

Interrupted Social Peace: Hate Speech in Turkish Media

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Abstract

Hate speech can play a key role in interrupting social peace. Recent studies have shown that the number of headlines and news stories that vilify specific groups on the basis of ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation have increased in Turkish media. Since media narratives and news reports affect the construction and representation of social groups, this study attempts to uncover hate speech strategies that specifically target ethnic and religious minority groups in Turkey. Reviewing hate speech in mainstream Turkish media, the article poses two important questions: (1) How, and to what extent, is hate speech employed? (2) What types of discourse strategies are constructed in the news? Answering these questions, the article will then discuss related issues and use critical discourse analysis methodology. Also, the relationship between hate crimes and hate speech will be investigated, revealing the primordial importance of combating hate speech.

Keywords: Hate speech, discourse strategies, Turkish media, non-Muslim minorities, Kurds.

Introduction

In 2007, Hrant Dink, a Turkish Armenian journalist and human rights activist, after being threatened by extreme nationalists, wrote in the Turkish Armenian newspaper *Agos*, 'I may see myself as frightened as a pigeon, but I know that in this country people do not harm pigeons'. (10 Jan. 2007, www.agos.com.tr). In an unfortunate twist of fate, a few weeks later, Hrant Dink was shot dead by a sixteen year old boy who in a letter to court stated, 'I am not guilty. Guilty are the headlines that showed Dink to be a traitor' (BIA News Center, 6 Apr. 2011, bianet.org).

Studies have shown that in Turkey, media, school textbooks and politicians commonly engage in hate speech or hate discourse concerning ethnic, religious and gender groups and that this is accepted as 'normal.' (TTV & TİHV Report 2007; TTV 2009; Yeğen 2011). As a result of these studies, hate speech in the media has only recently become recognised as an important issue. After the death of Hrant Dink, hate speech and hate crime have attracted more attention and have become part of public discussions. Originally, these public discussions were, for the most part, organised by liberals and left-leaning groups.¹ More recently, however, the infamous trailer for the fictitious movie *Innocence of Muslims*, which engaged in anti-Islamic rhetoric, also drew conservative and right-wing religious groups' attention to the issue. (Hacıismailoglu 2012). Today, hate speech in Turkey is considered a serious problem, and receives attention from politicians, journalists, and academics from all over the country.

Furthermore, current research and monitoring organisations report that hate speech and hate crimes are rising in Turkey. The Hrant Dink Foundation's Hate Speech Media Monitoring Report announced that the employment of hate speech in news stories increased both in quality and quantity in 2012 compared to 2011. Furthermore, the report found an increase in the number of groups that were targeted by hateful reporting, a trend that has also been on the rise since late 2011 (Hrant Dink Foundation's Monitoring Report of Hate Discourse in the Media 2012 http://www.nefretsoylemi.org/rapor/rapor_Ocak-Nisan_2012.PDF). Since the media has become an effective tool in propagating hatred as well ethnic and religious divisions, and undoubtedly has a hand in provoking conflicts, examining hate speech and hate discourse in media, and combating against it, becomes more all the more crucial (Cohen-Almagor 2011; Vollhardt et al. 2006). According to Hernández, '[i]t is especially critical to broaden the hate speech debate now that we are seeing an apparent rise in the occurrence of hate speech worldwide' (2011: 806).

Hate Speech

Despite its frequent usage, there is no consensus on a definition of hate speech. Boeckman and Turpin-Petrosino (2002: 23) stress the wounding and denigrating character of hate speech, stating that 'any form of expression directed at objects of prejudice that perpetrators use to wound and denigrate its recipient is hate speech.' According to Vollhardt et al. (2006), members of targeted groups are delegitimised, demonised, or depicted as inferior in hate speech. Tsesis (2002) also draws attentions to the irrational, disapproving, hypercritical, unjustified expressional characteristics of hate speech.

¹IHD (Human Rights Association), the Hrant Dink Vakfi (Hrant Dink Foundation), Nefretme (Do not Hate), IHOP (Human Rights Joint Platform), BIA (Independent Communication Network) are some of the organisations that combat hate speech.

