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SECURITIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL HEGEMONY: US-TURKISH RELATIONS IN PERSPECTIVE

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Since its introduction by the social constructivists in the mid-1990s, the concept of securitization has affected the theoretical and case oriented studies in IR to the extent that it has reached to a status of theory, as it is called as *securitization theory* in international relations (Williams, 2003: 511). Securitization theory basically argues that security both at the state and international/global levels should not be thought as an objective condition of not being under real or perceived threats existing independently from the acts and decisions of the state-actors whose security in question. Rather it is constructed through these acts and decisions that reflect the nature of the international interaction between and the quality of domestic social-political bargain within them (Bigo, 2001; Lipschutz, 1995; Weaver, 1995). In other words, for any object of security –not necessarily for the states- security (or insecurity) should be thought as an intersubjectively constituted phenomenon, reflexively formed through the practices of actors that is the states, social groups, classes, various sub-state and interstate level actors that are all surrounded by a simultaneously forming material and cognitive structure.

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Therefore, any securitization does not take place in a vacuum. To define something as a security problem is possible only within a wider political framework of ideas, norms and values which give it a meaning and legitimacy all referring to the cognitive content of the structure. In this respect, as an act performed both at the state and interstate levels, securitization –definition and legitimation of security issues- needs to be framed with a cognitive as well as material structure. Here, the interest in the cognitive content of the structure takes us to the concept of Gramscian hegemony, as the locus, the structure end of the mutually constituting agent-structure conundrum. In the analytical framework of this study, therefore the concept of securitization will be drawn into the Gramscian concept of hegemony. In other words, securitization will be evaluated as a multi-lateral and multi-functional process that actively reproduces the hegemonic security structure within which securitization itself is possible. Gramscian hegemony well suits such an understanding of security since it is basically a power relationship, not a unilateral power imposition. The hegemonic structure as an order of international security both qualifies the securitization of particular units that are under hegemony and in return it is reproduced and sustained on a continuous basis through the acts of those securitizing units. Therefore, the concepts of hegemony and securitization allow us to analyze the mutually constituting agent-structure relationship in world politics par excellence.

With this analytical framework which will be outlined more in detail below, the objective of this study is to analyze the formation of national security conception, in other words the basic characteristics of securitization process of the Turkish Republic in relation to the US hegemony. In other words the issue is to understand the features of securitization in Turkey

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– which problems have been defined as security problems by the ruling elite and how they have been accepted by the people of Turkish Republic- in relation to US led global hegemonic security order. The study will reveal that the formation of national security priorities and the security identity of Turkish Republic at the international level were marked by specific turning points in US-Turkey relations; each affected the ways those priorities, in other words the internal and external securitizations of Turkish state were defined and carried out. The study will account for briefly that in some specific turning points of US-Turkish relations, the formation of national security priorities in other words the internal and external securitizations in Turkey took place along with the rhetoric and material guidance of US hegemony. In this respect, the basic argument of the study is that what drives the content and the logic of existing securitizations of the Turkish Republic cannot be decoded without figuring out Turkey's place in the context of global hegemonic networks led by the US.

The basic idea under such an enterprise is the well known point that Turkey in its foreign and security policy has put the interpretations developed by the Western world and by particularly the United States at the center of its own securitization as a cognitive process and as well as of its material security policies. In other words, both at the policy-making and cognitive, mentality formation levels, Turkish ruling elite has internalized the discourse and the rhetoric that constituted the ideological framework of American hegemony. But the story does not end there. In the same way, the study argues that Turkey's internal and external securitizations have greatly contributed to the consolidation of the US hegemony especially in the Middle East for many years. Therefore one can observe the mutually constituting agent-structure relationship well in the historical trajectory of

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US-Turkish relations. At this point, however, it should be cited that this is an ongoing study limiting itself by asking questions about the feasibility of developing such an analytical framework for such a case study and at the same time questioning the changing qualities of US hegemony after the Iraq War together with the features of securitization in Turkey which is also under a serious pressure of transformation.

