

READING the CRISIS of TURKISH PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY
THROUGH CARL SCHMITT: 1971-1980

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ABSTRACT

CRISIS of TURKISH PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY THROUGH CARL SCHMITT: 1971-1980

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This thesis examines the political conditions of Turkey from March 12 1971 to September 12 1980 with the use of Carl Schmitt's concept of the political, critique of parliamentary democracy and concept of partisan to analyze the relation between main political actors of the period. The main theme of this study is how the friend and enemy distinction would be produced in the interactions of the parliament, the military and partisan and which concepts would be applied to define the friend and enemy. This study argues that the theoretical framework of Carl Schmitt is worth using to examine the given period of Turkish politics. It is also argued that Schmitt's theoretical framework would provide fruitful theoretical perspective to examine the crisis that Turkish parliamentary democracy experienced between 1971 and 1980 which ended up with a military coup.

Keywords: state, Carl Schmitt, crisis of parliamentary democracy, concept of the political, political polarization.

ÖZ

TÜRK PARLAMENTER DEMOKRASİSİNİN KRİZİNİ SCHMITT ÜZERİNDEN OKUMAK: 1971-1980

Bulut, Dolunay

Yüksek Lisans, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü

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Bu tez, 12 Mart 1971-12 Eylül 1980 arasındaki dönemde Türkiye'nin içinde bulunduğu buhranı, dönemin ana politik unsurlarını ve bunların birbirleriyle ilişkilerini Carl Schmitt'in siyasal kavramı, parlamenter demokrasi eleştirisi ve partizan kavramlarını kullanarak incelemeyi amaçlar. Tezde başlıca ilgilenilen konu parlamento-ordu-partizan ilişkilerinde dost ve düşman ayrımının nasıl oluşturulduğu ve bu tanımlamaların ne gibi kavramlar kullanılarak yapıldığıdır. Bu çalışmaya göre Carl Schmitt'in kavramsal çerçevesi, ilgili dönemde Türk siyasi yaşamını incelemek açısından kullanılmaya değerdir ve 1971-1980 aralığında Türkiye'de parlamenter demokrasinin yaşadığı ve 1980 Eylül ayında ordunun yönetime el koymasıyla sonlanan krizi değerlendirmek için yeni teorik anlayışlar sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: devlet, Carl Schmitt, parlamenter demokrasinin krizi, siyasal kavramı, siyasal kutuplaşma.

To my beloved family

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Carl Schmitt's magnum opus *The Concept of the Political* opens with the statement that "The concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political"¹. With this statement, it is implied that "...in one way or another 'political' is generally juxtaposed to 'state' or at least is brought into relation with it. The state thus appears as something political, the political as something pertaining to the state-obviously an unsatisfactory circle."² However, in time, the equation of the state and politics;

...becomes erroneous and deceptive at exactly the moment when state and society penetrate each other. What had been up to that point affairs of state become thereby social matters, and, vice versa, what had been purely social matters become affairs of state -as must necessarily occur in a democratically organized unit. Heretofore ostensibly neutral domains religion, culture, education, the economy -then cease to be neutral in the sense that they do not pertain to state and to politics.³

Thus, rather than applying to the categorizations of ethics, aesthetics or economics, Schmitt defines "the political" through a peculiar categorization, which is based on the distinction of the friend and enemy. The political is about the declaration of the friends and enemies. According to Schmitt, "...politics

¹ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 19.

² Ibid., 20.

³ Ibid., 22.

contains both enmity (and possibility of war) and friendship (and possibility of peace)”⁴. He believed that:

... in an ideal world, friend/enemy groupings would only exist at the international level, and all politics would be international politics...However, Schmitt claimed that because of the crisis of the state, it was possible for friend/enemy groupings to arise within a state’s borders. Once the map of politics at domestic level displayed not homogeneity but heterogeneity, not convergence but divergence, not unity but pluralism, then this would give rise to civil war. Indeed, the definition of civil war for Schmitt is a war that takes place when ‘the domestic and for the foreign friend- and- enemy groupings are decisive, when the so-called ‘party politics’ turns from ‘patronage’ and ‘scramble for office’ into ‘real politics’, when ‘the equation politics=party politics’ materializes, and when one can speak meaningfully of ‘internal politics’.⁵

According to Schmitt, making the friend/enemy distinction at inter-states level would be more preferable. By assigning the power of declaring enemies to the “total state”, Schmitt expected to limit the range and impact of enmity. Nevertheless, his concept of limited enmity “...does not mean that enmity is limited in intensity but rather it is limited to specific targets that are circumscribed in space and time: the opposing army, the invader, the oppressor. Unlimited enmity instead targets a limitless universal enemy”⁶ which is more ambiguous and complex to wage war against. Schmitt argues that “If politics excludes enmity from its domain, it cannot curb it or limit it, like a doctor refusing to look at the unwell. The political can only control enmity if the issue of enmity becomes the central business of politics.”⁷ For it is impossible to eliminate the enmity at all, Schmitt supported the limited enmity to prevent a

⁴ Gabriella Slomp, *Carl Schmitt and the Politics of Hostility, Violence and Terror* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 8.

⁵ Ibid., 6-7.

⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁷ Ibid., 9.

potential civil war and the emergence of absolute enmity. With this regard, the presupposition of the political by the state becomes meaningful. Therefore, “The political is the most intense and extreme antagonism, and every concrete antagonism becomes that much more political the closer it approaches the most extreme point, that of the friend-enemy grouping. In its entirety the state as an organized political entity decides for itself the friend-enemy distinction.”⁸

The total state monopolizes the right of determining the friends and enemies; and, in turn, earns the right of being political. Of course, such definition of “the political” and the limitation of the power of making friend/enemy distinction with the total state is not an end-form. Contrarily, “the political does not evolve along a linear trajectory: its form is highly contingent, its path often circuitous, and its development only partially predictable but mostly uncontrollable.”⁹ This means that the friend/enemy distinction that defines “the political” may manifest itself in an unexpected and unlimited way, instead of the limited, well-defined way of the total state. At this point, Turkish political history provides an example for the theoretical framework of Schmitt. This study aims at examining specifically 1971-1980 period of Turkish politics through the theoretical concepts of Carl Schmitt.

Since its foundation in 1923, the political life of the Republic of Turkey has had to face with the presence of the military in civilian politics. In the form of coups, memoranda and the office of presidency, the military has continued its purely anti-democratic presence within the zone of parliamentary democracy. Especially after the transition to multiparty politics in 1946, the military have never abstained from intervening into the course of politics whenever it found necessary. The first of many interventions occurred in 1960, against the

⁸ Schmitt, *COP*, 29.

⁹ Slomp, *POHVT*, 15.

Democratic Party government with the claim of preventing the counter-revolutionary powers from demolishing the Republic¹⁰. Furthermore, the presence of the military within politics was not limited with the coups. Until the presidency of Turgut Özal in 1989, Turkey never had a single president who did not have a military background. Not only the office of presidency, but also many of the senators in the high chamber of Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA-Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi) were appointed by the military, among former high military officers and bureaucrats. Through these ways, the military have successfully protected its position within the zone of politics. This coexistence of the military and the parliament within the same zone inevitably had some pay offs; such as political instability that led to formation and dissolution of more than ten governments in a decade, two military interventions to civilian politics and political polarization.

This study aims at examining this coexistence specifically between 1971-1980 period which, began with a coup by memorandum and ended by a *coup d'état*. Throughout this period, the coexistence of the military and the parliament became tenser than it had ever been. The political radicalization and polarization fragmented the society as Alevis and Sunnis, communists and nationalists, and after all, the state and “anti-state” traitors. The political polarization and enmity hazardously climbed so that especially during the second half of the period the country was in a kind of civil war¹¹. The state was obviously in a crisis and unable to operate the political, by putting clear categorizations on the friends and enemies.

¹⁰ Milliyet, May 29 1960.

¹¹ Hamit Bozarslan, “Bir Bölücü ve Birleştirici Olarak Şiddet”, *Toplum ve Bilim* no. 116 (2009), 6-21, 7.

Even though the parliament was not shut down until 1980 coup, almost whole period had passed under the martial law rules; however, this could not suffice to stop the bloodshed; nor could it contribute to the consolidation of the parliamentary democracy and the provision of unity. However, the military was not the only obstacle before the operation of the parliamentary democracy. The parliament itself, independent of what the military imposed, was unable to function properly. On the other hand, the mobilized, ideologically polarized masses were on the streets, fighting for their own causes under the names of various radical political groups. In this sense, these three factors that coexisted within the same political atmosphere with clashing political positions and interests, inevitably paved the way for a chaotic atmosphere. This study aims at focusing on these three main actors to understand the political trajectory, grounds and production of friend and enemy categorizations, the crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy under given circumstances and the clash of different understandings of the political.

The equation which includes the military, the parliament and partisan movements, each of these actors shall be examined through different points of Schmitt's theoretical framework. Although this was controversial with the principles of parliamentary democracy, the military, with its fidelity to the transcendental state tradition inherited from Ottoman Empire, had a clear strong state position which wanted to keep its right to declare friends and enemies. This role that the military has traditionally undertaken has expressed itself in the form of coups, memoranda, martial law measures, military courts and even the suppression of the parliament. The Turkish parliament, on the other hand, was squeezed between the threatening presence of the military which have always tended to dictate the parliament how to function and the principles of parliamentary democracy which necessitates a civilian space to be implemented. Furthermore, the clash of the military and the parliament in the political arena dragged the state, and the normal form of the political presupposed by the state

in a crisis which, according to Schmitt, has led to the emergence of “...the exceptional form of the political that precipitated the crisis of the normal form and the search for a new one.”¹² In this sense, the period of Turkish politics between 1971 and 1980 would be selected in order to be analyzed through friend/enemy distinction and the crisis of the parliamentary democracy; referring to three main actors which are the military, the parliament and the partisan movements.

Since the main concepts of this research would be hostility, state, parliamentary democracy and the political; Carl Schmitt’s theoretical framework would be promising. The 1971-1980 decade of Turkish politics will be examined considering the relationship between main political actors of the period. This examination will be based specifically on his concept of the political and his critique of parliamentary democracy. Although there were various legal and illegal political actors, the principal aim of this investigation is to demonstrate the Schmittean characteristic of the nature of links established between the military and the parliament. This study mainly aims at understanding the key definitions of some concepts such as “the political”, “sovereignty”, “state” and “enemy” used by the aforementioned actors of the period. The parliament, the legitimate holder of the political power, and the military, traditional warden of the state and regime, had their distinct and intransigent definitions of the given concepts and their contradicting positions led to the ideological polarization in society and triggered the social and political chaos which, in time, created a civil war-like atmosphere. In this sense, the greater aim of this study shall be to point out the conflicting attitudes of the positions held by the military and the parliament that might have been the reason behind the political polarization and instability. Therefore, it is expected that this investigation will provide an alternative explanation to what happened in 1970s’ Turkey that ended up with a military coup.

¹² Slomp, *POHVT*, 15.

1970s' political actors had applied various keywords to define their positions; however these keywords are not peculiar to some specific political stances or even contextually coherent. Anarchy, terror, ultra-nationalism, state authority, democracy, pluralism, constitution, communism, extremist movements, unity and separatism could be counted as some of these keywords. Their use and emphasis, throughout 1970s, had been volatile and moody because of their flexible use by various political actors. This wide semantic axis of these keywords, besides making 1970s attractive in terms of its semantic richness, also makes analyzing the discursive content of this period more complicated. However, the use of these keywords by aforementioned three actors served for the formation of contradicting political positions which aggravated the political inconsistency and chaos. This ambiguous attitude mostly demonstrated itself at the parliamentary level; because the political parties, in order to survive within the pluralist parliamentary system, had to find a common ground and to form coalitions. The proportional representative system enforced them to create a common ground of reconciliation; but as a must of the unstable characteristic of the period, they had also been enforced to find a common ground within the zone of civilian politics, to maintain their relations with Turkish Armed Forces in peace.

1970s of Turkish politics presents a complicated web of relations which forms an equation including the military, parliament, revolutionary movements and counter-revolutionary street forces. In this sense, analyzing this period through the theoretical framework of Carl Schmitt seems possible in multiple ways. For instance, the theory of partisan shall be utilized in order to analyze and understand the revolutionary movements that predominantly shaped the political atmosphere of 1970s. On the other hand, it is also likely to analyze the political dynamics of the period through the concepts of the political and the total state. Moreover, Schmitt's critique of parliamentary democracy opens a new door into

the 1970s, regarding the perpetual government crises, failed coalitions and clear confrontation among political parties. For the benefits of this study, it is preferred to utilize Schmitt's framework specific to his definition of the political and critique of parliamentary democracy. Thus, the two of the three parameters mentioned above that created the political equation of 1970s will be examined through Carl Schmitt's theoretical framework. Within this framework, I shall examine how the political discourse of 1970s was shaped as a result of conflicting conceptions, which are the embedded strong state conception in Turkish political culture on the one hand and the principles of parliamentary democracy that were introduced in 1946 on the other. At that point, Carl Schmitt's critique of parliamentary democracy and his understanding of the political as a friend-enemy based concept which needs to be performed in the form of the total state would provide a greater, clearer picture of 1970s. For this purpose, it is helpful to divide 1970s into two main categories as the periods of interregnum (1971-1973) and coalitions (1973-1980)¹³.

In this regard, this study aims at answering several questions. The purpose of these questions is discovering and establishing the links between 1970s' Turkish politics and Carl Schmitt's critique of parliamentary democracy and the concept of the political. The first question is following: what is the definition of the state in Turkish politics? In other words, by this question, how the concept of the state was defined, what meanings were attributed to it and what would be the effects of this definition on the course of parliamentary politics in Turkey would be examined. In this sense, in order to understand the continuation of the state perception under the guardianship of the military, the Turkish state tradition inherited from Ottoman Empire would be briefly examined. In relation to the perception of the state, it would also be argued what the role of the military was

¹³ Metin Heper and Nur Bilge Criss, *Historical Dictionary of Turkey*, (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 346.

in the political life of Turkish Republic. Its ways of intervening into the zone of politics and the rationale of this inclusion would also be analyzed.

The second question will focus on who the main political actors of the period were; and aim at discovering their role on the course of events by examining their understanding and use of some critical concepts such as state, democracy and enemy. What was the rationale behind the actions and positions of these political actors? Related to this question, the main political actors of the period, which are the military, the parliament and partisan movements, will be introduced. The motives shaping their political positions would be examined in order to better understand their influence on the course of events and each other throughout the period. Depending on this question, I will argue how each of these actors interpreted the concepts of state, democracy and enemy and how these definitions would affect their decision-making processes and their interactions. For the purposes of this study, it is important to understand the underlying reasons that determined the stances of these actors since their adamant attitudes against each other dragged the political trajectory into a deadlock.

The third main question this thesis aims at answering is the following: what were the reasons that had led to the crisis of parliamentary democracy? How did this crisis direct the trajectory of events towards a military coup? How can the interaction of the political actors throughout 1970s be interpreted, regarding the crisis that dragged the parliamentary democracy into a deadlock? Related to this question, the interaction of the main political actors will be examined in depth; by this way it is expected that the formation of the political trajectory from parliamentary democratic regime to the point of increasing political polarization, violence and, eventually, a military coup. Depending on this question, it would be examined how the political atmosphere affected the interactions of these

actors with each other and their approach to the state, parliamentary democracy and politics.

This thesis consists of three main chapters. In the second chapter, the theoretical infrastructure of the study will be established through examining some specific concepts of Carl Schmitt, in relation to the political dynamics of 1970s. This chapter mainly aims at introducing some concepts such as the political, the sovereign, parliamentary democracy, partisan and the enemy within the context of 1970s' Turkey through the theoretical framework of Schmitt. The third chapter focuses on introducing the main political actors with the intention of understanding the impact of their positions on the formation of political atmosphere and the course of events. It also aims at understanding the basic dynamics of their relations to each other, so that the characteristics of the parliamentary politics in 1970s' Turkey will be examined. The fourth chapter will focus on the selected events which would apply the theoretical framework of Schmitt. In this chapter, the 1973 presidential elections, the formation of the Nationalist Front, massacres of Kahraman Maraş, Bahçelievler, Çorum and Sivas, and finally the Martial Law Coordination Office which was founded in the end of 1978 after Kahraman Maraş Massacre shall be examined. In this chapter, it is aimed to discover the links between three actors of the period and their conflicting positions by using Schmitt's theoretical framework.

To conclude, it is expected that this study will provide an alternative reading of 1971-1980 interval of Turkish politics, regarding the links between the military, the parliament and partisan movements. It is expected that the reason behind the crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy that had led to political polarization, fraternal fight and eventually the coup would be more complicated and multifaceted. Using Carl Schmitt's concept of the political and the critique of modern parliamentary democracy, it is expected to draw a clearer picture of the period, with special emphasis on the clash of three political actors of the period.

In this sense, it is also expected from this study that the military's position could be seen as a manifestation of the total-state based conceptualization of the political in Turkish politics. Moreover, the military's inclusion in civilian politics through memoranda, ultimatums and coup d'états could also point out another Schmittian conception, which is the state of exception. One of the conclusions of this thesis will be on the sovereign position of the military in Turkish politics in Schmittian sense of the word. Both on March 12 1971 and September 12 1980, the sovereign, in this case the military, decided "whether there is an extreme emergency as well as what must be done to eliminate it"¹⁴ and with no hesitation "took over the political power to take 'necessary' measures for protection the Republic of Turkey."¹⁵ In this sense, the military was a state actor that supposedly "...stands outside the normally valid legal system, he nevertheless belongs to it, for it is he who must decide whether the constitution needs to be suspended in its entirety."¹⁶

This study shall also argue that the Turkish parliamentary democracy was in a crisis since it could not stand still against the non-democratic presence and pressure of the military, nor could it completely accept the surrender of the parliamentary democracy to the strong, transcendental state tradition. This in-between situation of the parliament can be qualified as double-bind and by this way; it is aimed at examining the mentality of this double-bind position that dragged the parliamentary democracy into a crisis as well as dragging the country to a moment of exception from which the military rose as the decisive power.

¹⁴ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 7.

¹⁵ *12 Eylül: Öncesi ve Sonrası*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1981), ix.

¹⁶ Schmitt, *PT*, 7.

