Sevres Syndrome:
Constructing the populist "us" versus "them" through fear in Turkey

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of

Masters of Arts
in
Political Science

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December 17th, 2020
Blacksburg, VA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the role of the phenomenon of Sevres Syndrome in the construction of the populist antagonistic relation of "us" versus "them" in Turkey. Not only does it look at its role in populist discourse, but it also highlights how it has been used throughout Turkish history by different hegemonic entities to exclude groups from the Turkish nation. It begins by briefly looking at the origins of Sevres Syndrome in the Treaty of Sevres and its manifestations throughout the history of the Turkish Republic as a fear of outside powers and their domestic collaborators intent on dividing and destroying the Turkish nation. It continues by providing an in-depth analysis of the populist discourse regarding the specific events of the July 2016 coup attempt and the April 2017 constitutional referendum to explore how Sevres Syndrome informs the development of the populist relation of "us" and "them". The thesis argues that the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative acts as a historic background narrative, which informs the discursive categorization of which groups belong to the populist "us" of the Turkish nation as opposed to the populist "them" of foreign powers and their domestic collaborators.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

The discursive construction of the populist "us" versus "them" relation has played a role in Turkish politics since the founding of the Turkish Republic. Following the Ottoman defeat in World War II, the Treaty of Sevres signed between Allied powers and representatives of the dying Ottoman government divided the Anatolian peninsula between various entities until the country was united under Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and the newly declared Turkish government in Ankara. However, the memory of national division under the Treaty of Sevres left a lasting impact on the country that has continued till today. Political discourse contains numerous references to vague outside powers who are supposedly aiming to divide and destroy the Turkish nation with the aid of domestic traitors. As argued by this thesis, this narrative has become the foundation for the discursive construction of the populist "us" versus "them" relation in which groups are associated as being either on the side of the Turkish nation or on the side of supposed dark forces plotting to nationally and territorially divide Turkey.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

The growing momentum of populist fervor around the globe has been accompanied by a significant increase in the study of populism (Gidron and Bonikowski, 2013). Numerous scholars have taken different approaches to analyzing populism associating it with various issues including political mobilization, polarization, the erosion of democratic institutions, and more. Populism is a broad concept with many elements, but one significant aspect of populism is the discursive construction of "the people" versus "the elite". Although there are many different approaches to understanding and analyzing populism, most scholars agree that populism revolves around this antagonistic binary relation of "us" versus "them" (Mudde, 2004). As populism becomes increasingly prominent and influential within contemporary democracies, so has the construction of "us" versus "them".

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to a broader understanding of how fear and narrative play a role in creating the boundaries between the populist "us" versus "them" within the context of Turkish politics. Through the analysis of speeches, interviews, and other political communication, this thesis seeks to demonstrate how the populist "other" is constructed through fear. Specifically, this thesis focuses on the political discourse that evokes a fear of supposed outside forces and their domestic collaborators ceaselessly aiming to divide and conquer the Turkish nation. The main argument of this thesis is that this fear discourse is evoked in order to depict political opponents as moral enemies, which excludes them from the Turkish nation and confines them to the populist category of "other". Drawing upon the work of previous scholars, this thesis also demonstrates that the populist construction of "us" versus "them" can be observed through-

out the history of the modern Turkish Republic, and which groups are included within these two categories has changed between ruling parties despite the similar use of this common fear narrative in populist discourse.

Many academics and journalists have described the current leadership of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) as populist (Dincsahin, 2012; McKernan, 2019; Selcuk, 2016, Yalvac & Joseph, 2019). As Turkey expert Soner Cagaptay stated, "Erdogan is the inventor of 21st century populism" (Cagaptay as cited in McKernan, 2019). By embracing populism, Erdogan has depicted himself as an everyday man of the people defending the Turkish nation from supposed international elites seeking to oppress both Turkey and the broader muslim world, and political rivals have been portrayed as dangerous domestic collaborators working alongside foreign powers to destroy the Turkish nation (Sozcu, 2017). This thesis analyzes Erdogan's political speeches and other AKP communication as a populist discursive style, and will examine how the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative is used as an instrument to construct the AKP's populist understanding of "the people" versus "the elite". Previous scholars have noted the role of fear in populist discourse, and this thesis explores how fear is used within the context of Turkey and the AKP to construct the boundaries between the populist "us" and "them". The growing prominence of populism around the globe and the fear evoked through populist discourse make it an increasingly pertinent subject to study, and this thesis seeks to contribute its own unique analysis of populist discourse within the particularly noteworthy case of Turkey.

The main research question for this thesis is stated as the following: *How is the populist antagonistic relation of "us" versus "them" constructed in Turkish politics?* This thesis will argue that the phenomenon of Sevres Syndrome is evoked in Turkish political discourse in order to inform the construction of the two populist categories of "the people" and "the elite". Sevres Syndrome is a term used by some scholars to describe a fear of national division by foreign powers and domestic collaborators that is often referenced throughout Turkish socio-political discourse (Evans, 2014; Hovspyan, 2012). The term Sevres Syndrome refers to the short-lived Treaty of Sevres that divided the Anatolian peninsula between Allied powers after World War I before the peninsula was united by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and his revolutionaries during the Turkish War of Independence. The narrative claims that outside forces are continually seeking to divide the Turkish nation, and that Turkey must defend itself from foreign and domestic enemies seeking its division. As contended by this thesis, associating political opponents with these supposed outside forces seeking the division of the nation categorizes them within the populist understanding of "other".

The secondary research question for this thesis is stated as the following: *Which groups are included in the category of "us" and which are excluded in the category of "other" within current Turkish political discourse?* As this thesis will argue, the populist understanding of "us" versus "them" in Turkey as embraced by the currently ruling AKP is different from the previous understanding of "us" versus "them" as purported by the previously hegemonic Kemalists. Who has been included and excluded from these populist categories has changed between ruling par-

ties. For example, whereas the Ottoman Islamist approach of the AKP has been inclusive of minority populations, the Kemalists excluded minorities and perceived them as a threat to the unity of the Turkish nation associating them with the category of "other" (Cagaptay, 2006). The importance of exploring this question is to show that despite having different interpretations of who is included and excluded within the populist "us" and "them", both Kemalists and the AKP have used populism particularly through evoking the Sevres Syndrome fear of national division to discursively identify who belongs to the nation and who is excluded as a populist "other".

Methodology

Based on Gidron and Bonikowski's (2014) recommended methods to study populism as a discursive style, interpretive textual analysis has been used to answer these two questions. As Gidron and Bonikowski (2014) explained, the units of analysis in this approach include texts, speeches, and other public political discourses. To carry out this interpretive textual analysis, AKP speech transcripts, interview transcripts, and other political communication have all been collected and analyzed for how the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative is used to construct the "us" versus "them" relation. Transcripts of Erdogan's speeches are provided online by the Turkish government, and other AKP related interviews and speeches can be found on YouTube and through Google searches with the help of advanced search functions to limit search results to specified date ranges. In addition to analyzing how the populist "us" versus "them" is constructed in these discourses in order to answer the main research question, which specific groups are

being included and excluded from these two categories have been noted in order to answer the second research question.

Analyzing all AKP communication would be a nearly impossible task for one researcher, so this thesis has narrowed its focus to political communication published during two significant time periods in recent Turkish history. These two time periods are roughly one month immediately following the July 2016 failed coup and roughly one month immediately preceding the April 2017 constitutional referendum. While this focus excludes other communication materials published by the AKP during other significant political events in recent Turkish history, it is necessary to limit analysis to these two time periods in order to make the research of this thesis manageable.

While some sources used to inform this thesis are in English, such as reports from English language news websites or books, many sources are originally in Turkish. Turkish language sources include the speeches delivered by Erdogan and other members of the AKP that are either published on Turkish government websites or Turkish news websites. Many quotes are used within this thesis to emphasize its arguments, and while quotes originally published in English have been left untouched, quotes from Turkish sources are translated by myself. For each of my own translations from Turkish sources, the original quote in Turkish follows the translation in brackets.

Regarding the limitations to this methodology, analyzing populism as a discursive approach excludes several other elements of populism. As noted by Yalvac and Joseph (2019), the discursive approach only looks at populism from a top-down perspective. It does not take into account other social relations and dynamics that may contribute to populism. However, consider-

ing the complexity of populism in Turkey and how it extends into numerous aspects of society, it is likely impossible for any lone researcher to thoroughly explore every element of populism in the country. For the sake of practicality, this thesis will focus on populism as a discursive style, yet this means that other aspects of populism will be neglected. Furthermore, as Filc (2010) argued, the populist exclusion of out-groups in the construction of "us" versus "them" occurs at three separate levels: material, political, and symbolic. Because this thesis analyzes populism as a discursive style, it will primarily focus on the symbolic level that centers on political discourse and the redrawing of social boundaries. While this focus on the symbolic level mostly excludes analysis of populism constructed at the material and political levels, there is still some overlap between all three levels specifically in the case of the Turkish state of emergency, which was a material policy discursively justified through symbolic populist discourse. While the focus on populism as a discursive style excludes these other aspects of populism, populism is far too broad a subject to cover all of its elements especially within the complex context of Turkish politics.

The July 2016 Coup Attempt and the 2017 Constitutional Referendum

As already mentioned, this thesis will analyze the political discourse communicated during the month immediately following the July 2016 coup attempt and the month immediately preceding the 2017 constitutional referendum. The reason for focusing on the July 2016 coup attempt is due to the distinct "us" versus "them" discourse that appeared immediately following the failed coup in order to justify mass firings and arrests of political adversaries under a state of

emergency. Immediately following the coup attempt, the Turkish government framed the failed coup as a victory in a supposed second Turkish Independence War (Cagaptay, 2017). The government emphasized the role of Turkish citizens rising up in the streets to fight against the coup plotters and defend Turkish democracy and identified the coup plotters as members of a global religious movement led by Erdogan's political adversary based in Pennsylvania, Fethullah Gulen. The global nature of Gulen's movement contributed to claims of a global conspiracy against Turkey and Erdogan (Arango & Yeginsu, 2016). A state of emergency was implemented by the government in the days immediately following the failed coup, which resulted in the firings and arrests of thousands of government workers, politicians, academics, journalists, and other public figures who were deemed to be associated with Gulen and his movement. Analyzing AKP speech transcripts, interviews, and political advertisements within this period reveals how rhetoric reflecting Sevres Syndrome is used to discursively create a foundation for the construction of the populist "us" versus "them" relation during this time period.

The month of campaigning preceding the April 2017 constitutional referendum is the second time period focused on by this thesis. Reflecting the binary "us" versus "them" populist relation, the referendum was a simple choice between "yes" or "no" and framed by the AKP as a choice between "us" or terrorists (Ekim & Kirisci, 2017). Erdogan stated during the referendum campaign that those who supported the "no" vote would be siding with terrorists and the July 15th coup plotters who sought to overthrow Turkish democracy (Sozcu, 2017). As argued by this thesis, the referendum campaign contains many examples of framing political opposition through a lens of fear in order to construct an "us" versus "them" relation by evoking the Serves Syndrome fear of national division.

Together, these two events were pivotal in Erdogan's political career. The Gulen movement became a growing political threat to Erdogan and the AKP, and this thesis will contend that the coup attempt offered an opportunity to discursively depict the group as an enemy of the Turkish nation. This depiction was reaffirmed during the campaigning for the constitutional referendum where the Gulen movement was argued to be against the constitutional changes as a result of supposedly serving the interests of vaguely defined outside powers. As argued by this thesis, Sevres Syndrome was used to discursively construct the group as a moral threat to the nation by associating them as domestic collaborators working alongside foreign powers to divide and destroy the nation.

As will be discussed in chapter two, this strategy of evoking the narrative of outside powers and domestic collaborators plotting against the nation has been used throughout Turkish political history to discursively depict groups as mortal threats to the nation. However, as a group to be excluded to the populist category of "other", the Gulen movement is notably different from any other group that had been excluded previously in Turkish history, and the populist exclusion of the Gulen movement reflects the unique approach to populism by Erdogan and the AKP. Whereas excluded groups in Turkey under the previously hegemonic Kemalists were primarily minority groups such as Kurdish and Christian populations, the AKP brought minority populations into the understanding of the Turkish nation through an emphasis on the multicultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire (Hintz, 2018). This makes the AKP's approach to populism unique not only within Turkey, but also unique among populist movements across the globe, which can often be anti-immigrant and anti-minority (Wodak, 2015). Unlike previously excluded groups in

Turkey, the Gulen movement is not an ethnic minority, yet it is still perceived as a significant political threat.

<p style="text-align:center">Populism as a Discursive Style</p>

There is a wide range of interpretations regarding the term populism as well as different approaches to studying it. According to Gidron and Bonikowski (2014), there are primarily three overlapping and interconnected approaches to studying populism; populism as an ideology, populism as a discursive strategy, and populism as a discursive style. As a base theoretical framework, this thesis will focus specifically on populism as a discursive style. As explained by Gidron and Bonikowski (2014), analyzing populism as a discursive style primarily involves an emphasis on political rhetoric and expression, which discursively construct the populist understandings of "us" and "them". Much of the previous literature on populism that has been reviewed for this thesis focuses on the discursive construction of "us" versus "them" and how it is used to unify, exclude, and mobilize different groups of people.

Gidron and Bonikowski (2014) noted several authors that defined populism through a discursive style approach including Ernesto Laclau (2005) and Francisco Panizza (2005). According to Panizza (2005), populism is "an anti-status quo discourse that simplifies the political space by symbolically dividing society between 'the people' (as the 'underdogs') and its 'other'" (p. 3). As Panizza (2005) argued, this distinction between "the people" and "the other" is a politically constructed antagonistic relationship that acts as a mode of identification. As a mode of identification, it designates an oppressive or exploitative enemy that impedes the full prosperity

of the people. The people are identified through the naming of the "other" and the shared experience of perceived oppression. Panizza (2005) noted the example of President George Bush's line of "Either you are with us, or with the terrorists" as an example of how the naming of the terrorist "other" identifies the people under the shared experience of a perceived threat. As will be demonstrated in chapters three and four, the label of "terrorist" is similarly a significant element in the AKP's discursive exclusion of the Gulen movement as a populist "other".

According to Ernesto Laclau (2005), populism both depends on a sense of internal homogeneity as well as an outside group against which the identity of the people is formed. According to Laclau (2005), although references to "the people" is a major signifier of populism, what distinguishes populist discourse from the rest of political discourse is that it must, "divide society between dominant and dominated" (p. 234). Laclau (2005) approached populism as a discursive style through which the social production of meaning takes place. As Laclau (2005) stated, "'Populism' does not define the actual politics of these organizations, but is a way of articulating their themes - whatever those themes may be." (p. 44).

Other relevant scholars who have focused on the discursive aspects of populism include Chantal Mouffe (2005), Joseph Lowndes (2005), and Benjamin De Cleen (2017). Mouffe (2005) also elaborated on the "us" versus "them" distinction within populism. She argued that politics in general always consists of the creation of a distinction between "us" and "them". Mouffe (2005) argued that, "there cannot be an 'us' without a 'them', and the very identity of a group depends on the existence of a 'constitutive outside'" (p. 57). When the outside "them" is viewed as more perilous than a political adversary, the "them" may be constructed as a moral enemy. Through the condemnation of this moral enemy, the "us" of the people may be united through the act of ex-

cluding these others. Joseph Lowndes (2005) furthered this idea of the "us" being created through the identification of "them". Closely echoing Mouffe (2005), Lowndes (2005) stated, "Populism depends not only on a sense of internal homogeneity, but also on a constitutive outside - a threatening heterogeneity against which the identity is formed" (p. 148). This outside group is presented as a threat to the people. In the case of the Gulen movement, chapters three and four will demonstrate how the AKP discursively depicted the group as a moral threat to the Turkish nation that must be eliminated.

Benjamin De Cleen (2017) offered the most relevant argument for the purposes of this thesis in his essay that outlined the relationship between populism and nationalism. According to De Cleen (2017), "populism discursively constructs "the people" through an antagonism between "the people" and "the elite'" (p. 345). Populist discourse may be used to mobilize or reinforce frustration towards a supposed "elite" that is allegedly oppressing "the people". Although "the elite" often refers to a group within the nation, it can sometimes mean foreign entities as well. As De Cleen (2017) stated, "In some cases, the nation in its entirety even comes to be identified as the underdog in opposition to an international or foreign elite." (p. 348). Although populism is a distinct concept from nationalism, De Cleen (2017) argued that the two are closely related as the populist concept of "the people" is often associated with "the nation" particularly when the elite are portrayed as foreign entities and domestic collaborators. When the people and the nation coincide with each other, the populist discourse may be framed as a struggle for national sovereignty. De Cleen's (2017) approach to populism is particularly applicable to the case of Turkey in that populist discourse depicts groups belonging to the populist "other" as tools or pawns of supposed foreign elites seeking to undermine the national sovereignty of Turkey.

In addition to highlighting the "us" versus "them" aspect of populism, several previous authors have also elaborated on populism's potential for unifying and mobilizing populations from a bottom-up perspective rather than top-down. Paris Aslanidis (2017) noted how social mobilization is often overlooked within the study of populism, and similar to Lowndes (2005), argued that populism is a method of discursively articulating social grievances. According to Aslanidis (2017), public grievances alone are not enough to start a social movement driven by populism. Rather, a concurrent set of grievances can be discursively aggregated by effective social movement activists and portrayed as being the result of a social division between "the people" and "the elites". Aslanidis (2017) used the example of Occupy Wall Street's large list of 23 separate grievances, which, despite being a wide range of seemingly unrelated issues, were articulated by Occupy activists to have been the result of social divisions impacting the 99 percent. As Aslanidis (2017) argued, the populism of such a social movement did not originate in the grievances themselves, but rather "in the way they are articulated or, to put it better, in the way they are framed" (p. 309). Much of this populist articulation can also be quite vague and ambiguous in order to include as many different populations as possible into the concept of "the people". However, politicians and political parties can also sometimes latch onto a successful populist social movement claiming to embody the will of the people with the example of Bernie Sanders incorporating elements of the Occupy discourse into his own presidential campaigns. As Aslanidis (2017) contended, populist social movements are not inherently bad or good, and they can lead to either positive or negative outcomes for society.

