GeT MA

GERMAN TURKISH
MASTERS PROGRAM
IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

GeT MA Working Paper Series

No. 14

2018

Domestic Politics and the Decision-Making Process in Turkish Foreign Policy

A Case Analysis of AKP's Strategy in Response towards the Islamic State

ANNE BUNNENBERG

DAAD | Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung

GeT MA Working Paper Series

Published by the German Turkish Masters Program of Social Sciences (GeT MA), Department of Social Sciences at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Papers in this series are the final theses of GeT MA graduates. Publication in this series does not preclude a later publication elsewhere.

The views expressed in the GeT MA Working Paper Series are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the GeT MA Program or of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. The copyright stays with the author(s).

Copyright for this paper: Anne Bunnenberg

Corresponding authors:

Anne Bunnenberg, Master of Social Science, German Turkish Masters Program, Institut für Sozialwissenschaften, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin.

In her graduate study, Anne Bunnenberg focussed on Turkish Foreign Policy and Islam's influence on politics. Migration and Nation-Building were two important topics in these areas for her. Currently, she is working for a major German educational provider as a coordinator for intergration projects for refugees and immigrants in Berlin.

Domestic Politics and the Decision-Making Process in Turkish Foreign Policy

A Case Analysis of AKP's Strategy in Response towards the Islamic State

ANNE BUNNENBERG

Bei der Analyse spezifischer außenpolitischer Entscheidungen wurden innenpolitische Faktoren lange Zeit vernachlässigt; stattdessen wurde vornehmlich das internationale System betrachtet. Mit Ende des Kalten Krieges bildeten sich neue Forschungsansätze, welche vermehrt innenpolitische Faktoren in die Analyse einbezogen. Das durch den Syrischen Bürgerkrieg entstandene Machtvakuum ermöglichte es dem Islamischen Staat (IS) sich in Syrien und im Irak auszubreiten. Aufgrund weltweiter Terroranschläge des Islamischen Staates bildete sich eine von den USA geführte Anti-IS Koalition. Die Türkei trat der Koalition bereits im September 2014 bei, verstärkte jedoch etwa erst ein Jahr später nach einem Terroranschlag in Suruç ihre Bemühungen im Kampf gegen den IS. Unter Bezugnahme auf Realismus und Liberalismus als theoretisches Fundament geht diese Arbeit der Frage nach, inwieweit das internationale System oder innenpolitische Faktoren zum Wendepunkt der türkischen Außenpolitik geführt haben. Es muss jedoch festgehalten werden, dass sowohl innenpolitische Faktoren als auch externe Umstände im Entscheidungsfindungsprozess zum Ergebnis beitragen. Die von vielen Forschern in der Außenpolitikanalyse vorgegebene Trennung zwischen innerstaatlichen Faktoren und dem internationalen System sollte daher in zukünftiger Forschung aufgebrochen werden.

Stichwörter: Türkei, Außenpolitik, Innenpolitik, Realismus, Liberalismus, Islamischer Staat, AKP

In the analysis of foreign policy decisions, domestic politics have been neglected for a long time. Scholars have focused on the international system as the main source of explanation. After the end of the Cold War, a new paradigm within International Relations emerged and domestic factors are increasingly included in explaining foreign policy. The onset of the Syrian civil war enabled Islamic State to expand its power in Syria and Iraq. Worldwide terrorist attacks carried out by IS have led to the establishment of an anti-IS coalition headed by the USA. Although Turkey has been a member of that coalition since September 2014, the AKP-government stepped up its fight against IS only after the Suruç bombing about one year later. By referring to realism and liberalism as the theoretical foundation, this paper aims at exploring which factors have caused this shift in Turkish foreign policy towards IS: domestic politics or the international system. As only one result, it is to be assumed that both domestic politics and external factors have played a role in Turkey's decision-making process. The thesis at hand argues that this clear boundary between domestic politics and external factors in explaining a state's foreign policy should be loosened in future research.

Keywords: Turkey, foreign policy, domestic politics, realism, liberalism, Islamic State, AKP

Table of Content

List of Abbreviations

AKP	Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)A
CHP	Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
CPO	Causal-Process Observation
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DEIK	Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board (*Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu)*
DHKP/C	Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FPT	Foreign Policy Theory
FSA	Free Syrian Army
HDP	Peoples' Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi)
IR	International Relations
IS	Islamic State
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Sham
KAGIDER	Women Entrepreneurs Association (Türkiye Kadın Girişimciler Derneği)
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
LN	League of Nations
MHP	Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê)
PM	Prime Minister

PT	Process Tracing
PYD	Democratic Union Party (Partiya Yekitîya Demokrat)
THKP/C	Turkish Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front
TIM	Turkish Exporters Assembly (Turkiye Ihracatcilar Meclisi)
TÜSIAD	Turkish Industry and Business Association (Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği)
UNCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN	United Nations
WGFTF	Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters
YPD	People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel)

1. Introduction

'Turkey, a key member of NATO, has so far chosen to sit out the war against ISIS.' (Totten 2015: 5) Apart from that, international media and in particular pro-Kurdish parties have even accused the current government of supporting Islamic State (IS)[1] in various ways. The Turkish President Erdoğan vehemently rejected these accusations: 'Daesh is not a representative of Islam. Daesh is a terrorist organization that casts a shadow, a dark pall over Islam. We could never take sides with Daesh.' (N.A. 2016b) Although Turkey has been a member of the US-led anti-IS coalition since September 2014, the government took only much later an active role in combating IS. Notably the USA has exerted enormous pressure on Turkey to intensify its fight against the IS. 'Claims that Turkey does not condemn Daesh terrorist acts or has not launched any operations against its members are totally false', Turkey's presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin opposed. (N.A. 2015a)

On 20 July 2015, a suspected IS suicide bomber attacked a group of pro-Kurdish activists in Suruç, who had planned to travel to Syria in order to help reconstructing the Syrian town of Kobane. This was the first time that Turkey responded by launching airstrikes against IS bases *which is why the Suruç bombing is regarded as the tuning point of Turkish foreign policy towards IS.* (Zeldin, 2015: 1) Although the Suruç bombing constitutes the largest attack on Turkish soil back then, it was not the first time that IS targeted Turkish citizens. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 21)

Unlike the attacks in Paris or Brussels, IS has never claimed responsibility for any terrorist attack in Turkey. According to scholars such as Groll and de Luce, IS does not comment on its attacks on Turkish soil because it '(…) paves the way for Ankara to potentially blame the attack on its Kurdish adversaries.' (Groll/de Luce 2016). Since the Kurdistan Workers' Party's (PKK) foundation in the late 1970s, tensions in the relationship between the Turkish state and the PKK have resulted in repeating armed clashes in south-eastern Turkey. In the beginning of 2015, Syrian-based Kurdish forces that are affiliated with the PKK gained significant territory against IS in northern Syria. (ibid.) After the Suruç bombing, Turkey not only targeted IS, but also launched

---

1 Grammatically, the term Islamic State is in need of an article. Yet, the thesis at hand does not regard IS as a state. For this reason, no article will be applied in the following when using the term *Islamic State/IS*. Before assuming the designation *IS*, the militant group had adopted the names *ISIS* and *ISIL*; moreover, it is sometimes referred to as *Daesh/Deash*. To simplify, the terms *ISIS/ISIL* and *Daesh/Deash*, when quoted in this thesis, will not be replaced by the current self-designation.

airstrikes against PKK bases. (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 90) Therefore, it is to be expected that the Kurdish issue played a role in Turkey's foreign policy shift towards IS. However, due to the limited scope of the thesis at hand, a historical review cannot be provided.

Because these terror attacks carried out by IS also threaten Turkey's domestic security, the fight against IS cannot be regarded as a pure foreign policy issue. On closer examination of Turkish domestic politics and its foreign policy, it can be presumed that many events on the domestic level have a direct influence on governmental foreign policy decisions. Consequently, it is necessary to take into account domestic politics in the analysis of Turkish foreign policy towards IS.

As a result of the democratisation process that was initiated by the Justice and Development Party (AKP), the Turkish government has become more sensitive to public constraints. The scholar Walker argues that '(…) civilian leaders cannot ignore where public opinion stands on critical foreign policy questions as easily as the military leaders that previously dominated Turkish foreign policy decision-making.' (Walker 2011: 10) Yet, under the rule of the AKP, Turkish society has transformed sustainably and is marked by a growing political polarization that runs along the lines of being either for or against the ruling party. (Göğüş/Mannitz 2016: 19) This can be explained by the fact that the AKP has taken increasingly measures to supress dissenting political opinions: 'With state and government working to culturally and morally homogenise the population, the democratisation deployed to break the power of the secular elite has been replaced by a new authoritarianism, this time in the guise of conservative religious identity.' (Seufert 2014: 3)

All in all, the thesis at hand raises the question whether the shift in Turkey's foreign policy towards IS was caused either by domestic politics or by pressures from the international system. The analysis will be driven by two main assumptions. Firstly, it is predicted that Turkey's foreign policy is highly influenced by international actors, notably the USA, which constitutes Turkey's most important ally in security issues. As a second assumption, this thesis argues that domestic constraints increased and triggered the strategical shift in Turkey's foreign policy towards IS. The AKP-government faces growing domestic pressure and responds by excluding opposition forces from the decision-making process.

In the light of the given assumptions, both realism and liberalism will provide the theoretical foundation. Most importantly for the guiding question of this paper, realism and liberalism differ in weighting the role of domestic politics in the decision-making process of foreign policy. 'In essence, liberalism and realism offer different basic postulates in understanding the nature of international politics.' (Dugis 2009: 171) For liberals, domestic aspects such as the form of government and inner-state structures are the main driving forces in the formulation of foreign policy. In contrary, realists regard the self-centred nature of human beings and the anarchic international system as the primary source of explanation for foreign policy decisions.

The thesis at hand is subdivided into four major parts. The first chapter provides the main guidelines of liberalism and realism. Special attention will be paid to the opposing understandings of domestic and international politics. For each theory, one representative and his main ideas will be analysed: Norrin M. Ripsman represents the school of neoclassical realism and Joe. D. Hagan offers a liberal approach in analysing foreign policy.

The second chapter is dedicated to the methodology. In order to examine the two levels of analysis – domestic politics and international system – this thesis relies on process tracing (PT). This approach allows to follow these two paths with the aim of detecting whether domestic politics or the international system have caused the shift in Turkish foreign policy.

The main contextual factors of both domestic politics and foreign policy will be explored in the third chapter. By providing the necessary background information, this chapter represents the grounding for the case study. It is central for the investigation to introduce the main guidelines of Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East and in particular its stance towards Syria. This includes an analysis of Turkey's counterterrorism strategies towards IS and the PKK. With regard to the domestic level, the scope in which media and civil society can operate as a mouthpiece of Turkish public will be explored. In this context, it is of vital importance to examine domestic constraints that the government may face in its decision-making process.

The last chapter of this thesis seeks to explain the shift in Turkish foreign policy by applying the methodological approach of PT. From each level of analysis – domestic politics and international system – three hypotheses will be tested in the context of PT.

Similar to a criminal investigation, the given items of evidence will be collected and evaluated with the purpose of explaining the outcome in question.

The current state of research does not offer a wide spectrum of analyses and articles. Most known in this field is the scholar Robert Putnam who established the *two-level game* theory. In the introduction of his article *Diplomacy and Domestic Politics - The Logic of Two-Level Games*, he criticizes that '[d]omestic politics and international relations are often somehow entangled, but our theories have not yet sorted out the puzzling tangle.' (Putnam 1988: 427) According to Putnam, political decision makers have to negotiate not only in the international arena, but also on the domestic level. In general terms, most studies analysing the decision-making process of foreign policy hail from the USA. After the Second World War, prominent realists such as George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau focused on explaining a state's foreign policy by referring to the international system. (Morgenthau 1948, Kennan 1954) With the end of the Vietnam War and the rising globalisation of international markets, the importance of domestic politics in foreign policy research in the field of international relations (IR) grew. Although realism used to dominate the scientific discourse in explaining foreign policy, the role of domestic politics started to appear in many academic studies.[2] In particular liberal theories include domestic factors in explaining foreign policy decisions. In the realist tradition, a new stream – called neoclassical realism – emerged in the 1990s and includes domestic aspects as well. (Rose 1998). Although many scholars discuss the relation between domestic politics and foreign policy, the current research lacks case studies in which these theories have been applied.

Since the AKP came to power, international researchers have become increasingly interested in Turkish politics. Many studies concerning the AKP's style of leadership and its economic performance have been published recently. Among them are several analyses of Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East, in particular focusing on the era after the Arab Spring. Yet, studies on Turkey's foreign policy towards IS are few. Those available mainly emphasise the Kurdish issue instead of investigating Turkish politics towards IS in detail. The current research also suffers from a lack of primary

---

2 For further studies: 1) Adomeit, Hannes / Boardmann, Robert (1979), Foreign Policy Making in Communist Countries. A Comparative Approach, Farnborough; 2) Wallace, William / Paterson, William E. (1978), Foreign Policy Making in Western Europe. A Comparative Approach, Farnborough.

sources: Turkish governmental websites publish official speeches, statements and press releases only partly. Many statements by Turkish officials applied in this thesis were printed in Turkish state-run newspapers. By referring to the current state of research, the thesis at hand constitutes a fruitful case study in order to contribute to the current research discourse not only on Turkish politics, but also on domestic-state relations.

2. The Theoretical Foundation - Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy in Realism and Liberalism

'We all know about interaction; we all understand that international politics and domestic structures affect each other.' (Gourevitch 1978: 882) Already in 1978, the scientist Peter Gourevitch highlighted the interplay between domestic politics and foreign policy. Nevertheless, during the Cold War, realism dominated the political discourse on foreign policy and gradually was challenged by liberal theories. Realism and liberalism are in a relationship of mutual tension, especially in terms of the role of domestic politics in foreign policy. Thus, it is beneficial to refer to the rivalling approaches of realism and liberalism in order to establish competing hypotheses in the examination of Turkish foreign policy towards IS.

The first part of this chapter describes the main ideas of realism and, besides, introduces neoclassical realism – a theoretical stream that includes domestic factors in the analysis of foreign policy. In order to provide an example, the theoretical approach by the neoclassical realist Norrin M. Ripsman will be presented. In a second step, this chapter explores the guidelines of liberalism as a counter theory to realism. Accordingly, the concept of Joe D. Hagan as one of the representatives of liberalism will be illustrated.

2.1 The Classical Approach of Foreign Policy Analysis: Realism

2.1.1 From (Neo-)Realism to Neoclassical Realism

In the 1990s, the school of realism was regarded as an outdated heritage of the Cold War that needed to be overcome. In the middle of the 1990s, the scientific Ethan Kappstein published an article posing the question *Is Realism Dead*?, in which he states that '(…) realism must be viewed as deeply and perhaps fatally flawed.' (Kappstein 1995: 751) Nevertheless, realism remains one of the cornerstones of IR

theories and experiences a comeback in the current research discourse of foreign policy analysis.

Since (neo-)realism is one of the two theories applied to discuss weather domestic politics or the international system influenced Turkish foreign policy towards IS, this chapter will provide an introduction to the main guiding ideas. Special attention will be paid to its sub-discipline neoclassical realism that in contrast to classical approaches of realism, includes domestic politics in analysing foreign policy. This chapter's aim is not to present the concept of (neo-)realism and neoclassical realism as a whole but rather to explore the role of 1) domestic politics and 2) the international system in the process of decision-making.

The school of realism consists of two main branches: classical realism and neorealism. Classical realism entered the field of IR in the middle of the 20th century as a counter theory to idealism that had dominated the political discourse since the First World War. The most influential representatives of classical realism include inter alia Edward Hallett Carr (1939), Hans Joachim Morgenthau (1948) and John Herz (1951). Classical realism emerged in response to the political environment triggered by the Second World War, which was marked by an extreme totalitarianism and an aggressive nationalism. In this regard, classical realists blame especially the failures of the interwar diplomacy, for instance the collapse of the League of Nations (LN). (Freyberg-Inan 2004: 67)

With regard to political context back then, the research focus is on explaining conflicts between states. Classical realists base their theory on the assumption that a state's behaviour derives from the human nature itself. In the words of Morgenthau, 'politics (…) are governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature.' (Morgenthau 1948: 4)

The human nature is viewed as egoistic and self-centred, which contributed to the realist's pessimistic concept of humankind. The overall aim of any human being is to gain power, which '(…) is an element of all human associations, from the family through fraternal and professional associations and local political organizations, to the state.' (ibid.: 39) Classical realists attribute the emergence of conflicts between states to the immutable aspiration of human beings to dominate others. (Freyberg-Inan 2004: 67)

Classical realists not only refuse any decisive role of domestic politics in foreign policy, they are also sceptical about the contribution of the public to foreign policy. (Dugis 2009: 178-179) Due to the fact that successful foreign policy is in need of secrecy and flexibility, classical realists tend to neglect or exclude the role of domestic public opinion in the formulation of foreign policy. The people are mainly concerned about domestic issues that are rather related to their daily lives than foreign issues. The scholar Morgenthau emphasizes this point by stating that '(…) the rational requirements of good foreign policy cannot from the outset count upon the support of a public whose preferences are emotional rather than rational.' (Morgenthau 1978: 558) The scholar Ole Holsti adopts this view and adds that an active role of the public implies that the emotional is allowed to govern the rational which may harm the stability of democracies and/or especially the international system. (Holsti 1992: 440)

The concept of neorealism, also known as structural realism, was introduced by Kenneth N. Waltz during the Cold War in 1979. It agrees with the classical realist assumption that power is the decisive variable in a state's foreign policy behaviour. But for neorealists, '(…) [the] human nature has little to do with why states want power.' (Mearsheimer 2013: 78) They regard the anarchic structure of the international system as the main driving force in the decision-making process of foreign policy. (Bode/da Costa/Diez 2011: 180) In the neorealist context, anarchy describes the absence of a supranational authority endowed with sanction instruments. (Waltz 1979: 118)

As only one consequence, states constantly compete for power which is defined as material and/or economical capabilities. The more power a state possesses, the better its position is in the international system. In other words: '(…) [T]he more powerful a state is relative to its competitors, the less likely it is that it will be attacked.' (Mearsheimer 2013: 80). This results in the assumption that the anarchic structure of the international system forces states to strive constantly for power in order to ensure their survival. 'The distribution of capabilities is unequal and shifting, defining the relative power of the states and predictive of variation in balance of power behaviour.' (Arora 2011: 7) According to neorealists, as the most profitable strategy, states tend to balance each other in order to ensure their survival. (Donnelly 2009: 37)

Any shift in the balance of power within the international system leads to a security dilemma, which occurs because '(…) any country that improves its position in the global balance of power does so at the expense of the other states, which lose relative

power.' (Mearsheimer 2013: 80) This may result in a security competition as it was the case during the Cold War in the form of a military and nuclear arms race between the USA and the then-Soviet Union. (ibid.: 80)

In general terms, classical realism and neorealism can hardly be distinguished. The emergence of neorealism does not constitute a clear cut within the classical realist tradition. Both theories emphasize that foreign policy has to be analysed under the premise of power relations between states and that national interests are the main guideline in the formulation of foreign policy. 'This seems to allow them to cut through utopian political rhetoric and to focus on the realities of the situation.' (Elias/Sutch 2007: 42) The state is regarded as a unitary actor that decides on a rational basis with the predominant aim to gain power.[3] This leads to a second important point: (Neo-)realists strictly distinguish between domestic politics and foreign policy. In this sense, the ministry of foreign affairs – as a unitary actor – deals with foreign policy issues; likewise, domestic issues are handled by the interior, labour or other such departments. (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 85) Both theories only differ in the outcome of their political directives: 'Realism leads to power-oriented strategies with power as an end in itself. Neorealism leads to security-oriented strategies based in the need to compete for security.' (Arora 2011: 7)

In the tradition of the realist school, a new wave of realist thinking emerged in the 1990s, called neoclassical realism, which not only focuses on the international system but rather includes domestic explanation factors. Its most known representative is Gideon Rose, who contributed to its rising international acknowledgement with his article *Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy* in 1998. In summary, '[n]eoclassical realism builds upon the complex relationship between the state and society found in classical realism without scarifying the central insight of neorealism about the constraints of the international system.' (Lobell/Ripsman/Taliaferro 2009: 13) By including domestic politics in the analysis of foreign policy, neoclassical realism offers a new approach in the tradition of realist theories. (e.g. Rose 1998, Schweller 2004, Zakaria 1998; Wohlforth 1993, Ripsman 2009) 'This turn is ironic since realism

---

3 Especially neorealism focuses on the state as a rational and the unitary actor in world politics, for further information: Keohane, Robert O. (1984), After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton.

was instrumental in advancing the division between the international and domestic realms of politics.' (Kaarbo 2015: 203)

While analysing a state's foreign policy behaviour, neoclassical realists place primacy on the international system although domestic factors are significant in exploring the decision-making process. (Kaarbo 2015: 203) In accordance with the (neo-)realist approach, neoclassical realists defend the idea of an anarchic international system in which states are the main actors whose priority is to gain security. *(Ripsman 2009: 174)* 'Neoclassical realism presents a *top-down* conception of the state, which means systemic forces ultimately drive external behaviour.' (Lobell/Ripsman/Taliaferro 2009: 25)

In neoclassical realism, relative power – a state's power in relation to another state – constitutes the decisive variable in explaining foreign policy. (e.g. Zakaria 1998, Wohlforth 1993) Hence, proponents of neoclassical realism suggest that a theory '(…) should first ask what effect the international system has on national behaviour, because the most powerful generalizable characteristic of a state in international relations is its relative position in the international system.' (Zakaria 1998: 482) The scholar Rose urges that the impact of relative power may in some cases not be that obvious, even not for the leader himself; a negligence may lead to misguided causal explanation attempts of foreign policy. (Rose 1998: 151) From a methodological standpoint, '(…) by making relative power their chief independent variable, the neoclassical realists are forced to choose sides in the perennial debate about just how that concept should be defined and operationalized.' (ibid.: 151)

The neoclassical realist Wohlforth stresses the fact that any realist investigation has to explore both domestic factors and the international system. (Wohlforth 1993: 19) Following this approach, Turkey's relative power in the international system is most decisive, however, domestic features are significant in analysing its foreign politics towards IS as well. While examining a state's foreign policy, '(…) one must analyse how systematic pressures are translated through unit-level intervening variables such as decision-makers' perceptions and domestic state structure.' (Rose 1998: 146) Kaarbo equates the state with a filter through which external factors have to pass through. (Kaarbo 2015: 203) Giving an alternative picture, the neoclassical realist scholar Schweller describes domestic politics as '(…) transmission belts that channel,

mediate and (re)direct policy outputs in response to external forces (primarily changes in relative power).' (Schweller 2004: 164)

Since Turkey's degree of democracy is disputed in the field of political science as well as in the current media debate, and due to the fact that the realist school can be seen as a product of the Western World[4], one may question the applicability of such theories to the Turkish system of governing. In this respect, the neorealist Mearsheimer stresses that '(…) the structure of the international system, not the particular characteristics of individual great powers, causes them to think and act offensively and to seek hegemony.' (Mearsheimer 2001: 53) Since the premise of gaining power is the primary aim, states are not '(…) more or less aggressive on the basis of their economic or political system.' (ibid.: 54) The system of governing does not have any impact on the process of decision-making. By giving the same external stimuli, a democratic, authoritarian or capitalist regime behave in a similar way. (Hutchings 1999: 20)

In summary, (neo-)realism and neoclassical realism focus less on domestic factors but rather on the interpretation of the international system while analysing foreign policy decisions. Other disciplines of research such as studies of regional factors or of the impact of international organizations are of secondary importance. (Elias/Sutch 2007: 43) Only neoclassical realism includes domestic politics, yet, the focus is still on the international system. From a realist point of view, Turkish foreign policy towards IS is above all influenced by the international system.

2.1.2 Foreign Policy Analysis by the Neoclassical Realist Norrin M. Ripsman

In order to gain insight into neoclassical realism, this chapter aims at exploring Norrin M. Ripsman's[5] ideas on domestic politics and foreign policy. Since he is one of the leading scholars in this field, his article *Neoclassical Realism and Domestic Interest Groups (2009)* will serve as the literary foundation for this chapter. This article was chosen because it pays special attention to domestic influences on foreign policy in the framework of neoclassical realism. In his article, Ripsman follows the six guiding questions 1) who the actors are, 2) who matters most, 3) under which international

---

4 The term Western World only serves as a simplification in a geographical sense meaning Europe and the United States. The term does not include any socio-political or cultural purport.

