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APPROVAL

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- that this Ph.D. Thesis that I have submitted is entirely my own work and I have cited and referenced all material and results that are not my own in accordance with the rules;
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In addition, I acknowledge that any claim of irregularity that may arise in relation to this work will result in a disciplinary action in accordance with the university legislation.

SABRİ DENİZ TIĞLI

Date (21/03/24)



To My Beloved Wife, Lovely Son, and Dearest Family

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Completing my thesis was an indescribable joy. This process has been one of the most challenging and enjoyable periods of my life, during which I have experienced some of my most meaningful moments. I got married and had my child during this time. Now, as I finish this thesis, I am ready to move on to the next chapter of my life.

The foundation of this study is my curiosity about Turkish Foreign Policy, which has seen significant changes. I reviewed hundreds of articles and books to combine theory and practice. This work aims to offer a new perspective on Turkish Foreign Policy, and I believe it has achieved that goal to some extent.

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FROM DE-SECURITIZATION TO RE-SECURITIZATION OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY SINCE 2015

ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyses Turkish Foreign Policy within three different time categorizations. Thus, periodization examines why Turkish Foreign Policy has different characteristics and tendencies under the same party governments. This dissertation integrates the theoretical framework of Neoclassical Realism and Carl Schmitt's political philosophy. Through the theoretical interweaving of these approaches, the transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy in different periods and the dynamics in domestic politics are analytically integrated. The three different periodizations, namely, the periods of de-securitization, transition, and re-securitization, first made sense regarding their internal dynamics and then placed in a causal context as a whole. In doing so, unlike other studies on Turkish Foreign Policy, the explanatory power of international relations theory and political philosophy is utilized at the theoretical level. Thus, the impact of the transformation and changes in domestic politics and the effect of the transformation and changes in the global system based on the periodic change in Turkish Foreign Policy are combined in an analytical framework. In particular, through the causal relationship established between the structural transformation in domestic politics and the re-securitization period in foreign policy, the actor changes in domestic politics have also shaped foreign policy formation. While, through the theoretical framework of Neoclassical Realism, this thesis reveals the impact of the transformation in domestic politics on foreign policy making, the political philosophy of Carl Schmitt shows the effect of the transformation in domestic politics on the process of re-securitization of foreign policy. Thus, by integrating theory and approach, the thesis aims to draw a different framework for explaining the cases and transformation.

Keywords: Neoclassical Realism, Carl Schmitt, Turkey, Turkish Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, International Variables, Re-securitization, De-securitization, Friend-Enemy Dichotomy, State of Exception

GÜVENLİKSİZLEŞMEDEN YENİDEN GÜVENLİKLEŞMEYE 2015 YILINDAN BERİ TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASI

ÖZET

Bu tez Türk Dış Politikası'nı üç farklı zaman kategorizasyonu içerisinde incelemektedir. Böylelikle, Türk Dış Politikası'nın aynı iktidar partisi hükümetlerinde neden farklılaşan özelliklere ve eğilimlere sahip olduğunun irdelenmesi için dönemselleştirme yapılmaktadır. Birbirinden farklı karakteristiklere sahip olan bu dönemlerde yaşanan önemli gelişmelerin vakalar olarak ele alındığı bu tezde, Neoklasik Realizm'in teorik çerçevesi ve Carl Schmitt'in siyaset felsefesi bütünleştirilmektedir. Teorik olarak bu yaklaşımın iç içe geçirilmesi vasıtasıyla farklı periyotlar içerisinde Türk Dış Politikası'nın yaşadığı dönüşüm ve iç politikadaki dinamikler analitik bir düzlemde entegre edilmektedir. Üç farklı dönemselleştirme olan güvensizleşme, dönüşüm ve yeniden güvenlikleşme dönemleri önce kendi iç dinamikleri açısından anlamlandırılarak bir bütün olarak nedensel bir bağlama oturtulmaktadır. Bu yapılırken de Türk Dış Politikası çalışmalarının diğerlerinden farklı olarak teorik düzlemde uluslararası ilişkiler teorisi ve siyaset felsefesi alanlarının açıklama gücünden yararlanılmaktadır. Böylelikle, Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki dönemsel değişimin temelinde iç politikadaki dönüşüm ve değişimlerin etkisiyle küresel sistemdeki dönüşüm ve değişimin etkisi analitik bir çerçevede birleştirilmektedir. Özellikle, iç politikada yaşanan yapısal dönüşüm ve dış politikada yeniden güvenlikleşme dönemi arasında kurulan nedensellik ilişkisi vasıtasıyla iç politikada yaşanan aktörel değişimler dış politikanın oluşmasını da şekillendirmiştir. Bu tez, Neoklasik Realizmin teorik çerçevesi sayesinde iç politikadaki dönüşümün dış politika yapımındaki etkisini ortaya koyarken, Carl Schmitt'in politik felsefesi yardımıyla da iç politikadaki dönüşümün dış politikanın yeniden güvenlikleşme sürecine olan etkisini açığa çıkarmaktadır. Böylelikle, teori ve yaklaşım birbirine entegre edilerek tezin vakaları ve dönüşümü açıklamada farklı bir çerçeve çizmesi hedeflenmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Neoklasik Realizm, Carl Schmitt, Türkiye, Türk Dış Politikası, İç Politika, Uluslararası Değişkenler, Yeniden Güvenlikleşme, Güvensizleşme, Dost-Düşman İkilemi, İstisna Hali

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AoC	The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
BDP	Peace and Democracy Party
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CoM	Council of Ministers
CR	Classical Realism
DİB	Presidency of Religious Affairs
EU	European Union
FETÖ	Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization
FM	Foreign Minister
FSA	Free Syrian Army
JDP	Justice and Development Party
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIT	National Intelligence Service
MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCR	Neoclassical Realism
NMP	National Movement Party
NTC	National Transitional Council
NR	Neorealism
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PM	Prime Minister
PYD	The Democratic Union Party
RPP	Republican People's Party
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
TFP	Turkish Foreign Policy
TGNA	The Grand National Assembly of Türkiye
TİKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TWF	Turkey Wealth Fund
UAVs	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
UK	United Kingdom

UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States of America
YPG	People's Defense Units
YSK	Supreme Electoral Council
YTB	Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities
WWII	World War II



1. INTRODUCTION

Turkey has experienced several fluctuations in domestic and foreign policies since the late 1990s. Most of these changes occurred during the over two decades of single-party government led by the Justice and Development Party (JDP). Although the JDP rule has featured a cohesive single-party leadership, it has also shown inconsistencies by fluctuating between de-securitization and re-securitization. The JDP's dominance in domestic politics was the most notable attribute of their united and single-party government, as confirmed by their repeated victories in subsequent elections. In contrast, the JDP's foreign policy trajectory underwent serious fluctuations during its term in power, and, ultimately, Turkey abruptly re-entered the securitization cycle. This study intends to investigate the potential causal connection between the sustained electoral successes of the JDP and Turkey's swift regression towards a path of re-securitization. It is argued that the causal link is not a one-way relationship but rather a two-way interaction. In essence, the argument is that by establishing sovereignty in the political sphere, the JDP government has led to the re-securitization of foreign policy, which in turn crystallized the ruling party's sovereignty. By managing the monopolized decision-making mechanisms by excluding other influential actors from the mechanism, JDP has emerged as the sovereign in Turkish politics. Thus, as a natural consequence of the diminishing importance of different actors in decision-making, the JDP government has become the absolute power in shaping Turkish politics.

While a significant amount of research has explored Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) and its features, utilizing different conceptualizations and theories, this study aims to unpack the transmutation of TFP within three stages by using the theoretical framework of neoclassical realism (NCR). The evolution of Turkey's domestic policy will be scrutinized through how Schmitt dealt with the nature of the politics. Thus, it would be aimed to diverge from the current literature by focusing on NCR and incorporating Carl Schmitt's concepts of sovereignty, state of emergency, and the friend-enemy dichotomy to clarify the determinants of recent TFP fluctuations. In this regard, Schmitt's cognitive understanding of the concept of the political would be useful in making sense of Turkey's

transformation in domestic policy. Therefore, domestic policy constraints, which play a role in driving and influencing the pattern and trajectory of TFP, will be examined by utilizing Schmitt's conceptualizations.

However, the study may encounter potential theoretical and conceptual obstacles. Firstly, while the NCR considers domestic policy to be an integral part of the foreign policy-making process, its primary goal is to illustrate the correlation between the international system and the states' foreign policies. More accurately, the NCR's theoretical approach incorporates the influence of foreign policy on the international system as a significant determining factor, which is commonly overlooked by the principles of structural realism. NCR not only examines the capacity of foreign policy to influence the international system but also considers domestic politics as a crucial component in the foreign policy-making process. This enabled the consideration of domestic policy variables while expanding the implementation of the NCR's theoretical framework to a broader range of investigations. One of the difficulties this research faces is how to restrict the examination of domestic policy variables. Excessive focus on conceptualizations of domestic policies may detract from the study's main objective, which is to elucidate the fluctuations of TFP over the previous two decades. To avoid this, the study strives to classify domestic policy developments and analyze them according to specific periods.

The periodical categorization of the TFP mainly marks the focal point of this dissertation. It includes three time periods, which are the de-securitization period (1999-2010), the turbulent period (2010-2015), and the re-securitization period (2015-today). Rather than Copenhagen School's securitization approach, this study would rely on a periodical categorization that is helpful in explaining and understanding the shifts in TFP in the context of domestic constraints and international variables. "In this sense, the main purpose of using these terms is not to draw on the methodological and empirical applications of the Copenhagen school in security studies. Developments in these periods will be analyzed mainly through the theoretical framework proposed by the NCR, complemented by Schmitt's concept of the political. With the help of this categorization, the dissertation would aim to reach tangible results through intangible variations.

Domestic constraints and international variables are considered as two criteria for analyzing TFP in three different periods. The former has many variations which affect all aspects of the decision-making process. This impacts the decision-makers and foreign policy elites' interpretations of which decisions shall be made during the crisis or which long-term strategic choices shall be made by the policymakers. The Schmittian approach explicitly brings NCR into the frame of this study at this point. Schmitt's criticism of liberal democracies squarely defines sovereignty favoring either the ruling elites or the ruler as a positive way to determine the transcending power of domestic politics on the various sectors of politics. At first, it indicates the intertwined relationship between the ruling ones and sovereignty. Secondly, it creates a progressive political sphere for states, either positively or negatively. Thirdly, it defines the ruling ones as sovereigns who determine exceptional situations, which makes solid ground for studying how domestic constraints affect them.

On the other hand, international variables have a notable impact on the decision-making process and the opportunities for achieving political goals. This, in turn, influences the sovereign's ability to govern efficiently. In the context of international variables, NCR aligns with other types of realism. To begin with, it posits an objective world that exists beyond individual perceptions and definitions. Thus, the factors in this objective world provide a flexible framework for the ruling elites while implying or creating policies in certain circumstances. The reason for flexibility is the role of domestic constraints in shaping how decision-makers interpret international factors. This is where NCR adopts constructivist theory and contributes to the literature. On the other hand, by considering the coercive influence of international variables independent of domestic constraints, the NCR recognizes the objectivity of systemic factors and the inherently anarchic nature of international relations.

Considering the impact of the aforementioned variables on TFP, this dissertation focuses on three issues. The first is how international variables affect the decision-makers who constitute and practice the TFP. In this context, international variables and their effects will be analyzed within the specified time periods. The second is the transformative effect of the change in decision-makers' behavior on TFP under the influence of domestic

constraints. Thus, the importance of the role of the characteristics and dispositions of decision-makers in the formulation of foreign policy is revealed. The third is an in-depth consideration of how Schmitt's conceptualisations of the sovereign, the state of exception and the friend-enemy distinction transform domestic politics and determine the trajectory of TFP. By doing so, the reason why the TFP adopts contradictory identities under the rule of the same decision-making actor will be analysed. The main claim to be pursued is that the transformation of the decision-making actor into a Schmittian-style sovereign and the re-securitisation of the TFP are mutually reinforcing processes. To elaborate further, the impact of international variables on decision-making and the foreign policy outcomes as a result of it is conditioned by the capacity and capability of the sovereign due to the elimination of other actors in the mechanism. The lack of balance in the mechanism leads to a closed process in which the objectives to be pursued and the methods to be applied are in the hands of the sovereign. Because of the changes in the ruling actors involved in the decision-making process, Turkey serves as a case study for testing this hypothesis. It is necessary to cluster time periods in the context of this dissertation. Although it examines foreign policy making in three different political periods, Turkey underwent significant securitisation before the millennium. This explains why the term “re-securitisation” rather than “securitisation” is preferred to name the time period following the turbulent phase studied.

Before providing a brief overview of the three periods of TFP, which form the main framework of the dissertation, it is necessary to understand how they are categorised. A fundamental aspect to consider is the significant influence wielded by various ruling elites in decision-making processes across different foreign policy issues, which is crucial for understanding the classification of these periods. Prior to the de-securitisation period of TFP, the nature of the relations between the military-security bureaucracy and politicians was tense. In particular, the 1996 African tour of Necmettin Erbakan, the prime minister (PM) of the day and the leader of the National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*) movement, was one of the most important examples of the tense relationship between the military-security bureaucracy and politicians. The dominant role of the military-security bureaucracy in policy-making during this period was also evident in many other issues. For example, the Turkey-Syria crisis in the late 1990s was another issue where the influence of the military-

security bureaucracy in policy-making was evident. The allegations that Syria supported the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist organization, and patronized its leader, Abdullah Öcalan, brought the two countries, which already had strained relations, to the brink of war. The military-security bureaucracy played a crucial part in this crisis. It is important to note that TFP was primarily influenced by classical security threat perceptions, with the military-security bureaucracy playing a significant role in decision-making. However, changes in the conventional approach were brought about by internal political dynamics and developments in international relations.

The following sections elaborate on how various developments in Turkish politics affect the way in which the TFP is made. Nevertheless, the TFP is not only subject to internal political outcomes but is also profoundly influenced by international variables and structural considerations that affect state behaviors. In this regard, the periodic categorization allows us to explore how the elites' transformation and perceptions contribute to innovation in foreign policy, providing a chance to test our hypothesis in the different chapters of TFP.

The de-securitization period started with the capturing of Abdullah Öcalan and the approval of Turkey's EU candidate status at the Helsinki Summit in 1999. These two events were the critical turning points that shifted the balance between the actors involved in the making and implementation of the TFP. Endeavors of personal diplomacy by İsmail Cem, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan also made contributions to the de-securitization process. The personal friendship between İsmail Cem and Yorgo Papandreu and the 99' Earthquake have positively impacted Turkish-Greek relations. President Sezer's attending Hafez Assad's funeral and meeting with Bashar Assad in 2000 represent milestones in the Turkish-Syrian relationship.

Nevertheless, the relationship between both countries would start to improve in the earlier 2000s through President Sezer's contribution; it would continue with PM Erdoğan and Bashar Assad's close personal relationship. The de-securitization process in TFP could be characterized by the normalisation of the relationship with the two “traditional” enemies (Greece and Syria), which were considered enemies in the 2 ½ War Strategy forwarded

by former ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ (Elekdağ 1996). In this period, trading volumes, reciprocity, free trade agreements, visa-free agreements, bilateral security agreements, and bilateral and multilateral joint initiatives were increased consistently with personal diplomacy initiatives and changes in foreign policy practice.

However, implications of the global financial crisis in 2009, the instability in the region, particularly in Iraq and Syria, turmoil in domestic politics, deterioration in the relationship with the EU, and the effects of the Arab Spring pushed Turkey to a new phase in foreign policy. Even though we could not simply call it a re-securitization period, it paved the way for the re-securitization process. During this period, Turkey faced snags and deadlocks in both external and internal politics. The EU membership process lost momentum, and Turkey's relationship with the European countries gradually worsened. The positive perception of Turkey in Middle Eastern countries and the collaboration with Middle Eastern states decreased. US withdrawal from Iraq by the effect of the global financial crisis and the Obama administration's policies led Turkey to devise bolder policies that were beyond its material power. On the other hand, the particular developments in domestic politics, such as the Gezi Park Protests, the termination of the so-called “solution process,” the ISIS terror attacks, the June 7 Elections, and the military joint police operations against the trenches and barricades in the Southeastern Anatolia region led Turkey to move away from the de-securitization period.

In 2015, Turkey's internal and external politics underwent a transformation as it abandoned its soft power-based approach to foreign policy and adopted a hard power-dominated strategy. The 2 ½ War Doctrine, developed by retired ambassador Şükrü Elekdağ in 1996, has re-emerged as a significant concept within the different forms in the eyes of the TFP elites due to the increased tension with Syria and Greece, as well as the conflict with the PKK and its offshoot PYD. Almost two decades after Ambassador Elekdağ first developed the concept, Turkey found itself facing similar challenges with the same nations and combatting the same terrorist organization. This is one of the primary justifications for categorizing the period after 2015 as re-securitization due to internal political developments. Also, during the re-securitisation period, the geographical scope of Turkey's military operation changed. This period has seen the establishment of

permanent military bases, cooperation with local rebel forces, and prolonged interventions in destabilised regions.

On the other hand, military and political innovations also occurred during the re-securitization period. For instance, developing and using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), establishing bilateral and multilateral relations, and negotiating with countries not belonging to Turkey's traditional allies group are examples. Thus, while the re-securitization period is the resurrection of the classical threat perceptions in a much broader sense, response mechanisms and techniques to these threats also differ from the past.

Many researchers deal with these changes within the scope of domestic politics, economics, and leadership effects that have been gradually increasing in recent years (Çuhadar et al. 2020; Kutlay 2011; Özpek and Tanriverdi Yaşar 2018). Analyzing the personal characteristics of six leaders through eighteen different cases, Çuhadar et al. investigated the correlation between leaders' leadership styles and their foreign policies. According to them, there is a correlation between the different leadership styles of leaders and the foreign policies they perform. In this context, they argued that Erdoğan has an expansionist style unlike other leaders (Cuhadar et al. 2017). Kutlay, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of Turkish business sector capital in the shaping of the TFP since the early 2000s. Using the functionalist and interdependence approaches, Kutlay argues that the “active and independent” identity of the TFP should be evaluated independently of the shift in the axis, which he claims to be ideologically based (Kutlay 2011b). Özpek and Tanriverdi Yaşar, who argue that the JDP used its democratic and liberal discourses for pragmatic purposes, reveal the increasing “revisionist tone” in the TFP as the JDP's rule began to be consolidated. In particular, this study considers the 2011 elections as an important break in domestic politics and the Arab Spring as a case where the JDP's “revisionist tone” had the opportunity to crystallize. The emergence and strengthening of the “revisionist tone” is attributed to the JDP's adoption of a populist approach to domestic and foreign policy (Özpek and Tanriverdi Yaşar 2018). Başer analyzed the “shift of axis” debate, which was a highly contested topic, and concluded that there was no shift of axis during the JDP period, using the national role conceptions method. He acknowledged that

there were significant differences between the worldviews of the JDP policymaking elites and their predecessors but argued that these differences did not manifest in foreign policy (Başer 2015).

In addition to studies examining the relationship between TFP and domestic policy constraints and economic effects, there are also several studies by researchers examining the impact of international and systemic variables on TFP (Aydın 2000; Hunter 1999; Karaosmanoglu 2000; Keyman 2010; Öniş 1995; Sayarı 1997). In his study published in 2000, Aydın argues that the structural determinants that have traditionally influenced and shaped TFP have ensured political continuity despite Turkey's frequent domestic policy changes. The study reveals that the cases affecting TFP are international dynamics and regional changes (Aydın 2000). Shireen Hunter analyses Turkey's attempt to redefine itself geopolitically after the Cold War. She examines how Turkey has been influenced by systemic variables and highlights the strengthening of Ottomanist and Pan-Turkist inclinations in the nation. However, it is argued that while Turkey's relations with the West may continue to be marked by various tensions, they cannot be replaced by another regional relationship (Hunter 1999b). In his study on national security culture and the development of the military, Ali Karaosmanoğlu analyzes the national security culture from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic, ranging from aggressive realpolitik to the moderation of realpolitik. In parallel to this, Karaosmanoğlu notes that the weight of the military in politics began to decline in the late 1990s. However, in analyzing these, he considers international variables, such as the increasing importance of democratic governments around the world following the end of World War II (WWII) and the systemic effects of the Gulf War (Karaosmanoglu 2000). According to Keyman, Turkey's "buffer state identity" disappeared after the end of the Cold War, and the search for a new identity has become essential. "Geopolitics, modernity, and democracy have become the constitutive dimensions" of this new political identity quest (Keyman 2010, 1). Keyman argues that Turkey's main focus should be on improving its relations with the EU, which he believes would help consolidate Turkey's democratic reforms. In this way, he claims that Turkey would gain a multilateral and constructive foreign policy image and become a key actor in global politics (Keyman 2010). In his article published in 1995, Ziya Öniş argues that the end of the Cold War and the establishment of the Turkic republics pushed

Turkey to search for a new identity. In this respect, similar to Keyman's approach to the search for a new identity, Öniş emphasizes domestic political stability in order to actively benefit from the post-Cold War international system (Öniş 1995). In his article analyzing Turkey's relations with Middle Eastern countries and regional dynamics in the post-Cold War period, Sayarı argues that the Welfare Party's ability to change the TFP was constrained by regional factors. In this context, it could be concluded that Sayarı suggests that systemic and structural factors diminish the impact of domestic constraints on foreign policy making (Sayarı 1997).

On the other hand, some researchers have tried to evaluate TFP through conceptual discussions. In these debates, the power of the JDP government to transform the political sphere is evaluated, while the deteriorating relations between Turkey and the Transatlantic Alliance are discussed (Aras and Polat 2008; Keyman 2017a; Han 2013a; Karacasulu and Karakir 2014a). Keyman, using the concept of “moral realism”, argues that the post-Davutoğlu TFP has moved towards a new understanding that combines “hard power” and humanitarian norms. He remarks on the case of Turkey's unconditional granting of asylum to 3.5 million people from the wave of refugees from the Syrian Civil War while demonstrating its hard power through military operations against ISIS and the PKK (Keyman 2017). Karacasulu and Karakir trace how Turkey-EU relations were affected by the Arab Spring. They argue that despite their differences in approach, Turkey and the EU may share some common goals. The study reveals that Turkey pursues an assertive and active foreign policy in the region, while the EU adopts a more hesitant approach (Karacasulu and Karakir 2014). Analyzing the TFP in the context of Turkey-Syria relations using NCR, Ahmet Kasım Han argues that the Arab Spring threatened the benefits that the TFP expected from regional activism. Han also identified Turkey's attitude to the Syrian crisis as an example of “how the ambitions of worldviews can exceed a state's capabilities” (Han 2013, 69). He also stated that “...foreign policy decisions may (...) be intended to shift public perceptions and attitudes; indeed, the JDP has been trying to use Turkey's foreign policy to transform Turkey's political culture; according to its alternative worldview” (Han 2013, 57). Aras and Polat examine the desecuritization of the Turkish approach to Iran and Syria and claim that it develops hand in hand with the domestic desecuritization environment (Aras and Polat 2008, 196).

Moreover, Turkey's domestic and external environment has a considerable effect on this desecuritization process. The study by Günlük-Şenesen and Kırık's study have made striking observations on the process of desecuritization in Turkey by tracing the budgets of security agencies and ministries by years (Günlük-Şenesen and Kırık 2016). According to them, while the Ministry of Defense's budget remained stable, the budget of the Ministry of Interior and the security agencies under the control of the Ministry of Interior was increasing (Günlük-Şenesen and Kırık 2016, 81–82). While the budget of the Ministry of Defense has remained stable, the budget of the security agencies under the Ministry of Interior has been increasing, which seems to be a concrete indicator of Turkey's period of desecuritization in foreign policy.

The studies briefly reviewed above examine TFP and Turkish politics through different approaches. On the other hand, this dissertation aims to provide a more integrated study that combines conceptual and theoretical explanations to provide an insightful examination of Turkish politics, which is dynamic and fluid, and the TFP, which naturally has similar characteristics. The dynamic and fluid characteristics of TFP cannot be explained with the classical theories in the International Relations discipline, even though neorealism (NR) and constructivism have partly explanatory power in some cases alone. However, we aim to draw a much broader perspective to understand the primary mechanism that triggered the changes in TFP related to transformations in the domestic environment. This dissertation elaborates on the relationship between NCR and Schmitt's sovereignty and friend/enemy concepts to cope with the focal points behind the changing environment of Turkish politics, which naturally affects the decision-making process of TFP. This detailed analysis is based on the NCR's assumption that domestic constraints are effective in foreign policy making. While analysing the domestic constraints of TFP, the evolution of Turkish politics to the Schmittian concept of sovereign will be traced. As stated earlier, an objective and causal correlation will be established between the Schmittian transformation of Turkish politics and the securitisation of foreign policy. Thus, it will be comprehensively explained why the TFP has fluctuated so much in such a short period of time.

In this sense, the primary objective of the dissertation is to examine the changes in TFP in the periodization study. It aims to explain why TFP has shifted from de-securitization to re-securitization. The theoretical framework of the NCR and Carl Schmitt's sovereignty concept and friend/enemy distinction will be merged to understand the current changes occurring since the beginning of the millennia due to domestic and international constraints. One of the main challenges is how to bind NCR and Schmitt's sovereignty and friend/enemy distinction in the context of the TFP to explain the profound changes. The second question is why 2015 is considered a breaking point in the transition moment of the change in TFP. In this dissertation, where the answers to both questions will be sought around Schmitt's concept of sovereign, the actor changes in the domestic politics of Turkish politics will be identified. Therefore, NCR and Schmitt's conceptualizations will be elaborated in the transformation of domestic constraints. The area where the theoretical framework and conceptual convergence will be achieved would be the shifts in domestic politics. On the other hand, the integration of the NCR and Schmitt's conceptualization in the transformation of domestic constraints will be considered. At the same time, systemic effects will also be taken into account with the help of the NCR as to why 2015 will be taken as a breaking point.

This dissertation, thus, would provide a detailed explanation of the reasons behind the profound changes in accordance with the NCR approach and the presuppositions of the Schmittian approach on the nature of politics. Although the Schmittian approach is primarily concerned with law and politics, it also provides essential factors for domestic constraints. The fusion of the NCR and Schmittian approaches would give us much more analytical and comprehensive insight into explaining and understanding TFP. In this sense, Schmitt's conceptual framework has been employed to elucidate several political and international relations challenges, including Russia's annexation of Crimea, the ascent of authoritarianism, and the rise of illiberal democracies (Varga and Buzogány 2020; Zheng 2013; Auer 2015).

This dissertation is composed of four chapters and classifies TFP in three distinct time periods. In each period, the variations of TFP are thoroughly explained, with attention given to the factors that influence TFP, including domestic constraints and international

variables. The terms “desecuritization”, “transition”, and “re-securitization” are employed as themes for each period to reflect the characteristic of the policy pursued by the government. Within this context, the chapters rely on Schmitt's concepts, particularly when analyzing domestic policy developments. Relying on Schmitt's concepts, the ability of ruling elites to control changes in domestic political alliances and to determine the distinction between friend and enemy will be clarified. Furthermore, within the context of the theoretical premise of the NCR, the change of actors involved in shaping foreign policy and how this change affects foreign policy-making will be scrutinized.

In the first chapter, NCR theory and Schmitt's conceptualisations are elaborated separately, and it is questioned why both have an overarching explanatory capability. The central theme of this chapter is to develop a concrete framework for NCR and establish a cohesive and interconnected relationship between it and Schmitt's concept of the political. Additionally, it compares various NCR approaches and discusses their applicability in explaining the dramatic changes in TFP. Furthermore, Schmitt's definition of exception and sovereignty is also examined in this chapter. The fact that both concepts are analysed together is because they are inseparable in Schmitt's intellectual thought. Besides, it will explore how the sovereign, who constitutes and rules the state of exception, prevails over Turkish politics. Therefore, both concepts are essential components of the political thought of this dissertation. Domestic constraints, which are part of the NCR, provide the nexus where the theory is integrated with Schmitt's conceptualisations.

The second chapter analyses this dissertation's first case, desecuritisation, using the interaction between the NCR and the Schmittian approach in transforming the national environment after 1999. In deviating from the traditional security perspective, Turkey has dealt with its inherent concerns with neighbouring states while developing cultural and economic ties in its relations with other states. From Ismail Cem's tenure as Turkey's foreign minister until the Davos Crisis, Turkey played an intermediary role as a middle power in regional and global affairs. This was accompanied by a rise in civil society and business elite involvement, which coincided with the policies of the JDP governments. During this period, Turkey dramatically increased its trade volume with countries previously considered a high-security threat while diluting its security-based foreign

policy in response to domestic and international constraints. This chapter has argued that the most important challenge of the desecuritisation process in Turkey is the exclusion of the military from the decision-making process. In this context, the military elite in Turkey was securitized by the JDP government. More clearly, the JDP government claimed that the classical security approach was the biggest obstacle to Turkey taking its deserved place in the world. Therefore, it was emphasized that one of the biggest threats facing Turkey was the coup d'état.

The third chapter analyses the transition period of TFP, which is characterized as a hybrid period, a pendulum oscillating between the periods of de-securitization and re-securitization. It is designated as a hybrid since, being a transitional period, it displays characteristics of both de-securitisation and re-securitisation. During this time period, Turkey has undergone a shift influenced by both domestic political constraints and international variables in the decision-making process. This transformation represents a move from de-securitisation to re-securitisation. In the realm of domestic politics, the JDP has cemented its power with successive electoral victories, and the manifestation of its 'sovereign' identity has become more evident, with the reduction and change of actors in the decision-making process emerging as new variables. The foreign policy-making process has been constrained by various global developments, including the Global Financial Crisis, the Arab Spring, international terrorism, and the migration crisis. Turkey's enhanced standing in the global arena on both economic and political levels during the de-securitization period created the basis for a transition to a more assertive foreign policy in this period. The decision-makers of foreign policy have initiated a course of action premised on the conviction that Turkey, enjoying a regional and global influence, should devise a new playbook for more assertive foreign policy.

Finally, the fourth chapter examines the re-securitization of the TFP in the context of NCR theory and the Schmittian approach. As the first chapter demonstrated the link between the NCR and the Schmittian approach, the changing perspective of the Turkish ruling elites in light of domestic political constraints and international variables will help to test the hypothesis. During this time, various domestic political developments arose as constraining factors for re-securitization, in particular, the polarisation reinforced by

political alliances, the pure manifestation of sovereign identity in the JDP-National Movement Party (NMP) alliance, and the failed coup attempt of 15 July. Meanwhile, international variables consist of the increasing uncertainties in the global order and the intensifying struggle in many parts of the world. During this time, domestic politics and foreign policy have been intertwined in Turkey. The emphasis has been placed on the concept of “survival” as struggling against the existential threat that the state faced, as claimed by the JDP-NMP alliance. In this sense, political alliances were formed based on this “survival” concept and the dichotomy between friend and enemy became a political tool for the JDP, which had consolidated its sovereignty, to reproduce and construct the political space constantly. Furthermore, Turkey's worsening relationships with its longstanding partners, the US and the EU, have caused additional uncertainty in the conduct of foreign policy.

2. NEOCLASSICAL REALISM AND CARL SCHMITT: WIDE EXPLANATORY POWER

During the Cold War, the discipline of international relations was heavily influenced by realism and marked by competition between mainstream theories seeking to explain the functioning of the global order. However, the sudden end of the Cold War and the emergence of ethnic and sectarian conflicts in specific regions dealt a significant blow to the predominance of realism in international relations, which proved inadequate in explaining these events. This has led to critiques of realism, as manifested in critical theory, constructivism, and NCR in the 1990s, each offering unique viewpoints on international relations. The debate known as rationalism versus reflectivism is one of the most significant controversies in the field of international relations.

NCR offers a distinctive approach that differs from other theories, although it shares some similarities with constructivism. Firstly, the theory adopts a state-centric perspective similar to other forms of realism, which situates it under the rationalist umbrella. According to the NCR, states are the primary actors in the international system, as in mainstream international relations theories. However, unlike other mainstream theories, the NCR argues that there is a crucial interaction between states and the international system. In essence, the international system and states are interdependent. Yet this approach sees states as actors made up of different structures rather than uniform actors, as in structural realism. Without denying the anarchic nature of the international system and the fact that states are sovereign actors, it focuses on these structures themselves, recognising that each state has different features and sizes.

Secondly, the NCR recognises that the perceptions of interest groups and decision-makers can have an influence, but the theory primarily focuses on the diversity of state behaviour and decisions. While interest groups and policymakers' perceptions are important in what is known as domestic constraints, a state's political and strategic culture also plays a role in determining these constraints. By integrating domestic policy variables into the theoretical framework, the NCR creates a comprehensive explanatory capability to understand why states' behaviour and interests change in the short and long term.

The influence of domestic policy is frequently disregarded by structural approaches. According to Kenneth Waltz, the founder of structural realism, his theory is not applicable to foreign policy analysis and, therefore, excludes domestic policy variables from the theoretical framework (Waltz 1996, 54). Conversely, James D. Fearon argues that foreign policy choices made by states directly or indirectly cause systemic outcomes such as the “balance of power” (Fearon 1998, 295). Mark R. Brawley provides a pertinent illustration of Fearon's theory, demonstrating that France's security during the interwar years was adversely impacted by the US Senate's refusal to participate in the League of Nations. He stated that “when the US Senate rejected the peace treaty, they (...) cancelled (...) the American security commitment to France. When that happened, the British quietly gave up their commitment as well” (Brawley 2009, 82). Lloyd E. Ambrosius observed that differences in the methodologies employed by the Republicans and Democrats in the US Senate led to the failure to address France's security concerns, despite the fact that both groups intended that France's security concerns be considered (Ambrosius 1972, 350). This example highlights how a decision taken by the US Senate affected the security situation within the European continent. The absence of strong international commitments has deprived France of a security guarantee, prompting them to pursue alternative measures, including pressurizing Germany for their survival. This series of decisions fostered an imbalance in Europe as a result of a decision taken outside the continent.

An important instance of this is The Grand National Assembly of Türkiye's (TGNA) refusal in the early 2000s to approve the March 1 Decree, which would have permitted the United States to utilize Turkish territory for attacking Iraq. The rejection of the government decree by the TGNA highlights how significant domestic policy restraints can be. During the early years of the JDP's administration, the divergent perspectives of three top party officials, namely Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, PM Abdullah Gül, and TGNA Speaker Bülent Arınç, revealed the disagreements within the JDP assembly in the TGNA. In Kesgin and Kaarbo's opinion, Erdoğan's political ban, who expressed support for the decree before voting, preventing him from serving in the parliament and the cabinet, negated his influence on the JDP MP's in the parliament (Kesgin and Kaarbo 2010, 31). Almost a week following the lifting of Erdogan's political ban and the taking up the office

as PM, the resolution was adopted on 20 March to permit foreign forces to use the country's airspace. As noted by Kesgin and Kaarbo, Erdogan was the dominant decision-maker in the final decision-making process (Kesgin and Kaarbo 2010, 33). However, it was a decision that came too late.

The rejection of the parliamentary resolution by the TGNA generated various options in regional politics. Some argue that Turkey experienced a surge in popularity amongst European and Middle Eastern public opinion. Moreover, a significant improvement in Turkey-EU relations began to unfold (Gözen 2005, 86). On the other hand, there were concerns that the confidence crisis between Turkey and the United States following the rejection of a parliamentary resolution by TGNA could hinder Turkey's EU accession process. Consequently, there was cautiousness about how the process could proceed without the backing of the US while moving closer to the Franco-German alliance, which opposed Turkey's entry into the EU, and further away from the British-Spanish line, which favored Turkey's entry into the union, by the decision was taken by the TGNA (Önis and Yilmaz 2005, 283).

Nevertheless, the domestic constraints of the moment can be explained by Schmitt's concept of sovereignty, an ardent opponent of liberal parliamentarism. While certain scholars posit that the rejection of the March 1 resolution was a consequence of a “divided JDP” and a “conflicted Turkish military establishment”, Yeşiltaş contests such presumptions (Yeşiltaş 2009, 47). He argues that Turkey played a “soft balancing” role, considering the regional consensus against war, respecting Turkey's national interests and security concerns, and calculating the national and domestic costs (Yeşiltaş 2009, p. 48-49). However, one should not overlook the confusion caused by the different positions of the JDP trio, Gül, Erdoğan, and Arınç, which led the JDP deputies in the TGNA to act more independently in the vote. Specifically, as previously mentioned, the TGNA passing a comparable resolution shortly after Erdoğan assumed the position of PM serves as persuasive evidence for this assertion.

In this manner, the failure of the March 1 resolution can be attributed to the absence of a “sovereign,” despite the government's backing for the motion. This claim is reinforced by

Balkan Devlen and Özgür Özdamar's research on the JDP's assertive foreign policy since the mid-2010s. Devlen and Özdamar contend that in recent years, "the JDP, which has defeated its traditional rivals in domestic politics, has found a favourable environment to pursue an assertive foreign policy and impose its own preferences" (Özdamar and Devlen 2019, 191). According to their survey of TFP activism in the Arab Spring, the JDP eliminated its domestic rivals, thereby reducing the risk of unexpected events such as the 1 March vote. More specifically, the internal rifts within the JDP regarding the Iraqi War and the absence of a sovereign party leader demonstrated the existence of a fragmented political organism. Subsequently, the emergence of a sovereign, resulting from the purging of internal actors and significant domestic political transformations, will unify the JDP's fragmented political organism into a coherent political unit. This means that, as can be seen from this example, Schmitt's concept of the sovereign not only has a meaningful place within NCR theory but also constitutes an integrated approach to explaining the transformation of TFP.

Hence, it is vital to remove the ambiguity between NCR and Schmitt. Schweller draws a correlation between realism and fascism by quoting Carl Schmitt, but he distinguishes the two by stating that "fascism created a hysterical, mass-based hyper-nationalism by means of racist ideology and propaganda that worked to energize the disillusioned masses of post-war Europe" (Schweller 2009, 243). He elaborates on the resource extraction power of fascist regimes using a neoclassical realist framework. However, this framework can also be applied to non-fascist regimes, including illiberal democracies, populist governments, and authoritarian regimes. Therefore, it is not restricted solely to ideological regimes. The formation of a Schmittian sovereignty is a key determinant of the decision-maker's ability to do resource extraction. This is because the sovereign does not only determine the political sphere but also has the power to govern it. The ability to rule comes from the sovereign's capacity to constantly reconstruct the dichotomy of friend and enemy, as well as his ability to determine the state of exception.

In this point, Kutay's acknowledgement of the "founding act", which "has been largely justified by the political narrative suggesting a presumed historical antagonism between the repressed Muslim majority and the modernist ruling elites" (Kutay, 2019, p. 731), is

meaningful in the Turkish context in that it points out that a regime need not be fascist in order to consolidate the power of the sovereign. In line with this narrative, the sovereign must follow the “founding act” to promote this antagonism. The “founding act” aligns with Schmitt's friend/enemy distinction and offers a flexible space for the sovereign to manipulate both internal and external antagonism. It generates a constant state of flux in the recognition of peril and enemy, as well as in the recognition of friend. However, it is necessary to construct a narrative that establishes deep legitimacy for the flux. This strategy enables political stimuli to grant the internal coherence sought by the sovereign. Once internal coherence is achieved, the determination or revision of the friend-enemy dichotomy becomes considerably more straightforward. It is noteworthy to consider Schmitt's emphasis on the mutability of the enemy in the friend-enemy dichotomy at this stage. Schmitt argued that the enemy should not be considered an ugly or unaesthetic figure, nor an economic competitor, but should be coded as a “foreigner” or “alien” (Schmitt, 2007); thus, the enemy will change according to how the sovereign defines it. This makes elite perceptions, which are part of internal constraints, an important factor.

Schmitt's works have been criticized for a long time, retrospectively inspiring the Nazis and the claim that his views have provided a legal base for Nazis. Because of his bold statements on everything ought to be political, Schmitt's studies are also found inconsistent and lacking explanatory power in a theoretical sense. However, there are many studies that elaborate on Schmitt's conceptualizations either negatively or positively, implying various areas of study on a large scale, from international law to international politics. (Slomp 2009; Chandler 2008; Frye 1966a; Odysseos and Petito 2006; 2007; McCormick 1997a; Böckenförde 1997; Arato 2015; Wolin 1990; Cristi 1997; Kennedy 1997; Hussain and Bogdandy 2018; Orsi 2017). Beyond that, one of the critical contributions on why Schmitt's theoretical frame should not be confined by the Nazi rule is developed by Meierhenrich. Schmitt's institutional theory cannot be held solely responsible for the formation of Nazi Germany, and he describes such approaches as “categorical mistake” (Meierhenrich 2016, 178).

Roberto Orsi's analysis of debates on Schmitt in the context of international relations reveals two fundamental principles being discussed. The first pertains to whether there

exists a similarity between Morgenthau and Schmitt. The second principle relates to Schmitt's conceptualization of the state of exception (Orsi 2017). Scheuerman highlights the similarity between Morgenthau and Schmitt, contending that Morgenthau's criticisms of American liberals align with Schmitt's arguments against the liberals of the Weimar Republic (Scheuerman 2007). This leads to considerable debate over the applicability of Schmitt's definitions and conceptualizations in the study of international relations. Retrospectively, one of Schmitt's primary concerns is the "degradation of the concept of the sovereignty" (Orsi 2012, 97). For instance, Slomp notes some similarities between Hobbes and Schmitt in terms of theories of society and the state that developed in a "crisis of self-interpretation" and states that negative views of human nature stem from similar assumptions (Slomp 2009, 5, 22). Yet, Schmitt differs from Hobbes in his approach to the connection between politics and enmity. Slomp argues that Schmitt posits the inclusion of both enmity and friendship in politics. However, Schmitt's approach to politics and its domain diverges from Hobbes's viewpoint. Schmitt views politics and enmity as mutually inclusive concepts, rather than mutually exclusive, as Hobbes proposes (Slomp 2009, 8–10). In Hobbesian theory, the enemy is not determined by the sovereign; rather, it is the individual who violates the nature of law (Holmes 2010, 385). However, Schmitt's concept of enmity is integral to the existence of different political units, specifically states (Orsi 2012, 105). Sovereignty is a transcendent concept with no purpose in the absence of multiple political entities or units.

Furthermore, these political units have a right to identify who the "enemy" is, according to him, which constitutes "...the high points of politics..." (C. Schmitt 2007). While this kind of approach towards the nature of politics explicitly links Hobbes and Schmitt, Hobbes concentrates on the state of war between individuals, whereas Schmitt is concerned with "...sovereign states" (Schweller 2009, 244,245). In contrast, Chandler's analysis of Schmitt's works suggests that the Schmittian approach to international relations, which he views as lacking descriptive qualities, has been revitalized by the "crisis of critical theorising" (Chandler 2008). While Chandler credits the resurgence of Carl Schmitt's relevance in the realm of international relations studies to the lack of critical theories, Schmitt does provide a useful toolkit for NCR on the structure of internal constraints and the interactions between them. This toolkit proves to be effective in

political conceptualisations of domestic policy variables, an area of specialisation for the NCR and strengthens the analytical framework.

Briefly, hence the domestic constraints seemed an area related to foreign policy analysis by NR; it is not a concern for international relations theories. However, NCR brings us an organized and comprehensive approach to coping with the drastic state behaviours and international relations changes. Colin Dueck examines the reasons for war in democratic, authoritarian, and semi-authoritarian regimes and finds a cleavage between them. He explicitly concludes that even if the presidents desire to consolidate their domestic support in the US by major military interventions, they aim to preserve the US national interest in how they perceive it. However, he claims that major military interventions based on domestic political concerns are frequently found in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes. Dueck grounds the distinction on the internal structure of the regimes (Dueck 2009a). In our understanding, the cleavage between the different regime types can be briefly explained in the US, "...the president is neither entirely free, nor entirely constrained, but rather 'semi-constrained'..." (Dueck 2009a, 148), in contrast to authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes.

By disregarding the link between foreign and domestic policy, NR has forfeited its capability to comprehend the causes underlying policy-making in specific eras. The pioneer of NR, Kenneth Waltz, deliberately omits domestic determinants from his theory formulation, deeming them reductionist and out of place. (Waltz 1996) Nevertheless, Brian Rathbun argues that the NCR reintroduces domestic determinants to the picture, which had been excluded by Waltz. He further claims that it should not be separated from the school of realism and that it actually represents the "...next generation of structural realism..." (Rathbun 2008, 296). Therefore, Rathbun characterizes the NCR as a philosophy that is integrated into the realist school. Regardless of the ongoing debates, NCR offers an efficient framework for researchers, regardless of whether it is a successor to NR.

2.1. Supplying A Coherent Framework For Changes In State Behaviors: Neoclassical Realism

Contrary to Waltz's perspective, the NCR approach presents a novel method of integrating foreign policy analysis with the international system. It elucidates the impact of systemic variance and imperative conditions on states (Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M., Taliaferro 2009). The question, hereby, appears that if the states have “functional similarity”, why do they act differently under the same conditions or imperatives? (Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M., Taliaferro 2009, 17) Rather than treating states as the same constructs as in NR, the NCR helps to unravel this contentious point of why states behave differently from each other and what influences their behaviour. Domestic constraints and elite perceptions get involved as intervening variables of NCR. It provides us with a much more extensive area for understanding the states' behaviours and alterations in their foreign policies.

The inclusion of domestic factors by the NCR in their critique of Waltz's NR adds significant explanatory power to the theory (Kitchen 2010, 36:118). The Arab Spring, which arose from anti-government protests in North Africa and the Middle East, provides a stark example of international politics being impacted by domestic unrest. Despite Waltz's notion that domestic politics is irrelevant on the international stage, the regional and global repercussions of civil unrest in Syria and Libya highlighted a very different reality. On the other hand, Iraq's limited state capacity, lack of sovereignty, and eroded institutional structure facilitated the emergence of terrorist organisations like the ISIS. If Waltz's approach were deemed sufficient and domestic factors were considered too reductionist to be part of IR theories, it would be challenging to explain the consequences of the Syrian Civil War, the Libyan Civil War, and the spread of ISIS without accounting for domestic political problems. In this context, domestic policy developments of states can have an impact on the international system. This is one of the main reasons why the NCR, as suggested by Kitchen, considers the influence of domestic policy factors on both the state and system levels. The foreign policy behaviour of states cannot be fully explained by the assumption that states are rational actors who always make decisions

based on systemic influences within the framework of their own survival motivation. The NCR aims to address this ambivalence.

One of the main tenets of NCR is why states with different domestic systems or constraints act differently under the same or comparable degree of threat assessment. Mostly, neoclassical realists approach the British, French, and Soviet foreign policy during the interwar period (Brawley 2009; Lobell 2009; Schweller 2004; Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M., Taliaferro 2009). Lobell, Taliaferro, and Ripsman stated that when the threat was not close to Britain, the Soviet Union, and France during the interwar period, they would try to pursue various strategies to reach the same end under different constraints (Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M., Taliaferro 2009, 24). Lobell explicitly refers to the debate between the British nationalists and internationalists on Britain's threat assessment against Germany and Japan. The discussion revolved around the internationalists' concerns about rearmament costs and the nationalist economic program, which contained "fixed pricing," etc. On the other hand, because PM Chamberlain's political position was close to the internationalist bloc that Lobell directly cited, it led the British Government to the way of internationalists (Lobell 2009, 67–68). Lobell argues that one crucial fact is the British entrepreneurs, banks, and merchants' role in the reparation and reconstruction of German cities after WWI (Lobell 2009, 70). With the internationalist bloc's influence, we might say that the British foreign policy elites' view of national interest and the appeasement policy's implementation during the interwar period was based on the conflict of interests amongst the domestic constituencies.

Brawley also elucidates the states' strategies of Britain, Russia, and France, during the interwar period. The states' internal diversification and economic problems, with the British appeasement policy and other consenting (Brawley 2009, 76), have created a suitable environment for Nazi Germany to expand its territory and influence. Taliaferro's categorization of the NCR variables from a methodological perspective concurs with both Brawley and Lobell's propositions. Taliaferro states that the domestic variables are the filters of the systemic variables during the determination of the foreign policy agenda or direction by foreign policy elites. Hence, we can explain how the states pursue different strategies or policies under a similar threat or external variables, which can also be

observed in the aforementioned cases elucidated by Lobell and Brawley (Taliaferro 2006a).

Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell comprehensively drafted an NCR “research program,” in their own words, which aims to extend foreign policy analysis and merge it with NR. Thus, it can put forward a new alternative instead of other NCR theorists. They indicate the differences of NCR from NR, Innenpolitik and “liberal international relations theories” by stressing their deficiencies (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016a, 1–4). They group NR’s deficiencies under the four headings:

“(1) leaders do not always perceive systemic imperatives correctly, even when they are clear; (2) the international system itself does not always present clear signals about threats and opportunities; (3) decision makers do not always respond rationally to systemic imperatives, even when they perceive these imperatives correctly; and (4) states are not always able to mobilize their available resources efficiently and effectively” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016a, 12).

Ripsman et al. clearly identify four shortcomings that explain why the NCR includes internal constraints as a variable in the theory. However, these shortcomings also highlight variables within the internal structure of states. The first point emphasizes the significance of the leader's capacity and the constraints surrounding them. For instance, a political leader’s political or ideological identity may cloud their interpretation of systemic effects. The second point highlights that signals of opportunities or threats in the international system are not always clear, and states may behave differently in an uncertain environment. The third point stresses that decision-makers may not respond rationally to systemic imperatives and that leaders' or ruling elites' ideological or political concerns may influence their assessment of systemic imperatives. For instance, a leader with a particular political ideology may interpret systemic influences in accordance with their ideas and identity, which may not always result in rational decision-making. Conversely, leaders may sometimes be unable to take measures that would harm most voters who elected them. Additionally, systemic pressure on the leader or ruling group can significantly impact foreign policy decisions. Therefore, irrational outcomes may sometimes occur. The fourth observation highlights the potential inadequacy of states in mobilising their available resources. This point also considers the impact of a state's

regime type or form of governance on the theory. In this regard, they discuss the impact of varying state capacities on foreign policy-making and goal achievement in the context of an enormous mobilization force. While all four of these deficiencies are explicit criticisms of NR's disregard for domestic constraints, they also indicate at which points the NCR would distinguish itself from NR. Because the NR's assertion on the states are unitary actors misguided to erroneous assumption that all states have same characteristic comprises a basis for their objection. In this context, the Figure 1 illustrates how they classified the other theories in relation to NCR.

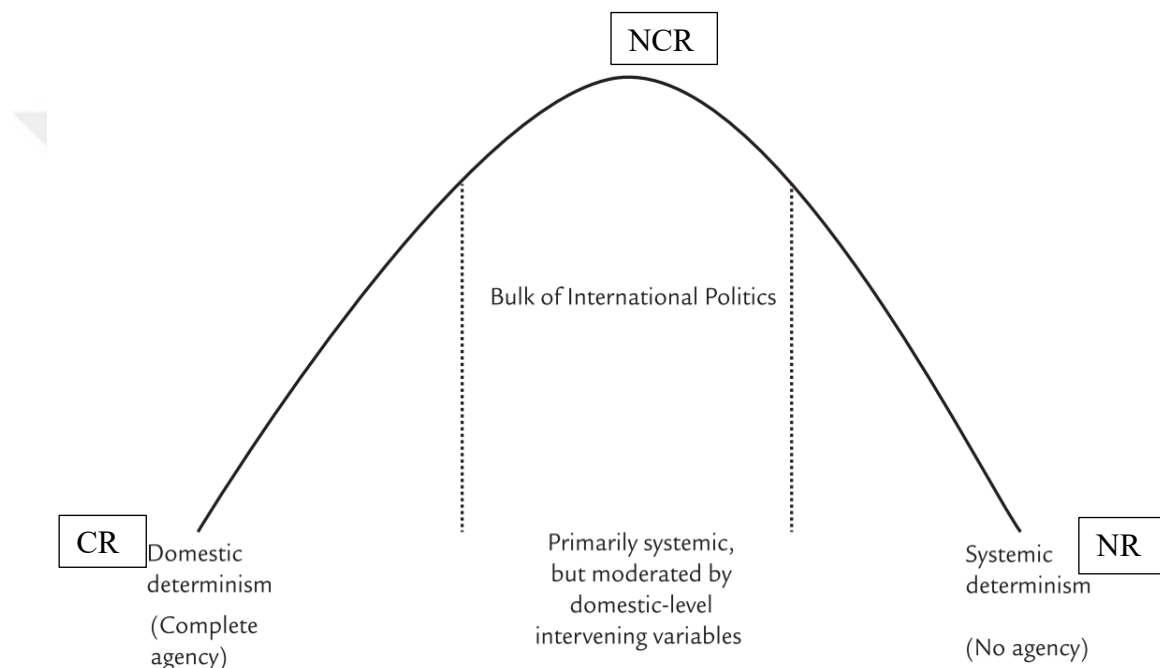


Figure 1 Comparison of the Location of NCR and Others¹

Based on the above drawing, Ripsman, Taliaferro and Lobell categorises the NCR as a systemic entity affected by domestic constraints. This theoretical understanding of the NCR combines elements of classical realism (CR) and NR. In this manner, NCR embracing the intensity of domestic and international variables constitutes the crucial theoretical contribution to international relations theory to address the insufficiency while dealing with controversial and multifaceted problems. For instance, the NCR can be used

¹ This drawing has been taken from the book “Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics” by Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell. They want to show the interaction between systemic and domestic variables and classify the NCR on the international relations theory scale. In this way, their criticism of NR, innenpolitik, and liberal theories makes sense visually. However, we use the current figure to expose why employing NCR allows for explaining different variables. (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 5)

to investigate Turkey's aspiration to join the EU and its subsequent loss of motivation under the same party governments. By analyzing this transition with the NCR, a clearer and more logical explanation can be provided to reveal the periodic impact of Turkey's domestic constraints on the decision-making process. This can help make sense of why the same ruling party has swung between different policies. It could be argued that the JDP hegemony in domestic politics was not fully established during its initial years in power. The EU accession process played a significant role in both domestic and foreign policy during this period, which could be interpreted as an effort by the ruling elites to legitimize the government. This is particularly evident when considering the JDP's attempts to establish legitimacy in domestic politics, as well as the process of democratization and dismantling of established bureaucratic structures. Thanks to the flexibility provided by the EU process, the government has sidelined the military in domestic decision-making mechanisms and strengthened its role in domestic politics through democratic reforms. However, after the establishment was replaced by long-term government policies, the government no longer required the EU process to legitimize its policies. With regard to international factors, the unstable situation in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean has strained relations and increased rivalry between Turkey and the certain EU countries, including France.

Gideon Rose, a prominent scholar of NCR, distinguishes the NCR from other theories, such as offensive and defensive realism and *innenpolitik*, by arguing that they are “often oversimplified and inaccurate.” (Rose 1998a, 150). NCR predicts that the relative power of states would influence the behaviour of them. He emphasized “as their [states] relative power rises, states will seek more influence abroad, and as it falls, their actions and ambitions will be scaled back accordingly” (Rose, 1998a, p. 152), reflecting the inclination of the states in relative conditions. According to Rose, the NCR differs methodologically from other realist theories in characterising independent variables and intervening variables as factors influencing foreign policymaking (Rose 1998a, 153–54).

Assessing the perception of relative power among foreign policy elites is a common preoccupation of NCR theorists. According to Rose, this can be observed from Wohlforth to Christensen (Rose 1998a, 160–61). Misperceptions might lead to foreign policies being

directed away from their intended goals. Turkey's policy towards Syria is a notable example of how foreign policy elites' miscalculations regarding the ongoing events since the beginning of the Arab Spring can potentially lead countries into further problems. Turkey's perception of itself as a significant country that could serve as an influential example for the protesters during the Arab Spring led to its involvement in the Syrian civil war and other conflicts in the region. NCR may provide explanation on TFP, as Zakaria argues that “a good explanation of foreign policy should not ignore domestic politics or national culture or individual decision-makers” (Zakaria 1992, 197).

Although the NCR has emerged as a novel approach to international relations, it includes many different types of perspectives. Therefore, Ripsman, Taliaferro and Lobell's attempt to categorize the different approaches within the NCR is crucial for systemising the NCR's criticisms against NR. They classify the different types of NCRs as Type I, Type II, and Type III. Both Type I and Type II attempt to address the deficiencies of NR mentioned above. Type I NCR focuses on anomalies in state behaviours, such as the British and the French policies in the interwar period. According to them, this type of NCR “utilizes the intervening state- and individual-level variables identified by critics of structural realism as explanations for suboptimal policy choices that are at odds with systemic imperatives” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016a, 25–26). Accordingly, Type I NCR, while acknowledging the predominance of systemic effects as suggested by NR, considers that in some cases, states' behaviour may not produce the expected outcomes. Therefore, they tend to explain this situation by using domestic politics. This approach is described by Ripsman, Taliaferro and Lobell as “a theory of sub-optimality or pathology to explain what are only understood to be infrequent deviations from structural realist expectations” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 28). Type II NCR transcends the border of the Type I NCR and elucidates the states' comprehensive choices in international politics. Type II NCR, on the other hand, presents a foreign policy theory by focusing on foreign policy preferences in a broader and more systematic way than Type I. In this context, states' foreign policies are not considered unexpected outcomes, but rather the result of systemic and domestic policy conditions. In this context, Type II NCR enables an understanding of the factors that influence foreign policy when domestic policy has a high level of influence, as well as the methods and

style used to formulate and pursue foreign policy when domestic policy has a weak influence (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 29–31).

The new understanding, Type III, fundamentally changes the research paradigm by introducing two additions. First, it considers new factors affecting domestic policy constraints that appear as interventionist variables of foreign policy production. These factors are “leader images, strategic culture, state-society relations and domestic institutions” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 13). These factors can be characterized as variables that constitute domestic policy constraints, where policy responses to systemic reactions are formed. The second is the claim that “neoclassical realism can explain international outcomes and structural change more effectively than structural realism” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 96). New ingredients of Type III move NCR to a different level from the position of the improver of NR. In other words, it conveys a new analytical frame by comparing Type I and II. Type III is composed of the interaction between the independent variables (structure and clarity of international system) and intervening variables (“images and perceptions of state leaders, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutional arrangements”) (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016a, 59). Intervening variables yield a partial influence on determining international outcomes via the foreign policy-making process because these variables affect the perceptions of the leaders to the systemic stimuli, then involve the decision-making process and policy implementation, which forms the policy responses that penetrate the international outcome. The following subchapter provides information on the intervening variables and their effects on the process of foreign policy-making.

Consequently, although Waltz and other neorealists largely exclude the influential power of domestic policy, the NCR addresses it through intervening variables in a theoretical framework. In fact, as seen in the Type III NCR, it even goes further and emphasizes the impact of domestic policy constraints on the foreign policy produced and the capacity of foreign policy to produce systemic outcomes. Thus, it is claimed that domestic constraints have an indirect influence on systemic outcomes. As NCR increases the explanatory power of why state behaviours cleavage under the same circumstances forces us to a comprehensive understanding of state behaviours to assimilate the acquired place of

domestic politics. Endeavours of Type I and II NCR make a contribution to forming the elaborative frame of Type III NCR because Type I and II NCR's criticism of NR actually provides a foothold. The following section aims to put up how the Schmittian approach finds itself in Type III NCR in the context of domestic politics, which is the essence of the concept of politics in other words.

2.2. Harmony of Domestic Politics, International Variables, and the Exception

All types of NCR deal with domestic politics and strive to carve out how intervening variables and domestic constraints shape the foreign policy responses under the pressure of systemic stimuli. Even though neoclassical realists are blamed for undermining the foundations of realism by ignoring the core assumptions of realism (Legro and Moravcsik 1999), Dueck defines the NCR's contribution to the realist paradigm as the *"...exploration of mechanisms by which domestic political dynamics force leaders into seemingly counterproductive foreign policies"* (Dueck 2009b, 141). However, he concluded that the "top-down" approach is shared by the NCR as well as other realists (Dueck 2009b, 141). NCR deals with the space between the second and third-level of analysis of foreign policy. Because classical realism and NR deal with different levels of analysis, NCR accurately endeavours to incorporate the rich formulation of classical realism and systemic explanation developed by Waltz and, in fact, extends the progress of realist thought, Schweller argues (Schweller 2003, 317).

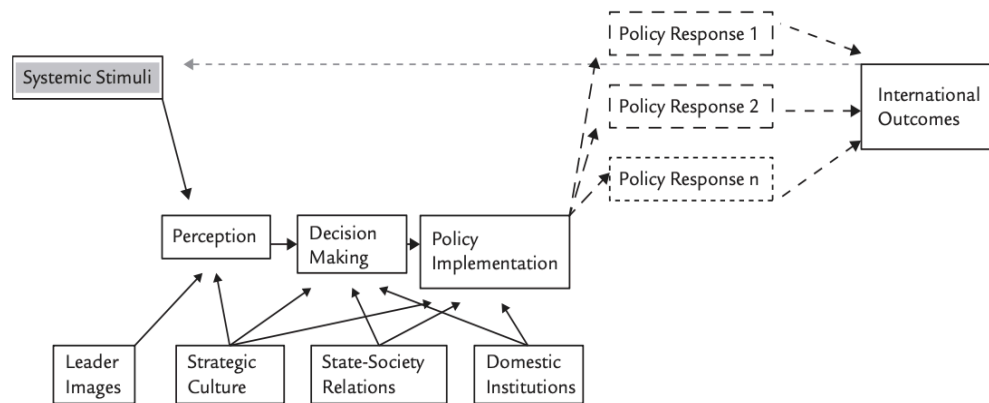


Figure 2 Mechanism of Type III NCR²

As shown in Figure 2, Ripsman et al. offer a comprehensive and detailed framework that would lead to NCR in a novel way. In this figure, the notion of systemic stimuli refer to the international system and its components such as “*system structure and structural modifiers, the relative distribution of power and polarity, clarity, relative permissiveness or restrictiveness of states' strategic environments*” of them, and it is used as an independent variable, as similar as other variations of NCR. Systemic stimuli shape the environment in which states exist and engage with domestic processes through international outcomes. In this sense, NCR can explain states’ dysfunctional and maladaptive behaviours even when the system provides “concrete and unambiguous information both on threats and necessary policy responses” (Yeşilyurt 2017, 14).

The intervening variables, which includes “*leader images, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutions*” have an impact on the three domestic processes: “*perception, decision-making, and policy implementation*” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 34). Ripsman et al. try to overcome the criticism of being ad-hoc by categorizing the intervening variables and domestic process. Moreover, they propose an organized structure that comprehensively reveals the relationship between the influencing

² This drawing has been taken from the book “Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics” by Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell. (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 34) They categorise the NCR threefold and declare that developing the Type III NCR is the book's aim. According to them, Type I NCR offers the anomalies in state behaviours from a structural basis; Type II NCR offers new models to generalise foreign policy behaviour of states; however, Type III NCR provides a comprehensive way to understand and explain how decision-making in states works under the pressure of systemic stimuli.

and affected sections. Intervening variables that indirectly affect domestic processes also influence policy responses and, consequently, international outcomes. Therefore, domestic policy variables play a crucial role in interacting with both independent and dependent variables. This approach avoids reductionism by incorporating domestic policy variables into the system.

This sub-chapter demonstrates how Carl Schmitt's concept of the 'exception' can be integrated into the framework for assessing the role of domestic politics and international variables in explaining the controversies in TFP, which will be detailed in later chapters with the help of the Type III NCR. To measure the rapid and drastic changes in TFP within a short time, it would be fruitful to employ the extended version of the NCR. Yesilyurt suggests that “*NCR allows to integrate variables at the sub-unit level (...) to the structural perspective of neorealism in order to better explain state's foreign policy behaviour (...)*” and it also concentrates on “*foreign policy of specific states*” (Yeşilyurt 2017, 1–2).

