

**Emergence of Transnational Social Spaces and Rethinking
Citizenship: The Case of Jewish Minority in Turkey**

by

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for any award or any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution. It is affirmed by the candidate that, to the best of his knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This study presents an analysis on transnationalism literature with a focus on the impacts of emerging transnational social spaces. This thesis questions whether the Turkish Jewish community can be perceived as a transnational community due to its transnational ties and networks. Despite various studies available on non-Muslim minorities of Turkey and specifically on the Turkish Jewish community, this study will be the first to analyze the issue from the perspective of transnationalism. The history of Jewish existence in Turkey and the evolution of citizenship concept in the Turkish context will be discussed to define Turkish Jewish community as a transnational community. Additionally, the understanding of Turkish citizenship by the Jewish community, by the majority of the society and by the Turkish state will be a focus of this study in relation to its impacts on the transnational character of the community. In sum, the argument will be made that the Jewish community in Turkey has become a transnational community in the 21st century.

Key Words: Transnational social spaces, transnational community, dual citizenship, Turkish Jewish community.

ÖZET

Bu çalı ma geli mekte olan ulusa ırı alanlar litertaürünü, ulusa ırı topluluklar kavramı üzerinden incelemektedir. Bu tez, Türkiye Musevi cemaatinin ve cemaat üyelerinin sahip oldu u ulusa ırı a lara ba lı olarak ulusa ırı topluluk olarak kabul edilip edilemeyece ini sorgulamaktadır. Bu çalı ma, ulusa ırı toplumlar literatürü bakı açısının Türkiye Musevi cemaati üzerinde uygulanan ilk örne i olarak Türkiye’de dini azınlıklar üzerine yapılan ara tırmalara katkıda bulunmayı hedeflemektedir. Bu amaca ba lı olarak, Türkiye Musevi cemaatinin bir ulusa ırı topluluk olarak adlandırılabilmesi için Musevilerin Türkiye’ye yerle imi ve Türkiye’de vatandaşlık kavramının geli imi tarihsel açıdan incelenmi tir. Buna ek olarak, Türkiye Musevi cemaatinin vatandaşlık anlayı ının; geni toplumun ve Türk devletinin Türkiye’de ya ayan Musevilerle ilgili dü üncelerinin cemaatin ulusa ırı topluluk yapısına olası etkisi ara tırılmı tır. Tüm bu etkenlere ba lı olarak, bu tez Türkiye Musevi cemaatinin günümüzde bir ulusa ırı topluluk olarak algılanması ve Türkiye’de ya ayan Musevilerinin vatandaşlık anlayı ının bu yapıya ba lı olarak incelenmesi gerekti ini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ulusa ırı Toplumsal Alanlar, ulusa ırı topluluklar, çift vatandaşlık, Türkiye Musevi cemaati.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZET.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Statement of the Research Question	1
1.2 Purpose.....	7
1.3 Methodology	10
1.4 Structure	18
2 TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE CASE OF TURKISH JEWS.....	21
2.1 Introduction.....	21
2.2 What is transnationalism? An Overview of the Field	22
2.2.1 Three Perspectives on Transnationalism.....	25
2.2.2 Emergence of Transnational Social Spaces: A literature review on Thomas Faist.....	28
2.2.3 Effects of Transnationalism on Citizenship and Culture	33
2.3 Transnational Communities: The Case of Turkish Jewish Community	39
3 THE HISTORY OF JEWS IN TURKEY	46
3.1 Introduction.....	46
3.2 Jews under the Ottoman Empire: From Subjects to Citizens.....	51
3.3 The Early Republican Period (1923-1945): Formation of the “Turkish” Nation.....	61

3.4 The Multi Party Democracy Period (1945-1980): The Road to Democratization?	77
3.5 Post-1980 Period (1980 - 2010): Globalization, Turkey and non-Muslim minorities	85
4 TRANSNATIONAL CITIZENSHIP IN CASE OF TURKEY’S JEWS	102
4.1 Introduction.....	102
4.2 A Discussion on Turkish Citizenship: Case of the Jewish Minority in Turkey	103
4.3 The Legal Status, Identity and Civic Virtue Aspects of Citizenship: Experiences of Turkish Jewish Community Members	113
4.3.1 Turkish Citizenship and the Legal Status of Turkish Jews	114
4.3.2 Turkish Citizenship and the Identity Aspect in Case of Turkey’s Jewish Minority	116
4.3.3 Turkish Citizenship and Civic Virtue in Case of Turkey’s Jewish Minority	119
4.4 Emergence of Transnational Citizenship: The Case of Jewish Community of Turkey.....	121
4.5 Concluding Remarks.....	125
5 CONCLUSION	128
5.1 Aim and Contribution	128
5.2 Findings.....	131
5.3 Strengths, Weaknesses and Further Research.....	134
BIBLIOGRAPHY	137

CHAPTER I

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Research Question

There were 146.000 Jews living under the Ottoman Empire based on the census carried out in 1906-1907. This figure significantly fell down with the establishment of the Turkish Republic, as Turkish Jews migrated in major flows during certain critical times of the 20th century. The Jewish population of Turkey declined to 82.000 in 1927 and 38.000 in 1965 (çduygu et al.; 2008: 363). Currently, the estimates for the Jewish population in Turkey range from 20.000 to 25.000¹ with 96 percent of this population being Sephardic Jews who had been expelled from the Iberian Peninsula and accepted in the Ottoman lands with the permission of Sultan Beyazid. Alongside with the Armenian and Greek communities, Turkish Jewish community today constitutes only 1 percent of the non-Muslim Turkish population.

The Treaty of Lausanne (1923) which recognized Turkey as a fully independent state within its present day borders, accorded minority rights to three non-Muslim religious minorities. The Lausanne treaty defined non-Muslim nationals as ‘national minorities’ guaranteeing Armenians, Greeks and Jews rights to enjoy the

¹ Since question on religion was taken out of the recent census polls, an official number on the Jewish population of Turkey is not available. The official number stated by the Turkish Jewish Community is 25.000.

freedom of religion, worship and education in their own language. More importantly the Treaty guaranteed the religious minorities the right to be treated equally before the Law and to face no discriminations based on their religion.

Today, the Jewish population of Turkey is mainly concentrated in Istanbul (approximately 90 percent of the Jewish population), Izmir, Edirne, Bursa, Çanakkale, Ankara, Adana and Antalya are some other Anatolian provinces with small Jewish populations. The community owns 19 synagogues located in the European and Asian sides of Istanbul as well as the Princess Islands². There are six cemeteries functioning under the community. The Chief Rabbi Ishak Haleva legally represents the community whereas the Lay Counselors are responsible for the decisions on the daily affairs. The president selected from the members of the Lay Counselors acts as the representative of the community looking after the secular and daily affairs of the Community³.

Despite their small number, the Jewish community of Turkey has distinguished themselves and has always been a vibrant community since the 15th century. Their number is low in Turkey, but their commitment to and enthusiasm for the Turkish Republic has always been high. There are many prominent Turkish Jews in business, industry and in the liberal professions. Despite the positive aspects of their relation to the state and the majority population, Turkish Jews have been blamed for the country's ills on several political and social issues. According to Bali (2004: 85), "Turkey's Jews have been scapegoated by the Islamist movement which started to grow in 1946, and in 1969 the National Order Party began propagating its

² Some of the major synagogues are the Neva Shalom, Beth Israel and Etz Ahayim synagogues. For an extended version of the list see <http://www.musevicemaati.com>. Some of the other institutions owned by the community are the Ulus Musevi Lyceum, the Balat Hospital and the Jewish Museum of Turkey.

³ Sami Herman is the current President of Turkish Jewish Community.

Islamist National View ideology accusing Jews and Zionism of being behind all the troubles of Turkey.” 1970s witnessed more difficult times for the Jewish community as the Jews became a victim to the clashes between the ultra leftists and ultra rightists. Despite some negative developments related mostly to international events, 1990s and early 2000s have been generally calm and peaceful decades for the Jewish community in Turkey.

This study began in a period when Turkey’s discussion of non-Muslim minority groups - defined as Armenian, Jewish and Greek communities by the Treaty of Lausanne - became an international issue with reference to the Copenhagen criteria of the European Union (EU)⁴. Despite the ongoing discussion within Turkey and with reference to the EU, this period represented a relatively peaceful environment for the Jewish community⁵. However, at the time of research for the thesis, the Israeli-Palestine conflict escalated once again causing a new conflict in the region. Beginning of yet another Israeli-Palestinian confrontation and death of many civilians turned this issue into a heated debate on the Turkish agenda. The tension between the two countries increased following Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdo an’s criticisms on Israeli policies and his verbal attack towards the Israeli President Shimon Peres at the World Economic Forum of 2009⁶. This in effect, contributed to a rise in anti-Semitism in Turkey. Prime Minister Erdo an’s reaction

⁴ The Copenhagen criterion defines the conditions required by the European Union to become an eligible member. Copenhagen criteria require the member country to achieve stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law and human rights,; as well as respect for and protection of minorities. Moreover, existence of a functioning market economy that is able to cope with competitive pressures within the Union is also required.

⁵ The Jewish community did not face any major problems in the period where as the Armenian community have been through a more conflicted period due to the global discussion on so - called ‘Armenian Genocide’ and the assassination of Hrant Dink, an Armenian journalist.

⁶ The video of the incident can be seen at: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-7125732350997917369>. Turkish Prime Minister rebutted Israeli President Shimon Peres: “Mr. Peres, you are older than me. Your voice is too loud out of a guilty conscience. When it comes to killing, you know very well how to kill...Your holy book says you shall not kill.” Erdo an then walked off the field saying “Davos is over for me.”

and his attitude against Israel was perceived as proud leadership, for taking a stand against the Israeli aggression by his supporters in and outside Turkey. Erdoğan's rebuttal of Peres in the international arena won over the masses and Erdoğan was greeted as a hero.

The ties at the leadership level had already been undermined before the Davos incident with Erdoğan's verbal attack of the Israeli Prime Minister for lying to him and acting behind his back regarding the beginning of the Gaza operation. Israeli-Palestinian confrontation in Gaza strained the relationship between Israel and Turkey, the full implications of which became clearer at the Davos meeting on January 2009 and then during the Mavi Marmara⁷ incident in May 2010. Erdoğan's response during both events won him praise among Turkish and Arab public but at the expense of increasing anti-Semitism in Turkey. It remains to be seen whether or not the long-term relationship between Turkey and Israel will survive, and more importantly whether or not the Turkish Jews will move towards a new era in their relationship with the Turkish state and the majority of the country's population.

At the time of research, *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP* (Justice and Development Party) policies of the time played a significant role in defining the formidable environment for the Turkish Jews, it is important to remind that this study focuses on a longer period starting with the Ottoman Empire and in the historical context it is possible to witness such periods of conflict under the rule of different political parties. In fact, conflicting and in some cases discriminatory state led

⁷ The Mavi Marmara Boat was purchased by the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedom and Humanitarian Relief (İnsan Yardım Vakfı) and was sent to Gaza for bringing humanitarian aid and supplies. Before the journey began Israel warned both Turkey and the Foundation members that they will not allow the ship in Gaza.

On 31 May 2010, on its way to Gaza, Israeli Defense Forces seized the boat on international waters. Violent actions were taken since the activists at the boat did not surrender. Since the incident resulted in killing of some of the Turkish activist the relations between Turkey and Israel almost came to an end. There is an ongoing investigation about the incident that is run by the United Nations.

policies were apparent in the Early Republican era of 1923-1945. The Turkification policies of Republican People's Party applied as part of the Kemalist ideology of the Turkish state sets forth an important example to such periods of conflict. Similarly, rising hostility towards the non-Muslim population and anti-Semitism in state and societal level were also evident in this period paving the way for changes in the perceptions of Turkey and Turkish citizenship in the minds of the members of non-Muslim minority groups⁸. To this end, it is possible to argue that this study developed in a delicate period for the Turkish Jewish community as they witnessed a shift from a peaceful environment to a more threatening one. Yet, this changing environment also enriched this study as the effects of this political crisis between Turkey and Israel caused the community to rethink about its status and its relations with the Turkish state and officials. In a period, when the Jewish community questioned its own position regarding Turkish citizenship due to the reactions, this study questioned the identification of Turkish Jews with Israel and the status of the community in reference to the debate on Turkish citizenship. In an attempt to examine the nature of the Turkish Jewish community, its relation to Turkish state, Turkish society and to other countries with Jewish population, this thesis tries to understand whether the Turkish Jewish community can be considered as a transnational social space in the form of a transnational community. Following Thomas Faist's (2000a: 199) definition of *transnational social spaces* as "combinations of ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that reach across the borders of multiple states"; Turkish Jewish

⁸Details of the Turkification policies and its effects on the non-Muslim minority groups will be explained in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Moreover, some examples of the perception changes among the Jewish minority members will be provided throughout this study with the help of some responses of the interviewees.

community's transnational social space could be argued to be shaped by its members' transnational ties and networks mainly including Israel, United States of America and some other European countries.

Taking the recent developments and events at home and abroad into account, the objective of this thesis is to examine the transnational social space of the Turkish Jewish community and decide whether or not it carries the characteristics of a transnational community. To this end, the social and symbolic ties of the Turkish Jewish community will be analyzed with reference to the transnationalism literature. Furthermore, the Jewish existence under Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic will be reinterpreted with reference to transnationalism literature to analyze the transnational nature of the community in a historical framework. Additionally, the effect of transnationalism on the perceptions towards citizenship will be analyzed in the context of the Turkish Jewish community. The evolution of citizenship concept in Turkey and its effects on the non-Muslim minority groups will be examined to investigate the possibility of transnational citizenship among the community members.

In an attempt to present the transnational character of the community, the face-to-face interviews with a selected group of Turkish Jews will be used to define the transnational ties of the community members. Interviews will also be used to provide information on the participants' understanding and experiences about Turkish citizenship. To this end, the qualitative research study preceding the thesis focused on a diverse population of Turkish Jewish community members taking age, gender and socio-economic background as factors of selection. As a part of the study, the participants were asked several questions to understand the nature of their transnational ties and transformations occurring as a consequence of these ties.

The effects of community's transnational ties and networks will be examined in relation to the emerging shift from *multiculturalism* to *transnationalism* paving the way for a change from *multicultural citizenship* to *transnational citizenship* in the form of *dual citizenship*.

While the framework of this thesis was developed before any conflict was at sight, the implementation and the interview periods took place in the setting of a Turkish-Israeli conflict and increased anti-Semitism as a consequence of the strained ties between Israel and Turkey. Yet, for an objective study, special attention will be given to present both the transnational nature of the community and the reactions within the community due to increasing anti-Semitism. The rise of anti-Semitism had an impact on the research part of this thesis, as the participants had already been going through a period whereby they questioned their own citizenship status.

1.2 Purpose

The main purpose of this study is to develop a new understanding in analyzing the current status of the Turkish Jews from the perspective of transnationalism literature with a focus on the effect of this transnationality on the perceptions of Turkish citizenship. It hopes to bring a novel approach in the literature by presenting the Turkish Jewish community as a case study and defining it as a transnational community. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the current literature on non-Muslim minorities of Turkey through defining a framework that can be applied for different minority groups in the Turkish context.

In line with the primary (main) purpose, various definitions in different literatures (such as sociology, cultural anthropology and political science) and uses of transnationalism (such as its usages in the economical, cultural domain and social realms) will be discussed and major discussions in the transnationalism literature will

be summarized in the theoretical parts of the thesis. Accordingly, this study uses a theoretical framework to determine the characteristics of a transnational community; it then tries to test these characteristics on the Turkish Jewish community to reinterpret it as a transnational community. While this study focuses mainly on the current status of the community and its members, the historical background covering the period starting from the Ottoman Empire and reaching to the current date will be included in the analysis to introduce the transnational nature of the community in a historical timeline.

Moreover, interviews conducted with thirty of the community members⁹ complemented the main research question of the study, which was to present whether or not the Turkish Jewish community can be considered as a transnational community. The survey, which formed the qualitative research part of the study, aimed to understand the transnational networks of the interviewees. As a result, the interviews offered the participants an opportunity to define their transnational ties, which were their extended family members and friends who emigrated from Turkey but with whom they are still in contact. Participants were then asked to define the nature of their relationship, how they maintained their relationship and the benefits of having transnational ties and networks. These questions served to obtain information on major characteristics of Turkish Jewish community's transnational ties.

The interviews also contained questions on citizenship that bridged the primary purpose of the study to the secondary purpose which is to assess and present the effects of community's transnational nature on its members' perception on Turkish citizenship. The information gathered from the interviews will be interpreted

⁹ Detailed information on the nature of the interviews and the selection of the participants are provided in the methodology section of this chapter.

in line with the multiculturalism and transnationalism literatures on citizenship. While the current literature on non-Muslim minority groups of Turkey mainly focuses on multiculturalism and multicultural citizenship; this study aims at expanding the current debate through introducing the concept of transnational citizenship and examining its consequences for the case of the Turkish Jewish community. To this end, the literature focusing on Turkish citizenship and the non-Muslim minority groups of Turkey were researched in depth to comprehend the common understanding prevalent in the literature.

The place of non-Muslim minority groups of Turkey will be evaluated in this study in the discussion axis of equal versus differential treatment in terms of citizenship. Following the current literature on non-Muslim minority groups and citizenship¹⁰, Will Kymlicka's identification of the term citizenship in terms of its *legal*, *identity* and *civic virtue* aspects will be applied to the case of the Turkish Jewish minority group. This discussion will be further expanded through the responses of the interview participants which offer *de jure* versus *de facto* information in the case of the Jewish minority of Turkey. As a novel attempt, this thesis will try to widen the discussion on citizenship with a focus on transnational citizenship and especially the concept of dual citizenship.

The citizenship status of the non-Muslim minority groups has historically been on the agenda of the academia, this issue has gained more importance with more recent attempts to adapt the Copenhagen criteria on the road to EU membership. However, the current literature on the citizenship of the non-Muslim minorities, in this case the Jews of Turkey, does not analyze the issue from the transnationalism perspective. Therefore, a study that focuses on the creation of

¹⁰ For examples of such studies see çduygu (1999), Tokta (2005), Tokta (2006).

transnational ties and the constructed meanings of these ties in relation to citizenship and identity building does not exist. This thesis will try to enlarge the scope of minority studies by attempting to analyze the role of transnational ties in Turkish Jewish community's interpretation of Turkish citizenship.

Combining transnationalism and citizenship literatures, this study propounds a new way of analyzing the non-Muslim minority groups in Turkey. While this thesis will focus on the Turkish Jewish community as the main case study, it aims to represent a framework which can be extended to any other minority group that meets the conditions to be a transnational community. In this respect, this study not only proposes that the historical formation and current status of Turkish Jewish community represents an example of a transnational community but it also puts forward the consequences of this transnational nature by centering its discussion around how the community members' understanding of their citizenship status is transformed by the influence of transnational ties. Through this research, the study extends its scope to different interpretations of Turkish citizenship.

1.3 Methodology

The main methodologies used in this research were the interviews that were applied on a diverse population and secondary data analysis. Interviews held with thirty of the Turkish Jewish community members constitute the primary data of this research; they are also the main sources of interpretation of the perceptions on current status of the Turkish Jewish community and the transnational nature of the community as presented in the study. This section will offer a comprehensive explanation of the methodology used in this thesis as well as the nature and the scope of the interviews. This explanation will be followed by a description on how

secondary data analysis was used to complement and strengthen the arguments presented in this study.

Between March 2009 and April 2009¹¹, thirty interviews were conducted with members of the Turkish Jewish community. The identities and names of the participants will not be revealed to protect their privacy. In line with the main research interests of this thesis, the interview questions focused on figuring out the transnational networks of the participants, questioning their understanding of Turkish citizenship, revealing their transnational ties and their loyalty to Turkey and to other countries they pursue their transnational ties and hold their networks in. All of the interviews were planned to be conducted individually to avoid any possible pressure or influence on answers from others. In the beginning of each interview, I introduced myself and underlined the fact that I was also a member of the Jewish community. Moreover, background information on the reason for carrying out these interviews was shared with the participants. This approach was used to create familiarity with the participants and to ease the process of interview as the questions necessitated the participants to freely express their ideas without fear of any judgments. In the course of the interviews, questions that were prepared beforehand were used. Yet, the nature of the interviews was designed in such a way that questions asked did not limit the scope of discussion. Therefore each interview was unique and was shaped by the willingness of the participant to explain him/herself and the scope of his/her experiences.

¹¹ The actual date planned for the interviews was between January-February 2009 but due to the increasing tension in the region, because of the Israeli- Palestinian war, the interviews had to be postponed. In the period of the war, anti-Semitism in Turkey rose once again and the Jews felt under pressure which meant that they were more likely to be more reluctant to participate in the interviews or their feelings toward Turkey could have been affected. Still, in all of the interviews the participants were asked to define how this current tension affected them and if it caused any change in their feelings towards Turkey.

To obtain a diverse sample, interviews were conducted on three different samples taking each participant as the unit of analysis. The samples were grouped based on age groups. As Jews have been part of Turkish Republic since its establishment, different generations faced changing types of state led policies which shaped their unique understanding of Turkey and Turkish citizenship. While three sample groups are not enough to reflect all of the generational differences, only three age groups were chosen to limit the scope of the thesis.

The first sample included five men and five women whose age ranged between eighteen and thirty. This first sample corresponded to the younger population of the Turkish Jews which were expected to be more incorporated with Turkish society since they did not witness any serious periods of tension. The second sample contained five men and five women aged between thirty one and sixty four. This middle aged group was followed by a third sample of five men and five women over the age of sixty five who are expected to have more vivid memories of older and more turbulent times, but since they did not immigrate they are likely to have strong financial or emotional ties to Turkey.

The groups were firstly divided according to age, but this was not the only factor taken into account in creating a diverse sample. Variety in the socioeconomic conditions of the participants has been a major factor in building the list of participants. Socio-economic conditions have been considered an important factor in presenting the diverse groups within the community and understanding the role socioeconomic conditions played in the construction of transnational networks and perceptions towards Turkey. Gender equality has also been considered by ensuring all of the groups consisted of equal number of male and female participants.

All of the interviews started with the demographic questions asking the participant about gender, date and place of birth, marital status, and educational background as well as; current occupation, and the knowledge of other languages and monthly revenue¹². These demographic questions were aimed at collecting basic information on the participants and getting a grasp of their current life conditions.

The participants were then asked to explain their and their families' life stories in stages. To obtain more comprehensive knowledge about participants' lives, they were guided to tell their stories according to milestones of their lives. For example, the life stories of the younger sample were categorized as parts by their education status (stories of primary school, high school and university). This has been the most general and comprehensive question of the interview which served as an opportunity to learn as much as possible about the participant. The life stories of parents or the grandparents of the participants were also asked to get a comparison of the possible generational differences.

The following interview questions focusing on the Jewish immigration from Turkey were used to display the transnational social space of the community. To this end, participants were asked to name three of their family members and friends who have migrated from Turkey. To protect privacy, relationship between the participants and the émigrés was used instead of names. Moreover, the participants were also asked to define the nature of their relationship with the immigrants, the reason why these people have migrated and whether their communication with these people still continued, and the frequency and ways through which communication channels these relationships have been maintained. Responses of these questions played a

¹² As some of the participants were not comfortable about declaring their monthly revenues, they were asked to choose from a range.

significant role in defining the transnational ties and networks of the participants as well as acting as the basis for showing the transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community.

The last set of questions was about citizenship. The participants were asked to define the concept of citizenship in their own words as well as defining their activities concerning citizenship, civic duties such as voting, paying taxes and compulsory military duty. These questions addressed the major components of Kymlicka's literature on citizenship which is focused on legal, identity and civic virtue aspects of citizenship¹³. The additional questions on dual citizenship were included to search on the possibility to capture the shift from multicultural citizenship to transnational citizenship. The sentiments and loyalties of the participants both to Turkey and Israel were also questioned as part of the interviews.

A special interview with Silvyo Ovadya, the then president of the Turkish Jewish Community, was conducted in early 2009. Significantly, this interview was held in a period when Turkish-Israeli relations were relatively good and interacted due to Turkey's mediator role in Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations and Turkish army's purchases of Israeli military equipment. In comparison to the following period the Turkish Jews were living in a more peaceful and comfortable environment. The aim of this interview was to get a grasp of the current status of the Turkish Jewish community, its lobbying activities, and its relations with the current government of AKP; as well as the problems the community face and the improvements on the road to European Union membership, from the official leader of the community. Moreover, specific questions regarding the tendencies and level of immigration of the Turkish Jews were asked. However, it should be pointed out

¹³ Will Kymlicka's literature on citizenship will be explained in detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

that in the period following this interview the Israel-Palestine conflict rose, a period of confrontation started once again and Turkish-Israeli relations entered a tense period due to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's criticism on Israel. The tension increased even more after the argument between Erdoğan and Shimon Peres in Davos. This tension in the international realm was reflected on the Turkish Jews in the form of increasing anti-Semitism in Turkey, both at the state and society level¹⁴.