5 Norrin M. Ripsman is a Professor of Political Science at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada and one of the leading scholars in the field of neoclassical realism. Besides this, in his research he mainly focuses on democracy and national security, postwar peacemaking, constructing regional stability, and the impact of globalization on national security. For further information regarding his person or research: Concordia University (2016), Norrin M. Ripsman, https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/polisci/faculty.html?fpid=norrin-ripsman, 20.06.2016.

conditions domestic actors can influence most, 4) under which domestic conditions domestic actors can influence most, 5) in which type of state domestic actors influence most, and 6) what domestic actors exactly influence.

Concerning the first question, Ripsman argues that a large number of actors are interested in shaping foreign security policy due to different reasons. But only a small number of actors have access to the legislature through which they may influence the leadership (executive). This mainly includes the public opinion, members of the legislature and organized interest groups such as labour unions or trade associations. Additionally, depending on inner-state structures, the military or in some cases the aristocracy, may have access to the executive. (Ripsman 2009: 180) Although these different groups are usually analysed separately, due to their common interest, Ripsman suggests to treat them as a whole to generate a theory of domestic political influence. (ibid.: 171)

In a second step, the article examines which of these actors can shape foreign policy. Domestic actors must be able to provide a valuable payoff in order to influence a state's foreign policy; in this context, especially *electoral support* is of great importance: Members of the executive '(…) should be most receptive to influence from domestic actors who can provide or deny electoral support or, in non-democratic states, preserve the leader's position or topple him/her.' (ibid.: 181). Moreover, domestic actors may be successful in shaping foreign policy if they can provide *resources* that may help leaders to stay in power, or in cases of corrupt regimes the leader might be open to bribery. 'Nonetheless, money and resources should be of only limited utility, since – unlike direct, coherent electoral clout – they tend to be spread across interest groups.' (ibid.: 183) Due to many countervailing *resources* offered by other domestic groups, bargaining with material *resources* is not a precondition for being successful in influencing foreign policy. (ibid.: 185) Ripsman underlines the power of the legislative as another influential domestic actor that is able to obstruct the government's agenda since it can act as a veto player by hampering policies.

As a third objective, Ripsman analyses under which circumstances domestic actors have the greatest influence. In this context, he argues that '(…) domestic actors and interest groups have the greatest influence over foreign security policy during stable periods when the state faces a low-threat international environment.' (ibid.: 186) Accordingly, in times of high external threat that may even lead to war, domestic

actors have less influence. Political leaders are able to neglect domestic opposition under the premise of the overarching goal to secure the survival of the state. In order to provide an example, Ripsman refers to a study by Milbrath[6] who argues that during the Cold War under the nuclear threat domestic groups had less influence in the USA. (ibid.: 186-187)

Fourthly, Ripsman explores the domestic environment in which domestic actors are most successful. According to Ripsman, governmental *vulnerability* is one of the key factors: In the case that a government fears a removal from office, political leaders are most willing to bargain with domestic actors over national security policy. Ripsman underlines the importance of *executive certainty* and *national consensus*. Regarding the first objective, he argues, '[w]hen the executive is decided about the course of national security policy, there is little room for domestic actors with other agendas to influence policy choices.' (Ripsman 2009: 188) Similarly, in case of a *national consensus* over a certain topic, for example the widespread acceptance of the containment policy during the Cold War by the American people, other interest groups with divergent opinions can hardly intervene. (ibid.: 188)

In the fifth place, it is questioned which role the form of government plays for the decision-making process. In line with the realist approach, the type of regime does not matter in this context. Ripsman clearly argues that the degree of a government's *autonomy* determines to which extent domestic actors may influence the formulation of security policies. By applying the term *autonomy* in this context, Ripsman refers to a state's decision-making environment, meaning prevailing institutional structures, procedures and norms. The degree of *autonomy* not only differs between states, but may also change within the same state over time. Irrespective of the type of regime, both democracies and non-democracies differ in the degree of *autonomy* according to their position in the international system. (ibid.: 189-190) Thus, Ripsman concludes that '[a]ll things being equal, the more structurally autonomous an executive is, the lesser the ability of domestic actors to interfere with government's foreign policy agenda.' (ibid.: 189)

---

6 For further information on his study: Milbrath Lester W. (1967), Interest Groups and Foreign Policy, in: Rosenau, James N. (ed.), Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy, pp. 231-251.

Lastly, the object under investigation is what kind of foreign policy decisions domestic actors factually can shape. First of all, domestic actors affect the formulation of security policies indirectly in the way that they are '(…) shaping the interpretation of international circumstances and helping define the national interest.' (ibid.: 185) Once more he emphasizes that only when the government does not fear any internal or external threat, it may formulate foreign policy strategies based on domestic demands. Nevertheless, domestic actors do not shape the formulation of security polices directly, they solely may shape the time and style of a state's foreign policy decision. Ripsman describes the nature of influence as follows: '(…) [D]omestic interests are unlikely to drive decisions of war and peace, but may affect the timing of war and the manner in which it is conducted.' (ibid.: 191)

In conclusion, according to Ripsman, the influence by domestic actors is limited, indirect and linked to preconditions in order to be successful. The international system plays the major role in determining a state's foreign policy '(…) but international imperatives are filtered through the domestic political environment, which can lead to variations in the way states respond to common international pressures.' (ibid.: 174) Therefore, Ripsman's theory possesses mainly classical neorealist elements but adds internal driven aspects in explaining foreign policy decisions; domestic politics may determine a state's foreign policy in functioning as intervening variables. (ibid.: 176)

2.2 The Theoretical Opponent: Liberalism

2.2.1 The Liberalist Theoretical Background

Realism and liberalism differ fundamentally concerning the interpretation of foreign policy, hence, this chapter will provide an alternative theoretical approach in order to explain Turkish foreign policy. The field of IR offers a wide range of theories, however, Kaarbo suggests that '[c]urrent liberal theory is perhaps the most logical and expected place to find domestic political factors.' (Kaarbo 2015: 196)

The liberal tradition comprises a variety of different approaches such as liberal intergovernmentalism, (neo-)functionalism or liberal pacifism just to enumerate a few of them. Liberal theories not only have to be distinguished from realism, they also differ from each other on a systematic level. Viotti and Kauppi describe the process of theory building in liberalism as *building separate islands of theory* that may develop a more general theory. (Kauppi/Viotti 2012: 136) This chapter will firstly provide the basic ideas of classical liberalism and in a second step the main guidelines of

neoliberalism. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, this examination does not raise the claim to present a detailed differentiation between the variety of liberal strands.

In the classical sense, liberalism has its philosophical roots in the European enlightenment including key thinkers such as Erasmus, Hugo Grotius and Immanuel Kant. After the First World War, liberalism evolved into a separate school of thinking as part of IR. In the early years of liberalism, Woodrow Wilson[7] became one of the key players back then by proposing the LN as part of his fourteen-point plan in the aftermath of the First World War. (Daddow 2009: 70) Representatives of the early liberalism – such as Woodrow Wilson – sought to establish a peaceful international order based on a system of cooperation between nation states. (Chatterjee 2010: 11) Overall, the concept of classical liberalism is related to three main topics – human nature, war and governance – that will be explored in the following.

The scholars Jackson and Sorensen describe liberal thinkers above all as *optimistic* in their way of thinking. (Jackson/Sorenson 2016: 98) This is closely linked to their positive perception of the human nature: 'The laws of nature dictated harmony and cooperation between peoples.' (Burchill 2009: 62) Classical liberalists believe in the power of human reason and the progress of humankind that will eventually overcome wars and conflicts between nation states. (ibid.: 62) The idea of progress is not limited to the human nature itself but includes a process of modernization in science, technology and economy, which leads to the emergence of global cooperation. (Daddow 2009: 70)

According to classical liberalists – similar to neorealists – the international system is marked by an anarchic character, meaning the absence of a superior government. In contrast to the neorealist perspective that assumes the emergence of war due to a cycle of self-interests and fear of survival, classical liberalists do not evaluate the anarchic system as a general risk for war. (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 35) The nature of states is regarded as free and rational and therefore the state '(…) for most liberals is not naturally one of violence and war.' (ibid.: 35) Peace and not war is the natural condition of international relations. (Daddow 2009: 70) Only in case that a state

---

7 Woodrow Wilson is equally connected to the school of idealism. 'In the history of International Relations, classical liberalism is also referred to as idealism, highlighting that this theoretical approach rests upon normative premises (…).' (Bode, da Costa, Diez, 2011: 180) This is the reason why some scholars call the early liberalism utopian liberalism or idealist liberalism. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, this chapter does not discuss the similarities of liberalism and idealism. In 2005, Pestritto published a book about Woodrow Wilson calling him the *Godfather* of liberal-ism. For further information: Pestritto, Ronald J. (2005), Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism, Maryland.

becomes subject of a military attack from outside, '(…) self-defence and even collective defence are permissible activities.' (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 35) And even then, according to liberals, conflicts in the international area need to be solved through international organizations or regimes. (de Mesquita 2010: 9)

The state is not a rational and unitary actor but rather a coalition of different interests represented by individuals and groups of the public. Democracy is the only political type of government that can encourage the development of mankind. (Daddow 2009: 70) 'Therefore, national interests are determined by which of such many interests between individual, groups of individuals, and the public captures government authority.' (Dugis 2009: 171) Accordingly, in classical liberalism, the form of government is decisive in explaining a state's foreign policy. The regime type is evaluated on the basis of how states protect the value of human rights; thus, they distinguish '(…) liberal from non-liberal societies, republican from autocratic or totalitarian states, capitalist from communist, fascist, and corporatist economies.' (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 35) Classical liberalists assume that democracies have less conflicts among each other and therefore '(…) the best prospect for bringing an end to war between states lies with the spread of liberal-democratic governments across the globe.' (Burchill 2009: 62)

Nevertheless, the form of government alone does not explain a state's foreign policy decision. In this respect, domestic structures are of great importance as a source of explanation. As an illustration, Durfee and Rosenau provide two examples. First, if a state neglects human rights of its own citizens, that state simultaneously acts differently in world politics than a state that protects the international standards for human rights. The same applies from an economic point of view: States which are eager to open their market to the world economy act differently on an international level from those that try to protect their market. (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 35) Following this approach, one should first consider the internal conditions of a state in order to analyse a state's particular decision in foreign policy. A classical liberal foreign policy analysis – depending on the form of government and inner state structure– constitutes a clear break with the realist tradition.

After the Second World War a new wave of liberal theories occurred that in this thesis will be collectively gathered under the term neoliberalism[8] (e.g. Doyle 1986, Keohane 1984, Krasner 1983, Niye 1975/1988, Russett 1990, Young 1982). The scholars were inspired by the economic developments that had gathered pace since the middle of the 20th century. Besides this, the increasing number of emerging international institutions in the 1970s challenged the research debate back then sustainably. (Daddow 2009: 96)

Similar to neorealists, this new wave of liberal thinkers claims that states are the main actors in the international system that decide on a rational basis by weighting cost-benefit calculations. Yet, according to neoliberals, cooperation in an anarchic system is possible: States do not just cooperate on the basis of high politics. Under the condition of interdependence[9], states are not only interested in relative gains (gaining more than the other state), but also pursue absolute gains (considering the outcome as a whole). (Bode, da Costa, Diez: 2011: 132) The continuing existence of international organizations such as the EU or the United Nations (UN) should be understood under this premise. 'It also explains the fact that NATO still is alive and well despite the loss of its enemy, the Soviet Union – that is, the cooperation was meaningful and not superficial.' (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 35)

In the eyes of neoliberals, the process of modernization and increasing economic growth triggers the cooperation through international institutions. The neoliberalist Keohane points out that states do not balance but rather tie each other with mutually constraining institutions that reduce the importance of military safeguarding. 'Properly designed institutions can help egoists to cooperate even in the absence of a hegemonic power. '(Keohane 1984: 84) In this context, institutions mean a set of rules in a

---

8 The term neoliberalism is normally used synonymously with the terms structural liberalism and neoliberal institutionalism. A few scholars link the term neoliberalism particularly to Andrew Moravcsik who introduced the approach of liberal intergouvernmentalism, also called *new liberalism* (also by himself). It should not be confused. Since there has been a new paradigm in IR theory after the Second World War, this thesis uses the term neoliberalism in order to describe this development. Therefore, this term includes any liberal theory that has emerged since the 1950s. For further information: Daddow, Oliver (2009), International Relations Theory, London.

9 Especially the scholars Robert Keohane and Joseph Niye focused in their research on international cooperation. In 1977, they introduced their theory of *complex interdependence*, also known as neoliberal institutionalism. Basically, Keohane and Niye argue that the structure of the inter-national system leads to the distribution of capabilities and cooperation between nation states. In contrast to neorealist assumptions, neoliberal institutionalists believe that a zero-sum game is not a precondition for cooperation in international relations. Eventually, international cooperation between nation-states will reduce the anarchic character of the international system, which will lead to a peaceful world order. (Daddow 2009: 97) For further information: Keohane, Robert / Niye, Joseph (1977), International Relations Theory. Power and Interdependence, Princeton.

specific policy field – such as the Law of the Sea – that shape a state's behaviour in the international system. (Burchill 2009: 66)

Apart from that, non-economic features influence the cooperation between states. 'Cultural norms, or shared values, may also promote cooperation by making clear what sorts of behaviour are unacceptable and open to punishment.' Neoliberalism not only focuses on the state-level itself but rather includes cultural aspects that may foster cooperation between states. (Daddow 2009: 96) In line with the classical liberal assumptions, neoliberal scholars appeal to the further development of humankind that is able to create international peace by the greater application of human reasoning. (Sterling-Folker 2013: 115) For this reason, neoliberals argue that '[n]on-state actors are important instruments of this cooperative international order which seeks to promote peace, and not conflict, in the world.' (Chatterjee 2010: 11)

In conclusion, while the realist school analyses a state's foreign policy on the basis of a *top-down* model, liberals tend to examine the process of decision-making from an *inside-out* perspective, which marks the main difference between the two schools. (Kauppi/Viotti 2012: 139) The neoliberalist Doyle defines a clear demarcation between realism and liberalism: '(…) [U]nlike realist approaches, liberals tend to focus on domestic structures and the individuality of each case (…) and believe that the international system has a less than overriding influence and so distinguish themselves not only from structural realists but also from all realists.' (Doyle 2008: 66) By arguing from a liberalist point of view, the shift in Turkey's foreign policy towards IS was driven by domestic politics, which constitutes the second assumption of the thesis at hand.

2.2.2 Domestic Explanation Factors in Foreign Policy Analysis by Joe D. Hagan

'The implication is that international politics is driven not solely by systemic structures (as posited by realism) but also by the domestic political patterns of at least the major powers.' (Hagan 1995a: 118) Apparently, Joe. D. Hagan[10] distances himself from the realists' approach that, as described above, mainly focuses on systemic structures on the international level. His theoretical approach shall contribute to the analysis of Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards IS. According to Hagan, each theory that

---

10 Joe D. Hagan is a Professor for Political Science at the West Virginia University and mainly teaches courses in foreign policy and IR. In his research career, he focuses on domestic explanation attempts in the decision-making process of foreign policy, especially related to studies on war and peace. Methodically, Professor Hagan did many studies on the basis of comparative foreign policy analysis. For further information: West Virginia University (2016), Joe D. Hagan, online: http://politicalscience.wvu.edu/faculty-staff/hagan, 20.06.2016.

seeks to explore the relation between domestic politics and foreign policy derives from the theoretical logic offered by both Robert D. Putnam (two-level games) and Geroge Tsebelis (nested games).[11] (Hagan 1995a: 121) 'All that follows is rooted in the basic notion that foreign policy makers simultaneously cope with the pressures of domestic and international affairs.' (ibid.: 121)

This chapter is based on Hagan's article *Domestic Political Explanations in the Analysis of Foreign Policy*, in which he analyses the interplay between domestic politics and a state's political leaders. While dealing with political opponents, a government pursues two main aims in the decision-making process of foreign policy. These are *building coalitions* and *retaining political power* – called *twin political games* – that will be explored first. In a second step, the applied political strategies, called *dynamics,* through which domestic politics shape foreign policy will be discussed.

The first imperative of *building coalitions* describes the necessity of every leadership to gain domestic support for any introduction of policy initiatives. Political leaders need to achieve agreements with the significant actors who are decisive in the process of implementation. According to Hagan, two conditions may transport a certain issue into the broader political arena. Firstly, a certain issue might be politicized if the decision-making authority is fragmented among autonomous and powerful actors, for instance due to a strong military or a fractional division of the executive. The second condition describes the degree of polarization of the involved actors over the issue itself. In this sense, the process of decision-making is determined by the need of *coalition building* with the supporting actors in order to implement the initiative. (ibid.: 122) Although *coalition building* predominantly occurs in established Western democracies, yet, Hagans emphasizes that *coalition building* is not only a democratic phenomenon: Studies on authoritarian regimes such as Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia have shown that those former leaders had to face some constraints on the domestic level as well. Due to the variety of democratic regime types, the process of *coalition building* differs depending on each system. For instance, in a parliamentary system, the central authority is located in the cabinet, therefore, a fragmentation of the cabinet itself may

---

11 For further information: Putnam, Robert D. (1988), Diplomacy and Domestic Politics. The Logic of Two-Level Games, in: International Organi-zation, Vol. 42, No. 3, pp.427-460; Tsebelis, George (1990), Nested Games. Rational Choice in Comparative Politics, California.

lead to an inability to act. Taking the case of Turkey, a parliamentary system in which the AKP as a single party controls the cabinet through a parliamentary majority, according to Hagan, political constraints are less. (Hagan 1995a: 122-123) Thus, *coalition building* is not as necessary as in fragmented cabinets without any parliamentary majority.

The second objective – *retaining political power* – describes the aim of the ruling government to survive politically. 'Whereas *coalition building* concerns authority over an immediate issue, the longer-term political survival of the ruling group is at the heart of the political imperative of *retaining power*.' (ibid.: 124) The scholar argues that in case domestic constraints jeopardise the continuance in office, foreign policies need to be adjusted in order to decrease the domestic pressure. Although not every foreign policy issue leads to a potential loss of power, policy makers tend to formulate foreign policy decisions with regard to long-term consequences. Two factors are of great importance in this context: Firstly, political leaders qualify significant opposition that may become a direct challenge for the government, especially if they have '(…) political resources that indicate they may succeed in the not-too-distant future.' (ibid.: 124) Apart from that, political leaders try to act in accordance with the overall credibility of the current leadership. For instance, foreign policy strategies such as confrontation can be interpreted by the public as a willingness to risk war. Hagan underlines this argument by giving an example from the First World War: Due the pressure of political survival, leaders joined the war in order to prove their nationalist credentials. (ibid.: 124-125) Like the first objective of *coalition building*, the political instrument of *retaining political power* is not limited to Western democracies. Hagan points out that many studies have shown that leaders of authoritarian regimes were highly influenced by domestic crises as well. (ibid.: 124-125)

In a second step, this chapter now explores the political *dynamics* through which the overarching goals of *coalition building* and/or *retaining power* can be achieved. In this context, the term *dynamics* means alternative political strategies '(…) by which the games of building policy coalitions and retaining political power influence foreign policy.' (ibid.: 127) Every political leader responds to domestic opposition in a different way, which leads to varying outcomes in foreign policy. He argues that the literature offers a variety of approaches on how to link domestic politics to foreign policy and suggests to summarize them into three main strategies: 1) *accommodation*

(bargaining and controversy avoidance), 2*) mobilization* (legitimization of the regime and its politics) and 3) *insulation* (deflecting, suppressing, and overriding opposition).

The first category *accommodation* describes the dynamic of a low-risk behaviour, that is to say, the strategy of responding to opposition with restraint in foreign policy. Leaders try to appease the opposition by avoiding public controversial matters, consequently, the strategy consists in preventing any changes in policy setting as well. The dynamic of *accommodation* takes place in both in the process of *coalition building* by bargaining with the significant opposition and with the aim of *retaining political power*. The strategy of *accommodation* mostly occurs in democratic systems but is not limited to Western democratic systems. For instance, studies on the former Soviet Union have shown that *accommodation* was a central dynamic in order to *retain political power*. (Hagan 1995a: 128-129)

While applying the second dynamic, *mobilizatio*n, meaning the legitimization of the regime and its politics, leaders confront the political opposition by emphasising the leadership's legitimacy. The goal behind this is to control the opposition as well as to receive greater support. 'This strategy is most often associated with the game of *retaining power* in which a leadership manipulates foreign policy issues.' (ibid.: 129) In this context, Hagan refers to studies by Levy (1988), Russett (1990) and Snyder (1991) and suggests three main approaches on how a leadership tries to ensure its political position: 1) appealing to nationalism (e.g. discussing imperialistic issues as well as blaming foreign elements), 2) emphasizing their special capacity or wisdom and 3) distracting from domestic problems. (ibid.: 129) Due to a lack of political institutionalization, the dynamic of *mobilization* is mostly linked to authoritarian regimes. In many of these cases, the political atmosphere is marked by mutual distrust that precludes any bargaining process with the opposition. 'Foreign policy is a correspondingly viable means for unifying the public and discrediting domestic adversaries.' (ibid.: 130)

The third strategy of *insulation* (deflecting, suppressing, and overriding opposition) describes how leaders isolate controversial foreign policy issues from political opposition. Hagan points out that leaders are able to bypass domestic constraints through a number of political tools such as ignoring domestic challenges, suppressing opponents or reaching agreements by promising political favours. When foreign policy

issues are the top priority, '(…) they are even willing to override strong opponents and hope that domestic controversies may be restricted to acceptable levels.' (ibid.: 131)

All in all, Hagan suggests that '[i]nstead of emphasizing one dynamic or the other (as is done in most of the literature); a general theoretical treatment of domestic politics must recognize the possibility of both the *push* and the *pull* of domestic opposition, as well as the fact that domestic pressure might be effectively contained.' (ibid.: 132) Against this background, Hagan underlines the fact that leaders can choose between different strategies, thus, the way how a leader deals with the political opposition shows how domestic politics shape a state's foreign policy.

3. Methodological Approach

The overall aim of this thesis is to explore if the shift in Turkish foreign policy strategy towards IS was either influenced by domestic politics or by the international system. Therefore, the qualitative method of process tracing is most suitable in following these two paths. PT enables to detect causal mechanisms that lead to a certain historical outcome.

In this sense, this analysis is based on a single case research design, yet, by applying single case studies it is important to consider their main strengths and weaknesses. Single case studies allow a detail-oriented investigation of the single outcome, which constitutes the greatest strength. Within the case, several subunits of analysis can be included, which provides the opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the case. However, applying to several subunits of analysis bears the risk of neglecting the larger holistic aspect of the study and the actual topic of the case study might shift. (Yin 2009: 52-53) Besides this, another point of criticism focuses on the fact that results of single case studies cannot be generalized to other cases. (Van Evera 1997: 64)

In order to analyse Turkish foreign policy towards IS, this chapter will present the methodological approach on a theoretical basis. In a first step this chapter will offer an explanation of the significance of the given case, followed by a detailed operationalization of the main concepts applied in the thesis at hand. Hereafter, the main idea of PT as well as its strengths and weaknesses will be presented.

3.1 Significance of the Case: Turkish Foreign Policy towards Islamic State

'Turkey has long been accused of turning a blind eye as militants freely crossed its territory to fight Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, whom Ankara seeks to topple.' (Peker 2015) This was stated in April 2015 by Emre Peker in his article *Turkey Steps Up Its Fight Against Islamic State*. Syria and Turkey not only share a common history but also a 500-mile long border that for a long time has neither been closed nor sufficiently secured, according to Turkey's allies such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the European Union (EU). (Zeldin 2015: 2) In response, the then-PM *Davutoğlu contradicted and claimed:* 'Turkey has proved its stance against ISIS in the first place, we are the first country that designated ISIS as a terrorist organization.' (N.A. 2015a)

After the Suruç bombing on 20 July 2015, for the first time, Turkey launched airstrikes towards IS bases located in Syria. However, Turkey had already joined the US-led coalition in September 2014 as one of the first members, and was also targeted by several terrorist attacks carried out by IS before the Suruç bombing. (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 90) Therefore, the thesis at hand seeks to explore why Turkey took an active role in the anti-IS coalition only much later. Is this strategical shift in fighting IS caused by domestic factors or by pressure from the international system? On the one hand, one can observe a process of transformation on the domestic level and many events in the domestic area seem to have a direct effect on the decision-making process in foreign policy. On the other hand, it seems that Turkey is under massive pressure from international actors such as the USA, NATO and EU. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 24)

The main purpose of this work is to analyse to which extent either domestic politics or external factors influencing the decision-making process. Turkey's strategical approach in response towards IS under the AKP constitutes a fruitful case study in examining the driving forces in the decision-making process of Turkish foreign policy. Since the terror attacks in Paris, Ankara and Brussels, IS has become once more a centre of the current research debate in many countries. Turkey – as a common neighbour with both Syria and Iraq, the heartland of the militant organization, and at the same time ally of the Western world – plays a significant role, which is why the analysis of its strategy in combating IS is of vital importance.

