

# INTEGRATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY AND DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN TURKEY BETWEEN EARLY 1950S AND 1970S: CRISES AND SUCCESSES

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## **Abstract:**

*Within theoretical frameworks of democratic consolidation and integration theories this article analyzes the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority into the society at institutional and individual level between the years of early 1950s and early 1970s. In this respect, it evaluates the integration of Armenian minority in political, economic and cultural spheres at individual and institutional levels in line with the implications of successes and crises of efforts towards democratic consolidation. While doing this it puts particular emphasis on domestic socio-economic developments, the integrative role of main institutions of Armenian minority and international dimensions of the integration in terms of linkages between the foreign policy issues and the situation of Armenian minority in Turkey in this era. The article concludes that notwithstanding the crises and precariousness which appeared in the efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey, the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority was not exposed to devastatingly injurious challenges in economic, political, cultural spheres of social life in this era until the negative impact of violent acts of terrorist organizations started to be felt in Turkish public opinion from early 1970s onwards*

## **Keywords:**

*Keywords: Armenian Institutions, Armenian Minority, Crises, Democratic Consolidation, Integration, Progress, Restoration, Turkey.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The years between early 1950s and early 1970s are significant in the history of political culture of Turkey within the context of efforts towards democratic consolidation and socio-economic integration of Armenian minority. Differing from the periods of difficult and conflictual relationships, this era

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**This article will have four main arguments, with regard to the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority.**

symbolizes growing efforts of integrity and inter-communal interaction and communication among the Armenian minority, as well as the rest of the society at both institutional and individual level. In this respect, despite some crises and structural challenges, socio-

economic and political integration of Armenian minority into the society took place less problematically and more progressively in this particular era of efforts towards democratic consolidation (which had gained impetus from late 1940s onwards following the introduction of multi-party system in Turkey) until the violent political acts of Armenian terrorist organizations beginning from early 1970s.

Following the main premises of this line of thought, this article will have four main arguments, with regard to the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority into the socio-economic, political and cultural structures of the new Republic between 1950s and 1970s. First, as the efforts towards democratic consolidation accelerated from the beginning of 1950s, the process of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority took place without facing seriously damaging challenges apart from some exceptional cases and other than the implications of crises in the efforts for democratic consolidation. Second, the integration, which took place in political, economic and cultural spheres at both institutional and individual levels, was affected by the developments in political, civil and economic societies, rule of law, and the nature of bureaucracy in Turkey in the different periods of efforts towards democratic consolidation within this era. Third, during these developments institutions of Armenian minority provided the necessary institutional grounds and forums where the process of integration could take place institutionally. The contribution of these institutions mainly affected and shaped by implications of the domestic and international developments, which took place parallel to stages of the efforts towards democratic consolidation. Finally, although the minority policies of Turkish state and thus the integration processes of minorities recognized by the Lausanne Treaty have been influenced negatively by the foreign policy necessities or linkages, regional/international developments, and political acts of

diasporas or supportive countries the Armenian integration either was less or positively affected from such developments until early 1970s.

In line with these arguments this article will try to analyze the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority within the theoretical context of democratic consolidation and social integration. After putting forward the theoretical framework on democratic consolidation, the significance of efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey regarding Armenian minority will be discussed in three historical stages within this particular era. The following part is devoted to the analysis of integration process in political, economic and cultural spheres and at individual and institutional level, while emphasizing socio-economic and cultural phenomena of urbanization and immigration and other socio-economic dynamics in this era. While analyzing the patterns of integration in different spheres of social life, the basic institutions of Armenian minority and their contribution to integration process will be put forward in order to understand the institutional dimensions of the integration. Finally, the international dimension of the integration will be discussed in order to shed light on the integrative or disintegrative impact of linkage policies between the foreign policy issues and the situation of Armenian minority. Moving from the analyses of different aspects of socio-economic integration the article will end some concluding comments on overall picture of the process.

## 2. CONCEPTUALIZING DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION

'Democratic consolidation', which mainly implies the phase of stabilization and maturation of an already established democratic system and functioning democratic practices,<sup>1</sup> has become one of the pivotal notions within the literature of democracy especially in the 1990s following the emergence of new democracies worldwide and with the collapse of alternative ideologies to democracy. In consolidation phase, 'democracy becomes the only game in town (where) no one can imagine outside the democratic institutions'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Øyvind E. Lervik, *A New French Revolution? An Integrative Approach In The Analysis Of The Romanian Transition*, A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Cand. Polit. in the Department of Comparative Politics, University of Bergen, Norway, February 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 26

In other words consolidated democracy is one that is unlikely to break down.<sup>3</sup> The process of democratic consolidation is multifaceted in the sense that it brings in many democracy-related issues for the transforming regimes such as 'popular legitimation, the diffusion of democratic values, the neutralization of anti-system actors, civilian supremacy over the military, elimination of authoritarian enclaves, party building, the organization of functional interests, the stabilization of electoral rules, the routinization of politics, the decentralization of state power, the introduction of mechanisms of direct democracy, judicial reform, the alleviation of poverty, and economic stabilization'.<sup>4</sup>

As it may be deduced from its aforementioned multifaceted nature, there are different structural, contextual and actor-centered conditions, determinants, processes and variables for consolidation phase of democracy to take place following the democratic transition in a country.

In the following part, I will evaluate different approaches within the literature of democratic consolidation in order to shed a theoretical light to Turkish society's experience and efforts towards democratic consolidation and thus to draw the boundaries of contextual and structural framework in which the socio-economic integration process of the Armenian minority took place. While establishing the necessary theoretical basis for the further discussions, this article will mainly introduce a synthesis of structural and process-centric approaches towards the democratic consolidation as Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan did in one of the magnum opus of the relevant literature. Similar to many scholars of democracy, for Linz and Stepan, the main logic of 'democratic consolidation' simply rests on the idea that 'the democracy must become the only game in town'. Here, the main question may appear to be 'how democracy will become the only game and how all relevant political actors as well as the overwhelming majority of the mass public will fundamentally accept its institutions'.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Andreas Schedler, 'Measuring Democratic Consolidation', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Spring 2001, Vol. 36, No.1, pp. 66-92.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted from Andreas Schedler, 'What is Democratic Consolidation', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 9, No.2, 1998, p.91 by John Ishiyama, 'Ethnopolitical Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Post-Communist Eastern Europe' in *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol.7, No.3, Autumn 2001, pp.25-45.

<sup>5</sup> Judith Kullberg, 'A Unified Theory of Democratic Change', *Mershon International Studies Review*, 1998, Issue 42, pp.125-127, Review of J. Linz and A. Stepan's *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

Linz and Stepan define consolidation behaviorally, attitudinally, and constitutionally,<sup>6</sup> and introduce a recipe of democratic consolidation, which consists of five interconnected and mutually reinforcing conditions: a lively civil society, an autonomous political society, the rule of law, a state with effective and loyal bureaucracy, an institutionalized (certainly in a liberal way) economic society.<sup>7</sup> Within this framework, a robust civil society is necessary at all stages of democratization in the sense that it can help transitions get started, help resist reversals, help push transitions to their completion, help consolidate and deepen democracy with its capacity to generate political alternatives and to monitor government and state.<sup>8</sup> This lively civil society of course could be effective only if it is accompanied and supported by a political society, which would function in line with the democratic values, norms and principles in a competitive political structure. Both political and civil societies need legitimacy basis on which they would exercise their political and socio-economic acts. In this respect, for a democracy to be consolidated the rule of law must be bounding not only for the citizens but also for all the political actors in the political sphere of the society.<sup>9</sup> Thus, these political actors should act in line with the rule of 'the laws, constitution and mutually accepted norms of political conduct'<sup>10</sup> and democratic officials 'must give up the habit of placing themselves above the law'.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, both civil and political societies and rule of law and bureaucracy need a liberally institutionalized economic society where they would function freely and competitively.<sup>12</sup> Overall, the progress of the countries

<sup>6</sup> For Linz and Stepan, "Behaviorally, democracy becomes the only game in town when no significant political groups seriously attempt to overthrow the democratic regime or secede from the state. Attitudinally, democracy becomes the only game in town when even in the face of severe political and economic crises; the overwhelming majority of people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic formulas. Constitutionally, democracy becomes the only game in town when all actors in the polity become habituated to the fact that political conflict will be resolved according to the established norms and that violations of these norms are likely to be both ineffective and costly. In short with consolidation, democracy becomes routinized and deeply internalized in social, institutional, and even psychological life as well as in calculations for achieving success." See Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe and Post-Communist Europe*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.5.

<sup>7</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems...*,

<sup>8</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems...*, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> For further analysis of relation between rule of law and democracy also See Stephen L. Esquith, 'Toward a Democratic Rule of Law: East and West', in *Political Theory*, Vol 27, No 3, June 1999, pp.334-356.

<sup>10</sup> Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Carothers, 'The Rule of Law Revival', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.77, No.2 March-April 1998, pp. 95-106.

<sup>12</sup> Linz and Stepan, *Problems of...*, p. 11

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towards democratic consolidation depends on their success in fulfilling of these five conditions.

For Beetham, on the other hand, the framework of this conditionality mainly based on four hindering or facilitating conditions for democratic consolidation: the process of transition, the character of country's economic system, its received political culture, and the type of constitutional arrangements. He mainly put forward around ten hypotheses on the factors, which influence the consolidation process through the assessment of different approaches and studies on democratic consolidation. Thus, hypothetically, the character of previous regime, the mode of transition, nature of economic system (whether it is market economy or not), level of economic development, social and political agency (organization of socio-economic forces), religion of the people, intra-cultural diversity/unity, institutional design and electoral systems, and system of devolved regional government appear to be the main factors that play role in the consolidation of democracy in a country. Beetham argues that the consolidation of democracy is a product of these several factors or conditions operating together. In this respect democracy can become capable of withstanding pressures or crises without abandoning electoral process or political freedoms on which it depends if the historical origins of regime, economic and social structure, political agency and constitutional arrangements operate harmoniously in the direction of democratic consolidation in a country.