In the Appendix to the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers' Recommendation no. R (97) 20, hate speech is defined as:

The term 'hate speech' shall be understood as covering all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.

The definition above stresses the racist, nationalist and xenophobic origins of hate speech. Matsuda (cited in Schwartzman 2002) points out that racist hate speech must be defined according to its three characteristic features. (1) Hate speech contains a message of racial inferiority; (2) hate speech is directed against a historically oppressed group; (3) hate speech is persecutory, hateful, and degrading. 'According to these criteria, racist speech is harmful not because of the words *all by themselves* cause harm and pain, but because of the social, historical, and political context in which they are uttered' (427).

Parekh (2006: 214) states, 'Hate speech expresses, advocates, encourages, promotes, or incites hatred of a group of individuals distinguished by a particular feature or set of features' and 'when hate speech is permitted to be propagated, it encourages a social climate in which particular groups are denigrated and their discriminatory treatment is accepted as normal.' In summary, hate speech can basically be defined as racist, nationalist or sexist speech that hurts, wounds or causes psychological and physical harm. In other words, 'Hate speech is the rhetoric of hate crimes and perpetuates racism, heterosexism, and sexism' (Cowan & Khatchadourian 2003: 300).

Hate speech has consequences because '[s]peech always matters, is always doing work; because everything we say impinges on the world in ways indistinguishable from the effects of physical action, we must take responsibility for our verbal performances – all of them' (Fish cited in Hernández 2011: 841). If speech kills and harms, we must take responsibility for our words and speech. This raises crucial questions such as: where we should draw line in order to protect historically repressed groups? Is the answer censorship? Is a ban on hate speech a violation of the freedom of expression? These questions are given consideration in most scholarly treatments of hate speech, with the fundamental aim of finding the most ethical and responsible way to deal with hate speech.

Speech That Kills: Hate Crimes

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) defines a hate crime as:

[...] any criminal offense, including offences against persons or property, where the victim's premises or target of the offence are selected because of their real or perceived connection, attachment, affiliation, support or membership with a group. A group may be based upon their real or perceived race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual disorientation or other similar factors (www.osce.org).

The connection between hate speech and hate crime can be detected within a rhetorical stratagem of hate speech that is described by Whillock as having the following four characteristics: '(1) to inflame the emotions of followers, (2) to denigrate the designated out-class, (3) to inflict permanent and irreparable harm to the opposition and ultimately (4) conquer' (1995: 32). In this way, hate crime can be seen to follow hate speech. However, the question of how exactly this is achieved requires further analysis.

Rwanda and Yugoslavia serve as the most dramatic and well-known examples of hate speech communicated through the media. Davison suggests that the ability to successfully convey the politics of hate relates to a number of factors, including the media's role in instigating mass mobilisations. Nazi and fascist parties, for instance, took advantage of press laws, urbanization and mass communication to agitate and attract followers. Likewise, Milošević in Serbia and the Hutu extremists in Rwanda established 'ultranationalist networks and controlled important media outlets' (Davison, 2006: 50). Serbian media broadcast propaganda messages just as Hutu Radio des Mille Collines propagated hate stratagems, as described by Whillock (1995).

The Hate Speech Dilemma: Prohibition or Freedom

Discussions regarding hate speech can be controversial in nature, and often involve the conflict between hate speech restriction and free speech. One of the major concerns coming from the North American perspective is whether or not hate speech laws violate a person's right to freedom of speech guaranteed under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, as well as the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the E.U. Human Rights Charter and other conventions, declarations and charters. The notion of free speech is a core value in Western societies. The roots of the libertarian concept of free speech go back to the seventeenth century and the writings of John Milton, John Stuart Mill and others. Today's liberals acknowledge the harm of hate speech, yet generally argue that the proper response is to grant even more freedom of expression. Free speech supporters derive their theoretical arguments from marketplace theories, peacekeeping, deontological theories, and civic republicanism (Heinze 2006), and therefore reject bans or restrictions on hate speech.