He analysed the TFP during the Arab Spring and attempted to clarify the miscalculations and maladaptation in TFP during this period with the assistance of the NCR. While his concern solely focused on Turkey's ambitious and assertive foreign policy after 2011, he concludes that the policy that Ankara between 2013 and 2016 followed has brought isolation to Turkey (Yeşilyurt 2017, 12–13). However, the isolation asserted by Yeşilyurt did not end in 2016; further, it has endured even after 2016. Because the impact of regional or global politics is not considered the sole ingredient to grasping policy responses on Ankara, the way how the ruling elites embrace them emerges as another issue. This dissertation aims to contribution the literature by bringing the Schmittian approach into the game on this theme. By the help of the Schmittian approach, we can have a robust framework to explain and understand why Turkish decision-makers, mostly President Erdogan and the ruling elites, have been either ignoring or misperceiving the international variables when formulating foreign policy.

Sørensen posits that “(...) the effects of the structural pressures created by systemic factors have to be filtered through state”, moreover “(...) state leaders need to secure

public support in order to mobilize necessary resources for their foreign and security policies as well as to safeguard their own positions and their ability to govern” (Sørensen 2013, 368). What if pursuing foreign and security policy coherently with structural pressures endangers the state leader's position and ability to govern? The need for public support for foreign policy is relevant to states' willingness to increase their ability to extract resources from society. State leaders, whether in a democracy or dictatorship, should strive to gain public support for their policies. However, public support and the ability to govern do not always go hand in hand.

Recognizing that political groups, not individuals, are the basis of politics and that this has not changed at any point in history, Taliaferro, Lobell and Ripsman emphasize that the NCR takes these political groupings into account through its conceptualization of domestic constraints (Taliaferro et al., 2009, pp. 23–24). Thus, the policies of states in response to the challenges or opportunities presented by the international system are not independent of these political groupings. This relationship between the state and society is a two-way relationship that determines the strength of the state's policies in response to systemic influences and threats, while also influencing the struggle of groupings within society against each other. On the other hand, in cases where the state's influence on society is dominant or weak, the dynamics of this relationship also determine whether the mobilization of society necessary to sustain the state's policies would be incurred. If the state power is huge and prevailing over society, it would be very comfortable to extract resources from society to expand and maintain the state's foreign and security policies. Conversely, if the state power is narrow and fails to prevail over society, it will be very difficult to extract resources from society to expand and maintain the state's foreign and security policies. They also argue that while rejecting the notion that the state is clearly the supplier of “the demands of different interest groups and economic classes” (Taliaferro, Lobell, and Ripsman 2009, 25), which is also propounded by different theories, leaders who define national interests and execute policy are open to the influence of domestic constraints.

Sørensen, for example, attempts to illustrate the state-society dichotomy through the changing legitimacy on which state leadership in China depends. She stated that China's

economic reforms have made “*the legitimacy of the Chinese leadership dependent on performance*” (Sørensen 2013, 376). However, she argues that this performance-based legitimacy has added more pressure on China's “foreign and security policy strategy” in recent years by imposing an obligation to meet the growing demands of Chinese society. This pressure, she explains, is caused by the fact that China is faced with increasing domestic demands that have narrowed its room for maneuver in foreign policy. From another perspective, the dichotomy is also valid in other areas. For example, while the environment of a strong civil society and remains divided mitigates the legitimacy of state institutions, it makes it difficult for states to extract resources for hard power implementation. However, the creation of internal and/or external threats by the state facilitates extracting resources from society to implement hard power (Becker et al. 2016, 118). Therefore, Schmitt's ability to distinguish between friends and enemies is important in his political theology. The ability to make this distinction gives the sovereign unlimited ability to extract resources defined by NCR.

While discussing the NCR and state mobilization, Schweller points to the rise of fascism and its relationship to realism in the interwar period of the 20th century. Both accept the nature of politics as confrontational, and the state-centered approach strengthens their relationship. Despite fascism's efforts to fill the gap in realist theory in a practical way, its mechanism of “*hysterical, mass-based hyper-nationalism through racist ideology and propaganda*” differentiates it from realism (Schweller 2009, 235–48). Moreover, he claims that fascism is a realism redressed with a “*racist and social Darwinist overlay*”, and converging themes would be found in Schmitt's works. The distinction between friend-enemy and war are the preconditions of politics, while the main actors of politics are estimated as states. Furthermore, any institutions that share the authority of state leaders, referred to as sovereign in Schmitt's study, undermine the state's sovereignty. In this manner, his criticism of the liberal parliamentary system makes sense, as explained later.

NCR creates harmony between international variables and domestic politics by establishing a causal linkage in a pattern. In particular, Type III NCR, developed by Taliaferro, Ripsman, and Lobell, extends the explanatory capacity by establishing a

comprehensive pattern. The international system and its impact on the states is one of NCR's core values, shared with NR. The concept of the international variables, examined in this sub-chapter, is the outcome of the systemic structure produced in an anarchical or a hierarchical environment. Both NCR and NR studies share the same core belief that the structure of the international system is anarchic. However, Taliaferro, Ripsman, and Lobell posit that neorealist study creates four obstacles that limit the evaluation capacity. These are “*the ability of leaders to perceive systemic stimuli correctly, the lack of clarity in the international system, the problem of rationality, and the difficulty of mobilizing domestic resources*” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 20), which are also relevant with the shortcomings that stated before. In contrast to NR's understanding of states as billiard balls, NCR, especially Type III, deepens the insight into domestic politics and state structures. As such, it incorporates domestic constraints into the causal mechanism of policy responses. In this way, it overcomes the theoretical shortcomings in NR's assumptions.

In this respect, Type III NCR claims that the leaders do not always identify the systemic stimuli correctly. The variables that affect the leader's perception would create a risk that leads leaders to misunderstand and wrongly evaluate the systemic stimuli. For example, during the earlier period of the Arab Spring, Turkey relied on the willingness of the Western allies to support regime change in the Middle East. Moreover, relying on its rising power status and increasing soft power capacity, it tried to present itself as a model country in the vacuum created by the toppled dictators of the Arab Spring. However, the results of the Arab Spring did not turn out the way Turkey wanted, and it intervened because of the reluctance of its Western allies, who were concerned about the rising Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamist wave.

Secondly, contrary to the basic assumption of NR, the NCR does not rely on the understanding that the system provides a clear signal to states. Even if systemic incentives estimate that the system provides a clear signal for states in some cases, NCR assumes that it is not generally valid and supposes that in this environment, “*a broad range of foreign policy choices and international political outcomes must lie outside the purview of a structural theory of international politics.*” (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b,

22) Fordham's additive model also supposes that the international variables are not only determinations of foreign policy choices because the perception of threats or opportunities sourced from international variables is relative facts with state leaders' or ruling group's priorities (Fordham 2009, 256–57). Sterling-Folker also wrote that “external competitions with other states, internal competition for control of the state, and the process of national identity politics” is an integral part of the policy responses and the evaluation of the “external threat” (Sterling-Folker 2009, 103).

Thirdly, state leaders are not always rational when they respond to systemic stimuli (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b, 26, 33). Lobell also stressed the importance of the degree of constraining of the foreign policy executives. The degree of constraining of the foreign policy executives influences the policy response for various reasons, such as domestic politics and elite groupings. He illustrates the influence of a constrained environment on foreign policy executives with the policy the British government pursued before WWII. Because constrained by their close ties to the entrenched internationalist bloc, the British government acted in a way that slowed Britain's military development and increased credits and loans to the defeated states of World War I (WWI). It has caused the postponement of the British rearmament program. In this sense, the foreign policy executives' perceptions and assessment of international variables can be varied according to the situation and domestic constraints (Lobell 2009, 68). Even if the rationality of actors is taken as given in NR, the responses of the situations are not a result of the situations, but the result of the process that concludes with the situation. Sterling Folker asserts that the production of the responses is the interaction process that cannot be deduced into “attribution of the situations themselves.” (Sterling-Folker 1997, 26) Therefore, NR's assumption of static rationality as a precondition is replaced by Folker because the rational agency is not a given condition of international politics. In this sense, the erroneous decision leading states to compelling situations is not considered an anomaly in Type III NCR. Hence, the interaction between systemic stimuli and domestic politics is not limited to rational behavioral patterns.

Finally, another limitation of NR's assumption is that not all states can mobilize their resources similarly in the face of systemic effects. This is primarily due to economic and

domestic political conditions. For instance, states that are not economically comfortable are unlikely to be able to act flexibly even if they achieve domestic consensus, and vice versa. Therefore, states' foreign policy responses in international politics also depend on their economic and political strength. Zakaria, for example, has found that throughout history, there has been a positive correlation between the growth in material power of the states and their' expansionist ambitions beyond their borders (Zakaria 1999, 3). Zakaria also objects that even if the state is presumed to be billiard balls, the structure and material of each state are different from the other. According to him, disjuncture in realism is structural realism's threat perception based on systemic stimuli (Zakaria 1999, 9–10). He supposes that the statesman efficiently uses the threat perceptions to justify their politics. Thus, they can manipulate or produce systemic threat perceptions to increase their domestic powers or strengthen their political position (Zakaria 1999, 10). Such a manipulation leads us to question the reliability of the effects of the systemic threats on foreign policy. Taliaferro defines state power as “*the relative ability of the state to extract or mobilise resources from domestic society as determined by the institutions of the state, as well as by nationalism and ideology*” (Taliaferro, 2006, p. 467) that determines the contents of the different policies pursuing by the states. In this vein, the issue of mobilization of domestic resources becomes an essential component of state power that influences states' policy responses against systemic stimuli.

2.2.1. International Variables

While system theorists, whether liberal or realist, deal with the dynamics of the international system and/or structure, the state is treated as a unitary actor whose core drive is its own survival. In this sense, the shape of the structure or the distribution of the power in the system is almost the single determinant that shapes states' behaviors during the process of foreign policy outcomes. According to this approach, threat perceptions and opportunity windows caused by systemic stimuli influence the direction of the foreign and security policy of states.

This approach mostly ignores the intra-state relationship that is a particular part of the state's power and ability; thereby, more is needed to explain the different behaviors of states under the same circumstances, even if they have the same regime types. On the

other hand, Rose underlies the importance of international variables by illustrating why states with similar domestic systems often act differently in the foreign policy sphere and why dissimilar states in similar situations often act identically. Innenpolitik approaches, in this sense, are less able to explain and understand the aforementioned paradox (Rose 1998b, 148). Thus, NCR challenges Innenpolitik by establishing an interaction between international variables and domestic politics in the sense of comparing relative power. NCR foresees the international system as the first driver of foreign policy. Systemic stimuli, in other words, the international system, can expand or limit the state's foreign policy choices. However, the ability and capability to produce an appropriate foreign policy depend on domestic constraints, including the factors that generate state power.

Ripsman et. al. define the system structure and structural modifiers, the relative distribution of power and polarity, clarity and permissive/restrictive strategic environments as the components of the systemic stimuli (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b). These factors can be defined as the external determinants that impact the domestic decision-making process in terms of threat perception, opportunity window, and relative power. In contrast to NR, they are not the sole determinant of the foreign policy responses but the component of the foreign policy responses. The innovation that NCR brought into the realist paradigm is to categorize the systemic stimuli as an interaction unit into the production of policy response. Consequently, the international structure, regional structures, and shifts in international politics are the components of the international variables that interact with intervening variables. The interaction between international variables and domestic politics is, therefore, the most prominent contribution of the NCR to the realist paradigm. Employing domestic politics removes the paradox of the dissimilar states' similar behaviours or vice versa. In other words, *“systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level”* (Rose 1998b, 146).

2.2.2. Domestic Politics

The role of domestic politics is mostly ignored by systemic theorists, whether realist or liberal. One of the most prominent systemic theorists, Kenneth Waltz, finds domestic politics to be a deductive approach, while systemic theory deals with the dynamics of the

international system and/or structure (Waltz, 1979). Waltzian approach to realism conducts the relationship between states in a material-based structure that shapes the behaviors of the states. However, the relationship between states is also shaped by politicians' ability to perceive relative power, who are the critical components of the intrastate decision-making process. It also empowers their prominent positions in international politics.

Classical realists, Schweller argues, mark the importance of the essential position of the statesman and domestic politics while evaluating international relations (Schweller 2003). He mainly determines the position of NCR, a relatively new cleavage in realism, as a consolidative approach that merges classical realism and NR for an opening way for progress in realist theory and stresses Fareed Zakaria's reformulation of classical realism while criticizing the Waltzian systemic approach for being non-progressive (Schweller 2003).

Many studies on converging the effects of domestic politics on foreign policy outcomes and international variables have been made since the 1990s. In line with the new arguments on the state's capacity and ability regarding domestic politics, the studies concerning domestic politics entail the question of how domestic politics and international variables can be compatible. In this vein, Sorensen argues for the "peaceful rise of China" by using NCR and concludes that domestic constraints have a precise effect on decision-makers, even if the domestic system is democratic or not (Sørensen 2013). Dueck also posits that neoclassical realists deal with the space between the second and third-level analysis for foreign policy; thus, the critical juncture of their contribution is how international variables are translated by unit-level variables in the state (Dueck 2009b, 141–42). Because classical realism and NR deal with different levels of analysis, NCR, in fact, extends the progress of realist thought.

Domestic constraints, which differ across countries and have distinct dynamics and characteristics, are an essential factor of pressure in the decision-making processes of elected officials and ruling elites seeking to maintain their legitimacy. The forms of domestic constraints also variously affect the decision-makers in the scope of election

concerns, economic pressures, state-society relations, and the structure of the government, among many other variables. Ripsman et al. categorize the domestic constraints, each that intervenes in either the same or different part of the domestic policy-making process, as the leader images, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutions (Ripsman, Taliaferro, and Lobell 2016b).

Even if states would be taken as rational actors within the international system, the policies moving states are established by humans who occupy the power positions to construct them. In this vein, the concerns rooted in domestic politics influence both policymaking and policy implementation processes. Even though the states' behavioral patterns or customs steer their agenda while shaping policies, the human factor is eventually part of it. From political affiliations to protecting political power, a wide spectrum of facts consists of the daily concerns of policymakers. Kutlay and Öniş suggest that “for Erdogan, foreign policy is a natural extension of his vision of a conservative and majoritarian [New Turkey]” (Kutlay and Öniş 2021a, 1099). In this manner, Erdogan, the figure who decides the way of foreign policy while dominating the institutions and decision-making mechanisms, uses the authority in the Schmittian sovereign concept.

According to Adam Quinn, strategic culture plays a crucial role in the internal processes that generate policy responses for the NCR. Dueck and Layne are categorized as NCR theorists by Quinn, who cites their case studies of the United States, stating that “*national ideology and political culture play a role as an ‘interfering’ force mediating between the incentives of the system and the policies of the state*” (Quinn 2013, 174). Lantis's argument on “*political culture may include a commitment to values like democratic principles and institutions, ideas about morality and the use of force, the rights of individuals or collectivities, or predispositions toward the role of a country in global politics*” (Lantis 2002, 90), also provides an insight on states capabilities and abilities while producing policy responses. Thus, both Quinn and Lantis further elaborate on the NCR's existing approach and diversify the domestic political factors that play an influential role in policy-making processes. This deepens the NCR's view of domestic policy factors as an encompassing theory, paving the way for the NCR to assess domestic policy constraints through Schmitt's conceptualizations.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, mainstream international relations theories such as classical realism, NR, liberalism or neoliberalism mostly and intentionally ignore the impact of the power of domestic politics on states' behaviours. As Nuri Yeşilyurt emphasizes, even though a very new and immature theory among other theories, the newest addition of the NCR to the IR discipline is that it creates a merging point between the “sub-unit” actors and structure while examining and explaining the states' behaviours and activities (Yeşilyurt 2017). This chapter, therefore, tries to explore the interaction between domestic politics and international variables while relying on Schmitt's concept of exception to realize under what circumstances rigid shifts occur in states' behaviours.

2.2.3. Exception

The exception is a situation that could be defined as the sovereign's ability to capsule power in a vacuum by using authority. According to Schmitt, exception relies on how and what the sovereign explores and outlines (C. Schmitt 1985, 5). The environment created by the exceptional situation is compatible with the states' power struggle and survival instinct, which are the assumptions of the realist paradigm in the international arena. However, the exceptional situation emerges in the hierarchical environment of domestic politics rather than anarchy, which is the main feature of the international system. The distinction between friend and foe, which Schmitt, a legal theorist, defines as the prerequisite for the existence of politics, is directly related to the exceptional situation in terms of the agent and the environment in which it is created.

In his article on Schmitt's influence on Turkish politics, Bican Şahin argues that Turkey has evolved into a Schmittian understanding of law since 2013, based on Hayek and Schmitt's different understandings of law (Şahin 2017). In particular, he examines the state-society relationship through conceptualizations such as sovereign, exception, and friend-enemy distinction. One of the most critical points that Şahin pursues is the Schmittian perspective of the ontological status of society. In this sense, society and state are co-existing structures which unseparated from each other. The duty of the state to protect society, which is one of the most critical basic structures that exist, can also be supported by mystical enemy images if necessary (Şahin 2017, 561). The ability to create

an enemy, whatever its form, provides a unique environment for nationalist and populist authoritarian regimes. On the one hand, Botwinick, who tries to revoke Schmitt's friend-enemy distinction by profound elaboration of Plato, Hobbes, and Levinas, implies that policies and actions applied to the concept of enemies can also serve to rationalize and legitimize the actions of states (Botwinick 2015).

Furthermore, the decisionism that overlays Schmitt's concept of the enemy provides an instrument for moving around obstacles for political authority to "galvanise his people into an authentic political stance" (Botwinick 2015, 339, 351). On the other hand, it extends the sovereign's order and capability enormously, and the so-called threat created by the sovereign justifies its' acts against both individual rights and society by dressing it with the "greater good." In this sense, the state's priority should be to protect society from existential threats rather than provide peace or order.

If the sovereign determines the definition of exception without any limitations (Şahin, 2017), the sovereign can use this power of determination to ensure the continuity of the exception. In fact, the variability of the exception situation may fluctuate with the constant changes in the definition of friends/enemies. This situation may result in the total dominance of the sovereign in a political field such as foreign policy, where the decision-making mechanism is exposed to various constraints by providing the sovereign with absolute power. In such a situation, the sovereign, who holds the ultimate power of the determination of politics, may read the messages he receives from the international system with subjective concerns, such as how to ensure the continuity of his political economy. It would contain a risk of leading the state to the pursuit of variable and inconsistent policies.

Even if extra-legal theory overlaps with Schmitt's definition of sovereignty to identify the emergency and extra-legal measures (Mészáros, 2021, pp. 5–6), Schmitt's conceptualization is based on a person or the elite group who decides and implies it. Furthermore, recognizing this kind of ambiguous power to anybody/group in society could create mass confusion and abuse of power to create a cohesive society with their agendas. Thus, it would pave the way for the establishment of dictatorship/authoritarian

governments, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Particularly, one of the essential components of internal politics is a quest for great power and the ability to provide political survival by disregarding its identity. Obtaining such power in domestic politics leads to the transformation of the elements of the political sphere, such as determining who/what does not belong to the political sphere, the formation of foreign policy, and the distinction between friend and foe, from collective action to an individual or narrow group action. In other words, it leads to a political sphere under the absolute authoritarian sphere, rather than the increasing anticipating ability of democracies.

Of many variables affecting the TFP, because providing tremendous authority to the ruling elite, the exception makes some space to analyse the impact of the national-level variables on foreign policy outcomes in coordination with international variables. The harmony of domestic politics and international variables in NCR, therefore, can be exposed by the exception which provides the consolidation of authority in sovereign hands. Type III NCR, therefore, provides an insight into how the decision-making mechanism works under the pressure of domestic constraints and international variables.

2.3. Linkage Between NCR and Carl Schmitt: Influence of domestic constraints on foreign policy and the concept of sovereign

The logical relationship between the NCR and Schmitt needs to be established in domestic politics. While Schmitt's conceptual works offer insights into the international system, the primary focus should be on thoroughly considering domestic politics as a significant component of foreign policy-making. Therefore, examining the periodic differences in TFP through Schmitt's conceptualisations would be comprehensive and explanatory. The main argument is that there is a significant overlap between Turkey's domestic and foreign policies, and the boundaries between the two spheres are becoming increasingly blurred, as evidenced by various references throughout the study. Hence, this study's crucial aspect is establishing the conceptual link between the NCR and Carl Schmitt and embedding it in theory by creating a logical framework that explains the sudden changes in TFP along the course. This chapter examines the impact of domestic constraints on foreign policy making and the transformations of the TFP in three different periods under

the same political party. It combines Carl Schmitt's concept of the 'sovereign' with the NCR to reveal how the sovereign's ability to ideologically and structurally rule transforms foreign policy decision-making.

The link between the NCR and Schmitt also provides a systematic framework for the case studies. Domestic policy cases, which will be analysed through Schmitt's conceptualisations, such as sovereignty, exception, and friend-enemy distinction, reveal the transformation of this subject and how it periodically affects the foreign policy decision-making process. Schmitt's conceptualisations expand the NCR's scope for understanding how Turkey's domestic politics shape foreign policy-making. The logical relationship enriches the NCR's approach by systematically considering domestic policy factors, revealing the impact of domestic dynamics on the different periodic shifts under the JDP rule, which can be termed the three states of the TFP.

The sovereign, as the sole actor in Schmitt's political conception, is the one who can shape the entire public sphere and politics. One of the reasons why Schmitt's concept of the sovereign is so rigid is that it is developed as a political alternative. In essence, Schmitt sought a political solution to a political problem from a legal perspective. He believed that the disorganisation and lack of unity in the constitutional state in the twentieth century had undermined the authority and purpose of the state and rendered it incapable of effectively managing crises (Howland 2018, 212).

2.3.1. Domestic Constraints

One of the significant theoretical contributions of the NCR is its analytical incorporation of domestic constraints into the foreign policy formation process in interaction with systemic factors. The analysis of domestic constraints as an influencer highlights their impact on forming states' foreign policies as a crucial variable. Although there is a risk of ignoring international systemic factors, focusing on domestic constraints in the NCR theory of international relations is essential. The theory identifies and analyses the interaction between the two, making it imperative to consider the influential power of domestic constraints in detail. Taking domestic policy constraints into account, the NCR,

which considers states as the primary actors of international relations, does not endorse the idea that states are homogeneous organizations with similar processes or structures and thus can easily explain why states pursue different policies even when they have the same threat perceptions or systemic opportunities.

Many factors, such as the existence of different groups or interest groups holding economic and political power within states, coalitions formed for specific purposes, ideologically different groups taking part in decision-making processes, and political concerns of governments, can be cited as examples of internal constraints. In this sense, while the measures and policies to be implemented by states against any event affecting the structure and/or functioning of the international system may differ, it is also possible that the foreign policy formulated by states may become a case that affects the international system. Domestic constraints as intervening variables in foreign policymaking, which have a cyclical process, affect the foreign policy formulation of states and impact the international system through their possible consequences.

To achieve their desired results in foreign policy, governments may attempt to exclude other actors from the decision-making process and steer society in a particular direction. The success of this approach depends on the extent to which they can consolidate authority in domestic politics. Jeffrey Taliaferro, the most prominent advocate of NCR and the resource extraction model, uses historical examples from Imperial Japan, Ming China, and the European States in the 19th century to formulate the model. In all three cases, the level and intensity of interaction between the state and society and the methods by which resource extraction is constructed and developed vary according to each other. Taliaferro identifies two types of consequences resulting from successful resource extraction: emulation and innovation (Taliaferro 2009). Both examples can be found in history. For instance, the Ottoman Empire attempted to counteract imperial decline by emulating Western institutions.

Weiker states that the Ottomans imported instructors and equipment, particularly since the 18th century, to assimilate Western military techniques. The reason for this was Ottoman statesmen's recognition of the West's military superiority. He argues that the

Ottomans copied Western institutions one by one starting in the nineteenth century (Weiker 1968, 456). Like Weiker, Heper also argues that the Ottoman Empire's decline in the face of its Western enemies, especially since the late eighteenth century, led the empire to emulate similar institutions of European states, first in the bureaucracy and then in the military (Heper 2000, 64). In this context, the emulation of Western institutions can be observed in the reforms implemented by the Empire in both the military and bureaucratic spheres during the late Ottoman period. These reforms were implemented to ensure “the survival of the state against internal and external challenges” (Karpas 1972, 245).

Since the late 1990s, Turkey has reshuffled its foreign policy and adopted an innovative approach in response to changes in the global system. This innovative approach involves both institutional changes and new approaches to Turkey's relations with other states, particularly those in its neighbourhood. One of these approaches has been to shift relations from a security-based perspective to economic and strategic cooperation. In this way, Turkey has sought to improve relations with its neighbours with whom it previously had problematic relations. As part of the EU harmonisation process, the military's role in policy-making has been reduced, while the domestic legitimacy of the JDP government has been increased. Although the military's role in policy-making has diminished, the role of non-state actors, such as NGOs, in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy has increased. With the help of various organisations, including some state-sponsored groups, Turkey's soft power in regions such as Africa, the Middle East, and the Balkans has helped Turkish decision-makers solidify their prestige, influence, and leadership in these regions.

The scholars who examine the evolution of TFP under Erdoğan's leadership cited the domestic policy made for foreign policy or vice versa (Haugom 2019; Mehmetcik and Çelik 2021). This proposition is partly reflected in policymaking, however, there is a continuity between the foreign policy pursued by the JDP government from the early 2000s to 2010 and the foreign policy of its predecessor. While the influence of Erdoğan and the JDP government in foreign policy increased until the 2010s, it evolved into a total dominance in foreign policy-making after the 2010s. One of the most important pillars of

Erdoğan's influence was the institutional transformation in domestic politics. Since the late 2000s, the effects of the transformation have become more visible. In this period, the influence of domestic constraints on foreign policy-making started to diminish gradually. Thus, Erdoğan, who can also be called sovereign in the Schmittian perspective, has completely dominated the foreign policy-making process.

The state-society relationship is the most important component of Turkey's evolving assertive foreign policy and quest for autonomy since 2010. In this sense, the state-society relationship occupies an overwhelming place in the NCR schema. The relationship between the two is reciprocal, power-driven and contested. Even in a non-democratic regime, the state should take society into account when producing and implementing a policy response. This would be defined as a process of negotiation and bargaining, which is the essence of the resource extraction model developed by Taliaferro, one of the most prominent NCR theorists, and reflects the fundamental core of politics. Rather than determining the nature of politics, the impact of the nature of the relationship between the state and society shapes the power of the state to extract from society in order to achieve its political goals, whether related to the survival of the state or not. In particular, the ability of the state to dominate society is deepened by the intersection of the interests of ruling elites and the people through political myths such as nationalism or ideology (Taliaferro 2006b).

Taliaferro proclaims that state power is the *“relative ability of the state to extract and mobilize resources from domestic society”* and added it *“is a function of the institutions of the state, as well as of nationalism and ideology”* (Taliaferro 2006c, 464). Even though nationalism and ideology seem to be intangible elements, their ability to mobilize and shape the society to the direction wherever state leaders want, would create a tremendous power for the state leaders and/or ruling elites. Taliaferro prominently underlines the concept of *“metus hostilis”* in order to constitute and pursue political groups by removing obstacles that prevent the collective entity, whether minor or major. The concept of *“metus hostilis”* needs an environment that is boiled by nationalism and ideology (Taliaferro 2006b, 483).

Until the 2010s, the JDP government used the concept of “*metus hostilis*” in domestic politics rather than foreign policy. This concept, which defines rival actors in domestic politics as obstacles to Turkey's development and progress, was used in the opposite way in foreign policy. The JDP government placed the concepts of “multilateral foreign policy” and “zero problems with neighbours” at the center of foreign policy against the assumption that Turkey's classical foreign policy approach defined the country as surrounded by enemies and therefore its priority was based on defense. According to Aras and Akpınar, this transformation took place when the EU accession process, which started in 2005, “began to see many problems that had previously been securitized by the bureaucratic elite as normal political issues and entered into a process of desecuritization.” (Aras and Akpınar 2011)

One dimension of the alteration in the TFP is attributed to the transformation in domestic politics. Through PM Erdogan's emphasis on “self-confidence”, evaluations have come to the fore that Turkey is on the way to becoming a regional and global power by increasing its activity both in the eyes of international organizations and forgotten regions. In this manner, in Turkey, the emphasis on ensuring stability during the JDP government is shown as the success of political leadership (Küçükcan 2011b; 2011a). The difference between Kemalist foreign policy and JDP foreign policy is described as “adopting the identity of Western civilization” while emphasizing that Kemalist foreign policy follows “a policy of caution and avoidance towards conflicts in its region”, while JDP foreign policy, which “attaches great importance to historical and cultural factors”, is reconstituted on the basis of “pro-active, multi-lane and multi-dimensional foreign policy understanding” (Ataman and Uçgan 2011).³

³ The view that Turkey's previous passive foreign policy had increased the problems it faced legitimized the JDP government's transformation in foreign policy and marginalized the groups and individuals who carried out the more recent foreign policy. Küçükcan states that Turkey's foreign policy transformation under the JDP government is “Turkey's exit from the vicious circle in which it has been trying to be condemned and taken off its passive foreign policy shirt, which isolates it from the countries with which it shares the same fate, brings it to the point of conflict with its longest border neighbour.” (Küçükcan 2011b) Even though the main reason of the transformation of the TFP is defined as the inevitable outcome of the end of the Cold War, the transformation is started with 02’ election and the sharp contrast between the old paradigm and the new paradigm is manifested: “The systemic change in the 1990s was accompanied by the introduction of a new political actor in Turkey in 2002. In the new foreign policy discourse, Turkey's relations with the West in general, and with the USA, the EU and Israel in particular, are considered as complementary, not an alternative, to its relations with the Islamic world. Relations with Middle Eastern

Since the early 2000s, with the democratic reform packages implemented as part of the EU harmonisation policy, developments such as the reduction of the military's place in political decision-making, the regulation of bureaucratic apparatuses, the participation of NGOs and state organisations in the foreign policy decision-making process and the achievement of economic growth have been experienced. The foundations of Turkey's assertive foreign policy and quest for autonomy since the 2010s can be traced back to this period, when the JDP government was institutionalised. The elimination of opponents within the decision-making process and rapid economic growth have provided a clear basis for the JDP to implement its foreign policy vision and continue on its path unhindered. Thus, the ruling power of the leader of the JDP, Erdoğan, has a smooth area to exercise its sovereign power over the society in order to change the nature of politics according to the interests of his political front. In this way, a way has been created to lead the nationwide political transformation that defines itself against the “*metus hostilis*” that acts against the increasing power of Turkey in the region and the world claimed by the JDP.

Since the 2010s, the JDP government, which has increased its dominance in both the state administration and the public sphere, has also correspondingly upgraded its foreign policy goals. In this sense, Erdogan has sought to increase Turkey's activity in the global political arena while feeding national pride in domestic politics through assertive behaviour towards other states, i.e. disputes with Israel and escalating tensions with Western states. In particular, the successive electoral successes of the JDP and Erdogan's consolidation of power both in party politics and in the domestic equation have generated new leadership practices that depend on the merging of national pride and the sovereign himself. Çagaptay argues that Erdogan does not agree with Turkey's status as a medium-sized state and differs from his predecessors in his quest for autonomy and great-power status (Çagaptay 2019, 173–75). The JDP government saw the Arab Spring that broke out

countries have been the most affected by this restructuring. It is noteworthy that in the policies pursued by Turkey during the JDP period, a serious rapprochement process towards the countries in the region has begun. (...) In addition, when we look at the previous decade, it is seen that the course of relations with the Islamic world has evolved from exclusion and marginalization to multi-dimensional partnership.” (Ataman and Uçgan 2011) However, this assumption overlooks the FM İsmail Cem's efforts on normalizing relationship with neighbouring countries and Turkey's acceptance into the EU membership process at the EU Helsinki Summit.

in 2010 as an opportunity to spread this influence. In a speech in 2012, FM Davutoğlu described the Arab Spring as,

“a natural process and everyone should respect this process, and because it is natural, it is an inevitable process. This change will take place in the region; it is not possible to avoid this change; it is necessary to manage this change. Instead of clashing with this change, this change, it is necessary to manage this change” (Davutoğlu 2012b).

Then, he added,

“those who voted for the JDP government in 2002 after the major crises voted with the same motive when they were looking for a new perspective, and what they were looking for was one: honour, honour, honour. They wanted to be respected, they wanted to be respected both in the political system and in the international system as a country” (Davutoğlu 2012b).

According to Thwaites-Diken, the most striking word that should be noted here is “managing the change” (Thwaites Diken 2015). Likewise, considering the “order-maker” role that Turkey has assigned to itself (TRT Haber 2012), it can be said that this assumption is a correct inference. Davutoğlu linked the demands of Arab Spring protesters with the motivations of voters who supported the JDP in the 2002 Turkish elections, highlighting the similarity of popular motivations between the two cases. He identified the main concern of JDP voters in Turkey as the search for “honour”. Defining this quest as both an individual and collective concern for values, Davutoğlu argued that the demands of people in the Arab Spring were the same. In this context, an issue shaped by external factors suddenly became a policy-defining issue within Turkey's domestic political agenda. Davutoğlu's approach, the JDP's focus on managing the Arab Spring by elevating Turkey's honour, aimed to align domestic constraints with the country's ambitious foreign policy. This foreign policy approach has had an impact on domestic politics while also being influenced by it. In the post-2010 period, the impact of domestic constraints has decreased, and there has been greater permeability between domestic and foreign policy. As a result, both political spheres have become a tool for the sovereign to reconstruct its conceptualizations.

2.3.2. Sovereign: Schmitt's Concept of Ultimate Power

Schmitt defines the sovereign as an actor who utilises various tools and instruments to organise politics and determine the state of exception. The sovereign, who embodies ultimate power, is subject to constant change in interaction with politics. The exceptional characteristic of the sovereign arises from the fact that it is an actor not subject to any restriction or control. According to Frye, Schmitt's definition of the sovereign is that it is not subject to any ethical, legal, or popular constraints, and its decision is based on pure judgment (Frye 1966b, 824). However, claiming that this relationship develops in a unilateral direction leaves the discussion incomplete. In this context, the sovereign has a significant influence on domestic political actors and constraints, and vice versa. The sovereign, defined as the center of political power, is subject to external influences as a rational actor seeking to preserve and maintain its power. The relationship between the sovereign and the political sphere is mutually reinforcing and transformative, making the sovereign both the actor and the subject of political transformation.

Rather than eliminating the ambiguity of both concepts, the relationship between sovereign and state of exception increases it. In this political conception, in which one can be characterised as the constituent and the other as the constituted, there is no definitive approach as to the conditions or manner in which the constituent can declare the state of exception. The only condition proposed by Schmitt, that is, the situation in which the existence of the state and society is endangered, is left to the initiative of the actor who can declare a state of emergency. This gives the sovereign a wide area to determine the political in every sense, without any restrictions. According to Bendersky, Schmitt does not propose “a sovereign dictator above the constitution” (Bendersky 1983, 76). However, the ambiguity in the relationship between the sovereign and the state of exception allows the sovereign to constantly reconstruct the state of exception.

McCormick and Brännström discuss the legal limits of sovereignty, but there is unresolved ambiguity between their concepts. McCormick defines the sovereign as the person who embodies the 'popular will' and has powers that can go beyond the law in exceptional cases (McCormick 1997b, 174). In contrast, Brännström considers the

sovereign as a legal actor who is surrounded and constrained by legal boundaries. Brännström highlights the importance of the sovereign's adherence to established legal norms and principles, emphasizing that its power is not arbitrary or unlimited, but rather constrained by the legal order in which it exists (Brännström 2015). McCormick, however, argues that the president, as the embodiment of the 'popular will' through popular vote, may not require legitimacy for emergency actions. This clearly demonstrates the contrast between McCormick and Brännström in assessing the source of legitimacy and legality of the sovereign's actions in a state of exception. It highlights the ambiguity in Schmitt's conceptualisation of the sovereign, which is not limited to a specific area but is evident in all aspects of the sovereign's decision-making.

In addition to McCormick and Brännström, Moore has also analysed Schmitt's concept of sovereignty and argued that it extends beyond the legal sphere and is influenced by the matter of jurisdiction. Moore's emphasis on this point is important because Schmitt argues that an understanding of sovereignty that remains within legal boundaries cannot “provide a framework for ensuring public order and security” (Moore 2020, 697). Therefore, the sovereign can be considered as an extra-legal regulatory actor who ensures public order and security. This may position it as the highest authority that determines the relations between society and the state. Thus, Schmitt's concept of sovereign has a political essence rather than a legal and normative content (Suganami 2007). The competence of the sovereign, which shapes the entire political sphere, is one of the fundamental criteria. Emerging as an actor who shapes and transforms the entire political sphere, the competence of the sovereign stems from the ability to distinguish friend and enemy and determine the state of exception.

This assumption makes the sovereign the supreme authority within the state structure and gives it a divine dimension. Emphasizing Schmitt's claim that the concepts of the modern state are secularised theological concepts, Hirst reveals that this is most clearly manifested in the sovereign, whom he characterizes as “the omnipotent law-giver, a mundane version of an all-powerful God” (Hirst 1987, 21–22). In Kalyvas's analysis of Schmitt's concept of sovereignty and Gramsci's concept of hegemony, the sovereign is categorised as an actor with absolute power, outside all legal constraints and established structures, able to

influence and transform them (Kalyvas, 2000). As seen in Kalyvas and Hirst, Schmitt places the sovereign in an absolute position within the political order, and this is consistent with his understanding of decisionism. According to him, each order should be based on the decision (Kalyvas 2000, 348). Therefore, whoever makes that decision is naturally manifested as the sovereign. By claiming that indecision leads to disorder, Schmitt's understanding of decisiveness is also presented as a theological reinterpretation. The fact that the most important characteristic of the sovereign is the ability to make decisions reveals him as an absolute omnipotent in the above interpretation.

On the other hand, this unquestionable position of the sovereign in the political order makes him the absolute authority in the struggle of different groups within society and in the state-society relationship. The philosophical basis for the sovereign to appear as such an unquestionable authority stems from Schmitt's definition of the concepts that characterize the modern state as being built upon and influenced by theological concepts. On the other hand, the sovereign's position in the political order makes him the absolute authority in the struggle between different groups within society and in the relationship between state and society. This philosophical basis for the sovereign's unquestionable authority is derived from Schmitt's definition of the concepts that characterize the modern state as being built upon and influenced by theological concepts. Schmitt's approach highlights the similarity between the state and the church in terms of decisionism and sovereignty. This is evident in the dogmatic nature of the church's decisions and the ability of the sovereign, who holds decision-making authority in the state, to make decisions outside the law (Baume 2009, 377).

In this context, the sovereign is the critical player in both the internal power struggles of political groups and the relationship between the state and society. As previously explained, the supreme power given to the sovereign allows for complete control and transformation of the entire political sphere. Political decisions are more confident than any other decisions, reinforcing the sovereignty of the political and the position of the sovereign who exercises this power. This privileged position of sovereignty arises from the decision to make distinctions. As it appears in Schmitt, the ultimate political form of this distinction is the distinction between friend and enemy (Frye 1966b, 819). The

sovereign can redefine this distinction in domestic and foreign policy, constantly reproducing the political sphere and its other components, such as social groups and relations. In this sense, the results of this struggle ensure the political realm's perpetual regeneration. Therefore, this struggle forms the core of the political sphere, which is in constant flux.

One of the most important features since the first day of the JDP period of power was that it tried to put forward a new political way by comparing the previous periods with its reign in power. In this sense, when PM Erdoğan described the period before the JDP government, he emphasized that Turkey had lost its prestige and that it had been regained during the JDP government. Considering international developments as a matter of domestic policy, PM Erdoğan stated that any foreign policy success, even if it contributes to the common interest of the country, is not appreciated by the opposition. PM Erdoğan described the JDP as the party of the nation and implied that the alliances against the JDP were alliances developed against the nation: “The RPP is cooperating with the media for destroying the JDP. The nation founded the JDP, and no one has the power to destroy it” (Milliyet 2009d). In this way, PM Erdoğan, with his us/them distinction, creates the perception that opposition groups put their political gains above the mutual interests or goodness of the country.

Schmitt's concept of the sovereign gets involved in the process at this point. The structure of the international system, anarchy, and the state's aim to protect itself and its goal of survival provide a comprehensive study area for Schmitt's concept of the exception because of extremity. Assuming the stronger state's ability to extract resources is greater than that of a weaker state, the consolidation and harmonised relationship between the state and society becomes important. In this regard, Schmitt idealised creating a more robust state through the solid ground for sovereignty and the situation of exception.

Suppose the ability to distinguish between friend and enemy is the essence of the politics that finds itself in the anomalies and daily routines. In that case, the main political essence of the sovereignty depends on the one who is the absolute decision maker who holds the statute of the sovereign. In this manner, the sovereign, either a political leader or an elite

group, institutionalises and instrumentalises the sovereignty with its actions and policies. Any control mechanism or equal-level organisation in a state that constitutes an obstacle against the sovereign would be labelled as an enemy by him/her/group by holding the ability to determine the friend/enemy distinction, both external and internal. However, if opposition groups have the majority, the parliament contains a risk for the sovereign's authority, which might be why Schmitt opposes liberal democracies. For the chaos or disharmony that would result could throw into crisis the very existence that is the basic motive of the state and its equivalent, the nation.

Turkey's referendum in 2007 and the following presidential elections in 2007 were important turning points in the context of reflecting the holism of Schmitt's theory of sovereignty. The referendum and presidential election in 2007, which would be detailed in the next section, paved the way for the transformation of the presidency in the 2010s from the symbolic presidency to the party-based presidential system that is to be a shareholder of sovereignty. Considering the order in which the MPs are determined by the party leaders in Turkey, this transformation has brought the authority to the party leader, who would become the president, to control both the state and the parliamentary group closely.

On the other hand, as Erdogan's popularity and power grew, Jovanovic and Didic claim that his tendency toward authoritarianism and quest for sovereignty rose. They conclude that the respect for authority and patriotism that are deep-seated in the historical and cultural stereotypes of Turkish society are mostly relevant to the fear of dismemberment and loss of independence. Because the weakness of the institutions, according to them, and the fear of dismemberment and loss of independence struck a chord with presidential system in minds (Jovanović & Didic, 2018).⁴ In the early 2000s, however, Erdoğan adopted a more liberal approach to regional affairs and security issues. In this context, he emphasised a "civilian geopolitics" that promoted common cultural ties, multilateralism and economic interdependence. This understanding, in turn, creates an environment of

⁴ The claim, developed by the authors, suggests how Schmitt's idea of sovereignty is a useful and functional tool in Erdogan's hands when turning the system into a presidential path. In this sense; Erdogan and his party has been using the concept of sovereignty while justifying the Erdogan's decisions in both domestic and external politics. (Mladenov Jovanović and Didic 2018, 9–10)

desecuritisation. Moreover, during this period, Turkey increased its diplomatic initiatives with many countries with which it had historical hostilities. In addition, Turkey's global reputation has improved, which played a role in Turkey securing a temporary seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC) through its contribution as a mediator in inherited trouble spots around the world.

In fact, Turkey's security-oriented concerns and geopolitical discourse, which came to the fore since the Cold War years, have been used as a “conservative power practice” in the conceptual context, according to Özcan. Pointing out the examples of this in Turkish politics, he said that it would be revealed as four main points: “limiting the political situation, legitimizing calls for a state of emergency, demonizing the opposition and giving the political power the possibility of avoiding political responsibility” (Özcan, 2015). On the other hand, Yeşiltaş, while analyzing how geopolitical discourse places military at the center of politics and an unquestionable role, claims that geopolitics is “one of the tools for positioning soldiers as a separate category against civilian actors in determining national strategy” (Yeşiltaş 2015).

In this sense, Schmittian sovereignty had belonged to the military for a long time while establishing and conducting national policies whether domestic or foreign practices. Considering all four facts pointed out by Özcan, before the 2000s, the influence of the TAF and the military bureaucracy in the implementation and national policies was based on a point that determined the political sphere as well as the narrowing of the civil bureaucracy and boundaries of politics. Furthermore, as a reflection of the geopolitical view, “foreign policies shaped around the axis of state and security-oriented discourses” (Hisarlioğlu 2020, 104) provide the legitimacy to turn the exception into the norm as an extension of the Schmittian concept of sovereignty.

Nevertheless, the monopoly of the military over holding sovereignty on politics has ended by the normalising the relationship with eternal enemies starting by 2000s (Özcan, 2010), might be traced back to the end of the 90's. Since the mid-2000s, the JDP, which has begun to consolidate its power and eliminated other influential forces in domestic politics by constitutional amendments and reforms, began to concentrate its power on every part

of the state.⁵ The principles of multilateralism and economic interdependence, which the JDP government began to apply in the context of “civilian geopolitics”, have become the basic principles of the TFP. Thus, the policy of de-securitisation has also diminished the legitimacy of the TAF's place in decision-making.

In a system of loosening internal constraints, the consolidation of the JDP government's sovereignty was also reflected in the assessment of systemic influences by decision-makers. This situation found its counterpart in politics with the policy pursued after the Davos Crisis in 2009 and the Arab Spring that began in 2010. In the absence of an international variable that coerced JDP to abandon the relationship with Israel (Özcan, 2018a), the government had chosen to continue its policy of tension with Israel under the impact of PM Erdogan's increasing charisma in the Middle East. So, the questions appear that if there is no international variable that forces them to pursue the current policy, why has the leadership of the JDP acted in this way, what did they aim to achieve, and how did they perceive the national interest? Furthermore, they gave public support to the Muslim Brotherhood in the region during the Arab Spring, which has created a risky environment for Turkey in its relationship with the Gulf States and Egypt. Even if a systemic perspective was coercing Ankara to change the policy since 2013, it did not happen until 2016 (Yeşilyurt 2017).

⁵ Demir and Bingöl puzzle this well-played game as “aware of the secular army’s sensitivity, the JDP first focused on democratization reforms and the EU membership rather than opposing secularism. This policy helped the government to achieve political legitimacy among liberal intellectuals who also opposed military supervision. This policy was well- appreciated by the EU, which gave enormous support to the JDP to achieve political legitimacy. The EU accession process drove reforms that have weakened the military’s internal role. The U.S. also supported the JDP as it was considered the best example of integrating a secular democratic system with moderate Islam” (Demir and Bingöl 2020, 182).

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter provides the theoretical background of the study by examining NCR and Carl Schmitt's conceptualization of sovereignty and the exception. NCR provides a very productive analytical power for researchers to understand and explain differences in state behaviours without ignoring the prominence of the systemic stimuli in the form of the state's foreign and security policy. Furthermore, Schmitt's outlook on the intrastate relationship with the concepts of the sovereign and the exception provides an insight into the evolution of Turkish Politics that is profoundly elaborated in the next chapters. In this sense, the interaction between sovereign and systemic stimuli will make the fluctuations in TFP meaningful for readers.

In this discussion, TFP is evaluated in three different periods. The inconsistencies within the policies pursued in these periods, where changing systemic effects are interpreted differently by decision-makers, are an obstacle to the evaluation of actors as rational actors. Therefore, a closer look at the decision-making actors becomes necessary. In this context, it can be accepted that factors such as the power struggle within the state, the change of sub-actors, and ultimately, the consolidation of power are factors in forming the cognitive structures of the decision-makers and determining their goals.

The actors of TFP are also unable to evaluate systemic factors independently of these factors. As it will be further elaborated in the following sections, TFP has also become an element of the power struggle in domestic politics. Schmitt's friend/foe conceptualization, which has already been tried to be explained in detail, is also very important in terms of understanding this struggle and exemplifying the practical use of the concept. In summary, the theoretical connection that is tried to be established between NCR and Schmitt in this chapter will illustrate the transformation in TFP. Thus, the contribution of the TFP to the quest for autonomy abroad and the establishment of hegemony at home can be evaluated together.

3. DE-SECURITIZATION OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY: 2000-2010

Turkey has been experiencing significant transformations in its domestic politics and external environment during the last twenty years. The changes that occurred in both were not independent of each other but rather affected each other. Therefore, examining TFP by dividing it into processes; will help us understand both the changes in processes and their effects on each other and their differences. In this context, the period between 2000 and 2010, is considered the de-securitization period. The main characteristics of this period comprise tensions between political elites and bureaucracy, efforts to soften problematic foreign policy areas, the emergence of soft power, and the EU accession process.

On the other hand, the accession of various regions has provided an adventurous inclination for Turkey that started to develop during this period. TFP, therefore, pertained to establishing a legitimisation in domestic politics as well as salient characteristics. In this way, this chapter mostly deals with the relationship and logrolling between the state elites to induce the occurrence of the desecuritization period. In this environment, societal actors from different parts of society also supported the government's actions to purge the old elites. So, while the EU process and economic concerns have influenced Turkey, the intra-state power struggle was shaping the politicians' minds.

The normalization of the TFP essentially makes no sense without considering the effects of the international system, the export-based development model of the Turkish economy and the struggle between the JDP government and the state elites. The normalization process of the TFP actually prepares the ground for hegemonic change within the state. In this sense, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the normalization steps that started before the JDP government and had been supported by many civil society actors also contributed to the liquidation of the groups opposing the JDP government. The reason for limiting this section between 2000 and 2010 was the steps taken by Turkey in 2000 to improve relations with its two troubled neighbours, Greece and Syria, and the constitutional referendum in 2010, Israel's attack on Mavi Marmara and the Arab Spring.

3.1. Normalisation in Turkish Foreign Policy

Normalisation of the TFP is a concept used to describe the methodology and implementation of foreign policy in the era of desecuritisation. In this context, normalisation, which began in the late 1990s, refers to the shift in bilateral and multilateral relations from a security-oriented to an economic and cultural-oriented domain. As will be argued in the following sections, this conceptualisation emphasises the declining importance of the military and the security bureaucracy in foreign policy-making and the increasing importance of NGOs and the civilian bureaucracy. Normalisation in the TFP preceded the JDP government but gained momentum under its rule. It gradually ran out of steam after the obstacles encountered in the EU process and the 2007 elections. In this section, the process mentioned above will be evaluated by considering both internal and external factors, and the evolving ground will be tried to be revealed in the process called the transition period.

The normalisation process in the TFP continued in the same period as the power struggle in domestic politics. The frictions between the JDP government and the military-civilian bureaucracy, which have surfaced occasionally, have formed the structure of internal politics of this period, which we call the normalisation period of the TDP. The 2007 Presidential Election, which constituted the largest of these crises, paved the way for an early election and a referendum that followed. The power struggle in domestic politics continued with the normalisation of relations in the field of foreign policy and the progress of the EU process.

In fact, the power struggle in domestic politics and the normalisation of foreign policy should not be evaluated independently. As mentioned earlier, the permeability of the lines between domestic and foreign policy has increased in Turkish politics. In the first period of the 2000s, the JDP government used the detente in the foreign policy that had started in the previous period by extending it to different regions in its struggle with the existing bureaucratic structure. The JDP government, which drew attention to the economic and social dimension of relations with countries in problematic regions such as the Balkans,

the Middle East and the Caucasus, pushed the policies based on “national security” to the background with the policies it implemented.

3.1.1. Debates Around the Domestic Politics

During the 1990s, Turkey was exposed to many internal and external factors that put itself in security and continuous state of emergency policies. However, these problems were replaced by a quiet mood with developments such as the Adana Agreement with Syria, the recovery in Turkey-Greece relations, the capture of PKK Leader Abdullah Ocalan and the Helsinki Treaty with the EU at the end of the 90s. In this manner, before the JDP’s landslide victory in 2002, Turkey had begun to repair its relations with its neighbouring countries and take a foreign policy path where the influence of security actors on the foreign policy decision-making process was diminished. However, the fact that should not be ignored here is that while the influence of security actors in foreign policy decreased, the effects of economic interest groups increased as a result of the economic policies that started to be followed during the Özal period.⁶ (Karaosmanoglu 2000) As Cizre and Bilgin stress, Mesut Yılmaz, former president of the Motherland Party (ANAP), mentioned the existence of “national security syndrome”, which was implied as to the biggest obstacle to Turkey's EU accession process, in Turkey in his speech in 2001. Both acknowledged the Cyprus issue, Annan Plan, is a tool used by the JDP government to reduce the weight of the military in politics. (Cizre 2003; Bilgin 2007)

The Annan Plan, one of the most comprehensive developments the JDP has faced in the first years of its rule, has led to serious tensions between the JDP and the RPP. In fact, the involvement of the Chief of the General Staff in these discussions has brought criticism of the military's intervention in politics back into the spotlight (Aşık 2005). In

⁶ In his article examining Turkey's security culture and the transformation of the military, Ali Karaosmanoglu mentions that the participation of civilians in the post-Cold War period has increased in the construction of foreign and security policies. He describes the increase in relations with regions such as the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus and the active participation in regional organizations as an important change in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War. Furthermore, cites as an example of the fact that there was no statement from the army against Özal after the Özal-Toruntay dispute and the process that ended with Toruntay's resignation. Karaosmanoğlu, who claims that the “military is gradually withdrawing from the political scene”, attributes this to the fact that Turkey, which has been claiming Westernization for many years, has now entered a period in which westernization is not possible without democratization.(Karaosmanoglu 2000)

this process, many reports that the government and the military diverged on the fundamental issues about the Annan Plan were reflected in the national media (Ergan 2004). Besides the MP of RPP, the main opposition party, Onur Öymen, a former diplomat, has addressed that the government did all this to be a member of the European Union, but that the Cyprus issue did not occupy an important place in the concerns of European countries about Turkey's membership (O. Öymen 2004).⁷

The controversy over Cyprus and the Annan Plan could not prevent the plan from being voted on both sides of the island. Just before the referendum, tensions escalated between PM Erdoğan and TRNC President Rauf Denktas. Upon Denktas' campaign for a referendum in Turkey, PM Erdoğan said, “If there is something to be done, just do it in Cyprus. Whatever you are going to tell, just tell it in Cyprus” (BBC Türkçe 2004). During the referendum process, demonstrations were also held in various squares of Turkey to support Denktas' “no” campaign. At the same time, he was accused of appearing together with marginal factions in Turkey by Erdoğan. Erdoğan's harsh criticism of Denktas continued after the referendum.

In this sense, The JDP government's support for the Annan Plan cannot be assessed independently of the process of its candidacy for EU membership. The JDP government's support for the Annan Plan cannot be assessed independently of the process of its candidacy for EU membership. Mesut Yılmaz's “national security syndrome”, which was mentioned earlier, revealed itself through the Annan Plan discussions in domestic politics. However, this debate went back quite a long time and caused tensions between state actors in the period when it was on the agenda. Erdoğan's statement immediately after the 2002 elections, “Turkey's traditional Cyprus policy does not coincide with our policy”

⁷ While concluding his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Öymen evaluated the process as “a breaking point of TFP, which we have been following for eighty years, and which we have been following since Lausanne.” (O. Öymen 2004) In his reply to Öymen, former Foreign Minister and JDP MP Yaşar Yakış stated that Öymen's party, the RPP, is one of the responsible for the current crisis, similar to Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül's statement that the reason for the current developments in Cyprus that threaten Turkey should be sought in the pre-JDP governments. (Yakış 2004) TRNC President Rauf Denktas' attitude towards the Annan Plan was similar to the approach of the main opposition in Turkey. Denktas stated that the Annan Plan was a plan that would make the TRNC Turks a minority and that he sat at the negotiating table at the request of the Turkish government. (Milliyet 2004)

(Hürriyet 2002) was a vital sign not only of how the Cyprus process would proceed under the JDP government but also of how the foreign policy would progress.

Aside from the tension between political elites and state bureaucrats, TUSIAD, the most prominent business associate in Turkey, has also backed Yılmaz by emphasising the EU process and Copenhagen Criteria. Their support of the issue had been continued during the first JDP government. While Atmaca and Tosun pursue the geopolitical visions of JDP governments, they define the period between 2002-2005 as a Europeanization and 2005-2010 as a selective Europeanization due to the diminishing trust between Turkey and the EU. Between 2002 and 2005, they attributed economic and political reforms as one the accompaniment elements of Turkey's Europeanization policy (Atmaca and Torun 2022).

However, Atmaca and Torun, like many others, also claim that the Europeanization policy pursued by the JDP is an attempt to gain legitimacy in domestic politics (Atmaca and Torun 2022; Duran 2011; Özpek and Demirağ 2014).⁸ Furthermore, Cyprus Issue, related to the EU process, was a significant turning point for JDP to eliminate the military-security bureaucracy which has dominated the political environment in the 1990s. Öniş clearly asserts the JDP's posture in the Cyprus issue is much more concrete than its predecessors (Öniş 2003). As mentioned above, former coalition partner Mesut Yılmaz's opinion that Turkey should eliminate the "national security syndrome" did not reciprocate by public opinion and was oppressed. However, it was an important statement to light the fuse of future debates about how Turkey's political environment would shape in the 2000s, particularly in JDP's comfortable single-party period.

⁸ Burhanettin Duran says that foreign policy is used as a tool to transform domestic policy. In addition, it is seen that the democratization moves carried out within the scope of the EU process are placed at the center of foreign policy. The contribution of this process to the JDP is that it has eliminated the problem of gaining legitimacy in domestic politics (Duran 2011). Atmaca and Tosun drew attention to the importance of the concept of Europeanization in overcoming the distrust and opposition of the secular establishment towards the JDP. The reforms and policies pursued under this concept have enabled the JDP to gain legitimacy both domestically and internationally, just as Duran claims (Atmaca and Torun 2022). Özpek and Demirağ say that the EU-aligned reforms and policies implemented during the JDP period destroyed the influence of the military on politics, but these developments did not contribute to the EU membership process (Özpek and Demirağ 2014).

Although normalisation in Turkish politics started in the pre-JDP period, JDP has enjoyed the single-party rule comfort during implying foreign policy. In this vein, normalisation in TFP and politics hand to hand with economic and political reforms provided an opportunity to eliminate patriarch security and military elites from the political scene. Former PM Abdullah Gül and his successor PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan maintained a conflicted relationship with military bureaucrats and state officials during the early period of the JDP government.

Notably, until the 2007 early elections, the conflicted relationship between the JDP government and patriarch security and military elites has gradually arisen, and the tension reached a peak during the 2007 presidential election quagmire. After the first round of the parliamentary vote on the presidential elections, tensions in the political sphere increased considerably with the General Staff's declaration, also known as the e-memorandum in the public opinion. However, business associations and significant business actors have supported the former PM Abdullah Gül's candidacy for the president (Yeni Şafak 2007b).

Gül, who received 357 votes in the first round of voting following the controversy surrounding the presidential election, could not be elected president because the quorum for the decision could not be reached. The main opposition party, the Republican People Party (RPP), had appealed to the Constitutional Court because the quorum for the meeting had been ignored. Following this process, the first round of the elections was cancelled with the decision of the Constitutional Court. Upon this, the necessary quorum for the decision in the renewed elections could not be found again and the RPP brought the process to the Constitutional Court again. Upon this, the necessary quorum for the decision in the renewed elections could not be found again and the RPP brought the process to the Constitutional Court again. However, this time the JDP decided to hold early elections without waiting for the Constitutional Court's decision, leading the country to elections. Furthermore, upon Abdullah Gül's withdrawal from the candidacy, the Constitutional Court declared that there was no need to decide on the application.

The JDP opened the door to the referendum to be held in October 2007 with the proposal it brought to the TGNA in May 2007 that the President of the Republic should be elected by the people and those general elections should be held every 4 years. 10. President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and the main opposition RPP took the constitutional amendment to the Constitutional Court and filed an annulment case. In the presidential election held after the early elections held in July 2007, Abdullah Gül was the last president elected by the Turkish Grand National Assembly. In this sense, PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who will be a candidate in the next presidential elections, would be the first president elected by popular vote in the history of the Republic of Turkey.

On the other hand, Deniz Baykal, former opposition leader, criticised the constitutional amendment package that it would create a duality while exercising the sovereignty on behalf of the nation. Baykal has enunciated that the authority to exercise sovereignty is in the Turkish Grand National Assembly on behalf of the nation. In this context, he stated that the election of the President by the people would create a duality in the exercise of sovereignty and turn to be an “elected sultan” (Dünya Bülteni 2007). Furthermore, while 9th President Ahmet Necdet Sezer has used the veto power on the constitutional amendment proposal, he explicitly stated that:

“Electing the President of the Republic, which is envisaged in the Constitution as an element of balance and stability with its impartial character, and thus politicising both parts of the executive branch, will remove the President from being an element of balance and stability. In other words, with the election of the President representing the State by the people, his “compensating” powers will be transformed into “executive” qualities. The addition of the moral authority to the strengthened powers of being elected directly by the will of the people will also be able to easily make the President the dominant element of the political system. In the face of a Parliament which does not have a majority, or a Government which relies on a more minor majority than the one which elects the President, the President, who directly represents the popular vote, will rise to the status of an office in which the national will is formed in itself, and will have a much stronger democratic validity; it is clear that this will facilitate the political exercise of the powers of the President. In addition, while the executive branch exercises sovereignty only in the context of other organs on behalf of the Nation, the President of the Republic, who comes to power by the election of the people, will be able to become an authority that exercises national sovereignty outside the “executive branch” by taking advantage of the power to represent the unity of the Turkish Nation” (Ahmet Necdet Sezer 2007).⁹

⁹ President Sezer’s remarks on the constitutional amendment proposal highly stressed the political crises caused by the duality of sovereignty. Accordingly, President Sezer, who used his veto power, underlined that the election of the President of the Republic by the voters would also harm the Presidency, which is defined within the framework of the current constitution. This section, which is quoted from the veto decision taken for the return of the law to the TGNA, contains the criticisms and justifications of President

The fact that the people elect the President is an element that increases the authority and responsibility of the presidential office. In this sense, the office of the President of the Republic has been reconstructed as an office that derives its authority directly from the people, not from the parliament. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the first President elected by the people after the presidential election held in 2014, has emphasized this situation many times. This transformation, which took place in 2007, should be considered together with the referendum held in 2017. This transformation, which took place in 2007, should be considered together with the referendum held in 2017. During his visit to Slovakia, which he carried out less than a year after his election as President, Erdoğan stated that his current powers were not enough for him and that the next stage was to switch to the presidential system, which he described as a change in the administrative structure (TCCB 2015a).

In this respect, it can be said that Erdoğan started to create the concept of sovereignty put forward by Schmitt in his own political identity from the first period of his rule. The JDP won the early elections held on 22 July 2007 by increasing its votes by 12% and won the referendum held on 21 October 2007 with 68.95% of the votes. With the first Presidential election to be held in 2014, the legal basis for the inauguration of the President, who will be elected by popular vote for the first time in the history of the Republic of Turkey, has been established. The transition from the model of the impartial and balancing President to the model of the executive and politician President has brought about different institutions in which the source of sovereignty is the citizens. It, which will be further detailed in the next section, can be considered the starting point of the process leading up to the 2017 referendum to be held in the future.

In the period that followed the presidential election, tensions continued to escalate further, and in 2008, the Chief Public Prosecutor of the Court of Cassation, Abdurrahman

Sezer. One of the most dramatic points in Sezer's veto decision is how the President, who will be elected by popular vote, will share sovereignty with the parliament elected by popular vote and the CoM coming out of the parliament. In this context, as Sezer points out, if the president and the ruling political party are in the same political line, it can be said that the possibility of the administration exhibiting authoritarian tendencies will increase. (Ahmet Necdet Sezer 2007) He believes that the fact that the president and the political power to be elected by the people belong to the same political views or traditions "creates an unbalanced power of authority"; vice versa, it would lead to constant conflict and a weakening of state authority, he noted. (BBC Türkçe 2007)

Yalçınkaya, filed a closure case against the JDP. Once again, the business associations and societal actors from various spheres have strongly criticized the closure case against the JDP (Anadolu Ajansı 2008; Hürriyet 2008). In addition to the business associations and societal actors' outcry, the closure case also drew international outrage. Furthermore, European Union Commissioner Olli Rehn said in a statement in Slovenia: "If the JDP is shut down, EU-Turkey relations will be cut off." The fact that it was the turn of Ali Babacan to speak after the Slovenian Foreign Minister at the meeting also contained a symbolic message about the European Union's posture (Habertürk 2008a). On the other hand, U.S. officials also said that it was against U.S. interests for the closure case to harm the EU process (CnnTurk 2008). The reactions that followed the closure of the JDP also reflected the stance of the US and the EU against the closure case (Cindemir 2008).

