MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY: THE 2011 TURKISH NATIONAL

ELECTION COVERAGE

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MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY: THE 2011 TURKISH NATIONAL

ELECTION COVERAGE

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Thesis Abstract

Selina Denise Bieber, "Media and Democracy in Turkey: the 2011 Turkish National

Election Coverage"

This thesis aims to examine the ability of the Turkish media to fulfil its democratic

role for the Turkish public by case studying the 2011 national Turkish elections.

Given the limited number of previous studies existing on Turkey, this thesis takes the

notion of the press politics relationship, as put forward by Bennett, and economic

pressures influencing the way in which the press functions to question whether the

Turkish media effectively carries out a watchdog and messenger role. This study

codes newspaper articles leading up to the elections to test the hypothesis that despite

continued patterns of polarized parallelism, the media coverage will reinforce the

AKP's consolidated governmental position. Split into two separate research question,

the first research question discusses the coded article characteristics and keywords to

draw out patterns and trends apparent in the coverage with a major focus on sources,

main article subjects and handling of critical agenda issues. This lays the foundation

for the second research question in which an in depth textual analysis is employed to

determine the frames being put forward by publications when relaying two topics

drawn from the data set - the Inan Kirac and Prime Minister Erdogan conflict and

foreign press commentary - to make conclusions about the press politics relationship

and position of the AKP in Turkey. Ultimately, this study argues that the press

politics relationship is defined by the AKP's strong political position and media

coverage serves to support this position by largely employing the frames put forward

by the government to generate neutral or positive commentary, instead of offering

critical coverage or diversity in reporting.

Tez Özeti

Selina Denise Bieber, "Türkiye'de Medya ve Demokrasi: 2011 Ulusal Seçimlerin

Basın Yansımaları"

Bu tez çalışmasında, 2011 genel seçim dönemi özelinde Türk medyasının demokrasi içinde üzerine düşen kamusal rolünü yerine getirme yeteneği araştırılmıştır. Türk basınının denetleyici ve mesaj iletici rollerini etkili bir şekilde yerine getirip getirmediği, Bennett tarafında ortaya konduğu şekliyle basın-siyaset ilişkisi ve ekonomik baskıların basının işleyişine etkileri açılarından ele alınmıştır. Seçim öncesi dönem gazete haberleri kodlanarak, toplumsal kutuplaşma paternlerinde gözlenen paralelizme karşın, basının AKP'nin hükümet olarak pozisyonunu güçlendirici rol oynadığı yönündeki tez test edilmiştir. İlk aşamada haberlerde kendini gösteren eğilimleri ve paternleri tespit etmek için kodlanmış olan haber karakteristik özellikleri ve anahtar kelimeleri incelenmiştir. Bu yapılırken haber kaynakları, konuları ve kritik gündem konularının ele alınış şekilleri sorgulanmıştır. Basın siyaset ilişkisi ile AKP'nin Türkiye'deki konumu sorgusu da ikinci aşamada ele alınmıştır ve veri setinde yer alan iki konunun (İnan Kiraç ile Başbakan arasındaki çatışma ve yabancı basının seçim hakkında yorumları) ülke basınında ele alınış şekli ve sunulduğu çerçeve üzerinde derinlikli metinsel çözümlemeler yapılarak incelenmiştir. Nihai olarak çalışmada, basın siyaset ilişkisinin AKP'nin güçlü siyasi konumu tarafından belirlendiği ve basının eleştirel bir tutum takınmayarak, haber sunumunda çeşitlilik sağlamayarak ve hükümet tarafından ortaya konan çerçeve içerisinde kalarak çoklukla nötr veya pozitif yorumlara yer vermek suretiyle, bu konumunu destekleyici bir işlev üstlendiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandparents, Cenan and Talha Ermiş, who

instilled in me a love and curiosity to teach myself the language and learn more about

the inner workings of Turkey at a very young age.

Without them, I would not be here presenting this study today.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

AKP – Justice and Development Party

CHP – Republican People's Party

MHP – National Action Party

BDP – Peace and Democracy Party

RTE – Recep Tayyip Erdogan

PM Erdogan – Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan

Independents – Independent candidates running for seats in parliament

MP – Member of Parliament

Ak. – Akşam Newspaper

Bir. – Birgün Newspaper

Cum. – Cumhuriyet Newspaper

HT – Habertürk Newspaper

Hur. – Hürriyet Newspaper

Mil. – Milliyet Newspaper

Rad. – Radikal

Sab. – Sabah Newspaper

Soz. – Sözcü Newspaper

Post. – Posta Newspaper

Tar. – Taraf Newspaper

Tur. – Türkiye Newspaper

Vat. – Vatan Newspaper

Zmn. – Zaman Newspaper

TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A national news media is an integral part of a democratic political landscape. As one of the main tools of political communication between a government and its polity, it facilitates an information exchange that contributes to the public's knowledge about the government, its performance and the pressing issues in the country, while simultaneously providing a means for citizens and their organisations to communicate their opinions and requests back to the political elite and thus hold the government accountable for its actions. In Turkey, the ability of the news media to create an effective framework of communications for the Turkish public has been contested significantly by international voices and to a lesser extent local media circles and the public, fuelled by the forced resignation and jailing of several journalists. Such criticisms have implications for the relationship between the government and the media and the way in which this relationship manifests in the news media's coverage.

This study commences in Chapter 1 with a focus on the scholarship as a foundation for determining the research question and research component. Given that the focus of this study is Turkey, the US centric nature of existing scholarship is problematic, and Chapter 2 endeavours to broaden the scope of the literature by going beyond a developed Western media model. Though there are many factors related to the press politics relationship which can be examined, this study limits itself to the role of the print press in a given democracy focusing particularly on the notion of the media's watchdog and messenger role and the challenges that exist to the fulfilment of these in media systems developing much later to their American

counterpart. Chapter 3 examines the limited number of studies on the Turkish media and its relationship with democracy, especially throughout the AKP era.

Upon the foundation of the literature, Chapter 4 discusses the methodological approach for studying the election coverage ten days leading up to the 2011 national Turkish elections and a day after to answer the following questions:

1. What is the range and the depth of issues covered across newspapers before the elections?

Based on the observations and results in Research Question 1, the second question explores:

2. What are the specific textual elements of coverage, which dominant frames are employed?

In accordance with the two separate research questions, Chapter 5 and 6 each address one research question, the first engaging with the entire data set of articles to draw out major patterns across the selected publications and tie these patterns to the notion of scope and depth with a particular reference to the visibility of critical coverage and handling of the government's performance. Chapter 6 singles out two topics touched upon throughout the selected time period to look at the way in which the media frames the subjects and what these frames and patterns can then tell us about the way the Turkish media functions and its ultimate contribution to democracy in the country.

As the first broad ranging study of its kind on the Turkish media, this study finds that the press politics relationship defines the media coverage in Turkey and identifies a lack of range and depth in the Turkish media leading up to the national elections, which is emphasized even further when looking at the frames employed in Research Question 2. With an overwhelming visibility of the AKP on the media's

agenda in comparison to other political parties and citizen voices, there also appears

to be an attempt by the majority of publications to refrain from critical coverage of

the AKP and therefore framing is an important tool for publications to try to change

the elite political messages and even frames which are being put forward.

CHAPTER 2

MEDIA, SOCIETY AND POLITICS

Democracy and Media

The notion of a fully functioning media, in whichever form, is often linked with

ideas of the public sphere, civil society and the positive development of democracy

through the development and continued existence of an informed citizenry that can

take part in public debate and in certain critical times, help influence key decisions

via the information they are being fed to consequently evaluate and apply. The

importance of the news media itself arguably lies in its public nature, directly

catering to a diverse range of public audiences whilst simultaneously remaining

independent from political control or manipulation. In terms of democracy,

theoretically the media is seen to be a key actor in monitoring the government's

exercise of power by keeping checks on the government through public scrutiny and

debate over various governmental actions, hence being termed the Fourth Estate.[1] To

quote McNair (2009) "[d]emocracy, it is generally accepted, contributes to good

government only to the extent that it is reliably and accurately informed, and that the

choices made by citizens in elections and other contexts are thus reasoned and

rational… the democratic ideal is one of informed choice, to which the outputs of

political journalism are key contributors."[2]

The traditional role of the media is a topic that has been touched upon by

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[1] McNair, Brain. "Journalism and Democracy,"in *The Handbook of Journalism,* ed. K. Wahl-Jorgensen and T. Hanitzsch. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), p. 239

[2] Ibid., p. 238

various scholars, mostly when discussing the way in which its role has been eroded by economic developments and the effects of these on journalistic processes. W. Lance Bennett, for example, is one of the leading scholars to examine the role of the media and how news is created and formulated from the perspective of politicians, journalists and the public. Within his analyses he questions the journalistic profession and its role in society often with an identification of the problems that exist in media systems today. The media ideally, is active in four key areas which help it carry out its democratic role as discussed above. Gans (2010) determines these as "messengers for political elites", "messengers for the citizenry", "disaster messengers" and "watchdogs". The first two areas are directly linked to the idea of a participatory democracy, with the media acting as a communications medium to ensure the public is informed of the activities of the highest level government officials, following their "actions" and "statements"[3]. On the other hand, they also assume that this communication is a two-way channel which enables the citizenry to evaluate elite political messages and communicate their messages, attitudes and demands, often critically, back to the political elite. This interaction is arguably observed most significantly around election time in any given system. The latter two areas revolve around the public good, the disaster messenger role ensuring that the public is regularly informed and kept up-to-date on disasters and other events which directly affect their well-being and safety, as well as the more prominent and perhaps difficult task of acting as a watchdog for society and politics. Gans further expands on this final role solidifying the democratic function of the media stating that the news media helps in "monitoring the political environment and assuring the country that

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[3] Gans, Herbert J. "News and Democracy in the United States: Current Problems, Future Possibilities," in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism.* ed. Stuart Hall, (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 96

the polity will survive [...] reporting the actions and decisions of elected officials [...] airing political disagreements and conflicts [...] defending democratic values [...] everyday watchdogging [... and] investigative reporting".[4] Hence, in fulfilling the role of watchdog, the style of journalism and the journalistic profession in itself gains great importance, as it is this critical component of coverage that means the news media remains independent of political influence and strives to uphold democracy. On the other hand, this final task, as will be seen in the continued discussion, is a much harder role to fulfil given the economic and political pressures existent in current day news media systems. However, the news media should theoretically be able to present itself as an actor with the ability to criticise and scrutinize the government, compelling it to make decisions in the interest of the public good and for the benefit of society. Depending on the level of influence of political and business elites, the news media's ability to carry out this role will change. Gans too makes this point clear by highlighting that that "power determines what knowledge is relevant to effective political participation"[5], hence the information being relayed and debated is largely tied to power relationships which can undermine the traditional roles set out for the news media.

All of these traditional roles involve the engagement of the media with the citizenry to provide them with details that will ultimately lead to an informed and empowered population with secured democratic rights; different scholars put different perspectives on the way in which these four basic roles should be fulfilled. The notion of the media is often linked to Habermas' conceptualisation of the public

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[4] Gans, Herbert J. "News & the news in the digital age: Implications for democracy," *Daedalus* 139, no.2 (Spring 2010), pp. 8-10

[5] Gans, News and Democracy in the United States, p. 104

sphere and Dahlgren (2001) highlights that "[t]he mass media have contributed to space of public visibility, where the world and its current affairs are, via various modes of representation, available to most citizens."[6] However due to commercialisation making the media landscape a largely market dominated place, he proposes that the public sphere ideal is "largely be defined by the dominant mass media" and therefore argues for "multiple and alternative public spheres" that would ensure diversity of society through the media.[7] Gamson (2001) also handles the notion of the public sphere by comparing a view of democracy as empowering citizens through public discourse to a limited citizenship model, in which the citizen's role is to effectively select his leader and provide them with a mandate to carry out politics as they view best.[8] This second idea fits in quite well with democratically elected governments and their relationship with the news media. Within this concept, Gamson touches upon the idea of collective action frames which serve as a model for publics to engage as citizens.[9] The important parts of this concept are the components that aid in the process of creating an empowered citizenry, namely injustice, identity and agency. All these are components which the media can take up or have an impact on, however, Gamson rightly chooses to analyse agency in his study as it is through agency that action is taken and the media's coverage of public reaction and organisation in regards to an issue, inclusive of

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[6] Dahlgren, Peter. "The Public Sphere and the Net: Structure, Space, and Communication," in *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* ed. W. Lance Bennett et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 37

[7] Ibid., p. 39

[8] Gamson, William A. "Promoting Political Engagement'," in *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* ed. W. Lance Bennett et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 56

[9] Based on Snow and Benford's (1992) definition as "action oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns". Ibid., p. 58

policy debates or events can determine to what extent the media can help the public facilitate action.

In order to fulfil the roles set out for the news media, there are various processes of news gathering, evaluation and story production carried out by journalists and editors under advice and pressure from news organisation owners, political elites and usually to a lesser extent, the public. One of the main debates in news production is on the subject of unbiased and objective news. The way news is constructed is through images and messages which 'can act as teachers of values, ideologies, and beliefs and that they can provide images for interpreting the world.'[10] Gans implies a two-way communications model conveying *both* elite messages and messages from the public and the question is whether objectivity or impartiality is possible. In news production both of these are arguably impossible to ever achieve because of the message formation process in which the vast amount of information available to the public must be filtered by the media in accordance with pre-given criteria and presented to the public. A lack of commentary when delivering news with the aim to inform; is considered important and often used as a measurement of the degree of professionalization of the journalistic profession in a media system. This value is most significantly valued in the US and British models, however, it can be clearly observed that even within these advanced media systems factors such as pressures stemming from the role of elite politicians and their relationship with media elite, the degree of commercial interests influencing the news production process and to which journalists are able to carry out their profession. McChesney (2008) notes that the idea of professional journalism emerged only in the twentieth century as a "politically neutral, nonpartisan, professional, even "objective""

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[10] Ibid., p. 373

profession,[11] whereas prior to this, the links between politics and the media were closer due to the subsidization of the print press by the government. With neo-liberalism and thus privatisation in the US, media outlets changed the way reporting was being conducted. Parallel to this process was also the increasing importance of advertising to fund news organisations and a more sensationalist style of writing to ensure readership and bring in revenue.[12] McChesney also argues that increased monopolisation resulted in the absence of coverage to counteract and balance strongly partisan stories, bringing with it the idea of professional journalism to support the notions of objectivity and neutrality. In light of the difficulties surrounding impartiality and the developments in the ownership patterns of media, it is worth looking at the end effect of reporting in different circumstance related to these themes. Different ideological groups have their own views as to the effect the news media should have. A feminist perspective argues for example that the media should carry out the task of 'minimizing harm and being accountable',[13] which does not necessarily mean objective reporting, instead it may require the disclosure of information to the public presented in a way that will empower them to take action if they feel they are being harmed. As Ward states (2009) '[t]he debate now includes such issues as the relationship of ethics and power, media representation and dominant cultures, the social construction of identities, differences in ways of knowing and valuing, and the relationship between the local and global.'[14] Hence,

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[11] McChesney, Robert. W. *The Political Economy of the Media: Enduring issues, emerging dilemmas*. (New York: New Monthly Review, 2008), p. 26

[12] Ibid., p. 28

[13] Ward, Stephen. J. A. "Journalism Ethics," in *The Handbook of Journalism,* ed. K. Wahl-Jorgensen and T. Hanitzsch. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), p. 300

[14] Ibid., p. 304

professional ethics in the media rather than pure impartiality or objectivity can instead be considered in terms of presenting information to the public in order to aid in their understanding and comprehension of information to allow them to make informed decisions and opinions. This view also reinforces the idea of the creation of an "informed public" and hence the ability of the news media to provide a foundation and environment that fosters this is one of the key concepts and roles that must be considered when discussing the role of the media, it is also an idea that becomes particularly important when discussing election coverage.

Reporting accurate and verifiable information aims to create the "…provision of a rich, interpretive dialogue, with and among citizens that aims at "civic transformation."[15] Given that they arguably change the future path of the country in question, one of the political events in which the public seeks and requires the most information in order to carry out informed choice is thus national elections and the associated election campaigns of each running party. In addition to Gamson as mentioned, who holds that a citizen's role is to select his leader, Balkir et al assert "[a] substantial amount of learning about candidate and party positions occurs during a campaign."[16] Much of the scholarship put forward relates to a public participating in some form of selection of their leaders, the degree of the public participation in elections and beyond is dependent on the interpretation. Baker (2001) in particular discusses electoral campaigns and their role in democracy in terms of the political and institutional framework surrounding them. Approaching the election topic generally; given that elections are viewed as a central part of democracy, every

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[15] Ibid., p. 300

[16] Balkır, Canan et al. "Expecting the Unforeseeable: The 2007 Turkish Elections in the Media," *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 2 (June 2008), p. 199

election must effectively "dilute the focus on substantive issue, partly, because they are also crucially concerned with evaluating candidates' personal competence, in its various contested meanings."[17] Around this idea, there are two kinds of democratic ideals, one in which elections have a key central role assuming that elections bring a busy public to order to choose their leaders, the other assumes that elections play a "a vital democratic role but one that is much more precise and institutionally limited."[18] The former view perceives elections as embodying the entire political process, whereas the latter "assumes that politics takes place primarily in the unregulated public spheres of civil society rather than in elections themselves."[19] In terms of engaging with the public, elections are essentially "legally created frameworks, rely heavily on speech, and conclude with expression that has legal force, namely, votes that place on candidate and not another in office" and therefore rely heavily on the news media to facilitate the two way communications between the public and the political elites.[20] This results in a different interaction of government and media, in which politicians utilise the media in campaigning and for other opportunities.

The content of election coverage differs from normal news production as it is a strategic style of communication and does not resemble everyday political speech. In the two democratic election models that Baker puts forward elections are essential to democracy and the effectiveness of the media must be questioned by questioning whether it communicates the needed information effectively and the types of frames

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[17] Baker, Edwin C. "Implications of Rival Visions of Electoral Campaigns," in *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* ed. W. Lance Bennett et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 345

[18] Ibid., p. 344

[19] Ibid., p. 345

[20] Ibid., p. 346

it puts forward, avoiding cynic frames for example which he argues dampens electoral participation.[21] At the very least the media's coverage "need not bear the weight of being the center of a democratic discourse; … [but] needs to serve fairly the various actual and potential participants in the electoral process."[22] Meaning that, at the very least, a fair and just style of reporting that gives a balanced amount of coverage to all candidates is important.

In its simplest form on the election subject, the media is arguably the primary source of information for the public, as they require a high degree of orientation in terms of candidates, party positioning and the general progression of the elections. Thus, while "[m]edia giants can beam the same images and ideas at a national and global audience in different forms via different media"[23] this subject area is one which cannot give in wholly to global market pressures due to their local nature and instead local media ownership patterns, local agenda issues and the direction in which the country is heading become more apparent. In the Turkish context then, it can be expected that the major ideas on the media agenda and the way in which they are framed and hence being projected to national audiences will help us identify the factors influencing the message formation process.

The process of news production is one that is today dependent on many different actors and processes, with a particular emphasis on the state-media relationship and the way in which this changes according to the economic environment. With the ongoing development of technology, the media is present all

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[21] Ibid., pp. 348-351

[22] Ibid., p. 351

[23] Gamson, William et al. "Media Images and the Social Construction of Reality," *Annual Review of Sociology,* 18 (1992), p. 378

day and every day, blurring the boundaries between private and public lives and political elites are in no real position to escape the media. Bennett (1996) in particular is a scholar that examines and discusses the relationship between the press and politics, arguing that politicians construct their every move according to how it will be perceived through the eye of the media and the public. The press is the medium through which the public view their politicians. Within this framework the expressions of "good press" and "bad press" are easily understood, with the latter being avoided at all costs. This avoidance of bad press is what Bennett terms as "press-politics",[24] in which politicians ensure that the images they are projecting through the news are of success. J. Meyrowitz (1985) handles this idea by arguing that now an individual's private sphere – backstage – has become exposed and is thrust into a public area, or front stage. In Bennett's words, "[i]f wars are to be fought, taxes levied, legislation passed, and approval ratings maintained, the political imperative is to construct and maintain related images that convince people." [25] The political elite effectively rely on the media to ensure the public is being informed in order to maintain the flow of every politics, however, this communications process is also geared towards the creation and presentation of positive images which guarantee public support rather than backlash. In this construct, room for journalistic objectivity is extremely small, instead the management of public images and messages via public relations is relied upon in order to attempt to gain public support. Bennett asserts that the media, in trying to fulfil its traditional role competes

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[24] Bennett, W. Lance. *News: The Politics of Illusion*, 3rd Edition, (New York: Longman Publishers, 1996), p. 2

[25] The initial negativity surrounding Clinton's character is cited and the way in which he handled the press, by avoiding situations in which the press could ask potentially damaging questions and a direct communications campaign during the election are cited as examples of this phenomenon. Ibid. , p. 2

for scoops (personal scandals, character attacks etc.) that will reveal unknown information and ultimately sell news. This relates back to the idea of newsworthiness in which "the news is constructed through a constantly changing set of political moves and adjustments as journalists, politicians, and people seek their own ends through an often imperfect exchange of information."[26] Coupled with this is the character construct in the media versus the actual political behaviour, in order to generate good press "the cosmetic presentation of a newsworthy version of [an] event, a version inspired by concerns about how the actual circumstances might appear to the public"[27] is constructed for the media. In creating images that earn public support, a production of socially accepted and familiar images and events are required. In such an instance, the on-going representation of mainstream views is problematic as it "fails to consider the role of the news in creating and legitimizing official or normal politics in the first place."[28]

In order to highlight the notion of press politics and sound message formation, Bennett cites an analysis of the success of Reagan's communications processes, the most striking element being the precision with which messages were both repeated and maintained throughout the entire administration using for example a "line of the day" and increasing the level of internal communications in order to ensure that messages sent out to the press remained uniform.[29] On the other hand, the consequences for going against the administration's official line are shown with the example of Times reporter Ray Bonner being transferred for exposing U.S official's

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[26] Ibid., p. 7

[27] Ibid., p. 78

[28] Ibid., p. 80

[29] Ibid., pp. 97-98

unruly behaviour in San Salvador under the Reagan administration, facts which were later revealed as true.[30] In Turkey, these kinds of examples are seen on a regular basis with claims that journalists have been removed from their positions for not following the government line. These examples also bring forward the idea of sources used in reporting, whether the majority of sources are official or whether a certain degree of investigative journalism is going on behind the scenes. In Bennett's example during the subject period of his study, 46.5% of sources for Times and Post coverage were U.S. officials or agencies, followed by foreign, international offices or agencies at 27.5% and nongovernmental Americans at 14:4%, highlighting the degree to which an "official" line that is mostly American is preferred.[31] Entman (2004) too examines the way in which the Bush administration framed September 11and subsequent foreign policy acts in such a way that would gain public support via the use of a particular model of framing, which highlights that the "presidential dominance of the news frames allowed little opportunity for journalists to convey or citizens to develop contrary interpretations of political consequence."[32] Given the sensitivity of September 11, the presidential line is seen to have dominated in particular throughout this period, allowing intervention in Afghanistan and later Iraq. One can then argue, depending on the period of time in which events are occurring, politically sensitive and potentially damaging issues will be pushed through the media via official sources in order to ensure coverage that resembles the government's official line. The pressure put upon media organisations will change according to the media system

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[30] Ibid., pp. 104-105

[31] Ibid., p. 107

[32] Entman, Robert M. *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion and U.S Foreign Policy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago UP, 2004), p. 18

and the degree of autonomy it enjoys. This relationship can be observed across almost all existing media systems at differing levels. These studies emphasize that the degree of diversity stems from the number of different voices that exist on the political spectrum in the first instance and to take the argument further and link it to other texts, those that will be listened to. Despite several actors existing, the major players still appear to be the press and politics, with other actors disappearing and reappearing accordingly.

The media's growing dependence on official sources in light of economic pressures results in a lessening in the degree of press accountability and transparency. Bennett (2010) puts forward an "indexing theory" which holds that officials in institutions of government generally make the news and "journalists in various press systems rely on established norms that implicitly filter or "index" the sources and viewpoints in the news according to perceived power balances among factions within political institutions"[33] It is undeniable that a filtering or indexing process occurs in news production, yet if the same sources and viewpoints are exhausted the diversity of media coverage and thus public debate will stagnate causing only governmentally endorsed stories to trickle down. This process is touched upon in other forms by Chomsky (1997) who criticises the Western centric nature of the news, Christensen (2005) who describes the nature of the global news production system, focusing on the US / Western centric nature of international news and Castells (2009) who looks at the power dynamics existent in the networks that made up the news, particularly ownership structures. All of these views involve a power play in the news production process which determines the nature, tone and presentation of the news being

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[33] Bennett, W. Lance. "The Press, Power and Public Accountability," in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism.* ed. Stuart Hall, (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 107

presented to the public. In order to highlight the effects of the indexing theory, Bennett uses the Iraq war and the later Abu Ghraib examples to pinpoint how the American press virtually became hostage to the Bush Administrations views, so much so that the Washington Post and New York Times issued apologies to their readership.[34] Hampton (2010) too makes similar conclusions about the press-politics relationship maintaining that the media favours official sources, partially constructed by the release of information and flow of information itself. If the media and journalists are reliant on sources, a need fuelled by the lack of budgetary allocations, then the news being produced is in line with official views and does not take into account opposing narratives,[35] citing the War in Iraq as an example; "so long as the public (and especially the elites) remained broadly united in support of the war, mainstream media were fairly uncritical of in their coverage; critical coverage followed, rather than led, the shift in public opinion."[36] This notion diminishes the effectiveness of the media as carrying out its role as the fourth estate in the political landscape of any given country. Entman and Paletz (1980) devote an article to the way in which politicians interact with the press, emphasising in particular the fact that due to the political elite being the sources of information, especially top level politicians, they control the flow of information and can release or withhold information as they wish, testing the waters for possible policy in order to gauge the public's opinion or later present a less drastic policy that appears to be a compromise when in fact the publicly introduced policy was the original policy proposal.

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[34] Ibid., p. 108

[35] Ibid., pp. 9-10

[36] Hampton, Mark. "The Fourth Estate Ideal in Journalism History," in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism.* ed. Stuart Hall, (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 10

The Political Economy of the Media

The proximity between press and politics and the way in which news is produced is intrinsically tied to the economy supporting the media industry. It is true that each media system is tied to a unique business environment and this is in turn linked to the political system in some shape or form. Yet despite the majority of literature having a US-centric focus, the subjects raised by leading scholars, McChesney in particular, are important to discuss as many countries with a functioning media have experienced a period of neo-liberalism which has let the power of the market flow into the political and economic system.[37] To delve further into the subject of neo-liberalism, we are effectively living in a society in which "neoliberal initiatives are characterized as free market policies that encourage private enterprise and consumer choice, reward personal responsibility and entrepreneurial initiative, and undermine the dead hand of the incompetent, bureaucratic, and parasitic government, which can never do good (even when well intentioned, which it rarely is)."[38] Such a picture posits private against public in a relationship in which private is always the do-gooder and it is best for the public not to interfere.

To outline the development of the political economy of the media in the US, McChesney begins with a discussion of the history of journalism and as discussed, highlights that the idea of professional journalism emerging in the twentieth century

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[37] Please see Baldwin (1993), Harvey (2007) for discussions on neoliberalism and its roots Yalman et al (2010) for the transition to neoliberalism in middle class countries amongst others for relevant literature.

[38] McChesney, p. 283

as a "politically neutral, nonpartisan, professional, even "objective"" profession[39]

after a period of government subsidization. This pattern can also be observed in

South European countries or Latin America, many governments making a move to

democracy and neo-liberalism later and hence the relationship between the state and

media is extremely close due to subsidization, even ownership by politicians and / or

families. After the onset of commercial interests occurred, McChesney argues a

change in the way reporting was being conducted was observed, with a tendency

towards advertising and sensationalism to ensure readership and bring in revenue.[40]

McChesney's description of this reality's manifestation in the socio-political

realm appears to be rather cynical as he describes it as working best when democracy

is functioning but when the public is not involved in decision making, meaning a

depoliticized citizenry.[41] In terms of the media, if one is to assume a depoliticized

citizenry, no action is taken towards changing the economic balances in society as

corporations are the influencing actors on the media and the political process with

their vast resources. This therefore reinforces a system which perpetuates their

position of advantage. McChesney goes further to cite Chomsky and Herman (1988)

to follow on from Chomsky's ideas that despite democracy being a cornerstone of

any post-capitalist society, flaws in democracies that view themselves as the ultimate

democracy exist. In terms of news formation

> [t]he mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and
> symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain,
> and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and
> codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures
> of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major

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[39] Ibid. p. 26

[40] Ibid., p. 28

[41] Ibid., p. 285

conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda. In countries where the levers of power are in the hands of a state bureaucracy, the monopolistic control over the media, often supplemented by official censorship, makes it clear that the media serve the ends of a dominant elite. It is much more difficult to see a propaganda system at work where the media are private and formal censorship is absent. This is especially true where the media actively compete, periodically attack and expose corporate and governmental malfeasance, and aggressively portray themselves as spokesmen for free speech and the general community interest. What is not evident (and remains undiscussed in the media) is the limited nature of such critiques.[42]

For Chomsky then "it is impossible to be a proponent of participatory democracy and at the same time a champion of capitalism or any other class-divided society."[43] In the absence of real market competition, Chomsky argues for a restructuring of the media in order to open it up to "anti-corporate, anti-neoliberal perspectives and inquiry"[44] as opposed to the propaganda model that exists today.

