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**TÜRKİYE-SAUDİ ARABIA RELATIONS DURING
THE TRUMP ERA**

(2017-2021)

HATİCE MELTEM ÇELEBİ

MASTER'S THESIS

**ADVISOR:
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Türkiye ve Suudi Arabistan Ortadoğu'nun en güçlü ve önemli aktörlerindedir. Köklü bir tarihsel geçmişe sahip olan Türkiye ve Suudi Arabistan ilişkileri 19. yüzyılda iki ülke arasında imzalanan dostluk anlaşmasıyla resmîyet kazanmış ve günümüze kadar devam etmiştir. Cumhuriyet döneminden Arap Baharı sürecine kadar sorunsuz ilerleyen iki ülke arasındaki ilişkiler, Arap Baharı sürecinde her iki ülkenin farklı dış politika uygulamaları ve bu süreçte ortaya çıkan krizlerden dolayı bazı sorunların yaşanmasına sebep olmuştur. 2017-2021 yılları arasında ABD Başkanlığı görevinde bulunan Donald J. Trump döneminde Katar Krizi ve Cemal Kaşıkçı cinayetinden dolayı Türkiye ve Suudi Arabistan arasında bazı gerginlikler yaşanmış ve ilişkiler var olan seviyenin altına düşürülmüştür. Yaşanan söz konusu krizlere rağmen 2022 yılında değişen bölgesel gelişmeler sebebiyle iki ülke arasındaki ilişkiler ticari iş birlikleri ve karşılıklı ziyaretlerle tekrar üst seviyeye çıkarılmıştır. Çalışmada Arap Baharı süreci ve 2017-2021 Trump dönemini kapsayan süre içerisinde iki ülke arasında yaşanan krizler ve bu krizlerin Türkiye-Suudi Arabistan ilişkilerini nasıl etkilediği "Realizm", "Liberalizm" ve "Konstrüktivizm" teorileri çerçevesinde analiz edilmektedir. Bu bağlamda çalışma, literatürdeki hâkim yaklaşımlardan farklı bir bakış açısı sunarak literatüre katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Arap Baharı, Cemal Kaşıkçı Cinayeti, Katar Krizi, Trump Donemi, Suudi Arabistan, Türkiye



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ABSTRACT

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Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are two of the most powerful and important actors in the Middle East. The relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which have a deep-rooted historical background, were formalized with the friendship treaty signed between the two countries in the 19th century and have continued until today. The relations between the two countries, which progressed smoothly from the Republican period until the Arab Spring, caused some problems during the Arab Spring process due to the different foreign policy practices of both countries and the crises that emerged in this process. During the presidency of Donald J. Trump, who served as the US President between 2017 and 2021, there were some tensions between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia due to the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and the relations were reduced below the existing level. Despite these crises, the relations between the two countries were increased to the highest level again in 2022 due to the changing regional developments through trade cooperation and mutual visits. The study analyzes the crises between the two countries during the Arab Spring process and the Trump period of 2017-2021 and how these crises have affected Turkish-Saudi relations within the framework of the theories of “Realism,” “Liberalism,” and “Constructivism”. In this context, the study aims to contribute to the literature by offering a different perspective from the dominant approaches in the literature.

Keywords: Arab Spring, Jamal Khashoggi Murder, Qatar Crisis, Saudi Arabia, Trump Era, Türkiye



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Yukarıda adı geçen öğrenci tarafından hazırlanan TÜRKİYE-SAUDİ ARABIA RELATIONS DURING THE TRUMP ERA (2017-2021) başlıklı bu çalışma 19/12/2023 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda oybirliği/oyçokluğu ile başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AK Party: Justice and Development Party (“Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi” in Turkish)

DAESH: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

DEIK: Foreign Economic Relations Board

EU: European Union

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council

MbS: Mohammed bin Salman (Unofficial Abbv.)

ME: Middle East

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

OAPEC: Organization of the Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries

OPEC: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

P5+1: UN Security Council’s Five Permanent Members + Germany

PKK: Kurdistan Workers’ Party

PYD: Democratic Union Party

UN: United Nations

USA: United States of America

YPG: People’s Defense Units

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INTRODUCTION

Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are the important actors among the Middle Eastern countries. The relationship between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia has strategic importance for both countries in terms of political, economic, and global factors. There are historical and political relations that date back to the 17th century, although the two countries have different regimes. In the 17th century, after Sultan Selim I's conquest of the Hijaz region, Saudi Arabia was ruled by the Ottoman Empire until the collapse of the Ottomans. After the collapse of the Ottomans, the Republic of Türkiye, which was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on October 29, 1923, recognized the Kingdom of Hijaz and Najd, which was founded by the Saud family in 1926. Türkiye was one of the first countries to recognize the kingdom whose name was changed to Saudi Arabia (the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)) in 1932. In the 20th century, the diplomatic relations were established by signing *the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty*¹ between the two countries (Özev, 2016: 11).

However, because of the ideological and socio-politic structure differences, there was no significant positive development in the relations between the two countries until the 1980s. During the Cold War, the pro-US policy of both countries against the Soviet Union paved the way for cooperation. In 1980, economic relations were established between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which was rich in oil and financial resources. In the 2000s, when the AK Party government came to the power in Türkiye, Türkiye has implemented multi-dimensional foreign policy, improved relations, and expand fields of cooperation with Saudi Arabia (Ataman, 2009: 75). There have been close relations between the two countries until Arab Spring in this period. During the Arab Spring process, especially in the coup in Egypt, the fact that while Saudi Arabia supported the coup, but Türkiye's support of Mohammed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood negatively affected the relations between the two

¹ The Friendship and Cooperation Treaty was signed between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia on 3 August 1929. The agreement was signed by Abdulgani Seni Bey, Ambassador of Hejaz and Yemen on behalf of the Republic of Türkiye, and Fuad Hamza, Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Government of the Hejaz and Nejd Reconciliation Government (**T.C. Resmi Gazete**, 31 May 1930, S.1507, Article No: 1621, p.1).

countries. After Arab Spring, these tensions continued, and a very close relationship could not be established between the two countries. After 2017, when the former US president Trump came to the power, some negative and positive developments affected the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. The dissertation subject here is composed of all developments in the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia in the period of 2017-2021. The relations between the two countries have been analyzed in the context of important crises and international theories. While the thesis examines the relationship between the two countries, it focuses on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations during the Trump Era. The reason why the study focuses on the Trump Era and the period between 2017-2021 is that the Qatar Crisis and the Jamal Khashoggi Murder, which directly and most affected the relations between the two countries, took place during this period of time and the Trump's foreign policies had an impact on the relations between the two countries.

