlates with respective governments and states. Nevertheless, it is worthy to note that in some friendly reports, it is possible to sense underlying hostility. If the reports are read carefully, it can be seen that they are indeed not friendly.²⁰¹ As a result, these news reports are assumed of having a distrusting or wary attitude toward the Patriarchate.

In addition, the archive research will reveal the Turkish newspapers use of nationalistic headlines, aggressive texts, as well as antagonistic words and expressions in their coverage and under which circumstances this occurs. Moreover, it will investigate whether some newspapers are bias or harsh to the Patriarchate and if they do in fact use hostile descriptions in their news reports.

²⁰¹ This is one of the reasons that Discourse Analysis was chosen as the Methodological Method for this thesis, because it is the analysis of language beyond the sentence

Furthermore, the study analyzes the findings in the archive research by exploring if the Turkish press followed a more moderate tone in its reporting and if it adopted a friendlier attitude toward the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate during the last few years. The examples of friendly news reports are not few in total. However, even though the news reports concerning the institution have become milder in tone, the traditional antagonistic approach in covering Greek-Turkish relations is still much followed, especially from mainstream nationalist newspapers.

Above all else, this chapter attempts to investigate the tone Turkish journalists write both hardcopy and electronic, about the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate.

A. The Estates

Today in Turkey, minority/community foundations and properties have gained major importance, as they are fundamental for the survival and continuity of its minorities.²⁰²

As we already mentioned before, in the time span under consideration, four cases are considered of high importance in regard to the estates that are associated to the Patriarchate: the decision of January 2007 of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in the case of Fener Rum Erkek Lisesi Vakfı (Μεγάλη του Γένους Σχολή) which is under the protection of the Patriarchate; the new Foundations Law No. 5737 of February 2008, concerning Greek properties that were characterized as seized

²⁰²Kurban and Tsitselikis, 2010, p. 7

(mazbut)²⁰³; the returning of the Orphanage of Büyükkada (Prinkipos) in November of 2009; and the new regulation for the minority properties of August 2011.

The archive research of the last six years revealed that the Turkish press pays special attention to the property issues and all of the developments associated with it. The newspaper *Hürriyet*, on June 15, 2006, published an article concerning the minority institutions. It was reported that there was “finally” a list established of community foundations, which included 161 (70 of them belonging to the Greek minority) that used to be under dispute. The newspaper underlined that from now on things would be different. Thus, *Hürriyet* adopted a friendly behaviour towards the Patriarchate, by giving emphasis to the adverb “finally”, which carries a special meaning. In other words, by using the adverb “finally”, indirectly criticize the Turkish Government for being late in the establishment of the list of community foundations.²⁰⁴

In February 2008, when the Turkish Parliament approved the new Foundations Law no. 5737, not all of the Turkish newspapers and media welcomed it with enthusiasm. Some nationalists (the newspapers supported by opposition parties), opposed the amendment of this law.

²⁰³ A vakif is declared as “occupied” (mazbut) when there is no Management Committee (natural persons). Since the “occupied” vakif falls under the total and exclusive control of the Directorate General Foundations, the risk of confiscation of property increases significantly.

²⁰⁴ As it is already mentioned before, according to Richardson, particular words used in a newspaper text may carry connoted in addition to denoted meanings

The English edition of newspaper *Hürriyet* ran the titles, “Full marks to AKP on the foundations law,”²⁰⁵ “Foundations law on the heart on new debate,”²⁰⁶ “Parliament approves foundations law, CHP to take it to court,”²⁰⁷ and “Turkey’s parliament approves law to boost non-Muslims’ property rights.”²⁰⁸

The writers of the articles, one being Mehmet Ali Birand, did not hesitate to say that Turkey corrected a mistake of the past that was grossly unfair to its minorities, especially the Greeks. The European Union and Greek media emphasized the importance of this law as a measure to secure the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Turkish citizens.