Bennett and Entman (2001) too, make similar observations to their fellow scholars. They put forwards two views of the market, one more positive view that holds that open competitive markets enrich the flow of information, whereas the other side of the coin views these as constraints caused by profits, costs and programming decisions.[45] However, they are in agreement with McChesney that together with neo-liberalism, mass media resulted in a professionalization of the media, in which political messages relied on "pollsters, image consultants, press strategists, performance coaches, and the routinization of relations between

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[42] Chomsky, Noam and Edward S Herman, "A Propaganda Model," in *Manufacturing Consent*, (New York: Pantheon, 1988), pp. 1-2

[43] McChesney, p. 287

[44] McChesney, p. 289

[45] Bennett, W. Lance and Robert M. Entman. Introduction to *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* ed. W. Lance Bennett et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.11

journalists and their political sources."[46] As touched upon in the previous section, each newspaper or publication provides its readership with information that allows them to contextualize their everyday lives within a wider social, political and economic context. But all these ideas imply the implementation of these ethics and standards at the journalistic and editorial level. In an increasingly commercialised system, as members of a media organization and profession, individual positions are often at stake of the industry and the organization as a whole, for the failure to adhere to external pressures will ultimately lead to the demise of the organization. Looking at journalism and the media in terms of an industry, according to McNair, market driven forces and profit focused media elites result in "…competitive pressures on the media, and the consequent commercialization of journalism… [which] have driven the standards of political journalism down, undermining democracy itself."[47]

The effects of this obviously change from country to country dependent on the laws and regulations that are in place to foster or hinder the degree of freedom of speech and the level of autonomy provided to the media. In the private sector major media companies focus on the markets that produce the best returns, often meaning overseas markets and resulting in these companies becoming "supranational entities", or else facing the possibility of being bought out by a bigger company.[48] In other countries and media systems survival in the media industry is seen through the division of assets across different sectors, with companies from outside the media sector buying in and a general monopolization occurring in ownership. In essence, without the global media system, companies would not be able to market across the

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[46]Ibid., p. 16

[47] McNair, p. 242

[48] Ibid., p. 316

globe as it "is the necessary transmission belt for business to market their wares across the world; indeed, globalization as we know it could not exist without it."[49]

These developments and changes result in a separation in the way news is shaped; "economic pressures increasingly drive the news business, while sophisticated communication methods developed by politicians and their communication consultants increasingly shape news content"[50] If we assess this from the perspective of traditional media, there exists a tendency to give in to economic pressures and the elites control most of the news production, whereas journalists are left to adhere to the wishes of their editors and their greater news organisations. Given recent developments in technology it must be acknowledged that online news production in increasingly specialised forms, blogging and citizen journalism are emerging as alternative areas of news consumption and public date. This too creates additional commercial pressures on the traditional media as audiences move to alternative news mediums. In Turkey, Hurriyet newspaper went through significant restructuring in mid-2012, laying off several renowned journalists to streamline their focus on the online counterpart of the print publication.[51] However, from the perspective of the traditional print media, the ability of democracy to reach a wide audience to fulfil its watchdog role is questionable. The traditional news media's inability to generate "feedback" which would ideally allow for "political ideas... to be criticized, modified, and reacted to by the general public" and aid in "dealing effectively with the problems of society" undermines this watchdog function.[52]

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[49] Ibid., p. 317

[50] Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, p. xi

[52] Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, pp. 27-29

Hence, when bringing critical societal or political issues to the fore the required arena for debate and an analysis of the facts is not produced. In such an environment, an institutional model that embodies checks and controls on the way the media reports politics is required to prevent the increased influence of commercial forces and allow for effective action.[53] Within the concept of a neo-liberal media, Bennett, rather pessimistically, defines the news as "what politicians promote, news organizations produce, technologies transmit, and people consume at any moment in history"[54] and bases this one three problems "the overwhelmingly private (corporate) ownership of the media [...] the resistance to government support for public broadcasting (compounded by weak government regulations imposed on commercial broadcasters) and [...] the professional norms of independence and political neutrality shared by most journalists."[55] In the first instance, the news itself becomes a commercial product seen with the popularity of shows such as *60 Minutes* and *Dateline* in the US. Secondly, given the idea that the media should remain independent of the government, instead critiquing politics, fuels a laissez-faire approach to the press and opens the door to neutrality in reporting, resulting in similar news production. The difference between sources is attributed to differences in packaging - "length, pace, sound track, anchor personalities, writing styles" - and these voices in the news consistently tend to be government officials, insiders and experts emerging from circles surrounding the capital.[56] Underwood's (2001) arguments are in line with Bennett's as he highlights the importance of profits,

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[53] Ibid., p. xv

[54] Ibid., p. 26 Emphasis in original

[55] Ibid., p. 9

[56] Ibid., p. 18-19

posing the question of whether publics are now "citizens" or "consumers".[57] One of the most important effects of commercialisation has been a decrease in funding, with a focus on a more business style of running the media industry; this has resulted in a drop in resources for journalism and reporting, but also a change in newspaper structures themselves. In Turkey it is known that certain business pages, the insurance pages in particular, are bought out on an annual basis for a certain price determined by publications, which guarantees companies news coverage. Hence, there is an increasing pattern that emerges in which money drives the news production process, without a proper balance in reporting. Underwood cites Jon Katz in using the terminology "New News" to describe the characteristics of the media in the post-neoliberal world in which there exists a profit oriented media nature in comparison to previous coverage.[58]For Katz, news must not inform, but must effectively entertain in order to be consumed by a wide enough audience to generate profits and also bring in advertising revenue. The effects of the changing nature of the news media and news production processes will be discussed at length in the next section; however it is important to note that a lack of audience threatens the existence of individual publications and news organisation, therefore an orientation towards packaging news content can be observed. In this analysis then, the notion of a space in which the public are able to evaluate information and attempt to use agency is bleak in terms of empowering and engaging citizens.

Effects on News Coverage

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[57] Underwood, Doug. "Reporting and the Push for Market-Oriented Journalism: Media Organizations as Businesses," in *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* ed. W. Lance Bennett et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.100

[58] Ibid., p. 109

The above sections have offered an overview of the existing debate on the traditional

role of the media, the actors and factors involved in the news making process, with a

focus on the press-politics relationship, and the way in which the political economy

of the media has changed the characteristics of the media over the years to make the

media industry a more profit oriented entity. The ultimate effect of this on the news is

highlighted through the commercialisation process, yet it is important to look at how

these effects manifest in the actual end product, the news.

Entertainment is tied to the idea of sensationalism, framing and producing

news that is sensational or entertaining in nature rather than just factual to increase

audience engagement. McChesney observes that in the US, when the competition in

the media landscape was widespread, sensationalism did not present an issue;

however, in the absence of this there are no other newspapers to counter the coverage

of major newspapers. McChesney goes further to outline three problematic biases

within professional journalism; a reliance on official sources, an avoidance of

contextualization together with the rise of public relations and the reinforcement of

the commercial aims of media owners.[59] A reliance on sources to legitimize stories

also explains the proximity between journalism and political officials.[60] For

McChesney, the combination of the first two biases results in a politics stripped bare

of "meaning"[61] ultimately opening the door to the corporate world of public relations,

creating a foundation for PR reps to be "able to shape the news to suit the interests of

their mostly corporate clientele" because the media relies on these sources to validate

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[59] McChesney, pp. 30-34

[60] Ibid. p. 31

[61] Ibid. p. 34

information.[62]

In the new era of commercialisation, the notion of newsworthiness gains importance. That which is newsworthy is more likely to be consumed, by a wider audience, and hence is preferred by news and media organisations. This notion of newsworthiness is then something which is sought after not only by media organisations, but also by actors taking place in the media, with many political actors playing to the entertainment dimension of the media. In regards to this Kellner's (2010) puts forward the "media spectacle". According to Kellner, with an increased level of competition between newly emerging digital news sources and forms, political events are covered in the form of the media spectacle "including the packaging, promotion and display of commodities and the production and effects of all media."[63] Kellner uses the 2008 US Presidential campaign to highlight the forms of media spectacles that are produced and also their varying degrees of success. As a political figure, Kellner defines Obama as "a master of the spectacle", through his stagecraft and speeches, Obama presented an unwavering character that he was able to sustain throughout the entire campaign.[64] In comparison, the Republicans attempts to make an anti-Obama spectacle failed due to the inconsistency of projected messages. The ability to master the spectacle is dependent on those manufacturing it; however, one can conclude that it can be assured that the spectacle itself, whether negative or positive, will gain coverage.

Adding to these discussions of the effects of commercialisation is Delli Carpini

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[62] Ibid. p. 33

[63] Kellner, Douglas. "Media Spectacle, Presidential Politics, and the Transformation of Journalism," in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism.* ed. Stuart Hall, (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 117

[64] Ibid., pp. 118-125

et al and their arguments, based on the idea that "politics is largely a mediated experience; that political attitudes and actions result from the interpretation of new information through the lenses of previously held assumptions and beliefs; and that these lenses are socially constructed from a range of shared cultural sources."[65] So much so that distinguishing between what is news and what is not is becoming increasingly difficult. One important observation made by Delli Carpini et al that is worth noting is that as individuals we are "*simultaneously* citizens, consumers, audiences, family members, workers and so forth."[66] Within this concept, the information that is being fed to us is filtered through all of these lenses and applied accordingly, making it harder to define what information requires of us a critical approach to its analysis. Hence, Delli Carpini et al make a distinction between "public affairs" and "popular media" highlighting that the term public indicates issues that are of importance to the citizenry and hence arguably require a different approach to the latter. They go further to argue that with economic changes the new focus of profit makes "this new media environment present a direct challenge to the authority of elites – journalists, policy experts, public officials, academics, and the life – who served as gatekeepers under the old system."[67] Within the analysis, the authors touch upon the ideas of *hyperreality* and *multiaxiality*. Hyperreality involves an issue which has its own reality, leaving the audience unable to determine what is reality and what is a representation, nor able to understand the modes of its representation. In this case there is "no consensus on the facts or their significance

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[65] Original idea is taken from Edelman in text. Delli Carpini, Michael X and Bruce A. Williams, "Let Us Infotain You: Politics in the New Media Environment," in *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy,* ed. W. Lance Bennett et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 161.

[66] Ibid., p. 161

[67] Ibid., p. 167

because there is no longer a clear cut distinction between facts and their representation".[68] Multiaxiality is used to describe the changing nature of the media, in that hyperreality is followed by struggles in the media relating to "the expansion of politically relevant media and the blurring of genres" and "the expansion of media outlets and the obliterating of the normal news cycle" which brings non-political actors into the sector.[69] All these different definitions emerged with the commercialisation of the media. Bennett additionally observes that with the move to electronic media and what he terms "electronic democracy"[70] information become personalised, driving people into consuming only the media which interests them, resulting in the formation of groups of loyal audiences to one particular news type. The social implications that arise from this idea are of great concern; with greater personalisation in media consumption comes a narrower insight into the whole social, cultural or political landscape as seen through the lens of the media. This ultimately undermines the principles of the news media.

Methodological Approaches

Today, the demand for information makes the links between the public sphere and the media even closer, the "globalised news culture of the twenty first century makes journalists ever more dependent on the political sphere for stories, and less willing to accept traditional codes and conventions as to the appropriate subject matter and

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[68] Ibid., p. 171

[69] Ibid., p. 173

[70] Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, p. x

style of coverage.'[71] Therefore, rather than the channels through which messages are being put forward by the media, it is the way in which the information for messages themselves is packaged and what information they contain and omit that are important in determining the way in which the public is "informed". This section briefly looks at the kind of methodological approaches employed in studying the news media coverage and their effectiveness in engaging with the data and generating accurate results. The primary focus for these studies are agenda setting, framing and priming and though none of these are applied for the methodology for this study, they do serve as a framework for understand the way in which to approach newspaper coverage in the print media. Additionally, the final part of this discussion includes a methodological framework which could be used to broaden this study and further validate the results achieved.

Agenda setting and framing are all ideas that refer to the filtering and packaging of information in a certain way that leads to certain topics being on the public agenda in accordance with a set of certain beliefs, dependent on the media sources from which they obtain them. These ideas work on the basis that "media can make certain issues or aspects of issues more accessible (i.e. easily recalled) for people and thereby influence the standards they use when forming attitudes about candidates and political issues."[72] Similarly, cultural and social symbols in a given society must be utilized in order to convey messages and images in a way in which the audience can relate them to their everyday environments.

At the first level of conveying information to the public, agenda setting comes

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[71] McNair, p. 245

[72] Scheufele, Dietram A. and David Tewksbury. "Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models", *Journal of Communication* 57, no. 1 (2007), p. 15

into play as it is argued to tell the public what to think about.[73] According to

Coleman (2009) at al "[a]genda setting is the process of the mass media presenting

certain issues frequently and prominently with the result that large segments of the

public come to perceive those issues as more important than others."[74] By setting the

agenda, the media effectively determine the issues and topics being discussed and

debated in the public sphere, however, as touched upon above, agenda setting is

based on "memory-based models of information processing"[75] which means that it

must draw upon societal and cultural values in order to have some resonance in a

particular public. The major characteristic of agenda setting has traditionally

remained in the cognitive area of study. Theoretically, the basic idea of agenda

setting has been the transfer of media salience to the public, meaning that the degree

of attention given by media can affect public perceptions and the levels of public

support. According to Takeshita (2005) "agenda setting theory [is] one of the main

perspectives in mass communication effects research [and] has contributed to public

opinion research by providing an explanation of the role played by the media in

public opinion processes."[76] Generally it is acknowledged that the media determine

what subjects govern the focus of public opinion. Adding priming to this idea, which

implies that increased media salience leads to "the development and expression of

opinions about objects."[77] Kiousis outlines four basic priming attitudinal outcomes of

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[73] McCombs, Maxwell E. and Donald L. Shaw. "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (Summer, 1972), p. 177

[74] Coleman, Renita and H. Denis Wu. "Agenda Setting," in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism.* ed. Stuart Hall, (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 147

[75] Scheufele, Tewksbury. p. 11

[76] Takeshita, Toshio. *"Current critical problems in Agenda-setting research,"* *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 18, no. 3 (2005), p. 275

[77] Kiousis, Spiro. "Agenda-setting and attitudes," *Journalism Studies* 12, no. 3, (June 2011) p. 360

priming: first level priming constituting basic priming – the shaping of opinion and attitudes in correlation to the level of salience and priming – the modification of public attitudes and behaviours. Second level priming consists of attribute priming, focusing on the "characteristics and qualities" of objects and basic attribute priming being when attribute priming leads to opinion formation about objects.[78] In this respect, objects can be issues or actors and Kiousis ultimately tries to make conclusions about the links between media salience and the opinions formed in the public. In moving away from the traditional theoretical framework, agenda setting begins to then resemble framing in the shape of priming. Additionally, as in framing the idea of schema also plays an important role, however agenda setting is primarily focused on the effects of mass communication in the cognitive sense, quoting Shaw (1979) "what a person knows, thinks, believes".[79]

Generally it is acknowledged that the media determine what subjects govern the focus of public opinion, whereas "the newly developed concept of *second level of agenda setting* or *attribute agenda setting* assumes that the media also have an influence on how people make sense of a given theme."[80] This is not to say, however, that agenda setting is an unproblematic method of approaching the study of media and its relationship with publics and politicians and Takeshita discusses three problems associated with agenda setting in the areas of process, identity and environment. Takeshita ultimately asserts that salience, the key concept in agenda setting, has a dilemma of identity, which arose with the onset of the framing method. "Framing research explores how the media cover an issue or event by applying

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[78] Ibid., p. 360

[79] Ibid., p. 361

[80] Takeshita, p. 275

certain frames; and how the media's framing consequently influences people's understanding of that issue or event."[81] Though framing is supposed to measure substance and agenda setting a set of issues, second level agenda setting moves into the realm of attribute agenda setting and begins to cross over with framing. Takeshita argues that both effectively are now researching the same thing. As has been outlined by Kiousis and is too supported by Takeshita, agenda setting is essentially cognitive and deals with telling people what to think *about*, framing on the other hand can cover the cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions.[82] Though priming, Kiousis' study is effectively an attempt to bridge this gap, as it opens up the door to the study of examination of opinion formation, not purely the level of public salience.

Framing, rather than telling the public what to think about, traditionally "is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences."[83] Hence, it is the way in which information is presented which influences its audience. Frames are essential for journalists as they provide a way of organising information and a particular "emphasis on a subset of potentially relevant considerations cause individuals to focus on these considerations when constructing their opinions."[84] Media consumers alter the importance they attach to certain beliefs dependent on the set of considerations the particular publication puts forward at the expense of other

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[81] Ibid., pp. 279-280

[82] Ibid., p. 284

[83] Scheufele, Tewksbury, p. 11

[84] Druckman, James N., "On the Limits of Framing Effects: Who Can Frame?" *The Journal of Politics*, 63, no. 4 (November 2001), p. 1042

considerations, creating a direct link between media elites and the public.[85]

Considering that newspapers use approximately 15 % of the available information on

any given day, the importance of framing becomes apparent in using this information

to both select and generate comprehensible and coherent message.[86]

In the classical sense, Entman et al (2009) assert that "what matters above all

are the effects of single framing messages on individual citizens' opinions about one

policy or candidate."[87] Introducing the idea of framing with the much quoted framing

conceptualisation of Gamson and Modigliani which assumes frames to be "the

central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of

events"[88], Entman et al elaborate on this interpretation by stating that frames act in

"defining problems, making moral judgements, and supporting remedies."[89] Frames

can emerge in different forms, with generic frames involving frames that "can be

identified across different issues and contexts"[90], these can involve ideas such as

human interest, economic consequences and morality, or frames that are constructed

on specific events or individuals versus those including background information or

the evaluation of political strategy and power struggles, perhaps more relevant during

election periods. To then be more precise "a frame repeatedly invokes the same

objects and traits, using identical or synonymous words and symbols in a series of

similar communications that are concentrated in time. These frames function to

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[85] Ibid., p. 1046

[86] McCombs, Shaw, p. 183

[87] Entman, Robert M. et al. "Nature, Sources and Effcts of News Framing." in *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism.* ed. Stuart Hall, (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 175

[88] Gamson and Modigliani quoted in Ibid., p. 175

[89] Ibid., p. 176

[90] Ibid., p. 176

promote an interpretation of a problematic situation or actor and (implicit or explicit) support of a desirable response, often along with a moral judgement that provides an emotional charge."[91] Hence frames work on cultural schema and at the elite and professional level to reach individuals through communications, often with repetition helping the success of frames. In terms of approaching the study of framing, the analysis focuses on an in depth examination of the frame, which can take a paragraph or sentences or words which construct and build the frame. There are different approaches, each involving a different way to approach the data; a qualitative approach, a manual-holistic approach, a manual-clustering approach and a computer assisted approach. Regardless of which approach taken, Scheufele et al (2007) make an interesting point in stating that some researchers "have taken a very narrow approach to framing and have experimentally manipulated the description of decision situations while holding the content of the message absolutely constant. This, of course, gets at the very essence of what framing is and maximizes the internal validity of a study because it restricts framing very narrowly to an effect of presentation and modality. As a result, however, it may also limit the external validity of the concept, given that the effects of messages in the real world are likely an outcome of both content and framing."[92] In this respect, when conducting the study of framing it is important to keep in mind both the internal validity, whilst simultaneously acknowledging the end effects of this particular communications process.

Entman has written extensively on the media's role in democracy, with a particular focus on politicians and their relationship with the news media and

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[91] Ibid., p. 177

[92] Scheufele, Tewksbury, p.18

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inclusive of the methodology that can be utilized. In his examination of US foreign policy Entman (2004) discusses the role of framing foreign policy in the news in reference to specific events, most significantly focusing on offensive action and intervention. Whereas the media is conventionally interpreted as scrutinising the government, Entman asserts that "in practice, the relationship between governing elites and news organizations is less distant and more cooperative than the ideal envisions, especially in foreign affairs."[93] Yet depending on the issue and the way in which it is framed, the level of public acceptance differs according to the ability of the government to frame its policy effectively. Framing can take different forms of objects as its subject matter – political events, issues, and actors – but can also be related to issues or actors.

News media analyses are often conducted with an examination of frames, their standard definition being "selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and /or solution."[94] In order to analyse framing effects, Entman describes the two prevailing approaches – hegemony and indexing. Both approaches assume the media is close to the government, but the hegemony approach "believe[s] that government officials keep the information available to the public within narrow ideological boundaries that democratic deliberation and influence are all but impossible."[95] One of the most important assumptions of the hegemony approach and arguably the reason why it gets its name is that elites agree on "first principles"

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[93] Entman, Robert M. *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion and U.S Foreign Policy*. (Chicago: University of Chicago UP, 2004), p.2

[94] Ibid., p. 5

[95] Ibid., p. 4

which ultimately "impedes the flow of independent information and consistently (although not inevitably) produces progovernment propaganda".[96] The indexing approach on the other hand focuses on elite disagreement by arguing that "the media "index" or reflect elite debate rather closely."[97] In such an approach, critical policy analysis is not done by the media unless it first appears in the government. Entman puts forward the Cascade Model as an alternative form of framing analysis to fill the gap that he argues emerged after the end of the Cold War, as consensus no longer exists among elites, undermining the hegemony model, whereas the indexing model is argued to not delve further into looking at why certain issues are contested and why other aren't.[98] Additionally, Entman highlights two classes of framing – substantive and procedural, the former "definition effects or conditions as problematic [...] identifying causes [...] conveying a moral judgement [...] endorsing remedies or improvements"[99] whereas the latter "have a narrower focus and function [...] suggest[ing] evaluations of *political actors legitimacy,* based on their *technique, success* and *representativeness.*"[100] This second class of analysis is particularly relevant during election time when competing candidates' performances are commented on daily in the media. It is also outlined that frames are based upon pre-existing schema, which are defined as clusters or nodes of connected ideas and feelings stored in memory."[101] The idea of schemas is extremely important as the

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[96] Ibid., p. 4

[97] Ibid., p. 4

[98] Ibid., p. 5

[99] Ibid., p. 5

[100] Ibid., p. 6

[101] Ibid., p. 7

way in which frames are received by audiences is arguably dependent on this pre-existing knowledge; hence it is a determining factor in the frames that will be used.

Advocates of the "Cascade activation model" are cited as being Hallin, Bennett and Mermin, and Entman states that "[t]he cascading activation model is designed to help explain how thoroughly the thoughts and feelings that support a frame extend down from the White House through the rest of the system – and who thus wins the framing content and gain the upper hand politically."[102] Hence, views in journalists, leaders, the public and the way in which they are activated are examined, meaning the way in which and the extent to which they spread.

Though this model may be too complex to apply to the Turkish situation at this point in time, this study may play a stepping stone role that will enable such models to be used at later stages and further connections between the different actor groups established, determining the balance of power between each on different issues.

Overall, the effects of agenda setting and framing will increase or decrease in relation to the degree of concern, relevance of the topic in the current political climate and the degree of the need for orientation by the public. Regardless of these factors, at the very least, agenda setting determines what the actual media content is going to be and framing draws on the 'stock of schemas' provided by the agenda setting mechanism,[103] in order to promote a particular understanding. These are both key frameworks within which the way news is constructed and its intent can be explored.

Beyond the Scope of America

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[102] Ibid., p. 9

[103] Entman et al. Nature, Sources and Effcts of News Framing, p. 177

As seen above, the media's traditional role, the way in which it functions in modern day socio-political systems and the political economy that the media industry is found within have all been discussed and debated by leading scholars, still with a solution to the increasing domination of capital and political elite governing the media being put forward in different shapes and forms. However, it is evident that these studies and analyses have been largely focused on the US example, without an acknowledgement that the role and functioning of the news media may change depending on the region or the country. Hence, it is important to take a brief look at the discussions surrounding other countries and media systems being put forward.

While the liberal or US model assumes a respect for the freedom of expression, a degree of institutionalisation allowing social actors to voice their opinions freely on the public stage or in the "public sphere" and the existence of organised political bodies and transparency in conduct, Hallin et al's (2004) study is extremely valuable as it offers not only the American model, but three different news media models based on history, the political climate of the countries and journalism as a professional organisation in a comparative framework. While these models do not necessarily need to be taken as a permanent reference, this is the only broad study which discusses the differences in the way in which the press-politics relationships emanates in society. Precisely on this point Hallin et al argue that comparative analysis is essential "[b]ecause it "de-naturalizes" a media system that is so familiar to us, comparison forces us to conceptualize more clearly what aspects of that system actually require explanation."[104]

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[104] Hallin, Daniel C. and Paolo Mancini. *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), p.2

By working on an assumption that the Liberal Model of media systems prevails and hence not looking in depth at other media models, scholars risk overlooking significant differences and similarities between models and hence the way in which historical factors can positively or negatively influence the development of media systems. Turkey too fits into this framework, being a media system which has been largely overlooked by the academic arena. Hallin et al argue "that one cannot understand the news media without understanding the nature of the state, the system of political parties, the pattern of relations between economic and political interests and the development of civil society, among other elements of social structure."[105] The comparison of these elements, through aiming to look at how they function and the social systems in which they exist, provides data that ultimately allows the formulation of possible models, hence entailing an empirical analysis. Hence, despite Hallin et al's study being a preliminary study with minimal data, it offers a guiding framework for analysis of the press politics relationship.

As a starting point of analysis, Hallin et al identify four key areas on which studies can focus on:

- the development of media markets
- political parallelism: extent to which the media system reflects the major political divisions in society
- the development of journalistic professionalism
- the degree and nature of state intervention in the media system

The first area relates to the "development of the mass circulation press", a development of which reflects strongly in today's society with extremely high circulation rates in the Scandinavian countries compared to extremely low rates

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[105] Ibid., p. 8

throughout the Mediterranean.[106] An important point Hallin et al make in relation to this is "[s]o far as we know no country that did not develop mass circulation newspapers in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century has ever subsequently developed them, even if its levels of literacy and pattern of political and economic development have converged with those of the high-circulation countries."[107] Hence, the foundations for the development of news media gains importance in ensuring its extent and reach within a social framework.

Political parallelism relates to the way in which the media interacts and reports the political characteristics of the political environment it functions within. As discussed, one of the proposed aims of the media is to ensure an informed citizenry, allowing it to make informed decisions at critical times such as elections, referendums and so forth. Yet despite neutrality being a value commonly raised in the news media debate, the degree of political parallelism in comparison to neutrality differs greatly across media systems and to different effects. Hallin et al propose the components of political parallelism to be "*media content* - the extent to which the different media reflect distinct political orientations in their news and current affairs reporting", "*organizational connections* between media and political parties or other kinds of organizations", "*tendency for media personnel to be shaped by their political affiliations,*""*partisanship of media audiences* with supporters of different parties or tendencies" and "*journalistic role orientations and practices*. Journalists in some systems [...] retain more of the "publicist" role that once prevailed in political journalism"[108] As can be expected, the greater the influence of politics on the media,

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[106] Ibid., p. 22

[107] Ibid., p. 23

[108] Emphasis in original. Ibid., p. 28

meaning the level of political parallelism, the more the risk of polarization and biased coverage increases. The authors tie these elements to the concept of external and internal pluralism, the former being pluralism reached throughout the "media system as a whole, through the existence of a range of media outlets or organizations reflecting the points of view of different groups or tendencies in society", whereas the latter "is defined as pluralism achieved within each individual media outlet or organization."[109] The notion of professionalisation places the journalistic profession in a class with others such as medicine and law, yet it is important to note that "[j]ournalism has no such systematic body of knowledge or doctrine"[110] and therefore the way in which it unfolds as a profession is dependent on its social and political environments. Hallin et al highlight dimensions of professionalization such as autonomy, both for individual journalists and as a body of journalists, the existence of professional norms which increase the degree of autonomy and public service orientation meaning an ethical dimension which works towards a public good.[111]

Taking up both political parallelism and professionalization, in a media system in which professionalization is high, "journalism is differentiated as an institution and form of practice from other institutions and forms of practice - including politics"[112]creating an independence which decreases the presence of political parallelism in the media. It is impossible to separate journalism entirely from judgements, yet if the notion of a public good is the driving force behind the news

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[109] Ibid., p. 29

[110] Ibid., p. 33

[111] Ibid., pp. 35-37

[112] Ibid., p. 38

media and reporting, the information and the way in which it will be presented to the public will arguably be more balanced and hence a lower level of commentary will exist.

Given that media systems and even economic systems generally grow out of a state apparatus, a continued or diminished role of the state determines the level of political influence over the media. Hallin et al highlight that "public broadcasting has been the most important form of state ownership of media",[113] however, at some point in time, many countries have experienced state owned news agencies, newspapers or other media-related enterprises, as well as establishing press subsidies.[114] Most significantly, regulations and laws that hinder the media's expansion and coverage ability are signs of heavier state intervention, as opposed to systems in which "the media are left primarily to market forces, and systems in which social democratic [...] traditions are manifested in a larger state role in the ownership, funding, and regulation of media."[115] In comparison to Europe, without the welfare state model foundation, Mediterranean countries are more inclined to clientelistic relationships due to the focus being taken off the notion of a public good.[116] Politically, the authors make a distinction between majoritarian politics and consensus politics which too influence the way in which the media is viewed within the political system. In majoritarian political frameworks, the media is seen as "a neutral servant of the public as a whole rather than as a spokesperson of a particular political tendency or social group" whereas consensus systems are generally

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[113] Ibid., p. 43

[114] Ibid., p. 43

[115] Ibid., p. 44

[116] Ibid., p. 50

multiparty systems in which "external pluralism [...] is more likely in the media system [...] along with other aspects of political parallelism."[117] In these models, the ability to transition to professionalization is determined by the control of the political majority.

The authors also make a distinction between individualized pluralism, in which "political representation is conceived and organized in terms of the relationship between governing institutions and individual citizens, along with a multiplicity of competing "special interests"" and organized pluralism, in which "organized social groups are more central to the political process."[118] The importance of the inclusion of such interest groups, corporatism, becomes evident when assessing the role of the media in Northern and West-Central Europe, which played a role during the development of the political and media systems. Organized pluralism is connected to external pluralism and political parallelism, a media landscape tied to and reflecting politics and social groups and giving way to clientelistic relationships. Clientelism on the other hand is stalled by the development of a rational-legal authority, meaning "a form of rule based on adherence to formal and universalistic rules of procedure."[119] Rational-legal authority manifests itself in the everyday political set-up, reflecting the degree of institutionalization of political processes via an autonomous public administration system. This authority ensures that processes are governed according to specific regulations and standards, allowing equal opportunity and eliminating political bias and clientelism. In terms of the media, media regulations, allocations of press subsidies and other areas are likely to be embodied in a rational-legal authority

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[117] Ibid., p. 51

[118] Ibid., p. 53

[119] Ibid., p. 55

that is separate from government and party control, and hence reduces the risk of political instrumentalization of the media. Given the fact that they "require formal codification of procedures and information, and their public accessibility [...they] thus provide relatively fertile ground for the development of journalism."[120] Therefore, such a framework provides a pathway for the development of journalistic professionalization. Clientelism on the other hand "refers to a pattern of social organization in which access to social resources is controlled by patrons and delivered to clients in exchange for deference and various forms of support."[121] In a system based on clientelistic relationships, the notion of the public good is overridden by individual interests and without rational-legal authority to prevent such relationships, a system of bias and favouritism flourishes. In these types of media systems, instrumentalization of both public and private media can be observed, with private business owners having "political connections, which are essential to obtaining government contracts and concessions [...] and in many other ways necessary for the successful operation of a business."[122] This is echoed by a high level of political parallelism, with media favouring their political party of preference and preventing the professionalization of journalism. Pluralism can be either moderate or polarized, in that cleaves between parties and between ideological differences are vast. In light of the above discussed factors, media systems are separated into three different models: Polarized Pluralist, Democratic Corporatist and the Liberal Model, observed in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean, Northern Europe and Scandinavia and North Atlantic regions respectively. The characteristics

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[120] Ibid., p. 56

[121] Ibid., p. 58

[122] Ibid., p. 58

of each model are categorised according to the factors discussed, however it is worth briefly summarising the main characteristics of each model. The Polarized Pluralist Model has a high degree of state intervention and political interference, with ideological ties valued over the notion of a public or common good. Consumption of news media is low and commentary style journalism prevails in the absence of a ration-legal authority and a high level of external pluralism. In contrast, the Democratic Corporatist Model puts "a strong emphasis on the role of organized social groups in society, but simultaneously by a strong sense of commitment to the "common good" and to rule and norms accepted across social divisions."[123] Based on a history of social welfare, this model differs from the Liberal Model in that the state is entrusted with maintaining the flow of information to a citizenry that has an extremely high level of news consumption and institutionalization of journalism. The Liberal Model is more individualistic but the state's role is also minimal, with markets determining the flow of information. Professionalization of journalism is high, yet not formally institutionalized as in Democratic Corporatist countries.[124] Both of the latter two models have a rational-legal authority which determines the way in which journalism as a profession functions, this is stronger in the Democratic Corporatist model.

As seen here in this extensive overview of Hallin et al's framework, the basis of the news media remains the same across different media systems, however the way in which the media functions, its relationships with politics and the public and the economy sustaining it manifests differently in each country. This study puts forward the importance of firstly accepting the differences between media systems,

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[123] Ibid., p. 298

[124] Ibid., pp. 298-299

but also the developmental and political factors which influence the way each model functions today.

In looking at further studies of alternative media systems it is apparent that Spain and Greece in particular are characterised by a late move to democracy, a heightened role of the state and an instrumentalization of the media which can be then be linked to political parallelism existing in their own media systems. Canel focuses on the study of Spain quite extensively and her 2004 study with Sanders focuses on the way in which public figures utilize the media, with a focus on Spanish President Jose Maria Aznar and Felipe Gonzalez's representation in the media.