Lillian suggests that 'most discussions of free speech revolve around the interpretation of the U.S. First Amendment' and points out that '[f]or American readers, this might seem a self-evident preoccupation, but from a non-U.S. perspective, the framing of a large and complex *human* problem in peculiarly U.S. terms suggests a form of hegemony' (2007: 738). The hegemonic, individualistic and libertarian nature of the pro-free speech argument is challenged by critical race theorists and feminists. Feminist perspectives stress that 'free speech is not an ahistorical, objective, universal concept' (Phillips cited in Cornwell & Orbe 1999: 78). They also criticise the role of power, privilege, culture, and social-political inequalities embedded in the liberal structure of society. However the liberal ideology of free speech assumes that hate speech and hate crime victims have equal power with hate speech and hate crime perpetrators.

Critical race theorists, on the other hand, oppose the unregulated usage of freedom of speech, arguing that hate speech has become embedded in social structures and hierarchies. Slagle comments that 'the traditional western notion of freedom of expression has been criticised in recent years by critical race theorists who argue that this ethos ignores the gross power imbalance between the users of hate speech and their victims' (2009: 238). Critical race theorists draw attention to the rights of historically oppressed minority groups, rather than individuals, and have a communitarian approach to law and ethics, instead of taking a strictly libertarian approach. As Matsuda puts it, 'tolerance of hate speech is not tolerance born by the community at large [...] rather it is a psychic tax imposed on those least able to pay' (Matsuda 1993: 18). Another concern expressed by these scholars is there is an artificial distinction between speech and conduct. Hate speech causes violence, and as such should be outlawed (Boeckman & Turpin-Petrosino 2002: 3). Under the U.S. Constitutional principle of equal protection, hate speech may be subject to state regulation if the state has an interest in preventing violence and in protecting the esteem and dignity of its citizens (see *Beauharnais v. Illinois* 1952, 343 US 250).

There is a long history of international organisation and governments trying to regulate harmful hate speech. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in 1965. CERD not only explicitly opposes the manifestation of racist hate speech, but also requires that states condemn the dissemination of hate speech and punish such offences under states' laws (Art. 4). Similarly, Article 20 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides that 'any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law' (www.ohchr.org).

After the Holocaust, hate speech and hate crimes became a sensitive issue for European countries. As a result, most European nations have since restricted or outlawed racist hate speech and crimes (Bleich 2011). Different countries and regions have dealt with hate speech in various ways. In 1994, the U.S. federal government passed the Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act, 28 U.S.C 994. (Bleich 2011: 924). In 2003, the Council of Europe issued a protocol that encouraged signatories to criminalise racist and xenophobic acts committed in cyberspace (CETS No. 189; Bleich 2011: 927). In Latin American countries, hate speech is also prohibited (Hernández 2011: 805). Post-apartheid South Africa has also enacted hate speech legislation (Hernández 2011: 810).

In contrast to the CERD and the ICCPR, the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) does not prohibit sexist or gender discriminatory speech. Indeed, there are no explicit provisions with regard to the prohibition of hate speech against women. Lillian writes with reference to Samuel Walker, author of *Hate Speech: The History of an American Controversy* (1994):

[He] makes reference to hate laws in the UK, Brazil, Turkey, Germany, and Canada, all of which refer to various combination of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, and class, but none of which specifically refers to sex, gender, or sexual orientation. He also points out, however, that in the 1980s, definitions of hate speech began to expand to include other historically victimised groups such as women, lesbians, and gays (2007: 731).

Despite these legislative improvements, many sociologists argue that the criminal law approach is a poor vehicle for regulating hate speech, adding that 'what is needed is a framework of civil remedies that is better formulated to address the harms of hate speech and its hindrance to racial equality' (Hernández 2011: 807). In essence, the relation between hate speech and crime, as well as between hate speech and racism, nationalism and sexism should be addressed and questioned through discursive means rather than through legalisation. The relationship between hate speech and the media must also be explored.