Carl Schmitt's *Theory of Partisan* will also be referred in order to understand the formation and impact of the partisan movements of the period which were revolutionary leftist groups and ultra-nationalist Grey Wolves. The radical political movements will be examined with special regard to their illegal, illegitimate and irregular¹⁷ qualities and their overall influence on the political trajectory. In this sense, it will also be argued whether these movements that fought illegally and irregularly against an absolute enemy¹⁸ could be named partisan.

Therefore, the main claim of this thesis is based on the crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy, due to its in-between situation that squeezed parliamentary democratic politics into a dilemma. This dilemma had led to rapid and bloody political polarization and, eventually, the military's taking the political power over. The crisis that caused the deadlock of parliamentary politics cannot be seen only as the failure of the parliament; contrarily, it was also the outcome of the mentality that incorporated the military into the zone of parliamentary politics. As a result of their clash within the sphere of politics and their alienation, the high political polarization turned into a kind of civil war especially between 1975 and 1980. After all, the course of politics throughout the period was determined by the interactions of these three actors and doomed by their adamant stances.

¹⁷ Carl Schmitt, *Theory of Partisan: The A Commentary/Remark on the Concept of the Political*, (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 2004), 9.

¹⁸ Schmitt, *TOP*, 9.

CHAPTER II

From State to Partisanship: Concept of the Political in between the Extraordinary and Normal

“If the political is to exist, one must know who everyone is, who is a friend and who is an enemy, and this knowing is not in the mode of theoretical knowledge but in one of a practical identification: knowing consists here in knowing how to identify the friend and the enemy.”¹⁹

2.1. Concept of the Political

Political for political science is equivalent for what a universal set is for mathematics. The concept of the political, regardless of the ground on which it is located, has been interpreted as a comprehensive concept. In Carl Schmitt's conceptualization, this feature of the political takes us a different direction than his criticism of liberalism. Schmitt re-constructs the concept of the political in the light of tangible failures of liberal constitutionalism which was experienced in European countries and has led to a social and political depression and chaos atmosphere that triggered worldwide wars and the rise of extremist, partisan political movements. Schmitt claims that liberal constitutionalism, as a modeling for state and attempt at operating the political in the light of the liberal understanding, is paradoxical. Liberalism and liberal constitutional model of the state as its reflection at practical level triggers neutralization and

¹⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, (New York: Verso, 2006), 116.

depoliticization²⁰ which according to Schmitt are completely against the nature of the political. What makes liberal understanding paradoxical in terms of the political is certainly this neutralizing character of liberalism. For Schmitt, the concept of the political could not be comprehended without clear friend-enemy categories²¹; however liberalism, because of its nature, tends to define the state as a neutral, minimal, and, in Schmittian sense, apolitical. The basic principles of liberalism, such as pluralism and diversity, are inappropriate to define friends and enemies as determinants of the political. Within the framework of liberalism, if the state starts to define friends and enemies, it would be the end of parliamentary democratic understanding within which the plurality and diversity blossom.

This is because the concept of the political is based on the principle of friend-enemy distinction: "...The enemy is not merely any competitor or just any partner of a conflict in general. He is also not the private adversary whom one hates. An enemy exists only when, at least potentially, one fighting collectivity of people confronts a similar collectivity. The enemy is solely the public enemy, because everything that has a relationship to such a collectivity of men, particularly to a whole nation, becomes public by virtue of such a relationship. The enemy is *hostis*, not *inimicus* in the broader sense."²² Considering this categorization Schmitt applies, the political appears in his thought as something more than the state. The conception of 'total state'²³ comes into existence as a

²⁰ Schmitt, *COP*, 86.

²¹ "The specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy." Schmitt, *COP*, 26.

²² Schmitt, *COP*, 28.

²³ "As a polemical concept against such neutralizations and depoliticizations of important domains appears the total state, which potentially embraces every domain. This results in the identity of state and society. In such a state, therefore, everything is at least potentially political, and in referring to the state it is no longer possible to assert for it a specifically political characteristic." Schmitt, *COP*, 22.

result of the wide scope of the political. The provision of total state is necessary to limit the borders of the political in the name of the state. Nevertheless, for Schmitt, equating the concept of the political with the state is insufficient when the matter of social and of state penetrates into each other²⁴. In this case, neutral domains such as religion, culture, economics and the like would no longer stay neutral. What emerges as a result of this penetration is the total state, and “in such a state, everything is at least potentially political, and in referring to the state it is no longer possible to assert for it a specifically political characteristic”²⁵. The distinction which defines friends and enemies of, preferably, a state or, exceptionally, a group or a party composes of this potentiality. For example, partisanship in Schmitt’s sense of the word is one of these potential manifestations of the political outside the control and boundaries of the state. What makes this potentiality possible for an outside-state actor is the conceptualization of the concept of the political on the basis of friend-enemy distinction rather than moral, aesthetic or economic categorizations²⁶.

The concept of the political can only be defined by its peculiar, essentially political categories. Categorizations seen in aesthetics, economics, morals and the like are insufficient in defining the political; so there is a need for a specific categorization/distinction peculiar to the political itself. This distinction, for Schmitt, is the distinction which determines and separates friends and enemies. In this sense, friend-enemy distinction is independent from the rest of distinctions; and does not have to correspond with them²⁷. This means that enemy does not have to be morally evil, aesthetically ugly or economically non beneficial. Contrarily, it might be seen as evil or ugly because he is the enemy. It

²⁴ Ibid., 26.

²⁵ Schmitt, *COP*, 22.

²⁶ Ibid., 26.

²⁷ Ibid., 27.

is clear that the logic here follows a diverse way; different from the indisputable role of morality in liberal political thought, in Schmittean sense the political is not determined by those that are immoral, ugly, evil or unprofitable; here, the political defines itself with its peculiar categories and then, enemy becomes open to be defined with negative categorizations of morality, aesthetics or economics; in other words, of nonpolitical fields. Moreover, the political enemy does not have to be the personal enemy; enemy discourse here is a “concrete and existential”²⁸ qualification that constitutes the nature of the political at the heart of Schmitt’s theoretical framework. The determinants of the political, namely friend and enemy categories, in this sense, have no individual characteristic; instead, they have a more abstract, supra-individual, even a corporate characteristic. Any group, organization, and even society can be political in Schmittean sense; they could be political in the aftermath of the declaration of their friends and enemies. As an inevitable result of this understanding, the political on the basis of friend-enemy distinction cannot be reduced to institutionalized organs of politics, such as state, political parties and so on. Here, there are two crucial questions which must be answered: Why the presupposition of the state by the concept of the political is seen as the preferable and legitimate form of the political; and what is expected from the reduction of the content and practice of the political to the state is seen legitimate and preferable.

2.2. Liberalism and the Political

For Schmitt, it is clear that the political is cogitated as something which must be conducted at inter-state level. Even though there seems nothing overtly

²⁸ Ibid., 27.

emphasizing this, the notion of total state implies this expectation about performing the political. In this total state, what is social and what is political are nested with each other in the name of the state; and in such a state, “everything is at least potentially political, and in referring to the state it is no longer possible to assert for it a specifically political characteristic”²⁹. With regard to this, it must be clarified that, what is meant by this penetration of the social into the political does not refer to the politicization of social components or of members of society; contrarily, this penetration helps provide the unity in the name and under the control of the state; no inner conception of enemy included. This unity, and the elimination of the possibility of ‘enemy within’, serves for the maintenance of the political at interstate level. Friends and enemies, in such a practice of the political, are outsiders for the state which declares them as friends and enemies; and the most excessive point of this practice of the political is war.

It is necessary to explain why Schmitt found this way of performing the political more preferable and legitimate. The ground on which Schmitt locates his thought is the eternality and inevitability of the notion of hostility. Here, determining the borders of the concept of the political as the space that the state occupies, means determining the borders and rules of declaring hostility as well as determining how it will be practiced. This limited hostility, in Schmittian total state, is practiced at states level and by this way, Schmitt actually suggests a less intensified hostility and war in comparison to the intensity of hostility of an ‘enemy within’ and to a possible civil war. This state-based hostility depends on the provision and maintenance of the unity within the borders of the state in its broadest sense; but on the other hand the provision and maintenance of the unity inside necessitates the presence of an external enemy well defined by the state. This point might be seen as a crack in Schmitt’s conception of the state. If the existence of unity inside and practicing the political outside both necessitates and triggers each other; it seems impossible to protect and maintain the total state

²⁹ Ibid., 22.

forever. The total state in this sense, more than a straightforward line, seems like one period of a sinusoid; either positive or negative one. It is inevitable that the political inside would come into existence and this would re-construct the understanding and the practice of the political. But it is also inevitable that the state idea would become capable of equating the border of the political to that of the state; since it is the natural reflex of the state in its original sense.

This is a vicious circle that Schmittian concept of the political inevitably triggers. Although Schmitt had taken a further step from Hobbesian absolute state, his conceptualization of the political and identification of it with the state still has weaknesses. Hobbesian absolute state is criticized by Schmitt because of the ongoing existence of evil though it is transformed; and the Achilles' heel of his absolute state is the free space given to the individuals to perform and express their differences and peculiarities within the borders and under the control of the absolute state. Schmitt, with his total state, makes Hobbes's absolute state closer to the idealized form; however, his mistake is based on his comprehension of total state as the ideal, even perfected form. The reduction to the state or expansion to the non-state actors of the political in an endless and inevitable circle constitutes the vulnerable point of his conceptualization. Here, it might be questioned whether this is actually inevitable; however, Schmitt's late writings also prove this even though it could have been proven by historical evidences. *Theory of Partisan*, for example, might be seen as the anti-thesis or as the complementary of 'the political' defined in *The Concept of the Political*.

What makes the partisan and the state opposite polars of the universe, in which the political is located, is the content and scope of the hostility. The state and the political performed at interstates level point out the limited hostility while partisanship, in its each form –telluric and global³⁰- paves the way for unlimited hostility. For Schmitt, it is impossible to annihilate the hostility at all; the best

³⁰ Slomp, *POHVT*, 16.

scenario which can be imagined is based on the limitation of hostility as much as possible. This is because Schmitt prefers to present the total state conception and the identification of the political with the state as the best case scenario in which the political is not excluded or is directly disregarded. Nevertheless, limitation of the scope of hostility does not necessarily mean limiting the intensity of hostility; but mostly, “it is limited to specific targets that are circumscribed in space and time: The opposing army, the invader, the oppressor. Unlimited enmity instead targets a limitless universal enemy: evil itself”³¹. With regard to this, it becomes clearer why Schmitt sees the presupposition of the state by the concept of the political legitimate, normal and preferable form of the political. If the hostility and the political are held within the borders of the state; enemies defined by this limited conception of hostility become tangible, and, by this way, destructible. Though this conceptualization is, at least theoretically, perfect in terms of limiting and controlling the scope of hostility; including the Schmittian, state-centric form of the political, no form of the political “...is an end-form of the political”³² for Schmitt and this means, whatever the more preferable or legitimate one is, the concept of the political finds its peculiar ways to manifest itself on the basis of friend-enemy distinction.

The partisanship, in this sense, might be seen as one of these peculiar ways that the concept of the political is manifested. Schmitt defines two types of partisan as “the aggressive international revolutionary activists”³³ and “the defensive-autochthonous defenders of home”³⁴. Both types are deprived of stability, regularity, and legal recognition by their enemies. That’s why “the partisan has an enemy and ‘risks’ something quite different from the blockade-breaker and

³¹ Slomp, *POHVT*, 11.

³² Slomp, *POHVT*, 15.

³³ Schmitt, *COP*, 21.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

the transporter of contraband. He risks not only his life, like every regular combatant. He knows, and accepts, that the enemy places him outside law, statute, honor”³⁵.

It is clear that the partisan and the political performed by the partisan are everything that the presupposition of the state by the concept of the political is not. It is irregular, illegal and its hostility is unlimited. “What instigates partisan activity is the total renunciation of rights in the mode of juridical passivity”³⁶; and this passivity also determines the basic characteristics of partisan. Schmitt lists the distinct features of partisan from the legitimate form of the political as four tenets: “...with these four criteria, irregularity, increased mobility, intensity of political commitment and the tellurian character- along with the possible consequences of further technological development, industrialization, and agrarian disaggregation, the conceptual scope of the inquiry has been circumscribed”³⁷. Here, the emphasis on the irregular and illegal characteristic of the partisan is clear. Illegality and irregularity of the partisan in terms of the political imply the construction of a new form of the political; but at the same time, they also imply the unrestricted nature of hostility which comes into existence in this abnormal or exceptional form of the political³⁸. These two components are what make the partisan distinct from the state in terms of the political; and the notion of partisanship points out the non-linear trajectory on which the political evolves uncontrollably.

³⁵ Schmitt, *TOP*, 20.

³⁶ Michael Marder, “Carl Schmitt and Risk of the Political”, *Telos* no. 132 (2005), 5-24, 6.

³⁷ Schmitt, *TOP*, 14.

³⁸ According to Schmitt, the state has represented the ‘normal’ form of the political for four centuries; and the partisan is the ‘exceptional’ form of the political that precipitated the crisis of the normal form and the search for a new one. For more, see *The Theory of Partisan* and *Carl Schmitt and the Politics of Hostility, Violence and Terror*.

By the recognition of this circuitous and contingent evolution of the concept of the political, Schmitt indeed recognizes that the concept of the political could not be performed within the borders of the state and at interstate level forever. Therefore, the monopolization of the concept of the political by Schmittian total state is not the end stage of the political, despite being seen as the best option among various alternatives and limiting the scope of hostility by constructing friend-enemy discourse based on interstate politics.

To conceive what makes the state as the normal form of the political and the partisan as the exceptional, at first it is necessary to conceive the notion of hostility in Schmittian sense. The undefeatable nature of hostility presents us the distinction of friend and enemy as a peculiar category defining the political. For Schmitt, “it cannot be denied that nations continue to group themselves according to the friend and enemy antithesis, that the distinction still remains actual today, and that this is an ever present possibility for every people existing in the political sphere”³⁹. The notion of enmity, or grouping in accordance with friend-enemy distinction has always continued its presence; even though it has taken different names throughout the history. In this sense, what drives Schmitt to the concept of the political based on the idea of total state seems the best way to eschew from this eternal and endless hostility. Allegorically, the presupposition of the state by the concept of the political means playing the game according to its rules; it, compared to any other way of performing the political, is better because the targets and means are well defined and regulated within a legal framework. Indeed, this legal-illegal, or domestic-interstate categorizations applied to define the essence and practice of the political, refer to the distinction put between conventional and absolute hostility. While the former points out the “central unit of *jus publicum europaeum*” which is the sovereign state in modern sense, and, by this way, points out that the state is “the agency

³⁹ Schmitt, *COP*, 28.

which makes the political decision of naming the enemy”⁴⁰, the latter refers to the partisan sense of the political in which the definition of enemy is blurred and unlimited. As Slomp also indicated;

Whereas conventional hostility assumes the value and worth of the enemy, real hostility entails despise for the enemy; whereas conventional enmity assumes opponents of comparable strength, real hostility is often associated with great inequalities between two opposing parties, and this in turn explains why terror, deceit and camouflage are the only way for the weaker side to attack the stronger. Moreover, while the unit of conventional enmity is the state and its forum is an inter-state war, real hostility originally associated by Schmitt with civil and colonial wars and its fundamental unit is the partisan group. Schmitt is keen to link the emergence of real enmity with the weakening of the state.⁴¹

Although limited and conventional form of hostility is more preferable than the absolute and unlimited one, Schmitt, even tacitly, accepts that the political could be manifested outside the space within which the concept of the state lets it be performed. With regard to this, it is conceivable why the presupposition of the state by the concept of the political is the preferable and legitimate form of the political. This reduction of the political to the level of the state helps providing and protecting the unity and, as an expected result of the absence of opposing stances and ideas, helps the provision and protection of peace within the borders of the state. With the conception of limited hostility and the conduct of the political at interstates level, the emergence of fragmentations and of antitheses within the spectrum of the state is prevented. Unfortunately, whatever the motives behind promoting such form of the political and obvious advantages of the conduct of the political in such a way, even Schmitt recognizes that this reduced version of the political could not stay still; and transforms to less legitimate and, clearly, less preferable forms, as seen in the case of partisanship.

⁴⁰ Slomp, *POHVT*, 80.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

Here, the potential transformation of the political to a less legitimate and preferable form might be seen in favor of liberal constitutionalism. This would be a precipitating and misleading judgment. Liberalism, with its dignified conceptions of plurality and individualism, inevitably implies the emergence of the political in various forms at different levels, rather than being limited by the borders of the state. This kind of plural understanding and conceptualization of the political, obviously, ignores the notion of hostility which is impossible to discard at all; and morality involved in liberal politics has generally tended to see any version of evil appropriate to be controlled and, even, to be discarded. Here, the inference about the elimination of evil in liberal politics is based on the conception of plurality in liberalism: Since the evil, or a potentially unlimited hostility, is not seen as a threat which necessitates the provision of unity, pluralism blossoms as a fundamental dynamic of liberal politics.

What liberalism discards under the name of evil is actually more than a matter of morality. It is, according to Schmitt, the by-pass of the concept of the state and of the political. For Schmitt, the state “derives its reality and power from the respective central domain, because the decisive disputes of friend-enemy groupings are also determined by it”⁴². This central domain is the glue which keeps the concept of the state and of the political safe and sound; without this central figure that provides the power of defining friends and enemies, the state could no longer survive in the sense that Schmitt perceived. Liberal constitutionalism, essentially, is based on public deliberation of argument and counter argument and it fosters the plurality and diversification of the political as well as the social.

For Schmitt, two political demands, which characterize the liberal constitutionalism and its practice, parliamentary democracy, are “the postulate of

⁴² Carl Schmitt, “The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations” in *The Concept of the Political*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), 87.

openness in political life and demand for a division of powers”⁴³. These two components also compose of the reason behind seeing democracy and liberalism identical, according to Schmitt. However, this imagined matchup would be as misleading as seeing the transformation of the political to a non-state form, like partisanship, in favor of liberal constitutionalism. This characteristic of liberalism, based on plurality and individualism, becomes the exact target of Schmitt’s critique. For Schmitt, this pluralistic, universal values-based, neutralized structure of liberalism pushes the concept of the political aside by diminishing the central domain with its insistent tendency of neutralization. By this way, liberal constitutionalism reduces the concept of the state to a “neutral and agnostic mechanism”⁴⁴; and this neutral-agnostic state is inevitably incapable of performing the political due to its incapability of defining friend and enemy. At that point, the conceptualization of the political becomes blurred and ambiguous precisely when the boundary to define the extent to which this mechanism can be qualified as “the state” in Schmittean sense becomes questionable. For Schmitt, there is nothing to question with regard to liberalism in relation to the political; because its pluralism and individualism discard the essence of the political. From his point of view, liberalism is certainly apolitical and, furthermore, it is paradoxical to talk about a liberal sense of the state. The conceptualization of the political also binds the perception of the content and characteristic of the state; and what is called as liberal state cannot go a step further than being a moral or economic mechanism which is essentially devoid of the concept of the political. Here it is clear why Schmitt abstained from qualifying liberal state as a state in a sense that he conceptualizes it in relation to the concept of the political. Although Schmitt sees the political, at least potentially, a wider concept than the state; the notion of the state could not be comprehended without applying the concept of the political.