In Spain a late transition to democracy and neo-liberalism can be observed and the laissez faire approach ensures that the Spanish media is a competitive landscape, ending state monopoly. To summarise, "Spain's media consumption is characterised by low levels of newspaper readership, a significant sports and gossip magazine market, relatively high levels of radio audience and, above all, a television-dominated market driven by sports and fiction consumption."[125] Additionally the press politics relationship in Spain has seen political ties historically playing to the advantage of particular media groups, with media purchases which lean more towards the government but fall outside of the regulatory framework being cited. Hence, no rational-legal authority regulating the sales and purchases of media companies exists. This idea relates to the notion of a rational legal authority – it not existing in Spain. On the other hand political coverage in Spain is legally restricted from "reporting on the private lives of individuals [... which] exist in both Spain's

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[125] Sanders, Karen and Maria Jose Canel. "Spanish Politicians and the Media: Controlled Visibility and Soap Opera Politics,*" Parliamentary Affairs* 57, no. 1 (January 2004), p. 201

penal and civil code."[126] This law coupled with the provision for the freedom of speech, result in the type of reporting being left to the journalist, and it is here that Sanders et al discuss trends in Spanish journalism, with an older generation of journalists seeking to help the "development and consolidation of the democratic system "whereas the later generation appears to be "more impartial, factual and critical".[127] Canel et al (2006) further their study of a tabloidist tradition examining how journalism is carried out looking at investigative journalism comparatively in Spain and Britain in terms of publicity, accountability and solidarity, namely uncovering wrongdoing and holding those responsible accountable in the public eye – a view extremely close to the original roles envisaged for the media.[128] In terms of investigative journalism, the quality of subject matter of Spanish reporting appears to be focused on government misconduct, whereas in the UK individual politicians appear to have been focused on in their personal and political lives. This can be attributed to the existing legal framework in Spain, however, also may give an indication of the state of democracy. Canel et al find that subject areas such as the system in which the journalists work in, the way in which the story is crafted – often beginning with a tip which needs to be verified – and the way in which investigation was accepted by society and the profession, Spain being more adverse to investigative means than Britain. In this context, if journalism as a profession has long history of investigative reporting, critically calling the government to account for its actions, it is more likely to be accepted by the public. However, if there is a

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[126] Ibid., p. 204

[127] Ibid., p. 204

[128] Sanders, Karen and Maria Jose Canel. "A scribbling tribe: Reporting political scandal in Britain and Spain," *Journalism* 7, no. 4 (n.d 2006), p. 454

lack of support for journalism and its progression, the degree of freedom and autonomy journalists have will also have will be restricted, giving the government more power to apply pressure on the publication.

Ultimately, the subject matter and source is extremely important when it comes to investigative journalism as these will determine the degree to which resources are allocated, the importance and relevance of the story to the public and whether it is worth positioning the news organisation against the government.

Papathanassopoulos discusses the commercialization of the media and journalism in Greece, particularly focusing on the constraints created by the media on the journalistic profession. According to Papathanassopoulos, "media organizations reflect the differences between political systems, political philosophies, cultural traits and economic conditions." [129] In the case of Greece, changing political systems do not change the way journalists' view their work, instead a journalistic system still heavily tied to news organisations prevails. The traditional criteria cited by all discussed texts, such as autonomy and impartiality, are also mentioned by Papathanassopoulos, giving priority to serving the public interest.

Papathanassopoulos asserts that there has been "a shift away from "hard" news, especially parliamentary news, foreign news, culture and investigative stories [...] a convergence with a tabloid agenda, including police and crime news [...] and [...] more features focused on the problems encountered in everyday life" in Greece.[130] This appears to manifest itself most clearly through change in content, with a greater focus on the local citizen and an increase in the length of reports and

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[129] Papathanassopoulos, Stylianos. "Media Commercialization and Journalism in Greece," *European Journal of Communication* 16, no. 4 (December 2001), p. 506

[130] Ibid., p. 510

news, particularly sensational news. Papathanassopoulos contrasts the printed press, which he argues is extremely partisan and states that publications lose any semblance of independent judgement whenever topics have political implications. Based on commercialization putting journalists in a privileged position in Greece whilst simultaneously continuing an absence of impartiality due to organisational pressures and journalists' role as the voice of the people, Papathanassopoulos highlights that the absence of a "strong, truly independent journalistic body of ethics, capable of expressing the rules and conditions of professional behaviour in its own right",[131] is a major factor in the current day state of the Greek media system, together with the financial power the media owners hold in different sectors, maintaining political ties.

Overall, the press politics relationship is a continuous part of the news media's existence and, as seen, this point is strongly emphasised and examined in different ways. The pressure politics applies on the press is perhaps, in its most extreme form clientelism, as such a trend determines the strength of news organisations, the selection of subjects to report and the framing of political issues, the sources quoted and ultimately the way in which news is produced and the end messages that are being put forward to the public. As seen in regards to Spain, government proximity to the media can be seen through ownership structures, however also, the way in which political elites use the news media to project their own messages. Clientelism relates directly to the distribution of power across the media landscape in a given country and hence this could be argued to be one of the greatest obstacles to the establishment of a free press. Hallin and Papathanassopoulos (2002) focus on this through examining the political and media ties in Latin America and Europe, stating that none of these forms of clientelism exist independently; rather they exist within

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[131] Ibid., p. 519

"a complex relationship with other forms of political organization".[132] In the media, clientelism exists against the professional norms of impartial reporting and often "undercuts the development of horizontally organized mass political parties, particularly those representing the working class."[133] Much in the fashion of Hallin and Mancini's book on comparative media systems, Hallin et al outline key characteristics of Latin American and southern European media systems; low levels of newspaper circulation, a tradition of advocacy journalism with a focus on opinion and commentary, the instrumentalization of privately-owned media usually associated with using media property for political ends, the politicization of public broadcasting and broadcast regulation and limited autonomy. They also define clientelism as "a pattern of social organization in which access to social resources is controlled by patrons and delivered to clients in exchange for deference and various kinds of support."[134] The later transition to democracy in some countries means that without the establishment of the required political and legal institutions clientelism can foster and hence the importance of looking at the political economy dimension of the media to determine ownership patterns and whether these have a direct relation on the news produced emerges as important. Hallin et al state "[o]ne advantage of the concept of clientelism is that it gets beyond a common dichotomy that limits the sophistication of our thinking about the political economy of the news media, the dichotomy between the liberal perspective, for which democratization of the media is purely a matter of the elimination of state interference, and the critical political

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[132] Hallin, Daniel C. and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos. "Political clientelism and the media: Southern Europe and Latin America in comparative perspective," *Media Culture Society* 24, no. 2 (March 2002), p. 176

[133] Ibid. p. 176

[134] Ibid., p. 185

economy perspective, which has focused on the control of media by private capital, but has until now not been very sophisticated in its analysis of variations in the relation of capital to the state, political parties and other institutions."[135]

Beginning with an in depth discussion of Hallin and Macini's different media models and the criteria they put forward to analyse and compare media systems, the existence of these criteria or characteristics to be more precise was discussed in relation to Spain, Greece and the concept of clientelism in a Latin American context. In each of these examples, the proximity of the politics – press relationship differs from that that Bennett, McChesney and the alike put forward for America in not so much the end product, but the definition of the relationships itself. Commercialization has appeared to have led to a decrease in funding and hence a tendency to rely on political resources, coupled with the growing presence of the media in the lives of political elite and their hence having to play the news coverage game in North America, yet in the latter countries, these commercial pressures and the presence of the news media are arguably heightened by the direct influence many politicians have over media organisations. Therefore, while elite messages are arguably produced across the media spectrum regardless of the country system, the level of political parallelism and in the case of Turkey, polarization, is much greater. When using this background information to then assess the Turkish situation, the way in which the media developed, the kinds of ownership structures that exist and hence the press-politics relationship and to some extent the journalistic profession are elements to reflect on when evaluating the news coverage.

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[135] Ibid., p. 184

CHAPTER 3

THE TURKISH MEDIA

The Media Landscape in Turkey

This chapter seeks to begin with an overview of the Turkish media today before moving on to literature which describes the development of the Turkish media over the past two decades and a discussion of studies handling the past two Turkish national elections. Given that the academic literature and debate available on the development and the state of the Turkish media is limited, the literature is discussed in length; however, the societal debates, criticisms and assumptions regarding the media in Turkey are wide and give indications of the current state of the media.

Debates have begun to dominate the agenda more prominently over the past two years in particular. These have been associated with the arrests of journalists under the suspicion of their involvement in an underground terrorist organisation plotting against the AKP government, four of these journalists only just released after spending over a year in jail. [136]

Coupled with this has been the resignation of many prominent and respected journalists and who have been criticised openly by the governing AKP, as well as the changing nature of news organisations. Ece Temelkuran, a former journalist at major

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[136] CNN Turk. 12 March 2012. *Ahmet Şık ve Nedim Şener'e tahiye*. (Release for Ahmet Sik and Nedim Sener). Available [online]: "http://www.cnnturk.com/2012/turkiye/03/12/ahmet.sik.ve.nedim.senere.tahliye/652761.0/index.html" [14 March 2012].

Dombey, Daniel. 12 March 2012. *Four Turkish Journalists released from Jail.* Available [online]: "http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4c973a24-6c6e-11e1-b00f-00144feab49a.html#axzz1q25KU0vr; http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/four-turkish-journalists-released-by-court.aspx?pageID=238&nid=15855" [13 March 2012].

daily newspaper Haberturk, was let go from the news organisation for what she asserts is "the price for speaking your mind".[137] Similar situations can also be seen in regards to Turkish news channel NTV, from which two prominent reporters – Banu Guven and Can Dundar- parted ways and programs critical of the government have also been lifted.[138] Turkey is listed as number 148 on Reporters Without Borders' press freedom index, significantly behind countries touched upon such as Spain, Portugal, Greece, Italy and Brazil.[139] This situation has reached a point where not only part of the Turkish public are criticising the government, but foreign observers have begun interpreting these as moves taken by the AKP to silence opposition and openly criticising the AKP and Erdogan. Press freedom in Turkey is repeatedly criticised by the EU Commission in regards to press freedom and corruption in the ownership of the media[140], the Economist also has openly criticised PM Erdogan's silencing of the press in articles at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011, highlighting the EU commission's progression report on Turkey – highly critical of the situation of press freedom – and the Sik / Sener case.[141]

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[137] Vatan. 07 January 2012. *Neden Kovulduğunu Açıkladı* (Announced why she was fired) Available [online]: "http://haber.gazetevatan.com/neden-kovuldugunu-acikladi/422646/11/Haber" [14 April 2012].

[138] Kaya, Ezgi. "Investigative Journalism in Corporate Media: Reporters' Perceptions of Investigative Journalism in Turkey" (master's thesis, Boğaziçi University , 2011) has also written briefly on the changing nature of the news media in Turkey, citing the NTV example.

[139] Reporters Without Borders. 25 January 2012. *World Press Freedom Index 2011 / 2012.* Available [online]: "http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2011-2012,1043.html" [13 April 2012].

[140] Europa. 06 May 2011. *Stefan Füle European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Opening address at the High-Level International Conference on Freedom of Expression Speak Up! Freedom of Expression Conference.* Available [online]: "http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/11/313" [13 April 2012].

[141] Economist. 10 March 2011. *A Dangerous Place to be a Journalist.* Available [online]: "http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4c973a24-6c6e-11e1-b00f-00144feab49a.html#axzz1q25KU0vr" [12th December 2011].

Economist. 11 November 2010. *Publish and be Damned*. Available [online]: "http://www.economist.com/node/17472834" [12th December 2011].

Most recently the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) published a report highlighting the state of the media in Turkey, which clearly states "The authorities are waging one of the world's biggest anti-press campaigns in recent history. At least 76 journalists were imprisoned, nearly all on anti-state charges [...] Between 3,000 and 5,000 criminal cases were pending against journalists nationwide at the end of 2011, according to the estimates of Turkish press groups."[142] Highlighting that the "anti-press campaign" has been led by Erdogan, the report goes through the major problematic areas in the Turkish media such as the jailing and intimidation of the press, journalists being seen as enemies of the state and the fact that 70 of the jailed journalists are Kurdish, being jailed for writing pro-Kurdish news defined by the state as terrorism. The report also gives an account of the changing dynamics occurring in the Turkish media since the AKP came to power. It is within this context that the Turkish media must be discussed.

As touched upon by Sahin, Sonmez and Adakli (2010) there has been a structural shift in the Turkish media which has occurred and indicates a foundation for the governing AKP to assert a position of hegemony in the media. Since the beginning of the AKPs first term as government, various scholars (see Adakli 2008) have commented on the realignment in the Turkish media in terms of ownership, fuelled by the 2001 financial crises forcing certain actors out of the media landscape and their assets to move to groups closer to the government. The Dogan Group is described as retaining a significant degree of power in the Turkish media until 2007 through its ownership of several newspaper, TV stations and shares in advertising, but the Group is alleged to have run into disagreements with the government

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[142] Committee to Protect Journalists, *Turkey's Press Freedom Crisis: The Dark Days of Jailing Journalists and Criminalizing Dissent.* (New York: United Book Press, 2012), p. 8

regarding its business dealings outside of the media realm and was subject to a high tax fine amounting to four fifths of the group's market value. [143] Having already begun to sell some of its publications (Vatan and Milliyet, though Milliyet was still in its possession during the period this thesis analyses), the future of the Dogan Group's presence in the media sector is not known, but it has been argued that it has toned down its criticism of the government – a fact that will be confirmed or challenged by this study. The coverage of Sabah will be a particular focus due to the takeover of Sabah and ATV from the Ciner group and their sales to Calik, the CEO of whom is the PM's son-in-law as mentioned by Sahin and Sonmez.

To look at ownership in the context of national elections, the circulation of publications and the way they may have changed over the past decade can be determined by looking at a listing of the top ten newspapers from each election year.

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[143] Yackley, Ayla Jean. 8 September 2009. *Update 3 – Turkey gov't hits media group Dogan with tax fine*. Available [online]: "http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/09/08/turkey-dogan-idUKL815352620090908" [12 October 2012].

Table 1: Newspaper Circulation Numbers 2002-2011

2002	Sales	2007	Sales	2011	Sales
Hurriyet	461,504	Zaman	705,212	Zaman	965,570
Posta	414,382	Posta	662,285	Posta	461,158
Sabah	384,000	Hurriyet	544,050	Hurriyet	442,661
Star	353,783	Sabah	387,501	Sabah	364,762
Zaman	301,694	Takvim	219,729	Sozcu	251,871
Milliyet	280,202	Milliyet	216,511	Haberturk	242,489
Vatan	273,798	Vatan	204,493	Star	164,529
Aksam	206,966	Aksam	173,678	Turkiye	146,769
Takvim	131,892	Gunes	158,253	Milliyet	140,099
Turkiye	122,001	Turkiye	146,126	Aksam	136,731

The most interesting change is the rise of Zaman, which has tripled its sales since

2002. The fact that Zaman newspaper is based on a subscription model and

distributed to several workplaces and individuals free of charge means that these

figures may not be a proper reflection of the real circulation and readership of the

newspaper, however, there is a vast difference in sales between the publication in

second position. Reflecting back on Sonmez (2010), he argued that Zaman's counter

sales were reported to only be 20 thousand in number, in comparison to 880 thousand

in subscription.[144] Obviously there have been changes in these numbers; however,

they still serve to highlight the vast difference between subscription and actual

purchase of the newspaper. Looking at the top five newspapers, Hurriyet has

experienced a drop and loss in readership, while Posta too has also experienced a

drop since 2007 though maintained its position in second rank, Star has dropped

from fourth to seventh with also a significant drop in sales. The greatest drop has

been experienced by Milliyet and Vatan with Milliyet dropping to ninth place almost

pushing it out of the top 10. Despite there being no vast changes in the newspapers in

the top ten, via the changing of owners Sabah, Star and Aksam did move closer to the

government.

Sozcu's rise to fifth rank as an independent newspaper is interesting as it is a

newspaper that began publication in 2004, hence does not have a lengthy history like

its counterparts, and is also known for being critical of the government. Sozcu is the

publication with the second highest increase in circulation, increasing its readership

twofold since being "Gozcu" newspaper in 2003. The rise of this publication may be

an indication of the public's desire to consume more critical content on a media

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[144] Please see Sonmez pp. 52-53

spectrum that is increasingly producing similar news.[145]

Given this picture, the characteristics of journalistic professionalism and rational legal authority raised by Hallin et al (2004) appear to be lacking in Turkey. This notion is supported by Christensen (2007) who had argued that Turkey's media environment does not offer a healthy environment for journalists to carry out their professions due to the laws of the country. The high number of jailed journalists and the changing dynamics in media ownership in Turkey ultimately has an effect on the way news is being produced and often the fact that media owners have strong business interests outside of the media industry implies that there may be a spill over effect into coverage that may protect their business interests elsewhere. These rankings, the ownership patterns and the debates surrounding the Turkish media are important to keep in mind when examining and discussing the data results.

The Development of the Media Industry in Turkey

The Turkish media system, the development and status of journalists in Turkey is a subject area that has largely been ignored in academic study and hence the information available is limited. The Turkish media industry began developing after 1980 together with the influx of neo-liberalism in Turkey, and has today become a highly debated part of the Turkish political landscape. With a history of proximity to the government, many argue that the Turkish media and thus coverage have been characterised by high levels of political parallelism, with an increase since the AKP's first time in parliament. As will be highlighted in the following chapter, in light of

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[145] Sahin, Ismail. 03 April 2012. *9 yılda gazetelere ne oldu?* (What happened to the newspapers in 9 years?) Available [online]: "http://ekonomiservisi.com/9-yilda-gazetelere-ne-oldu-2952.html"
 [3 October 2012].

the lack of critical political coverage and the removal or jailing of several journalists that are known to have criticised the government or presented critical issues such as the Kurdish issue to the media's agenda, the current state of the Turkish media and its ability to fulfil the democratic role of informing audiences are questioned. Hence, the characteristics of the media in Turkey is a topic area worth examining academically, beginning with a look at existing English / Turkish literature.

In a comprehensive dialogue between (former) journalist Devrim Sevimay and fellow journalist and academic Haluk Sahin (2008), the developments in the Turkish media after the 1980 coup are discussed and explained from a journalistic perspective which moves from a landscape in which many voices on the left were silenced after the coup, giving prominence to the military, and evolving to a landscape incorporating different voices with the coming to power of the AKP. The text, separated into chapters relating to specific pinnacle moments or topics in this period of Turkish history, offers a structured framework in which developments in the media are tied in to political events.

Beginning with the time period directly post the 1980 coup, Sahin maintains that the opportunities for journalism decreased due to the restrictions brought on by the military coup in a period of "depoliticization" [146] in which 500 thousand people were arrested, 150 thousand tortured and many hanged, information that is often overlooked or forgotten today.[147] However, one of the main trends of this period that arguably reflects itself in today's political and media landscape is that not all groups of society or factions were treated in the same way. Sahin says that Islamists did not

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[146] Sahin, Haluk. *Liberaller, Ulusalcılar, İslamcılar ve Ötekiler* (Neo-nationalists, islamists and the others) (Istanbul: Say Yayınları: 2008), p. 13

[147] Ibid., p. 14

suffer throughout this period, rather we can even say that "new doors were opened" for them.

One of the most important developments that must be noted is that this period immediately after the coup also coincided with the onset of the neo-liberal ideology and hence significant economic developments for the country – reflective of the experiences of Southern Europe and Latin America. This caused divisions between leftists and those inclined to socialism and those supporting liberalism in Turkey and shaped the social and political landscape for the next decade. Sahin terms this the emergence of the "New Right" (Yeni Sag), and in newspapers it simultaneously resulted in an increase in the "business" focus of newspapers with the number of pages devoted to the economy increasing and an influx of economy experts and businessmen.[148] It also signified a break in the journalistic circles of newspapers, the new "liberal" daily Sabah launched in opposition to the nationalist and leftist Cumhuriyet newspaper and can be termed as the first newspaper close to the government (and is still known to be). Sahin describes society at this time as undergoing a "paradigm change" because liberalism brought with it things that were previously only a fantasy; notions of community, the public interest were replaced by success, individual courage.[149] Neo-liberalism represented an American school of thought which was adopted and utilized by the Ozal government, through the period of "opening up". In terms of the relationship between the government and the media, Ozal as a leader was someone who knew how to maintain a good relationship with the press, having a consultant that would follow journalists and explain his policies. Meanwhile, those in the business world reaping the benefits of capitalism meant that

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[148] Ibid., p. 14

[149] Ibid., p. 21

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newly rich people entered the media, those in particular close to Ozal, re-emphasising the notions of clientelism discussed and providing an alternate view of the political economy of the media.[150] In regards to this, the proximity in ownership is apparent as Sahin discusses Ozal buying 14 magazines through friend Asil Nadir, manipulating his monopoly on the media. As a journalist, Sahin asserts that it is your professional duty to report "without tainting, manipulating the information to relay it to your reader as objectively as possible", however a wave of people, and journalists, emerged that enjoyed the proximity to the government.[151] It is worth noting in regards to this the issue of Haberturk TV's former Editor-in-Chief Yigit Bulut being let go from the organisation, though various claims regarding this have been made, the fact that Bulut criticised the genetically modified organism Cargill Group, partner with Ulker in Turkey has been put forward by some, while others claim it is due to him complaining about journalists Hasan Cemal to the Prime Minister, both reasons having ties to the government.[152] One must question whether the fact that Bulut was almost immediately appointed as advisor to the Prime Ministry in the areas of economy and privatisation can be interpreted as a continuance of this tradition and form of clientelism in the media system.[153]

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[150] Ibid., pp. 25-26

[151] Ibid., pp. 23-24

[152] BirGün. 05 January 2012. *Yiğit Bulut neden kovuldu?* (Why was Yiğit Bulut fired?). Available [online]: http://www.birgun.net/actuel_index.php?news_code=1325762488&year=2012&month=01&day=05 [08 July 2012].

Medyaloji. 04 January 2012. *Yiğit Bulut neden kovuldu?* (Why was Yiğit Bulut fired?). Available [online]: http://www.medyaloji.net/haber/yigit_bulut_neden_kovuldu_.htm [07 July 2012].

[153] Haberturk. 11 January 2012. *Yiğit Bulut Başbakanlık Başdanışmanı oldu*. (Yigit Bulut becomes principle adviser to the prime ministry). Available [online]: "http://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/705141-yigit-bulut-basbakanlik-basdanismani-oldu" [08 July 2012].

Islamists on the other hand, appear to have gained an understanding of how to use the neoliberal ideology to reach out to society and reach a wider support base. Prior to the 1980s, Islamic media confined itself to minimal relationships with shows in time slots that were not of wide popular appeal. As Sahin explains "In what is called prime time, the time television is watched the most, a *hoca*'s commentary was on [...] Just at that moment when AGB began measuring viewers rating reports began coming in. They had a look, no one is watching, when no one is watching there are no ads, when there are no ads, there is no money. It started to change." [154] With the onset of neo-liberalist forces, profit and advertising became driving factors in the success of newspapers, meaning commercialization. The Islamic newspapers began to understand this when Zaman newspaper came to Istanbul and a series of other newspapers – Yeni Safak, Akit, Turkiye – emerged. Sahin states "in the control and guidance of Turkey they began to understand the importance of ideological hegemony." [155] This period helped thrust the AKP and a more conservative democracy to the centre stage. Sahin summarizes the importance of the AKPs ability to adapt to these neoliberal forces nicely, saying "if after 10 years today we are able to say 'No, the AKP is not a religious party threatening democracy, it is a conservative democratic party', these seeds have been sown since then. Gaining legitimacy stems from this. Therefore most definitely the points for this need to be given to Islamic intelligentsia that consults for Erdogan." [156] This point will also be emphasised later in the discussion reflecting on the changes in observations made by studies of election coverage in Turkey, clearly indicating the growing AKP

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[154] Sahin, p. 68

[155] Ibid., p. 68

[156] Ibid., p. 71

hegemony.

The main turning point in modern Turkish political history and the beginning of the AKP reign is interpreted by Sahin as 28 February 1997, resulting in the closure of Erbakan's religious Welfare Party, curbing the path of traditional Islamists continuing on in power while leaving a space for upcoming Islamists to utilize the liberal influence. Sahin states: "With the liberals help, flags like freedom, freedom of thought and democracy passed into the hands of the Islamists on February 28th." [157] The fact that Islamists were able to take on liberalist tendencies created a positive image for them in the eyes of the liberals, Sahin summarises this thought by highlighting that modernisation is equated to secularism and hence as Islamists secularise and adopt the new capitalist lifestyle, the role of religion becomes less important, in other words, less of a threat.

At this point in time polarization between the Islamists and Kemalists leaning towards a secular nation and the fear they felt was also fuelled by global support of the AKP, a fact which as seen, has changed over the past decade, "the acceleration of globalisation accelerating and the new Islamic movement in the shape of the AKP being supported by the EU and the US intensified the confusion. Fear turned into panic."[158] This process of support for the AKP began in the 1980s with roots in the Ozal government but continued well into the 2000s as the party became not so much about religion but about globalisation, human rights and individual rights.[159] Sahin implies that the inability of the Kemalists to change both in terms of ideologies and the law, they effectively shut themselves off from the mass population and thus

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[157] Ibid., p.77

[158] Ibid., pp. 142-143

[159] Ibid., p. 184

alienated themselves from the rest of society. It is at this point one see the emergence of polarization within these societal circles.

If we view the above period as the point of emergence for the AKP, it is also important to acknowledge the character of the AKP in relation to society and business and that liberal or international ideas have no foundation in Turkey and hence must combine or adapt to gain support within the domestic sphere, Sahin states "Turkey's socialist (*toplumcu*), ummah and nationalistic traditions are much stronger… It is because of these, liberals have always felt weak, they have always felt obligated to form an alliance with some people."[160]

The emergence of Islam in the government has also created a shift in society in which the AKP maintains close relations with those of the same conservative Islamic ideology. However, these simultaneously exist with an opening up of society; "[t]ogether with an increased number of women in work life, together with the spreading of Western style consumption models, together with local and foreign soap operas encouraging a Western lifestyle being shown from morning until evening on television, even the previously untouched most remote corners of society begin learning about secular, global values."[161] This explanation highlights the direction in which the country is supposedly heading, a conservative modern Islamic society and also relates to many of the current newspaper headlines regarding PM Erdogan's comments on why one cannot be both contemporary and pious, questioning whether if not we will become derelict (*tinerci*).[162] This current agenda topic highlights the

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[160] Ibid., p. 171

[161] Ibid., p. 165

[162] TRT Haber. 06 February 2012. *Dindar Bir Nesil Çağdaş Olamaz mı?* (Can a religious generation not be contemporary?) Available [online]: "http://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/dindar-bir-nesil-cagdas-olamaz-mi-27393.html" [05 April 2012].

current day reflections of these separations and representations in the Turkish

political and social landscape, Islam is portrayed as good, a saving ethical or moral

force, which can still be modern, however, anything else is deemed too modern,

losing its touch with what the Turkish Muslim population should be. One may also

comment on the fact that in this latest headline story, Erdogan now has a stronger

presence that is really uncontested and hence prominent reporter Cuneyt Ozdemir,

was forced to apologise for critiquing Erdogan on this speech stating that he too

came from a religious family and is a journalist that has a mother that wears a

headscarf.[163]

In terms of business the AKP's proximity to MUSIAD is widely known, so are

the relationships between Istanbul's traditional press and industry. The AKP's focus

has largely been on developing industry in Anatolia and this too developed as a series

of new media that supported Anatolia and religious circles. Hence, business and

ownership ties found increasing support in the other. Accordingly, Sahin cites one of

the major criticisms of the AKP as being "the fact that the media is very close to the

government that it is manipulated in many ways by it [and] uses it as a tool for

nationalism and chauvinism."[164] The goal of hegemony, effectively pushed the AKP

Hurriyet. 07 February 2012. *Hem dindar hem çağdaş nesil olmaz mı?* (Can there not be a generation that is both religious and contemporary?) Available [online]: "http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/19860976.asp" [14 April 2012].

Pulur, Hasan. 06 February 2012. *Dindar Nesil.* (Religious generation) Available [online]: "http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/dindar-nesil/gundem/gundemyazardetay/06.02.2012/1498565/default.htm" [14 April 2012].

TRT Haber. 03 February 2012. *Arınç'tan "Dindar Nesil" Açıklaması.* ("Religious generation" announcement from Arinc). Available [online]: "http://www.trthaber.com/haber/gundem/arinctan-dindar-nesil-aciklamasi-27095.html" [14 April 2012].

[163] Derin Medya. 10 February 2012. *Cüneyt Özdemir Başbakan'dan Özür Diledi! (*Cuneyt Ozdemir apologised to the prime minister) Available [online]: "http://www.derinmedya.com/2012/02/10/cuneyt-ozdemir-basbakandan-ozur-diledi/" [14 April 2012].

[164] Sahin, p. 187

to take up liberal ideals and implement them, whilst altering their messages to maintain a conservative tone yet one which embraced democracy and a free economy, hence gaining the support of the masses as well as the international sphere. One of the most significant examples that highlight Erdogan's success is Ergenekon. Sahin states, "[Ergenekon] shows what has changed from Erbakan to Erdogan. When praising Erdogan because of Ergenekon, the Second Republicans remember Susurluk and revile against Erbakan."[165]

Mustafa Sonmez (2010) similarly highlights that the media in Turkey first came about due to renewed political and economic production, yet coupled with a capitalist development, created an economic and industrial area in the domestic arena.[166] Much as Sahin observes, Zaman newspaper moving to Istanbul and the founding of several new newspapers highlights the importance of Istanbul as the media centre and the centre of industry. In terms of the development of the media in the 1950s and 1970s, small family operations gradually grew into something resembling a media industry, after the 1970s, capital from outside the media industry flowed in, bringing the media under the umbrella of holdings active in different sectors. In the 1990s this took on a new force with radio and television integrating with print media and experienced a growth fuelled by external sources, laying the foundations for what it is today an industry made up of holdings dealing with things from photos, the internet, book and music industry. Sonmez explains that this period also saw the creation of a hierarchical structure which brought with it a less

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[165] Ibid., p. 111

[166] Sonmez, Mustafa. *Medya, Kültür, Para ve İstanbul İktidarı* (Media, culture, money and the Istanbul power) (Istanbul: Yordum Kitap, 2010), p. 14

democratic production and decision making process.[167] These trends highlight a late development of the media industry in Turkey, together with the impact of commercialization in terms of business ties and those to whom the power belonged, with a more "aristocratic" air for editors, relative editorial independence weakened and with the increasing power of media bosses outside of the media sector.