3.2 Operationalization

In social sciences terms and concepts are marked by a high degree of abstraction. In the light of the research question, this chapter seeks to overcome this problem and will operationalize the concepts applied in the thesis at hand. For this purpose, this chapter will clearly define the following concepts: domestic politics, foreign policy, international system and Islamic State.

Domestic Politics

The term *politics* has to be differentiated clearly from the two other dimensions of the political, applying to *polity* (political community) and *policy* (content/regulations). Accordingly, *politics* describes political processes on the nation-state level, for instance elections, voting or lobbying. This includes procedures within the decision-making process such as political disputes, debates or acts of war. In short, *politics* refers to power struggles between domestic actors inside of a state. (Vowe 2008: 620) In the Encyclopedia of Political Communication, the scholar Gerhard Vowe defines *politics* as the '(…) core of the political system'. (ibid.: 620) Methodically, doing research on *domestic politics* means to decompose the state into single fragments, known as opening the *black box* for detailed examinations. With regard to Turkey as the object of investigation, it is important to point out that the analysis of *domestic politics* is not limited to pure democracies. In any type of regime domestic political processes take place, although they are less transparent then in democracies. (Rathbun 2011: 691-692)

Foreign Policy

The terminus *foreign policy* emerged within the process of increasing bureaucratization and systematization of state affairs during the industrial age. On the very basic level, *foreign policy* can be characterized as the total amount of relations in the international system by an independent actor, mostly the state. (Hill 2014: 320-321) In the classical sense, *foreign policy* is subjected to the governmental authority which consist of the foreign minister, president, defence minister, foreign trade-minister et al. As a result of the evolvement of multi-, supra- and international organizations, the terminus *foreign policy* also includes a state's participation in or its relation to these organizations. (Seidelmann 1994: 42) Yet, the concept of *foreign policy* must be understood in a holistic way since it includes any actions and attitudes referring to outside of the state. (Hill 2014: 320-321) These external relations defined as *foreign policy* consist of a

variety of actions, for instance, diplomatic negotiations, conclusion of contracts and state visits. In the broader meaning, it also includes foreign trade policies or cultural policies. (Seidelmann 1994: 42)

International System

The International Encyclopaedia of Political Science describes the terminus *international system* as follows: 'The international system is made up of individual, constituent units and an ordering principle that arranges the structure of those units, together forming a whole toward an outside environment.' (Engelbrekt 2011: 1322) Thus, the *international system* consists of three basic elements: the units, the overall structure and the interaction that takes place between the units and the overall structure. (ibid.: 1323) It is above all the nature of the structure in IR theory that is subject of interest and that every school approaches differently. In this regard, the absence of a supranational authority in terms of a state's foreign policy formulation is widely discussed.

One crucial characteristic of the *international system* is the territorial dimension. Traditionally, the relations between the states are based on mutual recognition of sovereignty. In the *international system*, states (units) communicate by using a variety of political instruments such as military power, diplomacy, economic resources or propaganda. However, demographic shifts and transnational cooperation undermine both national identities and the legal capacity of nation states. In this context, it is important to point out that the *international system* has always undergone a process of transformation; since the early 21st century it is mainly challenged by increasing technologisation, globalization, violence by non-state actors and transnational movements. Besides this, the establishment of international organizations shape the environment of the modern international system, which is why scholars discuss the future order of the international system. (Rosow 2005: 455-457)

Islamic State

The self-proclaimed *Islamic State (IS),* since 2014 officially calling itself IS, previously known as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS), is a militant movement that took over territory mainly in Syria, Iraq and Libya. (Bunzel 2015: 3) IS is classified or banned as a terrorist organization by most members of the international community including the UN, EU, USA and many non-EU

countries such as Turkey, Russia or India. The number of terror attacks carried out by IS outside of their heartland has increased significantly since 2014. (Laub 2016)

The militant group, having emerged in the aftermath of the USA Iraq invasion in 2003, used to be part of al Qaeda Iraq back then and eventually expanded territorially after the uprisings in Syria had erupted in 2011. Currently, around 6,5 million people live under the domination of IS whose aim is to establish a territorial state. In June 2014, the group declared the establishment of the Caliphate, hence, it claims authority of the entire Muslim population with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in the position of the Caliph. In media and many academic works, the Syrian city of Raqqa is named as the de facto capital of IS where most administrative institutions are located. (ibid.) Although IS and al Qaeda have already separated from each other, IS still clearly needs to be distinguished from al Qaeda: While IS seeks to establish a Sunni Islamist state under the religious law of the Sharia in the regions of Syria and Iraq, al Qaeda focuses on attacking the USA and its allies without any territorial aspirations. (Cronin 2015)

3.3 The Applied Method: Process Tracing

3.3.1 The Main Ideas of Process Tracing

'I want only to show what actually happened.' – This is one of the most famous sentences in historical scholarship stated by Leopold von Ranke. (Himmelfarb 2004: 17) Indeed, many scholars describe PT as a method that closely resembles the historical approach of research. To some extent the idea of PT follows Ranke's approach in focusing on archival research in order to reconstruct historical events and detect *how it actually happened*.

Generally speaking, PT is a single case research method that seeks for within-case inferences in order to detect causal mechanisms, that is to say, finding correlations between the independent variables (X) and the outcomes (Y). Shortly, '(…) the cause-effect link that connects independent variable and outcome is unwrapped and divided into smaller steps; then the investigator looks for observable evidence of each step.' (Van Evera 1997: 64) The focus is on examining causal mechanisms by working on an in-depth level within the case, particular in order to determine '(…) how causal forces are transmitted through a series of interlocking parts of a causal mechanism to produce an outcome.' (Beach/Pedersen 2013: 11) The core advantage of this method is that PT pays attention to dependent, independent and intervening variables, which is why a careful description and fine-grained case knowledge is required. (Collier 2011:

823) Metaphorically, while seeking the causal explanation for the outcome in question, the researcher opens the *black box* between the independent and dependent variable. (Blatter/Janning/Wagemann 2007: 133)

The methodological approach of PT unpacks historical events over time and seeks to analyse the specific process that has led to a certain event. 'Yet, grasping this unfolding is impossible if one cannot adequately describe an event or situation at one point in time.' (Collier 2011: 824) The challenge here is to define the right time sequence while analysing the matter in question. (ibid.: 824)

Many scholars compare the method of PT with the procedure of a criminal trial: the detective attempts to solve the crime retrospectively by collecting and evaluating clues and suspects. Eventually, he presents a convincing evidence-based explanation for the crime after testing all motives that the suspect factually committed the crime. (Bennett 2010: 208)

Similar to criminal trials, in qualitative research, the researcher builds its assumptions on observations, in PT called causal-process observations (CPO). The scholars Seawright and Collier describe CPO as '(…) an insight or piece of data that provides information about context, process, or mechanism, and that contributes distinctive leverage in causal inference.' (Seawright/Collier 2004: 283) Continuing with the analogy of the criminal trial, one may compare the suspects with the hypotheses and following this logic, clues then resemble the COPs. (Collier 2011: 826)

PT is subdivided into three different approaches: theory-testing, theory-generating and explaining outcome. While the first two approaches focus on theory (theory-centric), the latter emphasises on the individuality of the case (case-centric). Since this thesis seeks to explore the shift in Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards IS, the explaining outcome approach will be applied. In contrast to theory-centric approaches, the goal is not testing or building a theory, but instead explaining a specific historical outcome in a particular case. (Klamberg 2015: 34) As an illustration, instead of studying general mechanism that lead to war, the aim would be to explain a particular example such as the cause for the First World War. The scholars Beach and Pederson conclude the main idea of explaining-outcome PT as follows:

Here the ambition is to craft a minimally sufficient explanation of a particular outcome, with sufficiency defined as an explanation that accounts for all the important aspects of an outcome with no redundant parts being present. (Beach/Pedersen 2013: 18)

In contrast to theory-centric approaches of PT, where inferences are based on the presence or absence of causal mechanism, the case-centric approach evaluates postulated mechanisms in crafting minimally *sufficient* explanation factors. In practice, while studying the case, postulated hypotheses are tested until a *sufficien*t explanation of the matter in question is found. (ibid.: 18-22) In order to evaluate these hypotheses, PT offers four types of tests differing in their rating scales. These are *hoop tests*, *smoking-gun tests*, *straw in the wind tests* and *doubly decisive tests* that will be explained in the next section of this chapter (3.3.2).

What Gerrring calls the *hallmark of process tracing* (Gerring 2007: 173) is the fact that '(…) some types of evidence have far more probative value than others. (…) What matters is the relationship between the evidence and the hypothesis, not the number of pieces of evidence.' (Bennett 2010: 219) In other words, '(…) the probative value of evidence depends on the degree to which a hypothesis uniquely predicts that evidence, and the degree to which it is certain in doing so.' (Van Evera 1997: 31)

All in all, the purpose of applying this method is to detect causal mechanisms in the shift of Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards IS. On this occasion, six different hypotheses derived from the two competing theories realism and liberalism will be tested in order to detect which of them has most explanatory power.

3.3.2 The Four Variants of Tests in Process Tracing

In order to detect causal inferences within the case, process tracing provides four test variants with different rating systems. These are 1) *straw in the wind tests,* 2) *hoop tests,* 3) *smoking-gun tests* and 4) *doubly decisive tests*. These four empirical tests became most popular due to Bennett's publications who based his research on Van Evera's work. (Van Evera 1997: 31-33) Each test differs in its information value and determines if a hypothesis is *sufficient,* which confirms the interference, or *necessary*, which only affirms the hypothesis. A hypothesis must be both *sufficient* and *necessary* in order to explain the outcome in question in a final manner.

Firstly, the *straw in the wind tests* provide neither a *necessary* nor a *sufficient* criterion, thus, the test only points in a direction whether the hypothesis has

explanatory power or not. Consequently, they are not decisive and neither confirm nor eliminate a hypothesis. (Mahoney 2012: 572) Passing the test affirms the relevance of the piece of evidence, but does not confirm it. If a hypothesis fails this test, alternative hypotheses are marginally supported, whereas passing the test weakens rival hypotheses slightly. In comparison to the other test variants, the *straw in the wind tests* are the weakest and of least significance. (Collier 2011: 826) These tests serve as a basis for the *hoop tests* as well as for the *smoking gun tests.* 'Alternatively, it might simply be viewed as an intermediate test, with corresponding implications for rival hypotheses.' (ibid.: 825)

As a second approach of testing hypotheses, the *hoop tests* provide *necessary* but no *sufficient* criteria for accepting the interference. In this sense, '[t]he hypothesis must *jump through the hoop* to remain under consideration (…).' (ibid.: 825) In fact, the *hoop tests* evaluate if a given piece of evidence is present for the validity of the hypothesis. Passing the test only affirms the relevance of the hypothesis, but failing the *hoop test* eliminates the hypothesis, which can be seen as the greatest advantage of this sort of tests. (Mahoney 2012: 571) As an illustration, Van Evera provides the following example: 'Was the accused in the state on the day of the murder?' If he was absent he is innocent, however, the fact that he was in town also cannot prove that he is the murderer. (Van Evera 1997: 31) In comparison to *straw in the wind tests*, these *hoop tests* support or weaken rival hypotheses as well, but with stronger implications. Although it underpins the plausibility of the hypothesis in a more decisive way, the possibility that rivalling hypotheses may be relevant in explaining the outcome remains. (Collier 2011: 826)

In the third place, PT offers the *smoking gun tests,* which only examine if the hypothesis is *sufficient* for the validity of the outcome in question. Yet, the test does not provide any information about the hypothesis's *necessity*. (Bennett 2010: 210) The name *smoking-gun* goes back to the idea of observing a suspect with a smoking gun in its hand right after a crime, which immediately suggests the accusation that this person is guilty of the crime. The important point is that an alternative suspect, not been seen with a smoking gun in his hand, can also be guilty of the crime. (Van Evera 1997: 64) The scholar Van Evera concludes that '[a]n explanation passing a smoking-gun test of this sort is strongly corroborated, but little doubt is cast on an explanation that fails it.' (ibid.: 32) In other words, passing the *smoking-gun test* confirms the

hypothesis and substantially weakens alternative hypotheses; likewise, failing the test does not eliminate the given hypothesis in a final manner but strengthens rival hypotheses. (Collier 2011: 827) 'Passing a smoking gun test lends decisive support in favour of a hypothesis, though failing a smoking gun test does not eliminate a hypothesis.' (Mahoney 2012: 572)

Finally, the *double decisive tests* provide *necessary* and *sufficient* criteria for detecting a causal mechanism. In short, passing the *double decisive tests* confirm the hypothesis and eliminate all other rival hypotheses. 'Just one doubly decisive piece of evidence may suffice, whereas many *straw in the wind tests* may still be indeterminate vis-à-vis alternative explanations.' (Bennett 2010: 211) While explaining the *double decisive tests*, Van Evera provides the example of a bank camera that recorded the suspected bank robber. This piece of evidence – the bank's film – is decisive in two ways since it can clearly prove if the suspect is guilty or innocent. (Van Evera 1997: 32) As Collier notes, such single tests that are able to evaluate both the *necessary* and *sufficient* criteria for establishing the causal interference are rare in social science. However, the same result can be achieved in combining multiple tests: Passing both the *hoop tests* and the *smoking gun tests* achieve the same result as the *double decisive tests*. (Collier 2011: 827)

Overall, the question which test will be chosen for each hypothesis remains. Basically, the decision which test is most suitable for each single hypothesis is up to the researcher. Knowledge about the case, causal process observations and the quality of hypotheses are crucial in deciding which test is most appropriate. The stronger the assumption, the clearer the decision will be which test suits to the given piece of evidence. (ibid.: 826)

3.3.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of Process Tracing

The scholar Frank Schimmelfennig criticizes two main aspects. Firstly, he argues that PT might lead to an *infinite regress*, which means that either the researcher includes too many intermediate steps or that the level of analysis becomes lower. Furthermore, Schimmelfennig is concerned that in some cases PT may lead to what he calls *storytelling*: Due to a high amount of possible explanatory variables that are detected during the process analysis, it is usually feasible to create a sufficient causal mechanism in order to explain the outcome. As one consequence, the researcher may neglect alternative variables that could have affected the outcome as well.

(Schimmelfennig 2006: 267) Bennett agrees to his colleague and argues that '[t]here is no guarantee that researchers will include in their analyses the variable(s) that actually caused Y (…).' (Bennett 2010: 209) Besides the risk of neglecting determining variables, a '(…) measurement error can be an issue, and probabilistic relationships are harder to address than in quantitative research.' (Collier 2011: 828) Moreover, many scholars criticize the *degree of freedom* while studying the individual case. From a statistics' point of view, the number of cases should be larger than the number of variables and not vice versa as it is the case in process tracing. (Bennett 2010: 209)

In contrast, PT offers clear advantages over other methodological approaches in social sciences. First of all, in response to the often-criticised *degree of freedom*, one can argue that not the number of evidence or/and cases but rather the relationship between the evidence and the hypothesis is most decisive. Not every piece of evidence has the same explanatory power and differs in its value for the outcome in question. (Bennett 2010: 219) Moreover, explaining outcome PT does not raise the claim of generalization; on the contrary, the focus is on the single case that is the object under investigation. The understanding of causal mechanism is not only based on a systematic approach: This method allows an individual, case-specific examination. (Beach/Pedersen 2013: 18-22) The complexity and the variety of context-specific variables of each case '(…) makes the ambition of producing knowledge that can be generalized across many cases difficult, if not impossible.' (ibid.: 13) Accordingly, case-centric scholars refuse any differentiation between theory-centric (systematic) and case-centric research; according to them, the complexity of the social world makes a generalization impossible anyhow. (ibid.: 13) Another strength of PT is that it can be mixed – depending on the outcome in question – with other methodological approaches in the sense of multi-method research that may include for instance studying primary and secondary sources (literature review) or interviewing. Collier stresses the fact that '(…) the boundary between qualitative and quantitative should not be rigid.' (Collier 2011: 825)

4. Contextualisation – Domestic Politics and Turkey's Approach to Foreign Policy in the Middle East

With regard to the applied methodological approach of process tracing, providing a historical background as well as presenting a fine-grained knowledge of the case is of vital importance in order to detect causal inferences. In the light of this paper's case

study, the main contextual factors of both foreign policy and domestic politics will be explored.

By referring to realism, the first part of this chapter will present the main guidelines of Turkish foreign policy, also called the *Davutoğlu Doctrine*. Special attention will be paid to the effects of the Syrian civil war on Turkish foreign policy and the *AKP's approach in countering IS and the PKK simultaneously.*

In accordance with the liberal approach which consists in first considering inter-state conditions in order to analyse a state's foreign policy, *the second part of this chapter offers background knowledge on Turkish domestic politics. The current situation of media and civil society as the main channels for domestic demands will be analysed. Afterwards, domestic constraints that the government might face in their policy-making will be explored.* An analysis of the political scope in which domestic actors can shape the governmental decision-making process will also provide insight into AKP's understanding of liberal democracy.

4.1 The Guidelines of Turkish Foreign Policy

4.1.1 The *Davutoğlu Doctrine* and the Syrian Civil War as its Litmus Test

The current Turkish foreign policy is strongly linked to the strategical approach introduced by Ahmed Davutoğlu. Since the AKP came to power, he has been the chief advisor for foreign policy and shaped Turkish foreign policy significantly. During his term in office as foreign minister (2009-2014) and premier minister (2014-2016), his influence on foreign policy was even greater. (Falk 2014) In his academic career, Davutoğlu introduced his foreign policy doctrine in several writings and became most famous with his book *Strategic Depth*, published in 2001.[12]

His foreign policy doctrine *Strategic Depth* – known as *zero problems with neighbours* – outlines a specific position that Turkey should gain in the international system. More precisely, it serves as a justification of an active multi-dimensional and multi-regional Turkish foreign policy based on its geographical position as well as the historical and religious-cultural heritage from the Ottoman Empire. In this concept, Turkey is geographically seen as a state in the centre of a huge Eurasian-African landmass.

---

12 For more information (only available in Turkish): Davutoğlu, Ahmed (2001), Stratejik Derinlik, Istanbul.

(Kramer 2010: 1-2) 'In terms of its area of influence, Turkey is a Middle Eastern, Balkan, Caucasian, Central Asian, Caspian, Mediterranean, Gulf and Black Sea country.' (Davutoğlu 2008: 79) Turkey shall strive for becoming a regional leader in the Middle East and playing a global strategic role by '*(…) providing security and stability not only for itself, but also for its neighbouring regions. Turkey should guarantee its own security and stability by taking on a more active, constructive role to provide order, stability and security in its environs.' (ibid.: 79)* In accordance with Davutoğlu's doctrine *zero problems with neighbours*, Turkey needs to overcome its sectarian politics and establish cordial relations with all its neighbours. (Walker 2011: 7) *As only one result of this foreign policy strategy, Turkey's popularity in the Middle East increased immensely. Due to its successful approach of combining economic elements, democracy and a focus on Islamic tradition, Turkey became a role model for many other Muslim states in the region. (Ayata 2015: 96)*

After a decade of thriving policy-making in the Middle East, the onset of the Arab Spring challenged Turkish foreign policy significantly.[13] (Öniş 2012: 59) In particular the Syrian civil war can be regarded as the litmus test for Turkey: Although the relation with Syria had always been difficult, under the rule of the AKP, Turkey rebuilt close ties with Syria including free trade agreements, lifted visa regimentals as well as cooperation in many other fields such as education or health care. In fact, Syria constituted the leading example in Turkey's application of its *zero problems with neighbours* doctrine. (ibid.: 51-52) Then-PM Erdoğan's emotional reaction to the Syrian crisis should be understand against this background: 'We do not see Syria as a foreign problem, Syria is our domestic problem (…), we have historical and cultural ties, we have kinship.' (AK Parti 2011) In response to the Syrian crisis, the Turkish government internationally lobbied for a military intervention in order to overthrow the Assad-regime, albeit with little success. 'Yet, as Syria's uprising evolved into a civil war, Turkey's reactions became increasingly erratic, confrontational, and interventionist.' (Ayata 2015: 97) Turkey started to support oppositional forces, in particular the Free

---

13 The Arab Spring in general affected Turkish foreign policy significantly. Due to its limited scope, this thesis will not discuss in detail to which extent and for which reason Turkish foreign policy has changed. Since the outbreak of the Arab Spring, a variety of literature has been published analysing the shift in Turkish foreign policy. For more information: Öniş, Ziya (2012), Turkey and the Arab Spring. Between Ethics and Self-Interest, in: Insight Turkey, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 45-63; Kuru, Ahmet T. (2015), Turkey's Failed Policy towards the Arab Spring. Three Levels of Analysis, in: Mediterranean Quarterly, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 94-117.

Syrian Army (FSA), which represents a turning point in Turkey's foreign policy strategy. (Kuru 2015: 103)

Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, Turkey has been faced by several spill-overs in its border region. These include a massive influx of Syrian refugees, the flow of foreign fighters who seek to fight alongside jihadists groups, terrorist attacks by IS and increasing smuggle of oil, arms and other goods. (Coşkun 2016) Apart from that, Turkey's border region is occasionally hit by airstrikes deriving from Syria. These border issues constitute not only a security threat to Turkey but also a financial challenge for the current government. (Al-Shahery/Frederick/Stebbins et. al. 2014: 15)

The long-lasting relationship with the USA, one of Turkey's most important partners in security issues, once again deteriorated with the emergence of IS. Since the introduction of the anti-IS coalition in September 2014, the USA has put pressure on Turkey to become more active in the fight against IS. Turkey's *open door policy* has posed the greatest struggle to the Obama-administration: besides Syrian refugees who flee from the civil war to Turkey, also foreign fighters pass the Turkish-Syrian border in a significant number. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 24) While discussing Turkey's role in the anti-IS coalition, 'Turkish leaders also manifest concern that U.S. expectations of Turkish cooperation regarding Syria and Iraq are insufficiently sensitive to Turkey's domestic pressures and security vulnerabilities.' (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 9)

All in all, Turkey lost its status as a regional mediator as well as many strategic relationships within the international community. (Coşkun 2016) 'Thus, despite its efforts to establish itself in 2010 as a promoter of democracy in the region, in 2014 Turkey appears as a partisan actor deeply embroiled in the power conflicts in Syria, and in repeated conflicts with the US, EU Russia, Iran, Saudi-Arabia, and Israel.' (Ayata 2014: 105) Ironically, some scholars argue that Turkish foreign policy moved from *zero problems with neighbours* to *zero neighbours without problems.* (Halistoprak/Özdamar/Sula 2014: 106)

After the resignation of *Davutoğlu in May 2016, some scholars anticipated changes in Turkish foreign policy because the former prime minister had sought to maintain relationships to international partners. The scholar John Hudson stated in his article America Loses Its Man in Ankara that his resignation* '(…) risks upending the currently fraught but still functioning relationship between Washington and Ankara — two wary

allies that nonetheless need each other in their shared fight against the Islamic State.' (Hudson 2016) In May 2016, Binali Yildirim, known as a paladin of the President Erdoğan, was elected prime minister. In one of his first speeches, Yildirim summarized that the main aim of Turkish foreign policy was '(…) to continue pursuing policies which would ensure lasting peace and fellowship in the immediate region.' (AK Parti 2016b) Judging from the party programme introduced only shortly after Yildirim´s accession to office, the main guidelines of Turkish foreign policy – introduced by Davutoğlu – were only slightly modified. (AK Parti 2016a) Nevertheless, it remains open to which extent Turkish foreign policy towards IS may change.