Hate Speech and the Media

According to van Dijk, discourse 'is the main interface between the social and cognitive dimensions of racism' (van Dijk 2012: 16). This is important because 'one of the main roles of discourse is the reproduction of social representations, such as knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, and values' (van Dijk 2012: 16). Discourse can thus be said to play a fundamental role in provoking conflict as much as in establishing social peace. Furthermore, the way in which social problems are defined by news media strongly influences how the public and policy-makers understand and act on an issue (Thompson & Ungerleider 2004). According to van Dijk, 'the mass media are currently the most

influential source of racist bias, prejudice, and racism [...] news, editorials, and opinion articles in the press are crucially involved in the formation of ethnic attitudes and ideologies' (van Dijk, 2012: 17). Moreover, 'across many countries, the main source of racist beliefs stems not from an individual's daily experiences but rather from the racist speech prevalent in public discourse and racially biased media sources' (van Dijk cited in Hernández 2011: 813). Thus, the media is often the primary vehicle by which the public learns, in essence, about who is valued and who is not (Dasgupta cited in Hernández 2011: 814).

Methodology and Scope

The scope of this study includes seven Turkish newspapers and articles published from between 2011 to 2012. The newspapers were chosen according to their different political ideologies. *Vatan* and *Sözcü* newspapers are known as being secularist and republican. *Yeniçağ*, *Yeni Mesaj* and *Ortadoğular* are known as being pro status quo, or nationalist papers that propagate the supremacy of the Turkish nation. They are also secular and republican but with Islamist and 'neo-Ottomanist' leanings. *Milli Gazete* and *Yeni Akit* newspapers are Islamist, conservative and 'neo-Ottomanist,' although they are sometimes considered to be anti-republican. Left-leaning and liberal newspapers are not included in this study because of their heightened sensitivity to the issue of hate speech and oppositional attitude towards the status quo.

Articles published in these newspapers in 2011 and 2012 were surveyed with the aim of detecting hate speech employed against religious or ethnic groups. Although the data is taken from the Hrant Dink Foundation Hate Discourse Media Monitoring Project, which monitors twenty-four national newspapers and two sports newspapers, I have only included in the dataset findings related to the seven above-named newspapers for the purposes of this study.

The content of the newspaper articles are categorised according to how hate language is used. After categorising the ethnic or religious group that was targeted, the journalistic methods used to convey the hate speech are determined and categorised as either creating a perception of a potential or existing threat, or degrading and humiliating a group based on the act of an individual (www.nefretsoylemi.org/metodoloji.asp). News and columns are analysed to reveal the dominant discourse patterns and discourse strategies employed in the headlines as well as in the main body of text.

In assessing the data, I employ two approaches belonging to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): the socio-cognitive approach model of Teun van Dijk and the discourse-historical approach model developed by Ruth Wodak. Using these models, the dominant discourse patterns and strategies in the news headlines and texts are revealed. CDA, as defined by Fairclough, is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that sees languages as a form of social practice and that focuses on the regeneration of social and political dominance through text and speech (Wodak 2009: 27). Wodak defines CDA as an interdisciplinary field that approaches the use of language from a critical perspective and argues that it should be methodologically placed in the hermeneutic tradition instead of the analytic-deductive tradition (Wodak 2009: 28). Generally, CDA is problem-focused, and that is why it is defined as having eclectic and interdisciplinary characteristics both in theory and practice (Wodak 2009: 3).

Another characteristic feature of CDA is its interest in revealing the ideology behind certain discourses. Based on these reasons, Critical Discourse Analysis approaches discourse with a critical

focus on concepts such as power-dominance, ideology and hegemony. Contrary to other discourse analysis methods, it also attaches a special interest to the examination of news discourse. According to van Dijk, proof of the method's success can be clearly seen in its effective usage in studies on class struggle, anti-colonialist movements, the civil rights movement and the women's rights movement (1992: 252). For these reasons, the CDA method is appropriate for the scope and content of the study.