Hegemony and Securitization

As stated above, the Critical Theory's concept of hegemony is used to address the context, the structure in which all kinds of securitizations take place in the contemporary international order. As two different concepts of the political science and international relations, securitization and hegemony have some common critical implications about the nature of international relations. The articulation of these points will help to clarify the original analytical framework of this study.

First, both securitization and hegemony facilitate to erase the dividing line between the domestic and international which is one of the most criticized and restrictive underlying idea in international analysis. As a matter of fact, this questioning has been the subject of an older methodological debate but it has created new repercussions with the end of Cold War. The end of Cold War brought the reexamination of the traditional ways of viewing how security and insecurity arise in the domestic and international fields (McSweeney, 1999:3). The relevance of domestic factors in the relations between states and the relevance to security of the internal structure of states with its security policies in the international field was directly observed in the events following the end of bi-polar security design. This emphasis on the relevance of domestic politics to security went hand in

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hand with the identity debate which questioned both the understanding of state as the only security referent that is the only answer of the question of “Whose security” and the understanding that the security of the state is a matter of the distribution of material capabilities. It was emphasized that the object of study in IR is the social order as a whole which encompasses the domestic sphere as well as the international. (McSweeney, 1999:81-100).

The end point of this debate was that security is inextricably related to the constitution of identity. The process of securitization –which problem is a security problem and who is being secured from that problem– is at the center of the constitution of identity. Therefore, the concept of national security lost its autonomy and status as an objectively defined situation. Rather, the idea that security issues get constituted relationally and reflexively through a dynamic interplay between domestic and international processes has become prevalent. Why is it so important? It is important because, with such a perspective, it becomes possible to understand the more deeply inserted, cognitive elements behind a particular security act or to read the cognitive processes behind the constitution of ideas, values and modes of behavior in security policy apart from a realistic cause and effect framework. Such an analysis allows us to see that international as well as domestic political issues known as objective realities of our world are in fact objectified through everyday practices of the actors and are given an independent existence in rules, values and norms that in turn direct those practices (McSweeney, 1999: 138-172). Governments develop a particular security understanding, define a problem as a security problem, in other words *do securitization* not in a political vacuum but through their interaction with all kinds of sub-state level and international actors.

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As a well-known methodological innovation, the wiping up of the differentiating line between the domestic and the international makes possible to see the state as a collective actor, rather than an abstract entity. Concerning the formation of a particular security conception, the point is that it is the domestic interaction process –between individuals, social groups, classes and the state- that continuously reproduces the meaning of what is to be secured in consistency with the wider international security structure. Here, the function of this domestic interaction process is the synchronization of a particular securitization with the needs of the structural reproduction at the international level (McSweeney, 1999: 160).

Therefore, the blurring of the line between the domestic and international paves the way to develop a socialized conception of state behavior that is how states and the ruling elite socialize into a particular international order –in this study characterized by hegemony- through a particular representation of threat and security. (McSweeney, 1999: 132-137) It allows us to see the mutual constitution of a domestic security identity and the reproduction of the hegemony in the international field. At this point, it is clear that securitization is much more than the speech acts of the security elite. The definition of a problem as a security problem is a much more complex process, as a matter of fact “a product of historical structures and processes, struggles for power within the states, of conflicts between the social groups that inhibit states and the interests that besiege them.” (Lipschutz, 1995: 8) It is relational in the sense that it takes place among the various classes, groups in the society, especially among the ruling elite and the rest. Every securitization internal or external, every foreign policy act and definition of threat towards security is a choice made in the

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context of interaction with other states in international arena, and with the sub-state groups in the domestic politics. (McSweeney, 1999: 161)