⁴³ Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 36.

⁴⁴ Schmitt, *COP*, 88.

2.3. Defining the Sovereign

Liberal state, as a natural result of its pluralist attitude and division of power based formation, seems also incapable at the moments of exception. For Schmitt, sovereignty could be defined by the initiative taken exactly at the moment of the state of exception⁴⁵, which is simultaneously defined by law but also emerges outside the borders and content of the law. The one who declares the state of exception, in other words, the end of the framework drawn by the law, is the sovereign in an absolute sense. Because “the decision on the exception is a decision in the true sense of the word”⁴⁶; and because the liberal constitutional state in this sense is agnostic and tends to stay neutral, it is almost impossible to perform the political by this kind of state formation for Schmitt. At this point, it would be illuminating to explain what is meant by the state of exception in Schmittian framework. This would help understand how the political is performed within the given boundaries. For this reason, understanding the content and characteristics of the notion of sovereignty would help understanding the practice of the political and the feasibility of Schmittian framework to specific cases such as 1971 and 1980 interventions of the military in Turkey.

What Schmitt defined in *Political Theology* as sovereignty in relation to the state of exception could not be conceived apart from parliamentary democracy and liberal constitutionalism. Parliamentary democracy as a way through which liberalism operates is based on the principle of division of powers and check-balance mechanisms designed to prevent the system from power corruption. According to Schmitt, “...since the middle of the eighteenth century: That a

⁴⁵ “The sovereign is he who decides on the exception.” Schmitt, *PT*, 5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

constitution is identical with division of power⁴⁷; in other words, as the Article 16 of Declaration of the Rights of Man proclaims "...any society in which the separation of powers and rights is not guaranteed has no constitution"⁴⁸. As a natural result of this logic, modern parliamentarism has been built upon the ground that constitution and principle of division of powers provide. This division provides a "...balance of different state activities and institutions"⁴⁹ but also triggers the idea of competition. Liberal thinking supposes that this division of power and competition between the sides of this division would serve for the best of the system by checking and balancing each other; however Schmitt thinks that this divided power of the state and the competition between different state activities and institutions would shut the political system down at the moments of exception, when the need for the sovereign emerges.

"The exception, which is not codified in the existing legal order, can at best be characterized as a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the state, or the like"⁵⁰. In other words, the exception is the situation which the present legal framework is unable to define and eliminate. This is exactly the moment that the sovereign appears to decide the exceptionality of the situation. However, what liberalism and parliamentary democracy suggest to eschew from the power corruption fails at that juncture. From the liberal constitutional point of view, there would be no jurisdictional competence at all:

The most guidance the constitution can provide is to indicate who can act in such a case. If such action is not subject to controls, if it is not hampered in some way by checks and balances, as is the case in a liberal constitution, then it is clear who the sovereign is. He decides whether there is an

⁴⁷ Schmitt, *CPD*, 41.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁵⁰ Schmitt, *PT*, 6.

extreme emergency as well as what must be done to eliminate it. Although he stands outside the normally valid legal system, he nevertheless belongs to it; for it is he who must decide whether the constitution needs to be suspended in its entirety. All tendencies of modern constitutional development point toward eliminating the sovereign in this sense.⁵¹

Under normal circumstances, liberal constitutionalism is appropriate to operate the system; however, when the norm that constitutes the legal order loses its validity and the exception comes to the scene -which is the actual time that the actual power is needed- liberal constitutionalism, with its rationale and its institutions, comes to an end, according to Schmitt. In order to define the exception, to declare the state of exception and to eliminate the threat that the exception poses, the sovereign must be within but outside the present legal system. However, liberal constitutionalism does not let that happen since, both theoretically and instrumentally, it discards the concept of sovereign who hold the whole power. Schmitt, at this point, gives Article 48 of 1919 German constitution as an example of the exception that is "...declared by the president of the Reich but is under the control of parliament, the Reichstag, which can at any time demand its suspension"⁵²; and the structural problems derived from this liberal constitutional regulation under exceptional circumstances. From his point of view, declaration of the state of exception depending on a check and balance mechanism could not be a state of exception in the real sense of the word; in other words, "the individual states no longer have the power to declare the exception, as the prevailing opinion on article 48 contends, then they no longer enjoy the status of states"⁵³. Here, what Schmitt meant by the paradox of talking about a liberal sense of the state becomes clearer.

⁵¹ Schmitt, *PT*, 7.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 11.

For Schmitt, the existence of the state is the evidence of its superiority over legal norm⁵⁴; in this sense, it is implied that the legal norm could not be sufficient *per se*. If it would suffice, there would be no need for the state at all. What makes liberalism incapable of being or performing the political is that fact, indeed. Liberalism, according to Schmitt, reduces what state is supposed to and ought to be to a legal framework in which there is no need for the authority or superiority of the state. This formula might work well under normal circumstances, but fails when it comes to the state of exception. Since “what characterizes an exception is principally unlimited authority, which means the suspension of the entire existing order. In such a situation it is clear that the state remains, whereas law recedes. Because the exception is different from anarchy and chaos, order in the juristic sense still prevails even if it is not of the ordinary kind”⁵⁵. It is clear that the exception encompasses more than the legal norm presumes; and to cope with it, logically there is a need for more than the legal norm.

Liberalism aims at reducing the state into a legal framework in which there is no specific use of power against what the constitution declares and guarantees. However, the state of exception is real, unexpected, in other words, it is a strange parameter which cannot be defined by present equation. Schmitt, being aware of the fact that the exception could not be dealt with the framework of the norm, puts the state as “...not just any reality or any imagined entity alongside and outside the legal order. The state is nothing else than the legal order itself, which is conceived as a unity”, and it is “...neither the creator nor the source of the legal order”⁵⁶. However, this does not mean the state as the sovereign is just a legal framework in which it is defined. Contrarily, “the state is the terminal point of ascription, the point at which the ascriptions, which constitute the essence of

⁵⁴ Schmitt, *PT*, 12.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁵⁶ Schmitt, *PT*, 18-19.

juristic consideration, "can stop"”⁵⁷. Therefore, what makes the sovereign distinctive from the daily/normal decision making mechanisms of legal/constitutional framework is the time it comes to the scene, at the end or the outside of what constitution presumes.

Theoretically, liberal constitutionalism, as a framework that minimizes the state and neutralizes the political in the sense that Schmitt conceives, is inevitably desperate at the moment of exception. There is no sovereign to declare the exception and to take action against the state of exception in a purely liberal system. Legal framework could not define and declare what cannot be defined and declared based on present norms. At this point, liberalism comes to a dead end in terms of the political. It builds itself on the presumption that a potential problem would be solved by the legally highest power; however its tendency to eliminate the sovereign⁵⁸ actually makes the so-called legally highest power a dysfunctional, symbolic mechanism which is unable to decide about the moment of exception. It is certainly this ‘legally defined’ quality that makes it incapable at the legally unexpected and undefined moment of exception; for its authorization is defined by and according to the present legal framework. At that point, it might be argued that parliamentary democracy, which is established upon the principles of division of powers, openness, discussion and public deliberation, is dysfunctional under exceptional circumstances since it basically aims at discarding the sovereign in Schmittian sense. This hypothetical situation seems to have been actualized in cases of 1971 intervention and 1980 coup in Turkey. The military, in order to protect the unity of the Turkish state with its nation and people, defined the exception at these two points and took initiative to deal with the state of exception. In this sense, it can be argued that the military,

⁵⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁵⁸ “Sovereignty is the highest, legally independent, underived power.” Schmitt, *PT*, 17.

which is located within but outside the law, emerged as the sovereign in 1971 and 1980.

2.4. The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy: Political nested within the Apolitical

Schmitt's critique about the practice, formation and logic of the parliamentary democracy is quite distinct from his contemporaries who repeatedly pointed out the "already well-known and tiresome catalogue of the failings of modern parliamentary practice"⁵⁹. His critique is distinct because it is oriented to explore and explain "the ultimate core of the institution of modern parliament from which it can be seen how far this institution has lost its intellectual foundation and only remains standing as an empty apparatus"⁶⁰. Thus, what Schmitt found problematic in the practice of modern parliamentarism can be named as the loss of the essence of parliamentarism and its transformation to some kind of empty, meaningless, irrational formality⁶¹. Here, what is meant by emptiness is noteworthy because it derives from (and points out to) the postulation which mistakenly takes democracy and parliamentarism identical in a broader sense.

For Schmitt, this false identification inevitably leads to perceive parliamentarism and democracy inseparable. The crisis of parliamentarism and the crisis of democracy appear simultaneously and "...each one aggravates the other, but they are conceptually and in reality different. As democracy, modern mass democracy attempts to realize an identity of governed and governing, and thus it confronts

⁵⁹ Richard Thoma, "On the Ideology of Parliamentarism" in *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* Translated by Ellen Kennedy (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 78.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁶¹ Schmitt, *CPD*, 6.

parliament as an inconceivable and outmoded institution”⁶². This dilemma lies at the very heart of parliamentary democracy debates; indeed, it constitutes the base on which Schmitt’s critique lies. Perceiving this as a dilemma and the tendency to take democracy and parliamentarism as separate but concurrent concepts strengthens Schmitt’s theoretical stance. Putting this distinction points out the conclusion that modern parliamentarism has changed structurally and it has become a framework in which the politics have been performed as if it did not lost its rationale. As Thoma pointed out, “...the rationale for parliamentary institutions is not to be found in the familiar argument that the elected committee must function as a surrogate for an assembly of citizens that is no longer practically possible”⁶³ and this structural change which has made the notion of parliament a functional tool or a lesser evil also vindicates Schmitt’s conceptualization of the political. It is agreed that there is a crisis of parliamentary democracy when it had lost its essential principles that are “discussion” and “openness”, and could not be able to replace them with more up-to-date principles. Thus, what is meant by crisis is this lack of essence and the potential danger that might drag the political system into chaos, insufficiency and weakness due to this lack. This crisis proves why according to Schmitt liberalism could not be capable of being or performing the political.

According to Schmitt, “all specifically parliamentary arrangements and norms receive their meaning first through discussion and openness”⁶⁴. In the light of this postulation, parliamentary arrangements and norms should have lost their meaning without discussion and openness which are the core components of public deliberation and modern mass democracy. Without these principles,

⁶² Ibid., 15.

⁶³ Ibid., 78.

⁶⁴ Schmitt, *CPD*, 3.

parliament could be nothing but a “superfluous decoration”⁶⁵ based on general elections and ballots. At this point, what is meant by the crisis of parliamentary democracy is the result of the both functional and semantic erosion that the concept of parliament had suffered; and this erosion had pushed the public deliberation and discussion out of the parliamentarism and, by this way, the parliament had turned into something just decoratively operated. The arguments of 19th century thinkers such as Burke, Bentham, Guizot, and John Stuart Mill on the parliamentary and parliamentarism are “antiquated today”⁶⁶; and, for Schmitt “no one today would shape their hope that parliament alone guarantees the education of a political elite. Such convictions have in fact been shaken and they can only remain standing today as an idealistic belief so long as they can bind themselves to belief in discussion and openness”⁶⁷. Therefore, today parliament serves only as an artificial mechanism which is necessary to conduct the system since the contradiction between liberal individualism and democratic homogeneity by-passed the essential idea of parliamentarism.

Regarding all of Schmitt’s works as details of a big picture, what Schmitt criticized in the name of the crisis of parliamentary democracy is actually not a single problem but a web of problems originated in the claim of liberalism being political. The definition of the concept of the political through friend-enemy distinction, conceptualization of the state as a dependent notion presupposed by the concept of the political⁶⁸, state of exception and the definition of the sovereign by declaration of the state of exception are actually parts of a puzzle which as a whole reveals the defects of liberalism in relation to the concept of

⁶⁵ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 8.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 7-8.

⁶⁸ “The concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political.” Schmitt, *COP*, 1.

the political. At that point, the applicability of what Schmitt had theorized might be arguable regarding the extent of his theory and critique. Regarding the time he published these works, his attitude against liberalism and its reflections under the cover of parliamentary democracy might be seen as reactions against the circumstances in which he lived. Most of Schmitt's works were released in 1920s and early 1930s; respectively during Weimar Republic and Third Reich (Nazi regime); in this sense his critique of parliamentary democracy and insufficiency of liberalism to practice the political have been and might be seen contextual. However, this is not the right explanation. His theoretical framework addresses more than the present situation of interwar period Germany. Apart from the special conditions of Germany in which the theory of partisan, critique of parliamentary democracy, state of exception and the concept of the political have flourished, Schmitt's critique of parliamentary democracy in particular, and of liberalism in general seems applicable to the case of many parliamentary democracies which were tried to be established upon strong state traditions. All these points made by Schmitt actually indicate the impossibility of a liberal way of performing the political; even with a liberal, parliamentary democracy, the concept of the political continues to conduct itself under the cover of apolitical. This is the real source of the crisis that fails parliamentary democracies.

Since it is almost impossible to erase a whole political culture grounded upon the transcendence of the state, parliamentary democracy is always at stake in such contexts. What stake refers here is unfortunately more than shutting down the parliament and turning the system into an anti-democratic, centrist one. It is indeed a serious and real threat that the parliament might have turned into something that serves only as a formality without its essence. This would be worse than any scenarios that liberalism or the total state would provide due to the lack of stability and coherency of such a scenario. Therefore, a political position squeezed in between the strong state tradition and liberal values is the real threat against the conduct of the political, of the society and of the state. To

take it a step further, it might be argued that liberalism with a claim of being political instead of to be economic or social, is a wolf in sheep's cloths; since the essence of the political requires friends and enemies. Even the parliament could not be capable of by-passing the characteristic of the political or replacing it with a new, peculiar, liberal essence. At this juncture, Schmittian sense of the political continues to be performed within and by the parliament or it finds its way to be performed outside the parliament; in the hands of army, of partisan, or so. In this sense, parliamentary democratic experience of Turkey between 1971 and 1980 military interventions might be given as the perfect example of the dilemma of the political under the cover of apolitical.

In this sense, Schmitt's theoretical framework provides an opportunity to analyze the decade from different angles, from dissenting perspectives. This decade can be examined through the theory of partisan, focusing on the revolutionary movements that spread among students and workers and led to a civil war-like atmosphere; or through the crisis of parliamentary democracy, focusing on the incoherent and unstable political discourse and government crises which strengthens the army's hand on their claim of defending and perpetuating glorious Turkish state. Regarding the goals of this research, it seems more promising to examine 1970s' Turkey through the crisis of parliamentary democracy than through the theory of partisan.

For Schmitt, as a result of the disappearance of openness and discussion in a parliamentary system, "the parties do not face each other today discussing opinions, but as social or economic power groups calculating their mutual interests and opportunities for power, and they actually agree compromises and coalitions on their basis"⁶⁹. This statement defines the basic dynamics of Turkish political life in 1970s. All coalitions formed during this interval were based on compromises that parties made to find a common ground which would

⁶⁹ Schmitt, *CPD*, 6.

preferably be satisfactory for the benefits and demands of each coalition partners. In this sense, 1970-1980 interval of Turkish parliamentarism can be seen as a characteristic example of what Schmitt meant by the crisis of parliamentary democracy. March 12 1971 memorandum was a perfect example in terms of reducing the parliament a “superfluous decoration, useless and even embarrassing, as though someone had painted the radiator of a modern central heating system with red flames in order to give the appearance of a blazing fire”⁷⁰. With the memorandum, although the military did not directly take control of the state, by overthrowing the legitimate, democratically elected government and shaping the new government in accordance with its own demands and agenda, the military turned the Turkish Grand National Assembly into a formality, a framework which only gave the political system its name. In this sense, the supra-party, partially technocratic interregnum governments were the red flames painted on the radiator.

In 1970s’ Turkey, political decision making did not come out public deliberation or parliamentary debate but “small and exclusive committees of parties or of party coalitions make their decisions behind closed doors, and what representatives of the big capitalist interest groups agree to in the smallest committees is more important for the fate of millions of people, perhaps, than any political decision”⁷¹. Therefore, the crisis that Turkish parliamentary democracy experienced in 1970s had led by small, privileged groups to make ground breaking decisions behind closed doors, disregarding the freedom of information and openness; in other words, the essence/rationale of parliamentary democracy. As Heper and Keyman also indicate, “parliamentary activities in Turkey have tended to be based on grand spoils operations; there was little concern with other functions. Individual parliamentarians ... were not interested

⁷⁰ Ibid., 6.

⁷¹ Ibid., 50.

in debate, deliberation and policy-making. In any case, they were not expected to make such contributions”⁷².

To conclude, what makes 1970s’ Turkey worthy to examine through Schmitt is the bipolarity that triggers the crisis between military and parliamentary politics in terms of performing the political at the level of state. Throughout this decade of excessive polarization and fragmentation, various state and non-state sources had defined and redefined the friends and enemies sometimes with common terms and characteristics; but these commonalities could not suffice to perform the political in a coherent way and to provide domestic peace and order. In this sense, even if the non-state actors who produced friend-enemy discourses were disregarded by the state, at the level of the state, the military and parliament, as the dissenting parties that produce their own friend-enemy groupings, had precipitated the political volatility and hampered the provision of the unity inside under one comprehensive state discourse. This controversy between civilian and military offices of the state might be interpreted as the crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy in between strong state tradition and liberal constitutional values. Their controversy eventually turned into the erosion of the state authority and a continuing crisis on the performance of the political. As an inevitable result of the erosion of the state conception, another form of the political, namely partisanship had come into the existence in 1970s with their friend-enemy categorizations and the plurality of discourses dragged Turkish politics into a deadlock which neither state nor partisans could define the friends and enemies and to perform the political.