While the AKP ministers and Prime Minister Erdoğan himself stated that they condemn anti-Semitism in all of its forms, the actions and speeches held by Erdoğan displayed a more contradictory picture. Following these events, the statements and interviews of Ovadya became more apparent in both the written and visual media as a means to calm the community members.

Secondary data were analyzed to expand the information gained from all of the interviews in a theoretical perspective and to provide the aim of the study, which is to define Turkish Jewish community as a transnational community. This research is built around three main literatures. First, to provide the theoretical basis of this thesis a literature review on transnationalism will be provided. This literature review will focus on the prominent scholars of transnationalism with a focus on their theorization of economical, political and socio-cultural forms of transnationalism. This literature review will be followed by an extensive research on the works of Thomas Faist that defines the view of political science on transnationalism. His work on transnational social spaces defined the main argument of this research with

¹⁴ Throughout this period there have been numerous protests against Israel around Turkey but especially in Istanbul in front of the Israeli Consulate building. Some of these protests showed that Israel was not the only part condemned but Jews in Turkey were criticized too. Moreover, different types of protests were also visible in the business world like Muslim businesses quitting business deals with Jews.

an emphasis on transnational communities. Faist's literature was selected as the main theoretical framework of this study since his discussion on transnational social spaces, and especially the category of transnational community, offers a promising area of research in understanding and interpreting the status of Turkish Jewish community.

The second part of the literature review will focus on the history of Turkish Jewish community starting from the Ottoman Empire and reaching up to the current status of the community in 2010. This historical background will be reinterpreted from the perspective of the transnationalism literature to define the conditions met by the Turkish Jewish community in becoming a transnational community.

The third part of the research will focus on the citizenship literature. However, rather than providing a detailed literature review on citizenship; the main focus will be shifted towards Will Kymlicka's discussion on multicultural citizenship and Thomas Faist's contribution to it by extending it through introducing transnational citizenship. Following the current literature on non-Muslim minority groups and citizenship, Kymlicka's definition of the term citizenship in terms of legal, identity and civic virtue aspects will be included in this thesis. In the Turkish Jewish case, incorporation of the identity and civic virtues played a significant role since equality was provided in legal terms whereas difference was felt in identity and civic virtue realms. Faist's transnational citizenship and the shift to dual citizenship are included to define the changing structure of the community's perception on citizenship. In Chapter 4, evolution of the Turkish citizenship concept will be discussed in reference to both of the above mentioned literatures.

In conducting a research on the Turkish Jewish community, secondary data provided by the books and articles of the researchers who worked on the subject

were used. Various books focusing on the Jews of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic written by Jewish and non-Jewish authors were included in the research period of this thesis. Throughout this research, sources that defined the same period in very different ways were available. To avoid any partiality that may occur due to this reason, a combination of available perspectives was used to compose a rather objective and realistic picture of these periods.

From all of the available sources, Ule Tokta 's Ph.D thesis "Citizenship, minorities and immigrants: A Comparison of Turkey's Jewish minority and the Turkish-Jewish immigrants in Israel" has been the most enlightening work as it provided an insightful research. Moreover, demographic information (population, education level, socioeconomic conditions) on the community and its members were gathered from the sources of the Rabbinate of Turkish Jewish Community (Musevi Cemaati Türkiye Hahamba lılı 1) and its official website¹⁵.

Despite the different methodologies used for this research, interviews constituted the most informative, yet at the same time the most difficult part of the thesis research. In some cases, especially with the older participants, it was harder to communicate since they were reluctant to share their experiences. While in others the contradictions in the answers of the participants, in relations to delicate issues like identity, were difficult to analyze. Yet, the ability to mix the information gained from literature with the experiences of the participants can be considered as one of the strengths of the study. An additional strength of this thesis has been the attempt to identify the Turkish Jewish community which is a non-migrant group rooted in Turkey for more than five hundred years as a transnational community which is usually used for migrant groups. Due to the diaspora nature of the community and

¹⁵ It is the highest institution that represents the Jewish community in Turkey.

the maintained ties of the community members with Israel, it was possible to take the Turkish Jewish community as a case study for Thomas Faist's literature on transnational communities. A possible contribution of this research to the minority literature¹⁶ could be through application of this framework to both Muslim and non-Muslim minority groups in Turkey.

1.4 Structure

The introduction chapter states the research question of this study, which is to investigate whether the Turkish Jewish community can be accepted and presented as a transnational community. In relation to this research question, the relationship between transnationalism and the case of Turkish citizenship with reference to Turkish Jewish community's case will be analyzed. Moreover, the purpose of this study and novelty it hopes to bring to the current literature will be described.

Chapter 2 will present a literature review on transnationalism. It will begin by presenting the different explanations of the term transnationalism used in the literature. Transnationalism has a wide use in different areas of anthropology, sociology and political science; and different uses of the term in economic, political and socio-cultural realms will be explored. Thomas Faist's work on transnational social spaces and his definition of transnational communities will be discussed further in the chapter. This theoretical explanation will be followed by the presentation of Turkish Jewish community as a transnational community in reference to Faist's definition of the term. The criteria already provided by the literature will

¹⁶ Studies that apply the transnationalism approach for migrant Turkish groups are available in the literature. See Kaya (2007).

be tested for the Turkish Jewish community and this way the link between the theory and the case will be introduced.

Chapter 3 will focus on the story of Jews in Turkey. This historical knowledge will be presented in periods that are set forth as the milestones of the Turkish history. The chapter will begin with the Ottoman Empire period and the relations between the Empire and the non-Muslim millets will be presented in this section. The Ottoman period will be followed by the Early Republican period of 1923-1945. As this period was marked with the developments following Turkey's Independence War, the effects of the war on Turkey with a focus on the Jews will be exposed. Moreover, the state led and society supported Turkification policies of the period and the outcomes of these policies on the Jewish community will be put forth. The Multi-Party Democracy Period of 1945-1980 will be the next which will be followed by the Post-1980 Period. In the final section of this chapter, the effects of the economically and politically liberalized policies on Jews will be analyzed with a special focus on the concept of citizenship. Moreover, this part will be complemented with the more current developments in Turkey such as the steps taken to become an EU member, and the adaptation/implementation of minority policies that are conditional to this end. This chapter will serve to introduce the life of Jews in Ottoman Empire and Turkey in a historical perspective with an attempt to emphasize the historical conditions that contributed to the transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community.

In Chapter 4, the effects of transnationalism on citizenship with a focus on the case of the Turkish Jewish community will be analyzed. The chapter will introduce the equality versus difference discussion that is prevalent in the citizenship literature. The case of Turkish Jewish community and its perceptions on Turkish citizenship is

followed by an explanation of Will Kymlicka's conceptualization of different aspects of citizenship. The transformation to transnational citizenship will also be introduced in this chapter. Chapter 4 will also underline how the responses of the interviewees played a significant role in defining the perceptions of the community members towards Turkish citizenship and their status towards transnational citizenship.

CHAPTER II

2 TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE CASE OF TURKISH JEWS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will include; three versions of transnationalism that involves the interpretation of the term from the perspectives of cultural anthropology, sociology and political science. The view point of the latter, i.e. political science, contributes to the main discussion of this thesis in terms of transnationalism. The first section will attempt to provide an overview on the emergence of the transnationalism literature by analyzing the studies of Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, Christina Szanton Blanc, Alejandro Portes and Thomas Faist.

This chapter will begin with an introduction of different perspectives on trans-nationalism. The next section will address Thomas Faist's understanding of transnationalism. Faist's development of the literature centers on the term transnational social spaces and its application to current situations of migrants. Despite existent criticisms about transnationalism literature, it will be argued that transnationalism provides a promising theoretical discussion on current immigration flows and their effects on nation-states and the migrants themselves. While economic, political and socio-cultural definitions of transnationalism are available in the literature, this chapter will focus on the contributions of Thomas Faist through the introduction of the term transnational communities. Finally, in line with Faist's

definition an analysis on whether or not the Turkish Jewish community can be presented as a transnational community will be put forward.

2.2 What is transnationalism? An Overview of the Field

A prominent scholar of the transnationalism literature, Steven Vertovec (1999: 447) defines transnationalism as “multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation states.” Following this understanding, transnationalism literature emerged as a consequence of globalization and the changes it has brought to the structure of immigration process. The migration process has been influenced by globalization since flow of people, money and goods are facilitated and inevitable level of interconnectedness is assured through the technological means of globalization. The theory of transnationalism analyzes the characteristics of this new wave of immigration and the effects of immigrant mobility on social, political and economical links that go beyond the defined boundaries of nation-states.

In defining transnationalism, Vertovec (1999: 449-456) focuses on the six uses of the term:

(1) a social morphology focused on a new border spanning social formation; (2) a diasporic consciousness; (3) a mode of cultural translation, and hybridity; (4) an avenue of capital for transnational corporations, and in a smaller but significant way in the form of remittances sent by immigrants to family and friends in their homelands; (5) a site of political engagement, both in terms of homeland politics and the politics of homeland governments vis-à-vis their émigré communities, and in terms of expanded role of international non-governmental organizations; and (6) a reconfiguration of the notion of place from an emphasis on the local to the translocal.

Expanding the framework defined by Vertovec, the current literature on transnationalism focuses on the reasons and consequences of the increasing

interconnectedness on economical, political and socio-cultural realms. To this end, Portes et al. distinguish three types of transnationalism; economic, political and socio-cultural. This section will summarize the three types by providing some examples for each.

Firstly, economic transnationalism focuses on changes on the global economical system like the production cycle that materializes globally, the changes brought by increasing technological means in communication and transportation, the power structure and the role of emerging transnational corporations. It is important to note that the literature on economic transnationalism challenges the analogy 'capital is global, labor is local' and presents cases where capital and labor have both become global. Economic transnationalism analyzes the lives and practices of immigrant workers and their relation with their home and host countries with a special focus on processes like sending remittances to families/ relatives at the home country. According to 2001 estimations, global remittances far exceed US\$60 billion each year and economies of numerous developing countries increasingly depend on them (Vertovec, 2001b:11). To this end, the main research topics of the literature on economic transnationalism focus on mass immigration flow of workers, remittances of these workers and impact of this global system on the development of the less developed economies versus the developed ones.

Secondly, political transnationalism has centered on the concept of nation-state and its applications and relations in the 21st century. In addition to forming a global economical structure, globalization process has been influential in challenging the very definition and boundaries of the nation-state. With globalization, countries have become politically and economically intertwined and incidents taking place in one part of the world started to largely affect the rest of the world. As a result, and as

part of globalization, there have been several changes in the expected role of the state and the loyalties of its citizens leading to a redefinition of the state. Political transnationalism scholars analyze these changes and focus on political belonging and identity formation of the immigrant groups who are affected by their links to both home and host countries. With the advent of globalization, migrants started to form transnational ties between their home and host countries and these ties were strengthened and expanded by the use technological tools such as internet, email and telephone. As Levitt et al. (2003: 569) argues, “new technologies of communication and transportation allow migrants to sustain more frequent, less expensive, and more intimate connections.” Technology has been an enabler for the immigrants to form transnational communities as they began identifying themselves through their transnational networks. As a result, individuals came to identify themselves in line with the characteristics of their transnational networks as well as their citizenship link to their nation-states. This duality in identification played a major role in determining immigrants’ perceptions on political belonging and identity. As pointed out by Portes (1997: 812); “through these networks, an increasing number of people are able to live dual lives. Participants are often bilingual, move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries, and pursue economic, political, cultural interests that require their presence in both.”

Thirdly, these transnational ties and networks have had socio-cultural implications for the émigrés and their linked ones both at home and in their host countries. “It is oriented towards the reinforcement of a national identity abroad or a collective enjoyment of cultural events and goods.”(Portes et al., 1999: 221) Therefore, not only the relations between identity and transnationalism, but also the

influences of transnationalism defining the family, kin and class structures and gender relations have become a research topic.

In an attempt to provide an analysis of the emerging literature on transnationalism, this thesis will focus on Peter Kivisto's¹⁷ classification of the field. Therefore, prominent scholars of transnationalism and their work focusing on different aspects of the literature will be briefly presented. This chapter will include; three versions of transnationalism that involves the interpretation of the term from the perspectives of cultural anthropology, sociology and political science. The view point of the latter, political science, contributes to the main discussion of this thesis in terms of transnationalism. Firstly, the early works of Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Christina Szanton Blanc¹⁸ will be analyzed to provide an overview on the emergence of the transnationalism literature. Furthermore, a sociological interpretation of the literature will be provided through the work of Alejandro Portes and finally the use of the term transnationalism in the political science will be analyzed through the works of Thomas Faist. In line with the main argument of this thesis, Thomas Faist's arguments on transnationalism and his categorization of the field will be used to present the Turkish Jewish community as a transnational community.

2.2.1 Three Perspectives on Transnationalism

Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc are some of the forerunner scholars of transnationalism literature. They have become key academics

¹⁷ Peter Kivisto's work is a critical review of the transnationalism literature. However, his threefold classification of the literature was adopted in this thesis. For detailed information see Kivisto (2001).

¹⁸ For more details on the Works of Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc see Glick Schiller (1997), Glick Schiller et.al. (1992), (1994) and (1995).

when it comes to understanding the emergence of transnationalism literature. This group of scholars contributed to the discussion by focusing on the need to use the term transnationalism to define the new flow of immigration that came with globalization. In their understanding, transnationalism referred to a process by which immigrants build and maintain multi-layered social relations that link together the home and the host societies (Basch et al., 1997:7).

The difference in immigration flows that the above-mentioned scholars focus refers to the construction of networks and relationships by the migrants both in the home and host countries. They argue that in the past flows of immigrations the immigrants did not carry on their relations to their home countries, whereas the habits of current immigrants have changed as a result of several developments. To this end, maintaining economical and/or cultural relationships to home and host countries became the determinant factor for becoming *transmigrants* which is the term they use to define the newly emerging immigrants who preserve their familial, economical, social, organizational, religious and political relationships across the nation-states (Basch et al., 1997:7).

This understanding of transnationalism puts the global capitalist system at the core of the immigration process and analyzes it within the context of global relations between capital and labor. As Basch et al. (1997: 24) defines, “capitalism as a global mode of production has necessitated the maintenance of family ties and political allegiances among persons spread across the globe.” When capitalism and flow of material goods are put at the core of transnationalism as the reasons for immigration, the main area of analysis has become the transnational social spaces created between home and host countries and the identification of immigrants through these transnational social spaces. Another area of interest has been on the relationship

between states and transmigrants. As transmigrants started to identify themselves with the characteristics of home and host countries, their loyalties and political belonging began to be affected by the two countries. As a result, this created a social phenomenon where the identities of the transmigrants are shaped by more than one country and culture.

Like Glick Schiller et al., Portes emphasized the need to underline the difference between former and later (defined by globalization) flows of immigration. Additionally, Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt define three conditions for considering transnationalism as a new term. In their classification, these conditions focus on the percentage of immigrants, the frequency of their transnational activities and the ability of current concepts to define these activities of the immigrants (Portes et al., 1999:218-219). Unlike Glick Schiller et al., Portes denies the need for the use of the term transmigrant as the word immigrant complies with the essence of both the former and contemporary definitions of the migration process. To this end, the focus on becoming transnational immigrants is set forth as: (a) access to technology, (b) level of social capital and (c) proximity.

In their definition, technology becomes a key element to sustain the multiple social relations in the home and host countries. The widespread access to technological tools such as internet, email and telephone make it easier for immigrants to stay connected to the both societies. Secondly, it is expected that those with higher levels of social capital would be more likely to form transnational linkages than those who have less capital. Finally, another factor that plays a role in defining transnational immigrants is defined as proximity. It is expected that migrant groups that are closer to their homelands would be more likely to maintain transnational ties.

To explain this stance on the novelty and importance of the term, Portes focuses on four stories that define the essence of transnationalism and changing structure of the immigration flows. Portes's first example focuses on the Mexican enclave in Brooklyn. He focused on this Mexican community's attempt to gather money to fix the water systems back at their neighborhood in Mexico. In his understanding of transnationalism this example is significant as it shows that the migrant communities maintain their ties with their homeland¹⁹. Moreover, this example signifies one of the major facilitators of transnationalism which is the improved communication and transportation channels that expand the interaction of migrants with the home and host countries. While Portes used these examples to define the emergence of transnationalism and underline the differences between the former and later migration flows, the novelty of his examples and the term transnationalism is still debated among the scholars of migration theory.

2.2.2 Emergence of Transnational Social Spaces: A literature review on Thomas Faist

In his book *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces* (2000a), Thomas Faist expands and develops the literature on transnationalism through introducing the term transnational social spaces. In Faist's (2000b: 191) explanation, "transnational social spaces are combinations of ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of

¹⁹ Portes's second example focuses on the Dominican entrepreneurs that migrated back to the Dominican Republic after spending time in the US. He focused on the economical relationship the migrants maintain between the home and host countries. The following examples focused on the Chinatowns emerging around the United States and the Otalvo traders from Ecuador that sell their ethnic wares in the commodity markets around Latin America.

organizations that reach across the borders of multiple states.” The irreversibility of the migration process, meaning the possibility of the migrants to return to their home countries, increases their maintenance of transnational ties. In fact, migrants maintain their ties to home and host countries as a way of survival that can enable them to pursue their lives in any of these countries. Moreover, even in those cases where the migrants are rooted in the host country and do not consider going back, they maintain strong transnational ties through their relatives or other sources that connect them to both countries due to various reasons such as economical relations, political belonging or social and symbolic ties with the home country. Another point defining the formation of transnational social spaces through transnational links is concerned with the formation of these links. Transnational ties can have an informal nature such as family ties and kinship or a formal nature such as political parties or civil society organizations that function both in home and host countries.

Faist criticizes the above-mentioned scholars’ use of the term transnational community because of the common tendency in the literature to name all transnational social spaces as transnational communities. To eliminate the confusion that occurs due to the intertwined use of the term, Faist offers a typology of the transnational social spaces which are *transnational kinship groups*, *transnational circuits* and *transnational communities*²⁰. Using this typology to distinguish between the different types of transnational social spaces, Faist also analyzes the effects of political and cultural transnationalization on citizenship and culture. Since the current literature on transnationalism mostly focused on the economic aspect, one of Faist’s major contributions has been his focus on offering a systematic typology of transnational social spaces and identifying factors that enable the formation of long-

²⁰ Extended explanations of these terms will be provided in the following pages of this chapter.

lasting transnational ties. Furthermore, his contribution is critical in providing an analysis on the effects of transnationalism on citizenship for different types of transnational social spaces.

While agreeing with prominent scholars of transnationalism literature about the importance of improvements in technology, especially in mass communications and travel; Faist argues that technological breakthroughs do not suffice in explaining the rise of emerging transnational ties and networks. When explaining additional factors that contribute to the rise of these ties, Faist distinguishes economical transnational social spaces from political and cultural ones. Since transnational networks of business people became viable, it was possible to invest in the countries with lower production costs (Faist; 2000b: 1999) and it led to the expansion of economic transnational social spaces creating a basis for political and cultural social spaces to prosper under some additional conditions. One of the most important conditions for the emergence of political and cultural transnational social spaces is the existence of strong symbolic and social ties. Immigrants who feel belonging towards their home country and who are tied to them through certain symbols such as language also maintain their social ties to the home country through their relatives, families or friends. Furthermore, an additional factor that acts favorably for the emergence of these social spaces is the attitudes of immigration and emigration countries towards the transnational activities of their citizens. Transnational ties flourish in countries that have liberal juridical and political regulations compared to restraining ones. Nation-states that have more liberal minority rights and do not aim to assimilate the immigrants also tend to play a positive role in restoring transnational social spaces. Considering the case of the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey, it is possible to see that one of the major flows of emigration from Turkey

took place throughout the period of Turkification policies where the Turkish state undermined the minority rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty and pursued discriminative policies on non-Muslim minorities that would contribute to the process of nation building²¹. In this period, some members of non-Muslim minority groups chose to leave the country instead of trying to maintain their transnational ties in a country which perceived such ties as a threat.

Transnational social space groups are integrated through different mechanisms and resources that nourish them. Through these mechanisms, migrants maintain their relationship with the rest of the members of their transnational social space. While transnational kinship groups are integrated through *reciprocity*; transnational circuits keep *exchange* at the core of their relationship and for transnational communities the connecting factor is *solidarity*. In transnational kinship groups such as families, reciprocity acts as the transaction mechanism where the relationships are strengthened by the return of favors. The remittances sent by workers to their families or relatives at the home country sets an example to the reciprocal actions that keep the transnational kinships together. On the other hand Rouse (1999: 17) distinguishes transnational circuits as they are “characterized by the global circulation of goods, people and information transversing the borders of emigration and immigration states.” Trading networks and economic entrepreneurs are mostly associated with transnational circuits. Businessmen located in one country and maintaining business relationships in others are parts of these transnational circuits. Knowledge of both the receiving and sending countries and having ties in both of these countries become insider advantages that strengthen the transnational

²¹ A detailed account on the non-Muslim minority groups of Turkey, with a special focus on the Turkish Jewish community will be provided in the following chapter. To this end, the content of Turkification policies and its effects on the non-Muslim minorities are provided in the next chapter.

circuits which are “transacted through exchange defined as mutual obligations and expectations of actors, associated with specific social ties and based on exchanges and services rendered in the past.” (Coleman, 1999: 306)

Strong international ties play an important role in understanding transnational communities. According to Faist (2000a: 207), “transnational communities characterize the situations in which international movers and stayers are connected by dense and strong social and symbolic ties over time and across space to patterns of networks and circuits in two countries. In this sense, diasporas constitute the main example for transnational communities since one of the constituents of diasporas is the longing for the homeland which acts as the symbolic tie that the migrants hold. Moreover according to the classification of Cohen (1997:26), the common characteristics of diasporas which can be traced in the case of the Jewish diaspora can be stated as follows:

- (1) Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;
- (2) alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions;
- (3) a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements;
- (4) an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity even to its creation;
- (5) the development of a return movement that gains collective approbation;
- (6) a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history and the belief in a common fate;
- (7) a troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance at the least or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group;
- (8) a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement; and
- (9) the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

As Vertovec (2000: 12) argues; “all communities comprise diasporas, but not all diasporas develop transnationalism.” The main condition for identifying diasporas as transnational communities is the significant social and symbolic ties the members have to the receiving country as well as the sending country. The Jewish diaspora

that suffered from many traumatic events, biggest being the Holocaust, always longed for the foundation of a Jewish state in the Promised Lands. Even in the aftermath of the establishment of State of Israel, the religious ties and representations of Judaism have been the means to keep the transnational ties of the Jewish community together. In this sense solidarity in the form of shared identities, beliefs or concepts like religion, ethnicity or nationality define the main factors that bring together the members of the transnational Jewish communities around the world.

For members of transnational communities in shape of diasporas, it is possible to find instances where their solidarity to their home or to the host country is inconsistent. In such cases, it is common for the members of transnational communities to have dual loyalties directed towards both countries. Especially in cases where the home and host countries are in conflict, it is likely that the solidarity of members of transnational communities feel a clash of their dual loyalties. For instance, it is possible to argue that the tension in the Israeli-Turkish relations peaking after the Mavi Marmara incidents challenged the members of Turkish Jewish community to question their positions towards the two countries they have significant ties and loyalties to.

2.2.3 Effects of Transnationalism on Citizenship and Culture

Emergence of the nation-states gave way to the rise of citizenship concept because it acted as the main source or contract for defining the relationship between state and society. Laws on citizenship act as the main determinant for the expected duties and rights of the society. Furthermore, citizenship acts as the common ground that keeps the society together and in some cases equalizes them in front of the state and its laws. As Faist (2000a: 271) puts forward;

in the case of the immigrants, the citizenship status changes in line with the citizenship policies and laws of the emigration country that may lead to exclusive citizenship in a single nation-state, ethnic pluralism to multicultural citizenship, based on the recognition of varied cultural heritage and representations, and border-crossing expansion of social space to dual citizenship and dual nationality.

In terms of citizenship and affiliation with the sending and receiving countries, transnationalization of immigrants translate into dual state membership that comes in the form of *dual citizenship* or *dual nationality*. Dual citizenship occurs in instances where a person holds two passports, both from the immigration and emigration countries, and therefore enjoys the full rights and duties in both. However, it is common to see that those people that hold dual citizenship use their passport of residence whereas the other is only used in needed times such as advantages like health system. Dual nationality on the other hand differs from dual citizenship as more of the rights associated with citizenship are granted to immigrants through dual nationality.

