

**The London Center of International Relations**

**Dissertation Supervisor:**

**Vivienne Jabri**

**DISSERTATION**

**Nikolaos Panagiotou**

**MA in Conflict Analysis**

*To the ones that I love*

## **Topic**

“The role of the press in a ‘conflict’: The Greek press coverage of the Greek-Turkish dispute.”

*“A nation is a group of people united by a mistaken view about the past and a hatred of their neighbours.”*

*Ernest Renan French philosopher*

## **1.1. Foreign policy and the press**

Mass communication development in modern societies influenced to a great extent the ways in which we acquire knowledge, we interpret information and transform it into a meaningful and coherent whole. As Thompson points out, mass media should not be regarded simply as channels for the circulation and diffusion of symbolic forms, but also as mechanism which creates new kinds of actions and interactions, and contributes to the establishment of new kinds of social relations<sup>1</sup>. Mass media affect the ways that we participate in the political sphere, through becoming an important source of our knowledge. “They have become ‘definers’ of the ‘political’, extending the limits of the public sphere to an unprecedented extent, by introducing a mediated publicness.”<sup>2</sup>. Mass media not only provide cognitive knowledge informing us about what is happening but also order and structure political reality. William Gamson suggests that media discourse is but one of three resources that people use to make sense of politics. Personal experience and popular wisdom are often combined with media discourse in ways that lessen the influence of media converge on people's opinions and frames of reference.<sup>3</sup>

For McNair, modern politics are largely mediated politics, experienced by the great majority of citizens, through their print and broadcast media of choice. He suggests five functions of the media in ‘ideal-type’ democratic societies: 1) They must inform citizens of what is happening around them (this is the ‘surveillance’ or ‘monitoring’ function of the media). 2) They must educate as to the meanings and

---

<sup>1</sup> Thompson J.B: Ideology and Modern Culture p.265 Cambridge: Polity 1990

<sup>2</sup> Roza Tsagkarousianou: Mass Communications and political culture: Authoritarianism and press representations of political deviance in Greece. P.84 Ph.D Thesis 1993 University of Kent (UKC) Sociology.

<sup>3</sup> William Gamson : ‘Political communication effects’ pp.123-125 in Ann N. Crigler (ed):The Psychology of Political Communication Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1996

significance of the 'facts'. 3) The media must provide a platform for public political discourse, facilitating the formation of 'public opinion'. 4) Their fourth function is to give publicity to governmental and political institutions-the 'watchdog' role of journalism.<sup>4</sup>

As soon as the significance of internal factors upon the state behaviour has been realized the attention given to the importance of the mass media in foreign policy is aroused. More precisely there are three analytical approaches to the role of the press in foreign policy. The first considers press to be an important factor in the formation of foreign policy, but emphasis is placed upon the structural factors that shape its content. The second approach emphasizes the centrality of the press as a propaganda tool in the hands of the ruling elite. The third approach suggests that the outcome of foreign policy is a result of continuous negotiation in which the role of the press is important. It is through the press that the interaction of the different agendas (public, policy, press) take place and shape the outcome of the foreign policy. Although the role of the press is important, this approach takes into account and reserves the autonomy of the public, policy, and press agenda without equalizing each importance.

For the first approach, the press performs an important role in the process of opinion formation and of policy formulation. This approach focuses on how the general economic and political conditions determine the boundaries in which the press operates and shapes its product. It examines the larger organizational limits impinging on press actions and decisions that may lead journalists to support government policies. Cohen suggests that organizational practices shape press coverage of foreign policy. Journalists often work within the governmental instituted boundaries of foreign policy coverage, and consequently are inclined to support the stated policy

---

<sup>4</sup> Brian Mc Nair: Journalism and Democracy: An evaluation of the political public sphere, Routledge London and New York 2000 pp.80-82

objectives.<sup>5</sup> Inspired by this study scholars have looked at either the organisational practices of the press or the government's imposed organizational constraints that influence international news products. Peter Drier suggests that newspapers became integrated into what he calls the "web of affiliations that form the national power structure, remaining a very important factor in foreign policy"<sup>6</sup>. Although all of these studies place emphasis upon the structural conditions which influence media content, they share a belief about the central role of the press in foreign policy. The press is thought to shape and determine, to a great extent, public opinion reactions, and through that policy itself. Critiques of this model focused upon the underestimation of the capacity of the audiences to retain some degree of autonomy from the mass media. Secondly they criticised the assumed neutrality of media message by structural-functionalist approach, and its inability to account for the role of the press in the political and cultural struggle for the construction of consensus.<sup>7</sup>

The second approach informed by Marxist theory emphasizes the centrality of the mass media in the reproduction of ideology and of asymmetrical relations of power in society. A very representative work of this approach is Herman and Chomsky.<sup>8</sup> The 'instrumental' approach concentrates on the actual controls exercised on press operators by the power holders in the capitalist economy, as well as the dependence of ideology on the economic processes. Ownership and control are considered to be determining factors in media activities which directly influence ideological production, and the content of media messages. "With a majority of the news outlets being owned by large conglomerates, the press as an institution is

---

<sup>5</sup> Bernard Cohen: The Press and Foreign Policy Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963

<sup>6</sup> Peter Drier: 'The position of the Press in the US Power Structure' Social Problems, vol 49, no.3 1989:298-310

<sup>7</sup> Brian McNair: An introduction to Political Communication p. 65 Routledge 1995

<sup>8</sup> Herman&Chomsky: Manufacturing consent New York Pantheon Books 1988

essentially viewed as belonging to the broader economic system, with very close ties to the governing political system.”<sup>9</sup>. Access to the media is determined by political elites, while room for challenges to the political and economic systems is limited. “The press is considered as “lapdog” of the state and the corporate powers; it panders to the interests of those in power. The information that it disseminates to the public, therefore, simply reflects its role as mouthpiece for the governing power elites. Thus news coverage of foreign affairs would reflect the interests of both multi-national corporations and the government.”<sup>10</sup>

The instrumentalist approach constitutes an important contribution, as it focus on the important implications of ownership, market pressure and other economic and political considerations to the ideological production that has been neglected by approaches focusing exclusively on the content of media messages. It fails though, as McNair suggests, “ to account adequately for the complexity of mediated political debate, and the many cases where ‘primary definers’, like the ruling elites, have failed to impose their primary definitions on the public debate as a whole. Political shifts like Nixon administration withdrawal from Vietnam War, Thatcher’s retreat from poll tax and her removal highlighted the weakness of any theoretical framework which asserts the existence of a deep structural bias on the part of the media towards the ‘powerful’ the ‘establishment’ or the ‘ruling class’ ”<sup>11</sup>

According to McQuail the emphasis placed by the second approach on the economic process does not explain cases where the mass media are under public ownership and not operate on the logic of profitability, or ownership by powerful corporations.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Catherine Luther: Press Images, National Identity and Foreign Policy: A case study of US-Japan Relations from 1955-1995 p.36Routledge 2001

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p.37

<sup>11</sup> Brian McNair: An introduction to Political Communication Routledge 1995 p.59

<sup>12</sup> Denis McQuail&Sven Windahl: Communication Models, p. 64 Longman:Singapore 1993



Even in the case of privately owned media other priorities could be detected, since it might serve the owners plan for political influence or control.