Biancalana and Mazzoleni (2020) also explored the unifying potential of populism particularly be examining how populist discourse brings together heterogeneous constituencies

within the concepts of "the people" and "the nation". As noted by Biancalana and Mazzoleni (2020), there have been few attempts to empirically demonstrate how the populist "us" is constructed particularly in unifying diversified populations. Through an analysis of the populist discourse of three parties on the Swiss-Italian border, Biancalana and Mazzoleni (2020) empirically demonstrated part of Aslanidis's (2017) argument showing how vagueness and ambiguity is used in populist discourse in order to unify diverse populations into the populist concept of "us". Similar to Biancalana and Mazzoleni (2020), Wodak (2015) also noted how ambiguity in populist discourse, which she referred to as "calculated ambivalence", helps right-wing populists in Europe reach out to multiple and sometimes contradictory audiences in order to unify them particularly through fear-based nationalist, xenophobic, racist, and anti-Semitic rhetoric.

Similar to Wodak (2015), several previous populism theorists have also noted the role of fear in populist discourse. In his gathering of data regarding the communication styles of populist and non-populist political candidates worldwide, Nai (2018) demonstrated that populist campaigns are more likely to be negative and contain fear messages than non-populist campaigns. Nai (2018) referred to Jagers and Walgrave's (2007) definition of populism as, "a communication frame that appeals to and identifies with the people, and pretends to speak in their name" (p. 322). Nai (2018) noted previous research indicating that because people pay greater attention to fear narratives, they become more susceptible to them. Through the fear of an impending threat of a supposed out-group, the sense of shared belonging and unity strengthens among members of the perceived in-group. Because of this power to unify through fear, Nai (2018) argued that "populist candidates have all reasons to play the fear card" (p. 8).

Hirvonen (2017) also demonstrated the role of fear in populist rhetoric and how fear discourses can construct individual and national identities. Specifically, he focused on undocumented migrants, Muslims, refugees, and foreigners as objects of fear within European politics. When governments claim to regain control over territory and borders, this signifies a broader security over national identity. The universalism of European values can be exploited as an instrument to define the "us" of Europe versus the outside "them" of migrants, Islam, intolerance, and sexism.

Palavar (2019) also elaborated of the nature of fear in populism as well as the populist disassociation of others in a friend-enemy pattern. He attributed the success of populist mobilization to "parochial altruism", which he described as inner group solidarity relying on resistance against perceived outside enemies. This has particularly thrived in what Palavar (2019) argued were emerging societies of fear. Populist leaders have exploited these fears in order to channel blame towards alleged enemy scapegoats. This can become especially pertinent when mortality and fear of death are invoked both on an individual and collective level. When people are confronted with mortality, group solidarity can become stronger and supported by enemy scapegoating.

Each of these populism theorists have contributed valuable insights regarding the nature of populism and its discursive construction of "us" versus "them". Populist discourse can be a method of social mobilization in which the populist themes of "the people" being oppressed by a nefarious "elite" are articulated. Fear rhetoric can also become a significant element of populist discourse and its categorization of who belongs to "us" and who belongs to "them". The insights provided by these populism theorists are integral to understanding the immense impact that populist discourse has had within the case of Turkey, and how political actors within Turkey are able

to latch onto already existing themes of "us" versus "them" in order to exclude political opponents from the understanding of the nation.

Sevres Syndrome

An essential concept that this thesis will demonstrate is the Sevres Syndrome fear of national division by outside powers and domestic collaborators expressed throughout Turkish socio-political life. As already mentioned, the term "Sevres Syndrome" refers to the short-lived Treaty of Sevres. Following the end of World War I, the Treaty of Sevres was signed between Allied forces and representatives of the defeated Ottoman government in the Paris suburb of Sevres in 1920 (Evans, 2014). The terms of the treaty resulted in the partitioning of the Anatolian peninsula between French, Greeks, and Italians in addition to internationalizing Istanbul and the Bosphorus Strait and calling for the creation of Armenian and Kurdish states within Anatolian territory. As Evans (2014) noted, the treaty meant that Turkey "would lose control of the Straits, agree to the occupation of its capital, commit to paying reparations, agree to an independent Armenia carved out of its eastern flank and assent to the possibility of an independent Kurdistan within a few years". The terms of the Treaty of Sevres were perceived by Turkish nationalists as an existential threat to the Turkish nation, which made the treaty became a major rallying point within the newly arising Turkish War of Independence being waged at the time by the eventual first president of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and the newly declared Turkish government in Ankara. The Turkish Independence Movement eventually prevailed over the Allied occupation of Anatolia, and the failed Treaty of Sevres was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne,

which established the borders of the modern Republic of Turkey and the recognition of the new Turkish government in Ankara.

Despite the Turkish victory in the independence war and the unification of Anatolia under the new Republic of Turkey, the Treaty of Serves left a significant socio-political impact on the country that extended far beyond its early years. The experience of attempted national dismemberment by foreign powers under the terms of the treaty contributed to the development of a political fear narrative in Turkey that purports foreign powers and their domestic collaborators are ceaselessly conspiring against Turkey to divide and conquer the nation (Arango, 2016; Danforth, 2015; Evans, 2014; Hovsepyan, 2012; Taspinar, 2011). This fear of Turkish national division by outside forces has been designated by academics and journalists by the terms "Sevres Syndrome" or "Sevres-phobia" in reference to the Treaty of Sevres. Kirisci described Sevres-phobia as "the conviction that the external world is conspiring to weaken and divide up Turkey" (Kirisci as cited in Mufti, 1998, p. 42). Danforth (2015) also described Sevres Syndrome as "a form of nationalist paranoia", which influences Turkey's responses towards Kurdish separatism as well as the belief that recognition of the Armenian Genocide is an anti-Turkish conspiracy.

Throughout modern Turkish history, prominent figures within Turkish politics have expressed elements of this Sevres Syndrome fear of national division in order to attribute numerous national crises to supposed international conspiracies that ultimately seek the division of Turkey and the reimplementation of the Sevres Treaty. This includes various Turkish politicians, military leaders, educators, and political commentators who have made numerous references to Sevres claiming that Europe, the US, and international elites seek the reimplementation of the Sevres Treaty in order to divide and conquer Turkey (Hovsepyan, 2012). Even Ataturk himself referred

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to this belief of foreign powers and domestic collaborators continually seeking to suppress Turkey. In Ataturk's Speech to Youth, which is prominently displayed at the front of almost every classroom of every school and university across the country, Ataturk warned Turkish youth that the country may be attacked by enemies both at home and abroad who seek to subvert Turkish independence (Ataturk Society of America, 2015). Specifically, Ataturk declared in this speech that the first duty of Turkish young people is "to preserve and defend Turkish Independence and the Turkish Republic forever" arguing that "there will be internal and external enemies who will want to deprive you of this treasure" (Kemal Ataturk as cited by Ataturk Society of America, 2015). The speech further refers to those within the country who may commit treason and "unite with the political ambitions of the invaders for their personal interests" leading to the ruin of the nation (Kemal Ataturk as cited by Ataturk Society of America, 2015).

Very few Turkish politicians have made direct references to the exact phrase "Sevres Syndrome". This is only a phrase that has been used by academics and journalists to describe the conviction and narrative within Turkey that foreign powers and domestic collaborators are seeking the territorial division and destruction of the country. This belief can be observed throughout the history of Turkey, In his book, "The Fears of Turkey: The Serves Syndrome", Hovsepyan (2012) outlined numerous examples of Turkish politicians, military leaders, and academics who have expressed this fear narrative in some form or manner. Several quotes of Turkish politicians from this book are used in the following chapter. As will be argued by this thesis, the Sevres Syndrome fear of outside powers and domestic collaborators seeking to divide and conquer the Turkish nation continues to inform the understandings of current events particularly in the two cases of the July 2016 failed coup and the April 2017 constitutional referendum. As an under-

standing of history that informs the understanding of current events, the narrative acts as a foundation in which Turkish politicians, particularly within the AKP, categorize actors involved in these events as either on the side of the nation or on the side of foreign powers and domestic collaborators seeking the destruction of the Turkish nation.

<u>Structure of the Thesis</u>

Following chapter one, each of the proceeding chapters will build upon each other. Chapter two will provide necessary historical background information in order to understand the themes of this thesis. It is divided into three sections focusing on the Turkish War of Independence, elements of Sevres Syndrome within early Turkification projects of Anatolia, and the rise of the AKP and the Gulen movement. Chapter three will focus on Sevres Syndrome informing the populist discourse following the July 2016 coup attempt. It is divided into sections focusing on separate patterns observed within the populist discourse. Similar to chapter three, chapter four will focus on populist discourse informed by Sevres Syndrome during the April 2017 constitutional referendum campaign. Chapter five will answer the initial research questions based on the previous chapters with a review of all the content of the thesis and its main findings, and provide a brief conclusion. Each chapter will be introduced by a short chapter abstract.

Chapter 2: Serves Syndrome in Turkish Politics: From Kemalism to the AKP

Chapter Abstract

The following chapter is divided into three sections aimed at providing necessary background information regarding the origins of Sevres Syndrome in the Turkish Independence War and the short-lived Treaty of Sevres. It also shows how Sevres Syndrome's narrative of the nation defending itself against foreign powers and domestic collaborators informed the "us" versus "them" populist relation of Kemalist Turkey. Kemalist Turkey enforced a specific understanding of the Turkish nation on the side of "us", and foreign powers, manipulated minority groups, and terrorist organizations on the other side of "them". The chapter continues with a brief look at the rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the AKP's neo-Ottoman understanding of the Turkish nation, which is notably different from Kemalist understanding of the Turkish nation. It ends with an overview of the Gulen movement, and how the relationship between the movement's leader, Fethullah Gulen, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan drastically deteriorated leading up to the coup attempt of July 15th, 2016.

The Turkish War of Independence and the Treaty of Sevres

The populist narrative of "us" versus "them" played a significant role in the early development of the modern Turkish Republic particularly during the Turkish War of Independence among proponents of the Turkish National Movement (Kazancigil, 1981; Ozden, 2006). It was

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used to construct a unified understanding of "us" against an outsider "them", which was built around the idea of foreign conspirators and their domestic collaborators seeking to dismantle and destroy the Turkish nation. This was contrasted with the members of the Turkish nation who rose up to defend the Turkish homeland from foreign occupation and eventually establish their own state of the Republic of Turkey. As argued by Kazancigil (1981), populism was "a major ideological instrument in forging the alliance of the state elites and the civil elites" (Kazancigil as cited in Aytemur, 2007, p. 39).

Following the end of World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Allied Powers maintained control over the Anatolian peninsula and held control over the Ottoman government in Istanbul (Turnaoglu, 2017). Through a series of conferences, various resistance organizations scattered across Anatolia united under the Turkish National Movement led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and other former Ottoman military leaders to end the foreign occupation and regain national sovereignty (Kinzer, 2010; Turnaoglu, 2017). Agreeing on the common goal of unconditional independence, these revolutionaries of the national movement formed a new parliament in Ankara and declared Ataturk as its first president in April 1920. As president of the newly established government in Ankara, Ataturk served as the commander in chief during the war of independence of the Turkish nation against the foreign occupation of the Allied powers.

While a new government in Ankara was forming with the common interest of defending a united homeland against foreign invaders and occupiers, representatives of the Ottoman government in Istanbul met with Allied leaders in the Paris suburb of Serves to sign the Treaty of Sevres in August 1920 (Turnaoglu, 2017). As mentioned in chapter one, the treaty ceded portions of the Anatolian peninsula to Armenian, British, French, Greek, Italian, and Kurdish control leaving

only about 25% of Anatolia to Turks. Unlike the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which divided the former territories of the Ottoman Empire in the broader Middle East between spheres of influence and has arguably received far greater attention within academia, the Treaty of Sevres focused on the specific partitioning of the Anatolian peninsula, which was perceived by the independence movement as the homeland of the Turkish nation (Evans, 2014). As a result of this partitioning of the Anatolian peninsula by foreign outsiders, the Treaty of Sevres became a rallying point for Ataturk and his revolutionaries. Ataturk described the treaty as "a sinister death sentence" by colonial powers attempting to divide the Turkish homeland among enemies (Ataturk as cited in Kinzer, 2010, chapter 2). With their nation believed to be on the verge of annihilation as a result of this treaty, Ataturk's offensive progressed from region to region with the aim of expelling Allied forces from Anatolian territory.

Throughout the course of Ataturk's campaign, the Ankara government began reaching out directly to the Anatolian public through the press and appointed deputies in Anatolian villages to spread the message of the independence movement as a fight of Turks and Muslims against perceived Christian invaders intent on exterminating Islam and the Turkish nation (Turnaoglu, 2017). As argued by Turnaoglu (2017), a political language of "friends and enemies" developed that depicted Allied powers not only as military enemies, but also as enemies of liberty (p. 208). As Turnaoglu (2017) stated, "a sharp line was drawn between proponents as friends, patriots, and supporters of the national cause and their good and moral virtues, and opponents as ruthless and cruel enemies" (p. 208). This populist friend vs. enemy dynamic extended towards the rejection of the Ottoman government in Istanbul under the grand vizier Damat Ferid Pasha for signing the Treaty of Serves. The partitioning of Anatolia was viewed as a subjection of the state to slavery,

and Damat Pasha was depicted in Anatolian newspapers as an ominous traitor who aligned with enemies intent on destroying both the Turkish nation and the Islamic world.

The active fighting in the Turkish Independence War came to an end with the signing of the Armistice of Mudanya in October 1922 (Turnaoglu, 2017). This was followed by the Lausanne Conference, which led to population exchanges between Greece and Turkey as well as the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923. The Treaty of Lausanne brought about the official end of the war and replaced the failed Treaty of Sevres establishing the borders of the modern Turkish Republic. On October 29, 1923, the Republic of Turkey was officially proclaimed and the Ottoman Sultanate was abolished. The signers of the Treaty of Sevres were among 150 personae non grata of Turkey along with the last Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed VI. This banishment signified a political and cultural break between the Ottoman Empire and the new Turkish Republic as well as a rejection of the role that the Ottoman Istanbul government played in the Treaty of Sevres.

Sevres Syndrome and Kemalism: Defining a Nation through the Backdrop of Fear

Despite the Turkish victory and the establishment of the borders of the modern Turkish Republic, the memory of the Treaty of Sevres continued to impact Turkish society and politics. As already mentioned in chapter one, the term Serves Syndromes refers to the conviction and associated political rhetoric that claims outside powers and their domestic collaborators are seeking the territorial and national division of Turkey (Arango, 2016; Danforth, 2015; Evans, 2014; Hovsepyan, 2012; Taspinar, 2011). Although there were many treaties which partitioned former

Ottoman territories, no other treaty besides Sevres partitioned the territory of what was perceived to be the Turkish homeland by the modern Turkish Republic. This sets the Treaty of Sevres apart from other treaties which partitioned territories that consisted predominately of Arab or other populations as it was perceived to be pursuing the annihilation of the Turkish nation. The former Ottoman territories that were lost under previous treaties were not viewed as part of the Turkish homeland or belonging to the Turkish nation. Therefore, no treaty has been discussed within Turkish political discourse with the same threat of national annihilation other than the Treaty of Sevres, which divided territory perceived as belonging to the Turkish nation.

Evans (2014) noted Ataturk's presentation of the National Pact at the start of the Turkish Nationalist Movement, which elaborated on Turkish identity as well as Turkish territorial claims of what was perceived as the Turkish homeland. The borders of Turkey stipulated by the National Pact were relatively similar to the current borders of the modern Turkish Republic with the exception of northern Syria, northern Iraq, parts of Bulgaria, and a number of Greek islands. According to Evans (2014), "The Pact accepted the loss of the Ottoman Empire's Arab territories, but insisted that those areas not occupied by the victorious powers at the time of the Armistice of Mudros that have a Muslim majority were the homeland of the Turkish Nation." Many of the stipulations and territorial claims put forth by the National Pact served as the basis of the eventual Treaty of Lausanne, which established the internationally recognized borders of the modern Turkish Republic. However, the Treaty of Lausanne has been debated in more recent times particularly on a secular versus religious axis within Turkey (Sofuoglu, 2018). Whereas the Treaty of Lausanne is upheld as a triumph of Ataturk and the Turkish nation by secular Turks, the treaty is sometimes viewed as a blunder by religious Turks particularly within the AKP for its ceding of

Ottoman territory. Despite this debate regarding Lausanne, the Treaty of Sevres is almost universally abhorred across the Turkish political spectrum. Whereas the Treaty of Lausanne was negotiated and agreed upon by both the government of the newly declared Turkish Republic and representatives of the Allied forces, the Turkish government in Ankara was excluded from the Treaty of Serves and viewed it as a betrayal by representatives of the dying Ottoman government in Istanbul. This is why the Treaty of Sevres specifically is the basis of the Sevres Syndrome fear of national division by foreign powers and domestic traitors unlike other treaties.

Sevres Syndrome played a significant role as a historical backdrop to the state and nation-building projects undertaken during the early years of the Republic. As Robins (2003) argued, history in Turkey "helps to legitimize the creation and existence of the state; it helps ideologically to orientate the state; it tells a story which embodies the myths, ideas and values which give meaning to political life within the state" (p. 93). The "friend" versus "enemy" dichotomy that developed during the Allied occupation of Anatolia continued to influence the Turkish government, and the memory of foreign occupation and national division under the Sevres Treaty helped determine who was to be included and excluded from the Turkish nation. Anatolian Christian populations in particular were affiliated with the foreign occupation of the independence war, and were excluded from the Turkish nation (Cagaptay, 2006). As argued by Turnaoglu (2017), the political language of "friend" versus "enemy" that developed during the Allied occupation of Anatolia depicted a religious struggle between Christian and Islamic nations, and this outsider view of Christians continued after the war and Turkish independence. Despite the secularism of the new republic, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews experienced civil limitations that were not enforced on Muslim populations including banishment from serving in public office

(Taspinar, 2008). In "Islam, Secularism, and Nationalism in Modern Turkey: Who is a Turk?", Cagaptay (2006) demonstrated the influence of the Ottoman millet system and nominal Islam on the development of Turkish identity in the early years of the Turkish Republic. Despite the promotion of secularism and a secular Turkish state under the early Turkish republicans, Cagaptay (2006) argued that Turkish identity was largely informed by nominal Islam and the former Muslim millet of the Ottoman Empire. All Sunni Muslims, including Kurds, were viewed as members of the Turkish nation by the Turkish state. Christians on the other hand were viewed as Turkish citizens, but not members of the Turkish nation particularly due to the role of Greek and Armenian Christians in the Allied defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the occupation of the Anatolian peninsula.