As stated previously, the citizenship status of the immigrants are usually shaped by the policies of the receiving states as well as the willingness of the immigrants to maintain transnational ties. Yet, it is possible to define a threefold classification for the possible citizenship status for the immigrants. First possibility is to maintain an exclusive relationship with the host country and therefore hold only the national citizenship which in turn requires assimilation and limited ties with the home country. The most common citizenship by the newcomers is through acquiring national citizenship of the country of settlement (Faist; 2000b:204). Most common identification of national citizenship in such societies came from the *territory* and *blood principles*. Whereas territory citizenship is defined by the country of birth, the blood principle is delineated through the citizenship status of the parents and it is granted by the parents to the next generations. In this case, the immigrants are able to

get the citizenship of the host county only after they fulfill certain conditions such as residing for certain time period, having sufficient income and living conditions, learning the language of the country and not having any criminal records. More recently with the effects of globalization on the nation-states, a new interpretation of national citizenship has come into being and it is called the *post-national citizenship* (Soysal, 1994). The literature on post-national citizenship focuses on the changes brought by globalization to the structure of the nation-state that brought human rights ahead of citizenship rights. However it is important to note in cases where post-national citizenship holds; the state-society relations are still defined by citizenship laws that are grounded in national citizenship rights and any additional rights are subject to decisions and flexibility of the nation-state. In the cultural realm, national citizenship is associated with assimilation. Since national citizenship is expected to define the culture and social practices of the citizens, immigrants are anticipated to let go of their cultural affiliations and practices that link them to the home country. The assimilation process starts with acculturation where the immigrants start to lose the essence of cultural practices; the second step is the structural assimilation where the migrant groups start to familiarize with the country of immigration. The last step that leads to suppression of the immigrant culture is the identificational assimilation where immigrants culturally become part of the host country. The process of assimilation aims at ensuring full scale cultural and behavioral adaptation to the nation state through eliminating any sort of differences and unifying the whole society under the same values. The Single Party Period (1923-1945)²² of Turkish history can be set as an example where citizenship was decided upon the blood principle and differences of minority groups were culturally assimilated through

²² Details on the policies of the Single Party Period are provided in the Chapter 3 of this thesis.

incidents like *Citizen Speak Turkish!* Campaign (Vatanda Türkçe Konu !) where the non-Muslim minority groups were forced to drop their mother tongue languages to replace it by Turkish.

The second option holds for nation-states with liberal democracies that give special importance to human rights and freedoms. In these nation-states ethnic pluralism acts as the main state policy towards the citizens and immigrants maintain their difference and ties through the recognition of multicultural citizenship that respects cultural differences through special rights granted for them. Like the assimilation theory, multiculturalism theorists argue that the adaptation of the immigrants will happen under the control of the nation-state yet they offer a more liberal solution where the immigrants will maintain their differences through the provided minority rights. Two types of multiculturalisms are provided in the literature. Whereas in passive multiculturalism immigrants and minorities are only able to express their differences in the private realm; active multiculturalism stands for the expression of differences in all realms of daily life. It is argued that this could only be possible if ethnic and religious groups were provided certain rights guaranteeing their freedom, equality and liberty (Kymlicka, 1995).

Active multiculturalism is concerned about necessary rights such as voting rights, affirmative actions that will guarantee the representation of immigrants and minority groups in educational and economic institutions, work schedules that are designed in line with their religious holidays, bilingual education programs that respect both the home and host countries' languages and allowance of minority schools. These rights are aimed at ensuring freedom for immigrant and minority groups, opening the way to maintain and practice their cultural and religious differences freely. However, it is important to note that the freedoms granted to

ethnic and religious groups under the ethnic pluralist system takes place within the control of the nation-state which leaves no room for transnational ties that emerge outside of the state's control. Compared to acculturation that comes with national citizenship, ethnic pluralism brought about multiculturalism. In terms of ethnic pluralism, minority rights are separated from immigrant rights. Whereas national minority groups are perceived as national cultures that need to be preserved and supported through self governing rights, immigrants that voluntarily migrated to host countries are not provided with such rights since they do not have a complete societal culture. However, this stance towards the immigrant groups is problematic as it undermines the role of transnational ties in their cultural adjustment (Faist, 2000b: 214). It is necessary to note that, the immigrant culture will always carry some characteristics from country of origin which is undermined in this perspective.

The third option that comes with the maintenance of transnational ties and networks is the border-crossing expansion of social space in which migrants maintain relations with both the home and host countries and therefore their perceptions on citizenship is not limited by the home or the host country. Therefore, their citizenship status is translated into dual citizenship and/or dual nationality. Through this classification, Faist not only adds to the current literature on the assimilation and multiculturalism theory but also defines the relationship between transnationalism and citizenship through introducing border-crossing expansion of the social spaces and transnational citizenship.

The border crossing expansion of the social space is concerned about transnational ties and networks that are exceeding the boundaries of sending and receiving countries and forming transnational social spaces. This perspective does not undermine the importance of the nation-state; instead it offers a formation where

the possibility of membership to two nation-states prevails. This possibility occurs through the dual citizenship and dual nationality status previously explained in this chapter. The acts and stance of the immigration and emigration countries play a major role for the existence of dual citizenship and dual nationality. While some countries of emigration allow (examples include the USA, UK, France and the Netherlands) and even enjoy dual citizenship as they were better off economically, through remittances, some other countries do not allow dual citizenship status. From the point of view immigrants, dual state membership serves as the best opportunity since it offers them the chance to pursue and protect various rights in two countries.

The explanations of acculturation and cultural retention are inadequate since the former overly emphasizes the national borders and treating the immigrant culture as if it can easily be assimilated and the latter neglects the rights for immigrants and only focuses on the minority rights. Furthermore, these theories tend to overlook the fact that presently culture is also understood as a translocal process open to influences by transnationalism.

Transnationalization process and the maintenance of social and symbolic ties accelerate as long distance communication tools and long distance travel gets more widespread and; liberal state policies prevail and the emigration policies of states loosen (Faist, 2000b). While proposing transnational syncretism in the form of new identities emerging through the mingling of different cultures in transnational social spaces; the necessity of transnational boundaries and the importance of rights given to minorities and immigrants are not undermined. In fact, multiculturalism acts in favor of transnationalism as it plays a role in expansion of the transnational networks and ties. Therefore, in Faist's (2000b:217) words;

To think of transnationally enriched syncretism as another layer of immigrants' insertion processes – in addition to acculturation and

cultural retention – is to use an understanding of culture as ‘whole way of lives’, one that emphasizes their translocal aspects without occluding the fact that cultures are still overwhelmingly nationally bounded and have mainstreams.

Despite available critiques²³ about its novelty and validity, transnationalism provides a promising theoretical discussion on immigration flows and its effects on the nation-states and the migrants themselves. While economic, political and socio-cultural definitions of transnationalism are available in the literature, this thesis focuses on the contributions of Thomas Faist in the literature through introducing transnational social spaces and transnational communities. In the next section of this chapter, the Turkish Jewish community will be presented as a transnational community following the definition and conditions defined by Faist.

2.3 Transnational Communities: The Case of Turkish Jewish Community

In line with the aim of this study, this section will present the transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community with reference to Thomas Faist’s use of the term transnational social spaces. Since there are no major studies focusing on the transnational aspect of the Turkish Jewish community, this thesis hopes to contribute to the literature through providing a new perspective that examines the history and nature of the Turkish Jewish community from the view point of Thomas Faist and his literature on transnationalism. To this end, in the following chapter a historical background of the Turkish Jewish community under the rule of Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic will be provided with a special focus on the factors that contribute to the transnational character of the community. As Faist’s literature also addresses

²³ For a detailed critique on transnationalism literature see Kivisto (2001).

the effects of transnational social spaces on citizenship, the effects of the transnational character of the community on its members' perception on Turkish citizenship will be questioned in Chapter 4.

The three types of transnational social spaces - transnational kinship groups, transnational circuits and transnational communities - defined by Thomas Faist were introduced previously in this chapter. Within the context of this thesis, transnational communities will be elaborated as the transnational social space of the Turkish Jewish community can be identified with Faist's transnational community category. In his argumentation, a requirement for the emergence of transnational communities is that the "communities without propinquity link through exchange, reciprocity, and solidarity to achieve a high degree of social cohesion, and a common repertoire of symbolic and collective representations." (Faist, 2000a:208)

Diasporas which are mainly associated with scattered communities away from the established or ancestral homelands are transnational communities that have strengthened social spaces through social and symbolic ties. In case of diasporas, existence of social ties is not obligatory since the idea of the longed homeland acts as a powerful symbolic tie that unifies people. This has been the case for the Jewish diaspora for centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple. More than a thousand years later, some authors like Jacobsen (1995: 236) "have characterized the relationship of diasporic Jews with those in Israel as *mispachah*, literally meaning family". Therefore, the state of Israel acting as the longed home country for 8.3

million Jews living in diaspora²⁴ constitutes a transnational social space that includes various countries such as United States, Canada, France, Russia and Ukraine²⁵.

The most important criterion for considering diasporas as transnational communities is the requirement for the members of the diaspora to maintain social and symbolic ties to the receiving country. Therefore, in order to define the Turkish Jewish community as a transnational community it is important to question the existence of social and symbolic ties the members of the Turkish community have towards Turkey. In case of the Turkish Jews, loyalty acted as the main factor describing the social and symbolic ties the community has. In fact, in the case of the Turkish Jewish community it is possible to trace back these ties also in the Ottoman Empire period where community members acted as the loyal subjects of the Sultan.

In the shift from the fall of Ottoman Empire to the foundation of the Turkish Republic, the community denied any separatist movements and sided with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as a sign of their commitment to Turks and to Turkey. As shown in an historical perspective in the next chapter of this thesis, despite difficult times faced due to some state led policies and flows of immigration following the times of repression; Turkish Jewish community is rooted in the country and they maintain all kinds of social, cultural, political and economical ties in Turkey. Enjoying equal citizenship rights with the rest of the society, the Turkish Jewish community uses Turkish language as their mother tongue and its members maintain a Turkish lifestyle. Furthermore, it is common for the members of the Turkish Jewish

²⁴ (<http://www.simpletoremember.com/vitals/world-jewish-population.htm>)

²⁵ It is estimated that Jewish communities in changing numbers are available around 120 countries ranging from Africa to Europe and Middle East. The above stated countries are some of these countries with most populated Jewish communities. Since this thesis focuses on Turkish Jewish community the transnational characters of other Jewish communities will not be included in this study.

community to identify themselves with both their Turkish and Jewish identities.

When asked about their identity, one of the respondents said:

I'm a Turkish Jew. I use the term Jewish as it relates to my religion. However, I'm first a Turkish citizen then a Jew yet I carry sentiments for and characteristics of both (Sixty- two years old, male, construction engineer).

In order for transnational social spaces to emerge, it is also necessary that the migrants also maintain social and symbolic ties with the home country, in this case Israel. As a religious and ethnic diaspora, Turkish Jewish community shares transnational ties – in form of economical, social and cultural ties – with Israel.

When asked about belonging towards Israel and perceptions on the existence of a Jewish state the participants displayed different levels of belonging, yet all of the interviewees (all age groups and genders) emphasized that they value the existence of Israel since existence of a Jewish state gives them confidence:

I have a special belonging towards Israel; it is an important source of assurance for me. At least I know that as long as Israel exists what happened to Jews in World War II (Holocaust) will not happen again. To me Israel is the key to Jewish safety which is not hundred percent possible elsewhere. (Sixty years old, female, managing partner of an auditing firm).

Since it embraces all of the Jews around the world²⁶, Israel is symbolically perceived as the saver of all Jews around the world. Moreover, a sacred place like Western Wall of Jerusalem adds to the symbolic representation of Israel as it is the holiest place for the Jewish religion. The relationship between the members of Turkish Jewish community and Israel contains more than just the symbolic ties. Many Turkish Jews maintain their social ties with Israel through their relatives and friends who live in Israel. It is also common to see trading and economic relations

²⁶ The Israeli Law on Return enacted in 1950 grants all of the Jews around the world the right to migrate and settle in Israel and gain citizenship status without any other forced conditions.

maintained between Turkish Jews and Israelis. As a prerequisite of transnationalism, improvements in technology and especially in mass communications and transportation tools played a significant role in retaining their social ties. A member of Turkish Jewish community defines her social ties to Israel as below:

My father's cousins immigrated to Israel back in 1968 since the political environment of Turkey was very hostile. My father and his cousin worked together for an Israeli company specializing in food industry. While my father managed the work in Istanbul, his cousin was responsible for the work in Israel. Our cousin and his family visit us in Istanbul once every year and we keep in touch once or twice a month through telephone or Skype²⁷ (Twenty- nine years old, female, CEO assistant).

Due to the nature of diaspora, Israel constitutes one of the most important components of Turkish Jewish community's transnational social space. Yet, it is important to note that Israel is not the only country the members of the Turkish Jewish community maintain transnational ties to. Some other countries included in the transnational ties of the Turkish Jewish community are United States, France, Belgium and Panama²⁸. Similar to the case of Israel, the extended ties of the Turkish Jews in these countries mainly focus on family ties that are kept at the social level. Technological tools also play a significant role in preserving these relationships and keeping in contact. An interesting case offering an insight on the stance of non-Muslim minority groups among one other and the role of transnationality was shared by one of the participants:

My cousin married to an Armenian guy and together they moved to Paris since none of the families approved the wedding. They are both working at a school named after Hrant Dink. My cousin visits us in Istanbul twice or three times a year. However, his husband is not able

²⁷ Skype is a software application used for making cheap or free calls over the internet.

²⁸ List of these countries was collected as a result of the interviews done for this research. Considering, that Jewish communities are available in 120 countries around the world it is most likely that the transnational social space of the Turkish Jewish Community is more extensive than the given countries.

to enter Turkey since he did not do his military service. We also keep in contact through telephone, Skype or facebook. (Twenty-eight years old, female, photographer)

In conclusion, transnational social spaces are formed through ties and networks of immigrants that exceed the border of the nation-states they live in and compose of relationships maintained with home and host countries. Transnational communities, that are part of transnational social spaces, mostly emerge as diasporas that maintain strong social and symbolic ties with the homeland. As a nation of exiles, Jews constitute one of the major diasporas of the world. Yet, this nature is not sufficient to define it as a transnational community since strong social and symbolic ties to country of residence are also a requirement for the emergence of a transnational community. Turkish Jewish community meets these requirements both socially and historically. The community enjoys strong symbolic ties to Israel through the common perception among Turkish Jews to see Israel as a religious capital and a safe haven for the Jews of the world. The social ties on the other hand are maintained through networks of friends and family and through economic relations as well. Moreover, a wider transnational social space is granted for Turkish Jewish community through other Jewish communities around the world especially in Europe and United States.

This chapter provided an overview of the developments on transnationalism literature with a special focus on Thomas Faist's theory on transnational social spaces and his discussion on transnational communities. To this end, following Thomas Faist's typology, Turkish Jewish community is presented as a transnational community. To further discuss this nature of the community, the following chapter will provide the historical conditions that contributed to transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community through historical milestones and formation of strong

social ties to Turkey. Furthermore, Chapter 4 will discuss the effects of this transnational nature on Turkish Jewish community's perception of Turkish citizenship.

Chapter III

3 THE HISTORY OF JEWS IN TURKEY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide historical facts for the period starting with the Ottoman Empire to the current day Turkish Republic with an attempt to bring a novel approach to the literature by interpreting these historical facts from the perspective of transnationalism literature and by underlining the historical events that contribute to the transnational nature of the Turkish Jewish community. Moreover, the political actions taken by the Turkish Jewish community under the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish state are presented to show the strong ties the Turkish Jewish community maintained in these lands over a period of five hundred years. This factor has been significant for the current study, since it serves as one of the main conditions of becoming a transnational community.

This historical background will be provided in a chronological order where the milestones of Turkish history with significant political, economical and social consequences are introduced with reference to its ramifications on the Jewish population of Turkey. To this end, an introduction on the Ottoman and Turkish past is set forth in four main periods²⁹. The first period is the rule of the Ottoman Empire

²⁹ For a similar periodization of Turkish history, see Özbudun (1988), Ahmad (1995) and Barkey (2000) and Tokta (2004).

which explains the beginning of mass Jewish settlement and migration to the Anatolian area. In this section, the *millet system* which defines the basis of political, economical and social relations between the Empire and its subjects will be introduced. Moreover, the changes in political structure of the Empire and its effects on the Jewish population are discussed. In the period between 1299 and 1923, Ottoman Empire has been through the Rise, Growth, Stagnation, Decline and finally the Dissolution periods. Millet system has been the dominant administrative structure of the Empire until the Stagnation Period when the reform packages called *Tanzimat* and *Islahat* were introduced along with the concept of *citizenship*. These reform packages were critical for the Ottoman Empire as they redefined Sultan's relationship to its subjects paving the way for them to become citizens.

The second period, which is the Early Republican period of 1923 to 1945, is marked by the abolishment of Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Turkish Republic. This period witnessed the rule of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's Republican People's Party (RPP) during which Turkish people were introduced to the Kemalist ideology and its components such as republicanism, nationalism, statism, populism, secularism and revolutionism. These ideologies cultivated RPP's need to create a Turkish nation which is constituted by a public that is motivated by its ideologies and which has a common idea of Turkey that brings the society together. For non-Muslim minority groups, the most significant agreement of this period that defined their relationship with the newly emerging Turkish state has been the Lausanne Treaty. Nevertheless, the period was marked by RPP's implementation of *Turkification* policies which were aimed at building a homogenized Turkish nation but eventually led to a breakdown in the society and resulted in a hostile environment for the non-Muslim groups of Turkey. Introduction of these policies meant

associating with the state led definition of what a Turk should be. This definition played a major role in defining Turkish citizenship and the place of non-Muslim minority groups within this strict definition. Even though the Lausanne Treaty gave a secure position to Greeks, Armenians and Jews living under the Turkish Republic, the early Republican era's nation building policies pushed them to the periphery making them outsiders.

The nation-state formation of Turkey can be argued to have had an impact on the mass migration of non-Muslim minorities from Turkey to various countries around the world. This was also the case for the Jewish minority of Turkey and in case of the Jewish minority these migration flows contributed to the formation of the transitional social space of the Turkish Jewish community. This section will also include an analysis on the effects of the World War II on Turkey's domestic policies especially towards its Jewish population.

The third period which signified the democratization process of Turkey is the Multi-Party Period that took place between 1945 and 1980. This has been a significant period for Turkey due to the transition to a more democratic system following the shift from a single party to multi-party system. Contradicting the ongoing attempts of democratization of Turkey, this at the same time has been a period of *coup d'états*. The shift from RPP rule to Democrat Party (DP) rule and the adoption of the 1961 Constitution, which is still considered as the most freedom granting Turkish constitution, created a relatively freer environment for different religious groups. Yet, this period is also remembered for the political unrests, the polarization of the society in terms of left and right political wing politics and military interventions. For non-Muslim minority groups, September 6-7 incidents followed by flows of mass migration from Turkey have been a significant issue of

the period. This period has also been important for the Jewish community as the state of Israel was founded on 14 May 1948. This date set the beginning of mass migration to Israel by Jews that were spread around the world at the time. Inevitably, the immigration processes contributed to the expansion of transnational social space of the Turkish Jewish community as the migrants continued maintaining their social ties to Turkey.

Finally, the fourth period introduces a timeline from the beginning of the 1980s to the recent decade of early 2000s. 1980s started with the flow of new ideologies such as liberalism, and the effects of globalization were felt all around the world. Globalization and its means such as the developments in the communication and transportation tools brought about unavoidable changes in lives of Turkish citizens as it did to the rest of the world. Consequences of globalization had impacts in the cultural, political, social and economical realms. It brought neo-liberal policies in economical terms, increased liberties and choices in social life and brought all cultures closer opening the way for cultural influences.³⁰ Especially, for the non-Muslim minority groups that were already spread around and connected to the rest of the world through their diaspora natures, it was easier to access and maintain their connections with their relatives and loved ones through these newly emerging communication and transportation tools. While globalization defined the general framework of this period in terms of domestic politics, implementation of the 1982 constitution, which has been a constitution of restrictions and limitations compared to its predecessor 1961 constitution, has been a remarkable development for Turkey.

³⁰ This thesis does not discuss the positive and negative consequences of globalization. The literature of globalization is included in this thesis as long as it is associated with the main topic.

Relations with the European Union (EU) have also been a major issue in Turkey's political agenda. In the period ranging from 1987 to the present the Turkish-EU relations have been one of the determining factors of the state's relationship with non-Muslim minority groups. EU expectations and regulations have shaped Turkish states' emerging laws and practices covering a large area that also includes state's relations regarding its non-Muslim population. Especially with the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria which set the minority rights as a precondition for full EU membership the role of non-Muslim minorities gained even more importance.

The relationship between Turkey and Israel has always been significant for Turkish Jews. Despite, rise and falls in their relationship since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Turkish-Israeli relations have mostly been peaceful, especially in comparison to Israel's relations with other Muslim countries in the Middle East area. However, there has been an undeniable rupture in Turkish-Israeli relations especially in the past two years (2009-2010). Turkey under the rule of current Justice and Development Party (AKP) has been more distant and vocally against the Israeli policies in Palestine. Lastly, the reaction of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at the 2010 Davos World Economic Forum, the ambassador crisis in Israel and the Mavi Marmara Incident almost caused diplomatic relations between Turkey and Israel to end. This tension between the two countries was heavily felt by the members of Turkish Jewish community, causing a feeling of insecurity among them³¹.

³¹ While there have been many protests against Israel, there were no recorded insults against Jews living in Turkey. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stressed in one of his speeches to public that the Turkish Jews should not be held accountable for these incidents.

This chapter offers a summary of defining events of Turkish history with a special focus to investigate the political and social consequences of such incidents on the non-Muslim minority groups, especially the Turkish Jewish community. In doing so, this chapter discusses the policies applied by the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish state as long as they have legal, political, cultural, social or economical implications for the Turkish Jews.

In line with the main argument of this thesis, this historical documentation is presented to demonstrate the role of these historical incidents in the formation of the Turkish Jewish community's transnational social space and its status as a transnational community. More importantly, this chapter is a summary of how the term citizenship emerged and evolved in the case of nation-state building in Turkey. To this end, this chapter provides an explanation of the shift in the understanding from considering people as subjects under the Ottoman Empire to citizens under the modern Turkish state. Pursuant to this shift, Turkish Jews started as the subjects of the Ottoman Sultan, they were then introduced with the concept of citizenship and finally their equal citizenship status was granted to them constitutionally. The experiences of Jews under the above mentioned conditions have inevitably contributed to their interpretation of Turkish citizenship and in many instances caused them to question their Turkish identity. Yet another determining factor in this questioning has been the transnational character of the Jewish community, where the members had ongoing personal and economical relations with the rest of the world.

3.2 Jews under the Ottoman Empire: From Subjects to Citizens

The Jewish existence on the Anatolian lands has a longer history than the establishment of the Ottoman Empire on these lands. According to Sevilla-Sharon

(1992: 11), reliable proof for Jewish existence in Anatolia that dates back to the 6th century BC is existent. Despite the existence of some biblical information that dates back in Phoenician period, the solid proof for the Jewish existence in the Anatolian lands and what constitutes a part of what is now known as Turkey comes from the Byzantine period. Most of the Jewish population living under the Byzantine rule continued their existence on the same lands following the conquest of Istanbul by the Ottoman Empire in 1453. At the time when Ottoman Empire was founded three groups of Jews were living under the Islamic world, the first one was the Persian speaking Jewish community of Iran, the second group was the Arabic speaking Jews spread around an area from Iraq to Morocco and finally the third group was the Romaniot Jews that used to live under the Byzantine rule and spoke Greek (Groepler, 1999: 29).

There have been various migration flows of Jews from Europe to Ottoman lands. Compared to the oppressive rule in Europe that was discriminating against Jews, Ottoman Empire provided a peaceful and tolerant environment where Jews could practice their religion freely. In 1376, the *Ashkenazi Jews*³² who were exiled from Hungary and in 1394 the Jewish population of France who were exiled by the King Charles VI settled on the Ottoman lands that had been ruled by Sultan Murad II. Yet, population wise the most significant migration flow has been the mass migration of the *Sephardi Jews*³³ in 1492. At the time, the Ottoman Empire under the rule of Sultan Beyazid II was the only land accepted the exiled Jews from the Iberian

³² Ashkenazi Jews are the descendants of the Jewish communities in Germany, Western and the Central Europe. Besides Germany, the Ashkenazi population was dominantly seen in countries like Hungary, Poland, Belarussia, Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine. The Ashkenazi Jews speak Yiddish which is a language similar to German but which is also influenced by Hebrew.