The research problem arises at whether it is possible to analyze the effects of all aspects of the important crises and events on the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. Throughout the study, the thesis answers the question that "How did the events and crises affect the relations between the two countries?" Additionally, the research questions forming the subject of the thesis can be listed as follows:

"What are the factors affecting the historical relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia? What are the effects of Türkiye's multilateral and active foreign policy during the AK Party period on the relations between the two countries? What are the perspectives of the two countries against the Arab Uprisings? How did these perspectives affect the bilateral relations?"

What events in Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations during the Trump Era and how did these events affect the relations between the two countries? How did Türkiye's rapprochement with Qatar during the Qatar Crisis affect the relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye?"

How Türkiye's perspective on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi has affected relations between the two countries? How did the murder affect the role of the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed Bin Salman in the international arena?"

In this context, this dissertation aims to answer the research question that "how did the events and crises affect the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia" by analyzing eight crises during the Arab Spring and Trump Era through Case Analysis. The importance of this dissertation is to contribute to the literature by presenting a

different argument from the dominant approaches in the literature and examining current relations of Türkiye and Saudi Arabia from the perspectives of realist, liberalist, and constructivist theories due to the scarcity of studies related to this subject in the literature. Regarding the studies conducted in the study, it is seen that foreign and domestic resources are few and limited on current relations of Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. Some master's, doctoral dissertations, and articles on the subject have generally dealt with the historical relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia in detail until the post-Arab Spring period. However, when analyzing the current Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations, it is seen that there are limited and few studies analyzing the events and crises that took place after the Arab Spring.

The closest study with the subject of the study is Oğuz Bilge Güngördü's thesis, named "*Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations Since the Establishment of The Saudi Kingdom*". Güngördü emphasizes in his study that Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations over the main parameters that shape the relations and analyzes the relationship between the two countries by linking them with the progress of Türkiye's relations with the Arab world (Güngördü, 2015: 5). Güngördü examines the relations of Türkiye-Saudi Arabia by dividing it into three periods; he analyzes conflicts and developments between the two countries on historical relations from the Ottoman period to 1980s in first section. In second section, he discussed the bilateral relations between 1980 and 2002 economically, and in the final section, the reflection of Türkiye's proactive and multi-dimensional diplomacy, which started with the AK Party period, on the relations between the two countries and the effect of the Arab Spring process on the bilateral relations. Unlike other studies, his thesis is an important source in terms of evaluating Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations from the establishment of Saudi Arabia to 2015 in a general context.

Another study is Mustafa Bostancı's doctoral thesis, titled "*Suudi Arabistan Devleti'nin Kuruluşu ve Türkiye-Suudi Arabistan İlişkileri (1926-1990)*". Bostancı concentrates on the Turkish-Saudi relations during the Republic. He views the historical and social relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia within the framework of events and mutual visits. He argues that during the Republican Era, the relationships were maintained by removing them from the context of religion and history since both

countries' ideological thoughts, political, and social structures were different, and the Arabs were alienated by the Turkish politics (Bostancı, 2013: 6). Bostancı analyzes Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations by separating into three periods; firstly, he argues the history of Saudi Arabia in detail from the pre-Islamic period to the Republican period. Secondly, he discusses the period from the Republican period to the 1970s through the foreign policy of the leaders, and finally, he examines the period between 1970-1990 in terms of mutual visits and economic and political relations. Unlike the other studies, Bostancı's thesis is one of the most competent Turkish sources in terms of presenting official documents and dealing with the historical relations in detail while examining the Turkish-Saudi relations.

Hilmi Özev and Muhittin Ataman wrote numerous articles related to the subject. Özev's article, named "*Siyasi Ekonomik Çıkarlar Kimlik Politikaları Çerçevesinde 1929-2015 Arası Türkiye-Suudi Arabistan İlişkileri*" was written in 2015. The article examines the relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye regarding strategic interests, the impact of economic interdependence, and thoughts on international relations. He argues that international interests and economic cooperation, and intellectual and identity-related factors significantly impact relations. He analyzes the Arab Spring process and its aftermath regarding the current relations and emphasizes that both countries carried out different policies during the Arab Spring process, but they act together to reduce the impact of this process (Özev, 2015: 24). Unlike other studies, this study examines the bilateral relations by considering intellectual and identity factors instead of dealing with realist national interests or liberal interdependence.

On the other hand, Muhittin Ataman, in his article named "*Türkiye and Saudi Arabia: Newly Discovered Partners*" written in 2012, focuses on the relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye during the reign of King Abdullah. Ataman argues that there had been positive developments in the bilateral relations during this period. He discusses that the two countries acted together to prevent the impact of popular uprisings in their countries and ensured stability in the region during the Arab Spring process. He asserts that Türkiye will not succeed in pursuing a unilateral regional foreign policy in the Arab Spring process, and it should cooperate with Saudi Arabia,

which has achieved stability in the structure of the state, to maintain political stability in the region (Ataman, 2012: 23). His article is an important source in terms of analyzing today's Saudi Arabia-Türkiye relations through the foreign policy understanding of the two countries and explaining the perspectives of both countries with certain factors during the Arab Spring process. Further research revealed that studies typically focus on historical relations, and the developments and events that occurred until the post-Arab Spring period considering that there are few and limited studies regarding the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia during 2017-2021. For this reason, this study focuses on the relations and crises between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia during the Trump Era. The study examines Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations for 2017-2021 in detail within the framework of the hypotheses. The main hypotheses forming the subject of thesis can be listed as follows:

During the Republican Period, the close relations between the two countries could not be established until 1980 due to the Türkiye's western-oriented foreign policy and the Turkish people's perception of the Arabs as traitors because of the Arab Revolt.