⁷²Metin Heper and Fuat Keyman, “Double-Faced State: Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol.34 no.4 (1998), 259-277, 263.

CHAPTER III

1971-1980: Political Atmosphere in Turkey

3.1. State tradition and Political Actors

In Turkish state tradition, “Both ‘Leviathan’, the form of government which emerged in the West in the middle of the seventeenth century, and the later nation-state had a role to play”⁷³. Ottoman state and institutions had been formed by this combination and “...The builders of the Turkish Republic placed the strengthening of the state first in their priorities”⁷⁴ just as their ancestors. Under the influence of this combination, “Turkish political life has undergone a series of profound crises, marked by the political intervention of the military at roughly ten-year intervals” and “...each time the military justified their intervention by the need to restore democracy or to remedy its defects.”⁷⁵

The 1970-1980 interval of Turkish politics is the most intense period in terms of the profound crises that alarmed the military. This interval has peculiar aspects that make it distinct from the rest of the Turkish political history. It is a decade which hosted two military interventions, more than ten governments and countless government crises, excessive political polarization, ideological fights and massacres. Not only at the level of parliamentary politics, but also on partisan fronts that were opened in late 1960s, had Turkey confronted with serious challenges throughout this decade. These challenges could be listed as

⁷³ Şerif Mardin. “Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics?”, *Daedalus*, vol.102 no.1 (1973), 169-190, 169.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁷⁵ Dankwart A. Rustow, “Political Parties in Turkey: An Overview” in *Political Parties and Democracy in Turkey*, ed. Metin Heper and Jacob Landau (New York: IB Tauris, 1991), 10-23, 17.

continuous government crises, military's involvement in civilian politics and the rise of social-political sensitivity in relation to the constitutional rights and freedoms. However, there is no doubt that the most serious challenge that Turkish parliamentary system had to confront was the embedded definition and perception of the state and the use of the political power by this state. Political parties of the parliamentary system were enthralled by the strong, authoritarian, but at the same time democratic and constitutional conceptualization of state, as well as the military officers. Therefore, various political actors had come to the scene throughout this decade with varying political incentives; and each of them had influenced the trajectory of Turkish politics. The military, the parliament and the partisan, mostly illegal, political movements are these serious political actors.

3.1.1. The Military

Turkish Armed Forces has historically undertaken the role of protecting the embedded values and characteristics of the state, and at some junctures, did not hesitate to intervene for the sake of the maintenance of these traditional values which, inevitably, have determined the peculiar characteristics of Turkish democracy. The role attributed the military can also be rationalized within Ottoman context. The Ottoman Empire has always been defined as a great military establishment; however:

During the centuries of decline, this same army, now actively engaged in palace politics, became a greater threat to the ruling sultan than to his enemies. The Janissaries, in alliance with the men of religion, the *ulema*, became a formidable obstacle to reform. When the reforming sultans of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began to modernize the structures of their ailing state, they gave their attention first to the army. As a result, military schools and academies based on the Western model were set up, and out of these institutions emerged a

new generation of reformist officers dedicated to the salvation of their state and empire.⁷⁶

In this sense, the case of Turkish Armed Forces presents a complicated picture, with regard to the means and methods of its interventions to civilian politics. The military in Turkey, as Cizre underlined, recognizes the legitimacy of democracy and civilian rule⁷⁷ while, on the other hand, "...They choose to wield influence in the structuring and vetoing of political initiatives from a position outside the civilian authorities' constitutional control"⁷⁸. The Armed Forces happens to be within but outside the zone of civilian politics, by this way.

As the transformative power of the late Ottoman politics and the founding dynamic of the Republic of Turkey, the role and influence of the military in Turkish political life is quite obvious. It is the warden with the responsibility of guarding and defending the traditional values that was attributed to the state for it "identified itself completely with the state and the status quo"⁷⁹. However, intervention is not the only way that the military has applied to maintain the status quo. Not only through interventions to the civilian zone of politics, but also integrating former soldiers into politics through the Senate membership and presidency; has the military come to the scene as both an outsider and a directly included figure. By this way, the military has developed its peculiar way of intervening into the supposedly civilian zone of parliamentary politics. From this point of view, the military is the bug that corrodes the principal grounds of the parliamentary democracy and turns it into an empty framework. In the history of Turkish political life;

⁷⁶ Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 2.

⁷⁷ Ümit Cizre Sakallıoğlu, "The Anatomy of Turkish Military's Political Autonomy", *Comparative Politics*, vol.29 no.2 (1997), 151-166, 153.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 155.

...the military regimes never tried to justify their prolonged rule as an alternative to democratic government. On the contrary, their actions were legitimized as operations to reintroduce democracy by creating a new, more stable government system. Periods of military rule were exceptions rather than the rule and never challenged the merits of democratic government.⁸⁰

Even though the claims of the military on the political power have never been presented as an alternative to parliamentary democratic system, the short term involvements of the military was powerful enough to weaken the ground of parliamentary democracy. Thus, these peculiar aspects of the military in Turkey inevitably shaped the civilian zone of politics accordingly. Democratic experience in Turkey has grown up under the shadow of the gamekeeper Armed Forces. The existence of the military as an autonomous unit re-defined the function, essence and content of the parliamentary democracy. Regarding the reasons behind three interventions of the military and their demands from the civilian politics in 1960, 1971 and 1980, it might be argued that the military has come to the scene at the “moments of exception” in the Schmittian sense, which were defined as the events that challenge the embedded state perception and republican, Kemalist status quo. In 1971, the anti-state revolutionary movements that aimed at changing the existing political regime by force were the greatest challenge against the notions that military traditionally has guarded. The existing government led by Süleyman Demirel was accused of being incapable of dealing with this challenge. A neutral, supra-party, technocratic government was formed to fulfill the demands of the army and to “sooth” the restlessness through constitutional changes.

In *Political Theology*, Schmitt defines the sovereign through the state of exception, which is “not codified in the existing legal order, can at best be characterized as a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the state, or

⁸⁰ Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, “Turkish Democracy: Patronage versus Governance”, *Turkish Studies* vol.2 no.1 (2001) 54-70, 54.

the like. But it cannot be circumscribed factually and made to conform to a preformed law”⁸¹. If it could be defined by a preformed law, it would no longer be the “exception”; what makes the exception crucial for the determination of the sovereign is this unanticipated, undefined, and outside the book quality of the sovereign. In this sense, the exception stays as a vaguely defined concept, as the existing legal framework is unable to identify and deal with it. The sovereign is the one who “decides whether there is an extreme emergency as well as what must be done to eliminate it”⁸². From this point of view, regarding the direct interventions of the military in 1960, 1971 and 1980, it might be argued that the military has traditionally defined the moment of extreme emergency and taken initiative to make the real decision on the exception and its elimination.

March 12 Memorandum of Turkish Armed Forces was released in accordance with the military’s definition of ‘exception’. The exception, in a Schmittian sense, was the breaking point that the legal framework and daily politics could not suffice to handle. The rise of leftist movements, coup attempts of various fractions among junior army officers, the existing government’s inability to solve the problems and eliminate the challenges against the state composed of the picture of ‘exception’ that brought the military into civilian politics once again in 1971. Constitutional framework was unable to define, anticipate and eliminate these threats; and the military, as a constitutionally integrated but highly autonomous state institution, happened to be the sovereign “who decides on the exception.”⁸³ At that point, what characterizes the military as the sovereign is its quality to make the decision about the “situation of conflict what constitutes the public interest or interest of the state, public safety and order, *le salut public*, and

⁸¹ Schmitt. *PT*, 6.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 5.

so on”⁸⁴. This is exactly what is emphasized in the March 12 memorandum. In the memorandum, the parliament and the government were accused of endangering the future of the Republic of Turkey by their ignorance and inability. Moreover, anarchy, fraternal fight and social and economic unrest of the time were the results of this ignorance and inability⁸⁵. The military claimed to make the intervention for the best interest of the state, public safety and order and thus overthrow the democratically elected government. Up to this point, the methods that the military made an intervention into the civilian politics may not seem extraordinary. What makes the situation of the military in Turkish politics unique came to the scene from this point on. In 1971, the military preferred to intervene into the civilian politics through throwing over the elected government and demanding the formation of a supra-party, neutral one under the blessing of the military. By this way, military was endorsing to the legitimacy of the existing political system and being loyal to the principles of parliamentary democracy; while, on the other hand, the military was not abstaining from giving directions about how and by whom the existing political system should be governed.

By the end of the year 1970, the restlessness of the military reached a peak in parallel with the rising tension in society. Towards March 12, high commanders were nervously observing the rise of separatism, sectarian, ideological and ethnic movements. According to the Chief of Air Forces Muhsin Batur, reaching consensus on what the main threats against Turkish state were and restoring the state authority through legal changes had due diligence and the government should to be strengthened within the constitutional framework⁸⁶.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁸⁵ March 12 1971 Memorandum, Milliyet, March 13 1971.

⁸⁶ Nihat Erim, *12 Mart Anıları*, (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), 183.

1971 memorandum contains three articles. The main idea of the text was the insufficiency of the parliament and government in establishing peace. The threat caused by this insufficiency posed for the future of the Republic was highlighted. The military recommended a solution which was about the formation of a “strong and plausible nonpartisan government that would stop the existing anarchy and, in the light of the principles of Atatürk, implement the reforms proposed by the constitution within the framework of democratic rules”⁸⁷. This statement is interesting; for it displays the dilemma laid upon the heart of the military’s perception of parliamentary democracy. The military sees parliamentary democracy and democratic values as the legitimate tools of political system; but on the other hand, their tendency to intervene and ‘fix’ the parliamentary democracy in accordance with their embedded state, society and democracy perceptions does not cease to exist. In this sense, the military seems comfortable with intervening into the trajectory of civilian politics, making recommendations about the conduct of parliamentary system; but ironically demanding all to be done within the framework of democracy. The military itself is an irrefutably non-democratic actor that time to time enters the scene to fix democracy and constitutional values. This would be more or less the definition of the peculiar “within but outside” position of the military in Turkish politics. Through this position, the military had become capable of bending the borders of the parliamentary democracy and re-defining some principal concepts, such as the state and democracy, within these altered borders.

In 1970s the military came to the scene as a more prominent power figure than it has ever been. During the 1970s, the profound role of the military in civilian politics demonstrated its effects through the use of diverse methods. Through declaring martial law, determining candidates for the presidency, “suggesting” the parliament how to operate and even re-regulating the constitution, the

⁸⁷ The March 12 1971 memorandum, Article 2.

military strengthened its power holder position within the political system. Throughout this period, the military's "...repression became the backdrop for all other activity" and "...martial law was renewed regularly by the Assembly every two months to meet constitutional requirements."⁸⁸

3.1.2. The Parliament

The Republic of Turkey is the heir of strong, transcendental state and weak society tradition of Ottoman Empire⁸⁹ and this tradition has always been the biggest challenge for a smooth transition to pluralist, parliamentary democracy. For Mardin, "the history of modern Turkish politics shows that all the opposition movements were accused of the same failings"⁹⁰, which is the intention to "divide the Turkish nation"⁹¹. Although methods or final aims of opposition movements differ from each other, posing a threat against the unity of Turkish nation was a kind of glue which makes all these opposition movements certainly defined as the enemy of the state; or at least, "the polarity that the perception of regulation creates is that of officials versus all others"⁹². Indeed, various examples from Ottoman or Republican history validate this perception of opposition by the state. For example, the coup of 1908 led by the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası) was a military-originated coup against the monarchical regime of Ottoman State. To give a more current example, after the transition to multiparty parliamentary politics in 1946, Turkey

⁸⁸ Ahmad, *MMT*, 152.

⁸⁹ Metin Heper, *Türkiye'de Devlet Geleneği*, (Ankara: Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2010), 43.

⁹⁰ Şerif Mardin "Opposition and Control in Turkey" submitted at International Political Science Association Round Table Conference at Grenoble (1965), 378.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 378.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 186.

had experienced three military interventions and countless coup attempts in the next forty years. In 1960, the first of them came to the existence. Turkish Armed Forces, based on the claim that the Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti-DP) was a counter-revolutionary party which aims at changing the regime, seized the control of civilian power and eventually executed the DP Prime Minister Adnan Menderes with two of his ministers and a new government had been formed as the military wished. In both examples, regardless of different conditions of different historical conditions, obviously, the notion of enemy has been shaped around the notion of challenging the authority and fundamental principles of the existing state.

“For over a century, Turkish political parties have reflected both the profound changes and the underlying continuity in the country's political history.”⁹³ The consistent interruptions to the basic mechanisms of parliamentary politics such as elections and party activities consist of the most crucial continuity in this sense. These interruptions have been made by different actors which vary from sultans to military commanders. Despite the variety of actors, the reason that urges them to intervene is unique. The authority and image of the state has always been a reference point for the justification of interventions to the natural course of parliamentary politics. However, beginning from the Ottoman experience, there were more serious obstacles before the development and consolidation of party politics “...than this alternation between parliamentary constitutionalism and authoritarian rule. Party activity implies agreement to disagree, it requires above all, fundamental consensus on the territorial boundaries within which such partisanship is to be exercised and on the population for whose support the parties are to compete.”⁹⁴ It is clear that recognizing the legitimacy of party politics necessitates admitting and adapting

⁹³ Ibid. 10

⁹⁴ Ibid.10

the basic principles of parliamentary democracy which are according to Schmitt, openness and discussion⁹⁵. However, Turkish political tradition has been deprived of the blessing of these principles for a quite long period. This deprivation has driven Turkish parliamentary politics to deadlocks which mostly ended up with interventions of the military.

After the transition to the multiparty politics in 1946, Turkish parliamentary politics has gained its unique character under the threatening presence of the military. It is characteristically unique, because since the beginning, the parliamentary politics in Turkey have been urged to create itself a middle ground between the embedded strong state tradition and the principles of parliamentary democracy. Compromising with the military on the definition and image of the state seemed to be the only way to guarantee the survival of parliamentary democracy⁹⁶. As a result of this adaptation process, when we analyze the 1970s, "...the simple model of the politics of the first half-century of the Turkish Republic is clearly no longer adequate.

The general elections of October 1973 and particularly the local government elections held in December of the same year, when all the main cities were won by a reformed Republican People's Party - formerly the party of Ataturk's establishment - marked the end of the old simplicities. It is not, however, a total ending: the dichotomy between 'the civilian-military bureaucrats' and 'the people' remains an important, even if not the main element of Turkish politics."⁹⁷ This dichotomy between the bureaucracy and the people can be interpreted as the dichotomy between the principles of parliamentary democracy which render the

⁹⁵ Schmitt, *COP*, 36.

⁹⁶ Süleyman Demirel, "MİT Hükümete Bilgi Vermemiştir", *Nokta*, March 1986, 36-37.

⁹⁷ Andrew Mango, "The State of Turkey", *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol.13 no.2 (1977) 261-274, 265.

people to express their demands, stances and opinions and the state tradition which has always tended to intervene the course of parliamentary democracy.

Regarding the political conditions of 1970s, Turkish parliament can be qualified with a double-bind characteristic. The term “double bind” is literally defined “a psychological predicament in which a person receives from a single source conflicting messages that allow no appropriate response to be made.”⁹⁸ However, what is meant by naming Turkish parliamentary democracy double bind has a wider implication. I claim that the parliament was receiving conflicting messages about how to conduct the parliamentary politics/how to operate the parliamentary democracy and these conflicting messages eventually blocked the operation of parliamentary democracy at all.

Both the military-driven interregnum cabinets and democratically elected civilian cabinets suffered in the hands of the same dichotomy, which squeezed parliamentary politics between the principles of liberal constitutional order, such as pluralism, political diversity and awareness, and the strong state tradition. The double bind character of Turkish parliament can be explained through this dichotomy. On the one hand, there is a strong state tradition which enforces politicians to feed from and, at the same time, to be fed up by the comprehensive, authoritarian, competent image of the state to survive in parliamentary system; on the other hand, there is an endless trial to consolidate democratic, liberal constitutional, western model of state based on the discourse of plurality, human rights, freedom of expression and so on. As the legitimate political mechanism, the parliament was stuck in between the messages of exalting and protecting the strong image of the state and the principles of parliamentary democracy on which its legitimacy should rest.

⁹⁸ “Double Bind”, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed June 11, 2013, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/double%20bind>.

“By the 1970s, with the influence of the electoral laws based on proportional representation the number of political parties in the TGNA increased, while the imperative of coalition governments began to be felt. Tolerance for political opposition increased yet the fragmentation, volatility and polarization of the vote continued to undermine the stability of the governments and the political system in general. Radical right wing parties were permitted into governing coalitions, as political instability worsened from 1975 to 1980.”⁹⁹ It is clear that the 1970s’ Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) was also suffering from schism that rendered reaching a consensus impossible. This fragmentation within the parliament inevitably aggravated the adoption of a solid, coordinated attitude against the pressure of the military.

In the late 1970s, the relation of the parliament with the military was “...tended toward uneasy coexistence” since “...both camps were divided along at least three competing ideological lines: Islamism, pan-Turkism, and socialism. However, Atatürkist principles were the most prominent army ideals, which explain why the military distanced itself from far right and radical left ideologies after the September 12, 1980 coup. The army declared that the coup's aim was to ‘reestablish democracy’.”¹⁰⁰ It is obvious that the reason behind the military’s inclusion in the zone of civilian politics was not only the traditional roles attributed to the military to protect founding principles of the regime and the state. The parliament was unable to produce a coherent political solution due to the ideological fragmentation within the framework of parliamentary democracy that would supposedly function as a zone of discussion, deliberation and consensus.

⁹⁹ Ersin Kalaycıoğlu, “Turkish Democracy: Patronage versus Governance”, *Turkish Studies*, vol.2 no.1 (2001), 54-70, 55.

¹⁰⁰ Nilüfer Narlı, “Civil-Military Relations in Turkey”, *Turkish Studies*, no.1 (2000) 107-127, 114.

Therefore, it might be argued that the parliament as a major political actor had developed an ambiguous stance in the 1970s' political atmosphere. In the search of compromising with the military, the attitude that the parliament adopted would be neither democratic, nor total in the Schmittean sense; and this in-between situation had inevitably diminished the political effectiveness of the parliament as the legitimate political mechanism. By this way, parliamentary democracy turned into a framework whose details were to be defined by the needs of the strong state tradition that is represented by the military. Besides, the presence of the military made parliamentary democracy incapable of operating as a checks and balances mechanism. Instead, the parliamentary democracy itself was "checked and balanced" by the military. In this sense, the role that the parliament played in the course of 1970s' Turkish politics is drastic. The subservient attitude of the parliament towards the pressure of the military would be the key to understand the period.