³³ Sephardi Jews are those that were descendants of the Jews that were rooted in the Iberian Peninsula before their expulsion by the King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel. Sephardi Jews follow the Jewish traditions that were originated in the Iberian Peninsula and they use the Ladino language which is the ancient Spanish.

Peninsula. Following this mass migration flow, the dominance on Jewish population of Ottoman Empire shifted to *Ladino* speaking Sephardi Jews. Although there is an ongoing discussion on the number of Iberian Jews that migrated to Ottoman Empire, most historians agree that the number of immigrants was around 120.000 (Güteryüz, 1993: 60).

The Sephardi Jews enjoyed the welcoming and tolerant environment that was granted to them by the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II. As Jews were able to provide their knowhow on trade, printing and firing weapons, they became a valuable asset for the Empire. This interaction has been very valuable both for the Ottoman Empire and the Jews since it had advantages for both sides. Ottoman Empire valued this knowledge as they were necessary means to reach up to and even get ahead of their European counterparts who were already introduced to these technologies. For Jews, this silent agreement guaranteed protection by the Ottoman Sultan which paved the way for their smooth integration to Ottoman Empire and to Ottoman society. Moreover, their knowledge also helped them rise to important duties within the Empire.

For the Jewish population, life under Ottoman Empire has always been considered as tolerant especially compared to the conditions under Europe that limited free practice of religion. Ottoman Empire was a popular destination for immigration because Jews were not only accepted by the Empire, but also the Sultans granted them the right to freely practice their religion as well as giving them some autonomy in their internal affairs. This religious tolerance Ottoman Empire has always been associated with was rooted in the administrative system that determined the Empire's relationship to its Muslim and non-Muslim subjects. According to çduygu (2007: 375) et al., "this administrative system called the *millet* system

functioned as a practice for managing the internal affairs of the multi-religious and poly-ethnic imperial setting.” *Millet* system structured the daily lives of the Ottoman subjects; including their economical, legal, and political relations with the Empire and among themselves. Through *millet* system, Ottoman subjects were grouped as *millets* (nations) according to their faith. The determinant factor in this classification was that the *millets* belonged to the monotheistic religious groups. Under the Islamic decree of *dhimmi*³⁴ (*zimmi*), Christians and Jews were acknowledged as ‘people of the book’ and hence were granted protection, security, religious autonomy and cultural independence (Tokta , 2004: 52). Despite all the religious freedom granted for the non-Muslim *millets*, the *millet* system was not a system of equality but rather it pointed a special status for non-Muslim groups that was defined by the differences in faith and religion. In fact, this was a system that helped to preserve and emphasize the religious distinctions among the subjects, yet at the same time an administrative tool gave non-Muslims a certain level of cultural and religious autonomy and local self-rule (Karpat, 1985: 95).

The non-Muslim *millets* of the Ottoman Empire were (a) the Jewish *millet*, (b) the Greek *millet* made up of all the Orthodox Christian groups residing in Ottoman lands and (c) the Armenian *millet* which was made up of the Gregorian Christians such as Armenians, Georgians, Assyrians, Protestants and Catholics. The *millet* system granted minority groups certain freedoms in their religious practices, educational affairs and juridical decisions. Non-Muslim *millets* were granted the right to impose their administrative rules for marriage, divorce, inheritance and tax collection. The religious leader of each of the non-Muslim *millet* was given the freedom to administer its community in the above-mentioned matters. This autonomy

³⁴ In Ottoman Empire, the monotheist non-Muslim groups were called the dhimmis.

also made the religious leaders the sole representatives of their millets in front of the Ottoman Palace.

Nevertheless in case of the non-Muslim *millets*, autonomy did not mean equality with the Muslim subjects since the *millet* system was based on differential treatment where the Muslim subjects were superior to the non-Muslims. “The dhimmis were tolerated to exist within their belief systems and religious practices but only at the expense of inegalitarian obligations and responsibilities.” (çduygu et al., 2006: 450) Examples of these differentiated treatments such as; extra taxes, specified colors of clothes and exclusion from the military service were mostly apparent in the economical and social realms.

One of the extra tax payments required from the non-Muslim millets was called the *jizya* (*cizye*). Since the non-Muslim men were exempt from military obligation, those in the age of military service were expected to pay the *jizya* tax. This practice caused an interpretation of this tax as a fee paid for ensuring the security of non-Muslim millets. Another tax implemented for the Jewish millet was the *Rabbi's Tax* (*Cizye-i ray*). This tax granted the Jewish community the right to have their religious leader called the *rabbi* in their own neighborhoods³⁵. Alongside with Thessalonica and Izmir; Istanbul was one of the central areas of Jewish settlement with a population of 30.000 Jews and forty-four different synagogues with its own rabbis (Güleryüz, 1993: 62).

The rest of the differentiating practices for non-Muslim millets were apparent on the social realm. Examples to those practices could be the ban on living next door to the mosques, carrying arms and riding horses. Furthermore, non-Muslims were

³⁵ In this period, European Jews were living together in specific neighborhoods in the form of ghettos. Jewish *millet* in Ottoman Empire was granted the right to live in various neighborhoods. Some of these neighborhoods were Balat and Hasköy.

obliged to wear different colored clothes than the Muslims, they could not build houses above six meters and their testimonies' were not valid in the Muslim courts. Despite these differences, Jews were able to attain good positions in the Ottoman Palace due to their knowledge of European languages and their existing networks in the European countries as part of their transnational ties with the countries they immigrated from. Throughout the 16th century, Jews worked in high administrative positions in diplomacy, medical and trading sectors. The Growth Period (*Yükselme Devri*) of the Ottoman Empire that lasted between 1453 and 1579 has also been the Golden Age of the Ottoman Jews. Yet, in the following periods of Stagnation (*Duraklama Devri*) and Decline (*Gerileme Devri*), Jews lost these positions to members of the Greek and Armenian *millets*.

The *millet* system has been the core of the administrative structure of the Empire until the beginning of decline in the 19th century. Some reasons for Ottoman Empire's decline were the weakening of administration due to the incompetence of Sultans to administer the Empire and control the army; and the excessive spending that led to bankruptcy. Furthermore, the effects of the ideas emerged with the French Revolution of 1789 played a significant role in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. With the French Revolution ideas such as liberty, equality and nationalism were introduced. As Ottoman Empire had a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious structure at the time; emergence of these new ideologies led to uprisings and separatist movements among the different millets.

These emerging ideologies also affected the non-Muslim millets as independence from the Ottoman Empire became an option for them too. In the case of the Greek and Armenian millets, these ideologies translated into separatist movements with the support of the Western powers. To this end, the first Balkan

revolt emerged in Serbia in 1804 which was followed by the Greek revolt which resulted in independence of Greece in 1832. Following these incidents, the Ottoman Empire felt the need to take new measures to protect itself from the increasing demands of the millets in asking for independence. Ottoman Empire responded to these demands through reform packages that were designed to give more rights to millets. First one of the reform packages was the *Tanzimat Declaration (Tanzimat Fermani)*. Tanzimat Declaration set forth the end of a separation between Muslims and non-Muslims within the Ottoman structure. Even though Jews benefited from the Tanzimat Declaration, it was the actions of Armenians and the Greeks that initiated the process (Yetkin, 1992: 103).

The Tanzimat Declaration of 1839 was Ottoman Empire's reaction to the French Revolution and it was a major attempt to save the Empire from the separatist movements that began in the wake of promotion of ideas such as liberty and equality.

Essentially equality was used to refer to the equality of classes in the French Revolution, but in the Ottoman context, it referred to the equality of nationalities leading to the spread of nationalist ideology and the transformation of the non-Muslim millets into minorities. (Tokta , 2004: 55)

Tanzimat Declaration was significant as it set an end to the millet system and introduced the concept of citizenship for the first time. Introduction of the citizenship concept eliminated the basic principle of the millet system which was the different enforcements between the Muslims and non-Muslims. As Tanzimat Declaration aimed at bringing change by promoting equality for everyone, despite religious and ethnic differences the superiority of the Muslim citizens was no longer accepted by the law.

With Tanzimat Declaration, a new structure was introduced where both Muslims and non-Muslims started to enjoy the same rights and they were obliged to the same duties. To this end, the jizya tax which was paid by the Non-Muslims in return for exemption from their military service duty was abolished in 1855. Following the abolishment of the tax, non-Muslim men were accepted to military service and they were also granted the right to get professional ranks. Additionally, non-Muslims were also granted an equal chance for being appointed for as state officials. The reform package also brought legal, administrative and educational changes. Legally, non-Muslims were granted the right of life, property and safety and they were made equal to Muslim components of the society in front of the law.

The *Reform Edict (Islahat Fermanı)* of 1856 followed the Tanzimat reforms in the road to equal citizenship status for the non-Muslims. The Reform Edict aimed at creating an Ottoman nation which was not defined by religion but through the common ground of being an Ottoman. Through this Edict, non-Muslim millets became responsible for preparing regulations on their internal administration. In case of the Jewish community, this regulation that framed the internal relations was named the *Regulation of the Chief Rabbinate*. In the long run, Jews had to give up on these rights that granted them the autonomy to act independently in certain areas to obtain the equal citizenship status which no longer necessitated the autonomy given to the rabbi for the internal affairs of the community.

The reform packages of 1839 and 1856 were legalized in the first constitution of the Ottoman Empire in 1876. The aim of this constitution was to grant the non-Muslim millets equal rights in front of the law and to prevent them from acquiring an independent status which would also decrease the influence of the Western powers over them. The 1876 constitution declared that religious and ethnic affiliations no

longer played a major role in relations with the Ottoman Empire and that the loyalty of citizens should be to the Empire. Since the ruling elite of the Ottoman Empire was also effected by the ideas emerged with French Revolution, the Young Turks worked to define a common Ottoman nation and identity that is aimed at unifying both the Muslim and non-Muslim Ottomans. Significantly, this constitution granted the property owning non-Muslim men the right to join the Legislative Assembly and become represented in the administrative system for the first time. However, Sultan Abdülhamid II suspended both the Assembly and the constitution as he argued that these rights will give the Western alliance the power to intervene with the internal politics of the Ottoman Empire. This suspension ended only after the adoption of the 1908 constitution.

The reform packages and the additional attempts of the Ottoman Empire such as the spread of nationalist ideologies like Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism did not prove to be successful in keeping the millets together under the Ottoman rule. While the Greek Orthodox millet wanted an independent Greece, the Bulgarian Orthodox millet requested the foundation of free Bulgaria and Armenians were willing to establish an Armenian state. By the second half of the 19th century, the only non-Muslim group which was perceived to be loyal (not requesting independence from Ottoman Empire) was the Jewish millet (Poulton, 1997: 54). Due to their diaspora nature Jews were spread all around Europe and they lacked a single home country to support them through a nationalist cause. Moreover, Zionism which is the ideology that promoted a self sovereign homeland for all the Jews were not popular among the Ottoman Jews. The influence of the *Alliance Israelite*

*Universelle*³⁶ was more heavily felt on the Ottoman Jews compared to the idea of Zionism. Regarding the Jews of the Ottoman Empire, the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* advocated their integration into the Turkish culture and promoted the idea of Jewish military conscription (Nahum, 2000: 82). Alliance used education as its main tool in modernizing and secularizing the Ottoman Jews as well as promoting the Jewish culture. Alliance schools promoted an ideology as well as providing an education system which created an invisible line within the Jewish community between the French speaking, Westernized and middle or upper class Jews; and the lower class, less educated, conservative and Ladino speaking Jews. Rodrigue argues that (1997:180), “this dichotomy that appeared among the Jewish community at the end of the 19th century was also carried into modern Turkey in the 20th century.” Due to this separation, the Jewish community lacked a common voice; which also contributed to the unwillingness of the Jews to fight for an independent state. Furthermore, the Ottoman Jews who mostly migrated from European countries under oppressive regimes saw the Empire as a safe haven; which played a role in community’s decision to keep their distance with the Western powers.

The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) which acted as the political party branch of the Young Turk movement started as a secret opposition organization to Sultan Abdülhamid’s rule. The 1908 Revolution brought an end to the secret structure of the CUP and the political party was established on 1913. The CUP members were mostly army officers, workers and small merchants. However, there were strong divisions and frictions among the administration of the CUP causing internal opposition within the group. Significantly, one of the members of CUP and a

³⁶ Additional information on Alliance Israelite Universelle schools will be provided in the following section of this chapter.

prominent name in the Pan-Turkism ideology was Munis Tekinalp formerly known as Moiz Kohen. Additional to his role in the CUP, Tekinalp's discussions on Pan-Turkism were published in various newspapers. Tekinalp's writings also focused on the need to Turkify the Jews³⁷. The reforms and legal rights provided for the non-Muslim millets were not enough to control and prevent the separatist movements. By the end of World War I, the Ottoman Empire lost majority of its lands and through the Treaty of Sevres, the dissolution of the empire was guaranteed.

Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, there has been a common understanding among the public that the non-Muslim minority groups proved to be disloyal and untrustworthy. Even the Jewish population that maintained close relations with the Ottoman Empire throughout its reign was considered as untrustworthy due to these common prejudices. The ramifications of this general belief among the Turks had many consequences for those non-Muslim groups who chose to stay at the ruins of the Ottoman Empire and take part in the emergence of the Turkish state.

3.3 The Early Republican Period (1923-1945): Formation of the “Turkish” Nation

The period following the end of World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire was followed by the Turkish War of Independence³⁸ in the leadership of the Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The Jewish population supported the War of Independence and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had always been a respected national figure in the eyes

³⁷ For additional information on life and work of Munis Tekinalp see Landau (1996).

³⁸ The process that led to the War of Independence and the War itself was not included in this chapter since the incidents in the aftermath of the War of Independence has been effective in the lives of the Turkish Jewish minority.

of the Jewish community (Galanti, 1995: 212). However, their support for the war³⁹ was not able to end the overall distrust among Turkish public against the non-Muslim minorities and overcome the common belief that all of the non-Muslim minority groups betrayed the Ottoman Empire. Compared to the Armenian and Greek minorities, Jews were less affected from this aversion as they were not associated with any conflicts regarding the separatist movements. The exile of the Armenian population in 1915 and the 1923 Protocol concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations were examples of the state led policies against the minority groups that were blamed for their separatist acts. Yet the population figures show that these policies had impacts for all of the non-Muslim minority groups. In 1914, there were an estimated 1.5 million Greeks, 1.2 million Armenians and 128.000 Jews living in the Ottoman Empire. By 1927, these figures had fallen to 110.000 Greeks, 77.000 Armenians and 82.000 Jews (Courbage and Fargues, 1998: 128).

Following the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the millet system was abolished and the status of the non-Muslim minority groups⁴⁰ was reorganized in line with the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. Lausanne Treaty was signed between the Allied powers of Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Greece and Turkey as the successor of the Ottoman Empire. Despite major decisions such as the recognition of the borders of the new Turkish state, the Articles 37 to 45 of the Lausanne Treaty defined the most up-to-date agreement for the rights and the duties of the non-Muslim minority groups. According to Lausanne Treaty's Article 38; minority groups were granted full and complete protection of life and liberty to all inhabitants without distinction

³⁹ For examples of the Jewish support on the War of Independence see Yetkin (1992) and Galanti (1995).

⁴⁰ In defining the non-Muslim minority groups, Turkish state stayed loyal to the classification of the millet system. To this end, the non-Muslim minority groups of the Turkish state were Greek, Armenian and the Jewish minorities.

of birth, nationality, language, race or religion. Article 39 granted them equality before the law and Turkey declared that Turkish nationals belonging to non-Muslim minorities will enjoy the same civil and political rights as Muslims. Furthermore, through Article 40 the minority groups were also granted an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein. While similar rights were introduced with the reform packages of the Ottoman Period, Lausanne Treaty was the first international agreement to legalize and internationally secure these rights.

Through Lausanne Treaty non-Muslim minorities were granted autonomy in terms of their practice in family law, marriage and divorce. Article 42 of the Treaty is concerned with the non-Muslims' family law or personal status measures permitting the settlement of these questions in accordance with the minority groups' customs. Through Lausanne, non-Muslim minorities also gained the right to establish schools that would educate the students in their own languages. With Article 45, it was agreed that the rights provided for the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey will also be valid for the Turks living under the Greek rule in Western Thrace.

Even though Lausanne Treaty was signed between the Allied Powers and Turkey, its repercussions were discussed among the Turkish public. Since, the rights granted by the Lausanne Treaty promoted certain level of autonomy to non-Muslim minorities, in areas such as education, family law, and use of language and establishment of foundations, it contributed to the ongoing skepticism among the Turkish society considering the non-Muslim minority groups as tools for Western powers to intervene in the domestic politics of Turkey. This autonomy also bothered

the Turkish government since the acknowledged liberties also eliminated the common ground for the Muslim and non-Muslim citizens to meet. As Bali (2000: 62) states, “the regulation of the minority issues by special articles of the Lausanne Treaty created a handicap for the social homogenization and nation-building aims of the new Turkish state.” As the most loyal non-Muslim minority group, the Jewish community was expected to give up on these rights as they would prioritize equal status over privileged autonomy in internal affairs. Among Turkish state officials and society there was a belief that the Armenian and Greek minorities will follow the Jewish community in giving up these rights.

The ongoing anti-Jewish propaganda led by the mainstream Turkish media at the time increased the pressure over the Jewish leaders. Moreover, the reactions to the Elza Niyego incident⁴¹ by the Jews resulted in the ban of their free movement. Following this incident, many articles were published in the Turkish media almost condemning the Jewish population for overemphasizing the killing. While this incident and the reactions among the Jews were shown as the main reason for the societal unrest, the hidden reason for the ban on free movements was the Jewish dominance on trade. By the end of the War of Independence, Jews had already filled the gap in commerce sector that existed due to the immigration of the Greek and Armenian tradesmen and it became a common practice among the Turkish society to maintain hostile attitudes for the Jewish community (Bali, 2003: 42).

⁴¹ The Elza Niyego incident can be summarized as a murder caused by an unreturned love. Osman Ragıp who was a son of the mayor and who used to be the orderly officer of the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid fell in love with a young Jewish girl called Elza Niyego. However, the young girl did not accept Ragıp’s proposal of marriage. In return, Ragıp stabbed Niyego to death. Following this crime, Ragıp was sent to a mental home instead of prison and the Jewish community has been furious with this development. 10 to 25 thousand Jews attended at the funeral of Elza Niyego showing their reaction to the incident and how it was handled by the Turkish state. For detailed information on Elza Niyego incident see Levi (1996).

Following the suspicions about the future implementations of Lausanne Treaty and the unrest due to the Niyego incident, leaders of the Jewish community felt the need to show their loyalty to the Turkish state through money donations to the Institution for Turkish Aviation (*Türk Hava Kurumu*) and Turkish Red Crescent (*Kızılay*) (Levi, 1998: 63). Nevertheless, these attempts by the Jewish community were not successful in terminating the existing tensions that mainly revolved around the discussions about the Lausanne Treaty.

As expected the Jewish community has been the first non-Muslim group to opt out of Article 42 of Lausanne Treaty. Article 42 was foreseeing that any conflict between the non-Muslim minority populations that is in the scope of family law will be solved by the Turkish courts in line with the religious customs and conventions of each minority group (Bali, 2003: 60). In choosing to opt out of the rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty, the leaders of the Jewish community advocated that the Jewish people did not need differential treatment as they intended to become equal citizens of the Turkish state. This understanding by the community leaders can account for commitment of the Turkish Jewish community to strengthen its relations with newly emerging Turkish state, which is a prerequisite for obtaining the transnational community character. The decision of Jewish community was followed by the Greek and Armenian communities. Significantly as Tokta (2004: 74) points out, “while the non-Muslim minorities unilaterally opted out of the rights provided to them by the Lausanne Treaty, this withdrawal had no legal standing in terms of international norms since the treaties’ signatory parties were the states, not the minorities.” However, once the minority groups voluntarily withdrew from these rights, the minority issue of Turkey was no longer discussed in light of the rights granted by the Treaty of Lausanne.

Following the War of Independence, Turkish Republic reestablished the boundaries of the newly emerging Turkish state. Despite this attempt to define the nation of this newly emerging state, a common understanding of Turkey and the components of Turkishness were not defined by the time. As the newly emerging Turkish state was founded on the ruins of Ottoman Empire, RPP felt the need to start a nation-building process that will provide a common ideology to unify the Turkish society. Accordingly, a common definition of the term Turk became necessary. Despite an inclusive understanding of citizenship in law, during the Early Republican period ‘Turk’ was generally equated with ‘Muslim’. To this end, the Kemalist bureaucratic elite tried to establish state authority over ethnic and religious groups (Toprak, 1986).

RPP redefined the components of Turkish citizenship in 1928 with a supplement to the Article 88 of the Turkish constitution. The law no.1312 stated that children born from a Turkish father or mother whether in Turkey or in a foreign country are considered Turkish citizens (Nomer, 1989: 45). Through this law, the Turkish state tried to define a common ground for specifying Turkish citizenship through the blood principle. However, this definition did not set forth the situation of the non-Muslim minorities since there was a need on the side of the Republican elite, to Turkify the minority groups to be able to fit them in the newly emerging Turkish nation-state (Bali, 2003:102).

Within this period, the differences of the non-Muslim minorities in terms of religion, language and other practices served in benefit of the RPP as it helped them to define what a Turk should be. “Policies following this definition and therefore prioritizing the Muslim Turks aimed to put the autonomy and the weight of the Turkish ethnic identity without any concessions in every level of the social life.”

(Aktar, 2004: 101) The social and economical activities of the non-Muslims were restructured in line with this aim. As a result, for all of the non-Muslim minority groups the Early Republican Period was marked by the attempts of RPP to pursue the nation-building process through creating a Turkish society that did not tolerate their differences. Accordingly, the Early Republican Period was marked by the attempts of RPP to create a homogeneous Turkish society through the Turkification policies. For non-Muslim minority groups both the implementation and aftermath of these policies played a significant role in defining their relationship to the new Turkish state.

Use of Turkish in the daily life and education was one of the most important requirements of the nation building process. As an ongoing process of the Ottoman *millet* system, non-Muslim minorities were educated in foreign languages and they were using these languages in their daily lives both in the public and private spaces. The common languages among the Jewish community were Ladino and French among the Sephardi Jews and Yiddish among the Ashkenazis. Starting from the Ottoman period, Jews were mostly educated in the *Alliance Universelle Israelite* schools⁴². *Alliance Universelle Israelite* was a Jewish organization based in Paris, France with an aim at safeguarding human rights of Jews around the world. The members of organization believed the Jewish communities should obtain the best education to overcome biases, to avoid poverty and maintain high level of culture and employment. To this end, the first Alliance Israelite Universelle Schools were seen in the Ottoman cities of Edirne, Thessalonica, Izmir and Istanbul. Attendants of the Alliance schools were educated in French and had some classes in Turkish. Through the wide spread education system of the *Alliance Universelle Israelite* schools and due to the general habits of the community since the Ottoman period;

⁴² For more information on Alliance Israelite Universelle see Güleriyüz (1993).

only Jewish tradesmen that had interaction with people outside of the community were able to speak in Ottoman language or Turkish. Furthermore, as the number of non-Muslim population changed drastically after the World War I it became more common to hear Turkish and it became more common to notice the use of foreign languages.

The inability of the non-Muslim minority groups to speak Turkish gave rise to the introduction of the *Vatanda Türkçe Konu !* Campaign (*Citizen Speak Turkish!*). The campaign was initiated by the law students of Istanbul University⁴³ on 13 January 1928. The non-Muslim minority groups who were unable to speak Turkish were the targets of this campaign which aimed at forcing them to learn and speak in Turkish in every aspect of their daily lives. Many propaganda tools such as posters, bulletins and newspaper articles were used to draw attention to the campaign. Moreover, public demonstrations were held to give the common message that focused on the necessity to speak Turkish in order to be considered as a Turk. The efforts by the law students proved to be successful and soon Citizen Speak Turkish Campaign gained the support of the Turkish public. Turkish media also supported this attempt. Through articles Turkish people were asked to warn those who did not speak in Turkish. Some of the Jewish intellectuals also supported the campaign as language was seen as a barrier to social unification. For the Jewish community this campaign was seen as yet another chance to prove their loyalty to the Turkish state. Language differences were evaluated through the lens of citizenship question, therefore to become full citizens Jewish leaders warned the community to learn and use Turkish (Bali, 1996: 44). In order to spread Turkish among the Jewish

⁴³ The root of Istanbul University goes back to Ottoman Period and at the time it was called Dar-ül Fünun.

community, institutions such as *Union for Speaking in Turkish (Türkçe Konu turma Birli i)*, *Jewish Commission of Disseminating the Turkish Language (Türk Dilini Yaygınla turma Komisyonu)*, *Union of Culture (Kültür Birli i)*, *Turkish Culture Association (Türk Kültür Birli i)* and *Balat Association of Turkish Culture and Aid (Balat Türk Kültür ve Yardım Derne i)* were established.