During the AK Party period, Türkiye's multi-dimensional and proactive foreign policy and close relations with Islamic countries increase the rapprochement between the Türkiye and Saudi Arabia.

During the Egyptian coup, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia's contrasting perspectives on the coup and their foreign policy practices led to tensions in bilateral relations.

During the Trump Era, The Qatar Crisis, which emerged with the embargo imposed on Qatar by the Gulf countries in 2017, caused Türkiye to move away from Saudi Arabia and get closer to Qatar.

During the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, Türkiye played an active role to investigate the murder and find the perpetrator and did not want its relations with Saudi Arabia to deteriorate due to the murder.

As for the methodology of the study, the crises of the during the Arab Spring and its aftermath, especially the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi that most affected bilateral relations are analyzed by using the Descriptive Case Analysis method. Using this method, the study firstly gives information about the events, and their effects on the relations between the two countries by focusing on the actors of the period. During the literature review, thesis studies, books, articles, journals, reports, reliable websites, news sources and newspapers are examined. However, more digital resources are used in the study, since the events and crises of the period are current.

Additionally, by using the major newspapers of the period, these newspapers' perspectives are included in the scope of the thesis. The limitations of the study include the inability to examine the Arabic sources in the literature review due to the beginner level of Arabic and the inability to go to the field and make field observations within the framework of the thesis. The dissertation work to be done is planned to be approximately 100 pages. It is examined under four main headings apart from the "Chapter Introduction" and "Chapter Conclusion" sections to analyze the events and crises in the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia in the period of 2017-2021 deeply and healthily. These sections involve "Theoretical Framework, Historical Background of Turkish-Saudi Relations, Turkish-Saudi Relations During the Trump Era, and Turkish-Saudi Relations in the Shadow of the Crises".

The study's subject, importance, scope, hypotheses, and method are briefly mentioned in the introduction. The first chapter establishes the theoretical framework that analyzes Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. It analyzes the definitions of realism, liberalism, and constructivism from international relations theories and discusses their assumptions. The second chapter evaluates the historical relations of Türkiye and Saudi Arabia by dividing them into six periods "Before the Republican Period, the Republican Period, the AK Party's Period, Arab Spring Period, the Post-Arab Spring Period (2011-2017), and Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Economic Relations".

The third chapter discusses the developments of bilateral relations after Trump's presidency under the title of "Turkish-Saudi Relations in the Trump Era". This chapter examines the foreign policy of the Trump Era and the relations between Saudi Arabia-USA and USA-Türkiye, and the positive and negative aspects of this period on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. Additionally, the final chapter analyzes crises or events during the Arab Spring and its aftermath and discusses the impact on the relations between the two countries with the title "Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations in the Shadow of the Crises". In particular, it focuses on the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, which mostly affected the bilateral relations, and discusses their impact on the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. Finally, the conclusion chapter evaluates the general scope of the study and analyzes whether the hypotheses have been confirmed.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Concepts and Assumptions of Realist, Liberalist, and Constructivist Approaches in International Relations

Chapter Introduction

The chapter establishes the theoretical framework which analyzes Türkiye - Saudi Arabia Relations exactly as realist, liberalist, and constructivist approach. Realism argues that the state is the only actor in international relations and should increase its power for its national interest against the threat of other states. Realism is examined in this section by dividing into two groups: Classical Realism and Neo-Realism. Classical Realism argues that human beings are selfish and aggressive by nature, so wars are inevitable. Neo-realism points that the international system is anarchic, so peace between states will not be possible. Hobbes, Machiavelli, and Waltz are important realist thinkers. Secondly, the chapter examines liberalist approach. Liberalist approach focuses on peace and cooperation between the states. The approach argues that state is not only actor as well as international organizations, non-state actors and multinational cooperation are important actors in international relations.

The chapter divided liberalist approach into three groups: Classical Liberalism, Commercial Liberalism, and Neo-Liberalism. Classical Liberalism focuses on important role of individuals and limited role of states. Commercial Liberalism emphasizes the important role of individual entrepreneur and limited role of state. Neo-liberalism argues role of international organizations in maintaining peace and cooperation between states. The important liberalist thinkers are Immanuel Kant, John Locke, Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Joseph Nye, and Robert Keohane.

Finally, the chapter analyzes constructivist approach. Constructivism focuses on social interactions of states. Constructivism emerged as an approach after the Cold War because of the failure of dominant theories to explain Post-Cold War international politics. Constructivists focuses on importance of norms, institutions, identity, and culture in international politics. The important constructivists thinkers are Alexander Went, John Gerard Ruggie, and Nicholas Onuf.

1.1. Keywords of Theories

In international relations theories, there are important concepts that are specific to each theory. The first important theory is realism. Realism's concepts are *power*, *balance of power*, *national interest*, *anarchy*, *hegemony*, and *self-help*. Realism explains international relations as power politics. Power is defined as ability of states to use their material resources to get other actors to do what they otherwise would not (Barnett-Duvall, 2005: 40). According to realists, states should maximize its power and national interest. National interest means that the goals a state pursues to maximize what it believes is best for its nation (Dağ, 2009: 308). In addition, realists argue that power should be kept in balance. Balance of power is explained as in any international system involving three or more states, the stronger party is balanced by another power or coalition of powers (Dağ, 2009: 52).