Following the foundation of the Republic, Ataturk's state-building ideology of Kemalism became official state ideology under the Republican People's Party (CHP), which had maintained single-party rule until 1950 (Cagaptay, 2017). As official state ideology upheld and defended by the Turkish government, the six pillars of Kemalism - nationalism, secularism, republicanism, populism, statism, and revolution - influenced the development of many aspects of Turkish society including the educational system, the military, and the justice system (Cagaptay, 2006; Hintz, 2018). Kemalism helped establish the Turkish nation by serving as a guide for its creation, and the Kemalist nation-building process determined who was to be included and excluded from the Turkish nation largely based on historical experiences.

Under the CHP's Kemalist policies, Turkification projects were undertaken in order to enforce the concept of the Turkish identity, and all nominal Muslims within Anatolia, such as Kurds, Alevis, Lazes, and Arabs, were expected to accept their Turkish identity and assimilate

(Kaya, 2013). In his paper "Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism", Taspinar (2008) highlighted the assimilationist nationalism of Kemalism, which sought to define Turkishness under a common national, linguistic, and territorial identity, and aimed to assimilate its non-Turkish speaking Muslim minorities under the identity of "Turk". Population exchanges also facilitated the exchange of Christians and Muslims between Turkey and Greece in order to create a homogenous nation of Turks within Turkey. The nation-building Turkification process of early Kemalists was based on a stark populist understanding of "us" versus "them", whereas the "us" was heavily rooted in the "friend" versus "enemy" dichotomy that developed during the Allied occupation of Anatolia. Because of this, any recognition of minority populations was believed to be a threat to the integrity and unity of the nation. As stated by the first Prime Minister of Turkey, Ismet Inonu, "only the Turkish nation is entitled to claim ethnic and national rights in this country. No other element has any such right" (Inonu as cited in Sagnic, 2010, p. 129).

In "Kurdish Politics in the Middle East", Entessar (2010) highlighted the process of forced assimilation through Turkification and suppression of Kurdish identity in south eastern Turkey. Policies of assimilation and Turkification in predominantly Kurdish regions included excluding public mention of Kurdish history or culture particularly within the educational system in order to promote a homogenous, singular national identity of Turks. Kurdish populations were also labeled by the state with the term "Mountain Turks" in order to argue that Kurds have forgotten supposed Turkish roots. Sagnic (2010) similarly highlighted deportations of Kurdish populations to predominantly Turkish urban cities such as Istanbul in order to facilitate assimilation.

In response to this marginalization and forced assimilation under Kemalism, several armed Kurdish revolts and separatist movements have occurred throughout the history of the republic (Cagaptay, 2006; Entessar, 2010). The most prominent and longest lasting example of an armed revolt is that of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has continued till today. In order to suppress the revolts, extreme measures were undertaken to dismantle Kurdish identity, which included banishment of the Kurdish language and the words "Kurd" and "Kurdistan" from public use between 1983 and 1991. As Akturk (2012) noted, the term "Kurd" became associated with separatism and terrorism. According to Hovsepyan (2012), Sevres Syndrome played a significant role in suppressing Kurdish identity and forced assimilation. Political rhetoric expressed by Turkish political and military leaders greatly reflected Sevres Syndrome by depicting Kurdish separatism as a plot by foreign powers seeking to divide Turkey. Through this rhetoric rooted in Sevres Syndrome, Kurds were depicted as pawns in a game of outside powers intent on destroying Turkey through national and territorial dismemberment.

These armed uprisings and separatist movements against the republic, such as that of the PKK, were blamed by Turkish government officials on supposed interference by outside powers seeking to divide the nation (Entessar, 2010; Hovsepyan, 2012). Hovsepyan (2012) highlighted numerous examples of academic papers published in Turkey that argued the West supports the PKK in order to dismember the Turkish nation. Military leaders also publicly condemned the West for supposedly supporting Kurdish groups in order to territorially dismember the Turkish nation. In the early 1990s when conflict against the PKK was at its highest, General Dogan Bayazit argued that external forces perceived the existence of a strong Turkey to be a threat, and as a result, they have adopted a policy of creating a Kurdish state (Hovsepyan, 2012). In the con-

text of Kurdish separatism, General Suat Ilhan also claimed that the West wants to achieve "what it failed to reach in World War I, i.e. dismemberment of Turkey" (Ilhan as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 25).

In addition to these military leaders, Turkish politicians have also accused foreign powers of manipulating the PKK in order to divide Turkey. The Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) released a statement in the early 1990s claiming that, "The PKK is being used by foreign forces with conspiratorial goals - elimination of the unity of the Turkish state" (MHP as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 61). The leader of the Felicity Party (Saadet), Recai Kutan, in February 2008 directly implicated the US, Europe, and Israel in supporting the PKK saying, "Israel, the European Union, and especially the USA have been supporting this organization for years" [ABD başta olmak üzere İsrail ve Avrupa Birliği ülkeleri, bu örgütü yılardır desteklemişlerdir] (Kutan as cited in Milli Gazete, 2008). Even Erdogan argued that German benevolent funds operating in Turkey were indirectly financing the PKK, and any European or foreign proposals focusing on Turkey's Kurdish population were argued to be an infringement of Turkey's security and sovereignty (Hovsepyan, 2012).

The belief that the West supports the PKK in order to divide Turkey has been widespread among the Turkish public as well. In a survey of Turkish public opinions conducted in 2006 by the International Republican Institute, 68% of respondents stated that they believe the West wants to divide and dismember Turkey, and 71% said the West supports separatist groups including the PKK (International Republican Institute, 2007). This perception of the West's support for Turkey's division has continued over time. In a survey conducted by Istanbul Bilgi University in 2017, 87.6% of Turkish participants responded that they believe European powers want to divide

Turkey similar to the Ottoman Empire (Stockholm Center for Freedom, 2018). Such beliefs have also been fueled by the US's support for the predominately Kurdish YPG in Syria, which is widely believed in Turkey to be one and the same as the PKK.

During this process of Turkification, Sevres Syndrome also played a significant role in the exclusion of Turkey's Christian populations particularly in the case of Armenians and Armenian genocide recognition (Danworth, 2015; Hovsepyan, 2012). International recognition of the Armenian genocide has been framed by Turkish officials as an international conspiracy against Turkey in order to supposedly justify a reimplementation of the Sevres Treaty and force Turkey to ceed portions of the country to Armenia. In 1987 when the European Parliament adopted the "Resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question", the president of Turkey at the time, Kenan Evren, called the resolution a "conspiracy against the Turkish state" (Evren as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 16). He continued claiming "The expectations of external forces are to eliminate Turkey, divide and dismember it, and these intentions continued for centuries and continue now as well" (Evren as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 12). Evren escalated this argument to the point of questioning whether or not Turkey should review its membership in NATO stating, "It is regrettable, that those consolidated in the alliance for maintaining their own territories, strive to take Turkey's territories and give them to others" (Evren as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 17).

The Justice and Development Party

With the rise of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Justice and Development Party (AKP) has come a new understanding of who belongs to the "us" of the Turkish nation. Unlike the strict ethnically-based understanding of what it means to be a Turk under Kemalists, the AKP has taken an approach to understanding Turkish identity through a multicultural lens (Hintz, 2018; Taspinar, 2008). Rather than rejecting the multicultural identity of the Ottoman Empire as was done by Kemalists, the AKP has embraced it as a part of Turkish identity and has welcomed historically oppressed minority populations into the idea of what it means to be a Turk. This new approach to Turkish identity has also included a heavy focus on the religious Islamic identity of the Ottoman Empire with significant efforts to revive religion in public life. Through the AKP's efforts in promoting this new Turkish identity proposal, they drastically altered the understanding of who was to be included and excluded within the categories of "us" and "them". Rather than excluding minority populations into the category of "them" as was done by Kemalists, the AKP embraced them as part of the "us" of the nation. Although this has been a drastic shift from the secular Kemalist approach to Turkish identity, the AKP has nonetheless used elements of the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative in order to discursively determine who is to be included and excluded from the Turkish nation as will be demonstrated in chapters 3 and 4.

Although the AKP came to power in 2002, its roots go back earlier. In 1996, Turkey experienced its first Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan (Cagaptay, 2017; Evans, 2014). Erbakan had been the leader of several Islamic movements and parties calling for the strengthening of Islamic values within Turkish society, yet in 1997, he was pressured by the military to step down from office for violating secularist articles of the Turkish constitution. Erbakan was a mentor for several Islamist politicians including many who would eventually form the Justice and

Development Party (AKP), which rose to power in 2002. Under the AKP and the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, there has been a significant revival of the religious Ottoman identity of Turkey that had previously been suppressed by secular Kemalists (Hintz, 2018). This Ottoman identity revival has included greater recognition of religion in public life, efforts to increase appreciation for Ottoman culture, and the extension of Turkish influence throughout former Ottoman territories as well as other Sunni Islamic countries. This Ottoman-associated approach to policy development by the AKP has been referred to by a number of terms including neo-Ottomanism, Ottoman Islamism, Republican Ottomanism, and more (Yavuz, 2018).

According to Hintz (2018), the Kemalist identity proposal of Republican Nationalism historically maintained hegemony until the rise of Ottoman Islamism through the efforts of the AKP and Recep Tayyip Erdogan (Hintz, 2018). Hintz (2018) argued that supporters of Ottoman Islamism achieved hegemony as a result of strategic policies that took identity contestation to the realm of foreign policy, which systematically disabled the domestic influence of Kemalism and Turkish Republican Nationalism. Specifically, this was made possible by Turkey's European Union candidacy, which required Turkey to make reforms to the military, judicial system, and other institutions as well as to make greater efforts in addressing the rights of minority populations. These reforms through Turkey's EU candidacy allowed Ottoman Islamism to make hegemonic political gains as a multiethnic identity proposal that would not have been possible under Kemalist hegemonic rule.

Hintz (2018) explained that membership within the identity proposal of Ottoman Islamism requires being a practicing and devout Sunni Muslim as well as recognizing and celebrating the achievements and culture of the Ottoman Empire. Although Ottoman Islamism opposes

and rejects separatist ethnic nationalism, it recognizes and welcomes other Sunni Muslim populations, including Kurds, into membership within the identity framework. This is in contrast with secular Kemalist Republican Nationalism, which believes acknowledgement of other ethnic identities is inherently dangerous to the unity of the republic.

This recognition of Turkey's multiple identities has allowed the AKP to reach out to Kurds and other minorities in order to pursue electoral and other political interests (Hintz, 2018; Ipek, 2019). In his dissertation "Türkiye'de AB Adaylık Sürecinde Kimlik ve Kültur Politikası", Ipek (2019) noted similarly to Hintz (2018) that the AKP's multicultural understanding of the Ottoman Empire has coincided with Turkey's European Union candidacy, which helped foster greater recognition of the cultural rights of traditionally oppressed minorities within the country. In "Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey", Akturk (2012) also highlighted the efforts of the AKP to recognize minority rights, which included reforms such as the broadcasting of state television in five minority languages. Akturk (2012) used his theory of antiethnic regimes to describe Turkey under Kemalism before the reforms.

Whereas Hintz (2018) labeled the AKP's Ottoman-oriented approach to nationality as Ottoman Islamism, other academics and journalists have used the term neo-Ottomanism to describe the AKP's foreign and domestic policies aimed at a revival of the Turkey's Ottoman past and influence throughout the former Ottoman territories (Kiper, 2013; Taspinar, 2008). According to Taspinar (2008), neo-Ottomanism is not imperialistic, but focused on promoting "a high profile diplomatic, political, and economic role for Turkey in the larger Middle East and Europe" (p. 1). Reflecting Hintz's (2018) argument, he also stated that "neo-Ottomanism wants the Kemalist republic to be at peace with its multicultural, Muslim, and imperial past" (Taspinar, 2008,

p. 3). This is a significant distinction from the two pillars of assimilationist nationalism and secularism under Kemalist ideology that viewed multiculturalism and the recognition of minorities as a threat to the unity of the nation.

With a focus on extending the influence of Turkey in former Ottoman territories throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and the Balkans, neo-Ottoman policies have included fostering soft diplomacy efforts to promote a shared Sunni Muslim Ottoman identity between Turkey and regions of the former empire (Taspinar, 2008; Yavuz, 2018). In the Balkans, Turkey's development assistance agency, TIKA, has sponsored the restoration of historic Ottoman architectural sites and the building of mosques throughout the peninsula (Targanski, 2017). The non-profit Yunus Emre Institute, established in part by Erdogan, has been especially active in the Balkans promoting Turkish history and cultural exchange programs. Furthermore, AKP members during official state visits have highlighted the shared Ottoman past between Turkey and the Balkans as well as emphasizing Sunni Islamic ties by praying with local residents in Balkan mosques. During a visit to Pristina, Erdogan expressed support for Turkey's continual assistance for Kosovo's development and ties with Turkey in part by stating, "Turkey is Kosovo and Kosovo is Turkey" (Yavuz, 2018).

However, these attempts to foster a multicultural understanding of Turkish identity have faced challenges particularly from secular Kemalists who perceived the recognition of minority identities to be a threat to the unity of the Turkish nation. In 2011, CHP parliamentarian, Mehmet Siyam Kesimoglu, argued against the AKP's reforms stating, "Turkey still faces the challenge of dismemberment. This challenge comes from the so-called policy of reforms implemented by the Justice and Development Party, negotiations with the PKK leader Ocalan, growing terrorism and

statements of the Kurdish democratic autonomy" (Kesimoglu as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 20). Kaya Ataberk of the leftist nationalist newspaper Turksolu also criticized neo-Ottomanism arguing that, "Under the name of neo-Ottomanism, Turkey is being taken to a new Sevres" (Ataberk as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 62). The concern for the AKP's reforms, closeness with the EU, and recognition of minority and religious rights even contributed to the rationale for the Sledgehammer plot of 2003, in which high ranking Kemalist members of the military were alleged to have been plotting a coup against the AKP government (Dogan & Rodrik, 2010). The alleged plot served as a basis for the Ergenekon trials, which purged many secular Kemalist elite from the military who were accused of participating in a "deep state" working against the AKP.

Coinciding with the rise of the AKP has also been the rise of the Gulenist movement led by religious cleric Fethullah Gulen. The Gulenist movement is a Sunni Islamic movement with followers throughout the world (Kestler-D'Amours, 2016; Matthews, 2016). The movement focuses on diffusing their own particular brand of conservative yet modern Islamic values through global relief work, media, and education having founded and managed thousands of schools in numerous countries both inside and outside the Islamic world[1]. Originally, Erdogan and Gulen were close allies sharing the same opposition to secular Kemalism. While Gulen himself never entered politics, both him and Erdogan were partners in transforming Turkey with a renewed focus on Ottoman religious identity. Followers of Gulen within the Turkish government were an

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[1]Groups affiliated with the Gulen movement manage the largest charter school network in the United States, yet many of the schools have faced scrutiny including FBI investigations for a series of issues related to financing, oversight, and more. See Beauchamp (2014) for more about the Gulen charter school network in the US.

integral element of the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer cases that investigated alleged attempts to overthrow the AKP by secular forces in the government.

However, the relationship between Gulen and Erdogan eventually deteriorated particularly after Gulen publicly criticized Erdogan for his response to the 2013 Gezi Park protests (Deutsche World, 2018; Matthews, 2016)[2]. A series of scandals broke out that led to high profile members of the AKP being implicated in various corruption schemes. This led to Erdogan's claims that Gulen and his followers were attempting to sabotage his government, and he accused Gulen followers of illegally wiretapping government officials. The movement has been criticized in Turkey by the AKP and secularists alike for what Akyol (2016) described as setting up a "covert organization within the state, a project that's been going on for decades with the aim of establishing bureaucratic control over the state". Erdogan and the AKP have repeatedly used the term "parallel state" and "parallel structure" to describe the movement. Several high profile members of the police, military, and other sectors of government have also alleged that the movement has infiltrated the state. Former police chief Hanefi Avci claimed that the movement had taken control of police intelligence, and the movement began to use the similar repressive state mechanisms of secular Kemalists in the past including drawing on far-fetched criminal associations or fabricating criminal evidence to target political rivals (Akyol, 2014).

With the Gulen movement becoming a political threat to Erdogan and the AKP, the AKP began removing Gulenist followers from the police, judiciary, and media, and Gulen himself remained in self-imposed exile in his compound in rural Pennsylvania (Matthews, 2016). In May

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[2] Although many of the details surrounding the breakup in the alliance between the AKP and the Gulen movement remain publicly unclear, Balci (2013) provides an overview of the potential factors that contributed to this breakup, which may in large part stem from the alliance losing its original reason for being in dismembering the Kemalist state apparatus.

2016, the Turkish government designated the movement as a terrorist organization with Erdogan declaring "We will not let those who divide the nation off the hook in this country… They will be brought to account. Some fled and some are in prison and are currently being tried. This process will continue" (Erdogan as cited in Kestler-D'Amours, 2016). As will be discussed in the next chapter, the discursive exclusion of the Gulen movement from the Turkish nation and their confinement to a populist "other" culminated in the events of the coup attempt on July 15th, 2016.

Chapter 3: The AKP, Serves Syndrome, and July 15, 2016

Chapter Abstract

Chapter 3 consists of four sections focusing on how Sevres Syndrome informed the development of the populist "us" versus "them" in the context of the July 2016 coup attempt. Following a brief overview of the coup attempt and its aftermath in the first section, the second section focuses on how Sevres Syndrome acted as a historical background to inform and explain the events of the coup. Using the fear narrative of Turkey under siege by foreign powers and their domestic collaborators, the AKP drew from Sevres Syndrome to depict the failed coup as a victory of Turkish democracy over foreign powers and their collaborators seeking the division of Turkey. This supposed victory of Turkish democracy over foreign powers was presented as a victory in a second Turkish War of Independence.