The enthusiasm of Jewish community leaders was not met by the members of community. Despite the establishment of the above-mentioned associations, it was common for Turkish Jews to resist this imposed change on their mother tongue. In some cases, the resistance to speak Turkish in public translated into violent acts and legal punishments. Those who were caught not speaking in Turkish in the public space were punished by the Article 159 of the Penal Code which was against insulting Turkishness. In terms of overall effect, the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign had been successful in forcing the non-Muslim minority groups to use Turkish in public sphere whereas in the private space languages like French, Ladino and Yiddish were still common⁴⁴. As seen from the responses from one of the participants, the effects of the Citizens Speak Turkish Campaign were apparent long after it ended:

In 1978, when I immigrated back to Istanbul I lived with my mother for a while. Our neighbor knew that we were Jews and they were disturbed by the fact that my mother spoke Turkish with an accent. We were shocked to receive the document from the court to see that my mother was sued by this same neighbor who filed a case against her for insulting Turkishness. (Sixty years old, male, psychologist)

⁴⁴ Turkish is the mother tongue of the younger generations of the Turkish Jewish Community. Yet it is still common to hear Ladino, French or Yiddish in households and in some cases in the public realm. It is also common for those who learned Turkish afterwards to speak with a certain Jewish accent. While many Jews learned Turkish following the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign this process negatively affected the Jewish culture as the number of people speaking in thousand year's long language such as Ladino diminished significantly.

The Turkification policies of the Early Republican Period also had implications on the non-Turkish education institutions of the minority groups. Since, all education institutions were united after the establishment of the new Turkish state; Turkish became the main language of education. Due to this transition, the younger generations started using Turkish as their mother tongue which caused an overall decrease in the number of non-Turkish speaking Jews. Moreover, the transition to Turkish in the education brought an end to the *Alliance Israelite Universalle* schools which pursued education in French. Additionally on 1934, the Law on Surnames was passed. Through this law, non-Muslim minority groups were obliged to acquire surnames that are easily pronounceable in Turkish. Additionally, use of words such as *monsieur* or *madame* that comes from French and used for addressing the members of the non-Muslim minority groups were prohibited along with religious titles like *sheik* or *pasha*.

Additional to Law on Surnames, the Law on Settlement no.2510 also passed on 1934. This law restructured the immigration policies of the Turkish state and the need to integrate the non-Muslim groups with the rest of the Turkish society was underlined once again. In terms of settlement, this need of integration was realized through disarranging the neighborhoods that Jews lived together. Despite its contradiction to the essence of the rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty, the Law on Settlement was passed by the Turkish parliament.

Most historians agree that the interpretation of this law by the public became the basis of the 1934 *Thrace Incidents*. While interpretation of the law constitutes the reasoning for one side of the incident, it is also necessary to analyze it within the context of the international political agenda. This was the period when Nazi Germany was rising and Turkey was feeling under threat due to a possible territorial

occupancy. Jewish population around the world was the common enemy for the Nazi Germany. Therefore, the Jewish settlement in Thrace which is the European border of Turkey constituted a strategically important yet dangerous area. The rising anti-Semitism in Germany at the time was also supported in Turkey especially through the voices of right wing media organs like *Milli nkılap* periodical. Thrace Incidents began in Çanakkale province when members of the Jewish population started receiving unsigned letters telling them to leave the area. Following these threats, community leaders tried to get in contact with Prime Minister smet nönü to inform him about the situation and ask for guidance but this attempt proved to be unsuccessful.

The violent acts of the Thrace Incident began on July 3, 1934. Jews living in the Thrace provinces like Çanakkale, Tekirda , Kırklareli and Edirne were attacked, their houses and shops were destroyed. Turkish government intervened in the incidents only after the violent acts had started and therefore the actions taken focused on restoring peace in the area. Following the incident, anti-Semitism was condemned publicly and the ideologies spread by the Nazi Germany were blamed for the Thrace Incidents. RPP also took more active actions such as closing down the right wing press organs that promoted anti-Semitism as well as removing the governors and mayors of the cities that the incidents took place.

Despite the actions taken by the RPP government, Jews were already affected by the incidents both financially and psychologically which resulted in their migration within and outside of Turkey. According to 1927 census, there number of Jews in Çanakkale was 1.845; it was 6.098 in Edirne and 1.481 in Tekirda . Following the Thrace Incident of 1934, there has been major immigration flows to Istanbul or outside of Turkey. In 1945 census, the number of Jews living in the

Thrace provinces decreased by 52 % (Dündar, 1952: 61). While Istanbul and Izmir became a common destination for immigration, Palestine was also a destination for those who left the provinces of Thrace. RPP's public condemnation of the incidents was not enough to terminate the overall suspicion and reactions against the Jewish community. Majority of the Turkish public was not convinced that the Jewish community was complying with the necessary conditions of being a Turk. As a way of putting an end to this discomfort among the Turkish public, the Jewish community again made donations to civic foundations as a way of showing their loyalty and commitment.

Another policy that served as part of the Turkification policies and which was grounded on a discriminatory basis was the *Incident of Reserves* (Yirmi Kur'ahtiyatlar). The Incident of Reserves was the military decision of recruiting non-Muslim men between the ages of 26-45 to military service for reserve services. Since, non-Muslims were still considered as unreliable the non-Muslim men recruited for the army worked in duties like building roads, national parks and collecting garbage. With the Incident of Reserves most non-Muslim men who had already fulfilled their military service were sent to military for the second time. In his memoir, the honorary president of the Turkish Jewish community Bensiyon Pinto defined his memories of the time as:

My father did not know why he was taken for the military service once again. He also did not know if he was going to be back. I later learned that they were treated badly when they surrendered. The discomfort among the non-Muslims was growing and it was possible to realize that everyone was worried. Combined with the trauma of the 1934 Thrace Incidents, the Incident of Reserves caused great fear among the non-Muslims (Pinto, 2008: 33).

The Incident of Reserves took place in a period when the European Jews were placed in the concentration camps by the Nazi Germany; the common belief at the time was

that Turkish government took this measure to avoid any conflict with Germany. The non-Muslim men recruited to the army served for a year and they were released on 1942.

The reflection of the discriminatory policies on the economic realm was materialized with the *Law on Capital Tax (Varlık Vergisi Kanunu)*. The Law on Capital Tax was approved by the Turkish Parliament on November 11, 1942. State officials argued that the Capital Tax was a necessary one time measure to create additional resources for the state treasury that was already hurt from the war economics. An additional argument used for justifying the tax was the need to eliminate the improper personal benefit that was derived during the war years mostly by the non-Muslims. The non-Muslim tradesmen were accused of war profiteering as they controlled the scarce basic goods such as sugar, oil, flour and gasoline at the time of war. Despite the given justifications, Capital Tax was used as a tool to end the non-Muslim dominance on trade and to open up the way for a Muslim bourgeoisie that will manage the newly emerging Muslim capital. To this end, the non-Muslim minorities were obliged to pay higher taxes than the Muslims. “The burden of the tax fell on the shoulders of non-Muslim minorities who were assessed a proportion up to 10 times higher than the amount levied on their Muslim equivalents.” (Çduygu et al., 2006: 460)

The Tax Assessment Boards made up of governmental, commercial and local authorities were established in every city, town or district and they were responsible for deciding on the amount of tax that needs to be paid. The assessments of the boards about the amount of payments were posted in fifteen days and the defined amounts needed to be paid within a month from the posting date. The board was also responsible for controlling the payment process. To pay the given amounts, non-

Muslims sold their properties and commodities at prices much less than its worth. Those who were unable to pay the levied taxes were sent to the A kale work camps in Erzurum. In A kale, people lived under primitive living conditions and they were forced to build roads under severe weather conditions. The weather conditions and primitive opportunities caused many people to go through serious illnesses or lose their lives. Significantly, there was not a single Turkish/Muslim defaulter among the 1229 persons deported to and made to work in the A kale work camp (Aktar et al., 1999:140). The Law on Capital Tax was abandoned in 1944. Yet, by the time the Capital Tax was abolished, i.e. in only a couple of years, property and money had already changed hands from the non-Muslims tradesmen to Muslim ones.

The Capital Tax has been one of the most apparent policies of discrimination against the non-Muslims. According to Pinto (2008: 34), the Capital Tax was aimed at intimidating the non-Muslim minorities: “it was an attempt to distance the non-Muslim minorities from their home country and spread the idea that they are different from the rest of the society”. As Pinto suggested, the Capital Tax was a turning point for the Jewish community that was used to the tolerant and more autonomous policies of the Ottoman Empire period. Instead the Early Republican Period was a time of oppression and shame for the Jewish community and there was a common tendency among the community members to blame smet nönü for these policies.

Accusations against nönü or the RPP notwithstanding, the policies of the Early Republican Period were actually meant to construct a Turkish nation. The problem was Turkish nation building process - politically, economically and culturally- centered on the Muslim citizens of Turkey. In doing so, Islamic identity came to be seen as an obligatory component of Turkishness. The political and social

repercussions of such an understanding led to discriminative policies, and even violent acts. They were used to diminish the role of the non-Muslim groups and define the boundaries of their existence and status within the new state structure.

RPP's emphasis on secularism and Jewish community's choice of opting out from the rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty defined an environment where the non-Muslim minority groups had to give up on the essence of their rights to obtain equality and become equal citizens with the Muslim majority. International politics was also significant in Turkish policies against the Jewish population at the time. Nazi Germany under the rule of Adolf Hitler declared Jews all around the world as the main enemy and six million Jews were killed in one of the worst genocides of the world. This animosity in the international arena also showed its face as anti-Semitism in Turkey. Since Turkey was one of the countries under the threat of German occupancy, RPP maintained its active neutrality policy to keep out of the World War II. Yet a common belief among the Jewish community has been that some of the discriminatory acts and incidents were used as part of this active neutrality strategy⁴⁵.

On the other hand, Turkey played an important role in saving lives of Jews that were escaping from the Nazi Germany. As Aktar et al. (1999:133) points out, "while the Jewish population of Eastern Thrace was being virtually forced to migrate to Istanbul, and at a time when the Turkish government closed down all associations, Ankara was extending its welcome to Jewish professors from Germany who were being persecuted by the Nazi regime in Berlin." Through the *University Reform* of 1933, many professors that were escaping from the Nazi Germany came to Turkey with the invitation of the government. The University Reform was an attempt to

⁴⁵ To this end, it is also possible to argue that these discriminatory measures kept the Turkish Jewish community under the protection of the Turkish state and away from the Nazi Germany.

modernize the educational system and conditions of the Istanbul University. To this end, Professor Albert Malche of the Geneva University was assigned to analyze the state of the Istanbul University and offer ways to improve it. Prof. Malche suggested offering positions for the refugee Jewish professors that were prominent names in their areas. Professors arriving in Turkey were appointed for positions at the Istanbul and Ankara Universities. As well as ending any threats that may come from the Nazis, Turkey gave privileges to the professors such as tax exemptions, free housing, high salaries and Turkish citizenship⁴⁶. Moreover, Turkish ambassadors like Behiç Erkin⁴⁷, who was the Turkish ambassador to France, saved many Jews who had connections to Turkey from the Holocaust by providing them with Turkish passports and sending them to Turkey.

The inclusion of Greeks, Armenians, and Jews in the minority category did not provide them with full protection. Non-Muslim minority groups faced problems ranging from security issues to the threats against their identities (Tokta et al., 2009-10: 701). Especially in the Early Republican Period, Turkish public was already prejudiced against all non-Muslim minority groups due to their perceived betrayal during World War I. Even though the Jewish community stood by the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish state they were associated with the rest of the minority groups and they too were considered as untrustworthy. Jewish community's chronic need to prove its loyalty and commitment to the Turkish Republic did not result in the desired outcome of putting an end to the ongoing prejudices towards them. Moreover, the dominance of Jewish community in trade was also disturbing for the Muslim population since Jewish community was getting financially better off by

⁴⁶ For detailed information on the University Reform and the list of professors that arrived at Turkey see Shaw (1993).

⁴⁷ For a detailed account on Behiç Erkin and his attempts to save Jews see Kivırcık (2007).

trading and they were dominating the sector. In the Early Republican Period, minority groups were forced to pay off the amends of the commercial privileges they attained under the Ottoman Empire. This pay off translated into unofficial exclusion of the minority groups from Turkish political life and public administration. Contrary to this exclusion, minority groups lived under acceptable conditions and laws regarding religion, civil status and tax payment issues. As minority groups accepted this exclusion, they accepted the second class citizenship provided for them (Bali, 2003: 477-478).

3.4 The Multi Party Democracy Period (1945-1980): The Road to Democratization?

The period between 1923 and 1945 was marked by the single party rule and nation-building policies of the RPP. As the sole authority, RPP became responsible for many controversial laws, measures and political acts which helped them keep together a new country emerging from the ruins of the multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, there was an inevitable need on the RPP's side to unify the population. In order to maintain the continuity of the newly emerging Turkish state, RPP created a Turkish society at the expense of positioning the Turkish non-Muslim minorities as the 'others' of the society whilst redefining the 'Turk'.

In international arena, the end of World War II promoted a period of democratization with a focus on the democratization of the Western political system. Despite its active neutrality policy and the maneuvers to avoid taking part in the war, Turkey sided with the Western powers throughout the World War II. Therefore, in

the aftermath of the war Turkey was expected to take its part in the democratization process that was becoming influential in the Western world.

Developments in the international arena had an impact on the domestic politics of Turkey too. The single party period of the RPP was now challenged with the emergence of the Democrat Party (DP). Democrat Party symbolized hope and change for the Turkish society that was already suffering from war economics and social unrest. Since non-Muslim minorities were negatively affected by the policies of the former period, the newly emerging Democrat Party became their hope for a move towards a more democratic, liberal and equal status. Yet, it became obvious by the mid-1950s that the democratic context would hardly wipe away the traditional 'other' position of Turkey's non-Muslim minorities (Çduygu et al., 2007: 371). As RPP's emphasis on secularism was now replaced by DP's prioritization of Islamic values, non-Muslim minorities were still unable to find their place within the constructed Turkish identity as religion still acted as the determinant factor.

Under the rule of Adnan Menderes, DP won the 1950, 1954 and 1957 elections. The success of Democrat Party was grounded on its populist policies based on religion and Islamic values. Despite the informal division between the Muslim and non-Muslim citizens, minority groups supported DP as they were not associated with any of the nation-building policies of the former period. Still, the Multi Party Period has not been free of conflict for the non-Muslim minority groups. Within this period, Turkey's relationship with Greece had direct effect on the lives of the non-Muslim minorities. The tense relations between the two countries resulted in discomfort among the Greek community of Turkey and in resulted in migration flows following the September 6-7 Incidents.

The Multi Party period witnessed the loosening of state led policies of the single party period in terms of non-Muslim minorities. Practices concerned with bureaucracy and military were some of the main areas that the non-Muslim minority groups started to enjoy more freedom. In this period, the non-Muslim men who used to get appointed only for unarmed duties started to be accepted to military schools. This change also paved the way for them to take part in the professional cadre of the Turkish army. As DP was not insistent on the Turkification policies, the restrictions on use of foreign language have also been loosened. In fact, under the DP rule the number of Jewish press organs published in Turkish, French or Ladino increased significantly⁴⁸. Another significance of this period for the Jewish community was the revival of the Chief Rabbinate after a long interval which resulted in the appointment of David Aseo to the seat of the Chief Rabbinate in 1953.

During 1950s, Cyprus and relations with Greece acted as one of the main issues in Turkish foreign policy agenda. The future of Cyprus had major implications for Turkish-Greek relations⁴⁹ and also for the Greek community living in Turkey as they were expected to side with Turkey in this conflict as a way of showing their loyalty to the Turkish state. The tension in Turkish-Greek relations peaked after September 6, 1955 with the news on Turkish media about bombings at Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's house in Thessalonica. Following the broadcast of this news in Turkey, the most violent depredation of the Republic Period started. These violent acts mainly took place in Istanbul and Izmir. Aggressors initially targeted the Greek settlements and shops. However, soon after the attacks on Greek business and residences began, they spread to the Armenian and Jewish owned settlements and

⁴⁸ The Jewish press organs were newspapers and journals. Some of the newspapers published in this period were *abat*, *alom*, *Atikva*, *Or Yehuda*, *Or Israel* and *La Boz de Turkiya*.

businesses. The protests and violent acts against non-Muslim minorities varied from attacking shops and temples to beating up and insulting non-Muslims on the streets.

A witness of the September 6-7 Incidents explain the day as follows:

I was 7-8 years old by the time of September 6-7 Incidents. Mostly, I remember the chaos and the outcries I was hearing from our house. My parents were not letting me see what was going on but I heard that the grocery store owned by Yorgo (a Greek) was robbed. I guess the incident has been the first time I understood that we were different. From then on, I started feeling estranged from Turkey (Sixty - two years old, male, textile business)

Democrat Party did not play a significant role in controlling the incidents. Instead the main action taken by the government was to pay compensations to non-Muslims in the aftermath of the events. The September 6-7 Incidents have been one of the turning points for the lives of non-Muslim minority groups in Turkey as these infamous events represented a period of hostility and violence. It was common to see fear, anger, disappointment and hopelessness among the non-Muslim groups since they found themselves in the middle of great tension. In his memoir Bensiyon Pinto (2008: 66) explained his memory of the day as:

Protestors were coming close to our apartment to burn down the shop on the first floor. To stop them, our door keeper Hüseyin Efendi had already called the imam of the mosque in our street. The imam shouted at the protestors and said: "Stop! This is not the property of the Non-Muslim (gavur). Everyone living here are Muslim. Once again I knew that we were the excluded 'other' of the Turkish society. At that point I've decided once again to leave Turkey.

Like Bensiyon Pinto, many members of the non-Muslim minority groups decided to leave Turkey in the aftermath of the incidents. Following the 6-7 September 1955 Incidents, the number of emigrants climbed to over 1,700 in 1956 and to more than 1,900 in 1957, compared to just 339 in 1955 (Weiker, 1988: 22).

Due to lack of a checks and balances system, what was supposed to be the transition to democratization of Turkey resulted in the authoritarian rule of the

Democrat Party. This authoritarian rule was terminated with the military coup of 1960. The leaders and the parliamentarians of DP were sent to trial following the *coup d'etat*. Following the military intervention, representatives of the army stressed their willingness to shift to a democratic system as soon as possible. To this end, a Constituent Assembly that also had representatives for the non-Muslim minority groups came together to prepare a new constitution. The 1961 Constitution which is still regarded as the most democratic and freedom granting constitution of Turkey was designed following the 1960 military coup⁵⁰.

Following the shift to civilian power, The Justice Party (JP) which was considered as a continuation of the closed Democrat Party ruled Turkey during the 1960s. However, due to political unrest that was caused by the polarization of society between right wing and left wing politics, JP's rule was ended by another military coup in 1971. Following the 1971 coup, constitutional amendments were applied to increase the power of the executive and limit the freedoms and activities of citizens in order to safeguard national security and unity (Tokta , 2004: 98). To this end, the freedom granting constitution of 1961 was replaced with a more controlling one.

In 1970s the issue of Cyprus rose once again and became an influential factor in the lives of non-Muslim minorities, especially the Greek community of Turkey. By 1974, the Cyprus issue became the most important conflict in the Turkish foreign policy agenda and its association with the Turkish-Greek relations turned it into an international conflict. Following Turkey's intervention of Cyprus, with an aim at protecting the Cypriot Turks in the area, the issue became an international problem and Turkey found itself within a diplomatic crisis where she was accused of major

⁵⁰ The reinterpretation of citizenship concept through the 1961 constitution will be analyzed in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

human rights violations. In the international arena, these accusations were also backed by measures such as embargos. The Cyprus crisis was a major breakdown for the Greek minority of Turkey since the Greek population was facing the consequences of reactions due to the rising nationalism in Turkey and increasing hostility towards Greece and Greek Cypriots⁵¹. Around 30.000-40.000 members of the Turkish Greek minority immigrated to Greece after the termination of the Turkish-Greek Treaty in 1964 (Aydın, 1985: 510). While the Jewish community of Turkey was not directly impacted, as a means to show their loyalty the community leaders engaged in international lobbying attempts to defend and justify Turkey in the international arena⁵². The tension between Turkey and Greece took a lead in the Turkish domestic politics too. Following the conflict, the *Theological Seminary of Khalki (Heybeliada Ruhban Okulu)*, which has been very significant for Greek Orthodox population as it is the center of Orthodox ecclesiastical training, was closed down⁵³.

A major issue that affected all of the non-Muslim minority groups has been Council of State's regulation of 1974 that prohibited corporate bodies that are composed of non-Turkish citizens to own immovable property. Due to this regulation, the real estates that belonged to the religious foundations of non-Muslim minorities were sold off. Although contradictory to the essence of the Article 40 of the Lausanne Treaty, these properties that were either purchased or donated to the

⁵¹ Despite many attempts to restore the Turkish-Greek –Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot relations it is still common to see hostility and resentment towards one another among the stated nations.

⁵² Starting with the Cyprus issue, lobbying for Turkey around the world has been a role that the Turkish Jewish community maintained. Since, the Jewish lobby in America is considered to be one of the most powerful lobbies, the lobbying activities by the Turkish Jewish community took and it is still taking an important role in determining the Turkish-American relations.

⁵³ This issue is still on the agenda of Turkish-EU relations and it stands as one of the obstacles to full membership.

foundations of non-Muslim minority groups were considered illegal and they were returned to their initial owners. This enforcement caused severe financial disturbances for the communities causing them to lose ability to use these revenues for minority schools or hospitals.

For Jews from all around the world, this period has been significant due to the establishment of State of Israel on May 14, 1948. Foundation of Israel, a Jewish state, has been the dream of Jews since the biblical times. Turkey represented a dual stance in terms of establishment of the Israel. On the one hand, Turkey wanted to keep close relations with the American Jewish community as a means to get closer to the United States and Western world; on the other hand its loyalty to the Arab world kept it from ratifying the foundation of the State of Israel. By allowing and at times encouraging Jewish migration it was keeping its relations warm with the Jewish communities and organizations, and avoiding a totally hostile position against Israel, which after all, was being supported by the United States. At the same time, by its refusal to recognize the new state it was also trying to keep its relations with the Arab countries unharmed (Aktar et al., 1999: 143). Short after its foundation Israel became a land of emigration for the Jewish community of Turkey. In the great wave of 1948-51, a total of 34,500 Jews – making up nearly 40 percent of the Jewish community in Turkey at the time- immigrated to Israel (Benbassa and Rodrigue, 2001: 386). While the idea of a Jewish state has been attractive for the Turkish Jews, the effects of Turkification policies and incidents like the Capital Tax, Thrace Incidents, September 6-7 Incidents and their severe consequences also played a major role in the mass emigration from Turkey. The migration wave continued in 1950 with 2,500 emigrants and in 1951 with 1,300 (Weiker, 1998: 21). In line with Thomas Faist's discussion on transnationalism literature; the emigration of Turkish

Jews to Israel acts as a proof on the irrevocability of the migration process. Those emigrated to Israel enjoyed strong social ties with Turkey through their family members and friends that were left back in Turkey. Moreover, despite the embracing politics of Israel to all Jews from around the world the Turkish character of the emigrated Jews became more apparent once they arrived in Israel. This in return contributed to their idea of Turkey strengthening their symbolic ties to their former country of residence. This process of emigration played a significant role in the expansion of the Turkish Jews' transnational social space through contributing to the transnational nature of the community.

The period between 1945 and 1980 has been significant for Turkey in terms of the attempt to democratize. While this period witnessed the shift from the single party period to the Multi Party period and from Republican People's Party rule to Democrat Party and finally to Justice Party's rule none of these transitions has been smooth. Turkey's democratization attempt has been disturbed by two military interventions and polarization of the Turkish society especially in 1970s due to right versus left wing politics. Moreover, in terms of its foreign policy Turkey had to focus on the worsening Turkish-Greek relations and the Cyprus issue as they became the primary issues of Turkey's foreign relations. The Cyprus issue had direct effects on the Greek minorities of Turkey, as there was a tendency among the Turkish public to hold them accountable for Greece's foreign policy. The Armenian minorities were also under the pressure of the Turkish public due to the terrorist attacks of ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia)⁵⁴. Significantly, this period showed that Turkey's relationship to its non-Muslim minorities was defined through

⁵⁴ ASALA was an Armenian terrorist organization aiming force Turkey to acknowledge responsibility for the incidents of 1915. To this end, ASALA organized terrorist attacks and assassinations against the Turkish Ambassadors and they were responsible for killing of 46 people.

the countries associated with these groups. The foreign policy relations Turkey maintained with these countries such as Greece, Armenia and Israel defined possible conflicts these groups may face. Although members of non-Muslim minority groups are associated with these countries through their transnational ties and networks; this transnational character does not necessarily mean that they should be held accountable for the actions of these countries. Nor should they feel the need to interpret such incidents as conditions to prove loyalty towards Turkey.