Findings: The Construction of Polarised Identities

'Since every search for identity includes differentiating oneself from what one is not, identity politics is always and necessarily a politics of the creation of difference' (Benhabib 1996: 3). Benhabib, who was born in Istanbul and has become one of most important political scientists of our age, believes that 'othering' is an obligatory step in the process of identity construction. While the 'self' is constructed by emphasizing the qualities that differ from the 'other,' both identities are constructed. Wodak and van Dijk, who both focus on decoding racist discourse, argue that while the 'self' or the concept of 'us' is constructed as an in-group identity, the 'other' or the concept of 'them' is constructed as an out-group identity (van Dijk 1992, 2012; Wodak 2009).

Therefore, polarisation and opposition are created by emphasizing the differences between 'us' and 'them'. By creating a discriminative differentiation in the identity hierarchy, the desired and undesired identity is clarified. Positive self-representation and negative representation of the 'other' mark the 'other' as an out-group that is undesirable. By stressing the difference between 'us' and 'them,' members of the out-group are denigrated, demonised, delegitimised, or depicted as inferior. Through an examination of the referential, nomination, and predication discursive strategies, negative names, adjectives, references and definitions are used in the construction of out-groups in media discourse (Wodak 2009).

According to the Hrant Dink Foundation Hate Speech Media Monitoring Project Report (Jan.- Apr. 2011: 6, table 1), the first four out-groups that are targeted and represented in a negative light in Turkish media are respectively the Armenians, Christians, Jews (who are targeted as much as Christians) and Rums (Greek Orthodox Turkish citizens). Later that year, however, according to the Hrant Dink foundation Hate Speech Media Monitoring Project (Sep.-Dec. 2011: 4, table 1), the main group targeted by hate speech is Jews (24%), followed by Armenians (15%), Rums (9%) and Christians (9%). Christians and Jews are the main targets of hate speech for reasons related to religious identity. The Armenians, Rums, Jews and Kurds are, respectively, the main targets of hate speech for reasons related to ethnic identity. It should be noted that Turkey has citizens from all these ethnic and religious groups. The Turkish identity, on the other hand, is uniformly depicted in a positive light.²

Ethnic minorities are described using a variety of words that have negative connotations and attributes. Furthermore, ethnic communities are frequently depicted as having undesirable characteristics. This situation is widely seen in news stories published by right-conservative-nationalist-Islamist newspapers. Some examples include:

² This is exemplified in the usage of a quotation from M. Emin Yurdakul's famous poem as the title of a column by Ahmet Sevgi: 'I am a Turk, my religion, my kind is divine' (Yeniçağ 14 Jan. 2011, www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr).

Despite being Ottoman citizens, Armenians, who dreamed ‘of forming Armenia on Turkish land,’ collaborated with enemy forces and stabbed Turkey in the back [...] (Ruhut Mengi, Vatan 25 May 2011, haber.gazetevatan.com);

The Greeks [...] no race in the world has such lying, untrustworthy, unreliable people (H. Macit Yusuf, Yeniçağ 12 Sep. 2012, www.yg.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr);

The most ferocious enemy of Muslims are the Jews [...] Let me remind you that all gambling games were invented by Jews. Are you aware of how the Jews took you away from your [Muslim] faith and make you slaves? (Adnan Öksüz, Milli Gazete 3 Sep. 2012, www.milligazete.com.tr)

Tsesis argues that violence against ethnic minorities and other outsider groups never occurs in isolation, but is legitimated and made more likely through a combination of social beliefs, customs, imagery, metaphors and stereotypes that degrade and dehumanise the ethnic minority. Indeed, ‘[e]motive response elicited by the repeated expression of disrespectful images about ethical, political, sexual, religious, or familial qualities of targeted groups’ (Tsesis 2002: 81) produce all these social beliefs, customs, imagery, metaphors and stereotypes which are expanded and reinforced by the media. It is for this reason that we must imperatively study the relationship between hate speech and hate discourse in media, as well as its influence on hate crimes.

