



Summary :

The strong presence of newspapers printed in Greek in Constantinople in the 19th c. is closely related to the re-establishment of the religious communities, the reforms of Tanzimat in the 1830's and the developments in the Greek-Orthodox community and the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Date

19th c.

Geographical Location

Constantinople (Istanbul)

1. Periodization of the Greek press in Ottoman Constantinople

The strong presence of newspapers in Greek in [Constantinople](#) (Istanbul) during the 19th c. is closely related to the re-establishment of the religious communities in the middle of the 1830's and the beginning of the Tanzimat [reforms](#) (1839). We can divide the newspaper publishing activity in three phases.

1.1. First phase (1835-1857)

The first publishing attempts were made by representatives of the Greek-Orthodox community who were closely related to the Ottoman administration. The first newspaper that was published both in Greek and Ottoman was *Othomanikos Minytor* in 1835 by Ioannis (or Iagos) Mousourous, brother of Konstantinos Mousourous, who was ambassador of the Ottoman Empire in Athens at that time. The newspaper was an official publication of the Ottoman state and continued being published until 1841.

Tilegrafos tou Vosporou (1843) was the second important publishing attempt. Its publisher was Konstantinos Adosidis, employee of the Sublime Porte since 1841. At first, it was published three times a month but later it became weekly. In June 1857, after 14 years of publishing, Adosidis gave *Tilegrafos tou Vosporou* to Dimitrios Ksenis, also was a high ranking government employee, and who merged it with the newspaper he had just created, *Vyzantis*. So, until 1871, the newspaper was published with the name *Tilegrafos tou Vosporou kai Vyzantis* under Ksenis' direction. The newspaper had a good team of translators and published articles from the foreign press, while editors of its main political articles were the lawyers Platon Rotas and Ioannis Georgantopoulos.

The *Tilegrafos tou Vosporou* and Dimitrios Ksenis represented a peculiar coalition of interests, as Ksenis was favoured both by Aali Pasha, who served many times as Grand Vizier, and by the Russian embassy, the political line of which was going through a transitional period after Russia's defeat in the Crimean War. Both sides –reformers of the Ottoman state and Russian diplomats– had chosen, each for its own reason, to push the reforms through to the [Patriarchate](#) and *Vyzantis* was at the core of this political line. For this reason, the newspaper's style was generally mild, without effusions and outbursts "against Russians and Bulgarians, against Albanians and Turks and ministers", as [Manouil Gedeon](#) lets us know. Thus the newspaper held a mild stance toward the Bulgarian issue, but the death of its political protector, Aali Pasha (September 1871) had a great impact on its influence. Aali Pasha, as well as Husni Pasha, who was minister of the police at that time, financed the newspaper's publisher, D.Ksenis. It is not a coincidence that after 1871 (and until 1904) the newspaper's name changed back to *Vyzantis*.

1.2. Second phase (1857-1872)

The 1860's brought a new period of prosperity to the Greek press. This prosperity had to do with the reform inside the Orthodox [millet](#) (Rum millet), with the National Assembly of 1858-60 and the voting and ratification of the General Regulations (1862). Newspapers like *Anatolikos Astir*, [Omonoia](#), [Armonia](#), [Neologos](#), as well as the publication of the Karamanli newspaper *Anatoli* in Greek, changed the profile of Greek press.



Publishers of the newspaper *Anatolikos Astir* (1861-1891) were three professors of the [Great School of the Nation](#) (Megali tou Genous Scholi): Ioannis Philalithis, Konstantinos Fotiadis and Vasileios Kallifron. In a very short time, the first two left and Kallifron remained as the only owner of the newspaper. From 1862 to 1864, on the newspaper's payroll were Stavros Voutyras, who later became publisher of the newspaper *Neologos*, and Dimitrios Nikolaidis, who later published *Konstantinoupolis* and who also worked as director of the *Anatolikos Astir* for some time (1864?). Manouil Gedeon, Nikiforos Kalogeras, Michail Chourmouzis and others also worked for the newspaper.