The third approach sees foreign policy as the outcome of continuous negotiation, where press role is important in shaping the public and political agendas. “‘Political reality’ is not neutral it is rather a product of representation, of processes of definition, or signification. In this context the press product is not mere reflection of ‘reality’, but rather specific interpretation of it.”<sup>13</sup> Press account is the outcome of processes of selective introduction and exclusion of issues from the universe of discourse. The central role of the press in the public sphere could be defined as “assisting the equitable negotiation or arbitration of competing interests through democratic processes.”<sup>14</sup>

The press is considered to constitute a domain of action, negotiation of increasing importance in contemporary societies. Tsagkarousianou suggests that the press is a gatekeeper: “It is through the press that our understanding of the political is mediated: the definitions of the political which determine which issues will enter the sphere of public awareness, discussion and collective action; the terms in which these issues are discussed; the criteria for legitimate participation in the public debate; and the parameters of the ensuing debates and discussions”.<sup>15</sup>

The press has a critical role in making more explicit the links between events in foreign policy and their repercussions for the average citizen. Its role as information provider is not entirely neutral. In its decision on what or what not to cover, various political, economic, ideological and cultural factors, along with organizational

---

<sup>13</sup> Roza Tsagkarousianou: Mass Communications and political culture: Authoritarianism and press representations of political deviance in Greece. P.114 Ph.D Thesis 1993 University of Kent (UKC) Sociology.

<sup>14</sup>Curran James “Mass Media and Democracy: A reappraisal” in J. Curran et al.(ed): Mass Communications and Society London: Edward Arnold/ Open University Press 1977

<sup>15</sup> Ibid p.117

constrains or interests, are employed and determine the outcome. As McNair states: “there is no single ‘primary definition’ of an event or an issue circulating in the public sphere at any given time, but a multiplicity of definitions, reflecting the interests of various collectivities, within and outside the ‘establishment’; while one definition may be dominant at a particular time, challenges will continually be mounted, as opposition groups seek to advance their alternative definition. That structures of access to the media through which the struggle for definitional primarily takes place, are not rigid but flexible, and capable of accommodating, even under certain circumstances welcoming challenges to the establishment; and that such flexibility is, indeed, an integral legitimating feature of the media in a liberal democracy.”<sup>16</sup>

Patrick O’ Heffernan writes “policy makers-the Insiders- have a definite model of the media’s relationship to the foreign policy process. They see the media as dual actors, affecting the policy both inside as a player or a tool of the inside players, and outside as part of the environment shaping policy, both overtly and covertly”.<sup>17</sup> According to Heffernan, the policy makers are particularly informed by the mass media during the early stages of policy development rather than during the latter stages, after policy adoption.

All the approaches that have been presented recognize the importance of the media and especially the press upon foreign policy. More importantly they tend to agree that the study of mass media is a study of the political system itself. In my study of the Greek press I adopt the third approach. The importance of this model, according to my view lies upon its hypothesis that there is an interconnection between the public, policy and media agenda, but their ‘autonomy’ is being reserved without their importance equalized.

---

<sup>16</sup> Brian McNair: An introduction to Political Communication p.140Routledge 1995

<sup>17</sup> Patrick O’ Heffernan: Mass Media and Foreign Policy p.152Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation 1991

## 1.2 Agenda-Setting

This chapter is structured across two sections which discuss and present the communication model of Agenda setting and Critical Discourse analysis.

### Model of Agenda-Setting

The relationship between public opinion and decision-making, and more generally the process of influence in societies has intrigued generations of scholars. One method of studying such influence in modern democracy is to investigate mass media, and public and policy agendas, defined as issues or events ranked in a hierarchy of importance.

Agenda research is concerned with investigating and explaining societal influence. It has two main research traditions: 1) *agenda-setting*, a process through which the mass media communicate the relative importance of various issues and events to the public and 2) *agenda-building*, a process through which the policy agendas of political elites are influenced by a variety of factors, including media agendas and public agendas.

The agenda-setting tradition is concerned with how the media agenda influences the public agenda, while the agenda-building tradition studies how the public and the media agenda influence the policy agenda.

The basic assumption is that there is a close relationship between the manner in which the news media present issues during a political campaign and the order of importance assigned to those issues by those exposed to the news. Cohen, introducing the agenda-setting model, wrote: “The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think

about.”<sup>18</sup> Malcom McCombs and Donald Shaw<sup>19</sup> introduced a model that would account for the more complex interactions through the communication process.

“Audiences not only learn about public issues and other matters through the media, they also learn how much importance to attach to an issue or topic from the emphasis press place upon it. For example in reflecting what candidates are saying during a campaigning, the mass media apparently determine the important issues. In other words the mass media set the ‘agenda’ of the campaign. This ability to affect cognitive change among individuals is one of the most important aspects of the power of mass communication.”<sup>20</sup> The press is not successful in swaying their audiences to adopt any particular point of view, but it is successful in bringing people to regard some issues as more important than others. Press agenda becomes the public agenda.

The underlying hypothesis of the model is that individuals, as casual observers of the political scene, do not monitor the entire political universe; instead, they attend selectively to a few issues that appear important at the moment. The appearance of that importance is very much a matter of what editors and journalists choose to cover or ignore. The more prominent some issue in the press is, the higher the level of importance people accord to that issue.

The Agenda-setting model has been criticised for containing a level of uncertainty. As McQuail and Windahl argue: “It is not, for example, always clear whether we should look for direct effects from the media on the personal agendas of individual members of the audience or whether we can expect agenda-setting to work through interpersonal influence. A second problem has to do with the different kind of

---

<sup>18</sup> Bernard Cohen: The Press and Foreign Policy p.13 Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963

<sup>19</sup> Malcom McCombs and Donald Shaw: The agenda setting function of mass media Public opinion Quarterly 36: 176-87, 1972

<sup>20</sup> Malcom McCombs and Donald Shaw: Structuring the “Unseen environment Journal of Communication, Spring 18-22 1976

agendas which are involved. A third theoretical ambiguity concerns the degree of intention which may be attributed to the media. There is consequently some uncertainty about whether agenda-setting is initiated by the media or by the members of the public and their needs or, we might, add by institutional elites who act as sources for the media.”<sup>21</sup>

Rogers and Dearing mention some additional sources of variation and uncertainty. One is that the press varies in its credibility so that not all newspapers are equal in their likely effect. Press messages may not coincide with personal experience from the environment. Thirdly many people may hold different values concerning news events from those which mass media tend to share.<sup>22</sup>

In order to respond to the above critique, Rogers and Dearing employed a new model for the Agenda-setting role of the press. In their model they distinguish between three different kinds of agenda: the media agenda, which refers to the priorities of attention in media content to issues and events; the public agenda the varying salience of issues in public opinion and knowledge; and the policy agenda, which describes the issue and policy proposals of politicians.

As Rogers and Dearing suggest “ agendas appear to show the following main kinds of interactions:

- Mass media do influence the public agenda directly, presumably by weight of attention and media authority.
- The public agenda (public opinion) influences the policy agenda as politicians seek to respond to what voters might want.

---

<sup>21</sup> Denis McQuail&Sven Windahl: Communication Models Longman:Singapore 1993 p.130

<sup>22</sup> Everett Rogers & James Dearing : “Agenda-setting research where it has been where it is going” in James Anderson (eds): Communication Yearbook/11 1994 Sage Publications pp. 550-560

- The media agenda also has independent direct influence on the policy agenda, since politicians use it as a guide to public opinion.
- On some issues the policy agenda has a direct and strong influence on the media agenda.
- The media agenda is directly influenced by many sources and by ‘real-world events’ which come to the attention of the media, a factor not usually included in earlier considerations of the process.”<sup>23</sup>

Figure 1<sup>24</sup>, represents the above kinds of interaction while it takes into account what is being proposed by other communication models.