3.1.3. Partisan Movements

Throughout the 1970s, there were various liberal leftist groups that fought for a socialist revolution in Turkey. Besides the parliament and the military, these groups happened to be one of the major political actors of 1970s. Actually, 1971 intervention of the military "...intended to prevent the leftists from taking over the government. Indeed, there had been a leftist upsurge after 1965, and this allowed liberal leftist groups to gain control of the universities and some labor unions and to increase their influence in the press, education, and in the lower ranks of the bureaucracy."¹⁰¹ The state, as it can be anticipated, responded the

¹⁰¹ Kemal Karpat, *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society: Selected Articles and Essays*, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 290.

acts of those movements with massive repression and waged war against those who are identified as “traitors and anarchists”¹⁰².

The foundation of the political activity of the revolutionary groups in 1970s was based on the social and political change of early 1960s; especially the new constitution and the appearance of the Socialist Turkish Workers’ Party in the parliament. “For the first time in years the suppressed ideological and political streams were permitted to take part in the political life of the country. In the early 1960s a legal left-wing movement appeared that encompassed a variety of leftist, radical left, social-democratic trade union and Marxist elements, who described themselves and their movement as ‘socialist’.”¹⁰³ This movement led by Mehmet Ali Aybar and Behice Boran established the Turkish Labor Party in 1961. “This party differed from earlier socialist parties mainly in that it was formed not by intellectuals but by representatives of the workers”¹⁰⁴ and, in this sense, became the voice and mere representative of workers and trade unions in the parliament.

During the first half of 1960s the TLP started to extend the range of its reach; “in addition to the trade unionists the new leadership now included lawyers, academics and publicists, and the cooperation between the intellectuals and the trade unionists following Aybar’s election bore fruit. Party branches appeared in many of the Turkish vilayets. TLP data give the class and social composition of the party as follows: 27 per cent of the card-carrying members were industrial workers, nine per cent agricultural workers, 17 per cent peasants, and 47 per cent intellectuals, civil servants, students, and craftsmen.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Nihat Erim and Sadi Koçaş, *Milliyet*, April 23 1971.

¹⁰³ Igor Lipovsky, “The Legal Socialist Parties of Turkey: 1960-1980”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 27-1 (1991) 94-111, 95.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

The spirit that established the TLP also triggered the formation of various student clubs in universities, from which, various revolutionary movements emerged. In the late 1960s, different voices started to rise within the TLP. Mainly, the faction of a national-democratic revolution led by Mihri Belli began to deviate from the main line of the party which adhered the establishment of the democratic socialism through constitutional/legitimate ways and through passive resistance against the American capitalism in Turkey. Furthermore, the student movement gathered under the Federation of Idea Clubs started to fractionalize as a result of the contradictions about the means and methods of revolution; and, in time, this fractionalization paved the way to the establishment of the revolutionary groups.

Throughout the 1970s, streets rather than the corridors of the parliament happened to be the ground on which the socialist movement took shape as a political actor. The TLP was banned after the 1971 intervention; and throughout the period, it could not have a chance to raise its voice within the zone of parliamentary politics. This is why the revolutionary groups started to organize underground; and started to fight irregularly and illegally¹⁰⁶ against the enemy, which was identified with the existing state structure and state elite. Turkish People's Liberation Army and People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey can be counted as prominent examples of those movements.

Nevertheless, there were other radical political movements besides leftist revolutionaries. With the foundation of the Nationalist Action Party and its youth organizations Idealist Hearths in 1969, extreme nationalist *Grey Wolves (Bozkurtlar)* also took their places in the process of political polarization. The Idealist Youth Organization was first established in 1969, under the leadership of Alparslan Türkeş who was also the leader of Nationalist Action Party and had

¹⁰⁶ Schmitt, *TOP*, 13.

been a coalition member of the Nationalist Front. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the youth organization of the NAP had prepared in commando camps for an anti-guerilla war and, especially after the formation of the Nationalist Front, this right-wing street force started to attack leftist-revolutionary groups on the streets with the reason of protecting the state from the threat of communism. “Former military prosecutor and Supreme Court Justice Emin Değer has detailed collaboration between the Bozkurts (Grey Wolves) and government counter-guerrilla units”¹⁰⁷ and he also cited “the advice from the CIA handbook used by the Turkish armed forces: anti-subversion units must be prepared to lead actions which can arouse popular suspicions that they are the work of revolutionaries. To achieve this one should not even refrain from engaging in acts of humanity”¹⁰⁸. This endeavor to organize and mobilize the right-wing street forces eventually ended up with a political chaos, which, in some senses, resembled a civil war.

Especially after the resignation of Prime Minister Ecevit and the formation of the Nationalist Front, the street forces from both right and left started to grapple with each other without any humanitarian compassion. It was pure violence on the streets that terrorized civilians and the parliamentary politics were unable to stop the bloodshed.

In this sense, extremist political movements can be identified as the third actor, which, in Schmittean terms, would be defined as “partisan” movements. “In partisan battle, a complexly structured new space of action emerges, because the partisan does not fight on an open field of battle nor on the same plane of open frontal war.”¹⁰⁹ The war they conducted was the war against an absolute enemy rather than a concrete and limited one; it is formally the state they waged war

¹⁰⁷ Seyla Benhabib, “The Next Iran or the Next Brazil?: Right-Wing Groups behind Political Violence in Turkey”, *MERIP Reports*, no. 77 (May, 1979), 16-17.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁰⁹ Schmitt, *TOP*, 49.

against. The existing regime of Turkey was established upon anti-communist premises and thus leading state officers continuously voiced hostility towards those “extremist” leftist movements and label them as the enemy of the state.

In the year 1970, the Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel was boldly expressing his concern about the revolutionary leftist groups that took a clear anti-government and anti-imperialist position by calling them “extremist movements”¹¹⁰ and “sources of anarchy”¹¹¹. In the aftermath of June 15-16 workers’ strike, the first martial law of the decade was declared on June 18, 1970 to be extended by the General Assembly every two months. Under the command of the military, harsh measures were taken against the actions of those “extremist” movements. In the meantime, the revolutionary groups, prominently the THKO (TLPA), started to prepare for armed resistance and guerilla war against American imperialism in the cities. On March 5 1971, the THKO kidnapped four American soldiers from American military base in Balgat, Ankara¹¹². Two days later, the Cabinet declared that they would not recognize the THKO as a legitimate organization nor would they negotiate¹¹³. After the coup by memorandum, the “Operation Sledgehammer” was launched to take urgent and harsh measures against the activities of “extremist” movements. Within the extent of the Operation, Erim government decided to shut down the Idealist Hearths and revolutionary youth organizations; changed various articles of 1961 constitution to limit the constitutional expand of the rights and freedoms. The leader of THKO Deniz Gezmiş and his comrades who kidnapped four

¹¹⁰ Tercüman, January 14 1970.

¹¹¹ Tercüman, May 28 1970.

¹¹² Milliyet, March 5 1971.

¹¹³ Milliyet, March 7 1971.

American soldiers were captured and imprisoned; and eventually the military court sentenced them to death¹¹⁴.

On 22 April 1971, “Deputy Premier Sadi Koçaş, the military’s representative in the cabinet, announced that ‘from today we are declaring war on all those who come out against the law’. Five days later, the martial law was declared in 11 of 67 provinces of Turkey. These provinces included the major urban and industrial areas of the country as well as the provinces of the south-east where Kurdish nationalists were active.”¹¹⁵ The stance, which the state preferred to take, points out the embedded enemy perception. Considering what the principles of parliamentary democracy presuppose, it can be claimed that the attitude developed against these “extremist” movements would originate in the strong state tradition rather than the parliamentary democracy. The state declared war against the “enemy within”. It was declared many times by the civilian or military officers that this enemy was in search of ways to dissolve existing regime and to destroy the state of Turkey under the cover of socialism¹¹⁶.

As a result of the coordinated act of the government and military, “...although calm was not restored easily, the situation did become calmer after the intervention, matched with an excess of military zeal and countless reports of the systematic torture of suspected leftists.”¹¹⁷ Thousands of people were arrested, tortured and imprisoned for they were seen as a threat against the state. Furthermore, “The military, along with many intellectuals, believed that much of the dissent and dissatisfaction in the universities and the press stemmed from the

¹¹⁴ Milliyet, January 11 1972.

¹¹⁵ Ahmad, *MMT*, 150.

¹¹⁶ Milliyet, May 22 1971; June 5 1971; September 28 1971.

¹¹⁷ Özgür Mutlu Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism*, (New York: IB Tauris, 2011), 18.

failure of the government to introduce social and economic reforms”¹¹⁸ and, besides imprisoning and torturing the members of those groups, it was also demanded to reform the social and economic structure in order to resolve the dissatisfaction and dissent of those groups.

In this sense, the role both the nationalist and socialist “extreme” movements undertook throughout the 1970s was directly linked with the strong state tradition which was represented and protected by the military, and which outmaneuvered the parliament at the same time. The parliament, even after the formation of a relatively civilian cabinet with 1973 elections, continued to deal with the partisan political movements in a way that the military would. Anti-communism was the roof under which the military and, after the closure of the TLP, the whole parliament gathered. Especially after the Nationalist Front’s coming to power, the dose of violence on the streets sharply increased. Beginning from 1975, the political struggle on the streets began to turn into a kind of civil war. The political polarization reached its peak and the struggle between the pro-state nationalist street forces and anti-state leftist revolutionaries culminated into armed conflict. Such political violence between the extremist political movements and state powers paved the way for the development of a political fragmentation at parliamentary level and, eventually, gave the military the justification to seize the political power, shut down the parliament, imprison elected politicians and to suppress those partisan political groups.

3.2. The Crisis of Turkish Parliamentary Democracy

“A regime is democratic when it can be credibly assumed that the people freely participate in determining who will form the government through competitive,

¹¹⁸ Kemal Karpat, *Turkish Politics*, 291.

free and fair national elections.”¹¹⁹ Turkish political life has been operated by this form of government since 1946 “except for three brief military interventions in the early 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.”¹²⁰ The perpetual presence of the military in civilian politics deviated the operation of the parliamentary democracy in time. As a result of this threatening shadow over the civilian zone of politics, the parliamentary democracy was in a deadlock in the end of 1970s.

Under the influence of the military and revolutionary leftist groups, the parliamentary democracy in Turkey experienced a serious breakdown throughout 1970s that, eventually, ended up with the military’s takeover of the political power in 1980. After the coup by memorandum in 1971, “The civilian parliament was allowed to function, and there were no mass arrests or trials of politicians”¹²¹; however this cannot be interpreted that the parliament was allowed to function freely and based on the genuine principles of parliamentary democracy. The memorandum that the military released to announce the takeover accused the existing government led by Süleyman Demirel of having “pushed the country into anarchy, fratricidal struggle and social and economic unrest through its (wrong) views, attitude and politics. In the eyes of the public the government had lost any hope of achieving the level of civilization targeted by Atatürk; failed to enforce the reforms mentioned by the Constitution and placed the future of the Turkish Republic in grave danger.”¹²² As a result of these accusations, the Prime Minister Demirel preferred to resign instead of standing against the military’s intervention. Some may say that this surrender of the democratically elected government to the military was a breaking point for the trajectory of Turkish political life that directed it towards intense political

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 56.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 56.

¹²¹ Ibid., 291.

¹²² Cumhuriyet, March 13-14, 1971.

radicalization, which triggered a sort of civil war, and consequently a military coup that would regenerate the structure of Turkish politics and parliamentary democracy.

The crisis of parliamentary democracy in Turkey should be seen both as the reason and the outcome of the military's inclusion in politics. It is the reason that dragged the military into the sphere of politics due to the parliament's inconsistent and hesitant attitude towards the values that the military exalted and towards the military itself. Using this hesitance, the Armed Forces strengthened the ground on which its traditional political stance has laid and, by this way, would claim the power any time whenever there seemed a threat to the image and potency of the glorious Turkish state.

3.2.1. The Reasons of the Crisis

The crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy in 1970s can be explained with reference to the main political actors. Throughout this period, the hostile interaction of three main actors, which are the military, parliament and partisan movements, instead of reconciling their dissenting positions, had exacerbated the political tension and made establishing the social peace more difficult. Why did Turkish parliamentary democracy have a crisis that turned the essentials of parliamentary democracy into an "empty formality" in Schmittian sense and dragged the existing political system to a deadlock? The reason that separated them irreconcilably was their different perceptions of the state, democracy and the concept of the political itself. According to Carl Schmitt, the crisis of parliamentary democracy is related to the mistaken identification of democracy with liberalism. With this mistaken analogy, it is implied that the parliamentary democracy has lost its function when it traded its basic principles, which are

“openness and discussion, division and balance of powers, concept of law and legislation in parliamentarism”¹²³, with liberalism. “All specifically parliamentary arrangements and norms receive their meaning first through discussion and openness” and in case this principle corrodes, the rest of the provisions of parliamentary democracy “would be unintelligible if the principle of public discussion were no longer believed in”¹²⁴.

Considering the circumstances of the period, the impact of the three political actors with their diverse goals and motives needs to be explained to understand the nature and scope of the crisis. The military, with its traditional statist position, was a serious obstacle before the consolidation of democracy. On the other hand, the parliament was trying to keep the mass support where its legitimacy depends; while also trying to please the military and fulfill its demands. This double bind situation of the parliament to maintain legitimacy through mass support and to please the military at the same time led the parliamentary democracy to lose its main function and rationale. As a result of this vacuum that emerged at the center of the political life, the partisan movements, which were excluded from the zone of parliamentary democracy and marginalized in time, came to the scene as an alternative political voice with the promise of an alternative conceptualization of the political.

The pressure of the military over the operation of the parliamentary democracy, as well as the social unrest of the masses which pushed them towards various illegal political groups, squeezed the parliamentary democracy in between. In this sense, the crisis of the parliamentary democracy seems to take place as a result of the disturbing presence of the military and partisan movements within

¹²³ Schmitt, *CPD*, 33-51.

¹²⁴ Schmitt, *CPD*, 3.

the zone of civilian politics within which the parliament is supposed to act as the legitimate political instrument.

The crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy could not be explained only through the presence of the military within the civilian zone of politics. The double bind condition of the parliament also has a great share in the course of events. At this point, besides the presence of the military and the partisan movements, it might be argued that the parliamentary democracy dragged itself into a deadlock by not being able to resist the pressure of the military.

3.2.2. Parliamentary Democracy's Response to the Crisis

“With the 1971 intervention, Turkey moved to a ‘military control/civilian partnership’ situation.”¹²⁵ Indeed, what the Turkish parliamentary democracy had to experience after 1971 intervention of the military was a mutation which, in advance, made the parliamentary democracy dysfunctional and brought the military into the politics once again. Under the martial law circumstances and keeping the memory of recent intervention of the military in mind, Turkish parliament was “...hesitant, if not extremely timid, in questioning the prevailing power configuration. Instead, they continued to consent, and even sometimes actively seek, an enhanced role for the military.”¹²⁶ The parliament preferred to cooperate with the military to protect the parliamentary democracy; however this cooperation had paybacks. Throughout the period, although the efforts for cooperating with the military kept the parliament officially open; the parliamentary democracy lost its core principles and turned into a mechanism

¹²⁵ Narlı, *Ibid.*, 113.

¹²⁶ Demirel, *Ibid.*, 128.

that determined its discourse, stance and actions according to the demands, expectations and political understanding of the military.

In this sense, to understand the crisis better, it would be helpful to divide the period between 1971 memorandum and 1980 coup into two main parts as the Interregnum, which its political directions were mainly given by the military, and the Coalitions, during which the impact of military was less prominent but still sufficient to sabotage the parliamentary democracy. The distinction has been put intentionally, regarding the ways that the parliamentary democracy preferred to response the course of events.

3.2.3. The Interregnum

In 1971, with the memorandum the high commanders released on the March 12, Turkish Grand National Assembly was enforced to make a decision considering the fate of parliamentary democracy. The 3rd article of the memorandum stated that “In case of this point is not swiftly actualized, Turkish Armed Forces is determined to exercise its duty given by the laws with regard to guard and protect the Republic of Turkey and directly assume the government.”¹²⁷ This was the implication of shutting down the parliament unless the existing government would accept their inadequacy and therefore resign¹²⁸. Thus, right after the coup by memorandum, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel resigned and a search for a new prime minister who would form a nonpartisan government as the military wished took start. This new, nonpartisan government formed under the military’s blessing was also the beginning of a new period, known as the interregnum. The surrender of the parliamentary democracy to the military at this juncture was a

¹²⁷ March 12 1971 Memorandum

¹²⁸ March 12 1971 Memorandum

breaking point and determined the new course of Turkish politics towards the 1980 coup.

On March 12, 1971, the armed forces chiefs, headed by army commander General Faruk Gürler, presented a memorandum to President Sunay demanding the installation of a "strong and credible government." The military leaders warned civilian officials that the armed forces would be compelled to take over the administration of the state once again unless a government was found that could curb the violence and implement the economic and social reforms, including land reform, stipulated in the 1961 constitution. Demirel resigned the same day. The incident was referred to as the "coup by memorandum." ... After consultation with Gürler and the other armed forces chiefs, Sunay asked Nihat Erim, a university professor and CHP centrist, to form a "national unity, above-party government" that would enlist the support of the major parties. Erim led the first of a series of weak caretaker cabinets that governed Turkey until the October 1973 elections.¹²⁹

The interregnum period started with the resignation of Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel in the aftermath of 1971 intervention. 1971 intervention was not exactly a coup d'état; but it was a certain intervention to the civilian, parliamentary politics and the reason behind this intervention was summed up in the memorandum of the March 12. In the 1st article of memorandum, the military accused the parliament and government of endangering the future of the regime and the state; and these establishments were 'nicely' warned to recover themselves and to solve social and political problems in democratic, parliamentary ways. The Armed Forces "...tried to rule through a National Security Council that was superior to the civilian parliament and a cabinet headed by a "neutral" figure, who, in this case, was Nihat Erim, a liberal-minded old-timer among RPP leaders"¹³⁰. Here it is clear that the military did not prefer to directly take the control of civilian politics; but with three articles, the military

¹²⁹ "Crisis in Turkish Democracy", US Country Studies archive, accessed March 5, 2013, <http://countrystudies.us/turkey/16.htm>

¹³⁰ Karpat, *Ibid.*, 364.

had paused civilian politics for two long years of interregnum during which the democratic parliamentary system obviously lost its function.