There is a growing, disturbing trend of hate discourse entering the political arena. A new tendency in Turkish politics, for instance, is to represent Kurds as non-Islamic. This is especially blatant in recent speeches and public addresses by Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan. The reality is that the vast majority of Turkey’s 15 million Kurds are Muslim. However, Kurdish members of the Turkish parliament, who sit with the opposition, are sometimes accused of being Zoroastrian or Yezidi. The Prime Minister is reported as saying:

They are Zoroastrian. [...] they are mentioning Yezidi. They are practising this kind [Yezidi] of worship. [However,] even if they are Yezidi, so long as they do not get involve with terror, we value human beings as human beings (transmitted by Pınar Öğünç, Radical Newspaper 22 Oct. 2012).

By characterizing these opposition party members as Zoroastrian, Prime Minister Erdoğan aligns these Kurds, who are belong to a dissident political party, with non-Muslim religion and tradition, thereby engendering hostility towards them, given that non-Muslims are the historic enemy. He therefore practises a ‘politics of difference’; a practice that ‘cannot easily be abstracted from particular histories of social conflict and ideological contestation’ (Kaplan 2008: 40).

The Construction of non-Muslim Identity as Evil and the Historic Enemy

The commonplace phrase – ‘ninety-nine per cent of the population of Turkey is Muslim’ – depicts Turkey as a monolithic Muslim country with a population of 70 million. However, research has shown that in modern-day Turkey there are 50,000 Armenians, 27,000 Jews, and around 3,000–5,000 Rums, all of whom are Turkish citizens. Historically, since the beginning of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey has been a multi-religious country. Moreover, the Ottoman Empire developed a system for protecting minority rights called the *Millet* system:

Ottomans had evolved a system of dealing with religious and ethnic minorities because of the policies of progressive sultans, anxious to maintain their hold on territories populated by non-Muslims [...] non-Muslims were allowed their own religious laws and institutions [...] such as

education, religion, justice, and social security including separate schools, hospitals and hotels, along with hospices for the poor and aged. Millet system was established in the fifteenth century, during the height of Ottoman power by Sultan Mehmet II and lasted until the twentieth century, an impressive example of group rights based on religion (Sigler 1983: 70).

In the Ottoman era, Jewish people lived peacefully with the Turks. However, in the Republican era, they suffered from anti-Semitic and anti-Christian state oppression.³ Rather than being non-Muslim, the problem was being non-Turk because the new state was, and currently is, a secular republic dominated by Turks.

In summary, hostility towards non-Muslims can be seen to be embedded in the social fabric of Turkish society. It is detectable in news broadcasts, which has the effect of normalising the representation of non-Muslims as the enemy and as evil. Nationalist, Islamist newspapers play a crucial role in constructing such a discourse, but liberal, secularist, pro-republic newspapers like *Vatan* also show how hate speech is internalised in the rhetoric and language of newspapers regardless their ideological, political attachment. For example:

[...]if we look at our district, we can see that Zionist powers and the Christian world are behind every type of cabal and chaos [...] Zionists and the Christian world constitute an evil axis against Islam [...] If they were able to, they would wipe Islam and Muslims from the face of earth (Abdülkadir Özkan, *Milli Gazete*, 9 Aug. 2012);

Do Evangelists have any interest in peace? Are not Evangelists a Christian sect whose members believe in ruining the Al-Aqsa mosque and killing all Muslims in the war of Armageddon? What happened to this geography's [Turkey] tradition of resisting the invading Crusaders? (Mustafa Hilmi Yıldırım, *Yeni Mesaj*, 17 Sep. 2012);

[Muslim] believers do not make Jewish or Christian friends. They are friends with their own kind. If one of you keeps [Jews or Christians] as friends s/he is one of them. There is no doubt that Allah does not guide them (Selim Çoraklı, *Vatan*, 20 Mar. 2012);

The Vatican says, 'We made Europe Christian in the first millennium and America in the second millennium. In the third millennium we will make Asia Christian' (Seyfi Şahin, *Ortadoğu*, 18 Jan. 2011).