Alternatively some scholars focus on the structural aspect of the democratic consolidation. Within this structuralist framework, Mark Gasiorowski and Timothy Power join Karen Remmer in

<sup>13</sup> For Power and Gasiorowski with the few exceptions the new literature on consolidation is dominated by the process-centric approaches of scholars such as Gunther, R., Diamandouros, P. N. & Puhle, H. J. (eds.) *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Higley, J., & Gunther, R. (eds.), *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press 1992).; Mainwaring, S., O'Donnell, G., & Valenzuela, J. S. (eds.), *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); and Tulchin, J., & Romero, B. (eds.) *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995). For another perspective within structuralist line and further criticism of overemphasis on the role of process factors, also See J. Mark Ruhl, 'Unlikely Candidates of Democracy: The Role of Structural Context in Democratic Consolidation Studies', *Comparative International Development*, Spring, 1996, Vol.3, No 1, pp. 3-23.

criticizing the process-centric trends dominating the literature of democratic consolidation which privilege political processes and actor-centered and contextual variables over structure<sup>13</sup> in the sense that such approaches pay inadequate attention to the effects of structural factors. Gasiorowski and Power on the other hand, put emphasis on interconnections between the structuralist approach, which is based on rich paradigms that examined the impact of economic development,<sup>14</sup> political culture, political institutions and economic crises on democracy on one hand, and the political processes and actor-centered variables on the other.<sup>15</sup> By means of empirical analyses they mainly identify three structural factors, which clearly affect democratic consolidation; development-related socio-economic factors, economic crises and contagion effect of democratic neighbors.<sup>16</sup> Structurally while economic development, which is mainly associated with country's level of wealth, the size of its middle and working classes and the extent of education and urbanization have positive effect on the likelihood of consolidation;<sup>17</sup> the economic crises contribute to breakdown and thus have adverse effect on consolidation.<sup>18</sup> Conduciveness of international environment for the consolidation of democracy in a country, on the other hand, would be important for transmission and adoption of ideas, norms and political pressures that are contributing to consolidating democracy.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> In this respect, for instance, Lipset put it as early as 1959, there exists an important connection between growth of [liberal] economy and differentiation of civil and political economy, which could lead to constitutional and bureaucratic reforms and rule of law within the context of democracy. See, S. M. Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy', *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No 1, 1959, pp. 69-105.

<sup>15</sup> Mark J. Gasiorowski and Timothy J. Power, 'The Structural Determinants of Democratic Consolidation', *Comparative Political Studies*, December 1998, Vol.31, No 6, pp. 740-772.

<sup>16</sup> Gasiorowski and Power, 'The Structural...'

<sup>17</sup> Beetham agrees with Gasiorowski and Power regarding the connection between the economic development and democratic consolidation. For him, despite the fact that there are examples both of underdeveloped democracies and developed economies with little democracy; the chances for sustainable democracy are indeed improved by economic development and market economy. For evaluation of Beetham's arguments on this connection, See: David Beetham, 'Conditions for Democratic Consolidation', *Review of African Political Economy*, June 1994, Vol.21, No 60, pp.157-171.

<sup>18</sup> Gasiorowski and Power, 'The Structural...', p.10

<sup>19</sup> Gasiorowski and Power base their arguments on this factor on the approaches and studies of Whitehead and Starr. For further analyses of these approaches See L. Whitehead 'International Aspects of Democratization' in G.A. O'Donnell, P.C. Schmitter & L. Whitehead (eds.) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) and H. Starr 'Diffusion Approaches to the Spread of Democracy in the International System', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 35, No. 2, 1991, pp. 356-81.

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equilibrium through compliance to the democratic institutional framework. This institutional framework of open and competitive political expression of democratic regime would be internalized within the context of democratic consolidation and free elections would be the only recognized legitimate means for the constitution of government within this institutional framework.<sup>20</sup>

This entire theoretical framework provides us necessary hints about the link between main premises democratic consolidation and integration of minorities. As the democratic consolidation is one of the pivotal conditions of the socio-economic integration of different segments of the society into the democratic domestic socio-economic and political systems; it may be possible to apply several aspects of abovementioned theoretical approaches to the case of Armenian minority's situation during the years of efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey. In fact in the final analysis, the Armenian minority was among the minorities in a democratizing society, which would be able to express their differences within the political culture of tolerance based on democratic values that were supposed to diffuse among the different segments of the society during the consolidation process. Looking from the other side of equation, as the democratic consensus among all politically significant groups, which would be bounded by democratic rules<sup>21</sup> is vital for democratic

Valenzuela, Whitehead and Przeworski contribute this theoretical framework of democratic consolidation from an institutionalization perspective. For them consolidation necessitates democratic institutionalization where the decentralized strategies of all relevant political forces reach the

<sup>20</sup> For further analysis of institutionalist approach, See Lawrence Whitehead 'The consolidation of fragile democracies' in Robert A. Pastor (ed.) *Democracy in the Americas: Stopping the Pendulum*, (London: Holmes and Meier, 1989), pp. 76-95; Przeworski, *Democracy ...*; and J. S. Valenzuela, 'Democratic consolidation in post-communist settings: notion process, and facilitating conditions' in Mainwaring, O'Donnell & Valenzuela (eds.) *Issues ...*

<sup>21</sup> Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 1-32.



consolidation, the integration of the minorities into the socio-economic and political structures of the society become necessary for the success and survival of such a process. In the following parts the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority to the society will be evaluated by referring the dynamics of efforts towards democratic consolidation process (under the light of abovementioned approaches) and the socio-economic and political structure of Turkish society.

### **3. EFFORTS TOWARDS CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY BETWEEN EARLY 1950S AND EARLY 1970S: CRISES AND SUCCESSES**

The situation of Turkey just after the end of single party regime resembles the definition of Ellen Comisso of 'procedural democracies'. In other words, in the late 1940s it could be possible to claim that Turkey fulfilled very well the prescriptions of Schumpeterian definition of what democracy should be like. In this respect, on procedural grounds, it had conducted free elections, it experienced peaceful transfer of power, it had enforced necessary reforms in order to diffuse political culture of democracy among the different segments of the society, it tried to pave the way for creation of environment conducive to consolidation of democracy in the country. Nevertheless on substantive grounds it faced some problems.<sup>22</sup>

The first half of the 1950s signified a considerable change in this situation. Beginning from the early 1950s, this period witnessed attempts and efforts towards consolidation of democracy at substantive level as well. Although it may not be possible to talk about a fully consolidated democracy as proposed by the scholars of democratic consolidation, it was possible to

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<sup>22</sup> From Comisso's point of view, the problems which Turkey faced were: "From a liberal perspective the state was still involving into markets, entrepreneurship was not rewarded excessively, [...] civil liberties still were not fully applicable as long as newly liberalizing parties control the governments. From a national perspective, the state was in hock to international finance" [despite the etatist measures and protective policies], traditional middle class could not be strengthened considerably [in fact there had not been 'traditional' middle class in Turkey], [...] ethnic minorities were collaborating with foreigners to create a protected position for themselves and they were still seen as the agents of foreign economic intrusion. From egalitarian perspective, new civil rights could hardly be utilized by a population to make ends meet and what was supposed to be democracy for everyone has turned into the rule of the few who were only tenuously accountable to the many." See, John Nagle and Alison Mahr, *Democracy and Democratization: Post-Communist Europe in Comparative Perspective*, (London: Sage Publications, 1999), p. 223 and See Feroz Ahmad's comments on the last years of İnönü government in Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, (İstanbul : Kaynak, Yayınları 1999) pp. 125-133

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towards the democratic consolidation, which mainly derived from the nature of democratic transition<sup>24</sup> and legacy of previous political culture<sup>25</sup> Turkey's experience with democracy was one of considerable progress towards the consolidation of democracy.<sup>26</sup>

It is possible to talk about three periods in Turkish experience and efforts towards democratic consolidation between the late 1940s and early 1970s: periods of progress, crisis and restoration. In the following part I will briefly evaluate the conditions and circumstances of efforts towards democratic consolidation in line

argue that expectations, attempts and efforts towards democratic consolidation gained impetus with the introduction and development of multi-party regime in Turkey during the period of our analysis. In this respect, despite the problems and the systemic crises<sup>23</sup> on the way

<sup>23</sup> In fact although this process of democratic consolidation was not immune from systemic crises, as Bozkurt Güvenç argues democratic parties and their coalitions managed to remain in power from 1950s onwards "despite several military interventions since for causes of national unity (1960), peace and order (1971), and the 'restoration' of "Kemalist Reforms" (1980)". For further analysis of this approach, See Bozkurt Güvenç, 'Quest for Cultural Identity for Turkey' in Baidyanath Saraswati (ed.) *Interface of Cultural Identity and Development*, (New Delhi: IGNCa and D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 1996) or see on internet at [http://ignca.nic.in/ls\\_03.htm](http://ignca.nic.in/ls_03.htm)

<sup>24</sup> As Heper puts it, democracy in Turkey was introduced by state elites rather than political elites who represented socio-economic groups. In fact, socio-economic groups neither had effective demands for increased political participation, nor played a significant role in the transition to democracy. For further discussions on the nature of transition to democracy, See Metin Heper, 'The Consolidation of Democracy versus Democratization in Turkey' in Metin Heper and Barry Rubin (eds.) *Political Parties in Turkey*, (London: Frank Cass, 2002); pp. 138-146.

<sup>25</sup> For Özbudun, four basic characteristics of state-society relations in Turkey can be considered as a source of problems and challenges to consolidation of Turkish democracy: the strong state tradition, weak civil society, corporatist political culture and center-periphery relations. For Heper, on the other hand, Turkey had the same problems, which are faced in consolidating democracies; that of reconciling the approaches of statist and political elite. In this respect, striking the balance between horizontal and vertical dimensions of consolidation of democracy had been rather difficult in Turkish case. For further discussions on the problems of and challenges to democratic consolidation in Turkey, See, Ergun Özbudun, *Contemporary Turkish Politics: Challenges to Democratic Consolidation*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), and Metin Heper, 'The Strong State as a Problem for the Consolidation of Democracy: Turkey and Germany Compared', *Comparative Political Studies*, July 1992, Vol.25, Issue 2, pp. 169-195.

<sup>26</sup> For Heper this progress towards the consolidation of democracy took place in the absence of a diffusion of democratic values among the political elite as a result of the fact that state-centered political regime was replaced not by a civil-society-centered political regime but by a polity-centered one. In this respect the progress towards consolidation of democracy has been a consequence of the fact that democracy was perceived as an end rather than as a means. For further evaluation of this approach See Heper 'The Consolidation...'

with the main theoretical premises, which were discussed in the first part in order to give an idea about the domestic environment of socio-economic integration of Armenian minority into the society in the period of analysis.

The initial stages of multi-party regime and the early years of the Democratic Party rule can be characterized as the era of progress in democratic consolidation process in Turkey. As Ali Yaşar Sanbay argues, the Democrats came to power in the belief that free competition without any bureaucratic restraints in economy and polity would result in consolidating democracy in Turkey.<sup>27</sup> Regarding the developments connected to civil society, we can argue that it is possible to see main tenets of lively civil society before and after the crises in the efforts towards consolidation of democracy in Turkey in the period between the late 1940s and early 1970s in line with the evaluation of Linz and Stepan of lively civil society for the progress towards democratic consolidation.<sup>28</sup> Especially in the years of progress of democratic consolidation, as the DP's goal was advancing the democracy by decreasing the government's interference and the prestige of the bureaucracy to the societal issues, increasing individual freedoms, encourage the political participation of the previously deprived segments of the society; the civil society flourished to a considerable extent with the rapid growth and diffusion of voluntary associations of different type.<sup>29</sup> In terms of rule of law, first half of 1950s witnessed the liberalization efforts such as amendment of restrictive laws and adoption of liberal Amnesty and Press laws and establishment of a committee to list undemocratic laws<sup>30</sup> in order to increase the confidence of civil and political societies to the rule of law. Meanwhile, although it was not easy to expect an

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<sup>27</sup> Ali Yaşar Sanbay, 'The Democratic Party, 1946-1960', in M. Heper and J. Landau (eds.) *Political Parties and democracy in Turkey*, (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1991), pp. 119-134.