The aim of the newspaper was to put pressure on Joachim II, who was Ecumenical Patriarch at that time (first patriarchate: 1860-1863), to go on with the implementation of the General Regulations that had just been voted by the National Assembly (1858-1860). The newspaper represented the leading neo-Phanariot families that proposed the reforms, like the families of Stefanos and [Konstantinos Karatheodoris](#), and Pavlos Mousouros (brother of Konstantinos and Ioannis). Until *Anatolikos Astir* was published, the reforms were supported by the newspaper *Tilegrafos tou Vosporou kai Vyzantis*, published by Dimitrios Ksenis. But, as mentioned above, Ksenis and his newspaper were influenced by the Russian embassy. This was the reason the pro-Western families of the Greek-Orthodox community, like the ones mentioned, saw the need for a different voice of support to the reforms, untouched by the choices of Russia that had lost the Crimean War. The Mixed Council proposed that *Anatolikos Astir* should become the official newspaper of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, provoking the reaction of Patriarch Joachim II who in return favored *Omonoia*, its primary rival. At that time, *Anatolikos Astir* undertook the full publication of the acts of the Mixed Council, while *Omonoia* published only the final decisions of the Holy Synod and the Mixed Council.

The publication of *Omonoia* was Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim II's political choice. He was a personal friend of Gerasimos, metropolitan of Chalkedon, one of the most eminent prelates of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the mid-19th c., supporter of *gerontism* and relative of D. Katselidis, *Omonoia*'s publisher. Joachim's purpose was to minimize the influence of *Tilegrafos tou Vosporou* and, even more, *Anatolikos Astir*, as they both pressured for the implementation of the General Regulations.

In 1867, *Omonoia* was published together with the newly established *Neologos tis Anatolis*, by Stavros Voutyras, as *Omonoia kai Neologos*. At that time, it was common practice for newspapers that were banned by the Sublime Port to continue being published under the name of another newspaper of Constantinople. This is what happened also with *Neologos tis Anatolis*, which was first published in the middle of the crisis caused by the Cretan Revolt of 1866-69. Its publication was soon to be banned as it published news that had to do with the revolt. But as the newspaper *Omonoia kai Neologos* went on with that practice, its circulation was also banned and *Neologos* sought shelter in another newspaper, *Melissa*. The newspaper was published under the name *Omonoiakai Neologos* from January 1867 to March 9th of the same year. Since March 10th it was published under the name *Neologos*.

In 1870, Vlassis Gavriilidis, who had then resigned from the directorship of the newspaper *Konstantinoupolis*, became director of *Neologos*. This was the last flash of the newspaper before it finally stopped being published in 1871. During that first glorious period of the newspaper, G.Polychroniadis and the reporter N.Argyriadis (who both resigned in the same period) worked there, while in its second, adventurous, period, Manouil Gedeon and Spyridon Lambros, who worked as a correspondent in Athens, while he was still studying literature, were two of the newspaper's contributors.

Publisher and editor of the newspaper *Armonia* (1864-1868) was Michail Chourmouzis (Chourmouzios Triantafyllou). Editor and director of the newspaper (since 1866) was the lawyer Alexandros Axelos. The newspaper was known for its fervent articles against members of all classes of the clergy who misbehaved in their personal or priestly life. The creation of the newspaper in the middle of Sofronios III's patriarchate (1863-1866) served as a means of pressure against him, as he was a fervent supporter of the implementation of the General Regulations as Metropolitan of Amaseia.

Newspaper *Anatoli* was being published by Evangelinos Misailidis in Karamanli from 1851 to 1865. In that year it was also published in Greek, with Christoforos Samartzidis as editor. But this publication lasted only until the December of the same year because of the reaction that Samartzidis' articles against the worship of the sacred icons triggered in the Greek-Orthodox community of Constantinople. Since 1865, it started being published again in Karamanli and, in August 1873, after its name was changed to *Mikra Asia, yani Anatoli*,¹ it started being published both in Karamanli and in Greek.