Even though the Multi Party Period started as a more hopeful one for the non-Muslim minority groups, the hopeful environment left its place to discontent and a feeling of exclusion since it became apparent that Turkish government and society still associated Turkish citizenship and Turkishness with Islam. To this end, the September 6-7 Incidents have been a milestone for all of the non-Muslim minority groups since these events were perceived as an act of hatred. The ramifications of September 6-7 Events were financial and psychological damages on the side of all non-Muslim minority groups. Combined with social unrest among the public, this period witnessed one of the major immigration flows of the non-Muslim minority groups causing an overall decrease in the number of non-Muslim people living in Turkey. In case of the Turkish Jews, foundation of the State of Israel has also been a significant reason for emigration.

3.5 Post-1980 Period (1980 - 2010): Globalization, Turkey and non-Muslim minorities

Due to the political unrest of 1970s caused by social polarization of supporters of right wing versus left wing politics, Turkey entered the 1980s with another military intervention. With this military coup, Turkey's attempt to

democratize was blocked for the third time. Turkish public heavily felt the consequences of this military intervention as major killings and human rights violations took place under military rule. Moreover, strong measures such as strict control over media, closing down of the political parties and banning politicians from politics were taken.

In line with the oppressive military rule it represents, the 1982 Constitution⁵⁵ was also prepared in a manner that protects the strict and anti-liberal environment. The 1982 Constitution was a document of restrictions that strengthened the executive, decreased the powers of high court, centralized universities, limited the activities of women and youth branches of political parties and gave more power to the National Security Council. Moreover, the rights of labor as well as associations and the trade unions were hindered.

After a period of extreme polarization, Islam was once again used as the tool to bring together the Turkish society. The military advocated a Turkish-Islamic synthesis, a rightist position which presumed that Turkishness and Islamism were complimentary aspects of Turkish culture and furthermore emphasized religious values in the fabric of Turkish nationalism (Bora, 1998). The state led definition of 'Turk' once again did not include those Turkish citizens with different religions. To this end, mandatory religion classes that focused on the Sunni interpretation of Islam were included in school curricula. Christian and Jewish students were excused from these classes only after 1987.

Turgut Özal's Motherland Party (MP) has been at the political center of 1980's. The core elements of the Motherland Party that helped bring people together

⁵⁵ Turkey currently discusses changes on the 1982 Constitution. A referendum was held on September 12, 2010 about the constitutional changes proposed by the Justice and Development Party.

were conservatism and nationalism. However, the most significant reason for MP's success in the 1983 elections was the novelties it brought by in economical and political fronts. The MP combined engineering pragmatism with cultural conservatism, and all its policies emphasized traditional values, economic development and the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals (Toprak, 1993). MP's leader Turgut Özal was also known for his sympathy towards the West and Western values. Özal's policies were aiming at bringing Turkey closer to the Western powers and the United States of America. The first step of Özal's project which ultimately aimed at making Turkey compatible with rest of the Western world focused on integrating the Turkish economy with the rest of the world. In fact, main policies of the Motherland Party were on the economic front and actions such as shifting from import substitution economic policy to the free market model and export oriented growth were taken⁵⁶.

Özal's policies were also shaped by the developments in the international context. Globalization has been the defining phenomenon of the post-1980 period. In a broader sense, globalization was associated with flow of money, information and ideas around the world. Moreover, it had an effect of bringing cultures and people together which left the nation-states vulnerable for outside influences. As the global power of the era, United States of America (USA) and American culture became the emerging source of influence around the world. Increasing interconnectedness and transnational ties emerging through globalization challenged the understanding of the nation-state. Yet, influences of globalization and homogenization of societies also became a source of several backslashes. Reactions to the changes brought by

⁵⁶ Turgut Özal's economic policies were followed by and influenced of the neo-rightist Thatcherism in United Kingdom and Reaganism in the United States.

globalization also marked the post-1980 period with rising nationalist movements and ethnic conflicts.

The effects of globalization made it obligatory for Turkey to reinterpret her citizenship laws. This reinterpretation mainly focused on two areas. The first area was the restrictions on *dual citizenship*. Theoretically, dual citizenship refers mainly to membership to more than one state, and the concept presupposes loyalty to the state rather than the nation (Tokta , 2004: 105). Until 1980s Turkish citizenship was recognized by the *jus sanguinis (blood principle)* which granted people Turkish citizenship depending on their parents' association with Turkey. However by 1980s Turkish citizens had already been migrating to European countries in mass numbers⁵⁷ and Turkey felt the need to revise its stance towards dual citizenship as it had the will not to loose these citizens and possible remittances they might bring. In 1981, Turkish parliament passed a new law that prioritized Turkish citizens' loyalty to the Turkish state rather than the Turkish nation. While this law on dual citizenship was initially designed for the Turkish citizens that mostly immigrated to Germany for work; its impact played a role for the Turkish Jews that immigrated to Israel. The content of the dual citizenship law was expanded in 1995 with the Supplement Law No.4112. Under this Supplement Law, those emigrants who were unable to benefit from the rights provided with the dual citizenship law of 1981 were granted equal rights with the rest of the Turkish citizens. This change in citizenship law and allowance of dual citizenship has been significant for the Turkish Jews as it

⁵⁷ Starting with 1960s there had been a major migration flow from Turkey to Germany. The immigrating Turkish population became the major source of work force in Germany.

contributed to the transnational character of the community through granting the citizens the right to enjoy rights in both countries⁵⁸.

The second area globalization had an influence on the conceptualization of the Turkish citizenship has been the incorporation of constitutional citizenship in 1990s. As Soyarı (2000: 202) argues, “in response to the rise of identity politics, multiculturalism, and demands from different segments of society (i.e. Islamists, Kurds, etc.), constitutional citizenship was proposed as a solution which would ensure internal peace in academic and political party circles.” This understanding provided an equal status for the ethnic and religious groups; therefore became important for the non-Muslim minorities as they were granted equality before law. The acknowledgment of such rights for the non-Muslim minorities developed an environment where they started to analyze their existence under the Turkish Republic. While equal citizenship status of the non-Muslim minorities was granted under the Turkish constitution; this granted equality on legal grounds did not prevent the common understanding of Turkish society that associated Turkishness with Islam and Islamic values. Therefore the improvements in the legal status were not necessarily reflected upon the discussion on the Turkish identity. In return, “non-Muslim minorities began to introduce retrospective criticisms against non-egalitarian practices of the Republican regime, and sought ways to accomplish substantive reforms that would relieve their ‘second class’ position in the country.” (Çduygu et al., 2007: 377)

Another reason that obligated Turkey to restructure its relations with its Muslim and non-Muslim minority groups in the post-1980 period was the

⁵⁸ An analysis on the relationship between transnationalism and citizenship will be provided in the next chapter. Accordingly, the role of dual citizenship elaborating the above-mentioned point will be included in the following chapter.

acknowledgment of the membership status to the European Union (EU). The EU accession process acted as one of the main tools to keep the minority issue on the agenda of Turkish politics. In fact, EU expanded the debate on the Turkish minority issue by focusing on the rights of the Muslim minority groups such as Kurds and Alevis which were not included in the scope of the Lausanne Treaty. With the confirmation of the European Council, following the Copenhagen Summit of 1993, EU candidate countries were expected to achieve stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities to become full members of the European Union.

Starting with 1998, EU Commission reports on Turkey started to include parts on the minority regime and treatments of the Turkish state. Following the candidate membership status gained at the Helsinki Summit on December 1999, Turkey entered into a period of reforms and constitutional changes that included parts on the minority rights, too. One of these constitutional amendments was the allowance of the use of mother tongue in TV and radio broadcast offering freedom of expression for different ethnic groups⁵⁹. An important step taken for the non-Muslim minorities was the new Law on Foundations that was put into effect in 2008. Through this amendment, the foundations of non-Muslim minorities were allowed to own and dispose immovable property. Moreover, establishment of new synagogues and churches were allowed with a change on the Law on Public Works. However, the restriction on the training of clergy still continues to be a problem especially for the Greek community as the opening of the Theological Seminary of Khalki has not yet been resolved. Furthermore, other problems like complicated bureaucratic

⁵⁹ Within the context of the EU, the Kurdish question of Turkey gained importance. The right to use the mother tongue in broadcasting is significant for the Kurdish minority that has been demanding it. This has not been one of the issues in the agenda of the non-Muslim minorities.

procedures and the control and interference of the General Directorate of Foundations with the administration of the religious foundations. Therefore, the new draft law did (does) not provide an ultimate solution to the problems of community property belonging to the non-Muslim foundations, yet it has been (is) more promising than the existing 1935 law (Tokta et al., 2009-10: 703).

Inclusion of the minority issue (both Muslim and non-Muslim) on the agenda of European Union has been discomforting for Turkish public as well as the right wing political parties due to the ongoing tendency to see minorities as untrustworthy and open to the manipulations of the European powers. To this end Tokta et al. (2009-10: 705) argued that “in light of the European Union accession process Turkey’s minority regime which has a legal foundational base on the one hand, and state preoccupation with controlling minorities, which is backed by societal strategies, on the other.” Although the reforms and changes provided through the directives of European Union brought some improvements, they have not provided any concrete changes in terms of the perceptions on the involvement of the non-Muslim minorities within the Turkish identity⁶⁰. Therefore, it is possible to argue that non-Muslim minorities are still excluded from the constructed Turkish identity. A proof of this exclusion can be seen in Turkish identity cards that still hold a part for religion. While it is possible to leave this part of the identity card blank, Turkish state did not accept to take the religion part out of the identity cards.

⁶⁰ There is also an ongoing debate on the inclusion of the Muslim minorities into the Turkish identity. However, this issue will not be elaborated in this thesis.

In case of the Turkish Jewish community,⁶¹ Jewish religion and in some cases ethnicity played a major role in determining their identity. The Jewish communities around the world that have a diaspora nature have the tendency to stick together to maintain their culture and religious practices and fight against all kinds of assimilation. Like many other Jewish communities that live away from Israel, the Turkish Jewish community also displays a closed community structure, which makes it easier for them to maintain their culture and follow their religious practices. Yet, this loyalty towards religion and in some cases to the perceived ethnicity did not prevent the Jewish community from identifying itself with Turkey. Turkish Jewish community formally asserts that Turkey is their homeland and it is very common for the community leaders to announce their gratitude for the Ottoman Empire that embraced them in exile 500 years ago. In line with the essence of the transnational community concept Thomas Faist provided, identity and culture of the Turkish Jewish community are shaped by the elements of both the Jewish and Turkish identities. In other words as ambassador Co kun Kırca puts it: “The difference between the minority groups and the majority is the fact that to some extent the minorities have a dual attachment. This double attachment is felt by the majority and as they have a single attachment they get doubtful about the position of the minority groups.” (Behmoras, 1993: 276) As a result of their transnationality, the Turkish Jews redefine their identity in relation to transnational syncretism. For this reason, it is common to see that in the Turkish context their Jewish identity is put forward

⁶¹ The use of Jewish community in this paragraph refers to the community as a whole. Rather than focusing on the stance and interpretations of members of Jewish community individually, the general stance of the community and its leaders are taken into account. Yet, this stance does not necessarily hold for each member of the community.

whereas in the Israeli context they are still perceived differently because they carry the elements of the Turkish identity. As one of the interviewees shared:

Due to the pressure (from political and economical conditions) we felt in Turkey; we attempted to emigrate from Turkey three times. First time we went to France-Paris and then to Israel but we came back every time. Lastly, in 1971 I got married and went to live in Israel. I thought I would be more comfortable in Israel, however I realized that in much the same way I had to carry my Jewish identity in Turkey and in Israel I had to carry my Turkish identity and this did not save me from the identity crisis I had been going through. (Sixty - four years old, female, housewife)

In the post-1980 period, the Turkish Jewish community of Turkey faced three terrorist attacks. The first terrorist attack took place at the Neva Shalom Synagogue in 1984 and it was prosecuted by an Arab. At the time of the attack there was a Shabbat prayer in the synagogue so it resulted in killing of 23 people⁶². Following this attack the security system of the synagogues were tightened. Currently, synagogues are protected by Turkish police, a private security firm and voluntary community members. However, these security measures were not able to prevent the next set of terrorist attacks happened in 2003.

The other two bombings took place in November 2003, following the September 11 attacks in the USA. The two concurring attacks that took place at the Neva Shalom and Bet Israel synagogues resulted in killing 27 and injuring more than 300 people. The attacks were committed by the Islamist terrorist organization Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden publicly announced that these attacks should be interpreted as warnings⁶³. Since both attacks were carried out by non-Turks, these bombings were not perceived as acts of anti-Semitism in Turkey, but rather a general

⁶² The names of those killed in this attack are printed on a memorial board in the Neva Shalom synagogue.

⁶³ In the same month, the headquarters of HSBC Bank and the British Consulate were also attacked by suicide bombers of Al-Qaeda.

reaction against the foreign policies of United States, Israel, United Kingdom and Turkey. Moreover, in 2003 Yasef Yahya, a Jewish dentist, was murdered by Islamist fundamentalists solely because he was Jewish and the terrorists wanted to find financial resource to buy the weapons for their next attack (*alom Newspaper*, 31.08.2005). The impact of this incident has been influential for one of the participants as she said:

I am a dentist and I have an office in one of the busiest streets of the European side of Istanbul, in fact it is in the same area with where Yahya's office used to be. I know it doesn't make sense but following Yasef Yahya's killing I changed the name plate with my name on it, which was placed in front of the building. The name plate no longer holds my whole name only my initial and my surname. In a funny way, I am hoping that this won't stand out if anything like that happens again. (Thirty-five years old, female, dentist)

In the period of 2009-2010, the determining issue for the Turkish Jewish community has been the deterioration in Turkish-Israeli relations. Despite ups and downs, the Turkish-Israeli relations have generally been considered to be peaceful until recently. In fact, Turkey was the first country with a majority Muslim population to recognize the State of Israel in 1949. From then onwards, strategic, military and diplomatic relations between the two countries have played a significant role in the region. Yavuz (1997: 27) argues that;

through its strategic relationship with Israel, the Kemalist establishment, led by the military, hoped(s) (1) to gain a "back door" to Washington via Israel's good offices, countering the Greek and Armenian lobbies; (2) to confirm Turkey's Western orientation following the EU's rejection of its bid for membership and to demonstrate its "secular" credentials; (3) to counter regional support for local Islamist groups an the PKK; and (4) to secure a reliable new source of military technology not subject to human rights constraints.

While Israel became an important arms supplier for Turkey and played a significant role in important events like the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, at times Turkey played the facilitator role to maintain peace in the Middle East.

An important part of Turkish Jewish community's relationship with the Turkish state has been its intermediary role in opening the way for Turkey's relationship to Jewish lobbies in United States and Europe. The former president of the Turkish Jewish community Silvyo Ovadya explained this transnational role as: "we maintain close relations with other Jewish communities around the world, especially with AIPAC, so that when Turkish government and Foreign Ministry approach us with a request we provide them with close contacts" (Silvyo Ovadya, 2009). For years, Turkish Jewish community's close ties to the AIPAC played a significant role in preventing the passing of the Resolution on the Armenian Genocide at the American Senate. Moreover, Turkish Jewish community maintains close relations with the lobbies in Europe and the European Union. In his memoir, the Honorary President Bensiyon Pinto (2008: 269-70) defines one of his attempts for Turkey's EU membership as:

I received an invitation from the then Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül for a dinner arranged in the name of Romano Prodi. I was shocked to see that my name existed in the protocol table right next to Serge Abou (who happens to be a Jew), the top advisor of Prodi. By the end of the dinner I learned that he knew my commitment as the president of the Turkish Jewish community to work for Turkey's membership to EU. He even promised to help me further on this attempt in the future.

While this role of the community showed its commitment to work in support of the Turkish state, it was their transnational ties and the diaspora nature of the community that enabled them to hold such relationships.

The Turkish-Israeli relations entered a period of stagnation and impair starting with AKP's rule starting from 2002. The tension between the two countries centered mostly on the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Israeli policies in the Middle East region. Moreover, Israel has been hesitant about Turkey's rapprochement to the Arab world and Iran. Despite the reluctance on both sides due

to its good relations in the Middle East region Turkey maintained the mediator role in the peace negotiations between Israel and Syria and Israel and Palestine. However, the visit of Hamas leader Khaled Mashal to Turkey in 2006 was a shock for Israel since Hamas is considered a terrorist group in the international arena. Following Mashal's visit, Israel denied Turkey's role as the mediator arguing that Turkey's impartiality was put under threat. Yet, the peace negotiations were ruptured once again after the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 2008 and 2009.

Another breakdown in the Turkish-Israeli relations took place at the World Economic Forum in January 2009. One of the sessions was dedicated to the developments in the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan and Israeli President Shimon Peres shared the stage with UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. The discussion on Gaza turned into a heated exchange of words between the leaders of two countries. Peres increased his voice while defending the Israeli politics and Erdoğan argued that this change of tone referred to his attempt to "conceal his (Israel's) guilt." Turkish Prime Minister continued saying to the Israeli President, "When it comes to killing, you know well how to kill." The "One Minute" Incident that occurred due to Erdoğan's disagreement with the session moderator in terms of the limited time left for his speech caused him to leave the session stating that "Davos is over for me from now on."⁶⁴

The attitude of the Turkish Prime Minister marked his presence on the World Economic Forum. While there were some vocal critics in the Western world, Prime

⁶⁴ For detailed information on the session, the discussion between Erdoğan and Peres and the one minute incident of Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan see http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x870lx_recep-tayyip-erdoan-davos-01292009_news; "Leaders of Turkey and Israel Clash at Davos Panel," New York Times, 29 January 2009; "Benim için Davos Bitti," Hürriyet, 30 Ocak 2009.

Minister Erdoğan was greeted with great enthusiasm in Turkey and he was supported throughout the Middle East. Peres took a step to resolve the issue by calling Erdoğan and apologized to him for the incident at Davos. However, this incident had been significant for two reasons. First of all, the speech and tone of Erdoğan accusing the 'Jewish state' showed AKP's stance towards Israel which has been consistent in the events that followed. The second point of significance has been the tendency among parts of Turkish public and in the Middle Eastern world to see Prime Minister Erdoğan as a hero which showed the overall reaction against Israel and its policies in the Middle East.

Other major crises in bilateral relations during 2009-2010 have been the following: the Anatolian Eagle Incident, the diplomatic crisis with Turkey's Ambassador to Israel and the Mavi Marmara incident. The Anatolian Eagle is the Turkish military exercises performed with other armies such as USA and NATO on a yearly basis near the Konya region. The crisis occurred in the 2009 Anatolian Eagle after Turkey declared that the list of participants will be reviewed and Israel will be excluded from the list. The crisis was significant as it symbolized the first time that Turkey wanted to freeze the relations in the area of defense and military. The diplomatic crisis between the two countries occurred in July 2010 when the Turkish Ambassador in Tel Aviv Ahmet Öz Çelikkol was called by Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon for a meeting which was broadcast in Israel. At the beginning of the meeting, Ayalon told cameramen in Hebrew: "Pay attention that he is sitting in a lower chair...that there is only an Israeli flag on the table and that we are not smiling."⁶⁵ The insulting comments regarding the Turkish Ambassador strangled further the Turkish-Israeli relations that have been already going through a

⁶⁵ "Deputy FM Ayalon apologizes to Turkish Ambassador," Haaretz Daily, 13 January 2010.

delicate period. To avoid further conflicts, the Deputy Foreign Minister sent a letter of apology and Israeli Minister of Defense paid a visit to Anıtkabir which was followed by a private visit to Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davuto lu.

Nevertheless, none of the above-mentioned crises damaged the Turkish-Israeli relations as much as the Gaza flotilla Mavi Marmara incident of May 2010. The purchase of Mavi Marmara Boat was an attempt by the pro-Hamas Foundation for Human Rights and Freedom and Humanitarian Relief (*nsani Yardım Vakfı*) to send Gaza humanitarian aid and supplies. Before the journey from Istanbul to Gaza started, Israel warned both the members of the Foundation and Turkey that they would not accept Mavi Marmara's disembarkation at Gaza but instead they offered the use of the Ashdod port. Against all warnings Mavi Marmara started its journey to Gaza and on 31 May 2010, on its way to Gaza, the Israeli Defense Forces seized the boat in international waters. Violent actions were taken since the activists on the boat did not surrender. Israel argued that violent measures needed to be taken as the boat did not contain materials of humanitarian aid and the activists were violent too. The confrontation resulted in nine killings, eight Turks and one Turkish-American. Israel argued that their violent acts were self defense. Yet the global public opinion was mainly critical of Israel for carrying out a confrontation in international waters. The UN Security Council also condemned the acts and called for an impartial investigation. Following the Mavi Marmara incident the Turkish-Israeli relations came to the lowest point in history as this was the first incident that Turkey was defending its own citizens that were killed in the seizure of the Mavi Marmara boat.

Alongside with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's accusations to the Jewish state⁶⁶ and his quotations from the holy book of Jews, the Torah (Thou shall not kill!); the Israeli-Palestinian conflict also became a propaganda issue for television series. The broadcast of the TV series called *Ayrılık* and *Kurtlar Vadisi* were strongly opposed by Israel arguing that the TV series promoted anti-Semitism through producing scenes where Israelis were killing Palestinian children or they were pursuing plans to capture Turkey.

In her 2006 study about the perceptions of the Turkish Jews on anti-Semitism, Tokta concluded due to the responses of the interviewees that "on the whole Turkey was not an anti-Semitic country and that anti-Semitism did not exist at the official or state level" (Tokta , 2006: 210). While this perception among the Jewish community may still be true, recent studies showed that anti-Semitism in Turkey increased significantly. The 2009 survey called the "Research on Perception of Different Identities and Jews" was held by the Turkish Jewish community with the support of the European Union. According to this survey, "76 percent of the participants did not have any knowledge about Jews in general." Significantly, "42 percent of the participants implied that they would not want to have a Jewish neighbor, which was the second higher figure coming after the atheists." Moreover, when participants were asked to define the effect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on their perceptions of the world Jewry and Turkish Jewry, 65 percent stated that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict effects either very negatively or negatively their perceptions on the world Jewish population whereas this number was 51 percent for the Jewish Turkish population (<http://www.turkyahudileri.com>). Furthermore, in the

⁶⁶ Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan several times publicly condemned anti-Semitism in all its forms. Still, it is common to hear him uses phrases like "Jewish state" which corresponds to all of the Jewish population rather than a sole criticism to Israeli state.

2010 research held by Prof. Dr. Yılmaz Esmer on ‘Radicalism and Fundamentalism’, “64 percent of the participants declared that they would not want to live next door to a Jewish family”(alom, 30.09.2009). The change in the given figures⁶⁷ put forward different levels of anti-Semitism existent among Turkish society. As seen from the results of these researches, lack of information on the Turkish Jewish community and the Israeli foreign policy acts as the main factors contributing to the rise of anti-Semitism. At the same time, it is also important to note that the fact that the Israeli foreign policy is perceived as a factor that increases anti-Semitism against Turkish Jews shows that Jewish elements of the Turkish society are mostly associated with Israel rather than Turkey.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

While many European nations expelled, persecuted or tried to convert the Jews under their dominion, the Turkish people, remained as an outstanding example of tolerance of different nationalities with different religions. Nevertheless, Jewish minority under the Ottoman Empire and then under the Turkish Republic, like any minority in any country, witnessed sometimes isolated events and experienced differential treatment. Overall, the Jewish Community leaders have been appreciative of the benevolence of the Ottoman Sultans and Turkish leaders since 1492, through five centuries.

Since the beginning of their existence in these lands, the Turkish Jewish Community has witnessed major events and developments in Turkey: the rule and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the foundation of the Turkish Republic,

⁶⁷ It is most likely that the level of anti-Semitism among Turkish society increased after the Mavi Marmara Incident.

discrimination of religious minorities through the Turkification policies and expanding rights and freedoms in the European Union context. Despite the ever changing conditions of Turkish politics, the Turkish Jewish community has always proven its loyalty and maintained peaceful relations with the Turkish state at the expense of giving up on their rights. In theory they were able to maintain constitutionally protected equal citizenship status, but when it comes to practice they came to be excluded from the Turkish identity that was associated with Islam in all of the periods summarized in this chapter. Yet, in the words of several Jewish leaders and the majority of community members, they feel themselves as Turkish and identify with the Turkish people.