By the memorandum and the formation of a “neutral” government, the Armed Forces succeeded to rule through a seemingly democratic mechanism. This was an appropriate mean for the military’s ends; but not for the parliamentary democracy. The inclusion of the military within the zone of politics in such a way inevitably shifted the ground on which the parliamentary politics located. Parliamentarians and governments had to re-shape their attitude according to what the military’s perceptions of parliamentary democracy and state presupposed. In this sense, politicians started to act within the borders that the military and the state tradition determined.

From 1971 intervention to the 1973 general elections, Nihat Erim served as the prime minister of two interregnum cabinets. Two cabinets of Erim were formed as technocrat governments to complete the reforms which 1961 constitution had set forth; and the goal of these governments was clearly defined. On his first day as the prime minister, Nihat Erim declared that the government agenda was determined by the 2nd article of March 12 memorandum and aimed at completing the reforms Atatürk had started and 1960 coup continued¹³¹. More importantly, in the same declaration, Erim also stated that pleasing the Armed Forces was also among the prior goals of his government.

According to Erim, “both in 1960 and again in 1971 the military twice played a crucial role in the preservation of democracy and the safeguarding of the regime.”¹³² This statement demonstrates the impact of the military’s presence on the allegedly civilian zone of politics. It points out how the inclusion of the

¹³¹ Erim, *Ibid.*, 197.

¹³² Nihat Erim “Turkish Experience in the Light of Recent Developments”, *Middle East Journal* vol.26 no.3 (1972), 245-252, 248.

military in the zone of parliamentary politics was interpreted and justified by the parliament. Turkish parliamentary democracy has developed its unique way to re-define some notions in a way that would please the military. This adaptation that the parliamentary democracy experienced in Turkish case ended up with the emergence of a political system which could be neither totalitarian nor democratic. The parliamentary democracy in Turkey had to adapt itself to the conditions of the strong state tradition rather than replacing it with democratic values such as openness, discussion and plurality.

After the coup by memorandum, the President Cevdet Sunay, who also happened to be a former military commander, stated that “the military has done its duty”¹³³ by intervening into the unfortunate course of events. Besides, the Prime Minister Nihat Erim and Deputy Premier Sadi Koçaş repeatedly stated that what the military had done was for the protection of the democratic regime and constitutional order¹³⁴. The common attitude of parliamentarians and the military-originated president was praising the values of parliamentary democratic regime but at the same time respecting the borderlines that the strong state tradition had drawn around the parliamentary politics. This kind of ambiguous attitude had turned the parliamentary democracy into an empty framework which would be filled in as the military wished. Here, outside-but-within position of the military becomes clearer. Through dictating the formation of a cabinet under its blessing and determining the content of this government’s agenda, the Armed Forces entered into the area of parliamentary politics and started to form a political position held by the interregnum cabinet. Hence, the parliamentary politics found itself squeezed between the pressure of the military and the principles of the parliamentary democracy.

¹³³ Milliyet, March 16 1971.

¹³⁴ Milliyet, April 11 1971.

The end of the interregnum period and general elections did not eliminate the challenges that Turkish parliamentary politics confronted. After two years of interregnum, although general elections was held and a public will based government was formed, the military continued its inclusion in an indirect, but as equally effective as the direct way. As a result, even after the 1973 general elections, the parliamentary democracy could not get rid of the influences of the military's involvement and continued to keep their ambiguous positions.

3.2.4. 1973-1980: The Coalitions

The 1973-80 period was perplexing for Turkish politics as factors promoting instability were manifold. Turkish politics were polarized by the issues of Cyprus and European Community membership, education and economic policies, and martial law and corruption. Instability in the form of clashes between ultra-nationalist militants and radical-leftists, urban guerrilla terrorism, sectarian antagonism, union strikes, and a deteriorating economy in the midst of global and domestic economic crises increased political tensions. During this period, Turkey was ruled by internally divided coalition governments which included ultra-nationalist and Islamist parties.¹³⁵

Even though the pressure of the military over civilian politics was eliminated after the general elections held in 1973, Turkish politics continued to be "...characterized by fragmentation and polarization and by a lack of decisive authority on the part of the government. Polarization came to characterize not only the parties, but was insinuated into other important social sectors as well, including organized labor, the teaching profession, the civil bureaucracy, and even the police. On the right, an effective alliance developed between the centrist

¹³⁵ Narlı, *Ibid.*, 113.

Justice Party and the Nationalist Action Party, enabling the latter to infiltrate its minions into a variety of government agencies.”¹³⁶

In this sense, 1973 general elections was symbolically the transition to civilian politics; however this was neither a true transition to civilian politics nor a smooth process which contributed to social peace and political stability. Contrarily, various combinations of political stances, through the coalitions the political parties formed, instigated the political polarization and hostility.

Although voting polls insistently pointed out the RPP coming to the power in 1973 and 1977 elections¹³⁷, the RPP could not form a single-party government due to the electoral system. In this sense, the first government crisis had burst out even before the formation of the first coalition government after 1973 elections. “The results of the 1973 election did not give the winning party (the RPP) a sufficient majority to form a strong government. Instead, the country was forced to turn to a coalition government”¹³⁸. Thus, the search for a coalition partner had begun. Forming a coalition government with Demirel’s Justice Party or Türkeş’s Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi-MHP) was almost impossible; however “Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Salvation Party, was willing to form a partnership with anyone provided the price was right”¹³⁹. However, this could not be interpreted that forming a coalition was a smooth process. Contrarily, reaching an agreement with the National Salvation Party to form a coalition government took four months. In the end of this process, in

¹³⁶ Frank Tachau, Metin Heper. “The State, Politics and The Military in Turkey”, *Comparative Politics*, vol.16 no.1 (1983), 17-33, 24.

¹³⁷ Vote shares of the RPP in 1973 and 1977 elections respectively: 33.3%, 41.4%. For more see Heper and Criss.

¹³⁸ Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy: 1950-1975*, (London: Billing&Sons Limited, 1977), 328.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 328.

January 1974, the RPP-NSP (National Salvation Party-Milli Selamet Partisi) coalition, which was the first of coalitions from 1973 general elections to 1980 coup, was formed. This was a speculative and, certainly, unpromising coalition from the very beginning. As expected, this partnership did not last long. Although “both claimed to believe in a democracy that guaranteed the fundamental freedoms, a mixed economy, economic and social development with social justice, and an economic policy which benefited society as a whole”¹⁴⁰, their differences were still standing among these parties as an insurmountable fact. Indeed, irreconcilable differences were not only between the RPP and the NSP; but the rest of political parties also had their particular indisputable, adamant stances.

The rest of the coalitions did not go smooth as well. From 1973 to the 1980 coup, none of the governments were able to prevent the political radicalization and establish peace and stability. After Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit’s dissolution of the RPP-NSP coalition on September 1974 and after his success in Cyprus Peace Operation, the parliamentary politics dragged into a deadlock which neither of the political parties could form a reliable government that could have won a vote of confidence. After the months of failed trials for a coalition, on November 1974, Sadi Irmak was assigned to form a technocratic government by the President Korutürk¹⁴¹. Irmak formed his government mainly by technocrats; but could not have a vote of confidence and had to resign¹⁴². However, until the formation of a new government in the end of the March 1975, Sadi Irmak served as the prime minister; and left his place to Süleyman Demirel,

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 328.

¹⁴¹ Cumhuriyet, November 13 1974.

¹⁴² Milliyet, November 30 1974.

who led the first Nationalist Front government including the JP, NSP, NAP and RRP¹⁴³.

At this point, it must be noticed that as opposed to the representation of various right-wing political positions in the parliament, Ecevit-led RPP was the only legitimate representative of the left at parliamentary level. Thus the Nationalist Front was formed in the last days of 1974, against the alleged threat of communism that was represented by revolutionary groups on the streets and, supposedly, by Ecevit-led RPP in the parliament¹⁴⁴. The Front had developed a clear stance against the threat of communism. It was repeatedly underlined that “the state forces had to stop anarchy that threatened the regime and the unity of the state with its nation and territory”¹⁴⁵. In this sense, it is likely that the political parties were also affected by the rapid polarization that pushed large segments of society towards radical ideological positions. This polarization in the parliament inevitably exacerbated the formation of a consistent coalition.

From 1973 general elections to the 1980 coup, all of the coalitions continued to compromise with the military and to give its demands and expectations priority. Compared to the interregnum period, it might be argued that the military seemed less included in politics; but the Nationalist Front as a legitimate actor of parliamentary politics continued to impose and exalt some key values which have traditionally been defended by the military and, by this way, enabled the military to exist within the zone of politics. The Nationalist Front, by exalting the potency and image of Turkish state and by denying any room for dissenting political stances in an actually democratic parliament, took a position on the military’s side and paralyzed the ways of discussion, openness and after all, an

¹⁴³ Milliyet, April 1 1975.

¹⁴⁴ Milliyet, December 19 1974.

¹⁴⁵ Milliyet, April 28 1975.

efficient, coherently functioning, civilian parliamentary politics. This military-enabling attitude can also be observed in the speeches and statements of the RPP leader Ecevit. Under the given circumstances, he did not abstain from claiming that he was the real nationalist who was against communism and any kind of threat that would underestimate the embedded conceptualization and the potency of the state¹⁴⁶.

This attitude that penetrated into the political stance and statements of all of the political parties throughout 1973-1980 period would be the reason behind the constant instability. None of the political parties were capable of standing still against the demands of the military and able to demonstrate a strong democratic position. Instead, during this period the parliament tended to compromise with the military rather than protecting, exalting and implementing the genuine principles of parliamentary democracy, which are "...openness, discussion, division and balance of powers, concept of law and legislation in parliamentarism."¹⁴⁷ The parliament was neither democratic nor purely anti-democratic; nevertheless, this in-between situation into which the parliament fell became sufficient to drag the politics into a deadlock.

The distinguishing aspect of such ambiguous position of parliamentary politics *vis-à-vis* the military is worth mentioning. The parliament was stuck in a double bind between the principles of parliamentary democracy and strong state and eventually, giving way to the oppressing position of the military. For this reason, throughout the period, the parliament could not break the bond that tied it to the military and blocked the operation of parliamentary democracy. The insufficiency of coalition governments in taking the political trajectory under control and efficiently operating parliamentary politics, eventually paved the way

¹⁴⁶ Milliyet, April 18 1977.

¹⁴⁷ Schmitt, *CPD*, 42.

for the military to claim the political power. The negative impacts of this ambiguous stance of the parliament against the political tension and the pressure of the military reached its peak at certain breaking points which I attempt to examine in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

Breaking Points: Political Polarization and Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy

Throughout 1970s, some specific events created wider influences on the trajectory and characteristics of politics and society. In this sense, even though countless events occurred related to the political trajectory and definitions of politics, democracy and state; some of them seem more prominent with special regard to Carl Schmitt's theoretical framework. As a crucial part of this study, some events have been selected to be read from a Schmittian perspective. For the purposes of this study, four critical events would be selected to be explained under separate headlines. The first one is the presidential elections held in 1973. The 1973 presidential elections were selected to analyze the tension that sharply rose during the elections and influenced the trajectory of politics throughout this decade and to examine the relation between the military and the parliament. Secondly, the formation of the Nationalist Front within the parliament would be examined in order to understand the double-bind aspect of the parliamentary politics. The third part of this chapter would focus on the massacres happened at various cities of Turkey, especially during the year 1978. By examining these unfortunate mass murders, it is aimed at understanding the scope and content of the clash of three main actors of the period. Lastly, the Martial Law Coordination Office would be shortly analyzed in order to better understand the crisis of Turkish parliamentary democracy and the impact of the military over politics.

4.1. 1973 Presidential Elections: Parliament versus Military

1973 presidential elections was perhaps the first critical event in the aftermath of 1971 intervention in terms of the relationship between the military and parliamentary politics. “It was a test of the strength of Turkey's civilian institutions and constitutional procedures as well as a test of the military's patience with civilian politicians and compromise politics”¹⁴⁸ and the results were worth attention.

In the last months of 1972 and the beginning of 1973, the upcoming presidential elections were the main topic in both civilian and military officers' agenda. “To ensure their continued influence in policy making and policy direction, the military moderates pressed for the election of General Faruk Gürler, chief of the General Staff. As early as February 6, 1973, Commander of the Air Force General Muhsin Batur and Commander of the Naval Forces Admiral Kemal Kayacan had visited President Sunay to inform him of the armed forces' preference for General Gürler.”¹⁴⁹ Right after his immediate retirement, General Faruk Gürler, the former Chief of General Staff and one of the signatories of the March 12 Memorandum was assigned to senatorship by the president Cevdet Sunay¹⁵⁰. Leaders of the two largest political parties, Bülent Ecevit and Süleyman Demirel, were against the election of Faruk Gürler to the office of presidency; and they resisted to the pressure that the military created throughout the election process.

¹⁴⁸ Roger P. Nye, “Civil-Military Confrontation in Turkey: the 1973 Presidential Election”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol.8 no.2 (1977), 209-228, 210.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 213.

¹⁵⁰ *Milliyet*, March 8 1973.

At first sight, results indicated that the reluctant cooperation of civilian politics with the military during the interregnum had come to an end. The vast majority of the parliament was fiercely against the election of the Former Chief of Armed Forces General Faruk Gürler to the office of presidency. However, "...since none of the political parties including the JP declared an official candidate for presidency"¹⁵¹, it was expected that Gürler was the only candidate who would run the presidential elections. Even though they did not declare any candidate for presidency, this could not be interpreted that political parties consented upon electing Gürler to the presidency. After the retirement of Gürler from the Armed Forces Chieftainship; leaders of two largest political parties declared their concerns about Gürler's potential candidacy for the presidency.

According to Süleyman Demirel, "the pressure over the free will of the parliament would collapse the parliamentary regime. TGNA should elect the president under no pressure, only based on its free will."¹⁵² Bülent Ecevit also underlined that "...compelling the parliament to vote for a 'determined' candidate would damage the Republic, democracy, parliamentary regime and the Constitution."¹⁵³ In these declarations, it is crucial that both leaders avoided being offensive and the tone of their discomfort about this candidacy was turned down. Both leaders attracted attention in their declarations to an ambiguous potential threat that could become an obstacle before the free democratic operation of the parliament. However neither of them pointed out that the implied threat would be the presence of the military in the electoral process. Even though they exalted the virtues of a well-functioning parliamentary democracy and defended the autonomy of the parliament, leaders were not able to take a clear position against the ineffable presence of the military within the

¹⁵¹ Milliyet, March 6 1973.

¹⁵² Cumhuriyet, March 6 1973.

¹⁵³ Cumhuriyet, March 7 1973.

sphere of politics. As a result of this, the parliament started to seek for an alternative candidate who could run in the elections against the military's candidate. The JP suggested the candidacy of Tekin Arıburun who was also a former general and a Senator. The RPP on the other hand kept its silence about declaring or supporting a candidate; but also repeatedly emphasized that they would not support candidates who are nominated from outside the parliament¹⁵⁴. However, the military was insistent on the election of Gürler. On March 13 1973, high commanders were present at the parliament to "observe" the elections¹⁵⁵. Though, their threatening presence could not suffice for the election of Faruk Gürler to the presidency. Until the 14th round, neither of the candidates could receive the sufficient vote in continuing rounds. On March 20 1973, while the 7th round was held, Faruk Gürler's withdrawal was declared through to the public.¹⁵⁶

On the 15th round, eventually a candidate was selected by the agreement of the JP, RPP and RRP. The presidential elections ended up with the agreement upon the name of another retired general, whose presidency would please both the military and the parliament. Leaders who rejected to bring Faruk Gürler to the presidency agreed on Fahri Korutürk. The agreement on the name of Fahri Korutürk leads some second thoughts about what the results tell on the given situation of the military-civilian relations. The resistance against the election of Gürler was justified by Ecevit and Demirel through similar reasons. Both leaders emphasized that the election of Gürler to the presidency would create the doubt that the rule of the interregnum has not ended yet, and could damage the image of democracy and civilian, free elections in Turkey.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ "Cumhurbaşkanlığı", *Yankı*, 100, February 18 1973; *Son Havadis*, March 7 1973.

¹⁵⁵ Mehmet Ali Birand. *12 Eylül Yakın Tarih Belgeseli* 1. Bölüm: 12 Mart Kasırgası

¹⁵⁶ *Milliyet*, March 20 1973.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

In this sense, the cooperated resistance of two major political parties may seem like a brave step for the protection of parliamentary democracy and free, civilian politics. However, the agreement of these two parties on the name of another ex-military commander Fahri Korutürk rebuts such an argument and points out the significance of the 1973 presidential elections, for it was one of the most challenging interactions of the military and the parliament throughout this period.

The election of Fahri Korutürk to the presidency was a win-win situation which satisfied both military and parliament. After the resistance of the parliamentary against the election of Gürler, supporting the candidacy of Korutürk was a balancing move to sooth military's nerves. Ecevit declared that the crisis should be averted by protecting the prestige and reputation of the parliament but also "respecting the sensitivity of the military"¹⁵⁸. In this sense, agreeing on the presidency of Korutürk was the leaders' way to show their respect. That's why the reasons asserted against the presidency of Faruk Gürler disappeared when the name of Korutürk came up. Electing Korutürk was not seen threatening for the image of civilian politics in spite of his military background. The concerns of Ecevit and Demirel about the trajectory of Turkish democracy and civilian politics seemed to be disappeared. In this sense, 1973 presidential elections was a critical confrontation of the military and parliamentary democracy. Considering the results, it can be argued that this confrontation was solved in a way that aimed at reducing the tension in short term; but indeed the path the parliamentary democracy pursued was not quite promising for the consolidation of civilian democracy and free operation of the parliament. This confrontation was the confrontation of the strong state tradition which has traditionally tended to determine the operation of politics and the parliamentary democracy which cannot possibly function under those determined conditions.

¹⁵⁸ Yankı, 105, March 25 1973, 6.