From the formation of the media industry to a group of holdings, governmental control and ownership also began to play a significant role. Sahin describes Sabah as the first newspaper that came out as a liberal government newspaper. In the 2000s this newspaper was part of the Sabah-ATV group belonging to the Turkuvaz media group, a Calik Holding Company and also managed by PM Erdogan's son-in-law. This signals the close ties between the media and the government. Sonmez describes these changes in the 2000s: "[t]he most important development leaving its mark on Turkey's media-culture industry of the 2000s became the rapid political polarization after 2005 and the tendencies of sides to dress themselves with the "media weapon". Some bourgeoisie close to religious cults and communities founded or bought existing media companies directly with incentives from the AKP. The transfer of one of the biggest media groups, Sabah-ATV, to Calik Holding, managed by Prime Minister T. Erdogan's son-in-law, with public bank loans is one of the most extreme examples of this trend, the legality of which will be debated."[168] This trend can be observed in today's political landscape, with close governmental ties and high degrees of polarization in the media. These ties and changes also signified a decline in the already "relative autonomy" of the sector.[169]

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[167] Ibid., p. 24

[168] Ibid., p.24

[169] Ibid., p. 35

Print media evolved to encompass more narrowed down and personalised media consumption patterns with the emergence of magazines addressing different interests tried to find their markets, while economically the influx of foreign sources financing growth models simultaneously increased incomes and consumerism. In terms of media purchasing, the 1980s saw the Kozanoglu-Cavusoglu partnership found the Gunes (Guclu) newspaper group with resources from outside of the sector. The Gunaydın Group was sold to Cypriot businessman Nadir in 1989 and as Sahin explains in his accounts, Nadir went on to purchase Gunaydin, Gunes and the biggest magazine group Gelisim with the support of Turgut Ozal to become the biggest media group in Turkey. The Dogan – Dinc sector opposition tried to prevent this by combining their forces, however, Nadir eventually weakened. At the end of the 1970s, the Hurriyet group was bought by Aydin Dogan, together with Milliyet leaving two big media groups in Turkey by the 1990s: Dogan Group and Sabah Group.[170] Ozal's reach extended further into the media with his son, Ahmet Ozal, and Cem Uzan, forming their own private TV station connected illegally from overseas with Ozal's support. The Uzan Group continued using threat and blackmail as a tool to strengthen its commercial and political strength, mostly through illegal means. Cukurova Group, still existent today, bought Show TV and the platform Digiturk, adding Aksam newspaper to its group.[171]

The extent and effects of commercialization can be seen by looking at the revenue and importance of advertising for the media industry. The Dogan Group (DYH), at the time Sonmez was writing his text, was publishing a total of 9 newspapers and according to the Group's activity report the Group's share in the

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[170] Ibid., p. 38

[171] Ibid., p. 39

advertising market reached 43%, the majority of this accounted for by print media, mainly magazines.[172] Zaman newspaper on the other hand is known for being tied to Fettullah Gulen, though not "officially", who is known for gaining his financial resources from religious groups and organisations and simultaneously has a strong presence in the real estate sector. Zaman newspaper is claimed to be the newspaper that sells the most, however, it is speculative whether the numbers put forward are really reflective of the real figures. Yaysat distributes the newspaper and according to its figures the counter sales are only 20 thousand, while subscription numbers are 880 thousand. Sonmez compares this with Turkiye newspaper, a similar make to Zaman, saying that its figures are 10 thousand and 135 thousand and outlines that the newspapers are not sent out to distributors, instead Zaman's special men come and pay Yaysat for the papers, Yaysat takes the commission delivers Zaman and enters this into their records as "subscription".[173] Such a situation, if true, highlights the desire of the government and Islamists to establish and maintain hegemony both in terms of ideology and political power, but also in terms of image. However, Zaman is not as popular in advertising or in electronic media, raising question marks as to the real figures behind the paper.[174] As Sonmez says "the "Neoliberal-Islamists give more importance to giving the message "Hegemonic power is ours!" with the newspapers they distribute, mostly for free, to homes, businesses, with a fabricated ballooned circulation to a public they are closing in. The ideological hegemony they have found also contributes to peer pressure."[175] Hence, this image plays an

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[172] Ibid., pp. 47-48

[173] Ibid., p. 52

[174] Ibid., p. 53

[175] Ibid., p. 54

important role in shaping and influencing the public, as well as the level of support received. The Sabah-ATV group sale is again mentioned by Sonmez who goes further to explain that the sale was actualised by the company taking out state bank loans.[176] Turgay Ciner established his own publishing group in 2009 after briefly renting out the Sabah-ATV group prior to Calık, beginning with television channel Haberturk, and publishing the Haberturk newspaper thereafter. The Cukurova Group began with the purchase of Aksam and Tercuman newspapers; it also publishes the Gunes newspaper.[177] Dogus Group is also a big player, entering the media scene with radio and TV broadcasting and despite having no newspaper within its body; it publishes several magazines and has a book publishing arm.[178] It can be seen that there has been an evolution in the ownership patterns of Turkish media, however, the proximity of certain organisations to the government remains static over time.

Sonmez discusses the development of a dictatorship and aristocracy in the media due to existing patronage relationships, what we can also term to be clientelism, but also due to the employees of the sector differentiating and bringing about an aristocracy similar to patronage,[179] arguably reducing the standards of journalism and reporting, as well as the quality of the news. This is not a situation unique to the media sector, however, the media has a right to produce diversity in the messages it is putting forward and this is dependent on the freedom of expression and job securities. Sonmez states "[t]herefore, in the media, workplace democracy, freedom of speech and editorial independence are perquisite conditions for the

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[176] Ibid., p. 55

[177] Ibid., p. 55

[178] Ibid., p. 55

[179] Ibid., p. 146

development of democracy and in a narrowed, dictatorship, oligarchic structure,

these will certainly become embroiled in the entire country management manner.[180]

As the media sector grew, commercialised, advertising shares and the importance of

sales increased. Similarly, top level editors formed close relationships with Group

owners, earning more and serving the interests of the company. In light of these

developments, unionism was seen as a restriction, lowering the level of

professionalization and autonomy for journalists in Turkey.

Christensen's (2007) line of argument correlates with this idea by identifying

the inability of the Turkish journalistic profession to develop autonomously and the

lack of legal rights protecting journalists as a problem to the effective functioning of

the media in Turkey. The major problem areas hindering the successful functioning

of the news media in Turkey are the concentration of media ownership, the

successful efforts of media owners to undermine the power of journalists' unions and

government legislation working creating an environment in which the journalistic

profession cannot be fostered.[181] In addition, the uncontrolled 'spread of free market

policies and ideologies', 'the development of (and changes within) journalism and

the mass media before, during and after the advent of free market policies' and the

idea of 'clientelism'[182] are factors related to the economic development of the media

and hence lead to the characteristics that it displays today. The Turkish government

did not take measures to regulate the Turkish media's ownership system and hence a

concentration of ownership arguably further fosters political ties and business

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[180] Ibid., p. 148

[181] Christensen, Christian. "Breaking the News: Concentration of Ownership, the Fall of Unions and Government Legislation in Turkey," *Global Media and Communication* 3 no. 2, (August 2007) p. 180

[182] Ibid., p. 182

influence, leading to competing media groups and a tabloid style of journalism.[183] On the other hand, the concentration of ownership has not been balanced by a professional journalism due to lack of legal protection and guarantee of minimum working rights for journalists in Turkey, as well as restrictions on the access and disclosure of information, the lengthy imprisonment penalties for defamation, disclosure of information relating to political interests of the state or state information in itself among other factors, which seriously restrict the news formation process and also place journalists in a weak and vulnerable position in which they in fact are arguably reliant on PR as a source of information to be able to report anything.

Publications and News Coverage in Turkey

The notion of news and print coverage in particular has been examined by a handful of academics, mainly conducting a comparative analysis between publications and the way they cover a particular issue or topic. These are then used to determine the political pressures and influence over particular news organisations and thus the news that Turkish audiences are consuming.

Turkey's media landscape can be termed as sceptical and imbalanced with Carkoglu (2010) highlighting that 'a clear majority of voting age population appear to have no confidence in either the press or TV at large.'[184] Starting from this point, it is clear that scepticism is born out of a lack of factual reporting and consistency across the board, hence the effects that are also observed in North America are also observed in Turkey with sensationalist tendencies. In this sense Turkey may be closer

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[183] Ibid., p. 184

[184] Çarkoğlu, Ali. Introduction to *Turkish Studies,* 11 no.4 (December 2010) p. 513

to Greece in the type of consumption patterns audiences prefer, with a high preference for news consumption in the form of entertainment and however, this simultaneously creates distrust due to sensationalism overshadowing fact. Hence, significantly different perspectives, even biases, will arguably be observed when taking a deeper look at the news media.

As touched upon by Hallin et al, pluralism is an important concept to consider when analysing the media. Bayram (2010) also offers the same definition,[185] highlighting the importance of diversity and balance in a national media system if it is to cater to an entire population. The existence of pluralism is likely to increase the quality of democracy; however, polarized pluralism creates a biased landscape in which the flow of information is dictated by political preference. Bayram's study uses content analysis to code secondary sources to determine the level of parallelism in the national newspaper environment, revealing that sudden increases and decreases consistent with political changes characterises the system. Examining the Turkish example on a deeper level the party system and the number of parties, the level of ideological polarization, the type of government and the existence of cleavage voting are all important influential factors over the media.[186] Bayram ultimately argues that the more politics reflects social groupings and divisions, the higher the degree of polarization in the Turkish press as it caters to opposing voices.

Parallels between same region countries and Turkey are emphasised by Kaya and Cakmur (2010), taking up the idea of political parallelism and the role of the media in politics in order to examine political trends. Kaya et al identify clientelistic

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[185] Bayram, Salih. "Political Parallelism in the Turkish Press, a Historical Interpretation," *Turkish Studies* 11, no. 4 (December 2010) p. 580

[186] Ibid., p. 592

tendencies in the DP era between the government and certain media owners and individual journalists, attributing the entertainment factor in the Turkish media to economic growth and the commercialization of the popular press.[187] In this sense, the concepts of commercialization and entertainment appear to be a continuing theme in the Turkish case and the balance of these elements with fact could arguably be taken up as an element of analysis of media coverage.

It has been acknowledged that the commercialization of the Turkish press occurred late during the Ozal era in the 1980s and interestingly, together with the onset of commercialization, almost all reviewed articles show an increase in the level of parallelism from the 1990s onwards, highlighting that despite a liberal style economy existing, the ties between politics and business governed the media landscape. If business and political interests dominate the Turkish media, the autonomy of the journalistic profession and thus the stories they produce will be undermined, creating a polarized environment in which journalistic professionalism is minimal.

Somer's (2010) article gives an insight into the polarization and pluralism in the news media, particularly in consideration of a debate between the secular and Islamist parts of society. He focuses on the idea of "pluralistic democracy" to question the level of pluralism that exists within each newspaper and the role of elite thinking.[188] In conceptualising the role of the media, Somer specifies three mechanisms "through which the media can affect values and political development" – shaping public values and preferences, reflecting elite thinking and becoming a

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[187] Kaya, Rasit and Barış Cakmur, "Politics and the Mass Media in Turkey," *Turkish Studies* 11, no. 4. (December 2010) p. 524

[188] Somer, Murat. "Media Values and Democratization: What Unites and What Divides Religious-Conservative and Pro-Secular Elites?" *Turkish Studies* 11, no. 4 (December 2010) p. 556

medium for the formation, change or maintenance of elite thinking.[189] Examining

religious and secular newspapers, Somer finds that in general there exists a divide

between the two on the issue of political democracy. In addition, the agenda of the

secular press clearly focuses on human rights, political pluralism and nationalism

whereas the religious press at the time of analysis on the headscarf question, Muslim

problems and the West.[190] In this respect, he too characterises the Turkish media

model as having polarized-pluralist model tendencies, though acknowledging that the

subject matter is of importance to whether polarization or consensus exists. [191] In this

sense, the major topics of focus of different publications at any given time will likely

highlight the differences in interests, concerns and values of differing groups in

Turkey society, as well as their stance on common agenda issues.

These divisive trends and the increased presence of Islamic media can also be

observed as contributing to the gradual transformation of the Left media in Turkey,

the subject of Keyman's (2010) article. The history of Cumhuriyet and Milliyet are

traced through the study, beginning with the modernity project "aiming at achieve a

top-down and state-based transformation of a traditional society into a modern nation

by introducing and disseminating Western reason and rationality."[192] These processes

removed any kind of Islamic or traditional voice in the Turkish media landscape,

which has re-emerged parallel to the increasing complexities of Turkish society. As

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[189] Ibid., p. 558

[190] Ibid., p. 568

[191] Ibid., p. 557 Somer defines this as a model in which '[d]ifferent media organizations are divided along distinct political orientations, have close connections to political parties and other political organizations, and journalists are active in political life and try to influence, not merely inform, public opinion.'

[192] Keyman, E. Fuat. "Turkey, Transformation and the Left Media," *Turkish Studies* 11, 4 (December 2010) p. 545

Keyman asserts "since 1923 [Turkish history] has involved a number of significant ruptures with the state-centric nature of Turkish modernity which have brought about a complex society whose reflexive social relations and processes are becoming difficult to govern." In such a political climate, new publications seek to represent different social positioning, whereas the older publications such as Cumhuriyet try to protect Republican nationalism against a conservative liberalism, but arguably pushing the newspaper to extremes.[193] Milliyet on the other hand appears to have continued to support "social democracy at the level of values and norms",[194] taking a state centric stand against the AKP and globalization. However, looking at ownership structures one can also argue that this moderate stance is a result of the newspaper being bought out by Dogan Yayin Holding (DYH) at that time, ensuring a continued commercial success of the paper.

<p align="center">Election Coverage in the AKP Era</p>

Sahin, Sonmez and Christensen all discuss the development of the Turkish media industry in relation to business and the journalistic profession in Turkey, with Christensen focusing on the standards and environment in which Turkish journalists must operate in. Against this backdrop, the other side of the coin must be examined, meaning the kind of news coverage produced within such a news media system. Ideas such as clientelism, polarization, economic and business forces governing news organisations have all been raised, but more importantly, the gradual rise of the AKP from the late 1990s into the 2000s, the changing character of the party and its

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[193] Ibid., p. 549

[194] Ibid., p. 549

connection to the public also carries implications about the way in which the news media portrays the party and whether this has changed parallel to the growing dominance of the party. Christensen (2005) takes an American / British perspective on Turkey's 2002 national elections, with the aim to reveal the degree to which the issue of religion holds importance and also the way in which the AKP is portrayed. As he states, his aim "is to examine the degree to which the religious origins of the victorious party, the AKP, were emphasized by newspapers, and the implications of such emphasis on the overall coverage."[195] The significance of these elections is that this was the first national election in which the AKP came to power and marked the beginning of a decade of AKP rule and considering the wide spread criticism from foreign voices today, earlier views may indicate changing opinions.

Christensen discusses dominant frames in light of the Muslim-Christian clash that came about after September 11th and the Iraq War, creating an "us versus them" dynamic via the projection of an acceptable Christian image and an unacceptable Muslim religious image and contributing to the rise of Islamaphobia. According to Christensen, Turkey is a paradox in this relationship due to it being member to NATO and a candidate country for the EU.[196] Given this paradoxical situation, he uses media frames existent in major renowned dailies in the US and the UK to qualitatively examine each article in detail and code for references relating to one or more of the following areas: "definitions of the AKP [...] the AKP and secularism [...] the AKP and relations with the West [...] and the AKP and democracy".[197]

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[195] Christensen, Christian. **"Pocketbooks or Prayer Beads? U.S./U.K. Newspaper Coverage of the 2002 Turkish Elections,"** *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 10 no. 109 (2005) p. 109

[196] Ibid., p. 113

[197] Ibid., p. 114

The 2002 Turkish national elections occurred at a time when the Turkish economy was wrought by economic crisis and the political scene similarly unstable. According to Christensen, "[p]ublic confidence in the prime minister, his ministers, and many of the opposition parties had reached an all-time low."[198] Additionally, issue such as northern Cyprus, conflict with the Kurdish separatist group the PKK and military ties with Israel are also issues to consider in the portrayal of the AKP in the foreign press, yet also indicators of how the public agenda at the time of elections has changed. In the 2002 elections, the AKP won with 34% of the vote, not the overwhelming majority,[199] which is in stark contrast to the 2011 elections in which they won with a clear 50% of the vote.

As Sahin outlines, considering that Necmettin Erbakan's Welfare Party was closed down due to the perceived threat of the religious nature of the party, a threat that was also felt by the EU, the way in which the AKP is both perceived and received by different publics is important. Christensen's study finds that the fact that the party has "Islamic" or "Islamist" roots was the most common frame with the majority of articles making this distinction in their opening, inclusive of many headlines, and reinforced throughout the rest of the article through repetition.[200] Christensen asserts that there are two major reasons behind this framing, these being; the fact that the AKP "was created from the ashes of the Islamist Welfare Party (ousted from power in 1997), and that the leader of the AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, had, as mayor of Istanbul, promoted an Islamist-based political agenda."[201] However,

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[198] Ibid., p. 115

[199] Ibid., p. 115

[200] Ibid., pp. 116-117

[201] Ibid., p. 117

these seem to have been balanced out by the AKPs willingness to remain close to the West, which despite being "framed as a potential threat to the "Westwardness" of Turkey" was not presented as an alternative to a pro-Western government.[202] This signals that the Western media did acknowledge that the AKP had Islamist roots and was a potential worry for the secularist nature of Turkey, given the WP roots, however, did not feel the need to outline the other alternative, signalling that the unacceptable Muslim frame did not need to be implemented in this situation. Christensen claims that this forced audiences to rely on stereotypical interpretations of Muslims, however, due to our ability to compare the current model and stance of the AKP today, the lack of contextualisation likely signals that at the time the AKP was accepted as a potential threat but not viewed directly as one. Most significantly, this is evident from the commentary of the Christian Science Monitor describing the AKP as "cosmopolitan" or "educated", which signals that the party was held apart from traditional perceptions of Islamically inclined parties whilst simultaneously portrayed as a potential to be one of these parties.[203] One of the interesting points that Christensen does make however, is the fact that though "the Turkish electorate were framed as voting for that party on the basis of factors *other* than religion or anti-Western sentiment."[204] In this sense, other agenda issues and the conditions of the political landscape at the time reveal that the choice of the AKP was a choice made out of necessity. Today, the way in which these conditions and necessities have changed, along with how the party has evolved, are key to how the media is framing the party.

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[202] Ibid., p. 118

[203] Ibid., pp. 120-124

[204] Ibid., p. 126

Following on from the 2002 elections, Canan Balkir (2007) discusses the 2007 elections in terms of democracy, specifically focussing on the controversial Presidential election arguably highlighting the heightening of polarization between secular and Islamic groups. This study firstly indicates the major agenda topic of the 2007 elections - the issue of the Presidency, according to Balkır came about due to "[t]he Turkish political system… not hav[ing] institutional checks and balances such as the existence of a Senate. Therefore, the 1982 Constitution created an implicit checks and balances system through the strengthened roles of the Constitutional Court and the Presidency. However as some of the members of the Constitutional Court are appointed by the president, the resultant concentration of power was the concern of some democratic circles."[205] This issue can be interpreted as a symbol of the power struggle in the Turkish political landscape, as well as one of the points where the AKP gained a significant amount of leverage and perhaps the gradual reduction in the role of the military.

The election of the President was viewed by secularist groups as a threat to the democratic nature of the Republic and the CHP took the matter to the Constitutional Court, which ruled that the parliamentary election of the president was invalid due to it lacking "a quorum".[206] After a failed second attempt, the AKP subsequently "submitted a constitutional reform package, which included the election of a president by popular vote for a five-year term with an opportunity to be re-elected"[207]. The bill was vetoed the first time, however, passed the second time.

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[205] Balkır, Canan. "The July 2007 Elections in Turkey: A Test for Democracy," *Mediterranean Politics* 12, no. 3 (November 2007) p. 416

[206] Ibid., p. 416

[207] Ibid., p. 416

The important aspect of these legal and political processes emerges in the social reactions to them. Several rallies against the growing presence of Islam in politics and the potential presence in the Presidency were arranged not only in Istanbul but in other major cities such as Izmir, Samsun and Denizli.[208] Balkır describes these as "neo-nationalist" movements, largely secularist in nature, however also emphasizes that they included strong nationalist, pro-military and anti-EU discourse the latter in particular a point which Sahin also touches upon in his description of *ulusalcılar* (neo-nationalists).[209] As Balkir highlights, a distinct division between the AKP and secularists was and still is evident in Turkish society. Adding to the build-up in nationalist sentiment was also an increase in terrorist attacks and deaths. The CHP and MHP leaders played on this, portraying the AKP as blocking or obstructing the path of the military in fighting terrorism.[210]

These changing dynamics in the socio-political landscape show a split in the "social and political forces represented by the AKP and the entrenched political and economic elite denoted by the Kemalists." Traditionally,"[t]he Kemalist elite are embedded in the military, the bureaucracy, the legal system and the upper echelons of academia" yet with the growing economic strength of the AKP and Anatolia the central power structure is no longer focused on the Kemalists. At the point when Balkir is writing, she states that "the main defining characteristics of Turkish politics is that the majority of Turkish voters locate themselves at the centre of the ideological spectrum, left or right, although a noteworthy portion over time has

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[208] Ibid., p. 416

[209] Ibid., p. 416

[210] Ibid., p.. 417

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shifted from the centre to the right."[211] Now, the centre is arguably the AKP, with the major of voters supporting this centre, however, it is no longer an elite or Istanbul focused concentration of power, instead it is focused across the nation on smaller cities in Anatolia.

One of the interesting observations Balkir makes is regarding the frames leading up to the election, which revolve around the presidential race, secularism and terror whereas "the election manifestos of the political parties are limited both in substance and the number of issues covered."[212] It is interesting that other directly election related subjects are given less attention in comparison to the key issues separating the political parties in particular. The AKPs own agenda revolved around democratic consolidation, economic liberalisation and accession to the EU,[213] thus a model for change and improvement. It can be expected that the way in which the party frames itself and the way in which it is framed will have changed with time. This stance appears to have paid off given that association with the military, as touched upon by Sahin, hindered the DHP, who only won 20.9 % of the vote.

Balkir et al (2008) also examine the 2007 elections presenting an analysis of how the media reported the 2007 elections and the way in which media system features potentially influence voting decisions. As highlighted by Balkir's previously discussed text, the issue of Gul being put forward as a Presidential candidate and the subsequent "anti-government statement" dominated the agenda.[214] Despite failing to win election in parliament, the AKP government also passed an amendment to the

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[211] Ibid., p. 419

[212] Ibid., p. 420

[213] Ibid., p. 420

[214] Balkır, Canan et al. "Expecting the Unforeseeable: The 2007 Turkish Elections in the Media," p. 197

Constitution in parliament allowing for the president to be elected by popular vote, which came together with an early general election brought about by the controversy surrounding Gul's candidacy. Balkir et al emphasize that the 2007 elections resulted in an about 80 % turnout, with the AKP winning 34% of the votes and signifying "the second time the people would have to decide between the "progressive" Islamists and the "conservative" secularist elite."[215] The distinction between the secularist and Islamic block is an important subject that keeps reoccurring throughout all the articles; "[t]he 2007 election outcome seems to indicate further solidification of the AKP base and an attempt to reach out to new groups of voters."[216]

In terms of campaign results "[o]ver half the voters switched parties between the 1999 and 2002 elections, with 20 % shifting ideology. With that degree of volatility, it would be expected that campaigns would have more influence than when party preference is more stable. However, there seems to be little trust in the media. In a Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2004 in Turkey, only 32 percent reported that they trust the press, and 47 percent reported trusting television."[217] In relation to this observation it is important to note that Turkey is characterised by low newspaper readership and a slanted press with media favouring the political positions of their owners, a trait which Pippa Norris is cited as defining Turkey as "having a non-free press but with wide access to the public."[218]

Balkir et al found that while one-third of the stories focused on the upcoming elections, with most stories focussing on who was ahead or behind and on party

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[215] Ibid., p. 198

[216] Ibid., p. 198

[217] Ibid., p. 200

[218] Ibid., p. 200

conflicts, the horserace; this kind of coverage was less in comparison to Western

countries. The AKP was additionally the party with the most visibility throughout

this time, leading the way almost entirely through the study period.[219] A look into this

reasoning by comparing the horserace coverage within the 2011 elections may show

to what extent this may be true, especially in relation to the pro-secular papers. Party

agendas and what they were planning to offer for the next five years was not a

prominent subject on the agenda. Looking at the results in detail, Hurriyet appears to

have covered the campaign event the most as a primary story, and though we must

acknowledge that the highest percentage across all newspapers was given to the

campaign event, Zaman, Posta and Cumhuriyet also gave a lot of attention to the

party program list and Zaman in particular election related court decisions. Overall,

Zaman newspaper had the highest number of election related articles.[220] Despite both

Posta and Hurriyet being found in the same media group Posta, the mostly widely

read newspaper at the time, maintained a negative tone towards the AKP, whereas

Hurriyet "displayed very little negativity, even less than Zaman"[221] a fact that

arguably goes against claims about ownership structures and perceptions of Zaman's

ideological positioning.[222]

Terrorism is also a subject that is touched upon by the study, a topic resurfacing

due to an escalation of attacks around election time. Balkir et al in particular observe

that "[n]ews stories tended to portray the situation as a battle between the prime

minister and the military, with the military urging the government to decide on a

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[219] Ibid., p. 207 See Figure 2

[220] Ibid., p. 203 See Table 1

[221] Ibid., p. 209

[222] Ibid., p. 210

military operation and the prime minister wanting to hold off until after the election."[223] This is parallel to what other authors discuss, the media and nationalist groups pitting the AKP government against the military. This issue was of course played upon by other leaders, Bahceli in particular.[224]

Results also show the shift in the media agenda over time, beginning with secular protests regarding the president's election, with a focus on the Islamic nature of the AKP and hence its threatening position, again in this framework there exists a polarization between the Islamists and the secularists emphasised by the media. The EU and economy were secondary issue in the coverage, yet the AKP "was the only party with a positive approach to the EU", [225] again signifying that other parties took a more nationalist line.

Finally, moving on to the 2011 election, Paul Kubicek (2011) examines the prospects of the 2011 elections through a more positive lens stating that the AKP "promised significant changes to the Turkish political system if it won elections" and that "[i]t remains to be seen if the AKP can deliver on these promises and what the nature of the changes will be."[226] The appeal to shut down the AKP and what Kubicek terms as "the AKP [fighting] back with Ergenekon prosecutions offers a different perspective on power plays and the declining role of the military, despite his acknowledgement that the AKP was criticised for being authoritarian and the arrests of journalists in relation to Ergenekon. This idea relates to Sahin's interpretation of the AKPs hegemonic success, comparing it to the Erbakan era.

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[223] Ibid., p. 204

[224] Ibid., p. 204

[225] Ibid., p. 206

[226] Ibid., p. 443

Kubicek details the main opposition parties of the AKP, the CHP and MHP, and makes the observation that the CHP was only able to win 21 % of the vote in 2007, whereas in these elections it managed to improve increasing its percentage to 25.9%, still not presenting a major threat to the AKP.[227] The MHP on the other hand managed to cross the 10 percent threshold and several BDP, Kurdish based, independents managed to gain a seat in parliament. Ultimately, despite the AKP winning with an almost 50 percent victory (49.9%), it did not receive enough seats in the National Assembly to gain a supermajority, preventing it from making unilateral constitutional amendments, yet it also failed to gain the required number of seats required to allow it to "submit constitutional amendments to voters for their approval",[228] a change from previous years.

Kubicek interprets the AKPs overwhelming success as a sign that the party has "consolidated itself as the country's main political party, leading some analysts to suggest that Turkey has evolved from a highly fractured party system in the 1990s to one that is now a "'dominant party system'".[229] This point holds true and is attributed to the party's ability to avoid political crisis as well as the economy's positive performance, in particular the performance of smaller Anatolian business arguably associated with MUSIAD.[230] The growing number of votes and support over the years is again an indication of the hegemonic position the AKP has now gained. Kubicek's analysis of the elections stops short, citing unresolved issues such as the

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[227] Kubicek, Paul. "The 2011 Elections and Prospects for Change in Turkey," *Mediterranean Politics* 16, no. 3 (November 2011) p. 444

[228] Ibid., p. 445

[229] Ibid., p. 445

[230] Ibid., p. 446

country's leadership role in the Arab Spring, political reform and a new constitution – inclusive of reforming the Presidential system to make it a French style system and the on-going issue of Kurdish minority rights as a determining factor in the party's success. These issues are in fact topics on the agenda and it will be interesting to see whether they emerge in the form of debates, concerns or promises leading up to the election.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Research Component and Methodology

The press politics relationship, the way in which the public relate to the media and

the news production process can be examined in regards to any given topic or period,

however, the peak of a citizenry's participation is arguably elections. During

democratic elections the public must make an informed decision regarding their

potential leaders and hence engage with the media more than they normally would to

follow the progress and competition between parties and candidates. This study takes

the ten days leading up to the Turkish national elections on 12 June 2011, and the

two days after, to examine the newspaper coverage of the top ten daily national

newspapers in Turkey.

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the way in which the relevant data

has been collected and analysed. Commencing with an outline of the two research

questions this thesis seeks to answer, this chapter will discuss data collection, coding

procedures and finally the two stages of analysis. The qualitative approach in

handling Research Question 2 is also discussed together with the sampling

procedures.

Research Questions

The empirical design for this study consists of two stages. The first stage surveys the

articles to identify key characteristics of coverage and to list the major topics on the

Turkish news media agenda leading up to the elections. The second stage involves an in depth textual analysis of selected articles. In short, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the range and depth of issues covered across newspapers before the elections?

Based on the observations and results in Research Question 1, the second question explores:

2. What are the specific textual elements of coverage, which dominant frames are employed?

In short these two questions ultimately observe whether or not the Turkish news media fulfilled their watchdog and messenger role.

This study hypothesizes that the results will show a continued level of polarization in media coverage, however; also a development from previous academic studies in the media's handling of the AKP, which will emphasize the AKPs consolidated position in government as Kubicek observes.

Data

The study takes media coverage from the top ranking fifteen Turkish national newspapers – as per Medyatava rankings - between 2 – 12 June 2011 the ten days leading up to the election. (Table 2) The coverage from 13 June 2011 has also been coded and included in this data set to observe the immediate reactions to election results by the media.

The articles selected have been filtered from the newspapers via a digital press scanning system, courtesy of the media scanning company Interpress, and coded for

the keyword *seçim* meaning election in Turkish. Any articles containing the keyword that do not relate either directly or indirectly to the elections have been eliminated from the initial pool of articles.

Newspaper lift outs have been included in the study as these have the potential to offer a different set of sources, more detailed reporting and particular subject focused coverage.

The study does not include columnist commentary as these are based on opinion and would require a different methodological approach and arguably a deeper analysis of the journalistic perspective within individual news organisations.

Due to the Interpress automated system being based on keywords and certain news article constructs, the way in which articles are selected and handled by the computer scanning system has caused certain individual articles to be grouped together. For example, in particular on the subjects of campaigning, several singular articles are grouped together and counted as one single full page article by the Interpress system and therefore they have been analysed as a single article, but still coded in detail for sources, images, sources and so forth. In this respect, the number of articles of some newspapers may have been underestimated, but this is discussed in detail in the evaluation of the results. In the case of Cumhuriyet newspaper each of these campaigning focused pages includes a small column on observations, which has been excluded from the analysis due to its editorial nature, therefore the total article area in Cumhuriyet may have been overestimated, but again the unit of analysis is still the news article and this is still part of election coverage and therefore does not pose an issue that threatens to undermine the accuracy of the study.

This observation in the operationalisation of the data has been overcome by detailed coding according to the sub-level keywords existent across all relevant news

content, which shows the way in which news article and newspaper page

composition is made up. The coding of these sub-levels is discussed further below.

Table 2 Newspaper Ownership and Ranking. 6 June-12 June 2011[231]

Newspaper	National Ranking	Owner Company at the time
Zaman	1	Feza Gazetecilik A.Ş
Posta	2	Doğan Yayın Holding
Hurriyet	3	Doğan Yayın Holding
Sabah	4	Turkuvaz Medya Grubu
Sozcu	5	Sozcü Gazete ve Matbaacılık Turizm Ticaret Ltd Şti
Haberturk	6	Ciner Medya TV Hizmetleri A.Ş.
Star	9	Star Medya Yayıncılık A.Ş.
Milliyet	10	DK Gazetecilik Yayincilik A.Ş.
Turkiye	11	İhlas Holding A.Ş.
Aksam	12	T Medya Yatırım San. ve Tic. A.Ş
Vatan	13	Bağımsız Gazeteciler Yayıncılık A.Ş.
Radikal	18	Doğan Yayın Holding
Cumhuriyet	20	Cumhuriyet Vakfı
Taraf	21	Alkım Gazetecilik Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş.
Birgun	32	Birgün Yayıncılık ve İletişim Tic. A.Ş.