### **1.3 Discourse Analysis**

Van Dijk shows that there are at least four frequently used meanings of the concept ‘discourse’. First a “token” of a specific discourse takes place between specific actors in a specific setting. Secondly discourse is described as “type”, corresponding with the notion of a genre. Therefore we can talk about the ‘discourse of news report’ in general. Thirdly there is the notion of social domains of discourse such as ‘medical discourse’ and ‘political discourse’. And lastly there is the more Foucauldian notion of an ‘order of discourse’, referring to “all the text and talk, or the discourses of a specific period, community or whole culture” or “the very abstract and general notion of the discourse of that period, community or culture”.<sup>25</sup> Fiske defines discourse as “a language or system of representation that has developed socially in order to make and circulate a coherent set of meanings about an important topic area”<sup>26</sup>

Discourse analysis views language “as a form of social practice. Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p.555

<sup>24</sup> Ibid p.557

<sup>25</sup> Teun Van Dijk : News as Discourse. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum 1988 pp.194-197

<sup>26</sup> John Fiske: Television Culture London Routledge 1987

event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structures(s) which frame it. A dialectical relationship is a two-way relationship: the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them”<sup>27</sup>. Discourse analysis “enables us to focus not only on the actual uses of language as a form of social interaction, in particular situations and contexts, but also on forms of representation in which different social categories, different social practices and relations are constructed from and in the interests of a particular point of view, a particular conception of social reality.”<sup>28</sup> According to Hall: “ Examining the news through discourse analysis, we acknowledge both polysemia that is the inability of the text to close off a variety of meanings, and the audience member’s particular decoding strategies, or the means by which she or he makes sense of a text”.<sup>29</sup>

The critical aspect of discourse analysis is the product of the discipline’s two principle theoretical origins: first “the ideas of the Frankfurt School (in particular the work of Jurgen Habermas) and the other on a shared tradition with the so-called critical linguistics”<sup>30</sup>. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for Wood and Kroger “is a term that is most often used to identify a set of perspectives that emphasizes the relations between the language and power and the role of discourse analysis in social and cultural critique”<sup>31</sup>. Titscher et al suggest that “CDA sees itself as politically involved research with an emancipatory requirement: it seeks to have an effect on social practice and social relationships”<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Fairclough, Norman & Wodak, Ruth: Critical Discourse Analysis: an overview, p.55 in Teun Van Dijk(ed): Discourse Studies: A multidisciplinary Introduction, Vol. 2, pp.67-97 London: Sage 1997

<sup>28</sup> Deacon, David, Pickering, Michael, Golding Peter & Murdock, Graham: Researching Communications: A practical guide to methods in media and cultural analysis. P.146, London: Arnold, 1999

<sup>29</sup> S. Hall: Encoding/decoding in S.Hall, D.Hobson, A Lowe&P Willis (Eds) Culture, media, and language pp 128-138. London: Hutchinson

<sup>30</sup> Titscher, Stefan, Meyer, Michael, Wodak, Ruth & Veetter, Eva: Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis p.144, London: Sage 2000

<sup>31</sup> Woods, Linda & Kroger, Rolph O: Doing Discourse Analysis: Methods for studying action in Talk and Text Thousands Oaks, Ca: Sage 2000 p.205

<sup>32</sup> Titscher et al (2000: 148)

Critical discourse analysis assumes that language represents both social action and social interaction; language is socially constitutive, contributing to and representing the (re)production of social reality.

The general principles of CDA are: 1)“CDA is concerned with social problems. 2) CDA studies both power in discourse and power over discourse. 3) Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same time constitute discourse. 4) Language use may be ideological. 5) Discourses are historical and can only be understood in relation to their context. 6) Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory. Critical analysis implies a systematic methodology and a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power relations”<sup>33</sup>

What is important in critical discourse analysis is that not only can the discursive representation be analysed, but the situation of the analyst also has to be taken into account. One of its essentials is that the analyst her or himself is part of the analyzing process.

A number of questions should be addressed when applying critical discourse analysis:

1. “ How is the text designed, why is it designed in this way, and how else could it have been designed?
2. How are the texts of this sort produced, and in what ways are they likely to be interpreted and used?
3. What does the text indicate about the media ‘order of discourse’ (Foucault)?
4. What wider sociocultural processes is this text a part of, what are its wider social conditions, and what are its likely effects?”<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid p.146

<sup>34</sup> Fairclough Norman: Media Discourse 1995 p.202 London: Arnold Press



## **1.4 Methodology**

In order to evaluate the role of the Greek press in Greek-Turkish relations, both in situations of confrontation and attempted resolution, I will examine the coverage of the press of the 1987 and 1996 crisis, and the Helsinki accord of 1999. The first two were chosen because they represent the most serious crises between the two countries, in different decades and in a different socio-economic environments. The Helsinki accord is the most important initiative for rapprochement, whilst it signals the ongoing effort to resolve the ‘conflict’.

I choose to study the press instead of the TV because:

1) A multiplicity of channels was not available during the 1980s. Private TV licenses in Greece have only been allowed from the 1990s, until then television broadcasting was under a state monopoly. This factor prevails the comparison among the television coverage of different crises in different decades.

2) As Anthony Sampson suggests the role of political journalism in “providing the chief context for information and understanding for the public” is being undermined by “the media’s ability to confuse news with entertainment”<sup>35</sup> This ‘ability’ creates a technique of presentation that is known as infotainment, which is widely used in the television across the world. In contrast, the absence of the use of these techniques in press coverage enables me to have a clearer examination on the way that it reports the facts.

The selection of newspapers is based upon the following criteria: 1) representation of the whole political spectrum 2) circulation figures 3) Influence upon the members of the political spectrum that they belong. The newspapers that I

---

<sup>35</sup> Anthony Sampson: ‘The crises at the heart of our media’ British Journalism Review, vol. 17, no.3 1996, p.42, pp.42-51

examine are: 1) Vima 2) Eleftherotypia 3) Eleftheros Typos 4) Kathimerini 5) Rizospastis.

Local newspapers are excluded from the sample, since they do not share the characteristics of national broadsheet newspapers favoured for the study: “they are not generally thought to display ‘journalistic excellence’; they typically target a less specific socio-economic audience than national broadsheets; and, of course, their editorial concerns articulate a ‘local’ rather than a ‘national’ agenda.”<sup>36</sup>

My choice to examine the headlines is based, on the following assumptions: They are a decisive among other factors, in a reader’s decision to buy a newspaper. This assumption lies in the fact that the Greek press has a small number of subscribers, while the most of its circulation is made through kiosks. Secondly, headlines ‘express’ the stance of the newspaper. It is highly unusual for the headline of a newspaper to present a message different to that of other articles, covering the same subject.

A set of criteria is employed in order to systematically identify which headlines would be examined. A headline will be recorded and analysed if its contents are Turkey related, including third party intervention in Greek-Turkish relations. However, passing references to Turkey, Turks will be excluded in order to concentrate on more specific, comprehensive, detailed and in-depth newspaper coverage.

A three-month period will be examined in order to evaluate the interest in and coverage of Greek-Turkish relations by the Greek press, commencing a month before and ending a month. A sample of this kind would produce an archive of relevant published items which would be large enough to be representative of newspapers

---

<sup>36</sup> Roza Tsagkarousianou: Mass Communications and political culture: Authoritarianism and press representations of political deviance in Greece. P.197 Ph.D Thesis 1993 University of Kent (UKC) Sociology.

output and yet small enough to be manageable. Implicit in this decision was the desire to collect a data archive of headlines of a size significant enough to be able to make general “inferences about the processes and politics of representation” operating in newspapers.<sup>37</sup>

In the analysis of the Greek press headlines the following hypotheses will be tested:

Hypothesis 1: Negative stereotypes of the Turks seem to overwhelm the positive ones. This coverage works towards the continuation of the dispute, since it constructs a negative image of the ‘Other’, drawing upon nationalistic stereotypes. This hypothesis aims to discover the role of the press in the construction of the Greek-Turkish disputes, and to highlight its importance in the diffusion of it.

Hypothesis 2: The news coverage by the selected newspapers is more favourable towards Greek foreign policy decisions in times of conflict than on efforts to defuse it. This hypothesis aims to measure the stance of the press and its ability to be critical even in moments that are considered important for the nation.