In the same way, hegemony also views the domestic organization and processes of the state as very related with its international behavior. The establishment of material and normative elements of hegemony first within states and then its outward extension to the international sphere was developed in detail by Robert Cox in the late 80s in an effort to establish an alternative framework of hegemony that is alternative to neorealist understanding hegemony which is based mainly on material dominance. According to Cox's critical conceptualization of international hegemony which is drawn mainly from Gramscian hegemony, the powerful interests located within the state-society relations turn into a global hegemony or support the global hegemony (Cox, 1993: 49-52). Here, hegemony is not one state's dominance but established by a historical bloc which is more than a simple political alliance within as well as between the states. It refers to the integration of a variety of different class interests that are not only based on political and economic aims, but also on intellectual and moral unity on a universal plane. Hegemony would therefore be established "if the relationship between intellectuals and people-nation, between the leaders and the led, the rulers and the ruled is provided by an organic cohesion" (quoted from Gramsci in Bieler and Morton, 2004: 91). In Gramscian hegemony, the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over it rules. More specifically, hegemony relies on the consensus among the ruling elites and/or classes about the continuation of the greater hegemonic structure. In this sense the hegemonic power means the power to draw the general framework of thoughts and ways of thinking that structurally limits the

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worldviews of the ruling elite, the civil societal, groups, classes and the individuals. Hegemony is not something about interstate relations but it is a transcending social and economic order having global level and social level appearing and manifestations.

This brings us to the second common ground between hegemony and securitization. Both are not impositions. Critical theory specifies that the hegemon's power is a co-optive one which means it is a power capable of structuring the system and particularly domestic politics of the states as to get them to behave in a complete harmony and in consent when they are defining their interests, preferences and specifically in defining threats to their security. In a successfully constructed hegemonic order, the hegemon is capable of determining the conditions and position of all units in the structure, their relationship with each other and with the hegemon, their domestic politics, the perceptions and policy preferences. Therefore, alliance with the hegemon may not be just a tactical move (Gill, 1990: 74). The relationship with the hegemon may create profound changes in perceptions, reconfiguration of ideological and institutional forces within the state apparatuses of governments and international organizations. On the whole it is an educational process went through organic intellectuals. Therefore, as developed at the international level by Cox, hegemony refers basically to a consensus established on ideas and values which are supported by material institutions and resources. The establishment of hegemony expresses a fit between a configuration of material power, the prevalent image of world order with a certain semblance of world order. It successfully constructs the thoughts and values about social order and social relationships both at the international and state levels (Bieler and Morton, 2004: 92-93).

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Securitization in the same way is not an imposition. There is always a receptive audience which is made ready to embrace that something is an existential threat and some conditions are the conditions for the realization of society's security. In this sense, security is neither related with the overcoming of objective threats nor is it a total subjective elite design. It is an intersubjectively constituted phenomenon. For the securitization theory, what is objective or observable is not the objective threats but the power of the discourse of national security that is constructed mainly through the security practices of actors. The sub-state and inter-state level security practices of various actors are of central importance in the production and reproduction of security truths mediated through communication, particularly by the media in the domestic and international levels. Therefore, a successful securitization depends on harassing domestic political culture to the service of foreign policy in the name of national security.

Hegemony through Securitization

What is then the concrete relationship between hegemony and securitization from the analytical point of view? As stated above securitization theory relies on an understanding of security as a cognitive process and this refers directly to Gramscian hegemony which is first and the foremost a cognitive design. Hegemony is the normative power to affect the constitution and flow of ideas, the steering and direction of preferences and understandings about policy options. It is a historically contextualized structural power relationship which operates through not only material dominance, but more important than that, through cognitive processes generating the active consent of those under hegemony. Here, the element of consent does not mean freedom of choice from the alternatives. It is some

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kind of false consciousness developed simultaneously at different levels of the society. It depends on the generation of society-wide belief that it is possible to obtain some benefits from the system –protection, economic aid, prestige etc- and there is some kind of power distribution among the hegemon and others albeit very asymmetrical (Gill, 1990: 41-51).