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[231] Medya Tava. *06 June 2011-12 June 2011. Gazete Net Satışları* (Net sales of newspapers). Available [online]: http://www.medyatava.com/tiraj.asp [25 October 2011].

Taking a first glance at the data, there are in total 371 relevant articles from fifteen newspapers. All of the relevant articles have been analysed in the first stage of analysis, whilst in the second stage, only the articles relating directly or indirectly to the issues specified have been handled within the framing analysis.

First Stage Analysis: Research Question 1

In the first stage of analysis, the 371 articles have been read through and coded for the following:

- Date
- Article area – row x column (cm)
- Page Number
- Sources
- Tone
- Headline
- Images
- Topic Summary
- Keywords
- Major keyword

The articles being produced have been generated in a PDF format which automatically lists the date, page number(s), article area and headline. The latter categories were analysed as follows:

- Sources

Sources that were directly quoted, paraphrased or referred to throughout the article were coded. Articles which include opinions or refer to "experts" that have not been

named have been coded as "not specified".

- Tone

The purpose of creating a coding category for tone is in order to determine the way in which the Turkish print media handles the governing party, the AKP, and how this may compare to the way in which it handles the main opposition party, essentially highlighting the level of visibility of the AKP on the media spectrum. From this, both the ability of the media to fulfil a watchdog role and a messenger function and the positioning of the AKP in the political scene can be evaluated. As highlighted in the literature review, complete objectivity or neutrality in reporting is acknowledged as impossible, hence the coding of tone has been coded in terms of the way in which the subject matter is handled and how this reflects on the government and the main opposition party. Journalism itself may appear neutral in terms of its handling of parties; however, framing of the subject matter through the use of sources, quotations, images etc. may result in the article being either supportive or critical of the party in question. Therefore at this initial stage articles have been analysed to determine whether they display an obvious support or criticism of either of these parties based on the combined effect of the characteristics. In order to address this issue further, the second research question specifically looks into textual elements of framing of articles.

To effectively highlight the way in which coding for tone within the first research question, identifying whether or not news articles were either obviously pro or anti a certain party a few examples of the coding will be helpful.

In Posta's *In Turkey Justice isn't independent* published on 3 June 2011, an interview with former judge and CHP MP candidate has been published, the content of which offers a critical view on the judicial system, claiming that it is not

independent nor unbiased and that politics is the only remaining platform for debate. In this article, the information being put forward is critical of the judicial system, reflecting negatively on the government, whilst simultaneously presenting this view as a representative of the CHP. In saying that the only platform remaining for debate is politics, the CHPs position is given preference in this article and there is no counter voice used to balance it. Thus given the one sided and critical nature of this article towards the judicial system and thus the government from a CHP perspective, it has been coded as being anti AKP – pro CHP. For similar articles in which there is a sole focus and promotion of a particular party position, these are coded as being positive towards the party that candidate is from. For example, an 8 June 2011 article published in Sabah titled *Let off election steam at picnic* is a press release of the Ankara local AKP leader taking a break from election campaigning, the article details how hard the party has been working and the number of visits the local leader has made with the sub-heading "thousands of visits". This has been coded pro-AKP given that its supports an AKP position, however, neutral in regards to the handling of the CHP due to there being no reference to the main opposition party.

In covering campaigning, Cumhuriyet newspaper works on a province by province basis in a special election section titled *Province by Province Elections*. These articles focus on campaigning in specific provinces, without offering a focus on any particular party, quotes from several local party candidates and locals are included to give an overall impression of the situation in the given province. However, the content of quotes can also serve to portray a particular party in a more positive position relative to the other parties mentioned in the article. For example, in the *On the outside AKP, on the inside CHP* titled article published on 10 June 2011, the contextualisation of quotes from locals and local politicians indirectly portrays

the CHP in a more positive light because the visibility of the CHP in the article is greater than that of the AKP and also under a positive light. This article has therefore been coded as pro CHP, but neutral in terms of the article's position on the AKP.

In relation to subjects that are related to the governing of the country, the economy or business related news for example, whether the article retains a position relative to the governing AKP or not has been coded for. Zaman's *We are selling apartments as if there is no election* published on 2 June 2011 is a business focused article in which construction / real estate investment company Dumankaya is holding a press conference in which it discusses its own business and within this, the company puts forward the comment that the election is not affecting business and that they don't expect a surprise on 13 June 2011, instead they are continuing on with projects without stopping. In this article, though the source and the content is not related to the elections, the comments and view being put forward are supportive of the government and even implies the expectations or reliance on the AKPs election win. The article has been coded accordingly. This is similarly the case for an Zaman article titled *There are budget provisions for announced projects* on 5 June 2011, which covers a press conference in which the Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the economy, Ali Babacan, comments that Turkey is becoming a financial centre by 2023 and that problems exist outside of Turkey but suffering, even during election time, is not a problem and also highlighting that the budget is sufficient for projects announced by the AKP. This again puts forward a government perspective with a positive spin on the economy, reflecting well on the government's position and has thus been coded accordingly. The content and framing of each topic and article characteristic plays an important role in determining tones and the results of this coding and their implications are discussed in the next chapter.

- Images

All images in the articles have been coded, focusing on the person(s) or scene depicted in the picture and their stance for political figures in particular. While images do not formulate an integral part of the in depth analysis, the frequency of political figures and repeated images gives an indication of the party / politician that dominates the Turkish media scene together with the preferences of individual publications.

- Topic Summary

A summary for each individual article focusing on the major subject matter of the article, the views being put forward and critical issues / statements being made have been coded. Sub topics within articles have also been summarised as for many of the articles the election is a sub topic within the main frame.

For full page articles which cover a series of different small subjects, each subject has been summarised in line with the above specifications, no story or subject has been left out.

- Keywords

Keywords have been coded in two stages according to the major and minor topics mentioned in the articles. One single main keyword has been coded for each article to determine the scope of topics in election coverage and these have been chosen according to the general and major focus of the article. For example, an article which covers an AKP meeting in particular province will be coded as "AKP campaigning", whereas an article which focuses on employment conditions will be coded as "employment". While coding for the main keyword helps identify the major agenda topics during the ten day period leading up to the elections, many articles go beyond the major article topic to include and discuss several sub-topics, some of which are

critical to the election agenda. In order to not overlook the other topics being discussed, a second level of coding for the different topics being touched upon in each article has also been carried out. This coding is of particular importance when looking at the visibility of critical Turkish agenda issues which do not feature as the major topic of an article such as constitutional change or the jailed journalists, as it provides the opportunity to determine the frequency and the context within which they are discussed.

For the coding of the major keywords, 26 different major keywords in total have been determined. Below is a description of each one:

- Academics / Experts: Articles which are based on an interview or feature which puts forward an academic or expert on a given topic. The focus in these articles must be on the academic or expert and their opinion, as introduced and relayed by the article.

- AKP Campaigning: Articles which cover AKP campaigning only

- BDP and Independent Campaigning: Articles which cover BDP and independents campaigning only. This includes the eligibility of candidates when discussed within a BDP and independents context. These also include non-BDP independents and therefore the content of the articles is important to determine the category within which they are in to discuss results.

- Business: Company and sector related news, inclusive of automotive, real estate etc.

- Campaigning: Articles covering campaigning in a certain region or province, not focusing on a single party but at least two of the running parties.

- CHP Campaigning: Articles which cover CHP campaigning only.

- Economy: Articles handling economy related topics inclusive of inflation,

economic performance, plans and policies.

- Education: Articles in which the main topic of focus is education.

- Election Conduct: Articles in which the conduct of a particular party or party member during the elections is the main topic of focus. For example in Birgün's article *Official complaint at CHP meeting,* published on 2 June 2011, highlights misconduct at a CHP in Sereflikochisar due to the campaign meeting being held somewhere other than the area designated by the Higher Election Board (*Yüksek Seçim Kurulu*).

- Employment: Articles focused on employment conditions and wages, inclusive of union opinions.

- Foreign Relations: Articles which handle Turkey's foreign policy, international relations and foreign affairs.

- Gender: Articles focusing on gender within a particular situation or in Turkey in general.

- Health: Articles in which the main topic relates to health, inclusive of government initiatives.

- Hopa: Articles which focus on the Hopa incident as the main subject matter, these do not include the mention of Hopa within campaigning, rather reports, defendants and debates surrounding the incident form the foundation for this keyword.

- Justice System: Articles touching upon the state of the justice system, inclusive of the eligibility of candidates but only when the judicial process itself is the key focus of the article, not the candidate or their status.

- Kurds: Articles which focus on the Kurdish question in Turkey, Kurdish identity or ethnicity as their main subject. Campaigning of Kurdish candidates is not

included under this keyword.

- Media: Articles in which main topic of focus is the media, domestic or foreign. This largely includes articles highlighting the television shows which will be covering the elections and who will be presenting them or articles which take foreign media commentary as they main topic of focus, either as a direct translation or as the main subject around which the article is built.

- MHP Campaigning: Articles which cover MHP campaigning.

- Military: Articles which handle the military as the overriding subject, inclusive of the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials.

- Parliament: Articles which look at the parliamentary set up and changes that will be brought in with the new government.

- PKK: Articles which focus on the PKK as a terrorist organisation and its activities.

- Religion: Articles with religion as their main point of focus, this includes efforts of religious groups or discussion of particular religion.

- Results: Articles covering the election results both on a national and provincial / regional level.

- Security: Articles relating to election or state security, such as the number of police being stationed at polling stations on election day, in order to ensure the security of voting and the number of police force graduates that have been appointed in time for elections.

- Technology: Articles relating to the technological side of elections, the internet, Google and TTNET systems bringing forward election results. The articles relating to technology companies relaying election results have been included in this category as their main focus is the technological side of the elections.

- Voting: Articles covering voting rules and regulations for these particular elections, details of voting by both public and politicians and any other subject that falls within the voting process.

In the coding of second level keywords all the keywords coded throughout the coding process were listed and cross checked at the end of the initial coding process. Similar keywords, for example economy related taxation, exports or imports, were merged into one keyword (economy in the case of the example) where possible to bring the total keyword number down to 124. After reviewing the level of accuracy for each variable generated by a second reader's analysis of the sample,, this was reduced even further to 72. The second reader's results are discussed in more detail below. This is still an extremely high number; however, such a number is required to determine the depth and extent of coverage and whether publications touch upon subjects that will ultimately ensure an "informed public".[232] These coded keywords can be searched for in accordance with agenda topics and thus their frequency determined. Together with determining the frequency, the way in which they are discussed by any given article can then be analysed due to the way in which the articles have been coded. Several topics are only mentioned in brief, yet by whom they were mentioned and in what context shed important light on the way in which the media is handling critical issues and how this relates to the relationship of the media with the government.

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[232] Please see Appendix A for a full list of keywords

Reliability Analysis

In order to assure the reliability of coding, a randomly selected set of articles were selected and coded by a second reader. 37 randomly selected articles from the total 371 were manually coded and these results correlated with the initial set with an overall accuracy of 94.56 % accuracy, only one article was revised as a result of this process.[233]

The level of detail is was an issue encountered on the keyword variable. The seven articles which do not correlate are those which have been coded with at least one keyword which does not correlate, but overall the main coding for the thesis has been done in much greater detail .The number of keywords assigned by the second reader to each article was much less than those which had originally been assigned. Upon observing this discrepancy a third reading of the number of keywords was conducted and their overall number reduced to highlight only major themes in each article.

Second Stage Analysis: Research Question 2

In the second stage of research, the observations and findings of Research Question 1 are taken further by an in depth analysis of the coverage of two selected topics on the media's agenda. In essence the second stage analysis is an in-depth text analysis which seeks to determine the way in which these topics are framed and compares the way individual publications have framed a particular topic. Hence, the analysis looks at only the framing of the selected topic together with the mise en scene of the article

itself, the balance of sources and topics within an article and even the omission of certain pieces of information to determine these differences and make conclusions about publications and the political spectrum.

These two topics have been chosen in accordance with their ability to identify particular characteristics of coverage by different publications, more specifically the extent to which we can observe polarization across the media spectrum. These are:

1. Handling of businessman Inan Kirac's written response to the PM

2. Coverage of foreign press commentary on the elections

The background of these two topics and the primary reasons for their selection are discussed in detail in Chapter 6. After an initial selection, the frequency of the topic as determined by second level keyword coding has been determined and each of articles within which the topic is mentioned has been qualitatively analysed. These analyses are based on an examination of certain characteristics such as the context within which the subject is touched upon, the length of quotations and how it is framed with other sources, research and topics and so forth.

Through a comparison of the handling of these selected topics by different publications, conclusions in regards to the Turkish media's ability to fulfil a democratic role and the factors that either support or hinder it are discussed.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: RESEARCH QUESTION 1

1. What is the range and depth of issues covered across newspapers before the

    elections?

The first component of research for this thesis takes the entire set of data gathered

and examines this material to assess the range and depth of coverage, and thus to

observe whether or not the Turkish media sufficiently informs the public. Together

with this and in light of the debates in Turkey surrounding the polarized nature of the

media, the degree and nature of polarization will be discussed in regards to

newspaper bias and the content uncovered in the ten day period.

Throughout this period general agenda topics such as the economy, health,

education, foreign policy and so forth are topics which should potentially be on the

media's agenda as these are relevant across all political systems and are of key

interest to the public, however, issues unique to the Turkish political environment

such as the two court cases, Balyoz and Ergenekon, the jailing of journalists, the

Kurdish question and thus terrorism, religion and so forth are all subjects which

should potentially be discussed by the media in the lead up to the elections. As

outlined in the method chapter, these topics and how they are discussed have been

identified by the coding of a main keyword and several second level keywords for

each individual article, which will help determine the scope and nature of discussion

for each individual publication. Linking these with the theoretical frameworks, the

presence of economic and political pressures will also be examined to look at the

ability of the media to inform its citizenry. This will be primarily looked at through

the range and depth, the frequency of the mentioned keywords and degree of overlap

between publications.

This first level analysis will run in parallel to the coding processes, beginning with a discussion of the number of articles, page, area, circulation, image and source. This will then lead onto a discussion of the subjects of the articles with reference to major and sub level keywords. The main keywords for each publication have been tabled together to provide an overview of the scope individual publications provide to their readers. Observations on the range and depth of coverage across the newspaper spectrum and also on a publication basis will be evaluated in this section with a discussion of to what extent key agenda issues have been presented to audiences.

Newspaper content will be discussed in detail in terms of polarization between the governing party, the AKP, and the CHP. For the purposes of this discussion, the number of openly supportive or critical articles for each party have been coded and graphed on a publication basis. By looking at the tone and content, the level of polarization and the mechanisms at work in producing news will be determined and compared to gain an insight into the way news is produced in the print media in Turkey.

Overall Characteristics of Coverage

In total 371 articles were analysed and coded as per relevancy with the national elections. Front page headlines make up 25 % (93) of the 371 articles; these are not inclusive of the front pages of lift outs. Of these 371 articles, the highest number of articles were published by Milliyet, with 46 articles in total, followed by Haberturk with 35 articles and Vatan closely behind with 34 articles. Comparing these numbers

with their circulation Milliyet is ninth in terms of circulation, whilst Haberturk ranks sixth and Vatan is ranked eleventh. Not surprisingly these newspapers are also the publications with the highest number of front page stories, signifying the level of importance they give to the election subject as part of their daily agenda.

<u>Number of Articles</u>

The distribution of the total number of articles is outlined in Table 3 below. Before commencing a short discussion on the number of articles and how they are distributed, it is important to again touch upon the Interpress data collection in detail. As mentioned, the unit of measurement for this study is the individual article; however, a brief look into the way in which Interpress has gathered articles is included below to highlight the logic behind the data gathering and analysis.

It is evident that Interpress has largely grouped together articles which are interrelated on a given page. This is particularly evident in business or sector related articles, in which news regarding several different companies is grouped into one larger article around the major topic of real estate or insurance for example. It can be argued that these are essentially one article because they have been prepared by the same journalist and feature together to form the whole article. Articles gathered by Interpress that are published in combination on the same page are usually related, either causing balancing act if regarding different parties or providing a party insight into different election related topics and are usually articles covering a campaign meeting. The way and the depth in which topics, in particular elections and campaigning, are covered differs from publication to publication but the main articles essentially remain the same.

Breaking down these kinds of groupings on a publication basis, the highest occurrence can be observed in Cumhuriyet, Haberturk and Milliyet. Cumhuriyet devotes a special page to campaigning on a provincial basis and these are the only articles which have been grouped together as one article. In total there are ten articles and within these ten articles there are fifty one smaller stories, eight of these being observations which fit into the "column" category and have thus not been analysed. The majority of these ten articles only have one or two journalists named, indicating that the articles on these pages were written by the same journalists and hence formulate a whole. Haberturk similarly groups together articles on the topic of campaigning, five singular articles contain ten smaller articles, only two of these name two separate journalists while two name no journalist at all. Milliyet's coverage is more diversified in terms of format, but it is still largely related to election coverage and associated issues, with eight articles amounting to thirty five individual articles. In the case of Milliyet, much of the main article is supported by smaller news agency articles with very few journalists named outright. Looking at the remaining publications Birgun has three articles which include eleven smaller articles; Hurriyet has two which amount to four, Star, Posta and Sabah with four, two and one which include ten, nine and three smaller articles respectively. Finally, Vatan has four articles which amount to nine smaller articles. Again, the trend in these groupings of articles is that the main subject matter is interrelated and smaller articles support the page formulation, others are either related to another political party or event that has happened within scope of elections. In this respect though the number of articles may be underestimated for some of the publications, the total area of the articles and more importantly their content form an integral part of the analysis.

The below table shows the data as generated by Interpress used for this study.

Table 3: Number of Articles per Publication

Publication	Total
Taraf	8
Aksam	13
Posta	14
Sozcu	17
Turkiye	17
Sabah	18
Birgun	22
Hurriyet	27
Radikal	28
Zaman	28
Cumhuriyet	32
Star	32
Vatan	34
Habertürk	36
Milliyet	45
Total	371

At first glance and in terms of the number of articles, one could assume that the

number of articles on the election provided by any particular publication would be

related to its circulation and thus level of readership, as the role of a given to the

media implies informing the readership. Working on the basis of this assumption, the

top three newspapers Zaman, Posta and Hurriyet should be leading the tally of

articles in accordance with their leadership in sales, yet Posta is the newspaper with

the third least number of articles, whereas Zaman and Hurriyet fall in the middle to

lower part of the article scale. At this very first stage, this observation indicates that

correlating circulation numbers to the number of articles is not sufficient and one

must acknowledge that each publication has its own style of reporting which

obviously has an influence on the extent to which political subjects and therefore the

election is covered. This kind of evaluation is reliant on an examination of overall

average page numbers for each newspaper, stylistic features and the sections and

therefore subjects present on their agenda. Looking at the circulation figures in

comparison with the number of articles in each publication, particularly considering

the fact that the top three newspapers make up almost 40% of newspaper readership

yet have lower numbers of articles, does compel one to question this issue and more

specifically, whether this impacts the range and depth of coverage received by the

majority of readers. The economic pressure on publications may also play a part in

the lower number of articles with less resources allocated to campaign coverage,

particularly when they are not in major cities. This idea relates back to Bennet and

Entman's arguments about image formation and the role of PR. Many of the

Interpress underestimations which were discussed above included a higher number of

news agency news articles and non-attributed articles than actual journalistic work.

Articles which name no journalist are arguably sent to the media via PR mechanisms

and the majority of these are manufactured messages by either political elite or by commercial entities. These ideas will be discussed further when examining keywords.

<div align="center">Article area</div>

Total area is also of significance because it highlights the amount of space given to election and election related topics by each publication. Below is an overview of the total area given to election coverage on a publication basis.

Table 4: Total Area per Publication

Publication	Total Area
Aksam	1994
Taraf	2064
Turkiye	2252
Sozcu	3119
Birgun	3246
Posta	3549
Sabah	4103
Hurriyet	4361
Radikal	4458
Zaman	5849
Vatan	7339
Cumhuriyet	7482
Haberturk	7964
Star	9307
Milliyet	11596
Total	78683

The area given to the election subject by individual publications is largely reflective of their number of articles, with Milliyet remaining in first rank followed by Star, this is followed by Haberturk, Cumhuriyet and Vatan. While Star is not amongst the top three newspapers with the highest number of articles, it is still amongst the top five and therefore there appears no discrepancy in the amount of space given to the subject. It is important to note that article area is largely based on the publishing standards of a newspaper and any further discussion of this would require a deeper investigation into their characteristics, but it does allow us to determine whether there are any discrepancies in the correlation between the number of articles in each publication and the allocated area.

<div align="center">Sources</div>

The examination of sources is important for this study in measuring the range of voices that are seen across the media spectrum, the way in which newspapers balance sources and the position of the governing party. Throughout the existing academic literature a significant emphasis is placed on the use of sources by several authors to look at the press politics relationship and the level of influence the administration, or in case the government has. A higher level of balance or diversity among sources indicates a deeper level of investigation and journalist integrity, with a particular reference to the presence of alternative voices, while a reliance on official sources indicates closer ties between the government and the media. The coding and distribution of sources can be seen on a publication basis in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Use of Sources Across Publications

Publication	Government & State	Other Parties	Business & Business Orgs.	Civil society	Citizen	Trade Bodies & Unions	Other	Total
Aksam	6	0		0	1	1	5	23
Birgun	10	6	1	4	1	9	11	42
Cumhuriyet	11	19	2	1	9	6	5	53
Haberturk	20	21	8	0	3	2	3	57
Hurriyet	11	8	5	0	0	3	1	28
Milliyet	15	28	2	0	4	0	6	55
Posta	5	8	1	1	2	1	3	21
Radikal	8	5	6	2	1	0	17	39
Sabah	7	1	3	0	0	3	5	19
Sozcu	5	3	2	0	0	2	3	15
Star	18	6	5	0	1	0	12	42
Taraf	5	4	1	0	0	1	5	16
Turkiye	9	0	6	0	0	1	5	21
Vatan	19	15	8	1	2	2	6	53
Zaman	20	6	8	0	0	1	6	41
Total	169	130	68	9	24	32	93	525

Looking at the above table, it is evident that Zaman, Haberturk, Vatan and Star favour government or state sources, with only Haberturk and Vatan offering a more even balance between these and other parties. The level of citizen and civil society voice is also quite low. Only five publications offer sources from civil society and apart from Cumhuriyet the level of citizen voice is relatively low, remaining under five sources for each publication. Considering that the most common topic of election related coverage should arguably be campaigning, one could argue that the number of sources from other parties and the public should be much higher, at the very least comparable to that of government/state sources, however, the only newspapers to offer more of a balance between sources are Cumhuriyet, Milliyet, Posta. The "other" category includes voices such as academics, experts on the economy and other issues, foreign press sources etc., therefore an alternative voice is being put forward by certain publications. Yet, to what effect can only be determined by how the source is contextualised with the content.

As mentioned it is interesting to note that in comparison to business and business organisations the number of civil society and citizen sources are extremely low, with only Birgun, Cumhuriyet, Posta, Radikal and Vatan calling upon civil society as sources, all with low numbers, the majority including only one or two. In terms of citizen sources, keeping in mind that elections are the key democratic event in which citizen voices should be heard, Posta is the only publication in the top five to draw upon citizens as source. Cumhuriyet is the only newspaper that appears to consistently seek a citizen opinion, with Haberturk and Milliyet being the other newspapers that appear to call on citizens significantly comparison to their counterparts. The fact that these alternative categories are low indicates that the press-politics relationship in Turkey is strong with a preference for government

sources, coupled with this is economic pressures through the level of business sources being used in the data period is six times the number of civil society and almost three times the number of citizen sources. The tendency of the latter reflects the arguments of McChesney and others in that commercial interests drive coverage in an industry dependent on advertising for revenue. What is more is that this dependence on business sources may be reflective of the audience the media is addressing in Turkey, rather than the citizenry the media may be speaking to the business circles to inform them on the progress of the election and the associated economic environment. These observations can only be confirmed by further delving into the content and looking at the possible ways messages are packaged with their sources.

Looking at these in more depth; it is firstly important to note that article topics are the main influential factor on sources. For articles in which campaigning is a sub-topic, the sources that are used by the newspapers are determined by the main article topic and determine whether these sources will be official, a civil society group or business etc. From the types of sources used by each publication, one can begin making conclusions about their main focuses, for example Aksam newspaper has more of a focus on the economy and business news and therefore opts for companies or financial or other experts as sources.

Using multiple sources also offers a balanced view, particularly if these are teamed with government or official opinions. Aksam, Sabah and Turkiye are the most unbalanced newspapers in regards to political party sources. The types of sources indicate the degree of diversity offered by different publications and overall. Publications use companies and business representatives for many of the articles in which the election is a secondary topic, Aksam, Haberturk and Hurriyet lead in this

area. On the subject of the economy and even government policy, official sources are favoured by the majority of the publications; however, these are diversified across publications by the use of different sources together with them. Birgun, Cumhuriyet and Sozcu tend to favour unions or trade bodies, or civil society groups which present an alternative view to the government, whilst Zaman for example tends to favour governmental representatives. The 'other' category for publications is also quite important as this highlights their attempt to yet again diversify their usage of sources by calling upon other voices, which can be foreign media commentary being used as a source, academic experts or professionals offering an expert opinion on the topic of an article. Birgin, Radikal and Star are the leading publications in this area, but it is interesting to note for example that Aksam newspaper calls upon professors to put their opinions forward on economy related subjects. The lower number of sources in this case could also be attributed to the low number of articles published by Aksam in comparison to its counterparts and this highlights the importance of evaluating the variables together.

No publication appears to rely on a singular source for more than a small percentage of articles, for which the majority the election is a secondary subject. Hence, one can expect that on policy related issues the newspapers will use official government sources, yet it is the extent to which these are then diversified with other voices or insights that provides readers with a greater level of contextualisation and information which is required during elections. As Baker states, the role of election coverage is to serve fairly the actual and possible participants in this process, inclusive of alternative political parties and the public. Looking at the mainstream media in this analysis, this diversification and fair coverage in terms of sources used is relatively low. The majority of publications do not go beyond official sources for

politically related issues.

Looking at the use of political party sources on a publication basis, Aksam, and Turkiye for example include no articles which call upon other political parties as a source, and Sabah only calls upon one. Zaman newspaper calls upon 6 sources from other political parties, but it is evident in further investigation that this is largely used in coverage of the election results and is in stark contrast to the twenty government and official sources used. In terms of using the government as a source, Cumhuriyet, Haberturk, Milliyet and Posta all draw upon a higher number of other party sources than they do government or official sources.

From the above observations, a pattern in the Turkish media purely based on sources begins to emerge. There is a reliance on official sources, particularly on politically related issues, with a preference for the governing party. There are only four publications which appear to offer a more balanced or diverse style of coverage in terms of sources, with very few going further to consult unions, trade bodies, citizens and civil society groups that have the potential to reflect an alternative view on the topic of a given article. Thus, in the attempt to fulfil a messenger role very few newspapers appear to go beyond an official line, ultimately undermining their ability to carry out this role and indicating the proximity of the press-politics relationship in the country.

Images

Image placement, composition of the images and their captions all play a role in the final mise en scene of the article and thus the effect on their readers. As the existing literature highlights, images are a part of packaging and image formation to be

consumed by audiences. Thus, though the analysis of images does not form an integral part of this thesis, a brief look into the content of the images, in particular the political leaders depicted in the images of the data set will shine light on the upcoming discussion on polarization. The frequency of depiction of each of the major political party leaders and other politicians, independents in particular, is listed in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency of Images of Political Leaders per Publication

Publication	Recept Tayyip Erdogan (RTE)	Kilicdaroglu	Bahceli	Other	Total
Aksam	2	0	0	0	2
Birgun	0	0	0	5	5
Cumhuriyet	0	2	0	0	2
Haberturk	3	4	0	0	7
Hurriyet	3	3	2	0	8
Milliyet	8	17	3	0	28
Posta	4	2	1	12	19
Radikal	0	1	0	1	2
Sabah	7	2	1	2	12
Sozcu	1	4	1	1	7
Star	9	4	0	1	14
Taraf	1	0	0	0	1
Turkiye	1	0	0	0	1
Vatan	16	9	6	5	36
Zaman	0	3	4	0	7
Total	55	51	18	27	151

In examining images, the frequency of pictures does not necessarily mean that a particular publication supports a certain party or political leader as coding of images is independent of the context. The story may be portraying the subject depicted in the picture negatively. All the photos understandably relate to the subject of the article, with many depicting the source or the theme of the article, for economy and business related news in particular. A large portion of images is in the form of graphics to highlight voting and results, offering readers visuals of how to vote and what to expect when voting, together with tables and figures of previous elections and the 2011 election results. These have not been included in the coding.

Bringing in images into the analysis of coverage shines further light on the scope and depth of coverage being offered across the Turkish media spectrum. The depiction of political figures varies across each publication, with some publications such as Birgun depicting none of the major political leaders at all, while others favour either Kilicdaroglu or Erdogan. Again, due to the AKP winning the elections, it can be expected that the occurrences of RTE may be slightly higher depending on the extent of coverage of election results, however, Kilicdaroglu also commented on the election results and therefore it is plausible that publications will include the opposition leader's image. Cumhuriyet, Haberturk, Radikal, Sozcu and Milliyet favour Kilicdaroglu in images, the former four only slightly, with Milliyet including his image seventeen times in comparison to eight for Erdogan. Aksam, Posta, Sabah, Star, Taraf, Turkiye and Vatan favour Erdogan. Hurriyet depicts the leaders equally, both at three. Within these newspaper groups, Birgun, Cumhuriyet and Radikal do not depict Erdogan at all, while Birgun, Taraf and Turkiye do not depict Kilicdaroglu at all. Zaman newspaper interestingly does not depict Erdogan at all, and while it

depicts Kilicdaroglu three times, the publication uses Bahceli's photos the most. Vatan, Milliyet and Hurriyet are the other publications which depict Bahceli more than once, while Posta, Sabah and Sozcu depict the leader once. Aksam, Birgun, Cumhuriyet, Haberturk, Radikal, Star, Taraf and Turkiye do not depict Bahceli at all. Though Bahceli has been depicted by almost half of the newspapers, as mentioned in the introduction, the question of whether the MHP would cross the threshold was on the agenda before the elections and therefore it can be expected that he would have appeared in more publications. This may be an indication that the degree of diversity is lacking across the media spectrum.

The occurrences of images of other political party leaders and candidates are another indicator of diversity in newspaper coverage, especially considering these are mainly BDP and independent candidates. Only a small remainder of these candidates are ex-military officials running for a seat in parliament. Seven publications have failed to depict any member of this group, with Radikal, Sozcu and Star only publishing one image and Sabah two. Vatan, Birgun and Posta are the publications which depict images from this group the most, Posta depicting twelve. However, it must be acknowledged that images were counted individually, meaning if they appeared three times in one article they were counted as three, hence the degree of diversity in images is also reliant on the articles within which they appear.

Overall, it is difficult to make conclusions based on images, however, what does appear quite clearly is that there is a lack of images of the MHP leader and other leaders across the entire range of publications and this may indicate that there is a reluctance to go beyond the two major parties The fact that some publications have not published any images of either Erdogan or Kilicdaroglu also potentially indicates that this is a conscious decision made by individual publications which may serve to

increase the level of visibility of a particular leader and party by favouring their images. Upon an evaluation of the content, the relevance of images may prove to have a greater significance depending on the context within which they are used.