The third and fourth sections of the chapter focus on how the populist categories of "us" and "them" were discursively constructed within this context of a supposed second Turkish Independence War. Sevres Syndrome informed the historical background to the coup attempt as another struggle of the Turkish nation against foreign powers and their collaborators, and the populist "us" and "them" were rooted in this "Turkish nation" vs "foreign power" oppositional relationship. Whereas the "us" included groups who aligned with the AKP's understanding of the Turkish nation, the members of the Gulen movement were excluded from the nation and confined to the populist "other" by associating them with terrorism, division, and collusion with foreign powers seeking the division of the Turkish nation.

The Night of July 15, 2016

On the evening of July 15th, 2016, a faction within the Turkish military initiated operations in several cities around the country with the aim of toppling the government and removing President Erdogan from power (Al Jazeera, 2016; Al Jazeera, 2017). In Istanbul, a group of soldiers seized control of the only two bridges crossing the Bosphorus Straight and shut them down. In Ankara, Turkish fighter jets and helicopters flew over the city striking the Grand National Assembly building among other targets. In various cities across the country, tanks seized control of major streets. Chief of Staff, Hulusi Akar, was taken into custody as well as other high ranking members of the military. While this was all occurring, President Erdogan was vacationing at a resort in Marmaris along the coast when he also narrowly avoided capture or possible assassination. While social media websites became inaccessible, soldiers entered the newsroom of the state broadcaster TRT and forced an anchorwoman to read a statement that declared a military takeover has occurred in order to "reinstate constitutional order" while condemning Erdogan for eroding democracy (Al Jazeera, 2016).

Late in the night, President Erdogan called into CNN Turk to announce via FaceTime that a minority within the military had initiated a coup from outside the chain of command (Yeni Safak, 2016). Speaking from an iPhone screen held up to the camera on CNN Turk, Erdogan directly implicated the followers of Fethullah Gulen as the instigators of the coup, and called on

Turkish citizens to take to the streets and resist the coup plotters[3]. Following this call, mosques around the country were instructed by the head of the Religious Affairs Directorate to play the sala prayers followed by announcements from local imams to instruct citizens on where to assemble against the coup plotters (Tremblay, 2016). The sala prayers, normally reserved for funerals, had not been used in times of distress or war since the Ottoman Empire.

Following both Erdogan's call to action as well as the announcements from local imams, thousands of citizens began pouring into the streets of cities under siege to oppose and fight against the coup plotters (Al Jazeera, 2017). Several were killed in clashes including 30 on the Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul. Throughout the night, confusion ensued among military officials receiving opposing orders. Eventually, soldiers involved in the coup began to surrender while others fled including several military officials that took a helicopter to Greece to seek asylum. The next day, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim announced that the coup plotters had been defeated by Turkish citizens who rose up to protect and uphold democracy (TRT World, 2016). Throughout the rest of the month, democracy vigils were held every evening to celebrate the unity of the country against the coup attempt.

Altogether, the coup attempt left nearly 250 people dead and over 2,000 injured (Al Jazeera, 2017). The government and Erdogan himself immediately blamed the coup on supporters of the Gulen movement, although groups associated with the movement and Gulen himself denied involvement (BBC, 2016). In the days after the coup attempt, a state of emergency was implemented that led to the firings and arrests of thousands of government officials, academics,

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[3] While members of the Gulen movement played a major role in the coup attempt, there is significant evidence that the coup attempt was carried out by a broader array of actors including Kemalists. See Eissenstat (2017) for more regarding the range of participants in the coup attempt in addition to members of the Gulen movement.

journalists, police, and many other public figures who were believed to be associated with the Gulen movement. Even imams who did not follow the orders to announce where to assemble against the coup plotters were arrested for alleged participation in the coup or association with the Gulen movement (Tremblay, 2016). The government within the days following the coup attempt renamed the Gulen movement as the Fethullah Terrorist Organization (FETO). As of this writing, investigations and arrests of alleged members of the Gulen movement are continuing with the latest 2020 figures of the total number arrested since the coup attempt estimated to be about 80,000 (Reuters, 2020).

The events of July 15th led to the development of a narrative that depicted the coup's failure as a victory of the Turkish nation and Turkish democracy in a supposed second Turkish War of Independence. As will be demonstrated by this chapter, AKP discourse in speeches and interviews drew from Sevres Syndrome in order to construct this narrative. The narrative depicted the Turkish nation as heroically defending the homeland from outside forces and domestic collaborators determined to divide and destroy the nation. The political discourse associated with this narrative made numerous comparisons to the original Turkish Independence War and the Turkish victory over foreign powers seeking the division of the nation. The Sevres Syndrome fear of national division by foreign powers provided this discourse with a historical background and context that informed the development of the populist "us" versus "them" along the lines of those who support the Turkish nation and those who collaborate with foreign powers to dismember and oppress the Turkish nation. In the case of the failed coup attempt, the followers of Gulen were equated with the domestic collaborators of the Serves Syndrome narrative working as pawns of foreign powers.

The following section of this chapter focuses on the role that the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative played as a historical backdrop that would inform the categorization of the "us" of the Turkish nation versus the "them" of the Gulen movement and its supporters. The section does this by highlighting the numerous ways in which Sevres Syndrome was evoked through speeches and interviews with Recep Tayyip Erdogan and others associated with the AKP in order to establish the narrative context of Turkey under siege by foreign powers and their domestic collaborators during the coup attempt. Through evoking the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative, a familiar historical background was established that acted as a way to understand and make sense of the chaotic experience of the coup attempt by associating the actors involved in the coup with the familiar antagonistic relation of the Turkish nation versus foreign powers and domestic collaborators.

Sevres Syndrome acted as the foundation for the AKP to build the new narrative context of the coup's failure being a victory of a second Turkish Independence War. With the Sevres Syndrome narrative serving as a familiar historical background to help explain the coup attempt, it informed the development of the "us" and "them" populist relation that emerged from the failed coup by drawing from the theme of Turkey defending itself from foreign powers and their domestic collaborators. The third and fourth sections of this chapter focus on how these two opposing populist categories were discursively created by drawing from Sevres Syndrome to inform who belongs to these two categories. The two categories were associated with the Sevres Syndrome narrative's struggle of the Turkish nation against foreign powers and their domestic collaborators. In the case of the July 15th coup attempt, on the side of "us" was the Turkish nation understood through a neo-Ottoman multicultural religious approach to Turkish identity, and

on the other side of "them" was the Gulen movement. Drawing from Sevres Syndrome, the Gulen movement was depicted as a terrorist organization manipulated as pawns in a global game set on dismembering and destroying the Turkish nation.

A Second Turkish War of Independence: Captivity, Betrayal, and Dark Forces

Carr (1986) elaborated on the functions and importance of narrative in providing a historical background for actions. As Carr (1986) stated, "the historical past has the character of a 'background' for present experience" (p. 18). A narrative help us understand and make sense of actions by making them familiar, and it is through familiarity that a satisfying explanation for an action can be developed. As Carr (2008) argued, a narrative takes a puzzling action and "places that action in a temporal continuum, relating it to previous actions and events that led up to it; and it places the action also in relation to a future scenario or set of possible futures" (p. 22). A narrative places an action "within a familiar repertoire of actions, emotions, and motives. These are things we've seen before, and we illuminate the unfamiliar by relating it to the familiar" (Carr, 2008, p. 22). As a narrative, Sevres Syndrome has informed the historical background to numerous political events and crises throughout the history of the Turkish Republic. Following the July 2016 coup attempt, it again provided a historical background to help explain the coup and understand why it happened. As the AKP presented it, the coup attempt was a victory of the Turkish nation over the foreign powers of division and terrorism.

The following section focuses on how the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative provided a historical background and context that informed the populist categorization of "us" and "them". By

evoking Sevres Syndrome, members of the AKP used Sevres Syndrome to explain the events of the failed coup. As a historical backdrop to the coup attempt, it would be used to categorize who would belong to the "us" versus "them" populist categories by aligning the actors involved in the coup with the Sevres Syndrome narrative's opposing sides of the Turkish nation versus foreign powers and their domestic collaborators. This depiction of the failed coup as victory in a supposed second Turkish War of Independence was developed through callbacks and references to the Turkish Independence War as well as through references to grander conspiracies that involved "dark forces" working against both the Turkish nation and the broader Muslim world.

The idea of Turkey facing a second independence war has been a familiar theme throughout Turkey's history in the context of Sevres Syndrome. As an already existing element of Sevres Syndrome, the groundwork for the narrative of the coup's failure as a victory in a second Turkish Independence War already existed before the coup attempt as other Turkish politicians, military leaders, and political commentators have referenced to it in the past (Hovsepyan, 2012). For example, in 2011, the Chairwoman of the Kemalist Thought Association, Tansel Colasan, stated at an event that the Turkish nation should become prepared for a "second liberation war" to defend the country from territorial dismemberment (Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 19).

This depiction of the coup attempt as a second victorious Turkish Independence War was promoted particularly through comparisons of the failed coup with the original independence war with a significant emphasis on the idea of defending Turkish independence. On July 29th, Erdogan spoke about the unity of the nation on the night of July 15th (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). He stated that on July 15th, there was no single political party or political leader, but rather individual citizens who fought back to defend their sovereignty. He argued that this unity

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reflected the Independence War stating, "In my eyes, the night of July 15 is the current manifestation of unity and solidarity we exhibited in Çanakkale and the Independence War" [Benim gözümde 15 Temmuz gecesi, Çanakkale'de ve İstiklal Harbinde sergilediğimiz birlik ve beraberliğin günümüzdeki tezahürüdür] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). In the same speech, he continued to emphasize the country having defended its independence on the night of July 15th stating, "In my eyes, every one of my brothers, who took to the streets on the night of July 15 and claimed their country, nation, independence, and future, is a veteran. May all of you be blessed" [Benim gözümde 15 Temmuz gecesi sokağa dökülerek ülkesine, milletine, istiklaline ve istikbaline sahip çıkan her bir kardeşim gazidir. Hepinizin, hepimizin gazası mübarek olsun] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d).

Several other speeches throughout the following weeks continued to express the narrative that Turkish citizens defended their independence during the coup attempt. On August 7th, Erdogan stated, "On the night of July 15, my dear nation once again stood up for its independence and future, and did not surrender the country to the Fethullah terrorist organization and invaders at the cost of their lives" [15 Temmuz gecesi bir kez daha istiklali ve istikbali için kıyam eden, canı pahasına ülkesini Fethullahçı terör örgütüne, işgalcilere teslim etmeyen aziz milletim] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). In a more direct comparison between July 15th and the independence war, he referred to the fight against FETO as a second struggle for independence stating, "We are again living through a struggle for independence, and we are again fighting for our future" [Yeniden bir istiklal mücadelesini yaşıyoruz ve yeniden bir istikbal mücadelesi veriyoruz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). During this same speech, he also argued that the fate of the nation itself was at stake on July 15th if Turkey had lost its independence. Praising the citi-

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zen's who stood up against the coup plotters, he stated, "Those who stood in front of the coup plotters knew that if they lost their country's independence, their nation's future would darken, nothing would be left" [O gece darbecilerin karşısına dikilenler şayet ülkesi bağımsızlığını kaybederse, milletinin geleceği kararırsa geride zaten hiçbir şey kalmayacağını çok iyi biliyordu] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e).

Other more subtle references and comparisons to the original Turkish Independence War were made throughout Erdogan's speeches. On August 10th in Ankara, Erdogan highlighted Ankara as being one of the only cities in the Independence War to not experience a day of liberation, yet it experienced liberation on July 15th (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). He argued "Ankara was one of the rare cities in our country that did not have a day of liberation. Together with the rest of Turkey, July 15th became Ankara's day of liberation" [Ankara, ülkemizde adeta kurtuluş günü olmayan ender şehirlerimizden biriydi. 15 Temmuz, Türkiye'nin tamamıyla birlikte Ankara'nın da kurtuluş günüdür] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). References to broader Turkish history and historic Turkish military victories were made as well during this speech. Comparing July 15th not only with the independence war but also much older Ottoman victories, Erdogan declared, "No one can dismantle this country, divide this nation, or destroy this state without risking to relive the conquests of Malazgirt and Istanbul or the victory at Çanakkale." [Malazgirt'i, İstanbul'un fethini, Çanakkale'yi yeniden yaşamayı göze almadan kimse bu vatanı parçalayamaz, bu milleti bölemez, bu devleti yıkamaz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f).

Another feature of the narrative of Turkey under siege and struggling in a second independence war was the idea of Turkey countering invasion, bondage, and occupation. As a coun-

try supposedly under invasion during July 15th, Turkey required its citizens to stand up against those trying to occupy it. On August 10th, Erdogan stated that, "The terror exhibited by these traitors under the guise of a coup attempt is no different from a rehearsal of the invasion of Turkey" [Bu hainlerin darbe girişimi görüntüsü altında sergiledikleri terör, Türkiye'nin işgali provasından başka bir şey değildir] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). On August 7th, he quoted Ataturk in a way to depict Turkey facing invasion and occupation similar to the Independence War. Emphasizing the quote as having been stated when the majority of the country was under occupation during the war, he quoted Ataturk saying, "Nation, you must ask if you can accept captivity and restraint" [Millet, sen esaret ve zillet kabul eder misin diye sormak lazımdır"] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). He aligned himself with Ataturk posing his own question to the crowd, "I ask the same question to you from Yenikapı Square: Nation, do you accept bondage and oppression? This is the point. Nobody will ever be able to bring this nation under captivity" [Yenikapı Meydanı'ndan aynı soruyu sizlere soruyorum: Ey millet, sen esaret ve zillet kabul eder misin? Mesele bu. Bu millete, evet kimse bu esareti asla getiremeyecektir] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). He addressed this rhetorical question to the crowd by commending the Turkish citizens who resisted captivity and oppression on July 15th. He praised them stating, "You have already shown on July 15th that you will not accept bondage and oppression by putting your chest against the gun barrels, lying in front of the tanks, and even standing up against planes and helicopters" [Sizler 15 Temmuz'a esaret ve zillet kabul etmeyeceğinizi namlulara göğsünüzü dayayarak, tankların önüne yatarak, uçaklara ve helikopterlere dahi hamleler yaparak bilfiil gösterdiniz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e).

A feature of this narrative context of a second Turkish Independence War was the element of betrayal and treason, which was often referenced by Erdogan following the coup attempt in relation to the Gulen movement. In the case of the original Turkish Independence War, treason was committed by the signers of the Treaty of Sevres, who were perceived to have betrayed the Turkish nation in the interests of foreign powers. In the context of the coup attempt and the narrative of a second independence war, the followers of the Gulen movement were similarly portrayed as traitors who betrayed the nation to the interests of foreign forces seeking the destruction of Turkey. As noted in chapter one, Ataturk's Speech to Youth reflected this idea of betrayal by depicting a Turkey that will ceaselessly be under attack by "internal and external enemies" who seek to "unite with the political ambitions of the invaders for their personal interests" in order to deprive the nation of its independence and lead the country to ruin (Kemal Ataturk as cited by Ataturk Society of America, 2015). Erdogan evoked this same idea of outside attacks and inside betrayals in order to associate the Gulen movement with the already well-established element of domestic treason within the Sevres Syndrome narrative. Four days after the coup attempt, Erdogan declared that the coup attempt is another example of the Turkish nation reclaiming its homeland in spite of attacks from the outside and betrayals from the inside (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). He stated, "Our history is full of examples of the nation claiming its homeland and state despite outside attacks and inside betrayals" [Bizim tarihimiz, dışarıdan gelen saldırılara ve içeride yapılan ihanetlere rağmen, milletin vatanına ve devletine sahip çıkmasının örnekleriyle doludur] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). Echoing Ataturk, he added that "throughout the history of the republic, attacks, traps and betrayals against the country and the nation have never stopped and will always continue" [Cumhuriyet tarihi boyunca da ülkemize ve

milletimize yönelik saldırılar, tuzaklar, ihanetler durmadı, hep devam etti] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). He argued that while the coup plotters were seduced into following an insidious plan and betraying their country, good citizens have attempted to awaken their eyes to the wrongdoing.

The Gulen movement's alleged betrayal of the nation by aligning with the interests of outside forces was made most explicit through references to outside powers or "dark forces" that were supposedly working with the coup plotters to attack Turkey (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c). About three weeks after the coup attempt, Erdogan sated, "As a state and nation, we must analyze the July 15 coup attempt very well. We must not only evaluate those who have performed this betrayal, but also the powers behind them and what motivates them" [Devlet ve millet olarak 15 Temmuz darbe girişimini çok iyi analiz etmeliyiz. Sadece bu ihaneti gerçekleştirenleri değil, onların arkalarındaki güçleri, onları harekete geçiren saikleri de çok iyi değerlendirmeliyiz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). In this same speech, he made a populist division by delineating between the Turkish state with all its various political parties and segments of the nation on one side, and terrorist organizations and the "dark forces behind them" on the other side [onların arkasındaki karanlık güçler vardır] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). Not only was this a clear populist division between "us" and "them", but also a vivid use of Sevres Syndrome influenced rhetoric in depicting domestic terrorist organizations as pawns of outside forces.

Such rhetoric regarding supposed outside forces meddling in Turkey through domestic collaborators continued. About one week after the coup attempt, Erdogan spoke about forces working alongside the coup plotters to sabotage the country through a downgrade in credit ratings. As Erdogan claimed, "You see, despite the sabotage of some forces working arm-in-arm

with the coup plotters, our economy continues its stable operation on its own track" [İşte görüy-orsunuz, adeta darbecilerle kol-kola çalışan birtakım güçlerin sabotajlarına rağmen ekonomimiz kendi rayında istikrar içinde işleyişini sürdürüyor] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c). On several occasions he also referenced the coup plotters as having internal and external supporters, and that they are working within part of a grander conspiracy. On July 29th Erdogan stated, "We will con-tinue our struggle not only with the Fethullah terrorist organization, but with other terrorist orga-nizations and the forces behind them in a stronger and more effective way" [Sadece Fethullahçı terör örgütüyle değil, diğer terör örgütleriyle ve onların arkalarındaki güçlerle olan mücadelemizi daha güçlü, daha etkin bir şekilde sürdüreceğiz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d).