This belief obscures the malign character of the hegemonic structure. Hegemony is perceived as a benign one, providing opportunities for others to realize their interests regardless of the essentially malign character of the structure. In a well designed hegemonic order, the hegemon's acts are perceived as protective and benevolent for everyone since the hegemon behaves within defined rules and international procedures. As Gill states properly, hegemony is a system of rule in which the elements of legitimation and ideology interact at a deeper epistemological level, creating a global synergy of ideas beneficial to the outward extension or maintenance of the hegemonic power (Gill, 1990: 73). The Cold-War period American hegemony was a hegemonic order par excellence in these terms. The agendas, questions and solutions have generally been posed in major international organizations and interstate negotiations in and on American terms (Gill, 1990: 75).

Therefore, the successful construction and continuous reproduction of intersubjective meanings, collective images, shared notions, the *knowledge* on social relations and world order is essential in a hegemonic order. The point is that one of the most crucial subject on which hegemony has to produce knowledge and to get the others to socialize into is *security knowledge*. The production of security knowledge, in other words an effective securitization at the international level is the prerequisite of a

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sustained hegemony. In other words, securitization can be viewed as a medium through which hegemony is expressed and consolidated.

The intellectual and moral leadership of the hegemon in the production of security truths/or knowledge is expressed in its power to draw the limits of possible policy options for the subordinated. Here, one can give a crucial example from the current state of affairs in US-Turkish relations. In the current conjunction, no one in Turkey either in the ranks of the establishment or in people in the streets believe in the possibility of a military operation in Northern Iraq in spite of US opposition. The perceptions and policy options related with security are over determined and even mystified for a long period of time. The political and military elite in Turkey have always behaved with the foresighted reactions of the US governments. This has been a much internalized form of behavior on the part of the state elite.

Therefore, the causes of insecurity, the dynamics of securitizations should be searched for in the structural and relational dynamics of the hegemonic security order. The hegemon's global interests and the complex policies creates a malign structure which itself poses a threat for many states over and above any specific intentions of other states. However, the point is that as stated above, the malign structure is not an imposition. Actors, mainly the ruling elite of individual states draw strategically upon the hegemonic consensus not as a tactical move, but with a genuine, socially based belief that they also realize their interest.

There is one important point, however that should be underlined here. The emphasis on the cognitive element as a common ground or a point of connection between hegemony as the structure and securitization as the medium, should not mean that the states' behaviors are determined by

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structure of ideas as they are by material structure of the neorealist hegemony that is by coercive force (McSweeney, 1999: 132-33). The internalization of ideas, values, and the security truths by the actors is not a mechanistic process of acceptance. The actors participate into the construction and consolidation of security truths through their security practices, acts and decisions in the international field. In other words, the subordinated units under hegemony are not only consumers but also producers of securitization.

In this study, the enrichment of the idea of securitization as a medium in the mutual constitution of hegemonic structure and agents is based particularly on Bill McSweeney's study on security and identity which is developed on the basis of Giddens's Structuration Theory. The Structuration Theory can be utilized also to analyze the social relations and the constitution of identities at the international level. According to the theory any social order, including the international order cannot be considered as an independent phenomenon, external to acting units within it. The structure and the agent are ontologically interdependent (McSweeney: 138-145). In such a framework, security identity at the state level cannot be viewed as a dependent variable with respect to hegemonic security structure and accordingly, securitization is not a one way process.