<sup>28</sup> Here I refer the Linz and Stepan's the definition of civil society for our theoretical purposes in Turkish case, as the "arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests". See Linz and Stepan, *Problems...* p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Despite some scholars, like Walter Weiker, undervalue the development of new interest groups or other organizations during the DP period, the number of associations multiplied eight-fold to exceed 17.000 by 1960. For the comments of Weiker, See Walter F. Weiker, *The Modernization of Turkey: From Atatürk to the Present Day*, (London: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1981), pp. 129-131 and for the numbers of voluntary associations in this period, See Ali Yaşar Sanbay, 'The Democratic Party...' p. 126.

<sup>30</sup> Sanbay, 'The Democratic...', pp. 119-134.

immediate change in political culture of governance;<sup>31</sup> political society and bureaucracy were exposed to a temporary transformation in line with DP's efforts to decrease bureaucratic restraints in economic and political society in order to facilitate democratic consolidation. Liberalization of economic society appeared as the main goal in the early 1950s. In this respect, market economy was enthusiastically encouraged and supported by the economic policies of the government. From the structural perspective, in terms of economic and social development, the progressive era of efforts towards democratic consolidation witnessed a considerable level of economic and social development, which was accompanied by urbanization causing an increase in the amount of political participation in the society (as the social mobilization theorists would argue).<sup>32</sup>

The period of progress in the efforts towards democratic consolidation began to experience a crisis parallel to problems, which emerged as a consequence of unplanned liberal economic policies from mid-1950s onwards. For Schedler, the crises may be terminal, debilitating or stabilizing which means they may result in break-down of democracy, weakening the institutions and creating permanent fragility of democratic patterns or establishment of lasting precedent of democracy by the winner democratic actors.<sup>33</sup> In Turkish case the crisis took place in mid-1950s in a considerably debilitating way although it did not completely terminate the process.

During the years of crisis in the efforts towards democratic consolidation, civil society lost its liveliness to a certain extent due to the restrictions introduced by the government especially to the potentially oppositional circles.<sup>34</sup> Rule of law was begun to be

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<sup>31</sup> For further analysis of political culture and political elite in Turkey; See, Ilter Turan 'The Evolution of Political Culture in Turkey' in Ahmet Evin, (ed.) *Modern Turkey: Continuity and Change*, (Opladen: Leske Verlag, 1984); Frederick W. Frey, *The Turkish Political Elite*, (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1965); and Kemal H. Karpat, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959).

<sup>32</sup> In this respect, following the argument, which associates the political participation with democracy, one may conclude that the early 1950s until mid-1950s were the years of high level of political participation (as a result of socio-economic modernization) and thus the years of progress towards development of democracy in Turkey. See Ergun Özbudun, *Social Change and Political Participation in Turkey*, (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 3-23

<sup>33</sup> See Schedler, 'Measuring...',

<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, as the statistics show, despite the crisis the civil society continued to prosper, at least in terms of increase in the number of voluntary institutions, even if in a decelerated way. For the statistical data regarding the increase in the number of voluntary associations, See Weiker, *The Modernization...* p.74.

questioned as a result of the restrictive laws introduced in several fields of social life. Political society became conflicting in a disturbing way because of the exacerbated relations between the ruling and the opposition parties. Market economy was disturbed by the protectionist measures and thus economic development started to face important problems. The crisis in economy, which was characterized by rising prices, spiraling inflation, shortage of goods and spread of black-marketing<sup>35</sup> brought about the end of liberal policies both in economic and political spheres. Structurally international environment became problematic. Pressure on the governments exerted due to the foreign policy issues negatively influenced the relations between the state and the minorities. Minorities felt disturbed especially by the 1955 events. Nevertheless even these did not avoid them supporting the DP during the 1957 elections.<sup>36</sup>

The restoration period started with another crisis, but this time a stabilizing one, the military intervention of 1960, against the manipulation of democratic values for suppressive purposes. The restoration period was institutionalized with the initiation of the 1961 Constitution<sup>37</sup> and replacement of temporary military-civil bureaucratic administration by the political elite. In this respect, the rule of law was reestablished with the initiation of a new constitution with full of civil liberties and revitalization of the institutions to enact these laws. The efforts towards the democratic consolidation were reinitiated through introducing economic policies and liberalizing acts in order to increase level of economic development in a planned way; restructuring the social political agency and socio-economic relations between different segments of society: strengthening the social, legal and political bases of civil society by introduction of constitutional guarantees for the political and civil freedoms, and introducing democratic amendments to the institutional design and electoral system.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Sanbay, 'The Democratic...', pp. 119-134.

<sup>36</sup> Rıfat N. Bali, 'Cumhuriyet Döneminde Azınlıklar Politikası', *Birikim*, No.115, November 1998, p.83

<sup>37</sup> In Habermasian terms, 1961 Constitution was designed, to a considerable extent, in line with the basic argument of the rule of law, which requires that democratic will-formation not violate human rights that have been positively enacted as basic rights. See Jürgen Habermas, 'Constitutional Democracy: A Paradoxical Union of Contradictory Principles?' in *Political Theory*, Vol.29, No. 6, December 2001, pp. 766-781.

<sup>38</sup> For further analysis of this period, See. Feroz Ahmad *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy (1950-1975)*, (London: C. Hurst 1977); Avner Levi, 'The Justice Party 1961-1980', in Metin Heper & Jacob M. Landau (ed.), *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), pp.134-151; and Ergun Özbudun, 'Turkey's Second Try at Democracy (1961-1980)' in Ergun Özbudun (ed.), *Perspectives on Democracy in Turkey*, (Ankara: Turkish Political Science Assoc., Sevinç Matbaası, 1988), pp.19-25

In overall context, during this period, minorities in general and Armenian minority in particular felt connected to the system without being exposed to any open and direct discriminative political or economic acts of the state and/or other segments of society (with the exception of 1955 events). Political participation of Armenian minority was significant in political societal issues in this era as well. The Armenian community was represented in the parliament even in the years of crisis in the efforts towards democratic consolidation without any obstacle. Their trust to the rule of law was strengthened especially with the initiatives for the introduction of the laws and decrees aiming to clarify the status of foundations and property rights. In economic terms, the psychological pressure caused by the legacy of suspicion towards them in the years of protectionism in national economy was relaxed with the initiation of free trade regulations regarding the foreign investment and free enterprises.

In this respect, being one of the contending parties of democratic consolidation, Armenian minority tried to legitimize its socio-economic and political claims within the context of integration to the dynamics of the society and by appeals to universal principles of democracy as well.<sup>39</sup> The following part will mainly focus on the process of integration of Armenian minority in the different stages of democratic consolidation in Turkey in different fields. It will mainly focus on the developments in socio-economic structure and their implications on the lives and institutions of Armenian minority in the fields of religion, education, culture, sports, politics, and economy.

#### **4. THE PROCESS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY**

##### ***4.1 Conceptualizing the Integration of Armenian Minority:***

Following theoretical framework of Anthony H. Birch on the patterns of socio-economic and political integration,<sup>40</sup> Armenian

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<sup>39</sup> Chris Rumford, 'Placing democratization within the global frame: sociological approaches to universalism, and democratic contestation in contemporary Turkey', *Sociological Review*, May 2002, Vol. 50, Issue 2, pp. 258-278

<sup>40</sup> Birch categorizes the integration as social, economic and political. Social integration is argued to take place in the forms of assimilation, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism. Economic integration transpires as full integration, partial integration and economic segregation. Political integration occurs in the forms of political assimilation, accommodation, ethnic conflict and majority control. For the further evaluation of these categories and the forms of integration in Birch's conceptualization, see Anthony H. Birch, *Nationalism and National Integration*, (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 48-51.

minority's situation in this era can be evaluated from three aspects: social, economic and political.

In social arena integration can be analyzed in line with a synthesis of melting pot and cultural pluralism approaches in the sense that the Armenian community (with the exception of 'Dönme's) had not become completely assimilated in Turkish society via accepting the values and customs of that society while losing the distinctive values and customs it once had. In other words, thanks to its intra-communal structure, Armenian minority was successful in boundary maintenance against the probable external attacks to its communal patterns of existence in different fields of societal life. In this respect, according to Birch's conceptualization, it is not possible to discuss the process of integration of Armenian minority into the society in this period within the context of assimilation-perspective. On the other hand, despite the fact that Armenian minority had some problems in becoming merged into the society while contributing its distinctive values to the society it was still possible to evaluate the Armenian integration into the society within the context of melting point approach in some ways and to some extent. In addition, the perspective of cultural pluralism would also make sense in analyzing and understanding the situation of Armenian community from certain aspects in the sense that in Birch's terms, Armenian minority remained culturally distinctive to a significant extent while being a part of the larger society in terms of government, free trade and communications.<sup>41</sup>

In terms of economic integration, it is not so easy to associate the case of Armenian minority's integration with one of Birch's categories, which were classified as full integration, partial integration and economic segregation. In fact, despite some problems, which paralyzed full integration it is also not possible to argue that the Armenian minority had worse chance of economic success than the members of other segments or groups within the society. In various cases, as it will be discussed further in this article, it may even be argued that some members of the Armenian minority had significantly better chances of economic success than the members of other groups. In this respect it is possible to put the process of economic integration of Armenian minority between the partial and full integration (closer to full

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<sup>41</sup> Birch, *Nationalism...*, p.49

integration with the exceptional cases) in the scale of integration categories listed by Anthony H. Birch.

At political level, the situation of Armenian minority can be analyzed according to the premises of approaches of political assimilation and political accommodation in the different stages of efforts towards democratic consolidation and restoration of endeavor for democratic consolidation in Turkish society in this period. During the early years of efforts towards democratic consolidation it was possible to observe a condition of political assimilation where ethnicity was of no/ or little political significance with candidates in governing political party (the Democratic Party) chosen irrespective (or positively discriminative way) of their ethno-religious origins. In the early years of restoration of democratic rules and institutions, on the other hand, the transition regime paid significant attention to accommodate equal number of minority representatives within the Constituent Assembly. In this framework, an Armenian minority representative was accommodated in the Assembly in line with an awareness of ethnic and cultural differences and in a way where members of Armenian community would not feel left out or discriminated against.<sup>42</sup> As it may be seen along these lines, the political absorption and political accommodation took place respectively in the political integration of Armenian minority into the political society in Turkey in this era.