Hypothesis 3: The existent press coverage tends to favour and extend national stereotypes for the ‘Other’. It is ‘constant’ in general across time, while political and economical changes do have an impact upon the way that the Greek-Turkish relations are viewed. Little change over two times suggests that adversarial relations with Turkey are part of the national identity, which in turn is an important factor among others, behind the images.

Hypothesis 4: Greek press coverage is affected by emotional representations of third parties. As a result the images that are conveyed to the public do not represent the complexities of international relations and are easily exploited.

---

<sup>37</sup> Deacon, David, Pickering, Michael, Golding Peter & Murdock, Graham: Researching Communications: A practical guide to methods in media and cultural analysis. p.15 London: Arnold, 1999

Informed by the work of Luther<sup>38</sup>, whilst analyzing the news items an effort was made to ascertain the following:

- Use of metaphors. I am looking for the oppositional- or ‘friendly’ metaphors that the media text constructs about the ‘Other’ in the Greek context.
- Use of historical analogies.
- Key words, as well as the word choice (e.g. the use of adjectives/ pronouns for the country in question).
- Major themes in the news items (requiring themes and discursive patterns across time).

With regards to the influence of the press, on the public and the decisions-makers, I adopt the agenda-setting model as has been modified by Rogers and Dearing<sup>39</sup>. I use critical discourse analysis and the agenda-setting model, in order to evaluate how the Greek press constructs the public and policy agenda. My premise is that the Greek press sets the public and policy agenda. It both prioritises themes for public debate and determines the terms in which the themes are discussed.

The combination of agenda-setting model and discourse analysis will contribute further to our understanding of the role of the press in the construction of the public sphere. It will further explore meaning and the social implications of such meaning Hall states: “Precisely because identities are constructed within not outside discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific denunciative

---

<sup>38</sup> Catherine Luther: Press Images, National Identity and Foreign Policy: A case study of US-Japan Relations from 1955-1995 Routledge 2001

<sup>39</sup> Everett Rogers & James Dearing : “Agenda-setting research where it has been where it is going” in James Anderson(eds): Communication Yearbook/11 Sage Publications pp. 550-560

strategies. Moreover, they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power”.<sup>40</sup>

It is therefore particularly useful in analyzing how significantly the other side is reported in the press, and the importance of these representations in the public agenda.

Critical discourse analysis will reveal the content of this proposed agenda, and especially the construction of a discourse. It will provide a fuller account of the context and implications of the words, sentences, statements and arguments used in the sampled newspapers headlines.

Since “newspapers are constitutive of the social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief they represent a particularly important site for the production, reproduction and/or resistance to discourse on and around notions of ‘We-dom’ and ‘They-dom’”<sup>41</sup>. The qualitative analysis investigates how ‘Their’ negativity is constructed and maintained.

The findings of this analysis will not be presented organizationally under each level of analysis heading. What will be presented are the main thematic images identified in the analysis with illustrative examples. The examples presented are those that appeared to best illustrate the findings.

---

<sup>40</sup> Hall : introduction: Who needs ‘identity’? p. 4 in S. Hall and R. Gay (eds): Questions of Cultural identity, 1996 London: Sage

<sup>41</sup> Hartley: “Critical Discourse analysis p.145 in Van Dijk (ed): Discourse and Communication : New approaches to the analysis of mass media discourse and communication Berlin, New York: W de Gruyterz 1985

## **2. Greek-Turkish Relations 1974-2000**

No crisis can be understood without its social context. The historical reservoir of negative images, prejudices and stereotypes about the “other” is very critical in the emergence and the escalation of crisis. It is necessary to understand that Greece and Turkey are two countries that achieved their sovereignty as a result of wars of liberation fought against each other. The collective memory in both Greece and Turkey is continuously nourished by reminders of past enmity in history textbooks and the media.

### **1980-1990**

The Socialist Party (PASOK), in 1981 won the elections with 49 percent of the vote. Greece entered the European Union. This had a significant impact on its development. In Turkey in 1982, a new constitution after the military coup was put in place, T. Ozal was elected as prime Minister in 1983 when his Motherland party won the elections.

### **1987 Crisis**

This crisis, as the one that took place in 1976, hinged on proposed oil explorations in disputed waters and likewise involved the survey ship Sismik. The Greek government tabled a bill to take control of Canadian-owned North Aegean Petroleum Company (NAPC) that exploited the Prinos oilfield off the Greek island of Thasos. NAPC had earlier made public plans to prospect for oil outside Greece’s territorial waters; Turkey saw the take-over as signifying Greece’s intention to proceed with oil prospecting.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> T.Veremis: ‘Protracted Crisis’ pp. 140-150 in Dimitris Keridis and D. Triantaphyllou: Greek-Turkish relations in the era of Globalization Brassey’s 2001

The Turkish government granted further exploration and exploitation licenses to the state-owned Turkish Petroleum Corporation in international waters near the Greek island Samothrace. At the same time, Turkey accused Greece of having violated the Berne Protocol of November 1976.

On 28 March 1987, when the Turkish survey ship Sismik under naval escort set sail for the Aegean sea, Greek and Turkish forces were placed on alert and Papandreou declared that all necessary measures would be taken to safeguard Greece's sovereign rights. Holding NATO and, in particular, the United States responsible for the crisis, Papandreou ordered the suspension of communication facilities at the American base at Nea Makri. It also promptly dispatched his foreign minister to Sofia to brief the Bulgarian leader Tudor Jivkov. In a calculated snub, the ambassadors of Warsaw Pact countries in Athens were briefed on the crisis in advance of their NATO counterparts.<sup>43</sup> The threat of outright hostilities was averted only when Ozal declared that Sismik would operate only in Turkish territorial seas, while Greece likewise declared that no drilling would take place in disputed waters.

After the crisis of 1987 a secret dialogue was established between Ozal and Papandreou that led to a breakthrough that materialized in Davos in February 1988.

## **1990-2000**

### **Imia/Kardak Crisis 1996**

In 1996 Papandreou, the founder of PASOK and Prime Minister of the time, resigned and in his position K.Simitis was elected. His administration got off to a bad start with the Imia/Kardak crisis which almost cost him the premiership. His election signaled an effort for 'modernization' and change in domestic and foreign policy. Foreign

---

<sup>43</sup> Richard Clogg: Greek-Turkish relations in the post 1974 period, p. 15 in Dimitris Constanas (edit): The Greek-Turkish Conflict in the 1990s: Domestic and External influences Macmillan London 1991

policy, and more specifically the policy towards Turkey, ceased to be viewed as a zero-sum game. “This reformism was favoring Turkey’s integration into European structures on the proviso that Turkey adhere to the criteria and principles of the Luxembourg and Helsinki European councils of December 1997 and December 1999 respectively; respect of human rights, international law, international practices, the inviolability of the EU’s external borders; and accept the peaceful settlement of disputes through the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.”<sup>44</sup>

In late December 1995, a Turkish merchant vessel ran aground on the coast of the rocky islet Imia/Kardak in the Aegean Sea. This incident was followed by a small but silent exchange of diplomatic papers between the Greek and Turkish authorities as to who was to rescue the ship. The Turkish government in a verbal note argued that Imia/Kardak belonged to Turkish territory which was disputed by Athens. After an exchange of notes, the Greek authorities finally sent a Greek tugboat to the aid of the vessel.