On August 18th during a speech to the Union of Islamic World NGOs, Erdogan also ar-gued that foreign interference was not only within Turkey, but across the muslim world. Erdo-gan argued, "When we cease to be ourselves, it is inevitable for us to turn into the toy, tool, and pawn of others" [Kendimiz olmaktan çıktığımızda, başkalarının oyuncağı, aracı, piyonu haline dönüşmemiz kaçınılmazdır] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h). He further claimed that there is a supposed religious war between the Islamic world and the West, and that the West is trying to fuel Islamaphobia and hostility to Islam. He also brought up the role of the West in arming ter-rorist groups such as the YPG. He stated that half of the weapons end up with the YPG, and the other half in the hands of ISIS. Implying a greater international conspiracy, he stated, "Since Muslims are unable to confront these organizations themselves, Islamic geography is open to the intervention of foreign powers. The same game is played and the same template is applied in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Yemen, and many other places" [Müslümanlar kendileri bu örgütlerin önünü kesemedikleri için, İslam coğrafyası dış güçlerin müdahalesine açık hale geliy-

or. Suriye'de, Irak'ta, Libya'da, Afganistan'da, Yemen'de ve daha pek çok yerde aynı oyun oynanmakta, aynı şablon uygulanmaktadır] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h). He held up the Turkish nation as an example of how to successfully resist foreign meddling stating, "As the Turkish nation, we demonstrated the best example of how to spoil the game on July 15th to our brothers and the world" [Biz Türk milleti olarak 15 Temmuz'da zorun oyunu bozacağının en güzel örneğini kardeşlerimize ve tüm dünyaya gösterdik] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h). As noted by Hovsepyan (2012), references to foreign "games" in Turkey and the broader region have been made by Turkish political and military leaders in the context of Sevres Syndrome throughout contemporary Turkish history.

While Erdogan avoided making explicit implications of interference in the country by a specific foreign power during the coup attempt, many other media outlets close to the AKP were less cautious. The newspaper Sabah published photos of the US Ambassador to Turkey, John Bass, supposedly meeting with a high ranking member of the military who helped carry out the coup attempt right before it occurred (Sabah, 2016). However, the photos were later noted to be fabricated and heavily photoshopped (Gok, 2016). The fact that Fethullah Gulen continues to reside in Pennsylvania has fueled further stories claiming US involvement in the coup attempt. Despite his general caution towards directly implicating other countries in the coup attempt, Erdogan never-the-less lashed out at other governments particularly for supposedly neglecting Turkey by both expressing delayed sympathies for the coup attempt as well as upholding double standards focusing more on the human rights implications of the State of Emergency rather than the threat of the coup plotters. In a speech on July 29th, Erdogan argued that no one from the European Union, the Council of Europe, or the West offered condolences. Instead, he claimed they

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only say that "Erdogan is very frustrated and irritable" [Ondan sonra da ne diyorlar? 'Erdoğan çok sinirli, çok asabi'] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). Later in this same speech, he lashed out at supposed hypocrisy within international media, and claimed that some media criticized the coup plotters for their failure in the attempt. As Erdogan claimed, "They said, 'You did it wrong, you should have killed Erdogan first'. There were people who went so far" ['Yanlış yaptınız, önce Erdoğan'ı öldürmeliydiniz' dediler, bu kadar ileri gidenler de oldu] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). He further criticized countries such as Germany for supposed double standards in preventing Turkish citizens from holding democracy watches following the coup attempt or displaying Turkish flags. He claimed "Here is Austria, here is Germany, our citizens who want to rally and march there. But they are also citizens, dual citizens. They do not allow them" [İşte Avusturya, işte Almanya, oralarda miting yapmak isteyen, yürüyüş yapmak isteyen bizim vatandaşlarımız. Ama onların da vatandaşı, çifte vatandaş. Onlara müsaade etmiyorlar] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). This was intended to support the argument that Turkey is alone and cannot expect support from anyone. He further argued this lack of Western support throughout the month following the coup attempt including on August 16th when he stated, "If you are paying attention, it has been one month since the coup attempt, but almost no Western statesman at the level of president or head of state has visited our country" [Dikkat ederseniz, darbe girişiminin üzerinden tam bir ay geçti, ama neredeyse hiçbir Batılı devlet adamı, başkan, devlet başkanı, bu düzeyde ülkemizde ziyaret etmedi] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016g).

In the month following the coup attempt, Turkey was discursively depicted as defending its independence, resisting betrayal, and countering outside forces meddling in its domestic affairs. Such a depiction was rooted in the already established Sevres Syndrome fear of outside

powers and internal collaborators seeking the division and destruction of Turkey. In this way, the

Sevres Syndrome narrative provided a historical background to explain the events of the coup

attempt as well as the roles of those involved. The failed coup itself was depicted as a second

Turkish Independence War in which Turkey was defending itself from foreign meddling and oc-

cupation. Furthermore, this narrative provided a foundation for the construction and categoriza-

tion of an "us" versus "them" relation established along the lines of the Turkish nation versus

foreign powers and domestic collaborators. Whereas within the narrative of the original indepen-

dence war, the domestic traitors were the signers of the Treaty of Sevres, the traitors within the

AKP narrative of the coup attempt were the followers of the Gulen movement who were alleged

to be working alongside supposed dark forces to attack Turkey. The following section will

demonstrate how the specific idea of "us" was discursively created within this narrative of a sec-

ond Turkish Independence War.

"Us": Martyrs, National Unity, Democracy, and the National Will

With Sevres Syndrome acting as a historical background to inform the narrative of the

coup's failure as a victory in a supposed second Turkish War of Independence, a foundation was

established in which the development of the populist categories of "us" and "them" were based

drawing from this idea of the nation resisting the oppression of foreign powers and domestic trai-

tors seeking the destruction of the Turkish nation. The following section will demonstrate how

the populist category "us" was discursively constructed around the neo-Ottoman understanding

of the Turkish nation with an emphasis on the defense of Turkish democracy and the national

will of the people. The ideal members of the nation were those who upheld and defended Turkish democracy, unity, and the national will.

The categorization of the populist "us" of the nation and who belonged to it in light of the coup attempt began immediately on the night of July 15th when Erdogan called into CNN Turk via FaceTime. With a microphone held up to reporter Hande Firat's iPhone screen, Erdogan described the coup as "an insurrection instigated by the parallel structure" in reference to the Gulen movement (Yeni Safak, 2016). Throughout the interview, there were numerous distinctions made between the people and a supposed minority seeking to divide the Turkish nation. Erdogan called the coup attempt, "an attack on our nation's unity and solidarity" (Yeni Safak, 2016). He asked viewers to take to the streets to defend the country from the coup plotters stating, "I would like to call out to our people. I am inviting them to the squares and airports of our provinces…Let this minority come with their tanks and weapons and do whatever they may… I have not seen a force greater than the people's will" (Yeni Safak, 2016). Throughout the interview on CNN Turk, there were numerous references to "the people" emphasizing that the coup plotters were using tanks and weapons "that belong to the people" and that the plotters will receive a "necessary punishment and response by our people". Abdulkadir Selvi, a journalist in the studio at the time, said to Erdogan that "today is a day to protect democracy… you are inviting people to protect democracy and take to the squares, and we are reiterating your call from here" (Yeni Safak, 2016). Erdogan continued, "Come to the squares, and let's give them the necessary response from the squares" (Yeni Safak, 2016). Selvi added that "the public" is asking if the coup plotters will be successful, and Erdogan emphasized that he did not believe they would explaining that

"throughout history, putschists have not been successful. Sooner or later, they disappear" (Yeni Safak, 2016).

Those who took up Erdogan's call and resisted the coup plotters in the streets were immediately upheld as ideal citizens who defended the nation. Not only were they upheld as ideal citizens, but they were also bestowed with religious significance. While those who were injured while resisting the coup attempt were designated by the military term "veteran", those who were killed were designated by the religious term "martyr". In Ankara on July 29th, during a memorial program for July 15th veterans and families of martyrs in Ankara, Erdogan explained that within Islam, which he referred to as "our religion" [bizim dinimiz], martyrdom is the highest position of honor behind that of prophet (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). On July 20th, Erdogan spoke about the July 15th veterans who attempted to save fellow citizens and were shot by the "traitors" [hainler] who attempted to carry out the coup.

This religious context of loyal Turkish citizens who defended the nation was also stressed when Erdogan stated during a July 23rd speech, "Praise be to our citizens, obeying our calls, who filled the streets and squares, and did not abandon the squares to coup plotters. May God be pleased with you" [Hamdolsun vatandaşlarımız çağrılarımıza uyarak sokakları, meydanları doldurdu, meydanları darbecilere bırakmadı. Allah sizlerden razı olsun] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c). During a speech on August 10th, Erdogan referenced the red color of Turkish flag originating from the "blood of our veterans and martyrs" [Bayrağımızın rengi nereden geliyor? Şehidimizin, gazimizin kanından] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). Martyrs were also referenced in the context of defending the unity of the nation during the speech through phrases such as "martyrs do not die, the homeland is indivisible" [şehitler ölmez, vatan bölünmez] (T. C.

Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). The July 15th martyrs eventually became memorialized in numerous ways including when Erdogan announced that the Bosphorous Bridge in Istanbul would be re-named the July 15th Martyrs Bridge and the junction where the National Assembly and the General Staff are located in Ankara would be called the July 15th Martyrs Square (T. C. Cumhur-baskanligi, 2016d). The July 15th martyrs continued to be memorialized long after the coup attempt with many parks, bus stations, roads, and other public locations across the country becoming renamed in remembrance of them.

Another significant element of the understanding of the "the people" was national unity. This unity was argued as encompassing many diverse groups throughout the country. During a speech from the presidential palace on July 19th, Erdogan stated that people of many different backgrounds were "one body against the coup plotters" [darbeciler karşısında tek vücut olmuş-tur] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). He repeated this phrasing regarding the one body of the nation during a press conference on July 20th stating, "All members of our nation, from young to old, from worker to boss, from peasants to urban residents, became one body in the face of the coup plotters" [Gencinden yaşlısına, işçisinden patronuna, köylüsünden şehirlisine kadar mil-letimizin tüm fertleri darbeciler karşısında tek vücut olmuştur] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016b). At the opening of the Bestepe National Congress and Culture Center in Ankara on July 29th, Er-dogan spoke at a memorial program for veterans and family members of July 15th martyrs. He noted competing opposition political parties as having also united to resist the coup. He praised the AKP, CHP, and MHP parties as having chosen the side of the state and its administrators, and that this brought them together in unity and solidarity beyond political conflicts and competition

(notably, the predominately Kurdish and minority rights focused People and Democracy Party (HDP) was excluded) (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d).

National unity was also expressed through highlighting the indivisibility of the country despite attempts to divide it. The Sevres Syndrome fear of national dismemberment was prominent within this language. During a speech on August 10th in Ankara, Erdogan argued the indivisibility of the nation stating "… no one can dismantle this country, divide this nation, or destroy this state" [… kimse bu vatanı parçalayamaz, bu milleti bölemez, bu devleti yıkamaz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). This AKP understanding of national unity was remarkably different from that of early Kemalists due to the inclusion of historically excluded minorities. Numerous times throughout the month following the coup attempt, Erdogan repeatedly referenced minority populations of the country as being part of one Turkish nation and under one flag. A few days after the coup on July 19th, Erdogan argued that the various ethnic groups of Turkey are all part of one single nation, and that the coup plotters will not be able to divide them (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). During a July 23rd speech, Erdogan repeated this point by including various religious and ethnic entities as part of one unified Turkish nation stating, "On the night of July 15th, there were no Sunni-Alevi, no Turkish-Kurdish, no Circassian-Roma in the streets. That night, there was no right-left, rich-poor, power-opposition in the squares… There was the Turkish nation" [15 Temmuz gecesi sokaklarda Sünni-Alevi yoktu, Türk-Kürt yoktu, Çerkez-Roman yoktu, o gece meydanlarda sağcı-solcu, zengin-fakir, iktidar- muhalefet yoktu… Türk milleti vardı] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c). On August 7th during a democracy and martyrs ceremony, Erdogan again highlighted several minority populations stating that they were all united as one nation against the coup plotters (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). He stated, "On

the night of July 15th, we struggled on the streets 79 million shoulder to shoulder together as Turks, Kurds, Laz, Bosnians, Circassians, Arabs, and Roma" [15 Temmuz gecesi bu gerçeği Türk'üyle, Kürt'üyle, Laz'ıyla, Boşnak'ıyla, Çerkez'iyle, Arap'ıyla, Roman'ıyla, 79 milyon hep birlikte gördüğümüz için sokaklarda omuz omuza mücadele ettik] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). He further argued that as a nation in the face of bullets, the people of all these different backgrounds became veterans and martyrs while defending the future and independence of the country. This was not the only time he made this point referencing the same minority groups as part of a single nation, and it became a common talking point. On August 10th, he again described the Turkish nation as, "a single nation of 79 million Turks, Kurds, Laz, Circassians, Georgians, and Bosnians" [Türk'üyle, Kürt'üyle, Laz'ıyla, Çerkez'iyle, Gürcü'süyle, Boşnak'ıyla, velhasıl 79 milyon tek millet] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f).

This inclusion of minorities within the understanding of the unified Turkish nation was particularly emphasized through Erdogan's metaphor of Rabia 4. Rabia 4 is a metaphor with origins in the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt that has been referenced by Erdogan in numerous political speeches for several years, and was used multiple times following the coup attempt to emphasize national unity (Eren, 2017). Its four components are (1) one nation, (2) one flag, (3) one homeland, and (4) one state. Rabia 1 specifically refers to the unity of the nation. In every speech that Rabia 4 was referenced, Rabia 1 was broken down by referencing each separate ethnic group as being part of the indivisible Turkish nation. The Rabia 4 metaphor was brought up several times in multiple speeches following the coup. During a speech on August 10th, Erdogan asked the crowd to declare Rabia 4 together with him saying, "We now know our Rabia, right? Don't forget it. Are you ready to cry it out together? One nation, one flag, one country, one state" [şim-

di Rabia'mızı biliyoruz değil mi? Bunu unutmayın. Şöyle hep birlikte bir haykıralım, hazır mısınız? Tek millet, tek bayrak, tek vatan, tek devlet] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f).

Another term repeatedly invoked to construct the populist understanding of "us" was the term "democracy". As already mentioned, during Erdogan's FaceTime call to CNN Turk, Abdulkadir Selvi first used this term in the context of the coup attempt saying, "today is a day to protect democracy... you are inviting people to protect democracy and take to the squares, and we are reiterating your call from here" (Yeni Safak, 2016). This narrative of a victorious Turkish democracy in the face of an attack on the country continued following the coup's failure. During a speech on July 19th, Erdogan stated that the citizens who rose up to prevent the coup demonstrated the strength of Turkish democracy (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). In this same speech, he emphasized that his government invited those who love their country and nation to the streets on July 15th to claim their democracy [Milletimizi, ülkesini, vatanını, milletini seven herkesi meydanlara çıkmaya, devletini ve demokrasisini sahiplenmeye davet ettik] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). This focus on democracy portrayed the coup attempt as an attack on Turkish democracy and the will of the people. About one month after the coup attempt, Erdogan stated that the coup attempt was made against a political power that came to power "with the votes of its nation" [Milletinin oylarıyla işbaşına gelmiş bir siyasi iktidara yapılıyor] and that "this was a coup against democracy" [Bu demokrasiye karşı yapılan bir darbe] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h).

During a July 20th speech, Erdogan announced the State of Emergency and claimed that it aimed to uphold democracy, the rule of law, and fundamental rights and freedoms through the elimination of the terrorist organization that attempted the coup (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi,

2016b). In this same speech, Erdogan argued that by overcoming the coup attempt, "as a Turkish nation we have written a heroic epic in the history of democracy" [milletimizle birlikte inanıyorum ki bütün bu engelleri aşmak suretiyle demokrasi tarihine bir kahramanlık destanını Türk milleti olarak biz yazmış oluyoruz]. Erdogan used democracy in order to justify argue the necessity of the State of Emergency. He stated, "Democracy is a regime where the demands of the nation are in power, and we do this" [Demokrasi milletin taleplerinin iktidar olduğu bir rejimdir ve bunu yaparız] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). He promised that through the implementation of the state of emergency, the "parallel state" [paralel devlet] which carried out the coup attempt will be rooted out and cleansed from the government (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f).

Democracy inferred the will of the people, and "national will" [milli irade] was another term often used to highlight the difference between the nation and the coup plotters. The coup plotters were excluded from the nation as they were framed as violating the will of the people. Erdogan argued that the strength of Turkish democracy originated from the people who resisted the coup plotters in the streets to defend the national will. On July 19th in a speech from the presidential palace, Erdogan listed various civil entities such as police, media, and military who all contributed to the failure of the coup and thanked them specifically for representing the national will of the country (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). On July 20th during a press conference, Erdogan stated that the coup plotters failed in the face of the national will, which resisted their attempts to usurp democracy (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016b). Furthermore, in a July 23rd speech, Erdogan argued that terrorists were once again "defeated by the common will of the nation and its unshakable courage" [milletin ortak iradesi, sarsılmaz cesareti karşısında bir kez daha bozguna uğradı] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c).

These themes of martyrdom, national unity, democracy, and national will helped establish the understanding of the Turkish nation and who was to be included within the populist "us" within the context of the coup attempt. Ideal members of the nation were portrayed as those who upheld and defended the nation, national unity, and the national will. Furthermore, as a democratically elected government, the current government was highlighted as representing the national will thereby equating an attack on the government with an attack on the will of the people. Those who supported the government were also supporting the will of the Turkish nation, which would thereby include them within the populist category of "us". Through this discourse, the Gulen movement was excluded from the nation as the supposed orchestrators of an attack on the government through the coup attempt. By attacking the government, they were depicted as violating the national will and Turkish democracy. The following section will outline how the Gulen movement became excluded from the nation and confined to the populist category of "other".

"Them": Terrorists, Traitors, Viruses, and Infidels

The government did not hesitate in immediately implicating the Gulen movement as the instigators of the coup attempt while it was occurring, and the populist discursive exclusion of the Gulenists from the "us" of the Turkish nation began just as swiftly. This discursive exclusion was achieved by labeling the followers of the Gulen movement as terrorists, traitors, viruses, and infidels in addition to Erdogan directly declaring that they do not belong to the nation. As Erdogan stated about a week following the coup attempt, July 15th was a "historic challenge against

those who do not belong to this nation or country" [15 Temmuz, milletimizin… bu millete ve bu ülkeye ait olmayanlara karşı tarihi bir meydan okumasıdır] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c).