On March 2, 2008 the newspaper *Sabah* with writer Barış Erdoğan ran the harsh title, “The law does not cure the wounds”. In linguistic terms, this is a ‘metaphor’, which is a popular concept in journalism. Metaphor means perceiving something in terms of something else.²⁰⁹ This article was written in an attempt to criticize the government about the mistakes it had made in the past. In the article Erdoğan states that there are some sophists who claim that the amends of the occupied properties must be paid by the Turkish taxpayers. Thus, he criticises the authorities because Turkish citizens must not be the victims of the political mistakes that Turkey has made in the past.

²⁰⁵ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 22/02/2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=full-marks-to-akp-on-the-foundations-law-2008-02-22>

²⁰⁶ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 22/02/2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=foundations-law-at-heart-of-new-debate-2008-02-22>

²⁰⁷ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 22/02/2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=parliament-approves-foundations-law-chp-to-take-it-to-court-2008-02-22>

²⁰⁸ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 21/02/2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=turkeys-parliament-approves-law-to-boost-non-muslims-property-rights-2008-02-21>

²⁰⁹ For more information on ‘metaphor’, see Richardson, 2007, pp. 66-67

Nationalistic papers in Turkey often use scandalous headlines in order to affect a, not very small, part of the society against the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey, Mainly by saying that the nationalistic press perceives the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate as representatives of Greek national interests. The days followed by the adoption of the new Foundations Law in February 2008, the opposition parties via some newspapers, reacted on a nefarious way.” Some papers even talked about "treason" while using dirty editorials, disgracing the Greek minority and the Patriarchate.

An example of this manner is the nationalistic newspaper *Yeniçağ*, which is often far from performing the media’s ideal mission of reporting and reflecting the news. Some days before the adoption of the new law, *Yeniçağ* and Selda Öztürk Kay reported that the Patriarchate is an American service centre in Turkey. The same newspaper on February 28, 2008 reported that, “The privileges given to the "priest of Phanar" by the new law, means violation of Lausanne.”

The general expression one can get from examining the reports of nationalistic newspapers in the Rum Patriarchate and in general the minorities is that they are trying to create a negative climate by using the linguistic tool of ‘Hyperbole’. Richardson states that “Hyperbole is an example of excessive exaggeration made for rhetorical effect.” [...] “Hyperbole is in the reporting of various social out-groups – ‘racial’ or ethnic minorities, that it can take on a more sinister dimension.”²¹⁰ Media workers in mainstream nationalistic Turkish newspapers often use this tool while reporting in minorities.

²¹⁰ Richardson, 2007, p. 65

The case that the Turkish press paid the most attention to was the returning of the orphanage of Büyükada. During this time, most of the newspapers adopted a friendly attitude toward the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. On September 18, 2009, the newspaper *Vatan* reported on the meeting of Bartholomew and Prime Minister Erdoğan in Büyükada, after a meal with representatives of minorities. The article dealt with the background of the historic building and used positive statements to describe the meeting between the two leaders. It was framed within two pictures: one of the visit to the orphanage, whose caption stated that journalists were not allowed to enter and the other where Bartholomew offered an oil painting to the Prime Minister.

On November 27, 2010, *Hürriyet* and Mehmet Yılmaz, ran the title, “At long last, we got rid of this shame.” This title demonstrates that journalists do not hesitate to criticize their government. A large part of the Turkish people welcomed the decision and felt relieved that the historic building would finally given back to the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate and to the Rum minority.

On the same day the newspaper *BirGün* used the headline, “Finally it returns to its real owner.” (Again the word ‘‘finally’’, which, as we already analyzed before, carries connoted meanings). Undoubtedly, the fact that a portion of the society acknowledged the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate as the real owner of the building is very important.

On November 30, 2010, the newspaper *Sabah* reported that the returning of the Orphanage of Büyükada, was a very pleasant development and that it could be the

example of the next trials. News reports like this, indicates that journalistic voices often show sympathy towards the minority issues.

Another important report was that run by newspaper *Zaman*, which stated on November 30, 2010, that the returning of the property could mean the acknowledgment of the legal status of the Patriarchate. As it is already mentioned before, *Zaman*, which is the first highest circulated in Turkey, has a good connection with Patriarch. Bartholomew.