“The incident that took place on an islet of a size that was appropriate only for keeping goats but hardly of any other use, would have gone unnoticed had the Greek TV station ANT1 not aired the exchange of diplomatic notes nearly four weeks after the incident occurred. On 25 of January the mayor of Kalymnos (an island situated next to Imia in the Aegean) took action and planted the Greek flag on the rocky soil of the island. This was the spark that inspired the Turkish newspaper “Hürriyet” to fly a helicopter with a team of journalists and photographers to the tiny islet, to remove the Greek flag and hoist the Turkish one. The action took place and “Hürriyet” published

---

<sup>44</sup> T. Veremis: ‘Protracted Crisis’ pp.140-150 in Dimitris Keridis and D. Triantaphyllou: Greek-Turkish relations in the era of Globalization Brassey’s 2001



the photograph of the journalists removing the Greek flag on its front page the very next day.”<sup>45</sup>

Things took a more serious turn from that moment on. The Greek navy changed the flag within 24 hours and by January 30/31-1996 Greek and Turkish naval forces stood opposite each other in the Aegean.<sup>46</sup> The crisis escalated further when Turkish special forces landed and occupied one of the isles that was not been guarded by the Greek army. A Greek helicopter on a reconnaissance mission in order to verify whether or not the islet was being occupied crashed causing the death of its pilots. This prompted speculations in Greece that it had been hit by Turkish fire. The intervention of USA and especially a phone call by the President of the United States in person to the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey averted further escalation of the already dangerous situation. A deal under the auspices of the United States was achieved and the two countries withdrew their armies from the area.

### **Helsinki Accords 1999**

The significant domestic changes- cultural and international- that both Greece and Turkey were experiencing, has raised awareness among reformers on both sides of the Aegean that resolution of the Greek-Turkish dispute was necessary.

During the second half of 1999, Greek-Turkish relations entered a phase of détente. An important factor has been the establishment of a working relationship between G. Papandreou and Ismail Gem, the Greek and Turkish foreign ministers respectively. The ongoing rapprochement has been further prompted by the solidarity exhibited by the Greek and Turkish people in the face of the humanitarian disaster caused by devastating earthquakes in both countries on August and September 1999. “In the EU summit at Helsinki on 10 December of 1999 all member states agreed to grant Turkey

---

<sup>45</sup> Mariana Lenkova (ed): ‘Hate Speech’ in the Balkans. Vienna: The International Helsinki federation for Human Rights, 1998 p.134

<sup>46</sup>Ibid p.135

candidate status for future membership under the condition that it could meet the Copenhagen criteria. These criteria adopted in 1993, specified that prospective EU members must 1) be democratic and respect human rights; 2) have basic macroeconomic stability and an ability to deal with market competition and 3) be able to adopt the body of EU law. In addition Turkey was expected to make progress in relations with Greece especially over Cyprus.<sup>47</sup>

Helsinki accords heralds a new prospect for relations between the two states and introduces the EU as a major factor of pacification in the troubled region. The decision by the EU to consider Turkey as a candidate for accession, further contributed to the process of dialogue.

---

<sup>47</sup> Paul Kubicek : The Earthquake, Europe, and prospects for political change in Turkey Middle East Review of International Affairs, Vol.52, No 2 Summer 2001

**Guide to newspaper initials:**

E.T- Eleftheros Typos (Right)

Eleft.- Eleftherotypia (Center-left)

Kath- Kathimerini (Center-right)

Rizo- Rizospastis (Left)

Vima-Vima(Center-Sunday newspaper)

### **3. The two crises and the stance of the Greek press**

In this chapter, the headlines of the Greek newspapers during the periods that I examine, will be presented and analysed through the use of critical discourse analysis.

#### **3.1. 1987 CRISIS**

The Greek press during the 1987 crisis supported what is perceived as a decisive stance of the government towards the Turkish ‘provocations’ (*Decisive stance against Turkey Kath 25/02*). The word ‘decisive’ in this case justifies the use of military means, as appropriate towards Turkish ‘provocations’. It also serves as an approval from the press of this policy that is ‘decisive’ in contrast with other policies (like rapprochement) that from before are set to be non-decisive or to constitute signs of retreat.

The oppositional newspapers are critical towards the Greek government. They accuse the government of apathy towards Turkish ‘provocations and challenges’ of Greek sovereignty. In these cases the antithetical scheme Greek mildness stance versus Turkey’s provocation, and aggressiveness is employed. (*Government watching in apathy as Piri-Reis comes out in the Aegean Kath.12/03*) *The crisis is under control. The government either worries or assuring excessively Kath 24/03*).

During the crisis the headlines become dramatic in their tone (*Zero Hour Eleft.28/03.*) The ‘dramatization’ of the events aimed at evoking feelings of insecurity, extreme danger and threat. Thus the use of relevant metaphors mobilized these feelings and prompted a unified stance by the public towards the danger. Oppositional newspapers continued to be critical towards the government and the handling of the crisis (*War climate, while government is fuelling a national disunity E.T. 26/03. A deception and a sale (of the national rights). A secret deal between the*

*deputy Foreign Ministers Akiman-Kapsis. E.T.30/03. You should go. You have surrendered the Aegean to the Turks, Mitsotakis accusations as tomorrows Prime Minister. Sub. Title: They have surrendered the Aegean without a dialogue E.T. 31/03.)*

The use of words like ‘surrender’ and ‘sale’ is created the impression of an ongoing war between the two countries, while it constitutes a division line between patriots and traitors. The former are characterised by their decisive stance and firmness towards Turkey while the latter, by their ‘appeasing and retreating stance’.

The opposition to the government newspapers used the Greek-Turkish relations for political exploitation in two ways.1) They accused the government of yielding to Turkish claims, while the oppositional parties declared their firmness (*We dare. Mitsotakis (then leader of the New Democracy Party) quote that he will proceed with the drilling E.T. 7-8/03) (Unacceptable retreats towards Turkey (Rizo) (Turkey is ‘threshing’ to Aegean. A Turkish submarine was found close to Athens E.T.. 23/03) 2) Quotes from Turkish officials that negatively characterized the Greek political opponent of the newspaper, were used in order to expose the ‘incapability’ of the government. (Ozal attacks: Andreas is imprudent-unreliable. E.T. 04/02)*

The perseverance of the use of the name ‘Hora’, or ‘Piri Reis’ instead of the new name of the same ship ‘Sismik’, emphasizes in what is seen as a continuation along the time of the Turkish aggressiveness. (*Government watching in apathy as Piri-Reis comes out in the Aegean Kath. 12/03). They have taken Hora out in the Aegean again (Eleyft.20/03 Turkish ultimatum, while ‘Hora’ is departing for the Aegean (Vima 20/03).*

Turkey’s ‘aggressiveness’ is frequently employed by the headlines. It is suggested that it is an inherent characteristic of the Turkish policy, especially manifest in the

stance of the Turkish politicians toward Greece. (*Don't play with the fire. Turkey is dropping the glove (Eleft.22-23/03 Ozal attacks: Andreas imprudent-unreliable (on his way to USA he had made of power threatening and insulting (Rizo.04/02), Ozal Provocation. He is threatening having the backing of Reagan. (E.T. 05/02).*

Turkey's policy is presented as posing a threat to the stability of the whole region. (*Divested effects the Turkish provocations (Kath21/03).* Through the word 'divested' the 'Turkish threat' is magnified, while the responsibility from the beginning is placed upon the Turkish side. Turkish moves are characterised as 'provocations', while the Greek ones are 'defending acts' (*Ankara escalates the provocations Kath14/03), Turkish ultimatum, while 'Hora' is departing for the Aegean Rizo 15/03.*). It is a method that constructs an ideology of victimization, and justifies the use of all means necessary to protect the nation from its 'opponent expansionism'.

When faced with the prospect of a Greek-Turkish dialogue, the Greek press maintains a cautious stance as can be seen from titles like *First talks with Turkey, Exchange of letters between the two prime ministers. Eleft. 03/04*). Dialogue is seen as part of the zero-sum game. In this context, as long as 'we win' there is a neutral-to-positive stance as shown by the above headlines.