This chapter not only defined the historical incidents that played a major role in the lives of Turkish Jewish community members but also interpreted these incidents in line with Thomas Faist's transnationalism literature. To this end, the emergence of the transnational social space of the Turkish community was provided in an historical perspective. Thomas Faist's work on 'transnational social spaces' and his definition of transnational communities were examined regarding the Turkish Jews. As a result, it was argued that the Turkish Jewish community can be seen as a transnational community using the criteria already provided by the literature in Chapter 2. To sum up, this chapter tried to link the theory and to the case. It started by introducing the life of Jews in Ottoman Empire and Turkey in a historical perspective and continued to emphasize the historical conditions that contributed to the transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community. The next chapter will discuss the effects of this transnational nature on Turkish Jewish community's perception of Turkish citizenship.

CHAPTER IV

4 TRANSNATIONAL CITIZENSHIP IN CASE OF TURKEY'S JEWS

4.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter tried to focus on the historical background of the emerging transnationality of the Turkish Jews, this chapter will extend the argument by attempting to present the link between transnationalism and citizenship. This chapter aims to contribute to the overall argument of this thesis which is examining the link and relations between the transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community from the perspective of citizenship.

Following the prominent studies in literature that associate Turkish citizenship and the Turkish minority rights regime⁶⁸, the analysis on the evolution of citizenship will be discussed in light of Will Kymlicka's three aspects of citizenship; legal status, identity and civic virtue. Furthermore, this typology was selected to define the perceptions of the Turkish Jewish community on different aspects of what constitutes modern citizenship today. To this end, the historical presentation of the evolution of citizenship concept in the Turkish context will be expanded by insights from members of Turkish Jewish community to display an extended picture on the perceptions of the community members.

⁶⁸ For examples of the studies see çduygu (1999), Tokta (2005), Tokta (2006).

The chapter will then address the emergence of transnationalism and transnational social spaces which were formulated as transnational networks and ties in the case of Turkish Jewish community. In line with the aim of this study, the relationship between transnationalism and citizenship will be provided through Thomas Faist's literature on transnational communities. Since a detailed explanation of the theoretical aspect was already provided in Chapter 2, the current chapter will focus on the presentation of the transnational ties and character of the Turkish Jewish community in line with information gathered from the responses of the interview participants.

4.2 A Discussion on Turkish Citizenship: Case of the Jewish Minority in Turkey

Citizenship acts as the main bond and the legal contract that binds individuals with the state. In the context of each nation-state, the state-society relations are defined through the boundaries of the duties and rights defined by the understanding of citizenship. In the words of Shaschar (2000: 65), "since antiquity, citizenship has been defined as the legal status of equal membership in a political community with regard to the rights and duties." The evolution of the nation-state was also reflected upon the developments on concept of citizenship, paving the way for a reinterpretation of the concept. In today's multi-religious and multi-ethnic societies, the dichotomy of citizenship rests on the decision between equality and difference. On one hand, nation-states aim to provide equal rights for all citizens whereas on the other; the existence of minority groups initiate the discussion on providing different treatments and rights that will enable these groups to protect their ethnic or religious identities. Minorities, for instance, by nature imply multiple membership and

multiple loyalties which lead to confusion between rights and identity, culture and politics, states and nations- in short in citizenship (Kastoryano, 2000).

The dichotomy of equal versus differential status of citizenship has also been a concern for the Turkish state. Since Turkey has been a culturally diverse country acting as home to both non-Muslim minorities – Jews, Greeks and Armenians- and the Muslim groups such as Alevites, Kurds, Georgians and Lazs; the interpretation of citizenship played a significant role in the lives and practices of these groups. Having a strong state tradition, the Turkish stance towards citizenship focuses on the equality dimension. Therefore, “in the Turkish case it is possible to speak about the dominance of the rhetoric of equality concept in Turkey underlined by the unitary, republican state structure and uniform society despite religious, ethnic and cultural diversities and differences in the society.” (Tokta , 2005:395) For the non-Muslim minority’s case, Turkey’s dichotomy of equality versus differential treatment can be translated as inclusion versus exclusion in terms of Turkish citizenship and identity. Whereas the non-Muslim minorities gained equal citizenship rights that evolved in line with the changes both in Turkish and global context; the state led decision to construct Turkish identity around Islam caused exclusion of the non-Muslim’s minorities from the Turkish identity⁶⁹. Since this identity construction was rooted in the Sunnite interpretation of Islam, it would be right to argue that the construction of Turkish identity resulted in the creation of Muslim minority groups alongside with the non-Muslim minority groups.

This chapter will follow the historical periodization of Chapter 3 to provide an overall analysis on the understanding of the citizenship concept in Turkey. An

⁶⁹ Examples of this argument will be provided in the following sections of this chapter in line with the periodization of the Turkish history presented in Chapter 3.

analysis of Turkish citizenship with reference to the dichotomy of equality versus difference will be provided for each historical period. Furthermore, this examination on the evolution of citizenship will be discussed in light of Will Kymlicka's three aspects of citizenship; legal status, identity and civic virtue. In this context, the explanation of the legal status aspect will focus on the rights and duties provided by the Turkish state in reference to 1924, 1961 and 1982 Constitutions as well as the supplement laws. The identity aspect will analyze the question of inclusion versus exclusion of the non-Muslim minority groups into the definition of the constructed Turkish identity. Finally, the civic virtue aspect will question the understanding of the Turkish Jewish community regarding the concept of citizenship in light of participation level in civil society and other possible practices that may contribute to active citizenship.

In the Ottoman period, the millet system regulated the Empire's relationship with people. At the time, individuals were the subjects (*tebaa*) of the Sultan rather than citizens of a state. In this context, all rights were granted by the Sultan and differences were prevalent between the rights given to the Muslim and non-Muslim millets⁷⁰. At the same time the differences of the non-Muslim millets were acknowledged and respected through allowance of free practice of religion, use of different languages and education in these languages. More significantly, certain level of autonomy was granted to the religious leader of the each non-Muslim millet allowing freedom in internal affairs.

Although it may not be very efficient to analyze this period in terms of the legal status aspect as the modern concept of citizenship was not introduced at the time; it is important to note that the *millet* system was rooted in difference rather than

⁷⁰ For examples on different rights see Chapter 3, Section 3.2.

equality. Non-Muslim millets were not equal to the Muslim millet which was argued to be superior. Yet, this system provided freedoms and considerable amount of administrative autonomy to each non-Muslim millet in itself. The non-Muslims, under the millet system, were organized as a community on the basis of their religion which differed from the majority religion of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, there was no such thing as an Ottoman citizen, but an Ottoman subject who identified herself/himself with one type of religious creed. All millets were seen as subjects that belonged to the Ottoman Sultan, even with the adoption of the 1869 Citizenship Law during the *Tanzimat* era, the concept of citizenship based on equality principles did not exist. The beginning of the shift from subject to citizens in the Ottoman context began with the *Islahat* and *Tanzimat* Reform packages that occurred due to the impacts of ideas emerged with the French Revolution. *Islahat* and *Tanzimat* Reforms represent the legal background of the Empire's attempt to create a "collectivity of citizens" as a way to prevent its fall due to the separatist movements of the time (Üstel; 2004:25). These packages introduced the concept of citizenship and marked the beginning of attempts that will provide equal treatment for non-Muslim minorities. Despite differences in ethnicity, religion and language in terms of identity the concept of 'subject' defined the common point for all the millets. Therefore in the big picture the subject status unified all the Empire, whereas the other components of identity such as religion and language were practiced independent of the Empire through the rights granted by the Ottoman Sultan.

Following the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the discussion on citizenship was extended further in the Early Republican Period of 1923-1945. The Early Republican Period has been painful for the Turkish society as the country suffered from war economics. Moreover, the structural change from Ottoman

Empire's millet system to Turkish Republic's secularist positioning resulted in resentment among the society that was already giving mixed signals about their perceptions on the future of this new state. While Muslim citizens of Turkish Republic were forced to secularize, Lausanne Treaty was granting non-Muslims autonomy in their internal affairs. The legal status of the non-Muslim minorities were initially planned to be arranged by the Articles 37-45 of the Lausanne Treaty. These articles granted non-Muslim minorities of Turkey the freedom of life, property and religious belief – the same rights given to Muslim nationals. Lausanne Treaty additionally granted the non-Muslim citizens of Turkey; the right to use their own languages and establish educational institutions that function in these languages; as well as the right to establish religious foundations and practice their own laws on the matters of family. While non-Muslim citizens were being kept out of the sphere of secularist policies with the Lausanne Treaty; Muslim citizens had to undergo top-down modernization and secularization in education, language and religious affairs. This difference in treatment caused reactions among the Muslim citizens. The minority rights were difficult to accept by the majority, as these rights were interpreted as means allowing the Western Powers to interfere in the domestic politics of Turkey.

The legal status of citizenship was regulated by the 1924 Constitution which defined an inclusive understanding of Turkey's legal citizenship rules within the Early Republican Period. According to Article 88 of the Constitution, "Regardless of religion and ethnicity, all citizens of Turkey were considered Turkish." Article 88 was later extended via supplement Law no1312 in 1928. Through this supplement law, the blood principle that defined Turkish citizenship by birth of a Turkish mother and a Turkish father was introduced. While Article 88 promoted equality among all

Turkish citizens, the existence of differential rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty conflicted with this attempt to equalize all Turkish citizens. As Bali (2000:62) puts it, “despite national legislation such as the adoption of the Constitution in 1924 and the Civic Code in 1926, minority issues were regulated by special clauses in Lausanne, which was conceived as handicap to the social homogenization and nation-building aims of the new state.” In the legal sense, this handicap was removed when Jews voluntarily opted out of the rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty. This was a significant attempt in terms of the Jewish community as the Jewish citizens showed their willingness to become part of the Turkish society through maintaining equal status with the Muslim citizens and therefore they showed their enthusiasm to be subject to equal treatment by the Turkish state. In terms of the identity aspect of citizenship; the specific definition of the term ‘Turk’ that came with the blood principle resulted in the beginning of a nation-building process that aimed at homogenizing the Turkish society, especially the non-Muslim elements who were unable to fit into the definition of Turkishness associated with Islam.

A major contradiction in the Early Republican Period occurred due to the emphasis of secularism as a state policy on one hand; while on the other hand Islam became the main component of the nation-building process. For the Muslim majority this period was marked by the secularization attempts that were aimed at a complete rupture with the Ottoman past and Ottoman identity. Whereas for the non-Muslims, the period signified exclusion from the term ‘Turk’ in the wake of Turkification policies that were centered around the emphasis of Islam in the social, political and economical realm. To this end, for even those that were able survive the effects of Turkification policies and not emigrate from Turkey, this period did not offer

inclusion in Turkish identity as the non-Muslim citizens lacked the Islam component in their identity.

Similar to the Early-Republican period, the identity aspect within the Multi-Party period continued to exclude non-Muslim minorities under the rule of the Democrat Party. As DP used Islamic values both in rhetoric and as a means to its populist policies, these values continued to maintain their importance in defining Turkish culture and identity. In terms of the legal aspect, following the 1960 military intervention, the 1961 Constitution was prepared by a Constituent Assembly that also included representatives from non-Muslim groups. The Constitution was used as the legal document to define Turkish citizenship. In addition to the equal citizenship status that was already provided by the former constitution, the 1961 Constitution expanded the realm of citizenship through introducing the concept of civil society and its contents such as the right to organize, freedom of press, political participation and public speech. Therefore in the Turkish case the civic virtue aspect of citizenship was introduced only after the 1961 Constitution.

Article 54 of the 1961 Constitution stated that “Everyone who is tied up to Turkey by citizenship bond is a Turk.” With this definition every child that was born from a Turkish mother and a Turkish father was considered a Turk. In instances where the father of a child is not Turkish, the status of Turkish citizenship would be decided by the law. An additional law, no.143, on citizenship was introduced in 1964. With this law, three basic requirements of citizenship were introduced. These requirements were: (1) Everyone should have a citizenship; (2) Everyone should have a single citizenship; (3) Everyone should be free to choose their own citizenship and no one should be forced to hold a citizenship they do not want (Tokta , 2005: 409). Through the emphasis on single citizenship, loyalty to the Turkish state

became the main duty of the citizens. In case of non-Muslim minorities the need to show loyalty was more evident since there was a general hesitation among the Turkish society about their positioning. The Multi-Party period introduced a broader definition of citizenship as it introduced civil society as a component of Turkish citizenship and gave way to formation of non-governmental organizations. 1961 Constitution was advanced regarding the democratic rules of law, independence of judiciary and balances of power. The general principle was freedom and there was basis of pluralism. Nevertheless, in terms of identity, Islam still played the major role and this role was more apparent due to the political structure that came with the Democrat Party to emphasize this character.

The liberal and democratic rights that were provided by the 1961 Constitution did not last long in the Turkish experience since the 1970s witnessed the polarization of society due to the political violence between leftists and rightist groups. This polarization eventually led to another military intervention. With the 1980 military intervention, once again all powers were collected under the military rule which pursued a stronger and more restrictive rule compared to former interventions. Consequently, the 1961 Constitution of freedom and liberties were replaced by the 1982 Constitution of restrictions and societal restructuring. In legal aspect, with this new constitution the powers of the executive branch were strengthened, the universities were centralized and the National Security Council was given more rights. The 1982 Constitution brought about strict restrictions to the activities of political parties and the activities of women and youth branches⁷¹.

In this period, the role of Turkish military became determinant in the identity aspect. The military rule promoted the Turkish-Islamic synthesis that focused on the

⁷¹ More detailed account on these restrictions is provided in the previous chapter of this thesis.

complimentary role of these two concepts in defining Turkish nation. This understanding promoted cultural Islam rather than political Islam. However, effects of this understanding was still prevalent in the public policies maintained in this period; such as the compulsory religion courses that focused on the Sunni interpretation of Islam. In 1987 Christians and the Jews were excused from these forced religion courses, and in 1990 they were completely freed from any obligation to participate in classes on religion or ethics (Franz, 1994: 133). Ironically, the Turkish military that always positioned itself as the protector of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's secular Turkish Republic leaned over to a more Islamic stance to unify the Turkish public that was already polarized due to the political conflicts.

The shift to civilization in Turkish politics occurred only after the political elections in 1983 that was won by the Motherland Party (MP) with majority of the votes. Motherland Party combined elements of conservatism, nationalism and liberalism under its roof. Turgut Özal was the driving force behind bringing Turkey's economic policies more in line with the realities and demands of the emerging era of globalization. Liberalization in Turkish economy led to liberalization in political and social atmosphere from the 1980s onwards. Islam became a more important factor in Turkish economy, Turkish politics and Turkish society. As a result of liberalization of politics and social life, Islam came to be seen as an important tool for political mobilization.

In an era of globalization, the very problems of national identity are directly related to the changing political, social and cultural traditions. More significantly, the rise of cultural homogenization with globalization gave rise to the emergence of identity politics in domestic politics. National, regional and global dynamics and transformations have all been influential in the upsurge of identity politics in the post

1980 period. As Keyman (2000: 3) argues, “at a time when “outside” becomes “inside,” there is a need to analyze the Turkish experience both theoretically and historically by paying attention to the interplay of global dynamics and domestic transformations.”

The significance of the post-1980 period in terms of citizenship has been the rise of consciousness among the public regarding this issue. The more liberal environment of Turkish politics beginning in the 1980s and the rise of identity politics caused an overall questioning among the Turkish society about Turkish citizenship. This questioning was more visible in case of the Muslim and non-Muslim minority groups since they started to get more freedom to express their differences.

Two major developments in the post-1980 period that represented the impacts of globalization on the legal aspect of Turkish citizenship were the introduction of Dual Citizenship Law and the shift to Constitutional Citizenship. As a consequence of flows of labour emigration from Turkey to European countries, Turkey reinterpreted its stance on dual citizenship and allowed it with the 1981 Dual Citizenship Law. Through this law, “the loyalty was shifted from nation to the state and Turkey stressed the legal aspect of citizenship so as to permit émigrés to qualify for naturalization without giving up their original citizenship.” (çduygu et al. 1999:108) The law on Dual Citizenship was extended further in 1995 with the supplement law No.4112 that gave equal rights; in terms of property, inheritance, settlement and travel, to those Turkish citizens that emigrated earlier than 1981 and lost their citizenship status.

The second development that occurred due to the encounter of citizenship and globalization was the introduction of the constitutional citizenship concept. As the

ethnic and religious diversity became more visible in the post-1980 period, Turkish state felt the need to maintain a definition of citizenship that will embrace all these differences rather than try to assimilate it through repressive means. As Soyarik argues (2000: 202), “in response to the rise of identity politics, multiculturalism, and demands from different segments of society (Islamists, Kurds, etc.), constitutional citizenship was proposed as a solution which would ensure internal peace in academic and political party circles.” In constitutional citizenship, the constitution acts as the ultimate legal document that guarantees the recognition of different ethnic and religious minorities. Like in the essence of dual citizenship, constitutional citizenship also shifts the loyalty of the citizens from the nation to the state. Even though constitutional citizenship was initially designed as a solution to the Kurdish problem of Turkey, it had implications for the non-Muslim minorities, too. As constitutional citizenship aimed at shifting the loyalty from nation to state, theoretically it ensured that fitting into the definition of ‘Turk’ would not be very significant as long as loyalty to Turkey is maintained. In a way, constitutional citizenship would end exclusion from the Turkish identity as the determinant factor would no longer be the unifying factors of the nation.

4.3 The Legal Status, Identity and Civic Virtue Aspects of Citizenship: Experiences of Turkish Jewish Community Members

Following the historical interpretation of the legal, identity and civic virtue aspects of Turkish citizenship, this section will provide insights on the discussion of Turkish Jews’ perceptions on citizenship with reference to Kymlicka’s three aspects of citizenship. In an attempt to analyze the Jewish perceptions on the legal, identity and civic virtue aspects of citizenship; 30 interviews were held with members of the

Turkish Jewish community⁷² and the participants were asked to define their perceptions on Turkish citizenship, the components of their identity and their practices that may be related to the definition of active citizenship.

4.3.1 Turkish Citizenship and the Legal Status of Turkish Jews

Currently the legal status of the Turkish citizenship and the relationship between Turkish state and the Jewish minority is defined by the boundaries of constitutional citizenship. While constitutional citizenship grants equality to all citizens in front of the law, it also defines rights and duties of the citizens. The interviews highlighted that Turkish national identity cards and the passports were the two instruments that symbolically represented the citizenship concept for the participants. Legally defined duties such as; paying taxes, voting and military service act as the main and determinant practices for the interviewees. To extend the scope of this research further, participants were also asked for their perceptions on acceptance among the rest of the society in terms of Turkish citizenship. Significantly, all age groups agreed that at one or more points in their lives they felt that they were not accepted as Turkish citizens by the rest of the society. It is important to note that most participants were not able to distinguish the difference between Turkish citizenship and Turkish identity. Therefore it is likely that when they argue that they are excluded from Turkish citizenship, they focus on the identity aspect rather than the legal status. Moreover, since these interviews were held after the Davos incident of early 2009, the Turkish Jewish community was undergoing a delicate period where the participants felt left out and under pressure due to the

⁷² For detailed account on the nature and content of the interview questions, see Chapter 1 section 1.3

strained Turkish-Israeli politics⁷³. Quotes from two of the participants can be useful to understand the feelings of exclusion from the point of Turkish Jews:

To me an identity card and a passport is enough to be a Turkish citizen. To tell you the truth, I don't feel like much of a Turk so I don't feel the need to associate myself with Turkish citizenship. I don't have nationalistic feelings at all. What I mean is that I feel like a Turkish citizen but not as a Turk. I'm not accepted as a Turk anyway. There is always a 'but...' associated with my Turkishness. Our conditions are not the same. I think that even the use of the word 'minority' is discrimination. (Sixty eight, male, businessman)

In my understanding, an identity card and a passport is enough for being a Turkish citizen. I perceive myself as a Turkish citizen. I pay taxes and all the men in my family served in the Turkish military. The rest of the society cannot see that. Even when they accept me as a Turkish citizen a hidden prejudice comes along and you see that eventually. (Fifty-two, female, bookshop owner)

Significantly, for younger generations Turkish citizenship also included speaking in Turkish. Unlike the older generations who were effected by policies like "Citizen Speak Turkish Campaign," younger people were already familiar with the shift and they accepted Turkish as their mother tongue. One issue that the younger and older generations thought in the same line was the idea they were not accepted as Turkish citizens by the rest of the society. However, in case of the younger generation the socioeconomic factors also played a significant role. Those who are coming from families with higher income level argued that they would not see any exclusion from Muslims who share the same socioeconomic backgrounds (attendance in same private schools, living in same neighborhood etc.). Take, for example, the following:

To me the basic necessity for citizenship is speaking in Turkish, as well as voting and paying taxes. I feel like a Turkish citizen and I give

⁷³ Even though the conflict was between Turkey and Israel; Prime Minister use of the word 'Jews' and 'Jewish state' when referring to Israel bothered many members of the Turkish Jewish community. Moreover Erdo an's quotes from the Torah, the religious book of Jews, such as "Thou shall not kill" shifted the issue to a more religious context. To this end, Erdo an's speech condemning anti-Semitism did not suffice in calming down the Turkish Jews.

importance to Turkish traditions and holidays. I think that the majority of the Turkish public do not think of me as a Turk just because I am Jewish. Even if we are legally equal it does not prevent discrimination in societal level. Yet this is not a concern for my surroundings. (Twenty-three, female, university student at Sociology department)

4.3.2 Turkish Citizenship and the Identity Aspect in Case of Turkey's Jewish Minority

The responses to above mentioned questions on citizenship show that for the Turkish Jewish community the discussion on the citizenship mainly rests upon the issue of identity. As explained in detail in the previous chapter of this thesis, the actions of the Turkish Jews have always been compatible with the decisions and requirements of the Turkish state. In fact, the community used every opportunity to prove their loyalty to the Turkish state and nation. However, neither the ongoing attempts to prove their loyalty nor the changes in the understanding of citizenship in Turkey won them the chance to become part of Turkish identity. In the post-1980 period the introduction of constitutional citizenship resulted in a bigger contradiction as citizenship started to be associated with loyalty to the nation whereas in the public space the Turkish-Islamic synthesis still drew the lines of Turkish identity. On one hand, the minority groups were supposed to freely express and live with their differences due to constitutional citizenship; whereas on the other they were still excluded from the Turkish identity by the Muslim majority because the identity component of citizenship was superior to its legal meaning.

In this context, it is also important to note that the contradiction of Turkish state in terms of citizenship and identity is also visible within the Turkish Jewish community. In case of the Turkish Jewish community; As Clifford (1998:369) puts

it: “identity is not only about location, about shoring up a safe “home”, crucial as the task may be in certain circumstances. Identity is also, inescapably, about displacement and relocation, the experience of sustaining and mediating complex affiliations, multiple attachments.” While the formal representatives of the Turkish Jewish community emphasize the Turkishness of the community and the loyalty aspects; the voices of the members of Turkish Jewish community vary⁷⁴. When asked in an interview, the then president of the Turkish Jewish community Silvyo Ovadya responded as follows:

I define myself as a Turk both in Turkey and outside of Turkey. The Turkish Jewish community also states that it is Turkish. When we talk of about our community we prefer to use the term ‘religious minority’ rather than minority. We have been in these lands for 500 years and we are as much Turk as anyone else living in these lands, if not more. That’s why I think that the common belief that Turkishness comes with Islam is wrong. Of course, this is only the overall position of the community. You may get different answers when you ask the members of community. (Silvyo Ovadya, interview)

Some examples of different voices among the Turkish Jewish community are as follows:

I love Turkey. I couldn’t imagine living elsewhere. From time to time I’m faced with awkward remarks and questions. Many times I’ve been asked about my name. Once I tell my name, which is an English name, it is almost impossible to avoid questions like: ‘Are you Turkish?’, ‘Why is your name different?’ etc. I just wish that I wouldn’t have to explain myself every time. It becomes frustrating from time to time. (Thirty-two years old, male, textile business owner)

I consider myself a Jew (Yahudi) who is living in Turkey. I and my parents witnessed a lot in this country. My father had to sell his button factory to pay the amount decided in the Capital Tax and now with the current government the ongoing conflict with Israel raises once again anti-Semitism in Turkey. No matter what we (Jewish community) do, we will always feel different almost unwanted but at

⁷⁴ The discussion on the Turkish Jewish community’s perceptions on identity will be explained further in the following sections of this chapter.

the end of the day we really are different... (Seventy-five years old, female house wife)

A determinant aspect in terms of identity also rests upon the description of Turkish Jewish community of itself. In Turkish the words *Musevi* and *Yahudi* are used to refer to the Jews. The term *Musevi* only exists in the Turkish case and it is used to signify the followers of Moses. Turkish Jewish community usually uses the term *Musevi*⁷⁵ in formal language. The term *Yahudi* refers to the ethnicity of the Jews. However, the word also has a negative connotation since it is still used as part of anti-Semite discourse in Turkey. Despite the selected use the word by the formal language of the community, when identifying themselves the community members make their own choice. It is possible to see different identifications and terms such as *Türk Musevisi* (uses Jewish identity in the religious context), *Türk Yahudisi* (refers to both Turkish and Jewish ethnicities) and *Yahudi* (used by those who only identify themselves with the Jewish component of identity).