On November 25, 2010 the electronic edition of the newspaper *Zaman* used the headline, “The orphanage given to the Patriarchate of Fener.”²¹¹ The article discusses the bureaucratic details before the ceremony of the recursion of the building. Furthermore, it refers to what Cem Murat Sofuoğlu, the lawyer of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, said about the importance of such a critical development. Sofuoğlu stated that it was the first time that Turkey implemented a decision of the European Court of Human Rights, regarding the transfer of the estate, in terms of legal procedures. He characterized this development as proof of adoption to European standards and laws.

It is interesting to cite the friendly headlines that were used by the Turkish newspapers on June 16, 2010, when the decision of the European Court of Justice concerning the Orphanage of Büyükada had been published. Newspaper *Zaman* ran the title, “European Court of Human Rights: The orphanage to be delivered in the Patriarchate within three months,” newspaper *Aksam* ran the title, “The Patriarchate won,” newspaper *BirGün* said, “The orphanage belongs to the Patriarchate,” *Bugün* used the title, “European

²¹¹ *Zaman*, 25/11/2010, <http://www.zaman.com.tr/haber.do?haberno=1056661&title=buyukada-yetimhanesi-fener-patrikhanesine-iade-ediliyor>

Court of Human Rights: Give back the orphanage,” *Cumhuriyet*, “The orphanage is returned back,” *Habertürk* ran the title, “European Court of Human Rights: To open the orphanage within three months,” *Hürriyet*, “European Court of Human Rights: The orphanage to be given to the Patriarchate,” *Milliyet*, “Return back the orphanage within three months.” *Posta* ran the title, “It is not orphan anymore,” referring directly to the Orphanage. *Radical* used the title, “The road is now opening for the legal personality of the Patriarchate,” *Sabah*, “European Court of Human Rights: The orphanage now belongs to the Patriarchate- It will be transformed into environmental institute.” *Takvim* ran the title, “European Court of Human Rights: The orphanage to be given to the Patriarchate.” *Taraf* and *Vatan* shared the same title, “The orphanage belongs to the Patriarchate,” and *Yeni Şafak* used the title, “The orphanage will be transformed into an institution for the environment.” As we observe in this case, all the titles conferred are clearly positive ones.

Nevertheless, it is important to cite the headline *Yeniçağ* used on November 27, 2010. “A church does not have the right to own real estate.” It was not the first time *Yeniçağ* used the term, “church” referring to the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, seeking to reduce its influence in Turkish society. Propaganda, the attempt to influence the public opinion is a common tool in communication.

Adversely, on November 28, 2010 *Cumhuriyet* criticized Turkey for abstaining to acknowledge the Ecumenicity of the Patriarchate, while the title is not a political one, but rather one with religious connotations. As we observe, mainstream newspapers dare to criticize the government.

B. The Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki)

Concerning the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate, the issue that is the most important and the most frequently reported on by the Turkish press, is that of the re-opening of the Theological School of Heybeliada (Halki Seminary). The re-opening is one of the most important issues of the bilateral relations. Thus, the Greek government and the Greek minority, as well as the entire Orthodox world, pay special attention to it. The archive research revealed that the debates and the opinions about the School are reported in the Turkish press on a frequent basis, as one of the main problems faced by the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate.

On April 13, 2010, the newspaper *Taraf* published an interesting opinion article by Ayhan Aktar, which ran the title, “How the Theological School could re-open?”²¹² The writer underlines the need to re-open the School and suggests ways for this to be done. The Theological School could be granted with vakıf University status, under the Higher Education Council (YÖK). Aktar believes that the institution was the victim of the tension caused by the Cyprus issue. During the 1950’s, when the Cyprus crisis began, minorities in both Greece and Turkey were treated as “hostages.” Turks of Western Thrace and Greeks of Istanbul (Rums) were the victims of a diplomatic instrument of revenge called, “reciprocity.” Regarding the Greek community of Istanbul, the victim of this policy has been the Patriarchate. Decision makers in the Turkish bureaucracy have always looked for ways to, “get rid” of that “foreign institution.” One easy outlet has

²¹² *Taraf*, 13/04/2009, <http://www.taraf.com.tr/ayhan-aktar/makale-heybeliada-ruhban-okulu-nasil-acilir.htm>

been to include it among those subjects of “reciprocity” and reprisal for actions against the Muslim minority in Western Thrace.²¹³

Ariana Ferentinou, a Greek reporter and a lecturer at Bilgi University, wrote an article published in *Hürriyet Daily News* on July 13, 2009 with the title, “A little-known historical dimension to Halki debate.”²¹⁴ The article discussed the historical background of the Seminary, without referring to the issue of re-operating it. She left it in the hands of the Turkish government to prove its sincerity in its self-declared, “goodwill.” In this kind of reports, we observe that some media workers want to keep a moderate position, and not express openly their opinions. This is not because they do not dare, but it is because they prefer to keep a distance from the issue.