According to realists, the international system is anarchic, and states should protect their national interests in this environment. Anarchy here is defined as “a state of chaos” in which any central government or authority is absent or weak (Dağ, 2009: 31). Realists argue that states provide their security through self-help in an anarchic world. According to Waltz, “self-help system” can be defined as “a state capable of making a threat must be guarded against because no one can be assured when it may actualize that potential” (Waltz, 2000: 904). Realists argue that state's ultimate goal is maximizing power and establishing its hegemony in anarchic world. Additionally, the concept of hegemony is introduced by Antonio Gramsci. Later, Robert Cox combined the concept of hegemony with international relations. According to Cox, “hegemony is used to mean the dominance of one country over others, thereby trying the usage to a relationship strictly among states” (Cox, 1983: 221).

The second important theory is liberalism. The important concepts of liberalism are *cooperation*, *international organizations*, *non-state actors*, *interdependence*, and *transnational relations*. Liberalism prioritizes cooperation and peace. Cooperation is referred as a joint effort by countries or organizations with similar interests and objectives to achieve these objectives in specific areas (Dag, 2009: 113). According to liberalism, states should establish cooperation through international organizations and non-state actors. International organizations are

independent organizations formed when a large number of states come together around a common political, economic, security, etc. goal while preserving their sovereignty (Dag, 2009: 113). Non-state actors are non-state institutions, individuals or organizations which play a role in the international political arena (Dag, 2009: 318). Moreover, liberalism explains that there is interdependence and transnational relations between states and non-state actors. Interdependence in world politics refers to “situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries” (Keohane-Nye, 1971: 8). Transnational relations described as “contacts, coalitions, and interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments” (Keohane-Nye, 1971: 3).

The third important theory is constructivism. The important concepts of constructivism are *agent*, *structure*, *identity*, *norms*, and *institution*. According to constructivist approach agent and structure influence each other. Agent is described as people who act on behalf of other people (Onuf, 1998: 60). Structure in the simplest terms is the structure in which institutions and agents operate. Constructivism focuses on identity, norms, and institution. According to Wendt, “identity is structure composed of shared ideas, social relationship, norms, rules, and practice (Wendt, 1992: 398). Wendt argues that “institution is defined as structure composed of relative stable identities and interests. The structures are codified by norms and rules” (Wendt, 1992: 404). Here, norms are standards of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity (Katzenstein, 1996: 5).

1.2. Realist Approach

Realism, which continues to be influential among international theories, explains international relations as power of politics. Realism, which emerged as a critique of liberalism in the 1940s, criticized liberalism for failure of preventing World War II (WWII). According to liberalism, the human nature is good, and states overcome the common problems by cooperating each other. Liberalism focuses on international law, morality, cooperation, and international organization rather than power that concern on realism. Therefore, realists have criticized liberals for focusing on how the world should be rather than how it really is since WWII (Goldstein-Pevehouse, 2015: 43).

The theory of realism firstly focuses on states and based on four principal assumptions: First; states are the primary and most important actors in anarchical world. Realists view international organizations, multinational corporations, terrorist groups and other transnational organizations are lesser importance than states. States are dominant actors for them. Second, states are unitary actors, realist assumed that states have one policy in a given time on particular issues. Third; states are rational actor, governmental decision-makers must consider cost and benefits, they select the policy that maximizes benefit and minimizes cost. The assumption of rational actor is important for application of rational-choice methods to deterrence, arms control and balance of power. Fourth; realists assume that national or international security should top of the list for hierarchical issues. According to realists, military and political issues referred to as *high politics*, social and economic issues are referred to as *low politics* (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 42-23). In shortly, Realism argues that state is only and rational actor in the international relations.

The second theme of realism is power. Realism was defined as power of politics. *E.g.*, when the USA invaded Iraq, it used its military power to overcome terrorist groups and non-state actors. The concept of power was defined by realists from different perspectives (Barnett-Duvall, 2005: 40). While Morgenthau defined politics as 'power struggle', he defined power as the main purpose of politics. According to Waltz, power is used as a tool to ensure the security of the state and to maintain its existence (Ari, 2006: 170). In addition, the power is associated with national interest by realists. For realists, nation-states pursue their own national interests defined primarily in terms of power and they argue that power should be kept in balance (Donnelly, 2000: 8). Realism argues that states maximize their power for survival of state.

They emphasize that the international system is an anarchic structure which devoid of authority to enforce the rules and that states must maintain the balance of power in this system. According to realists, balance of power was referred as one or more states' power ensure to balance that of another states' power. Balance of power maintains stability of international system. This stability is preserved by wars that regulate power relations, not peace. That's why, the alliances play important role to maintain stability

with ensuring balance of power. For realists, smaller states could not balance with most powerful states, so they jump bandwagon of powerful states. This is called “bandwagoning”. For example, with the alliances formed in the WWI and WWII, small states sided with the big states and formed a balance of power. In the power struggle of the USA and the USSR during the Cold War, small states sided with the two powerful states, causing the world to be divided into two poles. However, when the USA declared its hegemony after the Cold War, Russia, China and Europe tried to maintain the balance by acting together against the power of the USA (Goldstein-Pevhouse, 2015: 52).

Realism divided into two types: ‘Classical Realism’ and ‘Neorealism’. The important thinkers of Classical Realism are Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Carr, and Morgenthau. Classical realism argues that the international structure arises from the power struggle between states, starting from human nature. Neorealism, on the other hand, focuses on structure and system and argues that the international structure is anarchic. The founder of neorealism is Kenneth Waltz. Classical realists also think that there is an anarchic structure, but they do not consider it as a result and do not emphasize that it has a decisive effect on the foreign policy of the states. However, neorealists look at the phenomenon of anarchy as a cause and think that it has an impact on the foreign policy of states (Ari, 2006: 197-198).