4.1.2 Turkey's Counterterrorism Strategies – Fight on Terror on Two Fronts

Not only the PKK and IS target the Turkish state, but the government also faces terror attacks from leftist groups such as the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP/C) and the Turkish Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (THKP/C). (Zeldin 2015: 2-3) Besides this, the AKP-government combats the so-called *parallel structures* by referring to the religious movement of the U.S.-based Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen[14], whose organization was recently designated as a terrorist group by the AKP-government. (Butler 2016)

Since the focus of this thesis is to explain Turkey's foreign policy shift towards IS, this chapter will focus on its counterstrategies towards IS and discuss the role of the PKK and its Syrian allies in the formulation of Turkey's foreign policy. In response to the Suruç bombing, Turkey not only targeted IS in the end of July 2015, but also launched airstrikes against PKK-bases in Iraq. Scholars describe Turkey's approach in countering both IS and the PKK simultaneously as a *two-front fight.* (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 90) The fact that Turkey in June 2015 had already started to carry out a large-scale anti-terror campaign focusing on both IS networks and suspected members of the PKK strengthens the scholars' hypothesis. (Stein 2015) Presumably, the reason for this is Turkey's approach to treat any terrorist organization in an equivalent way. 'There is no difference between the PKK, Daesh, and FETO [Gülen-movement]. They all serve the

---

14 Fethullah Gülen, born in 1941, is a Turkish cleric living in exile in the USA since the 1990s who initiated the Gülen community that rapidly be-came a massive international religious movement. The then-PM Erdoğan used to be allied with Mr. Gülen and supported the movement until 2011 when the friendship cooled down. Since then, an open rivalry between Gülen and Erdoğan has broken out. After the failed coup attempt, Erdoğan accused Gülen, and thousands of state officials have been suspended or arrested. Already in 2010, US-diplomats have argued that members of the Gülen-movement have infiltrated the Turkish State. 'Even Turkey's opposition parties agree with Erdoğan's assessment of Gülen – a unity not often seen in Turkish politics.' (Belli/Caylan/Popp 2016)

same purpose', Erdoğan said in a meeting of Islamic NGOs at the presidential palace. (N.A. 2016b)

From the mid-1980s onwards the Turkish government has been constantly combating the PKK that seeks to establish an independent Kurdish state in south-eastern Turkey and is therefore regarded as one of the main threats to the Turkish state. (Zeldin 2015: 1) Terror attacks launched by the PKK and its separatist aspirations have increased the tensions and have led periodically to violent clashes between the Turkish state and the PKK. Yet, the PKK's approach has shifted over time and '[t]he initially secessionist demands of the PKK have since ostensibly evolved towards the less ambitious goal of greater cultural and political autonomy.' (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 14) Similar to the current debate on the conflict between the Turkish military and the PKK, Turkey's approach in dealing with the PKK has often been criticized by Western governments and by human rights organizations for taking overly harsh measures against ethnic Kurds. (ibid.: 14)

With the onset of the Syrian civil war renewed tensions between the PKK and Turkish authorities arose. It is to be assumed that this was related to Kurdish politics in northern Syria. The Syrian equivalent to the PKK – the Democratic Union Party (PYD) – gained political control over Kurdish-populated enclaves along the Turkish-Syrian border. The Turkish government raised concerns that the Syrian border region could become another base for PKK operations such as training and administration as it is the case in the northern part of Iraq, which is under the authority of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). (ibid.: 14) Since the PYD's militia – the People's Protection Units (YPG) – has taken control over large territory along the border, tensions between Turkey and the PKK have increased. The fact that the PYD operates as an anti-IS ground force in cooperation with the USA has also deteriorated Turkey's relation to its ally, the USA. (Salih 2015: 4) According to the scholars Kanat and Ustun, Turkey fears to lose control over its borderline with Syria. As one scenario, arms given to the PYD may fall into the hands of the PKK and be used against Turkey. (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 89)

The intricate relationship between the USA, Turkey and Kurdish forces has to be seen against the background of domestic politics. The cease-fire agreement[15] between the Turkish state und the PKK – introduced in March 2013 – collapsed in the aftermath of the Suruç bombing when tensions heavily reinflamed. Only two days after that terrorist attack, the PKK claimed the death of two Turkish policemen to be an act of revenge for the Suruç bombing for which they accused the AKP-government. In response, Turkey launched airstrikes against PKK bases in Iraq and arrested hundreds of ethnic Kurds suspected as members of the PKK. (Salih 2015: 4) Terror attacks by the PKK on Turkish security personnel and Turkish airstrikes targeting PKK bases followed. (Totten 2015: 7) The increasing tensions led to an escalating conflict between the Turkish military and the PKK in south-eastern Turkey. Only in the time period from July to September 2015, dozens of civilians and hundreds of Turkish soldiers as well as PKK-fighters died. (European Commission 2015: 24-25)

The other enemy in Turkey's *two-front fight* – IS – started to target Turkey in the beginning of 2014 when three security personnel were shot by IS-fighters at a checkpoint close to Niğde. Terror attacks such as the Suruç bombing and spill-overs from the Syrian conflict threaten Turkey's internal and external security, and therefore the Turkish government implemented various counterterrorism strategies. Turkey's measures in countering IS focus mainly on three aspects: 1) preventing potential foreign fighters from entering Turkey, 2) hindering foreign fighters from travelling to Syria and 3) containing illicit smuggling in the border region, in particular oil, that constitutes one of the most important sources of income for terrorist organizations such as IS. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 32)

First of all, Turkey is constantly improving a no-entry list for suspected Islamist terrorists which the government had already introduced in 2011. (ibid.: 32) According to Turkish officials in July 2015, more than 15,000 suspected extremist foreign fighters were banned from entering Turkey. (N.A. 2015b) Since Turkey is co-chairing the Working Group on Foreign Terrorist Fighters (WGFTF) in the framework of the anti-IS

---

15 Although the AKP-government and the PKK agreed on a cease-fire in 2013, violent clashes occurred sporadically in south-eastern Turkey. While Turkish security forces increased their presence in the region, the HDP and the PKK strengthened their influence on the local governments' infrastructure. In the run-up to the elections in June 2015, a harsh political debate between the AKP and HDP culminated in massive accusations against each other. Tensions increased steadily, and as a consequence, the PKK declared the end of the cease-fire which eventually led to a wave of terror attacks, and an armed conflict in south-eastern Turkey arose. (Park 2016: 464) For further information regarding the conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK: Özcan, Ali N. / Yavuz, Hakan M. (2015), Turkish Democracy and the Kurdish Question, in: Middle East Policy, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 73-87.

coalition, the government particularly works on strategies that shall contain the flow of foreign fighters. One measure involves the promotion of greater intelligence sharing between the member states of the coalition, and for this reason, Ankara hosted the first meeting in November 2015 regarding this issue. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016)

In a second step, Turkey installed *risk analysis units* which shall detect suspected foreign travellers at airports, border cities and border crossings who seek to join extremist organisations in Syria. In 2014, Turkey had not yet introduced an advanced system for recording passengers' information which is why this step marks an important progress in decreasing the number of foreign fighters travelling to Syria. (Zeldin 2015: 5) Already in July 2015, the presidential spokesmen Ibrahim Kalin defended Turkey's strategy in combating IS by stating: 'Turkey listed Daesh as a terrorist organization in October 2013 and since then has deported around 1,600 foreign nationals who have been found to have ties with it'. (N.A. 2015b)

As a third measure, according to the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs, Turkey improved its security standards at the Turkish-Syrian border. This includes an official closure of all border gates in early 2015. Additionally, Turkey improved its border security by enhancing special forces that patrol constantly along the border. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016) Apart from that, Turkey announced that a wall of a length of 900 km along the borderline will be finished in February 2017 in order to stop illegal border crossings and smuggling. (Butler/Coskun 2016)

Lastly, concerning cross-border smugglings, notably oil, the Turkish foreign ministry points out that Turkey '(…) employs effective and robust measures to prevent smuggling activities [and] conducts a zero-tolerance policy regarding illegal cross-border activities.' (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016) Turkish authorities stated that 300 kilometres of illicit pipelines were destroyed and suspected oil stores were closed. In April 2013, Turkey tightened the legislation regarding the smuggling of oil and the sale of smuggled oil in gas stations. Moreover, in line with the UN Security Council resolution 2199[16], Turkey regularly shares information about the amount of smuggled oil with the UN-led Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. (ibid.) In terms of terror

---

16 For further information: S/RES/2199 (2015), online: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF CF9B-6D27- 4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2199.pdf, 14.10.2016.

financing, Turkey '(…) has launched a comprehensive strategy and took effective measures to combat Daesh's finances and disrupt and prevent the terrorist organizations from raising, moving and using funds.' (ibid.) Yet, the Turkish government does not provide any information how these measures look like.

4.2 Domestic Politics under the AKP-government

4.2.1 Media and Civil Society as the Mouthpiece of Turkish Society

On a press conference in January 2016, US-President Barack Obama expressed concerns about the situation of freedom of press in Turkey: 'And there is no doubt that President Erdoğan has repeatedly been elected through a democratic process, but I think the approach that they've been taking towards the press is one that could lead Turkey down a path that would be very troubling.' (The White House 2016)

In every democratic system, media play a crucial role in informing the people as well as serving as a platform for public discussion. Therefore, this chapter aims at analysing to which extent media and civil society are able to shape the governmental decision-making process. In the 65th government programme, the AKP clearly defines the role of media in a democratic system.

Free, independent, multi-voiced written press and visual media is one of the most important assurances of the democratic regime. It is fundamental to preserve the freedom to receive correct information and news. All measures shall be taken to ensure such an environment. (AK Parti 2016a)

According to Reporters Without Borders in 2016, Turkey reached the 151st rank out of 180 countries in the world press freedom index, one place below the Democratic Republic of the Congo and one place ahead of Tajikistan. (Reporters Without Borders 2016a) In comparison, three years after the AKP came to power, in 2005, Turkey achieved the 98th place out of 160 countries. Accordingly, in the period from 2005 to 2016, the degree of press freedom declined significantly. (Reporters Without Borders 2016b) The organization Freedom House notices a similar result: Turkey's degree of press freedom shifted from *partly free* in 2005 to *not free* in 2016. (Freedom House 2016)

Under the rule of the AKP, the freedom of press has been increasingly restricted. Against this background, Reporters Without Borders point out that 'President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has embarked on an offensive against Turkey's media. Journalists are

harassed, many have been accused of insulting the president and the internet is systematically censored.' (Reporters Without Borders 2016b) The European Commission (EC) adds that the '(…) ongoing and new criminal cases against journalists, writers or social media users are of serious concern.' (European Commission 2015: 22)

In general terms, the Turkish media market is highly concentrated which fosters the process of an enforced conformity. 'A small number of wealthy holding companies own nearly all of the country's most important outlets in both television and print.' (Corke/Finkel/Kramer et. al. 2014: 5) As only one consequence, in case of high political pressure, many newspapers ran with similar headlines. For instance, during the Gezi protests, seven newspapers printed the same quote from the then-PM Erdoğan on the front cover: 'I would give my life for the demands of democracy'. (ibid.: 13)

Since tensions between the Turkish state and the PKK reinflamed in summer 2015, also political pressure on media has increased. According to Freedom House, throughout 2015, '(…) at least 348 journalists, columnists, and media workers were dismissed or forced to quit during the year.' (Freedom House 2016) Already during the Gezi protests, around 59 journalists who had reported critically on the government lost their jobs. (Corke/Finkel/Kramer et. al. 2014: 5) Freedom House concludes that the fear of prosecution or the loss of employment has led to a widespread self-censorship. (Freedom House 2016)

Above all, the high number of prosecutions of journalists in the framework of the criminal code is criticized. Especially the law on fight against terrorism (no. 3713)[17] has been widely discussed due to its broad formulation that leaves room for interpretation. The scholars Pierini and Mayr argue that '(…) the imprisonment of journalists has a distinct Kurdish dimension and is largely based on the anti-terrorism legislation.' (Pierini/Mayr 2013: 5) In the context of the Turkish penal code, most journalists face trials on the basis of insulting the president (art. 299) and denigrating the Turkish

---

17 For further information on the law on fight against terrorism. Law on Fight Against Terrorism No. 3713, online: https://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1226_1335519341_turkey-anti-terr-1991-am2010-en.pdf, 05.07.2016.

nation (art. 301)[18]. Besides this, many journalists are accused of being a member in a criminal organization due to article 314 of the Turkish penal code[19]. (Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media 2015) As reported by Zeldin, '(...) the legislation's broad reach has enabled Turkish authorities to use it to detain and prosecute thousands of politicians, reporters, and activists.' (Zeldin 2015: 4) Additionally, the internet law (no. 5651) and in particular its implementation became the subject of criticism as the censorship of internet content increased steadily. (Akgül/Kırlıdoğ 2015: 2) The EC raises concern that the internet law strengthens '(...) the government's powers to block content without court order on an unduly wide range of grounds.' (European Commission 2015: 22)

Besides media, civil society organizations (CSO) constitute another important channel through which public opinion can shape a government's decision-making process. In the new party programme of the 65th government, the AKP clearly highlights the importance of an active civil society for democracy. The participation by civil actors '(...) indicates that a democratic regime is not a one-way regime, and that it is a two-way interaction by those who govern and those who are governed.' (AK Parti 2016a) In this sense, the current government states that they want to improve civil-state relations in the way that '[o]pinions of the non-governmental organizations shall be obtained in order to modify the related legal arrangements and a legal framework shall be drawn up to raise the civil society organizations to the level at contemporary democratic countries. (ibid.)

Although civil-state relations have been weak since the Ottoman Empire, CSOs emerged steadily in the 1980s. 'Despite their deficiencies, which are deeply rooted in their ongoing weak status in the country's social and political sphere, CSOs have begun to gain importance in Turkey's societal and political affairs.' (Içduygu 2011: 384-384) Within the scope of the accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey, the EU already repeatedly underlined the importance of civil society as one of the crucial elements in the consolidation of democracy and thus as a precondition for a membership. Especially in the beginning of the accession negotiations, prominent

---

18 In order to provide an example, on the basis of article 301 of the penal code, which punishes the denigration *of the Turkish nation*, many journalists have been accused because of discussing the division of Cyprus, criticizing Turkish security forces or claiming that an Armenian geno-cide took place. (Freedom House 2016)

19 For further information on the penal code: Council of Europe (2015), Penal Code of Turkey, COE online: http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-REF(2016)011-e, 16.10.2016.

CSOs such as Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSIAD) and Women Entrepreneurs Association (KAGIDER) lobbied for a membership in the EU domestically and internationally. (ibid.: 385)

CSOs with a focus on economic issues, in particular business associations – such as Turkish Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK) and the Turkish Exporters Assembly (TIM) – are most able to shape foreign policy decisions. This can be explained by the fact that the AKP's guiding line is mainly based on economic success.[20] The following example reflects to which extent business organizations may shape Turkish foreign policy: In April 2016, President Erdoğan visited many states in Africa accompanied by half of the Turkish cabinet and 150 businessmen from DEIK who closed several business deals in the fields of construction and education. (N.A. 2016a)

The scope of influence of most non-governmental actors remains little. According to the annual progress report of the EC, most CSOs are not able to take part in the process of decision-making. '*A number of CSOs have also continued to see their regular operations challenged through court closure cases, penalties, restrictions or discriminatory practices by public authorities. Restrictions on freedom of assembly remained a problem for segments of civil society (…).'* (European Commission 2015: 10)

To sum up, one can conclude that the Turkish government does not provide a sufficient legal framework in which civil society and media can operate on an independent basis. Apart from that, the current Turkish government controls large parts of the media landscape. Journalists as well as internet users face high pressure that leads to self-censorship and a highly concentrated media sector. (Corke/Finkel/Kramer et. al. 2014: 5) It is to be assumed that the scope of influence in the decisions-making process is restricted for the majority of civil society.

4.2.2 The Legal Framework and Domestic Constraints

The Turkish Constitution, written in 1982 by the military after the third coup, sets up the basis of a parliamentary democracy in which the cabinet depends on the confidence of the legislative. Due to the parliament's controlling function over the

---

20 The economical approach constitutes an important element of Turkish foreign policy under the AKP, for further information: Kirişc, Kemal (2009), The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy. The Rise of the Trading State, in: New Perspectives on Turkey, No. 40, pp. 29-57.

executive – vote of confidence and vote of censure –the legislative is formally able to influence foreign policy issues. (Özbudun 2011: 66-67) Yet, single-party majorities and strong party discipline '(…) makes it highly unlikely for a Council of Ministers or an individual minister to be ousted by a vote of no-confidence.' (ibid.: 67)

Since the AKP came to power in 2002, the party has held the majority in the parliament with increasing election results up to 50 % in 2011. Only in June 2015 the AKP lost a significant share of the votes and no coalition with any other party could be formed which eventually led to a re-run of the elections in November of the same year. In these elections, the AKP regained its majority with 49,5 % and the Republican People's Party (CHP) remained being the strongest opposition party with 25,32 %, followed by the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) with 11,9 % and the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) with 10,76 % share of the votes. (Çarkoğlu 2015: 1-2) Due to a 10 % threshold (Art. 33/1, Law No. 2839), the Turkish parliament shows only little fragmentation and thus currently consists of four parties including the single-ruling party AKP. (Erdem/Solak 2012: 18)

In the run-up to the parliamentary elections in June 2015, the AKP mainly promoted their political goal of transforming the Turkish system into a presidential democracy. (Çarkoğlu 2015: 4) Although the president legally needs to operate outside of the party, the current President Erdoğan represents the central person in the decision-making process within the AKP's party structure. (Seufert 2014: 4) 'De facto, Erdoğan's election as president has already transitioned Turkey to a presidential system, even if the constitution still provides for a parliamentary one. The new cabinet clearly bears Erdoğan's hallmark.' (ibid.: 5) The scholar Seufert concludes that the current President Erdoğan undermines the power and independency of the Turkish parliament. (ibid.: 4)

The AKP's supremacy in parliament and the president's proximity to the AKP resulted in the establishment of a quasi-presidential system that significantly weakens opposition forces. (ibid.: 4) It is questionable to which extent the exchange of opinions is possible and in how far the parliamentarians, excluding members of the AKP, are able to shape the decision-making process in foreign policy. A pluralistic parliament is not just crucial in controlling the executive and adapting laws, but also because '[a]s in many parliament systems, parliamentary supervision and debates aim at influencing public opinion, rather than unseating the government.' (Özbudun 2011: 68) It is

feasible to argue that members of the AKP are able to determine the discourse in the Turkish parliament and, in consequence, influence public opinion. On that premise, Gumuscu and Keyman are concerned about the consolidation of democracy in Turkey: 'The AKP's attitude towards the opposition combined with the opposition's ineffectiveness reinforce the AKP's tendency to monopolize the task of democratization which results in ownership of the democratization process (…), thus produces somewhat paradoxical counter-democratic manifestations.' (Gumuscu/Keyman 2014: 57)

It is important to point out that AKP's electoral success is closely linked to its economic policies. Under the rule of the AKP, the country witnessed a sustained economic growth that contributed to the party's political success. Turkey presented itself as a stable and reliable business partner, which contributed to a wave of foreign investments. (Karagöl 2013: 115) In 2011, Turkey and China were regarded as the most rapidly growing economies in the world: Turkey's world trade increased from $82 billion in 2000 to $389 billion in 2012. As only one consequence, the life standard of Turkey's citizens improved sustainably. Due to Turkey's economic success, a middle class with increasing prosperity emerged as it was the case in many Western countries throughout the 1950s. (Cagaptay 2014: 16) In this sense, the AKP needs to ensure Turkey´s current economic success in order to receive the sufficient majority in parliament in the upcoming elections.

When the AKP came to power in 2002, the military was one of the most influential opposition forces in Turkey. For a long time in Turkish history, the military dominated Turkey's domestic politics and foreign policy by playing the role of the guardian of the *kemalist* heritage with its primary aim to protect the secular order. (Ayata 2015: 107) Since the introduction of the multiparty system in 1950, the military carried out three coups and each time took power in the form of an interim government. (Alpay 2009: 9) Until the 1970s, the military was the most operative institution and therefore was able to secure its political function on a legal basis by constitutional amendments. (Heper/Keyman 1998: 265) Besides this, '[t]he military's power was sustained through heightened national security discourse that portrayed Turkey as surrounded by hostile neighbours and under constant threat from internal enemies, such as minorities, Islamists, or lefties.' (Ayata 2015: 107) After a decade of power struggles between the military and the current government, the AKP eventually ousted the military from

power by applying democratic tools: In the context of the accession negotiations between Turkey and the EU and by the implementation of several democratization packages initiated by the EU, the military's influential power decreased. (Söyler 2009: 5-6) Yet, with the resurgence of the Kurdish conflict, an AKP-military coalition remerged. Many scholars such as Tol criticize that 'Erdoğan has given the military a blank check to wage war against Kurdish insurgents and has struck a cosy alliance with the generals.'[21] (Tol 2016)

The AKP's predominant position in Turkish politics contributed to a shift in social cleavages. Since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey's society has been marked by a division along the conflict line of modernist fractions with its roots in the *kemalist* state elite and traditional-religious groups of society. However, many scholars argue that this cleavage does not apply to the current Turkish society anymore. A new type of political polarization emerged: '(…) the conceptual divergences that have become visible in recent years run along the lines of being either for or against the AKP government and its concept of democracy.' (Göğüş/Mannitz 2016: 19)

In summary, it has become evident that due to the AKP's majority in parliament and the military's loss of power constrains on the governmental level declined. Apart from that, the AKP and the Turkish President Erdoğan have introduced a quasi-presidential system that increasingly weakens political opponents.

5. The Shift in Turkey's Counterterrorism Strategy towards Islamic State

5.1 Facts and Figures on the Case

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), Turkey hosts around 2.7 million Syrian refugees who have fled from the civil war as reported in September 2016. (UNCHR 2016) This high number of refugees can be explained by the fact that Turkey used to apply an *open door policy* at its borders with Syria and Iraq. At a meeting with members of the UN in September 2015 concerning the current refugee and migration movement, the then-PM Davutoğlu clearly defended the

---

21 A group within the Turkish military carried out a coup attempt on 16 July 2016. Eventually, the coup plotters were defeated by pro-government security forces. The government accused Fethullah Gülen and his supporters to be responsible for the coup attempt, thus, thousands of suspected Gülen followers in public service have been arrested or suspended, including soldiers, doctors, judges and academics. (Belli/Caylan/Popp 2016) In response to the failed coup attempt, the AKP government declared the state of emergency that was supposed to last three months. Officially, the government still fears a second coup attempt by parts of the military. (Rosenfeld 2016)

maintenance of Turkey's border policy by stating: 'Despite all challenges, we still continue our *open door policy* for Syrians fleeing from the violence in their country, without any discrimination with regard to religious or ethnic origin.' (Davutoğlu 2015: 1)

This *open border policy* not only led to an immense arrival of refugees in Turkey, but scholars and most of Turkey's allies also raised the concern that Tukey had been indirectly involved in supporting terrorism in the sense that foreign fighters have used the Turkish-Syrian border for transit and smuggling. (Zeldin 2015: 2) The scholars Schanzer and Tahiroglu argue in the same way: 'It is unclear whether Ankara is explicitly assisting these groups, or whether JN [Al-Nusra Front] and IS are merely exploiting Turkey's lax border policies.' (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 3) However, it is fact that Turkey has supported irregular fighters in particular in the early stages of the uprisings, notably the FSA, in order to overthrow the Assad-regime in Syria. Unlike Turkey's expectations, the Assad-regime was not toppled, and jihadist groups such as IS started to dominate the Syrian opposition forces. (ibid.: 3) The ongoing conflict in Syria and the rapid rise of extremist organisations led to an increasing stream of extremist fighters into Syria. This also contributed to the establishment of several IS-linked sleeper cells within Turkey. (Sengupta 2016: 3-4) By insisting on the creation of a safe zone along the Turkish-Syrian border, Turkey had previously refused to allow military airstrikes of the anti-IS coalition from Turkish airbases. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 29) 'All of this has raised questions about Turkey's value as an American ally, and its place in the NATO alliance.' (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 3)

In point of fact, already in 2014, Turkish soldiers have started to train Kurdish Peshmerga forces in northern Iraq as part of the fight against IS, as a senior Turkish official declared. 'We have said many times we want a comprehensive strategy. It is impossible to stop these terrorists only by bombing (…) If you try to kill the mosquitoes it will not work, you have to dry the swamp'. (Pamuk 2014) Apart from that, in October 2014, the Turkish parliament assigned authority to the government to send military into Iraq or Syria in case the national security is threatened. This mandate also allowed foreign forces to operate in Turkey. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 21)

The Suruç bombing on 20 July 2015 marks the turning point in Turkish foreign policy towards IS. In response to that terror attack, the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs

published a press release concerning the Turkey-US cooperation in fighting IS. In this press release, Turkey emphasises that it had already contributed to the anti-IS coalition in the past, but that it will further deepen its engagement in the fight against IS alongside the USA. As one part of the deeper cooperation with the USA, Turkey announced that it would expand its role in the coalition by carrying out military airstrikes.