On June 18, 2010, Hakan Çelik wrote an article which was published on the website for the newspaper *Posta*, using the headline, “To Open the Theological School.” He mentioned that Turkish state should now open the closed Theological School of Halki without any delay. He suggested that this development will not only support the democratic process in Turkey, but that it also will send a powerful and important message worldwide, especially to Christians around the globe. Çelik mentioned that while traveling in Russia, Patriarch Bartholomew, the religious leader of all Orthodox Christians around the world, was treated as the “Ecumenical Patriarch.” If the Theological School of Halki re-opens, it would mean that Patriarch Bartholomew would be able to contribute even more actively in Turkey’s diplomacy.

²¹³ Macar, 2008, p. 144

²¹⁴ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 12/07/2009, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=a-little-known-historical-dimension-to-halki-debate-2009-07-12>

On January 22, 2008, Mehmet Ali Birand, a prominent journalist and political commentator, wrote an article published by the English edition of the newspaper, *Turkish Daily News*. The article ran the title, “Only the AKP can open the Heybeliada Seminary.” This referred to the possibility of re-operating the historic seminary. The writer mentioned that the issue of Halki was the most important one in the relation between the Turkish State and the Christian minorities of Turkey. He mentioned that the closure of the school in 1972, the Ecumenical personality of the Patriarchate, as well as the administration of the Greek properties in Turkey, was always the reasons for contention. There is no doubt that Birand adopted a very friendly behaviour toward the Patriarchate.

An article published on December 8, 2010 in the *Hürriyet Daily News* ran the title, “Turkey’s approach to Patriarchate is a revolution.”²¹⁵ The article dealt with the changing perceptions of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate in Turkey. As he characteristically mentions, “The patriarchate used to be called an empire of evil. It was perceived as trying to destroy Turkey and make sneaky plans in order for Greece to take control of Anatolia. It was labelled an institution that was to be oppressed and kept in its place. It was perceived as an enemy that foreign imperial forces forced upon us in Lausanne, which we unwillingly needed to carry on our backs.” Birand is rightly wondering why the Prime Minister Erdoğan and AKP have not been able to reopen the Theological School of Halki, despite the promises that have been made.

²¹⁵ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 08/12/2010. <http://web.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey8217s-approach-to-patriarchate-is-a-revolution-2010-12-08>

B. The Legal Status of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate

The lack of recognition of the international and ecumenical status of the Patriarch and the Patriarchate is another important issue faced by the institution and reported in the Turkish press. The Rum Orthodox Patriarchate is an institution with a global effect, but one that still lacks legal identity and personality within Turkey. It is thought that the title “ecumenical” was given to the Patriarch in the late fifth century and it is purely an ecclesiastical title. Being, ‘first among equals’ (*primus inter pares*) of all Orthodox churches; It safeguards the unity of more than 200 million Christians around the world.

The Turkish press often refers to the title should be given to the Patriarchate. The following examples can be seen as the indicator of a new positive attitude that was adopted from the Turkish mass media. In the past the press in neighboring country would approach the Patriarchate aggressively, without recognizing its history and its international role. Nowadays, this attitude has changed and the majority of the news reports concerning the historic institution are characterized positively.