1.2.1. Classical Realism

Classical realists associate the international system with human nature. According to them, fear, honor and interest guide human nature and state motivation. *E.g.*, Thucydides states that the three strongest instincts that direct human nature are fear, honor, and interest (Donnelly, 2000: 42). Thomas Hobbes refers to the pre-state period of the international system as the state of nature. According to Hobbes, the state of nature based on three assumptions: Firstly, men are equal naturally. He said that “Men are equal that the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest either by secret machination or by confederacy with others” (Hobbes, 1993: 92). Secondly, they interact in anarchy that is defined as absence of government. Thirdly, men are driven by competition, diffidence, and glory (Burchill, 2005: 32). Hobbes defines state of nature as war of all against all. Hobbes argues that “the state of nature is a continual

fear and danger of violent death, and life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.” Hobbes imagines that this condition would be like absence of government. He argues that “The people escape state of nature by agreeing to give their power sovereign authority or Leviathan that would end state of nature and maintain order and stability” (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 49). According to classical realism, human nature is selfish and evil. Niccolò Machiavelli, one of the proponents of classical realism, argues that all people are bad and reveal the evil in their minds when opportunities are presented (Donnelly, 2000: 9).

The thoughts of Machiavelli, the great diplomat and historian from Florence of the 16th century, are more specific than other realists. Machiavellianism, known as political morality or realism, emerged after him. He characterizes human nature as “insatiable, arrogant, crafty, and shifting; and above all else malignant, iniquitous, violent and savage” (Donnelly, 2000: 25). In addition, Machiavelli emphasizes the warrior character of the state leader in his book *Prince* and argues: “A prince ought to have no other aim or thought nor select anything else for his study than war and its rules and discipline”. According to him, “A prince who does not understand arts of war cannot be respected and trusted by his soldiers” (Machiavelli, 1993: 49). According to Hobbes and Machiavelli, war has become inevitable for states due to the warlike and ambitious nature of human beings.

Morgenthau, one of the best-known names of classical realism, argues that all politics consists of a power struggle because human nature is an insatiable creature with an insatiable urge to dominate others. According to him “Human nature is based on three dimensions as “biological, rational and spiritual”. He expresses that all three dimensions determine the human nature, but he defines the characteristics of politics as “*will to power*”. Morgenthau leaves aside morality and reason because he defines politics as dominating others by using force. For him, morality and reason are tools for acquiring and justifying power (Griffiths-Roach-Solomon, 2008: 52). As a result, classical realists focus on human nature and argue that wars are inevitable because human nature is bad, selfish, and aggressive.

1.2.2. Neo-Realism

Waltz, the pioneer of neorealism, shaped the post-1980 period with his academic ideas and thoughts. He is a realist, but while classical realists focus on human nature, Waltz focuses on the structure of the system with the thought of neorealism (Ari, 2006: 191). Neorealism focuses on how the concept of international structure affects the interacting units and outcomes that they produce. Waltz says that “International structure emerges from the interaction of states and constrains them from taking certain actions while propelling them towards other” (Waltz, 2014: 29). He argues that “a domestic political structure is defined firstly according to the principle by which it is ordered, by specification of the functions of formally differentiated units, and by the distribution of capabilities across those units” (Waltz, 1979: 82).

According to him, the first term *ordering principle of the system* is centralized and hierarchic. The domestic political system deals with the relations super and subordination. In contrast international politics is decentralizes and anarchic. It means “politics of the absence of government”. The important characteristic of international politics seems lack of order and absence of organizations. Waltz argues that international politics are also defined specification of functions among units. He states that “hierarchy entails relations of super and subordination among a system’s parts, and that implies their differentiation.” He also argues that in anarchic world, the units of international political system are not different by functionally.

In anarchy, all units need to coordinate each other and that implies their sameness (Waltz, 1979: 93). The third term is distribution of capabilities across those units. He argues that “although states are like units functionally, they differ vastly in their capabilities.” According to him, international political systems are distinguished by the number of great powers. The international structure changes according to changes in distribution of capabilities across the units (Waltz, 1979: 97). He addresses that bipolar systems are more stable than multipolar systems (Waltz, 1979: 128). Waltz argues that in anarchic world, states rely on the means that they can generate and the arrangements that they can make for themselves to maintain their survival and achieve

their objectives. The self-help is the most important action in anarchic order (Waltz, 1979: 111).

Neorealism is subdivided into two approaches: offensive realism and defensive realism. The two approaches are based on the idea that states provide security through self-help in an anarchic environment and that states seek ways to increase their security and minimize the possibility of being invaded and destroyed by another state (Lynn-Jones, 1995: 665). For offensive realists, the state must increase its power, influence, and wealth to become more secure in a world of anarchy (Lobell, 2010: 2). According to Mearsheimer, a proponent of offensive realism, “states should maximize power and their ultimate goal should be hegemony because that is the best way to guarantee survival” (Mearsheimer, 2007: 75). Defensive realism argues that states should maximize their security, preserve the existing distribution of power, and they are not inherently aggressive (Lobell, 2010: 3). The proponents of defensive realism are Kenneth Waltz and Robert Jervis.

To sum up; neorealism focuses on international structure than human nature. Waltz argues that international structure is defined three factors: ordering principle of the system (anarchy), differentiation of functions of units, and distribution of capabilities. Waltzian structural realism focuses on anarchic international system. In anarchic world, states are not functionally differentiated, and international structure differs from according to distribution of capabilities as a result of rise and fall of great powers (Donnelly, 2000: 84).

1.3. Liberalist Approach

The liberalist approach has been influential in the history of political and economic ideas in the USA in the 18th and 19th centuries. Liberalist approach was established on notions of equality, freedom, individuality, and property. Liberalist idea is an idea that forms the basis of the philosophy of Enlightenment Age. John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Montesquieu, John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant, Joseph Nye, and Robert Keohane are among the philosophers who have liberalist idea. The common feature of the philosophers of this period is that they believe that human character is positive from birth, or they can be educated (Arı, 2006: 354). In

international relations, liberalist idea is an idea that prioritize cooperation and peace. Therefore, liberalism is an approach that generates assumptions about how cooperation and peace between states can be possible. Regarding it, Immanuel Kant emphasizes that states should ensure peace by strengthening their cooperation with international organizations (Goldstein-Pevehouse, 2015: 86). In this direction, the League of Nations was established to maintain peace between states after the WWI. However, the liberals were criticized by realists because they could not prevent the WWII with the ideas that was presented. Liberalist approach of international relations bases on four principles. First, when the realism accepts that state as important actor, liberalism accepts that state as well as transnational actors, multinational corporations, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations are important actors. Liberalism is pluralist approach therefore multiple kinds of state and non-state actors play important role in the world politics. For example, in 2001 (after the 9/11) terrorism and terrorist organizations had a significant impact on world politics, and terrorism and security take the first place on the agenda of states (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 119).