<div align="center">Sub-Conclusion</div>

The above evaluations of the articles provide an insight into overall news production within a set of publications. From this initial overview, it is evident that though the number of articles and area do not play a determining role in the analysis, the patterns emerging from the use of sources and images draw attention to a possible proximity in the press politics relationship which serves as an area of weakness in terms of informing the public. This needs to be explored in more depth. Sources in particular highlight a distinct lack of diversity in coverage and more importantly an absence of a direct representation of the citizenry and civil society, coupled with an overwhelming representation of the government and an official voice. The frequency of images of political leaders too favours PM Erdogan, who has a much higher visibility across all fifteen publications. In an environment in which diversity is key, as argued by Dahlgren, these initial findings indicate a greater visibility and connection with the state, rather than with politics as an entire spectrum. The implications and effects of these patterns will gain greater importance when evaluated together with content.

Scope of Topics

One of the greatest indicators of the depth and range of coverage is the subjects covered by each publication. This discussion will first begin with a general look at the scope of topics and how they have been handled by each individual publication and will then lead into the final content evaluation, which will examine patterns of polarization in detail.

A total of twenty six major keywords have been coded. No newspaper includes all keywords listed in Table 7. The distribution of these keywords across the data set can be seen in Table 8.

Table 7: List of Major Keywords

Academics or Experts	Employment	Military
AKP Campaigning	Foreign Relations	Parliament
BDP and Independent Campaigning	Gender	PKK
Business	Health	Religion
Campaigning	Hopa	Results
CHP Campaigning	Justice System	Security
Economy	Kurds	Technology
Education	Media	Voting
Election Conduct	MHP Campaigning	

Table 8: Distribution of Major Keywords Across Data Set

Subject	Ak.	Bir.	Cum.	HT	Hur.	Mil.	Pos.	Rad.	Sab.	Soz.	Star	Tar.	Tur.	Vat.	Za.
Academics / Experts	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	1	0	1	2
AKP Campaigning	1	1	0	3	1	3	2	0	2	0	4	0	5	7	3
BDP and Independents Campaigning	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Business	2	0	2	2	6	3	2	1	2	1	1	0	2	2	3
Campaigning	0	0	10	4	1	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	1
CHP Campaigning	0	0	2	2	2	5	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Economy	3	3	1	2	3	1	0	2	2	3	5	3	1	3	5
Education	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Election Conduct	0	2	1	0	1	4	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1
Employment	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foreign Relations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Gender	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Hopa	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Justice System	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Kurds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
MHP Campaigning	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Military	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Parliament	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PKK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	3

Subject	Ak.	Bir.	Cum.	HT	Hur.	Mi.t	Post.	Rad.	Sab.	Soz.	Star	Tar.	Tur.	Vat.	Za.
Religion	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Results	4	1	5	16	4	17	5	8	5	8	9	3	1	9	10
Security	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Technology	1	2	1	2	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	3	0	1
Voting	0	1	3	1	4	4	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	2	0
Total	13	22	32	36	27	45	14	28	18	17	32	8	17	34	28

In terms of frequency, the highest number of articles across the media spectrum is election results, with the majority of publications devoting the highest number of their articles to election results. Once this subject is excluded, this is followed by economy, AKP campaigning and business. Due to the campaigning keyword being split into four different categories in order to code articles covering multi or single party campaigning, the frequency of economy and business as subjects has exceeded the other campaigning related keywords. The total number of campaigning related articles equals eighty eight which exceeds that of the number of economy and business articles, however, it is still interesting to note that these two topics are more often covered than straight campaigning as it suggests that the financial agenda is of more importance than campaigning for a high percentage of publications. This observation correlates with comments made on the number of business and business organisation sources in the previous section. In McNair's description of a commercialised media, he mentions ownership structures and the fact that many independent organisations have been replaced by external sectors buying into the media sector. This trend is frequent in Turkey with more than half of the fifteen publications being owned by larger holdings active in external sectors. Company news in the media is largely a product of PR mechanisms, reflecting the arguments Bennett in particular puts forward. Economy related news on the other hand can be interpreted differently depending on the angle. Yet the high frequency of these keywords in this data set indicates that this subject is considered relevant knowledge for media consumers during this period. Therefore, on the one hand the economic pressures can be observed due to the frequency of these keywords, whereas on the other, the target audience may also be considered to be businesses with interests in the stability of the country and its economy. The handling of these two keywords will

be discussed further in the context of agenda topics, for now campaigning coverage is the primary focus.

In examining the frequency of campaigning articles, this discussion looks at the frequency across the four mentioned categories with articles with campaigning as the main keyword comprising of a multi-party composition and articles with AKP, CHP, BDP and independents campaigning as the main keyword focusing on the campaigning efforts of parties on a single party basis. In total there are thirty two articles which have been coded for AKP campaigning, the third most frequent article topic. Vatan covers the highest number of AKP campaigning articles with six in total, followed by Turkiye and Star with five and four respectively. These figures contrast to the seventeen articles coded for CHP campaigning, with Milliyet covering CHP campaigning in five articles, followed by Vatan at three. Here, the number of AKP campaigning articles is almost double that of the main opposition party. Given that articles coded for campaigning are limited to the campaign trail as a major focus and do not include other government related subjects, the significant difference between the coverage of the two major parties alludes to the increased visibility of the AKP. The number of campaigning articles covering the campaigning efforts of several parties within one article equals more than that of those coded for CHP campaigning at twenty three. Cumhuriyet makes up the majority of these articles, ten in total, highlighting that as a publication it aims to provide a more rounded campaigning coverage focusing on several parties and local opinions. Haberturk, Milliyet and Vatan are the only other publications that take this approach, albeit to a lesser extent. Therefore only four publications out of fifteen attempt offer more rounded coverage of all parties in addition to or in lieu of single party campaigning coverage. The number of articles coded for BDP and independent and MHP campaigning are almost

equal to one another, again being significantly behind the two major parties with nine and eight articles respectively. Vatan covers MHP campaigning the most with three articles, while Haberturk, Hurriyet, Milliyet, Posta and Radikal touch upon the party's campaigning with one article each.

In determining the frequency of BDP and independent campaigning it is important to note that independents included in this category also include non-BDP independents such as former army officials which means that although the majority of the articles coded in this category are related to Kurdish and minority representation, some of these may also include the candidacy of another group of candidates. In this evaluation of major keywords, Hurriyet is the only publication which covers this other group in this category and therefore the remaining articles address campaigning of the Kurdish group. The articles coded for BDP and independent campaigning overall are much less visible across the set of publications with Birgun, Radikal and Sabah covering BDP and independents campaigning twice, while Hurriyet, Milliyet and Posta cover it once. As mentioned Hurriyet's coverage is of former military official Cetin Dogan's candidacy. The publications which cover each of these parties, arguably offer a stronger kind of coverage that will result in a greater ability to inform the public because they offer a perspective on the different, existing political voices.

Within the context of major keywords, at this stage we see patterns which separate publications into groups which are inclined to giving a particular party a greater level of visibility. A series of four publications do not cover AKP campaigning as a major topic at all, the majority of which also do not include articles which have been coded for multi-party campaigning coverage. In examining these patterns it is also evident that eight publications overlook CHP campaigning coded

articles, in comparison to the four mentioned above. Given there is a slant towards the AKP observed in these patterns, it can be argued that the visibility of the party is much more prominent and further, very few publications are willing to go beyond the two major parties in their main coverage scope. In this respect, the frequency for the AKP as sources is not surprising, but it indicates that more of the AKP messages are reaching the public than any other political participant and an inequality in the press-politics spectrum can be observed.

As mentioned, the high frequency of articles coded for economy is of significance as it touches upon an important agenda topic that can potentially influence voter preferences, but it may also highlight the commercialised nature and target audience of the media and the proximity between elections, the government and business elite in the country. Emphasis on the economy indicates that a high percentage of publications are addressing the economy prior and in relation to the elections, reflecting on the government's performance. Zaman and Star are the most economy focused publications, with Aksam, Birgun, Hurriyet, Sozcu, Taraf and Vatan following at three. However, the way in which the economy is covered is of significance and will be explored further in Research Question 2.

Similarly, business coded articles and therefore business related news is a reflection of the corporate nature of the news in line with Bennett, McChesney and Entman's comments about the commercial nature of news. As outlined, the entire data set has been selected in accordance with the keyword "election" and therefore the amount of business or company related news entering this data set should essentially be less frequent, yet as shown by the coding, the frequency of business news is in the top five. This is arguably a result of the influence corporate and business interests have in the media, coupled with the impact the elections may have

on certain businesses. To take the arguments regarding the political economy of the media further, an evaluation of the businesses news being covered by individual publications and their proximity to newspaper owners and the government could be discussed to look at the kind of pressures and packaging that occurs in putting forward messages and evaluating the government's performance. Coupled with this, in light of the changes that have occurred in the Turkish media since the AKP came to power, the preference for coverage of AKP campaigning can also be interpreted as being subject to some degree of economic influence that is determined by the ownership structure of these publications. By taking a look into the ownership companies this discussion could be expanded to help determine the extent of commercialisation and commercial pressures in the Turkish media. As mentioned, there is a high prominence of holding companies with interests outside of the media sector; the coverage of these is arguably more inclined to company news. Additionally, an examination of the proximity of the owners to the government would also provide a greater understanding of these influencing factors.

Technology has been a major topic on the media's agenda in these elections with fifteen articles in total, this parallels advancements in technology and the fact that major technology players now offer solutions in the area of elections. Some of the subject matter that has been coded in this category throughout the study period has been for example Google's tools to monitor and cover the elections, the security of the internet and internet usage and mobile applications developed to follow the elections. Accordingly, the major significance of this subject in particular is that quite a number of publications are informing their readers of how to follow the elections via technology – Milliyet, Posta, Sabah, Taraf and Vatan do not touch upon this subject. The fact that there is a commercial element to this subject must also not be

overlooked. Though the major focus is related to the link between technology and elections, it is still businesses putting forward their solutions and therefore further their own public relations activities accordingly.

Media and academic / expert related articles total eleven articles each, yet these need to be discussed in accordance with their content to determine the kinds of coverage being put forward to newspaper readers. Media includes both actual media coverage of the elections, result in particular, with many publications printing summaries of television shows discussing election results that are being hosted by key journalists, and articles focused on foreign press commentary which directly relates to an evaluation of party performances and offers alternate voices, hence offering greater depth in coverage. The former group has largely been published on 11 June 2011 and 12 June 2011 in order to inform readers directly before the elections take place. The role of academics / experts in evaluating the elections and party performances performs a similar role to the foreign press commentary mentioned above as readers are given a deeper level analysis by a professional in their respective field.

The remaining keywords are subjects which are significant agenda topics and of public importance, hence need to be reported, yet their frequency or lack of it characterises the scope of coverage offered by the Turkish print media. The Hopa issue was, at the time of the elections, a contested subject which put the AKP in a negative position. Six articles in total focus on Hopa as a major article subject, in only three publications.[234] Education, military, health and the justice system are all

[234] Haberturk. 31 May 2011. *Başbakan'ın Hopa mitinginde gerginlik!* (Tension at prime minister's meeting in Hopa!) Available [online]: "http://www.haberturk.com/gundem/haber/635702-basbakanin-hopa-mitinginde-gerginlik" [16 April 2011].

Milliyet. 31 May 2011. *AK Parti mitinginde olaylar çıktı.* (Incidents at AK Party's meeting) Available

important subjects relating to key government services and also the character of the military and justice system at a time when many military trials and criticisms of the justice system were taking place. All of the latter three subjects are reported in four separate publications, the topic of education being touched upon twice by Birgun. Again, the context within which these articles are presented to the public will further determine the depth publications offer their readers.

Considering the last eight keywords, the lower frequency of security and parliament as major keywords is not concerning as these can also be mentioned as sub-topics within the major agenda topics of election conduct and campaigning, however, the fact that foreign relations, gender and Kurds are only mentioned in one article makes one question the depth of coverage being presented to readers. The question of Kurdish representation is complex as campaigning has been the major focus and therefore the notion of Kurdish ethnicity is also present in these articles, however, in this section it is essential to note the major keyword and thus focus. The coding shows that BDP and independent campaigning has been the major focus point of coverage, whereas the issue of ethnicity has been less significant on the agenda. Foreign relations on the other hand forms a major part of a government's agenda and at the time of elections issues such as the deteriorating relationships with Israel, the aspirations of the AKP government to establish itself a leader in the Middle East region in the wake of the Arab Spring and thus the Country's distanced relationship with Europe are all of importance and have not been touched upon as major media

[online]: "http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/ak-parti-mitinginde-olaylar-cikti/siyaset/siyasetdetay/31.05.2011/1396892/default.htm" [16 April 2011].

DHA. 31 May 2011. *Hopa'da AK Parti mitingi sonrasında olay*. (Incident after AK Party meeting in Hopa). Available [online]: "http://www.dha.com.tr/hopada-ak-parti-mitingi-sonrasinda-olay_167495.html" [16 April 2011].

concerns. Gender is another issue which arguably needs further attention in Turkey considering inequality between males and females, yet this has only been addressed once. The lack of coverage of religion as a major media concern can be interpreted as showing that the religious nature of the AKP is no longer a contested topic, again reinforcing the hegemony of the governing party.

Within the Turkish context, other critical agenda issues at the time included the nature of the AKP government, jailed journalists, constitutional change, the Ergenekon and Balyoz court cases and the Kurdish question, as determined by wider debates, inclusive of media, these have not been given priority as major agenda topics of any of the publications. These will be discussed in terms of overall content in the next section, however, the notion of newsworthiness brought up by Bennett and Entman is worth touching upon. In this data set, the keywords with the highest level of frequency also have the greatest value of being newsworthy. It is natural for campaigning on an individual and multi-party basis to be newsworthy during this period, yet between parties there is a split. News regarding AKP campaigning is more frequent and arguably more newsworthy than that of other parties, particularly the group with a significantly low level of coverage: BDP and independents. Business and economy news have gained more coverage than any other performance related topic, such as health, education and even the Hopa scandal which was only covered by three publications. Therefore, in the Turkish example, it appears as though newsworthiness is based on the press-politics relationship, favouring the AKP, but also steers away from content which directly evaluates the government's performance.

Engaging with the Content: Scope and Depth of Critical Agenda Issues

Moving beyond the above coded characteristics, the determination of sub-level keywords allows for a greater engagement with the data and thus the ability to confirm or attest the patterns observed above and also determine new ones. As mentioned the observations made regarding scope through the use of major keywords points at the lack of scope on certain issues, in specific publications in particular, however, these cannot be examined without referring to sub-level keywords to determine whether they are not discussed at all or just as a sub-topic. If discussed as a sub-topic, then again the question to what extent they are discussed can be asked. For the purpose of this discussion, in addition to the degree of influence of the press-politics relationship, the notion of the media's role in democracy and more significantly the need for the public to be informed have been the underlying factors in selecting agenda issues to discuss in more depth. The chosen topics are topics which are unique and critical to Turkish society and therefore arguably newsworthy when evaluated on the basis of public relevance. These are also topics which were being discussed and debated in Turkish circles and more significantly contested in foreign media in the months leading up to the elections.

Examining the number of sub-level keywords related to the three critical agenda topics of Constitutional Change, the Balyoz / Ergenekon court cases, Kurds and the issue of the jailed journalists, the low number of articles that mention especially the latter two within a critical framework supports the idea that they are not considered to be newsworthy and additionally, due to their critical nature, in fact give way to the power of the press-politics relationship in the country. This results in an omission of topics or a packaging of messages and images to serve the

government's agenda rather than to inform the public and also highlights a lack of range and depth in coverage.

The subject of the jailed journalists is only mentioned twice out in the 371 articles. Radikal newspaper mentions the issue within a full translation of an article from the Economist, without any input from the newspaper itself, whereas the second article published in Vatan newspaper covers a written announcement from the AKP EU Minister Egemen Bagis. Within this written announcement Bagıs is quoted as stating that the journalists are in jail due to their links with a plot for a coup, not because of their journalism. The Balyoz and Ergenekon cases are also referred to subtly in this article with references to military arrests in other countries (Italy, Spain) which also experienced similar problems. Already in looking at the first critical agenda subject, there is almost no discussion at all of the journalists in jail or the wider issue of press freedom, instead a foreign press source is used to critique the situation while an official view has been published in the second, making the only domestic voice an official and thus AKP perspective.

The Balyoz / Ergenekon cases had begun developing and at the time of the elections in 2011 more people were being implicated in the cases, as supported by the coverage in this period. Given the previous studies conducted on election coverage, the divide between the secular and non-secular groups in society appeared to have reached a climax with the contestation surrounding the election of the President, also instilling pro-military discourse in the coverage at the time according to Balkir (2007). The way in which these subjects are handled by the media in the most recent elections thus provides an insight into the power play between the AKP and the secularists and also the military institution, which apart from coverage of defendants as candidates is portrayed largely through an official and more negative

lens in this election coverage. The two court cases are discussed overwhelmingly in the context of defendants being candidates or successfully making it into parliament. In total ten articles are related to the candidacy of defendants and the success of defendants, these being reported in Cumhuriyet, Hurriyet, Milliyet, Star, Vatan and Zaman. In contrast, Birgun and Cumhuriyet cover government comments that suggest Ilker Basbug, former Commander of the Turkish Armed forces will also be implicated in the court cases. In addition to this story, the idea of the army being toppled and the details of the two cases in particular portraying the AKP as a victim as new documents emerge are covered over three articles in Haberturk, Sabah and Zaman. The remaining three articles are anti-military, largely putting forward a government or official view in Vatan and Zaman newspaper, whereas Star has published an article in its "Open View" insert in which an author has written an article critical of the military. Reflecting back on these results, it is evident that for the period of the study at the very least, the previously observed AKP – military dichotomy appears to have come to an end. On this topic the AKP clearly dominates the media's agenda, but the frames being used are those influenced by the government's relationship with the media and this results in "good" images of the AKP being produced. There is no single article that provides a military perspective on the cases, let alone one that discusses the legality of the cases or includes the voice of an independent legal advisor to contextualise the cases; instead the use of official sources or incrementing documents has been observed. The majority of the articles coded for the sub-level keyword military are for the same set of articles discussed in this section and therefore the discussion does not go beyond campaign speeches, foreign press commentary and the views of experts or academics in relation to changes in the Constitution, again the commentary is largely against the

military and hence the AKPs position is supported.

On the subject of Constitutional Change, the need for the AKP to gain a supermajority and the PMs reported aim to bring in a Presidential System to Turkey are also linked to the ability of the party to change the Constitution unilaterally or by reaching consensus with the opposition parties. This subject was mostly discussed within the reporting of election results. A total of fifteen articles discussing the notion of constitutional change were included in the coverage of election results, the majority of these highlighting that the AKP must make the new Constitution by deliberating with the opposition parties. Within this coverage it can be observed that certain publications take the angle of the AKP being unable to reach the number of seats required for unilateral Constitutional change, whereas others only mention that it must reach consensus. Only two publications (Birgun and Milliyet) mention the topic in relation to minority rights being included in the Constitution. Hence, the topic of constitutional change is overwhelmingly presented from an AKP perspective, with only two publications balancing this with a view from an alternative party. In regards to this topic, it has been observed that foreign press commentary and the view of academics or experts are used to put forward a more critical views and recommendations on the topic which is interesting given the lack of alternative local political voices in comparison. The use of foreign press commentary is further discussed in Research Question 2.

A topic both unique and critical to Turkey is the Kurdish question and the way in which Turkish governments have handled and made progression on the issue. As seen in the previous sections, the use of BDP and independents as sources is relatively low, as is the number of articles with Kurds as the major keyword and the number of publications covering these articles. Having been coded for the sub-level

keyword "Kurds" there are in total twenty three articles touching upon the subject in some way or another, this figure does not include the eligibility of Hatip Dicle as an MP on which five articles in total have been written by Milliyet, Posta, Radikal and Star newspaper. These do not focus on the Kurdish identity rather the judicial proceedings and eligibility and therefore have not been coded for this keyword. Aksam, Haberturk, Hurriyet, Sozcu and Turkiye do not cover any articles at all relating to Kurds, while the Kurds are covered as a topic through election coverage of independents for the BDP by Birgun, Milliyet and Sabah totalling four articles overall. The Kurdish issue is referred to within the context of other parties campaigning in four articles, two of these from a CHP perspective looking at the expectations of the Kurdish group in society and a critique of the AKP for having not kept its promises, while the AKP campaigning article included a quote of PM Erdogan as saying he loved Kurds, the remaining article is a local campaigning article looking at where Kurdish votes will go. Two articles also mention Kurds in relation to Constitutional change and the fact that a new constitution should include Kurdish rights, however the Milliyet article for example quotes the British Guardian newspaper to highlight that Kurds are threatening "civil disobedience". Radikal too uses foreign media commentary in two of its articles touching upon this subject, much like it does with the above mentioned topics, to highlight that no step in the direction of Kurds has been taken and that the subject of Kurdish rights needs wider consensus. These are articles which critique the way in which the Kurdish issue has been handled, with particular reference to the government's performance, yet the source of these articles is external, independent of the newspapers. Looking at the remaining articles, some touch upon election results with Posta offering perhaps the most comprehensive insight detailing the successful MPs from the BDP /

independent block candidates and their backgrounds, for example highlighting that Zana returns to parliament after twenty years. There are quite a few articles in which academics and experts offer an opinion on the subject in Radikal, Star, Taraf and Zaman. In Taraf's article, researcher Taha Erdem shares his predictions for the elections, stating that the AKP has not produced systematic messages on the Kurds, while a professor evaluating parties and their performances in Radikal includes a reference to the AKP being prepared for a loss of votes given its stance on the Kurdish issue within his greater evaluation. In Star's article another academic view goes through the history of the Kurdish question in Turkey and looks at the way in which the AKP has furthered their plight by questioning where we would be on this issue if there was a CHP-MHP coalition. Zaman's article was published on the 13 June 2011 and has been written by an academic from Dicle University touching upon the expectation of the new constitution taking on the role of a social / community contract and that a democratic solution of the Kurdish problem will be found. One other article worth noting is an article published by Sabah newspaper in which a poll conducted with the public is covered, within this poll the participants have been asked about the most prominent problems on the agenda and the number of people who believe the Kurdish question is a problem is minimal whereas terrorism is seen as a separate and more pertinent problem. The article does not specify whether participants listed their own responses or whether the poll was multiple choice, meaning that these two issues were already presented separate from one another, however, it is interesting to note that on a certain level there is an attempt to separate the Kurdish issue from terrorism on the media and thus public agenda. This is again reflective of an official or elite political position. In contrast the PKK is mentioned mainly within campaign speeches in which critiques are made sometimes with links

to the BDP and in terms of attacks; with Star newspaper publishing an article on how many times AKP offices have been attacked.

An analysis of the content of articles and the frequency with which these critical topics are discussed shows quite clearly that in the period immediately before the elections there is a lack of critical discussion and depth in the handling of each of these issues. Considering that the subject of Constitutional change is only really discussed within the scope of election results, within campaign speeches as a sub-topic and by references to foreign media coverage as a concern, the level of public knowledge is in no way supported by the media's coverage. There is no mention of what the proposed Constitutional change entails or its implications, and very few publications made allusions to suggestions as to what the basis of the changes should be. The lack of discussion of the jailed journalists and the Ergenekon / Balyoz in the media also further confirms observations about the power of the press politics relationship in Turkey. The Kurdish issue is similarly discussed mainly within the scope of campaigning, with very little reference to the on-going social, political and cultural problem that exists in Turkey. Gans asserts that power determines what knowledge is relevant to effective political participation and given the frames employed on each of these topics, political participation will be influenced by messages packaged to support the AKPs position. Given that there are almost no voices within the domestic political and media sphere to offer an alternative view on any of these subjects, the messages of the dominant political elite are being conveyed and these all contribute to the generation of "good press" for the AKP. While each of these topics are open to critical coverage, effectively "bad press" for the AKP, the media avoids these entirely only using foreign or external sources to diversify the discussion. In this framework, the dynamics and power play in the Turkish media

does show signs of commercial influence, however, it appears as though the AKP is the actor determining the knowledge which is to reach the public. It also reflects Bennett's (1996) arguments that politically sensitive and potentially damaging issues will be pushed through media via official sources in order to ensure coverage that resembles a government line. One can argue that this is echoed quite strongly in this analysis. Hence, these processes severely undermine its ability to fulfil its watchdog and messenger roles.

Engaging with the Content: Polarization in Publications

An analysis of the content does not remain confined to scope, but also indicates whether the media has a particular bias towards a political party both overall and on an individual publication basis. This section will briefly look into the patterns of polarization and the major subjects on which patterns can be observed, an evaluation which will also indicate whether there is a degree of investigative journalism that is being carried out to evaluate the political performance. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, coding for tone has been coded in accordance with the overall composition of the article being presented to readers for publication tone showing an open support or critical stance towards the governing AKP and the main opposition party the CHP. The way in which the AKP is handled by publications is the focal point of this discussion as the media is delegated the watchdog and messenger roles for the public. A lack of critical coverage can indicate a weak media, particularly if it highlights a lack of investigative journalism. As previously stated, due to its position at the helm of the country it is natural that there will be a higher level of articles relating to the AKP government, however to what extent more articles exist and the

way different publications handle the portrayal of the government across different agenda topics will indicate patterns of polarization or hegemony in the media. A brief discussion of the way in which the main opposition party, the CHP, is handled will also provide an insight into the AKPs position in the media relative to another party and whether there is a level of scrutiny are differences in the way they are handled. The data for both major parties is summarised in Tables 8 and 9 below.

Table 9: Publication Positioning Relative to the AKP

Publication	Pro AKP	%	Anti AKP	%	Total
Aksam	2	15,4%	1	7,7%	13
Birgun	1	4,5%	10	45,5%	22
Cumhuriyet	0	0,0%	9	28,1%	32
Haberturk	3	8,3%	3	8,3%	36
Hurriyet	6	22,2%	2	7,4%	27
Milliyet	6	13,3%	12	26,7%	45
Posta	3	21,4%	4	28,6%	14
Radikal	1	3,6%	8	28,6%	28
Sabah	7	38,9%	0	0,0%	18
Sozcu	0	0,0%	7	41,2%	17
Star	9	28,1%	0	0,0%	32
Taraf	1	12,5%	0	0,0%	8
Tukiye	8	47,1%	0	0,0%	17
Vatan	8	23,5%	10	29,4%	34
Zaman	10	35,7%	1	3,6%	28
Total	65	17,5%	67	18,1%	371

Table 10: Publication Positioning Relative to the CHP

Publication	Pro CHP	%	Anti CHP	%	Total
Aksam	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	13
Birgun	0	0,0%	1	4,5%	22
Cumhuriyet	7	21,9%	0	0,0%	32
Haberturk	2	5,6%	1	2,8%	36
Hurriyet	3	11,1%	1	3,7%	27
Milliyet	9	20,0%	2	4,4%	45
Posta	2	14,3%	1	7,1%	14
Radikal	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	28
Sabah	0	0,0%	1	5,6%	18
Sozcu	3	17,6%	0	0,0%	17
Star	0	0,0%	8	25,0%	32
Taraf	0	0,0%	1	12,5%	8
Turkiye	0	0,0%	1	5,9%	17
Vatan	5	14,7%	4	11,8%	34
Zaman	0	0,0%	2	7,1%	28
Total	31	8,4%	23	6,2%	371

Overall, 17.5% (65) of articles take a positive position relative to the AKP, whereas 18.1% (67) have been coded as having an anti-AKP position, this compares to 8.4% (31) of articles taking a positive position relative to the CHP and 6.2% (23) portraying the party negatively. Though these numbers highlight that there is a significant level of critical commentary on the AKP, with the percentage of critical articles being greater than that of supportive articles, these numbers also show that the number of AKP related articles is more than double that of the CHP, indicating that the AKP overwhelmingly dominates the media's agenda, giving the main opposition party, the CHP, a lower level of visibility. Given that the lead up to the elections signals a political battle for power between two or more political parties the level of coverage should arguably be closer, in the Turkish situation the significant difference in these numbers may be related to the AKPs impending and unsurprising victory.

On a publication basis patterns that parallel some of the above findings and also signify a level of political parallelism can also be seen. Turkiye (47.1%), Sabah (38.9%) and Zaman (35.7%) are the newspapers which take the most pro-government position during the lead up to the 2011 elections, closely followed by Star (28.1%). This trend of positive coverage is also supported by the lack of critical government coverage in these publications, with Turkiye, Sabah and Star offering no negative or critical coverage of the AKP and Zaman newspaper offering only one article accounting for 3.6% of its coverage. Thus, these publications are arguably presenting the government through a positive lens to their audiences, without attempting to balance these with alternate positions. The degree to which this remains true will become evident in an examination of how they handle the CHP.

The engagement with the CHP is lower due to its lower visibility, however,

there are still a number of publications offering a position supportive of the party which again indicate a pattern of political parallelism manifesting in the media. Cumhuriyet (21.9%) offers the most positive CHP coverage, followed by Milliyet (20.0%) and Sozcu (17.6%), followed closely by Vatan (14.7%) and Posta (14.3%). In evaluating these percentages it is interesting to note that these are significantly lower than those of the AKP. While the publications offering critical coverage and those offering a more supportive position are clearly defined in respect to the AKP, the picture with the CHP is slightly different. Cumhuriyet and Sozcu offer no critical coverage of the CHP, however Milliyet (4.3%), Vatan (11.8%) and Posta (7.1%) all offer at least one article which portrays the CHP negatively. These results highlight that in terms of publications, despite Cumhuriyet and Sozcu offering no critical coverage, the publications which portray the CHP positively are also willing to provide more critical coverage of the party. This does not appear to be the case with the AKP; several publications indicate a reluctance to question the government's position.

To further define these observations, the level of negative coverage can be discussed. Birgun (45.5%) offers the most critical and thus anti-AKP coverage, followed by Sozcu (41.2%) and Vatan (29.4%). Posta / Radikal (28.6%) come in at joint fourth place. Star (25%) on the other hand is the publication with the most negative CHP coverage, followed by Taraf (12.5%) and Vatan as mentioned and Zaman (7.1%). It is worth mentioning that Milliyet also has a high percentage of more critical AKP coverage, this could be explained in particular by the high number of campaigning articles the publication covers, only three of these being AKP campaigning whereas the rest are of different parties. Out of these publications, the number of pro and anti-government articles in Vatan only differs by two and Posta

similarly offers three articles supportive of an AKP position and four critical articles. These two publications arguably offer a further degree of critical commentary which may be in the interest of the public given that it is critical of both the major political parties, however, Birgun clearly displays an anti-government stance; with only one article being anti-CHP (4.5%). Sozcu is the one publication that has seven anti-AKP articles and no anti-CHP articles, rather two positive articles ultimately highlighting both an anti-government stance but also perhaps a slight inclination towards the CHP given the number of positive articles. Radikal on the other hand only appears to engage with the AKP as a party, offering no positive or critical coverage of the CHP and only one positive AKP article.

Therefore, though critical commentary can be observed in line with a political parallelism that has been cited by previous studies, this study has found that overall the visibility of the AKP is higher in comparison to the CHP and that there is a distinct group of publications which is supportive of the AKP position. This on the other hand is confined to one publication in regards to the CHP. Additionally, the publications offering more critical coverage are mainly those of lower circulation and thus do not balance the overly positive coverage the higher circulated publications are putting forward. Again patterns supporting the notion of a powerful elite can be observed.

Critical or positive coverage and its importance within the scope of effective election coverage to create an informed public are also heavily dependent on the subject matter and framing of the article as tone alone does not necessarily confirm a newspaper's positioning. A contextualisation of the article content with the use of sources must be conducted because criticism may be reliant on campaign speeches rather than an initiative taken by individual publications.