The closure case against the JDP was also seen as a conspiracy organized by foreign-backed groups that wanted to destroy the ruling party in Turkey (Karagül 2008). The allegation of conspiracy, which is described as blocking Turkey's march to the future in the global financial crisis environment, has also been evaluated as a coup attempt through the judiciary (Bayramoğlu 2008). In addition, the closure case was discussed built on Schmitt's concept of "sovereign". The opening of a closure case against the JDP was evaluated based on the proposition that "the sovereign who decides the exception" and claimed that the coups became an element that determined not only the moments of exception but also the "routine" (Aktay 2008b; 2008a).

On the other hand, economic achievements and the EU process have provided legitimacy to JDP against TAF, during the 2000s. The TAF's reputation and impact was also diminished by the Ergenekon&Sledgehammer conspiracy cases, the EU's demand to increase civilian control over the military, and the success of the JDP's economic foreign policy by sidelining the classical security-oriented foreign policy approach (Demir and Bingöl 2020). However, the decline in the importance and influence of the military in politics in Turkey, according to some scholars, has not paved the way for democratization. On the contrary, Turkish democracy has not been able to institutionalize itself in parallel with the decline in the importance and influence of the military in politics (Satana and Özpek 2022). Instead, there are also claims that the reduction of the influence of the

military in politics is directed towards the softening of the TFP and the use of soft power (Larrabee 2010).

The “Kurdish Opening,” which was first signaled by President Abdullah Gül in 2009 with the phrase “good things will happen,” began with the statements made by PM Erdoğan during the year (Milliyet 2009c). Discussions have continued that the “Kurdish Opening,” which is one of the main topics of the domestic political debates in Turkey, has come to the agenda with the influence of international systemic incentives (Hürriyet 2009b). The fact that President Gül, while giving the first signals about the “Kurdish Opening” in his statement on his way to Tehran, stated that they had a common denominator with the newly elected US administration on many issues made these discussions meaningful (Milliyet 2009e).

The government's “Kurdish Opening” policy also found a positive response in civil society. (Yeni Şafak 2009; Habertürk 2010; Radikal 2009a) The “Kurdish Opening,” which is supported by important institutions and names that have the potential to influence public opinions, such as labor unions, business associations, and artists, has also been interpreted as the JDP's intention to “build a new Turkey” (Ete 2010). PM Erdogan also described those who opposed the opening process and criticized the foreign policy as an “old paradigm” ¹⁰ (Erdoğan 2009):

“Those who build today's national and international issues on narrow patterns, those who approach the issues with a sense of feeling, those who consider national and international problems with a sense of hatred, hatred and revenge are unfair to the founding spirit and founder of the republic. (...) We do not act with an understanding that says, “Three sides of Turkey are surrounded by seas and four sides are surrounded by enemies,” but with the understanding of “peace at home, peace in the world.” We produce an approach with the understanding of winning friends, not producing enemies. (...) The energy of this country has unfortunately been wasted due to non-existent threats.

¹⁰ Erdogan's statements were critical of previous administrations and bureaucrats. Former JDP MP Talip Küçükcan describes the JDP government's difference from previous governments by changing its priorities over the past decade and departing from the “passive foreign policy” attitude. Calling Erdogan “the architect of the new Turkey,” Küçükcan claims that Turkey has turned a blind eye to the injustices and atrocities that have been happening next to it in previous periods, but that Erdogan, on the contrary, has achieved this transformation as “the voice of the voiceless, the patron of the oppressed and stateless on their own soil, a sincere spokesman for those who are oppressed and oppressed by their regimes and political leaders.” (Küçükcan 2011b)

While the world was changing, transforming, and developing, this country was stalled, paused, and left behind with endless debates and issues that could not be solved. Today, with that old understanding, with that old political attitude, with the political style that is no longer in circulation, no one has the right to produce virtual threats against Turkey by producing new threats, new fears, new enemies that do not exist and will not exist” (Erdoğan 2009).

In this context, the “Kurdish Opening” can be considered another part of the establishing legitimacy that the JDP wants to provide within domestic and foreign policy. PM Erdoğan, in his speech at the General Assembly of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, made a distinction between us and the other over those who oppose the “Kurdish Opening” (Erdoğan 2009). With the words “our way, our style is the approach of the nation, it is the style of the nation”, PM Erdoğan, who described the sectors he left out as elements outside the nation, tried to gain a new field of legitimacy.¹¹

3.1.2. Debates Around the Foreign Policy

While reading the program of the first government he headed in the TGNA, PM Erdoğan said, “Turkey's domestic political dynamics and foreign policy dynamics are more interacting than many countries in the world” (Erdoğan 2003). Thus, it can be inferred that the Erdoğan government and the JDP government look at domestic and foreign policy as two areas that are intertwined with each other. Thus, it can be clearly deduced that the evaluation of many foreign policy cases, such as the candidacy process for EU membership, the March 1 voting, and the Davos Crisis, separate from the domestic policy dynamics, would lead to inadequate results. As can be seen in the previous section, it can be clearly said that the active attitude of domestic political actors in the face of foreign policy cases and the rapid establishment of hard partisanship are not ignored when determining Turkey's foreign policy, but the domestic policy also serves as an important catalyst for the emergence of results. Therefore, in this sub-chapter, the debates that affected TFP from 2000 to 2010 will be tried to be detailed.

¹¹ While the support of the “Kurdish Opening” by NGOs, business associations and artists are a legitimizing factor in domestic public opinion for the JDP government and its policies, the support of the EU and the US to this initiative has also been a legitimizing factor for the JDP government and its policies in the international arena.

The general characteristics of the foreign policy pursued during the JDP period can be considered as reducing security to a necessity and putting the economic and cultural dimensions of relations with other countries in the foreground in foreign policy and trying to diminish the importance of the classical state bureaucracy, whether civilian or military. In fact, Davutoğlu stated that the foreign policy pursued by the JDP government has developed in contrast to the trend of increasing security studies in the global sense after September 11. In this development, he emphasised that he could place Turkey in a position that could be a model for other countries. Expressing that 2003 was spent solving chronic foreign policy problems, Davutoğlu described 2004 as the year in which the goal of pursuing active policy at the regional and global level would be followed. He also grounded Turkey's goals in the following years as expanding its relations with neglected regions and emphasised the importance of making changes in the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in line with this goal (Davutoğlu 2004).¹²

One concept introduced by Davutoğlu that would shape the following years was the “zero problems with neighbours” (Davutoğlu 2004). In a later article, he defined this as one of the important principles of Turkey's foreign policy approach that was put forward by the JDP. According to Davutoğlu, Turkey should be an actor that provides security not only to itself but also to its neighbours, and good relations with neighbours have a high economic impact (Davutoglu 2008). In this context, this policy, which aimed to improve Turkey's historically problematic relations with many of its neighbours, continued until the early 2010s. William Hale notes the importance of the “zero problems with neighbours” policy in his article assessing Turkey's Middle East policy. However, he admits that the sustainability of this policy is not very easy due to the conflicts arising from regional dynamics. According to him, the most important aspect of this policy is

¹² Considering the impact of Ahmet Davutoğlu, who was the Chief Advisor to the PM, on the progress of his later career as foreign minister and PM and architect of the latest TFP, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the expression “Turkey should be the center country” used in these statements gives an important clue in terms of the policies to be followed in the future. (Davutoğlu 2004) The strengthening of the discourse that Turkey is an order-building country since the second half of the 2000s, PM Erdoğan's statement in 2007 that Turkey is no longer a country that consumes its energy through internal conflicts and that world balances cannot be created by ignoring Turkey, and the fact that Ahmet Davutoğlu, who declared his goal of becoming a central country and global power, became foreign minister in 2009 should be evaluated together with the ambitious goals set forth by the JDP government in foreign policy. (Karagül 2009) In this sense, the JDP government, which has strengthened its legitimacy in domestic politics since the mid-2000s, and PM Erdoğan's target raising in foreign policy moves showed that the sovereignty in the country has now begun to consolidate.

that “it was obviously better to try to resolve problems than to continue with xenophobic attitudes which had assumed that Turkey was “surrounded by enemies” (Hale 2009). This policy, which can be characterized as a policy to diminish the military from the foreign policy making process, the hints of which are visible in Hale, contributed to the “demilitarisation of the political regime as well as to the desecuritisation of the dominant political discourse” (Özcan, 2012, p. 61).

In his book *Strategic Depth: Turkey's International Position* in which Ahmet Davutoğlu proposes a comprehensive policy for Turkey, he emphasizes the encircling effect of Turkey's strained relations with its immediate neighbours. According to him, the way out of this encircling effect is through policies based on economic and cultural cooperation within the framework of interdependence (Davutoğlu 2001, 143–46). In this context, he implies reducing the weight of the military security bureaucracy in foreign policy making. Davutoğlu's idea, first as an advisor and then as foreign minister, was put into practice in the principle of zero problems with neighbours. Berk Esen and Başar Baysal, in their article examining the relationship between securitisation and democratic regression, argued that the role of the military in decision-making mechanisms weakened during the period when Davutoğlu took an active role in decision-making. They also emphasised that this has led to a process of desecuritisation in relations with Syria and Greece (Esen and Baysal 2022). Cihan Dizdaroğlu and Başar Baysal, in their article analysing the relations between Turkey and Greece, marked that the rapprochement between the two countries, which commenced before the JDP government, accelerated under the JDP government. According to them, one of the most important reasons for this is the JDP's economic and prosperity-oriented policy after coming to power (Dizdaroğlu and Baysal 2022).

When the JDP government came to power was confronted with developments such as the Annan Plan, which began to be prepared for the solution of the Cyprus problem, the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq after the 9/11 attacks and the status of Southern Cyprus as a candidate country for EU membership. As can be seen from the previous chapters, the JDP government has also used foreign policy to gain legitimacy in domestic policy and to expand its field of action. The biggest challenge the JDP faced after coming to

power was the US occupation of Iraq. Abdullah Gül, former PM and president, stated in his speech to the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 2003 that the policies to be followed by Turkey through the steps to be taken in foreign policy would also create importance on a global scale. During the crisis that followed the 9/11 attacks, he claims Turkey was the only country that could stand against the “Clash of Civilizations” thesis¹³, which became increasingly intense; legitimacy and field of action are essential points for our claim (Gül 2003). Later, when PM Erdoğan became the co-chair of the The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (AoC), which started with the initiative of Spanish PM Zapatero and became institutionalised under the UN umbrella, this claim was found an institutional response.

The “Alliance of Civilisations” project, which emerged against the developments such as the 9/11 terror attack, the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rise of Russia and China that affected international politics towards a confrontational phase and Huntington's clash of civilisations thesis, emerged as a development that positively affected Turkey's international prestige. As in the case of AoC, Turkey has pursued a multilateral and soft-power oriented foreign policy in many areas.

Turkey, which has seen itself as a part of the Western alliance for many years and positioned itself within Europe, can also be perceived as the representative of non-Western civilisations due to the co-presidency of the AoC. The undertaking role that Turkey, a country that has obtained candidacy status for full membership of the EU, has taken with Spain in the AoC has led to the debate whether Turkey sees itself as the representative of the Islamic world and part of the eastern civilisations (O. Öymen 2009; Oguzlu 2009). On the other hand, there have been assessments that Turkey's role in the “alliance of civilisations” related to that “to play a conciliatory and unifying role in the

¹³ Huntington, who states that the world was encamped as the first, second and third worlds during the Cold War, says that this disappeared after the Cold War. However, instead, he claims that countries are now camped out over their cultures and civilisations instead of their economic development and political identities. While Huntington argues that ideological commonality during the Cold War prevented the problems created by cultural differences, he states that after the Cold War, civilizations that differed from each other in terms of cultural, traditional, and, most importantly, religious characteristics emerged as “seven or eight” groups in the world. In this context, he claimed that future conflicts and battles would take place on the fault lines of the civilizations he described. Huntington, who does not limit the risk of conflict only between civilizations, draws attention to conflicts intra-civilizations. (Huntington 1993)

global sense” and that it has “become an actor influencing the global agenda” (Gül 2005; Davutoğlu 2009).¹⁴

Beyond all these discussions, the AoC initiative is an essential case in evaluating the foreign policy of the JDP government with the theory of NCR. With the thesis of the “clash of civilisations” that has begun to be discussed in international politics and the impact of the global developments that support this thesis, this initiative had emerged at a time when the JDP government was seeking legitimacy for itself both in the international arena and in domestic politics. The JDP's multidimensional foreign policy approach has found its political reflection in developing relations with many countries from different continents within the AoC framework.

On the other hand, the EU membership candidacy process, which started at the Helsinki Summit in 1999 within the framework of the EU's enlargement strategy and with the support of the United States, was another foreign policy case for the JDP. It was important for the JDP government to exclude the bureaucratic elements that threatened it in domestic politics. The tensions that started with the Annan Plan immediately after the formation of the government continued and became clear with the presidential election in 2007. However, the reform packages that the JDP passed through the TGNA, as part of the EU harmonization process also minimized the bureaucratic impact on the political establishment (Cizre 2003). The adoption made in the structure of the MGK with the seventh harmonisation package adopted in the TGNA paved the way for the appointment of civilians to the General Secretariat of the MGK. In addition, in 2001, the amendment to the law describing the MGK's decisions as recommendation decisions was arbitrated, and the role of the MGK Secretary-General was adjusted accordingly. In the appointment of a civilian secretary-general, the PM's proposal and the approval of the President of the

¹⁴ In his speech in 2005, JDP MP Hüseyin Kansu stated that thanks to the initiatives of the JDP government, the anti-Muslim attitude adopted in international documents and the habits of establishing prejudice-based connections between Islam and terrorism were prevented. (Kansu 2005) Burcu Sunar, who examined the “Dünya Bülteni”, the journal of the JDP, states that the point at which the relations between Turkey and the EU are knotted for PM Erdoğan is the “civilization difference”. According to Erdogan, the solution to the problem lies in “establishing dialogue” and “making alliances” despite the “difference in civilization”. In this sense, it can also be interpreted that Turkey has not evaluated itself within Western civilization. (Sunar 2013)

Republic were brought, and the Chief of the General Staff was excluded from the process (T.C. Başbakanlık Avrupa Birliği Genel Sekreterliği, n.d.).

The biggest debates that marked the foreign policy of the 2000s began to develop from the mid-2000s. After right-wing parties such as in Germany and France won the elections in important European countries, negative rhetoric towards Turkey's EU process began to develop (Milliyet 2005). While Erdoğan said that Turkey had previously pursued an introverted policy due to the loss of self-confidence, he revealed that the psychological effects of this were now broken.¹⁵ Stating that Turkey has also improved its relations with the countries around it, Erdoğan pointed to Armenia as the only country where the only problematic relationship remains (Yeni Şafak 2007a).

In the short period following Erdoğan's remarks, negotiations between Turkey and Armenia began with Swiss mediation. Following the election of Serj Sarkissian as President of Armenia, President Gül wrote a letter of congratulations. President Gül, who paid an official visit to Armenia in 2008, became the first Turkish President to go to Armenia. Gül, who watched the football match between the Armenian and Turkish national teams during his visit to Armenia, invited Sarkissian to Turkey for the rematch. In 2009, when the rematch was played, Sargsyan came to Turkey and watched the match with Gül. A month after Sarkissian's visit to Turkey, the "Protocol for the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations" and the "Protocol for the Development of Bilateral Relations" was signed between Turkey and Armenia in October 2009, in Zurich.

The "Armenian opening" of the government brought about reactions in domestic politics. While the opposition parties, the Nationalist Movement Party (NMP) and the RPP, considered the opening as a mockery of "capitulationist politics" made without putting forward the Karabakh as a condition and under pressure from the United States, ruling

¹⁵ Although Erdoğan claims that Turkey's introverted policy was broken in his own time, there were efforts to improve Turkey's relations with countries in different parts of the world since the late 1990s and early 2000s. One of the most important motives of this effort is Turkey's efforts to integrate into the global economy after the decisions of January 24, 1980, and its export-based economic growth policy. (Turan 2009)

party deputies described it as part of Turkey's regional outlook.¹⁶ U.S. President Barack Obama, who made his first foreign visit to Turkey after being elected president, touched upon the normalization process between Turkey and Armenia in his speech at the TGNA and stated that “the United States strongly supports the full normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia.” (Obama 2009).

The TFP experienced a breakthrough at the World Economic Forum Summit in Davos at the beginning of 2009. Following PM Erdogan's strain with Israeli President Shimon Peres, he has left the panel titled “Gaza is the Model for the Middle East” and returned to Turkey, where he was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd at Ataturk Airport (Hürriyet 2009a). PM Erdogan, in a press conference held at Atatürk Airport, stated that the issue was not related to his person but that he was there representing the Republic of Turkey. In this context, Erdoğan has united himself and the nation and described the rest as “mon cher”:

“I must be very clear. I don't speak the language that some retired diplomats understand. I am not a person who has come from diplomacy. I am someone who came from politics. I am also a core learner in politics. I don't know much about the customs of those diplomats, much less the monarchs. I don't want to know. Only I know that the Republic of Turkey is obliged to protect the honour of the Turkish nation (...) I am not a chieftain. I am the PM of the Republic of Turkey. I do what I have to do, and I did it. I'll keep doing it from now on. This is my character. It's my identity.” (Radikal 2009b)

PM Erdoğan established two important elements in his statements detailed above after the crisis in Davos. The first is that he unifies the relationship between himself and the nation. In this way, Erdoğan has made the task of carrying out the sovereignty of the nation a place where sovereignty is formed in him. Another issue is the criticism of “mon cher” that he brought through retired diplomats. With this criticism, he brings the long-standing debates over the JDP government's foreign policy approach to the agenda of public opinion. Declaring that protect the honor of the Republic of Turkey, Erdoğan

¹⁶ The criticisms made by the opposition parties had two bases. The first is that the ruling party pursues a “capitulationist foreign policy, the second is that foreign policy has been based on bilateral personal relations and developed around these relations. (Bölükbaşı 2009; Elekdağ 2009; O. Öymen 2009; Ergun 2010)

described the people who criticized his attitudes as “mon cher”¹⁷ with an accusatory and critical expression.

Finally, one of the biggest debates on TFP at the end of this period was the “shift of axis” dispute. The “shift of axis” debate, which has been growing since 2009, was heated by the appointment of Ahmet Davutoğlu as Foreign Minister in May 2009. Davutoğlu's response to the “shift of axis” debate is “our axis is Ankara axis, and our horizon is 360 degrees” (Milliyet 2009b). İlder Turan mentions no “shift of axis” problem in Turkey, but there is a stylistic problem. The stylistic problem created the impression that Turkey was beginning to break away from the West and turn to the East. However, what was disregarded is Turkey's effort to pursue a foreign policy coherently with the export-oriented development model hinges on its economic power, which is stronger than in the past, and the effects of the changing international system (Turan 2009). Çandar also presupposes that to say that there is a “shift of axis”, it is necessary to reveal that Turkey has wholly severed its relations with the West. Otherwise, the “shift of axis” claim would be a misidentification. (Çandar 2010)

Some said the “shift of axis” debate was a struggle to reduce Turkey's foreign policy reflexes from the inside. To support this, it was claimed that the “shift of axis” debate was carried out with the discussion of authoritarianism in domestic politics and that a course of action opposite to the JDP's use of foreign policy to transform domestic policy was adopted (Duran 2011).

RPP MP Şükrü Elekdağ, the former diplomat, stated that in the context of the axis shift debate, there are essential differences between the foreign policy pursued by the JDP government and the foreign policy followed during the Republican period:

¹⁷ The repercussions of PM Erdogan's “mon cher” outburst continued for a long time. On 30-31 January 2009, the 17. At the International Security and Cooperation Conference, there was a fierce debate between RPP's MP Onur Öymen and JDP's Murat Mercan, the chairman of the TGNA's Foreign Affairs Committee. (T24 2009) Those who said that the “mon cher” debate and the Davos Crisis were used to consolidate domestic politics and contribute to the local election campaign in 2009 also pointed out that the crisis would have many consequences in the TFP. (A. Öymen 2009) On the other hand, in the face of PM Erdogan's statements, retired diplomats have written a rather harsh statement. In addition to being a heavy criticism of the government's foreign policy stance, the declaration also directly targeted PM Erdoğan with the statement that “we thought that only Armenian terror and other terrorist acts targeted Turkish diplomats.”(Milliyet 2010b)

“(...) I will start by considering the foreign policy implemented in the period from the establishment of the republic to the JDP government. The cornerstones of the foreign policy implemented in this period, albeit sometimes with minor indiscretions, were always to prioritise national interests, pay utmost attention to the protection of independence and not create policies under the influence of external pressures, to follow a policy line that is dominated by the West but is multifaceted and does not neglect the East, to be principled, (...) not to use foreign policy as a tool for domestic policy ambitions. (...) When we follow the foreign policy pursued by the Erdoğan government, my dear friends, (...) this new mindset conducts foreign policy by indexing it to domestic policy and religious motivation. (...) In particular, the indexation of foreign policy to domestic policy and its inspiration from a religious motivation puts the country on adventurous and hazardous paths. PM's statement that the fate of Jerusalem is the same for Turkey as the fate of Istanbul and Ankara is more than rhetoric is an important foreign policy statement”¹⁸ (Elekdag 2010).

When the shift of axis debate is evaluated on two bases, the domestic policy dimension of the TFP, which is basically claimed by both sides of the debate, is revealed. The first is the ideological dimension of the debate. The importance of the military and security discourse in the foreign policy pursued by the JDP government from the first period it came to power until the early 2010s gradually decreased. As mentioned earlier, within the framework of the EU harmonization packages, logrolling was provided between the JDP government, business associations and civil society on the reduction of the role of the military in domestic politics. Searching for new markets for the Turkish economy is the second dimension of the debate. As Turan mentioned, Turkey is also looking for new markets with the export-based development model it has followed since the 1980s. The JDP government's desire to increase its share in markets outside Europe was also aimed at consolidating the logrolling mentioned above.¹⁹ PM Erdogan also underlined economic growth while responding to the axis shift debate. In fact, pointing out that these

¹⁸ In response, Duran states that the opposition has developed an ideological domestic policy discourse by conducting its foreign policy debate through the shift of axis. To support his claim, he directly quoted some parts of Elekdag's speech. (Duran 2011)

¹⁹ Turkish Exporters Assembly (TIM) has been part of the group opposing the axis shift discussions that are also reflected in the trade and business world. Stating that what happened was not an axis shift, TIM claimed that there was a change of trajectory caused by the shift of trade to the east with the effect of the global financial crisis. (Cumhuriyet 2010a) In his statement, the TIM President said that “we are seeking to increase our exports by opening up to new markets” (Hürriyet 2010b), while other statements drew attention to the business dimension of the discussion. (Sabah 2010; Cumhuriyet 2010b)

discussions were malicious, he also stated that the aim of the organizers of the debate was to scare and avert the foreign investment attracted by Turkey.

3.2. Interaction Between Domestic And External Politics

One of the most critical elements that have not changed since the first period of the JDP government has been the permeability between domestic and foreign policy. It inevitably brought about the fact that the two areas were affected by each other. As can be seen in many of the aforementioned examples, the need for legitimacy, which is a result of the search for autonomy and sovereignty in domestic politics, constitutes one of the important reasons for important developments in foreign policy. The JDP government's increasing autonomy and dominance in domestic politics has been an essential factor in the emergence of revisionist movements in foreign policy.

Following the Davos crisis in 2009, the active and multidimensional foreign policy²⁰ (Keyman, 2009) has already been pursued, boosted by the increasing popularity of PM Erdoğan and the JDP both in Turkey and in the Middle East, formed the basis of Turkey's goal of becoming the dominant actor in the region and at the global level. The Davos crisis, which became one of the most important topics of the local election campaign in March 2009, and naturally, the importance of foreign policy was clearly seen in PM Erdoğan's sentences that fed national pride and expressed the disrespect shown to himself was essentially done to all of Turkey:

No one can push the people of this country away. No one can treat this country as a second-class country. No one can establish an equation in which Turkey has no place, especially in regional issues. That's why we call it global peace. That is why we call it the alliance of civilisations. (...) We believe in Turkey, we believe in Turkey's effectiveness and potential, and we believe in Turkey's power. After the events in Davos, some of them wrote and drew it. They said that Turkey

²⁰ The “consolidation of democracy” has been described as an important element in order for TFP to attain a functional appearance and for the concept of soft power to be placed at the core. (Keyman, 2009) During the JDP rule, Turkey's “(...) that she considers herself to be a strong leader and soft power in his region” should not be considered independent of the discussion of democratic consolidation. (Aras and Akpınar 2011, 19) Aydın and Açıkmeşe evaluated the transformation of the TFP related to the EU candidacy process. They claimed that the way the TFP was conducted based on “coercion and pressure” until the Helsinki Summit in 1999 was replaced by an “active, cooperative and constructive policy”. (Aydın and Açıkmeşe 2007)

is losing its role as a mediator, becoming ineffective, isolated, and experiencing a shift of axis. Those who were doom-mongering on that day should see and understand Turkey's increasing importance today, its strengthening mediation role, and its desired and essential mission. (...) There is no longer a government in Turkey that grovels to the leaders of different countries. That's how you know it (Milliyet 2009a).

PM Erdoğan has tried to justify the new foreign policy approach he mentioned above with his criticism of previous governments. In this sense, the JDP government's new foreign policy approach differed from previous governments. Aras and Akpınar claim that the legitimacy sourced from “threat perception” was changed by “peace and cooperation” perception (Aras and Akpınar 2011). In principle, the foreign policy established with this approach cannot be considered unrelated to domestic policy. Because the threat to be established or perceived should be defined through a security problem based on perceptions.

From this point of view, the debate on the shift of axis would not be able to be held independently of domestic politics. The JDP government, which gained significant momentum with the 2007 Constitutional Referendum and General Elections, used domestic policy as a lens for forming foreign policy. Not only the new actions that have been taken to repair the problematic areas of the TFP, but also the new foreign policy understanding that was put forward at the same time found the ground in the period following the 2007 elections. Considering the aforementioned cases one by one, whether the development of foreign policy or the transformations in domestic policy cannot be evaluated independently of each other.

In this context, the relations of domestic and foreign policy developments, which are intertwined, are based on interaction. Thus, it cannot be discussed as a relationship in which domestic policy unilaterally affects foreign policy or vice versa. Two cases from different periods experienced by the TFP will be sufficient to illustrate the reciprocity of the interaction between domestic and foreign policy. The first is the EU candidacy process, which began at the 1999 Helsinki Summit. The EU candidacy process has significantly affected domestic politics and diminished the military's influence on domestic politics through harmonization packages. It has also, as already mentioned,

strengthened the legitimacy of the JDP government in domestic politics. The transformation of the security-oriented understanding of Turkey's geopolitical position²¹ into a liberal version²² was formed in this period.

Establishing a correlation between foreign policy and domestic policy moves and ensuring legitimisation has been the way for the JDP government to avoid crises. In this sense, the JDP government continued its domestic policy reform movements without being isolated from the “process of globalisation and Europeanization” (Duran 2010). The logrolling between JDP and civil society on the EU candidacy made it easier for the JDP government to shift the balance of power in domestic politics in its favour. While reading the cabinet program of his first government, Erdoğan emphasised that the interaction between domestic and foreign policy dynamics cannot be ignored:

Turkey's regional habitat corresponds to very risky geopolitics. This, in turn, eliminates the distance between the domestic and foreign policy axis in Turkey. Turkey's domestic and external dynamics were more interactive than many countries yesterday. Turkey's foreign policy directly affects the nourishment had by our people, and the strength and quality of domestic politics guarantee our country's regional and global interests. In the face of changing regional and global

²¹ Özcan traces this transformation to the end of the Cold War when the security approach that dominated the geopolitical understanding in Turkey was replaced by the understanding of “Turkey at the center of a great Turkic world”. However, in the 2000s, with the collapse of the foundation on which this view was based, the emphasis on “strong geography and strong state” gained importance. In addition, during this period, there was a political struggle between the groups that supported the entry into the European Union with the “Eurasianist geopolitical discourse”. Özcan states that the geopolitical understanding of political Islamist currents has found a response in Davutoğlu and that Davutoğlu's version is trying to relocate Turkey. (Özcan, 2015)

²² To illustrate a liberal understanding of geopolitics; PM Erdoğan said relations with Greece “are not within the framework of hostility (...) based on mutual economic interests”. (Erdoğan 2003) Likewise, noting the importance of mutual visits in relations with Russia, China and Middle Eastern countries, PM Erdoğan stated that mutual relations would be based on the economic benefits. (Hürriyet 2002) From this perspective, the synergy of globalization-based economic policies in accordance with the “post-Washington Agreement” of the AKP with the desire of “Anatolian Capital” to integrate into world markets has systematized the normalization policies in foreign policy, which were implemented with interruptions in the past, during the JDP government. (Uşul 2013) Aras and Akpınar, while describing the change in the TFP, state that “the traditional bureaucratic/authoritarian understanding, which sees concepts such as security, interest and power as basic priorities and takes its legitimacy from the perception of threat, has been replaced by a new understanding based on concepts such as peace, cooperation, solidarity and interdependence.” In fact, what they basically put forward are the concepts of liberal theory, and they state that Turkey has prioritized these concepts as the center of its foreign policy. (Aras and Akpınar 2011) At the dinner given by President Abdullah Gül in honor of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2007, while talking about the relations between Turkey and Syria, he emphasized the expansion of the areas of cooperation between both countries and the Free Trade Agreement signed. (Gül 2007)

realities, Turkey needs to redefine its foreign policy priorities and create a new balance between these realities and its national interests (Erdoğan 2003).

Erdoğan stated that Turkey is in a risky geographical region, and that the distance between foreign policy and domestic policy dynamics has disappeared because of this. Emphasising the impact of foreign policy on society, he linked the status of domestic policy with the effectiveness of foreign policy. Considering the consensus created by the EU harmonisation packages and the candidacy status, it is clearer how foreign policy influences effectively transform domestic policy. In addition, the fact that Turkey's location in risky geography eliminates the distance between domestic and foreign policy also manifests as the legitimising effect of geopolitics (Özcan, 2015).

Second, the 2007 referendum and general election results loosened constraints on domestic politics, which increased the “self-confidence” of the JDP government (Kara 2022). The fact that the JDP maintained its sole power with 46.2% of the vote Abdullah Gül became the president and his rivals at home weakened naturally enabled the JDP government to act much more efficiently in terms of policymaking. Having received the support of business associations and NGOs through the normalisation processes in foreign policy for EU candidacy and in line with the export-oriented development model, the JDP has already strengthened its legitimacy in domestic politics. As Baç states in, “as the political balances in Turkey shifted towards the JDP in terms of voting power, the preferences of the JDP became important in shaping Turkey's foreign policy choices” (Müftüler-Baç 2011). In other words, the JDP, which strengthened its position in domestic politics and decision-making mechanism, had the opportunity to act more efficiently in foreign policy preferences.

The diminishing influence capacity of military bureaucracy in domestic politics by electoral victories won in 2007 naturally increased the influence of the government in decision-making mechanisms of foreign policy. Therefore, the JDP government has had the opportunity to evaluate international systemic variables independently of the struggles in domestic politics. Thus, the foreign policy understanding of his government began to change after 2007 and the foundations of the foreign policy that would begin to transform in 2010 were laid. In this sense, the interaction of domestic and foreign policy has played

an important role in eliminating the actors fighting the JDP in domestic politics. Thereby, the JDP has consolidated the legitimacy of its power and gained the ground for the ambitious and hegemonic foreign policy discourse it will pursue from 2010 onwards. The increase in confidence in the JDP in the Arab world after the victory of the presidential and general elections in 2007 also indicated that Turkey's domestic policy was not independent of its foreign policy (Ataman and Uçgan 2011).

For many, democratisation and consolidation in domestic politics affect foreign policy and Turkey's power of influence in global politics and one of the most important aspects of this was the transformation in civil-military relations (Aras and Akpınar, 2011; Duran 2010; Jenkins 2007; Keyman 2009; Müftüler-Baç 2011; Özcan 2009). In this context, during the JDP government, the interaction between domestic and foreign policy has undergone significant modifications with the conversion in the balance between the actors of the decision-making process, the inclusion of various actors in the foreign policymaking and implementation, and the replacement of the dominant national security discourse with interdependency and economic relations. The involvement of civil society and the gradual exclusion of the military in the foreign policy-making process demilitarized the TFP. Thereby, the EU process and the increasing soft power capacity have accumulated the ability of the government and made internal cohesion. This transformation also consolidated the power of the JDP government, which dominated its power in domestic politics and foreign policy.

In this manner, the de-securitization of TFP went along with the political struggle in domestic politics. The struggle between the bureaucratic apparatus holding the security monopoly and the JDP government was reflected in how the foreign policy was carried out.²³ The fact that the EU's progress reports dated 2002 and 2003 mention the positive

²³ As mentioned in previous examples, the de-securitization of the TFP dates back to the period before the JDP rule. The “national security syndrome” debate put forward by former PM Mesut Yılmaz and the new foreign policy vision drawn and put into practice by former Foreign Minister İsmail Cem paved the way for de-securitization. İsmail Cem's efforts to start improving relations with Greece and President Ahmet Necdet Sezer's diplomatic efforts to improve relations with Syria were continued more broadly during the JDP rule. One of the biggest advantages of the JDP government compared to these periods was that it held the superiority in the TGNA and the comfort of being in power alone. Therefore, diplomatic initiatives could give much more effective results than in the unstable periods of coalition governments. However, it would not be wrong to say that the attitude of the JDP government while conducting foreign policy between 2002 and 2010 evolved to be surrounded by the domestic policy balances due to domestic policy constraints.

change in relations with Greece, Armenia and Syria is one of the important manifestations of the change (European Commission 2002; 2003). During PM Erdoğan's visits to Greece in 2002 as JDP leader and in 2003 as PM, problematic areas in bilateral relations were discussed and deliberated. During the first visit in 2002, the military's flying jets in the Aegean Sea was seen as a message to Erdoğan from the military. In addition, the fact that the foreign affairs bureaucracy was not included in Erdoğan's meetings and that only Foreign Minister Yaşar Yakış accompanied him led to discourses of distrust between the foreign affairs bureaucracy and the government (Birand 2002).

The improved relations with Greece were a process that had been on the agenda since the end of the 1990s. The other de-securitization process that started at the end of the 1990s was experienced in Syria. Another dimension of the crisis with Syria was the possibility that Greece would support Syria in the event of a conflict (Hürriyet 1998b). Although Turkey's tensions with Syria and Greece, the greatest external threats for Turkey during the 90's (Aydin 2003), have been touched together by some approaches, it has followed different methods in response to the PKK problem in relations with both countries (Aydın and Açıkmeşe 2007).

3.3. De-securitization of TFP: Greece and Syria Cases

Greece and Syria are two significant cases in which to examine the TFP's de-securitisation in detail. The recovery in relations with both countries, which started around the same period, is a very serious reflection of the changing of understanding and actors in the TFP. In the 1990s, Turkey was on the brink of war with both. They were defined as two countries in that Turkey should have the capability and resources to fight simultaneously in addition to the PKK (Elekdağ, 1996).²⁴ Thus, both were the countries in the 1990s

²⁴ The 2 ½ War Doctrine, which placed both countries at the heart (Elekdağ 1996) of the claim that they had aspirations over Turkey's vital interests, described these two countries as natural allies to each other and claimed that both gave significant support to the PKK in order to weaken Turkey. The circumstances that occurred between Turkey and Syria and Turkey and Greece must not be thought of separately in the 2 ½ War doctrine due to the intertwined interests of Greece and Syria over Turkey. In this respect, both cases were effective in securitising TFP and weighted the military's role in both domestic and external politics. Elekdağ claims that if the war occurred between Turkey and Syria, Greece would have a chance to imply her plans in the Aegean Sea. (Elekdağ 1996)

where Turkey felt the most severe security threat and fed the national security rhetoric in Turkey.

Since the end of the 1990s, both Syria and Greece have ceased to be a threat and emerged as countries with whom cooperation and bilateral relations have developed. Turkey especially over their support for PKK terrorism from outside and regional disputes, began to significantly improve its relations with both countries in 1999 and 1998.²⁵ Turkey's gradually restoring relations with Greece and Syria led to diminishing the importance of military bureaucracy during the foreign policy decision-making mechanism. On the contrary, while relations with the two countries were vice versa, the military also assumed the leadership of foreign policy (Özcan, 2010). In addition, the leadership role of the military in foreign policy ensured that Turkey's foreign policy was utterly aligned with security.

In this context, Syria and Greece are two cases that accurately exemplify the transition from a security-based foreign policy to an economic and political cooperation-based foreign policy approach. When the security concerns of the relationship with both countries were replaced by the focus on economic and political cooperation, Turkey entered a period in which the weight of the military in foreign policy decreased. In his 2009 article, Kirişçi explains Turkey's transformation with the “trading state” concept. He notes that this transformation started in the 1980s and was interrupted in the 1990s but started reasserting itself, especially with the JDP government's policy of zero problems with neighbours (Kirişçi 2009, 53). Kirişçi and Kaptanoğlu draw attention to another motivation underlying the trading state conceptualization. This motivation is the JDP's awareness that economic development is the key to electoral success. As such, the JDP prioritized increasing foreign trade volume to realize economic development (Kirişçi and Kaptanoğlu 2011, 719). To do so, it has sought to normalize problematic areas in foreign policy. Although the examples of Syria and Greece have different geographical and political characteristics, it would be helpful to understand how the TFP is carried out,

²⁵ Turkey's relations with Syria have been based on cooperation and diplomacy since the Adana Agreement reached in 1998 and its relations with Greece since 1999. (T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, n.d.)

which is produced by systemic compulsives and changes in decision-making processes created by domestic policy dynamics.

3.3.1. Greece: Traditional Enmity

The occupation of Anatolia by Greece in 1919, one of the most significant enemy figures of the Turkish War of Independence, constitutes the psychological root of the tension in Turkish-Greek relations. Although the relations between Greece and the newly established Republic of Turkey, which was expelled from Anatolia by Turkish forces at the end of the war that lasted for many years, recovered in the post-war period, it has fluctuated throughout recent history. The peace regime established in 1923 with the Lausanne Peace Treaty continued in the days when the disagreements between the two states gave rise to the possibility of war in the circumstances.

Although there was no direct war between Turkey and Greece after the War of Independence, issues such as the Aegean dispute and the Cyprus problem have survived until now without any resolution. Turkey's relations with its external enemy Greece (Durgun 2015) were based on a geopolitical security understanding. However the nature of relations between Turkey and Greece has been replaced by cooperation and dialogue since 1999. Greece's FM Yorgo Papandreu's statement that they would support Turkey's EU candidacy process²⁶ and the friendship that developed between the foreign ministers of the two countries were developments that raised hopes for a solution to the problems (İlem 1999).

²⁶ Papandreu's statements expressed the belief that Turkey's EU candidacy process could also open up an opportunity to solve the problems that have not yet been resolved between the two countries: "If Turkey is granted the title of membership in Helsinki, this will increase Ismail Cem's credit. If the result is positive, this will undoubtedly be Cem's chance. So far, we have not been able to solve our problems. However, if Turkey is granted candidacy status, we will support that unconditionally. EU membership is both a chance and a reform for Turkey. I hope that there would be a positive result in Helsinki. If Turkey becomes a candidate, it will have to comply with the Copenhagen criteria on the CBNS and Aegean issues. (İlem 1999) However, at the 1997 Luxembourg Summit and subsequent summits until the Helsinki, Turkey was very disappointed for failing to obtain candidacy status. In fact, the news that Turkey-EU relations had reached the brink was also reflected in the public opinion. The decision to start full membership negotiations with Cyprus at the 1997 Luxembourg Summit had also a negative impact on Turkey's trust to EU. (Cumhuriyet 1997b; Tavşanoğlu 1997; Cumhuriyet 1997a; Yeni Şafak 1999)

Although the rapprochement process of Turkish-Greek relations in the second period of the 1990's started with the Madrid Declaration²⁷ adopted at the The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit in 1997, the tensions experienced in the subsequent developments have strained relations between the two countries. Prior to this, Turkish-Greek relations were strained by the Greek Parliament's declaration that it reserved the right to extend its territorial waters to 12 miles in accordance with the provisions of the UN Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which it approved in 1995. However, by not signing the treaty, Turkey did not recognise Greece's right to expand in the Aegean (M. N. Schmitt 1996). Furthermore, TGNA unanimously accepted a bipartisan statement that threatened Greece with war if the "Greek Government would disrupt the balance established with Lausanne Treaty by extending its territorial waters in the Aegean beyond 6 miles" (TBMM 1995).

In transforming the relations between the two countries into a basis of dialogue and cooperation; the solidarity that took place after the earthquake disasters in 1999, Greece's removal of the veto against Turkey's EU candidacy status before the Helsinki Summit and the bilateral dialogue of Foreign Ministers İsmail Cem and George Papandreou were positively effective. Since the beginning of the 2000s, Turkish-Greek relations have gradually started to recover within the framework of Turkey's EU candidacy process and its policy of solving its problems with neighbouring countries. The meeting of Cem and Papandreou in Greece in 2000 was also of symbolic importance regarding Turkish-Greek relations. The words used by İsmail Cem, the first foreign minister to visit Greece in 40 years, that "what we have achieved so far for the common security and peace of the region and the two countries is a guarantee of what we can do in the future" (Hürriyet 2000) also pointed to the visit of the two ministers to Israel in 2002 to contribute to regional peace. The initiative taken by Cem and Papandreou was a pioneering step for eliminating the historical enmity between Turkey and Greece and making the improvement in Turkish-Greek relations felt at the regional level. During the visit, Papandreou emphasised that the Turkish-Greek rapprochement could be an important example for the countries in the

²⁷ The Madrid Declaration was an agreement that Turkey and Greece arranged to solve their problems peacefully. The Madrid Declaration, which was prepared with the mediation of the United States, was finalised with the negotiations of Turkish and Greek diplomats simultaneously with the NATO Summit in Madrid. (Gürcanlı and Elveren 1997)

region and then made a joint statement with İsmail Cem. This statement, which contained both ministers' proposals for a solution, showed that Turkey and Greece could collaborate against a regional problem (NTV 2002).

In this regard, the rapprochement in Turkish-Greek relations, which began in 1999, continued in the early 2000s. The leader of the JDP, Tayyip Erdoğan, who won the majority in the 2002 parliamentary elections, made his first visit abroad to the TRNC after the election and then paid a visit to Athens. During his official visit to Athens in 2004, PM Erdoğan explained his government's policy towards Greece with the words that “since our government came to power, it has been making efforts to improve bilateral relations with Greece as well as extending our cooperation to every possible area” (Hürriyet 2004).

The environment created by the conundrums between Turkey and Greece in the Aegean Sea was one factor that increased the military's influence on foreign policy. As a natural consequence of containment of these deep-seated problems by geopolitical and security concerns, the increasing influence of the military in foreign policy-making reduced the decisive power of governments on the policies to be conducted. Furthermore, the problems between Turkey and Greece, an issue on which the foreign affairs bureaucracy also has a comprehensive weight due to technical knowledge, eclipsed the areas of cooperation and led to conflicts on the ground in the relations between the two countries.

In this sense, the detente process, which started with the initiative of Cem and Papandreou, continued in parallel with the EU enlargement process that included Turkey and Turkey's domestic policy reforms in the early 2000s. In line with this, Turkey's more active use of tools such as diplomacy, cooperation and trade in its relations with other countries since the early 2000s has transformed the foreign policy areas defined by traditional hostility and geopolitical threats into new areas of cooperation. The case of Greece is important in that it shows how the TFP is influenced by systemic influences, changes in decision-making mechanisms and the domestic policy environment created by the struggle between actors.

3.3.2. Syria: Traditional Enmity

Turkey-Syria relations, like relations with Greece, have been marked by hostility throughout history. Yet, mutual relations between them, dominated by tensions and disputes, peaked in the 1990s for the first time after the 1957 crisis. However, the roots of the tension between the two countries went back much earlier than that. The joining of Hatay to Turkey and the control of water in the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers by Turkey stood out as the most important determinants in Turkey-Syria relations in near history.

In retrospect, some developments escalated the tension between Syria and Turkey during the 1950s. With the impact of the competition between the US and USSR on the Mid-East and the rising influence of Jamal Abdul Nasser's "Pan-Arabism", the tension between Turkey and Syria that has been strained for a long time, has almost reached the war. Strained characteristic of the relationship between Western bloc-aligned Turkey and Eastern Bloc-aligned Syria has also spread to the USA and the USSR and settled under the influence of the cold war dynamics. So much so that the President of the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev, in an interview with the New York Times, stated that Turkey came to the provocations of the US Secretary of State Dulles. Khrushchev also threatened Turkey, saying that in a war that could break out in the Middle East, the United States was too far away to protect Turkey, but the USSR was too close to intervening in Turkey (Reston 1957).

The crisis of 1957 resembles the reflection of the bloc politics of the Cold War. As mentioned above, the Soviet-Syria rapprochement and Nasser's "Pan-Arabism" policy that penetrated Syria, has triggered Turkey's security concerns. Turkey, therefore, has resisted the Soviet entrenchment in the Middle East by relying on US support.²⁸ Aiming to take regional leadership (Armaoğlu 2018, 173–74) and nation-building efforts of the Democrat Party (DP) (Abou-El-Fadl 2013), Turkey's acts of internationalist behaviour

²⁸ While the crisis was escalating, US Middle East Special Envoy Lee Henderson arrived in Turkey. Henderson's planned visit was rescheduled and hastened due to the emergence of an immediate threat. (Cumhuriyet 1957)

have also fostered regional polarization.²⁹ On the other hand, after Turkey's participation in the U.S. policy of “containment” of the SCCB and the establishment of the Baghdad Pact, the USSR's negative attitude towards Turkey continued to increase. While the increasing tension manifested itself in the 1957 Syria Crisis and the 1958 Iraq Crisis, which were briefly mentioned above, the risk of war between the USSR and Turkey arose for the first time since the establishment of the Republic. Although it can be concluded that the USSR did not directly target Turkey but threatened the United States, Krushev's statements in his interview published by the New York Times threatened to destroy Turkey (Tellal 2013, 514–15). In this sense, Syria brought Turkey and the USSR edge of the war; unsurprisingly, it would also get them to the edge of war in 2015, again. Syria has become one of the most important problem areas that the TFP has been unable to overcome for years. As Aras and Köni elaborated on the bilateral relationship and history of Turkey and Syria; they stated that the TFP has a mechanism with a “value-oriented” that operates autonomously:

Turkish foreign policy behavior (...) has its own “rights and wrongs” and is heavily value oriented. Namely, official identity defines the threats based on its own culture of security. Foreign policies come to be extensions of domestic politics and the “others” excluded during the construction of the Kemalist identity provide negative input for foreign policy formulation, making foreign policy hostage to considerations of the establishment identity. In the end, ideological narrowing in domestic politics causes foreign policies to be harsher, less sensitive to change and less flexible (Aras and Köni 2002).

²⁹ Immediately after the first term of the DP government, the economic depression and high inflation spiral that Turkey suffered reduced the capacity necessary to make the development moves promised by the government. Although the DP government held various negotiations to get more American aid, it did not yield significant results. Armaoglu's inference that Turkey plays to regional leadership can be evaluated together with the Eisenhower Doctrine's goal of preventing the USSR from influencing the states in the Middle East. Turkey, and the DP government, in particular, was ready to serve as a voluntary leader to prevent USSR expansionism in the region. (Armaoglu 2018) The “nation-building effort” in al-Fadl's narrative was based on the DP's development discourse. The DP's development discourse covered public works and development projects such as highways and dams. However, while sustainable financial resources were required for these projects, the economic crisis that Turkey had entered since the second half of the 1950s prevented access to these resources. This crisis accelerated the search for external financing. In this context, it was claimed that Turkey escalated the Syrian Crisis in 1957 in order to receive more economic aid from the United States. (Abou-El-Fadl 2013) Altunışık and Tür also underlie the importance of international stimuli and domestic politics of both countries in the relationship. The political change after the father Esad passed away that Bessar Esad, son of Hafez Esad, took his father's throne and subsequently changed the Turkish attitude to Syria. (Altunışık and Tür 2006)

On the other hand, Altunışık and Tür also assert the domestic and systemic effects are intertwined in both states' interaction with each other and the influence of domestic content should not be underestimated. In particular, the end of the Cold War had a great impact on both states due to the disappearance of customary international stimulus³⁰ (Altunışık and Tür 2006). In addition, internalisation of the problems with each other for both countries; were also used as elements that determined and shaped the policy area, enabling the powers to create a legitimacy area within themselves and a political movement area outside.

One of the greatest crises between two neighbours had exploited in 1997. NSC's announcement after the long meeting on February 28, 1997, which was called the "post-modern coup d'état" then, was signed the new era of foreign policy as well as a colossal impact on domestic politics. According to the "National Military Strategic Concept" announced shortly after the February 28 communiqué; While threats such as "fundamentalism" and separatism were defined and focused on as internal threats, countries such as Syria and Iraq were seen as supporters of these threats (Oran 2013; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu 2013).

In September 1998, the Commander of the Land Forces, General Atilla Ateş, went to Hatay and used very harsh and threatening expressions against Syria in his statement there. General Aytaç underlined that Syria supports PKK leader Öcalan and continues to

³⁰ Drawing attention to the internal and external factors affecting the threat perceptions of both countries, Altunışık and Tür have put forward an inclusive study on the nature of relations. One of the most important issues in this study is to emphasize that the fragile and permeable nature of the relations between the two countries is so vulnerable that it is affected by international systemic effects and developments in domestic politics: *"Domestic contexts also shaped bilateral relations within the systemic parameters - the Cold War. The two standing problems of water and security were deeply influenced by internal politics. The water issue was never just a conflict over a technical matter for Syria. It was closely related to identity issues, such as the ideology of self-sufficiency, full independence, and Arab nationalism. (...) For Turkey, the water development project was devised to remedy the unequal distribution of wealth and development in south-eastern Anatolia. This became increasingly pressing as the challenge of Kurdish nationalism in the form of the PKK began to gain ground. Syria first found itself in a strategically disadvantageous environment. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of bipolarity meant not only the end of Soviet aid - particularly military aid - to Syria, but also the disappearance of its room for manoeuvre. (...) As a result of Turkey's increasing threat perceptions in relation to the Middle East, Ankara started a policy of active engagement in the region and thus became an important actor in regional politics. (...) Bilateral relations between Syria and Turkey were affected by these transformations in the new international and regional strategic environment, as well as by how the two countries envisaged their roles in that context."* (Altunışık and Tür 2006)

support him despite all of Turkey's well-intentioned efforts, saying that Turkey's attitude would change in a more aggressive direction (Hürriyet 1998c). Then, the statement made by General Aytaç, who was also a member of the MGK, on the borderline became official with the MGK declaration and increased the pressure on Syria (Temizer 2019). Subsequently, President Süleyman Demirel, in the opening session of the legislative year of the TGNA, defined Syria as a state that follows a hostile attitude towards Turkey (Hürriyet 1998b). Lasty, FM İsmail Cem, in a statement that covered all statements and stated that the diplomatic path with Syria was blocked, implied that the possibility of a solution being military was very strong:

Turkey has only one issue which is to put an end to Syrian-backed terrorism. The only problem that needs to be solved is the end of Syria's support for terrorism. In this case, our analysis is as follows: At least in terms of the point reached today, diplomacy is blocked by Syria. Obviously, it is out of the question for us to tie our hands and wait for Syria to be enjoyed, to consent to the Syrian-backed attacks of separatist violence and to consider this as fate because Syria has blocked the way for diplomacy and left our proposals unanswered. Turkey does not have the luxury and time to fall for empty promises that are not integrated with practice. We do not need it (Hürriyet 1998a).

While making these statements, FM Cem did not reject the mediation attempts of Egypt and Jordan. However, by issuing a harsher statement than General Ateş's statement, he took the initiative into the hands of civilian politics and bureaucracy. In this context, after the February 28 “post-modern coup”, Cem's move alleviated the image of the TFP being in control of the military.

In the late 1990s, Turkey showed its intention to improve its relations with its neighbours during the Minister of Foreign Affairs Cem's era. This has found political correspond since the first period of the 2000s by contributing to Turkey's soft power capacity. Following the Adana Accord signed in 1998 and gradually increasing since the 2000s, the relations between Turkey and Syria have started to be based on mutual dialogue and cooperation rather than the enmity that has continued throughout history. Relations between Turkey and Syria have stabilised after the Adana Agreement was signed in 1998 and have evolved into mutual dialogue and cooperation since the 2000s.

Since the 2000s, relations between Turkey and Syria have developed in many areas, especially in the political and economic fields. Bilateral relations, which have increased under the JDP government since 2002, have reached a better level than ever with the personal diplomacy between PM Erdoğan and President Assad. As in the case of Greece, the JDP government has desecuritized relations with Syria through neoliberal rhetoric, such as increasing Turkey's regional influence and improving trade. Turkey, which has been Syria's fourth-ranked trading partner since 2000, has developed its relations with Syria quite quickly through bilateral trade agreements, visa liberalisation and free trade agreements (Aydın and Aras 2005), and organising joint cabinet meetings. However, after the Arab Spring that started in 2010 spread to Syria, Turkey's efforts to intervene in the developments in Syria with its regional leadership calculations dragged the relations between the two countries to a worse point than the crises of 1957 and 1998. Since 2015, Syria has been defined as a resecuritized area for Turkey due to factors such as increasing terror threats and lack of border integrity.

3.4. Conclusion

In this subchapter, the desecuritization process of the TFP is supported by the examples of Greece and Syria. The reason for choosing these two examples is that although there are deep-seated problems that still need to be solved with both, the improvement of the relations started in the late 1990s and led up to the 2010s. In both illustrations, the JDP government's efforts were made to gain legitimacy in domestic politics and the international arena by developing economic and political relations. At the same time, both examples are important cases of the "zero problems with neighbours" policy, which was one of the foreign policy principles of the JDP government until the 2010s. With this principle, Turkey has adopted the principle of interdependence in its bilateral and multilateral relations and prioritised areas such as economy and culture in its foreign policy. This has led both NGOs and economic and cultural institutions of the state to gain more weight in foreign policy.

With the influence of increasing soft power, the JDP's sphere of influence and PM Erdogan's personal charisma began to increase in the Middle East, paving the way for the role and goal they assigned to themselves to become more assertive. In addition to the economic growth achieved under his term, PM Erdogan has recalibrated and regulated the state's political concept by increasing the economic and cultural ties with the country's "traditional enemies". It also meant the reconfiguration of the decision-making actors in Turkey. In this context, in the face of the changing regional and global realities, he stated that *"Turkey needs to redefine its foreign policy priorities and create a new balance between these realities and its national interests. (...) Those who adhere to the approach of evaluating, understanding and questioning this new period with the concepts, patterns and habits of the past will be condemned to remain in an inefficient and fruitless political effort by falling away from the dynamism and will of change"* (Erdoğan 2003).

In the JDP's 2007 election manifesto, while declaring Turkey the goal of becoming a *"regional power and an effective global actor"*, it was stated that Turkey was brought to an influencing and determining position where it was no longer affected or determined

(AK Parti 2015). In this context, the redefinition of the foreign policy priorities that Erdoğan put forward in his speech in 2003 was rewarded with becoming a regional power and an effective global actor in 2007. Davutoğlu's goal of “making Turkey, the central country, a global actor commensurate with its potential”, put forward in 2004, was a manifestation of the redefinition of TFP expressed by PM Erdoğan in his 2003 speech (Davutoğlu 2004).

In summary, the desecuritisation of the TFP, which started in the late 1990s, intensified in the 2000s. The international constraints and domestic political struggles of the period also provide a combined contribution to the progress of TFP through the de-securitization path. International influences such as the EU's enlargement policy, the US invasion of Iraq, the rise of China and Russia, and the power struggle and changes in domestic politics have had an impact on the TFP. The transformations that took place during this period also formed the basis of Turkey's drive to further expand its sphere of influence between 2010 and 2015. Thus, in the JDP's effort to consolidate its power and its quest for autonomy, the TFP has entered into a conceptual and practical drift.

4. TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN TRANSITION: FROM DE-SECURITIZATION TO RE-SECURITIZATION: 2010-2015

The period between 2010 and 2015, under the JDP government, led to dramatic changes in foreign politics as well as international politics. In a domestic sense, the JDP and its leader Erdogan's growing ability to rule also neutralized the constraints that forced the government to formulate foreign policy. The JDP, which won the parliamentary elections of 2007 and 2011 and the referendum of 2010 with clear majority in ensured the concentration of power. As a result, the JDP government has begun to conduct foreign policy without regard for the concerns of state institutions. For example, there is no international factor forcing the JDP to abandon its relations with Israel; the policy pursued has led to a rupture in relations between the two countries. So, the question appears that if there is no international variable that forces them to pursue the current policy, why did the leadership of the JDP act in this way, what did they aim to achieve, and how did they perceive the national interest?

Özcan states that the power concentration by the JDP since 2007 has led to a more active foreign policy (Özcan, 2018a, p. 20). Aydın and Dizdaroglu also emphasize the impact of the 2007 elections on the JDP's foreign policy approach (Aydın and Dizdaroglu 2018). Özbudun and Özpek and Yaşar, on the other hand, define the 2010 referendum as an important step toward the JDP's consolidation of power over the state (Ergun Özbudun 2014, 156; Özpek and Tanriverdi Yaşar 2018, 201–2). Taskin, on the other hand, describes the 2010 constitutional referendum as a victory of the JDP government against the “Republican Guards” and claims that contrary to liberal expectations, it has led to the “authoritarianism” of Turkey (Taşkın 2020, 285).

While PM Erdoğan described the 2010 constitutional referendum as a struggle against the “members of the political tutelage” within the country, he claimed that the arrangements to be made were the ones that would determine the future and fate of Turkey (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan 2019b, 7:115). Erdoğan had accused opposition parties that came out against the constitutional proposal of prioritizing the JDP's electoral losses over Turkey's interests. At this point, he described the application to the constitutional court for the

annulment of the constitutional referendum as a disregard for the “will of the nation” (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan 2019a, 63:104–5).

During this period, there have also been important changes in international politics. First of all, developments such as the 2009 global financial crisis, the rise of China, the US withdrawal from Iraq, the Arab Spring and the Crimean annexation of Russia have significantly affected global politics. On the other hand, developments such as the Syrian Civil War and the emergence of ISIS have led to significant global and regional security developments. In light of all these developments, there is a dynamic transformation in international drivers.

Finally, this period also contains many tensions and shakes in domestic politics. Following the Ergenekon and Balyoz investigations that took place towards the end of the 2000s, the JDP government accumulated its power with the 2010 referendum. During the period from the beginning of 2010 to the end of 2015, Turkey experienced various fluctuations in domestic and foreign policy, and these fluctuations significantly affected the decision-makers assessment of international inputs. The debates on the presidential system, which have been increasingly discussed since the 2010s, the operations of 17-25 December and the Gezi Park protests, which posed an existential threat to the JDP government³¹, and finally the general elections of 7 June and 1 November have had an ominous impact on domestic politics and the government's perception of internal threats.

In this section, through three sub-chapters, Turkey's move away from the de-securitization process since the 2000s is examined. The main issue of this section is to examine how the period from 2010 to 2015, categorized as a period of transition, led to the process of re-securitization in Turkish politics. The chapter is concerned with both the

³¹ Fahrettin Altun mentions that PM Erdoğan sees the December 17-25 operations and the Gezi Protests as a coup attempt against him rather than an attack on the JDP. (Altun 2016e, 169) PM Erdogan described both incidents as an operation against Turkey. According to Erdogan, these operations are the traps of those who are unhappy with Turkey's development and prosperity. In a speech, he uses the following statements about both events: “Look, if the Gezi events had achieved their goal, believe me, we would be living in a very different Turkey today. Maybe we would be living the fate of Egypt, maybe Syria, maybe Ukraine. If the coup attempts of December 17 and 25 had succeeded, today we would be living in a Turkey where the law is trampled underfoot, those who are different are imprisoned and punished, and all reforms and all silent revolutions are eliminated.” (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan 2019c, 65:501) In this context, PM Erdogan's view of his own destiny and the destiny of the country is that they are one and the same.

application of Carl Schmitt's concepts into Turkish politics and the explanation of the situation with the set of assessments of NCR.

First, Turkey's active foreign policy since the 2000s will be evaluated together with PM Erdogan's rising popularity in the Middle East. In this context, it will be contended that PM Erdogan's growing popularity in the Middle East and Turkey's growing capacity due to increasing economic strength have added self-confidence and ambition to foreign policy making. Since the 2010s, with Erdogan's growing charisma in the Middle East and the inspiration of the Turkish model proposed to other countries, Turkey's influence in the region has continued to increase. Before the Arab Spring, Turkey's relationship with Mid-East countries had grounded on mutual and multilateral economic and political cooperation. However, Turkey took a more intervening role during the Arab uprisings.³² With the Arab Spring, Turkey started to support opposition movements against the governments in the Middle East and the foreign policy developed by PM Erdoğan and FM Ahmet Davutoglu, which intervened in the internal dynamics of the countries in the region, caused Turkey to skip from being a mediator to being a part to conflicts.

In the second subchapter, the international stimuli of the period will be examined. The purpose of this will be to explain the international developments of the period and to reveal the impact of these developments on the formation of TFP. The most important feature that distinguishes NCR from its other types is that it considers the influence of international variables on decision-makers. In this sense, whatever the goals or mindsets of the decision-makers, any transformation or development that can affect the international system affects the decision-making process. As will be mentioned in the second subchapter, many systemic developments that started in the 2010s had an impact on the decisions taken by PM Erdoğan.

³² Some experts explain Turkey's intervening role in this period as it abandoned its long-term defensive role during the Cold War conjuncture. Thus, according to Üstün and Yılmaz, who defend this view, Turkey's active foreign policy as well as the “dignified attitude” were effective in the emergence of the Arab Spring. Üstün and Yılmaz, who examine Erdogan's trips to Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia after the transformations in the Arab Spring in the article titled Erdoğan Effect, emphasise that Turkey's transformative effect can improve democracy in the Middle East. (Üstün and Yılmaz 2011) On the other hand Barkey also stated that Erdogan was the leader and hero of the Middle East began to be voiced before the Arab Spring word duel with PM Olmert and the “Mavi Marmara” incident. (Barkey 2010)

Finally, in the third sub-chapter, the changing domestic threat perception in Turkey and the developments in domestic policy will be evaluated. The aim of doing this will be to reveal how the transformation in domestic politics has created the environment in which re-securitization was evolving. The most important feature of this period is that many social and bureaucratic upheavals, especially widespread social protests, took place together. During this period, which resulted in the general elections of June 7 - November 1, 2015, the perceptions of the threat to internal security changed, and as mentioned before, the turmoil that took place during this period was described by PM Erdogan as coup attempts against his own power.

4.1. The charisma of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in the Middle East: Rise and Decline

Since the beginning of the 2000s, foreign policy has started to occupy an essential location in Turkish politics, as mentioned before.³³ In the previous chapter, which dealt the developments up to 2010, it was observed that the relationship of foreign policy to the transformations in domestic policy and the boundaries of the foreign policy to domestic policy relationship became increasingly blurred. One of the main topics of this section will be to reveal the transition of PM Erdogan to the position of the most important actor determining foreign policy. In this context, PM Erdogan's foreign policy activities and his increasing popularity, especially in the MENA region after the Davos Summit, will be examined.