In the proposed ways for resolution of the tension the Greek stance is praised as in accordance with international law while Turkey's proposals are presented as residing outside of lawful solutions. According to the headlines, the Greek side is looking at ways to resolve the conflict through addressing to the International Court of Justice while Turkey proposes a dialogue that leads to the bargaining away of Greek rights. The antithetical scheme employed in this case is Greece's rightful claims as against claims that are based on threats which are sought to be justified through bargaining. (*End at bargaining (Eleft 05/04), Turkey is looking forwards to the division of the*

*Aegean. Turkey reacts in the suggestion from the European Parliament (to commit the dispute in Hague) adhering to the bilateral talks (Kath 06/04).*

The USA is presented with a colonial image ‘dictating’ both countries. Additionally, it is considered as backing Turkey. Turkey is presented to be more valuable than Greece in the American interest calculation, and its claims to be heard and ‘understood’ are met, while the Greek ones are bypassed (*USA is aiming at the stability in Aegean, despite the phrases excessive in favor of Turkey (Kath18/03). (We are not taking any other slap in the face, Eleft. Ozal Provocation. He is threatening having the backing of Reagan.)*) In order to understand the USA representation in the Greek press we have to bear in mind that it is heavily influenced by the following: 1) It is widely believed that the Turkish invasion in Cyprus took place with the American acquiescence 2) antagonistic relations between the Reagan administration and the socialist government in Greece. Therefore any efforts by the USA in the long term to intervene as a honest broker between the two countries would be met with Greek suspicion.

An anti-American stance is adopted by the majority of the press, even from newspapers that belongs to the right of the political spectrum, which traditionally kept a pro-American stance. The language and rhetoric employed is in contrast to the collective experiences, memory and ideology of their predominantly politically and socially conservative public. This change signified the growth of anti-Americanism that covers the whole of the political spectrum.

In contrast to USA representations, the Greek press adopts a more positive stance towards Europe and European institutions like the European Parliament. (*In favor of commit to Hague the European Parliament Kath. 10/03*) it refers to the *commit of the dispute to the International Court in Hague*). This positive stance signals the beginning of a shift in foreign policy from the USA to the EU as a forum where Greek interests are best served.

The case of Rizospastis differs from the other newspapers, since it reflected the official position of the Greek Communist Party. Rizospastis adopted a Marxist analysis of the crisis which views conflicts in general as a by-product of capitalism and imperialism. The same applies to the Greek-Turkish tension which was considered to be the product of NATO and USA intervention in the region in order to promote their interests. A way out of the conflict would be if both countries break their ties with American imperialism. Turkish aggressiveness was attributed to America's guidance (*Ozal Provocation. He is threatening having the backing of Reagan. The American Pentagon supports the Turkish occupation of Cyprus. A blackmailing gung (The Americans behind Evren in the steering wheel of 'Hora'. Dangerous games by the Americans in the Aegean Sea. They support Turkish chauvinism)*) At the same time 'Rizospastis' favored a friendship between the two nations, separating the people of Turkey from the political-military complex that was in power and which profited from the continuous tension. This stance was a result of the fact that the Greek Communist Party was the only Greek party which had direct talks with its illegal counterpart in Turkey, even in times close to or after a crisis. (*Bridge of friendship between the two nations. Interview with the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey. Rizo. 14/02*)



### **3.2 Imia/Kardak crisis 1996**

The headlines of this period represent a general ‘disappointment’ over the handling of the crisis by the Greek government. More specifically there is a sense of humiliation and retreat from the Greek government and a victory of Turkish ‘aggression’. (*And now what we will do if Turkey hits back again? (Eleft. 01/02) Shame on us, we have been humiliated by the Turks. Subtitle: They placed the Turkish flag in Imia. E.T 29/01.*)

In this crisis the oppositional press stance is very critical of the Greek government (*To the Death squad Simitis and Pagkalos. Simitis is letting Tsiler and attacking Andreas. E.T. 03/02*) This ‘humiliation’ is paralleled to the one in 1922 between Greece and Turkey. Metaphors as to the ‘death squad’ are used in order for the historic analogies to be drawn by the reader. Then, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Affairs minister were charged with treason, because of the capture of the islet by the Turks and their decision to disengage instead of escalating the crisis.

Metaphors like (*To the Death squad Simitis and Pagkalos, Pagkalos with fesi (Turkish hat), E.T. 05/02*) create an atmosphere that pose as a threat to future agreements for disengagement, making the potential for a war more likely. Any appeals or propositions for an approach with the ‘Other’ are ‘banned’, since they are being equated with treason. The only solution is the use of military force.

The criticism against the government escalates by representing the Greek government as having completely ‘surrendered’ to Turkey (*Greece is being left ungoverned while the Turks are cruising. Another slap in the face: Simitis in Brussels have surrendered totally to the Turks. Three juntas are fighting against each other. The country has been left at the mercy of the Americans and the Turks. E.T. 10/02.*)

The perpetuation of the conflict is reflected in headlines that are calling to ‘reorganize our capabilities’. (*It's time to rally to reorganize our capabilities (Kath 04/02)*). There is a call to the nation to be prepared for a second round in the near future. It also presents hostility in the relations between the two nations as something normal. War preparations are to be considered ‘normal’, and the right reaction to be followed by the political leadership. Dialogue and a policy to diffuse the conflict are pushed out from the dominant discourse as not the appropriate approach towards an ‘unreliable, ‘expansionist, ‘brutal’ Other. Implicit is the message that only military preparations, and even the will to use military force will provide Greece with the necessary security, and will not allow the repetition of the Cyprus tragedy.

Turkey is presented as rejecting any resolution of the crisis based upon means like the International Court of Justice, favouring instead a dialogue based on its own terms. (*No to Hague, because we will lose Turkey responds, Elef15/02*). *Ankara does not promote the Hague solution, Kath 10/02*). Instead of addressing the dispute to the ICJ, Turkey chooses the use of threats of war. (*Tsiler is threatening with another war, Elef 05/02*).

Turkey is accused of insolvency, (*Turkey is insolvent Elef 06/02*). The use of the word insolvent undermines the possibilities for a successful dialogue between the two countries. In another headline with a similar context the reader is informed that (*Turkey should respect its signature E.T.12/02*). The general context of the phrase, presents Turkey as a country that cannot be trusted, since it does not respect any agreements or laws. This in turn leaves no space for compromise, since Turkey has been presented as morally bankrupt. War, or the continuation of the conflict, seems the only solution in order for Greece to safeguard its sovereignty rights.

Another characteristic that is attributed to Turkey is that of a continuous demand that is not easily satisfied. (*Turkey is pushing to the limits E.T.13/02*) Despite the ‘gains’ that it got over the latest incident, Turkey is presented as still demanding and pushing the Greek ‘patience’ to the limit. The only appropriate response is a military one, since appeasement fails to respond to the continuation of provocations. Representations of this kind lead to the creation of a more pro-war prone public opinion, since it moves from the scene any other response. The Greek public is led to believe in the need for a continuous rearmament to counteract the direct threat of Turkey’s permanent and repetitive claims against the Greek sovereignty.

The selective presentation and the emphasis on “irrational”, “offensive” and “aggressive” aspects of the events are crucial in the creation of a series of stereotypes of the “other” which in turn are frequently employed in further press coverage.

(*Denctas: "We slaughtered them", Kath 02/03*). The word ‘slaughtered’, referring to the lack of around 1800 missing Greek-Cypriots an issue that is very sensitive in itself, promotes the image of aggression. It underlines the cynicism and brutality of the ‘Other’ which ignores international law. The reader comes ‘face to face’ with a brutality, which in combination with the recent crisis strengthens the feelings of hostility and leaves no room for compromise.