A very good example of this manner can be found in an article published on December 12, 2006, in the English edition of *Hürriyet Daily News*. The article ran the headline, “About the Ecumenical title.”²¹⁶ In this article, which was written after the Pope’s visit in Turkey, Cengiz Aktar discusses the steps that could be taken on behalf of the Turkish side in several of issues in order for Muslim and non-Muslim populations to live together peacefully. In this article, the writer refers to the Patriarchate as a “Turkish institution” and to Bartholomew as the “Fener Patriarch.” The article can be perceived

²¹⁶ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 12/12/2006, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=about-the-ecumenical-title-2006-12-12>

as a positive argument both for the institution and for Bartholomew. It discusses the importance of the Patriarchate as an influential center and characterizes the fact that its being led by Patriarch Bartholomew as invaluable in terms of worldly relations and religious dialogue within the Christian world and the Orthodox populations around the globe. In the article's closing, Aktar points out that the Ottoman Empire set a high value on the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate. The author motivates the Turks to learn from the Ottomans and pays special attention to the institution's location in Istanbul. The writer adopts a friendly attitude and transfers positive messages toward the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate and specifically Patriarch Bartholomew.

On June 27, 2007 Turkish Supreme Court ruled the decision that the Patriarch and the Patriarchate do not have the right to use the title 'Ecumenical.' Not surprisingly, all the main newspapers in Turkey paid special attention to the decision with long reports and ran loaded titles. *Milliyet* ran the title, "Not an ecumenical, but a minority Church," *Hürriyet* titled, "The Supreme Court said: The claim of ecumenicity is not legal," *Radical* titled, "Supreme Court: The Patriarchate is not ecumenical." *Akşam*, "The Supreme Court said: The claim of ecumenicity has no basis," *Zaman* referred briefly to the issue in two-column home page titled, "The Supreme Court said: The Patriarchate is subject to Turkish law." *Bugün* reported the decision by using the title, "The Patriarchate can not be ecumenical," *Vatan* titled, "The Supreme Court said: Under the Treaty of Lausanne, the Patriarch is not ecumenical." As can be observed, all the newspapers referred to the decision by including the word 'ecumenical' in their titles, except one: *Zaman*. Newspaper *Zaman*, as it is already mentioned, is the first highest circulated in Turkey and one who supports the Patriarchate and the Patriarch.

On January 26, 2008, the front page of the print edition of *Milliyet*, ran an article with the title, “The Ecumenical Patriarch mustn’t be a taboo issue.” There is no doubt that this title could not have occurred ten years ago when the Turkish press used to use nationalistic and aggressive headlines and texts in its coverage about the Patriarchate. In Critical Discourse Analysis, this is what we call ‘modality’. ‘Modal verbs are a regular feature of more ‘opinionated’ genres of journalism such as the editorial and the column-genres of journalism that do not simply used to *report* an event (information), but also provide a *judgement* of an event (evaluation, comment).’²¹⁷

Additionally on the same day, the newspaper *Vatan*, ran the title, “We have to reconsider the issue of the Ecumenism,” and newspaper *Sabah* wrote, “We have to examine in a different way the issue of Ecumenism.”

On September 22, 2008, newspaper *Cumhuriyet* used the title, “With the status of Ecumenical, will speak at the European Parliament,” referring to Patriarch Bartholomew. The article dealt with the upcoming speech of Bartholomew, in which he was expected to express his complaints against the Turkish State, who did not acknowledge the Patriarchate of “Phanar” as Ecumenical.

Another example of this manner can be observed on May 10, 2009 in *Radikal*. Orhan Kemal Cengiz, a prominent lawyer and supporter of human rights, deals with the «*fait accompli*»²¹⁸ strategy that is followed by the Turkish state in issues related to the Patriarchate and to the Greek minority. He discusses issues relating to the seized

²¹⁷ For more information on ‘modality’, see Richardson, 2007, pp. 59-62

²¹⁸ Something that has happened previously and has already finished

properties that belong to the Patriarchate and to other religious foundations of the Greek community (“they took one by one”). He does this while criticizing Turkey for not recognizing the legal personality of the historic institution of the Patriarchate, which has more than 1,000 years of existence. Cengiz does not hesitate to discuss the pogroms from the 6-7 of September that forced Rums of Istanbul to leave their motherland, while asserting that Turkey appeared to allow the removal of the Patriarchate of Istanbul. He also considers the Patriarch’s citizenship issue. Cengiz appears to believe that the Turkish state does not operate according to national interests; rather it is clear that it operates according to its fears. “As we refuse to face our past, we will continue of our poverty and our fears. The history of the Patriarchate teaches us the history of Turkey, also.” The article could be perceived as a clear defense for the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and of the Greek community.