It may well be argued that in this era there were no crucial structural obstacles against the socio-economic integration/accommodation of Armenian minority in the society without assimilation. In other words, there was no crucial impediment against accommodation of Armenian minority without assimilation in the 1950s in the sense that the members of Armenian minority did not face so many detrimental obstruction and restrictions exerted by the state or other segments of society in front of preservation of their culture with their values, their communal structure, and their traditions.<sup>43</sup> In this respect, diacritical characteristics of Armenian minority were not expected to create any problems in inter-segmental communication with the other segments of the society. In addition it is not easy to oppose

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<sup>42</sup> Birch, *Nationalism...*, p.50

<sup>43</sup> Dimostenis Yagcioglu, 'Nation-states vis-à-vis Ethnocultural Minorities: Oppression and Assimilation versus Integration and Accommodation' at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8945/minor.html>



the view that Armenian minority members did not face any additional difficulty other than the systemic problems which were relevant for all members of the society even as accommodating themselves to the mainstream and dominant culture while maintaining their own culture. In this respect, during this accommodating process they were well able to confirm their cultural identity and while at the same time improving the necessary skills which would facilitate the possibilities of peaceful interaction and communication (and thus of integration) with the majority.<sup>44</sup> In the following parts the article will evaluate on how the integration took place in different spheres of social interaction, at individual and institutional levels and how the international structure affected this integration process.

#### *4.2. Integration of Armenian Minority in Political Sphere:*

As broadly argued and accepted by most scholars, 1950, the year of transfer of power to the Democratic Party, which (at least in its rhetoric) was committed to dismantling the structures of one-party state,<sup>45</sup> marked a watershed in the transformation of political and socio-economic structures and units of Turkey.<sup>46</sup> This watershed resulted in the acceleration of efforts towards democratic consolidation process in Turkey throughout the 1950s with the democratic practices, which had already begun to take root in late 1940s.<sup>47</sup>

In this political framework Armenian minority (like most of the other minorities) was attracted by the promises of the Democratic Party for opening up the society, economics and politics in line with the principles of liberalism. Thus it was not unexpected that most of the members of Armenian minority voted for and supported the Democratic Party in the elections of 14 May 1950 and played a role in DP's taking over the power.<sup>48</sup> Some researchers define the political relationship between the

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<sup>44</sup> Hugh Mehan, Lea Hubbard and Irene Villanueva, 'Forming Academic Identities: Accommodation without Assimilation among Involuntary Minorities', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, Vol.25, No.2, pp.91-117.

<sup>45</sup> Chris Hann, 'Subverting Strong States: The Dialectics of Social Engineering in Hungary and Turkey', *Daedalus*, Spring, 1995, pp.133-153

<sup>46</sup> See Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development*, (London: Verso, 1987)

<sup>47</sup> Hugh Poulton, 'The Turkish State and Democracy' in *The International Spectator*, Vol. XXXIV, No.1 January March, 1999.

<sup>48</sup> Bali, 'Cumhuriyet ...', p.83.

Democratic Party rule and minorities as a 'honeymoon' due to non-discriminative policies of the Democratic Party regarding the minorities.<sup>49</sup> In fact, the Democratic Party tried to preserve its good relationship with the minorities due to their high voting potential especially in big urban constituencies like İstanbul and İzmir.

Political elite of the Armenian community found an opportunity to express the socio-economic, cultural and political demands of the community among the ranks of Democratic Party within the parliament in the 1950s. This participation prevented the Armenian political elite from turning into a segmental elite (which would not have any general and sustained socio-political impact on intra-societal and inter-societal relations) within the political structure and thus it precluded any potential institutional alienation of the Armenian community in the political sphere within this framework, Dr. Zakar Tarver and Migirdiç Selleyan were among the MPs who served in Turkish Parliament in this period. They had the opportunity to raise the needs of the Armenian community in parliamentary meetings. In the era between late 1940s and early 1970s the DP was not the only political party in which Armenian minority tried to sound their voices. Some Armenian political and cultural elites having different political stance on political issues, such as Zaven Biberyan tried to take part among the MPs at Worker Party ranks. Zaven Biberyan<sup>50</sup> then became an active political figure in local politics at municipal level after he was elected as member of İstanbul Municipality Council in 1968 local elections and he served as vice-chairperson in the municipal council of İstanbul. Such participation and representation of the community's interests both among the ranks of the governing party in the parliament at national level and in the municipality councils at local political level had a positive and constructive impact on the political efficacy of ordinary Armenian citizens of Turkey as well.

Parallel to the integration of political elite of Armenian minority into the political sphere in the political society and bureaucracy, there was also a wave of integration, which was taking place at

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<sup>49</sup> Bali, 'Cumhuriyet ...',

<sup>50</sup> Being a journalist and author, Zaven Biberyan was among the cultural elite of this era as well. He was the publisher of *Nor Tar* (a political-literature magazine), and author of *Babam Aşkale'ye Götmedi* and *Yalnızlar*. See Aras Yayıncılık webpage, at <http://www.arasyayincilik.com/turkce/biberyan.html>

civil societal level with through the institutionalization of political efficacy of Armenian community members, specially in Armenian voluntary associations. In fact these years witnessed a considerable increase in the numbers of Armenian minority associations as the number of minority associations within the emerging and progressing civil society<sup>51</sup> increased almost four-fold from 1950 to 1968.<sup>52</sup> As mentioned above, the growth of Armenian voluntary associations appeared as an important indicator of increase in their socio-political participation in this era. As the participation in public affairs by minorities is central to their sense of identity and is crucial to their feeling a part of the state and wider community;<sup>53</sup> existence of MPs at the parliament, and having functioning voluntary associations gave the Armenian minority further motivation in terms of integration in political arena. In this respect even in the years of crises in democratic processes the Armenian minority did not face detrimental problems in terms of political participation and representation.

The restoration period also witnessed increased support for this participation and representation within the framework of the 1961 Constitution, which provided new grounds for democratic consolidation with its democratic provisions that introduced more and more freedom to all segments of society. The minorities were not forgotten in the egalitarianism of the new democratic institutionalization. In 1961 the minorities were represented in the Constitutive Assembly by enjoying the quota, which was reserved for them by President Cemal Gürsel. In this context, the Armenian minority was represented in the Constitutional Assembly of 1961 by Hermine Agavni Kalutsyan.<sup>54</sup> In fact, such a move was significant in the sense that it indicated intensive attention of political and state elite in accommodating Armenian elite within the political society.

<sup>51</sup> For Robert Bianchi "[this] rapid emergence and diffusion of this network of groups representing specialized interests suggest that the Turks have been particularly precocious in developing 'the art of association' while implementing broad social and economic change within the context of liberal democracy" See Robert Bianchi, *Interest Groups and Political Development in Turkey*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), p.3.

<sup>52</sup> Weiker, *The Modernization...* p. 74.

<sup>53</sup> Yash Ghai, 'Report on Public Participation and Minorities', (London: Minority Rights Group International, April 2001), pp. 1-25.

<sup>54</sup> TBMM Albümü 1920-1991, (Ankara: TBMM Genel Sekreterliği Yayınları, 1994); Bali, 'Cumhuriyet...', p.83.

**Armenian minority first politically absorbed (until the early 1960s) and then politically accommodated by and within the political society, bureaucracy and the state elite.**

Overall, it can be concluded that the Armenian minority first politically absorbed (until early 1960s) and then politically accommodated by and within the political society, bureaucracy and state elite in Turkey in line with the political developments regarding the democratic consolidation efforts and crises within political sphere during this era.

#### *4.3. Integration of Armenian Minority in Economic Sphere:*

Having experienced the destructive impacts of the economic dependence and of intrusive capitulations Turkish State and society had become skeptic about the foreign economic intrusion to the national economy. The impact of skepticism showed itself in the shaping of national economy of the new Republic from late 1920s to end of 1940s. The era of protectionism was mainly characterized by enforcement of protectionist economic policies and supporting creation of national bourgeoisie in order to keep national economy immune from foreign manipulative economic acts. In these early stages of creation of national economy in Turkey the minorities could not be immune from the consequences of their economic activities, which took place in the economic history of the country prior to establishment of new republic. In this respect, as Brian W. Beeley puts it, prior to the 1950s, members of minority communities were perceived as agents of outside economic intrusion and an organic part of the unequal capitulatory system.<sup>55</sup> Thus, until late 1940s, it would not be easy for minorities to integrate into the economic structure of the new republic and to conduct their economic activities freely due to the shadow of this legacy of suspicion of foreign economic interference with which they were associated as collaborators.

The more Turkey became integrated to the liberal economic world at international level, the less it became suspicious towards the foreign interference to domestic economy. The decrease of suspicion towards the foreign economic actors had constructive

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<sup>55</sup> See Brian W. Beeley, 'On the geography of development in Turkey', in Eric Watkins (ed.) *The Middle Eastern Environment*, St. Malo Press, at <http://www.netcomuk.co.uk/~jpap/beeley.htm>

impact on the perceptions of Turkish state and society towards the minorities, which were seen as foreign elements within the national economy. As the negative perceptions were transformed in line with the transformation of the attitudes towards foreign investment, the economic activities of the minorities were no more, perceived as the practices of economic enclaves, which kept their special ties and economic relations with the foreign economic circles. In fact, it would be ironical to concern about the possibility of suspicious attitude of state and other segments of society against the economic activities of non-Muslim minorities, which previously were considered as foreign agencies, in an era where the foreign investment was encouraged to enter the country directly with the initiation of 1951, 1954 Foreign Investment Laws and 1954 Petroleum Law.

As many scholars of Turkish political history argue Democratic Party's (DP) economic policies were designed to support mainly commercial and industrial bourgeoisie.<sup>56</sup> Institutions were established in economic sphere in order to encourage and assist free enterprise in the country in line with the DP's dominant rhetoric, which linked the free enterprise with democracy.<sup>57</sup> In fact, these policies did not only strengthen the economic elite in economic sphere but they paved the way for the transfer of political leadership from the bureaucratic-political elite to the economic one parallel to the campaigns which aimed at diminishing the privileged place of the bureaucracy. Indeed as Şerif Mardin and Engin Akarlı argue, it was the new interest groups, which supported the DP to accelerate the socio-economic development that constituted their power basis.<sup>58</sup> The minorities took their place among these interest groups as well. In this respect, within such a context, the defense of the DP of the private enterprises and commercial interests<sup>59</sup> improved the situation of the minorities who took their places both among the big city merchants and within the service sector, both in economic and political sphere.

<sup>56</sup> See Eroğul, *Demokrat...*, Sanbay, 'The Democratic...'

<sup>57</sup> Atilla Eralp, 'The Politics of Turkish Development Strategies' in Andrew Finkel (ed.) *Turkish state, Turkish society*, (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 219-259.

<sup>58</sup> See Engin Deniz Akarlı, 'The State as a Socio-cultural Phenomenon and Political Participation in Turkey' in *Political Participation in Turkey; Historical Background*, (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Printing House), 1975, p.146.

<sup>59</sup> Sanbay, 'The Democratic...', pp. 119-134.