The interviews held for this study showed that use of any of these terms is an individual choice. However, the overall tendency was that while the younger generations choose to use the term Turkish Jew (*Türk Musevisi*) in the religious context, in the older population it is common to see the use of the word Jew (*Yahudi*) or Turkish Jew (*Türk Yahudisi*). The following examples offer a comparison on the use of the terms between the two generations:

I am a Turkish Jew (*Türk Yahudisi*). The definition of Turk and Turkishness cannot be narrowed down to one simple component. The term ‘Turk’ by itself is a synthesis and has been a result of centuries of multi-ethnic Ottoman past, and being a Jew is a religion. So, I consider myself a Turk and my religion is Judaism. I think that the term *Musevi* includes an unnecessary and fake courtesy. Such a word

⁷⁵ A significant issue is that while the official website of the community uses the term *Musevi*, in a more recent website developed for a EU funded Project the term *Yahudi* is used.

does not exist in English, German or French (Fifty-five years old, male, journalist)

I consider myself a Turkish Jew (*Türk Musevisi*). The Jewish component of my identity only acts in part of religion. I feel like a Turk but I know that I'm not perceived as one since I'm not Muslim. However, when people ask me to identify myself, since my name is not Turkish; if I feel like I am in an anti-Semite environment I specifically say that I am a Jew (*Yahudi*) just to make sure that the person who is asking gets that I'm familiar with my identity and proud of it. (Thirty-two years old, female, sales representative)

4.3.3 Turkish Citizenship and Civic Virtue in Case of Turkey's Jewish Minority

Civic virtue, which can be defined as the participation level in general society is arguably closely related to modernization (Tokta , 2006:130). Turkish Jews still play a significant role in the Westernization of Turkey. Even today, through their transnational ties that spread across United States, Europe and Israel Jews of Turkey act as a modern, forward looking community. The set of questions concerned with the civic virtue of the Turkish Jews focused on their participation level in civil society organizations. Participants were asked about their participation in both the Jewish and non-Jewish organizations. However, the main attempt was to figure out the citizenship performances of the community, regarding *active* versus *passive* citizenship of Turkey.

The interviewees showed that respondents were mainly apolitical and did not participate in civil society as active citizens. Nevertheless, all the participants said that they have an interest in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and they have a positive understanding about the flourishing of civil society and participatory culture. While it is common to see participation in Jewish organizations and clubs, the participants showed almost no interest in membership and/or voluntary work for

NGOs that work in political or social realms. A common reasoning among the participants for not showing interest for active citizenship was the feeling of exclusion⁷⁶. One participant said:

I tried to do several voluntary works with NGOs especially in the area of education. However I felt so alienated because I had to work with people who didn't know what Turkish Jew means. When children don't know that, it is no problem because they're less prejudiced and more open to difference. However, I had many difficulties trying to explain myself to the person responsible from the school. She somehow believed that I was trying to promote my religion among the group. (Sixty-eight, female, housewife)

Only one of the younger participants showed interest in joining political parties and emphasized the importance of the representation of community in the Turkish parliament. He said:

If I wasn't living in Turkey I would definitely seek a career in politics. Yet in Turkey the best you can do is become a parliamentarian and that requires a lot of material resources. I can only think of one Jewish parliamentarian and even his wife was a Muslim. The unspoken rules of exclusion of non-Muslims from political sphere are prevalent. (Thirty, male, broker)

This chapter began by analyzing the historical evolution of concept of citizenship in Turkish context with reference to Will Kymlicka's three definitions; legal status, identity and civic virtue. The modern time dichotomy of citizenship, equality versus differential treatment, is examined in case of Turkish citizenship with special focus on the Turkish Jews. The historical analysis was combined with the experiences of Turkish Jewish community members in an attempt to combine theory with real life practices.

While these explanations on citizenship provide the roots of the situation of Turkish citizenship in reference to the Jewish minority case, in today's globalizing

⁷⁶ At this point, I would like to add that as a Jewish person who has voluntarily and professionally worked for several NGOs, I would argue that the feeling of difference is not very different compared to the problem one may encounter in daily life. My observation is that the Jewish community members are also prejudiced about the issue and do not try hard enough.

world where transnational ties and networks become an influencing component of perceptions on citizenship, it is important to analyze the issue of citizenship from a transnational perspective.

4.4 Emergence of Transnational Citizenship: The Case of Jewish Community of Turkey

As Thomas Faist (2000a: 271) puts forward, in the case of immigrants, the citizenship status changes in line with the citizenship policies and laws of the emigration country that may lead to exclusive citizenship in a single nation-state, ethnic pluralism to multicultural citizenship, based on the recognition of varied cultural heritage and representations, and border-crossing expansion of social space to dual citizenship and dual nationality⁷⁷. Within the historical evolution of the concept of citizenship, Turkish citizens witnessed all of these statuses. The single-party period introduced exclusive citizenship that was defined by the blood principle and aimed at assimilation in cultural sense through the Turkification policies. The concepts of multiculturalism and multicultural citizenship were introduced in mid-1980s with the rising impact of globalization and the recognition of differences of ethnicity and religion.

While multiculturalism emerged in the scope of nation-states, through transnational ties and networks of immigrants; transnationalism expands the borders of states creating its own social space through combining elements of all countries that are included in the transnational social space. In terms of citizenship, this

⁷⁷ A detailed presentation of the Faist's concept of transnationalism and transnational citizenship are provided in the Chapter 2 of this thesis. In this section the transnational ties/networks of the community members as well as the effects of these transnational components on citizenship will be provided.

transnational character translated into dual nationality and dual citizenship where individuals carry passports of the two countries and therefore benefit from the rights of the both. Moreover, in words of Thomas Faist (2004: 924), “the current context the evidence suggests that dual citizenship is not simply a foreboding of cosmopolitan citizenship. The main trend has been the spread of dual nationality and the tolerance towards dual citizenship as a result of an emerging trend of nationality as a human right.” Following this argument, the Turkish context as well as the situation in the rest of the world, dual citizenship and maintenance of relationship to both home and host countries is perceived as a human right. To this end, this section will provide an analysis on the transnational ties of the members of Turkish community, as well as questioning their dual citizenship status.

In an attempt to figure out the existence of transnational ties and networks, all participants were asked to define three of their friend and family members that have previously migrated from Turkey together with the possible reasons of migration. Moreover, the nature of their relationship was discussed so as to define whether these transnational ties are economical, political or social. Another set of questions was concerned with how these relationships were maintained over time. Since use of technological means in terms of mass communication and travel play a significant role in emergence of transnational ties, participants were asked to define how they maintain these relationships.

All of the participants had family members or friends that have emigrated from Turkey. Significantly, for the older participants it was common to have family members that left Turkey due to consequences of Turkish policies or due to their will to live in Israel. A female participant that vividly remembers the memory of September 6-7 incidents states;

My brother left Turkey back in 1955 after the September 6-7 Incidents. I still remember the day of the incident. We were hiding in our neighbor's apartment and they covered my and my mother's heads just in case. None of us could forget. My brothers chose to leave Turkey while rest of us stayed. My mother refused leaving Turkey because she used to live in France and at the time of Holocaust her Turkish passport saved her from Nazis. Her brother died in a Nazi camp. I have to say that even now I feel like there is still the possibility that all of this violence may come back. (Seventy-four years old, female, retired from private sector)

In the middle aged group the reason for migration was usually economical; it is still common to see that those who are hit by the economic crisis leave Turkey to start over again in a new place. Israel becomes a popular destination for these people as it embraces all Jews without any major requirements other than being Jewish. The younger population mostly has friends that left Turkey to access better education conditions and better jobs. The result of the interviews showed that selected countries of emigration were Israel, US, Canada and France. Immigration to Latin American countries such as Brazil and Panama were also observed⁷⁸. Two main reasons prevailed in the selection of these countries. First was the already existent tie with these countries such as family members. The second reason was the existence of Jewish communities in these countries.

The nature of the relationship was mainly socio-cultural. The participants were keeping their family ties through transnational ties. As emphasized by many of the transnationalism scholars, community members used technological means like; telephone conversations, Skype, Facebook and MSN messenger to keep these ties. Internet played a significant role in the maintenance of transnational ties, since all of these communication options were enabled through technological advancement. The average frequency for maintaining these relationships ranged between 15 days to two

⁷⁸ It is important to note that in both of these cases the immigrants first left Turkey to go to United States and they migrated once again to Latin America.

months. Moreover, air transportation made it easier for individuals to visit their home country and maintain these ties by visits.

The second set of questions regarding transnationalism was concerned with the citizenship aspect of transnationalism, therefore issues concerning dual citizenship. Participants were asked about their dual citizenship status and the countries of second passport. Twenty of the participants either had or were in the process of getting second passports and three had recently applied for it. Participants most commonly had Israeli, French, Italian and Spanish passports since an ambiguity on the Spanish law allowed the exiled Spanish Jews to regain their citizenship status. Most participants were acquiring Spanish citizenship or they were in the process of application⁷⁹. In the interviews, two reasons for acquiring dual citizenship stood out. The prevalent reasons showed that Fritz's argument on dual citizenship held for the Turkish Jewish community as, for some members of the community gaining of a 'citizenship of convenience' was (may be) seen simply as a kind of glorified travel visa or a license to do business (Fritz, 1998). The first reason was to obtain an EU passport that would ease the traveling processes. In case of the Israeli passport there were limited advantages such as traveling to United States. The second reason was the 'just in case' mentality which was persistent among the participants at the time of the interviews. One respondent said:

I've heard the possibility of acquiring Spanish passport from a friend. At first, I thought that it would be a nice option saving me from the visa burden of the Turkish passport. I just made an application but I wasn't insistent on it. Now considering all this tension (due to Israeli-Turkish relations), all of a sudden acquiring dual citizenship became more important (Fifty-four years old, male, automotive sector).

⁷⁹ The Sephardi Jews currently gained the opportunity to get Spanish passports if they were able to prove their Spanish roots.

Since the interviews took place in a delicate period for the Jewish community due to ongoing conflict in Turkish-Israeli relations and the protest campaigns that took place especially in Istanbul. The perception of participants regarding the level of anti-Semitism in the Turkish Society at large was higher. While the reactions differed, both younger and older generations were uncomfortable about the issue, and preferred keeping their options open.

Since loyalty constitutes an important component of citizenship, participants were asked to define their feelings and loyalty towards Israel. All participants were agreeing that they have positive feelings towards Israel even if from time to time they do not agree with its foreign policy decisions. A middle aged female participant stated:

Of course I have loyalty to the Israeli state. Not as much as I have for Turkey which is my home. But Israel gives me a feeling of security that I lack in Turkey. To me, Israel's existence defines why Holocaust will not happen again. (Fifty-nine years old, female, boutique owner)

Even though all participants talked about their loyalty to the state, only three stated that they may think of immigrating to Israel. Rest of the participants agreed that Israel would not be their first choice especially because it is a war country. United States is perceived as the best option especially for the younger generation. It is important to note that, at the time of interviews none of the participants were thinking about emigrating from Turkey.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter provided an analysis on the emergence and evolution of the citizenship concept in case of Turkey. Focusing on the historically significant periods, Turkish citizenship and its effects on Turkish Jewish community was examined in terms of the legal status, identity and civic virtue aspects. The historical

presentation was expanded by insights from members of Turkish Jewish community. Three definitions of citizenship and their impacts on the daily lives of Jews were analyzed by representation of the experiences of interview participants.

These definitions provided an account on multicultural perceptions of Turkish citizenship, which is regulated within the context of the state. Yet the new flow of globalization that emerged in the beginning of 2000s expanded the borders of states and therefore gave rise to the emergence of transnationalism and transnational social spaces which are formulated as transnational networks and ties. In line with the aim of this study, the relationship between transnationalism and citizenship was provided through Thomas Faist's literature on transnational communities. While a detailed explanation of the theoretical aspect was already provided in Chapter 2 of this thesis, this chapter focused on the presentation of the transnational ties and character of the Turkish Jewish community through the experiences of the interview participants.

The interviews showed that as part of their transnational community identity, the Turkish Jewish community members maintained transnational ties especially in terms of socio-cultural ties that extend to Israel, United States, France and Canada.⁸⁰ Technological means such as mass communications tools and transportation played a significant role in the maintenance of the transnational ties. Faist argues that the relationship between transnationalism and citizenship results in the emergence of dual citizenship. Even though it is not possible to reach the official number of Turkish Jews with dual citizenship from the accounts of Turkish Jewish community, the numbers of this study shows that there is an upward trend among the Turkish Jewish community for obtaining dual citizenship. The interviews confirmed this

⁸⁰ The transnational ties of the Turkish Jewish community are more extensive than the given countries. However, since this part of the thesis only focuses on the ties of the interview participants more extended list is not provided.

trend as almost all of the participants either had acquired or have recently applied for dual citizenship.

While Chapter 3 of this thesis was included to show the historical background of the emerging transnationality of the Turkish Jews, this chapter extended the argument by attempting to show the link between transnationalism and citizenship. The contribution of this chapter to the overall argument of this thesis has been the attempt to show the transnational character of the Turkish Jewish community from the perspective of citizenship.

CHAPTER V

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Aim and Contribution

As of 2010, the Turkish Jewish community's population ranges between 20.000 and 25.000. Turkish Jews take their part of the cultural mosaic of Turkey as the non-Muslim components alongside with the Armenian and Greek populations. In addition to the diversity and cultural richness brought by the Jews to the Turkish society, the non-Muslim minorities also became an important part of the Turkish political agenda during the EU membership negotiations. From the 1999 Helsinki summit to 2005, Turkey had to fulfill the political Copenhagen criteria⁸¹, in order to start the accession talks with the EU. The second set of Copenhagen criteria refers to the political criteria; as such the political system of EU candidates must be characterized by democracy and the rule of law, respect of human rights, and protection of minorities. As a result, EU institutions have repeatedly referred to these criteria in their relations with Turkey and the Commission, the Council and the Parliament have consistently monitored the development of human rights and the protection of minorities and reflected upon the status of minorities in Turkey in various occasions.

⁸¹ The Copenhagen criteria are the rules that define whether a country is eligible to join the EU. The criteria require that a state has the institutions to preserve democratic governance and human rights, has a functioning market economy, and accepts the obligations and intent of the EU.

Furthermore, the issue of non-Muslim minorities came to be debated as part of the Turkish foreign policy agenda in the past two decades, since there is a tendency among the Turkish state and society to associate the minority groups with the foreign countries. As a result, any conflict between Turkey and Armenia, Greece or Israel had significant implications on the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey.

Developments throughout the world happening in light of the globalization such as increasing interconnectedness opened up the way for new interpretations in minority studies existent in the diaspora structure. In line with this need, transnationalism literature recently developed to analyze the changes brought by globalization to the migration process and the lives of the migrants. Thomas Faist's arguments contributed to the transnationalism literature by focusing on the formation of the transnational social spaces, through the expanded migrant relations in economical, political and socio-cultural areas that cross the borders of the nation-states. Moreover, his typology on the existent forms of transnational relationships offered a way to differentiate between transnational groups. To this end, his categorization of transnational community mainly exemplified through diasporas contributed to the overall argumentation of this thesis.

Following Thomas Faist's category of transnational communities, this thesis analyzed the current status of the Turkish Jewish community, a society in diaspora, to test whether it complied with the characteristics of a transnational community. To this end, the social and symbolic ties of the Turkish Jewish community both with the home (Turkey) and the host countries (Israel) were tested for the case of Turkish Jewish community. Furthermore, the historical background of the Jewish existence in Ottoman Empire and in the Republic of Turkey is reinterpreted in light of

transnationalism literature to show the emergence and evolution of the transnational social space of the case of Turkish Jewish minority.

This research was expanded further by analyzing the relationship between transnationalism and concept of citizenship. As transnational communities cross the borders of states and create their own social space for existence, the understanding of transnational citizenship also moved beyond the national borders. Instead, dual citizenship and dual nationality that is defined by the rights and duties of two nation states emerged. Chapter 4 introduced the historical development of the Turkish citizenship concept and its impact for the case of Turkish Jewish community with reference to Kymlicka's three definitions of citizenship. Legal status, identity issues and civic virtue aspects of Turkish citizenship were further discussed through the experiences of the members of Turkish Jewish community.

It can be argued that Kymlicka's definitions of citizenship that emerged in light of the multiculturalism literature offered an adequate but not a sufficient explanation for the case of Turkish Jewish community in the 21st century. Multiculturalism is prevalent within the context of the state, whereas the transnational ties of the Turkish Jewish community expanded its boundaries. Moreover, in 1990s the allowance of dual citizenship carried the discussion into a new context. Through dual citizenship rights, duties and loyalties no longer belonged to a single state and therefore the perceptions of citizens were expanded in the past two decades. Due to the inability to obtain official data regarding Turkish Jews who hold dual citizenship, this study fails to make a generalization on the trend towards dual citizenship. Yet, the diverse population of interviews showed the significance of the shift towards dual citizenship among the Turkish Jewish community.

There is a rich literature on non-Muslim minorities which includes various studies about the Turkish Jews. These studies focus mainly on historical accounts, citizenship studies and social and political developments in light of the European Union negotiations. This thesis, however, approached the issue from a new angle. It tried to reinterpret the Turkish Jewish community from the perspective of transnationalism hoping to contribute to the current literature by offering a different perspective for examining the case of Turkish Jewish minority of Turkey.

The study not only presented the social ties of the members of Turkish Jewish community, but also the political transnational ties revealed in the form of other Jewish communities, and lobbies in the world. To this end, relations with AIPAC, European Jewish Congress and European Council of Jewish Communities that covers an area from the United States to Europe and finally to Russia and Ukraine plays a significant role. Occasionally, these transnational ties are used by the Turkish Jewish community around the world to promote Turkey.

5.2 Findings

This study attempted to analyze the nature and content of Turkish Jewish community's transnational ties and networks with a special focus on the impact of this transnational nature on the citizenship perceptions of the community members. To this end, the history of Jews in Turkey and evolution of the citizenship context were presented to show that Turkish Jewish community is a transnational community in the form of a diaspora.

In line with Thomas Faist's arguments, this thesis argued that Turkish Jewish community can be accepted as a transnational community as the members maintain social and symbolic ties both with the home and the host countries. It is possible to argue that the members of Turkish Jewish community maintain their relations both in

Turkey and Israel, having social and symbolic ties to both countries. Community members maintain socio-cultural relations with their family members and friends that are mostly spread around Israel, United States, Canada and France. As a consequence of increasing globalization, these relations are kept alive through technological means such as mass communication and transportation tools like telephone and internet tools, and traveling opportunities.

The current literature on the citizenship and the Turkish Jewish minority analyzes the issue from the perspective of multiculturalism focusing on the legal, identity and the civic virtue aspects of citizenship. In legal terms, constitutional citizenship that provides equal rights for all citizens despite religious and ethnic differences prevails in the Republic of Turkey. Therefore equal citizenship practices are applied for all components of the Turkish society. Yet, a more defining and problematic issue for the Turkish Jewish community rests upon the identity aspect. The identification of Turkishness with Islam since the foundation of the Turkish Republic, excludes the Jewish community from Turkish identity. Therefore, even the ongoing attempts on the part of the Jewish community to prove loyalty do not suffice to be accepted as Turkish. In fact, the common belief among the community members is that they will not be perceived by the society at large as Turks due to this religious difference. This feeling of exclusion in some cases causes the community members to become passive citizens. In civic virtue realm, Turkish Jews showed little interest in becoming active citizens through civil society or political party membership. Despite their support of Turkey's democratization process, they lacked enthusiasm to take active part in it.

The effect of transnationalism on citizenship translates into the emergence of dual citizenship. The allowance of dual citizenship in Turkey gave rise to the number

of people that obtained an additional citizenship. Despite the lack of formal numbers, the interviews showed that there is a trend within the Turkish community to acquire a second citizenship. Avoiding visa requirements and perceived threats in the Turkish political context seem to play a major role in the decision to apply for an additional citizenship which plays a significant role in the perception of Turkish citizenship among the community members.

This study analyzed the historical background of Turkish Jewish community and their evolving citizenship status to define the transnational nature of the community and its members. Interviews and some experiences of the members are included to expand the analysis provided in the literature and provide the factors that are currently contributing to the transnational community of the Turkish Jewish community.

During the interview with the then president of the Turkish Jewish community, the major problems of Turkish Jews were defined as: Anti-Semitism, problems concerning the perceptions on Turkish Jews and the Regulation on Foundations. This has been a significant comment as for years the community leaders publicly denied the existence of anti-Semitism among the Turkish society. What had been discussed behind closed doors came to be discussed openly partly because of the need to point out to the danger of anti-Semitism in Turkey. The inability to differentiate between an Israeli citizen and a Turkish Jew constitutes the lack of perception among the Turkish public which is also persistent for the other non-Muslim minorities of Turkey. Whereas Armenian minority is affected by the Turkish- Armenian relations and the discussions on the so-called genocide, Turkish Greeks suffer from any conflict with Greece over the issue of Cyprus. In the case of Turkish Jews, the Turkish-Israeli relations have been determinant in defining the

public opinion about the Jews. Especially conflict in the Israeli-Palestinian front and incidents such as the Mavi Marmara that almost brought the Turkish-Israeli relations to an end caused discomfort and concern among the Turkish Jews. It is important to note that, the reluctance of Turkish Jews to introduce themselves to the rest of the society plays as much role as Prime Minister Erdoğan's comments on Israel that were rooted in the religious context.

Significantly, the interviews showed that the perceptions of the Jewish citizens were that they were excluded from the Turkish identity and they did not believe that this situation would change in the near future. In the research period of this project, some attempts and projects were implemented to introduce the Jews to the Turkish society. The celebrations of the European Day of Jewish Culture at Galata and the EU funded "Improving the Present Perception about the Jewish Community of Turkey"⁸² tried to reach the Turkish society and challenge the prejudices against Jews. However these attempts are only small steps compared to the increasing anti-Semitism caused by the Israeli politics.

5.3 Strengths, Weaknesses and Further Research

An important strength of this thesis has been its attempt to implement a theory that is used for migrant groups to a non-migrant group in an attempt to identify the Turkish Jewish community. Turkish Jewish community has been rooted in Turkey for over a period of five hundred years. Throughout this period, the community preserved its diaspora structure and integrated with the Turkish state and society. To this end, the symbolic and social relations of the Turkish Jewish

⁸² For additional information, see <http://www.turkyahudileri.com>

community with Turkey and Israel enabled this study to analyze the status of the Turkish Jewish community from transnationalism perspective to define it as a transnational community.

Another weakness in the research of this study occurred due to interviews. This study started in a delicate period for the Turkish Jewish community as they witnessed the shift from a peaceful environment to a more threatening one due to rising anti-Semitism which was the consequence of the rising tension on the Turkish-Israeli relations. The tension of the Jewish community at the period was reflected on the responses of the participants. This factor acted as both an advantage and a weakness for this study. The advantage has been that the participants were already questioning their identity and status in Turkey. Yet the disadvantage was that the participants tended to be overly sensitive and effected by the images that were apparent in the protests against Israel. Therefore in a peaceful period, which is usually the nature, the questions may have been answered differently. To overcome this weakness, it would be useful to extend the number of interviews to get a representative sample and to repeat these interviews where there is no political tension at sight. Furthermore, different voices from the community such as *Ashkenazi Jews* should be included. A future research focusing on the relationship between transnationalism and citizenship should attempt to acquire the exact number of Turkish Jews with dual citizenship. Since the community representatives were unable to provide the exact number, the exact number can be obtained from foreign embassies.

This study was designed as an attempt to offer a new perspective in analyzing the status of Turkish Jewish community, their relations with Turkish state and society and their perceptions on citizenship. Finally, this study hopes to contribute to further

studies which will develop the framework presented here and apply it to the cases of different non-Muslim minority groups in the Turkish context.

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