Here, as McSweeney proposed, the concept of political spillover can be utilized to explain the harmonization of security interests produced intersubjectively in the international field (McSweeney, 1999: 170-171) Concerning the subject of this study, that is to establish a connection between securitization and functioning of hegemony, again an understanding of spillover can be used. As in the integration to a security community, the adherence to a hegemonic order also necessitates the shifting of loyalties,

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expectations and political activities toward a new security truth and the secondary states learn to identify their interests with the hegemon. Here, structure is used by actors to produce meanings of domestic conduct and in that moment, it is drawn into the temporal, contextual dimension of action, thus to be reinforced and modified by usage and repetition. In a sense, actors subject themselves to the constraints of behaving within the confines of habit. Actors learn and relearn their security interest in interaction with the sub-state level actors, with other states but mainly with and with the hegemon. Such a perspective towards securitization will provide us a richer conception of security and the functioning of hegemony. Giddens's Structuration Theory puts forward that far from being passive receptors and reproducers of an assumed consensus about meaning and norms, actors draw strategically upon such consensus to establish an agreement or to repair a relationship, in short they manage the rules that make the game interaction possible. In the same way, under hegemony, the patterns of meaning about what is to be secured or the shared knowledge of what is the threat are reproduced through typified behaviors of state actors that simultaneously sustaining it.

Therefore, the issue is that the interests of the states relevant to their security, in other words the basic features of their peculiar securitizations are gradually constituted through the security acts under hegemony which is reproduced through the same processes. The hegemon's manipulation of others' security interests and policies is fully compatible with the sovereign choice of the actors to cooperate. The agents are effectively enmeshed with the constraints of structure and learn to reconstruct their own securitization. As a result state choices are not only constrained by structure; they affect consolidation of the hegemonic order.

US-Turkish Relations in Perspective: A Few Remarks

At this point this study will ask the question: Can the analytical framework outlined above provide an alternative perspective to analyze US-Turkish relations, especially an alternative to studies viewing Turkish State and the United States as frozen, ahistorical, abstract entities? In other words, is it possible with such a perspective to develop a more sociological account of national security and/or securitization of Turkish Republic? Does it become possible to read the changes in internal and external securitization(s) of the Turkish State in relation to changing qualities of US hegemony throughout and after the Cold War?

To begin with, one should state that especially throughout the Cold War period, Turkey's security discourses were formed and reproduced along with the rhetoric and material guidance of US global hegemony. The following section will try to articulate this point through a brief analysis of some selected events in the history of US-Turkish relations.

As a historical fact, for not only Turkey but for most of the Middle Eastern states, United States' interests and policies have created a malign structure of insecurity which itself has posed a threat for the region as a whole. During the Cold War years, what drives the content of the security projects and appropriate means was the hegemonic rule of the United States in the Middle East as in most part of the world. In this respect, for the limited objective of this paper, it can be argued that the above perspective seems more plausible to understand the Cold-war period US-Turkish relations which was a period of definite US hegemony for the Western camp. As stated above, the causes of insecurity lie in the very nature of this structure both with its material and cognitive dimensions. From such a

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perspective, it is clear to see that alignment with Western Camp and voluntary entrance under US hegemony did not bring protection and safety for Turkey. On the contrary, NATO membership increased the material threats that Turkey faced with since the country became one of the first military targets due to the NATO installations in its territory (Gunter, 2005: 114-115). Therefore, in a broader sense, the hegemony did not present protection but made Turkish State secure as long as it remained as a part of balance of terror throughout the Cold War years. Nuclear missiles and some other elements of Cold War politics laid the foundations of geo-strategic determinism –the idea that Turkey should keep the value of its strategic position in the eyes of its Western allies at any cost- as the fundamental but at the same time the most restrictive securitization principle (Bilgin, 2005: 183).

At the regional level, on the other hand, the Eisenhower Doctrine remarkably forced Turkey to become the sub-hegemon of the region as a part of the US policy of lessening of the British influence in the Middle East. Not only it was unsuccessful, that policy alienated Turkey from its neighbors and again increased opposition towards Turkey. Throughout the different stages of Cold War US policies in the Middle East, Turkey did not produce an original, national foreign policy based on any regional, ethnical or geopolitical concern, or on a rational assessment about material threats, but completely relied on US hegemonic designs. The same can be said in case of first Gulf War when Turkey was put under international pressure to open its borders to Kurdish insurgents.