Even some Turks recognize the justness of the Greek claims as the headline of ‘Eleftherotypia’ informs the reader (*You are right in the name of Allah Eleft17/02*). The use of the word Allah is employed in order to support the truthfulness of the sentence while it gives the impression that it has been made to a virtual court. This recognition promotes the ‘objective’ character of the Greek claims while undermines Turkish claims as unjustified. As a result any dialogue between the two countries will lead to Greek losses.

Turkish claims are undermined through the use of the following tactics: 1) ironic headlines (*Operation goats Eleft 20/02*). 2) references made to articles in the Western press. In this case, the Western media is used in order to add to the rightness of the Greek claims and unlawfulness of the Turkish ones. (*Tsilers' claims are brazen, reproduction of the New York Times article. Eleft.12/03*)

The reproduction of articles from Western newspapers that are considered to be influential serves the claim that 'although our allies realize the rightfulness of the Greek claims, they turn a blind eye to them.' (*French and British do not have a clear stance. British torpedo to Greece. Eleft 14-15/03*). This emotional representation of relations among these countries has a big affect, and it might explain the anti-American or even sometimes anti-Western stances of the Greek public opinion. Representations of USA, Britain and Germany are affected by what I call the 'syndrome of the Great Powers'. It is a product on one hand, of the realization of the importance that these countries have in the international system, while from the on the other it is based on emotional representations that are drawn from their role in modern Greek history. These images still have a big impact on the way these countries are depicted by the Greek press. Their intervention in the Greek-Turkish relations is seen very cautious.

The emotional representation of foreign policy issues takes another form. Countries are categorised as friends or enemies of Greece. In an imaginary way it is the rebirth of Philhellenism as is to be found during the war of independence against the Ottoman Empire, by intellectuals and artists like Byron etc. This way of reporting transmits false impressions and enables the categorization of countries between philhellene and non-philhellene. It does not allow the critical evaluation of policies

while it blanketly undermines the image of organizations or countries in the public opinion.

The disappointment over failure to deal with the last incident leaves a feeling of having being betrayed by Greece allies, and most notably the USA (*Now we are looking for allies. Eleft 17/03*) The image of the USA, as in the previous crisis, is of a country that favours Turkish expansionism against Greece This representation does not allow the USA to be seen as a honest broker while it serves the emotional reporting that masks the complexities of international relations. USA according to this representations adopts a double standard policy, pressuring Greece to accept a settlement, while recommending that Turkey accept the committing of the dispute to the Hague (*Clinton to Demirel: Promoted Turkey but recommended to go to Hague. Eleft. 22/02*). *Washington is trying to restore, Kath22/02*). Only the newspaper Vima is more keen towards American intervention for a compromise between the two countries (*Clinton intervenes in order to succeed a compromise in the ongoing disputes. Dayton for the Aegean Sea. Rizo.18/02*). The Greek government is presented as obeying to the Americans and abolishing Greek rights (*They have given away the 12 miles in the night of the big treason. A cynical intervention by the Americans: Orders in the style of Piourifoy<sup>48</sup>, The country has been left at the mercy of the Americans and the Turks. Bargaining between Clinton and Demirel for our islands, E.T. 14/02*) *Humiliation and submission to American imperialism Rizo 17/02*).

The stance of the Greek press is more favourable towards Europe, although that the USA was the one that intervened to ensure the de-escalation of the crisis. This Imia/Kardak crisis symbolized a political turn towards Europe and its institutions in

---

<sup>48</sup> American ambassador that served in Greece during the fifties, and he has become synonymus with American interventionism in Greek politics. His term is the highlights of the American interventionism in Greece since he had a saying even in the composition of the cabinet.

order to secure Greece's rights. This turn in the political level was reflected in the headlines as well, which in general welcomed it. In contrast to the USA's image the EU's is by far better. (*Help from Europe, Eleft23/02*), *Solidarity to Greece by the European Union, Kath 24/02*). *Europe is our shield in Aegean. "New Democracy" achievements overcome government's failures. A Foreign Policy success by Evert in Strasburg. E.T. 26/02*). The use of the metaphor 'shield' expresses the hopes invested in the EU to justify and perhaps safeguard Greek 'rights'. The appealing to others represents a common way of reinforcing the sense of justification of Greek claims. It is contradictory though, since in decisions favouring Turkey the same newspapers accuse the EU or its member of favouritism. This manner of reporting fails to reflect the complexities of international relations in order to facilitate the exploitation of public opinion.

For Rizospastis, pursuing a policy of divide and rule by imperialist America is the major explanation of this crisis, as well as the previous one. American imperialism that favours the military expansionism of Turkey should be the target of both countries policy rather than working against each other. (*NATOI (in Greeks means they referring to NATO) the enemies of peace in the Aegean. The Division and ruling is the enemy. A continuous threat the politics of subordination. (Rizo31/02)*) The Greek government is being accused of following a policy of subordination. (*A new "thank you" this time to Brussels28/02*). Rizospastis, in contrast, favours through its headlines, the friendship between the two nations on the pretext that they would be liberated from imperialistic interventions.

## **4. A change in the Greek foreign policy and the stance of the Greek press**

### **4.1 Helsinki Accords 1999**

The stance of the Greek newspapers, as in the previous incidents that I examine, was informed by their political preferences, although common elements between them could be found. Eleftherotypia, Vima, Kathimerini tended to support the government decision to lift the veto on Turkey's nomination as candidate EU member.

Eleftheros Typos and Rizospastis are against the accords, which they consider to be negative for Greece. The image of Turkey as portrayed during and after the Helsinki accords remains the same as in the previous crises. It is upon this enemy image that they build their critical stance against the Helsinki accords. In the newspapers that are supportive of the accords, there is a small change in Turkey's image. There is still the aggressive, arrogant, and non-democratic image implicitly included in headlines (*From now on the pressure will come from Europe, Kath 14/12*), but there is an optimism that it might be the beginning of a new era in Greek-Turkish relations. (*A new era marked by hopes and bargain Eleft.11/12*)

Greek-Turkish relations are viewed as a zero-sum game, something that all newspapers share. In that sense, for some Greek newspapers, the Helsinki accords are portrayed as a Greek victory while for others it is a Greek loss and a Turkish gain.

The newspapers that have a more positive stance, are still cautious about Turkey's behaviour (*Greece says Yes, but.. Greece got want it wanted, Kath.10/12*) *A new era marked by hopes and bargains The big chance Elefth. 11/12*)

In contrast Eleftheros Typos and Rizospastis transmit a negative image of the Helsinki accords (*Three gifts to Ankara by Simitis. Article: They gave away everything without getting anything in return 6 reasons against and 1 in favour of Helsinki Accord*

*Negative future affects are behind the triumphal. E.T. 12-14/12) People will 'pay' for the Helsinki Accords Rizo.14/12)* The use of the word 'gift' in conjunction with 'gave away', signifies the 'unacceptable' retreat of the Greek government. A retreat that has been dictated by the USA (*Yes to everything, Simitis accepts everything by Clinton's order (E.T.10/12)*) and obeyed by a 'willing' government. Rizospastis adopts the same view (*People are ready to act against the 'New Order' 12/12*). For this newspaper the Helsinki accords are viewed as part of the plan that was announced by president Bush after the Gulf war. In this context the American superpower imposed its will to achieve a Greek-Turkish settlement that would promote Turkey's candidacy for EU membership and its status in general as a regional power. There is a repetition as in the crisis of 1987 and 1996, of the representation of the USA as having a pro-Turkish stance. The same scheme is employed, the one of the Great Power that dictating its will to Greece. A scheme easily recognized and probably adopted by the reader.

The image of Greece giving away everything without getting anything in return is highlighted by (*Simitis confession: Turkey still poses a threat even after Helsinki accords. E. T.15/12*). The threat that the 'Other' poses is used in order to reinforce the opposition to policies like this one. The reader is led to accept that the only successful policies are the ones that vanquish the Turkish threat. Long-term policies like the ones that are needed between countries engaged in protracted tension relations, are not considered applicable. This kind of reporting should be seen as part of the same context that misleads the reader when covering international relations issues and tends to oversimplify and categorise power relations inside and amongst countries.