PM Erdogan's rising popularity accompanying foreign policy activity is not a phenomenon that happened suddenly. The origins can be found in the characteristics of many different economic and political developments. To some, it was a result of positive economic indicators and the consolidation of power in domestic politics, (Tezcür and Grigorescu 2014, 258), while for others, it was due to Erdogan's quest to bring Turkey

³³ The fact that foreign policy has increasingly occupied more space in Turkish politics can be seen in Ataman's statement that "the ongoing political power and the strong political leadership in the person of President Erdoğan have come to the fore as the most important domestic political elements of Turkey's high-profile and pro-active foreign policy." (Ataman 2020) The relationship established between Erdogan's leadership and Turkey's high-profile and pro-active foreign policy implies that they are an integral part. Thus, Erdogan's political presence becomes the founder of the TFP. This allusion in Ataman places Erdogan as the ultimate hegemon at the center of Turkey's foreign policy.

back to the status of great power (Cagaptay 2019, 174). Erdogan's desire to bring Turkey to the level of great power and his proposals for power concentration in domestic politics with the rise in the economy ultimately lead to Erdogan's effort to rule the country in a direction.

Erdogan, who won three elections and one referendum between 2007 and 2011, was on the rise as much in domestic politics as his popularity among the people of the Middle East.³⁴ One of the most striking examples occurred at the Davos Summit. In the polls that took place after this summit, Erdoğan was seen as the most popular leader in the Middle East. The tension he experienced with Israeli President Peres at the Davos Summit, which stood out as a very important factor in his popularity in the Middle East, brought about the exclusion of the traditional foreign policy bureaucracy in domestic politics by Erdogan (Öniş 2011). As mentioned in the previous section, Erdogan, who was greeted at the airport by a large crowd on his return from Davos, separated his foreign policy vision and style from the traditional foreign policy bureaucracy and described them as “mon cher”.

4.1.1. On the Path to Leadership of the Muslim World: Israeli Tensions

The tension between Turkey and Israel could be rooted back to earlier than the Davos incident. Israel's Operation Cast Lead in Gaza in 2008 marked the most obvious beginning of the tension between Israel and Turkey, first in Davos and then in Israel's attack on the Mavi Marmara.³⁵ While PM Erdogan described Operation Cast Lead as a “crime against humanity” (Milliyet 2008b), relations with Israel came to a breaking point. Just before this operation, Israeli President Ehud Olmert paid an official visit to Turkey at the end of his term. During this official visit, the Israeli Syrian peace talks mediated by Turkey were

³⁴ In the Annual Arab Public Opinion Survey conducted in 2010 and 2011, Tayyip Erdoğan significantly increased his popularity compared to 2009. In 2010 and 2011, the answer to the question of which world leader do you admire other than your own country in the research came out on top. (Telhami 2010; 2011)

³⁵ According to Sönmezoğlu, the crises with Israel in 2009 and 2010, and the Ahmet Davutoğlu's appointment as FM represent the most important differentiation in terms of Turkey's regional policy. Referring to the increasing place of civil authority in foreign policy-making as a result of the internal political struggle put forward in this study, Sönmezoğlu considers this as another dimension of the change of the entourage of relations with the region. (Sönmezoğlu 2016, 544–46)

evaluated, and it was stated that the process was progressing positively (Habertürk 2008b).

While the start of the operation following Erdogan's meeting with Olmert led to criticism within the country that Erdoğan was aware of the operation, Erdoğan stated that the subject of the bilateral meeting was the ongoing peace process between Israel and Syria and described the start of the operation as “disrespectful to Turkey” in the days following the meeting (Milliyet 2008a). In this context, the Davos crisis has been a part of a deterioration process rather than a fact. Davos is the beginning of a process of producing a new leadership in the Middle East for Turkey and accelerating deterioration in Israeli-Turkish relations. At this point, the pro-government media's portrayal of Erdogan as the new leader of the Middle East and the symbolization of this rise with the phrase “one minute” used in Davos (Özcan, 2018b) would form the background of the motto “The World is Bigger Than Five”, which he would later use in his speech at UNGA (Erdoğan 2014b).

Another extension of the *mon cher* controversy, which was mentioned earlier in the immediate aftermath of the Davos crisis, was experienced when Turkey's ambassador to Tel Aviv, Oğuz Çelikkol, was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to convey Israel's reaction after the raid of an Israeli diplomatic mission in the Turkish TV series “Valley of the Wolves”. This incident, which took place at the beginning of 2010, brought about another crisis in the already tense relations when Ambassador Çelikkol was placed in a low chair opposite Ayalon, the Undersecretary of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The incident also led to criticism in the pro-government media that the ambassador remained passive, and those Turkish ambassadors had not benefited enough from the “new Ottoman wind” blowing in the Middle East (Barbarosoğlu 2010).³⁶

³⁶ Although there are not many severe criticisms of Ambassador Çelikkol regarding the current crisis, the point expressed by Barbarosoğlu is vital for the foreign policy pursued by the JDP government. Barbarosoğlu's criticism in *Yeni Şafak* is not a part of the “*mon cher*” criticism that PM Erdoğan developed through former members of the Foreign Ministry who found his behaviour in Davos diplomatically wrong. On the other hand, Öniş also sees Davos as the traditional foreign policy bureaucracy in Turkey being “marginalised” from the formalisation and implementation of foreign policy. (Öniş 2011, 52)

Last but not least, the relations between Turkey and Israel ruptured after the Mavi Marmara flotilla was attacked by Israel. The ship carrying humanitarian aid to be taken to Gaza carried passengers of many different nationalities. After the attack, PM Erdogan returned from a tour of South America and announced that Turkey's ambassador to Tel Aviv had been recalled to the country. He also stated that the State of Israel could lose Turkey's friendship and said, “the more precious Turkey's friendship is, the more violent its hostility. Even losing Turkey's friendship is a great price in itself” (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:46). In these words, Erdoğan described the state of Israel as being an enemy of Turkey and said, “(...) the more you are behind the illegality, the more we are behind the law. The bloodier operations, aggression, and terror you are, the more we are behind peace and justice. The more you are against civilians, the oppressed in Gaza and Palestine, the more we are on the side and behind the civilians, the innocent, the Palestinians and the Gazans” (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:49).

This rupture in relations between Turkey and Israel and Erdogan's remarks towards Israel signaled that this problem would be increasingly internalized, as Özcan claimed (Özcan, 2018b). Although Turkey has started legal and political processes in international organizations against Israel, the problem was also internalized. It, thus, became a political campaign carried out by the government and PM Erdogan. Erdogan announced Israel's removal from the Anatolian Eagle exercise in 2009 on the grounds that we could not ignore the people's demand (NTV 2009). The situation in Turkey-Israel relations, which have a very deep military dimension, also formed the basis for the claim that the JDP government had completely assumed the policymaking (Balci and Kardaş 2012, 113).

After the electoral victories in 2007, JDP consolidated its power and authority until 2010. Thus, it can be said that it has gradually dismissed or restructured the institutions of policymaking. In this context, the example given on the situation in Israel-Turkey relations through the concentration of power in foreign policymaking; In this relationship, which has a very strong military dimension, it has developed on the basis that the military dimension is no longer sufficient. PM Erdogan's announcement of Israel's removal from the Anatolian Eagle exercise as a public demand and his use of tensions with Israel to

accuse his domestic opponents of being with Israel ³⁷ can be explained by the fact that he is a ruler capable of friend/foe categorization.

While the tensions with Israel accelerated the transformation of the TFP, it overlapped with the period when the power of the JDP government's rivals diminished in domestic politics. The role of the "voice of the oppressed" in Erdogan's foreign policy, which will gradually increase his sphere of sovereignty, has shown itself so clearly for the first time during the tension with Israel. The impact of PM Erdogan's global campaign in this direction, which strengthened his power in domestic politics, ironically coincided with the rise of his assertive stance in foreign policy at a time when the power of his rivals in domestic politics was weakening.

4.1.2. Indicator of Active Foreign Policy and a Tool in Domestic Policy: Activism and Overseas Trips

Erdoğan has attached importance to following an active foreign policy since the early 2000s and has made the policies he has followed since the 2010s even more assertive. Between 2010 and 2015, Erdogan made a total of 165 foreign trips³⁸, 46 of which he went to European countries (including Eastern Europe) and 37 of them to MENA countries. Among these trips, Erdoğan visited Saudi Arabia the most with 8 times, while he visited Azerbaijan, Qatar, Russia, Germany, and France 7 times each. On the other hand, it is seen that Erdoğan made 89 of his foreign trips to European countries between 2003-2009 and 59 of his foreign trips to European countries between 2010-2015.³⁹ According to

³⁷ In his speech in Bursa in June 2010, PM Erdogan said that "I reminded him of the sixth of the 10 Commandments in the Torah in three languages and said, 'You will not kill.' It is very interesting that I called Tel Aviv, and the answer, unfortunately, came from Kesan. (...) Someone is answering on behalf of Tel Aviv. He is acting as a lawyer for Tel Aviv" (Yeni Şafak 2010). The person PM Erdogan accused of acting as Tel Aviv's lawyer in the speech is RPP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. Accusing Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu of acting as Israel's lawyer, PM Erdogan sees Israel and the RPP leader as part of a coalition against him. Thus, he characterizes the coalition formed against him as collaborating with the enemy abroad.

³⁸ These numbers are the sum of his overseas visits during the PM and President periods.

³⁹ The picture becomes more interesting when Eastern European and Balkan countries are extracted from the annual average of European trips. Compared to the previous period, it can be seen that European travel has fallen by almost half. Erdoğan, who travelled to European countries 62 times between 2003 and 2009, decreased the number of trips he made to European countries between 2010 and 2015 to 32. When the annual average of these periods is taken into consideration, the number of annual trips to European countries decreased from 8.85 to 5.33.

these figures, Erdoğan's annual travel average to European countries (including Eastern Europe and Balkan countries) was 12.71 in the previous period, and the average yearly travel to European countries (including Eastern Europe and Balkan countries) decreased to 9.83 in the following period.

Another interesting result related to overseas trips emerges from trips to the USA. While Erdoğan made 12 trips to the United States in the previous period, he made four trips in the following period. The annual average of U.S. trips, which fell sharply to a ratio of 1 in 3, also declined from 1.71 to 0.66. Considering the UN General Assembly, which is held annually in New York, USA, this decline in trips is quite remarkable. Furthermore, Erdoğan, who made a total of 7 US trips in the former period except for the UN General Assembly and summits with international participation, made only 2 US trips in the latter period except for the UN General Assembly and summits with international participation. However, the number of trips to Russia has not decreased and has remained the same. A total of 14 visits to Russia took place in both periods.

The sharp decline in travel to European countries has not been observed in MENA countries. Especially during this period, Erdoğan started to decline in relations with many MENA countries, especially Egypt and Syria and traveled to MENA countries 41 times between 2003 and 2009 and made 37 trips between 2010 and 2015. Considering the annual average, it can be said that Erdoğan's visits to MENA countries have increased. In the previous period, the yearly average was 5.85 visits, while in the following period, this average increased to 6.16 per year.

In the same way, the other regions to be affected by the decrease in foreign travel stand out as Asia and Africa. Erdoğan, who traveled to Asian (including Central Asia and Far East Asia) countries 29 times in the previous period, is seen to have traveled to these countries 32 times in the following period. The number of trips Erdoğan made to this region increased from 4.14 to 5.33 on average annual trips. When the same figures are looked at in terms of African countries, it can be said that the number of trips has doubled. While 5 trips to African countries were organized in the previous period, the number of

these trips increased to 10 in the following period. Looking at the annual average, an increase from 0.77 to 1.66 is observed.

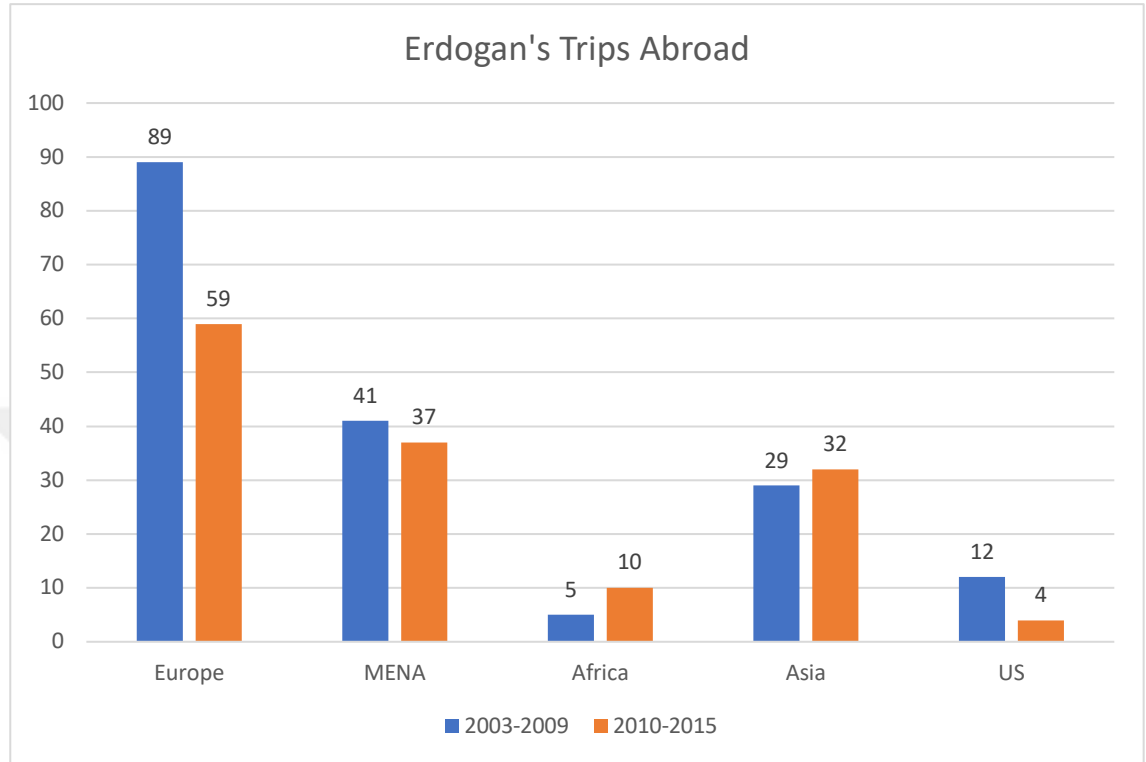


Figure 3: Erdogan's Trips Abroad, Source: *resmigazete.gov.tr*

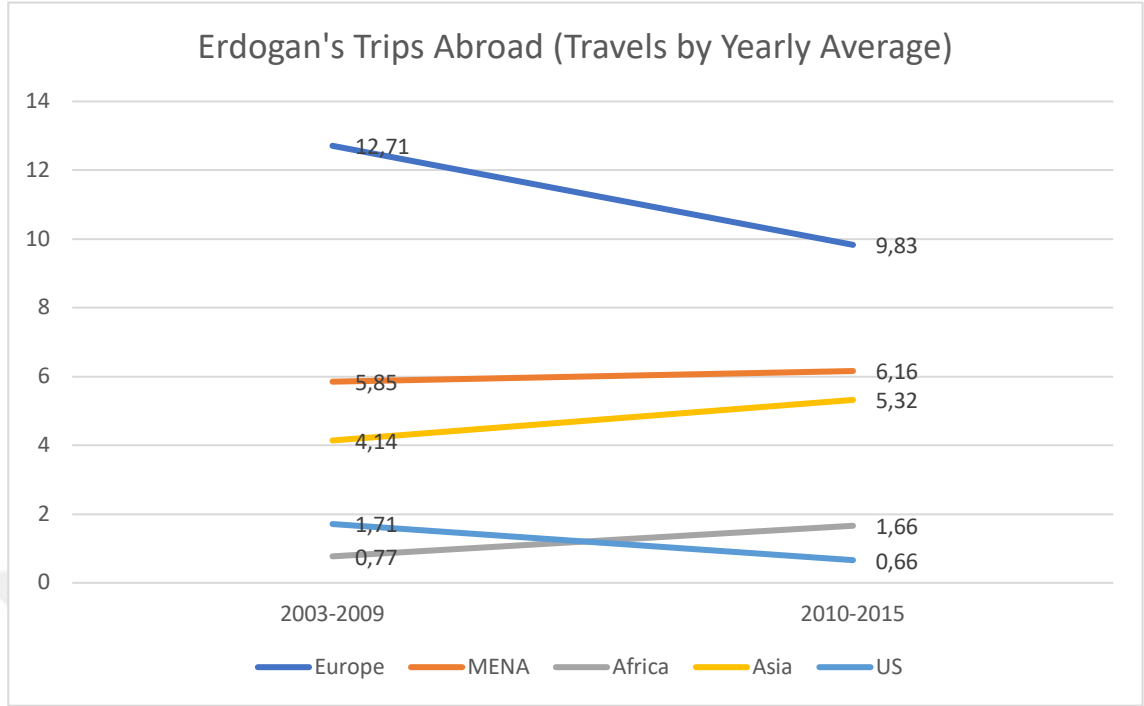


Figure 4 Erdogan's Trips Abroad (Travels by Yearly Average), Source: resmigazete.gov.tr

Erdogan's rising popularity manifested itself not only in the Middle East but also appeared in Africa. Former FM Ahmet Davutoğlu, in a speech addressed to Turkish Ambassadors in 2010, stated that countries that cannot take part in the first tier of the international system want Turkey to represent them. Accordingly, Davutoglu said that the President of Tanzania noticed Africa's representation in the G-20 inadequate and stated that he wished Africa to be represented by PM Erdogan (Davutoğlu 2010). Although Turkey's interest in Africa dates to before the JDP government, this interest intensifies during the JDP government. Numan Hazar, former ambassador to Nigeria and head of the working group that wrote the 1998 Africa Action Plan, states that the increase in Turkey's activity in Africa is based on two developments: the 1998 Africa Action Plan and the declaration of 2005 as the year of Africa. According to him, due to the consistent policy pursued after 2005, Turkey's relations with African countries have gained significant momentum (Hazar 2013).

Another dimension of improving relations with Africa is the economic and political differences put forward by JDP governments in foreign policy. In the post-2010 period, security cooperation figured more frequently in African relations, which had been focused

on the economic and political partnership between 2003-2010. According to the contents of the bilateral agreements approved by the Foreign Relations Committee of the TBMM since 2003, only two military and security-themed bilateral agreements were signed between 2003 and 2009, while this number increased to 7 between 2010 and 2015 and 48 after 2015. Military and security agreements, which had a share of 7.69% in the bilateral agreements signed with African countries between 2003 and 2009, increased to 18.91% in 2010-2015 and to 30.9% after 2015. With the effect of the increase in the last two periods, the share of military and security agreements in total bilateral agreements was 26.22%.

The content of the bilateral agreements, which can also give some ideas about the substance of Turkey-Africa relations, has increasingly begun to shift to the field of security and military cooperation. On the other hand, the share of defence industry cooperation agreements in these agreements has gradually increased after 2015. In this sense, the agreements have been signed in the defence industry since 2015 with these countries: Gabon, Somalia, Benin, Chad, Congo, Mali, Senegal, Djibouti, Niger, Rwanda, and Côte d'Ivoire. Although these agreements do not seem to be an indicator alone, they make sense in the context of the securitisation of TFP. The increase in security and military cooperation agreements in relation to the securitisation of TFP is a supportive indicator, both in terms of the periodic segmentation we made in examining TFP in this study, and in terms of our claim in general.

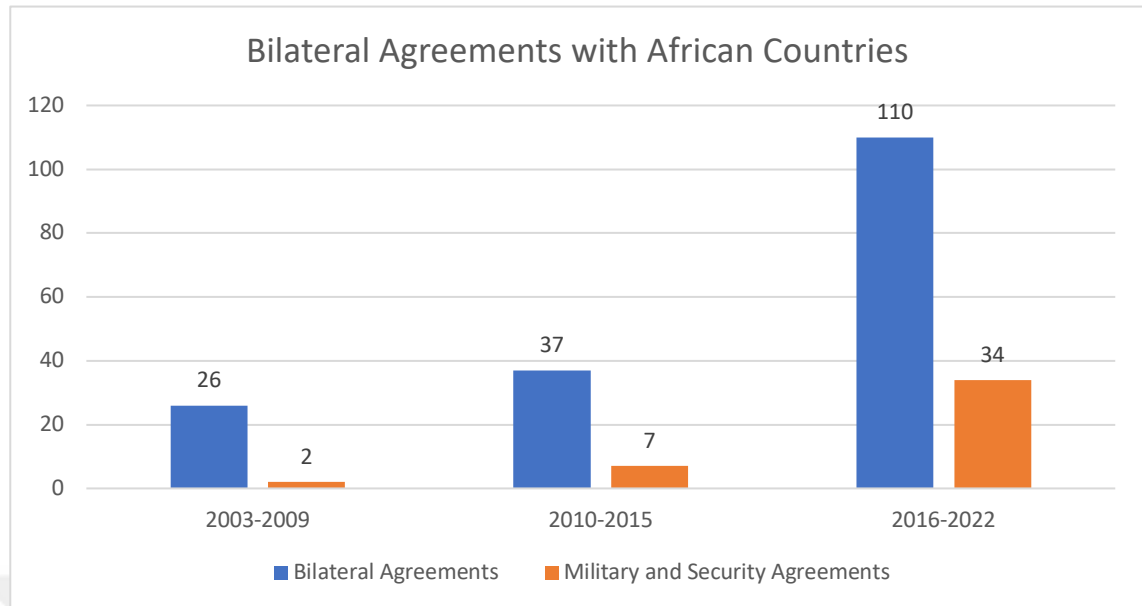


Figure 5 Bilateral Agreements with African Countries, Source: TGNA Foreign Affairs Committee

Turkey's increasing relations with Africa, with which relations were not developed much in erstwhile periods, have also contributed significantly to the fact that PM Erdoğan is referred to as the “voice of the oppressed”. In his speeches in 2010, PM Erdoğan referred to the place of defending the rights of the oppressed in the TFP as “the best example of nationalism”⁴⁰ (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:18, 124, 209). PM Erdoğan also used Turkey's growing foreign policy activism as a tool to against his political rivals at home. Linking

⁴⁰ Behind PM Erdoğan's presentation of the defense of the rights of the oppressed as the best example of nationalism is Turkey's growing regional activities. While emphasizing the renovations, aid, and cultural activities carried out, especially in the Balkans and Africa, Erdoğan criticizes his political opponents in domestic politics: “While neither the own nor the dreams of those who make politics through nationalism can achieve what we do, we show the power of the Turkish nation here with our works, services and all our being. We protect the Turks, who are in the minority. We are spreading Turkish in the world. We protect cultural heritage, we reach out to the victims and oppressed, we promote Turkey and carry out lobbying activities” (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:212). According to him, Turkey's humanitarian aid and the international arena have turned the JDP into “a group that has written its name in history as the voice of the oppressed all over the world, especially in our region, as well as in Turkey” (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:264). In the following years, Erdoğan continued to express that the JDP was on the side of the oppressed in every corner of the world: “The JDP is not only the party of Turkey but also the party of the world. From Mogadishu to Sarajevo, Damascus to Skopje, Sana to Bishkek, Abu Dhabi to Islamabad, Gaza to Benghazi, and Pristina to TRNC, wherever there is an oppressed person in the world, the JDP is at its side” (Erdoğan 2019c, 94:31). At this point, the JDP and the state have begun to unite in PM Erdoğan's rhetoric because he considers the state and the party to be the same. Although the examples can be multiplied, a final example in this context will suffice. To PM Erdoğan's remarks targeting the NMP in the previous example, another opposition party, the RPP, can be added: “We do not and cannot remain silent against what is happening in Syria. We cannot turn our backs on the Syrian people. We do not pat the back of the oppressors who slaughter their people, as the main opposition party and other opposition parties do. Let the RPP go and support the Baath Party, which shares the same mind and mentality; we will stand in solidarity not with the Baath Party but with the oppressed Syrian people” (Erdoğan 2019c, 94:144).

the policy of being the “voice of the oppressed” to Turkey's imperial past, PM Erdoğan and the JDP leaders have used this perception to concretize the self/other divide in domestic politics as well.

While PM Erdoğan claims that the foreign policy pursued by the JDP government is a new beginning for Turkey, he distinguishes it from the foreign policy followed before the JDP government. While calling the active foreign policy approach exhibited in different regions of the world a “dignified foreign policy”, he uses Turkey's activity in international institutions and the opening of new embassies in the first place and the involvement of institutions such as Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), and the Presidency of Religious Affairs (DİB) as institutions that support foreign policy as concrete indicators.

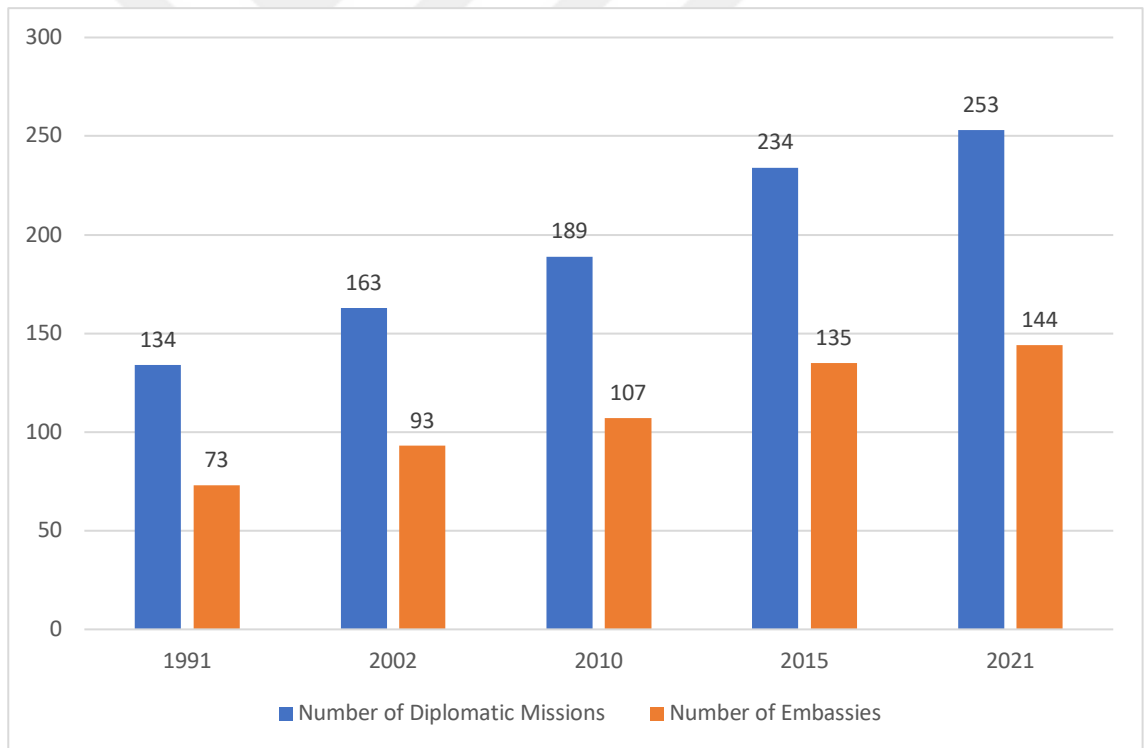


Figure 6 Number of Diplomatic Missions, Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

When Figure 6, which shows the number of diplomatic missions abroad by year, is examined, it is seen that 90 new representative offices were opened abroad during the JDP government. However, as can be seen from Figure 6, the upward trend of Turkey's

diplomatic missions abroad began before the JDP government. The annual increase in Turkey's diplomatic missions abroad was 2.63 per year from 1991 to 2002, 3.25 per year from 2002 to 2010, 9 per year from 2010 to 2015, and 3.8 per year from 2015 to 2021. In fact, the trend observed in the context of increasing the number of diplomatic missions abroad continues to increase with the JDP government. In this context, the increase in diplomatic representations, which are part of the active foreign policy understanding of the JDP government, can be characterized as the continuation of the policies of the coalition governments in the 1990s.

Another indicator of the active foreign policy of the period was the official visits abroad, as aforementioned before. Figures 3 and 4 show that Erdogan has started prioritising Asian, MENA and African countries in his abroad visits. The similarity with the data revealed by these trips in the same direction is the regional changes in bilateral agreements. It can also be said that bilateral agreements with countries in these regions are another indicator of the value given to these regions. Considering Figure 5, it can be observed that the number of bilateral agreements with Europe has decreased. In contrast, the number of bilateral agreements with the remaining three regions is increasing. The numbers in Europe include the Balkans and Eastern European countries. In the 2010-2015 period, the bilateral agreements with Europe did not decrease to a much smaller figure due to the increase in agreements with the Balkan countries. If the bilateral agreements with the Balkans countries were excluded from the number of bilateral agreements with European countries, the number of bilateral agreements made decreased from 82 to 49.

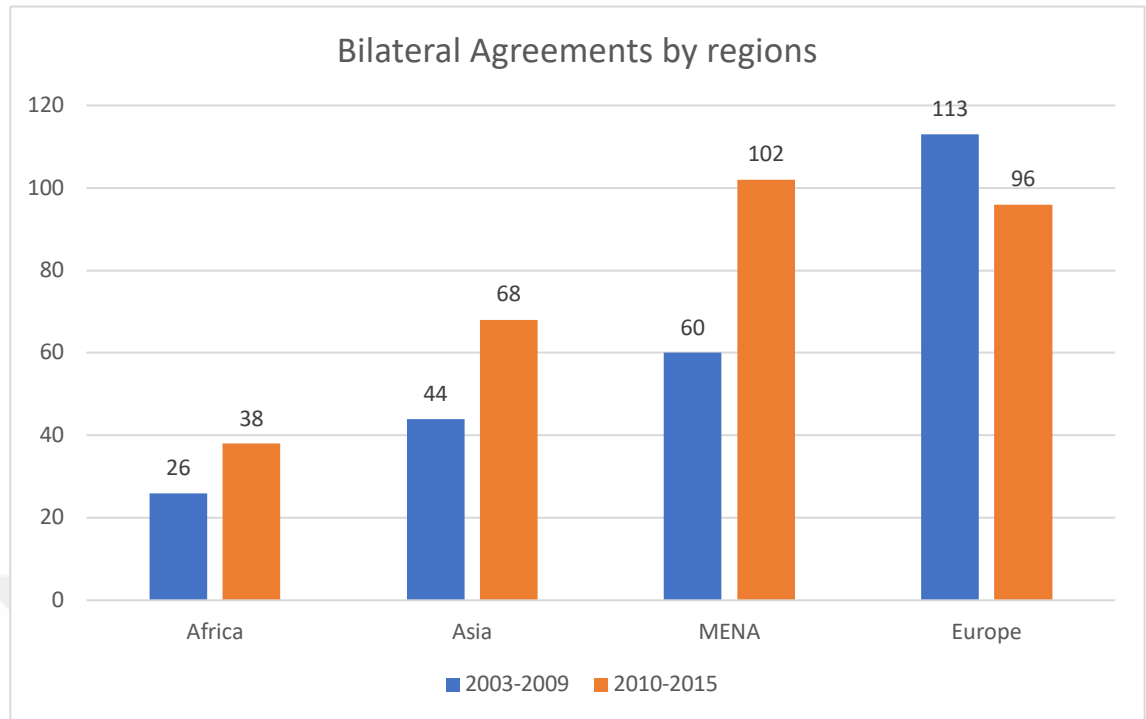


Figure 7 Bilateral Agreements by regions: TGNA Foreign Affairs Committee

There is also a similarity between the countries with which bilateral agreements are made and the regions where foreign trips are concentrated. Accordingly, the number of annual agreements with African countries increased from 3.71 to 6.33, with Asian countries from 6.22 to 11.33, and with MENA countries from 8.57 to 17. However, the number of bilateral agreements with European countries (including the Balkans and Eastern Europe) decreased from 16.14 to 16. This figure decreases from 11.7 to 8.16 with the exclusion of the Balkans and Eastern European countries from the calculation.

Muhittin Ataman stated that Turkey has made “expansions to new areas such as Far Asia and Africa apart from traditional Western partners” and pointed out that there is a search for independence in foreign policy by redefining relations with Western states (Ataman 2020). While some define the post-2010 period as de-Europeanization (Atmaca and Torun 2022), others see it as the beginning of the rise of “Turkish-Gaullism” in Turkey (Taşpınar 2010). Although each of these arguments is partially valid and contributes to the debate, Turkey's new aspirations since the 2010s are based on the unification of sovereignty with the rise of the JDP government's popular vote, the reduction of the influence of the bureaucratic structure in the decision-making mechanism of domestic politics, and the shifts in the international system. In this context, both the multilateral

and proactive foreign policy and the approach that has evolved from the understanding of “dignified foreign policy” to “precious loneliness”⁴¹ have been closely related to the consolidation of the sovereignty of PM Erdoğan and the JDP government.

In this context, the 2010s were the years that evolved both for Turkey to significantly expand its sphere of influence in different parts of the world and to its “self-encirclement”⁴². In the period leading up to 2015, Turkey, while increasing its presence and bilateral relations in different regions as well as its economic interests, faced tests such as the deterioration of relations with the EU and the impact of the Arab Spring. Thus, during this period, with both its self-encircling foreign policy and its domestic

⁴¹ The concepts of dignified foreign policy and precious loneliness cannot be considered as opposite or substitution of each other. Rather, both concepts are interrelated and interrelated. PM Erdoğan described what he called “dignified foreign policy” as “the JDP, not only in Turkey but all over the world, without any hesitation, without any fear, has stood by the oppressed and the victims; it has always stood against the status quo, oppressed and victim people. Turkey is playing roles that will move all the stones in the region, change history, and pursue a dignified foreign policy.” (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:264) On the other hand, the aftermath of the Arab Spring has disrupted Turkey's relations with many countries in the region, dragging foreign policy towards an impasse. While Ibrahim Kalin claims Turkey has not experienced any loneliness due to its Middle East policies, if there is loneliness as claimed, it is a “valuable loneliness” due to pursuing “value-based” policies. (T24 2013a) While both concepts have been trying to explain the TFP since the Arab Spring, it can be stated that the concept of “precious loneliness” emerged due to the “dignified foreign policy” emphasized by PM Erdoğan. Although the concept of “precious loneliness” is a concept that belongs to the JDP government, the concept of “dignified foreign policy” can be followed until the end of the 1990s. The term was often used by Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the National Vision Movement, the JDP's founding cadres' former political party, to stress the pursuit of independent foreign policy and criticize the TFP for engaging too much with traditional Western allies. (Tıgılı 2017)

⁴² The term “self-encirclement” was used by Jack Snyder to understand the late-industrialist power's assertive and bold foreign policy, which is together with, sometimes, “over expansionism”. (Snyder 1993) Given the causal relationship of both concepts to each other, the transformation in this study undergone over the three terms of TFP takes on more meaning. First, in the first period, between 2003 and 2010, the JDP government created a legitimate space for itself in domestic politics through its foreign policy activism and pushed the bureaucratic apparatuses against it out of the game. Towards the end of this period, the ambitious foreign policy discourses that started with the increasing foreign trade volume and institutional capacity, the expansion of the economic interest areas and the increase in cultural activities in the former Ottoman lands started to make Turkey a political party to the problems in different parts of the world. Ahmet Davutoğlu, former FM and PM, states that Turkey is the continuation of the geopolitical legacy of the Ottoman State. In this context, it emphasises that Turkey's defence is “impossible to conceive and plan” within its borders. (Davutoğlu 2001, 41) PM Erdoğan, while responding to the criticism of the deterioration of relations with Syria and Turkey's involvement in the civil war in Syria, said, “There is a straightforward answer to this: Our state was founded on the remnants of Great State of Ottoman. We are the descendants of the Seljuks. We are the descendants of the Ottomans. We are the descendants of an ancestor who fought for rights, justice, peace, peace and brotherhood throughout their history.” (Erdoğan 2019e, 95:81) In this context, he emphasises the history of Turkey's empire in the region and states that it will not remain indifferent to its developments. Considering the similar statements made by both of the names that have marked the last two decades of the TFP, both Erdoğan and Davutoğlu, and the foreign policy they have pursued as nominating Turkey be a global power, it is seen that this policy has constituted a self-encirclement since the 2010s. Because, in Snyder's words, (...) “the most aggressive states make the most enemies. When a state indiscriminately threatens many of its neighbours, they normally coalesce against it” (Snyder 1993, 7) and Turkey began to face it, especially since the second half of the 2010s.

sovereignty that forced the state to seek regional hegemony, the TFP inevitably began to evolve from de-securitization to re-securitization.

4.1.3. The Illusion of Leadership in the Middle East: The Arab Spring

TFP has also been used as a tool for domestic politics. During the period of the JDP government, the increase in foreign policy activity and Turkey's diversifications of its field of activity in various countries began to emerge as an essential element in domestic policy discourse. At the Kars rally held before the 2011 elections, PM Erdoğan stated that the June 12 elections have a “special importance not only for Turkey but also for this whole region we are at the centre of” and said, “the June 12, 2011 elections are being watched over very closely not only by 81 provinces but also by all neighbouring capitals, all cities in our region, our brothers, compatriots and relatives in the streets of the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus.” (Erdoğan 2019h)

The statement above that the general elections in Turkey are closely monitored in the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus present these regions as a part of Turkish domestic politics. That is why the subtitle of this subsection, “the illusion of leadership in the Middle East”, was chosen. At the beginning of the Arab Spring, however, Turkey had to increase its economic and political relations with the region. Although relations with the countries of the region have increased since the early day of the JDP rule, the rapprochement was gradually gained momentum after the 2007 elections (Aydin and Dizdaroğlu 2018, 91). The main reason for this is that with the 2007 elections, the JDP's power concentration and sovereignty within the country can be consolidated. Following the high number of votes received by the JDP in the 2007 elections, the increase in its votes in the 2010 referendum and the 2011 elections expanded the JDP's field of action in both domestic and foreign politics.

The JDP doubled its vote from the first election to 2011. The increase in the popular vote, which increased PM Erdogan's ability to implement his policies, ensured that policies were implemented more confidently, while providing democratic legitimacy to foreign policy oscillations. When Figures 8 and 9 are examined, there are similarities between the election results between 2002 and 2011 and the course of foreign trade volume. While

the foreign trade volume increased steadily and at a high pace from 2002 to 2008, it experienced a decline between 2008 and 2009 due to the impact of the global financial crisis. Still, after 2009, it submitted an increasing trend similar to the previous period until 2011.

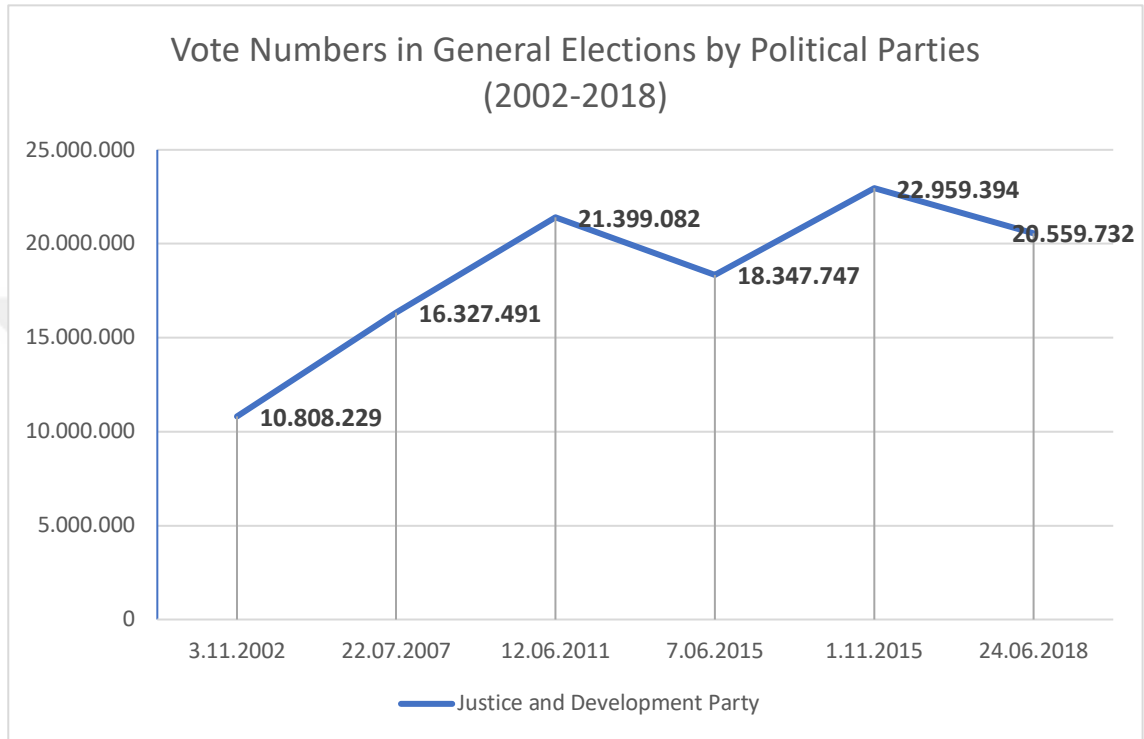


Figure 8 Vote Number in General Elections by Political Parties, Source: ysk.gov.tr

In this respect, considering the votes received by the JDP in the same period, it is possible to observe a steady rise until the 2011 elections. Between 2002 and 2011, the JDP's vote increased by almost 100%, while Turkey's foreign trade volume also increased by more than 400%. During the period between 2003 and 2011, Turkey's trade volume with the Middle East increased by more than 500%. In this sense, the trade volume with the Middle East has been above the total foreign trade volume of Turkey.⁴³ In addition to the

⁴³ Kirişçi boldly argues that Turkey has provided a bulk of hints for evolving a trade state, and one of these hints is the “zero problems with neighbours” policy. But his claim dates back to the late 80s and early 90s, long before he brought it up. Stating that these initiatives did not yield significant results due to the interruption of these initiatives in this period, which can also be referred to as the Özal years, he traces the origin of the “trading state” transformation in TFP to this period. Having considered the relationships established through economic interdependence by caring about identity change and systemic readings towards the TFP, Kirişçi said, “gradual shift from policies derived from a repertoire based on the military-political and territorial system to policies associated with a trading state in foreign policy”. (Kirişçi 2009,

increasing commercial ties with the Middle East, political and cultural ties are one of the most important indicators of this period. As mentioned earlier, the Davos Summit in 2009, coupled with the growing popularity of PM Erdoğan and Turkey in the Middle East, resulted in Turkey pursuing a more active policy in the region with a steadily rising foreign trade volume until 2011.



Figure 9 Foreign Trade Volume, Source: tuik.gov.tr

43) On the other hand, as another element of Turkey's transformation into a “trading state”, the interest shown by the businessmen called “Anatolian Tigers” in the cities where the JDP government received a very high number of votes in the markets of both Turkey's neighbors and African countries is revealed. (Kirişci and Kaptanoğlu 2011, 714)

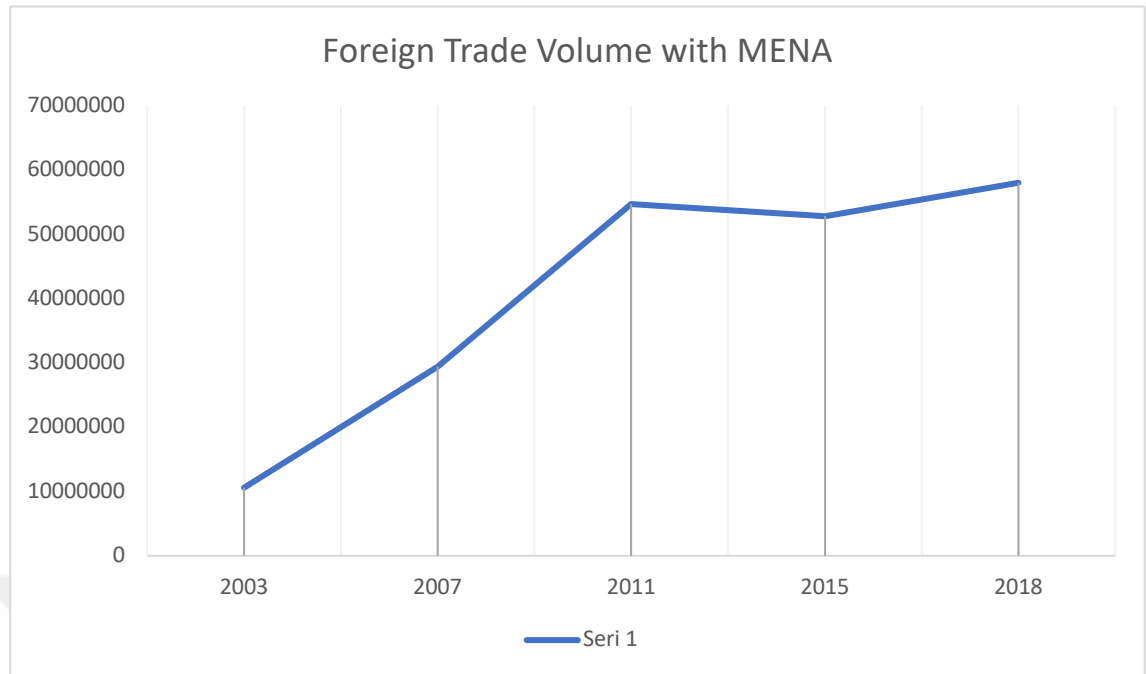


Figure 10 Foreign Trade Volume with MENA, Source: *tuik.gov.tr*

The transition from 2009 to 2010 was the scene of many dynamic developments for Turkey. In addition to the political rivalry that preceded the 2010 referendum and the 2011 general elections that followed, and the strengthening of the JDP in both elections, Ahmet Davutoğlu's appointment as Foreign Minister in May 2009 brought about a more assertive position in Turkey's foreign policy. Davutoglu's appointment as FM also shows an essential sign of a change in Turkey's strategic culture. Davutoğlu's view that Turkey is a “central country”, and that Turkey has “multiple regional identities” is one of the most important indicators in this regard (Arkan and Kınacıoğlu 2016, 395). On the other hand, according to him, Turkey has to be an “order-instituting country” due to historical and cultural ties with the region.⁴⁴ (Hale 2009, 144) The concept that “order-instituting country” is formally declared at the final declaration of the Third Ambassadors Conference. Thus, Turkey's role as an “order-instituting country”, which Davutoğlu also revealed in his 2000 book, was officially declared by Turkish MFA (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011).

⁴⁴ Some argues that the JDP government has tried to develop a new understanding of nationalism in TFP which is different than the earlier Republican period that was developed by republican elites. In order to understand what makes the JDP's attitude different than the republican elites are the cognitive rapprochement in the region for pursuing the assertive policies. (Saraçoğlu 2013)

Basically, one of the issues that has been most clearly tested has been the Arab Spring. The impact of the Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia towards the end of 2010, spread to all of MENA, especially Egypt, Libya, and Syria. In this period, Turkey's policy is based on the claim that it is Turkey that conducts global diplomacy from a Turkey whose policies are dictated from outside, expects foreign debt and is paranoid of Sèvres and has a noteworthy reputation in the eyes of the countries of the region (Davutoğlu 2011). The change in actors brought about by the exclusionary elements of the new foreign policy understanding drawn by Davutoglu is essentially a reflection of the transformations in domestic politics. His emphasis in his speech that the externally dictated policies are no longer accepted expresses the weakness of the previous governments, which the JDP government positioned as the opposite of the discourse of “independent foreign policy”.

In this context, at the beginning of the Arab Spring, some pro-JDP columnists refer to the developing process as the West's attempt to design the region to stop rising Turkey (Kaplan 2011). In this sense, the view that Turkey's activism in the region has disturbed western countries. While Turkey's attitude towards the Arab Spring was initially timid, it became increasingly evident when PM Erdoğan said in a speech in February 2011 that Turkey was on the side of societies that want democracy, freedom, and prosperity. (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:265–66) However, Turkey's support of movements in the region has gradually increased after the Libyan case. Following the intensification of the conflict in Libya, the intervention of France and Britain in the country was countered by PM Erdoğan, while Turkey stabilized the situation by activating NATO. Turkey called for stability by following only the developments without entering the process in the first place, covering the end of 2010 to January 2011. Since February 2011, Turkey's mediation initiatives in both Libya and Syria have begun to accelerate. Turkey, which has increasing relations with both countries, tried to play a role in the process with mediation initiatives. However, Turkey's mediation initiatives in both countries have not yielded results.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ It was announced by the spokesperson of the Turkish MFA that PM Erdoğan met with Gaddafi several times in order to meet democratic demands. (Arsu and Fahim 2011) In addition, in the summer of 2011, the negotiations with Syria did not yield results. (Milne 2011)

After the failure of these efforts and France's assertive attitude to the Libyan case, Turkey first played an active role in NATO intervention in Libya even before PM Erdogan strongly opposed intervention⁴⁶ and then began to openly support the opposition of the Assad regime in Syria. PM Erdogan further hardened his stance on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's lack of conviction; the FM stated that the situation would be clarified after Davutoğlu's visit to Damascus and said, "Syria is our internal issue" (Voice of America 2011). PM Erdogan's sentence that refers to Syria as an internal matter for Turkey is inconsistent for any other state's sovereignty. He probably, has tried to stress the integral and intertwined relationship between Turkey and Syria on both the leader level and state level in recent years. However, PM Erdogan and the JDP also internalized the Syrian crisis by attacking opposition parties.⁴⁷

While PM Erdogan internalized it, the Syrian chaos evolved into a prolonged civil war and negatively impacted Turkey's relationship with the countries in the region. On the other hand, the internalization of the Syrian uprisings has contributed to the security-based environment for both the domestic and external politics of Turkey. This approach, accordingly, is compatible with Davutoglu's claim that the defense of Turkey must begin

⁴⁶ PM Erdogan strongly opposed NATO's possible intervention in Libya, saying, "Any intervention in one of the countries that are members of NATO can bring such a thing to the agenda. Other than that, how can one intervene in Libya? Look, as Turkey, we are against this, such a thing cannot be discussed, such a thing is unthinkable." (Hürriyet 2011) Referring to Libya's difficult days due to the ambitions of the Western powers, PM Erdogan was looking for other solutions that could end the civil war in Libya through diplomacy, but in the end, the command center of the NATO operation was determined as Izmir and Turkey took an active role in the operation.

⁴⁷ While PM Erdogan defends their political approach to Syria, he categorically distinguished the JDP government from previous ones by constructing moral base on Turkey has to responsibility to region and people: "There can be no reasonable justification for the indifference and disconnection towards neighbouring and friendly countries, which are our historical past (...), a state like Turkey cannot remain indifferent to the developments in its region and cannot neglect its relations with its neighbours and the countries of the region. Taking care of its region does not indicate a shift of axis for a country; remaining ignorant of its region can be explained by losing its axis. Being a great state is possible by thinking big. Those who cannot go beyond Sivas in their own country, those who cannot get on a plane and go abroad, and those who remain ignorant of the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Asia cannot protect Turkey's international interests and national interests. Those who want to impose a foreign policy approach that distances Turkey from its claims, interests and historical role will be doing a great injustice not only to this country and this nation but also to the rights of the region." (Bloomberg HT 2010) As PM Erdogan's statement boldly referring a new foreign approach for Turkey, it would be built on "to be a great state" rhetoric while excluding the opposition parties' criticism on TFP.

with beyond of current borders. His focal point consists of expanding Turkey's borders to the countries of its immediate surroundings in a cognitive way.⁴⁸

In order to make sense of the policy pursued by Turkey during the Arab Spring, it is necessary to reveal the causal relationship between domestic and foreign policy. As briefly stated in the footnote, PM Erdogan's assessment of the crisis in Syria as Turkey's internal problem has a causality with Davutoğlu's geopolitics turning into a new vision of civilization in which Turkey is at the center. However, to a greater extent, it has become one of the main elements of the JDP's sovereignty as a new constituent policy. Because Davutoglu's construction demanded a change in domestic politics along with a new foreign policy understanding. According to Davutoglu's geopolitical claim, the framework of the TFP is shaped by domestic political elements that interpret the Turkey's geopolitical location in the world.

The internal political integrity necessary for Davutoglu's political narrative emerged after the election processes between 2007 and 2011. Thus, the geopolitical understanding proposed by Davutoglu and Turkey's claim to the pivot country has been most seriously tested by the Arab Spring. The different reactions in the short term essentially showed that Turkey was unprepared for regional transformation. However, since 2009, PM Erdogan's growing charisma in the region and growing trade and political relations with Israel have also increased Turkey's activation in the region. Therefore, the relationship between the transformation of the TFP and the Arab Spring is indistinguishable.

TFP has intertwined with domestic politics due to PM Erdogan's ability to raise charisma and power in Turkish politics through elections and referendums. Due to doubling popular votes within nine years, JDP's assertiveness and monopoly on domestic and foreign politics have been accompanied by the diminishing of former political actors. The prior periods have shown that the security and foreign bureaucracies' autarky in the

⁴⁸ Yeşiltaş states that the geopolitics that Davutoğlu implements for Turkey existing beyond of the Turkey's current borders with the Islamic World at its center. (Yeşiltaş 2014) From this point of view, it can be said that Turkey sits at the center of the geopolitics of the Islamic world. This structure, which Davutoğlu constructed in his book "Strategic Depth", exhibited an ontological critique of TFP until the JDP governments, while forming the philosophical structure of the transformation during the JDP governments. For this reason, the vision behind PM Erdogan's description of Syria as Turkey's internal issue stands out as basically a "Davutoğluist" vision of civilization.

decision-making process is mostly superior against the political leaders, excluding a few exceptions. However, PM Erdogan and the JDP government have merged the interests of their political agendas and the economic interest of business sectors. Hence, the political stalemate has been changed in favour of PM Erdogan and the JDP government.

While PM Erdogan's political authority was rising, the government's foreign policy was being directed in a way that consolidated it. The Arab Spring, in addition to having a test for TFP, has provided a comprehensive experiment for PM Erdogan's ability to rule and sovereignty due to some concrete reasons. The first reason is the unsafe environment stimulated by disrupted regional order. The chaotic environment created by the Arab Spring and the emergence of torn states, especially Syria, Iraq and Libya have increased the security risks for countries, such as Turkey. In this sense, Turkey has encountered political and economic instability, mass migration and terror threats due to the environment stimulated by the Arab Spring.

While the unsafe environment provided the conditions for the exception that could be constantly reproduced, it also enabled the expansion of the sphere of the sovereign who decides the exception. Secondly, there has been politicization through the symbol that PM Erdoğan created in domestic politics during the Arab Spring. This symbol has become increasingly widespread since PM Erdoğan started to use the “RABIA” sign, which has become the symbol of resistance to the coup against Mohammed Morsi, who came to power in Egypt, and the Muslim Brotherhood, in rallies. It has also been evolving into a political campaign and began to be used with the slogan “one flag, one state, one nation and one language” (Anadolu Ajansı 2013).

As Turkey has managed to fail to apply consistently during the Arab Spring, the country's policy has undergone many changes in a short time. Although these changes can be considered as the weakness of the decision-makers, on the other hand, it has been observed that political changes open new areas. Three examples that stand out in this direction are Libya, Syria, and Egypt. Egypt is the country in which the JDP government suffered its first political defeat. Also, the July 2013 Egypt Coup has a ground-shaking

impact on Turkey's Arab Spring policy, and it is also considered a turning point for Turkey (Özcan, 2018c, p. 25).

Mursi and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt did not last long, while protesters and Islamist groups were clashing with each other. The clash between them started after the controversial constitutional changes and allegations that Morsi was trying to concentrate the ruling power by changing the constitution. The clashes eventually led to the intervention of the army, paving the way for a military coup. The military coup in Egypt, which Özcan described as a turning point for Turkey, constituted a very critical point for Turkey's regional politics. PM Erdogan, who strongly opposed the coup, said, "I recognize Mr. Morsi as President of Egypt because I respect the Egyptian people" (Erdoğan 2013).

Some ideas that tried to establish an analogy between the Gezi Protests that took place in Turkey at the same time and the military coup in Egypt began to be put forward (Gürsel 2013). Accordingly, while the Brotherhood government in Egypt and the JDP government in Turkey were positioned similarly, the Gezi protesters and the soldiers who carried out the coup in Egypt were placed in the same position.⁴⁹ This form of discourse developed by the government will be used again in the local elections in 2019. President Erdoğan has targeted the opposition's Istanbul candidate Ekrem Imamoglu with the words, "are you going to vote for Sisi or Binali Yildirim this Sunday?" (Cumhuriyet 2019), was said a day after former President Morsi died during the trial.

⁴⁹ Kadri Gürsel, in his article in which he states that they are seeking the victimisation of Islamists in Turkey, quotes Hatem Ete, the Director of Political Research of SETAV, a think tank close to the government, in which he emphasises the similarity between the Egyptian Coup and the Gezi Protests and mentions the effort to "create the perception that there is an international conspiracy" in the Gezi Events, just like the coup in Egypt. (Gürsel 2013) In fact, Ete's article detailing his views on the Gezi Events constituted the political basis of the us-them distinction by reducing the participants of the protests to two groups and classifying them in the context of the old/new Turkey and JDP antagonism. Describing the Gezi protests as "an objection to the construction of Turkey by the JDP," Ete tried to fit the Gezi protests into a proposition of anti-JDP. He stated that the unifying element of his alliance in the protests was the opposition to "the fact that the JDP is building the new Turkey." (Ete 2013) PM Erdogan also made a connection between the Gezi Events and the Egyptian Coup d'état and said, "(...) our enemies inside and outside are not idle. Turkey continues its march that it started at the end of 2002 without slowing down. No one can stop or slow down Turkey's march. Very heavy bills were paid because the Constitution booklet was thrown 10 years ago. Anyone who still thinks Turkey is such a weak country is in a delusion. (...) Now there is a Turkey that is strong and stands by the side of the oppressed. They will and are trying all kinds of scenarios to distract us from our goals. We will frustrate these traps and turn them upside down. (...) If someone wants to make us like Egypt, we don't say 'thank you.'" (TRT Haber 2013)

In this regard, the case of Egypt shows that the line between Turkey's domestic and foreign policy has become transparent. The attitude of the JDP government against the Egyptian coup and the debates between the actors opposing this attitude constituted the general line of criticisms against the TFP of the period. While the Egyptian coup significantly damaged Turkey's claim to be a playmaker in the region, the debate on this issue emerged as heavy criticism of the JDP government. CHP MP Osman Korutürk, a former foreign affairs bureaucrat, criticized the JDP government, recalling Turkey's leadership role in the Middle East alleged by the JDP, after the Egyptian coup. He said that 'Mr. PM and Minister were also saying: "Nothing can be done in this region without asking Turkey. Nothing can be done in the world without asking Turkey, we are the playmaker here.' Dear friends, which game did we design? Did we organize the coup in Egypt, did Turkey organize it, or did they ask us? Today, is there a single thing asked of Turkey in this region?"' while citing the Egyptian coup as an example and questioning the TFP's claim to leadership in the region (Korutürk 2013)⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ Just a year before Korutürk's statement, FM Davutoglu addressed the TGNA to inform deputies. In fact, FM Davutoglu's statement was more of a challenge to the new foreign policy style than it was to inform deputies about the governments' Syria policy. Davutoglu blamed critics of the JDP's foreign policy, claiming that Turkey is playing a playmaker role in the region.: "Various criticisms of the principled attitude we have followed so far on Syria are raised: "We are faced with accusations such as "We act under the direction of others, that we are too involved in the Syrian issue, that we are alone, that we are in a hurry, that we are dragged into war, and even that we are in favor of military intervention." (...) Those who direct these criticisms at us are incapable of comprehending the facts in the field, the spirit of the time, and, most importantly, the foreign policy understanding of the JDP governments. (...) JDP governments have closed the era of the traditional "wait, see" policy of being dragged after the great powers and being the stunt double of the agenda of others. (...) Like the decisions we have taken so far in foreign policy, the address of the decisions we will take in the future is unique, and that is Ankara, the JDP government and their government. We have not been, and will not be, part of any politics or agenda whose origin is not Ankara. (...) So, why does Turkey stand out so much? Of course, we will stand out. You will have a 910-kilometer border with Syria, hundreds of our Syrian brothers and sisters will come to our door every day, the number of Syrian guests coming to our country will exceed 25,000 and threaten our border security, and Turkey will sit on the sidelines and wait! This Turkey has passed, my friends. Turkey is no longer a country of those who do not trust themselves and expect permission from the outside, even in developments within itself, let alone take initiative in its region. Turkey is the central country in its region and has done what is necessary for this, will do it and will continue to do so. (...) Whatever will be discussed about Syria outside of Syria will be discussed in Ankara, Istanbul, and the places where we are from now on. Whatever steps are taken regarding the future of Syria and towards achieving peace and prosperity, we will be in it. There is no alternative. (...) As Turkey, we will manage the great wave of change in the Middle East from now on, and we will continue to be the pioneer of this wave of change. Today, in all Middle Eastern societies, Turkey is seen not only as a friendly and brotherly country but also as a pioneer of a new idea, a new regional order with the power to determine the future. (...) I would like to give very short advice to our critics: Go to the streets of Cairo, Tripoli, Beirut, take to the streets of Tunis and Jerusalem, and ask, "What do you think about Turkey's Syria policy?" (...) They will hug you even before you ask and express their appreciation for the honourable policy pursued by Turkey. But it is impossible for those who embrace dictatorial regimes instead of fraternal peoples in the Middle East to understand such a new understanding.

This ongoing debate on the TFP reached its peak during the Arab Spring. In this period, while the foreign policy pursued by Turkey was tried to be realized by the JDP government as a regional playmaker, it was called as fanciful by the opposition. In Egypt, the Brotherhood movement and Morsi were overthrown by a military coup, while in Syria the desired result was not achieved. Thus, the failure of PM Erdogan's charisma, which rose during the Arab Spring, in the face of concrete developments brought about the JDP government's turbulence period in domestic politics.

Hence the failure of the implementation of the “playmaker role”, TFP has led to the way of re-securitization between 2010-2015 due to rapid changes in international variables and the development of transformations in domestic politics in favour of the JDP. The Arab Spring, which started in Tunisia in 2010 and spread to the entire MENA region, was a case in which Turkey's claims in the region were tested, and with its effects on regional security, it constituted one of the most important variables of the re-securitization process of the following period. In this context, Turkey's rising popularity in the Middle East at both the country and the leadership level between 2010 and 2011 declined after the developments in this period.

FM Davutoglu explained Turkey's stance against the established regimes in the Arab Spring as necessary due to the need to stand by democracy. FM Davutoglu, in his speech to the TGNA's Foreign Affairs Commission, indicated that it is not possible for Turkey

(...) Just as there is a new claim on Turkey in our minds, there is also a new Middle East claim. (...) Just as there is a new claim on Turkey in our minds, there is also a new Middle East claim. At the heart of this new Middle East claim is a new peace order based on brotherhood, not ethnic and sectarian differences. We will work until this peace order is established. No matter what anyone says, Turkey will be the pioneer and spokesperson of this peace order. I understand your concerns because you represent a different understanding of politics. It is not possible for those who prefer Baathist politics to understand us, we do not expect this. What is important for us is that the Syrian street of Damascus, the street of Dara, Hama, Homs, Deir ez-Zor, Latakia understand us. We are sure that they also understand us. The future is not in archaic regimes; the future is in the will of the peoples. Of course, those who defend the coup in Turkey will defend minority dictatorships in those regions as well, and we consider this normal. But the 74 million Turkish people are with the Syrian people and will continue to be on their side. We have embraced and will continue to embrace all of Syria with its Sunnis, Shiites, Nusayri, Kurds, Arabs and Turkmens, regardless of any ethnic or sectarian differences. The first signs of this new order, this new order of peace, have been seen. (...) Our will, the will of our government, takes its legitimacy only from the Turkish people. We have not relied on any other force, and our people have reaffirmed this in every election. Finally, I emphasize again that a new Middle East is being born. We will continue to be the owner, pioneer, and servant of this new Middle East. (Sounds of “Bravo” from the JDP benches, applause, noises from the RPP and MHP benches) In this new Middle East, not oppression, oppression, and dictatorships, but the will of the people and the voice of right, the voice of justice will prevail.”(Davutoğlu 2012a)

to support authoritarian regimes but stressed that they do not interfere in the internal affairs of countries. In this context, he has justified Turkey's support for the opponent groups of the regimes in the Arab Spring as an obligation to support the movements that have emerged against authoritarian regimes in the name of democracy (Davutoglu 2013).⁵¹

In short, the friend-enemy dichotomy of Turkey has progressed in the period that follows the Arab Spring, which has shaken the regional order in the Middle East. In this context, Schmitt's "all-encompassing" and "interventionist state", described by Meierhenrich, pictured a structure that integrated society and the state on its basis (Meierhenrich 2016, 192). The friend-enemy dichotomy, which develops in the structure of the state and society that cannot be separated, also penetrates society with a holistic integration of politics. As demonstrated above, the blurring of the distinction between foreign policy and domestic policy has led to the dichotomy created through foreign policy elements, as in the Arab Spring period, becoming the basis of politics. Thus, accordingly, the total state concept, through the society inseparably integrated with it, every development has become central to politics.