During that period, the newspaper was hostile against Anthimos VI, who was Ecumenical Patriarch at that time. When Anthimos was in his third patriarchate (1871-1873), he was responsible to assemble the Local Synod that condemned “ethnophyletism” and the followers of the **Bulgarian Exarchate** as schismatic (September 1872). But in the following year (1873) he was criticized by political figures of Constantinople and by Misailidis’ *Anatoli* for poor implementation of the General Regulations. Manouil Gedeon has stated that he was the author of the articles of that period that had to do with the church. Other newspapers of that period, like *Konstantinoupolis*, *Vyzantis* and *Typos* also expressed the same criticism.

In 1874-75, the newspaper was divided again to the edition in Karamanli, under the name *Anatoli*, and the Greek edition, named *Mikra Asia*, directed by Manouil Gedeon who took the place of G.Polychroniadis. Gedeon, however, resigned from the directorship and, in the following year, the publication came to a financial deadlock. In 1877, from February 24 to May 3, *Anatoli* was published again in Karamanli and Greek. The first was a political newspaper, while the second was focused on the matters of the church. But the publication of the Greek edition, which was directed by Gedeon, was banned because of the Russo-Turkish war that started in the same year. The edition in Karamanli continued being published even after Misailidis’ death (January 4 1890), until the end of World War I. After Evangelinos died, the newspaper passed on to Misailidis’ son, Christos.

1.3. Third phase (1872-end of 19th c.)

During this period, the publication of newspapers in Greek was influenced by people who had been involved in the publishing attempts of the 1860’s, either as reporters or as chief editors: Dimitrios Nikolaidis (*Konstantinoupolis*), Stavros Voutyras (*Neologos*), Vlassis Gavriilidis (*Metarrythmisis*). In the case of the first two, the newspapers were first published before 1872. However, the new political situation created by the declaration of schism against the Bulgarian Exarchate and the subsequent position of the publishers toward Patriarch Joachim III set the scenery in which the upcoming publishers formed the political line of their newspapers. The political gamble was their position toward the Russian factor, a problem that even older newspapers, like *Vyzantis* and *Anatolikos Astir* had to deal with. Manouil Gedeon’s mention that the rivalry between Stavros Voutyras and Joachim III was triggered by Joachim’s position over Dimitrios Nikolaidis and his newspaper is rather interesting. So, the former contributors of *Anatolikos Astir*, a newspaper that supported the promotion of the General Regulations to the Patriarchate followed different directions in the following decades; Voutyras’ *Neologos* represented the ethnocentrics (“Russophobes”), while Nicolaidis’ *Konstantinoupolis* represented the ecumenistic attempt (“Russophiles”). *Neologos* had expressed its support to the reforms in the Ottoman state and to the political representation of the populations in the Ottoman province.

In 1865, Dimitrios Nikolaidis, editor of *Anatolikos Astir*, in cooperation with Stavros Voutyras, took over the publication of *Eptalofos*, I. M. Raptarchos’ journal. Soon, Voutyras abandoned the project, but Nikolaidis continued publishing it as a small-size daily newspaper and, six months later, as a large-size newspaper, under the name *Konstantinoupolis*. From times to times, I. M. Raptarchos, G. L. Ksanthopoulos, V. Gavriilidis and M. I. Gedeon contributed as editors. In the crisis of 1872, *Konstantinoupolis* openly expressed its opposition to the schism. Nikolaidis was relieved of his duties as editor and asked for permission to publish a new newspaper. *Constantinoupolis*’ name was changed to *Thraki* (1873-1880) and later to *Avgi* (1880-1884). After the first phase of the issue of privileges that was the reason Joachim III was forced to end his patriarchate, the newspaper’s name was changed back to *Konstantinoupolis* and it continued being published under this until 1906. Despite the changes the newspaper went through from times to times, it remained positive toward Joachim III after 1878.