Although it is not adequately empirical to generalize the economic prosperity enjoyed by some segments of the Armenian minority to whole community; it may be possible to find some hints from the personal biographies of the Armenian industrialists and merchants of the time about the economic progress and integration which was experienced during the years of economic liberalization in this period. As mentioned in the biography of Yarmayan family, the years between mid-1940s and 1960s had been remarkably satisfactory and constructive years for their businesses.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless the economic integration of Armenian minority did not take place only in the upper strata of economic structure. In fact, the members of Armenian minority integrated into the economy not only as merchants and employers but also as employees and low-paid workers. In this respect, not all the members of Armenian minority, which tried to integrate into domestic economy, became prosperous businessmen. Especially, non-qualified people of Anatolian rural areas, which immigrated to İstanbul, found it difficult to obtain a place in the economic sphere of urban life at the beginning. Eventually, like most of their Turkish counterparts, some of them tried to engage in the urban economy by working in the low-paid service sector (like doormen, cleaning, etc.),<sup>61</sup> which expanded as a consequence of economic revival in the cities. Some others adapted to socio-economic conditions of İstanbul in time and especially the ones who started to work near the merchants in Mahmutpaşa, one of the lively trading centers of the city, became merchants themselves<sup>62</sup> through a merchantalization process.<sup>63</sup>

As it may be well observed liberalization took place in Turkish economy mostly as a respond to exogenous change which occurred in international economic structure in the early 1950s. In

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<sup>60</sup> Gülay Dinçel, 'Yarmayanlar: Üç Kuşak Sanayici Bir Ermeni Ailesi', *Toplumsal Tarih*, September 1999, pp. 22-33.

<sup>61</sup> Ayşe Berktaş, 'Minasyan Ailesinin Albümü: Biz Söзде mi Yaşadık?', *Toplumsal Tarih*, November, 1998, pp. 22-31.

<sup>62</sup> Hrant Dink, 'Türkiye Ermenilerinin Nüfus Hali', *Tarih ve Toplum*, No. 202, October 2000, pp. 31-35.

<sup>63</sup> The "merchantalization" of immigrated Anatolian Armenians and their adaptation to the urban economy of İstanbul drastically change the patterns of relationship between the urban and rural Armenians of Turkey and added a new meaning to the 'İstanbullu Ermeni' (Armenian who is originally from İstanbul) with the transformation of the immigrated Anatolian Armenians beginning from early 1950s. See Dink, 'Türkiye Ermenilerinin...

fact, there were not political, cultural or economic absolutes at the beginning of 1950s. With the integrative attempts towards liberal world economy, which were mainly encouraged and promoted by DP governments a structural change began to take place in Turkish economy.<sup>64</sup> Incidentally, communal adaptation to this changing socio-economic and political environment would take place for all communities within the society and the Armenian community was not an exception. Thus, in line with these changes, efforts towards democratic consolidation took place in economic sphere through the steps headed for adopting liberalism in the economy. Despite the fact that these attempts became exposed to transformation for the purposes of 'a program of planned import-substituting industrialization' with the changing attitudes of Turkish state elite towards means of national development<sup>65</sup> shortly after they started; they appeared as important steps towards the economic liberalization in early 1950s. During the restoration of democratic consolidation process which followed the army's interference in 1960, the Justice Party reinitiated the economic principles of the early years of progress in democratic consolidation, which mainly 'promised continuing industrial growth through a freer economy, continued encouragement of the private sector and further attraction of foreign capital, which had been important in the expansion of the 1950s'.<sup>66</sup> Within this liberalization context, economic integration of Armenian minority continued in several arenas of economy until the early 1970s without facing fatal problems mostly in the benefit of the Armenian minority. In fact, Armenians in Istanbul were second only to the Greeks of that city in wealth even at the beginning of 1970s.<sup>67</sup>

In brief, it is possible to argue that integration of Armenian minority into the economic sphere did not face many discriminative or opposing economic acts from the other segments and actors of economic sphere. The integrative attempts with the liberal world economy and efforts towards democratic

<sup>64</sup> It is not easy to call this change as a structured change where the change was supposed to occur in well-organised steps. It was rather an attempt to adopt to the exogenous change that was taking place as a respond to the external developments out of the domestic socio-economic and political systems.

<sup>65</sup> Çağlar Keyder, 'Whither the Project of Modernity? Turkey in the 1990s' in Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (eds.) *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 37-52.

<sup>66</sup> Weiker, *The Modernization...*, p.132

<sup>67</sup> R. Thomas Duval, *Area Handbook for the Republic of Turkey*, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p.106.

consolidation strengthened the confidence of Armenian economic elite and work force to the economic system and state economic bureaucracy. In this respect, although it may be more adequate to argue that economic integration took place between the scales of full and partial integration by considering the problems, which the process faced; it may well be possible to argue that there were not critical individual, structural and institutional obstacles against the full integration of Armenian minority into the economic sphere both at employer and employee levels in this era.

#### *4.4. Important Socio-economic Phenomena of 1950s and 1960s*

##### *Immigration, Urbanization and Consequences on Armenian Minority*

As above-mentioned integration took place in economic sphere it was accompanied and affected by different socio-economic developments such as immigration and urbanization as it will be discussed below. The phenomena of urbanization (or rurbanization) and immigration had an important effect especially on the economic integration and/or re-integration of rural families of Armenian minority to the economic and political and cultural spheres of social life.

The shift of population from rural to urban areas accelerated since 1950 by exceeding the national average with the rise of 4 per cent from 1950 to 1965 and 6.3 per cent in 1970.<sup>68</sup> Armenian minority did not remain indifferent to this general immigration and urbanization waves.

Another factor which accelerated the immigration process of remaining Anatolian Armenian citizens of Turkey was the activities of the Armenian Church which sought new candidates of monks or young Armenian people to be trained in better conditions especially in the newly opened seminary in İstanbul. As a consequence of these activities the families of the Armenian youth immigrated to İstanbul. Within this context under the auspices and guidance of Patriarchate, in 1950s Priest Şahak played an important role in organizing of the rural-urban immigration. These activities continued in the following years through the prominent

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<sup>68</sup> Dural, *Area...*, pp.77-78



initiatives and effective activities of Hrant Küçüküzelyan (Chairperson of Gedikpaşa Armenian Church Foundation) and Der Girogos (Priest of Church of Diyarbakır). As a consequence of these activities a flow of students and their families took place from different towns and villages of Anatolia such as Bitlis, Samsun, Diyarbakır, Siirt, Mardin, Tokat, Sivas, Kayseri, Malatya, Elazığ and from Silopi (where the Arto tribe lived) to İstanbul.<sup>69</sup> As the flow of Armenian community reached to considerable numbers and their as their settlement in the cities which they arrived began to necessitate a better organization and regulation, Armenian community leaders established a commission of immigrants, 'Kagtagonats Hantsankhump'.<sup>70</sup> The activities of this commission took place under the laws of Turkish Republic and they were not disqualified or precluded by the government.

In this respect, on the contrary to abstractions of some scholars, the Armenian community, which continued living in Anatolia in 1950s and 1960s, were not subject to corporate and directive action of the state in order to leave their homelands and move to İstanbul.<sup>71</sup> In other words, the rural-urban migration of Armenian minority from Anatolian towns to İstanbul and other urban areas was an economic, voluntary and free migration rather than a political one. In this respect, the scholars who put emphasis on the shrinking of Armenian parishes outside of İstanbul in 1960s seem to neglect the socio-economic and demographic changes, which had started already a decade ago in Turkey.<sup>72</sup> Thus, immigration of Armenians who used to live in Anatolia from 1950s onwards was not a state-led project of expulsion of Armenian citizens from these regions. It was rather a part of general immigration movement, which had started all over the country from the villages to the urban areas as a result of economic urbanization. In fact the intentions of Armenian rural populations were not much more different than their rural Turkish counterparts, who started to seek a better life in the urban areas of Turkey. Thus they became actors of the phenomenon of

<sup>69</sup> Dink, 'Türkiye...',

<sup>70</sup> Dink, 'Türkiye...',

<sup>71</sup> Tessa Hoffman is very critical in her approach towards the mobilization of Armenian communities from different parts of Anatolia. See Tessa Hofmann, 'Armenians in Turkey Today: A Critical Assessment of the Situation of the Armenian Minority in the Turkish Republic', (The EU Office of Armenian Associations of Europe, Bruxelles, 2002)

<sup>72</sup> Hofmann, 'Armenians...', p.10

immigration chain, from villages to new cities and towns of the republic, which resulted in urban agglomeration and which added new dimensions to the process of integration in political, economic and cultural spheres.

#### *4.5. Integration of Armenian Minority Cultural Sphere*

This era witnessed integration of Armenian minority into the overall social culture within the context of developments in cultural pluralism rather than unilateral acculturation (or cultural conditioning). In fact, possibility of such acculturation was avoided to a great extent in the sense that the Armenian community was not deprived of its contra-acculturative means to resist such a possibility. The members of Armenian minority had their own newspapers and other means of press in which they were able to encode and deliver their economic, political and social messages within the richness of their language. In fact, the consolidation period witnessed the new Armenian publications and newspapers in addition to already existing ones. As the means of representing different voices within the Armenian community and in the overall society; Rupen Masoyan's *Tebi Luys* (1950) and the publication of Armenian Patriarchate *Soğagat* took their places within the family of Armenian and Turkish press in the early 1950s.<sup>73</sup> Apart from the daily press, Armenian magazines of art such as *Kulis* (established by Agop Ayvaz in 1946), continued to contribute to the cultural accumulation of the Armenian community and the overall society while the society had already started to watch the world from the objective of Ara Güler's camera in the journal *Hayat*. The field of literature welcomed the works of talented authors of Armenian minority in this era as well. In this respect, the Armenian and Turkish literature was enriched with the valuable contributions of authors such as Migirdiç Margosyan (with the stories shedding light on the daily lives along the axis of İstanbul and Diyarbakır and socio-economic dynamics of the years of immigration and afterwards); Yervant Gobelyan (with his poems and stories which carried the smell of Eftalopos Café of Taksim Square and the warmth of friendship among the peoples of

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<sup>73</sup> For further analysis on the development and situation of Armenian minority press in this era, see, Pars Tuğlacı, '200.Yıldönümünde Türkiye'de Ermeni Basının Dünyu Bugünü', *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. 22, No. 132, December 1994, pp. 38-39 and Karin Karakaşlı, 'Gazetelerin Satıraralarında', *Görüş*, Ağustos 2001, pp. 66-69.