Considering the whole picture, it could be argued that the parliament during the presidential elections was only a framework which was reformed accordingly to meet with the military's –in other words, strong state tradition's- demands. In this sense, “the postulate of openness in political life and the demand for a division of powers, or more specifically the theory of a balance of opposing forces”¹⁵⁹ were clearly ignored. Instead, the parliament was functioning as an intermediary mechanism that filters the demands and expectations of the military and transforms them into more acceptable, relatively more democratic forms. The agreement on the presidency of Korutürk was a sharp example of this filtering process. This event tested the limits of both the military and the parliament. The 1973 presidential election process exacerbated the crisis that Turkish parliamentary democracy experienced. The compromise politics that was applied to solve the election crisis in this case had become the default way of the parliament's interactions with the military until the military took the power over in 1980.

4.2. The Nationalist Front

Between 1971 and 1980, the number of political parties that was represented in the parliament had never been less than six¹⁶⁰. When the March 12 memorandum had been released, the parliament was composed of ideologically differed small political parties besides the center-right JP and center-left RPP. Indeed, the seats that the RPP and JP had in the parliament after 1973 and 1977 general elections were nearly the two out of three of whole seats; and since both parties rejected to form a “national coalition that would represent the majority of votes”¹⁶¹, the

¹⁵⁹ Schmitt, *CPD*, 36.

¹⁶⁰ Heper and Criss, *Ibid.*, 348-349.

¹⁶¹ *Milliyet*, March 2 1975.

small political parties had a key role on the formation of coalitions and eventually, the conduct of the parliamentary politics. In this sense, especially two of these small parties happened to be effective and strategic actors throughout the decade. The ultra-nationalist NAP led by Alparslan Türkeş and Islamist NSP led by Necmettin Erbakan used their key positions in the parliament to provide the majority for the formation or dissolution of coalitions and had been coalition partners with two centrist parties depending on the circumstances.

The Nationalist Front was formed in the end of 1974 by the JP, NSP and NAP and RRP. After "...Ecevit's coalition government collapsed following Turkey's July 1974 military operation in Cyprus" by the resignation of the PM Ecevit; Turkish parliamentary politics was stuck in a position which would neither let any of the political parties form a reliable government nor could hold early elections. Therefore, "...The long-divided right realized it was time to unite against the rising power of Bülent Ecevit's *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican Peoples Party—CHP). Ecevit's popularity was on the rise particularly due to the successful 1974 military intervention in Cyprus, conducted under his premiership."¹⁶² The right-wing political parties decided to unite their political power to prevent social democratic Ecevit from being the prime minister.

With these concerns, on December 19 1974, for the first time a public statement had been made in the name of the Nationalist Front by the Chairperson of the RRP Turhan Feyzioğlu. With this statement, the Nationalist Front declared that it was "...the union of nationalists who defends and believes in the continuity and unity of the state and the virtue of the free democratic regime"¹⁶³ and anybody who call themselves nationalist were more than welcomed. It was underlined that the Nationalist Front was:

¹⁶² Alev Çınar, Burak Arıkan, "The Nationalist Action Party: Representing the State, the Nation or the Nationalists?" *Turkish Studies*, vol.3 no.1 (2002), 25-40, 28.

¹⁶³ Milliyet, December 19 1974.

...Against any harmful activity that aims at destroying the unity of our State and nation. We adhere and respect the national and spiritual values. We recognize the liberal democratic regime only regime that fits to the dignity of human... We are determined to defend the liberal democratic regime of Turkish Republic against the attacks of communism and any other destructive movement.¹⁶⁴

In this sense, it was a right-wing, anti-communist coalition that gathered the center-right JP, ultra-nationalist NAP and Islamist NSP together. The Nationalist Front not only prevented the RPP coming to power; but also blocked the healthy operation of parliamentary politics by exacerbating the ideological polarization and shutting down the channels of discussion and negotiation. The emergence of a “front” within the parliament which aimed at preventing another legitimate parliamentary actor from governance was for sure the evidence of escalating rather than soothing the tension. The coalition of the right-wing political parties under the name of Nationalist Front and this very position they took would show the extent of the crisis of parliamentary democracy; as well as displaying the double-bind characteristic of the parliament. In this sense, the formation of the Nationalist Front was clearly a ground breaking development for the trajectory of Turkish politics. It was the coalition of ultra-nationalist, Islamist and centrist right¹⁶⁵ against the rise of a social democratic parliamentary actor which was seen as a potential threat against the embedded notions of state and politics. In this sense, the stance that the Nationalist Front preferred to take was closer to the traditional transcendental state understanding of the military. Although the Nationalist Front was an actor of parliamentary politics, it tended to operate parliamentary politics in a way that would fit to the demands and expectations of the military, rather than the essentials of parliamentary democracy.

¹⁶⁴ Milliyet, December 19 1974.

¹⁶⁵ Nilüfer Narlı “The Rise of Islamist Movement in Turkey”, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, vol.3 no.3 (1999) 38-48, 41.

The Nationalist Front formed two governments on March 1975 and July 1977. During their governance, the extent of violence and polarization both on the streets and the parliament had risen dangerously. Throughout these three years¹⁶⁶ under the rule of Nationalist Front governments, 354 people were killed and 908 injured¹⁶⁷. Besides the continuing political conflicts on the streets of biggest cities of Turkey, political polarization based on Alevi-Sunni and/or socialist-nationalist distinctions in small Anatolian towns started to increase. The Front governments had witnessed Taksim Square Massacre (May 1 1977), continuing workers' strikes, student protests and hundreds of unsolved political murders. The rapid increase in political polarization and fraternal fight especially after 1975 could be the government of the Nationalist Front since, for more than half of the 1975-1980 period, the leader of the Front Süleyman Demirel was the prime minister.

There were some main points that shaped the political position of the Nationalist Front. These main points served as a common ground for ultra-nationalist, centrist and Islamist right political parties upon which they could form a government. On the other hand, these points could be seen as the reason behind the political instability and incoherency that dragged the parliamentary politics into a deadlock and the country to a military coup. The main common grounds on which the political parties formed the Front were the idea of strong state, anti-communism, and after all, nationalism. Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel did not abstain from expressing his ideas about the significance of keeping the strong image and structure of the state. He and the leaders of other Front parties repeatedly emphasized the importance of keeping the unity of the state with its nation and territory and underlined that this was the common ideal that gathered

¹⁶⁶ First and second Nationalist Front governments served nearly for three years, respectively between March 1975- June 1977 and July 1977-January 1978. See: Heper and Criss, *Historical Dictionary of Turkey*, Appendix B, 346.

¹⁶⁷ Milliyet, December 31 1977.

those parties together. The ‘anarchical’ movements that the Nationalist Front formed against were also qualified as “...the instigations of the enemies of Turkey”¹⁶⁸. At this point, it is clear that in the understanding of the enemy and definition of the state as a strong political entity, the Nationalist Front parties were on the same line with the military. Besides the statements of the PM Demirel, both Türkeş and Erbakan declared their concerns about the threat that the communism posed against “...the unity and authority of the glorious Turkish state”¹⁶⁹ and regularly underlined that the state forces would do whatever was necessary “...to eliminate the threat of communism and any other kind of anarchy.”¹⁷⁰

For a legitimate, civilian political actor; this kind of perception of the state and politics would seem quite disconnected to the essentials of the parliamentary democracy. The original idea of parliamentary democracy was established upon the idea of discussion which means according to Schmitt “...an exchange of opinion that is governed by the purpose of persuading one's opponent through argument of the truth or justice of something, or allowing oneself to be persuaded of something as true and just.”¹⁷¹ However, with the formation of the Nationalist Front, the chances of discussion as a parliamentary political practice decreased. The position held by the Nationalist Front would seem closer to the military’s position which claimed to maintain the unity of nation, to prevent the devaluation of the state and the degeneration of its omnipotent, transcendental image. Here the dilemma that squeezed the Nationalist Front between the virtues of parliamentary democracy and traditional position of the military comes clearer.

¹⁶⁸ Milliyet, November 29 1975.

¹⁶⁹ Milliyet, July 13 1977.

¹⁷⁰ Milliyet, July 10 1977.

¹⁷¹ Schmitt, *CPD*, 5.

The political parties that formed the Nationalist Front were conservatives who appreciated the strong state tradition and re-define parliamentary democracy in a way that could fit into the essentials of strong state tradition. The roots of their conservatism have traditionally tended to defend the strong state as a transcendental, authoritarian figure. However, as the elected members of the parliament, those parties were also expected to pursue and exalt the principles of parliamentary democracy to survive the elections. On the other hand, showing their fidelity to the existing regime was also binding for the Nationalist Front since they learned a lesson from what happened to DP leader Prime Minister Adnan Menderes after 1960 coup and to Demirel himself in 1971 intervention. Meanwhile, while forming the Nationalist Front governments, they knew that their survival in the political sphere depended on negotiating with the military and the strong state tradition it has guarded.

In the light of the points mentioned above, it can be argued that the Nationalist Front governments were stuck at a point which they could be neither democratic nor purely anti-democratic. This situation triggered compromising with the military on the one hand, and uttering the virtues of parliamentary democracy to have public support and legitimacy on the other. Thus the Nationalist Front's moderate attitude towards the virtues of the strong state tradition had escalated the political polarization both in the parliament and on the streets. Frankly, the strong state perception, which was based on "...the indivisible unity of the state with its nation and territory"¹⁷² and also emphasized by the Nationalist Front parties, did not help reducing the political tension. As a matter of fact, the Nationalist Front, by waging open war against those who were defined as threats to the strength and unity of Turkish state and nation¹⁷³, clearly served for otherwise.

¹⁷² Milliyet, January 16 1977.

¹⁷³ Milliyet, June 10 1977.

4.3. Political Violence and Massacres

The political and social tension artificially reduced by the military's intervention in 1971 started to rise again especially after the Nationalist Front came to power in 1975. Under the surveillance of the military and leading of the Nationalist Front government, ideological conflicts and political violence dramatically increased. The discomfort of both the military and Nationalist Front government because of the activities of partisan (especially socialist-revolutionary) movements started to be emphasized more frequently. In the second half of 1976, the political violence and conflict spread through small Anatolian towns and the number of political murders dangerously increased. These massacres would be analyzed in order to understand the clash of three main political actors and the enmity conception that puts a certain distinction between the state and anti-state factors.

The May 1st of 1977 could be accepted the breaking point for the political violence events that were mentioned as one of the most significant reasons that led the military to take the power over in 1980¹⁷⁴. For the May Day of 1977, Kemal Türkler, the Chairman of the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK) summoned the members of Confederation and the members of other trade unions¹⁷⁵. In turn, the estimated population of the crowd in Taksim Square on the May 1, 1977 was around 500.000¹⁷⁶. During the speech of the DİSK Chairman Türkler, gunfire started at the crowd from a car and roofs of various buildings around¹⁷⁷. Thousands of people started to run away. In few

¹⁷⁴ *12 Eylül: Öncesi ve Sonrası*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1981), ix.

¹⁷⁵ *Milliyet*, April 18 1977.

¹⁷⁶ *Sosyalizm ve Toplumsal Mücadeleler Ansiklopedisi*, "1973-1980 Arası İşçi Hareketleri: 1 Mayıs 1977", 2296.

¹⁷⁷ Gün Zileli, *Havariler: 1972-1983*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), 273.

minutes, the panic reached a disastrous level. 36 people were killed and 136 injured in Taksim.¹⁷⁸ In the aftermath of these events Nationalist Front cabinet declared their decision on taking more powerful safety measures. It was also declared that they would demand the military's help in this fight against anarchy.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, Deputy Chair of the NAP Ali Fuat Eyüpoğlu's public statement indicated the approach of Front member NAP towards the events of the May 1. He, on behalf of his party, implied that the main opposition RPP and the DİSK that organized the Labor Day were responsible for what happened and boldly stated that "...the RPP and DİSK should be closed down"¹⁸⁰. This attitude of the Nationalist Front political parties that had taken part in the government for two years was divisive rather than unifying; and inevitably, such a position taken by the top of the decision-making exacerbated the violence and ideological polarization. Hence, in the aftermath of May 1 1977, the extent of political violence, frequency of street fights and political murders and after all, the number of victims continued to drastically increase. The reported number of dead and injured in 1977 was respectively 157 and 1667.¹⁸¹

In the beginning of 1978, the Second Nationalist Front government dissolved and the RPP leader Bülent Ecevit accomplished to form the new government with the support of the RRP, DP and independents.¹⁸² During 1978, this government had to confront with the bloody results of increasing polarization and armed conflict, especially in small Anatolian towns that were populated heterogeneously by Alevis and Sunnis and/or Kurds and Turks.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 2296.

¹⁷⁹ Milliyet, May 3 1977.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Milliyet, January 1 1978.

¹⁸² Milliyet, January 4 1978.

While Ecevit was trying to end the political violence without declaring the martial law, the opposition parties JP, NAP and NSP had kept their critical tone against Ecevit's way of dealing with anarchy. The opposition also asserted that Ecevit was responsible for the unfortunate course of events. According to Demirel's claim, as soon as Prime Minister Ecevit would agree that the anarchy on the streets was originated in communist ideas and threatened our state, the national unity would be established.¹⁸³ Although they accused Ecevit because of his attitude of preventing the establishment of the national unity; neither of opposition leaders tended to leave their critical, labeling attitude to reduce the tension or to take a step forward for the formation of the unity.

On the 17th of April 1978, the independent mayor of Malatya, Hamit Fendođlu, his two grand children and daughter-in-law were killed by a bomb sent to his home¹⁸⁴. Right after the assassination of the mayor, protests and street fight which ended up with 1 dead and 15 injured¹⁸⁵ took start in Malatya. Mainly, it seemed that the target of these events was the RPP and especially Ecevit. The RPP party building was set on fire and Ecevit was loudly protested during his visit to the city for the funeral of Mayor Fendođlu. The main theme of slogans shouted out was anti-communism and Islamist sensitivities¹⁸⁶. Eventually, the military forces had taken the events under control.

What happened in Malatya was just the first signal of increasing political tension and violence in small towns. In the coming years, countless mass violent events occurred in different provinces of Turkey. In advance, the anti-communist and Sunni-nationalist polarization escalated uncontrollably. Inevitably, this

¹⁸³ Milliyet, April 2 1978.

¹⁸⁴ Milliyet, April 18 1978.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

polarization spread across the country and the strife between the nationalist militants and revolutionary groups started to turn into a civil war. However, it was not only the outcome of polarization on the streets. The parliament itself was divided as the nationalist parties, which repeatedly emphasized the importance of protecting the state authority and unity; and Ecevit-led RPP which exalts the virtues of parliamentary democracy, civilian and legal solutions to anarchy and whose public support was mainly based on trade unions, social democratic masses and intellectuals. Both sides tended to accuse each other. Even though all political party leaders expressed their concern about the political trajectory and pointed out the significance of the unity inside, none of them would take a further step over these statements.

The NAP, JP and NSP insisted that Ecevit was responsible for the bloodshed because of his mild attitude towards anarchy on the streets. Furthermore, Demirel claimed that the state was occupied by left militants during Ecevit's governance¹⁸⁷. It is clear that the ideological division within the zone of parliamentary politics was deep rooted so that it would seem challenging to operate the parliament on the basis of its original principles which are openness and discussion. At this point, the mass violence events on the streets that led to the death of hundreds in few months would seem as inevitable results of the increasing hostility at the top¹⁸⁸. Hence this growing ideological gap in the parliament led the parliamentary politics into a deadlock, and gave the military the green light to intervene. These events are also important since they showed the Nationalist Front's tendency to "collapse the distinction between the CHP and the socialist left."¹⁸⁹ The erosion of the line between the RPP and

¹⁸⁷ Milliyet, March 21 1978.

¹⁸⁸ Abdi İpekçi, "Tavanda Düşmanlık, Tabanda Şiddet", Milliyet, September 8 1978.

¹⁸⁹ Emma Sinclair-Webb, "Sectarian Violence: The Alevi Minority and the Left: Kahraman Maraş 1978" in *Turkey's Alevi Enigma: A Comprehensive Overview*, ed. Paul J. White and Joost Jongerden (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 216.

revolutionary left movements inevitably exacerbated the intra-parliamentary polarization. Hence, the Nationalist Front parties set their position against anarchy and, covertly, against Ecevit's social democratic stance and continued to accuse the RPP government of being responsible for the polarization of masses and fraternal fight.

On the 3rd of September 1978, a group of people in Sivas started to attack the houses where Alevis lived and the workplaces in Alibaba district, which was predominantly populated by Alevi citizens. These offenders were the NAP-affiliated Grey Wolves who tried to increase the tension claiming that Alevis and communists were attacking mosques and killing Sunnis. This group suggested that since Alevis' and communists' attacks targeted Sunni Islam, they should be stopped in the name of Islam. In this sense, what instigated the people to attack their neighbors was a kind of *jihad*¹⁹⁰ call that was declared against an 'enemy within' which obviously referred to communists and Alevis. At this point, what was presented in the form of religious conflict was actually the struggle between the strong state conception defended by the military and exalted by the nationalist front in the parliament. The political chaos of 1978 turned into massacres. It can be perceived as the war of the strong state conception against those who threatened the unity of nation and state. Therefore it was "...behind the front of a holy war lies an all too secular and, destructive strategy mounted by the organized, extreme right in Turkey."¹⁹¹ Hence the circular distributed with the signature of the Muslim Youth, "... by elements who can be assumed to have affiliated with the local branch of the MHP"¹⁹² pointed out the same perception and strategy:

¹⁹⁰ Jihad: Holy war of Islam

¹⁹¹ Benhabib, *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 215.

Beware Alevis!

Do not be used as an instrument; take lessons from history. Once upon a time you used to utter, 'Shah, Shah' [a reference to the Alevi/Kızılbaş support for Shah Ismail, the Safavid leader in the early sixteenth century]. Now it is not towards the Shah, but towards communism you are heading. We will absolutely prevent this move.¹⁹³

By this statement, nationalist Muslim Youth displayed its perception of the enemy and waged war against those who move towards communism. In this sense, it is obvious that the problem rooted deeper than the Alevi-Sunni distinction. Under this cover, it was actually the elimination of threatening anti-state factors through sectarian hostility, violence and oppression.

It took four days to suppress the bloody events in Sivas. These four days had cost the lives of twelve people and more than hundred injured¹⁹⁴. In the aftermath of these events, rather than searching for a middle ground on which all political parties could debate, negotiate and act, the opposition parties continued to attack the Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, accusing him of warding the leftist militants and by this way paved the way for more bloodshed.¹⁹⁵ In parallel with the day to day increase in the number of the dead and injured, the anti-communist position of the military and Nationalist Front parties expanded its scope in a way that targeted a wider spectrum of the left led by the RPP. As a result of this, the polarization and enmity started to climb within the parliament so that the chance of democratic discussion and operating on the basis of openness principle had become senseless. What happened in Sivas was actually the preview of rising tension between Alevis and Sunnis in Anatolian cities in parallel with the rising tension in the parliament between the Nationalist Front parties and the RPP.