Shortly after the coup attempt, the government renamed the Gulenist movement as the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO)[4]. With this new designation, the government depicted the movement as an existential threat to the "us" of the Turkish nation. Erdogan announced this new FETO designation during a speech from the presidential palace on July 19th just a few days after the coup attempt. During this speech, he argued that the coup attempt was "a terror attack of a different nature" [farklı mahiyette bir terör saldırısı] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). To further distinguish the Gulen movement as a terrorist organization excluded from the nation, Erdogan argued that "there is no gray area between the nation and the coup plotters, and those who try to create a gray area are members of terrorist organizations" [Darbe teşebbüsçüleriyle millet arasında gri bir alan oluşturmaya çalışanlar ise, hükmen terör örgütü mensubudur; çünkü ortada böyle tereddütlü bir alan yoktur] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). He continued threatening that, "supporters of FETO and other terrorist organizations will not be shown the slightest amount of tolerance or mercy" [ne Fethullahçı Terör Örgütünü, ne de diğer terör örgütlerini destekleyenler konusunda en küçük bir müsamaha, en küçük bir merhamet gösterilmeyecektir] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016a). Such harsh speech continued when he stated on July 29th that "we will not show the slightest hesitation in crushing the head of all terrorist organizations that threaten the

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[4] Only a small, limited number of countries have followed Turkey in officially designating the Gulen movement as a terrorist organization or condemning it for the coup attempt. Notably, the European Union and the United States have not designated the group as a terrorist organization with the EU citing lack of substantive evidence for their alleged involvement in the coup attempt. One of the primary pieces of evidence presented by the Turkish government was the common usage of a private communications application among Gulen followers, and those who had this application downloaded on their phones were implicated in the coup attempt. See Gumrukcu & Karadeniz (2017) for more on the EU's reasons for not designating the group as a terrorist organization due to lack of evidence.

survival of our country and nation" [ülkemizin ve milletimizin bekası için tehdit oluşturan tüm terör örgütlerinin başını ezmekte de en küçük bir tereddüt göstermeyeceğiz] (T. C. Cumhur-baskanligi, 2016d).

To further demonstrate the supposed terrorist nature of the Gulen movement, Erdogan argued that FETO was no different and no less dangerous than ISIS, the PKK, or other terrorist organizations. Several times throughout the month following the coup attempt, FETO was men-tioned alongside other designated terrorist organizations such as the PKK, ISIS, DHKP-C and YPG. On August 7th, while listing off various terrorist organizations including the PKK, FETO, and ISIS, he argued that "all of them are enemies of the nation" [ama hepsinin de Türk milletinin, Türk Devletinin düşmanları olduğu gerçeği asla değişmez] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). In a distinct reflection of the populist "us" versus "them", he also drew a sharp line in this speech be-tween the Republic of Turkey on one side and terrorists on the other (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e).

By aligning FETO with other terrorist organizations, Erdogan claimed that all terrorist organizations work together within a grander conspiracy against Turkey and the broader region. This supposed conspiracy against Turkey consists of both terrorist organizations and alleged "dark forces behind them" [onların arkasındaki karanlık güçler] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016e). Erdogan also referred to terrorists as "the desperate pawns of those who want to prevent the happy march of our country" [Ülkemizin kutlu yürüyüşünü engellemek isteyenlerin azgın piyonları olan teröristler] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016c). He argued that no one can stand in the way of Turkey's progress despite those who "cut us off at every opportunity and trip our feet"

[… her fırsatta önümüzü kesmeye, ayağımıza çelme takmaya çalışıyorlar] (T. C. Cumhurbaskan-ligi, 2016c).

The supposed conspiracy of greater forces behind terrorist organizations operating in Turkey was referenced several times throughout the month after the coup attempt (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). On July 29th, Erdogan stated, "We will continue our struggle not only with the Fethullahist terrorist organization, but with other terrorist organizations and the forces behind them in a stronger and more effective way" [Sadece Fethullahçı terör örgütüyle değil, diğer terör örgütleriyle ve onların arkalarındaki güçlerle olan mücadelemizi daha güçlü, daha etkin bir şekilde sürdüreceğiz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). He argued that on July 15th, "we broke the game that they wanted to play in our country once again" [Ülkemizde oy-nanmak istenen oyunu bir kez daha bozduk] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d).

This conspiratorial talk of terrorist organizations and "dark forces" that control them is linked to the previously mentioned betrayal aspect of the Sevres Syndrome narrative. Not only does the terrorist designation portray FETO as a mortal threat to Turkey, but it simultaneously associates them with the perceived historic betrayals and treason against the Turkish nation by depicting domestic terrorists organizations as the tools of greater powers seeking the destruction of Turkey. Building off this idea of offering the country to other powers, some of the most prom-inent terms used to describe the coup plotters were "traitor" [hain], "betrayal' [ihanet], "betrayal network" [ihanet şebekesi], and "treacherous structure" [hain yapı]. Some of these references to FETO's supposed betrayal were quite direct, such as on August 10th when Erdogan stated that, "The Fethullah terrorist organization has betrayed both the country and the nation" [Fethullahçı terör örgütü ülkeye de, millete de ihanet etti] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). During a memor-

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ial program for July 15th veterans and the families of martyrs, Erdogan gave the perceived be-

trayal of the coup attempt both historical and religious significance stating "The hill of martyrs

has never been left empty in this country… and what is clear about those who martyred them?

Only betrayal" [bu ülkede şehitler tepesi hiçbir zaman boş kalmadı, kalmıyor… onları şehit

edenlerin neyi belli? Sadece ihanetleri] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). To emphasize the

treachery of FETO and other terrorist organizations by implicating them within this supposed

grander conspiracy, Erdogan stated, "We know that people who draw arms against their own na-

tion will offer their own country as a gift to others" [Biliyoruz ki kendi milletine silah çeken,

kendi ülkesini başkalarına da peşkeş çeker] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). After listing off

groups designated by Turkey as terrorist organizations such as the PKK, PYD, ISIS, and FETO,

he implicated supposed outside powers behind them stating, "Where their own power is not

enough, they activate networks of betrayal around us and within us" [Kendi güçlerinin yetmediği

yerde çevremizdeki ve içimizdeki ihanet şebekelerini harekete geçiriyorlar] (T. C. Cumhur-

baskanligi, 2016c).

In addition to being called traitors and labeled terrorists, Erdogan also referred to the

Gulen movement as a "virus" and a "cancer" that needed to be cleansed from the military and

other public institutions. On July 20th when announcing the State of Emergency and its purpose,

he stated, "Like a cancer virus, it metastasizes in the body, and we have to clean it. I hope we

will clean it so that our nation will find peace, and our nation will continue to look to the future

with hope" [Çünkü adeta bir kanser virüsü gibi vücut metastaz oldu, bunu temizlemeye mecbu-

ruz. Bunu inşallah temizleyeceğiz ki milletimiz huzur bulsun, milletimiz geleceğe umutla bak-

maya devam etsin] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016b). On July 29th, Erdogan again compared

FETO to a virus stating, "Now this virus is getting scraped away, it has to be scraped away completely, the body must be purified from it" [Şimdi bu virüs kazınıyor, bunun tamamen kazınarak temizlenmesi, vücudun bundan arınması lazım] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). The comparison of cleaning out FETO like a virus continued on August 10th when he stated that the Republic of Turkey will "clean these invaders by law and with justice" [bu işgalcileri hukukla, adaletle temizliyoruz] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016f). Not only did such a term as "virus" exclude the Gulen movement from the nation, but it also dehumanized its members, and depicted them as a bodily threat to the health of the nation that needed to be eliminated.

Religious terminology was also invoked in the discursive exclusion of the Gulen movement from the nation. On July 29th, Erdogan referred to the coup plotters as "infidels" [kafir], which starkly contrasted them with the "martyrs" who died in defense of the nation during the July 15th coup attempt (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d). After describing several of the attacks that occurred during July 15th, he stated, "Only an infidel can do this. Can someone who calls himself a muslim or a Turk do these? These have nothing to do with our nation" [Bunu ancak kâfir yapar. Bunu 'ben Müslümanım, ben Türküm' diyen birisi yapabilir mi? Bunların bu milletle alakası yok] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016d).

On August 18th during a speech to the Union of Islamic World NGOs, Erdogan used the forum as way to outline the argument of FETO as a terrorist organization (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h). Fighting against FETO not only became an issue for the Turkish nation, but a struggle for the whole Islamic world. Good muslims were depicted as those fighting against terrorist organizations such as ISIS, the PKK, and FETO. He reached out in the speech to other muslim countries to help Turkey combat FETO. He argued that FETO will do anything to achieve its

ambitions "including pouring innocent blood" [masum kanı dökmek dâhil] (T. C. Cumhur-baskanligi, 2016h). He stated that "The fight against FETO is not just a matter of Turkey. The struggle with this organization is a matter of all Muslims" [FETÖ ile mücadele, sadece Türkiye'nin meselesi değildir. Bu örgütle mücadele, tüm Müslümanların] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h). Before ending the speech, he listed several terrorist organizations and labeled them as "puppet organizations" [kukla örgütleri] in a reference to supposed greater powers controlling them within the region (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi, 2016h). Framing the fight against FETO and other terrorist organizations as a matter of all muslims in a struggle against international meddling, he ended the speech with a distinct evocation of Sevres Syndrome stating,

"In these latest attacks, I call out to terrorist organizations like the PKK, ISIS, FETO, and the forces behind them. Pull yourselves together. Turkey is not participating in this game and will not participate. Stop messing with this nation. Enough blood has shed in Turkey, you have enough blood shed in Syria, you have enough blood shed in Iraq, and you have shed enough blood in Afghanistan, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia. You also shed enough blood in Palestine. Everyone knows very well that the blood you shed in Pakistan is enough" [Bu son saldırılarında PKK, DAİŞ, FETÖ gibi terör örgütlerinin de arkasındaki güçlere sesleniyorum, bu saldırının da PKK gibi, FETÖ gibi terör örgüt-lerinin arkasındaki güçler, kendinize çekidüzen verin. Türkiye artık bu oyunlara gelmiy-or ve gelmeyecek. Gelin bu milletle uğraşmaktan vazgeçin. Türkiye'de döktüğünüz kan yeter, Suriye'de döktüğünüz kan yeter, Irak'ta döktüğünüz kan yeter, Afganistan'da,

Mısır'da, Libya'da, Tunus'ta döktüğünüz kan yeter, Filistin'de döktüğünüz kan yeter.

Herkes çok iyi biliyor ki, Pakistan'da döktüğünüz kan yeter] (T. C. Cumhurbaskanligi,

2016h).

The Gulen movement became excluded not only from the Turkish nation through this discourse, but also depicted as a mortal threat to the nation that needed to be eliminated. They were labeled as terrorists, infidels, and viruses that threatened the fate of the nation, and they had to be cleansed from both the government and the nation through the implementation of the state of emergency. Drawing from the backdrop of Turkey under siege by foreign forces informed by Sevres Syndrome, they were depicted as traitors collaborating with outside powers to divide and destroy the Turkish nation. They were argued to be a threat no different from other terrorist organizations that had no place within the Turkish nation, and were confined to the populist category of "other" along with the other supposedly manipulated terrorist organizations working as pawns for foreign forces of division and oppression.

Chapter 4: Sevres Syndrome and the 2017 Constitutional Referendum

Chapter Abstract

The following chapter explores the "us" versus "them" relationship that developed through the course of the campaigning for a constitutional referendum. The referendum sought changes that would grant Erdogan significantly more executive power including eliminating the office of the prime minister. The vote in the referendum was a simple Yes/No vote, which among AKP discourse took on characteristics of an "us" versus "them" relationship that reflected Sevres Syndrome with the nation on the side of Yes, and foreign powers and their domestic terrorist collaborators on the side of No. The first section of the chapter provides a brief overview of the referendum. The second section demonstrates the ways in which the discourse in the referendum used Sevres Syndrome as a historic backdrop to inform the construction of an "us" versus "them" relation. This was particularly evident in how Europe was portrayed as supposedly supporting the No vote in order to oppress and divide Turkey. Similar to chapter 3, the third and fourth sections again outline how groups were categorized along the populist "us" and "them" based on the Sevres Syndrome narrative of the Turkish nation versus foreign powers and their domestic collaborators.

Proposed Constitutional Changes

Less than a year following the failed July 15th coup, Turkey held a constitutional referendum in April 2017. The referendum sought to implement several constitutional amendments that focused on transforming the country from a parliamentary system to an executive system of government (Ekim & Kirisci, 2017). The amendments granted significantly more power and authority to the president. Among the amendments, the office of the prime minister was abolished and the prime minister's duties were subsumed under the president making the president both the head of state and the head of government. The check and balance functions of parliament were also significantly reduced as they would no longer oversee the council of ministers. Greater limitations were placed on the presidential impeachment process as well. The vote in the referendum was a simple "Yes" or "No", and campaigning through the months leading up to the referendum heavily emphasized this dualism. On April 16th, the referendum passed albeit narrowly; with a 85.43% voter turnout, the Yes campaign won 51.41% of the vote as opposed to the No campaign with 48.59% (Atilgan, 2017).

With Sevres Syndrome as a narrative that informed the historic backdrop of the vote, the Yes/No vote become associated with another populist relation of "us" and "them". In this circumstance, those on the side of Yes were framed by Erdogan and the AKP as those on the side of the nation, whereas supporters of the No vote were affiliated with support for terrorism and acting as pawns within a grander conspiracy to oppress and divide Turkey within the context of the Sevres Syndrome narrative. Unlike the July 15th coup attempt, the campaign did not single out

one particular group as an enemy of the nation, but collectively associated various groups supporting the No vote as being one and the same as terrorists and collaborators with foreign powers seeking the dismemberment of Turkey. On the side of Yes vote was the nation and the nation's prosperity, and on the side of the No vote was terrorism and foreign oppression.

This depiction of the nation on the side of the Yes vote and terrorism and foreign powers on the side of the No vote began early in the campaigning for the referendum. Before a trip to Bahrain in February 2017, Erdogan stated at the Ataturk Airport in Istanbul that those who were on the side of No were on the side of terrorists (Sozcu, 2017). He stated, "On the one hand, there is a separatist terrorist organization trying to dismember the country and they are acting together. What does the separatist terrorist organization say? It says no" [Bir taraftan ülkeyi parçalamaya çalışan bölücü terör örgütü ve birlikte hareket ettikleri var. Bölücü terör örgütü ne diyor? Hayır diyor] (Erdogan as citied in Sozcu, 2017). Referencing the PKK stronghold of Qandil, Erdogan continued to argue, "Therefore, my nation will not act together with those in Qandil, who sent my 248 martyrs to martyrdom. It will respond to them by saying "Yes" on April 16th" [Öyleyse benim milletim o Kandil'dekilerle beraber, benim 248 şehidimi şehadete gönderenlerle beraber hareket etmeyecektir. Onlara da 16 Nisan'da "Evet" demek suretiyle gereken cevabı verecektir] (Erdogan as cited in Sozcu, 2017). Not only did he align the No vote with terrorism, but he also argued that support for the No vote was also support for the coup plot of July 15th. He stated, "At the same time, the 16th of April will be a response to July 15th… Those who vote No align themselves with July 15th" [16 Nisan aynı zamanda 15 Temmuz'un bir cevabı olacaktır… Hayır diyenlerin konumu, 15 Temmuz'un yanında yer almaktadır] (Erdogan as citied in Sozcu, 2017). This argument laid the groundwork for what would be the AKP's simplistic argument that the

Yes vote supports the nation whereas the No vote supports terrorism. Those who support Yes are part of the Turkish nation, whereas those who support No are with terrorists and foreign powers seeking Turkey's dismemberment. The following section will outline how another historical backdrop based on the idea of Turkey under siege was created similarly to how a historic backdrop was created for the July 15th coup attempt by drawing from Sevres Syndrome to inform an understanding of current events in a populist dualistic manner.

<u>The Referendum: A Struggle Against International Elites</u>

Throughout the referendum campaign, Sevres Syndrome informed the historic background to the referendum. This was achieved by the AKP drawing from Sevres Syndrome to depict another situation of Turkey struggling for independence against foreign outsiders and their domestic collaborators. In the case of the referendum, this was a struggle for independence from foreign powers, particularly in Europe, and their alleged terrorist pawns in Turkey seeking the division of the Turkish nation. This narrative was fueled by a series of cancelations across Europe of political rallies among Turks living abroad in support of the Yes vote. It contributed to a strong anti-EU discourse within Turkey that depicted the EU as seeking the division of the Turkish nation.

Among previous manifestations of Sevres Syndrome among Turkish officials, similar anti-EU sentiment had already been quite prominent, and modern Turkish history is filled with examples of politicians and military leaders condemning the EU as well as the US for supposedly supporting plots to destroy the Turkish nation. In 2007 for example, the former Chief of Tur-

key's General Staff, Dogan Gures, claimed that "Turkey faces the danger of dismemberment desired by the USA and the EU. Their goal is to make Turkey smaller" (Gures as cited in Hovsepyan, 2012, p. 24). As demonstrated by Hovsepyan (2012), numerous other Turkish political and military leaders throughout the Turkish Republic's history have alleged that Europe only temporarily shelved the Treaty of Sevres, but is working towards its reimplementation. With such beliefs already informing the historic background to events in Turkey, it was not difficult for the AKP to explain the cancelations of Yes vote rallies as part of a supposed plot to oppress Turkey. The following section will highlight statements made throughout the campaign for the referendum that constructed this narrative of Turkey struggling for its independence and sovereignty against European powers. The narrative would inform the categorization of "us" and "them" placing those who support the constitutional changes on the side of the nation, and those who do not support the changes on the side of foreign powers and their domestic terrorist collaborators.