It is clear that these threats and attacks directed against our national security will receive the response they deserve. Eliminating the threat posed by DEASH both within our borders as well as to our security has been an important aspect of the joint operational work conducted between Turkey and the US for some time now. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015a)

However, the terrorist attack in Suruç was not the first time that IS has targeted Turkish civilians and security personnel. (see Appendix 1) Already in March 2014, three Turkish security personnel were killed at a regular checkpoint in the central Anatolian province of Niğde by members of IS. (Idiz 2014b) This incident was followed by an attack on a Turkish consulate in Iraq: Along with the conquest of the Iraqi town of Mosul in June 2014, IS seized the Turkish consulate and took 49 people as hostages. The attack on the consulate constitutes one of the most serious attacks in modern Turkish history. In order to free the hostages Turkey negotiated directly with IS and in return, according to multiple sources, released 180 IS-fighters. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 21) Shortly after the hostage-taking in Mosul, Erdoğan defended Turkey's policy towards IS by arguing that the government had to be careful in taking action against IS because the hostages' lives were in danger. In this context, he announced that Turkey would play a more active role in the coalition. (Idiz 2014a) Yet, Turkey did not intensify its actions against IS at that point. Only a few days before the parliamentary election in June 2015, IS again targeted Turkey: Four people were killed and more than 100 injured during a rally of HDP-supporters in Diyarbakır. (N.A. 2015k) Following the attack in Suruç in July 2015, one soldier was killed at a border outpost in Kilis to which Turkey responded by military operations targeting IS bases but without entering Syrian airspace. (N.A. 2015l)

Although Turkey was threatened by IS much earlier than the Suruç bombing in July 2015 and has been a member of the anti-IS coalition since September 2014, the AKP-government had not countered the Islamist organization very actively until this point

which was highly criticized by its NATO-allies. 'However, following the Suruç attack, Turkey revised its strategy, adopting a new doctrine to deal simultaneously with all designated terrorist organizations, most significantly ISIS and PKK.' (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 89) In response to the Suruç bombing, Turkey *launched its first airstrikes against IS bases and allowed US-forces to use the air bases in Incirlik, Diyarbakır and Malatya in order to operate against IS. (ibid.: 88) Evidently, after the Suruç bombing on 20 July 2015, Turkey has shifted its foreign policy strategy towards IS.*

The following chapter seeks to detect the driving forces that led to Turkey's turn in its foreign policy strategy. In order to clarify the overall question whether domestic politics or the international system caused this shift, three given hypotheses will be examined from both level of analysis – domestic and international –in accordance with the methodological approach of PT.

5.2 The First Level of Analysis: The Impact of External Factors

5.2.1 *Hypothesis 1*: The Increasing Security Threat at the Turkish-Syrian Border led to the Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy

During the Cold War, the Turkish-Syrian border was factually an extension of the Iron Curtain. While Turkey served as NATO's eastern flank state, Syria was allied with the Soviet Union. At any time, the relations with Syria have been difficult: 'Turkey's policy toward Syria in the past decade has been a rollercoaster ride.' (Abramowitz/Edelman 2013: 21) In the late 1990s, the Turkish-Syrian border became a scene of military operations. By moving heavy ordinances to the border region, Turkey forced Syria to expel PKK's leader Abdulah Öcalan who lived in exile in Syria. Until the onset of the Syrian civil war, a period of warm relations with Syria followed. (ibid.: 22)

Turkey has been significantly affected by the continuing civil war in Syria. An increasing arrival of refugees, the flow of foreign fighters and the extensive smuggling of oil, arms and other goods not only pose a security threat to Turkey, but also a financial challenge for the current government. (Al-Shahery/Frederick/Stebbins et. al. 2014: 15) As only one consequence for the internal security, a high number of IS-sleeper cells within Turkey is presumed. (Sengupta 2016: 3-4) According to a Turkish police report from September 2015, around 3000 people living in Turkey are suspected to be linked to IS. Apart from that, IS controls several spots at the Turkish-Syrian border, which the report evaluates as an increasing security risk for Turkey. (Kızılkoyun 2015) Only a few days before Turkey launched its first airstrikes against IS

on 29 July 2015, one Turkish soldier was killed by IS-fighters close to Kilis during cross-border clashes. (N.A. 2015l)

Taking together these facts, the hypothesis at hand argues that Turkey was increasingly concerned about the security situation at its border with Syria which is why the Turkish government decided to step up its fight against IS. A statement by the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs of 24 July 2015 – one day after the soldier was killed in Kilis – underpins the hypothesis in question: 'The DEASH problem is a primary national security threat for Turkey. The dimensions of this threat are constantly growing.' (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015a)

Since the outbreak of the armed clashes in Syria, Turkey was occasionally hit by rockets and missiles in its border region, especially in the cities of Reyhanlı, Kilis and Suruç. 'Authorities admit that keeping security watertight along the 915-kilometer-long border is difficult despite a massive military presence recently reinforced by additional troops.' (Durmuş 2015) After each attack suspected to be carried out by IS or other terrorist groups, Turkey responded by military operations: 'We have never left any attack on Turkish lands and citizens unanswered and we will never leave it unanswered', said the Turkish President Erdoğan. (Girit 2016)

Due to this high security threat, already in November 2012, Turkey demanded support from the NATO in order to secure its border to Syria. In February 2013, the NATO set up six missile batteries along the Turkish-Syrian border in the framework of the operation *Active Fence*.[22] As only one side effect, the operation *Active Fence* has improved the relationship between Turkey and the NATO. This marks an important step since the organization constitutes one of the most important allies for Turkey in security issues. (NATO 2013)

In addition, Turkey constantly called on both the USA and the NATO to create a no-fly zone in Syria along the Turkish border with the purpose of establishing a corridor in which refugees and Syrian opposition forces find a safe haven. Turkish authorities argued that the creation of a save zone would also decrease the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. Yet, both the USA and the NATO refused this demand. (Hadjicostis 2016) The rejection not only led to tensions with the USA, but also Turkey's foreign

---

22 For more information: NATO (2013), NATO support to Turkey. Background and timeline, online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_92555.htm? 12.10.2016.

policy approach towards Syria in general increasingly seemed about to fail. (Sazak/Kibaroglu 2015: 99)

Although Turkey fully joined the anti-IS coalition in August 2015, the Turkish President Erdoğan called on Turkey's allies to provide more assistance in order to protect the Turkish-Syrian border region: 'They have left us alone in our struggle against this organisation which is shedding our blood both through suicide bombings and by attacks on Kilis.[23] (…) In Syria none of those who say they are fighting Daesh have suffered the kind of losses that we have, nor paid such a heavy price as us.' (N.A. 2016c)

As another piece of evidence, Turkey has intensified its border security since IS emerged. Besides other measures Turkey took in fighting IS (see chapter 4.1.2), in early 2015, the AKP-government most essential closed its border to Syria and introduced additional security personnel which patrols along the border. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2016) This is in line with the planned construction of a security-wall along the Turkish-Syrian border that is supposed to be finished in February 2017. (Butler/Coskun 2016)

In response to the terror attacks in Suruç and Kilis carried out by IS in July 2015 (see Appendix 1), Turkey requested a meeting with all NATO members under reference to article four of the Washington Treaty which suggests to consult all members, if '(…) in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties is threatened.' (North Atlantic Treaty: Art. 4) The Turkish ministry for foreign affairs announced this strategical step in a press release, published on their website on 24 July 2015, which highlights Turkey's shift in its strategy towards IS.

In the wake of increased security threats following the attacks against our security and law-enforcement forces in provinces of Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa and Kilis, in particular the terrorist attack that took the lives of 32 innocent Turkish citizens in Suruç on 20 July 2015, all necessary measures are being taken and in this context, operations are also being carried out by the Turkish Armed Forces. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015b)

---

23 Since Turkey stepped up its fight against IS, the terror organization daily launches airstrikes against the Turkish border town of Kilis; at least 21 people have been killed until May 2016. (Girit 2016)

In conclusion, it has become evident that the AKP-government has felt increasingly threatened due to IS-linked terror attacks, smuggling at the border and sleeper cells within Turkey. Yet, the security situation at the Turkish-Syrian border deteriorated earlier than 29 July 2015, when Turkey launched its first airstrikes against IS. In addition, Turkey had started to improve its measures in the border region already in the beginning of 2015. It can be concluded that the security threat at its border with Syria played a role in Turkey's foreign policy towards IS and thus constitutes a necessary criterion for the outcome. However, it does not explain Turkey's foreign policy shift sufficiently which is why this hypothesis passes the *hoop test*.

5.2.2 *Hypothesis 2*: Pressure from the International Community – Notably the USA – Forced Turkey to Take a More Active Role in Countering IS

The relationship between Turkey and the USA has always been marked by ups and downs. During the Cold War, Turkey constituted an important ally for the USA since it was a direct neighbour of the former Soviet Union. Especially in the first decade of the Cold War, Turkey directed its foreign policy towards the West. By sending troops to Korea, Turkey represented itself as a reliable ally and became a member of the NATO in 1952. In this respect, Turkey also benefited from the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine by receiving annual aid in the amount of $160 million to equip and train its military forces. (International Business Publications 2015: 87)

However, in the 1960s, the relations between the two allies cooled down, in particular because of the Cyprus issue.[24] In order to prevent any escalation between Turkey and Greece, the former US-President Lyndon Johnson wrote a letter to the Turkish then-PM Ismet Inönü and insistently condemned any Turkish intervention in Cyprus. This crisis reached its climax when the USA ordered an embargo on Turkey. In response, Turkey closed every airbase on Turkish soil for US-military. As of the coup in 1980, the relation between the two allies once again started to improve. Especially under the Turgut Özal administration – the first elected civil government after the coup – a close military cooperation was built during the Kuwait-Iraq War in 1990. (Bal 2004: 119-120) In this respect, it is important to point out Turkey's location – territorially connecting Europe and the Middle East – as well as its proximity to global hotspots has

---

24 For more information on Turkish foreign policy towards Cyprus see chapter 5 of the following book: Uzer, Umut (2011), Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy. The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus, London/New York.

always constituted a particular strategic value for the USA and the NATO. (Karaosmanoglu 2004: 289)

About one month after the Suruç bombing, on 24 August 2015, Turkey joined the coalition's US-led air campaign called *Operation Inherent Resolve*.[25] In the context of the anti-IS coalition, Turkey launched its first airstrikes targeting IS on 28 August 2015, which the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs commented in a press release one day later: 'Our fighter aircraft, together with coalition fighter aircraft, began carrying out joint air operations as of yesterday evening against DEASH targets in Syria that also present a threat to our national security.' (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015a)

Turkey's decision to take a more active role in the anti-IS coalition has to be seen in the light of Turkish-US relations. One week before Turkey stepped up its actions in the coalition, the US defence secretary Ashton Carter once again explicitly had called on Turkey to take a more active role in the fight against IS.

They need to join the ATO [Air Tasking Order] and they need to work more on controlling their border. And we've made that clear. (…) Their leadership has indicated that this needs to be done. It's overdue, because it's a year into the campaign, but they're indicating some considerable effort now. (N.A 2015j)

Since the foundation of the anti-IS coalition in September 2014, in particular the USA has put pressure on Turkey to intensify its fight against IS as it was also the case during the Cold War. Therefore, the hypothesis at hand argues that Turkey shifted its foreign policy strategy in countering IS due to increasing pressure from the USA, an ally which constitutes an important security partner for Turkey.

In order to underpin this hypothesis, one shall take into account another example: Since the Syrian town of Kobane, mostly Kurdish populated, came under the control of IS in September 2014, Turkey faced increasing international pressure to provide more than humanitarian aid to refugees fleeing from Kobane. The AKP-government previously had refused to support YPG in their fight against IS by arguing that the Kurdish forces were closely linked to the PKK. In November 2014, Turkey eventually

---

25 For further information regarding the operation visit its website: Operation Inherent Resolve. One Mission. Many Countries. http://www.inherentresolve.mil/, 24.10.2016.

led Peshmerga forces pass through Turkish territory in order to support YPG's fight in Kobane. Apart from that, Turkey allowed YPG-fighters to be treated in Turkish border hospitals. Many scholars such as Kanat and Ustun argue that the USA put Turkey under massive pressure which is why the Turkish government supported Kurdish forces at that time. (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 92)

The primary aim of the USA in the Syrian civil war is to combat IS, and because of this 'Washington now has little choice but to engage with Ankara, to ensure that Turkey's south-eastern frontier ceases to serve as a jurisdiction for weapons smuggling, bulk cash smuggling, illegal oil sales, and the flow of fighters, to name a few.' (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 24) It is likely that in case Turkey does not cooperate in the required manner, the USA will consider measures such as imposing sanctions or ceasing military intelligence cooperation. (ibid.: 24) In an interview with CNN, the deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes underlined the decisive attitude of the USA in fighting IS:

What I will say is now that those hostages have been released [Mosul], we would like to see Turkey play an active role with our coalition in taking the fight to ISIL. (…) A lot of these fighters who flow into and out of Iraq in Syria, they pass through Turkey. We want to make sure they're working with us to lock down that border as best they can, which is difficult given all the refugees that are flowing, and to apprehend people who we believe have been engaged in extremism. (CNN 2014)

The USA is one of the most powerful states in the world and the two NATO-allies share a history of a constant relationship that has been mainly based on security issues. However, Turkey's interest to continue this relation is also due to several other reasons: Firstly, in the context of various military training and education programs headed by the USA, the Turkish government receives annual security-related aid of approximately $3-5 million. Besides this, the USA is one of the major suppliers of arms to Turkey, which constitutes an important aspect, especially because of the increasing number of internal and external conflicts. These jeopardise Turkey´s national security and as a result contribute to its dependency on military equipment. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 6) Above all, the anti-IS coalition is under the command of the USA which is why Turkey is in need to cooperate with its NATO-ally in order to secure its border from terror attacks carried out by IS. To sum up, it is arguable to conclude that Turkey

is highly susceptible to being influenced by the Obama-government, which may have shaped Turkey's foreign policy decision to counter IS in a more effective manner.

Although Turkey's foreign policy mostly depends on the USA, EU and other NATO allies, Turkey increased significantly its economic and military self-reliance since the Cold War. (ibid.: 1) In the context of the *Davutoğlu Doctrine*, Turkey established an assertive foreign policy predominantly focusing on the Middle East in which sectarian elements became an integral part of its foreign policy strategy. Therefore, many Western scholars and governments feared that Turkey had distanced itself from the West. (Sazak/Kibaroglu 2015: 101-102)

With regard to Turkish-US relations, the AKP-government also conducted a more independent foreign policy strategy towards the USA. For instance, since the onset of the Syrian crisis, Turkey has tried to convince the USA to intervene in Syria in order to establish a no-fly zone along the Turkish-Syrian border and eventually to overthrow the Assad-regime. (Demiryol 2015: 77-78) By insisting on that safe zone, Turkey had previously refused to allow the USA to launch military operations from Turkish soil. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 29). Overall, '[t]here have been many situations in which the United States and Turkey have made common cause during their decades-long alliance in NATO, but their strategic cooperation also has a history of complications.' (ibid.: 21) The Syrian civil war once again poses a serious threat to the relationship of the two allies: 'These latent tensions in the U.S.-Turkey security partnership, which were by no means new (…), culminated over Syria.' (Sazak/Kibaroglu 2015: 99)

Above all, Turkey and the USA face struggles to formulate a common perspective on the Syrian civil war as a whole. Turkey's primary aims have been to bring down the Assad-regime and to obstruct any Kurdish autonomy in northern Syria. (Park 2016: 456) In this respect, Turkey considers the emergence of IS as an outcome of the broader conflict in Syria, triggered by the Assad regime, while the USA has not yet adopted any particular policy addressing the regime. In contrast, the USA prioritise countering IS and implementing a process of democratisation in the Middle East. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 24)

As a result of their different priorities, Turkey and the USA adopt diverging strategical approaches: *both states* cooperate with different stakeholders such as Russia, Iran and Israel, which hampers the development of mutual trust on the very basic level. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 1) *The fact that* the USA maintains close relations with the

PKK-affiliated YPG by utilizing them as a ground force in fighting IS generates further tensions between the two allies. (McInnis 2016: 5) While the USA designated the PKK as a terror organization, the Obama-government does not consider the PYD and the YPG as such. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 15) 'For the time being, it seems that Turkey is going along with U.S.-PYD coordination while working with the United States on the creation of a save zone.' (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 88)

Due to the fact that the AKP-government tolerates the close relationship between the YPG and the USA, one can assume that Turkey favours the relation with the USA over the Kurdish issue. But Turkey is in a dependent relationship with the USA, an ally which constitutes the most important partner in security issues. Although Turkey and the USA at times disagree on a strategical level, and Turkey's foreign policy agenda has become increasingly assertive, it has become evident that the USA played a significant role in Turkey's foreign policy shift towards IS. Therefore, the hypothesis at hand represents a sufficient criterion for the outcome in question and passes the *smoking gun test.*

5.2.3 Hypothesis 3: Turkey's Shift in Countering IS Served as a Cover to Prevent Kurdish Expansion

'Two wars in Iraq have made clear to Ankara that Kurdish problems in neighbouring countries can all too easy spill over into Turkey.' (Abramowitz/Edelman 2013: 25) During the First Iraq War in 1990, a power vacuum in northern Iraq enabled the PKK to lead a deadly uprising in south-eastern Turkey. As one consequence of the Iraq invasion in 2003, once again northern Iraq became a hotspot of Kurdish insurgency which spilled over into Turkish territory. According to the scholars Abramowitz and Edelman, the AKP-government puts such an emphasis on the Kurdish issue in the Syrian conflict because of its experience of the last two wars at its border to Iraq. (ibid.: 25)

Due to the turmoil in the Middle East, in particular the Syrian civil war, '(…) the Kurdish issue is now out of the bottle and will constitute a major element in the region's future evolution.' (Park 2016: 452) After the Suruç bombing, Turkey has entered a two-front fight against the PKK and IS simultaneously. (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 90) The then-PM Davutoğlu defended this strategical approach and stated that '(…) by mounting operation against the Islamic State and the PKK at the same time, we also prevented the PKK from legitimizing itself.' (Idiz 2015) While Turkey repeatedly targeted PKK

bases in south-eastern Turkey and northern Iraq, the military response towards IS has been limited, also after Turkey took a more active role in the anti-IS coalition. (Bipartisan Policy Centre 2016: 1) Many scholars criticise the fact that '[e]ven as periodic IS-linked terrorist attacks and cross-border rocket attacks have killed dozens in Turkey in recent months, various factors contribute to Turkish leader's continuing concerns about Kurdish groups and the Syrian government and its allies.' (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 29) These facts resulted in the assumption that Turkey is more concerned about Kurdish territorial aspirations in the border region, notably YPG, than about countering IS. (McInnis 2016: 5) Therefore, this hypothesis argues that the Turkish government utilises the fight against IS as a cover for countering the PKK and its Syrian allies.

First of all, Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards the PKK and Syria-based Kurdish forces has to be analysed in the context of domestic politics. After the emergence of the PKK in the late 1970s, the dominant state discourse has shifted from an approach of denial to one that regards Kurdish demands as an act of terrorism. 'In short, terrorism has been the single and most important concept used in shaping Turkey's perception, both domestically and internationally, of the Kurds and the Kurdish question.' (Gunes/Zeydanlıoğlu 2014: 13) After two decades of armed clashes between the Turkish state and the PKK, a cease-fire agreement was announced in 2013 that eventually ended in July 2015 when tensions once again arose heavily. (Zeldin 2015: 1)

Not only the relation with the PKK turned into an armed conflict, but also tensions between the HDP and the AKP increased in the run-up to the elections. The pro-Kurdish party repeatedly accused the AKP-government of supporting IS, and the government accused HDP of being affiliated with the PKK, which reflects the strained atmosphere during the election campaign. (N.A. 2015a) The results of the June-elections contributed to the escalating conflict between the two political wings: The HDP gained a significant share of the votes – around 13 percent – and the AKP for the first time lost a massive share of the votes – about 9 percent. (Çarkoğlu 2015: 3)

In early 2013, the Assad-regime withdrew from the Kurdish populated areas, and three geographically discontinuous cantons under the rule of the PYD emerged, collectively called *Rojava*. (see Appendix 2, Figure 1) 'Syria's Kurds had long been fractured, but the PYD soon, and surprisingly, emerged as the most organized and militarily most

effective of Syria's disparate Kurdish groups.' (Park 2016: 455) In the eyes of the Turkish government, the PYD and its armed wing YPG are equal to the PKK which is why the AKP repeatedly rose concern over the establishment of a factual PKK-controlled area at its border with Syria. While announcing the new party programme in May 2016, the PM Yildirim formulated the government's point of view towards the Kurdish issue by stating that '[t]here will be no tolerance for any illegitimate organization that would harm the unity of our nation, or the future of our country. (…) Our struggle against all terrorist organizations, in particular the separatist terrorist group [PKK] and parallel state [Gülen movement] will continue in a determined manner. (AK Parti 2016b)

Due to its successful fight against IS, the PYD and the YPG have gained international recognition and support in various ways. Although the USA designated the PKK as a terrorist group, the Obama-government regards the YPG to be a separate organization. Kurdish forces became one of the closest ally for the USA in combating IS on the ground. In consequence, the Kurdish dimension of the Syrian conflict became the bone of contention between Turkey and the USA: On the one hand, the USA is hampered to support Turkey's fight against the PKK; on the other hand, Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards Kurdish autonomy aspirations in Syria jeopardise the unity of the anti-IS coalition. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 15) Therefore, the government in Washington is mostly concerned that any further escalation of the conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK could affect its fight against IS. (Kanat/Ustun 2015: 91)

Another crucial piece of evidence for the outcome in question might be the takeover of Tal Abyad by the YPG in mid-June 2015, that had been hold more than one year by IS. The operation was supported by Syrian rebels on the ground and by airstrikes of the anti-IS coalition. Gaining power over Tal Abyad has been of great strategic value for Kurdish forces in the northern part of Syria. 'For the Kurds, capturing Tal Abyad allows them to link up the other pockets they control along the Turkish border, from Iraq in the east to Kobane in the west.' (N.A. 2015e) The YPG not only connected two of its three cantons, but they also cut off the major supply route for IS, which was of vital importance for the anti-IS coalition. (see Appendix 2, Figure 1) This enabled the Kurdish forces to extend their territorial dominion in the Turkish border region and to gain international recognition. (Salih 2015: 4-5) The following statement by President Erdoğan clearly reflects the Turkish attitude towards the Kurdish territorial expansion:

'I say to the international community that whatever the price must be paid, we will never allow the establishment of a new state on our southern frontier in the north of Syria.' (Zalewski 2015)

Turkey concerns the fact that its borders with Iraq, Syria and Iran are predominantly populated by Kurds. The government's '(…) fear of a loss of its territorial integrity, bitterness at the PKK's history of violence, and an elemental Turkish nationalism are all hard-wired into Turkish politics and society.' (Park 2016: 452) In this respect, many scholars refer to the Turkish *Sèvres Syndrome* that still shapes Turkish foreign policy towards Kurdish separatism. The Treaty of Sèvres was signed in 1920 by the Western Allies that had conquered Istanbul and by representatives of the defeated Ottoman government. According to the treaty, the territory of the former Ottoman Empire was divided into different spheres of European influence. As a result of Atatürk's War of Liberation, the Treaty of Sèvres was superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Although the Treaty of Sèvres did not enter into force at all, the *Sèvres Syndrome* remained. The perception that unspecific foreign powers might divide Turkey along ethnic lines still constitutes as one of the main driving forces in Turkish politics. 'The paranoid mindset has systematically been disseminated through the national education system and media, but also in all other spheres of society in Turkey, colouring the whole spectrum of political discourse.' (Gunes/Zeydanlıoğlu 2014: 12)

Correspondingly, since IS does not demand an autonomous region within Turkish territory, one may assume that the PKK poses a greater threat to the Turkish government. Thus, Turkey has stepped up its fight against IS as a cover for countering Kurdish autonomous aspirations. Yet, one can also argue in an opposite way: Since IS increased its terror attacks and eventually carried out one of most serious attacks on Turkish soil in Suruç at that time, the government might have seen IS as a foreign power that threatens Turkish integrity. In this case, the fight against IS has to be regarded independently from Turkey's conflict with Kurdish forces.