On December 17, 2009 Patriarch Bartholomew gave an interview on *60 Minutes*.²¹⁹ In the interview he said, “We (the Greek community) prefer to stay here (in Turkey), even crucified sometimes.” Later, he was questioned as to whether or not he personally feels that he is at times being crucified. Patriarch Bartholomew replied, “Yes, I do.” This interview caused criticism of the part of the Turkish press. On December 19, 2009 the front page of the ultra-nationalist newspaper *Yeniçağ*, ran the title, “Bartho got mad!” On the other hand, in an article published in *Hürriyet* on November 30, 2009, journalist Hadi Uluengin supported the Patriarch by saying that, “Our Patriarch said that he feels crucified, that in Turkish means suffering. I could say that if the same things happened to me, I would say the same.” This report was very important, because the journalist,

²¹⁹ The interview is available at:
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/12/17/60minutes/main5990390.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody>

while referring to Patriarch Bartholomew said, "...our Patriarch." An assumption can be drawn that this means that a large part of Turkish society considers Bartholomew an influential and important party in Turkey. Richardson argues that "the way the people are named in news discourse can have significant impact on the way they are viewed".²²⁰

Another example of this can be found in the report of *Milliyet* published on December 29, 2009, which ran the headline, "When we will become humans?" In linguistics analysis, presuppositions are present in 'wh-questions', such as when, who, why, etc. According to Richardson, a presupposition is a taken-for-granted, implicit claim embedded within the explicit meaning of a text or utterance."²²¹ This report also criticizes the Turkish authorities and reports that, "If we observe what happened during the last years concerning the Greek minority, we will understand what the Patriarch means by saying that."

On the same date, the newspaper publication of *Taraf* through the journalist, Faruk Özcu, also supported Bartholomew, by calling him, "honorable Patriarch." The article says that the Turkish people should sincerely consider why the Patriarch feels like this and realize that something has to change. In other words, the writer tried to motivate the public opinion to think about the problems urged the Patriarch Bartholomew to express this complaints.

²²⁰ Richardson, 2007, p. 49

²²¹ Ibid., p. 63

On August 30, 2010, the newspaper *Bugün* published an article using the scandalous headline, “Bartholomew is the last Patriarch,” which caused uproar in the Greek community and with the Greek mass media. The article was based on a publication released three days prior on the CNN website which honed the headline, “The last Orthodox patriarch in Turkey.”²²² It dealt with a documentary shown on CNN about Bartholomew, the 270th leader of the institution. It questions who could be the last Patriarch, due to the terms of Turkish citizenship that a Patriarch must be granted. Almost the same report was shared by both the English edition of *Today’s Zaman* and the website for the newspaper *Sabah*. This is a good example of how important it is to be well aware of the power and strength the media can have through particular uses and implications of language. Also, remembering that these distortions may sometimes be used for means of manipulation.

In the last several years, many articles dealing with the issues of the Patriarchate’s “Ecumenism,” have been published. This became especially clear after the contacts between President Obama and Patriarch Bartholomew. On November 6, 2009, the newspaper *Akşam* through the journalistic writing of Nagehan Alçı, mentioned that Patriarch Bartholomew is recognized as, “Ecumenical” by the rest of the world and it is only Turkey that does not recognize this title and has “limited” him within the Fener district.

²²² <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/europe/08/26/wus.patriarch/index.html>

Conclusion

The general impression one can get from examining the reports of the Turkish press in the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate is that press is trying to create a supportive climate for the institution. By positive words and expressions used by on the reports, the press creates a friendly climate for the Government's decision for the minorities. Furthermore, according to the synopsis of the Turkish Press over the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate-related issues, the newspapers do not hesitate to criticize the Turkish government for not acknowledging the legal status of the Patriarchate and not re-opening the Theological School and finally, a large part of Turkish journalists dare to deal with the "Ecumenicity" of the Patriarchate, something which until recently used to be considered as a taboo issue in a large part of society.