Second, when the realism states that the states are unitary actor, liberalism explains that state is not always unitary actors, and anarchy can be overcome with institutions and ideas important for state and non-state actors that operate transnationally across state borders. *E.g.*, international organizations play important role in terms of solving problems between states and agenda setting in obtaining information that influence states. Third, liberalism explains that economic and other forms of interdependence among state and non-state actors moderating effect on state behavior. With the effect of globalization, the borders between states remove and states become closer each other with economic collaboration.

Finally, according to liberalism, state-society relationship is important to understanding international relations. In addition, when the realism accepts that military-security issues are play substantial role in international politics, liberals accept that military-security issues as well as social issues play important role in international politics (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 120). Liberalism divides into three types: Classical Liberalism, Commercial Liberalism and Neoliberalism (Neoliberal Institutionalism). Classical Liberalism emerged in 18th century. John Locke and Montesquieu are

important liberalists in the 18th century. Classical liberalists believe in freedom of individuals, families, and democratic self-government to act independently from government. Neoliberals argue that states expand their self-interest to broaden the scope of collaboration through the membership in international organizations (Burchill, 2022: 64). Commercial liberals argue that free trade increases mutual dependence between states and reduces conflict (Burchill, 2022: 63).

1.3.1. Classical Liberalism

The Classical liberalism emerges in the 17th and 18th century. Classical liberals emphasize that important role of individual and limited role of state. According to them, states play limited role in society and maintain the stable in political, social, and economic environment which individual pursues their rights (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 121). John Locke, Adam Smith, and David Ricardo are important liberals in 17th and 18th century. Locke argues that the individuals pursue their self-interest, and they institute government by forming social contract to prevent their interest from conflicting with those of others. According to liberals, the government is legitimate only if it serves that purpose (Siegel, 2011: 6). As the founder of classical liberalism, He in his book “*Two Treatises of Government*” argues that political power can gain legitimacy only on the basis of the social contract formed by the consent of individuals. Locke explains pre-contractual state of nature to defend this idea.

However, Locke notes that the state of nature is not a savage and war of all against all as Hobbes idea. For him, the state of nature is ‘state of nature’ in which everyone lives in freedom and equality. He says that “state of nature has a law of nature to govern it which obliges everyone, and the reason which is that law teaches all mankind who wills but consults it that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions” (Locke, 1967: 93). Locke explains that there is no supreme authority in the state of nature, people live rationally, and solve their problems with the fairness and common sense inherent in their nature. Locke also mentions that people in the state of nature have property rights over their properties. However, although people have this right, the use of this right is quite uncertain, and they are constantly exposed to the encroachment of others. For this reason, people voluntarily transfer their rights to a civilian power by forming social

contract among themselves (Cilingir, 2019: 38). For him, the state only protects people's rights and freedom and play a limited role. In economic liberalism as the third part of liberalism, it is emphasized that the state has a limited role.

1.3.2. Commercial Liberalism

After the industrial revolution, the importance of economy and trade increased with the increase in production. In this period, political philosophers developed new version of liberalism that was called "commercial liberalism". Commercial liberalism based on freedom from government interference (Siegel, 2011: 56). Adam Smith and David Ricardo are important economic liberalist in 18th and 19th century. They emphasized that the important role of individual entrepreneur which was unconstrained by government and possibility of minimalist state (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 122). For commercial liberals, conflicts often arise from states that disrupt the natural harmony of individuals' mutually shared interests and place barriers. The solution to it is the free movement of capital, commodities, and labor. Free trade leads to mutual relations and reduces conflicts between peoples (Burchill, 2022: 63).

Adam Smith, in his book "Wealth of Nations", argued that individual freedom is the best alternative for allocation of resources and organizing economic activity instead of abusive state power. He also emphasized that *invisible hand*, according to the principle of invisible hand, is beneficial for the whole society when individuals act in their own interests in the free market (Smith, 1937: 400). According to Smith, the interests of individuals do not cause anarchy or chaos but rather the interests of individuals serve the interests of society (Smith, 1937: 114). With the ideas in his book, Smith revealed the ideals and doctrine of capitalism.

David Ricardo was one of the important economic liberalists, and he adopted view of Adam Smith. He said that "under a system of perfectly free commerce, each country naturally devotes its capital and labor to such employments as are most beneficial to each. The pursuit of individual advantage is admirably connected with the universal good of the whole" (Ricardo, 1973: 81). To sum up; economic liberals argue that free trade abolishes borders between states and ensure peace and eliminate the possibility of war.

1.3.3. Neoliberalism (Liberal Institutionalism)

Neoliberalism was emerged in 18th and 19th century and emphasized establishing peaceful world order and preference of democracy over aristocracy and free trade over autarky for elimination of war. For neoliberalists, human nature dictated cooperation and peace between the people. According to them, war is irrational and unnatural therefore it is not belonging to human nature. Wars are emerged by militaristic and undemocratic government for their own interests. Wars lead to increase control of government, raise taxes, and expand bureaucratic apparatus. For neoliberalists, war was a 'cancer' in human body. The disease of war is treated by democracy and free trade successfully.

Immanuel Kant, Michael Doyle, Joseph Nye, and Robert Keohane are important neoliberalists (Burchill, 2022: 58-59). Kant proposed in his work "*Perpetual Peace*" that offers to establish federation or league among states to maintain peace. After the WWI, League of Nations was established to maintain peace and reflected Kant's and Wilson's ideas (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 125). According to Kant, every state must have Republican constitutions which include freedom for all members of society, dependence on single common constitution, and sharp separation between legislative and executive.