On the other hand, Stavros Voutyras’ *Neologos*, which took its final form in 1867, committed itself to the representation of the radical nationalists of Constantinople, keeping a strict attitude toward Joachim III. It played a rather important part in the first crisis of the issue of privileges in 1883-84 (Voutyras was the author of the important *Memorandum of the Patriarchates* in 1884), and it contributed to the Patriarch being forced to resign. Because of Voutyras’ provocative articles against the Patriarch, in February 25 1882, a group of Joachim’s supporters attacked the newspaper’s offices and printing office, causing great damages. Voutyras’ articles also contributed to the declaration of the schism against the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1872 and to the more positive attitude of England and France against Greece in the Berlin Conference of 1878.

Voutyras’ work in Constantinople ended in 1897, when the Greek-Turkish war began and he was deported to Greece. He moved to Athens, where he continued publishing *Neologos* for some time. However, he returned to Constantinople, where he continued being



active during the [Revolution of the Young Turks](#) and the Balkan Wars, by participating in the committee that sent volunteers to Greece. In the following decade, until 1922, he played an important part in the formation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's policy. In 1922, he finally returned to Athens as a refugee.

Another short-lived publishing attempt worth mentioning was Vlassis Gavriilidis's *Metarrythmisis*. He published it in 1876, when he resigned from Nikolaidis' *Thraki*. It was a daily newspaper, edited by Ioannis Karavasilis. The newspaper was closed down in August 1877, in the middle of the Eastern Crisis, when Gavriilidis left Constantinople (because of the censorship) and settled in Athens.

1. The title means roughly *Asia Minor*, namely *Anatoli*. *Mikra Asia* was -and still is- the standard Greek name of Asia Minor, while *Anatoli* refers to its Turkish name, i.e. *Anadolu*. The title thus balances between the Greek and Turkish designations (and ideological representations) of Asia Minor.

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Glossary :

	Bulgarian issue
	The Bulgarian struggle for ecclesiastical autonomy. Since the 1850's the Bulgarians claimed the establishment of an autonomous church (exarchate) which would retain typical relationship with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The latter opposed to this movement as its role had been undermined. After long lasting negotiations and the failure of any attempt for reconciliation, an Ottoman firman promulgated in 1870 established the Bulgarian exarchate, although the Patriarchate declared the Exarchate schismatic. Naturally, the main character of the struggle of the Bulgarians for ecclesiastical independence was not religious. It was bounded to the Bulgarian nationalism emerged at that time and had clear political dimension (Bulgarian political independence).
	gerontism
	Administration system of the Ecumenical Patriarchate that was established during the tenure of the patriarch Samuil Chantzeris (1767). It was based on an ecclesiastical oligarchy consisting of the metropolitans of the dioceses that were near Constantinople (Heraclaea, Chalcedon, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, Nicaea, and later Derkon and Caesarea). These metropolitans, called "gerontes" (elders), were responsible for the administration of the patriarchate in cooperation with the patriarch. In reality they could often impose on him their own decisions and could bring about his dethronement. Gerontism provided for administrative competence within the patriarchate, since the gerontes' prolonged stay in the capital rendered them particularly experienced in the management of eventual crises; on the other side, however, the system was a source of financial and other abuse, while it undermined the patriarch's status and autonomy. The system of gerontism was abolished after the adoption of the so-called "General" or "National Regulations" by the National Assembly that convened in Constantinople in 1858-1860. This was a result of the proclamation of the Hatt-ı Hümayun (1856), the imperial decree that among others provided for the reorganization of the millet, the ethnic-religious communities of the Ottoman Empire.



millet

The millet system was based on the division of the Ottoman subjects according to religion. The millets were the central communal institutions for the members of the respective ethno-religious groups, in particular for the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. The millets had its own institutions and functions concerning self-administration, religion, education, justice, and social coherence. Although the division of the subjects according to their religion had always been fundamental in the Empire, the millets in their fully organized form originate in the end of the 18th century. In the 19th century, in particular during the period of the tanzimat reforms, the millets became the main institutions through which the non-Muslim subjects were incorporated in the Ottoman Empire.