VI. CONCLUSION

Changing Perceptions of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate in Turkey

The thesis's aim is to investigate perceptions and representations of the Turkish press towards the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate over the past six years, beginning in October 2005 and ending in 2011.

Since the recognition of Turkey as a candidate state in the European Council's Helsinki Conclusion in 1999 and moreover, since 2005 when its EU accession negotiations were officially, the social, political and economic structures of the state have been influenced with the notion of 'Europeanization.' In this direction, the Turkish press endorsed the Turkish candidacy in the European Union, by promoting democratization and respect of human rights, according to the 'Western standards.'

Within this context, press in Turkey promoted a new role in society. The three cases examined in the fifth chapter, shows that in contrast with the previous 'dark' decades, when part of the Turkish society and Turkish press, used to approach the Patriarchate aggressively, now this attitude changed. Most of the news reports were sympathetic to the Patriarchate and the problems it faces. Moreover, a large part of the press, do not dare to criticize the current government for not moving forward to more regulations towards the institution. Nevertheless, it has to be clarified that there have been always prominent journalists and intellectuals who supported the Patriarchate and were seeking solutions for the problems faced, even when Greek-Turkish relations were stressed. These people were always seeing the 'other' on a different way. The problem used to be

that they were hesitating to express their opinion. Thus, via the democratization of Turkey, the perspectives changed and the opening of discourse on issues that were taboos in the past were now appropriate. As a result, the balance between the positive and the negative reports has changed. Previously, there were more negative reports, with few positive ones, while now there are more positive reports, with fewer nationalistic and negative ones.

Changing perceptions of the Patriarchate in the Turkish Press over the last years will not be meaningful if Turkey is not determined to transform its vision in social, political, cultural, and economic terms. The transformation in the Turkish press seems to have occurred gradually within the decade of 2000-2010, following the government policy change. Nevertheless, some of the stereotypes and clichés have remained the same, but mainly only in the mainstream nationalistic newspapers. By publishing nationalistic reports against the Patriarchate and the Patriarch, or making propaganda, nationalistic press cultivates the knowledge gap and fear. Thus, by a large part of the Turkish society, the Patriarchate is still considered as a hostile institution.

Consequently, it is accepted that Greek-Turkish relations have assumed a more moderate character after 1999. I argue that the discourse transformation of the Turkish Press in regards to Patriarchate-related issues is mainly due to three factors: the ‘Europeanization’ of Turkish politics; the Greek support for the EU membership of Turkey, and the rapprochement of 1999. These factors were divergences from the long-standing stereotypical images in Turkish society and in the news reports.

It is my genuine hope that Greek-Turkish relations will be better in the near future and it will not be allowed for the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate to be ‘a victim of reciprocity’. Moreover, to the extent that media can play a conflict resolver and ‘peace maker’²²³ role, they can help to reduce the knowledge gap of the Turkish public opinion towards the Patriarchate-related issues. If journalists play a peacemaker role, media initiatives will gradually develop an approach and cooperation between Turkish society and minorities. As Ross Harrods stresses, “Good journalism is a constant process of seeking solutions.”²²⁴ Thus, journalists from both side of the Aegean should adopt the solution of ‘bridging’ in the bilateral issues. “In bridging, neither party achieves its initial demands, but a new option is devised that satisfies the most important interests underlying those demands”²²⁵.

Thus, an overall conclusion of this thesis is that the fact Rum Orthodox Patriarchate still faces problems related to the estates and its legal personality within Turkey, means that there are still challenges to be dealt with. Especially with the most important problem, this is the re-opening of the Theological School of Heybeliada/Halki.

²²³ “Peacemaking” is the process in which the energy of conflict is transformed into the energy of cooperation

²²⁴ See Howard, Ross, “Conflict Sensitive Journalism”, (Denmark: International Media Support, 2003). Available at: http://www.i-m-s.dk/files/publications/IMS_CSJ_Handbook.pdf

²²⁵ For more information on ‘Bridging’, see Dean G. Pruitt and Jeffrey Z. Rubin “Conflict Resolution: Problems Solving” in *Classics of International Relations*, Edit. By John A. Vasquez, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996), pp.135-140

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