All in all, the Turkish-Kurdish conflict has reinflamed domestically and internationally: The HDP gained a substantial share of votes in the general election, the cease-fire between the Turkish state and the PKK collapsed and the YPG widened its territory by taking control over Tal Abyad. (see Appendix 1) At the same time, the international community, notably the USA and the NATO, exerted pressure on Turkey to take action in the fight against IS. In response to the Suruç bombing on 20 July 2015, the Turkish

government not only targeted IS, but also launched airstrikes against PKK bases. Following the assumption that Kurdish autonomous aspirations constitute a greater security threat than IS, one can assume that Turkey covered its fight against PKK/YPG under the guise of countering IS. According to the present state of investigation, the USA played a role in Turkey's foreign policy shift towards IS as well, which is why the hypothesis at hand does not pass the *doubly decisive test.* The given evidence constitutes a sufficient criterion for the outcome in question and therefore, passes the *smoking gun test*.

5.3 The Second Level of Analysis: Domestic Explanation Factors

5.3.1 *Hypothesis 4:* The Turkish Government Feared an Economic Crisis due to the Increasing Threat of Terrorism by IS

'Turkey's dilemma to fight or not to fight ISIL is also directly linked to national security and economic considerations.' (Kirişci 2014) Already in 2014, many scholars such as Kirişci linked Turkey's – at that time – defensive foreign policy towards IS to economic issues. In general, politics and economic considerations are inseparable: domestic markets are sensitive to their environment which is why external threats such as terrorist attacks can influence a state's economy. On that account, this hypothesis aims at exploring to which extent the Turkish government feared an economic crisis that may have led to the shift in its foreign policy strategy towards IS.

Since the AKP came to power in the early 2000s, its political success has been based on economic policies. The government established new regulations for the banking system, strengthened the fiscal discipline and boosted privatizations of state enterprises. All of these measures led to an increasing economic and political stability under the AKP-government. (Karagöl 2013: 115) The life standard of Turkey's citizens improved sustainably and many small family businesses became medium-sized export-oriented enterprises. Turkey's success in establishing domestic stability enabled the AKP-government to formulate a more assertive foreign policy. In consequence, Turkey became more independent from its Western allies. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 17) Academics such as Schanzer and Tahiroglu emphasize the point that Turkey's strategical approach towards Syria as a whole have led to direct consequences on the domestic level. Terror attacks by IS threaten both the internal security and Turkey's economy which mainly depends on foreign investment and tourism. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 3)

According to the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index from 2015, Turkey ranked 44th out of 141 countries regarding the general competitiveness. Especially the sub-category concerning safety and security provides an insight into the Turkish tourist sector in summer 2015: Turkey only achieved the 121st position out of 141 countries. (World Economic Forum 2015) Therefore, it can be argued that Turkey in comparison to other countries came off badly in these rankings due to continuing terrorist attacks carried out by IS.

Yet, one also has to consider that Turkey in 2015 – as it was the case during the last years – reached the 6th position out of 141 countries regarding the most visited countries. (World Tourism Organization UNWTO 2016: 6) Beyond that, according to the Turkish ministry of culture and tourism, the number of arriving visitors in the second quarter of 2015 only dropped by 2,88 % compared to the same time period in the previous year 2014. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry for Culture and Tourism 2016) Any interference between the tourist sector and Turkey`s strategical turn towards IS can be rejected by the fact, that the tourist sector did not constitute a serious threat to the Turkish economy.

In many studies concerning Turkey's style of leadership, the AKP-government including the Turkish President Erdoğan – although the precedency is officially nonpartisan – is equated with states like Russia, Iran or China. But the fact that Turkey's economy is not based on natural resources and that Turkey has no access to nuclear weapons either distinguishes Turkey from the three other countries. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 10) Moreover, 'Turkey's economic, political, and national security institutions and traditions have been closely connected with those of the West for decades.' (ibid.: 10)

Another important aspect is the fact that Turkey's economic success is partly based on its exports to the Arab World. During the first decade of AKP's regency, the share of exports to the Arab World increased from 9 to 21 percent. Exports to Syria raised from $250 million in 2002 to $1,8 billion in 2012. As a result of the AKP's economic politics, Turkey's GDP tripled between 2002 and 2010. Syria did not only serve as an importer for Turkish goods, but Turkey also used Syria as a transit country for reaching Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Since the onset of the Syrian civil war, exports to Syria decreased by more than 70 %. (Abramowitz/Edelman 2013: 26) One may argue that the AKP-government was in need to ease the conflict in Syria in order to bolster its exports to Syria, and that for this reason the government decided to take a more

active role in combating IS. By looking at the actual export rate in 2015, this hypothesis might be confirmed in the first place: Turkey's export rate declined from about $158 billion in 2014 to around $144 billion in 2015. (Statista 2016: 27) The reasons for this are diverse. In order to provide an example, there is evidence that Turkey's exports also suffered from structural problems and a declining demand of Arab countries due to falling oil prices. (Sanli 2016)

However, the export rate alone does not mirror the overall performance of Turkey's economy in 2015. In fact, the annual GDP was raising to 3,83 % in 2015 while Turkey only achieved a GDP of 2,9 1% in 2014, which constitutes – generally speaking – an economic growth. Additionally, the inflation rate shows a similar economic trend by decreasing from 8,86 % in 2014 to 7,67 % in 2015. (Statista 2016: 21-26) Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that Turkey did not suffer from an economic crisis although its trade with states in the Middle East was hampered by the ongoing crisis in Iraq and Syria. This fact can be explained by different approaches: Either the Middle East is not as important as assumed for Turkey's economic growth or Turkey had reorganized its export structures. The hypothesis at hand cannot be confirmed and therefore this fact will not be considered further. The analysis has shown that there is no link between Tukey's economic performance in 2015 and the turn in its foreign policy towards IS. Since Turkey did not fear an economic crisis, this hypothesis fails the *hoop test* and can be regarded as eliminated.

5.3.2 *Hypothesis 5*: Turkish Public Demanded a Shift in Turkey's IS-Policy

'It should be assumed that oppositions can potentially occur in any type of regime and influence foreign policy – regardless of the regime's accountability or other aspects of its formal structural arrangements. (Hagan 1995b: 342) According to a survey of 2015 conducted by the Kadir Has University regarding social and political trends in Turkey, 86 % of the participants perceived IS as a terrorist organisation and 78 % considered IS as a threat for Turkey's security. The survey also has shown that around 54 % of the interviewees suggested that Turkey should conduct direct airstrikes against IS. In contrast, only 18,9 % of the participants rejected active responses in countering IS. (Kadir Has University 2015: 10-11) Since the Suruç bombing was the most serious attack by IS on Turkish soil at that time and the Turkish society regarded the Islamist organisation as a threat to Turkey's security, the hypothesis at hand argues that the

Turkish government had shifted its foreign policy strategy towards IS due to domestic demands.

As the first piece of evidence, a wave of prosecutions of Turkey-based IS supporters took place in July 2015. (see Appendix 1) Special police forces raided 24 different houses and shops of suspected IS-fighters in 19 different Turkish cities. These series of raids constitute a turning point in Turkey's strategy towards IS also on the domestic level. (Stein 2015) On that account, one may argue that the AKP-government had started those investigations due to an increasing pressure from the Turkish public.

Another survey conducted by the German Marshall Fund shall give an insight into the Turkish society's attitude towards IS. Only 29 % of the respondents supported the idea that Turkish troops should establish a buffer zone along the Turkish-Syria. More specifically, 35 % of the participants were in favour of such a buffer zone to protect the Syrian opposition from the Assad regime and 37 % of the responders would agree to a buffer zone if the aim was preventing a Kurdish autonomous region. Although the majority of the Turkish public refused the creation of a buffer zone in general terms, a plurality of 47 % favour the idea of sending troops to establish such a zone in order to protect the inhabitants in the region from IS. (German Marshall Fund 2015: 10) Consequently, it has become evident that the Turkish society regards IS as the main threat within the turmoil of the Syrian civil war, which supports the hypothesis at hand.

In the aftermath of the Suruç bombing, nationwide anti-government protests erupted in Istanbul and in predominantly Kurdish populated areas such as Diyarbakir, Mardin, Adiyaman, and Mersin. During the protests, 24 people were injured including eleven Turkish security personnel. According to the state-run Anadolu Agency, the police detained 51 protesters and seized various heavy arms such as petrol bombs, bullets and fireworks. Already in the past, fragments of Turkish society such as left-wing parties and NGOs as well as PKK-sympathisers had suspected the AKP-government of supporting IS. During the rallies, the protesters explicitly accused the government of being responsible for the Suruç bombing and expressed their demands by remarks such as *Murderous ISIL*, *collaborator AKP.* (N.A. 2015d). The Suruç bombing not only led to a politicized discourse in public because it was carried out by IS, but also because the victims of the bombing were a group of pro-Kurdish activists that had

planned to travel to Syria in order to help with the reconstruction of the Syrian town of Kobane. (Salih 2015: 4)

Taking together these facts, one may favour the given hypothesis. Yet, the factual scope of shaping the decision-making process is restricted by the current AKP-government. Following the approach of Ripsman, in times of an external threat, political leaders tend to neglect domestic politics under the premise of the overall aim to secure the survival of the state. (Rispman 2009: 186-187) In this sense, it is questionable to which extent members of the legislative and domestic actors are able to express their demands.

On a legal basis, the Turkish constitution provides a democratic multi-party system. To which extent the legislative is able to influence foreign policy decisions is reflected by an example of the recent past when the Turkish parliament rejected the request from the USA to enter Iraq through Turkish soil in 2003. (Eligür 2006: 3) Although the current Turkish parliament consists of four different parties, the AKP predominantly controls the discussions in parliament which is why the scope of participation of non-AKP parliamentarians is limited. (Gumuscu/Keyman 2014: 57)

The same applies to media and CSOs as explored above in the fourth chapter of this thesis. Already in 2009, the scholar Walker argued that Erdoğan and the AKP began to use their foreign policy agenda to placate domestic opposition: The AKP focused mainly on the EU accession process in order to expand its domestic support and to counter its opponents. (Walker 2009: 9) Seven years later, in 2016, Freedom House argued in a similar but harsher way and concluded that the AKP-government '(…) aggressively used the penal code, criminal defamation legislation, and the country's antiterrorism law to punish critical reporting, and journalists faced growing violence, harassment, and intimidation from both state and non-state actors during the year.' (Freedom House 2016) In the aftermath of the Gezi protests in 2013, the AKP's authoritarian tendencies increased, which has contributed to an atmosphere of political polarization in Turkish society. (Göğüş/Mannitz 2016: 19) The EC agrees to this point and states that '[a]fter several years of progress, serious backsliding has been seen over the past two years.' (European Commission 2015: 22)

Against this background, it is difficult to evaluate whether a majority of Turkish society favoured a shift in Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards IS. For instance, while reporting about the terror attack in Suruç, none of the most common newspapers

(Hürriyet, Sabah, Vatan)[26] have called on a change in Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards IS. (N.A. 2015g, N.A. 2015h, N.A. 2015i) The Turkish media sector is highly concentrated and to a certain extent controlled by the government, which is why domestic actors are hardly able to express their demands on a democratic basis if it is not in line with the AKP's polices. (Corke/Finkel/Kramer et. al. 2014: 13) The analysis at hand cannot evaluate in a final manner if the public did not demand such as a shift or if the newspapers did not publish it. With regard to the limited freedom of speech in Turkey, this aspect does not provide a conclusive argument for the outcome in question. In this context, one may argue that also the protests after the Suruç bombing could have been larger, yet, the AKP-government takes a variety of measures to prevent future protests. This ranges from installing restrictions on social media or harsh police action to criminal prosecutions against government-critics. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 9)

Due to the AKP's single-party majority in parliament, the party has consolidated a centrum of power in which Erdoğan plays the leading role. After the presidential elections in 2014, international scholars argued that Erdoğan '(…) claimed a mandate for increasing his power by pursuing a presidential system of governance.' (ibid.: 8) Apart from that, the AKP's style of leadership is highly discussed: 'Turkey today looks less like a liberal European democracy and more like the kind of one-man autocracy commonly found in the Middle East'. (Cook 2015) These authoritarian tendencies are also visible in the government's rhetoric. In the aftermath of the Suruç bombing, the Turkish government commented on the terror attacks in a press release on 24 July 2015, as follows:

While the wounds caused by the abhorrent terror attack that has claimed the lives of 32 of our citizens on July 20 are still fresh, the DEASH terrorist organization carried out an armed attack on July 23 against our troops assigned to a military-border post at Elbeyli, martyring a non-commissioned office. (Rep. of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015a)

---

26 This assumption is based on my own newspaper-research. Special attention was paid to the three newspapers Hürriyet, Sabah and Vatan because all of them represent different political opinions. As widely known, Hürriyet favours the AKP but not as much as Sabah supports the governmental party. In contrast, the newspaper Vatan is in line with CHP.

By using the term *martyring*, the Turkish government indicates that the soldier who was killed in the border region by IS fighters sacrificed himself for the Turkish state. Following this logic, the unity of the state is more important than a soldier's life. It represents a rhetorical language tool that is mostly used in non-democratic states.

After the failed coup attempt on 16 July 2016, the Turkish government expanded its policy of state intervention and, in result, thousands of personnel from civil service have been detained or dismissed. These measures also included the closures of various Gülen-suspected businesses, schools and media outlets which underlines the assumption that the AKP-government became increasingly authoritarian. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 12)

In fact, the more the AKP-government rules in an authoritarian way, the less civil society can influence foreign policy decisions. It is difficult to explore to which extent domestic actors have demanded a shift in foreign policy towards IS. However, it is to be assumed that domestic constraints have not caused the change in Turkey's strategy which is why the hypothesis at hand fails the *hoop test*.

5.3.3 *Hypothesis 6*: The AKP-Government Stepped Up its Fight against IS in Order to Receive Domestic Support for the General Elections

The scholar Soli Özel links the shift in Turkish foreign policy towards IS to domestic politics. 'The real aim here has more to do with domestic politics than foreign policy. Foreign policy continues to provide capital for the government in terms of domestic politics at a time when the country is heading for elections.' (Idiz 2015) Compared to the general elections in 2011, the AKP lost around nine percentage points in the June-elections. Although the AKP remained the strongest force in the parliament with almost 41 % share of the votes, they did not receive the necessary majority to rule in form of a single-party government. (Çarkoğlu 2015: 3) Moreover, the AKP also did not reach the necessary majority in order to transform the Turkish system into a presidential system that had constituted the greatest aim during the election campaign. (Seufert 2014: 4) As illustrated in the given timeline, on 24 August 2015, the Turkish President Erdoğan declared that no coalition could be formed and called for fresh elections in November of the same year. By considering the fact that Turkey launched its first airstrikes in the framework of the anti-IS coalition on 28 August 2015, one may presume a connection between those two events. (see Appendix 1) The hypothesis at

hand argues that the Turkish government expanded its actions in the fight against IS with the aim to receive greater support in the re-elections of November.

Since the AKP came to power in 2002, the Islam-conservative party received the majority in the parliament with improving results in each election. With regard to the loss of share of votes in the June-elections, it can be assumed that the AKP-government has faced domestic constraints during its last term in office. This electoral loss can be traced back to an increasing political polarization in Turkish society. Nationwide anti-government protests that erupted in the Gezi Park in 2013 and a corruption scandal involving key figures of the current government in the same year enhanced the process of domestic polarization in Turkey. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 8) Under the pre-hegemonic rule of the AKP, traditional-religious fragments of society have replaced the long-lasting domination of modernist in the centre-periphery conflict. As a result of the rapid modernization of economy, the traditional-religious part of society gained increasingly wealth. (Erdoğan 2016: 3) A new line of conflict emerged and led to a deep rift in Turkish society:

Being either for or against the AKP has become a central point for political identification over the past decade, and it has created a tense atmosphere in Turkish society. This phenomenon contributed to triggering the Gezi Park demonstrations and also accounts for their quick transformation from a protest concerning environmental issues into a site of much greater political salience. (Göğüş/Mannitz 2016: 20)

The survey *Dimensions of Polarization in Turkey,* a project of the German Marshall Fund, mirrors the alarming degree of polarization in Turkish society. The fact that 83 % do not want their daughter to marry somebody who votes for the opposing party and that 74 % dislike the idea of their children playing with other children whose parents vote for another party reflects the public polarization in its core. (Erdoğan 2016: 2) The high polarization is also present during political campaigns in which most politicians use a discriminatory discourse in order to underline their arguments. (ibid.: 3)

The scholars Thomas and Zanotti from the *American Congressional Research Service* emphasize two main aspects in terms of Turkey's economical and societal development under the AKP-government. On the one hand, Turkey has improved its economic performance and has shifted from a military-guided leadership to a more civilian-led system that reflects the newly growing middle classes interests. On the other hand,

'(…) many Turkish citizens and outside observers express concern that Erdoğan and the AKP have taken Turkey in a more authoritarian direction and are seeking to consolidate their hold in power.' (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 8)

In order to retain political power, the AKP is in need to gain electoral support and therefore has to mobilize its voters by increasing the party's popularity. Appealing to nationalism, emphasizing the party's special capacity or distracting from domestic problems are the most applied strategies in the dynamic of *mobilization* according to Hagan. Governments tend to manipulate foreign policy issues with the aim to decrease political polarization one the one hand and to create a public collective on the other hand. 'Foreign policy is a correspondingly viable means for unifying the public and discrediting domestic adversaries.' (Hagan 1995a: 130) Therefore, one may argue that the AKP has changed its approach towards IS in order to distract from the increasing public polarization and to gain electoral support by focusing on an external threat such as IS. According to a survey by the Turkish Kadir Has University from 2015, 86 % of the interviewees perceive IS as a terrorist organisation and 78 % of the participants consider IS as a threat to Turkey's security. (Kadir Has University 2015: 10) Concentrating on the fight against IS in times when the country is heading for elections may have provided an efficient political tool for the Turkish government.

Since the Turkish government entered a fight on two fronts – IS and PKK – it might be fruitful to analyse which role the Kurdish issue has played during the election campaign. Internationally, PKK-affiliated Kurdish groups continuously took control over large areas along the Turkish-Syrian border. On the domestic level, in the June-elections, the HDP gained a substantial share of votes whereas the AKP lost massive share of the votes. (Çarkoğlu 2015: 3) In the run-up to the November-elections, Turkish politics were affected by armed clashes between Turkish forces and the PKK on the on hand and terror attacks by IS on the other hand. (see Appendix 1)

These growing tensions have contributed to a nationalistic rhetoric by the Turkish President Erdoğan and AKP-officials who increasingly criticised the HDP and other Kurdish groups in public sphere. In the repeated elections in November, the AKP regained the absolute majority with 49,5 share of the votes. Electoral analyses have shown that a significant number of voters have shifted from HDP and MHP in the June-elections to the AKP in November. Despites their electoral losses, both opposition parties passed the 10 % threshold and remained in the parliament. (ibid.: 1-3) The

scholars Thomas and Zanotti conclude that '[t]he return to violence helped Erdoğan in the short term, with some Kurds presumably moving back to the AKP from the HDP in November 2015 elections because of the PKK's return to the conflict.' (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 15)

In the context of the anti-IS coalition, the Turkish government intensified its fight against IS at the end of August 2015. Already in July the AKP-government had allowed the USA to carry out airstrikes from Turkish airbases. In fact, the change in Turkish foreign policy took place earlier than August when Erdoğan called for fresh elections, which weakens the hypothesis slightly. (see Appendix 1) Above all, not only the fight against IS, but also the Kurdish issue played a role during the election campaign. All the given events and facts seem to be in a direct connection with the election campaign. Yet, the body of evidence does not prove to which extent the election campaign is linked to the shift in Turkish foreign policy. The hypothesis constitutes neither a necessary nor a sufficient criterion for the outcome in question. All in all, the hypothesis at hand passes the *straw-in-the-wind test* and provides valuable information for the outcome in question.

6. Conclusion

Turkish foreign policy towards IS provides a fruitful case study in order to understand the relation between domestic politics, the international system, and foreign policy. In the investigation whether domestic politics or external factors have caused the shift in Turkey's foreign policy strategy towards IS, three hypotheses from each level of analysis – domestic and international – were tested in the context of PT.

At first, it can be concluded that the government neither feared an economic crisis nor has changed its foreign policy strategy due to public demands. These two hypotheses did not provide necessary evidence for the outcome in question which is why both fail the *hoop test* and therefore can be eliminated in the process of explaining Turkey's foreign policy shift.

As a second finding, it can be assumed that the (then)upcoming elections have played a role in Turkey's decision to expand its fight against IS. During the election campaign, the AKP was mostly promoting the introduction of a presidential system for which they did not receive the sufficient percentage of votes in the June-elections. One reason for this is a rising political polarization within Turkish society that has evoked new social

cleavages. (Çarkoğlu 2015: 4) It can be concluded that Turkey has utilized its fight against IS as a tool – in the sense of formulating a common enemy – for improving its results in the November-elections. The analysis of this hypothesis has also given evidence that the election campaign was partly influenced by the Kurdish issue. Although this hypothesis constitutes neither a necessary nor a sufficient criterion, it provides a certain explanatory power to pass the *straw-in-the wind-test*.

Thirdly, it has become evident that the security threat at the Turkish-Syrian contributed to Turkey's strategical shift towards IS. Many statements of Turkish officials proved that security concerns played a crucial role in their policy-making towards IS. However, border activities such as smuggling, the high number of foreign fighters travelling to Syria and military spill-overs have already taken place since the onset of the Syrian civil war. Therefore, this hypothesis cannot explain Turkey's foreign policy shift after the Suruç bombing in a sufficient manner and should rather be regarded as a precondition for the outcome in question. It only provides a necessary criterion for the phenomenon at hand and consequently passes the *hoop test*.

As the main result, two of the given hypotheses pass the *smoking-gun test*. In the first place, it is reasonable to conclude that the Turkish government evaluates Kurdish autonomy aspirations as a greater security threat than IS, which is why the AKP expanded its fight against IS as a cover for countering PKK/YPG. In contrast to Turkey's approach in countering IS, the Turkish government did not hesitate to take military action against Kurdish bases. In addition, many scholars claim that Turkey has launched more airstrikes against PKK/YPG bases than IS. (Bipartisan Policy Center 2016: 1) Yet, these aspects do not confirm the hypothesis in a final manner due to various reasons. In the context of the anti-IS coalition, the allies launch airstrikes against the terror militia in a common approach. To which extent a member of the anti-IS coalition contributes to the fight cannot simply be measured by the number of launched airstrikes. Besides military assistance, the Turkish government also provides access to several airbases and took measures to protect its border from the flow of terroristic forces. The given items of evidence do not prove that Turkey would have acted differently towards IS if Kurdish autonomy aspirations would not pose a security threat to the Turkish state. Therefore, this hypothesis cannot pass the *doubly-decisive test* and rather provides a sufficient criterion for the outcome in question and passes the *smoking-gun test*.

The question still remains why Turkey was in need to cover its fight against Kurdish autonomy aspirations. This can be explained by the second hypothesis that passes the *smoking-gun test*: Pressure from the international community – notably the USA – forced Turkey to take a more active role in countering IS. Since the emergence of the terror militia, the Obama-administration constantly has put pressure on Turkey to increase its role in the anti-IS coalition. The analysis has shown that the USA constitutes Turkey's most important long-standing partner in security issues. For instance, the USA is one of the major suppliers of arms to Turkey and provides annual security-related aid to Turkey. (Thomas/Zanotti 2016: 6). However, with the implementation of the *Davutoğlu Doctrine*, Turkey applied an assertive foreign policy strategy: The AKP-government has highly criticized the close relationship between the USA and the YPG which became the bone of contention between the two NATO-allies. A statement by the Turkish President Erdoğan regarding the planed Raqqa-offensive reflects Turkey's attitude. 'Of course, if the United States wants to do the Raqqa operation with the PYD and YPG, we as Turkey will not take part in this operation. But if they exclude the PYD and YPG from this affair, then of course we can join this struggle together with the United States.' (Idiz 2016) Although Turkey might be not as dependent as assumed, the analysis has shown that the USA shaped Turkey's foreign policy towards IS in a sufficient manner, which is why this hypothesis passes the *smoking-gun* test.

In conclusion, Turkey's strategical shift was caused by both the USA and the Kurdish issue. By countering IS in cooperation with the USA, Turkey ensured its relationship with its Western allies. At the same time, the fight against IS allows Turkey to combat the YPG on Syrian ground while avoiding any conflict with the USA, which is allied with the YPG. In combating PKK/YPG and IS simultaneously, the Turkish government is able to counter its security threat at its borders with Iraq and Syria. As only one side effect, this strategical approach enabled the AKP to improve its results in the November-elections.