¹⁹³ Ali Öztürk, "Olaylarda MHP'nin rolü", *Aydınlık*, December 2 1978.

¹⁹⁴ *Milliyet*, September 8 1978.

¹⁹⁵ *Milliyet*, November 6 1978.

In the end of 1978, "...amidst the tumultuous political environment of the pre-1980 period, over 100 Alevis were killed in 36 hours by right-wing groups in Maraş. Slogans such as 'Maraş's going to be the grave of Alevis!' were chanted in the streets."¹⁹⁶ It was an attack of the nationalists on communists, Sunnis on Alevis, or, in other words, the state tradition to its enemies. The incident in Kahraman Maraş began with the explosion of a bomb in a movie theatre during the demonstration of a nationalist movie named *Güneş Ne Zaman Doğacak?* (When will the sun rise?) on December 19 1978. The following day it was reported that the building of the post office (PTT) and the windows of the local RPP building were smashed and a police car was destroyed¹⁹⁷.

"Though at first the film's anti-Russian (and by implication anti-communist) political line was suggested to have provoked the bombing by leftists, it was later shown in the trial to have been 'staged' by local *ülküci* rightists in order to implicate leftists as the perpetrators. This provides a clear link with other provocations (notably events in April 1978 in Malatya in which MHP supporters would attack one of their own or a workplace or cafe associated with their party in an attempt to smear the left and trigger further confrontations."¹⁹⁸ The following day, two leftist teachers Hacı Çolak and Mustafa Yüzbaşıoğlu were shot¹⁹⁹. "Their funerals were to take place on Friday 22 December, but the eruption of the armed clashes outside the mosque where prayers were to be said prevented the ceremony, left three people dead by the end of that day, many others injured and saw the destruction of property, workplaces and businesses in

¹⁹⁶ Zeynep Alemdar and Rana Birden Çorbacıoğlu. "Alevis and Turkish State", *Turkish Policy Quarterly* vol.10 no.4 (2012) 117-124, 119.

¹⁹⁷ Milliyet, December 20 1978.

¹⁹⁸ Sinclair-Webb, Ibid. 223.

¹⁹⁹ Milliyet, December 24 1978.

town.”²⁰⁰ In the next few days, the dose of violence escalated drastically; the number of dead and injured on December 26 was respectively 93 and 161. This day, against everything he emphasized on the virtues of civilian politics for months, Bülent Ecevit uttered declaring the martial law for the first time to stop the bloodshed in Kahraman Maraş. The next day, the parliament approved the martial law in 13 provinces; however this could not be a relief. The number of dead was still escalating and the Nationalist Front parties continued to criticize Ecevit and the RPP government about the course of events. On 27th of December, the NSP claimed that the one-sided attitude of government paved the way for the rise of anarchy²⁰¹ and thus triggered horrible incidents in Sivas, Malatya and eventually Kahraman Maraş.

Political violence in Kahraman Maraş longed about a week. The number of dead was more than one hundred. Throughout this process, certain state authorities kept their monotone statements emphasizing how artificial this enmity that triggered these events was and the immediate need for unity. On the 23rd of December, President Korutürk stated that “the external enemies who wanted to disintegrate our nation attempt at turning sectarian differences into fraternal fight and... the state cannot be a bystander where there is an attempt of starting fraternal fight.”²⁰² This is a vague statement regarding where it came from. By this statement, an ambiguous enemy definition is put which is mainly derived from the unity understanding of the strong state tradition. The actual expression of this vague enmity conception comes clearer in the statements of the Nationalist Front parties. The leaders of the opposition parties have tended to interpret the course of events as completely Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit’s fault. The NAP leader Alparslan Türkeş’s public statement strongly displays the

²⁰⁰ Sinclair-Webb, Ibid. 222.

²⁰¹ Milliyet, December 27 1978.

²⁰² Milliyet, December 23 1978.

attitude of the right-wing against Ecevit. According to him, the mere responsible for what happened in Kahraman Maraş was Bülent Ecevit and the RPP administrators and Ecevit's tolerant attitude towards anarchy would trigger the happening of similar incidents in different cities.²⁰³ By this way, the ways of finding inter-parliamentary solutions to the situation has been definitely shut down thus the martial law had to be declared once more Thus on December 26 1978, Ecevit-led RPP government declared martial law in 13 provinces (Ankara, Istanbul, Sivas, Erzincan, Erzurum, Kars, Bingöl, Elazığ, Urfa, Gaziantep, Malatya, Maraş, and Adana) of Turkey.

The dreadful events that happened in Kahraman Maraş were a milestone on the way towards the military coup. Alevi-Sunni, nationalist-communist distinctions reached its peak in the parliament as well as it did on the streets. This sharp polarization, which aggravated the establishment of democratic dialogue and shut down the chance of reaching an intra-parliamentary consensus, ended in the immediate necessity to declare the martial law and left the stage to the military one more time. In this sense, not only Kahraman Maraş but also other incidents that happened in 1970s demonstrate the parliamentary democracy's insufficiency to cope with political polarization in Turkey. The parliament itself suffered from political polarization that dragged the openness and discussion principles into a dead end.

4.4. Martial Law Coordination Office: a Middle Ground

In the beginning of 1978, as a result of the dissolution of the Second Nationalist Front government, Bülent Ecevit was assigned to form the 42nd government of

²⁰³ Milliyet, December 26 1978.

the republic.²⁰⁴ During the year he served as a prime minister, political polarization dangerously escalated and aforementioned bloody massacres took place in various provinces of Turkey. Throughout this process, Ecevit repeatedly emphasized that any measure against anarchy would be taken under the rule of law²⁰⁵. With this statement, it was implied that the civilian politics would cope with the situation instead of declaring martial law and letting the military take the control over. Besides the protection of democratic virtues, the continuation of DİSK's support that helped the RPP win the 1977 general elections was a strong motive that restrained the Ecevit from consenting on declaring the martial law. However, after Kahraman Maraş Massacre in the end of 1978, in spite of what he said, Ecevit had to declare the martial law in 13 provinces.²⁰⁶

The political violence reached an uncontrollable level and political polarization was peaked through the friend-enemy distinctions of Alevi-Sunni and communist-nationalist. Under these circumstances, Bülent Ecevit had to declare the martial law in the last days of 1978²⁰⁷ and few days after this, the establishment of the Martial Law Coordination Office was declared.²⁰⁸ The statement also said that the establishment of the Martial Law Coordination Office was founded on the basis of the Martial Law Code No. 1402/5 which presupposes that “in case of the state of exception, the Prime Minister’s Office shall be responsible for the coordination of military officers.”²⁰⁹ Therefore, on

²⁰⁴ Milliyet, January 2 1978.

²⁰⁵ Milliyet, September 8 1978.

²⁰⁶ Cumhuriyet, December 26 1978.

²⁰⁷ Milliyet, December 27 1978.

²⁰⁸ Milliyet, December 29 1978.

²⁰⁹ Milliyet, December 29 1978.

December 29 1978, the Martial Law Coordination Office held its first meeting under the leading of Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit.

The RPP government led to the foundation of the Martial Law Coordination Office in order to coordinate the operations of the military and government against anarchy and fraternal fight. Indeed, the move that Bülent Ecevit made to keep the military under control was a strategic one. While the declaration of the martial law was argued at Grand National Assembly, Ecevit stated that within constitutional and legal borders, the military would be called for duty to protect the unity of the state and nation²¹⁰ and, in this sense, the foundation of the Martial Law Coordination Office was a step further to guarantee that the military would do its part under the control of the civilian politics.

The formation of such an office to inform the government about the actions of the military in martial law regions was a bold move against the embedded conceptions of the military. The military, as it was experienced in 1960 and 1971, never tended to be accountable to civilian politics. For it was designed to be a middle ground for the military and civilian politics, the Martial Law Coordination Office was a significant development which nevertheless could not properly function under given circumstances and doomed to fail. In this sense, the foundation of the Martial Law Coordination Office would be examined as a failed attempt of civilian politics to curb the military's enthusiasm to involve in civilian politics.

It would be also expected that the parliamentary opposition supported the formation of such a mechanism for the virtues of the parliamentary democracy. Instead, they preferred to take an anti position to what Prime Minister Ecevit tried to do. Especially the JP leader Süleyman Demirel approached this practice

²¹⁰ Ibid.

doubtful and critical. He claimed that by the formation of the Martial Law Coordination Office to make the actions of the military accountable to the government, Ecevit's government actually "...prevented the military to do its job for establishing peace and security."²¹¹

In this sense, the dilemma that squeezed the whole period of Turkish politics between the traditional state conception of the military and principles of parliamentary democracy comes clearer. The parliamentary opposition reacted even more than the military against the formation of such a mechanism that aims at rendering the operations of the military in martial law regions accountable to the civilian political authority. This attitude would be explained through the strong state tradition that has always amazed the right-wing politics and, in Turkish case, has always been guarded and exalted by the military. Considering this, the failure of the Martial Law Coordination Office as a medium mechanism between the military and the government was not a great surprise. Süleyman Demirel's public statement on the February 3 1979 implied the discomfort and distrust to the Martial Law Coordination Office. It was mainly claimed that the government became an obstacle before the martial law by trying to control the operations and decisions of the military. He also highlighted in this speech that the Coordination Office may lead to the decay of the military's reputation in the eyes of public.²¹² Here it is clear that the parliamentary opposition was ready to instigate the military to act against the existing government, rather than supporting the existing government in its endeavor against rising political violence. This may be seen as an evidence of the insurmountable gap that divided parliamentary politics into two poles as the leftist RPP and the right-wing Nationalist Front parties. Eventually, the Martial Law Coordination Office

²¹¹ Milliyet, February 23 1979.

²¹² Ibid.

could not accomplish its purpose. Neither what Ecevit expected could come true nor could the martial law end the political violence and fraternal fight.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

A government that was decisively influenced by the representation of the people was called a parliamentary government, and the word was thus applied to a particular kind of executive... Parliamentary government presupposes a parliament, and to demand such a government means that one begins with parliament as an existing institution in order to extend its powers, or, in the customary language of constitutionalism, the legislative should influence the executive. The fundamental concept of the parliamentary principle cannot rest solely on the participation of parliament in government.²¹³

In the *Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, Carl Schmitt examines the causes that dragged the modern parliamentary democracy into a deadlock. According to him, the main problem is the misidentification of democracy with liberalism.²¹⁴ This mistaken analogy leads to erosion of the basic principles of parliamentary democracy and turns it into an empty framework which operates with no regard to its basic principles. He claims that “the crisis of the parliamentary system and of parliamentary institutions in fact springs from the circumstances of modern mass democracy... Modern mass democracy attempts to realize an identity of governed and governing, and thus it confronts parliament as an inconceivable and outmoded institution.”²¹⁵ In the case of 1971-1980 period Turkish politics, the crisis of parliamentary democracy derived from the clash of the strong state tradition with the principles of parliamentary democracy. The strong state tradition in Turkish political culture which has been carried on by the military also continued to shape the operations of parliamentary democracy. Political

²¹³ Schmitt, *CPD*, 33.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

parties that were squeezed between the military's threatening presence and the necessities of parliamentary politics had inevitably fell into a double-bind situation in which they had to perform two contradictory ways: one is to comply with authoritarian demands of the military and the other is to act according to the requirements of parliamentary democracy. Throughout the 1970s, this double-bind condition of parliamentary politics exacerbated the crisis of parliamentary democracy and may even have precipitated to the political violence, massacres and eventually a military coup.

This thesis has reached certain conclusions as a result of this study. The first would be about the state conception and political inclusion of the military. The Armed Forces has always been an indispensable part of Turkish political life. 1960, 1971 and 1980 interventions were not the only examples of military inclusion in civilian politics. The active inclusion of Turkish military officers in civilian politics from the beginning of Turkish republic comes to the scene as one of fundamental dynamics directing the trajectory of Turkish politics. The mentality of Turkish military after the foundation of Turkish republic had been shaped around the principles of Atatürk; “even though the role attributed to the armed forces was that of complete subservience to the civilian rule, the military did assume as their self-image the role of guardianship of Kemalist ideals and chief protagonist of modernizing reforms, which was also the ideal of Atatürk himself. The military was formally entrusted with the duty ‘protect and look after’ the republic in Paragraph 35 of the Army Internal Service Law promulgated in 1935”²¹⁶. In this sense the military, throughout the 1970s had taken its place on the stage of politics as the guardian of the omnipotent, transcendental state tradition. This was an abnormally authoritarian position to take within the zone of parliamentary democracy. However the military, through different channels, integrated itself to parliamentary politics and as a result of this integration, parliamentary democracy was dragged into a deadlock that had

²¹⁶ Ulus, *Ibid.*, 11.

given the military the necessary excuse to intervene to civilian politics. In this sense, the conceptualization of the state and understanding of the political by the military in 1960, 1971 and 1980 can be linked with Carl Schmitt's friend-enemy distinction based conceptualization of the political and, in parallel, the concept of the total state.

Furthermore, the inclusion of the military into civilian politics also points out Schmitt's *Political Theology* which argues that "...The sovereign produces and guarantees the situation in its totality. He has the monopoly over this last decision. Therein resides the essence of the state's sovereignty, which must be juristically defined correctly, not as the monopoly to coerce or to rule, but as the monopoly to decide."²¹⁷ What the military have attempted in 1960, 1971 and 1980, in this sense, could be seen as directly linked with defining the moment of exception by the military. At that point, it might be said that in Turkish politics the military have tended to determine the moment of exception on the basis of its embedded state and politics conceptions. Hence in 1970s, this kind of inclusion of the military within the zone of civilian politics would drag the parliamentary politics into a crisis.

Secondly, considering the reaction of state offices in cases of political violence, "the passive complicity of certain authorities and the part of the police force is ... worth noting. In such a context, the public authorities were no longer neutral and far from seeking to calm the population, they actually exploited political and religious divergences."²¹⁸ This indicates that the legitimate political authority, the parliament has suffered from the political polarization. Instead the parliament should have to remedy political polarization and violence through public

²¹⁷ Schmitt, *PT*, 13.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

deliberation²¹⁹, openness²²⁰ and the division (balance) of powers²²¹. At this point, the double-bind condition of the parliament constitutes the main obstacle before the consolidation and operation of parliamentary democracy. Throughout the period, parliamentary politics had to operate under the threatening shadow of the military. This kind of pressure inevitably led some changes in the rationale and operation of parliamentary democracy in Turkey. The parliament was squeezed between the demands and expectations of the military and the essentials of parliamentary democracy. This in-between situation had put the parliament in a position that paved the way for the rise of political polarization. The center-right JP, Islamist NSP and ultra-nationalist NAP that formed the Nationalist Front in 1975 symbolize the right-wing; while the social democratic RPP symbolizes the left-wing of the polarization in the parliament. Throughout the 1970s, this polarization in the parliament manifested itself on the streets in the form of Alevi-Sunni, communist-nationalist, and after all, the state and anti-state distinctions. All these distinctions point out the traditional understanding of the state based on its unity, transcendence and potency. At this point, it must be noted that although the political polarization and radicalization became more intense, the relations among these political stances became more ambiguous and complicated. The parliamentary politics traded its essentials with the strong state tradition that the military traditionally guarded. At certain points it would become impossible to distinguish the political position of the military and one of legitimate political parties. The parliament, instead of virtues of democratic regime, started to defend the virtues of the strong state that were exalted by the military.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 34.

²²⁰ Ibid., 37.

²²¹ Ibid., 40.

According to Schmitt, “the state rests, as a political unity, on the combination of two opposed principles: the principle of identity (namely the presence of the people as a political unity... when capable of distinguishing between friend and enemy) and principle of representation, by virtue of which the political unity is constituted by the government.”²²² Regarding this, it is clear that parliamentary politics in Turkey would not accomplish its duty to constitute the unity of the people and failed as a political mechanism. This failure paved the way for a military coup, rapid political polarization and political instability that blocked the operation of parliamentary politics. As well as the presence of the military within the zone of politics, the parliamentary politics was also responsible for the trajectory of events.

Lastly, the role of the partisan movements on the course of events in 1970s could be qualified as partisanship in Schmittean terms. The street fights were mainly originated in the ideological struggle of those groups throughout the period. They were illegal, irregular and had their own enemy conceptions rather than that of state. In this sense, the partisan movements had come to the scene as the third important political actor and their interactions with the parliament and the military led to the increase in polarization.

In relation to the tripartite dynamic of political life in 1970s, it can also be inferred that the main reason underneath the crisis that led to a military coup in 1980 was the clashing enemy definitions of the state and partisans. The state definition of the enemy was traditionally protected and reminded by the military. However, “...this ambivalent attitude towards democratic regimes and civilian control is not peculiar to the Turkish army. Soldiers generally find it hard to live with apparent chaos, disorder, and the slow decision-making process of the democratic regime. They needed to be taught to live with it. Here the role of civilians is crucial. It is further claimed that herein lies the lingering dilemma of

²²² Schmitt, *COP*, 214.

Turkish democracy. Civilian leadership has, with few notable exceptions, been hesitant, if not extremely timid, in questioning the prevailing power configuration. Instead, they continued to consent, and even sometimes actively seek, an enhanced role for the military.”²²³ This is the consent on the enemy definition that led the parliament to enable the military within the zone of civilian politics. In parallel with the rise in political polarization and the partisans’ actions, the parliament was pushed towards the conceptual position that the military has taken. By this way, the parliament and the military started to act together in the name of the state, against the threatening rise of the anti-state movements.

Throughout this period, the parliament in 1970s took a position that shares the enemy definition of the strong state but in spite of this position, the parliament was also supposed to be bound with the need of public support to survive the elections. Therefore, this study shows the interaction of the parliament, the military and the partisan movements in 1970s would fit in a Schmittean theoretical framework.

Thus, the definition of the enemy by the state and its imposition by the military inevitably dragged the parliamentary democracy into a deadlock at which the parliamentary politics was ideologically polarized and deprived of the basic principles of the system. Inevitably, the position that parliamentary politics preferred to take during the 1971-1980 period had made the parliamentary democracy an empty framework within which the military felt free to make the friend-enemy distinction and to be the political.

²²³ Demirel, *Ibid.*, 128.

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