İstanbul); Kegam Kerovpyan (with his works on Armenian dictionary –Levzi- and Mitolojik Ermeni Tarihi -Mythological Armenian History-); Anton Özer (with his plays, poems and stories about the different aspects of social life), Zaven Biberyan (with his works in different journals and with his editorship of literary/political journal 'Nor Tor' -New Century-); Hagop Mintzuri (with his stories on Erzincan region with particular emphasis on rural life); Kirkor Ceyahan (with his stories on the socio-economic structure of 1930s) and others. These years also witnessed the works of Kevork Pamukciyan, an important representative of Armenian culture, in Turkish language,<sup>74</sup> who, as well, contributed the promotion of both intra-cultural and intercultural communication in Turkey as one of the founders of 'Association for Promotion of Cultural Research' which was established in 1953.<sup>75</sup>

The press and literature were not the only fields where the voices of Armenian artists and thinkers reflected in the overall culture. Meanwhile, for instance, in the field of music, İstanbul Radio was playing the performances of Valantin Mazlum of Chopin in 1951. From this year onwards radio programs, which was prepared by Valantin Mazlum and her students became the frequent guests of radio receivers in the houses of classical music admirers in Turkish society. Mazlum contributed to the cultural development of radio audience not only by getting them acquainted to the masterpieces of classical music but also by introducing many future composers and practitioners of classical music which would add to the development of 'high culture' in Turkey with their performances in different occasions.<sup>76</sup>

While notes of Chopin and other masterpieces of classical music were listened by the radio audience, Baron Panosyan was teaching the moves of new dances such as tango, foxtrot, swing,<sup>77</sup> which became popular dances in the changing popular culture as a result of increasing cultural interaction with the cultural representatives of liberal world. 'Professor' Panosyan had students from different segments of the society who wanted to harmonize their paces in line with the 'westernization' in the dance culture.

<sup>74</sup> Garo Abrahamyan, 'Ermeni Kültürünün Son Kaybı: Kevork Pamukciyan', *Tarih ve Toplum*, September 1997, pp. 4-6

<sup>75</sup> Abrahamyan, 'Ermeni...'

<sup>76</sup> Sevan Ataoğlu, 'Müziğiyle Hep Ayakta', *Agos*, 20 June 1997, p.4

<sup>77</sup> "1950'lerin Renkli Kişiliği Baron Panosyan", *Agos*, 26 April 1996, p.5

In the fields of cinema and theater Armenian actors, actresses, and directors such as Nubar Terziyan, Toto Karaca, Hagop Ayvaz, Vahram Papazyan, Nişan Hancer and other respected and valuable representatives either started their careers or continued to contribute the cultural life of society in this period.

Overall, an important degree of integration was experienced almost in all fields and spheres of social life during this era in different scales and forms. This integration could not have taken place without the initiatives and guidance of the Armenian institutions. Institutions of Armenian minority played a crucial role in institutionalization of the intra-communal and inter-communal integrative acts among the members of the Armenian minority and the other segments of the overall society. The next part will analyze the institutionalization of socio-economic integration in different fields of Armenian community's social life.

### **5. INSTITUTIONAL PATTERNS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY:**

It may well be argued that the period between late 1940s and early 1970s was the period in which the Armenian citizens of the Turkish Republic did not experience the feeling of normative and political alienation deeply in the socio-economic, political and legal spheres within the societal system thanks to the integrative and constructive approaches of Armenian institutions and conduciveness of the political and civil societies in Turkey for such approaches.

As the participation in public affairs by minorities is central to their sense of identity and is crucial to their feeling a part of the state and wider community;<sup>78</sup> the Armenian community's institutions became the bridges and binders of Armenian community to the socio-economic, political, and cultural norms, values and processes within the overall society in achieving a greater competitiveness and social mobility in society regardless of the ethnic, linguistic or religious attribute. In this respect, they appeared as central agents of integration at institutional level, which enhanced the social links that allowed prevalence and exchange between Armenian community and different segments

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<sup>78</sup> Yash Ghai, 'Report on Public Participation and Minorities', (London: Minority Rights Group International, April 2001), pp.1-25.

of the society, while simultaneously binding them to act in line with socio-economically, politically and culturally coded patterns within the society.

### *5.1. Armenian Institutions and Socio-economic Integration of Armenian Minority within the Transforming Socio-economic Structure*

Stabilization and maturation of existence and involvement of minority institutions into the public affairs is another indicator for democratic consolidation. Within this context, the situation of Armenian Church and Armenian Schools and Armenian foundations during 1950s and early 1960s needs some evaluation for our purposes.

Throughout consolidation period, some institutions of Armenian minority such as Yedikule Surp Pırgıç Hospital continued to get aid from the state budget until 1956 in accordance with the Article 4, paragraph 2 and 3 of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, which stated:

"In towns and districts where there is a considerable proportion of Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities, these minorities shall be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment and application of the sums which may be provided out of public funds under the State, municipal or other budgets for educational, religious, or charitable purposes. "The sums in question shall be paid to the qualified representatives of the establishments and institutions concerned."79

After 1956 Yedikule Surp Pırgıç Hospital and other community foundations did not demand any aid from the state and thus the aid was cut upon their own wishes.<sup>80</sup> The mutual understanding of integrity between the state authorities, civil society and the Armenian institutions continued without facing grave problems until the early 1970s. In the following parts the institutional patterns of socio-economic integration will be evaluated through the analyses of acts of Armenian minority's leading institutions in several fields of social life respectively.

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<sup>79</sup> Lausanne Treaty, Text of Agreement from web pages of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupe/ed/eda/edaa/Part1.htm> and Hellenic Resources Network <http://www.hri.org/docs/lausanne/>

<sup>80</sup> Diran Bakar, 'Vergi Kanunları ve cemaat vakıfları', Agos, 18 December 1998, p. 2

### 5.2. Religion and Church

Scholars such as Tessa Hoffman and Florian Bieber argue that the non-Muslim minorities of Turkey have been exposed to dual assimilatory pressure, religious through secularization and ethnic through nationalism.<sup>81</sup> I believe such a generalizing approach which would encompass whole political history of Turkish governments lacks necessary empirical basis and a careful analysis of policy differences regarding the religious and minority affairs among the political parties which came to power in the history of "Kemalist Republic". Despite the fact that secularism has been one of the major founding principles of Turkish Republic, the understanding and interpretation of this principle was not the same for all the governments, which led Turkey. In fact the period, which I analyzed, is a good example of these different interpretations.

During the years of The Democratic Party rule the understanding of secularism became more flexible and thus the religion regained its primary place in the daily lives of the citizens of the Republic. In fact, as K. Boyle and J. Sheen put it, the number of religious institution increased rapidly while the strict grip of the state over religion was relaxed in almost all spheres. Thus as the 'Democratic Party set about undoing excesses of secularism during the single party era'; the practices of secularist principles were interpreted differently and in a loosened manner by the Democratic Party leadership. In fact the Democratic Party governments gained popular support in 1950s by identifying itself as the liberalizer of the religion without compromising Atatürk's reforms.<sup>82</sup> Within this context, DP rather loosened the premises of secularism<sup>83</sup> and revitalized the religious concerns in the social lives of the people of Turkey. In this respect, what has been argued by Florian Bieber regarding the "assimilatory pressure towards non-Muslim minorities through secularization by Kemalist regime" seem to lose its practical and empirical bases in this era in the sense that the non-Muslim minorities in general, and Armenian minority in particular, were not exposed to planned and constant pressure exerted by the Democratic Party governments and successive governments in line with the secularist concerns of the Republic.

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<sup>81</sup> Florian Bieber, 'Religious Minorities between the Secular State and Rising Islam: Alevi, Armenians and Jews in Turkey', at <http://www.juedisches-archiv-chofrank.de/kehilot/turkei/TY-mind.htm>, and Hoffman, 'Armenians in Turkey Today...' p. 10

<sup>82</sup> Ahmad, *Turkish...*, p. 370.

<sup>83</sup> Eroğul, *Demokrat...*, p. 89.

1950s and 1960s were not only significant for the relations between the state and Armenian minority in the field of religion. These years also signified the end of intra-communal crisis within the Turkey's Armenian community. For Sarkis Seropyan, the years between 1944 and 1950 witnessed intra-communal conflicts and instability, which were caused by organizational and leadership problems within the Armenian minority.<sup>84</sup> These intra-communal crises came to an end with the promulgation of Decree on Patriarch Elections with the permission of Council of Ministers in 19 September 1950. Meanwhile 1950s and 1960s were celebrating the establishment, restoration and opening of new Armenian Churches in the different corners of Anatolia and in Istanbul. The Surp Hovsep Armenian Catholic Church, which was under the control of military until 1949, began to be administered by Armenian Catholic Community from 1949 onwards and reopened in 30 July 1950.<sup>85</sup> This church, later on, did not only serve the Catholic Armenian community of Mardin and neighborhood as a religious institution simply monitoring the basic religious services but it also became an important institution for the religious education of Armenian children and youth in the region.<sup>86</sup>

These years also witnessed an increased religious liveliness in Istanbul following the immigration movements from Anatolian towns and villages. The scope of these lively religious activities reached to the point that some of the existing churches in Istanbul became insufficient for meeting the needs of Armenian Gregorian community so that these churches were rebuilt in order to meet these needs of Armenian and Assyrian prayers in Istanbul. One of these churches, Surp Asdvadzadzin (Meryem Ana) Beyoğlu was rebuilt in 1961 and was opened for religious services for the prayers in 1963 by Assyrian Patriarch Yakup III and Armenian Patriarch Şinorhk Kalutsyan.<sup>87</sup>

As it is widely accepted among the majority of Armenian community in Turkey, the Armenian Patriarchate has not only been

<sup>84</sup> Edited by Sarkis Seropyan, 'Her Dönemin Aynı Hikayesi', *Agos*, 3 July 1998, p.12.

<sup>85</sup> Tomas Çerme (ed.), 'Mardin Surp Hovsen Ermeni Katolik Kilisesi Tarihçesi', in *Agos*, 20 December 1996, p.2

<sup>86</sup> Despite the fact that the priest of church, Çandın, was declared persona non-grata in 1954 and that no other priest was appointed afterwards, the church functioned as an important religious institution of the region in the following years in spite of the negative impact of chain immigrations from Anatolian towns in 1950s.