It is not uncommon to encounter severely hostile language against non-Muslims in the press. While the first example cited above is derived from *Milli Gazete* ('National Newspaper'), a paper known for its Islamist and nationalist conservative ideology, the third example is taken from *Vatan Gazetesi* ('Homeland Newspaper'), known as a liberal, mainstream newspaper. These examples show how hostile language, regardless of a newspaper's ideological or political attachment, is common in Turkish media.

Historical conflicts between Muslims and Christians, like the Crusades that handed possession of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem to the Jews, are still vivid in the collective memory. Furthermore, historic images of medieval Christianity and hostile anti-Semitic clichés are still found in contemporary Turkish social imagery. Christians and Jews are routinely defined as enemies, unreliable, and dishonest individuals that threaten Turkey's existence. By using hostile language in the

³ See: Ayşe Hür, 'Küreselleşen Anti-Semitizm ve Türkiye' ('Globalised Anti-Semitism and Turkey') (12 Jun 2012), www.birikimdergisi.com.

news, therefore, we can see how identities are constructed based on historical animosity. This creates an opposition between Islam and the Christian-Jewish faiths, enhancing polarization. Generalizations and denotations that emphasise the evil character of Jews and Christians are indicators of how hate speech, hate discourse and racism are being employed against non-Muslim citizens of Turkey. Now Kurds are being positioned into this historical context by depicting them as non-Muslims that adhere to pagan beliefs – one of the greatest sins according Islamic teachings. The following column piece demonstrates this:

The mission of PKK [Kurdish Worker's Party] is to break [Turkey] to pieces, to separate [Turkey]. Do they want to form a Kurdistan? No! They want to form a big Armenia, a big Israel, and Christianised Asia Minor (M. Şevket Eygi, *Milli Gazete*, 5 Sep. 2012).

This column from *Milli Gazete* was also published in *Yeni Akit* ('New Commitment') on September 6, 2012 and was written by Ş. Eygi under the title of 'Separating Turkey.' Incidentally, in addition to being a renowned Islamist who writes on religious and political subjects, Eygi tackles lifestyle issues for the more 'sophisticated,' giving guidance on topics such as headscarf fashion and home decoration.

The Construction of Minorities as Disloyal Citizens and Traitors

Stigmatizing, blaming, stereotyping and scapegoating are the main characteristics of hate speech and hate discourse, and most of the time serve to inflame the emotions of followers, thereby increasing support for speakers. Destructive ideologies and dehumanizing messages become 'normal' for followers and listeners exposed to hate speech on a regular basis through mass media (Vollhardt et al. 2006: 25). The following examples indicate common forms of hate speech and hate discourse in the media that emphasise the supposed disloyalty and treachery of minority groups:

They [Kurds] are burning [Turkish] flags, ruining neighbourhoods, [but] then expect to be served by state (Sözcü, 14 Jul. 2011);

Ishak Alaton hugged pro PKK, former parliamentarian Leyla Zana, who was sent to prison for being a separatist. He also talked with the language of a separatist [...] as if he meant to say, 'Do not care about Atatürk! Erase the Turkish nation's identity' [...] While the Turkish nation's money has made him rich, he says 'it is time to set Öcalan, head of the terrorists, head of the enemies of the [Turkish] state, free' (Sözcü, 12 Apr. 2011);

Mayday belongs to labourers, workers and all working people who toil with sweat and honesty, who are loyal to the country and the nation and who are respectful to Ata[türk]. [Mayday] does not belong to the savage, blood-stained separatist Kurdistans (Ufuk Söylemez, Sözcü, 3 Apr. 2011);

There is no other country that has such big number of traitors [...] The Turks are suffering under the Armenians' cruelty (Altemur Kılıç, *Yeniçağ*, 26 Apr. 2010);

Patriarch Bartholomew [Ecumenical Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church, a Turkish citizen] is out of his mind... [He] complained about Turkey to the world. [He] will start a war [if he] continues to attack Turkey (Salim Yavaşoğlu, *Yeniçağ*, 19 Dec. 2009);

'Lovers of Armenia' pushed the button [Headline of an article reporting how the SOROS- TESEV think-tank and 'collaborator' writers participated in an 'Armenianist' conspiracy by criticising Turkey for its role in the Armenian diaspora] (*Yeni Akit*, 3 Sep. 2012).