Fostering expectations that long-term animosity can be extinguished in a short-term period is creating expectations that are difficult to meet. This usually has



negative effects on public opinions' support for rapprochement policies, as shown from the Palestian-Israeli peace talks after the Oslo agreement.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

In the beginning of my thesis I made some hypotheses concerning the Greek press coverage. My first hypothesis was that negative stereotypes of Turks seem to overwhelm the positive ones. This coverage works towards the continuation of the dispute, since it constructs a negative image of the 'Other', drawing upon nationalistic stereotypes. The hypothesis has proven to be correct. Turkey is presented as 'aggressive' and 'expansionist', with a 'provokative behaviour' which poses a threat to regional stability. Turkish 'expansionism' is continuous and aims at the takeover of Greek territory. This claim is connected with the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, and is reinforced after the Turkish takeover of the islet during the Imia/Kardak crisis in 1996. Turkey's 'aggressiveness' is frequently employed by the headlines which deem it to be inherent in Turkish policy. The image of the Turks throughout the whole public sphere is the one of the 'principal' and 'eternal enemy'. The historical background (the Ottoman empire, the War of Liberation, the Asia Minor disaster, the war in Cyprus) and the present tension provide the basis for attributing imaginary and non-imaginary perceptions to any fact regarding Turkey and the Turks. The emphasis on Turkish aggressiveness in contrast with the Greek 'defending' stance leads to the construction of an ideology of victimization, and justifies the use of all means necessary to protect Greece from its 'expansionist opponent'.

The press provides the body of information on the basis of which perceptions of Turkey are constructed. This information does not derive from the public's experience of direct contact with the Turks; rather it is information processed by the press and therefore structured by the particular constraints under which the Greek national press has to operate. Through the overwhelming negative representation of Turkey, the

Greek press plays a major role in “undermining” their discourse, and divesting their actions of any rational or moral basis.

The analysis of the headlines revealed a number of discursive strategies presenting the ‘Other/Enemy’ as a homogeneous, internally undifferentiated entity intending to deprive Greece of her identity and territory. Equating through dissimulation, the representations of the ‘Other’s’ citizens, political forces, government, with ultra nationalists is a commonly used strategy. There is a continuous use of oppositional schemes that are employed in the coverage of Greek-Turkish relations. This ‘technique’ enables the reader to compare and more easily to justify the Greek stance. It is by the use of these schemes that the enemy image is constructed and sustained. Metaphors are equally employed, aiming to explore national myths, stereotypes and history itself in order to reinforce the confrontational stances.

However, it would be misleading to suggest that press coverage was not characterized by some degree of diversity. This diversity has been shown in the Helsinki accords where newspapers like *Eleftherotypia*, *Vima*, *Kathimerini*, accommodated positive views for Turkey that were in line with the need for rapprochement between the two nations.

My second hypothesis was that news coverage by the selected newspapers is more favourable toward Greek foreign policy decisions in times of conflict than on efforts to defuse it. This hypothesis aims to measure the stance of the press and its ability to be critical even in moments that considered important for the nation. This hypothesis is less valid. The Greek press’s stance is affected by its political party affiliations, which results to be critical or supportive towards the handling of the Greek-Turkish relations. The critical stance adopted by the oppositional newspapers

though does not doubt the dominant discourse about Greece rights etc, but is directed at the Greek government calling for no compromises.

We must note here that in very rare cases the Greek press tends to critically evaluate the Greek position and let the positions of the 'Other' be transmitted. The criticism against the government policy is in between the lines of the Greek position. Besides the characterisation of Greek-Turkish relations as 'National issues' does not leave much space for a critical evaluation.

Thirdly I hypothesized that the existing coverage tends to favour and extend national stereotypes of the 'Other'. It is 'constant' in general across time, while political and economical changes do not have an impact upon the way that the Greek-Turkish relations are viewed. Little change over two time periods suggests that adversarial relations with Turkey are part of the national identity, which in turn is an important, among others, factor behind the images of the 'Other'. This hypothesis has to a great extent, been proven. Press coverage tends to be constant and promotes the national stereotypes of Turkey. But it seems that political and economic changes in Greece had an impact upon press coverage.

With respect to the image of third parties, my hypothesis was that their portrayal in the Greek press is affected by emotional appeal. As a result, the images that are conveyed to the public do not represent the complexities of international relations, and are easily exploited. Representations of the USA, Britain, and Germany are affected by the 'syndrome of the Great Powers'. These countries' intervention is seen very cautiously and from the beginning, not in the interests of Greece. According to the disseminated press images there are other countries or decision-makers that are supporting Greece because they are motivated by friendly feelings towards Greece. In an imaginary way it is the 'rebirth' of Philhellenism as is to be found during the war

of independence against the Ottoman Empire, by intellectuals and artists like Byron etc. This way of reporting transmits false impressions and enables the categorization of philhellene and non-philhellene countries. It does not allow for the critical evaluation of policies.

The analysis of the Greek press revealed a number of discursive strategies that present the 'Other/Enemy' as '*a homogeneous, internally undifferentiated entity intending to deprive Greece of her identity and territory*'.<sup>49</sup> Equating through dissimulation the representations of the 'Other's' citizens, political forces, government, with ultra nationalists is a commonly used strategy. Based on these representations the perception of the 'Other' as being the embodiment of internal and external opposition appears in the form of the 'principal' and 'eternal enemy'. The nation is established as a pure, moral and internally homogenous entity with its own rights, through the symbolic exclusion of dissidents.

The Greek press plays a significant role in the construction and distribution of the dominant discourse in foreign policy. The construction of the dominant discourse comes as a result of both the public opinion and from the political elites. The role of the press is not just that of mediation between these two poles but it preserves an autonomous role, contributing to the process of the construction of the dominant discourse

The stance of the Greek press cannot be attributed only to the national identity. In the construction of these images other factors of equal importance contribute as well. In the case of the Greek press much of its representations influenced by the newspaper's political affiliation. Also bearing in mind the promotional role that the

---

<sup>49</sup> Tsagkarousianou R. (1999): Nationalism, Ethnic Antagonism and Mass Communication in Greece In Allen T., Seaton J. (ed): *The Media of Conflict: War Reporting and Representations of Ethnic Violence*, Zed Books, NY:175-191

headlines play in the Greek press, some of the representations or more accurately, the dramatization of the events, can be attributed to their aim to increase their circulation.

The Greek press does not usually determine the foreign policy agenda, but it clearly wields a large amount of influence, as it has been shown through the cases that I studied. The press plays a crucial role in defining “success” and “failure” insofar as the public is concerned. It provides meaning and mediates the meaning of the action in foreign policy. Its influence is greater in foreign policy issues because of the lack of personal experience, and consequently, the public’s reliance upon the information that receives from the mass media in general. A very important survey conducted in both countries underlies the importance of the above. Ninety-five (95%) percent of Turkish people feel that the Greeks are not to be trusted, although ninety-three (93%) percent have never met a Greek; at the same time seventy three (73%) percent of Greek people feel that Turks are not to be trusted although seventy (70%) percent of the Greeks have never actually met a Turk.<sup>50</sup>

The role of the press is important in any case and especially if we want to move forward and break this cycle of confrontation. It is important because the press can possibly provide a critical stance that would break the dominant national stereotypes and move to the construction of a collective identity based on a future of regional peace and mutual trust and respect, rather than on the divisions of the past.

---

<sup>50</sup>Piar of Turkey and ICAP of Greece: Perceptions from the two shores of the Aegean, Private View, 1997 Vol. 1 no.3 p.45