For Kant, the preferences of governments on foreign policy were directed by formal representative institutions which include regimes of states, political parties, bureaucratic systems, and linked with state-society relations. In republican form of governments, the decisions of citizens are required about declaration of war. Therefore, the republican governments would be more willing to peace and more reluctant to war because the cost of war is straining on their citizens. However, the authoritarian governments have no similar reluctance to start wars. According to Kant, while republican governments do not fight among themselves, they can fight authoritarian governments (Carson, 1988: 175). Doyle also explained that democratic states would not fight each other, but were more inclined to fight non-democratic states, similar to Kant's ideas (Doyle, 1983: 225). Briefly, Kant and Doyle argue that if states are governed democratically and as republics, there will be peace between them.

Nye and Keohane draw attention in their works to these two terms: interdependence and transnationalism. In their works "*Power and Interdependence*", they explained that "mutual influences between states are achieved by the flow of goods, money, and people across international borders. Such international transactions increased after the WWII. They said that "a country that imports all of its oil is likely to be dependent on the steady flow of oil than a country that imports furs, jewelry, and perfumes (even if they have equivalent monetary value) will depend on the uninterrupted flow of oil access to these luxury goods. Where there are reciprocal costly effects of transactions, there is interdependence" (Keohane-Nye, 1973: 8).

Keohane and Nye explain the role of multinational corporations and other non-governmental actors in the formation of interdependence between states with the term transnationalism. The concept of transnationalism was emerged by the early 1970s after understanding of regional integrations losing its importance. The being transnational was described as an actor such as multinational cooperation or behavior of patterns such as role of multinational corporations. Keohane and Nye draw attention to the important role of multinational collaborations, non-governmental organizations, transnational organizations, and other components of governments that have the right to operate beyond the borders of the state in world politics in their study, titled "*Transnational Relations and World Policy*" (Viotti-Kauppi, 2019: 130).

In the work, they argue that state is not only actor in world politics, and multinational companies and other non-governmental entities play significant role to affect international events and world politics. Therefore, they become actors in international arena and competitors of nation-state (Keohane-Nye, 1971: 10). In their work, they explain that how do transnational actors affect interstate politics. For them, the transnational organizations increase constrains on the states through dependence and interdependence, and they increase in the ability of certain governments influence others (Keohane-Nye, 1971: 17). To sum up; neoliberalism argues that warring states have authoritarian and undemocratic structures and that all states should adopt democratic forms of government in order to achieve peace, and that there is a relationship of interdependence between states and that non-state actors and international corporations have an important role to play in ensuring the relations.

1.4. Constructivist Approach (Social Constructivism)

Constructivist approach explains international relations through the social interactions of states. According to this approach, states' identities and interests affect the foreign policy implemented by states. According to Adler, constructivism occupies middle ground approach between two dominant theories because it focuses on how to material and intersubjective worlds interact in the social construction of reality rather than on how structures constituted agents' identities and interests. It also explains how agents construct the structures in first place (Adler, 1997: 330). Constructivism emerged as a reaction against the Third Debate which was dominated international relations during the 1980s in North America.

The First debate emerged between realism and idealism was a reflection on failure of idealism to not prevent the WWII. The second debate arose between behavioralist and traditionalist between the US scholars about turning IR into a science. The third debate was between the rationalism seen after 1980 and the reflectivist theories. This debate was between positivist and post-positivist theories. And the fourth major debate in the late 1990s occurred between rationalism and constructivism. The scholars viewed constructivism as 'an approach' because it was not fixed perspective about the world politics and not put forward coherent hypotheses like as dominant theories of IR (Dunne, 2010: 188).

The important constructivists scholars are Alexander Wendt, who was most important scholar of constructivist approach, Nicholas Onuf, John Gerard Ruggie, Anthony Giddens, and Fredrich Kratochwil. Constructivism has five assumptions about the world politics. About the structure of international relations, constructivists argue that international structure composes of social relationships, but the structure was made of distribution of material capabilities so military power more important as material structure according to realism. Wendt said that "social structures have three elements: shared knowledge, material resources, and practices." It composed of intersubjective understanding in which states intentions to each other. He said that "social structure includes material resources that only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded" (Wendt, 1995: 73).

Secondly, constructivism argues that international politics is “*a world of our making*” far from reality. In constructivism, actors are free to make choices in the process of interaction. International relations are social construction and not independent from human interaction (Dunne, 2010:190) The third; structure and agency are mutually dependent. According to Wendt, the relationship of agent-structure has two assumptions about social life; human being was purposeful actor, and his actions transform the society. About the structure, the structure is made up of social interactions, therefore agent and structure independent or mutual entities. Neo-realism and world-system theory follow different way from constructivism, and these theories constrain the actions of state (Wendt, 1987: 338). Constructivists argue that shared norms and behavior play important role in world politics. Therefore, structure constituted identity of actors, not their actions.

To sum up, constructivism argues that actors were guided by the logic of appropriateness based on the appropriate of a rational act to the shared values and norms. Constructivism focuses on interplay interests and ideas of the states. The approach has no belief that interests are given such as neorealism. In contrast, constructivists argue that interests are not given, and they believe that interests are constructed by ideas. Additionally, constructivists argue for the importance of norms, institutions, identity, and culture in international politics. Norms and institutions are important for the process of socialization. In this point, constructivism argue that state become socialized like as human beings.