As it is argued by Vollhardt et al. that '[s]tatements alleging the disloyalty of the 'other' can create mistrust against the stigmatised individual or group, and even incite irrational fear of the ostensibly subversive group within one's society' (2006: 24). As the quotations above show, non-Muslim (the Armenians, Jews and Rums) and Muslim minorities (such as the Kurds) alike are accused of disloyalty, treachery and of showing allegiance to other countries.

Often accusations of disloyalty are related to the on-going armed struggle between the PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party) and the Turkish Army. When a minority member like Ishak Alaton, who is a respected business person, gives his opinion about the Kurdish question and calls for peace, a hate stratagem is employed and he is labelled and represented as a friend of the Turkish state's enemy, as seen in the above quotation from *Sözcü* (12 Apr. 2011). It should also be noted that many of the columnists and journalists that are quoted above are not Islamists, but on the contrary, secular and pro-republic. Nevertheless, their discourses are similarly hostile.

The hate stratagem concept that is introduced by Whillock (1995) essentially provides a typology of the main features of hateful discourse. Hate speech: (a) inflames the emotions of speakers' followers; (b) denigrates an out-group by associating them with undesirable qualities; (c) inflicts harm on the out-group by attacking features that the out-group values; (d) rhetorically conquers the out-group (e.g. by glorifying the killing or destruction of the group). The news stories or columns that are cited in this study illustrate Whillock's hate stratagem. Having identified hate speech, the next step is to highlight its hazardous effects and to formulate a riposte. Vollhardt et al. write that '[o]nce hate speech has been detected, sensitised and motivated listeners can engage in activities that counteract its destructive effects' (Vollhardt et al. 2006: 31).

Conclusion

In this article I have demonstrated that explicit hate speech is common in Turkish media, regardless of ideological or political position, and that it disrupts social peace. Print media use discourse strategies that represent minorities as disloyal citizens and traitors, with non-Muslim identities in particular constructed as the evil and historic enemy. Through this discourse, and with the help of the media, social polarisation is justified and normalised. Conducting research on the issue can provide data that helps to change the status quo. Such research can also provide support to citizens who are targeted by hate speech. Moreover, showing the destructive effects of hate speech on social peace can help raise awareness of the issue and gain the support required to confront and fight against it on a societal level.

The Hrant Dink Foundation Hate Speech Media Monitoring Report of January-April 2012 found that hate speech in Turkish media increased by more than 100% in the first quarter of 2012. According to the report, 80% of news reports employing hate speech or hate discourse were published in national media outlets, with the remaining 20% in local media outlets (4). Therefore, hate speech is undeniably on the rise. Raising awareness and encouraging lawmakers to pass new legislation is essential to combatting hate speech and discourse at a societal level. It is also noticeable that NGO reports on hate speech are not covered by mainstream media, and that there is a serious lack of academic studies on the issue in Turkey. This only reiterates the need for conducting further academic research on hate speech in increasingly polarised societies like Turkey. The findings of this study suggest that hate speech is particularly prevalent in Turkish print media. Future studies might focus on broadcast media outlets, such as network news and entertainment shows on television, in order to determine whether hate speech is present.

In conclusion, the mass media's propagation of hate speech is not only an ethical problem but also a violation of minority rights. In order to reduce hate speech in the media, we must educate journalists and reinforce ethical codes. Thus, subjects like hate speech, human rights-based journalism and peace journalism should be a core part of university journalism curricula. When hate speech becomes the dominant discourse and ideology of governments, states and societies, it diminishes the capacity for peace. When racism, nationalism and sexism become deeply embedded in the fabric of society, it becomes imperative that the state acts to uproot the hate politics and hate paradigms that threaten social peace and stability.

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