Between 2010 and 2015, the JDP government, which increased the concentration of its ruling power through general elections and the triumph of the struggle within the state, began to act more comfortably than in the first period of its rule. It can be, thus, said that the increasing search for regional hegemony since the 2010s is a development stemming from this reason. According to Snyder, when the state is stronger than society, "overexpansion and imperial mythmaking could occur only if the state itself-or "the ruling class"-had a parochial interest in such policies." (Snyder 1993, 40) In this sense, the transition of Turkey's regional activity before the Arab Spring to the concept of a

⁵¹ FM Davutoglu stated that while defending libertarian discourses, it would not be possible for Turkey to support authoritarian regimes in the protests that emerged as a result of the "justified reactions" of the peoples: "It is difficult for you to adopt a libertarian discourse on the one hand and stand by authoritarian regimes, dictatorial regimes in the Middle East on the other. Oh, there is no question of Turkey intervening unless those regimes have trouble among themselves, (...) but once people stand up for their just demands – demands that we see as right for our people – you have to make a choice, you will either use your preference for authoritarian tendencies or side with those peoples." (Davutoglu 2013, 13) On the other hand, the criticism of these words has been the inconsistency of the policy pursued. Criticizing FM Davutoglu's speech at the commission, opposition MPs criticized the fact that countries such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia are cooperating actors in the region despite being far from democracy. (Eryılmaz 2013, 34)

“playmaker country” following the Arab Spring shows an important change. According to this concept, Turkey's understanding of intervening in the problematic areas and developments around it and determining their direction is largely in line with Snyder's suggestion that Turkey should be regarded as a responsibility with an emphasis on the heritage of the Ottoman Empire.

In this respect, the search for hegemony that emerges when the policy pursued by Turkey in the Arab Spring is examined can be explained by the policy that decision-makers have emerged by considering both international variables and domestic politics. In the first period of the JDP government, the TFP, which proceeded in line with the EU goal by balancing relations with the West, evolved into a more original policy understanding in the following period, especially after the developments that dominated the power of the JDP in domestic politics. Economic and political activity, especially in MENA, Africa, and the Balkans, has turned into a search for regional hegemony since the 2010s. The policy pursued in the Arab Spring and the attitudes and manners of the decision-makers, especially PM Erdoğan, clearly reflected the search for integrated hegemony. In addition, the activities of institutions such as TİKA, Kızılay and DİB in these regions contributed to Turkey's active policy as well as formed the moral basis of this policy.

4.2. International variables

The 2010s were a period in which many changes were shifting quickly, and regional and global developments were accelerating. Naturally, this rapid transformation and alteration also had a profound impact on Turkey. As mentioned before, neoclassical realist theory does not ignore international variables but also examines their effects on decision-making. In this regard, one of the issues that had an impact on the transformation of the TFP was the extent to which international variables affected decision-makers and the foreign policy outputs produced by these decision-makers. The global system and the regions around Turkey have experienced significant changes during this period. These changes have also significantly affected Turkey and have had a restrictive or guiding effect on the decisions of the actors that make up the foreign policy.

Under this subchapter four, regional and international indicators will be assessed to understand how they influence the decision-making process in Türkiye. The world has transformed to comply with more Schmittian lines during the 2010s. Having eroded western-centric norms and the international system, a new approach to international politics has been revealed. This approach, contrary to the principles revealed by globalisation, has led to the loss of power of liberal democracy in the face of populist authoritarianism due to the rising economic and security concerns of nation-states. Turkey's political relations with western countries have also been significantly affected by these developments. The indicators of these changes will be tried to be revealed through the global financial crisis and the US-China rivalry, the Arab Spring, the emergence of ISIS and the Russian occupation of Crimea.

4.2.1. Effects of the Global Financial Crisis and the U.S. China Competition

Following the global financial crisis in 2008, the debate about the decline of American Hegemony began to gain momentum (Wohlforth 2014, 109; Schweller and Pu 2011). Even though it was an ongoing debate on declining of American hegemony, Robert Kagan firmly rejected that the declining American Hegemony would only happen if Americans had acknowledged it. However, Kupchan, on the other hand, has claimed Kagan's approach was wrong because the American Hegemony was a "product of teamwork", not only the US's sole efforts. In this sense, while the US partners have been diminishing their power, according to Kupchan, the US would not preserve its leadership status in the global system against the rising powers (Kupchan 2012).

Beckley, in examining studies of the declining theories, notes that globalisation has had an impact on the decline of the United States. even though he claims that declining is a bold concept for using the situation of the US vis-à-vis China. According to him, while the flow of goods and money created by globalisation has had positive effects on the rising countries, the effect of globalisation has been a negative impact on the US due to the Iraq War and other factors (Beckley 2011). Kupchan also draws attention to emerging

powers and mentions that the later period may be formed in the form of “shifting network of pacts”⁵² rather than partiality.

In addition, after the election of Barack Obama as president of the United States in 2009, the process of withdrawing troops from Afghanistan and Iraq began, while the policy of increasing the American presence in Asia was initiated (Obama 2012b). In his State of the Union speech in 2012, President Obama described America as a “Pacific Power” (Obama 2012a).

As far as John Mearsheimer considers becoming a global hegemon in world politics is merely impossible; he implicitly establishes a link between being a regional hegemon and a superpower. He also clearly indicates that the way China approaches Asia is the same as the US approach to the Western Hemisphere in the 19th Century. Having the same regional hegemony ambitions, China would try to dominate Asia as the US’ domination of the Western Hemisphere (Mearsheimer 2006). In this respect, the positioning of the US as a Pacific Power by the Obama administration paved the way for a new equation in the region against the Chinese ambitions to be a regional hegemon.

Ideas about the struggle for hegemony between the US and China were as much associated with the decline of US hegemony as they were with the rise of China. In this context, Joseph Nye was referring to the US elections in 2016. Nye refers to Donald Trump’s -successor of Obama- rejection to sign the G7 Communiqué was defined as an “anti-Wilsonian” moment with many other manners, while China has tried to invigorate the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (Nye 2019).

This regional contention between the US and China has led to the way emerging powers, such as Turkey, have gained a much more manoeuvring capability to make and follow foreign policy. The missile agreement signed by Turkey with China in 2013 can be shown

⁵² Kupchan emphasises the system of variable alliances in Europe in the 19th century by using the concept while demonstrating Türkiye’s attempt to follow its own course while tightening the relationship with, on the one hand, the US and Europe, on the other hand, the Middle East. (Kupchan 2012) Thus, emerging powers like Turkey would follow semi-independent or independent ways of making foreign policy. That kind of policymaking, therefore, related to emerging powers gradually gaining political weight in world politics.

as an example of increased maneuverability. On the other hand, PM Erdogan asked Putin, President of Russia, to take Turkey to SCO in 2013 when Turkish-EU relations had been going through a challenging period (Hurriyet Daily News 2013). According to Kaplan, Türkiye's western-oriented policy explicitly ruptured after the 2010 "Mavi Marmara Flotilla" incident even though the country's leaning towards a different inclination had started before (R. D. Kaplan 2012).

Another important issue is that European countries experienced an economic contraction caused by the global financial crisis. The fact that many European countries are on the verge of bankruptcy has led both the European Union and European countries to pursue a policy of becoming more introverted and solving their economic problems. With the emergence of increasing anti-globalization waves because of the financial crisis, the system of liberal democracy in Europe has also undergone significant shake-ups. According to Öniş and Kutlay, who explain this situation with the words "economic insecurity, increasing inequalities and weak growth rates have deepened the crisis of legitimacy of liberal democracies in the West", the rise of illiberal democracies and the election of Donald Trump as US President in 2016 are the political consequences of the search for neoliberal solutions in the fight against the global crisis⁵³ (Öniş and Kutlay 2020).

The institutionalization of these regimes, which derive their legitimacy largely from economic indicators(Öniş and Kutlay 2020), becomes proportional to the extent to which they can control state apparatuses and societal instruments. Beyond the institutionalization and establishment of these regimes, Boyle exemplified the end of the American-led global system, which was one of the themes of Putin's speech at the Munich

⁵³ Öniş and Kutlay, who examine the rise of authoritarian populism, state that elected authoritarian populist leaders are on the path of domination over state apparatuses and civil society instead of disabling them. (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 48) In this regard, the new inclination of authoritarianism in state politics led to the usage of the executive and societal instruments for the accumulation of power in the hand of certain groups or the leader. At the same time, this type of regime chooses the way of creating consent for the parochial interests of certain groups or leaders. Having interchangeable interests, on the other hand, the inclination of the state and society could become straightforwardly interchangeable with the help of state apparatus and societal instruments. In this context, the Schmittian concept of sovereignty provides political legitimacy to the newly emerging authoritarian populist regimes within the framework of the sovereign's absolute power and the increase of manoeuvring space within this intellect.

Security Conference (MSC) in 2007, and Orban's emphasis on the inadequacy of liberal institutions and democracies in the face of the global financial crisis in 2008 (Boyle 2016).

Just a year before the global financial crisis that began in 2008, Vladimir Putin delivered an important speech at the MSC. In MSC, he put forward Russia's concern about NATO's expansion and severely criticised the understanding of unipolarity that has brought the international system under U.S. influence (Putin 2007). Putin's speech would later be described as an important change in Russia's policy (Trenin 2013). His policy has been quite different from the beginning of the 2000s. In this respect, the refutation of the unipolarity he revealed in his speech to the MSC in 2007 was also a harbinger of the nationalism-based foreign policy he would later follow.

On the other hand, Viktor Orban, who took office in 2010, is another representative of rising authoritarianism in EU countries. In this manner, his views on the international system and norms are in line with Putin's. Like Putin, Orban shares the view that the international system is West-centric and that global norms are shaped to serve the perpetuation of this West-oriented structure. In a speech in 2014, Orbán stated that they were considering alternatives outside Western society and that they had to make themselves independent of European dogmas. He also describes the financial crisis that occurred in 2008 as the “Western financial crisis,” while treating it as a breaking point. Seeking an answer to the question of how the state should define, he says, “a state that is most capable of making a nation successful”. In this context, Orban, who cites Singapore, China, India, Türkiye, and Russia, which are defined as the rising stars of the international system, as the countries to build successful nations, saw Hungary's quest among these countries while emphasizing “that a democracy is not necessarily liberal. Just because something is not liberal, it still can be a democracy” (Orban 2014).

Orban's view that democracy does not have to be liberal reflects the volatility created by the crisis in which liberal democracies have fallen after the 2008 financial crisis. In this context, the basic discourses of Orban, the PM of an EU member state, contrast with the liberal understanding of democracy that the EU has defended. During the meeting between Chinese PM Wen Jiabo and Hungarian PM Orban, who visited Hungary in 2011,

was discussed expanding the cooperation between the two states and increasing economic relations. Accordingly, many treaties were signed by the two PMs while PM Orban supposedly said that Hungary would contribute to developing EU-China relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China 2011).

4.2.2. The Arab Spring

One of the most prominent developments of the 2010s was the mass protests that began in Tunisia and then spread throughout the MENA region after a young street vendor set himself on fire, overthrowing one by one the authoritarian regimes that had been ingrained in this region for years. After intense protests following this incident, the leader of the Tunisian regime, Zeynel Abidin Bin Ali, was forced to flee the country, while the incidents spread to the neighboring country of Algeria. In the following period, the effects of the uprisings that spread to many countries, especially Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, and Syria, continued for many years.

The emergence of the Arab Spring affected both regional politics and global politics. Although it is surprising that the Arab Spring has spread to other countries starting from Tunisia, it is emphasized that the most important role in this is the “new media” (Khondker 2011). However, Anderson draws attention to the response to the use of new technologies rather than their place and role in the Arab Spring (Anderson 2011, 2). Although the protesters' main demands in the Arab Spring were regime change and reform, the differences stemming from both the structures of the societies and the social and political differences of the countries led to the further development of the processes in each country. In this context, Msellemu and Msaky's Arab Spring proposition that “it had not spread because of hunger or because of insufficient food but because of unemployment, injustices, and hatred to the regimes” (Msellemu and Kessy 2022, 109) reveals the extent in which new technologies and communication methods have found a response in societies where the Arab Spring has spread.

In Tunisia and Egypt, the demands of protestors have been met in a transition that evolved differently from each other; however, in Libya and Syria, the states were dragged into

civil wars. The civil war that started in both countries and the transformation in Egypt paved the way for the process that resulted in the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood and influenced international and regional politics. In Egypt, Muslim Brotherhood, a deep-seated organisation in Egypt politics, has dominated the post-Mubarak era. So much so that the Muslim Brotherhood, which did not come to the fore much in the demonstrations in Tahrir Square, would suddenly come to the fore as the most organised structure in the post-Mubarak period in the face of the lack of political organisation of the demonstrators in the square.

Although tensions in Egypt continued in the period leading up to the elections following Mubarak's resignation, the Freedom and Justice Party, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, which had previously announced that it would not run in the elections held in November 2011, won the elections with a high percentage of votes. The subsequent presidential elections were won by Mohammed Morsi, the candidate of the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Muslim Brotherhood came to power in Egypt.

After a year, tension reached its peak in Egypt where political debates continued, and violence increased after the constitutional amendment referendum. With the lack of political stability and the escalation of violence in street protests, the Egyptian Army's ultimatum to politicians to reduce tensions was met with a reaction from the Muslim Brotherhood movement. It can be said that at this very moment, the Egyptian Revolution was divided into two. The Muslim Brotherhood, which refer to the military's intervention in politics as an assault against legitimacy, called for opposition to the ultimatum with protests to be held every Friday in Adawiya Square. On the other hand, the opponents to Mursi and Muslim Brotherhood held meetings at Tahrir Square which is a symbol of the Arab Spring Protests in Egypt, to protest them and blame them for hijacking the anti-Mubarak movement. Finally, the Egyptian army, led by General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, seized power in a coup on July 3, 2013.

While Egypt was one of the most striking examples of the Arab Spring, Libya was moving towards a new order after the assassination of Gaddafi. While Egypt was one of the most striking examples of the Arab Spring, Libya was moving towards a new order after the

murder of Gaddafi. However, the failure of the post-Gaddafi order in Libya to provide security and the continuation of internal turmoil would maintain the unstable environment. Libya's direct descent into civil war, unlike Tunisia and Egypt, stemmed from its social structure and lack of institutions (Anderson 2011, 6).

In this context, the National Transitional Council (NTC), established in 2011, an organised structure of the anti-Gaddafi front, paved the way for the international recognition of the opposition (Buera 2014, 111). NTC has provided a way to cooperate with international organizations in struggling against Gaddafi's forces, and thus, Libyan opposition has reflected itself in a much more organized way, though the societal structure of Libya is fragmented into various sects and kins. On the other hand, the NTC's call for foreign forces to intervene also pointed to a very important issue in terms of increasing the US influence in the region. According to Hinnebusch, the way the Arab Spring evolved has practically favored the US power because “opposition groups called for foreign intervention against their own governments,” and it “potentially reversed this Western recession” while “presented an opportunity for the US to reverse perceptions that US power in the region was declining” (Hinnebusch 2014, 16).

Libya stands out as the first country among the Arab Spring countries where the international intervention took place in the first place. While the UNSC resolution 1793, within the scope of the responsibility to protect principle, created the constitutional basis for international intervention in Libya, it was stated that this decision was taken due to the Gaddafi regime's attack on civilians (Balta Paker 2021). As a result of the NTC's presence in organizing the local opposition against the Gaddafi regime, cooperation with foreign powers was a key factor in the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime. Altunışık also, while examining the crisis in Libya according to the Theory of Rentier States, states that the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime was a “result of cooperation between local opposition and external intervention forces”.(Benli Altunışık 2014, 85).⁵⁴

⁵⁴ When Altunışık's findings on why Libya, among other rentier states, could not resist the expansionist influence of the Arab Spring are examined, an important determination stands out. Firstly, she emphasized that the Libyan state institutions were weak to imply reforms for pacifying protests. According to Altunışık, who stated that the state institutions and capacity did not develop due to the *jamahiriyya* system in the country, the lack of institutions and capacity, which is the necessity of a successful reform policy, prevented

As the effects of the second chapter of the civil war in Libya continue to be felt., the civil war in Syria, where the most violent conflicts of the Arab Spring took place, has still not yet reached a solution. The Arab Spring, which spread throughout Syria with the protests that started in the Syrian city of Daraa in March 2011, turned into a civil war that spread to all of Syria quickly. The Syrian Civil War, which affected all the countries around Syria with the migration wave and terror it created, has become a global problem.

The clashes between the regime and the opposition between 2011 and 2013 took on another dimension with the inclusion of ISIS in 2014. While the emergence of ISIS in 2014 led to the intervention of a US-led coalition in the region, Russia's sending troops to Syria at the invitation of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in 2015 transformed the Syrian Civil War into a field of global competition. Syria has become a “failed state” with a very rapid transformation. While armed militia groups supported by many foreign states began to operate on the territory of Syria, whose institutions and organisations were disintegrated, ISIS began to gain territory in Syria after its rapid advance in Iraq.

The emergence of ISIS in Iraq and its progress in cooperation with jihadist groups in Syria have changed the dynamic in the region and brought the Syrian Civil War to a multi-layered dimension. The first layer is Assad's forces and the opposition. Clashes between Syrian regime forces and opposition fighters constitute this first layer. The second layer is ISIS and the US-led coalition to fight ISIS. The third layer is the conflict between Turkey and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The fourth and final layer is the pro-regime coalition of Iran, Russia and Syria, and the anti-regime coalition of the United States, Turkey and other states. However, it is not possible to say that all the groups within these layers are fighting together and in a single struggle. In this context, the Syrian leg of the Arab Spring has created a massive conflict that first spread to the whole region and then to the whole world and whose effect is still there.

the rebellions in Libya from being stopped (Benli Altunışık 2014, 85). In this context, the system that Gaddafi established to govern Libya led to a lack of institutional capacity during the rebellions, paving the way for his overthrow.

4.2.3. The emergence of ISIS

ISIS has emerged as a self-declaration state which is called by caliphate by them, in 2014 in Iraq, however, the history of the ISIS was older than that time. The roots of ISIS have reached toward to the al-Qaeda organization. It was established as an Iraq partition of al-Qaeda in 2006 but international community hasn't been aware of this organization until the capturing of Mosul. Therefore, it is hard to find comprehensive and proper sources about ISIS. The origins of ISIS is pursuing to "obscure militant group, Jamaat al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (JTJ)" which was established by Abu-Musab al Zarqawi who was the former Afghan Mujahid. One of the primary goals of the JTJ was "establish an Islamic State under the sharia, God's Law." (Hashim 2014, 69–70)

Declaration of the caliphate by ISIS, ordering social life and bureaucratic organization of ISIS has developed coherently with territorial expansion. Thus, territorial expansion and sovereignty was the key elements of ISIS claim of the State-Caliphate. The strain and destabilization in the region after the Arab Spring has prepared the environment for ISIS. However, beyond the certain borders ISIS has declared the transcended borders by the way of Islam Identity. Pledge of allegiance was also part of this transcended borders. The term of hijrah constitutes the base of the transcended border and citizenship. According to ISIS, all muslims should be immigrated to land of ISIS due to Muslims shouldn't live another country because "they aren't governed by Shari'a law". (Bin Hassan 2017, 2)

ISIS is the successor of the al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). AQI was established by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Before that Zarqawi established the Jama'at al-Tawhid was Jihad (JTJ) in 1999. After that, the name of the group changed as a Tandem Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad and al-Rafidain which means that "The Organization of the Base of Jihad in the Land of Two Rivers". (Alexander and Alexander 2015, 1) Zarqawi's group merged with the al-Qaeda in 2004 and after that, it referred as AQI. The statement that was made by "Tawhid and Jihad", was the pledge of allegiance to al-Qaeda. (Bamford 2004) However, the doctrinal distinction between Zarqawi and Bin Laden had continued. The distinction wasn't a new thing between them. Hussein Solomon stated that Al-Qaeda is concerned about the AQI's approach to the concept of the "takfir". Because the base of al-Qaeda's concern was the

danger of the alienate the public of Iraq due to AQI's understanding of the "takfir".(Solomon 2016, 438) The group changed its name again in 2006 and took the name the "Islamic State of Iraq". Then, it turned to Islamic State in Iraq a-Sham in 2013. The reason for the changing name would be the consequence of the increasing interest of the ISI's in Syria. Eventually, they changed their name again to ISIL and finally to IS in June 2014.

During the Arab Spring in 2011, Syria was destabilising. The Assad Government needed external support from Russia, Iran, and China; therefore, the sovereignty of Syria was damaged. Particularly, the US and some European countries existence in Syria also created another dilemma. Almost the whole world took the position in Syrian territory. Syria and Iraq, before the existence of the Caliphate, met the condition of being a failed state.

4.2.4. The Russian Annexation of Crimea

One of the most important events affecting regional geopolitics in this period took place with Russia's annexation of Crimea, which is Ukrainian territory. The coming to power of the pro-Western Poroshenko government following the fall of the Yanukovich government following the demonstrations that began in Ukraine in 2013 was seen as a coup by Russia, and Ukraine-Russia relations gradually deteriorated, prolonging the war that was to begin at the beginning of 2022. Russia announced the annexation of Crimea after the decision of the Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to join Russia was issued in the referendum following the decision to hold a referendum. Russia was establishing the legitimacy of its actions by stating that it was acting to protect the Russians in Ukraine, just as it had in Georgia.

The annexation of Crimea also stands out as an important geopolitical development rather than Russia's seizure of Ukraine's territory. Crimea's important geographical position in terms of energy lines also made this annexation an international problem rather than a regional dispute. (Kösen and Tıǵlı 2021, 75) However, it has been claimed that the West and Turkey did not react adequately to Russia's annexation of Crimea and implemented

a “buck-passing” policy. In this sense, it is also stated that the lack of adequate deterrent measures and reaction may have paved the way for Russia's military intervention in Syria. (Aktürk 2017, 141–42)

According to Auer, Putin’s decision to annex Crimea is an example of Schmitt’s supposition that “the sovereign is who decides the exception” because Putin determined the exception in Crimea. (Auer 2015, 959–60) Having the authority to determine what is the exception, Putin has declared Crimea as an ancient Russian territory. In his speech after the participation of Crimea to Russia, he reiterates the Crimean importance in a historical, cultural and religious sense:

To understand the reason behind such a choice it is enough to know the history of Crimea and what Russia and Crimea have always meant for each other. Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride. This is the location of ancient Khersones, where Prince Vladimir was baptised. His spiritual feat of adopting Orthodoxy predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilisation and human values that unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian empire are also in Crimea. This is also Sevastopol – a legendary city with an outstanding history, a fortress that serves as the birthplace of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet. Crimea is Balaklava and Kerch, Malakhov Kurgan and Sapun Ridge. Each one of these places is dear to our hearts, symbolising Russian military glory and outstanding valour. (Putin 2014)

Through the historical and cultural approach Putin emphasised in his speech, he claims that Crimea is an integral part of Russia. Thus, while emphasising that Russia's territorial dominance is beyond its borders, he legitimises the actions of Russia within the framework of international norms. He refers to the UN Charter and the UN International Court’s decisions on declarations of independence; thus, he obviously compartmentalised the Crimean decision of interdependence by referendum and decision to join Russia. In doing so, emphasizing the hypocrisy of the West, Putin declared at the core of his speech announcing the annexation of Crimea that the world system had changed and that Russia, as a sovereign and independent state, had a role in this new order. (Putin 2014)

Duncombe and Dunne argued that Russia's military action was based on “a strategy of emulating NATO's interventions in its own 'near abroad', be it Kosovo (1999) or Libya

(2011)". (Duncombe and Dunne 2018, 29) Given Putin's emphasis on these points, Duncombe and Dunne's suggestion is accurate. However, Putin's justification of Russia's interventions through international norms was not because he was worried about pursuing a policy in line with these norms but because the West was using these norms as a weapon against Russia. Accordingly, his claim to comply with international norms was intended to reveal the hypocritical policy of the West. His main point is that the policy pursued by the West is a strategy against "Eurasian Integration". (Putin 2014)

The reason why John Mearsheimer considers the Crimean War to be the fault of the West further embodies Putin's complaints about Western countries. According to Mearsheimer, no superpower would accept the existence of another superpower or rival alongside its own territorial authority.⁵⁵ In this context, the problems of Russian-Ukrainian relations could be traced back to the "Orange Revolution" in 2004. (Mearsheimer 2014) Unlike Mearsheimer, Becker et. al. asserts that Russia's main motive is not on security concerns but on the fact that the revitalisation of the Russian economy through natural resources and political consolidation has taken place under Putin's leadership since the 2000s. Therefore, Russia has begun to pursue a more confrontational policy while redefining itself as a major power in international relations. (Becker et al. 2016, 119)

As another opinion, McFaul examines the ideological reasons for Russia's invasion of Crimea, citing concerns about the overthrow of Yanukovych and Putin's U.S. hegemonic liberalism and fear of democracy on Russia's border. (McFaul 2020, 121) In this context, McFaul's claim that Putin is not acting in the context of *realpolitik* is diametrically opposed to Mearsheimer's approach to Russia's behaviour. In this case, it can be argued that Putin's personal beliefs, ideology or theories shaped Russian Foreign Policy. In this sense, the change of administration in Ukraine created an "exception" situation for Russia and this situation led to Russia's annexation of Crimea with a nationalist attitude. (Kurylo 2016, 4) While Putin has been the dominant actor determining the "exceptional" situation

⁵⁵ According to Mearsheimer, "Putin and his compatriots have been thinking and acting according to realist dictates, whereas their Western counterparts have been adhering to liberal ideas about international politics. The result is that the United States and its allies unknowingly provoked a major crisis over Ukraine." (Mearsheimer 2014) In this sense, the main difference underlying the struggle between the US and Russia is that each country act accordingly separate playbook. The US has shaped its foreign policy by spreading democracy and enlarging its influence sphere while Russia has felt threatened by the geographical proximity of the US.

in this context, the element that constitutes the “exceptional” situation has gained integrity with Putin's policy of increasing anti-Western sentiment since 2007.

Another important point is that Russia is culturally incompatible and different from the West (Becker et al. 2016, 119). In this context, Russian nationalistic discourse is composed by these two ingredients which are similar to the Turkish pattern. Turkey also claims that its civilisational process is not part of Western culture. The cleavages between Russian culture and western culture are institutionalised for friend/enemy distinction by the ruling elite. On the other hand, the policy pursued by the government to restore and facilitate Turkey’s activity in former Ottoman geography also converges with Putin’s stated ambition to restore Soviet Era. Just like the Russian officials in justification of the Crimean intervention, Turkish officials are also justifying the abroad interventions with national interests accompanied by nationalist discourse.

Finally, Russia's annexation of Crimea has both shaken the regional balances and shown once again that Russia is pursuing a more ambitious foreign policy. In the following period, Russia, which carried out military intervention in Syria in 2015, continued its military presence in Libya as well. The year 2011 can be shown as the break of Russia's relations with the United States, which will sharpen its opposition with the US and the EU by starting the Ukraine War in early 2022 (McFaul 2018).

4.3. Internal Security Threat Perception

Between 2010 and 2015, Turkey experienced many drastic domestic political transformations that would shape the post-2015 period in accordance with foreign policy transformations. Having Davutoglu’s appointment as a foreign minister, TFP’s transformation has accelerated due to the alteration of the strategic culture of Turkey, the domestic environment, and external developments. As noted above, some developments such as the global financial crisis, Arab Spring, the emergence of ISIS and Russian assertive foreign policy have fundamentally influenced Turkey’s near environment as well as international politics. On the other hand, Turkey has experienced important political and juridical changes in this period. The focus of this subchapter is concentrated on the reproduction of the permanent exceptional situation that contributed to the

sovereign characteristic of the leader, and the variability in the friend/enemy distinction through the perception of internal security threats will be tried to be unfolded by examining the domestic changes.

In this regard, JDP's electoral power and autonomy have increased while the self-confidence of the JDP government.⁵⁶ (Kalaycıoğlu 2012) According to him, since the local elections in 2009 and 2010, the Turkish political elites have been defining each other entirely on the basis of the "friend-enemy" dichotomy. Expressing that both sides question each other's legitimacy, Kalaycıoğlu said that the main focus of the debate has turned around the "right to govern of the JDP" and "democratic credibility of the parliamentary opposition parties" (Kalaycıoğlu 2012, 4). He also marked 2010 as a turning point in internal politics towards polarisation and fragmentation.

⁵⁶ Pro-government columnists and government members have stressed that Turkey's self-confidence arises out of Erdogan's personality. That approach which merges Erdogan's character with the state has served to personify the state behaviours. (Güngör 2016; Miş 2014; Yeni Şafak 2014b; Habertürk 2011; Yeni Şafak 2004; 2015a; Cumhuriyet 2012a; Erdoğan 2018g) Both authors describe the self-confidence they claim Erdogan has brought to Turkey through relations with Western countries. While Güngör and Miş personalised the self-confidence in Turkey with Erdogan's leadership traits, they referred that Turkey lacked self-confidence in the pre-Erdogan era. (Miş 2014; Güngör 2016) The case in which this self-confidence debate symbolised was the comparison of the photograph reflected by the public during the meeting between former PM Bülent Ecevit and former US President Bill Clinton and the picture projected to the public during the meeting between PM Erdoğan and US President Barack Obama. (Habertürk 2011) Another example is that at the NATO meeting in 2015, PM Erdoğan stroked the cheek of US President Obama, while in 2001, it was highlighted that the Finnish PM made the same gesture to PM Ecevit. (Yeni Şafak 2015a) In addition to these two examples, it was emphasised that PM Erdoğan painted a more confident image regarding movement and attitude compared to former PM Ecevit. (Yeni Şafak 2004) PM Erdogan stated that Turkey's reputation and self-confidence were damaged by the leaders who stood ready to receive orders from foreign leaders in the period before them. (Milliyet 2009d) Referring to the draft resolution crisis between the JDP and RPP in 2012, PM Erdoğan said, "(...) you are the men who stand ready to receive orders from the US. While the president of the US was sitting there on the handrail, the political figures you always went behind were standing ready to receive orders," while criticising the opposition. (Cumhuriyet 2012a) During the visa tension between the U.S. and Turkey in 2017, Erdogan, who is president, rejected criticism of Turkey's foreign policy with similar rhetoric. In response to these criticisms, Erdoğan said, "Turkey, with its state tradition exceeding 2,200 years, has the knowledge to overcome these problems. We do not exist in this geography, which has been our homeland for a thousand years, by the permission or grace of somebody. Excuse me, the era of standing ready to receive orders from the US Presidents while they lean back to the handrails is over. The background of the man at the head of the opposition is based on this understanding. Of course, these periods are over. There is no such Turkey anymore. Whatever is in front of us, we are on the same level. If you compromise your personality, they put you through the mill. That's why upright posture is important." (Erdoğan 2018g, 52:265) In this context, PM Erdoğan is putting forward the understanding of "New Turkey" by completely separating the JDP government from the periods before them. He, who defines the existence of his own power by marginalizing these periods, clearly constructs the periods before them as failed government practices: "In all areas, from foreign policy to economy, from social policies to labor peace, from urbanization to transportation, from energy to education, from health to security, Turkey is no longer the old Turkey." Nothing will ever be the same." Yes, today, nothing is the same." (Erdoğan 2014a, 9:720)

The transformation experienced since the beginning of 2010, and the further polarisation and fragmentation in domestic politics can be attributed to the JDP government's neutralization of its internal rivals and the strengthening of PM Erdogan's leadership position. The increase in government control in the civil and military bureaucracy has also significantly changed the balance of power in the political sphere. The JDP government, which has risen in electoral power and increased its dominance in the state institutions, especially the judiciary, after the 2010 referendum, has narrowed the space occupied by the opposition parties in the public sphere. Since this period, while the secular coup dimension of the perception of internal enemies has been left behind, the members of the Fethullah Gülen Terrorist Organization (FETO) have been defined as the most serious internal enemy (Öktem 2022).

2010 referendum has given a chance to increase the government's impact on the judiciary by re-designing judiciary institutions for JDP and PM Erdogan. Having the ascending legitimate power of the JDP government since the 2010 referendum, PM Erdogan has enjoyed the accumulated legislative and executive power, which gave him a comprehensive maneuver space in both domestic and external politics. The most important legitimizing factor in all these developments was the EU accession process and the context of democratization. While PM Erdogan defended the yes vote during the propaganda campaign at the 2010 referendum, he promoted the expansion of civil rights and democratic progress. On the other hand, Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, a newly elected leader of the RPP, has defended the no vote for hindering the politicization of the judiciary. According to him, the constitution proposed by the JDP brought about the politicization of the judiciary, which could lead to the polarization of society (CNNTürk 2010).

Another important dimension of this period, the “Kurdish Opening,” which was called “the “National Unity and Brotherhood Project” by PM Erdogan, was one of the most striking agendas of the JDP government. Although the “Kurdish Opening” initiative started in 2009, the significant impact of the process was seen in the 2010s. This process, which ended in 2015, also points to an exceptional situation created by PM Erdogan. It, in which many institutions were disabled, was continued between the PM and his cadre and the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) and later the People's Democratic Party

(PDP). Though the process was interrupted in 2011, it would have been continued in 2013 after PM Erdogan's statement that "the dialogue had been continued with Imrali" (Cumhuriyet 2012b; Ete et al. 2013, 62).

In view of the Kurdish Opening, it is seen that two important issues stand out. The first of these, which pro-government authors voiced, is that PM Erdogan, who has Islamist roots defined as the other by the "establishment" for years, has taken inclusive steps towards the "Kurds" that are identified by the "establishment" as another one (Özhan 2013). On the other hand, Balta and Çelikpala have addressed another issue that the JDP government was trying to dissociate itself "from the "Old Republic's" malaises, anxieties, and fears, and intent on taking bold steps" (Balta and Çelikpala 2020, 596). Although the two views seem close to each other, there are fundamental differences. While the first view states that the "Kurdish Opening" put forward by PM Erdoğan indicates a transformation in Turkish domestic politics; the second view indicates the JDP's efforts to create and legitimize itself through the policies aimed at the problematic areas of the past, such as the "Kurdish Opening."

The third important occasion that affected this period was the Gezi Park events, which spread to the whole of Turkey in a short time. At the beginning of the summer of 2013, the events in and around Taksim Square, one of Istanbul's iconic places, soon turned into anti-government protests attended by hundreds of thousands of people. The government's harsh response to the protests and the fierce clashes between security forces and demonstrators have further deepened the polarisation of domestic politics. The Gezi Park events, which took place a year before the 2014 presidential elections, sharpened the definition of friend/foe within polarised Turkish politics. The Gezi Park incidents, which would later be described as a coup against the government, increased the government's domestic policy tendencies towards securitization and authoritarianism.

Last but not least, the 2014 Presidential Election is other milestones which paved the way for political transformation in Turkish Politics. By winning the presidential election, PM Erdogan assumed the role of a politically encompassing presidency rather than the classic presidential style. In this sense, the political landscape has changed in many ways. First, there would be two political institutions elected by the people has created a dual

legitimacy⁵⁷. Second, the fact that the president is also the leader of a political party may bring the TGNA under control due to Turkey's strictly disciplined party regime. Third, the President, who has a majority vote in the TGNA due to being the leader of a political party, also has a very high decisive power over the judicial institutions with the powers brought by the 2010 constitutional amendment. Therefore, the leader who takes responsibility of the presidential office and runs the political party with a majority in TGNA might reach the ultimate power by converting the Schmittian sovereign.

This subchapter uses the aforementioned cases when examining how the perception of the internal security threat shifted from one form to another between 2010 and 2015, in proportion to the consolidation of PM Erdogan's power. It would be not wrong to say that Schmittian sovereign form in Turkish politics was matured in this period. First, the electoral victory of JDP and PM Erdogan has fortified their ascendancy and superiority by unifying legitimacy of the political rule. Second, the 2010 referendum and following changes increase the political control on the judicial system, according to some authors (Saatçioğlu 2016, 134; Esen and Gumuscu 2016, 1585; Kalaycıoğlu 2012; Sözen 2019; Taspınar 2014; Arat and Pamuk 2019). Third, society has been rigidly polarized due to the political turmoil and frequent electoral calendar experiences. As a result of this polarization, hostility between groups within society also increased (Keyman, 2014).

⁵⁷ The term dual legitimacy refers to the situation created by the popular election of parliament and head of state. "Dual legitimacy", a concept in the constitutional law literature, is used to compare the parliamentary and presidential systems. However, there is also the view that examples can be found within the parliamentary system (Linz 1985; Mainwaring and Shugart 1997; Turhan 1992). According to Linz, the presidential system carries out the dual-legitimacy characteristic, and there is no way to determine which institution is superior to another in the sense of legitimacy. Thus, the confusion on legitimacy would create a risk to democratic stability (Linz 1985, 13). However, Mainwaring and Shugart stress that the dual-legitimacy conditions would be able to be a risk for parliamentary systems. In this sense, even though having agreed with Linz on general principles of the difference between parliamentary and presidential systems, they claim that the parliamentary system poses a risk to democratic stability (Mainwaring and Shugart 1997). However, according to Turhan, the answer to the question of whether a parliamentary system or a presidential system is more appropriate for Turkey is a parliamentary system. Referring to the fact that, unlike Mainwaring and Shugart's stance on democratic stability, it is quite possible to achieve this in the parliamentary system, Turhan mentions that Turkey is not suitable for the presidential system due to its historical background. Referring to Turkey's imperial past, Turhan says: "For Turkey, the inappropriateness of a popularly elected president has fundamental reasons: First of all, in the Ottoman Empire, individuals lived in a society in which the Sultan had absolute powers with no tradition concerning the limitation of political power. (...) And if the president lacks a parliamentary majority the conflict between the legislature and the executive will be very grave because of the absence of tradition of compromise and conciliation; this, too, would be inimical to democracy. Our traditions cannot accept the uncompromising conflict or the complete integration of the president and the legislature" (Turhan 1992, 158). In this manner, Turhan finds the presidential system is dangerous for Turkey due to the risk of creating either absolute power or instability because of dual-legitimacy.

4.3.1. The 2010 Constitutional Referendum

The 2010 referendum, which developed the political reforms in accordance with the EU candidacy process of Turkey, emerged as a process that increased polarization in domestic politics and marked the overthrow of the Kemalist bureaucratic elite by the JDP (Müftüler-Baç and Keyman 2012; Alessandri 2010; Arat and Pamuk 2019). According to RPP, the main opposition party, the referendum would be a vote of confidence for the JDP and poses a risk of undermining the judiciary in favor of the ruling party, while the JDP stressed that it is not a vote of confidence, but it is a part of democratization process of Turkey which aims to fulfill the conditions of EU membership. (Arat and Pamuk 2019, 110) Alessandri defines the 2010 referendum “as a contest between the supporters of democracy and European integration on the one hand and their opponents on the other” (Alessandri 2010, 23).

Within this debate, Turkey has experienced a highly polarizing referendum campaign that represented an important breaking point with the amendments proposed by the JDP. One of the most controversial issues was a change in the structure of the Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors. According to RPP, the constitutional amendment would increase the determination of the ruling party on the judiciary. However, the criticism of the RPP emerges precisely in this regard. It has been stated that the RPP’s criticism of the constitutional amendment stems from the party’s “traditional relationship” with the judicial bureaucracy (Yılmaz 2010, 20).⁵⁸ On the other hand, Sevinç also argues that the new structure of the SCJP that would bring by the 2010 referendum would be far from the democratic standards⁵⁹, adding that, lack of compromise on the constitutional change

⁵⁸ Yılmaz claimed that the RPP’s campaign for a constitutional referendum was based on opposition to the JDP. In this context, according to Yılmaz, “the RPP built its ‘No’ justification in the referendum on opposition to the JDP and tried to bring to the fore the claim that the JDP wanted to take over the judiciary in order to avoid being trialed. Ignoring the position of the judiciary in democratic countries, the RPP has advocated the judiciary to maintain its position as a limb of the guardianship system in Turkey. It has been argued that the contents of the other regulations in the package, which are said to be reformed by the RPP, are empty” (Yılmaz 2010, 21).

⁵⁹ Sevinç explicitly defends that the minister of justice and undersecretary of the ministry of justice should not be included in the structure of the SCJP (Sevinç 2010). Göztepe also criticized the 2010 Constitutional Amendment package in many respects and stated that a large part of the changes to be made included in

has transformed it into one-party attempt that would contain a risk for the legal and political legitimacy of a constitutional amendment (Sevinç 2010, 291–92).

While Kutay indicates that the 2007 and 2010, and then 2017, referendums led “the way for the settlement of strong executive rule and its absolute control over the legislation and judiciary” (Kutay 2019, 745), Arato also clearly stated that the new regulations would give power to the majority party in the TGNA, which is the JDP, to regulate” highest courts” (Arato 2010, 347). In light of Arato’s evaluations, the 2010 referendum might grant the power to interfere with the judiciary system of the ruling party and, in the future, that it leads to a political situation in which the supreme judiciary cannot prosecute decisions of power.

In his speeches during the 2010 Constitutional Amendment campaign, PM Erdoğan criticized the Constitutional Court's stance and described the amendment of a decision passed by the Turkish Grand National Assembly as an “excess of power” and a “violation of the law” (Erdoğan 2019b, 93:90). On the other hand, members of the ruling party and the circles that close to the ruling party has also usually emphasised the tutelage of the judiciary.⁶⁰ In this sense, the structural change of the SCJP via the referendum has marked an important turning point in the relationship between the JDP and the judicial bureaucracy. Some scholars have also stressed that the 2010 referendum has led to a way to strengthen the JDP by restructuring the judicial system (Waldman and Caliskan 2017, 97; Bâli 2020, 83).

the judiciary. Similar to Sevinç's criticism, she emphasizes that the change in the structure of the SCJP is a politically motivated change and claims that the government aims to “establish a structure suitable for itself” via these changes (Göztepe 2010). According to İnsel, the judiciary part of the 2010 constitutional amendment is the most controversial part that exacerbates the debate in society. İnsel stated that the part of the constitutional amendment that concerns the judiciary is perceived by the opposition as the seizure of the judiciary by the government (İnsel 2013, 713).

⁶⁰ JDP politicians and those close to the JDP insisted on the concept of judicial tutelage and pointed to the 2010 referendum as a step to destroy it. Some JDP deputies have blamed the SCJP members for working with the opposition party, RPP, to establish a tutelage over the ruling party and government (Özkan 2015). PM Erdogan reacted at a rally during the September 12 Referendum Campaign by stating that the judicial bureaucracy was campaigning for no. According to him, while the constitutional amendment was a regulation that would democratize the judiciary, the main intention of those who opposed it was to continue the tutelage (Cumhuriyet 2010c).

Beyond the debates around the judiciary system, the polarisation and sociological dimension of the referendum were also voiced. According to Ergil, who marks the September 12, 2010, referendum as the start of the era in Turkey, the supporters of the “No” campaign of the referendum “derive their power, positions, privileges and unaccountability from” (Ergil 2010, 20) the system that the JDP challenged via referendum. Regarding Turkey's political environment and bureaucratic transformation, the referendum campaign has converted into a general election campaign. In this sense, the legal dimension of the constitutional amendment has been taking a backseat compared to political debates about the essence of the republic around the political parties.

Another important discussion was the presidential system debate. Considering PM Erdoğan's statements in the 2010 referendum campaign⁶¹ that the presidential system should be opened for discussion, Özcan claims that the 12 September 2010 referendum accelerated the transition to the presidential system (Özcan, n.d., p. 18). As a result of the referendum held in 2007, the election of the President of the Republic by the people in 2014 would reveal two different leaders elected by the people in the system of administration, as mentioned earlier. Immediately after the 2010 referendum, PM Erdoğan's statements on the discussion of the presidential system would constitute the main purpose of the JDP in the work on the new constitution that would begin in 2011.⁶²

On the other hand, one of this referendum's most important building blocks was the JDP's most successful election campaign. The JDP, which both expanded the field of social cooperation through the referendum campaign and reduced the opposition parties to the position of status quo parties that stood against development, was legitimising the constitutional amendments with democratisation moves on the one hand and on the other hand, the judicial bureaucracy, which they faced significant obstacles as PM Erdoğan stated, was also being reorganised (Milliyet 2010a).

⁶¹ PM Erdogan, in a television program, stated that the transition to the presidential system should be discussed and that he approached such a transition positively. In addition, referring to the constitutional amendment made in 2007, he stated that the election of the President of the Republic by the people is also a step in the transition to the Presidential system (Milliyet 2010a).

⁶² In its 2015 election manifesto, the JDP explicitly states that the proposal for a presidential system was put forward in the studies of 2011. Accusing the opposition of disrupting the process by personalizing the system debate, the JDP claims that the parliamentary system is designed in a tutelary way that leads to recurring political crises (JDP 2015).

The obstructions mentioned by PM Erdogan may become more understandable with Özbudun's statement that “this office was designed to be impartial and above party, controlled by the state elites, with extensive supervisory powers over civilian politics” (Ergun Özbudun 2011, 192) when describing the comprehensive authority on determining the composition of institutions that granted to the President by the constitution. In this context, the amendments carried out by the referendum of 12 September 2010 dissolved the authority over civilian politics. On the other hand, the JDP government, which faced the case of closure in 2008, consolidated its own power by eroding the power of the institutional structures that opposed it by the adoption of the 2010 referendum (Müftüler-Baç and Keyman 2012, 85).

In sum, the 2010 constitutional referendum was a turning point for Turkey due to the many transformation elements it contained. First, the constitutional amendment, which deteriorates the resistance of the bureaucratic composition in favor of the JDP government, resembles the adjustment of the judiciary. Second, the JDP's rhetoric of democratization and anti-tutelage has also revealed a ground on which populism has risen in political competition. The rhetoric led by the ruling party that opposition parties are actors of tutelage and status quo has become the legitimiser of the unilateral policies pursued and to be followed by the JDP. Finally, it has been sparked by the debates on the presidential system that will determine Turkey's agenda for many years and invoked in 2017.

4.3.2. The Kurdish Opening

From 2009 until the end of 2015, the “National Unity and Brotherhood Project”, which composes one of the most important agenda items of the JDP government, has become one of the most important topics among the democratisation steps. For many years, the JDP government has put forward its opening plan for the solution to the “Kurdish Problem” that has dragged Turkey into an unstable climate. It has defined the opening as part of Turkey's democratisation process (Ö. Çelik 2011, 146).

This process, which started in 2009, occupies an important place in the “old Turkey” discourse of the JDP government.⁶³ PM Erdogan described the period before the JDP came to power in 2002 as the years of “denial.” In these years, claiming that the rights of Kurds living in Turkey were being violated, he blamed the main opposition party, the RPP (NTV 2011). On the other hand, Deniz Baykal, former leader of the RPP, has blamed the ruling party for leading a “PKK process” rather than a solution process for the Kurdish Question.

Like the 2010 Constitutional Amendment referendum, the Kurdish Opening was another development that increased political polarisation. Some government members and pro-government columnist has insisted on the roots of the Kurdish Problem deep-seated of “republics’ denial politics” (Altun 2014a; Özhan 2015). While Özhan suggested that “the remnant of the Empire should be dressed in the most primitive version of the secular nation-state shirt” as the cause of the problem, he described the secularists “as a current but weakening reflection of the deviation experienced a century ago” (Özhan 2015). Thus, it can be revealed that the Kurdish Opening aimed at solving the aforementioned problem and reflected an intra-state struggle for hegemony.

PM Erdogan stated that some of those who opposed the Kurdish Opening thought that their political interests would disappear when the peace prevailed (Cumhuriyet 2009). Stating that the JDP government had destroyed the status quoist approach, PM Erdogan cited the period before them as the source of the problem. The main criticism of the opposition parties opposing the Kurdish Opening included assessments that the process was not transparent and scheduled. In addition, as one of the main criticisms, it was claimed that the JDP was trying to legitimise the progress through dialogue with the PKK, using the participation of other political parties (T24 2013b).

The political rift between the ruling party and opponents on the Kurdish Opening has crystalised the polarisation of Turkey. Another opposition party, the Nationalist

⁶³ The issue of the Kurdish Opening constitutes one of the most prominent examples among the discourses of “Old Turkey” and “New Turkey”. In particular, the rhetoric of “New Turkey”, which PM Erdoğan sloganized with increasing momentum in his presidential candidacy campaign, was also expressed as a Turkey in which the influence of the military on the political sphere was decreasing. (Euronews 2014)

Movement Party (NMP), which has a group in the TGNA, described the JDP government's opening process as a “journey of betrayal.” NMP leader Devlet Bahçeli also criticises that the process is carried out in a way that is closed to the public eye and claims that the reason for this is the negotiations with the terrorist organisation behind closed doors (MHP 2009).

The mutual discourses of the ruling party and opposition discourses over the Kurdish Opening have increased the polarisation. PM Erdogan stated that those who opposed the opening process were in an alliance:

With our steps in foreign policy, our economic breakthroughs, our democratisation reforms, especially with our National Unity and Brotherhood Project, we are now demonstrating a strong will to solve this problem. Let my dear people look at who is disturbed by this will and solution and make their evaluations accordingly... The terrorist organisation has lost its ground for abuse and resists the solution. The arms dealers, the barons of war, are resisting the solution. Bloody circles accustomed to profiting from Turkey's instability and unrest resist the solution. I say this in particular: Those who abuse the martyrs and seek political interests through the funerals of the martyrs resist the solution. Those disturbed by Turkey's increasing influence in the region and taking on more important roles are hoping for help from the terrorist organisation's attack and rubbing their hands thinking that Turkey will be in a state of impotence. These are futile expectations. Turkey is a country that can overcome all kinds of problems and overcome all kinds of obstacles. This time, Turkey will disrupt this dirty game, this vicious circle and it is doing so, my dear friends... Turkey is no longer on the route of gangs, not of terrorist organisations, but of politics, the status quo, the status quo that is detached from the nation, but of the nation, and will continue on its way in that way. That is why I ask my people to be vigilant against what is happening... Let them see who opposes this National Unity and Brotherhood Project... Let them see who opposed the Constitutional Amendment... RPP, NMP, BDP, Terrorist Organization, İmralı... Currently, they are all in alliance opposing the National Unity and Brotherhood Project and the Constitutional Amendment... I am sure that all my citizens will evaluate and decide in the best way what this alliance means, what this overlap means (Erdogan 2019b, 93:58–59).

PM Erdogan's statements described all groups opposing the Kurdish Opening and the Constitutional Amendment as hostile groups to Turkey. Thus, he saw the opening as a struggle against enemies. Defining the opening as a struggle against the enemies, he has provided that the election results of 2010 and 2011 were proof that the people also support

it (Erdoğan 2019c, 94:185). His approach, which antagonises those against the process, also finds itself in the sense of building a new society via the process.⁶⁴

In addition, while the nation is united on the path of the opening they put forward, it has positioned itself against all other units of the society, especially the RPP. Thus, all of these units are excluded from the conceptualisation of an integrated nation. In other words, the policy of opening has fortified us/other distinction in domestic politics. The distinction, thus, has become even more apparent with PM Erdogan's statements that the RPP is the root of the Kurdish Issue.⁶⁵

The Kurdish Opening, which the JDP government put forward and implemented, was also an important example of how foreign and domestic policy are intertwined, therefore, the distinction between them is becoming increasingly blurred. The “Kurdish Question” and the search for a solution, which has been on the agenda since PM Erdogan's speech in Diyarbakir in 2005⁶⁶, has been embodied in the Kurdish Opening since 2009, both with the drastic transformations Turkey has experienced in domestic politics and the alterations in foreign policy that have been continuing at the same time.

PM Erdogan's reference to the JDP government's successful performance in the expansion of the economy and democratic sphere as a reference to society for the solution of the Kurdish Question could be seen as an effort to establish a comprehensive societal alliance against those who were the opponents of the JDP policies. It was also emerging as an

⁶⁴ Pro-government think tanks and scholars argue that the process initiated by the JDP government is a new mechanism of social construction, see the “Ergenekon case and the search for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem” as a significant democratization step that goes hand in hand. (Acar 2009) (Ete 2010) One of the reasons why the JDP government's approach to the Kurdish Issue differed from its predecessors is that the political origin to which the members of the government belonged was marginalized, just like the Kurdish movement also came to the fore (Köse 2022).

⁶⁵ In his party's speech at the Women's Branch Congress, PM Erdogan said, “in this country, the RPP has brought up the Kurdish issue. It is the RPP that has brought the Kurdish issue to such dimensions. It is the RPP that, through prohibition, denial, and negligence, has treated the East, and the Southeast, as stepchildren for decades. The RPP stands like a wall in front of the National Unity and Brotherhood Project,” describing the RPP as both the root of the problem and the obstacle to the solution (Erdoğan 2019c, 94:320).

⁶⁶ In his speech in Diyarbakir, PM Erdogan stated that the Kurdish Question exists and that they will solve this problem. Speaking about Turkey's economic development and the expansion of the democratic environment, PM Erdogan announced that they would not give up on these and that they would take further steps in the solution of the Kurdish Question (Sabah 2009).

actor in the quest for legitimacy by extending consent to the solution of the Kurdish Question, which the government sought to integrate with other policies, into more general policy areas.

In this context, while PM Erdogan's approach to the Kurdish Question and the Kurdish Opening is based on the acceptance that all citizens of the country are united, he blamed the discriminative policies pursued by predecessors for disrupting the integrity of the society (Hürriyet 2005). Thus, a new perception of the other is developed through discriminatory policies defined as the opposite of the integrity sought to be established and those who follow these discriminatory policies. Because, according to PM Erdogan, this group, which is described as both the cause of the problem and the obstacle to the solution, is an obstacle in front of Turkey's development. This behavior, consistent with the Schmittian friend/foe distinction, is an example of the JDP government's volatile friend/foe categorization.

4.3.3. The Gezi Park Protests

One of the most prominent cases of this period was that a local protest that started in Istanbul in the summer of 2013 quickly spread across the country to anti-government demonstrations. Protests that began in May over the government's project of an urban venue in Istanbul's Taksim Square sparked violent demonstrations and protests nationwide, especially in Turkey's major cities, following violence by law enforcement against demonstrators. In a short time, many people were killed in the demonstrations that turned into street clashes between security forces and protesters.

The demonstrations provide important findings on Turkey's re-securitization. In this context, the government's claim that the events were planned by the foreign interest groups has established the environment led to the "state of exception" in the Schmittian meaning. During the demonstrations, the government blamed the foreign interest groups and criticized the international organizations' approach. (NTV 2013; Takvim 2013). The government's rhetoric that the demonstrators were supported by foreign actors had created a situation in which the country was under external threat and surrounded by enemies.

According to Oğuzlu, in addition to the JDP government feeling that it is surrounded by enemies due to the impact of the Gezi Park events, the overthrow of the Morsi government in Egypt and the simultaneous occurrence of the Gezi Park events worsened the JDP's feelings of security (Oğuzlu 2022, 514).

In a tense political environment, PM Erdogan targeted protesters for claiming that the Gezi Park incidents were an attack on Turkey's economy and that it was organized in conjunction with foreign actors trying to prevent “Turkey's economic growth, international power, and democracy” (BBC News Türkçe 2013). According to him, it has emerged as another manifestation of the “obstruction” and “coup attempts” they had faced in previous years (Erdoğan 2019g, 5:324).⁶⁷ Many crises, such as the Gezi Park incidents encountered during JDP ascendancy, were considered a conspiracy to undermine Turkey's economic growth⁶⁸ and international influence. To struggle against the conspiracy against Turkey, the government created a securitized political environment which paved the way to create a continuous “state of exception” by the sovereign.

⁶⁷ In the meeting with Turks in Germany a year after the Gezi Park incidents, PM Erdogan listed the attempts to prevent their government and the “coup threats” and included the Gezi Park protests in them: “When the voice of Anatolia and the nation was raised, they staged a coup, they wanted to silence those voices. They limited the powers-that-be, drew limits on the national will, put obstacles in front of the preferences of the nation by saying that “the ballot box is not everything”. On November 3, 2002, we came to the office when the nation once again raised its voice. For 12 years, we have fought intensely for democracy, for the rule of law, for the national will. We fought sincerely not only for ourselves, but for all the oppressed, for the poor, for all neglected and denied people. They prepared coup scenarios, and we turned them all upside down. They threatened us with gangs, we did not bow down. They tried to harass us, they made provocations, they came at us with terror, and we did not take a step back. They told you that we would not elect the President, and they threatened you with e-memorandums; We went to the nation that is the source of our power and manifested the national will. It was not enough for them, using the tree, environment and green as an excuse at last year's Gezi events, they attacked Turkey's independence, Turkey's growing economy, Turkey's unity and brotherhood, and we did not let them. On December 17, under the guise of corruption, they wanted to stage a coup against the elected government. We did not take a step back, we did not bow our necks, we took Turkey to the elections safely on March 30, and we gave the necessary response to the coup plotters there” (Erdoğan 2019g, 5:324).

⁶⁸ The government stated that the reason behind the Gezi Park incidents was that the West was disturbed by Turkey's economic policies (Erdoğan 2020a, 5:435–36, 576). Pro-government columnists also emphasized that the Gezi Park incident was an attempt at a coup d'état, which was supported by Western countries and global interest groups (Çağlar 2020; Öztürk 2022; Karagül 2013a; 2013b). In this context, in the indictment prepared by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in 2019, the Gezi Park incidents were described as “attempting to overthrow the Government of the Republic of Turkey or to prevent it from performing its duties” and “financed by some international groups. In addition, the similarity between the Gezi Park events and the May 27, 1960, Military Coup in the indictment showed that the view of the public prosecutor's office on the Gezi Park events was the same as the government: “(...) the government, which came to power with the votes of the people, was put under pressure by street movements, just like before the May 27 coup d'état. It was understood that the main reason for the uprising was the domestic and foreign policies pursued by the JDP, as well as the major infrastructure investments and projects that are being tried to be built in our country” (Kaya and Hatipoğlu 2019; T24 2019).

“State of exception” does not necessarily have to be established legally, as seen in the government's reaction to the Gezi Park incidents. (Türk 2016) In this context, the use of police intervention against the constitutional right to freedom of assembly “according to Schmitt, the rule of law is based on the decision of the sovereign, not on legal norms. The sovereign who decides on the state of emergency is above the prevailing legal order” (Türmen 2013). According to Türmen, who criticized the use of the law for political purposes and the arbitrary decision of the sovereign in the Gezi Park incidents, the Schmittian sovereign concept has been unfolded by the government, “which has divided the social sphere into us and our enemies (...) and organized the public sphere (urban space) as the main battlefields of this war” (Şengül 2015, 5). In keeping with Şengül's view of public spaces as battlefields defined by the government, the rising pan-Ottomanist understanding has had an impact on shaping public investments (Çelik 2020, 108).

Şengül describes Istanbul as a central position in terms of the “conservative-revanchist” policies of the government and claims that the Artillery Barracks, which are planned to be built instead of Gezi Park, are a “revanchist intervention” (Şengül 2015, 7). Some also argue that the government has “begun to employ Turkish right's already existing 'national will' concept extensively to attract nationalists as supporters” after the Gezi Park incidents (Akçay 2021, 93). In this context, the government sees the ballot box as where the “national will” reflects itself and is the peak point of democracy.⁶⁹ While PM Erdogan states that in parliamentary democracies, the ballot box is where the national will manifests itself, he argues that the other ways are “anti-democratic” ways (Sabah 2013). Thus, the national will concept was used to portray the protestors as alienated from society's values and evaluate them outside the homogeneous structure of society. In particular, accusations against protesters, such as attacking women wearing headscarves and drinking in mosques, suggested that these people were not part of society and aimed to alienate them from the rest of society. The government has converted the discourse of national will into a political campaign by holding “respect for national will” rallies in different cities.

⁶⁹ PM Erdogan's approach to democracy was also considered as a very narrow understanding of democracy (Öniş 2015, 27).

When the government portrayed itself as the sole manifestation of the national will, it excluded the others. This has led to the fact that those who remain outside are not seen as part of the people but as foreign elements that are separated from it. In this context, those who remain outside have become alienated from the values of the people and have become internal enemies who cooperate with foreign interest groups that do not want Turkey's development and prosperity. According to PM Erdogan, these elites care about their interests without regarding the nation and national prosperity (Erdoğan 2019a, 10:256).

The elites that PM Erdogan stated constitute a minority in Turkey. JDP government claims that they have been trying to improve the economic conditions and prosperity of the people despite the selfish efforts of these elites. In this manner, PM Erdogan has criticised the protestors for serving these interest groups, however, the majority of the people in Turkey were against the protestor, according to him. He stated that “the issue is not Gezi Park. It's not about the tree, it's not the environment. The issue is democracy, the issue is the national will, the issue is the nation... The real issue is Turkey...” but “Turkey is not just about Taksim Square. Turkey is not only about Kuğulupark. Turkey is not only about Alsancak. Turkey is Kasımpaşa, Fatih and Üsküdar. Turkey is Keçiören, Altındağ and Mamak. Turkey is Kayseri, Sivas and Erzurum. Turkey is Mersin, Adana and Antalya. Turkey is Trabzon, Rize, Muğla, Muş, Diyarbakır and Yozgat” (Erdoğan 2019h, 77:287).

In addition to being a concept used to emphasise that the Gezi Park protestors resorted to undemocratic methods ⁷⁰ (Yeni Şafak 2013b), the National Will discourse was an attempt to sort the protestors, a heterogeneous group, under a single identity. Thus, the Gezi Park protests were evaluated as a practice of the groups that undermined Turkey's democratic progress and economic development, which the JDP government was fighting against

⁷⁰ PM Erdogan explained the underlying reason for the Gezi Park protests with the loss of the privileges of some interest groups and the end of their plunder of the country by these groups with the JDP government. In this regard, he indicated elections as the basis of democracy and stated that governments would change only through elections to stress that the Gezi Park protests were opposite to the manifestation of the national will because protestors were motivated to change the government via non-electoral ways (Yeni Şafak 2013b).

after coming to power in 2002 (Aslan 2021). It caused the government to reflect the anti-government attitude of the protests as opposing the state's existence and the country's prosperity.

On the other hand, the concept of national will appeared as the essential basis of the state of emergency. Because, according to the government, the political party that won in the elections where the national will was manifested was taking its power directly from the nation itself. Therefore, the government that obtains power through elections emerges as the ultimate representative of the people. The acts undertaken against the government are classified as endeavours against the national will based on which all are included in the same category regardless of the nature of the actions. In this way, the government has developed a behavioral pattern characterizing all actions against it, as the tutelary attacks the national will.