<sup>87</sup> Tomas Çerme, 'Surp Asdvadzadzin (Meryem Ana) Beyoğlu, Ermeni – Süryani Kilisesi', *Tarih ve Toplum*, October, 2000, No.202, pp.36-7.

the most active and central institution regarding the organization of religious lives of Turkey's Armenian citizens; but it also played a crucial role in preservation of Armenian socio-cultural identity and language.<sup>88</sup> The Church and patriarchs played an important role in the intra-societal organization and demographic structure of the Armenian minority in this period as they used to do before as well. The noteworthy rural-urban immigration wave of Anatolian Armenian citizens of Turkey to İstanbul, which started in early 1950s, gained impetus under the guidance and leadership of 81st Patriarch Karekin Khaçaduryan and 82nd Patriarch Şinorhk Kalutsyan with the aim of gathering students for the newly established Tibrevank Seminary.<sup>89</sup>

1960s were significant years for the restoration of Armenian Church and other Armenian religious institutions both in terms of the physical appearances and administrative structure. In terms of physical appearances the churches of İstanbul were restored under the guidance and with the initiatives of Patriarch Şinorhk Kalutsyan. Regarding the institutional restoration, 1961 welcomed the introduction of Procedural Decree for Election of the Patriarch which was prepared according to the Decree of Council of Ministers dated 18.9.1961 No.5/1654 and the protocol of İstanbul Mayor dated 29.9.1961 No.19607 and in line with the traditions and customs of Armenian community.<sup>90</sup>

All these developments improved the relations and strengthened the integrity between the religious institutions of Armenian minority and the institutions of overall society in different spheres of social life. Such integrity was expressed openly by the Armenian Church several times (especially during the political acts of some groups within Armenian Diaspora against Turkey in the spring of 1965). In general, the religious institutions of Armenian minority contributed the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority not only in religious sphere but also in other spheres in the different stages of efforts towards democratic consolidation in this era. These contributions took place more efficiently when they were encouraged by political and civil societies and regulations that could clarify and enhance intra-

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<sup>88</sup> See, 'The Folklore of the Armenians of Constantinople at <http://davidashen.aua.am/folklore/6Bolis.html> and also see, 'Interview with Patriarch Mesrob II of İstanbul and Turkey' by Florence Avakian at [http://www.15.dht.dk/~2westh/interview\\_with\\_patriarch\\_mesrob.html](http://www.15.dht.dk/~2westh/interview_with_patriarch_mesrob.html)

<sup>89</sup> Dink, 'Türkiye ...', pp.31-35

<sup>90</sup> '1961 Patrik Seçimi Talimatnamesi, Agos, 31 July 1998, p. 2



institutional structure and situation of religious institutions of Armenian minority in legal terms.

### 5.3. Education and Armenian Schools

According to procedures of Armenian Schools, these institutions of educations were supposed to educate the Armenian children in a way that they would be contribute public culture and respect Turkish state and country.<sup>91</sup> It is possible to argue that the Armenian schools functioned in line with these baselines in 1950s and 1960s. In fact they played an important role in socio-economic integration of not only the Armenian minority children and youth but of their families in this period.

The first and only seminary school (Surp Haç Tıbrevank Seminary) which was opened throughout the Republican era was opened in 1954 in Üsküdar<sup>92</sup> under Democrat Party rule<sup>93</sup> and then transformed into a civil high school in 1967. Tıbrevank was not only noteworthy because it was the first and only school that was established during Republican era but also due to its significant role (as mentioned above) in the socio-economic integration of the Armenian students (and of their families which immigrated to İstanbul following their children) who were collected from different Anatolian towns in mid-1950s into the society.

In fact, the main contribution of Armenian schools for the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority to the society took place in four interconnected and respective fields. First of all they played crucial role in adopting the Armenian children to the cultural, social and political values of overall society while at the same time preserving the communal values. Secondly they contributed the existing socio-cultural structure of society while educating the children in line with the cultural differences of Armenian minority. Thirdly, they functioned as the forums of Armenian minority where the educated members of minority could contribute the civil society through the socio-political activities of Alumni organizations (such as Tıbrevank and Getronagan).<sup>94</sup> In

<sup>91</sup> *İstanbul Ermeni Okulları Talimatnamesi*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Kültür Direktörlüğü Talimat ve Programlar Serisi, Halk Basımevi, 1969), pp. 7-11.

<sup>92</sup> The Homepage of İstanbul Armenians, <http://www.bolsohays.com/webac.asp?referans=1>

<sup>93</sup> 'Tarihte Ermeniler' in [www.bolsohays.com](http://www.bolsohays.com), <http://www.bolsohays.com/webac.asp?referans=1>

<sup>94</sup> Özel Getronagan, Ermeni Lisesi Web Sitesi, <http://www.getronagan.org.tr/default/htm>

fact, both the number of the Alumni organizations and their publications rendered a considerable increase in this period. In fact, alumni organizations of the schools also became active associations within the liveliness of the civil societal atmosphere in the field of education. Their publications did not only keep the relations alive between the alumni of these schools but also contributed to the cultural and social life of the community in particular and the society in general.<sup>95</sup> Finally as the Education institutions were active in enrolling students from Anatolia in 1950s and 1960s, they became one of the main institutional means of the urbanization not only for Armenian students who immigrated from Anatolian towns and villages but also for their families in their adaptation efforts to their environment in İstanbul.

Overall, along with these contributions, Armenian minority's institutions of education played an important role in consolidating process of integration among the members of Armenian minority through strengthening both the intra-communal and inter-communal social and cultural links, while simultaneously educating the youth and their families about the socio-economically, politically and culturally coded patterns within the society.

#### *5.4. Armenian Foundations*

Turkish Armenian Community has emphasized its deprivation about the status of the minority foundations, which had limited their rights of purchasing property apart from the immovable properties listed in "1936 Manifest" (1936 Beyannamesi). Nevertheless, despite the number of properties were set and frozen by the 1936 manifest,<sup>96</sup> the minority foundations managed to purchase ownership of immovable properties through the means of donations, disposals which were connected to death, auctions of the court of debts and bankruptcy cases until 1974.<sup>97</sup> While purchasing these properties, the minority foundations were able to get documents of authorization for their competence of ownership of these properties from the mayor of the cities where

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<sup>95</sup> In this respect, the publications, which started to be published from late 1940s onwards (like 'San' of Pangaltı High School and Hantes Misaguyti of Getrongan High School) promoted intra-communal and inter-communal integration especially in the field of education in the society. For further information about the publications of Alumni organizations, See, Karakaşlı, 'Gazetelerin Satıraralarında...', pp. 66-69.

<sup>96</sup> Yervant Özuzun, 'Kanun Önünde Eşitlik', *Agos*, 20 June 1997, p.2

<sup>97</sup> Murat Cano, 'Azınlık Vakıflarının Durumu', *Agos*, 19 May 2000, p.2

**This era appeared as a non-problematic era for the integration of Armenian foundations in the economic and social spheres.**

they used to inhabit.<sup>98</sup> In this respect, as Cano argues there was no mention of any 'de facto' or 'de jure' problem in the reports of inspections of state regarding the properties which were repossessed by the minority foundations even until 1974.<sup>99</sup>

Until 1949, the administrators of the minority foundations used to be appointed by the General Directorate of Foundations in line with the amendment made to the Law of Foundations with the Law No.3513 dated 28 June 1938. The Law 5404, which was promulgated in 1949, provided these foundations a new status other than *Mazbut* (state-governed) and *Mülhak* (self-governing), in connection to practices regarding the property rights and administrations of these foundations.<sup>100</sup> The Law which was accepted 31 May 1949, left the control of the foundations to the elected personalities or councils. According to some authors, initiation of this law signified 'the golden age of the community foundations'.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, the lack of statutes, which expectedly would put forward the ways of practicing this law in the legal cases, brought about some complications with regard to this issue. Despite this problem, in overall context, this era appeared as a non-problematic era for the integration of Armenian foundations in the economic and social spheres. As long as they were encouraged to regulate the property situation and intra-communal economic structure of Armenian minority they became interactive especially within domestic economic sphere and played an important role for the economic integration of Armenian minority into overall society at institutional level.

<sup>98</sup> Murat Cano, 'Türkiye Azınlıklarının Kurumları', *Görüş*, Eylül 2002, p. 39

<sup>99</sup> Cano, 'Türkiye...'

<sup>100</sup> Organization of Istanbul Armenians, 'Türkiye Ermeni Cemaati Kurumlarının Yaşamsal Sorunları', OIA Community News Articles, in [http://www.oia.net/news/articles/1999\\_06\\_17newsfile9816.html](http://www.oia.net/news/articles/1999_06_17newsfile9816.html)

<sup>101</sup> Diran Bakar, 'Tek Parti, Tek Mütevelli', *Agos*, 20 December 1996, p.8.

## **6. INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT, FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES AND THE SITUATION OF ARMENIAN MINORITY**

In the 1950s, in general terms, international environment was favorable for democratic consolidation in Turkey. It was just after the victory of the democratic regimes in the Second World War, which paved the way for the diffusion of modernization and democratic values all over the world. Another important factor was the social reaction against the difficulties, which were experienced during the war under the rule of one party regime despite the existence of comprehensive minority right instrument in legal terms for the non-Muslim minorities living within the borders of Turkish Republic<sup>102</sup> based on Lausanne Treaty. The democracy and the new political formations, which entered the political sphere in early 1950s, were representing the hope for the future as the untried alternatives for the Armenian minority as well as other segments of society. This international wave of liberalization was also significant for the situation of the minorities within the country. Since they were reactionary to the single party regime and its policy choices towards the minorities during the war, they perceived the Democratic Party as a representative of liberal change within the domestic socio-economic and political arenas. In this respect the significant political support, which was given to Democratic Party in the in the elections throughout all 1950s was not surprising.

In the years between early 1950s and early 1970s the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority was influenced by the consequences of two different stages of a same foreign policy issue, namely Cyprus issue, in two different phases of efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey.

In 1955, the domestic implications of Cyprus issue, which were materialized in the destructive acts of the mobs in Istanbul on 6-7 September, created unconstructive environment for socio-economic integration of Armenian minority although they did not mainly target the Armenian minority. During the and development of events, since the DP government could not establish necessary mechanisms to enjoy built-in control to keep variations occurring in the socio-economic and political system within certain limits they could not deal with the domestic implications of the foreign

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<sup>102</sup> Nigar Karimova & Edward Deverell, 'Minorities in Turkey', *Occasional Papers*, No.19, (Stockholm: Utrikepolitiska Institutet, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2001), pp. 6-8

policy developments in a very structured and organized way. Thus they could not avoid the reactions of the Turkish society from being directed to the minorities and when they could not (produce efficient solutions for foreign policy problems and thus) effectively intervene the issues in international arena.<sup>103</sup>

Despite DP government of the time tried to compensate the losses of minorities from state budget and through initiating nation-wide campaigns which became civil societal initiatives (consisting of representative of Armenian minority)<sup>104</sup> it was not easy to eliminate the negative impact of the events on the efforts towards democratic consolidation and the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority (like Greek and Jewish) minorities. Nevertheless as mentioned above, although their motivation for socio-economic integration and their confidence to the Democratic Party was negatively influenced due to the implications of crisis of democratic consolidation; the Armenian minority was not late to realize the linkage between the Cyprus

<sup>103</sup> In this respect, Bieber has a point in his thoughts about the impact of the context of Turkish foreign policy on the attitudes towards the non-Muslim minorities. (See Florian Bieber, 'Religious Minorities...') In fact, such a linkage was established between the Cyprus issue and Greek minority living in Turkey in mid 1950s, which resulted in 1955 events. As Eroğul puts it, Cyprus issue is a good example for linkage between the domestic and foreign policy issues. When Cyprus issue came to the agenda of Turkey in mid-1950s Democratic Party decision-makers wanted to use it in order to change the domestic political agenda and to attract the attention of political actors to a foreign policy problem in order to disguise the crisis of democratic consolidation. Nevertheless, the consequences of these efforts brought about the linkages between the Cyprus issue and the minorities created intra-social conflict. The anger, which was promoted against the Greece's and Greek Cypriots' political and violent acts against the Turkish Cypriots, resulted in reactionary acts against the Greek minority in 1955. The events, which took place in Istanbul in 1955, were a sign of a crisis of democratic consolidation. Istanbul surrendered to ochlocracy (rule by the mob) for two days until the government could get them under control. In fact the events took place as a consequence of a foreign policy issue, (developments in Cyprus issue). Since they were flamed by the antagonism against the political acts of Greek state's and Cyprus administration with regard to Cyprus issue the anger of the mobs mainly targeted the Greek minority living in Istanbul and Izmir. For Eroğul's comments on linkage issue, See Cem Eroğul, *Demokrat Parti : Tarihi ve İdeolojisi*, (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi Yayınları, 2nd ed. 1990), pp. 108-111 and For further analysis on development of Cyprus issue and linkages between the foreign policy and the domestic politics See Hüseyin Bağcı, *1950'li Yıllar Dış Politikası*, (Ankara: METU Press, 2001), pp. 109-119 and see discussions in 'Kıbrıs Sorunun Gelişmesi Bağlamında 6-7 Eylül Olayları', *Tarih ve Toplum*, September 1986, No.33, pp. 139-154.