In order to underscore these research findings, one should take into account Turkey's current approach in fighting IS and PKK/YPG. In response to an IS-linked terrorist attack at a Kurdish wedding in the Turkish city of Gaziantep on 20 August 2016, Turkey announced to take measures in order to withdraw IS from its border. A few days later, Turkey carried out the military operation *Euphrates Shield* with support

from the USA and Turkey-backed FSA-fighters. This operation has been the largest military intervention on Syrian soil so far: Turkey sent tanks, planes and ground forces into Jarabulus, the last remaining IS-held city at the border. (Shaheen 2016) However, many scholars argue that the main objective is to counter recent Kurdish expansion in that region instead of combating IS. (N.A. 2016d) Already in a meeting on 29 June 2015, the Turkish National Security Council (NSC) had announced that any incursion in the west of the Euphrates River was regarded as a violation of its *red line* that would be countered by a military cross-border operation. (N.A. 2015f) The YPG crossed that *red line* in August 2016 by taking control of Manbij in a US-backed military operation against IS. This step empowered the YPG to move towards Jarabulus, whose conquest eventually could help Kurdish forces to link their three cantons. (see Appendix 2, Figure 2) In fact, the Turkish military not only targeted IS but also YPG forces which raised concern of US-authorities: 'We want to make clear that we find these clashes – in areas where ISIL is not located – unacceptable and a source of deep concern', said Brett McGurk, US special envoy for the fight against IS. (N.A. 2016d)

In summary, the analysis has given evidence that the shift in Turkish foreign policy was mainly caused by external factors. The security issue constitutes the main driving force in Turkish foreign policy which is in line with the realists' assumption that security is one of the most important factors in formulating a foreign policy strategy. 'Realist theory claims that security is more important than economics and economics is more important than, say, human rights.' (Durfee/Rosenau 2000: 15) It is important to point out that the Kurdish dimension is not purely a foreign policy issue. As described in the prior analysis, Turkish interests in countering PYD/YPG are closely linked to the Kurdish issue on the domestic level. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that domestic aspects have shifted Turkey's foreign policy strategy as well.

In general terms, the analysis demonstrated that due to restricted freedom of speech, Turkish media and interest groups are not able to carry out their duties on a democratic basis. The fact that the AKP-government increasingly oppresses dissenting opinions implies that the current government faces domestic constraints. With regard to the theoretical approach of Hagan, one can conclude that domestic politics influence Turkish foreign policy decisions in an indirect way. Yet, due to the limited scope and a lack of reliable data in this field, the thesis at hand only represents a brief insight into domestic politics in Turkey. Further research is needed in order to explore to which

extent domestic actors are able to influence the government's decision making-process in spite of its authoritarian tendencies.

Above all, it is crucial to point out that the domestic level and the international system are hardly separable from each other in terms of exploring a state's foreign policy decision. Although it is to be assumed that external factors dominated the decision-making process in the given case study, domestic politics played a vital role in Turkey's foreign policy shift towards IS as well. The Turkish government can be regarded as increasingly authoritarian in its style of leadership, yet, domestic constraints remain. By applying realism and liberalism in explaining foreign policy decisions, it might be fruitful not only to focus on their differences, but also to explore their similarities. The analysis has shown that there is no clear boundary between domestic politics and external factors. None of the hypotheses has passed the *doubly-decisive test*, thus, further research that includes the results of the thesis at hand will be needed to explain the outcome in question in a final manner.

References

Abramowitz, Morton I. / Edelman, Eric S (2013), U.S.-Turkish Cooperation Towards a Post-Assad Syria. A Paper of BPC's Turkey Task Force, BPC online: http://bipartisanpolicy. org/ wp-content/uploads/sites/default/files/BPC%20US-Turkey-Syria.pdf, 19.10.2016.

Adomeit, Hannes / Boardmann, Robert (1979), Foreign Policy Making in Communist Countries. A Comparative Approach, Farnborough.

Akgül, Mustafa / Kırlıdoğ, Melih (2015), Internet Censorship in Turkey, in: Internet Policy Review (Journal on Internet Regulation), Vol. 4, No. 2., pp. 1-22.

AK Parti (2011), Syria is our Domestic Problem, AK Parti online: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/syria-is-our-domestic-problem/11535#1, 25.06.2016.

—(2016a), Party Programme, AK Parti online: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_, 30.06.2016.

— (2016b), Prime Minister Yildirim announces Govt Program, AK Parti online: https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/haberler/prime-minister-yildirim-announces-govt-program/84131#1, 17.10.2016.

Alpay, Şahin (2009), Die politische Rolle des Militärs in der Türkei, in: APuZ 39-40, pp. 9-15.

Al-Shahery, Omar / Frederick, Bryan A. / Stebbins, David / Young, William (2014), Spillover from the Conflict in Syria. An Assessment of the Factors that Aid and Impede the Spread of Violence, RAND online: http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR600/RR609/RAND_RR609.pdf, 26.10.2016.

Arora, N. D. (2011), Political Science. For State Civil Services and Other Competitive Examinations, New Delhi.

Ayata, Bilgin (2015), Turkish Foreign Policy in a Changing Arab World. Rise and Fall of a Regional Actor? in: Journal of European Integration, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 95-112.

Bal, Idris (2004), Turkey-USA Relations and the Impacts of 2003 Iraq War, in: Bal, Idris (ed.), Turkish Foreign Policy in Post Cold War Era, Florida, pp. 119-152.

Balci, Ali (2014), Energized Neighbourliness. Relations Between Turkey and the Kurdish Regional Government, Istanbul.

Beach, Derek / Pedersen, Rasmus Brun (2013), Process-Tracing Methods. Foundations and Guidelines, Michigan.

Belli, Onur Burçak / Caylan, Eren / Popp, Maximilian (2016), A Deadly Rivalry. Erdoğan's Hunt Against the Gülen Movement, Spiegel online: http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/Erdoğan-hunts-down-guelen-movement-after-coup-attempt-a-1105800.html, 26.08.2016.

Bennett, Andrew (2010), Process Tracing and Causal Inference, in: Brady, Henry E. / Collier, David (eds.), Rethinking Social Inquiry. Diverse Tools, Shared Standards, 2nd ed., Maryland, pp. 207-220.

Bipartisan Policy Center (2016), Turkey vs. ISIS and PKK. A Matter of Distinction, online: http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/turkey-isis-pkk-brief/, 15.10.2016.

Blanchard, Christopher M. / Humud, Carla E. / Nikitin, Mary Beth D. (2016), Armed Conflict in Syria. Overview and U.S. Response, Congressional Research Service, No. RL33487, New York.

Blatter, Joachim K. / Janning, Frank / Wagemann, Claudius (2007), Qualitative Politikanalyse. Eine Einführung in Forschungsansätze und Methoden, in: v. Alemann, Ulrich / Benz, Arthur / Döhler, Marian / Lauth, Hans-Joachim / Lütz, Susanne / Simonis, Georg (eds.), Grundwissen Politik, Vol. 44, Wiesbaden.

Bode, Thomas / da Costa, Aleksandra Fernandes / Diez, Thomas (2011), Key Concepts in International Relations, London / California / New Delhi.

Bunzel, Cole (2015), From Paper State to Caliphate. The Ideology of the Islamic State, in: Centre for Middle East Policy at Brookings (The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World), No.19, online: https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads /2016/06/The-ideology-of-the-Islamic-State.pdf, 02.10.2016.

Burchill, Scott (2009), Liberalism, in: Burchill, Scott / Devetak, Richard / Donnelly, Jack / Linklater, Andrew / Nardin, Terry / Paterson, Matthew / Reus-Smit, Christian / True, Jacqui (eds.), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed., Hampshire/New York, pp. 57-85.

Butler, Daren / Coskun, Orhan (2016), Turkey to Complete Syria Border Wall Within 5 Months, Official Says, Reuters online: http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKCN11Y1MB, 12.10.2016.

Butler, Daren (2016), Turkey Officially Designates Gülen Religious Group as Terrorists, Reuters online: http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-gulen-idUSKCN0YM167, 15.10.2016.

Cagaptay, Soner (2014), The Rise of Turkey. The Twenty-First Century's First Muslim Power, Nebraska.

Çarkoğlu, Ali (2015), Riding the Electoral Roller Coaster in Turkey. How to Read the Results of the June and November 2015 Elections, in: Global Turkey in Europe, Commentary 28., online: http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/gte_c_28.pdf, 15.09.2016.

Carr, Edward H. (2001) [1939], The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919-1939. An Introduction to the Study of International Relations, New York.

Cerha, Birgit (2015), Kurden: Immer noch die Weisen des Universums, IFAMO online: http://ifamo-blog.blogspot.de/2015/03/kurden-immer-noch-die-waisen-des.html, 03.11.2016.

Chatterjee, Aneek (2010), International Relations Today. Concepts and Applications, Chandigarh / Chennai / Delhi.

CNN (2014), The Situation Room. War on Terror: Strikes in Syria; Interview with U.S. Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes, CNN online:

http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1409/24/sitroom.02.html, 22.10.2016.

Collier, David (2011), Understanding Process Tracing, in: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 44, No. 4, pp. 823-839.

Concordia University (2016), Norrin M. Ripsman, online: https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/polisci/faculty.html?fpid=norrin-ripsman, 20.06.2016.

Cook, Steven A. (2015), How Erdoğan Made Turkey Authoritarian Again, The Atlantic online: http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/07/how-Erdoğan-made-turkey-authoritarian-again/492374/, 01.11.2016.

Corke, Susan / Finkel, Andrew / Kramer, David J., Robbins, Carla Anne / Schenkkan, Nate (2014), Democracy in Crisis. Corruption, Media, and Power in Turkey, A Freedom House Special Report, New York /Washington D.C.

Coşkun, Bezen Balamir (2016), The Post- Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy, E-international Relations online: http://www.e-ir.info/2016/06/03/the-post-Davutoğlu-era-in-turkish-foreign-policy/, 28.06.2016.

Council of Europe (2015), Penal Code of Turkey, COE online: http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDLREF(2016)011-e, 16.10.2016.

Cronin, Audrey Kurth (2015), ISIS is Not a Terrorist Group. Why Counterterrorism Won't Stop the attest Jihadist Threat, Foreign Affairs online: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/isis-not-terrorist-group, 01.08.2016.

Daddow, Oliver (2009), International Relations Theory, London.

Davutoğlu, Ahmed (2001), Stratejik Derinlik, Istanbul.

— (2008), Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007, in: Insight Turkey, Vol. 10, No.1, pp.77-96.

— (2015), Statement by Ahmed Davutoğlu at High Level Side Event: Strengthening Cooperation on Migration and Refugee Movements in the Era of Sustainable Development, 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, online: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/ga/2015/docs/statements/TURKEY.pdf, 06.10.2016.

De Mesquita, Bruce Bueno (2010), Principles of International Politics, 4th ed., Washington.

Demiryol, Tolga (2015), Interdependence, Balancing and Conflict in Russian-Turkish Relations, in: Klieman, Aharon (ed.), Great Powers and Geopolitics. International Affairs in a Rebalancing World, Cham / Dordrecht / Heidelberg / London / New York, pp. 65-86.

Donnelly, Jack (2009), Realism, in: Burchill, Scott / Devetak, Richard / Donnelly, Jack / Linklater, Andrew / Nardin, Terry / Paterson, Matthew / Reus-Smit, Christian / True, Jacqui (eds.), Theories of International Relations, 4th ed., Hampshire / New York, pp. 31-56.

Dougherty, Beth K. / Ghareeb, Edmund A. (2013), Historical Dictionary of Iraq, 2nd ed., Lanham / Plymouth / Toronto.

Doyle, Michael (2008), Liberalism and Foreign Policy, in: Dunne, Tim / Hafield, Amelia /Smith, Tim (eds.), Foreign Policy. Theories. Actors. Cases, 2nd ed., Oxford, pp. 54-77.

— (1986), Liberalism and World Politics, in: The American Political Science Review, Vol. 80, No. 4, pp. 1151–1169.

Dugis, Vinsensio (2009), Domestic Political Structure and Public Influence on Foreign Policy. A Basic Model, in: Media Jurnal Global dan Stragtegis, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 169-186.

Durfee, Mary / Rosenau, James N. (2000), Thinking Theory Thoroughly. Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World, 2nd ed., Colorado.

Durmuş, Yusuf Ziya (2015), Rocket from Syria adds to Turkey's Security Woes, Daily Sabah online: http://www.dailysabah.com/nation/2015/03/26/rocket-from-syria-adds-to-turke ys-security-woes, 26.10.2016.

Elias, Juanita / Sutch, Peter (2007), International Relations. The Basics, New York.

Eligür, Banu (2006), Turkish-American Relations Since the 2003 Iraqi War. A Troubled Partnership, in: Crown Centre for Middle East Studies, No.6., online: https://www.bra ndeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB6.pdf, 15.08.2016.

Engelbrekt, Kjell (2011), International System, in: Badie, Bertrand / Berg-Schlosser, Dirk / Morlino, Leonardo (eds.), International Encyclopaedia of Political Science, Vol. 5, Los Angeles / London / New Delhi / Singapore / Washington DC, pp. 1322-1325.

Erdem, Kasim / Solak, Mehmet (2012), Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Research Center, Ankara.

Erdoğan, Emre (2016), Turkey. Divided We Stand, in: The German Marshall Fund, No. 118, Washington, pp. 1-4.

European Commission (2015), Turkey 2015 Report, Brussels.

Falk, Richard (2014), Ahmet Davutoğlu as Foreign Minister, and Now Prime Minister, Foreign Policy Journal, online: http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2014/09/01/ahmet-davuto glu-as-turkish-foreign-minister-and-now-prime-minister/, 28.09.2016.

Freedom House (2016), Turkey. Freedom of Press 2016, Freedom House online: https://free dom house .org /report/freedom-press/2016/turkey, 16.10.2016.

Freyberg-Inan, Annette (2004), What Moves Man. The Realist Theory of International Relations and Its Judgement of Human Nature, New York.

German Marshall Fund (2015), Turkish Perception Survey 2015, online: http://www.gmfus.org/sites/default/files/TurkeySurvey_2015_web1.pdf, 27.10.2016.

Gerring, John (2007), Case Study Research. Principles and Practices, Cambridge.

Girit, Selin (2016), Syria Conflict: Kilis, the Turkish Town Enduring IS Bombardment, BBC online: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36245505, 26.10.2016.

Göğüş, Idil Sezer / Mannitz, Sabine (2016), The World Culture Entered Turkey. New Conflict Lines and the Challenges for Democratic Consolidation in Turkey, PRIF Report No. 139; Frankfurt on the Main.

Gourevitch, Peter (1978), The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics, in: International Organization, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 881–912.

Groll, Elias / de Luce, Dan (2016), Why Isn't ISIS Claiming the Istanbul Airport Bombing, Foreign Policy online: http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/29/why-isnt-isis-claiming-the-istanbul-airport-bombing/?wp_login_redirect=0, 14.11.2016.

Gumuscu, Sebnem / Keyman, Fuat E. (2014), Democracy, Identity and Foreign Policy in Turkey. Hegemony Through Transformation, Hampshire.

Gunes, Cengiz / Zeydanlıoğlu, Welat (2014), Introduction: Turkey and Kurds, in: id. (eds.), The Kurdish Question in Turkey. New Perspectives on Violence, Representation, and Reconciliation, New York, pp. 1-20.

Gurcan, Metin (2015), Is Turkey's Military Returning to Politics, Al Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/10/turkey-military-is-not-willing-to-intervene-politics-for-now.html, 29.06.2016.

Hadjicostis, Menelaos (2016), Turkey Insists on No-fly Zone in Syria, NATO Non-committal, The Washington Post online: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/turk ey-insists-on-no-fly-zone-in-syria-nato-non-committal/2016/09/09/16d422cc-769f-11e6-9781-49e591781754_story.html, 17.10.2016.

Hagan, Joe D. (1995a), Domestic Political Explanations in the Analysis of Foreign Policy, in: Neack, Laura / Hey, Jeanne A. K. / Haney, Patrick J. (eds.), Foreign Policy Analysis. Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation, New Jersey, pp. 117-143.

— (1995b), Regimes, Political Oppositions, and the Comparative Analysis of Foreign Policy, in: Neack, Laura / Hey, Jeanne A. K. / Haney, Patrick J. (eds.), Foreign Policy Analysis. Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation, New Jersey, pp. 339-365.

Halistoprak, Toygar / Özdamar, Özgür B. / Sula, Erkam (2014), From Good Neighbour to Model: Turkey's Changing Roles in the Middle East in the Aftermath of the Arab Spring, in: Uluslararası İlişkiler, Vol. 11, No. 42, pp. 93-113.

Heper, Metin / Keyman, Fuat E. (1998), Double-Faced State. Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey, in: Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 259-277.

Herz, John (1951), Political Realism and Political Idealism, Chicago.

Hill, Christopher (2014), Foreign Policy, in: Krieger, Joel (ed.), The Oxford Companion to International Relations Vol.1, pp. 321-323.

Himmelfarb, Gertrude (2004), The New History and the Old. Critical Essays and Reappraisals, Cambridge / London.

Holsti, Ole R. (1992), Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus (Mershon Series Research Programs and Debates), in: International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 36, No. 4, pp. 439-466.

Hudson, John (2016), America Loses Its Man in Ankara, Foreign Policy online: http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/05/05/america-loses-its-man-in-ankara/, 29.06.2016.

Human Rights Watch (2014), Under Turkish Rule. Abuses in PYD-run Enclaves of Syria, Human Rights Watch online: https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/06/19/under-kurdish-rule/abuses-pyd-run-enclaves-syria, 09.11.2016.

Hutchings, Kimberly (1999), International Political Theory. Rethinking Ethics in a Global Era, London / Thousand Oaks / New Delhi.

Içduygu, Ahmed (2011), Interacting Actors. The EU and Civil Society in Turkey, in: South European Society and Politics, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 381-394.

Idiz, Semih (2014a), High Stakes for Erdoğan in Fight against IS, Al-Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/fr/originals/2014/09/turkey-united-states-coalition-isis-syria.html, 08.10.2016.

— (2014b), ISIS Emerges as Threat to Turkey, Al Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/03/isis-threat-turkey-syria-jihadists.html, 16.10.2016.

— (2015), Turkey's Middle East Policy 'Fiasco', Al Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/en/originals/2015/09/turkey-syria-usa-ankara-dream-to-set-up-three-cities.html, 08.10.2016.

— (2016), What is Turkey's Strategy in Syria, Al Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/09/turkey-syria-government-military-strategy.html#ixzz4PWdOgLfU, 12.11.2016.

International Business Publications (2015), US-Turkey. Diplomatic and Political Cooperation Handbook. Strategic Information and Developments, Washington DC.

Jackson, Robert / Sorensen, Georg (2016), Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches, 6th ed., Oxford.

Kaarbo, Juliet (2015), A Foreign Policy Analysis Perspective on the Domestic Politics Turn in IR Theory, in: International Studies Review, Vol. 17, pp. 189-216.

Kadir Has University (2015), Social and Political Trend Survey. Turkey 2015, online: http://www.khas.edu.tr/uploads/social-and-political-trends-survey-b-v2.pdf, 27.10.2016.

Kanat, Kilic / Ustun, Kadir (2015), U-S.-Turkey Realignment on Syria, in: Middle East Policy, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 88-97.

Kappstein, Ethan B. (1995), Is Realism Dead? The Domestic Sources of International Politics, in: International Organization, Vol. 49, No. 4, pp. 751-774.

Karagöl, Erdal Tanas (2013), The Turkish Economy During the Justice and Development Party Decade, in: Insight Turkey, Vol. 15, No. 4, pp. 115-129.

Karaosmanoglu, Ali (2004), Turkey and the Southern Flank. Domestic and External Contexts, in: Chipman, John (ed.), NATO's Southern Allies. Internal and External Challenges, 2nd ed., London / New York, pp. 287-353.

Kauppi, Mark V. / Viotti, Paul R. (2012), International Relations Theory, 5th ed., Boston / Columbus / Indianapolis.

Kennan, George F. (1954), Realities of American Foreign Policy, Princeton.

Keohane, Robert / Niye, Joseph (1977), International Relations Theory. Power and Interdependence, Princeton.

Keohane, Robert O. (1984), After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton.

Kirişc, Kemal (2009), The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy. The Rise of the Trading State, in: New Perspectives on Turkey, No. 40, pp. 29-57.

— (2014), Turkey's ISIL Dilemma. To Fight or Not to Fight, Brookings online: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2014/10/03/turkeys-isil-dilemma-to-fight-or-not-to-fight/, 19.10.2016.

Kızılkoyun, Fevzi (2015), 3,000 Linked in Turkey to ISIL Group, Police Intel Report Says, Hürriyet online: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/3000-in-turkey-linked-to-isil-group-police-intel-report-says.aspx?pageID=238&nID=77063&NewsCatID=341, 26.10.2016.

Klamberg, Mark (2015), Power and Law in International Society. International Relations as the Sociology of International Law, New York.

Kramer, Heinz (2010), Die neue Außenpolitik-Konzeption der Türkei. Mögliche Konsequenzen für den EU-Beitrittsprozess, in: SWP Aktuell, Vol. 25, pp. 1-4.

Krasner, Stephen D. (1983), International Regimes, Ithaca.

Kuru, Ahmet T. (2015), Turkey's Failed Policy towards the Arab Spring. Three Levels of Analysis, in: Mediterranean Quarterly, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 94-117.

Laub, Zachary (2016), The Islamic State, Council on Foreign Affairs online: http://www.cfr.org/iraq/islamic-state/p14811, 02.08.2016.

Law on Fight Against Terrorism No. 3713, online: https://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1226_1335519341_turkey-anti-terr-1991-am2010-en.pdf, 05.07.2016.

Levy, Jack S. (1988), Domestic Politics and War, in: Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 653-673.

Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M. / Taliaferro, Jeffrey W. (2009), Introduction. Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy, in: Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M. / Taliaferro, Jeffrey W (eds.), Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy, Cambridge, pp. 1-41.

Mahoney, James (2012), The Logic of Process Tracing Tests in the Social Sciences, in: Sociological Methods and Research, Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 570-597.

McDowall, David (2007), The Modern History of the Kurds, London / New York.

McInnis, Kathleen J. (2016), Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State, Congressional Research Service, No. R44135, New York.

Mearsheimer, John J. (2001), The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, New York / London.

— (2013), Structural Realism, in: Dunne, Tim / Kurki, Milja / Smith, Steve (eds.), International Relations Theories. Discipline and Diversity, 3rd ed., Oxford, pp. 77-93.

Milbrath Lester W. (1967), Interest Groups and Foreign Policy, in: Rosenau, James N. (ed.), Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy, pp. 231-251.

Morgenthau, Hans (1948), Politics among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace, New York.

— (1978), Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, 4th ed., New York.

North Atlantic Treaty (1949), signed on 4 April 1949, online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/ natohq/official_texts_17120.htm, 06.10.2016.

N.A. (2014), Diminishing Press Freedom in Turkey, Rethink Paper 18, online: http://www.rethinkinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Diminishing-Press-Freedom-in-Turkey-Turkey-Task-Force.pdf, 02.07.2016.

— (2015a), Turkey First Country to Designate ISIS as Terrorist Organization: PM Davutoğlu, Daily Sabah online: http://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2015/06/25/turkey-first-country-to-designate-isis-as-terrorist-organization-pm-Davutoğlu, 05.09.2016.

— (2015b), Turkey Denies Claims of Ignoring Daesh. Presidential Spokesman Repeats Denials that Turkey not Doing Enough to Combat Daesh Militants, online: http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-denies-claims-of-ignoring-daesh/24072, 15.10.2016.

— (2015c), Turkey Launches First Coalition Airstrikes Against IS, DW online: http://www.dw.com/en/turkey-launches-first-coalition-airstrikes-against-is/a-18681379, 24.10.2016.

— (2015d), Turkey: 24 People Wounded in Protests After Suruç Attack, Anadolu Agency online: http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-24-people-wounded-in-protests-after-suruc-attack/23462, 31.10.2016.

— (2015e), Islamic State Conflict. Syrian Kurds Seize Tal Abyad, BBC online: http://www.bbc. com/news/world-middle-east-33132809, 02.11.2016.

— (2015f), Turkey Says West of Euphrates Red Line in Northern Syria, TRT online: http://www.trtworld.com/turkey/turkey-says-west-euphrates-red-line-northern-syria-3972, 10.11.2016.

— (2015g), Gaziantep ve Suruç'ta canlı bomba yelekleri aynı çıktı, Vatan online: http://www.gazetevatan.com/gaziantep-ve-suruc-ta-canli-bomba-yelekleri-ayni-cikti-836275-gundem/, 11.11.2016.

— (2015h), Suruç'ta büyük patlama, Sabah online: http://www.sabah.com.tr/yasam/2015/07/20/suructa-buyuk-patlama, 11.11.2016.