During the referendum, supporters of the Yes vote attempted to organize several rallies across Europe to mobilize participation in the referendum among Turks living abroad. However, several of these rallies did not receive permission from local and national governments across the EU (Kingsley & Smale, 2017). In the Netherlands, the Dutch government disallowed Turkish Foreign Minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, from holding a campaign rally for the Yes vote and revoked his flight permit to land in the country due to concern for potential public unrest (Parks, 2017). In response, Erdogan during a rally in Istanbul referred to the Dutch government as, "very nervous and cowardly. They are Nazi remnants, they are fascists" (Parks, 2017). The Turkish Minister of Family, Fatma Betul Sayan Kaya, decided to travel to the Netherlands by road rather than by flight, yet she was also prevented from entering the Turkish consulate in Rotterdam. In addition

to the Netherlands, local governments in Germany prevented Yes campaign rallies from being held due to concerns among authorities that they could not guarantee security during the events (Kingsley & Smale, 2017). Erdogan responded to these rally cancelations saying, "I was thinking that fascism is over in Germany, but it is still ongoing. It is ongoing, obviously" (Kingsley & Smale, 2017). Austria also blocked Erdogan from campaigning in Austria with the Austrian Foreign Minister, Sebastian Kurz, stating that Erdogan was not welcome to hold campaign events due to their potential to increase friction in Austria and prevent the integration of Austria's Turkish population (The Local AT, 2017). Chancellor Christian Kern of Austria also expressed his concern that Turkish politicians should not be campaigning abroad (Kingsley & Smale, 2017). In response, Turkey stated that Kurz's comments were a "new example of a biased and double standard approach" (The Local AT, 2017).

The European local and national governments that did not allow the rallies were depicted as supporting the No vote in an attempt to suppress Turkey (Milliyet, 2017a). During AKP rallies in Kars just a few weeks before the referendum, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim argued that Europe is against Erdogan and the Yes campaign because they are jealous of Turkey and do not want to see the Turkey prosper[5]. Yildirim announced to the crowd at the rally, "Why does Europe tear itself apart by saying 'no, no, no'? Because they are jealous. They do not want Turkey to grow. Does Turkey submit to this? Of course not" [Neden Avrupa 'hayır, hayır, hayır' diye kendini parçalıyor? Çünkü kıskanıyorlar. Onlar Türkiye'nin büyümesini istemiyorlar. Türkiye buna

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[5] While such comments inferred a grander pan-European conspiracy against Turkey, campaign rallies were held in France and Switzerland without issue. The cancellations in the Netherlands, Germany, and Austria were primarily due to local concerns regarding potential unrest and lack of security. Germany imposed restrictions on foreign politicians campaigning within Germany the following year. See SCF (2018) for more on these restrictions resulting from the Turkish constitutional referendum campaigning.

boyun eğer mi, elbette eğmez] (Yildirim as citied in Milliyet, 2017a). Reflecting Sevres Syndrome, Yildirim at the rally directly implicated Europe as a threat to Turkey stating, "For our country, we must stand shoulder to shoulder with Recep Tayyip Erdogan. They envy Turkey. That's why they started to cause mischief. They tried to calibrate the nation with threats and coups" [Ülkemiz için, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan için omuz omuza olmalıyız. Türkiye'yi kıskanıyorlar. Bunun için başladılar fitne fesat çıkarmaya. Tehditlerle, darbelerle millete ayar vermeye çalıştılar] (Yildirim as citied in Milliyet, 2017a). Throughout the speech, Yildirim continued to depict Europe as ceaselessly meddling with Turkey's domestic affairs, and further argued that the Yes vote is a matter of the country's independence and future. He argued, "We know that countries that threaten Erdogan, threaten Turkey. You see the attitude of Europe, the attitudes of the FETOists, the "no" campaigns of the PKK. Are we ready to stand shoulder to shoulder for our country, for Recep Tayyip Erdogan?" [Erdoğan'ı tehdit eden ülkeler biliyoruz ki Türkiye'yi tehdit ediyor. Avrupa'nın tavırlarını, FETÖ'cülerin tavırlarını, PKK'nın 'hayır' kampanyalarını görüyorsunuz. Ülkemiz için, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan için omuz omuza olmaya var mıyız?] (Yildirim as citied in Milliyet, 2017a). Not only did such discourse equate support for Erdogan and the Yes vote with support for the country, but it also associated the No vote with terrorism through the reference to the PKK.

The condemnations of Europe and the cancelations of the Yes vote rallies were echoed by Erdogan. During a Yes vote rally in the Black Sea city of Rize, Erdogan stated, "With this determination, we will never allow three or four European fascists ... from harming this country's honor and pride" (Erdogan as cited in Dolan et al, 2017). He continued by comparing EU countries to Nazis saying, "I call on my brothers and sisters voting in Europe...give an appropriate

response to those imposing this fascist oppression and the grandchildren of Nazism" (Erdogan as cited in Dolan et al, 2017). He continued to denounce the EU and questioned whether another referendum should be held to decide whether Turkey's EU ascension talks should continue or be canceled particularly in regards to a debate at the time on whether or not to reinstate the death penalty for terrorism, which would immediately disqualify the country from EU membership. To emphasize Turkey's differences from the EU, he stated, "The European Union will not like this. But I don't care what Hans, George or Helga say, I care what Hasan, Ahmet, Mehmet, Ayse and Fatma say. I care what God says" (Erdogan as cited in Dolan et al, 2017).

The anti-EU sentiment of the Yes vote campaign escalated to the point where Germany was directly accused by the Turkish government and the AKP of supporting the July 15th coup attempt (Toksabay, 2017). About one month before the referendum, Bruno Kahl, the head of the German BND foreign intelligence agency, announced that Turkey could not produce convincing evidence that Fethullah Gulen was behind the July 15th coup attempt. In response, Erdogan's spokesman, Ibrahim Kalin, argued that Kahl's comments demonstrated Germany's support for the Gulen movement. He stated, "It's an effort to invalidate all the information we have given them on FETO. It's a sign of their support for FETO" (Toksabay, 2017). Implying a grander conspiracy, Kalin continued to condemn Germany saying, "Why are they protecting them? Because they are useful instruments for Germany to use against Turkey" (Toksabay, 2017).

Supporters of the PKK held demonstrations throughout Europe in the period leading up to the referendum particularly in the light of several PKK attacks in Turkey. Because these PKK demonstrations were occurring while Yes campaign rallies were denied permission, it was framed as Europe's supposed support for terrorist organizations in Turkey. During a Yes vote ral-

ly in Samsun, Erdogan directly claimed that Europe works alongside terrorists in Turkey. Referring to the PKK headquarters in the Qandil Mountains of Northern Iraq, he stated, "Right now, Qandil is walking with Europe. They walk together with Europe's leftist parties. Who is against us? The West" [Şu anda Kandil, Avrupa'yla beraber yürüyor, Avrupa'nın solak partileriyle beraber yürüyor. Bizim karşımızda kim var? Batı] (Milliyet, 2017b).

During a Yes vote rally in the city of Agri, Yildirim also implicated Germany as supporting terrorist organizations operating in Turkey (Haberler, 2017a). Referring to the demonstrations among PKK supporters that were held in Germany, Yildirim stated, "This Germany provides unlimited recognition to terrorist organizations in Turkey. They carry around the images of dividers, yet our ministers cannot go there and campaign for Yes" [Bu Almanya, Türkiye'deki her terör örgütüne kendi ülkesinde sınırsız tanıyor. Bölücü başının resimlerini taşıyor ama bizim bakanımız oraya gidip evet kampanyası yapamıyor] (Yildirim as cited in Haberler, 2017a). Referring to Europe's supposed exploitation of terrorists, he added, "Europe does not do this because they love them. No, they use them" [Bu Avrupa sevdiği için mi böyle yapıyor. Hayır bunları kullanıyor] (Yildirim as cited in Haberler, 2017a). In the same speech, he evoked Sevres Syndrome by inferring a grander conspiracy claiming that the PKK and FETO are the same terrorist organization as part of a larger conspiracy. He stated, "On July 15, their masks were removed. FETÖ, the PKK are the same, both terrorist organizations and each other's brothers. Their ropes are in the hand of the same man" [15 Temmuz'da onlarında maskesi düştü. FETÖ, PKK aynı ikisi de terör örgütü, birbirinin kardeşi. Bunların ipleri aynı adamın elinde] (Yildirim as cited in Haberler, 2017a). Building off this claim of the supposed collaboration between the PKK and FETO, Yildirim like Erdogan claimed that Europe works alongside them in order to

oppose the Yes vote. He stated, "You see who opposes this vote. The PKK, Pennsylvania, and here the HDP also has its pincers. Who else is against it? European countries are also against it. Why do they oppose it? Because they work together" [Bu oylamaya kimleri karşı çıktığını görüyorsunuz. PKK, Pensilvanya karşı çıkıyor ve burada maşaları da var HDP. Başka kim karşı çıkıyor. Avrupa ülkeleri karşı çıkıyorlar. Niye karşı çıkıyorlar çünkü bunlar birlikte çalışıyorlar] (Yildirim as cited in Haberler, 2017a). He argued that the nefarious intentions of these groups working together against Turkey will be stopped by voting for Yes. He stated, "These plans will be broken. On April 16th, will will go to the polls, we will say "yes", and we will break their traps" [Bu planlar bozulacak. 16 Nisan'da sandığa gideceğiz evet diyeceğiz, bunların tuzaklarını bozacağız] (Yildirim as cited in Haberler, 2017a).

With European countries now depicted as supporters of terrorism pushing for the No vote in order to suppress Turkey, Erdogan lashed out at Europe during the opening ceremony for the Ataturk Cultural Center in Ankara (Haberler, 2017c). He stated, "April 16th is coming, and the Turkish nation will deliver the biggest lesson to western leaders" [16 Nisan geliyor, Türk milleti bu batının liderlerine en büyük dersi verecek] (Erdogan as cited in Haberler, 2017c). He claimed that the EU created a religious struggle between Europe and Turkey. He alleged that, "All EU leaders went to the Vatican and submissively sat there listening to the Pope. Do you understand why the EU does not accept Turkey? It is clear that it is a crusader alliance. April 16th is a time to evaluate this" [Gittiler Vatikan'da tüm AB liderleri kuzu kuzu orada oturup Papa'yı dinlediler. AB'ye Türkiye'yi niye almıyorlar anladınız mı? Olay tamamiyle açık ve net söylüyorum haçlı ittifakıdır. 16 Nisan aynı zamanda bu kararı değerlendirme zamanıdır] (Erdogan as cited in Haberler, 2017c). During a speech at the 4th Youth Forum in Istanbul, this conspiracy was fur-

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ther highlighted by Erdogan when he stated that there were "dirty bargains" behind closed doors that aimed to implement projects to divide the broader region through terrorism (Middle East Monitor, 2017). He argued, "Just as the borders of the region's countries were drawn a hundred years ago with blood, tears, and sedition, we are witnessing similar attempts today through the use of terrorist networks" (Erdogan as cited in Middle East Monitor, 2017).

This depiction of Europe as working against the AKP's rallies was depicted as Europe's supposed support for the No vote in order to oppress Turkey and divide it. This narrative strongly derived from Sevres Syndrome. As will be noted in the following section, the No vote was associated with support for these foreign powers, particularly Europe, in their supposed attempts to attack and divide the nation through the exploitation of terrorism. This depiction of the No vote would associate its support with the populist category of "other".

The No Vote: Terrorists, Dividers, and Foreign Powers

Support for the No vote was associated with support for terrorism and Turkish national division; that is, support for the No vote was equated with support for the populist "other" and those who do not belong to the nation. By repeating this argument at rallies and in interviews, the AKP discursively excluded supporters of the No vote from the nation by associating them with enemies of the nation. The previous section highlighted the discursive depiction of a conspiracy informed by Sevres Syndrome in which European countries were working against the referendum through alleged support for terrorism in Turkey. With this conspiracy serving as the backdrop to the referendum, those who supported the No vote were associated with support for terror-

ism. Instead of being a part of the "us" of the nation, No vote supporters were confined to the populist "other" as voting alongside terrorists, separatists, and European elites interfering in the affairs of Turkey by way of terrorism.

As noted already in the previous section, the historic backdrop of the referendum was set again by drawing from the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative of Turkey besieged by foreign powers meddling in the country's affairs. As Erdogan stated during a ceremony in Ankara, "But who says 'no'? Separatist terrorist organizations, Pennsylvania, Qandil, and some European leaders" [Ama kim hayır diyor. Bölücü terör örgütü, Pensilvanya, Kandil, Avrupalı bazı liderler] (Erdogan as cited in Haberler, 2017c). He repeated several versions of this line at different rallies throughout the campaign. With the nation depicted as being under siege by all these forces of terrorism and separation, voting "yes" in the referendum was depicted as the solution to defend the country and uphold its sovereignty. As Erdogan argued, "April 16th will be a historic response to all crises traders" [16 Nisan tüm kriz tüccarlarına verilecek tarihi bir cevap olacaktır] (Haberler, 2017c).

The main opposition party, the CHP, strongly opposed the referendum and campaigned for the No vote. As a result, Erdogan associated the CHP's support for the No vote with support for terrorism stating, "Unfortunately, the main opposition party acts together with a terrorist organization" [Ana muhalefet partisi terör örgütüyle beraber hareket etti, maalesef] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b). During a Yes rally campaign speech in Samsun, he further aligned the CHP's support for the No vote with terrorism and separatism (Milliyet, 2017b). Referring to the imprisoned leader of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, on the prison island of Imrali, he stated, "What does the head of the separatist organization in Imrali say? He says 'no'. What does the head of

FETO in Pennsylvania say? Now the main opposition walks together with them" [İmralı'da bölücü örgütün başı ne diyor? 'Hayır' diyor. Pensilvanya'daki FETÖ'nün başı ne diyor. Şimdi, ana muhalefet işte onlarla beraber yürüyor] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b).

During an interview with Kanal-D and CNN Turk, Erdogan addressed Turkish citizens who support the CHP and were considering to vote "no" (Haberler, 2017b). He argued that because terrorist organizations support the No vote, he was certain that citizens loyal to the country from other parties such as the CHP would oppose terrorism and vote "yes". He argued, "Qandil says 'no'. I believe that my citizens of the CHP who have devoted their hearts to the flag of this country will realize they cannot say 'no' because those who want to divide this country say 'no'" [Kandil 'hayır' diyor. CHP'ye gönül vermiş olan vatandaşlarımın da 'bu ülkenin bayrağına saygı duymayan, vatanı bölmek isteyenler 'hayır' dediğine göre biz 'hayır' diyemeyiz' diye bir yaklaşım olacağına inanıyorum] (Erdogan as cited in Haberler, 2017b).

During Binali Yildirim's campaign rallies for the Yes vote, he heavily drew from Sevres Syndrome to align support for the No vote with support for terrorists controlled by outside powers seeking the division of Turkey. Not only did he he argue that all terrorist organizations are one and the same, he also claimed that they are all controlled by the same outside power in support of the No vote (Milliyet, 2017a). Yildirim constructed this conspiracy by claiming that, "PKK and FETÖ, they are the same, both are brothers to each other. They moved together in solidarity, because their strings are in the same man's hand, their ropes are in the same place" [PKK ve FETÖ, ikisi de birbirinin aynı, ikisi de birbirinin kardeşi. Bunlar dayanışma içinde, beraber hareket ettiler çünkü bunların ipleri aynı adamın elinde, ipleri aynı yerde] (Yildirim as cited in Milliyet, 2017a). To emphasize this supposed collaboration between terrorist organizations plot-

ting against Turkey, Yildirim even claimed that the PKK was also involved in the July 15th coup attempt saying, "On the evening of July 15, the PKK delivered an order from Qandil saying, 'There will be a coup tonight, do not attack soldiers.' On the morning of July 16, after the nation defeated the coup plotters, a new radio order came 'Coup failed, free to attack soldiers'" [15 Temmuz akşamı PKK Kandil'den 'Aman bu gece darbe olacak, sakın askerlere saldırmayın' talimatı verdi. 16 Temmuz sabahı milletin darbecileri yerle bir etmesinin ardından bu sefer telsizle 'Darbe başarısız, askere saldırı serbest' emri geldi] (Yildirim as cited in Milliyet, 2017a). In addition to aligning the PKK and FETO, this claim was used to explain the series of PKK attacks in Turkey in the months leading up to the referendum. Yildirim used this supposed conspiracy of collaboration between terrorist groups to claim that they all support the No vote stating, "We will hold a referendum on April 16. You see who opposes this vote. The PKK and Pennsylvania oppose it, and the HDP also has its pincers here. Who else opposes? European countries oppose it. Why do they all oppose it? Because they work together." [16 Nisan'da bir halk oylaması yapacağız. Bu oylamaya kimleri karşı çıktığını görüyorsunuz. PKK, Pensilvanya karşı çıkıyor ve burada maşaları da var HDP. Başka kim karşı çıkıyor. Avrupa ülkeleri karşı çıkıyorlar. Niye karşı çıkıyorlar çünkü bunlar birlikte çalışıyorlar.] (Yildirim as cited in Haberler, 2017a)[6]. Through this discourse, support for the No vote was equated support for this conspiracy of terrorists and foreign outsiders working against the Turkish nation and state.

With this conspiracy constructed of terrorist organizations all working together in support of the No vote with the backing of outside powers, the No vote was heavily associated with the

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[6] There is no evidence of there having been any collaboration between the PKK and the Gulen movement. The PKK is based on Marxism, whereas the Gulen movement is rooted in Islam.

Sevres Syndrome element of foreign powers and domestic collaborators plotting against Turkey. This made support of the No vote incompatible with support for the nation. In addition to designated terrorist organizations such as FETO and the PKK being associated with the No vote, both the CHP and the HDP were also condemned for supporting the No vote and depicted as being on the side of the populist "other". By contrast, the Yes vote was associated with support for the nation and the nation's prosperity. The following section will demonstrate how the Yes vote was associated with the populist "us" of the nation.

<u>The Yes Vote: Support for the Nation and National Unity</u>

While the No vote was associated with terrorism and national division, the Yes vote was associated with support for the country, democracy, and national unity. As Erdogan asked the crowd while campaigning in Ankara for the Yes vote, "Does Ankara say 'yes' for a greater Turkey, democracy, and economy on April 16th?" [Ankara, 16 Nisan'da, demokrasi ve ekonomisiyle daha büyük Türkiye için evet diyor mu?] (Erdogan as cited in Haberler, 2017c). The Yes vote was repeatedly associated with being in support of the nation and national unity. This was achieved by likening support for the Yes vote to supporting national unity such as that displayed among citizens during the July 15th coup attempt. It was also likened to support for the neo-Ottoman vision of Turkey as a multicultural nation comprised of various ethnic groups, languages, and cultural traditions.