Cold War US hegemony provided the ideological framework that is the general framework of ideas, values and knowledge drawing the boundaries of possible policy options in Turkey's foreign policy may be

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more than in other states that were under hegemony. For about ten years following NATO membership, foreign policy had become a non-debated area. Neither the elite nor the different elements of civil society, -except for a weak leftist opposition- questioned the benefits of being within such an alliance system. It was partly because of the frustration of the post-war Soviet demands about the Straits but this general attitude on the part of especially security elite did not change after the Soviet's official denouncement of the demands after 1953. Turkey's foreign policy priority remained as to consolidate its position as NATO membership and to trade off geostrategic position with economic gain.

Turkey's internal securitization that is the definition of internal threats to security was also highly influenced from the ongoing of US-Turkish relations. For the sake of good relations with the United States, leftist opposition or any kind of opposition to official ideology were not tolerated, they were put under severe illegal pressures. The governments turned blind eye to the massive assaults, open violence to opposition figures and to even political murders throughout the 50s and 60s. NATO membership escalated anti-communism and anti-Sovietism to the extent that being o communist became one of the most serious crimes against the state. The young multi-party democracy of Turkey was stained by an anti-democratic political culture which was closed to freedom of thought and expression in this early period.

The reproduction and consolidation of US Cold War hegemony through the foreign policy practices of the security elites of the states under hegemony is also a well suiting argument to the US-Turkish Relations. Especially the early Cold War years was a period in which Turkey's security understanding was changed drastically. The Truman Doctrine was the

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turning point after which security outlook and policies of the Turkish ruling elite was transformed profoundly (Güney, 2005: 342). The Turkish elite completely relied on the security truths produced by US policy makers and an exclusive pro-Western attitude was embraced in foreign policy. In time, military and economic dependency which means a sustained US material hegemony, brought the complete and voluntary abandonment of some traditional foreign policy attitudes like balance politics and pro-status quo line which means the acceptance of also US' moral and intellectual leadership that is cognitive hegemony. For the sake of the continuation of economic aid, Turkey seemed to accept whatever outcomes of US hegemony in the Middle East. This change was the clear example of shifting loyalties on the part of the security elite towards a new security understanding, meaning the identification of security interests with the hegemon. This identification was not only at the elite level, in time it was embraced by different segments of Turkish society in this period. Turkish bourgeoisie and bureaucracy welcomed Marshall aid as a source of cheap credit and future guarantee for economic stability. The US economic aid programs had come with a cultural coverage that provided a basis for society-wide feelings of imitation to American way of life and world view to flourish. Therefore, US hegemony was very successful in terms of the generation of the will to resemble to the hegemon's socio-economic and political order. US moral and intellectual leadership was accepted completely as early as 1950s within the whole Western Camp. A similar degree of identification was to be achieved also just after the end of Cold War when Turkey was trying to prove its continuing importance for the Western defense and its commitment to neoliberalism throughout Ozal governments.

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As a consequence such a new perspective relating securitization with the reproduction of hegemonic world order seems very plausible to develop an alternative account for the US-Turkish relations especially for the period of Cold War. The connection between the formation of national security conception that is the peculiar features of internal and external securitization of a small power under hegemony and the continuous reproduction of global hegemony presents us some new hints also to think about the periods after the Cold War. As most of the analysts of the field have argued, the US-Turkish relations has entered in a new period which is characterized by the differentiation of security interests due to US policies in the Middle East after September 11. This differentiation, in the framework of this study should be thought as related with the changing qualities of US hegemony especially after September 11 which is as a matter of fact in decline since the late 70s. Space does not allow to evaluate this question which should be clearly the subject of a wider inquiry. However, as the analytical framework of this study lets us to think, the change in the nature of hegemony directly affects the nature of securitization in small states like Turkey which has been under a wider and severe social and political transformation since the early 2000s.

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