— (2015i), Şanlıurfa Suruç'ta büyük patlama, Hürriyet online: http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/sanliurfa-suructa-buyuk-patlama-29591017, 11.11.2016.

— (2015j), Turkey Must Do More to Fight IS: Pentagon Chief, Al Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/sites/almonitor/contents/afp/2015/08/syria-conflict-us-turkey.html, 24.10.2016.

— (2015k), Fourth Victim Dies from Attack on Turkey Party Rally, Hürriyet Daily News online: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/fourth-victim-dies-from-attack-on-turkey-party-rally.aspx?pageID=238&nID=83940&NewsCatID=335, 05.11.2016.

— (2015l), As it Happened: Turkish Army Engages in First Gunfight with ISIL After Soldier Killed on Border, Hürriyet Daily News online: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/as-it-happened-turkish-army-engages-in-first-gunfight-with-isil-after-soldier-killed-on-border. aspx?pageID=238&nID=85843&NewsCatID=359, 15.10.2016.

— (2016a), Erdoğan to Visit East Africa as Relations Boom, online: http://www.trtworld.com/mea/Erdoğan-to-visit-east-africa-as-relations-boom-112898, 07.07.2016.

— (2016b), No difference between FETO, PKK, Daesh: Erdoğan, Anadolu Agency online: http://aa.com.tr/en/politics/no-difference-between-feto-pkk-daesh-Erdoğan/631038, 15.10.2016.

— (2016c), Turkey Left to Fight Islamic State Alone, Erdoğan Says, Middle East Eye online: http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/turkey-left-fight-islamic-state-alone-Erdoğan-says-1560780412, 26.10.2016.

— (2016d), Turkish-baked Syrian Rebels Advance Towards Manbij, Al Jazeera online: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/turkish-backed-syrian-rebels-advance-manbij-160829154225197.html, 10.11.2016.

NATO (2013), NATO Support to Turkey. Background and Timeline, NATO online: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_92555.htm, 12.10.2016.

Niye, S. Joseph (1975), Transnational and Transgovernmental Relations, in: Goodwin, Geoffrey / Linklater, Andrew (eds.), New Dimensions of World Politics, London, pp. 36-53.

— (1988), Neorealism and Neoliberalism, in: World Politics, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 235-251.

Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (2015), Table if Imprisoned Journalists and Examples of Legislative Restrictions on Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom in Turkey, OSCE online: http://www.osce.org/fom/173036? download=true, 05.07.2016.

Öniş, Ziya (2012), Turkey and the Arab Spring. Between Ethics and Self-Interest, in: Insight Turkey, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 45-63.

Operation Inherent Resolve. One Mission. Many Countries. http://www.inherentresolve.m, 24.10.2016.

Özbudun, Ergun (2011), The Constitutional System of Turkey. 1876 to the Present, New York.

Özcan, Ali N. / Yavuz, Hakan M. (2015), Turkish Democracy and the Kurdish Question, in: Middle East Policy, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 73-87.

Pamuk, Humeyra (2014), Turkey Trains Kurdish Peshmerga Forces in Fight against Islamic State, Reuters online: http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-turkey-iraq-idUSKCN0J60B720141122, 18.10.2016.

Park, Bill (2016), Regional Turmoil, the Rise of Islamic State, and Turkey's Multiple Kurdish Dilemmas, in: International Journal, Vol. 71, No. 3, pp. 450-467.

Peker, Emre (2015), Turkey Steps Up Its Fight Against Islamic State, in: The Wall Street Journal online: http://www.wsj.com/articles/turkey-steps-up-its-fight-against-islamic-state-1448044846, 14.04.2016.

Pestritto, Ronald J. (2005), Woodrow Wilson and the Roots of Modern Liberalism, Maryland.

Pierini, Marc / Mayr, Markus (2013), Press Freedom in Turkey (The Carnegie Papers), Beijing / Beirut / Brussels / Moscow / Washington D.C.

Putnam, Robert D. (1988), Diplomacy and Domestic Politics. The Logic of Two-Level Games, in: International Organization, Vol. 42, No. 3, pp.427-460.

Radu, Michael S. (2006), Dilemmas of Democracy and Dictatorship. Place, Time, and Ideology in Global Perspective, New Jersey,

Rathbun, Brian (2011), Domestic Politics and International Relations, in: Badie, Bertrand / Berg-Schlosser, Dirk / Morlino, Leonardo (eds.), International Encyclopedia of Political Science, Vol. 1, Los Angeles / London / New Delhi / Singapore / Washington DC, pp. 691-696.

Reporters Without Borders (2016a), 2016 World Press Freedom Index, Reporters Without Borders online: https://rsf.org/en/ranking#, 01.07.2016.

— (2016b), Turkey, Reporters Without Borders online: https://rsf.org/en/turkey, 05.07.2016.

Republic of Turkey-Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2016), Number of Arriving-Departing Foreigners and Citizens, July 2015, online: https://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,153018/number-of-arriving-departing-visitors-foreigners-and-ci-.html, 07.10.2016

Republic of Turkey-Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2015a), Press Release Concerning Turkey-US Understanding on Countering DEASH, No.: 212, 24 July 2015, online: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-212_-24-july-2015_-press-statement-concerning-turkey_us-understanding-on-countering-deash.en.mfa, 05.10.2016.

— (2015b), Press Release Regarding Turkey's Request to Convene the North Atlantic Council under Article 4 of the Washington Treaty, No.: 214, 26 July 2015, online: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-214_-26-july-2015_-press-release-regarding-turkey_srequest-to-con vene-the-north-atlantic-council-under-article-4-of-the-washingtontreatyen.mfa, 06.10.2016

— (2015c), Press Statement on Joint Air Operations against DEASH Targets, No: 239, 29 August 2015, online: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-239_-29-august-2015_-press-statement-on-joint-air-operations-against-deash-targets.en.mfa, 24.10.2016.

— (2016), Turkey's Contribution's to Anti-Deash Coalition, online: http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-contributions_s-to-anti_deash-coalition.en.mfa, 13.10.2016.

Ripsman, Norrin M. (2009), Neoclassical Realism and Domestic Interest Groups, in: Lobell, Steven E., Ripsman, Norrin M. / Taliaferro, Jeffrey W (eds.), Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy, Cambridge, pp. 170-193.

セ

Romano, David (2006), The Kurdish Nationalist Movement. Opportunity, Mobilization and Identity, Cambridge.

Rose, Gideon (1998), Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy, in: World Politics, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 144-172.

Rosenfeld, Jesse (2016), Fear Grows as Turkey Introduces State of Emergency, Al Jazeera online: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/07/fear-grows-turkey-introduces-state-emergency-160723130514665.html, 29.08.2016.

Rosow, Stephen J. (2005), International System, in: Griffiths, Martin (ed.), Encyclopaedia of International Relations and Global Politics, pp. 455-457.

Russett, Bruce M. (1990), Controlling the Sword. The Democratic Governance of National Security, Cambridge.

— (1993), Grasping the Democratic Peace. Principles for a Post-Cold War, Princeton. S/RES/2199 (2015), online: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2199.pdf, 14.10.2016.

Salih, Cale (2015), Turkey, the Kurds, and the Fight against Islamic State, in: European Council on Foreign Relations, No. 141, London.

Sanli, Ufuk (2016), What fading oil fortunes means for Turkish businesses, Al Monitor online: http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/02/turkey-gulf-economic-crisis-worries-ankara.html, 20.10.2016.

Sazak, Selim C. / Kibaroglu, Mustafa (2015), Business as Usual. The U.S.-Turkey Security Partnership, in: Middle East Policy, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 98-112.

Schanzer, Jonathan / Tahiroglu, Merve (2014), Bordering on Terrorism. Turkey's Syria Policy and the Rise of the Islamic State (Center on Sanctions and Illicit Finance, Foundation for Defense of Democracies), Washington D.C.

Schimmelfennig, Frank (2006), Prozessanalyse, in: Behnke, Joachim / Gschwend, Thomas / Schindler, Delia / Schnapp, Kai-Uwe (eds.), Methoden der Politikwissenschaft. Neuere qualitative und quantitative Analyseverfahren, Baden-Baden, pp. 263-271.

Schweller, Randall L. (2004), Unanswered Threats. A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing, in: International Security, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 159-201.

Seawright, Jason / Collier, David (2004), Glossary of Selected Terms, in: Brady, Henry / Collier, David (eds.), Rethinking Social Inquiry. Diverse Tools, Shared Standards, Maryland, pp. 273-313.

Seidelmann, Reimund (1994), Außenpolitik, in: Nohlen, Dieter (ed.), Lexikon der Politik, Vol. 6: Boeckh, Andreas (ed.), Internationale Beziehungen, Baden-Baden, pp. 42-49.

Sengupta, Anita (2016), Turkey, Syria, and the Islamic State, in: ORF Issue Brief, No. 136, pp. 1-6.

Seufert, Günter (2014), Erdoğan's New Turkey. Restoring the Authoritarian State in the Name of Democracy, in: SWP, Comments 44 (October 2014).

Shaheen, Kareem (2016), Turkey Sends Tanks into Syria in Operation Aimed at Isis and Kurds, The Guardian online: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/24/turkey-launches-major-operation-against-isis-in-key-border-town, 10.11.2016.

Snyder, Jack (1991), Myths of Empire. Domestic Politics and International Ambition, Ithaca / London.

Söyler, Mehtap (2009), Der demokratische Reformprozess in der Türkei, in: APuZ 39-40, pp. 3-8.

Statista (2016), Türkei-Statista-Dossier, Statista online: https://www.statista.com/study/144 67/turkey -statista-dossier/, 10.10.2016.

Stein, Aaron (2015), Turkey's Counterterrorism Policies: Targeting ISIS and the PKK, Atlantic Council online: http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/turkey-s-counterterrorism-policies-targeting-isis-and-the-pkk, 05.10.2016.

Sterling-Folker, Jennifer (2013), Neoliberalism, in: Dunne, Tim / Kurki, Milja / Smith, Steve (eds.), International Relations Theories. Discipline and Diversity, 3rd ed., Oxford, pp. 114-131.

The White House (2016), Press Conference by President Obama, 4/1/2016, The White House online: https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/04/01/press-conference-pre sident-obama-412016, 01.02.2016.

Thomas, Clayton / Zanotti, Jim (2016), Turkey. Background and U.S. Relations, Congressional Research Service, No. R41368, New York.

Tucker, Ernest (2016), The Middle East in Modern World History, London / New York.

Tol, Gonul (2016), Turkey's Next Military Coup. How Empowering the Generals Could Backfire, Foreign Affairs online: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-05-30/turkeys-next-military-coup, 29.06.2016.

Totten, Michael J. (2015), The Trouble with Turkey. Erdoğan. ISIS, and the Kurds, in: World Affairs, Fall 2015, pp. 5-12.

Tsebelis, George (1990), Nested Games. Rational Choice in Comparative Politics, California.

UNCHR (2016), Syria Regional Refugee Response. Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, Last Update 26 September 2016, UNCHR online: http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees /country.php?id=224, 05.10.2016.

Uzer, Umut (2011), Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy. The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus, London / New York.

Van Evera, Stephen (1997), Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science, Ithaca / London.

Vowe, Gerhard (2008), Politics, Policy, Polity, in: Holtz-Bach, Christina / Kaid, Lynda (eds.), Encyclopedia of Political Communication, Vol. 2, Los Angeles / London / New Delhi / Singapore / Washington DC, pp. 620-621.

Walker, Joshua W. (2011), Introduction. The Sources of Turkish Grand Strategy – Strategic Depth and Zero Problems in Context, in: IDEAS Special Reports, pp. 6-12.

Wallace, William / Paterson, William E. (1978), Foreign Policy Making in Western Europe. A Comparative Approach, Farnborough.

Waltz, Kenneth N. (1979), Theory of International Politics, Boston.

West Virginia University (2016), Joe D. Hagan, online: http://politicalscience.wvu.edu/ faculty-staff/hagan, 20.06.2016.

Wohlforth, Wiliam Curti (1993), The Elusive Balance. Power and Perceptions During the Cold War, New York.

World Economic Forum (2015), The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index 2015, World Economic Forum online: http://reports.weforum.org/travel-and-tourism-competitiveness-report-2015/economies/#economy=TUR, 07.10.2016.

World Tourism Organization UNWTO (2016), UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2016 Ed., online: http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284418145, 07.10.2016.

Yin, Robert K. (2009), Case Study Research. Designs and Methods, 4th ed., in: Bockman, Leonard / Rog, Debra J. (eds.), Applied Social Research Method Series, Vol. 5, Los Angeles / London / New Delhi / Singapore / Washington DC.

Young, Oran R. (1982), Regime Dynamics. The Rise and Fall of International Regimes, in: International Organization, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 277-297.

Zakaria, Fareed (1998), From Wealth to Power. The Unusual Origins of America's World Role, Princeton.

Zalewski, Piotr (2015), Turkey Considers Setting up Safe Zone Inside Syria, Financial Times online: https://www.ft.com/content/7067066c-1f3c-11e5-aa5a-398b2169cf79, 06.10.2016.

Zeldin, Wendy (2015), Turkey. Counterterrorism and Justice, The Law Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Appendix 1: Timeline

Domestic Politics	International System	Foreign Policy
2011		
June AKP wins parliamentary election for the third time	*March* pro-democracy protests lead to a civil war in Syria	*October* Turkey hosts and establishes the Syrian National Council (SNC) in Istanbul
2012		
Throughout the year AKP-government increasingly bans Twitter, YouTube and Facebook		*October 3* Syrian mortar fire kills five civilians at Turkish border → parliament authorises military action inside Syria, Turkish forces respond with artillery fire into Syria
2013		
March announcement of cease-fire agreement between the Turkish state and the PKK *May-August* Gezi protest leads to nationwide anti-government demonstrations *December 17* key members of the government are involved in a corruption scandal	*February* Operation *Active Fence*: NATO installs missile defence system at Turkish-Syrian border *July 3* Egyptian President Morsi is overthrown in military coup	*November* Turkish President Erdoğan asks Russia to become a member in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) → tensions with Western allies increase

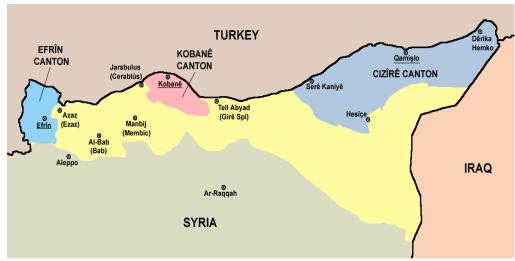| **2014**		
March 20	*January/February*	*November 21*
IS-members kill three security personnel at a checkpoint close to Niğde	YPG establishes an interim administration in northern Syria	U.S. Vice President Joe Biden meets with then-PM Davutoğlu in order to discuss Turkey's role in the anti-IS coalition
August	*June*	
Erdoğan wins presidential elections	IS proclaims the establishment of a caliphate	*December*
October 2	*June 11*	all members of the anti-IS coalition agree to the five lines of efforts
Turkish parliament gives authority to the government for sending military to Iraq or Syria	IS captures Turkish embassy in Iraq and takes 49 people as hostages	
→ also allows foreign military to operate in Turkey		
	September 5	
December	USA introduces anti-IS coalition, Turkey becomes one of the founding members	
police raids media outlets close to Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen and arrests 24 journalists		
	September 13	
	IS takes control over Kobane	
	September 24	
	President Erdoğan joins US-chaired Security Council meeting on foreign terrorist fighters	
2015		
June 5	*Mid-June*	*June 23*
IS-suspected terror attack: four people die and more than 100 are injured during a rally in Diyarbakır by supporters of the HDP	YPG takes control over the Syrian town of Tal Abyad	meeting between Turkey and the EU regarding a common strategy in counterterrorism
	July 28	*July 24*
	meeting of all NATO-members	

June 7 HDP clears 10 % threshold at parliamentary election, AKP loses its majority	after Turkey's request	Turkey and the USA sign a deal to open several airbases to the anti-IS coalition
July 11 PKK announces end of cease-fire		*July 24* operation *Yalçın Nane*: Turkey carries out airstrikes against IS headquarters without entering Syrian airspace
July 20 IS-suspected suicide bomber kills 32 young activists at rally in Suruç		
July 22 PKK claims responsibility for death of two Turkish policemen in Ceylanpinar		*July 26* Turkey calls for a NATO-meeting by referring to Art. 4 of the Washington Treaty
July 23 IS-fighters kill Turkish soldier at border outpost in Kilis		*July 29* Turkey launches airstrikes against IS for the first time, simultaneously carries out airstrikes against PKK
July/August prosecutions of IS supporters, a wave of raids took place		*August 24* Turkey fully joins the coalition's air campaign *Operation Inherent Resolve*
August 24 Erdoğan calls for fresh elections for November		*August 28* Turkey launches airstrikes targeting IS in the context of the anti-IS coalition
October 10 during a pro-Kurdish peace rally in Ankara 102 people die in twin suicide bomb attack died → Turkey accuses IS →Kurdish groups accuse the government		
November 1 AKP regains parliamentary majority in re-elections		

Appendix 2: Figures of Syrian Territories

Figure 1: Syrian Territory Under Control of Kurdish Forces

Figure 1: Cerha, Birgit (2015), Kurden: Immer noch die Weisen des Universums, online: http://ifamo -blog.blogspot.de/2015/03/kurden-immer-noch-die-waisen-des.html, 03.11.2016.

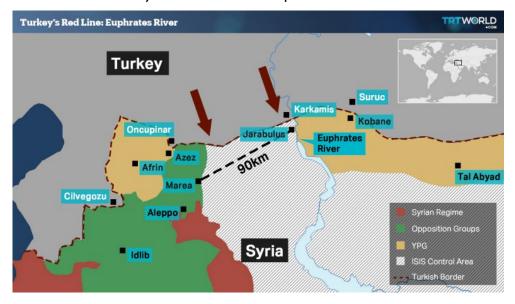Figure 2: The Territory West of the Euphrates River

Figure 2: N.A. 2015f, Turkey Says West of Euphrates Red Line in Northern Syria, online: http://www.trworld.com//turkey-says-west-euphrates-red-line-northern-syria-3972, 10.11.2016.

Appendix 3: Glossary

Anti-IS Coalition

In September 2015, US-President Barack Obama officially announced the introduction of an international anti-IS coalition. As of April 2016, all 66 participants have joined the coalition and contribute either militarily or by providing resources to the coalition. At a meeting in December 2014, all participants agreed to work along five *lines of effort*. Each *line of effort* is headed by at least two countries that are in charge of coordinating the cooperation between the participating countries. The *lines of effort* include 1) supporting military operations, led by the United States and Iraq, 2) combating the flow of foreign fighters, led by the Netherlands and Turkey, 3) cutting off IS' financing options, led by Italy, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States, 4) addressing humanitarian aid, led by Germany and the United Arab Emirates and 5) exploring IS' characteristics, led by the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. (McInnis 2016: 1)

Free Syrian Army (FSA)

In the beginning of the Syrian civil war, deserters from the Syrian army formed the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and claimed the leadership over the armed opposition forces. Yet, most local armed groups did not recognize the authority of the FSA. (Blanchard/Humud/Nikitin 2016: 4-5) The FSA was one of the first opposition forces that sought to defeat the Assad-regime. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, Turkey has supported the FSA and other oppositional groups. For instance, already in October 2011, Turkey hosted and established the Syrian National Council in Istanbul that should unite the disparate Syrian opposition factions. (Schanzer/Tahiroglu 2014: 9) Apart from that, the Turkish government provided weapons and a safe haven on Turkish territory with the long-term aim to overthrow the Assad-Regime. (Ayata 2014: 104)

Kurds

Kurds constitute the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East after Arabs, Persians and Turks. In the aftermath of First World War, the Kurdish people did not receive

their own state and instead settled down mostly in Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. Therefore, Kurds are regarded as the world's largest contiguously located ethnic group without a state of their own. The Kurdish population in the Middle East is estimated to range between 30 and 40 million, half of which are located in Turkey, where they constitute approximately 20 % of all inhabitants. (Park 2016: 450-451) Most of ethnic Kurds – around 75 % – are Sunni Muslims. The second largest group belongs to Alevism, most common in central Anatolia, followed by Shiites in Iran. (McDowall 2007: 10) Any Kurdish aspiration of self-determination has been opposed by most states in the Middle East. In the case of Turkey, Kurdish ethnicity has been denied since the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 under Mustafa Atatürk. (Gunes/Zeydanlıoğlu 2014: 13)

Kurdish Regional Government (KRG)

The Kurdish Regional Government was officially established in July 1992; the first elections in May 1993. The Iraqi constitution, introduced in 1992, recognizes the Kurdistan Autonomous Region with its government and legislations as a federal state within the Iraqi system. Until the Iraq invasion in 2003, the region was marked by armed clashes between the two big Kurdish parties. The KRG's military forces, called Peshmerga, are allied with Western powers in combating IS on the ground. (Dougherty/Ghareeb 2013: 384) Since the 2010s, the KRG has built strong economic and political ties with Turkey under the AKP-government. Especially energy politics have become the main dynamic that drives the relation between Turkey and the KRG. It is predicted that the area belonging to the KRG contains 45 billion barrels of oil and 100-200 billion cubic meters of natural gas; the exploitation of its natural resources constitutes the KRG's main source of income. (Balci 2014: 13)

Kurdish Workers Party (PKK)

The PKK was formed in the late 1970s by radical students in Ankara under the leadership of Abdullah Öcalan. In November 1978, the Kurdish group adopted the name of PKK and, unlike other Kurdish groups at that time, officially introduced a political agenda promoting Kurdish identity and nationalism. (Tucker 2016: 319) Although the PKK's leader Öcalan has been imprisoned in Turkey since 1998, the organization's ideology is based on a cult of personality around Öcalan. (Radu 2006: 97) By capturing several villages in 1984, the PKK for the first time carried out an armed campaign with the overall demand to establish an independent Kurdish state

within Turkey. From the 1990s onwards, the PKK started to focus on bombing governmental institutions and attacking tourists in hotels and restaurants. (Romano 2006: 123-124) Since its foundation, the relation between the Turkish state and the PKK has been marked by periods of armed clashes taking place especially in the south-east of Turkey.

The cease-fire agreement achieved in 2013 between the Turkish government and the PKK collapsed in July 2015 when tensions once again increased heavily. (Zeldin 2015: 1) The successful role of Kurdish forces in combating IS complicated Turkey's relation with the PKK. (Salih 2015: 1-2)

Kurdish Democratic Party (PYD)

The Syrian-based Kurdish Democratic Party was founded in 2013 and is widely regarded as being affiliated with the PKK. Already in 2015, the party's leader Saleh Muslim Mohammed officially declared that they did not support the Assad Regime. (Blanchard/Humud/Nikitin 2016: 40) The three predominantly Kurdish populated enclaves in northern Syria (Jazira, Kobane and Afrin), called *Rojava*, are controlled by the PYD. In the beginning of 2014, the PYD established an interim administration in these areas. Against this background, the party introduced councils, courts, and police forces. Many scholars and activists such as Human Rights Watch accuse the PYD of violating human rights by forced resettlements, arbitrary arrests, targeted killings and the use of children in their military forces. (Human Rights Watch 2014) Unlike the PKK, neither the PYD nor the YPG is designated as a terrorist organisation by the USA and the EU. On a military level, the USA maintains close ties with the PYD with the purpose to fight IS on the ground. Ideologically, similar to the PKK, the PYD regards the founder of PKK, Abudallah Öcalan, as their main source of inspiration and in this sense, supports the overall aim to establish governance structures in Kurdish regions. Yet, the YPG mainly focuses on the establishment of an autonomous region by linking the three enclaves in the northern part of Syria. (Salih 2015: 1-2)

Popular Protection Units (YPG)

The YPG is a secular militia coalition affiliated with the PYD and consists of mostly Kurdish fighters. Their military operations focus on consolidating power in the region along the Turkish-Syrian border in order to establish a territorial corridor that ranges from Syria to Iraq, called *Rojava*. (Salih 2015: 5) Its size is uncertain, but

approximately fifty thousand fighters belong to the YPG, including Assyrian, Armenian, Circassian and Arab sub-units. The Kurdish forces YPG played a decisive role in fighting IS, for instance by conquering the IS-held cities Kobane and Al Abyad, located at the Turkish borderline. (Blanchard/Humud/Nikitin 2016: 40) On a military level, the USA and other Western countries support and cooperate with the Kurdish forces. Due to the fact that the PYG represents one of the most successful partners on the ground in northern Syria, it has become a key ally to the anti-IS coalition. (Salih 2015: 4)