<sup>104</sup> The campaign which aimed to compensate the losses of victims of 1955 Events became a civil societal activity which would bring the representatives of minorities and political and economic elite of the country together in order to deal with the consequences of this destructive/disintegrative event. In fact the local committee which was established for determining the losses and to collect the donations consisted of Armenian representatives such as Onnik Balıkcıyan, Asgasar Boncuk as well. Within the context of this campaign Armenian schools, which had damages were given compensations in line with their claims. Although the campaign was hardly capable of diminishing the negative impact and consequences of the events on the socio-economic integration process of Armenian minority, it delivered the impression that the government tried to mobilize the society to compensate the losses of victims in these events. For further analysis of this donation campaign see, Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, '6-7 Eylül Olaylarından Sonra Hasar Tespit Çalışmaları Üzerine Birkac Ayrıntı', *Toplumsal Tarih*, September 2000, pp. 45-49

issue and the 1955 events and thus tried to distance itself from the probable negative consequences of such linkage.<sup>105</sup> In this respect, it would be possible for the socio-economic integration process of Armenian minority to get less incurable wounds from September 1955 crisis in relative terms.

The second foreign policy development, which took place in connection with Cyprus issue and had an impact on the integration process, was the political acts of some groups within Armenian Diaspora in April 1965 targeting Turkey.<sup>106</sup> In this framework, demonstrations which were planned to take place in several cities and towns of world for the 'commemoration of victims of the deportation' appeared as a test case for socio-economic integration of Armenian minority. They were also significant in the sense that they would show whether the linkage approach was relevant for the political acts of Diaspora against Turkey and the situation of Armenian minority in Turkey.

On the contrary to speculations, these political acts of Diaspora in 1965, which took place in several parts of world, did not create a devastatingly negative impact on socio-economic integration of the Armenian minority.<sup>107</sup> On the contrary, they rather played integrative role since they resulted in creation of the civic and political forums where the Armenian minority expressed their loyalty to the country they used to live in.

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<sup>105</sup> Thus, the members of Armenian minority soon became aware of the fact that these events were outcome of the developments in Cyprus and that they were not the main target of these reactionary political and violent acts. In fact such understanding would be seen in the events of 1965 when the members of the Armenian minority characterize the political acts of Armenian Diaspora as a political game organized by the Greeks who want to get the upper hand in Cyprus issue. In this respect they tried to distance themselves from the foreign policy issues, which might be linked to the other minorities within the country.

<sup>106</sup> Especially, for Turkish press there was an obvious linkage between the Cyprus issue and these political acts, which were targeting Turkey. Thus, in Turkish press, these political acts were presented as a part of Greek and Greek Cypriot strategy in order to change the agenda regarding the violent acts of Greek Cypriots against the Turkish Cypriots by directing the attention of world public opinion to the old issues. For Arcayürek this linkage could be deduced from the speech of Cyprus Foreign Minister Kyprianu, which was delivered in United Nations General Assembly in April 1965. See 'Rumların Tahrikiyle Ermeniler Katliamın 50nci Yılına Anacak', *Hürriyet*, 8 April 1965. For the presentation of the acts in Turkish press in connection to the 'provocations of Greek Cypriots', see Arcayürek, 'Rumların Tahrikiyle Ermeniler ...'; Osman Aykut, 'Ermenileri Tahrik Başladı', *Milliyet*, 9 April 1965; Kadircan Kafılı, 'Ermeniler ve Rumlar', *Tercüman*, 28 April 1965, p.3. and 'Lübnan'daki Ermeniler Katliam Törenini İptal Etti', *Tercüman*, 18 April 1965

<sup>107</sup> Despite the some studies put emphasis on the negative impacts, I would argue on the contrary. For the arguments about negative impacts, See Necla Başgün, *Türk Ermeni İlişkileri: Abdülhamid'in Cülusundan Zamanımıza Kadar*, (Töre-Devlet Yayınevi, 1973), pp.120-123.

From the very beginning of the incidents, Armenian minority distanced itself from these events and used all civic forums<sup>108</sup> in order to put emphasis on the idea that the members of Armenian community in Turkey had no connections with the political acts of some groups within Armenian Diaspora targeting the Turkish state and society in line collaborative manner serving the strategies and political maneuverings of the Greek Cypriots. In line with this understanding, at institutional level, the Armenian Patriarchate expressed that the Turkey's Armenians saw themselves as an inseparable part of this country and that they would not approve any movement opposing the interests of this country.<sup>109</sup> Likewise, at individual level, the members of Armenian community of Turkey accentuated their grief and even anger towards these political acts, which they believed, were encouraged in line with the Greek Cypriot's policies and strategies regarding the Cyprus issue.<sup>110</sup>

Parallel to these acts, press and local authorities delivering messages regarding integrity and peaceful relations with Armenian minority. In fact, in most of the news articles that took place in the Turkish press during these incidents the Armenian minority members were represented as the clever, hardworking and loyal citizens of Turkey,<sup>111</sup> who shared the similar feelings and interests with the overall society in many occasions in different fields of their daily lives;<sup>112</sup> and who actively contributed to the scientific, artistic, cultural accumulation of this country.<sup>113</sup> The common point in almost all news articles or comments was that Turkish citizens of Armenian origin would be offended by such incidents and organized political acts of Diaspora as much as any other ordinary Turkish citizen.

<sup>108</sup> While the political, economic and cultural elite of Armenian community gave interviews to the newspapers, some groups of Armenian minority put flowers to the Monument of Republic in Taksim Square in Istanbul. See, 'Ermeni yurttaşlar anıta çelenk koyacaklar', *Milliyet*, 23 April 1965; 'Ermeniler Türkiye'ye Bağlılık Çiçekleri Sundu', *Tercüman*, 25 April 1965; and for a comprehensive collection of interviews, see *Facts from the Turkish Armenians*, published by *Jamanak* Newspaper (one of the major newspapers of Armenian minority) (Istanbul: Jamanak publication, 1980).

<sup>109</sup> 'Ermeni Patrikliği Memleket Menfaatine Aykırı Bir Hareketi Tasvip Etmiyor', *Hürriyet*, 10 April 1965

<sup>110</sup> Serbest Kürsü 'Ermeni Vatandaşlarımız Ateş Püskürüyor: Biz Türküz ve Huzur İçindeyiz', *Hürriyet*, 10 April 1965, p. 2

<sup>111</sup> Arcayürek, 'Rumların Tahrikiyle Ermeniler...; and editorial 'Türkiye'deki Ermeniler Bu Eski Oyunlara Gelmeyecektir', *Tercüman*, 21 Nisan 1965, p. 1 and p. 7

<sup>112</sup> Bülent Ecevit, 'Ermeni', in *Görüş*, *Milliyet*, 12 April 1965, p. 2

<sup>113</sup> 'Takvimden Bir Yaprak, Biz ve Ermeniler', *Milliyet*, 10 April 1965, p. 2

Overall, both Turkish press, Turkey's national and municipal political and state elite and Armenian minority's political, economic, religious and cultural elite expressed the commonly shared belief that such political acts would not be able to damage the peaceful relations between the Armenian minority and the overall society through via giving messages of integrity by using all possible occasions at local and national level.<sup>114</sup> In this respect the incidents, which took place in the spring of 1965 in several parts of world such as France and Lebanon created an integrative impact on the Armenian minority and the rest of the society rather than shaking this integrity. As a result, unlike the Greek minority, the Armenian minority did not become a subject of such linkage between the foreign policy issues and the attitudes towards the minorities until the violent political activities of ASALA in early 1970s.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Despite the crises in and instabilities that appeared in the efforts towards democratic consolidation in Turkey, the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority did not face destructive challenges until the implications of political and violent acts of terrorist or fanatic Armenian organizations began to be felt in domestic spheres of socio-economic interaction from the early 1970s onwards.<sup>115</sup> Until the 1970s, the Armenian minority both suffered from the crises and enjoyed the benefits of efforts towards democratic consolidation together with the other segments of the society. In other words, during this era, within the context of its socio-economic integration to overall society, the Armenian minority did not face any excessive problems<sup>116</sup> other than the problems, which were faced by most of the citizens in the

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<sup>114</sup> While for instance political, economic and religious elite of Armenian minority were expressing their views in the columns of newspapers; Istanbul's mayor Aki and local authorities were emphasizing the integrity of all society with the Armenian minority by stating that they were among the primary actors in the population of thirty millions at a dinner given by the Beyoğlu Armenian Church Branch of Aid for Poor People in Kervansaray Hall, in 12 April 1965. See, "Vali Aki Ermenilere 'Otuz Milyonla Berabersiniz' Dedi", *Milliyet*, 12 April 1965, p. 3.

<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless it would also be a reductionist approach to simply link all the problems in the socio-economic integration after 1970s to the activities of these organizations. Any further study on the socio-economic integration of Armenian minority after this period needs to take into account the structural dynamics and developments within the social, economic and political spheres of Turkey as well as intra-communal dynamics of Armenian minority while conducting a research on the nature of integration during and after these years.

<sup>116</sup> Maybe with the exception of 1955 events.



process of democratic consolidation deriving from its ethno-religious difference from the majority.

The integration, which took place in economic, political and socio-cultural spheres at both individual and institutional levels, was influenced and shaped both by domestic and international developments of three different periods between early 1950s and early 1970s within the context of democratic consolidation. Thus the developments in political, civil and economic societies, in rule of law and the bureaucracy; and the changes in structural dynamics such as economic development, international environment, and political culture of the country played important role in determining the nature of integration of Armenian minority in the respective spheres. In the overall picture, as the Armenian minority integrated to the society in the forms of political absorption and accommodation; economic full/partial integration; and cultural pluralism through the institutional or individual socio-economic, political and cultural acts; it enjoyed a considerable degree of communal mobility and integrity within the society in this era. This progress of integration continued until the violent and political acts of Armenian radical and/or terrorist groups against Turkey from the beginning of 1970s without confronting any serious challenge.