PM Erdogan reduced democracy to the elections (Ülgen 2013). In this way, an order in which the people's ideas about the policies and actions of the government could be expressed only through elections was seen as democracy, a “majoritarian understanding of democracy” (Keyman & Gumuscu, 2014, p. 60). The remaining reactions were considered undemocratic methods and steps against national will. All these actions undertaken against the national will were naturally seen as actions against the existence of the state and society. Accordingly, government officials defined the Gezi Park protests as an act that had foreign supporters, against Turkey (Yeni Şafak 2013a). Süleyman Soylu, interior minister of Turkey, has said, “we are facing a process that started with the April 27 e-Memorandum, continued with the Gezi and December 17-25 and peaked with July 15, aims to weaken Turkey's security capacity, tests Turkey's commitment to democracy (...)” (Soylu 2017). His statement has pointed out that the continuous state of emergence condition sourced from the acts committed by different actors even though the identity of the actors were hostile to each other. He reduced these actors, whom he accused of being against Turkey's progress and development, to a single identity.

In summary, two main consequences of the Gezi Park events can be mentioned. The first is the growth of the scope of threat perception in domestic politics. PM Erdogan saw the

Gezi Park protests as a coup attempt against him. Therefore, unlike other government officials, his attitude towards the protests has been quite harsh (Altun 2016e, 169). While the Gezi Park protests continued in many cities of Turkey, he organized Respect for the National Will rallies and expanded the threat perception that the protests saw towards him as a threat to the nation. In this way, PM Erdogan has marginalized protestors by portraying them as minorities outside of society and alien to them.

Secondly, in the period following the Gezi Park protests and the 6-7 October Riots, the JDP government made amendments to the “Police Duty And Security Law And Certain Laws And Decrees Having The Force Of Law” which was popularly known as the “internal security package”, covering protests. Gaziantep MP Ali Serindağ, a former governor during the commission negotiations at TGNA, stated that the bill was an effort to block citizens' rights to protest and demonstrate directly and that the bill proposed aimed to prevent anti-government protests such as Gezi Park from happening again (Serindağ 2015). Even though the opposition parties have criticized the bill proposed by the government as aimed at controlling the protests against the government, critics of the opposition have focused on the intention of them. The pro-government columnists and officials voiced the claim that the opposition parties seemed to give up hope of coming to power in a democratic, legitimate, and legal way (Karaman 2015; Anadolu Ajansı 2015).

During this period, the Gezi Park protests were one of the most important events of Turkey's return to securitization. As explained above, the continuous effect of Gezi Park increased the polarisation as the government deepened the us-them divide⁷¹ (Yalvaç and Joseph 2019, 12) which reached the peak point at the elections held in 2013 (Ergün Özbudun 2014) and expanded the scope of the security-oriented approach in domestic politics. Thus, while the Gezi Park events gave rise to the opportunity for the government to identify many different enemies on a single typical frame, it also paved the way for the internalisation of a permanent state of emergency.

⁷¹ The us-them divide in Turkish politics has evolved into an antagonistic definition due to the government's aim to establish societal hegemony. Even, Yalvaç and Joseph argued that the Schmittian friend-enemy distinction also applies to populism, which is instrumental in forming a united society to support government policies (Yalvaç and Joseph 2019).

4.3.4. The 2014 Presidential Election

Amidst the conflicts and protests against the government, Turkey has experienced the first presidential elections in which the popular vote elected the president. After the change in the constitution the way how the president would elect in 2007, the focal point of the presidential elections was to gain the majority of the popular vote. Therefore, the presidential election campaign has turned to construct the “New Turkey” (Christofis, 2019, p16), and President Erdogan declared the day he won the election as the “founding day of the new Turkey” (Milliyet 2014).

According to him, there are very few problems left since the period he described as “the old Turkey”, one of which is the essence of the President’s statute. While stating that the president's office was positioned alongside the status quo, he says the duty imposed was to protect the state from the nation (Erdogan 2019d, 97:284). In this context, his statement on election day that “today is the foundation day of the new Turkey” emphasised the changing nature of the Presidency, which came directly by popular vote. The following conflict point would be whether the president, who derives his legitimacy directly from the people, would not remain within the constitutional limits.⁷²

According to Yalvaç and Johnson, the 2014 presidential elections constituted one of Turkey's important turning points in the way of authoritarianism (Yalvaç and Joseph 2019, 17).⁷³ President Erdoğan, who won the 2014 elections with 51.79% of the vote, gained significant executive and legislative power thanks to his party's majority in TGNA.

⁷² Former President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and PM Erdogan had different approaches to how the president shall be elected under the parliamentary system. As stated in the first chapter, the election of the president by the people could have created a crisis of dual legitimacy. In particular, Sezer explained the crises that the government and the president could enter into the system if they were members of different political parties or vice versa in his veto decision. Describing the president's election by the people as a turning point in the name of democracy, PM Erdogan said that the change is not technical or methodological but the closing of the history of tutelage (Erdogan 2019d, 97:261). Erdogan took the debate a step further, stating that “the system in Turkey has de facto changed” after he was elected president by the people (BBC News Türkçe 2015). By implying that the presidency elected by the people directly reflects the national will, he has responded to the criticism that he has exceeded the constitutional limits of the presidential authorities. He hereby tried to legitimize the existing constitutional limits that constrained the reflection of it.

⁷³ According to them, while the JDP’s hegemony was weak in Turkey between 2007-2011, the nascent hegemonic consolidation started to form in the 2010 Constitutional Referendum. Then, until the 2019 local elections, it was consolidated (Yalvaç and Joseph 2019). In this sense, the 2010 Constitutional Referendum was important to purge the bureaucratic elites, which have held an essential role in the decision-making process and lay the terrain for increasing the hegemonic power as Erdogan emphasized that it has marked the loss of tutelage in Turkish politics (Hürriyet 2010a).

However, the position that JDP obtains all power substance in the system did not be beneficial for expanded democratic progress (Keyman, 2014, pp. 30–31). Thus, there was an opportunity to reach absolute power for Erdogan, who holds both parliamentary and presidential powers through his political party. Former President Sezer's veto decision in 2007 to reject the draft law on the election of the President by the people mentioned the risk of an adherent hegemony in such a situation would occur.

The year 2014, when President Erdogan won the elections, followed years in which Turkey experienced extraordinary circumstances and developments in many respects. Therefore, the fact that President Erdogan, who was suddenly armed with the powers of the presidency and on the other hand was dominating the TGNA by his party, prepared the whole environment for him to emerge as a “sovereign” in the Schmittian style. In Turkey, where polarisation has increased with the developments that have taken place in Gezi Park and its aftermath, us/other distinction has gradually begun to materialise through the definition of friend/enemy and the groups defined as enemies have been positioned outside the homogeneous social structure.

Since the 2014 elections, the “de facto change of the system” led to the JDP government's effort to provide the de jure basis for this change. In this period of increasing polarisation and diversifying the perception of internal enemies, the desire to transition to the presidential system designed and discussed around the “sovereign” by the ruling party was an effort to make the de facto order the norm through the “political” which, according to Schmitt, was a rather intrinsic concept, was also constitutive.⁷⁴ In other words, it emerges as a concept that is “political”, which is the determinant of the internal transformations experienced by Turkey, and whose behaviours in both domestic and foreign policy constantly reproduce themselves.

⁷⁴ In Schmitt, the immanence and founder of the political is because it makes it the premise of all forms of relations. In this context, in addition to notions such as sovereign and state of emergency, the concept of the state exists within the political and its relations. According to Meierheinrich and Simons, Schmitt's conception of politics and Foucault's idea of power have similarities in “functionality” in that they both concentrate on power relations (Meierheinrich and Simons 2016, 1:24). Both the relationship that the sovereign establishes with the society and what this relationship produces belongs to the political. Thus, the “state of exception” decided by the sovereign is within the political sphere and its constitutive nature. It is essentially “the power at its fullest and purest” (Booth and Baert 2018, 21), and the power can constantly reproduce itself, creating the decisive position that will form it over and over again.

The 2014 Presidential Election marked an important turning point in terms of creating an elite or group of elites that would decide what is “political” and its content and that would derive its existence directly from society. Immediately after the victory of PM Erdogan, the leader of the JDP, which hold a majority in the TGNA throughout his political party, in the presidency, the discussions on the transition from the parliamentary to the presidential system increased (Al Jazeera Türk 2014b; Yeni Şafak 2014a; T24 2014; Anadolu Ajansı 2014; Al Jazeera Türk 2014a). According to Öniş, Erdogan’s desire to shift the system from parliamentarism to presidentialism would create a polarised political environment and major democratic backsliding (Öniş 2015, 38).

However, in President Erdogan's approach, the claim that the will of the nation was directly reflected in the office of the President was important. According to him, with the president's election directly by the people, “all the obstacles between Çankaya and the nation have been eliminated, it has integrated with the nation” and “Çankaya, which has been tried to be preserved as a guardianship tool above democracy for many years, has come under the full sovereignty of the national will as of today” (Erdogan 2019d, 97:325). In this respect, according to President Erdogan, he is the full reflection of the will of the nation because he is the president elected by the people. Therefore, in reality, carved out under this claim, the Presidency, which has the ability to reflect the will of the nation, has also become the founder of the “New Turkey” (Altun 2014b; Duran 2014).⁷⁵

President Erdogan, who won the election by portraying such a role, promised during the election campaign and reiterated during his term that he would be an executive president rather than a representative president who remained within the constitutional limits. One of the most important indicators was that at the beginning of 2015, the President of the Republic presided over the Council of Ministers. Although the constitution of the period gave the President the power to preside over the Council of Ministers (CoM) when deemed necessary, the chairman of the CoM was defined as the PM. Nevertheless,

⁷⁵ Altun, while mentioning that the concept of “New Turkey” is an ideal that is aimed to be achieved, stated that this ideal is portrayed in President Erdogan's political figure. President Erdoğan was thus positioned as a founding figure of the “New Turkey” (Altun 2014b). Duran, on the other hand, grounded President Erdogan's founding leadership mission by being the first president elected by the people. Duran, who described President Erdoğan as a “political actor with an exceptional role”, stated that he had put forward a new vision of a nation (Duran 2014).

President Erdogan began to chair the CoM continuously, normalizing this authority, which the constitution considered an exceptional circumstance.

Although this situation had a legal basis, it created an exception. However, while this exceptional situation became general, the President emerged as the decisive sovereign actor in determining the exception. Erdogan, who stated that he would not have a conventional presidential profile within the framework of his previous attitudes and discourses and that he would continue to serve as a more executive president, presided over the CoM and this became permanent, making the president the head of the executive power (Esen and Gumuscu 2016, 1583). The JDP, which could not obtain a sufficient majority in the TGNA to change the constitution to the presidential system, preferred to transfer some executive powers to the president through the widest interpretation of the presidential authorities in the first place (Grigoriadis 2015, 110).

Ultimately, the 2014 elections were one of the most important milestones in Turkey's transition to a presidential system. On the other hand, Erdogan, elected president following 11 years as PM, intensified his consolidation of power. Hereby, he emerged as a sovereign in the Schmittian understanding, both as a figure who determined the exception and could distinguish between friend and enemy. He had become the one who decided what the political would be, both as the president and as the leader of the party that had a majority in the TGNA. In this manner, the political authority of President Erdogan over his political party and state institutions has merged, and thus, the crisis of the JDP would carry the potential to turn into a state crisis or vice versa.

Last but not least, the 2014 elections paved the way for the transition from the parliamentary to the presidential system. Beyond that, these elections essentially represent the point at which the presidential system began to be implemented *de facto*. Former President Ahmet Necdet Sezer drew attention to the risk of sovereignty conflict or monopolization of sovereignty when he vetoed the proposal for the popular election of the President in 2007. Sezer's view that the popularly elected President would create a consolidation of power if he was close to the political party with the majority in the TGNA became more controversial after President Erdoğan won the election.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter examines Turkey's transition period from de-securitization to re-securitization, also called the transition period, because it resembles the transition process from “zero problems with neighbours” to “order-setter” aspiration voiced by Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (Özel and Güvenç 2012). In line with these developments, the changes in the international environment have also created a power vacuum for Turkey to pursue its regional and global goals. On the other hand, diminishing the capacity of the civilian and military bureaucracy in domestic politics has increased the ruling party's influence and ability to impact establishing foreign policy direction.

In this period when international variables are changing rapidly, the isolationist effect of the global financial crisis on the US and European states and the withdrawal of the US from Iraq have created an environment in which the decision-makers in TFP reflect their cognitive world easily in the foreign policy decision-making process. In this context, Turkey began to pursue an ambitious foreign policy, first at the regional and then global level. So much so that the distinction between domestic and external politics has become increasingly blurred, and the possibility of the realisation of Turkey's high foreign policy goals has been linked to the ruling party's success in domestic politics.

While the deterioration of relations with the EU and the chaotic environment created by the Arab Spring triggered new searches in the TFP, the decrease in the influence of TAF on politics after the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer Trials and the increasing threat of subversion due to FETÖ were the cornerstones of the transformation in domestic politics. In other words, while international variables provided a broader spatial movement to decision-makers in Turkey in this period, internal variables reinforced the security-dominated political space. Such a political environment turned the JDP government's increasing electoral success into a mechanism of political domination.

The domestic political environment that consolidated the political power of President Erdoğan, who was first the PM and then the President, and his efforts to expand the spatial space in foreign policy, disclosed the friend/enemy categorisation that was constantly re-

established in the political field. Another reason behind this is the decision-making authority of President Erdoğan, and the JDP on what the exception is, in accordance with Schmitt's definition of “sovereign is he who decides the exception”.

As the state of exception has become increasingly continuous, the friend/enemy distinction has affected the entire political sphere with the effect of increasing social polarisation. The most important example is that TFP has become an important part of domestic policy. In particular, the rhetoric that Turkey is no longer an actor under the influence of developments outside itself or international structure, but on the contrary, has turned into an “order-setter” actor that directs global developments, has evolved into constitutive rhetoric used against the opposition in domestic politics.

In this context, the JDP based its basic thesis on the fact that Turkey could not reach the position it should have in the international arena due to the dependence of the previous governments on the West and their unstable structures. The “New Turkey” concept that emerged in this period promised exactly the opposite of this claim. In the cases during this period, it revealed the political and cognitive understanding of the search for a “New Turkey”. As a result, during this period of transformation from de-securitization to re-securitization, the influence of the actors restricting the ruling party in domestic politics, also called the transition period, was reduced.

5. RE-SECURITIZATION OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY: 2015-ONWARDS

Most dramatic changes in TFP have been experienced in this period. Not only did the re-securitization project start but the shift in the centre of gravity was also clearly revealed. With the elections in 2015, the friend/enemy divide in domestic politics through ontological threat perceptions in connection with the power consolidation of the ruling party was the political packaging of the “exception”. During this period, as Turkey's relations with its traditional ally Western states deteriorated, the pro-government media and the ruling elite voiced the idea that these countries were in a conspiracy against Turkey.

The rhetoric of “New Turkey”, one of the slogans of President Erdoğan's election campaign in the 2014 elections, constituted the beginning of the “Great and Strong Turkey” claim to be voiced during this period. This discourse was embraced by both the pro-government media and the ruling elite. It was believed that the motivation of the conspiracies developed by the Western states, Turkey's traditional allies, against Turkey was the intention to prevent “Great and Powerful Turkey”. Thus, while this allowed the ruling party to politicise every field, it enabled it to generate the friend/foe divide through these politicised areas.

In this period, the continuity of the state of exception and the constant state of alert over the sharpening friend/foe categorisation brought about re-securitization in both domestic and foreign policy in a two-way street. Throughout the chapter, the examples of how the domestic and foreign policy environment, which will be detailed many times, mutually affect, and transform each other, will reveal how re-securitization progresses in both areas. In this context, especially since the 2016 coup attempt and the 2018 Presidential elections, the friend/enemy categorisation has completely dominated the entire political sphere.

The most important determinant of the friend/enemy divide that dominated this period was the alliances between political parties, and the founding of these alliances was the

“People’s Alliance” formed by the JDP and NMP. The alliance between the JDP and NMP traced back to the Yenikapı Rally in 2016, was formed during this period. In addition to the agreement reached by both parties on the security areas in domestic and foreign policy, their partnership for the transition from the parliamentary system to the presidential system would form the core of the re-securitization that marked this period. The re-securitization in this period covered a wide spectrum of rhetoric while being placed on a spatial plane in practice. In foreign policy, the security-based discourse developed primarily through spatial issues such as Syria, Libya, Greece, and the Eastern Mediterranean, while a sharp definition of friend/enemy in domestic politics was determined by how the political alliances established within it were positioned. Social polarisation has gradually increased in Turkey, which experienced elections almost every year from 2015 to 2020. In this period, in which political alliances are rigidly positioned against each other, the social sphere has become largely politicized.

In this context, Schmitt's view that a state must intervene in every facet of the social sphere to become a “genuine state” (McCormick 2014, 286) is seen as compatible with the transformation Turkey was experiencing. According to McCormick, Schmitt was placed to state as a superior of society, so the relation between them established as hierarchical order (McCormick 2014, 286). The hierarchical establishment of the relationship between the state and society conceives the state as an institution that regulates society and all relations within society. The state thus embodies itself as an actor that regulates society, while the decision-making actor or actors are the sovereigns “who decide on the exception”.

Some interpreted Schmitt's concept of sovereignty as setting the basic rules and norms, which differed from classical conceptualization (Kalyvas 2000). From this point of view, rather than exercising the sovereign's power, it can be assimilated that an entity emerges that decides what the political space is and how it emerges. The sovereign's decision as to what is political and how it is formed establishes public space and the political substance. Thus, the sovereign is the leading actor who decides on the exception and sets new norms and basic rules. The sovereign's ability to establish basic rules and norms and not only the administrative enforcement aspect gives him the freedom to politicise all

social and individual spheres. As well as politicising social and individual spheres, it can govern the institutional order in the basic sphere of politics by diffusing and perpetuating the exception situation.

In Turkey, the sovereign, integrated with the JDP government, became completely dominant as of 2015 by increasing social polarisation, which coincides with the politicisation of the economic and social sphere, empowering the JDP government's decisive strength and President Erdogan's sovereign in the sense of Schmitt. On the other hand, the security environment that Turkey has been in since 2015 has strengthened the power of the sovereign and has securitised the political sphere. Therefore, the securitisation of many social and political issues under the pretence of “the survival of the country” further sharpened the sovereign's superior position compared to society and institutions. After taking office, President Erdogan began to use the title of “Commander-in-Chief” and convene the cabinet. Although some authorities were granted to the president in the constitution on both issues, the predecessors did not use these much.

President Erdoğan used the title “Commander-in-Chief” many times since he was elected and emphasised that this title belonging to the presidency was not a common feature of previous Presidents. Even in the 2014 elections, he stated that the people would now directly elect the President (Sözcü 2014a). President Erdogan's approach that the post of Commander-in-Chief belonged to the President of the Republic caused serious debate about whether the Commander-in-Chief's role is a responsibility of the presidency or not. In this context, in Articles 104 and 117 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, it is stated that the President of the Republic has the authority to represent the Commander-in-Chief, which is an integral part of the TGNA, on behalf of the TGNA.

According to former Chief of General Staff İlker Başbuğ, the office of the commander-in-chief is not active during peacetime. Therefore, he says that there is no office of commander-in-chief in a period of peace, so it is not right for President Erdoğan to use the title of Commander-in-Chief in a period of peace (Sözcü 2014a). On the other hand, according to Gözler, the authority of the President of the Republic as the Commander-in-

Chief belongs to the TGNA. The President of the Republic may only exercise this power for representative purposes (Gözler 2000, 504–5).

Another example is the fact that President Erdogan convened the cabinet and became the chairman, which emerged as another issue in the period following the elections, while Sezer and Gül, two of Erdogan's predecessors, had never convened the cabinet. (Hürriyet 2015a) In his statements before the election, President Erdogan stressed that it was within his constitutional powers to convene the cabinet and stated that the president could head the cabinet as he headed the NSC (Al Jazeera Türk 2015b; Grigoriadis 2015). PM Davutoğlu, while defining the situation as exceptional, stated that it should be considered normal (Habertürk 2015a). However, Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the NMP, stated that the constitution gives the President this authority but that the head of the cabinet is the PM and that the President should explain why he would chair the cabinet (Bahçeli 2015).

While President Erdogan justified his presidency of the cabinet with the statements that the harmonious work of the government and the president would make Turkey prosperous, he also accepted the criticisms that stated that this was the push of the boundaries of the law within the current parliamentary system. In this sense, President Erdogan has clearly stressed that the presidential system would be the most beneficial system for ousting the bulky mechanism of the parliamentary system. However, according to him, the crux of the problem is the judiciary authority that puts under restraint the government's executive authority. Pointing to the change in the administrative system to overcome this problem, President Erdogan emphasized that a constitutional amendment is necessary for this to happen and said that the government should have 367 deputies in the TGNA for this constitutional amendment to be implemented (Cumhurbaşkanlığı 2015; Al Jazeera Türk 2015b).

Thus, President Erdoğan reluctantly acknowledged that leading cabinet meetings at the Presidential Palace would be seen as pushing the limits of the law while complaining about the broad powers of the judiciary and interference in administrative decisions, which he claimed was preventing the government from acting swiftly. From his inauguration in 2014 until the change of the system of government in 2018, President

Erdogan chaired 28 Cabinet meetings held at the Presidential Palace (Cumhurbaşkanlığı 2023). That is, although the presidency of the cabinet is an authority granted to the President of the Republic in the constitution, it was clearly stated that the head of the CoM was the PM. In this context, President Erdogan presided over the council of ministers, which the PM was supposed to preside over, many times and established administrative tutelage over the PM.

Although President Erdogan's predecessors included some presidents who presided over the CoM, he was the president who presided over the CoM the most during his tenure. Unlike his predecessors, he did not provide any justification for presiding over the cabinet, making it normal for the President to preside over the CoM, which is an exceptional circumstance (Al Jazeera Turk 2014). According to Figure 11, which shows how many cabinet meetings are chaired annually by previous presidents who chaired cabinet meetings, President Erdoğan stands out as the president who currently chairs the most cabinet meetings.

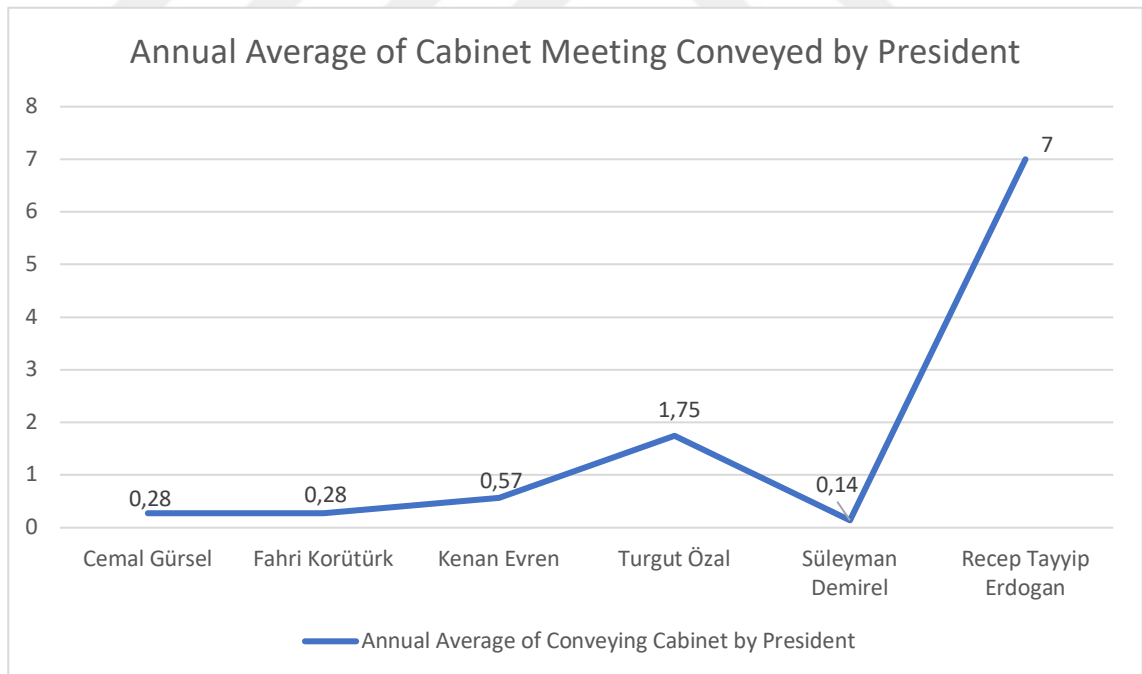


Figure 11 Annual Average of Cabinet Meeting Conveyed by President, Source: Habertürk 2015b

Cemal Gürsel, the National Unity Committee Chairman and then the Republic President after the 1960 Coup, and Kenan Evren, the head of the 1980 Military Coup, chaired

several cabinet meetings during their periods. Turgut Özal, on the other hand, convened the cabinet and chaired it seven times in total. Many of these cabinet meetings took place after regional developments and terrorist incidents, and only one was held after problems with the government. Thus, although Özal chaired more cabinet meetings than other presidents other than Erdogan, many of these meetings were justified for the above reasons.

On the other hand, by holding three times more cabinet meetings, President Erdogan is ahead of President Ozal, who held the second most cabinet meetings. Despite chairing the cabinet meetings by the President has remained the exception throughout republican history, President Erdogan has transformed exceptionality into ordinariness by using the constitutional authority that grants him to hold the cabinet meeting under necessary situations. Even though the president could decide within his constitutional authority, which fits into Schmitt's decisionism, it would be considered an excess of the power by the opposition parties because they claimed that such an authority is granted under certain circumstances "such as war or declaration of martial law" (Bloomberg 2015).

In this sense, the period that began in Turkish politics in 2015 has given rise to the ability to create the exception and remould it utterly by the President. The president, therefore, emerged as sovereign in the Schmittian sense due to the consolidation of power; it continued as de-facto status until 2018. Another characteristic of this period is that the president has emerged as an actor in domestic and foreign politics, taking decisive decisions about the political substance. At this point, the president has two pillars of legitimacy, namely that since he is elected by popular vote, he reflects the pure will of the nation and has legislative power by controlling the ruling party. The source of both pillars of legitimacy is addressed as elections by President Erdogan who points to the elections as the only device in which people's will is manifested (Sözcü 2014b).

The political environment of Turkey has been affected by domestic developments which forced transformations in the ruling elite perspective. In domestic politics, two consecutive elections in 2015 and the failed coup attempt in 2016 are critical turning points that affected the following years. Between the two elections in 2015, Turkey was

exposed to many security crises and entered a spiral of military operations that affected its subsequent years. Security issues have become a sector politicised by the ruling party throughout these operations. Thus, the policies pursued by the ruling party and its actions were made unquestionable through the securitisation attempts because questioning these policies and actions would be meant questioning national security. These securitisation policies, integrated under the identity of the ruling party, the JDP and President Erdoğan, serve as the main guarantor of national security.

Since 2015, the threat perceptions of the 1990s have started to revive in Turkey due to some internal and external developments. After the failure of the solution process, the increasing PKK terror and the problems it experienced with its neighbouring countries, Syria and Greece, dragged Turkey into a re-securitized domestic political environment. Turkey completely reversed the de-securitization period between 2000-2010 and initiated to address problem areas with a security-oriented approach. This chapter argues that the reason for this is based on the transformation of variables that impact the decision-maker or decision-maker elites due to the effects of the changing international environment and the transformation in domestic politics. In this context, while international variables and incidents are examined in the first subchapter, the transformations in domestic policy are detailed in the second subchapter. In the subchapter that will follow them, the policies followed by the TFP during the re-securitization process are aimed to explain. Therefore, with the impact of international variables and transformations in domestic politics, the change of TFP is elucidated by applying Schmitt's concept of “sovereign”.

5.1. The Nomos of the Earth: Path To Ambiguity

The “nomos of the earth” concept, coined for the first time by Carl Schmitt, encompasses the entire international political and legal order. According to Schmitt, “*jus publicum Europaeum*”, considered the European order and the nomos of the earth, starting with Westphalian Peace and continuing until World War I, had dissolved because of the high intensity of the competition between European states over the African continent and the lack of unity between European states; thereafter, the period following the Congo

Conference which was symbolised the last convention that European states reconciled, was the mark of the dissolution of the European order (C. Schmitt 2006).

The “nomos of the earth” conceptualised by Schmitt was not independent of the movements and policies of states, which were the basic building blocks of the international system. In this context, for Schmitt, who accepted states as sovereigns, developments arising from the spatial movements and policies of states had an impact on the “nomos of the earth” while it is also shaped the states’ behaviours and inclinations. As one of the most prominent examples, the “Age of Discovery” started when Britain's maritime experience influenced the “nomos of the earth” (C. Schmitt 2006, 48–49). However, he also elucidates that there is no law-abiding for all actors in the world. In this sense, the “nomos of the earth” indicates not a general rule or law but “new spatial divisions, new enclosures, and new spatial orders of the earth” (C. Schmitt 2006, 79).

In this context, the way of an international system heading towards ambiguity showed that the “nomos of the earth” would also be in change. As NCR theorists have argued, while the policies made by the states influence international variables, the policies of states are also affected by the international variables, so, too, it can be said that this is, in essence, a cycle which is also found in Schmitt's nomos of the earth. Ultimately, the policy-making process overlaps in Schmitt's theoretical approach and the NCR theoretical framework. Having a comprehensive authority, the sovereign is the sole actor in determining foreign policy by holding the power of deciding who is the enemy or friend. However, this does not mean that the sovereign will act arbitrarily. the sovereign must also consider its internal alliances and relations with interest groups because the sovereign must maintain his position. So, the power of the sovereign, which must consider both international variables and internal variables, is also limited.

In this subchapter, the Trump Era that started in 2017 and the transatlantic relations, Russia's pursuit of an assertive foreign policy and China's attempt to expand its sphere of influence within the scope of the “Belt and Road Initiative” in which Turkey was a part in 2015 will be discussed as international variables. The foremost concern of this subchapter is not to contribute to the debate about whether the world order is shifting

from the West to the East or whether systemic variables give rise to a new world order. Instead, international variables will be identified, and their impact is tried to be revealed.

The effects of international variables on Turkey's foreign policy since 2015 and the foreign policy approaches of decision-makers will be tried to be shown. Therefore, using Schmitt's concept of "the nomos of the earth" will help to create a more meaningful approach. Just as NCR states that the sovereign state is the dominant actor of the international system, according to Carl Schmitt, the sovereign state is the dominant actor in "the nomos of the earth" is the sovereign state. In this context, sovereign states' policies and transformative effects are vital in Schmitt's understanding of the international system. It is a harmonious approach to type III NCR's cycle of producing foreign policy outcomes, shown in Figure 2.

5.1.1. Twilight of the Transatlantic Alliance

Europe and the US have been facing challenges straining relationships among them since the last tenure of Barack Obama, the predecessor of President Donald Trump, who has dragged liaison to the edge of the cliff. The US' political reversal to Asia has increased the intensification of these challenges because Europeans felt that their traditional allies, the US, neglected them (Kramer 2016; Polyakova and Haddad 2019). While the boundaries in the international system became blurred and revisionist demands emerged, the distortion of the transatlantic alliance posed a danger to the Western-based international system. The challenges that the Western-oriented international system has been exposed to increase since the global financial crisis in 2009, while the regional developments across the world boosted its devastating effects on the system.

First, the transatlantic alliance was damaged during the Trump administration. The US withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and the Paris Agreement under his tenure and his attitude towards NATO that the US should not take all the burdens of the alliance has led to an unstable relationship with Europe. In particular, French President Emmanuel Macron's statement that "what we are currently experiencing is the brain death of NATO"

in 2019 clearly indicated that the US had turned its back on its allies under the tenure of President Trump, who did not share “idea of the European project” (Macron 2019).

Trump administration’s general approach to relations with NATO and European States was based on reducing the US’ burden of providing security for Europe. (Burt 2017) However, his approach has harmed the nature of the transatlantic alliance due to the challenging environment in which the rule-based international system led by the transatlantic alliance faced a risk of China’s increasing diffusion across the globe and Russia’s assertive policies in the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe. In such an environment, the Trump administration's foreign policy was that the United States would no longer be the world's policeman and that enormous amounts of money spent for this purpose would be spent on the reconstruction of the country. (Trump 2018)

Trump's transatlantic policy and his stance on relations with allies were considered inconvenient and dangerous. Trump's policies of using the resources allocated to overseas areas to rebuild the country and undermining the transatlantic alliance were also being criticized in the US. It has even been stated that these policies and speculation about the exit from NATO are “a victory for the Kremlin and beyond Putin's wildest dreams”. (Crowley 2020) In fact, the US under the Trump administration, its spatial activity to reduce its presence in Europe, and its “America First” policy could also be attributed to a policy of returning its role to the dominant position within the Western Hemisphere.

One of the most important examples of this situation is Donald Trump's aggressive policy against Maduro in Venezuela while pursuing a more moderate policy towards autocratic states, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The answer of the Trump administration would be geographical proximity by referring to the Monroe Doctrine (Taylor 2019), while the hypocrisy accusations were being made against the US for nearly a decade (Cawthorne 2011). In this manner, while the US has been questioning its commitments to the transatlantic alliance, the attitude implemented by the US towards the American states was to be much more interventionist.

The second issue pushing the transatlantic alliance's limits is the rise of China and Russian aggression. Some called these two states “rising as a great power” and are discerned as an external driver of the “American decline” (Layne, Wohlforth, and Brooks 2012). China's expansion of its sphere of influence and Russia's increasingly aggressive policy led to uncertainty in the structure of the international system. In addition, the divergences within the transatlantic alliance and the rising right-wing populist streams in Europe fueled the diminishing of the Western-based political order, which was the core of the “nomos of the earth” since WWII. However, the growing cooperation between Russia and China is not the sole problem the West would have to deal with to sustain the liberal international order. In particular, during Trump's tenure as US President, the institutional structure of the transatlantic alliance has been significantly damaged (House of Lords 2018, 45).

In this sense, the “nomos of the earth” concept would be valuable in understanding the systemic shift in international relations because it is not separate from the norms and politics of the dominant order that established the system. In the aftermath of the Cold War, the West-led international system dealt one of its biggest blows in the global financial crisis of 2009, despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's defiance in his Munich Security Speech in 2007 and the 2008 Georgian War. Following the global financial crisis, the devastating effects of the Arab Spring in the Middle East left Western countries with many crises, especially migration and terrorism.

As “nomos of the earth” became increasingly ambiguous, spatial conflicts and tensions escalated. The rising different spatial arrangements and the damage to the West-led liberal international order, which has been seen as the dominant order since the WWII, with severe convulsions, are two critical factors that increase the ambiguity towards the future. In this sense, the growing cooperation of Russia and China had revealed a risky situation for the US and West dominance regarding the balance of power. Because if these two powers form an alliance, or at least cooperate in certain sectors, the United States and Western countries will have to deal with both states simultaneously (Betts 2012, 197–98).

5.1.2. Russian Aggression

Russia has been taking a revisionist role under the rule of Vladimir Putin since the late 2000s. Though the Russian aggression marked itself in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 and 2022, Russian intervention in Syria and Libya significantly developed Russian activism abroad. Unlike the interventions in Georgia and Ukraine, Russia's interventions in countries outside the former Soviet geography, such as Libya and Syria, were one of the indicators of its desire to expand its sphere of influence. Pointing to the policies pursued by Western countries as responsible for the civil war experienced by both countries, Putin stated that the result of the unilateral policies pursued by the United States was “instead of the triumph of democracy and progress, we got violence, poverty and a social disaster” (Financial Times 2015).

In this context, he called the policy pursued by Russia, especially in Syria, the war on terrorism in the “zone of chaos” which threatened the whole world. (CBS News 2015) Claiming that the “zone of chaos” was created by the Western states' endeavours to replace the authoritarian regimes, he was clearly blaming the Western countries for the chaotic situation (Stent 2016). In this sense, the Russian approach to the regional developments since 2010 in the Middle East was premised on preserving the state authority, whether democratic or authoritarian, in order to prevent chaos which led to furthering an environment in that radical terror organisations would emerge.

Russia's approach to what it described as a “zone of chaos” included a spatial arrangement. Against Western states' disruptive role and policies claimed by Putin, Russia pursued an attitude to preserve spatial order. The “zone of chaos” thus emerged as the spatial regulator of the transformation of the international system. Hereby, the challenge of the spatial “contest between a cosmopolitan vision of universal norms, and an idea of law as embedded organically in local cultures and civilisations, a plurality of laws to reflect a multipolar world” reflects the different visions of Russia and Western states towards the regional disputes and unrests (Lewis 2020, 139).

The annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 dramatically changed the spatial order of Europe due to increasing concern of Russian expansionism. On the other hand, while rejecting the accusation of expansionism, Russia legitimised the unilateral annexation of Crimea by exemplifying Kosovo's independence and blamed the West for being a hypocrite (Putin 2014). In addition, the view that Western states disrespected Russia's international status and prestige emerged as a matter of debate after annexing Crimea. US President Obama's description of Russia as a middle power that threatens its neighbours because of its own weakness has been described as disrespectful by Putin (The Moscow Times 2016). Forsberg pointed out that the controversial relationship between Russia and the West has originated in the separate understanding of the "conceptions and perceptions of status" (Forsberg 2014, 324).

Auer also associated Russia's annexation of Crimea with an effort to preserve its "national dignity." The fact that "national dignity" was formed against the backdrop of anti-westernism was one of the reasons why Auer drew a similarity between Russia and the intellectual world of the two world wars in Germany (Auer 2015, 957). In this context, "national dignity", which can also be seen as an important part of national identity, is established through the perception of an enemy. Hereby, opposition to the Western-based international system, which is the dominant international order, and revisionist quests can become a natural part of this identity.

In the document "The Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation", officially published by Russia in 2023, it was declared that the unfriendly attitude of the West threatens Russia's vital interests and that Russia's becoming one of the important centres of gravity of the world and strengthening concerns the US and its "satellite states" (Russia Federation 2023). Thus, the policies and attitudes of Western states towards Russia have been characterised as hostile. The character of relations between the West and Russia was not based entirely on hostility; even after the Cold War, the view that they could work together became important. However, following decades, the idea that relations between Russia and the West could develop in cooperation and harmony was replaced by security concerns and geopolitical threat perceptions centred around NATO enlargement.

In 2010, Russia published a military doctrine that replaced the other one announced in 2000, defining NATO enlargement as an external threat to Russian national interests. But in the revised version of the doctrine published in 2021, Russia has spotted that NATO turned out to be a military threat against Russia. In this manner, Russian perception of the West and Western-based international organisations has changed in a much more hostile way while the competition between them was intensifying in other regions, such as the Middle East and North Africa. Two cases are unfitting the post-cold War Russian behavioural patterns in the sense of spatial activity. The first one is the Russian intervention in the Syrian Civil War in 2015 which indicates the change in the foreign policy that Russia has followed since the 1990s. Even though the bilateral relationship between Syria and Russia has been maintained positively, it was quite unusual for Russia to have military activity in a country not included in the former Soviet territory.

Russia's intervention in Syria exemplifies the use of military capacity by Russia's "coercive diplomacy" under Putin's leadership (Ziegler 2018, 134). The coercive diplomacy pursued by Russia can be seen as an important part of its mission to become a great power from its history. The use of its military capacity as an instrument of coercive diplomacy was, among other reasons, an attempt to show that Russia could conduct simultaneous activities in different parts of the world. This is based on Putin's depiction of Obama's view of Russia as merely a regional power, as disrespectful. Stating that state sovereignty is one of the most important principles for Russia against the unilateral actions of the West, Putin justified Russia's presence in Syria with the official invitation of the Syrian government and claimed that the presence of Western countries in Syrian territory was illegitimate.

Although Russia's intervention in Syria aimed to combat terrorism and maintain the status quo, Russia's move also enabled it to increase its political sphere of influence. So much so that the Russian city of Sochi has become one of the most important cities where negotiations on the future of Syria are being conducted. Many heads of state and high-level representatives held inter-delegation meetings and summits in this city. Russia, which has maintained its military presence in Syria since September 2015, has prevented the fall of the Syrian government, an important ally while putting forward an alternative

method against the interventionist attitude of the West to the sovereign states “under the guise of democratisation policy”, which it has long opposed.

Another example of Russia's aggression is its support for the Haftar-led Libyan National Army, one of the parties to the civil war, although it has not always been officially present in Libya. Putin has criticised the Western intervention in Libya against the Qaddafi regime as follows:

What troubles me is not the fact of military intervention itself -- I am concerned by the ease with which decisions to use force are taken in international affairs. (...) This is becoming a persistent tendency in U.S. policy (...) During the Clinton era they bombed Belgrade, Bush sent forces into Afghanistan, then under an invented, false pretext they sent forces into Iraq, liquidated the entire Iraqi leadership -- even children in Saddam Hussein's family died. (...) Now it is Libya's turn, under the pretext of protecting the peaceful population. (...) Today's events, including in Libya, confirmed our decisions on strengthening Russia's defense capabilities were correct. (...) The Libyan regime does not meet any of the criteria of a democratic state but that does not mean that someone is allowed to interfere in internal political conflicts to defend one of the sides (Bryanski 2011).

Putin's dissatisfaction with the West's intervention in Libya is a criticism of the method of unilateral intervention. In this context, according to Putin, the political regime of one state does not give another state the right to intervene, emphasising state sovereignty. He goes so far as to say that Western states are using the issue of human rights to destroy state sovereignty and consolidate Western domination (TASS 2022). The proposition that the Western intervention in Libya and the process leading up to the overthrow of Gaddafi emerged as a result of an understanding that ignored state sovereignty for the sake of human rights and interfered in the internal affairs of sovereign states and undermined the concept of state sovereignty becomes evident. From this point of view, the Western-dominated international system has become a system that does not recognise state sovereignty and has become a threat to Russia.

Russia's direct intervention in the civil war in Syria and its indirect intervention in the civil war in Libya stood out as the bold moves it made for the first time in the post-USSR period outside the former Soviet hinterland. Both cases are also significant due to being

direct examples of the Russian claim that the Western states ignore state sovereignty by human rights discourse. Unlike its military presence in Syria, Russia has not sent troops to Libya. However, the Wagner group, a Russian private military company, has participated in the conflicts on the side of Khalifa Haftar, the rebels' leader, since 2019. While Russia directly intervened in the civil war in Syria, it avoided such an intervention in Libya. Instead, it provided political support for Haftar during the Libyan civil war and the presence of Wagner Group, a Russian paramilitary private military company, gained more weight.⁷⁶

Russia's increasing geographical activity has gone beyond its classical political spatiality. Russia, which increased its cooperation with the political regimes in the Middle East and Africa, on the other hand, started to be a party to the conflicts in these regions, directly or indirectly. The aforementioned Syria and Libya cases stood out as the most concrete examples of this trend. The assertiveness taken in the Libyan and Syrian civil wars was reflected as the manifestation of Putin's attitude in his speech in Munich in 2007, where he openly criticised the West's effort to dominate the international system unilaterally. Therefore, Russia's intervention in these civil wars may also be an attempt to offer an alternative to the unilateral interventionism policies of Western states.

Russia's increasing military and political mobilisation in various regions has become more prevalent than ever in the post-Soviet period. Accordingly, Russia's foreign policy might be an integral part of its demanding role and status in the global order. In other words, Russia's dissatisfaction with the global political system and its claim that it has become instrumental in this system for Western states to maintain their dominance has also paved the way for the search for an alternative global system. In this period, when this claim has become evident, the relations between Russia and China have become tighter, and new alliance systems have begun to appear outside the sphere of influence of

⁷⁶ The claim that the Wagner group is a private military company that carries out covert operations on behalf of Russia in different parts of the world has been expressed in various articles. It is also stated that Wagner, who also carries out training and security activities in many African countries, is involved in many human rights violations and has become a threat to the presence of the US and European states in the region. On the other hand, the fact that the leader of the Wagner Group is the Russian oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin, who is in Putin's inner circle, also strengthens the view that there are close relations between Russia and Wagner (Banco, Aarup, and Carrier 2023; Clarke 2023).

Western states. Finally, Russia's aggressive policies around the various regions and China's new quests on regional and inter-regional arrangements portrayed the new “nomos of the earth” as a fragmental structure.

5.1.3. The Influence of a Rising China

Since the early 2000s, the shifting focus of the U.S. to the fight against terrorism, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Middle East have also contributed to creating a more beneficial environment for China to increase its economic and political influence. The debate around the rise of China has been focused on whether be peaceful or not and has also fueled much debate about the future of the global political system. Many prominent scholars have approached the rise of China from various perspectives. While some contend that China would continue to thrive in line with international systems and norms, some argue that China would threaten the international system and its rise will not be peaceful (Schweller and Pu 2011; Christensen 2006; Mearsheimer 2019; Buzan 2010; Clarke 2023; Zhao 2015; Allison 2018; Mearsheimer 2006; Beckley 2011).

In this section, China's increasing influence in global politics and the embodiment of this influence with the “Belt and Road Initiative” (BRI) will be examined, and the new “nomos of the earth” will be tried to be detailed. Therefore, rather than discussing China's rise, detailed in the previous chapters on international variables, the new gravitational sphere formed around China's growing influence would be considered. In this way, the issue of how decision-makers are affected by international variables shaped by new areas of economic and political interest would be contemplated in the following sections.

The BRI, which China initiated with the aim of expanding its economic and political influence in accordance with the principle of interdependence in the globalising world, has become an international formation involving more than 100 countries. Chinese President Xi Jinping, while stating that this initiative is one of the most important gates of China's opening to the outside world, also emphasises that it is a concrete indicator of the multilateral and independent foreign policy they follow. On the other hand, Jinping also expressed that the BRI is aimed to catalyse prosperity and development, which

contributes to global order in the sense of international norms (Jinping 2017). China's development and influence can thus be extended within the global system through regional links. In fact, by putting forward appropriate modelling in accordance with international systems and norms through the BRI, China would emerge as an actor who might diminish the hegemony of Western states over the international system.

China's increasing activities in the Western Balkan countries, which are in the process of joining the EU through the BRI, attracted the reaction of the EU. In the EU Parliament briefing, where it is stated that China's increasing economic activities in this region carry the risk of drawing the Western Balkan countries into a large debt trap and that some Balkan countries are aware of this risk, it is pointed out that China's economic expansion activities carry the risk of adversely affecting the accession of the countries of the region to the EU. In this context, Serbia's increasing economic relations with China were highlighted and noted as the country with the most relations with China. The historical background of the closed relations is based on the NATO bombing of the Serbian capital Belgrade in 1999 which stimulated the relations (Stanicek and Tarpova 2022).

The Balkans had become a very important region because it had an important place in the EU enlargement process. Another important actor in this region, where China is trying to increase the impact of direct investments through the BRI, is Russia. Bilateral relations between China and Russia have also developed rapidly since the 2010s. For example, the BRICS bank, which was founded in 2014, was perceived by Western states as a move against the global monetary system (Schweller 2015, 3). Another area of cooperation between the two countries is energy trade. "Power of Siberia", which was designed and started to be built in the early 2010s, became operational in 2019 and started out the first natural gas flow from Russia to China. It is important for Russia, one of the world's largest natural gas suppliers, to diversify the market. Thus, Russia's natural gas supply markets have varied, and its dependence on Europe has decreased slightly. However, Western states, particularly the US, are concerned about the expanding cooperation between the two countries in different fields (US Congress 2020). Because as mentioned earlier, as a result of the two countries increasing their influence and strengthening at the same time

by entering into close relations, Western states may have to deal with the threats that both countries may pose simultaneously.

The “trade war” that deepened the competition between China and the US began in 2018 when the US increased tariffs on some products imported from China. It was argued that the U.S. increased tariffs on Chinese products not only because of its economic concerns but also because the U.S. considered China a threat to its “national security and international standing”. (Liu and Woo 2018) On the other hand, the US-declared “trade war” led to closer cooperation between China and Russia. Russia, Western sanctions following the annexation of Crimea and China's trade war with the United States encouraged the two countries to look for ways to act together (Cooley and Nexon 2020, 106; Ellyatt 2023; Lee and Zhou 2019).

In these developing environmental conditions, China and Russia have both increased the search for ways to boost their bilateral relations and multilateral partnerships in the economic and political sectors have entered into new spatial searches. In this focus, Russia and China, which increased their economic cooperation, especially with the BRICS Development Bank and The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, entered into close political cooperation after Xi became the President of China (Ying 2016, 99). While all these relations continued to grow closer, the SCO, which was established in 2001 and continued to expand with new members in 2017, offered a new model of regional and international cooperation. Although it was primarily a regional “security community” in the first place, the economic and development dimensions began to gain weight in the following years (Lanteigne 2018).

The SCO has also become an important instrument for Russia and China at the international level. The organization, which expanded with partnership models such as membership, observer member, and dialogue partner, declared that the economic sanctions imposed by Western countries on Russia were contrary to international law and incompatible with global trade principles (Shanghai Cooperation Organization 2022). Similarly, although condemnations of human rights violations in China's Uyghur region have increased by many western states, especially the UK, the SCO has also become a

regional platform where China can share its views with other countries and find support (Hayyoun 2015).

One of the most troubling issues in China's relations with the West is the Taiwan issue. According to some, in today's world, China is seen as the closest state to establishing a regional hegemony similar to the one the US established in the Western Hemisphere region, but China will have to annex Taiwan to establish this regional hegemony. Therefore, if the United States wants to prevent this hegemony from forming, it should prevent China from annexing Taiwan (Kaplan 2012). According to Chinese officials, President Trump's "America First" policy marked a significant chance for China to deal with the Taiwan issue. However, the Trump Administration has made serious impacts in favour of Taiwan due to seeing China as a strategic opponent of the US (Deng 2022, 45, 52). One of the most critical of these was the Trump Administration's move to lift restrictions on Taiwan shortly before President Biden took office. It might be seen as a result of the Trump administration's characterisation of China as an enemy. Trump Administration's Secretary of State Pompeo called the move "the United States government took these actions unilaterally, in an attempt to appease the Communist regime in Beijing. No more." Pompeo referred to China as the "Communist regime in Beijing" and emphasised that the United States and Taiwan are democracies with common characteristics such as "individual freedom, the rule of law, and a respect for human dignity" (Pompeo 2021).

Finally, Xi Jinping, the long-standing president of China, has announced that accomplishing the "China Dream" is his premise target which was assumed to elevate China to global power rank (Deng 2022, 25; Economy 2014). According to Deng, the concept expressed by Xi, whose tenure marked a rupture from its predecessor President Deng Xiaoping's "lie low, bide China's time", was historical and nationalist. (Deng 2022, 210) In this respect, the goals of the "China Dream", even if not explicitly stated, could have historically emphasised the restoration of China to great-power status and the nationalist aspect of Taiwan's accession to China. When Xi first explained the concept of "China Dream," he said it was "rejuvenation." What was meant by this concept could be the revival of China's former glorious past. Because rejuvenation means re-energizing

and youthful about something and someone or reviving it with new ideas or methods. In his address to the China Communist Party centenary in 2021, Xi said patriots on both sides of the Taiwan Strait must work together to achieve “national rejuvenation” (Jinping 2021). In this context, Xi indirectly stated that he sees Taiwan as an important part of the “Chinese Dream.”

China, under Xi's leadership, has started to follow a different policy than its previous period and has entered into new international partnerships. In particular, its closer cooperation with Russia, as well as its growing influence in multilateral international organisations, might be a sign that China is pursuing an assertive foreign policy. China, which has created political and economic spheres of influence in many different countries of the world at the same time through the BRI, has adopted an attitude that prioritizes state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of states, just like Russia. The reason for this might be the aim of creating a new centre of gravity, primarily by creating a different spatiality from the USA and other Western states.

In this sense, since the mid-2010s, the escalation of regional tensions and the vagueness of global politics have significantly damaged the norm-based international system led by the West. The mass migration waves brought about by regional tensions and conflicts, global terrorism and the effects of regional uncertainties on the international order have led to the proliferation of populist and repressive political actors in many different regions of the world. For example, mass migration was seen as one of the most important factors leading to the strengthening of populist right parties in Europe.

However, the most important development that constituted “new nomoi of the earth” during this period was that the uncertainties and conflicts that emerged in various spatiality created new gravitational fields created by the convergence of countries such as China and Russia due to the damage done to the norm-based international system. In this context, while the unipolar system that developed after the Cold War was replaced by multipolarity, the orders in the spatial context began to diverge. While Russia's interventionist approach in the former Soviet geography and its reaction to the Western-led international system has been intensive, China's political and economic influence has

increased through the BRI. In addition, relations between the US and the European powers have deteriorated significantly, and the future of the transatlantic alliance has been called into question.

Although the U.S. has not lost its leadership position globally, countries such as China and Russia have been putting forward different models for many developing countries. In other words, the fact that it is not necessary to have liberal democracy for economic development and the increase in the number of populist and authoritarian governments in many countries constitutes an interesting correlation. Basically, the populist vein of this understanding, which has no problem with the economic dimension of globalisation, was fed by the tendency of Western states to intervene in the domestic politics of other states in order to protect and ensure universal values. For example, in Venezuela, China and Russia supported the Maduro government against the hostile attitude of the Western states against the Maduro government, perceiving the West's interference in Venezuela's internal affairs as an attack on state sovereignty.

Thus, the norm-based international order, based on Western leadership, no longer constitutes the *nomos* of the earth alone. Regional models of cooperation and spatial containments have created a variety of *nomoi* that operate simultaneously because there are different understandings of how the international order should operate and which principles should be dominant. While these differences in understanding contribute to the formation of different centres of attraction, the *nomos* of which they form the nucleus is in interaction and competition with each other. In this context, the multipolar order that became increasingly visible during this period offers an alternative to many developing countries, and “*nomos* of the earth” becomes *nomoi* of the earth. In particular, Russia's increasing military presence in many problematic geographical areas, especially Syria and Libya, after the 2014 invasion of Crimea and China's developing relations with other countries within the scope of the BRI have also had effects on the decision-makers of the TFP in many respects. Having a deteriorated relationship with Western countries, Turkey has sought new partnership quests and spatial arrangements.

5.2. Securitisation of Domestic Politics: Road to Presidential System

Since 2015, Turkey has entered a very rapid process of securitisation which encapsulates the political and social sphere of the country. Experienced five elections from 2015 to 2019, including one referendum, Turkey entered an uninterrupted state of exception due to the internal political turmoil and economic crisis. In this sense, the competitive effect of the elections in Turkey has intensified and increased the polarisation in domestic politics, which in turn led to domestic politics in a more security-oriented area through foreign policy developments.

The dominance of the security-oriented approach in domestic politics may be based on two main reasons. The first is that since the mid-2010s, Turkey's perceived threat from its neighbouring countries, especially its southern neighbours, has increased. The ongoing civil war in Syria and the ongoing instability and chaos in Iraq had notable exacerbations on the flow of migrants to Turkey and the level of the terrorist threat. Immigrant flows and the threat of terrorism has become the most important agenda items of domestic policy discussions. While the JDP government described Turkey's acceptance of immigrants as a requirement of being an “Ansar”⁷⁷, the opposition parties expressed that the future of the country was at risk.

On the other hand, while the JDP government pointed to its tenure as the most active period to fight against terrorism, according to the opposition parties, the reason for the increase in terrorist movements was seen as the policies pursued by the government within the scope of the solution process and in the Syrian civil war. In this context, the fight against terrorism has also become an important part of the political sphere. Linking the fight against terrorism to the identity of its own government, the JDP claimed that opposition parties would not fight terrorism and were in cooperation with terrorist

⁷⁷ The concept of “Ansar” holds significant historical and cultural value as it refers to the Medinan people who generously provided shelter and protection to the Muslim immigrants from Mecca. The JDP government's characterisation of Turkey as an Ansar also showed that it compared Syrian asylum-seekers to the prophet of Islam, Muhammad, and his followers, who fled the persecution of the Meccan polytheists. Thus, both while portraying that it was a religious duty to protect the Syrian asylum seekers, it was justifying Turkey's involvement in the Syrian Civil War on the side of the opposition.

organisations. Therefore, one of the most important catalysts in the process of securitisation of domestic politics was the debate on the fight against terrorism.

The second reason for the securitisation of domestic politics is the JDP-NMP alliance, which began after the November 2015 elections and began to become evident after the failed coup attempt in 2016. In mid-2016, the NMP Leader Bahçeli made a statement indicating that the ongoing turmoil within the ruling party should not hinder the fight against terrorism and that his party would provide all necessary support. This statement can be interpreted as the initial measures towards forming an alliance between the two parties. Even though he added that this support would be limited only within the framework of the fight against terrorism (Bahçeli 2016), the NMP's support for the JDP would soon turn into an alliance that would last for a long time.

The two primary reasons for the securitisation of domestic politics appear to be interconnected elements within the current milieu. That is why the aim of this subchapter is to understand how both elements securitise domestic politics. Because evaluating the impacts of the international variables on decision-makers in domestic politics and their translation into foreign policy outputs are important within the theoretical framework of NCR, the decision-makers who shape foreign policy and how they evaluate systemic variables under internal constraints would be analysed. In order to provide a proper analysis, the process would be initiated by examining the time interval between the 7 June-1 November elections. This would be followed by a detailed account of the turmoil and government crisis within the ruling party, JDP. The exceptional situation created by these events became permanent after the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016. Finally, the transition to the Presidential System and the emergence of the sovereign, the decision-maker of this state of exception, would be explained.

5.2.1. Turmoil between Two Elections: From June 7 to November 1

The JDP government failed to secure a majority mandate in the 2015 general elections, as it experienced a significant loss of approximately 3 million votes compared to the previous election. The JDP suffered a major loss of votes in the first elections it entered

after Erdogan stepped down as party leader following his inauguration as president. The loss of votes in the first election of President Erdogan's successor, JDP leader and PM Ahmet Davutoglu, a former foreign policy czar, was an important challenge that the JDP had been faced after the Erdogan period.

The most serious challenge posed by the loss of votes in the June 7, 2015 elections was the possibility that the political careers of the JDP's leading elites would come to an end and President Erdoğan's "a la Turca Presidentialism" campaign could face disruption (Kalaycıoğlu 2018, 22). Both potential dangers have turned the election into a struggle for survival for the JDP and a referendum for "a la Turca Presidentialism". The election campaign, in which President Erdoğan was actively involved, was the first prime ministerial race of the new leader of the JDP, Ahmet Davutoğlu. Hence, both the June 7 elections and the subsequent November 1 elections were very important for both leaders.

Having to claim that changing the current system of government was one of the most vital actions to create a "New Turkey", President Erdoğan also claimed that the structure of the TGNA slowed down Turkey's development. Emphasising that it is unacceptable for opposition parties to slow down the legislative process despite being in the minority, he pointed out that the most important example of this was experienced in the negotiations on the internal security reform package discussed in the TGNA (Erdoğan 2018f, 77–78). On the other hand, he claimed that if Turkey could not switch to the presidential system, it would fall far behind the world, rapidly transforming under the influence of global developments. Emphasising the mechanisms of rapid decision-making and implementation of the presidential system, he said that only if such a mechanism is established, "Turkey will be able to reach its 2023 goals and 2053 and 2071 visions" (Erdoğan 2018f, 114–15).

In this case, the June 7 elections have also become a referendum for a change in the system of governance, which President Erdoğan has put forward as one of the biggest goals. Although Erdogan, who has been president since 2014, seems to have officially severed his ties with the JDP, he rallied to campaign for a change in the system of governance before the elections. During the campaign, in Gaziantep, he said that "are we

ready to lead Turkey towards its new goals, constitution, presidential system and strengthen the peace process in this election? Give 400 parliamentarians, and let's resolve this matter peacefully” (T24 2015a). Another case that shows how vital the change of the system is for President Erdoğan was the statement after the terrorist attack carried out by the PKK in September 2015 that if the number of deputies had reached 400, these things would not have happened (Erdoğan 2015b). He, therefore, attributed the instability between the two elections and the current precarious state, marked by the emergence of terror and insecurity, to the insufficiency of the current governance system.

Despite Erdoğan's stance, it is notable that during the June 7 campaign rallies conducted by PM Davutoğlu, there was comparatively little emphasis placed on the promise to alter the presidential system. According to Davutoğlu's interpretation, the June 7th election results did not demonstrate a positive reception from the public towards JDP's stated intention of implementing changes to the system of governance (Sözcü 2015b). The transition to the presidential system, which is the sharpest of the differences of opinion between PM Davutoğlu and President Erdoğan, would also manifest itself in the JDP party congress that would take place between the two elections.

Prior to the JDP congress in September 2015, media outlets disseminated information indicating that Binali Yıldırım, a member of President Erdoğan's inner circle, would be a contender against incumbent PM Davutoğlu. President Erdoğan's consultations with both Yıldırım and Davutoğlu served to intensify speculation surrounding this matter (Hürriyet 2015b; Sözcü 2015a). Notwithstanding PM Davutoğlu's uncontested status and subsequent reelection during the JDP congress, it is noteworthy that the emergence of Binali Yıldırım as a potential candidate was not an unprecedented development. Following President Erdoğan's leaving of his posture at the JDP, Yıldırım was one of the most prominent figures vying for the party's leadership among such names as PM Davutoğlu.

In this vein, the JDP experienced a tumultuous and contentious inter-election period characterised by various challenges. Notably, during this period, the leadership of PM Davutoğlu's party was under threat, and significant points of contention between

President Erdoğan and PM Davutoğlu came to the fore. These disagreements were particularly carved out during the coalition negotiations following the June 7 elections, the transition to the presidential system, as well as the implementation of the transparency package. Thus, it became evident that critical splits existed between President Erdoğan and PM Davutoğlu.

The inter-election period was tumultuous not only for the JDP but also for Turkey. Although the JDP received 40.87% of the vote, it could not reach a sufficient majority to form a single-party government, making the formation of a coalition government obligatory. The NMP leader's call for an early general election in the immediate aftermath of the election and the JDP's aversion to forming a coalition government with the PDP pointed to the JDP-RPP coalition as the only coalition alternative. However, the inability of the JDP and the RPP to successfully negotiate and form a coalition government, in tandem with the escalating levels of terrorism and insecurity, has resulted in a marked increase in the prevailing state of exception throughout the country.

The political uncertainty and the insecure environment have created the de-facto state of exception in Turkey. The primary source of the political uncertainty was the unfavourable stance adopted by President Erdoğan, the founding leader of the JDP, towards the coalition government. Although statements were made that the JDP-RPP coalition talks were positive and the talks continued, the anti-coalition statements of President Erdoğan and his close circle dragged the process to a more uncertain point (Al Jazeera Türk 2015a). During the coalition talks, President Erdogan repeatedly voiced his apprehension regarding the efficacy of coalition governments in Turkey and their potential for fostering instability (T24 2015b).

President Erdogan's negative attitude towards the coalition government negotiations continued in his discourse that a single-party government should be formed during the early election process on November 1. President Erdogan, who made a statement against the possibility of a coalition in a television program he participated in before the November 1 elections, describes the coalition as not in Turkey's culture and should be avoided in the next elections (Erdoğan 2015a). Throughout the November 1 election

campaign, President Erdogan persisted in his position that Turkey should be governed by single-party rule and advocated for constitutional amendments. This stance was indicative of the JDP's desire to reclaim lost votes which were predominantly nationalist and conservative voters who had shifted their support to the NMP in the previous elections.

Satana and Özpek contend that in order to win back these votes, President Erdoğan used the concept of national security by setting to nationalist and conservative discourses (Satana and Özpek 2022, 100). In an editorial piece published a few days before the November 1 elections, Ibrahim Karagül, the editor-in-chief of *Yeni Şafak*, a newspaper with pro-government inclinations, articulated his views on the upcoming elections. Karagül described the elections as defending the homeland and asserted that any opposition or hostility directed towards President Erdoğan or the JDP constituted an assault on Turkey's glorious journey and its defiance (Karagül 2015a). The term “defiance” was used by Karagül to allude to Turkey's recent progress and development, which he stated had been awakened from a prolonged period of stagnation (Karagül 2015b).