Unity was a significant part of the argument for the specific constitutional change that eliminated the office of the Prime Minister. As Erdogan argued at a rally for the Yes vote in Sam-

sun, "If the President and the Prime Minister are from separate parties, there will be conflict" [Cumhurbaşkanı ve Başbakanın ayrı partilerden olursa çatışma çıkar] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b). Erdogan further explained stating that, "You will see that the essence of the constitutional amendment consists of the unification of the presidency and the prime ministry. This is to prevent conflict" [Anayasa değişikliğinin özü cumhurbaşkanlığın ve başbakanlığın birleştirilmesinden ibaret olduğunu göreceksiniz. Bunu bu kavgalar olmasın diye olacak] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b). Even Prime Minister Binali Yildirim argued that through the referendum's changes that would eliminate the office of the Prime Minister (his own office), it lowers the possibility of government divisions that could threaten wider government and national unity (Memurlar, 2017).

During an opening ceremony for the Beylikduzu Congregation in Istanbul, Erdogan associated the unity shown among citizens during the July 15th coup attempt to national unity needed to vote Yes in the referendum (Son Dakika, 2017). He evoked Sevres Syndrome in emphasizing the need for this unity in voting Yes to oppose the alleged outside forces interfering in the domestic affairs of both Turkey and the country's neighbors. Referring to July 15th, he stated, "If our nation did not demonstrate its determination that night, Turkey would have entered its darkest period. The ones playing games in Syria, Iraq, and Libya tried to carry out the same in our country" [Eğer milletimizin o gece sergilediği kararlılık olmasaydı Türkiye tarihinin en karanlık dönemine girecekti. Suriye'de, Irak'ta, Libya'da oynanan oyunun aynısını ülkemizde sahnelemeye çalışacaklardı] (Erdogan as cited in Son Dakika, 2017). He further argued that it is impossible to go through such events without learning any lesson, and that the referendum is intended to strengthen Turkish unity in the face of such events.

During Binali Yildirim's speech in Kars, he highlighted the neo-Ottoman emphasis of the different ethnic groups of Turkey uniting together in solidarity, and that this same unification will be demonstrated in support for the Yes vote. He highlighted the AKP's accomplishments in removing bans on this multicultural religious identity and declared "Be Azeri, be Kurdish; be proud of your identity. Be Jafari; Be Alevi" [Azeri olun, Kürt olun; kimliğinizle gurur duyun. Caferi olun; Alevi olun] (Yildirim as cited in Milliyet, 2017a). Connecting this multicultural identity with the Yes vote, Binali argued, "we have become one and together as Turks, Kurds, Alevi, Sunni, Jafari… We are walking into the future with the prayers of our brothers from all religions and ethnic groups living all over our country. We will experience bright springs after April 16th. Turkey will win with 'yes'" [Farklılıkları hep zenginlik gördük, Türk, Kürt, Alevi, Sünni, Caferi bir ve beraber olduk. Ülkemizin dört bir yanında yaşayan her dinden, her etnik kesimden kardeşimizin duaları ile geleceğe yürüyoruz. 16 Nisan sonrası da aydınlık baharları yaşayacağız. 'Evet' ile Türkiye kazanacak] (Yildirim as cited in Milliyet, 2017a). During this same rally in Kars, the MHP mayor of Kars, Murtaza Karacanta, also spoke and equated support for the Yes vote with support for the nation. He stated, "With the permission of God, I promise to explode the ballot boxes from Kars. I also promised the Prime Minister. The people of Kars swore to stand by the national will, state, and homeland" [Allah'ın izniyle Kars'tan sandıkları patlatma sözü veriyorum. Başbakan'a da sözü verdim. Kars halkı milli iradenin, devletinin, vatanının yanında olmak için and içmiştir] (Karacanta as cited in Milliyet, 2017a).

During a rally for the Yes vote in Samsun, Erdogan associated his unifying message of Rabia 4 with the Yes vote. He stated, "Now, give a response that all of Turkey, Europe, and the world can hear. Yes for one nation on April 16? Yes for a single flag? Yes for one country? Yes

for one state? [Şimdi, öyle bir cevap verin ki tüm Türkiye, Avrupa, dünya duysun. 16 Nisan'da tek millet için evet mi? Tek bayrak için evet mi? Tek vatan için evet mi? Tek devlet için evet mi?] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b). Following the crowd's responses, he continued stating, "To all terrorist organizations from PKK to FETO, this 'yes' rising from Samsun is the sign of your end" [Ey PKK'sından FETÖ'süne tüm terör örgütleri, Samsun'dan yükselen bu evet sizin sonunuzun işaretidir] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b). Again, not only was the yes vote associated with national unity, but it was also associated with the end of terrorist organizations threatening the country.

During this same speech in Samsun, Erdogan directly called out to supporters of all the major political parties in Turkey including the CHP (yet notably excluding the HDP, which had repeatedly faced claims of supporting the PKK) to support the Yes vote in order to both uphold national unity and give a response to supposed challenges being made by the PKK and Europe (Milliyet, 2017b). Calling the members of each party his brothers and sisters, he said to the crowd, "Are we ready to explode the voting boxes together with 'yes' on April 16? We will be one, we're big, we're alive, we'll be together, we are brothers and sisters, we will always be together with Turkey" [16 Nisan'da sandıkları birlikte 'evet'le patlatmaya var mıyız? Bir olacağız, iri olacağız, diri olacağız, beraber olacağız, kardeş olacağız, hep birlikte Türkiye olacağız] (Erdogan as cited in Milliyet, 2017b). This was followed by Erdogan reading out loud the lyrics to a song titled "We Walk These Roads Together" [Beraber Yürüdük Biz Bu Yollarda].

By associating the Yes vote with support for national unity, those who would vote Yes were depicted as supporting the nation. As repeatedly stressed by both Erdogan and Yildirim, this was also an invitation to the country's minority populations including Kurds to become one with

the nation by voting Yes. By equating the Yes vote with support for the nation and national unity, anyone who opposed this vote was depicted as voting against national unity and thereby voting for national division alongside domestic terrorists and the alleged outside forces controlling them. Voting for "yes" was voting for the "us" of the nation whereas voting "no" was voting for the populist "them" of the PKK, FETO, and Europe.

Chapter 5: The Role of Sevres Syndrome in Contemporary Turkish Politics

This thesis has aimed to demonstrate how Sevres Syndrome informs the historic backdrop and understanding of events that creates the foundation for the construction of the populist "us" versus "them". Despite its exaggerated elements of nationalist paranoia, the fear narrative of Sevres Syndrome is rooted in history and based on the actual division of Anatolia by foreign powers that occurred under the Treaty of Sevres. As argued by Carr (1986), historic narratives are used to explain puzzling events, and serve as a frame of reference in order for people to understand events. In the case of Turkey, the Sevres Syndrome fear of outside forces and their domestic collaborators has been used as a frame of reference to explain numerous political events and crises throughout the history of the Turkish Republic. Sevres Syndrome was used as a historic narrative base that informed the understanding of the July 15th coup attempt. It acted as a framework of the Turkish nation resisting foreign powers and their domestic collaborators seeking Turkey's division. With this framework informing the understanding of the events, the Gulen movement was excluded from the Turkish nation and confined to the populist category of "them". Sevres Syndrome was used again during the April 2017 constitutional referendum to justify support for the Yes vote. It explained the justification for the Yes vote by aligning the Yes vote with the Turkish nation whereas the No vote was depicted as being supported by outside powers and their supposed terrorist pawns in Turkey. This also resulted in alining the Yes/No vote along the populist categories of "us" versus "them". With Sevres Syndrome already rooted in an "us" versus "them" relation, groups are categorized in one of these two sides of this dualistic relation. On the side of "us" is the Turkish nation, and on the side of "them" is everyone else

working with foreign powers to suppress and dismember the nation. The following chapter will recap much of what was covered in this thesis and provide answers to the original two research questions.

Despite its promotion of conspiratorial beliefs, Sevres Syndrome is still rooted in the actual historic experience of the Treaty of Sevres, which, following the Ottoman defeat, divided the Anatolian peninsula between foreign powers (Evans, 2014). With this threat of national division and foreign domination lingering over the cities and villages of Anatolia, the Treaty of Sevres played a significant role in motivating popular support for the Turkish Independence movement. Following the Turkish victory in the Independence War, the memory of the treaty left a significant socio-political impact on the new Republic of Turkey particularly in how it was to define who belongs to the Turkish nation and who does not; that is, who is "us" and who is "them". Under Kemalist Turkey, the category of "us" included those who belonged to the Turkish nation. Despite the secular government of the new Republic of Turkey, this understanding of the Turkish nation was heavily based on the Muslim millet of the Ottoman Empire. As part of the former Muslim millet, even Kurdish populations were also considered to be Turks and included within the idea of the Turkish nation. Turkification projects aimed to dismantle Kurdish identity, remove the language from public use, and reaffirm a Turkish identity through education and assimilation. Those who resisted this assimilation and continued to embrace a Kurdish identity were excluded from the nation and perceived as pawns used by foreign powers in order to dismember and destroy the Turkish nation. They were excluded from the nation and confined to the populist category of "other" along with Christian populations such as Armenians and Greeks who were viewed as collaborators with the West in attempts to divide the Turkish nation during the Inde-

pendence War. The fear rhetoric of Sevres Syndrome continued throughout the history of the modern Republic manifesting itself in the discourse of Turkish politicians, military leaders, and others who attributed numerous domestic political crises to the supposed interference of jealous foreign powers seeking to divide and conquer the Turkish nation (Hovsepyan, 2012). Separatist terror organizations such as the PKK were believed to have been supported by foreign powers, and even recognition of the Armenian genocide was depicted as being part of an international plot to eventually reinstate the Treaty of Sevres to cede territory to Armenia.

However, with the rise of the AKP came a new understanding of the Turkish nation. Embracing what some such as Taspinar (2008) described as neo-Ottomanism, the AKP's approach to Turkish identity emphasized the multicultural and religious Ottoman identity of Turkey that had previously been suppressed by secular Kemalist Turkey. This multicultural understanding of Turkish identity led to the acceptance of minority populations including Kurds who were previously oppressed by Kemalist Turkey or forced to assimilate to a Turkish identity. Rather than seeing the recognition of minority populations as an inherent threat to Turkish national unity, the neo-Ottoman approach of the AKP viewed Turkey as a nation of many different cultures all sharing an Ottoman history and legacy of religious tolerance. Minority populations were no longer seen as outsiders, but included within the "us" of the Turkish nation.

Under the AKP, several reforms aimed to reach out to religious Turks and minority populations. Minority populations were no longer seen as an inherent threat to Turkish national unity. Minority languages were not only allowed to be spoken in public settings again, but radio and TV stations began to broadcast in minority languages. Religion was also brought into mainstream politics through actions such as removing a headscarf ban among women in public insti-

tutions such as universities. The AKP also made limited efforts to reach out to other religious minorities outside of Islam such as through restoration work across Turkey of historic synagogues and churches (Daily Sabah, 2018).

Through its neo-Ottoman strategy, the AKP introduced a new understanding of "us" and "them" in Turkey that was significantly different from the previous Kemalist understanding of who belongs to the nation and who does not. However, despite this new understanding of the Turkish nation, Sevres Syndrome continued to be used as the narrative background to identify a new populist perception of "other". Using Sevres Syndrome rhetoric of Turkey under siege by foreign enemies and their domestic collaborators seeking its division and destruction, the AKP and Erdogan exploited it to construct a new "other". In the case of the July 15th coup attempt, it was the Gulen movement. Members of the Gulen movement were accused of orchestrating the coup attempt, and they were excluded from the understanding of the Turkish nation as terrorists, traitors, infidels, and viruses. Sevres Syndrome was also used again during the April 2017 constitutional referendum, with supporters of the referendum depicted on the side of the Turkish nation, and opponents of the referendum being associated with foreign powers and terrorists.

With this in mind, it is now time to answer the main research question, which was stated as the following: *How is the populist antagonistic relation of "us" versus "them" constructed in Turkish politics?* This thesis aimed to answer this question by analyzing the role that the phenomenon of Sevres Syndrome plays in discursively constructing the populist "us" versus "them" relation. The political discourse used by Turkish leaders that evokes the Sevres Syndrome fear of Turkish national division and destruction by outside forces and their domestic collaborators acts as a historic background narrative that informs and explains political events and crises in Turkey.

As a historic background narrative, it serves the foundation for the construction of "us" and "them" by categorizing groups within the opposing dualistic sides of either the "us" of the Turkish nation or the "them" of foreign powers and domestic collaborators seeking Turkey's destruction. As argued by Carr (1986), historic narratives help explain puzzling events, and the narrative of foreign powers seeking Turkey's division has been evoked within Turkish political discourse throughout the history of Turkey to help explain various political crises and threats to the nation since the founding of the country. It is rooted in the actual Treaty of Sevres that did in fact territorially divide the what was perceived as the Turkish nation, and it has been used as a framework to associate groups in an "us" versus "them" populist relation aligning them either on the side of the nation or the side of foreign powers.

The secondary research question was stated as the following: *Which groups are included in the category of "us" and which are excluded in the category of "other" within current Turkish political discourse?* The understanding of "us" versus "them" and who belongs to these categories has changed throughout modern Turkish history. Kemalists viewed minority populations as an inherent threat to the unity of Turkey and sought to either oppress, forcibly assimilate, or deport minority populations through both population exchanges and internally forced migration. From the Kemalist standpoint, minorities that did not assimilate to the Turkish identity such as Kurds, Alevis, Greeks, and Armenians were in the populist category of "other" and excluded from the populist "us" of the Turkish. In the context of Sevres Syndrome, they were depicted as potential domestic collaborators in the alleged games of foreign powers seeking to divide the Turkish nation. The is notably different from the AKP, which has included historically oppressed minorities within the understanding of the Turkish nation, thereby making them a part of the

populist "us". As mentioned in the previous chapters, Erdogan's metaphor of Rabia 4 strongly reflects this inclusion of minorities.

Although the AKP has brought minority populations into its understanding of the nation, Serves Syndrome nevertheless continued to be used as a way to designate new political threats as populist outsiders excluded from the nation. In the case of the AKP and similar to the Kemalists' exclusion of minorities, Sevres Syndrome was used to exclude the Gulen movement from the "us" of the Turkish nation by depicting them as the domestic collaborators of foreign powers seeking the division and destruction of the Turkish nation. As demonstrated by the previous chapters, they have been discursively depicted as traitors, infidels, and viruses threatening the health of the Turkish nation that not only must be excluded from the Turkish nation, but also eliminated. This depiction of the Gulen movement as the populist "other" began immediately after the July 2016 failed coup and was reaffirmed during the April 2017 constitutional referendum in which they were aligned among other terrorist threats such as the PKK.

The phenomenon of Sevres Syndrome is one element of many that impacts Turkey's understanding of national identity and national security priorities. Identity in Turkey is an incredibly complex topic and many different factors impact numerous understandings of national identity within Turkey particularly in the construction of the populist "us" versus "them". This thesis looked specifically at the discursive aspects of populism in Turkey, but not the material policies that acted against perceived populist threats. This thesis is an observation and analysis of the pattern of the Sevres Syndrome phenomenon playing a role in populist discourse in the development of the "us" and "them" relation. Political events and crises are depicted as being the result of foreign interference, and groups perceived as political threats are depicted by Turkish leaders as

domestic collaborators working as pawns of outside forces intent on dividing and destroying the nation.

Conclusion

In the weeks leading up to the first year anniversary of the July 15th coup attempt, the day became memorialized in numerous ways including making it a new national holiday called Democracy and National Unity Day (Anadolu Agency, 2017). Public spaces across the country such as bridges, parks, bus stations, sports stadiums, and more were renamed in some fashion to remember the day with names such as The July 15th Martyrs Park or The July 15th Democracy Bridge. Quite notably in a sign of the new Ottoman Islamic AKP hegemony over the nation, the face of the Turkish one lira coin temporarily replaced the face of Ataturk with a memorial to July 15th depicting several hands in the air raising a Turkish flag with "July 15th martyrs" written across the perimeter. A museum in Istanbul was also announced to memorialize the events of July 15th. Posters and billboards across the country began showing illustrations of the night of July 15th as citizens rose up against the coup plotters. Several news stations would nearly cease-lessly show footage from the night with commentary focused around the theme of "Don't forget July 15th".

All of this reflected one of the most prominent messages of the coup attempt purported by the AKP; the coup attempt was a victory of Turkish democracy in a second war of indepen-dence fought against foreign powers seeking the country's dismemberment. This narrative had its roots in the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative, which served as the foundation for the development

of a populist "us" versus "them" relationship emerging from the coup attempt that excluded the coup plotters from the nation labeling them as traitors, infidels, terrorists working alongside foreign forces to destroy the nation. Sevres Syndrome further informed a similar antagonistic populist relation that developed amidst the April 2017 Turkish constitutional referendum depicting support for the referendum as support for the nation and opposition to the referendum as support for terrorists and outside forces seeking the dismemberment and destruction of the Turkish nation.

This thesis sought to demonstrate how fear plays a role in the construction of the populist "us" versus "them" relation in Turkey. It specifically looked at the role of Sevres Syndrome in this construction and how it informs a historic narrative to explain political crises and events. Actors involved in political events and crises are associated with one of the two opposing sides of the Sevres Syndrome fear narrative; either on the side of the Turkish nation or on the side of foreign forces and their domestic collaborators. Whereas the populist "us" includes those belonging to the Turkish nation, the populist "them" is reserved for foreign forces and domestic traitors. As demonstrated by this thesis, political opponents can become discursively associated with this populist "other" in which they are depicted as domestic collaborators working alongside foreign forces to dismember and destroy the Turkish nation. It is expected that by examining the role of Sevres Syndrome in populist discourse, this analysis of populist discourse in Turkey is able to make its own unique contribution to the broader study of populism.

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