Relating these back to the discussion on content and sources and the critical agenda issues of the time Sozcu is the publication that offers the highest degree of critical coverage, yet in doing so does not touch upon any of the critical agenda issues. Again, despite a higher number of critical government related articles, Vatan favours a government / official position on the critical issues and in its use of sources which undermines its ability to employ an investigative and more detailed journalism. Star, Sabah and Zaman are also publications that choose to favour the government position by portraying the AKP as a victim in relation to the military court cases or by putting forward anti-military perspectives with no further contextualisation or discussion of the cases objectively. On the issue of Constitutional change, Star balances foreign press comments with an AKP perspective and Zaman covers a business organisation supporting the notion of Constitutional change. None of these publications mention the case of the jailed journalists, while Vatan publishes only a government view on this subject. In contrast to this group of publications, Radikal covers all the critical agenda topics with the use of a high frequency of foreign press sources and academics / experts writing in depth on the subject, which displays a different approach and an effort on behalf of the newspaper to increase the level of depth and diversity in information being presented to its readers. This is achieved through the use of external sources or third parties to both put forward and validate critical coverage. To recap, all three publications, Sabah, Star and Zaman, favour official sources with Zaman and Star calling upon the CHP as a source only once and twice respectively. Sabah doesn't call upon the opposition party at all.

Therefore, taking this information together, there is a clear pattern of publications supportive of the government position which reflects a political

parallelism, however, when evaluating tone together with the other article characteristics the domination of the AKP on the media's agenda becomes more evident. To the detriment of the media's role, one can observe that the articles offering a critical view of the government are not related to the outlined and discussed critical agenda issues, which is to be expected in a democratic environment evaluating political performance. Each publication's agenda can be expected to vary depending on the subjects they handle and the stance of the publications change. As seen, the handling of critical agenda topics is largely dominated by an official line; therefore the topics on which the AKP is criticised will also help determine the level of watchdogging being carried out by the Turkish media.

It is evident that the source of AKP criticism and thus an anti AKP stance is overwhelmingly discussed within the context of campaigning of one of the opposition parties, with almost a third of the total number of negative articles being accounted for by campaign coverage. Though this may not be surprising, it indicates that a major source of criticism is through campaigning and thus the discussion of critical topics and an evaluation of the government's performance on certain key areas is caught up within these speeches and lacks qualified evaluation or investigation. The economy and business related articles cause a division between publications with Aksam, Birgun, Cumhuriyet, Posta and Vatan all including negative references to the AKP in a portion of their coverage of these two subjects, whereas Sabah, Star, Taraf and Zaman include positive references. These two groups are clearly separate in their stance towards the government. None of the latter group of publications touch upon topics relating to government performance issues in a critical manner, hence though one can observe patterns of political parallelism, these mainly remain on the surface of coverage. When one delves deeper into the content,

150

issues such as education, employment and health are put forward critically by only four publications, none of these being critical on all three subjects. The Hopa situation constitutes critical coverage from four publications; however, it is also interesting to note that this is not a major keyword in any other publications. In this respect, Birgun and Cumhuriyet are the only two publications that appear to offer a consistent level of criticism on topics directly relating to the government's performance out of a total of fifteen newspapers.

The engagement with the CHP is much less, the majority of positive articles related to the CHP are within the scope of CHP or normal campaigning related articles, while Milliyet puts a pro-CHP tone on its coverage of the Hopa issue. Much of the negative CHP coverage is touched upon in relation to election conduct, which is almost balanced with the sentiment towards the AKP on this subject, and two academic / expert articles, both printed in Star, are critical of the CHP.

Conclusion

This chapter touches upon the characteristics that are integral to formulating news articles and looks at the way in which they are used by the Turkish media and to what effect. It is evident that the scope of coverage in the lead up to the 2011 elections was limited, with a particular reference to major keywords. Instead, the focus arguably reflected the proximity of the press-politics relationship with the majority of subject matter being related to AKP campaigning, together with campaigning in general and the majority of publications called upon official sources to build their stories. The high level of economy and business related news may be an indication of the economic pressures on the media as a pattern which correlates with much of the

literature on the commercialisation of journalism can be observed. However, the former subject also includes official sources in much of its coverage and therefore the commercialisation effects in Turkey may go beyond economic pressures to reflect the press-politics and business relationships in the country.

Given that the majority of subjects relating to the government's performance are discussed within campaigning speeches or by the use of foreign press sources, a critical style of coverage that would allow a public exposure to scrutiny is eliminated. This goes against Baker's arguments for a fair representation of the actors and participants in elections, instead implying a depoliticised citizenry which is fed a largely official line. These influences too have implications for the level of investigative journalism. Overall, investigative journalism is low with the majority of on ground reporting being observed in the context of party campaigning on a regional basis, very few publications go further to contextualise and qualify their content. There is very little visibility of alternative voices such as minorities or civil society groups that would potentially be actors facilitating political change or providing the public with an alternative and thus more informed view.

In particular it is evident that political messages on all the critical issues discussed above largely follow a government line, particularly on the issue of the military, Constitutional change and jailed journalists. Considering the literature reviewed on previous election coverage in Turkey, a discussion of Kurdish minority rights, the EU and secularism is argued to have been visible on the agenda. However in these elections, for the time period of the study at least, the visibility of these subjects together with alternative or critical voices is next to none. On the subject of Constitutional change it can be observed that while the Presidential debate was the media's focus topic in the 2007 election, in 2011 the notion of a Presidential system

is only referred to within foreign press commentary used by the Turkish media or as per a government line put forward by the government. The government's line on this subject is to lessen the importance of the change by saying it is something that may be on the cards but not discussing it in length. Thus much as Entman and Bennett highlight (2001), there is strong evidence of a government line being produced in the Turkish media across much of the publications, the mainstream ones in particular. This is a desire to decrease the level of bad press and also redefines the classification of newsworthiness by the media, with only one view on these subjects being put forward.

In terms of polarization Sabah, Star, Turkiye, Taraf and Zaman show tendencies to support a government perspective, Sabah and Star in particular. Whereas Milliyet and Cumhuriyet appear to support a more pro-CHP position, yet these are not necessarily anti AKP. As mentioned, the visibility of the AKP is much greater than that of any of the opposing parties, and those publications that offer more critical perspectives on the AKP and the government's performance are smaller publications with less coverage or largely reliant on external sources. In the mainstream, top level publications, with the exception of Sozcu, there is a pattern of governmental support or neutrality, highlighting a position of AKP dominance, which ultimately affects the way the Turkish media produces news – to the detriment of its democratic role. To contextualise these findings within a theoretical framework, one can refer to Bennett's indexing theory in which officials and governmental institutions make the media "rely on established norms that implicitly filter or "index" the sources and viewpoints in the news according to perceived power

balances among factions within political institutions"[235] This observation appears true to Turkey, especially given that the AKP received almost 50% of votes in this election, a testimony to the party's hegemonic position politically. Hence, the press politics relationship in Turkey appears to be effectively indexing the sources and viewpoints that they view as valid and this then becomes newsworthy. This idea is too supported by the patterns of political parallelism. Though polarized parallelism is evident, it differs from that observed by previous scholars to now shows tendencies of pure political parallelism rather than a polarization, which serves to reinforce the party's political position and limit the level of critical or bad press. The rise of Sozcu and its anti-government stance is an exception in this trend which can be examined further for these elections and should also be observed in the future. However, it must be acknowledged that Sozcu did not cover any of the specified critical agenda issues for these elections.

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[235] Bennett, W. Lance. "The Press, Power and Public Accountability," p. 107

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

2. What are the specific textual elements of coverage, which dominant frames are

    employed?

The way a subject is framed or presented to audiences by individual publications and

the differences between the framing or handling of the subject indicates not only the

positioning of the publication on the political spectrum but also the positioning of the

AKP and the pressures that may exist influencing the news production process. As

Entman (2004) defines frames in their simplest form the central organising idea or

storylines, consumed by media audiences. Therefore the way in which these frames

are used is important to determine the state of the Turkish media for these elections.

This analysis has only been limited to two different topics in order to prevent the

scope of this study expanding beyond the thesis boundaries, however, with a wider

set of topic analyses across the fifteen publications the observed positioning and

pressures can be confirmed and further solidified.

Two vastly different subjects have been chosen for Research Question 2 based

on the topics they touch upon and the way in which publications have the

opportunity to frame them largely based on their own publishing policy. In this

section, the topics will be handled separately through a discussion of the context

within which the chosen topics are presented, the kinds of reporting and framing

characteristics observed on a publication basis when handling the topic at hand and

the implications of these. In both cases, those publications which omit coverage of

the chosen topics will also indirectly make a statement about their political

positioning which relates back to the previous chapter's discussion regarding the

press politics relationship and production of elite messages in lieu of diverse coverage. The way in which publications respond to these constraints through frame production is a key point of this discussion.

Handling of Businessman Inan Kirac's Written Response to the PM

During the lead up to the elections, a dispute between Turkish businessman Inan Kirac and PM Erdoğan emerged. The basis of the Inan Kirac dispute is the fact that Kirac was claimed to have entered a bet regarding his own election predictions that the CHP would win the elections with a journalist at a meal. This was then mentioned in two columns of Cumhuriyet journalist, Cuneyt Arcayurek, on 26 May 2011 and 28 May 2011 sparking discussions throughout the political world and the media. Being prompted by questions on an interview on national TV channel TRT Erdoğan commented on the situation in a manner which could be interpreted as relatively harsh. Kirac then released a written statement in response to the PM's comments. The media covered this topic accordingly.

This is an interesting situation which emphasised by the nature of the actors – private business versus government –because businessmen are independent of government and should have the ability to freely support who they want. The fact that PM Erdogan commented on the allegations, effectively making it an issue to be debated and a front page headline for six of the publications prompting a response from Kirac is a key indication of the level of influence PM Erdogan has over the media and other circles. Additionally, in terms of article formation, the fact that the media has a written statement to work with, one can determine this as a static variable for the purposes of analysis and hence this topic in particular provides a

strong basis to look at the framing of this statement across the entire group of publications. The topic allows for publications to report factually and neutrally, or choose between positioning Kirac as PM Erdogan's victim or as being in the wrong.

In total, nine different publications have covered the Kirac topic, with the majority of publications providing full coverage of the topic as the main focus of the article, and only two mentioning it within the context of campaigning. It is interesting to note that Sabah and Zaman have omitted the topic completely, which effectively means that they are ignoring an agenda topic relating to both the political and business world, which is unexpected due to their circulation levels and coverage of other business / economy related topics (2 / 2 and 3 / 5 respectively), as opposed to smaller publications which don't fall into the mainstream media spectrum. This may also be a reflection of their reluctance to cover the commentary of a columnist from Cumhuriyet,[236] a publication which does not maintain an overly supportive position for the government. All articles except Haberturk second article have been published on 3 June 2011.

Overall, the way in which the topic has been framed by different publications is dependent on the amount of Kirac's written statement they use in their coverage and on the other hand, the way they depict the power play between PM Erdogan and Kirac. The framing is largely based on a blame game between these two subjects and is dependent on the use and placement of quotations. Three dominant frames emerge through the analysis of this topic; all with varying degrees of critical framing of the

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[236] Cuneyt Arcayurek. 26 May 2011. *Seçim Üzerine Bir Bahis!* (Bet on elections!) Available [online]: "http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/?hn=247126&kn=34&ka=4&kb=34" [12 April 2012].

Cuneyt Arcayurek. 28 May 2011. Malumı İlan! (As you know the declaration!) Available [online]: "http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/?hn=247838&kn=34&ka=4&kb=34" [12 April 2012].

PM. Publications that frame the topic in such a way that favours the AKP or neutralises the situation quote PM Erdogan in only shortened sentences and select these quotations to eliminate any kind of wording that implies threat such as "taking a risk". In this frame the articles are much smaller in size, mostly being included within a wider election related topic, and linguistically choose informative words which serves to distance the relationship between the PM's comments and Kirac's statement. This frame appears to try to put the blame on Kirac for having made these comments, or at the very least put the two on an equal playing ground their exchange. One publication also quotes another AKP party official which further attempts to contextualise and legitimise the PM's words, despite employing a more critical choice of wording. The second frame is linguistically more detailed, introducing Kirac's written statement as a reaction to the PM's commentary. In this frame the PM is quoted in greater length, as is Kirac, and this serves to shift the balance of blame slightly onto PM Erdogan due to the nature of his comments. In the third frame, the linguistic elements are more complex and serve to define PM Erdogan's commentary as a warning or threat towards Kirac and also provide more background on the bet. In this frame the PM's quote is the longest and used to emphasise the threat towards the businessman, effectively leaving him no choice but to issue a response. This positions Kirac as a victim of PM Erdogan and in this frame some publications go further to quote the opposition leader Kilicdaroglu heavily criticising these comments as well. In this final frame, the article layout, headlines and the use of sub-headings are clear journalistic elements being used to portray Kirac more positively in the scenario. Table 11 gives an overview of the frames employed by individual publications, as well as those omitting the topic completely. The following section looks at how this topic is framed on a publication basis, the

comparison of which results in the identification of the above discussed frames.

Table 11: Frames Employed by Publications in Handling the Subject of Businessman Inan Kirac

Frame 1: Minimal Quotations	Frame 2: Shifting balance of blame	Frame 3: Blame on the PM	Not touched upon
Aksam		Cumhuriyet	Birgun
Star	Hurriyet	Milliyet	Sabah
Haberturk		Posta	Sozcu
	Radikal	Vatan	Taraf
			Turkiye
			Zaman

<u>Textual Analysis</u>

Aksam, Habertürk, Hurriyet and Radikal have covered the subject in a small number of articles on one page. With the headline *"Reliable source" announcement from Kirac: Election bet a personal observation* Aksam newspaper has published the article on page 13 with a small colour headshot of Kirac. Aksam's introduction to the subject attributes Kirac's response to the PM's comments starting, "due to PM Erdogan's evaluations regarding the CHP for businessman Inan Kirac for whom he said 'I would not like to see him enter this kind of business.'" The rest of the article is a direct quote from Kirac's announcement which outlines that journalist Cuneyt Arcayurek was witness to an exchange of ideas in which they shared their predictions as they had in previous elections, mentions that their conversation is not linked to a reliable source rather personal views and that Kirac is uncomfortable with his name being mixed in politics and that he has been watching in shock as something that

does not reflect the truth. Hurriyet's article is similarly short, published only in the Ankara lift out of the newspaper, features a headshot of Kirac in black and white but mentions Anadolu Ajansi as the source at the end of the article. Hurriyet has chosen a headline reflecting that of Aksam but instead uses a direct quote from Kirac's statement, *Not a reliable source, my personal observations.* Already a slight contrast can be observed between these two publications, as Aksam's headline distances itself from the quotation by introducing its own introduction for the announcement then inserting the quote. Hurriyet has also highlighted the quote "News articles don't reflect the truth" at the top of the article next to the introduction which begins as follows: "businessman Inan Kirac brought clarity to his words regarding "election predictions" which paved the way for a reaction from PM Tayyip Erdoğan and debate." The contrast between these two first articles can already be observed as Aksam defines the PM's words as an "evaluation" whereas Hurriyet classifies this as a "reaction" from the PM which opened up the path to "debate / arguments". Ultimately, Aksam neutralises the PM's commentary putting the focus and indirectly the blame on Kirac. Hurriyet uses a lengthier quote from the PM on TRT which is more reflective of his rugged and almost threatening comments: "To be correct, I would not like to see Inan Kirac in this business. I would not like to hear that he got mixed up in this business. This would seriously make me uncomfortable and I can't see this suiting [him]. If what has been written is really true, this of course probably means he has taken certain risks regarding the future." The quote used by Aksam is then printed as a statement upon the PM's comments. Yet it is evident that Aksam's coverage softens the role the PM plays in the situation by the omission of a lengthy quote, only choosing to print one line representative of the PMs entire comments.

Haberturk is the only newspaper to mention the article twice, once on 3 June

2011 and once on June 4th. The first article begins with a summary of the situation stating Inan Kirac said that his comments on CHP coming out number one from the elections were not from a "trustworthy source" rather tied to his own personal observations. Haberturk has used sub-headings within the article to highlight one comment from Kirac and one from the PM, with Kirac's written statement being printed in full and the article closing with a reminder that the media claimed that Kirac's had an American source and the PM's comments regarding Kirac having taken risks if what is written it true, this is again presented neutrally with the publications saying "he used the expression" for the PM's quote. The second article is presented with only an extremely small reference being made to the topic within the greater topic of an AKP campaign meeting in Konya. One of the main focuses of this article is the commentary of The Economist, together with criticism of a Turkish journalist and the Hopa situation. Beneath the main article is a text box covering Deputy PM Bulent Arinc's comments on the possibility of information incriminating Ilker Basbug emerging and it is immediately after this that his opinion on "the PM's harsh criticism of businessman Inan Kirac" is published via a direct quotation as follows "the PM wanted to say: This is not your job. Look if you do this CHP won't be the number one party. AKP will be number one again. Then how will you look people in the eye? You will be embarrassed. You are getting on in age. Why are you interpreting this negatively? It can be critiqued." In this article, the newspaper assumes readers have read the related article from the previous day, but it still presents an AKP perspective, which does not appear out of place given that the article is about AKP campaigning. Hence in furthering the constructing of the story the publication has chosen to do this from an AKP standpoint.

While Radikal's article is still confined to one page, the article itself increases

in length and begins to go into more detail, hence it is worth examining Star's article first, which is written within a story on AKP campaigning titled *"By using violence they cannot break our wrists."* The article is published on the front page with the main focus being AKPs campaigning in Isparta, in which the opposition is accused of trying to break the party's wrists with violence due to them being unable to compete at the ballot box and also refuting Kilicdaroglu comments on the "imam hatip" religious schools. Within the main body of the article the PM speaks out heavily against violent attacks on the AKP and the opposition is accused of forming an alliance with MHP, CHP and BDP. At the very bottom of this full page article is a small recap of the Kirac situation titled *"Denial of the 'CHP will be the number one party' from Inan Kirac."* The article opens with a description of the PM relaying his comments on a live broadcast of the "Election Special" program on TRT followed by the quote, however the publication does not quote the PM on Kirac taking a risk, instead it goes on to state the claims and publish the statement. Looking at the currently discussed articles, the reporting pattern remains relatively the same and only in the event where the PM's quote is contextualised further can variations be observed.

Radikal's *Risk warning for Inan Kirac* uses the same quotes but prolongs the reporting of the story. The article's introduction focuses on the PM's comments, quoting him speaking about Kirac taking risks, however balances this by preceding the quote with "in regards to businessman Inan Kirac, who entered a bet that CHP would be the number one party with journalists PM Tayyip Erdogan" and not defining it as a claim. Providing a brief background, PM Erdogan's quotes are given in full and it is here that one can begin to observe the way in which certain comments have been omitted in the above discussed article. The continuance of the PM's quote

is printed as follows "[b]ut if what is written really is true, if what is being said is true, then of course this means he has taken some risks regarding the future. Because a business man has a certain power within the country, a businessman with opportunity entering something like this, taking a step towards it, is a serious risk from his own perspective. No businessman would enter something like this. But I applaud those who do, congratulate them. It means they have squarely stated 'this is my approach'. They have put their position out in the open. But whether they have done something to confirm that, that is important. I read one or two newspapers but has anything come from him that denies or confirms this – that I don't know." The article then mentions Kirac's response upon the PM's comments but first includes Kilicdaroglu's reaction that the AKP is using blackmail and threats; "if the AKP becomes government at the next elections I'm telling all the businessmen that their assets will be transferred elsewhere. The AKP will do this." The article then briefly backgrounds Arcayurek's column, offering again another piece of information by stating that the original column did not give Kirac's name but after pressure from readers the journalist provided it in another column a few days later, followed by a full publication of Kirac's statement. In the above discussion it is evident that a lengthier quote from the PM serves to highlight the harsh nature of his comments, in contrast to the use of only a few lines.

Milliyet and Posta both use PM Erdogan's taking risks quote on their front page together with a response from Kirac. Milliyet confines this to "I am uncomfortable with news articles not reflecting the truth" whereas Posta goes further to include the explanation that this was a bet for a meal made during a conversation and based on personal impression not a reliable source. Posta also writes that Arcayurek had written that Kirac had said that the CHP would be the winning party,

while Milliyet defines these as claims. Both these accounts of the situation distance themselves slightly from qualifying whether the situation is true or not by pushing the definition onto the Arcayurek column or by reporting the situation as claims. Milliyet's main article *"Statement from Kirac: I am uncomfortable"* highlights AA as its source and quotes the PM in response to the claims saying he would not want to see "Mr. Kirac" involved in these, that no businessman in the world would enter such risk and that no denial or confirmation had been given. The wording of this quote differs from that used in Radikal's in which the PM is reported as saying "I don't know" in relation to Kirac making a statement or not. By reporting that no statement has been made, Milliyet further pushes Kirac into the victim position as he is almost compelled to then release a statement. In presenting the statement, Milliyet also includes Kirac's explanation that he was away from Istanbul for a program planned earlier, hence his inability to respond. In terms of the PM's comments, these are also taken further by reporting that upon being asked "When you say risk do you mean 'he will be embarrassed if the result he predicted doesn't actualise?'" the PM responds by saying: "It can be any kind of embarrassment. Nowhere in the world would a businessman, especially one of the leading businessmen of that country, would get messed up in something like this. Because a businessman must work with all incoming governments. They can't work with one and against another; they would not enter such a risk. I am expressing it from this perspective." Again this lengthier quote serves to position Kirac as a victim, as it is clear he has no other choice but to make a statement based on the PM's comments. This observation is supported by a red text box at the bottom of the page focusing on Kılıcdaroglu's comments. Posta clearly sensationalises the story a bit more with the sub-headings *"Claim of 'CHP being number one", "Has taken a risk", "Interesting", "Not a*

reliable source, my own opinion" and "Threat and Blackmail". From these headings

the framing of the topic becomes evident, with the introduction of the article defining

Kirac as a "doyen Turkish industry name" and the line of questioning from TRT. PM

Erdogan's quote is published in full, the reporting highlighting that the PM "doesn't

know" whether a confirmation or denial has been made by Kirac, adding the

additional PM quote used by Milliyet and Kılıcdaroglu criticisms. As mentioned the

additional quotes from PM Erdogan put Kirac in the victim position, however, Posta

furthers this position by adding in another quote from the PM in which he comments

that when trying to reach Kirac he expressed that he was overseas and would not be

able to speak and that "This is of course interesting." By positioning Kirac's

statement in a thin column to the left of the article's main body, the reader's attention

is also drawn to the quotes of the PM rather than Kirac's response, which is

published in full after an introduction quoting Arcayurek column.

Moving on to the final two articles, Vatan's *"A businessman will not make the*

government an enemy" opens with the quote regarding not wanting to see Kirac

mixed up in this and the risk statement, then a small text insert in a red text box

reading "A businessman..." is followed by PM Erdogan's quote that nowhere in the

world would a businessman would take such a risk and get mixed up in such a

situation. Cumhuriyet on the other hand uses Kirac's quote "Not a source an

impression" to paraphrase Kirac stating that the view is not from a reliable source

rather a personal opinion and quote him "reacting to speculative comments" with

"I'm uncomfortable with the news articles mixing my name up in politics." From the

introduction of these two articles it is evident that Vatan puts the focus of the article

on the PM's quotes, while Cumhuriyet makes Kirac's response the main topic of its

article. In the main body of its article Cumhuriyet uses a slightly longer version of

the quote and mentions that Kirac was away from Istanbul with his wife before printing his statement. The PM's quote is only provided at the end of the article in two sentences inclusive of the risk line. This stands in great contrast to Vatan's main article which is probably the most repetitive out of all the articles on the topic given that the main article page reuses the quote twice, once in the text excerpt and once in the introduction to the main article, though the latter is expanded a little. The question posed is presented and then the PM's full quote as per Radikal is provided. Much like Posta, the PM's inability to reach Kirac being "interesting" is reported and how he defines risk is quoted directly. Kirac's statement is published in full with a brief backgrounder in which his discomfort and shock is mentioned together with a note that he was away from Istanbul with his wife. The overall framing with visuals in Vatan is more indicative of the publication's stance on this issue as it is the only article with the situation as its main focus that includes a photo of the PM. There is one photo with the PM in sunglasses addressing a crowd at the top of the article, however, and above this is a stamp like image with a sketch of PM Erdogan's face with the word's "Lessons to businessmen from the PM" written around it, offering an almost sarcastic take on the situation. Kirac's picture has been used twice and there is a graph showing a drop in shares of his company, Kirac, by 1.85%. These images put together with the text serve to link the implications of the PM's threats to Kirac's business performance.

Conclusion

The Inan Kirac story is one in which the story actors and the amount of information in terms of quotations and background information available to each publication

remains the same. In such an example, the room to move and present the story differently is relatively narrow, thus framing relies on the positioning of quotes and the weight given to a particular actor. It is evident from an analysis of the ten articles which handle the subject that the length of quotations, or to be more precise, the omission of certain parts of quotes serve to change the balance of blame within the story. By using lengthier quotations the situation becomes about a businessman's response the PM's "threat", whereas shorter quotations that highlight only one or two lines from PM Erdoğan result in a more balanced exchange between the two actors. Those publications that go even further to use Kilicdaroglu's comments and include the "interesting" comment when PM Erdogan could not reach Kirac, clearly align themselves with the businessman, whereas articles such as Star's which give the story only in slight reference within AKP campaigning and Aksam's distance themselves from the PMs comments.

None of these articles display a particular critical or supportive stance for the AKP as per the analysis in Research Question 1, instead a neutral or more AKP inclined approach to the subject matter was observed and this is reflective of the press politics relations. Yet when the subject matter is examined on a publication basis and systematically compared, changes and particular biases in coverage can be observed. Though nine publications covered the article, two publications in the top five did not report the story and six out of the nine have presented a story without full reference to the PMs quotes. Haberturk going further to present a view from Arinc a day later, furthering the AKPs commentary on the issue. From these six publications, Hurriyet is in the top five, with Haberturk at sixth and Star at seventh, therefore Posta is the only publication that presents an alternative view and more critical perspective on the Kirac issue within the top mainstream newspapers.

The implications of these observations for wider coverage are more focused on the depth of reporting than the scope. There is a tendency to avoid the topic entirely or neutralise it among the major publications, with quotations being used by the remaining publications to alter the frames. The majority of publications report the dispute, however, the depth in which they report it changes significantly and this ultimately reflects on public perceptions of the PM, which can be damaged by bad press. Therefore, the AKP's politically dominant and even hegemonic position can be confirmed by this example due to the number of publications offering a critical and lengthier coverage being relatively low.

Framing of Coverage of Foreign Press Commentary on the Elections

Foreign press commentary and the use of the foreign press as sources are observed across several publications in this period of election coverage, the main keyword and thus focus topic changes from article to article, but the context within which this commentary is presented to audiences, the length of quotations from the foreign press and how they are related to the elections are all important factors to consider. One of the major influencing factors in selecting foreign press commentary as a topic is its emergence as a source of criticism of the AKP, the element of critical coverage that is lacking in much of the non-campaigning coverage.

In total there were twenty articles touching upon foreign press commentary either directly or indirectly through politician's remarks and campaign speeches. Eleven publications out off fifteen referred to foreign press commentary with a distribution as per 12.

Table 12: Distribution of Usage of Foreign Press Commentary by Publications

Publication	No. of Articles
Haberturk	1
Milliyet	3
Posta	1
Radikal	6
Sabah	1
Sozcu	1
Taraf	1
Turkiye	2
Vatan	2
Zaman	1

Amongst these articles, foreign press commentary is used as a significant part of a publication's coverage topic, while others use the commentary as a supporting source of information, particularly for those publications reporting on the economy, hence this discussion will split the articles according to the foreign press commentary being used and contrast how different publications handle the topic.

Framing of Foreign Press Commentary of Election Results

On 13 June 2011 the election results of the 2011 national Turkish elections became evident and these results generated coverage not only in Turkey but across the world. Three publications in total focus on the reflections of foreign media on election results: Radikal, Sabah and Vatan. All the publications use this commentary similarly, however, it is evident that Sabah does not mention the fears and authoritarian nature of the PM when relaying foreign press commentary, in contrast Radikal and Vatan do. In Radikal's article titled *Erdogan Hope and Worry* covers the "big interest from

foreign press in Turkey's 2011 elections." The article explains that foreign press emphasized the AKP's inability to get enough MPs to change the Constitution unilaterally. The article then continues on to summarise coverage in the German, British, French and US press both in print and TV media coverage. In doing so it highlights the commentary on the AKP's inability to reach a two third majority despite a significant lead and thus being unable to change the Constitution alone and bring in a Presidential system. In an examination of this coverage it is evident that the French AFP and Financial Times (FT) offer a deeper insight into the Turkish political situation with AFP reporting that there is both fear and hope feeding Recep Tayyip Erdogan but at the same time a decreasing tolerance for criticism displayed by Erdogan's attacks on media and the AKP's search for a plot in each opposition. The FT similarly reports that PM Erdogan continues to be the hero of the poverty stricken, villagers and entrepreneurial middle class thanks to his villager-like talk but his authoritarian behaviour worries the liberals. Within this foreign press commentary the key dynamics in the Turkish political spectrum are identified and the areas of concern of foreign observers highlighted. Sabah too summarises the commentary in an article focusing on the AKP's win. The stance of the publication is clearly emphasised by its headline "C'mon *Usta*" (expert in his / her field of work) and by its introduction in which Sabah reports that Turkey said "continuance of stability" in the election. While the article is a front page article, foreign press is reported in the main article looking at five different publications in brief and focusing on the PM's success, but his inability to change the Constitution alone. It is interesting that Sabah has chosen to relay coverage from the Greek and Italian press, whereas the others focus on the British, US, German or French press. Vatan too looks at foreign press commentary with a recap of results but also in addition from the

170

perspective of election predictions and report that the foreign press commentary was wrong while one of the US' leading newspapers, the Wall Street Journal, reports that the markets want the AKP to win but not with a great number of votes because they don't want the PM's focus to be on the Constitution instead of the markets. From these three articles, the way in which foreign press commentary pinpoints key areas of criticism is evident, this point supported by Sabah's omission of the criticism itself. The use of foreign press in the Turkish media as a source of information and opinion on both a political and economic front is also observed from these initial articles.

Radikal: Direct Translations of Foreign Press Commentary

As seen in the introduction, Radikal's use of foreign commentary is interesting as it has the highest number of articles using foreign press commentary in some form of its reporting, however, there are four articles for which it publishes a direct translation of foreign press articles without any introduction or own framing. One Financial Times (FT) editorial is published on 9 June 2011 titled *Election balances changing in Turkey* in which the number of MPs AKP will receive is questioned. Within this context the editorial highlights that the AKP not reaching supermajority will be good for the Turkish public and states that it does not want to belittle the AKP's achievements but it points to authoritarian trends; media and journalists and the military's power being crippled as examples of the increasing level of authoritarianism. Much like its second article to be discussed shortly, FT looks at the opposition in Turkey within the context of the number of seats the AKP needs to be able to draft a new Constitution without debate, classifying the Turkish opposition as

being in a "construction phase", which "even if delayed has begun to expand its base." The underlying idea being put forward in this particular editorial is that a contribution from the opposition contributes to the drafting of a new Constitution, and thus it will be much more "important." This indicates tipping the hegemonic balance away from the AKP to include a more deliberative and essentially more democratic decision making process, an idea not brought up by the local.