The series of violent incidents that Turkey has experienced during the inter-election period commenced with a bomb attack in Diyarbakir just two days before the June 7 elections. Following this initial attack, numerous suicide bombings and terrorist assaults occurred, attributed to both ISIS and the PKK. These acts of terrorism, which claimed the lives of hundreds, have plunged the political climate into a state of exception amidst the current uncertainty. In this exceptional situation, the two elections took place in completely different environments. According to Sayarı, while the election in June was held in an environment of increasing polarisation, the election in November was held under the shadow of increasing “political violence” and terrorist attacks in an environment of polarization (Sayarı 2016, 269). In the campaign period, the JDP effectively utilized the “national security” concept to appeal to voters, capitalizing on the increased terrorist activities carried out by the PKK and ISIS. The JDP's campaign against the PDP resulted in a significant shift of votes from both the NMP and the PDP to the JDP. In November 2015, the NMP and PDP lost 2,746,274 votes, while the JDP gained 4,814,515 (Sayarı 2016, 275–76).

While explaining the reason for this change as “the politics of fear”, Öniş implied that the people's search for security and stability benefited the JDP, the party closest to winning power. The politics of fear was a two-legged situation. The first of these was the climate of fear in which the increasing terror and lack of security, which were tried to be detailed above, dragged the society. The second was the fear of instability caused by the failure to form a coalition government. However, Turkey's membership in the anti-ISIS coalition reduced criticism of the US of the authoritarian tendencies in Turkish domestic politics, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel's pre-election visit to Turkey suggested a positive shift in the JDP government's relations with the West, raising hopes for future stability (Öniş 2016, 149–52). The bilateral meeting between Chancellor Merkel and President Erdoğan has been perceived as an expression of support for the latter in Germany prior to the November 2015 elections (BBC 2015; Anadolu Agency 2015b). During the meeting, Chancellor Merkel pledged to provide Turkey with financial assistance and accelerate the visa liberalization process. Following the meeting, Chancellor Merkel announced in a press statement that an agreement had been reached to speed up the visa liberalization process. Chancellor Merkel conveyed her intention to speed up Turkey's accession process to the European Union during her bilateral meeting with PM Davutoğlu. At the press conference held after the meeting, Chancellor Merkel expressed her desire for a stable Turkey to emerge and stated that this is Germany's top priority. She declared that “Germany wants a stable Turkey. We don't want instability” (BBC Türkçe 2015).

Even though her comment implies that an unstable political climate in Turkey could potentially have negative repercussions for Europe, the statement that Germany desires a stable Turkey can be interpreted as a covert expression of support for the incumbent government. It is further strengthened when juxtaposed with President Erdoğan's public statement that “stability will be voted on November 1,” which emphasised the importance of maintaining a single-party rule (Erdoğan 2018f, 236). President Erdogan's rhetoric of stability pointed to the necessity of a single-party government in the face of growing insecurity and economic uncertainty. The inter-election period marked the commencement of a comprehensive re-securitization process in Turkey, as evidenced by the resumption of internal security operations and the heightened impact of the instability

stemming from the Syrian Civil War, which gradually led to an increase in both internal and external threats perceptions. In this regard, the dominant discourse utilised by the JDP and President Erdoğan during the inter-election period contended that an international coalition threatened Turkey to plunge the nation into turmoil, so the reinstatement of the single-party rule was imperative to overcome the existential threat confronting Turkey (Esen and Gumuscu 2016, 1596).

Consequently, the protracted “solution process” concluded during the inter-election period, and security forces initiated operations to destroy trenches dug by a terrorist organisation in the southeastern provinces of Turkey. The security operations and conflicts that started after the end of the process created a de facto state of emergency and in the midst of this situation, the November 1 elections were held in Turkey. President Erdogan indicated that internal and external threats to Turkey had reached a critical level, which was the political rationale of the de-facto state of emergency. In this sense, as the sovereign who determined what constituted an exception, President Erdogan generate the situation of exception by announcing the end of the “solution process” (Cumhuriyet 2015), which marked the beginning of the re-securitization of domestic politics in a context where Turkey was facing both internal and external adversaries.

5.2.2. Return of Erdogan, Fall of Davutoglu

The emergence of President Erdoğan as the sovereign who decided the state of exception during the inter-election period engendered a power struggle between him and PM Davutoğlu. The rising rivalry between these two leaders, which resurged just six months after the November 1 elections, led to the JDP convening an extraordinary congress culminating in PM Davutoğlu's stepping down from his premiership and the leadership of the JDP. Before PM Davutoğlu's stepping down, the cleavage between PM Davutoğlu and President Erdoğan bore significant ramifications, both as an intra-party conflict and a state-level struggle. The struggle between PM Davutoglu and President Erdogan, which would be named the rise of Erdoğan and the fall of Davutoğlu, exhibited how the intra-party and intra-state struggles are intertwined. Regarding the determining the deputy list process before the June 7 Elections and the head of the National Intelligence Service

(MİT), Hakan Fidan's application for the deputy candidacy of the JDP was one of the issues of the contest between the two leaders both within the party and at the state level.

In early 2015, before the TGNA's vote on whether to refer four ministers to the Supreme Court in connection with the December 17 to 25 investigations, the first divergence between the two leaders was said to have occurred before the June 7 elections. According to reports, PM Davutoglu is insisting that four ministers be exonerated by going to the Supreme Court, but President Erdogan is opposed to this because he thinks that the claim of a “parallel structure” could collapse in such a case (Cumhuriyet 2014). The divergence between the two leaders' approaches created an existential threat to President Erdogan's claims from 2013 and 2014 that the government was in relentless danger of a coup. Therefore, President Erdoğan's objection to the ministers being sent to the Supreme Court for vindication can threaten the sovereign position that determines the exception.

President Erdogan has described many of the dangers facing his government as conspiracies against Turkey. The December 17-25 investigations, which included corruption charges against 4 ministers, were one of these conspiracies. Following the December 17-25 corruption investigations, which were called a coup attempt orchestrated by FETÖ, the issue of whether the 4 ministers would be tried in the Supreme Court caused controversy both within the JDP and throughout the country. The Gezi events and the December 17-25 investigations, which President Erdogan described as integrated coup attempts, were perceived as interventions staged by external powers and carried out by their domestic partners to thwart Turkey's claims to regional and global leadership. Therefore, for President Erdogan, who saw these events as obstacles to Turkey's development and development, even the possibility of 4 ministers being tried in the Supreme Court meant that the legitimate foundations of the exceptional situation he created were damaged. President Erdoğan intervened in the process and prevented 4 ministers from going to the Supreme Court, and PM Davutoğlu learned about this situation later (Zeyrek 2015).

Another point of separation between the two leaders was the arrest and expulsion from universities of academics known to the public as “Academics for Peace”. In an interview for 2020, Davutoğlu explained that this problem had arisen between him and President

Erdoğan (Duvar English 2020). “Academics for Peace” was formed with the declaration signed by 1128 academics under the title “We will not be a partner in this crime” in order to stop the internal security operations launched by Turkey in 2015. This declaration remained on the agenda for quite a long time, and some of the academics who signed the declaration were arrested and many were fired from their jobs. The day before the arrest of some of the academics, President Erdoğan said the definition of a terrorist should be reconsidered. In addition, President Erdoğan described the academics who signed this declaration as terrorists and accused them of being pro-mandate (Cumhuriyet 2016a; BBC News Türkçe 2016).

However, PM Davutoğlu has taken a stance against the arrest of academics even though his criticism against them was as harsh as President Erdoğan’s criticism. He said the petition published by “Academics for Peace” did not comply with the freedom of thought even though he expressed his opposition to arrest in principle (Diken 2016). President Erdoğan described the attempt as a betrayal and said, “I believe that our institutions will do what is constitutionally and legally necessary against this betrayal, which constitutes a clear crime according to our constitution and laws, and there can be no compromise here” (Erdoğan 2018e, 72). Thus, contrary to PM Davutoğlu's view, he emphasized the need for a harsher and more punitive stance. It was not the content of the academicians' statement that caused the difference of opinion between them but the way in which they reacted to it. While President Erdoğan described the academics as terrorists and called the state's security and judicial institutions to task, PM Davutoğlu emphasized that an intellectual struggle should be waged against the content of the declaration.

The growing unrest and the contention between President Erdoğan and PM Davutoğlu would lead the JDP to an extraordinary congress and paved the way for a change of PM in Turkey. Binali Yıldırım, who took PM Davutoğlu’s chair, became PM two days after the congress. Fahrettin Altun, who is in President Erdoğan's inner circle, said that the contention and unrest between PM Davutoğlu and President Erdoğan began when PM Davutoğlu presumed that laws and his service time to the party and government gave him a right to be a strong prime ministership. Therefore, according to Altun, PM Davutoğlu had entered into a political rivalry with President Erdoğan and the JDP party leadership

intervened in this political competition and took authority over the organizational structure of the JDP from the hands of PM Davutoğlu (Altun 2016b). Buried political contention between PM Davutoğlu and President Erdoğan has been visible and came to the surface by the JDP elites' act against PM Davutoğlu.

Following the decision of the Central Decision and Administration Board of the JDP to break PM Davutoğlu's influence on the party, PM Davutoğlu announced that he would take the party to an extraordinary congress and would not run for the presidency. Although PM Davutoğlu's decision to resign as both JDP leader and the PM was tried to be explained by many different rumors, the most fundamental problem was his political struggle with President Erdoğan. He described the current system's severing of the link between him and his party as a “distorted practice” and gave the message of the transition to the presidential system by stating that this practice should change in the future (Yeni Şafak 2016).

PM Davutoğlu's decision to resign and his replacement for Binali Yıldırım was seen as an occasion that President Erdoğan concocted to have unlimited power (Smith 2016). While Yıldırım is a politician from an engineering background, Davutoglu was the foreign policy czar of Turkey who has been preparing the theories of global power and leadership that the JDP government has been putting forward since the beginning of 2010s. One of the reasons why Davutoğlu was chosen as his successor was the unification of Turkey's goal of becoming a global power and a leading country under President Erdogan's charisma (Türk 2014a). To a much more comprehensive extent, a system transformation to be achieved by integrating the global leadership goal of Turkey with President Erdogan's authority, the transition from the parliamentary system to the presidential system, would also form the legitimate origin of being a constituting authority.

Davutoğlu's civilizational approach and Turkey's leadership formed the basis of President Erdoğan's constituent power approach through his cult of dominance in both regional leadership and domestic politics. While the Balkans, Middle East, and African policies pursued since the early 2000s aimed to increase Turkey's material presence in these

regions, they also established the legitimate ground for the “New Turkey” conceptualization, which included not only the transformative nature of the JDP government in the domestic context but also its civilizational approach to foreign policy at different spatial levels in an integrated way. Thus, while the foreign policies of Turkey's previous periods of power were evaluated on an exclusionary and limited level, the claim was developed that the JDP government based the regional expansions in foreign policy on a spatial approach. The civilizational approach, put into practice under the guidance of Davutoğlu, who revealed a transcendent foreign policy approach with references to Turkey's imperial past, portrayed the constituent power approach of the “New Turkey” claim.

The concept of “New Turkey”, which was integrated under the charismatic leadership of President Erdoğan, marked a space beyond the spatially existing borders of the country with Davutoğlu's civilizational approach. In his speech at the first UNGA he attended after being elected President in 2014, Erdoğan reiterated that the current structure of the UN could not respond to the crisis environment in which the world finds itself and emphasized his criticism of the structure of the UNSC with the slogan “the world is bigger than five” that he voiced in previous UNGA in 2013.

According to some, this slogan, which Erdogan used for the first time in his speech to the UNGA in 2013, was the reason for the foreign operations against Turkey. Because Erdogan's challenge to the current structure of the UN showed that Turkey is not a “passive actor” of the international system. The outsourced operation referred to here was the Dec. 17-25 corruption investigations. Altun indicated that FETÖ, which tried to stage a “judicial coup” targeting the government just three months after Erdogan's criticism of the current structure of the UN, aimed at Erdogan's challenge to the existing international system (Altun 2016f). Thus, in the eyes of the JDP government, as Turkey progressed towards becoming a global power and its opposition to the world's status quo increased, foreign attacks on the government also increased. The following statements of President Erdoğan have reinforced this perception:

None of the disasters we have been through in the recent period are events that have arisen with Turkey's own internal dynamics. Separatist terror, the Gezi events, the 17-25 December coup

*attempts, and some other attempts are events that were designed to set a direction for Turkey and were exhibited by both the outside forces and their insider stooges. (...) The sole purpose of all these incidents is to bring back that old, controlled, dependent, oppressed, insecure, manipulated Turkey. All these conspiracies have been devised and staged in order to resurrect the old Turkey, whose economy could not grow, whose democracy could not develop, which could not solve its problems, that is, which constantly lost its energy in a vicious circle*⁷⁸ (Erdoğan 2020b, 106:47).

The process described in this subchapter as the rise of Erdoğan and the fall of Davutoğlu enabled Erdoğan to emerge as a sovereign capable of consolidating the entire political sphere. Following the concrete move of the JDP elites, who are loyal to President Erdoğan, against PM Davutoğlu, the party has returned to President Erdoğan's axis and the process of returning from the parliamentary system to the presidential system has accelerated. The party's return to Erdoğan's axis meant that the legislative power would also return to him. Because, although his influence on the JDP continues to be dominant, PM Davutoğlu's efforts to increase his specific weight in the party naturally reveal the rivalry between him and President Erdoğan. In the Erdoğan-Davutoglu struggle, which can be described as a failure to agree on a power-sharing issue at its core, the possibility of Davutoğlu dominating the JDP, which holds the legislative power, posed a significant risk for Erdoğan.

Davutoğlu's failure to tone his stance with Erdoğan on pivotal matters posed a potential challenge to sustaining the JDP's rule within the state of the exception adopted by Erdoğan. Given the politically turbulent atmosphere in Turkey, influenced by the activities of both FETO and PKK terrorist organizations, the divergent perspectives held by the two leaders jeopardized the ongoing existence of the JDP government. Erdoğan's portrayal of threats to his leadership as threats to the nation since the 2010s formed the basis for the establishment of the exceptional state. As a result, his consolidation of power

⁷⁸ This statement was translated into English by the author. The original version of the statement is as follows: “Son dönemde yaşadığımız badirelerin hiçbiri, Türkiye’nin kendi iç dinamikleriyle ortaya çıkmış hadiseler değildir. Bölücü terör, Gezi olayları, 17-25 Aralık darbe girişimleri, diğer bazı teşebbüsler, Türkiye’ye istikamet çizme amacıyla kurgulanmış gerek dışarıdan gerekse içerideki maşalar tarafından sergilenmiş olaylardır. (...) Bütün bu hadiselerdeki yegâne amaç; o eski, kontrol altındaki, bağımlı, ezik, özgüveni eksik, gündemi belirlene- bilir Türkiye’yi getirmektir. Ekonomisi bir türlü şahlanamayan, demokrasisi bir türlü gelişemeyen, sorunlarını bir türlü çözüme- yen, yani kısır bir döngü içinde, bir fasit daire içinde enerjisini sürekli yitiren eski Türkiye’yi diriltmek için bütün bu oyunlar kurgulanmış ve sahnelenmiştir” (Erdoğan 2020b, 106:47).

further entrenched the permanent nature of this exceptional situation and made a return to normalcy unlikely. The July 15 Coup Attempt, which would follow the change of power in the JDP, would further entrench the state of exception by reinforcing President Erdoğan's narrative that Turkey was under existential threat.

5.2.3. The July 15 Coup Attempt

In February 2012, the struggle between the government and FETÖ began, and after the failed coup attempt in July 2016, it entered a phase of more intense confrontation. In February 2012, following the operation to arrest Hakan Fidan, the Undersecretary of the MIT, the FETÖ organization within the state, which many opposition groups in Turkey had been drawing attention to for years, was exposed. Following this crisis, the intra-state struggle, which started with the corruption operations in December 2013 and continued at an accelerated pace, ended in favor of the government after the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016, and with the state of emergency declared by the government, a purification process began in many institutions of the state, especially in the security and judicial bureaucracies.

The power struggle between FETÖ and the government was the deepest institutional crisis Turkey has ever experienced, having experienced several military coups and periods of instability in its 100-year history (M. H. Yavuz 2018). As a result of this institutional crisis, the July 15, 2016, coup attempt left 251 citizens dead and nearly 3000 wounded. Five days after the failed coup attempt, Turkey entered a state of emergency that would last for nearly two years. Kaliber has described this period as a transition to a “modular emergency” from the state of emergency and its effects and practices continued despite the legal end of the state of emergency in 2018. The permanency of this process is attributable to the institutionalization of mechanisms that were developed during the two-year duration of the state of emergency (Kaliber 2023).

The modular emergency that Kaliber introduced would set the background for the transition to a robust presidential system due to the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016 (Turan 2019, 35). In this sense, President Erdoğan's resistance call against the coup attempt and declaring a state of emergency has purified his “unilateral” power “at the

expense of the parliament, judiciary, council of ministers, and his own party” (Çınar and Şentürk 2019, 110). President Erdoğan's empowerment over other institutions paved the way for the institutionalization of his reign. The presidential decrees issued under the State of Emergency, declared during this period and extended several times for three months, were not limited to the fight against FETÖ. Many different sectors were regulated through presidential decrees, which brought about debates about bypassing the legislative institution, the TGNA. In a study examining 30 decrees with 1194 articles, which were declared between July 2016 and January 2018, it was stated that only 4 of the 30 decrees were accepted and enacted by the TGNA, while many decrees contained regulations outside the scope of the State of Emergency declaration. (Cumhuriyet 2018d) For example, Decree Law No. 696 amended the Turkey Wealth Fund (TWF), which was established by Law No. 6741 in August 2016. (Anadolu Agency 2017b) This amendment had nothing to do with the fight against FETÖ and terrorist organizations, which was the purpose of the State of Emergency. Muharrem Erkek, an MP from the main opposition party, criticized the members of the government in his speech at the TGNA “you are regulating everything from economy to national defense, from education to health, from the Council of State to the Supreme Court, from the TWF to the staffing of subcontracted workers with emergency decrees,” underlining that the TGNA was completely disabled (Erkek 2018).

The July 15 failed coup attempt contributed to the consolidation and institutionalization of President Erdoğan's power by creating a “new ontological security crisis”. As mentioned above, in addition to bypassing critical executives and judicial organs such as the TGNA and the Constitutional Court in legal status, the “permanent state of war” cemented “the distinction between them and us” (Rumelili and Uzunoğlu 2022, 223–24). Just a few days after the July 15 coup attempt, President Erdoğan did not hold back in his efforts to deepen this divide because the line he sharpened between those who voted for the JDP and those who did not was an essential part of his “populist political strategy” (H. Bahadır Türk 2018, 159). Noting that “the projects for Channel Istanbul are nearing completion” and that “the services to be provided to Istanbul would not stop there, “President Erdoğan stated that “the Military Barracks in Taksim would be rebuilt in accordance with its history and a history filter will be created in it” (Erdoğan 2017).

In the aftermath of the coup attempt, the use of many executive powers by the president without any oversight mechanism, coupled with the state of emergency, further consolidated the powerful presidential model that had already begun de facto in 2014. Following the suppression of the July 15 coup attempt, PM Binali Yıldırım stated that the coup plotters could not calculate Commander-in-Chief President Erdoğan's love for the country and that the whole world once again saw that no power could stand against his resilience and his love for this nation (TGNA 2016, 40). In this context, President Erdoğan's resilient stance against the coup attempt, which was also highlighted by PM Yıldırım, soon found its place in the school textbooks in line with President Erdoğan's opinion that “July 15th should be encouraged in all media, from textbooks to documentaries” (TRT Haber 2016). In these school textbooks, it was stated that the people resisted the coup attempt on July 15th “at the call of our Commander-in-Chief and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan” (Cumhuriyet 2017b). According to Çapana and Zarakol, the July 15 narrative, which also appears in school textbooks, portrayed the resistance to the coup as another 'War of Independence’ that “the people valiantly had rescued their 'democracy' and the state which represented in the person of Erdogan” (Gülsah Çapan and Zarakol 2019, 276). In this way, President Erdoğan was projected as a political symbol representing the will of the nation against the coup, in addition to exercising executive power unilaterally with his State of Emergency powers.

The developments in the aftermath of the coup attempt profoundly impacted Turkish politics and set it on a new course. The National Will rally in Yenikapı, to which all political parties except the PDP were invited, was one of the most important milestones in the forthcoming coalition between the JDP and the NMP. The future alliance between the JDP and the NMP, sparked by the Yenikapı rally, was initiated for a transformation in the system of governance. In the fall of 2016, NMP leader Bahçeli stated that the President of the Republic was violating the current constitution and that this had already turned into a de facto situation. Since 15 July, he emphasized that Turkey was a different country and described the President's acting outside the law as a hazardous situation “in times of a struggle for survival”. In this context, he put forward the idea of legalizing this de facto situation, and this idea was welcomed by the JDP, which started to work on constitutional amendments (NTV 2016). The collaboration between the JDP and the NMP

was considered not only as an alliance or coalition but also in a much more sacred framework, and the political interest of the alliance between the two parties was alleged to be “the survival of the state” (Sobacı 2018; Aslan 2018).

In this context, the first act of the nationalist and conservative-leaning JDP and NMP alliance would be to agree on amending the existing constitution. Starting to work collaboratively to transition from the parliamentary system to the presidential system, the alliance was to be established in the early general elections of 2018. The central rhetoric of this alliance was “being native and national”, a concept voiced by President Erdoğan in the 2015 elections. Emphasizing that the struggle in Turkey was among “those who are native and national and those who are alienated from their own country and nation”, he claimed that “being native and national” was a condition for full independence. However, he also made an inclusive definition by stating that this concept should be a valid criterion in every field (Altun 2016a). As inclusive as the concept may seem, it is also exclusionary with the distinction between us and them that it has created both historically and in current political debates.

President Erdoğan accused the RPP, the main opposition party, of not being native and national. In doing so, he excluded the RPP from society by stating it was not native and national. President Erdoğan even claimed that the RPP was in contact with the terrorist organization PKK and said there was no difference between the RPP and the PDP (TCCB 2017). Altun, a member of President Erdoğan's inner circle, accused the RPP of being non-national, claiming that its aim was to “create an atmosphere of social conflict and make the country vulnerable to foreign intervention”. Altun stated that the RPP is against the native and national policy pursued by Turkey and that it does so “under the name of Erdoğan enmity”, adding that the RPP's main objective is to “disrupt the spirit of mobilization that Turkey entered into after July 15th (...) to prevent Turkey's ability to act” (Altun 2018b). Hence, the securitization approach, which was based on a dual terrorist threat, created its own adversaries in the domestic political sphere. While the RPP was portrayed as an actor that developed a pragmatic interaction with both FETÖ and the PKK over Erdoğan's enmity, the PDP was depicted as the PKK's extension.

The 2017 Constitutional Referendum was also held in a polarized and alliance-divided political landscape and contributed to it. In the political environment built on the concept of native and national, President Erdoğan's definition of the JDP-NMP alliance within this framework signaled the centrality of the concept to the two parties. The 2015 successive elections, the attempted coup in 2016, and the increasing terrorist attacks created an environment of heightened political polarization and increased securitization. The process that started with the system change proposed by the NMP to make President Erdoğan's de-facto executive presidency de-jure further increased polarization. Throughout the referendum campaign, political blocs campaigned on authoritarianism and the elimination of unstable governments. The social factions and political organizations that coalesced during the referendum campaign have also established the foundation for the coalitions that were set to emerge in the 2018 Presidential elections.

There were many criticisms that the referendum, which took place under the state of emergency following the coup attempt, did not take place in a robust democratic climate (Esen and Gümüşçü 2017; Bilgin and Erdoğan 2018). The long-standing JDP government's ability to use state resources and the fact that the campaign was carried out under a state of emergency were among the most important arguments of those who claimed that the referendum process was carried out under anti-democratic conditions. However, according to the constitution, there was no provision against holding elections under the state of emergency. Although some countries around the world were prohibited from holding elections during the state of emergency, Turkey was not one of them. During the referendum period, the faction campaigning for “no” to the constitutional amendment claimed that conducting the referendum under the state of emergency “overshadowed the referendum” (Kılıçdaroğlu 2017).

The advocates of voting no to the constitutional amendment also saw the referendum being held under state of emergency conditions as a legitimacy problem. They also emphasized the Supreme Electoral Council's (YSK) decision to recognize the validity of unsealed votes, arguing that the referendum results were “shady” (BBC Türkçe 2017; Anadolu Agency 2017a). President Erdoğan, for his part, argued that the state of emergency did not pose any obstacle to the referendum, saying: “There is no problem in

conducting the referendum under the state of emergency. It can also prepare a much more comfortable ground. I believe that the government also shares that interpretation. There is nothing that prevents you from going to an election under the state of emergency” (Özcan 2017). Only two months before President Erdoğan's comment, PM Yıldırım said, “Now, in the event of a referendum, of course, we will not allow anyone to say, 'Elections (...) and the referendum was held under the state of emergency. Therefore, I think the state of emergency will be lifted before the referendum” (Cumhuriyet 2016b). Despite PM Yıldırım's remarks, the referendum was held, and the constitutional amendment was adopted by a narrow margin under the state of emergency in an environment where polarization was high, and the government had the ability to rule the state through emergency decrees.

Although President Erdoğan stated that there was no problem with having elections during a state of emergency, some changes were made to the YSK's supervision of the electoral process through decree decrees. Article 10 of Decree-Law 687, issued a few months before the referendum, abolished Article 149/A of the Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voter Registers, and prevented the YSK from penalizing broadcasters and media outlets that do not abide by the principles set out during the election period (Resmi Gazete 2017). Decree laws, which should be related to the reason for the declaration of a state of emergency, were used beyond their scope, as mentioned before, and thus, decisions were taken that would intervene in the electoral process. Although, according to the constitution, the content of the emergency decrees must be linked to the reasons for the state of emergency, the exception had made the president a sovereign who could act outside the law. According to Hirst, in Schmittian decisionism, “the exception reveals the legally unlimited capacity of the sovereign within the state” (Hirst 1987, 22). In this vein, the state of emergency in Turkey marked a moment in which President Erdoğan appeared as the sovereign, together with his leverage over the TGNA, the legislative power by becoming a state of exception. Starting in 2015, with the re-securitization process that began, the state of exception that the government created on the premise that the state was facing an existential threat was given a legal basis by the state of emergency declared in the aftermath of the coup attempt in 2017.

5.2.4. President as a Sovereign: The June 24 Elections

Since the inter-election period in 2015, “being a native and national” had emerged as a new identity in Turkey, which was heading towards a referendum on system change under the state of emergency declared due to increasing internal security problems and the coup attempt. This identity was also integrated with the incumbent government's political direction and historically patterned goals of 2023, 2053, and 2073. These goals, which refer to the Seljuks, the Ottomans, and the Republic of Turkey, merged with the identity of being native and local. It, embodied in the JDP-NMP alliance, incorporates a broad social base in Turkey while excluding the remaining blocs as those who allegedly were uncomfortable with Turkey's development and pursuit of ambitious global policies.

June 24, 2018, elections are crucial as a case in which the JDP-NMP alliance was consolidated and the conceptualization of native and national was consummated. This election, which President Erdoğan won with 52.6% of the vote, marked the launch of the Turkish-type presidential system, passed in the 2017 referendum and began to be implemented by the 2018 elections. One of the pillars of the JDP-NMP alliance's election campaign was “the right-wing nationalist populist perspective of the 'external world and their domestic collaborators' conspiring against Turkey”, emphasizing that Turkey was under terror and security threat (Sözen 2019, 11–12). In this regard, the JDP-NMP alliance electoral campaign positioned itself as a political structure fighting against internal and external attacks that threatened the existence of the state and the nation. In the elections, which took place under the influence of a very severe polarization in this way, the RPP-İYİ Party and the Felicity Party were accused of being the political facade that was not “native and national”. These accusations enabled the political bloc calling itself the Nation Alliance to be defined as the exact opposite front of the JDP-NMP, the People's Alliance.

The JDP's effort to “redefine Turkey as a 'Muslim nation” (Çınar 2018, 177), which it had been building for years and accompanied by the foreign policy, was integrated with the concept of “‘native and national” and through the JDP-NMP alliance, the nationalist-conservative tendency became the manifestation of this conceptualization in social praxis.

Hence, the 2018 elections held after the 2017 referendum consolidated the People's Alliance as the only equivalent of the concept of being “domestic and national”. Çınar traces the historical adventure of this understanding, which he refers to as “populist nativism”, back to the late Ottoman Empire and finds that the gap between Turkey's “Western” identity and political reality increased in the 1990s (Çınar 2018).

In the prelude to his election manifesto announced on May 6, 2018, President Erdoğan made a wide historical and spatial definition of “us” but left the definition of who is being fought against ambiguous. However, he stated that the groups being struggled against were those who wanted to put “shackles on the will of the nation”, pointing to military coup attempts, memorandums and Gezi Park protests. To this end, President Erdoğan evaluated themselves and those groups they were struggling against within a historical continuity and implied that this struggle has been ongoing for a number of decades. Emphasizing that the political domain in which they occupy is native and national, Erdoğan said that with the increase in development during their period in power, the “axis of evil” mobilized against them. Another noteworthy point in Erdoğan's speech is that he added Alpaslan Türkeş, the founder of the NMP party, to his description of his political traditions, which in previous speeches he had based on leaders such as “Menderes, Özal, and Erbakan”. Thus, Erdoğan, who mentioned the leaders representing the conservative tendencies of Turkish political history while defining his political tradition, expanded the tradition towards the nationalist ground by including Türkeş, the most important figure of the nationalist tradition, among them (Erdoğan 2018a).

Pro-government figures also saw President Erdoğan's manifesto as the most straightforward statement of the philosophy and theoretical relevance of “native and national” politics. Altun said, “When Erdoğan launched a new political movement in the late 1990s, he underlined the need for a native and national stance. Today, Erdoğan represents native and national politics” (Altun 2018c). İnat and Yeşiltaş, on the other hand, drew attention to the geopolitical and global problems Turkey faced and to the increasingly autonomous and decisive stance under President Erdoğan's leadership, arguing that the June 24 elections also marked an important juncture for foreign policy (İnat 2018; Yeşiltaş 2018a). According to İnat, if the June 24 elections consolidated the

government's position in domestic politics, it would increase its decisive stance in foreign policy. Highlighting the security risks posed by the current situation in Syria and Iraq, the increasing tension in the Israeli-Iranian-US triangle, and Turkey-Russia relations, İnat argues that the JDP government's policies on these issues are generally evident, while the stance of the opposition presidential candidates is uncertain (İnat 2018). Yeşiltaş argues that one of the aims of the government's decision to call for early general elections was to avoid losing time on strategic foreign policy issues. In addition to issues such as the instability in Syria and the fight against terrorism, Turkey's domestic political debates also risked undermining its “current strategic position on the international platform” (Yeşiltaş 2018a).

In the protocol of the People's Alliance, the alliance is defined as an entity that “emerged as a natural result of a native and national stance against the attacks that Turkey was exposed to after the treacherous coup and invasion attempt by FETÖ on July 15, 2016” and as “a national and moral attitude in the face of hostile domestic and foreign attempts against Turkey, and a historical unity to be maintained accordingly” (Milliyet 2018). On the other hand, the Nation Alliance protocol describes the alliance as electoral cooperation based on principles such as “ending social division and polarization, normalizing the political system, the separation of powers, the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, and freedom of expression and the press” (Cumhuriyet 2018c). The People's Alliance asserts that Turkey is perpetually in a state of emergency, and it delineates the political domain as a battleground in order to combat both internal and external adversaries of Turkey. By emphasizing Turkey's goals of becoming a regional and global power - in line with 2023, 2053, and 2071 goals - the People's Alliance characterized Turkey as “the guarantee of world peace and justice, the only hope of the Islamic world and all oppressed nations” (Milliyet 2018). These goals and the missions attributed to Turkey also carried a mythical sense. Unlike the Nation Alliance, the People's Alliance, which is not an electoral alliance, has therefore demonstrated an understanding to fortify the political sphere. This understanding padlocked down the area of ideological or political debate at the public level, while the effort to organize the nation around an existential problem became prominent.

With the Operation Olive Branch, which began in January 2018, Turkey carried out a cross-border operation to remove the YPG terrorist organization operating in northern Syria from Afrin. In this operation, which lasted for nearly three months, 7171 terrorists were killed and the YPG terrorists in Afrin were expelled from the city. However, the debates between the government and the opposition continued over this operation. RPP leader Kılıçdaroğlu stated that the Turkish Armed Forces should not enter Afrin due to the dense population in the city center (Cumhuriyet 2018b). President Erdoğan, on the other hand, responded that the RPP's stance on the Afrin operation was neither native nor national, describing the RPP's approach as that of the PKK, PYD and YPG (Erdoğan 2018d). Operation Olive Branch also dominated the agenda of the 2018 elections. There was a fierce debate over 2nd Army Commander Lieutenant General İsmail Metin Temel, who applauded President Erdoğan's speech in which he criticized his rival, main opposition party candidate Muharrem İnce. Presidential candidate İnce harshly criticized Lieutenant General Temel's behaviour and stated that he would remove his ranks (BBC Türkçe 2018b). President Erdoğan, on the other hand, responded that Lieutenant General Temel was the hero of the Olive Branch operation and was targeted because he was the commander who cleared Afrin from terrorists: "Those who have never uttered a single word for the sake of the country and the nation are now aggressively harassing our heroes in the war on terror" (Erdoğan 2018h, 57:424).

Another aspect of the debate over Lt. Gen. Temel was the tightening of national security and the construction of national pride on which the ideal of a "native and national" Turkey clustered around President Erdoğan rested. The tightening of national security policies through the trench operations against the PKK and the cross-border operations in northern Syria, and the "great and powerful Turkey" goals built on national pride were being integrated as interwoven components of the Erdoğan presidency. In the midst of the Lt. General Temel controversy, President Erdoğan asserted, in accordance with constitutional provisions, that he holds the position of commander-in-chief, thereby underscoring his authority over all military officers, or "pashas" (Erdoğan 2018h, 57:457). By making this statement, President Erdoğan effectively diverted the discourse away from his position as the leader of the JDP and instead underscored that the

occurrence in question was a natural consequence resulting from his assumption of the presidential office.

Erdogan further connected the controversy over Lieutenant General Temel to the opposition's discontent with Turkey's cross-border operations, as emphasized above. According to him, the opposition was bothered by Turkey's development and combat against terror organizations. Thus, by categorizing the opposition as adversaries, Erdoğan reduced the elections to a struggle for existence. This, in turn, created a state of exception, providing a legitimate basis for President Erdoğan to establish permanent and/or arbitrary State of emergency. The creation and continuity of the exceptional situation could also be considered as an accurate reflection of the cognition that constitutes the People's Alliance. The most important impetus for the People's Alliance was to “deal better with severe security problems, such as Turkey's cross-border operations in Syria, ongoing developments in Iraq and Syria, and the threat of terrorism” (Başkan, Gümrükçü, and Canyaş 2022, 327). In this context, the manifestation of the political domain as a purely friend/enemy distinction was consistent with the nature of the People's Alliance to form the political one. Because, according to the primary rationale of the People's Alliance, Turkey is a country that constantly faces internal and external threats and therefore has to struggle with them. As this understanding, which sees internal and external threats as interconnected, takes the continuity and the security of the state as the utmost political priority, President Erdoğan, as the strong leader of the alliance, assumed the protagonist of the continuity and the security of the state. In other words, a perception combining the People's Alliance and Turkey's future was introduced and claimed that “the People's Alliance is Turkey's survival” (Anadolu Agency 2018a; Ünal 2021).

Analyzing the positions of the main actors of the two alliances, scholars argue that the political orientations of the JDP and the NMP have converged considerably. In this comprehensive review of the parties' electoral programs, it is clear that the JDP and the NMP are almost identical in the matrix on “social and cultural values” and “civil liberties and Law and Order”. In another matrix, “social and cultural values” and “cosmopolitanism vs. nationalism”, the two parties are almost on the same page (Başkan, Gümrükçü, and Canyaş 2022, 332–33). From this point of view, it may be argued that the

alliance is not an electoral alliance, as mentioned in the People's Alliance protocol, and the high level of harmony between the parties is remarkable.

The People's Alliance, which can be defined as a political alliance that consists of an almost homogeneous unity, was also a manifestation of the concept of being “ native and national”. The homogeneous structure of this alliance paved the way for other groups or political structures to be characterized as those who were not “ native and national”. In this way, the political domain was completely transformed into a battlefield and the lines between the alliances were built with thicker walls. Although the People's Alliance seemed more successful in terms of the homogeneity within these walls, in the 2018 elections, President Erdoğan received approximately 600,000 fewer votes than the two parties combined. However, with 97 percent of the JDP and NMP vote, President Erdoğan's leadership within the alliance was unwavering.

President Erdoğan was elected as the first president of the new system after the 2018 elections. The new system was described by Öniş and Kutlay as a “hyper-central presidential system” and by Esen and Gümüşçü as a system that institutionalized the transition period, and the new administrative system was described as “excessive centralization and monopolization of power at the hands of a single individual” (Kutlay and Öniş 2021b; Esen and Gumuscu 2018, 45). President Erdoğan, on the other hand, stated that the most important reason for the change in the administrative system was the problem of “bureaucratic oligarchy” that they faced, and said that in the new system, this problem would be completely eliminated and the government would act much faster. In this sense, it could be considered that a system is being created in which decisions would be much more centralized and the participation of the bureaucracy in decision-making processes would be reduced (Anadolu Agency 2018b). In this sense, presidential decision-making capacity has been increased in the system and the decision-making process has been centralized through the presidential decrees. Although there are restrictive provisions in the constitution, there are no checks and balances to restrict these decrees if the president has a majority in parliament. Furthermore, if the parliament is fragmented, it may not be possible in practice to take action against presidential decrees. The new system aims to achieve rapid decision-making by making the president, who is

endowed with more powerful authority, as the head of the executive branch. In security issues such as the fight against terrorism, which form the basis of the People's Alliance, there were views that these powers could be used to accelerate the procedures. In his speech after winning the June 28th elections, President Erdoğan said that the voters chose to “decisively fight against all terrorist organizations from the PKK to FETÖ”, adding that “these results are also a statement that we will stand firmly against everyone from terrorist organizations to global interest circles that look at our country with evil eyes” (Erdoğan 2018h, 57:679–80).

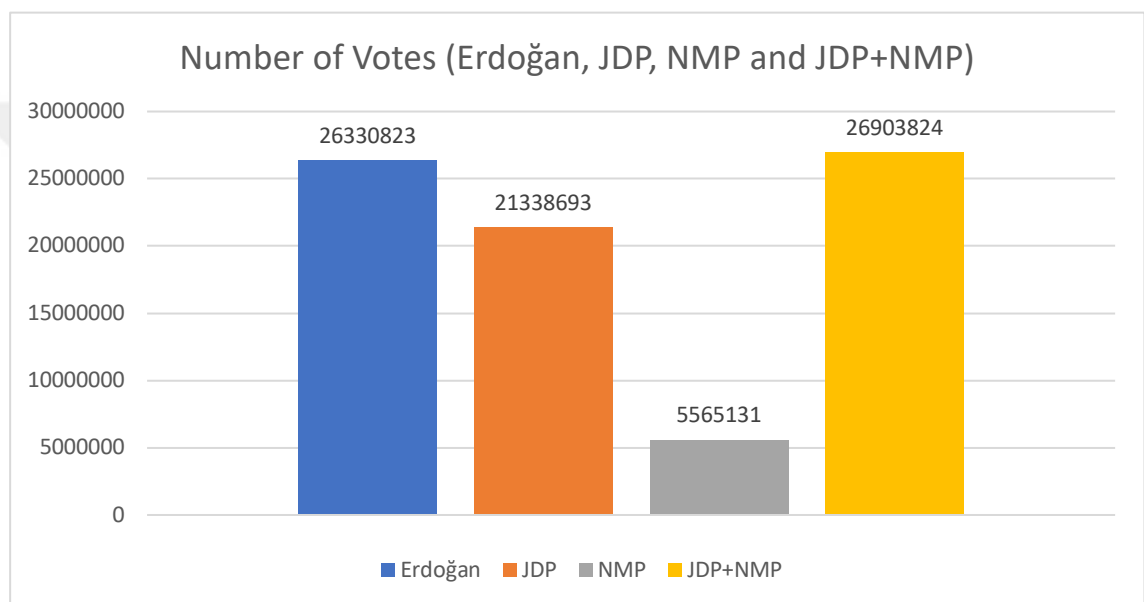


Figure 12 Number of Votes (Erdoğan, JDP, NMP and JDP+NMP), Source: ysk.gov.tr

Within this framework, the significance of the 2018 elections lies in their role as a crucial turning point in the consolidation of the notion of “native and national” as a novel form of citizenship identity within the People's Alliance. Additionally, these elections served to operationalize the “Turkish-type presidential system,” which aligns harmoniously with this particular identity. The 2018 elections not only acted as a catalyst for the escalating polarization in Turkish society and the deepening division between political alliances but also conferred legitimacy upon the People's Alliance as an integrated political structure characterized by an exclusionary approach rooted in the distinction between friends and enemies.

5.3. The State of Emergency in Foreign Policy: Source of Permanent Exception

The main focus of the third chapter was the TFP's shift to an aggressive and assertive foreign policy stance since the early 2010s. In this regard, the transformation of the TFP was traced by focusing on international systemic variables and changes in domestic politics on the basis of actors, and the impact of their interaction on foreign policymaking was revealed. Thus, the reasons for the interim phase of the transition period from de-securitization to re-securitization between 2010 and 2015, the so-called transition period of the TFP, were examined. On the other hand, in this sub-chapter, the main dynamics of the TFP's reproduction since 2015 due to the shifts in the global system and the increasing re-securitization moves in domestic politics would be tried to be explained through different cases.

Since 2015, with the impact of shifting domestic policy alliances and international systemic variables, the TFP has become re-securitized. In domestic politics, the concept of being “native and national” shaped around the JDP-NMP alliance, namely the People's Alliance, has become an effective identity in many areas of politics and has influenced foreign policy. Thus, President Erdoğan's Turkey-Centered and Multilateral Foreign Policy approach, also presented in his 2018 election manifesto, can also be considered the foreign policy equivalent of the “native and national” conceptualization. This is because the JDP government's foreign policy approach, which has started to change since the end of the 2000s, contains the criticism that its predecessors had a Western-centered foreign policy approach. On the contrary, the foreign policy of the JDP government was stated to have the goal of making Turkey a regional and then a global power, and it was advocated that Turkey should develop an independent foreign policy in order to achieve these goals. In this context, the claim of Turkey to pursue an independent foreign policy entailed a state of exception in foreign policy. Foreign policy outcomes, which were heavily affected by internal developments, were also prone to abrupt and sweeping changes occurring in a very short span of time.

This period, when the number of countries with which Turkey had problems increased, was characterized by significant discursive and practical fluctuations as well as political inconsistencies. While these inconsistencies featured prominently in cases such as the jet

crisis with Russia and the Pastor Brunson crisis with the US, there were significant fluctuations in relations with Europe. President Erdoğan has taken a hardline policy stance in both of these crises. However, in a short period of time, as a result of his abandonment of these attitudes and changing domestic dynamics, relations with Russia began to recover and Pastor Brunson was extradited to the US. Hence, inconsistencies have appeared between rhetoric and actions in foreign policy.

Additionally, advocating that Erdogan's single-handed management of foreign policy was crucial at a time of heightened global and regional risks, pro-government circles have attempted to conceptualize “Erdoğan's diplomacy”, which “has shown a unique success in overcoming bottlenecks in bilateral relations through leaders' meetings, (...) creating a synthesis between realism and values in foreign policy and in intervening in the hot topics of the international agenda” (Duran 2019). According to Ülgül, who examines the role of personal diplomacy in recent TFP, there are several reasons for the increasing importance of this practice in the implementation of foreign policy, including the system transformation Turkey experienced in the 2017 referendum and Erdoğan's personal characteristics (Ülgül 2019, 165).

As the already strained relations with the West became even worse after the failed coup attempt in 2016, and as a result of conflicting interests in many regional disputes, particularly in Syria, the West emerged as the other of the “native and national” foreign policy approach led by President Erdoğan. In particular, his criticism of the Western-centered international system and its injustices, alongside Turkey's “humanitarian and entrepreneurial foreign policy” concept, represented an important challenge to the existing system. A paper prepared by the Turkish MFA for presenting at the TGNA titled “Entering 2023: Our Enterprising and Humanitarian Foreign Policy” is emphasized President Erdoğan's motto, “World is Bigger than Five,” and the concept of “A Fairer World,” and notes that “in 2022 (...) we decisively implemented our native and national foreign policy understanding”. Thus, the ideas and approaches of President Erdoğan have been integrated into the formal policies of the MFA (T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı 2022, 4–5).

Yeşiltaş regards this as a reconfiguration of foreign policy based on the understanding of being “native and national”, a concept that is at the core of the People's Alliance bloc formed by the JDP-NMP:

“The foreign policy identity framed in President Erdoğan's speech is not a return to Kemalist foreign policy. Rather, it is an identity formulated around the perception of threats arising not only from the issue of terrorism but also from the changing nature of the Turkey-West relationship. It could be interpreted as a consequence of the interplay between 'classical nationalism' and 'neo-conservatism', which is influenced by the rising concern for survival. The West is no longer an integral component of Turkish foreign policy identity. In fact, the foreign policy identity no longer coexists with the West; it is even a production of the practice of native and national stance in which the West is not an integral part of it” (Yeşiltaş 2018b).⁷⁹

In this context, as new politics began to form around the concept of “native and national”, foreign policy was transformed under the influence of this politics. In line with the dominant character of nationalism and conservatism of the People's Alliance, Turkey has shifted to a foreign policy based on morality on the one hand and a security-based foreign policy on the other, and every threat in its near abroad has been a question of survival for Turkey. The shaping of the new foreign policy identity, which corresponds to the production of the interaction between classical nationalism and “new conservatism”, under the leadership of President Erdoğan and the integration of his political identity has led to the consolidation of Schmitt's conceptualization of “the sovereign is he who decides the exception” in him.

Thus, according to Erdoğan, a sovereign with the ability to determine the exception, a power holder who could determine the entire political sphere, the opposition was characterized as a threat to Turkey's survival. Apart from whether this proposition is true or not, Erdoğan, who emerged as a sovereign in the Schmittian style, was an actor who

⁷⁹ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan’ın konuşmasında çerçevelenen dış politika kimliği, Kemalist dış politikaya dönüş değildir. Daha ziyade, sadece terörizm meselesinden değil, Türkiye-Batı ilişkisinin değişen doğasından kaynaklanan tehdit algısı etrafında formüle edilen bir kimliktir. ‘Klasik milliyetçilik’ ile hayatta kalma (beka) kaygısının yükselmesinden etkilenen ‘yeni muhafazakarlık’ arasındaki diyalogdan türeyen bir sonuç olarak anlaşılabilir bu. Batı, artık Türk dış politika kimliğinin tamamlayıcı bir bileşeni değildir. Aşlında, dış politika kimliği Batı ile bir arada bulunmamakta, hatta Batı’nın onun ayrılmaz bir parçası olmadığı “yerli ve milli duruş” uygulamasının bir ürünüdür.” (Yeşiltaş 2018b).

alone determined the political and, therefore, the state of exception. According to Haugom, the consolidation of power around the presidential palace and the president's close circle of advisors gave rise to arguments that the TFP was shaped by the president's personal ambitions and paved the way for Erdoğan's aggressive stance towards Western governments, especially after the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016 (Haugom 2019, 215). In this context, Erdoğan was expressing that the West was uncomfortable with Turkey's growing power and influence in global politics. The West, in this sense, became the other in Turkey's new foreign policy identity (Erdoğan 2018g, 52:168; TCCB 2016).

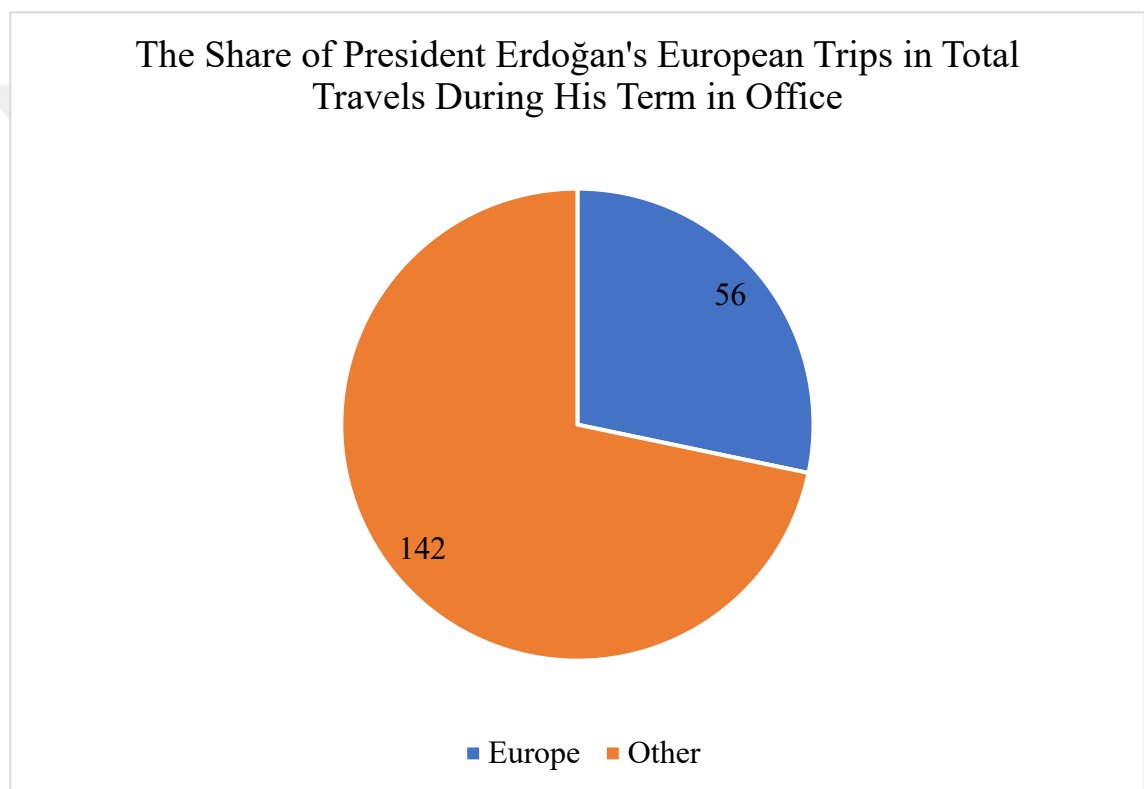


Figure 13 The Share of President Erdoğan's European Trips in Total Travels During His Term in Office

The deterioration of relations between Turkey and Europe could also be observed in the decrease in the share of Europe in Erdoğan's state visits during his presidency. Of the 311 foreign visits he made as PM, 132 were to European countries, while 56⁸⁰ of the 198 abroad visits he made during his presidency were to European countries. In other words, he made 42% of his state visits to European countries during his prime ministership, while

⁸⁰ This number includes visits to the Balkan region.

European countries constituted 28% of his state visits during his presidency. The majority of his visits to Europe were within the context of NATO and EU meetings, while most of his trips to Russia or China, for example, were organized in the context of regional developments and the stimulation of bilateral relations.

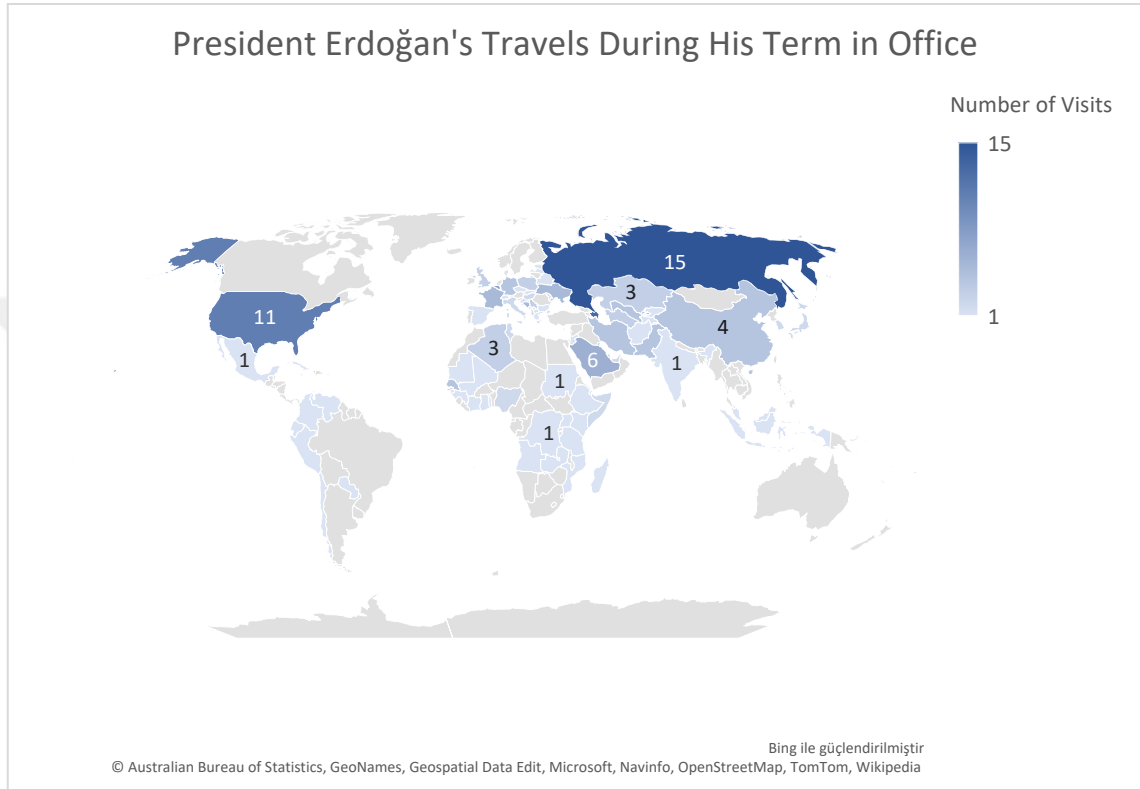


Figure 14 President Erdoğan's Travels During His Term in Office

Looking at the map of President Erdoğan's foreign visits during his term in office in Figure 14, it is noteworthy that the highest number of visits was made to Russia. During Erdoğan's prime ministership and presidency, 19 bilateral agreements were signed between Turkey and Russia on different issues. This is more bilateral agreements between the two countries than Turkey has signed with any other major power. Likewise, after Russia, the other major power with which Turkey has signed the most bilateral agreements is China. A total of 15 bilateral agreements have been signed between China and Turkey. It is also noteworthy that Turkey and Syria, which severed diplomatic relations after 2011, signed 47 bilateral agreements, more than any other state in the same period of time.

Figure 15 shows that while there was no significant change in the number of bilateral agreements signed with the states in Asian and European regions in this period, the change in the African and MENA regions is striking. The number of bilateral agreements with countries in the MENA region, which experienced a sharp increase between 2010 and 2015, also decreased sharply in this period. Although reasons such as regional instability and the persistence of internal unrest in the states in the region might explain such a change, these factors alone may not be sufficient. This is because the number of bilateral agreements signed by Turkey with countries in the region has almost doubled since the Arab Spring emerged and reached its peak. Therefore, the decline in bilateral agreements with countries in the MENA region is mostly due to Turkey's troubles with some countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, during this period.

Although there seems to be a numerical increase in bilateral agreements with European countries, there is a proportional decrease of 2.7%. In this context, the slight decline in bilateral agreements is correlated with the decrease in the number of President Erdoğan's visits to European countries after 2015. While President Erdoğan visited European states 59 times between 2010-2015, he visited European states 41 times between 2016-2022. This corresponds to 9.8 visits per year between 2010-2015, compared to 5.8 visits per year between 2016-2022. Considering the annual meetings of various international institutions and organizations of which Turkey is a member, such as the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government, this year-on-year decline provides further evidence in support of the deterioration in Turkey's relations with European states.

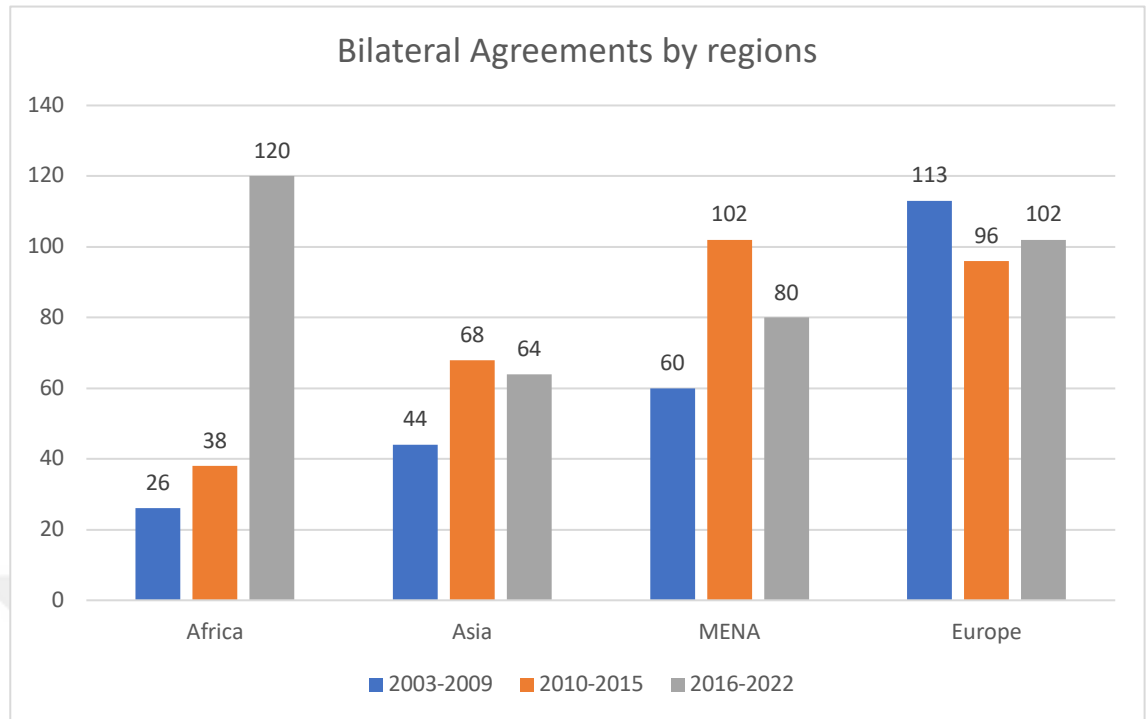


Figure 15 Bilateral Agreements by regions⁸¹

On the other hand, there has been significant progress in bilateral agreements with African countries. Economy, military and security agreements and defense industry take the highest share in the bilateral agreements with African countries. Turkey, which had 12 embassies in Africa in 2002, increased this number to 44 by 2022 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye, n.d.). In 2019, FM Çavuşoğlu stated that Turkey aims to increase the number of its embassies in Africa to 50 and drew attention to the fight against the FETÖ organization in Africa (Çavuşoğlu 2019). In a similar vein, President Erdoğan also drew attention to the FETÖ organization in Africa and stated that African countries were among the first countries to take concrete steps against the FETÖ organization. In this context, he revealed that many countries in Africa are also suffering from terrorism and that Turkey aims to increase cooperation with the countries in the region in this field. Furthermore, by stating that Turkey had neglected the region due to domestic problems despite its historical ties with the region before his administration, he also hinted that Africa would have an important part in Turkey's new foreign policy identity in the upcoming political period (Erdoğan 2018b).

⁸¹ This number includes bilateral agreements with countries in the Balkan region.

The fact that the content of bilateral agreements signed with African countries is concentrated in economic, military and security and defense industry agreements indicate Turkey's motivation to intensify its activity in the region in these domains. He emphasized that Turkey has a different course of action from the West in formulating its Africa policy:

“Believing that the role of the African continent will be decisive in the 21st century, we want to advance our relations with the continent on the basis of win-win and equal partnership. We never view our cooperation with African countries as short-term and interest-oriented. We are not like others who are trying to continue the old colonial order with new paths and methods. We wish to succeed and walk together with our African brothers and sisters” (Erdoğan 2021).⁸²

Erdoğan's words emphasize not only the West's colonial past in Africa, but also position Turkey's role in the region as the opposite of it. In this context, Turkey's humanitarian aid activities and technical assistance in the region are emphasized, while in the case of Somalia, methods that differ from the West are highlighted. Accordingly, the biggest difference is Turkey's direct contact with the country through state institutions and non-governmental organizations, while the West has an indirect diplomatic engagement in Somalia (Sıradağ 2018, 315). In the African countries where Turkey has been active, particularly in Somalia, through its effective and direct diplomacy, state institutions such as TİKA and international aid organizations such as the Red Crescent and İHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, has increased its manpower in the countries. Thus, a significant part of the activities in Africa, which also had an important place in the emerging foreign policy identity, was considered within the scope of humanitarian aid. Turkey's emergence as a non-reciprocal humanitarian aid actor in the region can also be considered in conjunction with the emphasis on its Ottoman roots, which constitutes the legitimacy of pursuing an assertive Africa policy. This emphasis on Turkey's imperial past also reinforced the historical background of the JDP's conceptualization of “native and national” (Yanık 2022, 14).

⁸² Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “21. yüzyılda, Afrika kıtasının rolünün belirleyici olacağı inancıyla kıta ile ilişkilerimizi kazan-kazan ve eşit ortaklık temelinde ilerletmek istiyoruz. Biz Afrika ülkeleriyle iş birliğimize asla kısa vadeli ve çıkar odaklı bakmıyoruz. Başkaları gibi eski sömürge düzenlerini yeni yol ve yöntemlerle devam ettirmeye çalışanlardan da değiliz. Afrikalı kardeşlerimizle birlikte başarmak, birlikte yürümek arzusundayız” (Erdoğan 2021).

In this period, when being “native and national” constituted a new homogeneous identity of citizenship, foreign policy became a political field in which the concepts of friend and enemy were constantly reproduced. Since his election in 2014, Erdoğan's strong and executive presidential profile, outside the usual presidential profile, and his interaction with his political party, which has a parliamentary majority, have made him a sovereign over the entire political space. After the 2017 Constitutional Amendment, President Erdoğan was elected as the chairman of the JDP, thereby re-establishing his organic ties with the party, even though he had continued to have influence over the party when he was not the chairman. Given the strict party discipline of political parties in Turkey, he had complete control over the JDP, which held the majority in the parliament. This paved the way for him to exercise his party power in high-level appointments to the higher judiciary and other public institutions under the TGNA, while at the same time continuing to exercise presidential powers. In such a political environment, various transformations and new directions in foreign policy also emerged.

First, the Turkey-centered and multilateral foreign policy identity of the TFP will be analyzed in line with the transformation in domestic politics on the way to crafting a more assertive foreign policy. Such an understanding, which will be evaluated as the new embodiment of the concept of being “native and national” in domestic politics, which is centered on the People's Alliance, in foreign policy, has been formed by the completion of a foreign policy transformation that has been underway since the early 2010s. In this context, the expression of Turkey-centricity and the assertion of multilateralism, as two intertwined notions, constitute the basis for Turkey to pursue an assertive foreign policy.

Second, relations with Western countries, which had been oscillating since the early 2010s, began to deteriorate rapidly after 2015. In this context, the allegations that Western countries were uncomfortable with Turkey's pursuit of an independent foreign policy and that they were involved in conspiracies against Turkey rendered them the perceived other to Turkey-centered foreign policy identity. Through the definition of the other, it was claimed that Turkey was in a constant struggle with Western countries and had to win this struggle to ensure its survival. Therefore, it was believed that Turkey's constant struggle

with Western states and the continuation of this struggle on many different dimensions was the only way to ensure its survival.

Thirdly, new spatial pursuits in foreign policy will be examined, as these were coded as spaces for both pursuing an assertive foreign policy and disrupting the conspiracies of Western powers against Turkey. At the same time, these pursuits also constituted the practice of the TFP's quest to become a regional and global power. In addition, spatiality, which became an integral part of domestic politics, was legitimized as state policies based on national interests. In this context, the examples of Syria and Libya constitute concrete areas of change in Turkey's foreign policy in terms of the use of military force, while the policies pursued towards both countries were directly or indirectly constructed through Turkey's survival.

Finally, the gradual deterioration of relations with Greece, which was an important part of desecuritisation along with Syria during the early years of the JDP government, has been an essential part of the re-securitisation period. Towards the end of the 2010s, Greece carried out energy exploration activities in the Eastern Mediterranean region with various countries, particularly Egypt, Israel and Southern Cyprus. Turkey announced that these activities violated Turkey's maritime jurisdiction. The disputes between the two countries over maritime jurisdictions in the Eastern Mediterranean and the continental shelf dispute in the Aegean contributed to a re-securitisation of bilateral relations.

5.3.1. The Pursuit of an Assertive Foreign Policy: Turkey-Centered and Multidimensional Foreign Policy

Beginning in the early 2010s, especially with the outbreak of the Arab Spring, the TFP began to pursue a much more assertive foreign policy. However, from 2015 onwards, nationalism was added as a new ingredient into assertive foreign policy approach, influenced by the notion of being “native and national” in domestic politics. The fact that nationalism is an essential component of foreign policy in the TFP, facing increasing challenges, is also related to the political tendency of the People's Alliance, the foundations of which were laid in 2016 and materialized with a practical electoral alliance

in 2018. Moreover, nationalism was not only integrated into the foreign policy approach, but also into the new system shaped around President Erdoğan, and according to Kutay, the new system used the symbols of the old system, such as Atatürk and nationalism, in its own way (Kutay 2019, 745).

First of all, attempts have been made to disassociate the concepts from their political counterparts, the RPP, and the NMP. On many occasions, Erdoğan criticized the RPP and the NMP over Atatürk and nationalism, accusing both political parties of exploiting these concepts. According to him, the RPP had turned into a party that was far from being Atatürk's party and had widened the distance between Atatürk and the nation:

“The RPP first became the party of İsmet İnönü and then the other presidents who succeeded him. Today's RPP is the party of the individual who is currently at its head. Establishing a relationship between such a party and Atatürk is the biggest insult against Gazi. The RPP, which claims to be Atatürk's legacy, broke its relationship with Atatürk on November 10, 1938. (...) Are we going to let Atatürk be monopolized by circles whose spirit is fascist and whose rhetoric is Marxist? We will not allow an amorphous party like the RPP to take Atatürk away from our nation” (Hürriyet 2017) ⁸³.

In fact, by pointing out that the RPP's relationship with Atatürk was severed in 1938 and by declaring that the RPP is the party of subsequent presidents, not Atatürk, he both ruptures the relationship between him and the RPP and portrays the party as a rootless entity. On the other hand, he also claims that it was he who claimed Atatürk's vision and the fronts he fought on, and characterizes the RPP's criticism as a criticism against the path he followed:

“Mustafa Kemal was in Libya, in Syria, in Gallipoli, in the Caucasus, on our borders, in every inch of Anatolia. You know how they tell us, 'What is your business in Azerbaijan, in Syria, in Libya', you were supposed to be Kemalists, you were supposed to be following Atatürk's path? (...) This journey of Gazi Mustafa Kemal is also the road map of today's Turkey. Turkey is still in Syria,

⁸³ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “CHP önce İsmet İnönü'nün, daha sonra da başına geçen diğer genel başkanlarının CHP'si olmuştur. Bugünkü CHP de malum şimdiki başında bulunan zatın CHP'sidir. Böyle bir partiyle Atatürk arasında ilişki kurmak Gazi'ye yönelik en büyük bühüttür. Atatürk'ün mirasçısı olduğu iddia edilen CHP'nin Atatürk'le olan ilişkisi 10 Kasım 1938'de kesilmiştir. (...) Ruhu faşist, söylemi Marksist çevrelerin tekeline mi bırakacağız. CHP gibi amorf bir partinin Atatürk'ü milletimizinden kaçırmaya rıza göstermeyeceğiz” (Hürriyet 2017).

in Libya, in the Caucasus, in Europe and in the world today, waging a pioneering diplomatic struggle. If there is anyone in this country who embraces Gazi's political, diplomatic, economic and military legacy that embraces our region and the world, then it is us. (...) This fascist mentality, which has become so insolent, rude and arrogant even to dream of power, which threatens every segment of society, which knows no other job than stealing the sword of the giaour, will surely get the lesson it deserves from our nation. We, on the other hand, will continue to make whatever investments are needed, take whatever steps are needed, and fight whoever needs to be fought to achieve Atatürk's goal of raising the country above the level of contemporary civilization” (Anadolu Agency 2021)⁸⁴.

Erdoğan had responded to the RPP's criticism questioning Turkey's military presence in Syria and Libya by saying that Atatürk fought in these countries, thereby claiming that the true inheritor of the Atatürk is the People's Alliance. Turkey's military presence in these countries is legitimized on the grounds of ensuring its national interests and security, while the claim that the People's Alliance is the political alliance that preserves Atatürk's legacy based on the fact that Atatürk fought as an Ottoman officer in these countries has been put forward. In this way, the RPP's characteristic of being Atatürk's party was claimed to have disappeared.

On the other hand, before the establishment of the People's Alliance, President Erdoğan also criticized the NMP over nationalism. Just as he argued that there was no connection between the RPP and Atatürk, he said that the NMP's understanding of nationalism was based only on slogans and symbols. Moreover, during the years of the solution process, he criticized the NMP's opposition to this process in accusing words:

⁸⁴ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: Mustafa Kemal Libya'da, Mustafa Kemal Suriye'de, Mustafa Kemal Çanakkale'de, Mustafa Kemal Kafkasya sınırlarımızda, Mustafa Kemal Anadolu'nun her karış toprağında. Hani bize diyorlar ya 'Azerbaycan'da ne işin var, Suriye'de ne işin var, Libya'da ne işin var', hani siz Kemalisttiniz, hani siz Atatürk'ün yolundan gidiyordunuz? (...) Gazi Mustafa Kemal'in bu serencamı, bugünkü Türkiye'nin de yol haritasıdır. Türkiye bugün de Suriye'dedir, Türkiye bugün de Libya'dadır, Türkiye bugün de Kafkaslar'dadır, Türkiye bugün de Avrupa'da ve dünyada öncü bir diplomatik mücadele yürütmektedir. Eğer bu ülkede Gazi'nin bölgemizi ve dünyayı kucaklayan siyasi, diplomatik, ekonomik, askeri mirasına sahip çıkan birisi varsa o da biziz. (...) İktidarın hayalini kurmak da bile böylesine küstahlaşan, nobranlaşan, kibirden yanlarına varılmayan, her kesimi tehdit eden, gavurun kılıcını çalmaktan başka iş bilmeyen bu faşist zihniyet, milletimizden hak ettiği dersi mutlaka alacaktır. Biz ise Atatürk'ün ülkeyi muasır medeniyet seviyesinin üzerine çıkarma hedefi doğrultusunda hangi yatırım yapılması gerekiyorsa yapmayı, hangi adım atılması gerekiyorsa atmayı, kiminle mücadele edilmesi gerekiyorsa mücadele etmeyi sürdüreceğiz (Anadolu Agency 2021).

“Instead of being a political party with a plan, a project, and alternative solution proposals, the NMP has preferred to be a party nourished by the terror issue. (...) Rather than addressing any of Turkey's issues, the NMP has abused the funerals of martyrs, and has almost equated the existence of terrorism with its own existence. Only a party that can survive through the continuity of terrorism would, undoubtedly, lose the grounds for its existence with the solution process. This is the reason why the NMP opposes the Solution Process and the end of terrorism” (Erdoğan 2019d, 97:352).⁸⁵

Indicating that the NMP equated its existence with the continuation of terrorism, it was a discursive policy aimed at “liberating” nationalism from the NMP's “monopoly”. At the heart of this claim was the idea that nationalism was equal to service to the homeland. In other words, while the NMP's nationalism was considered to be based on an abstract ideological premise that had no public sphere reciprocity, “service nationalism”, which was produced as a more concrete understanding of nationalism, was positioned in opposition to it. According to President Erdoğan, “nationalism is to build roads, to build schools, to establish universities, to bring modern housing and hospitals to cities (...) to keep the honor of the country and the nation upright, to fly the flag with pride”⁸⁶ (Erdoğan 2018e, 27).

Erdoğan sees the projects and services carried out by the government at home and abroad as important nationalist practices. In this context, Erdoğan's nationalism is “a complementary element in the promotion of the Great State, Great Turkey ideal” and “at the rhetorical level, refrains from ethnic definitions” (Türk 2014b, 298, 302). Therefore, the previously mentioned conceptualizations based on the distinction between the old Turkey and the new Turkey also manifest themselves in the struggle over nationalism (Türk 2014b, 305). Being “native and national” also reveals a new understanding that

⁸⁵ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi planı, projesi, alternatif çözüm önerileri olan bir siyasi parti olmak yerine, terör meselesinin beslediği bir parti olmayı tercih etmiştir. (...) MHP, Türkiye'nin hiçbir meselesine eğilmemiş, şehit cenazelerini istismar etmiş, terörün varlığını adeta kendi varlığına endekselemiştir. Ancak terörün devamıyla var olabilen bir parti, hiç kuşkusuz, çözüm süreciyle de varlık zeminini yitirecektir. MHP yönetiminin, Çözüm Süreci'ne, terörün sona erdirilmesine karşı çıkmasının sebebi de budur. (Erdoğan 2018e, 352)

⁸⁶ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “Asıl milliyetçilik, millette hizmet etmektir. Asıl milliyetçilik, ülkesi için eser üretmektir. Asıl milliyetçilik, bu millete, bu ülkeye hizmetkâr olmaktır. Milliyetçilik, bu ülkenin zenginliğine zenginlik katmaktır. Milliyetçilik, yol yapmaktır, okul inşa etmektir, üniversite kurmaktır, şehirlere modern konutlar, hastaneler kazandırmaktır. Milliyetçilik, bu ülkenin, bu milletin onurunu dik tutmak, bu ay yıldızlı bayrağı gururla dalgalandırmaktır.” (Erdoğan 2018e, 27)

should not be considered apart from nationalism. As in all political fields, these conflicts between the JDP and opposition parties over the conceptualizations have also affected foreign policy.

In the 2015 and 2018 elections, the changes in the foreign policy section of the JDP's election manifestos reveal this conceptual contestation to a considerable extent. Announced in the 2015 election manifesto as a “visionary and pioneering country”, the foreign policy title was changed to “foreign policy and national security” in the 2018 election manifesto. Thus, within three years, a vision in which foreign policy and national security blended more intertwined has been developed. Although it is not presented as sufficient evidence to explain the transformation alone, the foreign policy titles in the election manifestos have also revealed that foreign policy has become increasingly security-concerned. Therefore, one of the most important pillars of Turkey-centered and multilateral foreign policy identity was national security. In the period between 2010 and 2015, the failure of the political entities that Turkey supported in the Arab Spring, especially the toppling of the Muslim Brotherhood government in Egypt and the survival of Assad in Syria, led to the search for a new foreign policy. In addition to increasing security threats stemming from regional instabilities, deteriorating relations with the US and Europe paved the way for a re-securitization of the TFP.

In 2015, Turkey began to look for ways to act on its own rather than in partnership with its Western allies in its Syria policy. According to Özcan, the difference between the US and Turkey's attitudes towards the alleged chemical attack in Ghouta constituted an important breaking point (Özcan, 2017, p. 271). The fact that Turkey's request for a Kosovo-like intervention was not granted, the decreasing possibility of a regime-destroying intervention by the US, and the advancement of the terrorist organization PYD in northern Syria, as well as Russia's intervention in the civil war in support of Assad changed the whole dynamics. Following Russia's intervention, a Russian jet was shot down by Turkish jets for violating Turkish airspace. The incident strained relations between the two countries for 8 months and was to be exacerbated by President Putin's allegations that Turkey was committing an international crime by trading oil with ISIS.

Normalization of relations between the two countries began in June 2016 when President Erdoğan wrote a letter to his counterpart Putin in which he made a tacit apology.

In analyzing the reasons behind Turkey's decision to shoot down the Russian plane, Özcan notes that it might be seen as an effort to draw its Western allies, even the detect of the aim was not clear, especially the United States, into a process of adopting a similar position with Turkey on regime change in Syria (Özcan, 2017, pp. 292–293). However, if one considers that the plane was shot down with this motivation, the attempt seems to have failed. Immediately after the plane downing, President Erdoğan stated in an interview with CNN International that Russia had committed similar airspace violations before and warned Putin about it, emphasizing that Turkey would not apologize for doing what the rules of engagement required. He also reiterated that Turkey is a member of NATO, and in such a case NATO would do what was necessary, pointing out that Russia's attitude was not only against Turkey but also against NATO (TCCB 2015b).

The downing of the Russian plane and the subsequent incidents, while exposing alliances, also contributed to Turkey's perpetual state of emergency. According to Yeni Şafak columnist İbrahim Karagül, criticizing Turkey's actions at such a time was a betrayal:

“Turkey's political wisdom and centuries of experience might draw a path for the region, transform into a collective mind, and create a defense shield. Let me repeat it, saving the region is saving Turkey. If Turkey is disconnected from its region, the country will never be able to survive. The jet crisis between Turkey and Russia has pulled the veil off the deep-seated war. It revealed the hidden intentions of each country. It made Russia's calculations and Iran's goals visible. In such an environment, criticizing Turkey and questioning its actions is treason. Because Turkey cannot remain a tame state amid these imperial ambitions. It must do whatever it needs to do and take bold steps. Because this is a matter of the country's survival or non-existence” (Karagül 2015c).⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “Türkiye'nin siyasi aklı, yüzyıllara dayanan birikimi bütün coğrafya için bir yol çizebilir, bir ortak akla dönüşebilir, bir savunma kalkını oluşturabilir. Tekrar söyleyeyim, coğrafyayı kurtarmak Türkiye'yi kurtarmaktır. Coğrafyadan koparılan bir Türkiye asla ayakta kalamayacaktır. Türkiye ile Rusya arasında başlayan uçak krizi, derinlerde devam eden savaşın üstündeki örtüyü kaldırdı. Her ülkenin gizlediği niyetleri ortaya çıkardı. Rusya'nın hesaplarını, İran'ın hedeflerini görünür hale getirdi. Böyle bir ortamda Türkiye'yi eleştirmek, yapıp ettiklerini sorgulamak artık ihanettir. Çünkü Türkiye bu emperyal hırsların ortasında uysal bir ülke olarak kalamaz. Yapması gereken ne varsa yapmak, cesur adımlar atmak zorundadır. Çünkü bu, ülkenin varlığı ya da yokluğu meselesidir” (Karagül 2015c).

According to Karagül, while Iran and Russia openly targeted Turkey, Iraq's attitude towards Turkey was portrayed as an Iranian-led reaction. He stated that Turkey should act like a Seljuk and Ottoman empire in the face of all these threats and emphasized that Turkey should impose the map it draws to protect its territorial integrity when the region is being reshaped. According to Duran and Altun, although Russia's allegations of cooperation with ISIS, which targets Turkey and President Erdoğan directly, are baseless propaganda, there are also some risks. Duran argued that one of these risks was to destabilize domestic politics in Turkey and increase the PKK's activities in the Southeast (Duran 2015). On the other hand, Altun argued that there was already a national and international “manipulation process” against Turkey through the allegations of cooperation with ISIS and pointed out that Russia would try to manipulate it further (Sabah 2015). Like Karagül, Altun believed that it was imperative to support Turkey's struggle under the current circumstances:

“Turkey is taking a stance against the PYD/PKK and the Assad regime based on its own interests. It evaluates Russia's expansionist policy on this line. Of course, the Assadists, PKK members, and Putinists may want to push Turkey into a corner. Their allegiances may require it. However, at this critical juncture in history, everyone who cares about their country's national interests must support Turkey in its internal and external struggle” (Altun 2016c)⁸⁸.

Thus, according to the pro-government circles, the correlation between the situation created by the downing of the Russian jet and Turkey's policies in Syria made it essential to support the struggle both inside and outside the country. The shooting of the Russian jet was considered an act of national security for Turkey, securitization prevented the political debate on the proper or improper methods to be employed. In this way, public debate on the current policy and the shooting down of the jet was also prevented. President Erdoğan's use of the term “enemies of the country” in his statement also confirmed this proposition. President Erdoğan said,

⁸⁸ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “Türkiye, kendi çıkarları gereğince PYD'ye/ PKK'ya ve Esed rejimine karşı bir tutum takınıyor. Rusya'nın yayılmacı politikasını yine bu ekseninde değerlendiriyor. Esedciler, PKKlılar, Putinperestler elbette Türkiye'yi köşeye sıkıştırmak isteyebilirler. Aidiyetleri bunu gerektiriyor olabilir. Ancak, tarihin bu kritik evresinde, ülkesinin milli menfaatlerini gözetken herkes Türkiye'ye içeride ve dışarıda yürüttüğü bu mücadeleye destek vermek durumunda” (Altun 2016c).

“Russia may not have been able to decipher the contents of the black box of its jet, but this incident has deciphered many things in our country. 100 years ago, during the Balkan War, the representatives of the mentality that said, “Let the Bulgarians enter Edirne instead of Enver,” have come out today with the mentality of “let Putin be right instead of Erdoğan being right”. We used to think that those who used to be Pro-Soviet Union acted like this only because of their ideological attitudes. Today, when we witnessed some old-school socialists, some so-called liberals, and some names taking sides with Russia, we became aware of the real truth. It turns out that they (...) are enemies of this country, this nation. They were using all other titles as a cover, as a tool to maintain this enmity. (Erdoğan 2018f, 365).⁸⁹

After the Russian jet was shot down, President Erdoğan took a very harsh stance against those who criticized the government's action, describing them as enemies of the country and the nation. In this context, his analogies of Enver-Bulgarian and Erdogan-Putin indicated a state of war and those who were engaged in domestic politics during this state of war. In this way, Erdoğan turned the tension with Russia into an exception and used this incident to construct a friend/foe identification in domestic politics. NMP leader Bahçeli also stated that the incident was a non-partisan issue and related to the survival of the nation, that the NMP would support the JDP government, and Russia's attacks on Turkmen people in Syria could not be tolerated (NTV 2015). RPP leader Kılıçdaroğlu, on the other hand, criticized President Erdoğan's attitude towards the situation that could have been handled better, but for that, the President should not comment too much on the issue and act with more restraint (Anadolu Agency 2015a).

Mutual accusations and harsh rhetoric between the leaders continued to escalate until the summer of 2016 when relations between the two countries improved again. Although President Erdoğan was more conciliatory than President Putin, he questioned the legitimacy of Russia's presence in Syria and underlined that Russia's attacks on the opposition were playing with fire. The Turkish business community has also started to

⁸⁹ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: “Rusya, belki düşen uçağının kara kutusunun içindekileri deşifre edemedi, ama bu olay ülkemizde pek çok şeyi deşifre etti. 100 yıl önce, Balkan Harbi sırasında, “Edirne’ye Enver gireceğine Bulgar girsın” diyen zihniyetin bugünkü temsilcileri, ne diyor biliyor musunuz? “Erdoğan haklı çıkacağına Putin haklı çıksın” mantığıyla ortaya döküldüler. Biz, eskiden Sovyetler Birliği yanlısı olanların, sırf ideolojik tutumları sebebiyle böyle davrandıklarını sanıyorduk. Bugün, eski tüfek sosyalistlerin, güya birtakım liberallerin, birtakım isimlerin Rusya safında yer aldığını görünce, asıl gerçeğin farkına vardık. Meğer bunlar (...) bu ülkenin, bu milletin düşmanıymışlar. Diğer tüm sıfatları, bu düşmanlığı sürdürebilmek için birer kılıf olarak, birer araç olarak kullanıyorlarmış” (Erdoğan 2018f, 365).

express the importance of a peaceful solution to the crisis between the two countries. Considering the intense economic relations between Turkey and Russia, there has been an increase in the number of opinions from organizations such as DEİK, especially representatives of the construction and textile sectors, that the problem should be settled at soon as possible (Yeni Şafak 2015b). Within this environmental structure, Turkish-Russian relations began to improve and evolve towards cooperation following the settlement of the conflict in the summer of 2016 by the involvement of both businessmen and Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev (Yetkin 2016). One of the reasons behind the rapid evolution of relations towards cooperation was Turkey's growing security concerns against the US-backed PYD-YPG and the search for new cooperation (Erşen and Köstem 2020). Another reason was the volume of trade between Turkey and Russia. Many business sectors, especially tourism, energy and textiles, were significantly affected by the crisis. Although relations between the two countries started to improve as of June 2016, the foreign trade volume between the two countries declined from 24 billion dollars in 2015 to 17 billion dollars in 2016 (BBC Türkçe 2020).

This turbulence in relations with Russia constituted an important turning point for the TFP. After the July 15, 2016, failed coup attempt, relations tightened further, and the growing anti-Western sentiment in both countries paved the way for strategic cooperation. According to Balta, Turkey's purchase of S-400 missiles from Russia, a reflection of the strategic cooperation between the two countries, “undermine the Turkish-Western alliance and Turkey's position in NATO” (Balta 2019, 81). The fragile nature of Turkey-Russia relations, which have transformed from enmity to strategic cooperation in a very short period of time, could be evaluated through the sovereign's ability to decide who is a friend and who is an enemy. The two contradictory points that President Erdoğan emphasized in his statements after the downing of the Russian jet revealed precisely this volatility. The first is that the Russian jet was shot down in accordance with Turkey's declared rules of engagement and that there would be no apology made to Russia. The second is that there was no knowledge that the jet was a Russian plane, and if it had been known that it was a Russian jet, it would have been treated differently. This contradiction in the assessments on the issue showed that the decision-making mechanisms in the TFP had a volatile and conjunctural nature. Similarly, following the escalation with Russia,

President Erdoğan's labelling of those who criticized him as enemies of the nation showed that the identification of the enemy at home was also fluid and conjunctural.

Following the sudden thaw in relations between the two countries, many pro-government columnists have also changed their view of Russia in a positive direction. "The jet crisis between Turkey and Russia has pulled the veil off the deep-seated war," Karagül had previously written, claiming that after the detente in relations, Turkey's NATO allies were trying to make Turkey a target by trying to pick a fight with Russia and Iran (Karagül 2017c). Taking this claim even further, Karagül stated that a regional war was planned, but the Syrian leg of this war was disrupted by the Turkey-Iran-Russia agreements, and in response to this move, a new and much more comprehensive war plan was prepared by the US, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Israel. While stating that Turkey has been resisting such a plan for a long time, he considers Turkey's stance against the Gezi Park protests, the December 17-25 operations and the July 15 Coup Attempt as the reason for the conspiracies against Turkey (Karagül 2017a).

Another pro-government columnist, Ergün Diler, argued that the motivation behind the downing of the Russian jet was to prevent Russia from acting jointly with Europe by Turkey and the US. According to Diler, the Russian plane had the technology to intercept communications between all NATO members, which is why Turkey deliberately shot it down. Thus, Diler stated that Turkey was protecting the NATO alliance (Diler 2015), and contrary to his aforementioned claims after the start of the rapprochement between Turkey and Russia, he considered the downing of the Russian jet as a conspiracy by those who did not want Turkey-Russia rapprochement (Diler 2017a; 2017b).

Fahrettin Altun, who would later become the Director of Presidential Communications, also stated that Turkey's rapprochement with Russia and Israel constituted a normalization step. In an article he had written after the resignation of PM Davutoğlu, he emphasized the importance of the steps of normalization with Israel and the improvement of relations with Russia, while stating that a group among those who criticized these initiatives was the "non-national opposition". According to him, the group he characterized as the "non-national opposition" was hostile to Erdoğan, and their

motivation was to oust him (Altun 2016d). Therefore, Altun characterized their attitude against the improvement of relations with Israel and Russia as non-national opposition.

Altun thus characterised opposition to Erdoğan on international issues as non-nationalism and this discourse became a highly effective rhetoric in the political arena. In particular, this rhetoric, which constituted a nexus between foreign and domestic politics, emerged as a reflection of the conceptualisation of "native and national" and became an essential part of the re-securitisation policies. Through this integration, the sovereign was able to consolidate its power by struggling to dominate a single political sphere instead of struggling to dominate multiple political spheres. In other words, to put it more clearly, Erdoğan's policies and political manoeuvres were transformed into national policies and declared as the cornerstones of national security. Consequently, the shooting of the Russian jet and sending a letter of regret to President Putin were justified and defended by the pro-government circles on the basis of national interests, as explained in the examples above.

Meanwhile, Turkey experienced a significant deterioration in its relations with many Western states during this period. Although trade relations were not immune to this decline, the negative trend in relations with Europe and the US has not been accompanied by a recovery as in relations with Russia. Relations between Turkey and the transatlantic states, here referring to the US and European states, have been deeply affected by their diverging postures in the Syrian Civil War and the July 15 coup attempt. Having been on a very fragile footing since the early 2010s under the JDP government, relations were plunged into several diplomatic crises from 2015 onwards.

The most tense point that was reached in the relationship between the US and Turkey was the American support for the PYD in the north of Syria and the purchase of S-400 missiles by Turkey from Russia. It is interesting to note that while Turkey and Russia, which are on opposing sides in conflicts such as Syria and Libya, have rebuilt their relations after resolving the jet crisis, the United States and Turkey, which have been allies for many years, have failed to reach a solution to the crises between them and their relations have

deteriorated even further. For example, despite the settlement of the Pastor Brunson crisis, the relationship between the two countries did not move in a positive trajectory.

In 2016, Andrew Brunson, a US citizen and pastor of the Resurrection Church in Izmir, was ordered to be deported after an investigation into his alleged 'activities that threaten national security'. He was arrested for alleged links to the PKK terrorist organization after a secret witness testified against him as part of the investigation into the 15 July 2016 coup attempt. In 2017, during a meeting between US President Trump and President Erdoğan, President Trump called for Pastor Brunson's release, while President Erdoğan later said in a statement, referring to US-based FETÖ leader Fethullah Gülen, "They say, give us the pastor. You have a pastor too and you give him to us." (Cumhuriyet 2017a) In March 2018, an indictment was announced against Pastor Brunson, demanding life imprisonment for his role as a part of FETÖ leadership, and the trial against him began in April 2018. Following US President Trump's statements that sanctions could be imposed on Turkey, relations between the two countries became even more strained. Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, on the other hand, described the statements that sanctions could be imposed as a threatening approach and stressed that the case of Pastor Brunson was a judicial process (Cumhuriyet 2018a).

Although Pastor Brunson, who was convicted with a sentence at the end of the process, was released considering the time he spent in prison, there was no improvement in relations between the two countries. In the process, the US decided to impose sanctions on Süleyman Soylu, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Turkey, and Abdülhamit Gül, Minister of Justice. The reason for this decision was the investigation against Pastor Brunson. This situation, which further strained the already tense process in bilateral relations, was perceived as the intervention of the US in the Turkish judiciary (BBC Türkçe 2018a). In fact, Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu stated after the sanctions decision that they faced similar pressures from many different countries, not just Pastor Brunson. Çavuşoğlu even hinted that old habits continue to prevail in the foreign ministry in the face of these pressures, pointing out that the nation and the private sector have a much more advanced understanding in this regard than state institutions (Cumhuriyet 2018a).

According to Haugom, one of the most important aspects of the Brunson crisis is that it embodies Turkey's "reciprocity, which is central to transactional foreign policy" (Haugom 2019, 211–12). "Reciprocity" being a central element of Turkey's transactional foreign policy, as Haugom claimed, can be associated with the multilateral and Turkey-centered foreign policy approach. The following statements by President Erdoğan also reveal the practical use of the concept of reciprocity. Following the US sanctions against two Turkish ministers, President Erdoğan announced that Turkey would also impose sanctions against two US ministers:

"(...) The step taken by the US in the case of Pastor Brunson does not befit a strategic partner. With this step, America has shown serious disrespect towards Turkey. On the one hand, you call Turkey a model partner, a strategic partner, and an ally, and on the other hand, you are trying to protect a pastor who has ties with the PKK and FETÖ. (...) The decision taken against my Minister of Interior and Minister of Justice cannot be related to logic. (...) We were patient until yesterday evening. Today, I give orders to my friends that we will also freeze the assets of the Ministers of Justice and Interior of this country in Turkey. (...) The latest attitude of the US reflects an Evangelical, Zionist approach. Mr. Trump has fallen for a very big trap here. I know the game-makers very well. Mr. Trump has to disrupt this plot" (Erdoğan 2020c, 117:40–41).⁹⁰

On the one hand, Erdoğan said that sanctions would be imposed against the US Justice Minister and Interior Minister as a requirement of reciprocity; on the other hand, he pointed out that there were organizations that pursued very different agendas behind the US attitude towards Turkey. His message could also be seen as a domestic political message in line with the discourse on foreign conspiracies and evil forces mobilizing against Turkey. The following section will analyze in more detail how the discourse of foreign powers developing conspiracies against Turkey has occupied a very important place in foreign policy understanding since the beginning of the 2010s.

⁹⁰ Translated by the author. The original text is as follows: "(...) Amerika'nın Papaz Brunson olayıyla ilgili attığı adım stratejik ortağa yakışmıyor. Amerika attığı bu adımla Türkiye'ye karşı ciddi bir saygısızlık yapmıştır. Bir taraftan model ortak diyeceksin, stratejik ortak diyeceksin, müttefik diyeceksin, diğer taraftan da PKK'yla, FETÖ ile ilişkisi olan bir papazı savunmanın gayreti içine gireceksin. (...) Benim İçişleri Bakanım ve Adalet Bakanım ile ilgili alınan kararın mantıkla alakası olamaz. (...) Biz dün akşama kadar sabrettik. Bugün arkadaşlarıma talimatı veriyorum, biz de bu ülkenin Adalet ve İçişleri Bakanlarının Türkiye'deki mal varlıklarını donduracağız. (...) ABD'nin son tavrı Evangelist, Siyonist bir yaklaşımın tezahürüdür. Burada Sayın Trump çok büyük bir oyuna gelmiştir. Oyun kurucuları da gayet iyi biliyorum. Sayın Trump'ın bu oyunu bozması gerekir" (Erdoğan 2020c, 117:40–41).

During this period, Turkey had various problems not only with the US but also with many European countries, especially Germany and the Netherlands. These problems were experienced most frequently during the propaganda for Turks living in European countries amid the 2017 referendum campaign. The high ranking JDP officials who wanted to campaign in countries where Turks live densely, especially in Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands, were faced with obstructions by the official authorities of these countries. The worst of the crises was experienced with the Netherlands, which turned into a diplomatic crisis. This diplomatic crisis escalated to the point where the Netherlands prevented Turkish ministers from attending their programs in the Netherlands, and when the Turkish ministers insisted on carrying out their programs in response to this attitude, the ambassadors were recalled and Turkey imposed sanctions on the Netherlands. President Erdoğan accused the Netherlands of being a “Nazi remnant” and also accused the German Chancellor of practicing Nazi practices.

President Erdoğan emphasized that Turkey was a different Turkey than before and claimed that other countries could not tolerate this attitude. His emphasis was another reflection of his Turkey-centered foreign policy approach. Erdoğan expressed this behaviour of countries such as Germany and the Netherlands as follows: “Those who were used to the old Turkey could not accept the stance of today's Turkey, so they started to violate their own values, human rights and international law, and started to break and destroy everything like an elephant in a China shop”⁹¹ (Erdoğan 2018g, 52:168). Esen and Gümüşçü noted that this international crisis facilitated “naysayers as a coalition of 'enemies of the people' within and outside of Turkey” by the JDP (Esen and Gümüşçü 2017, 307–8).

According to President Erdoğan, those who voted no in the referendum could easily campaign in Europe, while the yes campaign was suppressed. He portrayed those who campaigned for no in the referendum campaign as associating with terrorist organizations and acting with states that refused to allow Turkish ministers into their countries (Erdoğan 2018g, 52:183). According to him, the coalition of naysayers in the referendum campaign

⁹¹ Eski Türkiye’ye alışanlar, bugünkü Türkiye’nin duruşunu kabullenemedikleri için, “Züccaciye dükkânına girmiş fil” gibi, kendi değerlerini, insan haklarını, uluslararası hukuku çiğneyemeye, her şeyi kırıp dökmeye başladılar (Esen and Gumuscu 2018, 168).

represented a composition that included Turkey's enemies. Moreover, the effects of the referendum campaign also had a decisive impact on the course of foreign policy due to the long-standing rhetoric of the Old Turkey/New Turkey divide once again surfaced here.

On the other side of the tensions with Europe during the referendum, there were allegations that FETÖ members' provocations were behind the crisis. Following the attempt to prevent Fatma Betül Sayan Kaya, the Minister of Family and Social Policies, from travelling to Rotterdam to campaign for the referendum in the Netherlands, the pro-government media in Turkey targeted Ahmed Aboutaleb, the Moroccan mayor of Rotterdam. The pro-government newspaper Yeni Şafak reported that Mayor Aboutaleb had given the order to shoot Minister Sayan Kaya's security detail if they resisted, and emphasized that the mayor, nicknamed “Abu Jahl”, supported all FETÖ organizations in the Netherlands (Yeni Şafak 2017).

The claim that the nickname of the mayor of Rotterdam, Ahmed Aboutaleb, is “Abu Jahl” was not found in any of the sources other than the news article in Yeni Şafak newspaper. Historically, Abu Jahl is characterized as one of the perpetrators of many atrocities and massacres in the history of Islam and is also referred to as a person who was “extremely merciless towards foreigners who came to Mecca” (Mehmet Ali Kapar 1994). Therefore, the characterization of Mayor Aboutaleb as “Abu Jahl” is used as a noteworthy symbolization. Considering Abu Jahl's struggle against the spread of Islam as a historical figure and Yeni Şafak columnist İbrahim Karagül's comparison of the attitude of European states to a Crusader Attack against Turkey, the extent of symbolization becomes even more understandable. According to Karagül, the hostility of European countries towards Turkey exceeded the referendum campaign and Turkey had to take radical measures against this situation:

“Behind the attacks that we see in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, in short, in almost all of Europe, lies a very big historical calculation. The enmity against Turkey, which was started after Islamophobia, is not limited to the elections. It will not improve after the elections. Therefore, we have to prepare for this new situation” (Karagül 2017b).

Turkey's Minister of Culture and Tourism Nabi Avcı also pointed out that there are problems between Turkey and some European states by emphasizing the presence of FETÖ in the Netherlands. Stating that some people affiliated with FETÖ have an important place in the Dutch bureaucracy, Minister Avcı mentioned that these issues were brought up in their meetings with their Dutch counterparts at which they acknowledged it. He emphasized the presence of FETÖ-affiliated politicians working in municipalities and municipal councils and underlined that there is a widespread campaign of “enmity against Turkey and hostility towards Turkey” (Milliyet 2017).

In line with Avcı's views, in circles close to the government, the Dutch government's attitude was attributed to anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim sentiments and characterized as an effort to influence the results of the referendum on the constitutional amendment (Yalçın 2017a; 2017b; Duran 2017; Altun 2017a; 2017c; 2017d). Yalçın implicitly emphasized the Old Turkey/New Turkey distinction by claiming that Turkey's transition to a stable system of governance disturbed these countries in an environment in which Europe was being dragged into internal strife. Stating that “in the past, Turkey was controlled by coalitions, economic crises and IMF regulations”, he emphasized that today, on the contrary, a country with strong leadership is rising (Yalçın 2017a). Embodying the Old Turkey/New Turkey dichotomy in this way, he accused those who criticized the JDP government during the tensions with the Netherlands of being “underdogs against Europe” and accused them of trying to “undermine Turkey's efforts to build itself” (Yalçın 2017b). His criticism was a manifestation of an imaginative approach insinuating that Turkey has internal and external foes who are interrelated with each other. From the early 2010s onwards, the claim that Turkey was no longer as weak and compromised towards the great powers as it had been in the past thanks to the policies of the JDP government and the leadership of President Erdoğan formed the basis of the views of those who argued that there were two different Turkeys.

Fahrettin Altun, one of the closest members of the President's inner circle, also emphasized that European states were engaged in a systematic intervention effort against the referendum in Turkey and made the following statements:

“The No front is globalized. All forces of evil in the global arena are campaigning for a no campaign for the referendum on April 16. It is not only about taking away the right to speak from those who voted for the constitutional amendment. It is also the fact that no campaign is being carried out in a coordinated manner. The RPP has cancelled its programs in Europe as if there is a need for the RPP to campaign for no in Europe. All enemies of Turkey in the West are already campaigning on behalf of RPP”(Altun 2017b).

According to Altun, there is a relationship between the groups he characterizes as enemies of Turkey and the RPP. Thus, the RPP is categorized as the internal ally of those allied against Turkey. The reason for this alliance against Turkey is that Turkey's influence on the region and its politics disrupts “the annihilation plan that the Western establishment has envisioned for the Muslim geography since the 1990s”. In this way, Altun implies that Turkey is a game-changer actor for the existing world order and describes the country as the leader of the Muslim geography, which he defines as the Islamic geography (Altun 2017b).

Since the mid-2010s, Turkey's relations with Western countries and its foreign policy have been highly volatile. While the developments surrounding the Syrian civil war and the deterioration of relations between Turkey and Western countries were the main external influences, the 2015 elections, the fight against FETÖ, the July 15 Coup Attempt, and the 2017 referendum were internal variables. Following the 2011 elections, the gradual institutionalization of the JDP government and the global leadership aspirations formed in Erdoğan's image enabled the formation of the TFP in line with these goals. From 2015 onwards, however, Turkey's turbulent domestic political developments and deteriorating relations with foreign governments led the JDP and those close to the JDP government to claim that Turkey's ongoing transformation would pose a threat to other countries and that Turkey was, therefore, under attack from multiple actors.

5.3.2. The Reemergence of Traditional Enmities: Greece and Syria

The two most striking examples of the resecuritization period have been the deterioration of relations with Greece and Syria, among others. During this period, relations with both countries deteriorated for different reasons. First, the transformations in regional balances

have deeply affected Turkey's relations with the two countries. Syria, which was dragged into a very intense civil war with the Arab Spring, began to lose control over its territory. This has left Turkey with an unstable state on its border. Turkey's strained relations with many countries due to regional disputes have significantly contributed to the expansion of Greece's regional claims. In this context, the dispute over maritime jurisdiction areas in the Eastern Mediterranean has been added to the continental shelf dispute in the Aegean Sea, which is an inherited problem. Greece, with Egypt and Israel, countries in the region with which Turkey has bad relations, has embarked on natural gas exploration activities in the Eastern Mediterranean. This development, which drew strong reaction from Turkey, led to the re-emergence of tensions between the two countries.

Secondly, the allegations that both countries support organisations that carry out terrorist attacks against Turkey have been another factor in the deterioration of relations. After the July 15 coup attempt, disagreements between Turkey and Greece over the extradition of FETÖ members who fled to Greece further deepened the damage in relations (TRT Haber 2017; 2022; 2023). Relations with Syria, which had been ruptured following the outbreak of the civil war, became the main subject of a re-securitisation with the allegations that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was providing support to the PKK/PYD against Turkey and Turkey's military operations in Syrian territory. Therefore, the tensions between the two countries became a part of domestic politics.

Until the mid-2010s, even if no significant progress was made in resolving the problems between the two countries, Turkey-Greece relations did not experience additional problems to disrupt bilateral relations. After the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey, tensions over the non-extradition of FETÖ members who fled to Greece after the coup attempt in Turkey started to cause strains in bilateral relations again. However, in 2018, the controversy over the maritime jurisdiction areas in the Eastern Mediterranean and Greece's increased activities in the region in cooperation with Egypt and Southern Cyprus put Turkey-Greece relations into a significant crisis. Turkey's uncompromising attitude towards the energy exploration activities in the region signalled that the tension would escalate.

In 2019, bilateral relations entered into a huge crisis, and by 2020, the focus of Turkish-Greek relations, which had become tense over many different issues, was shifted entirely on the Eastern Mediterranean, and a new security understanding began to take shape through the “Blue Homeland” doctrine. In 2019, the concept of Blue Homeland, which was put forward by Cem Gürdeniz in 2006, became the name of the exercises carried out by the Turkish Naval Forces simultaneously in the Black Sea, Aegean and Mediterranean. In 2020, President Erdoğan defined this concept as a geographical area that needs to be defended with the statement, “We will protect the 'Blue Homeland' with the same determination today as we tore Sevres, which aimed to divide our homeland a century ago” (NTV 2020).

This debate marked the beginning of a new controversy in Turkish politics. President Erdoğan accused the RPP of being against Turkey's interests in the Eastern Mediterranean:

“The RPP was even disturbed by these activities. They brought this issue to the agenda in the Parliament using the rhetoric of the Greeks. Their allegations appeared on the front page of Greek newspapers. They have fuelled all those who are unhappy with our activities in the Mediterranean. While we are defending the rights of our country and the Turkish Cypriots, it is significant that we are subjected to such an attack from within. This situation shows that the RPP is walking together not only with FETÖ and the separatist organisation but also with the Greek Cypriots. While we pursue native and national solutions in every field, they use the same language and attack together with Turkey's enemies” (Erdoğan 2020d, 118:23–24).

Vice President Fuat Oktay have responded to RPP Istanbul MP and retired ambassador Ünal Çeviköz's assessment that the Blue Homeland could be perceived as an expansionist concept. He made statements implying that the RPP does not have a national stance. Vice President Oktay implied that RPP is on the same side with Greece and said,

“We see that the opposition is targeting the concept of the Blue Homeland from the angle of Greece, especially from the RPP seats, and characterising the Blue Homeland as an expansionist concept. Defending the Blue Homeland requires a national stance. We do not know whether the RPP has this national stance,” (Yeni Şafak 2021)

In his speech at the TEKNOFEST Fair, where defence industry products were exhibited, President Erdoğan threatened Greece by saying, “we might come suddenly one night,” and drew attention to the military support given by the USA to Greece. Thus, Erdoğan stated that the US was also on the front against Turkey and warned Greece not to trust the US (Erdoğan 2022). In response to the US support for Greece's actions in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey built a new policy around the concept of the Blue Homeland (Yeşiltaş 2021). The Blue Homeland concept can also be described as a conceptualisation that Turkey instrumentalised to change the regional balance in its favour (Çelikipala 2020). On the other hand, Çelikipala stated that “this strategy, endorsed with a chronic siege mentality [believing itself to be surrounded by hostile forces that threaten its core interests], led Turkish decision-makers to react by employing [gunboat diplomacy] to protect Turkish interests and prerogatives” (Çelikipala 2022, 64). In this sense, it can be said that the Blue Homeland concept have a similar philosophy with the 2 ½ War Doctrine.

While this approach aligns with Turkey's assertive and Turkey-centred foreign policy approach, it also reinforces the polarisation in domestic politics by reconfiguring the definition of friend and enemy. Although the concept of Blue Homeland is an understanding put forward by the military bureaucracy, the JDP government's use of this concept as one of the tools of the state of exception supports Dizdaroğlu's and Baysal's claim that the military bureaucracy has largely been controlled by the government after the 2016 coup attempt and that the government has more leeway in the implementation of securitisation policies (Dizdaroğlu and Baysal 2022, 356).

Syria was another case of the TFP re-securitisation experiment. Similar to the relations with Greece, the relations was also intensified by regional influences and domestic politics. At the beginning of the Syrian Civil War, Turkey became a safe haven for opponents of the Assad regime (BBC Türkçe 2012). The facilities provided by Turkey to the opposition in Syria have created a heated debate in domestic politics. The RPP opposed the JDP government's policy of supporting the opposition in Syria and argued that Turkey should remain neutral. One pillar of the debate began to take shape through the Free Syrian Army (FSA), founded in Turkey. While President Erdoğan described the

FSA as an organisation representing all factions of the Syrian people, he severely criticised the RPP's description of the FSA as a terrorist organisation. He even drew an analogy between the FSA and the Kuvayi Milliye forces that fought for Turkish independence, stating that the RPP could also call the Kuvayi Milliye forces as terrorists. In this context, President Erdoğan emphasised that the RPP was non-national and pointed out that the RPP used the same rhetoric as Assad (Erdoğan 2019f, 174).

On the other hand, the Syrian Civil War was a major factor that transformed Turkey's Middle East policy (Özpek and Demirağ 2014, 333). In this context, economic and culture-based policies were replaced by security-oriented policies. Han demonstrates that the Syrian crisis crystallised two different approaches in Turkish politics. According to him, while the RPP advocates that foreign policy should be independent of domestic policy, the JDP claims the interdependence of domestic and foreign policy. In this context, these divergent stances of the two political parties during the Syrian crisis formed the core of the hotline in domestic politics. Whereas the RPP's position was based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a neighbouring country, the JDP approached the Syrian crisis with the claim that Turkey was a playmaker and agenda-setter (Han 2013, 67–68).

However, the Russian intervention in Syria in favour of Assad government and increasing cooperation between the PYD and the US has damaged the Turkish intentions turning into reality. On the one hand, the toppling of the Assad government became more complicated, and on the other hand, the PYD started to gain strength in northern Syria. Turkey's goal of toppling the Assad government in cooperation with the allies was dragged into a stalemate among the allies as the balance on the ground shifted in favour of Assad. Furthermore, the utilisation of the PYD as an instrument to combat ISIS has caused a rift between Turkey and its allies. In this context, while Turkey became isolated in Syria, its only ally on the ground remained the FSA. The FSA's presence on the ground as a balancing factor against the PYD shows that Turkey's view of the FSA is not only in the context of anti-terrorism but has a broader strategic perspective (Erkmen 2022).

The FSA has worked with the TAF in all four cross-border operations Turkey has conducted against ISIS and the PYD since 2016. Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the leader of the RPP party, stated in 2018 that he did not find it proper to associate the TAF with the FSA and that the successes of the TAF should not be attributed to the FSA. This statement by the leader of the leading opposition party drew harsh reactions from those close to the government, who claimed that the RPP was acting together with terrorists (Altun 2018a). Another claim was that the RPP did not have a Turkey-centred perspective (Miş 2018). In this context, the debates around the role and place of the FSA in cross-border operations were suddenly transformed into a threat to Turkey's existence.

On the other hand, a dialogue mechanism between Russia and Turkey started with the Astana process, even though their interests in Syria were hardly converging. It can be said that this was due to Turkey's view of Russia as a balancer in the regional equation due to the growing anti-Americanism among the Turkish public after the 15 July 2016 coup attempt (Rüma and Çelikpala 2019, 80). In this context, deepening Turkey-Russia relations have strengthened Turkey's hand vis-à-vis the West and provided a larger room for manoeuvre. In this way, Turkey, with its cross-border operations starting in 2016, not only perpetuated its military presence in Syria but also eliminated the threat of a possible Kurdish state on its border. On the other hand, the mutual cooperation between Turkey and Russia on the Syrian issue was a factor that undermined the influence of the US in the region (Erkmen 2018).

Although the Syrian Civil War created one of the biggest crises in recent history between Turkey and Russia, it also led to a new structure of cooperation (Baev 2019). This new structure of cooperation has largely enabled Turkey to control the disorder and threats on its southern border (Keyman 2019). However, this cooperation with Russia could, in the medium term, threaten Turkey's relations with NATO and the US (Aydin 2019). The S-400 missiles have been one of the most concrete cases. Turkey's cooperation with Russia and its military presence in Syria through cross-border operations are both seen as reflections of the two main principles of multilateral and Turkey-centered foreign policy approach (Alabarda 2019; Yeşiltaş 2018c).

As a result, Turkey's relations with Greece and Syria were consistent with the foreign policy pursued by the state during both the desecuritisation and resecuritisation periods. This policy has not ignored the impact of systemic constraints created by regional and international developments. However, the effect of evolving to a Schmittian political understanding is visible within Turkey's political transformation framework. The impact of domestic constraints on foreign policy-making has remained important under the influence of the state of emergency that the sovereign has perpetuated. Thus, while relations with Greece and Syria emerged as cases of a re-securitised foreign policy understanding, they became one of the tools used to determine the political space in domestic politics.

5.3.3. Foreign Powers “Conspiring” Against Turkey's Sovereignty: Relations with Western States

Since the third term of the JDP government, sovereignty has been the most important concept determining Turkey's relations with Western countries. While this concept constitutes the core of the multilateral and Turkey-centered foreign policy approach, it has also become one of the most important feeders of the Old Turkey/New Turkey dichotomy in domestic politics. The discourse of “being hostile to national sovereignty”, which was frequently used by Erdoğan in the early 2000s for domestic politics (Castaldo 2018, 474), began to take on a more prominent role in politics from the second half of the 2010s onwards.

In this context, many of Turkey's political and economic crises were portrayed as anti-Turkey operations directed from abroad, while the JDP government was positioned as the sole representative of national sovereignty as the producer of “native and national politics”. The area outside of this political space drawn by the JDP government was categorized as the place where those who are uncomfortable with Turkey's development and active foreign policy are located and thus excluded from politics. The July 15, 2016 coup attempt was one of the most critical moments of this transformation. Altun emphasized that after the July 15 coup attempt, following the elimination of FETÖ's structuring within the state, Turkey switched to the presidential government system,

which he called Turkey's most radical governance reform, and claimed that the president's “visionary leadership consolidated sovereignty day by day” (Akşam 2021).

The claim that terrorist organizations have come together to wage a war against Turkey and that Turkey's NATO allies and European states are sponsoring these terrorist organizations has become a more vocal discourse in hostility against Turkey and President Erdoğan. In his statements following the July 15 coup attempt, President Erdoğan stated that the Western states supported terrorism (Erdoğan 2018c), while Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu also claimed that Western states were behind the coup attempt, emphasizing that the US was the primary actor (Yenişafak 2022). This has strengthened the belief that many Western states, especially the US, are engaged in an operation against Turkey. For example, in the Public Perceptions on Foreign Policy survey, which is conducted regularly every year, it can be said that the perception that the US and EU countries pose a threat to Turkey has reached a very high rate in the public opinion. Before the coup attempt, while 44.1% of the public saw the US as a threat to Turkey, this rate increased to 66.5% after the coup attempt and to 81% after the Pastor Brunson crisis and Turkey's purchase of S-400 missiles from Russia. As a result, the number of people who see the US as a threat has doubled in Turkish public opinion in a very short period of time (Aydın et al. 2019, 28).

Meanwhile, the perception of EU member states as a threat more than doubled from 10% in 2015 to 25% in 2018 (Aydın et al. 2019, 28). In addition to the tensions with European countries over the PKK and FETÖ terrorist organizations, it is also possible to say that the escalation of tension with countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland before the referendum in 2017 was also influential on the increase. In addition, Turkey's military presence in Libya, especially Turkey's cross-border operations in Syria, and issues such as the continental shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean have been a significant part of Turkey's problems with Western countries.

Another debate where the allegations of an international conspiracy against Turkey were visible was the defence industry. The defence industry, which the JDP government started to attach more importance to in the mid-2010s, was also used as a tool in domestic and

foreign policy. The fact that Turkish defence industry products were showcased to international public opinion in conflict zones such as Syria and Libya, as well as in the Azerbaijan-Armenia War, emerged as an element of national pride in domestic politics. The increasing public awareness of the defence industry also led the JDP government to turn this field into a more political one. In this sense, defence industry breakthroughs were cited as one of the reasons for international conspiracy attempts against Turkey after the 2010s. This discourse created an organic bond and perception of symbiosis between the JDP government and the defence industry. Kurç states that the defence industry is vital in the JDP's securitisation discourse. In this context, the discursive relationship between the defence industry and Turkey's strengthening stigmatises any discourse against the defence industry as an approach directly against Turkey's national interests. According to Kurç, the discourse of the JDP blames the foreign powers for obstacles to Turkey's defence industry attempts while blaming the RPP as their domestic collaborator (Kurç 2022, 386–87, 392). Therefore, there was a rhetorical link between being "native and national" and the government-led allegations of conspiracies by foreign powers against Turkey.

This rising public sentiment against the US and Western states enabled the JDP government, under Erdoğan's leadership, to position itself as a government that defended Turkey's independence and sovereignty by resisting the conspiracies of many foreign states against Turkey. Therefore, the political environment in which a state of perpetual exception was created conceptual approach in which both the friend/enemy dichotomy and foreign policy were re-securitized. The securitization process in domestic politics and the foreign policy that emerged under the influence of the shifts in the international system were reflected in the political sphere through the identity of "being native and national" and formed the inputs that re-securitized foreign policy both at the regional and global levels.

5.4. Conclusion

In this sub-chapter, the rapid transformation of Turkish politics is analysed through electoral processes. The reason for such a structured approach is due to the assumption that Turkish politics has begun to be shaped more and more around elections and alliances since 2015. In other words, the factors and shifts in domestic politics have fundamentally affected both domestic and foreign policymaking in Turkey. It is observed that the securitization policies of the JDP government and the establishment of the People's Alliance thereof are not independent cases. Likewise, the shift from a parliamentary system to the “Turkish-type presidential system” should not be considered separately from these developments.

The variables and dynamics emerging in domestic politics had a significant impact on the formulation of the TFP. For instance, Turkey's multilateral and Turkey-centred foreign policy approach, which can be considered as an extension of the “native and national” identity that emerged as the essential content of the JDP-NMP alliance, the People's Alliance, also influenced the responses to international systemic challenges. With the 2017 change in the system of governance, the concentration of many decision-making processes and powers under the Presidency made the President the decisive actor in the formation of the TFP. Reinforcing his political determinant role in domestic politics, the President became the sole actor deciding on the friend/enemy distinction and how to define these concepts, thus becoming the manifestation of Schmitt's concept of sovereign.

On the other hand, the security problems produced by the unstable state structures of Turkey's South-Eastern neighbours, especially the Syrian civil war, the exclusion caused by the decline in Turkey's relations with many states in the international arena, and the conditions created by the constant threat of subversion since the early years of the JDP government, by different actors changing periodically, re-securitised the TFP and made it the most important component of Turkey's relations with other states. The continuity of the state of emergency in foreign policy has almost completely destroyed the distinction between domestic and foreign policy, making both fields an extension of each other. The political has thus surpassed all other components and occupied the entire public sphere.

6. CONCLUSION

This dissertation, which consists of four chapters in total, has attempted to categorise the main transformations experienced by the TFP under the JDP rule, attempt to categorise each period as a separate case and compare them with each other. It, thus, revealed the reason for the major policy shifts between these periods under an uninterrupted one-party government. In this framework, the NCR has been shown to have more capability to explain the formations of states' foreign policies. At the same time, with the contribution of the theoretical structure of the NCR, the impact of the Schmittian transformation in Turkish politics on the journey of the TFP has been displayed. Explaining the periodic change in TFP through the NCR enabled the integration of the struggle in Turkey's domestic politics with Schmitt's concepts. This has increased the explanatory power of the NCR.

The most striking feature of these three periods, in which international systemic variables vary, is that the TFP's oscillations are shaped by domestic policy variables in consideration of systemic constraints. The different characteristic segments of the TFP, categorized into three periods, reveal the trajectory of the shift from a more moderate and cooperative ground to a more aggressive and assertive ground as the JDP destroyed the coercive variables in domestic politics. Therefore, the main hypothesis of this dissertation, which is the trajectory of the establishment of the sovereign in Turkish politics and the increased securitisation of politics, is confirmed.

Confirmation of this claim was provided through Schmitt's political philosophy. According to him, in a state that has stability, the sovereign holds absolute authority for the sake of the survival of the state and society. In this sense, the fundamental instinct of politics is the ability to make decisions on the enemy. The determination of the enemy is under the authority of the sovereign. Therefore, the sovereign rules the entire political field through this ability to have comprehensive jurisdiction. This assumption has been clearly observed in the last twenty years of Turkish politics. There is a causality between the establishment of the sovereignty of the JDP, naturally its leader, President Erdogan,

and the TFP. This dissertation revealed this causality by pursuing the trend of the changing behavioural patterns of the TFP.

As a result, the causal link between the securitisation process of the TFP and the crystallisation of the role of sovereignty in domestic politics is established. In doing so, although the theoretical framework of the NCR provides an explanatory ground, the explanation of domestic policy transformation through Schmitt's conceptualisations completes the puzzle. The power of President Erdoğan, who emerged as the sovereign as a result of successive electoral victories and the exclusion of balancing actors from the process, to determine the state of exception also affected the dynamics of the TFP. In this context, fluctuations in the TFP have been both a result and an influencer of the transformation in domestic politics.

In all three chapters in which the adventure of TFP is analysed, the development of the sovereign is examined. Therefore, the increasing hegemony of the sovereign in Turkish politics evolved in these chapters, which were related to each other. Between 2000 and 2010, the struggle laid the foundation of the emerging sovereign in the political arena. In this framework, the importance of the referendum in 2007 is particularly emphasised in the desecuritisation chapter. Its transformative power constituted the first phase of the development of sovereignty in favour of the government in the military-government struggle. In domestic politics, which was constantly securitised through the myth of a military coup, the transfer of hard power from the military to the government enabled the military to be sidelined in foreign policy. In this respect, the desecuritisation of the TFP was essentially a reflection of the change of the security monopoly in domestic politics. Turkey's democratisation initiatives through the EU process and its economic development-based “zero problems with neighbours” enabled the government to consolidate its power in domestic politics. In this period, the JDP increased its popular vote with successive election victories and expanded its political domination.

However, the JDP could not establish a hegemony in domestic politics during this period. In addition, the US-led hegemony of world politics and the impact of the strict structure of the international system have forced the JDP to pursue more constructive and liberal-

oriented policies. Therefore, the foreign policy followed in this period stood out as a period in which the JDP cooperated more frequently and maintained closer contact with the US and Western countries to get loose from domestic policy constraints and provide rapid economic development. From the end of the 90s onwards, the JDP government, which largely followed the policies of then foreign minister İsmail Cem, improved Turkey's relations with its neighbouring countries and reorganized these relations through economic and cultural cooperation. In addition to rapid economic growth, Turkey increased its regional and global influence and became more active in mediation between other countries and in international organizations. This activism in the international arena consolidated the JDP's legitimacy in domestic politics. It constituted the zero point of the Old Turkey/New Turkey dichotomy on which the identity of "being native and national" would be constructed in the following years. Finally, the JDP government's friend/enemy distinction in this period was primarily focused on domestic politics, and the actors categorized as enemies were considered extensions of Old Turkey.

The transition period is considered the period in which the transformation between the two periods accelerated and systematized the most, a period in which Turkey's regional and global ambitions increased significantly. In this era, the military bureaucracy's influence over the political sphere was eroding, while the JDP government and its leader Erdoğan's hegemony over the political field was consolidating. As a political identity constructed above the profile of a strong leader became increasingly dominant, the diversity in the definition of enemies also increased. In particular, the deterioration of relations with Israel and the consequent rise in Erdoğan's popularity in the Arab world formed the main line of the JDP government's active policy during the Arab Spring. Morality was one of the core principles of this period. It cultivated the domestic hegemony of the JDP by steering national pride related to the country's imperial past. The JDP government emphasised Turkey's historical responsibility, which was borne out of the Ottoman legacy. While it intended to establish superiority rather than equality in regional relations, it provided a new approach to merging national pride with religious insight. This new sense of approach was an attempt to construct a new citizenship which clearly defined the fundamentals of the national identity. The conceptualisations of the divergence between the New and Old Turkey and "being native and national" were the

main characteristics of this intention. Slow-stead manifesting sovereign has commenced to identify who is the enemy. In this sense, the enemies were defined as those who opposed this new intention.

On the other hand, in addition to the increasing polarisation in domestic politics, the JDP's power consolidation after winning the elections paved the way for re-securitisation in foreign policy. Due to eliminating domestic actors previously involved in the decision-making process as balancing actors, the sovereign has gained more flexibility to adjust foreign policy. However, the JDP's government foreign policy pursued during the Arab Spring has not achieved any substantial results. The failure of the fractions that Turkey supported in Egypt and Syria, undermined the foreign policy and increased regional problems. In addition to such an environment, the regression of the strict characteristics of the US-led global hegemony has forced Turkey to begin new pursuits in international politics. However, during this period, Turkey failed to get results from the policies it pursued, and its foreign policy failed. This failure led to Turkey's isolation in many regional issues and increased its reliance on military means. Furthermore, the government also started to claim that because the foreign powers were disturbed by the increasing power of Turkey globally, they attempted to prevent Turkey's rise in global politics. In this period, when the political field became heavily securitised, the discussion of different policy proposals was contained, and the domestic political field was strictly controlled and dominated by the JDP government as a result of the sovereign's exclusive authority to determine the enemy.

Finally, the period of re-securitization, categorized as the third part of the TFP, is conceptualized. The most decisive issues of the chapter are the process of re-securitization that started with the 2015 elections and the Schmittian notion of sovereignty that went hand in hand with re-securitization with the change in the system of governance. The fact that the decision-making actor in domestic politics has become entirely the presidency and that the president's party holds the majority in the TGNA has ensured the steady implementation of resecuritisation policies. In addition to that, the emergence of the national conservative alliance under the umbrella of the JDP-NMP and the rise of nationalism in society has clearly paved the way for the resecuritisation policies as well

as the concrete hegemony of the sovereign. In this sense, all fields of politics were codified as a matter of national security. The developments of the defence industry and cross-border military operations were the most striking catalysts of the sentiment of national pride, which was constructed on the concept of "being native and national". In this context, the entire political sphere, which has been reproduced around the concept of "being native and national", has excluded policies and proposals outside of this concept. The manifestation of this concept in foreign policy was defined within the framework of a multilateral and Turkey-centered foreign policy approach. Thus, other solution proposals and policies were accused of not being Turkey-centered and characterized as a coalition of enemies of Turkey.

In such an environment, the resecuritisation of the political field was profoundly established. The sovereign was manifested as the ultimate decision-maker and held the entire ability to transform the society in the direction of his political will. In fact, this is a crystal clear example of the Schmittian sovereign concept. Holding the ability to make decisions about who is the enemy and what is the exception, the sovereign in Turkish politics shaped not only the politics but also the political, which is the concept that encompasses every field of the state and society. Therefore, while the resecuritisation of the TFP emerged as a result of the ultimate power of the sovereign, it is also vice versa. As a result, the re-securitization of the political field and the re-securitization of foreign policy were intertwined in this period. Increased uncertainty and instability in the global system also gave decision-makers in the TFP a more comfortable space. As part of the re-securitization, cross-border operations, the increase in the number of military bases abroad and the centrality of the defence industry in the political field were prominent. In addition, Turkey's regional leanings diversified, particularly in Africa, as evidenced by President Erdoğan's foreign trips and Turkey's bilateral agreements with other countries.

The foreign policy pursued by the JDP governments gradually became more assertive with the domestic transformations Turkey underwent and the elimination of domestic constraints, which had the ability to force the hands of the JDP government in different political fields. Each of these cases, which are divided into three periods, has its own distinct characteristics. For this reason, each period has been individualized, and its

characteristics have been evaluated separately. By doing so, the lines of continuity and divergences in the trajectory of the TFP are revealed. In this context, the most important line of continuity has been the increasing authority at the leader level, while the divergences have been the reshaping of the TFP in line with the changing needs of the JDP according to the internal characteristics of the periods. For example, while the full membership process with the EU in the early years of the JDP's rule helped to ensure domestic legitimacy, in the following years, tensions with the EU increased during the most dominant period of the JDP by the effect of rising populism, conservatism, and nationalism.

However, just as this process can evolve towards re-securitization, it can also evolve towards desecuritization. This dissertation shows that there is no room for any other politics in the space fortified by the sovereign. Therefore, as in Schmitt's definition of sovereign, if it is the sovereign who determines friend and foe, it is also the sovereign who has the ability to do it again. Therefore, as long as the sovereign's superiority in decision-making continues, policies can change, and the clustering of friends and foes can also change. However, the only thing that does not change is the existence of the ability of the sovereign to decide who the enemy is. That is to say, the transformation that the TFP is undergoing lies in its capacity to produce periodic differences in the definitions of friend and enemy. This dissertation concludes that as long as this capability persists, the state of emergency continues.

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