The FT article is followed by a 9 June 2011 Independent article looking into foreign press commentary on Turkey and focuses on their point of agreement that the Turkish public should refute the AKP's desire to be in government again and break its keenness by blocking its supermajority to prevent giving new powers to the President, stating that "Recep Tayyip Erdogan wants to sit in this seat". The article also touches upon Erdogan's intolerance with a reference to the jailing of journalists and generals, as well as the fact that there has been no step taken in relation to the Kurdish issue. The article references the CHP finding itself again. This is followed two days later by the full translation of an Economist and FT article. The Economist's *Erdogan's increasing authoritarian trend* titled Economist editorial from 9 June 2011 and maintains quite a harsh and sarcastic tone in its introduction, "it is now official, women should stay at home and give birth to children", due to PM Erdogan removing the women's ministry along with 7 others. The article touches upon fears of a conservative Islam and while it does acknowledge that the AKP has taken efforts to increase women's rights an increase in societal pressures against short skits etc. and increasing authoritarianism are cited. The original article also includes the Economist's response to PM Erdogan's threats saying "[l]ast week we too became a target of Erdogan… this may win him votes in his own country but will not do much for his reputation in the West." This final sentence touches upon an

important point regarding the way in which the PM lashes out with criticisms and threats, with very few domestic voices echoing similar critiques. The second article published on this date is a Financial Times article titled *Eye on the big prize,* which comments that there is no other politician in Turkey with the same influence as PM Erdogan and looks at a few positive points of the AKP balancing authority structures in the country stating that he has used the EU as a pushing force in this arena. The "but" of the reporting comes thereafter, with the article highlighting that the important question if whether he will use his election victory to create a Constitution according to his own agenda and referring to the issue of Kurdish rights and jailed journalists. The article also states that Turkey's problem on the political scene lies in a weak opposition.

All of these direct translations are ready to acknowledge the positive changes brought in by the AKP, however, they all linger on the worrying path the party is currently on and make no attempt to hide the party's authoritarian tendencies. Together with this, one cannot help but question why Radikal has not offered an introduction or some level of its own reporting or commentary to the articles; however, this may also highlight the hegemonic position of the AKP. The articles translated and published by Radikal are very critical of the AKP, in particular telling the Economist article telling voters to vote for the CHP for the sake of democracy, hence attributing these criticisms and advice to a foreign source in its entirety to a certain extent distances the publication itself from the criticisms while still presenting the information to the public. This idea becomes especially important when one considers the backlash from the PM the negative comments received.

Foreign press commentary, mainly the Financial Times (FT) is used as a source in the press' evaluation of the state of the Turkish economy. The usage of foreign press sources on this subject is as a supporting voice, usually presenting a worried view that points out key problems with the Turkish economy. Yet, as FT often includes the view of a financial expert, the commentary and evaluation are qualified and this also serves to save media organisation resources in the long run. Radikal's 7 June 2011 article, *When waiting for a note increase a warning came* is an economy focused article with Moody's commentary, sharing financial figures and drawing attention to the increasing current account deficit and the difficulty in financing it which may mean that Turkey's credit note will remain under pressure. Within the article FT commentary is used in relation to the Turkish economy, with the main idea "The fiscal policy Turkey must not get used to: Time to think again?" being put forward. In its reporting FT links the inflation rate rise to the elections saying "rates being announced a week before elections is not a pretty surprise. After elections Turkey will be under increasing pressure and will have to increase interest rates and tighten fiscal policy. A Royal Bank of Scotland spokesperson is also quoted within FT's article citing issues that the Turkish economy faces. Taraf too uses the same article on the same day, focusing on the Central Bank's announcement that "downward fruit prices will decrease inflation" but chooses to look at the FT comments from an overheating perspective. Taraf too also includes the Royal Bank of Scotland's comments, confirming that the use of an expert within even foreign press commentary qualifies the opinion being put forward and serves as an indirect way to critique the state of the Turkish economy. Turkiye's 12 June 2011 article uses

Germany's Deustche Welle to present a positive perspective on the economy in relation to the elections reporting the publications as stating "[i]f there is a result different from what which is expected the economy's path will not change. Stable growth will continue." Businessmen and economists are also quoted in saying they do not see a risk in terms of economic stability, hence the usage of foreign press commentary can be used as both a tool to frame the subject of the economy positively or negatively. Zaman too publishes an article on 4 June 2011 quoting the Royal Bank of Scotland and Morgan Stanley evaluating the state of the Turkish economy and the "unexpected" rise in inflation in food and clothing, therefore having examined coverage in the other articles, the source is known as the FT. However, Zaman fails to cite FT as a source, instead only putting forward the evaluation of the Royal Bank of Scotland representative.

<u>Framing of Foreign Press Commentary on the Political Landscape</u>

The final and most prominent focus of the media on this subject area has been the comments of the Economist and the call for Turkish voters to vote for the CHP to ensure democracy. Some of the coverage on this is a reference within an election campaign speech or in response to the comments, putting forward mainly an AKP perspective. There are few publications which handle this commentary as their main subject.

Haberturk's article, "This isn't courageous, these are cowardly", focuses on AKP campaigning in Konya, providing a recap of PM Erdogan's speech and his criticisms of opposition leader Kilicdaroglu in regards to The Economist article's comments. Haberturk doesn't outline the commentary and therefore details are not

provided to the reader, instead the PM's comments are paraphrased: If the magazine said support the AKP, honestly we would be against it. The fact that an international magazine is saying this so openly highlights what kind of project this is" and goes on to accuse the CHP of being involved in a global project due to the article calling for voters to vote for the CHP. Due to several other topics being discussed in the campaigning article, including the Inan Kirac situation, the foreign press coverage is presented indirectly within PM Erdogan's speech and the readers don't know exactly what the article said or its criticism towards the AKP. It provides an AKP perspective, which is not surprising given that the main subject of the article is AKP campaigning. "Posta similarly covers AKP campaign meetings in Kazlicesme and Istanbul on 6 June 2011 in its *"Explode the polling stations"* article in which the PM talks about the public saying "advanced democracy." Several topics are touched upon by the PM within this context, inclusive of the competition in the size of Izmir campaign meetings between parties, civil groups taking part in the drafting of the new Constitution and the future foundation of two hospitals. The foreign press commentary is reported again in a reactive format, with Posta quoting the Treasurer Mehmet Simsek saying "I have cancelled my 10 year subscription to the Economist." Though this is a very small reference, the positioning of the quote in the centre of the newspaper page in a small red text box may serve to draw the reader's attention to this quote, or vice versa and overlook it completely. Posta does introduce this quote by reporting "reactions to the Economist's comments continue to come" which retains an almost negative or accusatory tone.

Milliyet's *Hey the Economist, you are too French to us* article from 4 June 2011 focuses on the Economist editorial, reporting that the Economist recommend Turkish citizens vote for the CHP as it will "clearly be the best guarantee for

democracy." Milliyet's approach to the foreign press commentary can be evaluated

as the most balanced due to its use of several voices to formulate the article. The

main topic of the article is the AKP's campaigning in Konya, a topic which has also

been touched upon in the same context by other publications, yet such a structure

ensures that it includes PM Erdogan's criticisms as well as the commentary from

both Time and the Economist. The commentary from these two foreign media

sources is also provided in greater length than its counterparts. The publication

reports that the PM reacted "strongly" to the comments saying "a magazine publishes

an article, not indirectly; this is straight to the point saying to vote for the CHP. How

tactless is this?" But in contrast to Haberturk for example, Milliyet describes the

Economist as an "influential" magazine that is "one of the world's leading news and

economy magazines" and Time magazine as "The US' respected news magazine",

which frames the opinions they are putting forward as a reliable and therefore ones

which readers can pay attention to. Time magazine's article is reported to have

written that there is no doubt of the AKP victory but that the real question is whether

it will get enough seats to change the Constitution alone to create a Presidential

system in Turkey and states that Erdogan is one of the figures causing the greatest

division in Turkey. Time's commentary touches upon the increase of income per

person but also the jailed journalists and the state of the military. Milliyet reports

that the Economist has called for Turks to vote for the CHP in order to strengthen

democracy in Turkey and the fact that Kilicdaroglu's party has a stronger

performance is cited as something which will reduce the risk of a one-sided

Constitution. Milliyet makes its stance and opinion of the Economist's commentary

clear by adding background information on the Economist, reporting that it has been

stating who it supports in the US election in its editorial, separate from its main

articles, and has also made its position clear on the Iraq War, the Afghanistan occupation and global warming previously. While this is presented as additional information, it serves to frame the Economist's comments as valid and relevant and undermine directly the PM's criticism of it.

Another Milliyet article on the same day reports Minister Ergun's evaluation of the Turkish automotive industry and also includes a very short reference to the Economist comments through an economy perspective. Ergun is quoted as saying "[h]ow can a country increasingly opening its border to everyone become authoritarian. A Turkey telling its businessmen to export, build factories, invest all over the world."

Milliyet covers AKP meetings in Kazlicesme and Izmir on 6 June 2011 in which one of the four topics of focus is foreign press commentary. Among criticisms of the opposition at the campaign meeting, foreign press commentary from The Observer is reported as saying that PM Erdogan is still a father figure for the Turks yet has problems with Liberals in Turkey. The Observer is quoted as reporting "[i]f Erdogan has one problem it is not further distancing himself from those mean Kemalists that oppose him. The real problem is about those [Kemalists] who once supported him but now find him increasingly authoritarian and oppressive." There is also a reference to a dispute between Taraf newspaper's Editor-in-Chief and the PM with the publication saying this is a situation to learn from.

Star offers an extremely different framing of the commentary of the Economist, teaming it up with New York Times (NYT) comments. Published the same day as the other Economist related articles, Star's "*Nothing like this has been seen before*" takes the commentary as its main subject and balances the opinions put forward with commentary from the AKP. On the front page of the newspaper the Economist is

reported as calling for voters to "for democracy vote for CHP" and the NYT as saying "AK Party's votes should not increase". The publication's main introduction is as follows, "[o]ne week to elections the US and British media openly made the call 'Don't vote for AK Party on 12 June 2012, vote for the CHP'. Its reasoning is ancient: voters are happy but secularists are uncomfortable." The Economist is reported as "openly" calling for voters to vote for the CHP and commenting that there is no need for a Presidential System in Turkey and that according to polls the AKP is poised to get two thirds majority; which will be bad for Turkey, highlighting the jailing of journalists and those criticising Erdogan. Other publications do not include the Economist's reasoning regarding polls showing that AKP will receive a two third majority, which is an indication of the AKP's leading and hegemonic position that Star chooses to include. NYT is reported as stating that what Erdogan is really seeking is to bring in a new Constitution without hitting the opposition, hence AKPs efforts to ensure the MHP remains under the threshold due to the tape scandal. These quotes are balanced with views and criticisms from Minister Ali Babacan and Star's own article titled *"Big Alliance against the Government"* in which the opposition is accused of forming an alliance due to polls showing AKP will win 45-50 % of votes and in regards to this CHP leader Kilicdaroglu is quoted as saying he is happy with the Economist's comments. This is in line with the PM comments accusing the opposition of being part of an international gang due to the Economist's comments.

Sozcu is the only publication that appears to go further to research and frame the topic and commentary to put the AKP in a negative position. Published on 5 June 2011, a day after the other articles, Sozcu's *"votes for AKP' it's good" "When it's 'votes for CHP' it's bad* article looks at the 2007 Economist coverage telling Turkish

voters to vote for the AKP for democracy and contrasts this to the 2011 call to vote for the CHP, emphasising that the AKP is two-faced due to the party's current reaction. Comments from the Economist's Editor in Chief are also reported as saying "no one can pressure us. The Economist is an independent publication. We make political commentary on candidates in France, German etc. No one can claim we are under political pressure." As seen through the other articles, the PM had said in response that if the publication had said vote for the AKP they still would have contested such opinionated coverage, however, Sozcu's article serves to undermine these statements in the way it contrasts two opinions and thereby framing the subject matter to create an anti-government stance.

It is evident from the coverage that reactions to the commentary focus on an AKP perspective, with the CHP response being covered minimally. Turkiye's article *"The Economist's article is unethical"* focuses on Foreign Minister Davutoglu's response to the commentary of the Economist on Kanal 7's program. Davutoglu reported as saying "A foreign magazine saying vote for the CHP has never been seen... If there is such a thing as media ethics they have no idea about it." Attributing these comments to certain international groups being uncomfortable with the path Turkey is on, Davutoglu emphasizes that this is not something done in any other country. In this article the focus is obviously on Turkey's foreign policy due to the Ministers position, however, the AKP view is still presented with a relatively harsh response to its comments. The final article has been published in Vatan. Vatan's article is the interview with Egeman Bagis, which has also been discussed elsewhere, in which he states that he completely rejects the claims of authoritarianism.

Conclusion

The Turkish media's handling of foreign press commentary in the lead up to the 2011 national elections displays patterns of polarization through the way in which the commentary itself is framed, however, it must be acknowledged that apart from Sozcu's article which provides contextualisation in order to frame the commentary to portray the AKP negatively, the majority of the articles provide either a balanced overview of the commentary or an AKP perspective. In comparing approaches of the Turkish media to the framing of commentary on Turkey's economy versus political landscape, it can be observed that economy related foreign press commentary is framed as though it is an expert opinion that either supports or opposes the government's line, whereas political commentary is not used as a supporting piece of information, rather is the subject of debate that is being reported about by the media. Though it is very interesting to note Zaman's reluctance to cite FT as a source, this may be to pass it off as its own research or to distance itself from a publication that has put forward critical coverage of the AKP, either way again the tool of omission is present. By framing these comments in this way, their validity or accuracy is not confirmed by individual publications, but is framed in regards to the AKPs stance. As discussed in regards to Radikal's direct translations, though the newspaper is presenting the articles in full, inclusive of their critical commentary on the AKP, by offering no introduction or reporting of its own it essentially distances itself from the content of the article acting merely as a platform on which the articles are shared.

The idea of distancing is furthered when looking at the range of voices available together with the presentation of foreign press commentary. The basis of much of the foreign press commentary is criticism of the AKP and the direction in

which it is heading, serving as a warning to the Turkish public. The examination of the way in which these are handled, however, highlights the dominance of the AKP influence in the media. Despite the frames between certain publications being different, Sozcu's article is the only article which has used a specific frame to create an anti AKP stance, all the other publications use subtle descriptions, for example defining the foreign publication in question as "respected" or "influential" which serves to qualify the opinion but goes no further. None of the commentary is contextualised by any publication with local voices supporting or confirming their validity, yet in comparison the visibility of the AKP's response and reaction is high across the entire media spectrum. The fact that CHP being happy with the comments is only reported by Star within the context of their being a global gang against the AKP, serving to support the AKP's position, and there are only two publications which include the reaction of the Economist to the PM's threats, one of these limited in length. Therefore in concluding this section, it is evident that the commentary is being used as a voice of criticism, but simultaneously this is a criticism from which many publications want to distance themselves from.

Despite this study focusing on studying frames through a textual analysis, meaning studying frames in their most basic sense, the related literature all relates to an interaction with the existent schema within public opinion and the way in which the media aids their understanding and knowledge. Entman's (2004) framing study was considered advanced for this thesis due to the Cascade Model involving several different actors across the political and media spectrum, yet these results indicate that the Turkish model may be more in line with Entman's idea of a hegemony model. Considering that frames define problems, make moral judgements and support remedies, it appears that rather than the media defining the frames, the governing

AKP is framing events and occurrences and the Turkish media reinforces these frames through the use of sources, quotes, images and the overall way in which they themselves handle these frames provided. As Entman states, the hegemony approach "believe[s] that government officials keep the information available to the public within narrow ideological boundaries that democratic deliberation and influence are all but impossible"[237] and this appears to hold true for the Turkish example, for the data period at the very least. In both of the topics of Research Question 2, though polarization can be observed, there is very little contextualisation and levels of investigative journalism or a use of alternative sources that may confirm or undermine the elite views and opinions being put forward are low. Especially in the latter example, it is evident that an AKP visibility in the form of a response is much higher than any other voice; this too is supported by the majority of newspapers not quoting the PM in full in relation to the Kirac issue. Hence, the press politics relationship influences the type of coverage emerging and this results in a lack of depth that produces an environment more favourable to the governing party, with many newspapers trying to distance themselves from the commentary. Hence political power determines knowledge in this example.

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[237] Entman, *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion and U.S Foreign Policy*, p. 4

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Based on the relationship between media and democracy, this thesis looks at the ability of the Turkish media to fulfil its democratic role during what is argued to be the height of a citizenry's active role in democracy – national elections. Situating the media's role within a theoretical framework which focuses on the media's relationship with the political elite, the press politics relationship as termed by Bennett, the watchdogging and messenger role of the Turkish media were examined. This study also looked at the level of investigative journalism employed by the Turkish media in light of political and economic pressures to provide a sufficient scope and depth of coverage for an informed public. In an era in which the state of the media in Turkey is being contested in local society and largely criticised by foreign bodies, the role it plays in Turkish politics and the information it is presenting the Turkish citizenry is a topic worth examining. Given the fact that Turkey has been widely neglected by academic study in the area of media and political communications, this study is timely. Furthermore, the existing studies on Turkish print news media focus on a limited number of publications in their analyses, and/or mainly use content analysis based on selected keywords, therefore they remain somewhat narrow in scope when providing insight about the characteristics of the Turkish print media spectrum as a whole. The polarized parallelism identified by these studies has too been considered in an analysis of the data.

Taking the ten days leading up to the 2011 Turkish national elections in Turkey and one day after to gauge the immediate coverage post-elections, this study sought to answer two research questions across fifteen Turkish national newspapers

(inclusive of the top ten national newspapers in Turkey). The study aimed at first identifying the range and depth of issues present throughout this period to determine the dynamics present in the Turkish media, primarily focusing on the observable effects of political and economic influences and pressures. This too allowed for an evaluation of the Turkish media's ability to fulfil its watchdog and messenger role. The second stage analysis engaged deeper with the content throughout this period by singling out two topics on the Turkish print media's agenda (the dispute between Turkish businessman Inan Kirac and the portrayal of foreign press commentary in the Turkish media) to conduct a textual analysis which compared the way in which these topics have been framed by different publications,. These research questions were as follows:

1. What is the range and depth of issues covered across newspapers before the elections?

Based on the observations and results in Research Question 1, the second question explores:

2. What are the specific textual elements of coverage, which dominant frames are employed?

The first stage analysis found that the scope of coverage in the lead up to the 2011 election was limited, giving in to the power of the press politics relationship. The use of sources highlighted a dependence on official sources , in the top ranking publications in particular, in contrast to a low level of citizen and civil society voices. This correlates with the arguments of Gans, Bennett, Entman and McChesney who cite both the image making of political elite to generate good press and the economic constraints of the news media as underlying factors. These observations coupled with the fact that the Turkish media failed to bring critical issues to the public's eye

indicate that the press politics relationship is of greater significance in influencing the Turkey media. The media handled these subjects largely through campaign speeches or by using foreign press or external sources, thereby distancing newspapers from the opinions being put forward. Much of this coverage was observed to include official sources, implying a one way communications framework which reinforces the AKP's political position rather than a two way communications model between polity and public. These observations also then have implications for the level of investigative journalism occurring outside of the realm of political campaigning of the major political parties.

Given the limited scope of coverage, a look into the handling of the critical issues in Turkey such as the military, jailed journalists, the Kurdish issue and Constitutional change, at the time of the elections supported the above observations revealing that discussions of these largely followed a government line with the discussion of these topics remaining within the message boundaries established by politicians. The current messages on the military in particular are in great contrast to the military – AKP conflict that has been observed by previous studies. In terms of polarization, a group of publications supportive of the government's position emerged and while certain publications were observed to be more supportive of a CHP position, these publications positioned themselves more centrally on the political spectrum still not offering a significant amount of critical coverage of the governing party, even Sozcu failed to address all but one of these critical issues. Hence, this study found that rather than polarized political parallelism, the Turkish media is beginning to display characteristics of a more hegemonic political parallelism with little visibility of other political voices, especially those of minorities and civil society. This is ultimately to the detriment of the media's

democratic role as rather than serving to inform the Turkish public, it serves to depoliticise the readership and reinforce the position and messages of the political without facilitating an arena for debate.

Additionally, despite data being gathered in accordance with the Turkish equivalent of "election", the high level of business and economy news and sources in comparison to topics addressing the performance of the government indicated that coverage is influenced by economic and commercial factors, many of these articles reliant on public relations packaging. A large majority of this coverage is positive or neutral, indicating that the media serves both political and business elite. In both the political and business arenas, the aim to achieve "good press" is evident and this - also implies that in addition to the public, a number of publications are addressing n audience of business elite that consumes information on the economy and the current business environment.

It is upon this foundation that Research Question 2 sought to further shed light on these findings by looking at the way in which different publications framed two specific topics during the study period. One of the key findings in this second stage analysis is the complete filtering out of or limited coverage of controversy that could challenge dominant powers; meaning bad press. The use of quotations from official or challenging sources proved to be a particularly strategic tool employed by publications to either create positive images of the AKP or undermine their position. Some newspapers chose to omit these stories altogether, which is seen as a way to narrow the scope of debate and is in line with findings in Research Question 1, this serves to reinforce and support the position of the government. In regards to the Inan Kirac dispute, it has been observed that two thirds of the publications covering the dispute did not provide a full reference to the PM's quotes and avoided the

generation of bad press for the PM, others used lengthier quotations to shift the balance of blame and alter the packing of messages reaching the public. On the issue of foreign press coverage in particular, it is evident that the media is more inclined to embrace the use of foreign press commentary as a valid opinion when the subject is the economy, all newspapers employ a similar approach on this subject. In contrast, when the AKP's political performance is the subject of critical evaluation, variations between the framing of individual publications can be observed. Though this may highlight a polarization in the handling of this topic, what is evident is that apart from Sozcu which provides contextualisation to portray the AKP negatively, the majority of the remaining newspapers that cover the topic as a major news item provide a more neutral line of coverage. Subtle wording is used to give more credit to the foreign press publications and change or at the very least balance the messages being produced by the political elite. This idea of neutrality and a greater visibility of the AKP are seen clearly when looking at the voices projected onto the media spectrum, the AKP's reaction is put forward, but no other local voice is used to support the commentary with the exception of the main opposition party in only one article.

For both of these issues, the findings indicate that while the scope is limited, the depth of coverage and investigation offered by the Turkish media to its public is entirely lacking. Though this second research component only engaged with the frames on a basic level, upon examining the results and building on the observations in Research Question 1, we can draw on Entman's hegemony model for the Turkish example. The messages being put forward in the Turkish media are largely those of the political elite and in general, rather than contextualising these messages with investigative journalism and alternative media tools, the Turkish media allows these

messages to drive the dominant frames presented to the public. The media further relies on external sources such as foreign press commentary or academics and experts to change these frames. Therefore the AKP is effectively the hegemon determining the knowledge that will inform the citizenry.

As a result, the public is unable to make an informed decision based on what they receive from the news media. Rather than facilitating a two way messenger model with the Turkish public and key societal actors, the Turkish media appears to be dependent on the press politics relationship and therefore serves the interests of the political elite, overlooking voices that fall outside of the mainstream political and economic spectrum. In addition, beyond campaign speeches the media has been observed to leave the watchdogging role to foreign press commentary, which further confirms the level of political influence the Turkish media is subject to. These results put forward a media model that is reflective of the media's relationship with the dominant political elite, so much so that the media serves to reinforce the hegemonic position of the AKP in Turkish politics. Having gained almost 50% of the votes, the AKP's position is widely supported by the mainstream Turkish media, with limited instances of bad press. Only smaller publication and independent publications offer a critical tone to their coverage on a limited range of issues.

In order to limit the media coverage analysed to the period directly before the elections to capture the media's wrap up of critical commentary immediately before the elections, the time frame from which the data set has been drawn is limited. To further confirm, expand or undermine the findings of this study, the time frame can be extended prior to and after elections to look at the range and depth of topics over a longer period of time. The economic effects on the Turkish media have also only been discussed in terms of coverage, examining specific media companies and

owners together with the coverage would allow a greater analysis of their effects. Given that each article has been coded for several keywords, other subjects can be address and analyses more in depth to determine whether similar patterns observed in Research Question 2 are found. Ultimately, one of the most valuable and indicative additions to this study would be the introduction of a journalistic element, through the use of interviews to look at the role journalists play and the pressures they function under, which would potentially allow a measurement of the ownership pressures as well. Approaching the study in this way would essentially allow the methodology to fully employ Entman's framing analyses and further discuss the hegemonic position of the AKP. In light of technological developments and the changes caused in media consumption habits, introducing a parallel analysis of online media both mainstream and non-mainstream would serve to provide a more rounded picture of the coverage patterns within a comparative framework.

This study provides a detailed overview of election coverage in Turkey that also puts forward findings that have implications for the wider coverage provided by the Turkish news media. It is the first study that handles such a vast range of publications and that draws out keywords from the data itself, meaning that it is completely reflective of what the media is bringing to the agenda during this period. The findings of the study highlight a changing dynamic in the Turkish media, which is reflective of the AKP's largely unchallenged governmental position. The implications of these findings paint a bleak picture of the media's ability to fulfil a democratic role now and into the future in Turkey. This study in particular presents a strong foundation for future studies to both draw upon the points it puts forward and build upon the observations made.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

FULL LIST OF KEYWORDS

1. ACADEMIC
2. AKP
3. AUTHORITARIANISM
4. AUTOMOTIVE
5. BAHCELI
6. BALYOZ
7. BDP
8. BUSINESS
9. CAMPAIGNING
10. CHP
11. CONDUCT
12. CONSTITUTION
13. CRITICISM
14. DEFENDENTS
15. DEMOCRACY
16. ECONOMY
17. EDUCATION
18. ELECTION PROMISES
19. ELECTION RESULTS
20. ELECTIONS
21. EMPLOYMENT
22. ENVIRONMENT
23. ERGENEKON
24. ETHNICITY
25. EXPECTATIONS
26. FOREIGN POLICY
27. FOREIGN PRESS
28. GENDER
29. GOVERNMENT
30. HAS PARTY
31. HEALTH
32. HEGEMONY
33. HOPA
34. INDEPENDENT
35. INDUSTRY
36. JAILED JOURNALISTS

37. KEMALISM
38. KILICDAROGLU
39. KIRAÇ
40. KURDS
41. LOCAL
42. MEDIA
43. MENDERES
44. MHP
45. MILITARY
46. MINORITIES
47. MP CANDIDATES
48. PARLIAMENT
49. PARTY SUPPORTERS
50. PERFORMANCE
51. PKK
52. POLITICAL PARTIES
53. POLITICIANS
54. POST ELECTION
55. PRECAUTIONS
56. PROJECTS
57. PUBLIC
58. REAL ESTATE
59. RELIGION
60. RESEARCH COMPANY
61. RTE
62. SECURITY
63. STABILITY
64. TAPE SCANDAL
65. TECHNOLOGY
66. TERRORISM
67. TEXTILE
68. TOURISM
69. UNION
70. VIOLENCE
71. VOTING
72. ZANA

APPENDIX B

TURKISH QUOTATIONS

Prime time denilen günün en çok televizyon izlenen saatlerinde bir hoca efendi tefsir yapıyordu... Derken AGB izleyici ölçümü yapmaya başlayınca reyting raporları da gelmeye başladı. Baktılar ki seyreden yok, seyreden olmayınca reklam yok, reklam olmayınca da para yok. Değişmeye başladı. (p.73)

Türkiye'nin kontrolü ve yönlendirilmesinde ideolojik hegemonyanın önemini kavramaya başlamıştı. (p. 74)

Ardından 10 yıl geçtikten sonra bugün eğer "Hayır, AKP demokrasiyi tehdit eden dinci parti değildir, bir muhafazakar demokrat partidir" denebiliyorsa bunun tohumları o zamandan atılıyor. Bu meşruiyet kazanımı orada ortaya çıkıyor. O yüzden bunun puanını kesinlikle Erdoğan'a da danışmanlık yapan İslamcı aydınlara vermek lazım. (p. 74)

İslamcilar da liberallerin yardımıyla 28 Şubat'ta özgürlük, inanç özgürlüğü, demokrasi gibi bazı bayrakları ellerine geçmiş oldular. (p. 74)

Türkiye'nin kentlileşmesi, kapitalistleşmesi, küreselleşmesi ve eğitim düzeyinin yükselmesi. (p. 74)

Önemli bir kısmı geçmişte daha çok solda yer almış, fakat küreselleşme dalgaların karşısında ülkeyi korumanın en iyi yolunun yurdu savunma ve içe kapanma olduğu sonucuna varmış, küreselleşmenin Türkiye'ye karşı uluslararası bir komplo olduğu görüşünde olan ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin geleneksel bürokratik kadrolarıyla ya da daha önce kullandığımız terimle cumhuriyet muhafızlarıyla bağları bulunan "yeni

milliyetçiler (p. 75)

Küreselleşmenin hız kazaması ve AKP şeklinde örgütlenen yeni İslami hareketin AB ve ABD tarafından destekleniyor olması kafa karışıklığını daha da yoğunlaştırdı. Korku, paniğe dönüştü. (p. 75)

Türkiye'nin sorunları vardır, fakat bunlar, kökleri derinlerde de olsa, bugünün sorunlarıdır, eskinin yöntemleriyle değil, bugünün yöntemleriyle çözülecektir. (p. 76)

Türkiye'nin toplumcu, ümmetçi ve milliyetçi gelenekleri çok daha güçlü... Bu yüzden liberaller kendilerini her zaman zayıf hissetmiş, daima birileriyle itifak yapmak zorunda kalmışlardır. (p. 76)

Daha fazla sayıda kadının çalışma hayatına çıkmasıyla beraber, Batı tarzı tüketim kalıplarının Türkiye'de yaygınlaşmasıyla beraber, televizyonlarda sabahtan akşama kadar Batılı yaşam tarzına özendiren yerli be yabancı dizilerin gösterilmesiyle beraber, toplumun daha önce el değmemiş olan ücra köşeleri bile seküler, küresel değerleri öğrenmeye başlıyor. (p. 77)

Medyanın devlete çok yakın olması, onun tarafından çeşitli şekillerde manipüle edilmesi, milliyetçiliğin ve şovenizmin aracı olarak kullanması. (p. 78)

Erbakan'dan Erdoğan'a nelerin değişmiş olduğunu gösteriyor. İkinci Cumhuriyetçiler Ergenekon yüzünden Erdoğan'ı överken Susurluk'u hatırlatıp Erbakan'ı yeriyorlar. (p. 78)

2000'lerin Türkiyesine medya-kültür endüstrisine damgasını vuran en önemli gelişme ise, 2005 sonrası hızlanan siyasi kutuplaşma ve tarafların daha çok "medya silahı" ile kuşanma eğilimleri oldu. Bazı dini tarikat ve cemaatlere yakın burjuvalar, AKP iktidarının doğrudan teşvikleriyle medya şirketleri kurdu ya da var olanları satın aldı. En büyük medya gruplarından Sabah-ATV'nin, Başbakan T. Erdoğan'ın damadının yönettiği Çalık Holding'e, hem de kamu bankalarının kredileri ile devri, bu eğilimin en uç ve hukuken en çok tartışılacak örneğidir. (p.80)

Neoliberal-İslamciler, çoğunu beleşe, evlere işyerlerine dağıttıkları gazetelerden imal balon tirajlarıyla, kuşattıkları topluma, "Hegemonya, güç bizde!.." mesajını vermeyi daha çok önemsiyorlar. Yaratmış göründükleri ideolojik hegemonya, mahalle baskısı oluşturmaya da yarıyor. (p.82)

Dolayısıyla, medya ortamında iş yeri demokrasi, ifade özgürlüğü ve editoryal bağımsızlık, bir ülkede demokrasinin gelişimi için, olmazsa olmaz koşullardır ve bunlar daraltıldığı, diktatörlük, oligarşik yapı, mutlaka ve mutlaka bütün ülke yönetim biçimine de bulaşır. (p. 83)

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