1.4.1. Interest and Identity

Interest explains state actions, and it is central for explaining the theories of international politics. National interest is important for international politics because of two reasons in firstly by national interest determines the goals of state and practice of state actions and secondly the national interest as power legitimizes the actions of state. National interest is dominant assumption especially for realist understanding of politics (Weldes, 1996: 277). According to Constructivism, interest depends not only structure of system but also interaction of state. Interests are not given but constructed by the identity and ideas. According to Wendt, interests base on identity. Constructivists argue that identity is structure composed of shared ideas, social

relationship, norms, rules and practice. Identity ensures to state to define other states behavior. Each state has identities as “sovereign”, “imperial”, “autocratic”, and so on. Identity constitutes the structure of the world (Wendt, 1992: 398). Interactions of state can weaken, strengthen, and change the identities. Identity is also affected by race, culture, nationality, and religions. In addition, international norms and rules ensure to defining one country’s identity (Viotti, Kauppi, 2019: 288). Constructivists argue that such non-material structures as culture, norms, and values shape the identities and these inform interactions and interest (Burchill, 2001: 197). Constructivists argue that state identities are complex and variable, and they often interact with other states through the process of socialization. *E.g.*, in the half of the 20th century, the wars in Europe caused the death of many people, but today the wars in Europe have been replaced by alliances (Goldstein and Pevehouse, 2015: 146). Depending on how states define each other, the relationship between them also changes.

1.4.2. Norms, Rules and Institutions

Constructivism focuses on the role of norms, rules, and institutions on the world politics. Norms are central for the constructivist understanding. Norms are defined as “standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity” (Katzenstein, 1996: 5). States that carry a particular identity must comply with the norms pertaining to that identity. This process known as *logic of appropriateness*. Actors behave according to the behavior that appropriate them.

There are three forms of norms: Regulative norms, Constitutive norms and Prescriptive norms. Regulative norms constrain and order the behavior of state, constitutive norms form new actors, interest and actions, and prescriptive norms determine the norms. If certain mass of relevant state actors adopts and internalize it, the norms become expected behavior. For example, states that give importance for human rights can come together to prevent the reduction of nuclear weapons (McGlinchey, 2017: 38). Rules help to manage relations among actors. Rules and norms have influence on state behavior. Also, international norms and rules affect the one country’s policy choice. Especially, governments and societal interest groups apply to rules and norms to advance their objectives (Cortell, 1996: 451). Constructivists divide rules into two groups: Regulative rules and constitutive rules.

According to Ruggie, regulative rules are intended to have casual effects. Constitutive rules define the consciously organized set of practice that make up a particular class of social activity. Constitutive rules are institutional base of all society. Constructivists believe that if there are no rules, the reciprocal behavior of international relations cannot understand (Ruggie, 1998: 871). Norms and rules are spread by the institutions. According to Wendt, institution is structure composed of relative stable identities and interests. The structures are codified by norms and rules (Wendt, 1992: 404).

Constructivists argue that institutions prepare to individuals to abide the rules and international institutions can solve the problems of the world politics. Institutional facts emerge from both process of socializations and diplomatic and political process which include negotiation, persuasion, and coercion. Constructivists argue that NGOs, international organizations, and social movements play important role for social construction of international relations by intersubjective knowledge. Especially, international organizations can shape the interactions of state through shared and established norms and rules. Moreover, some scholars think that international organizations encourage to states to imagine belong themselves as part of region so international organizations become formation of identity (Adler, 1997: 344-345).

1.4.3. World Order and Types of Anarchy

Constructivism accepts the international society as anarchical. This means that there is no single hierarchical government in international politics. According to constructivism, anarchy can be change and state shape the anarchy through interactions. States act differently towards enemies than towards friends, because enemies pose a threat to them, but friends do not to them. Wendt argues that anarchy is not simply given but shaped by interaction of states. Norms and other values are constructed under anarchy, the meaning and effects of material power and interest important on which of the three types of anarchy is dominant. He defines “three types of anarchy” as Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian (Wendt, 1992: 397).

The first type is that Hobbesian type of anarchy based on realist understanding. Hobbes emphasizes that state of nature takes place in state of war. For him, the world politics is characterized by a war of all against all. The aggressive and selfish nature

of human beings is one of the reasons that drive states to war (Bull, 1981: 721). In the Hobbesian type, the world politics is dominated by self-help and power. Distribution of military capabilities always matters, and the states increase their military power to prevent threat from other state. Every state sees other states as an enemy (Wendt, 1995: 78). Lockean type of anarchy is based on liberal understanding. According to Locke, state of nature is state of freedom and equality in reciprocal. Locke argues that natural law regulates the relations of states, and no one harm to another. States recognize sovereignty of other states, and they reach agreement with one another to maintain peace (Ward, 2006: 693).

In the Lockean type of anarchy, a state sees another state as rival. *E.g.*, USA recognizes the sovereignty of USSR and there is a competition between them economically and militarily. The final type is the Kantian type of anarchy on friendly relations. Kant emphasizes state of perpetual peace unlike Hobbesian state of war. Kant argues that human being acts rationally, and human nature is good. Kant expresses that the states reach a just world order when all state become republic. In this type of anarchy, shared norms, values, and identity come to the fore than other types. State sees other state as friend (Burchill, 2001: 59). Wendt points out that states relate to each other according to how they define each other with the 3 types of anarchy. He argues that in the Hobbesian type of anarchy everyone is at war with each other, in the Lockean type of anarchy there is an environment of freedom and equality, and in the Kantian type states see each other as friends.

Chapter Conclusion

The chapter explains the theories that analyze Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations exactly as realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Realism is defined as power politics. Nation-states pursue their own national interests defined primarily in terms of power. Realists argue that states are the only actors, and they should maximize their national interests and power against threats from outside and wars between states are inevitable. Realism emerged as a criticism against liberalism due to the liberals' inability to prevent the WWII with the ideas put forward within the framework of peace and cooperation. The important thinkers of realism are Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Edward H. Car, Kenneth Waltz, and Morgenthau.

Realism divided into two types: Classical Realism and Neorealism. Classical realism argues that wars are inevitable because human nature is selfish and aggressive. Hobbes in his book *Leviathan* talks about the state of nature before the emergence of the state. According to the state of nature, man is selfish and aggressive. Hobbes defines this state of nature as the state of war of all against all. To get rid of this situation, people should give their power to a sovereign power called *Leviathan*. The sovereign power brings security and stability to an end to the state of nature. Neorealists, on the other hand, focus on the structure and system of international relations and argue that the international system is anarchic and therefore there is a power struggle. Its most prominent representatives are Kenneth Waltz. Waltz argues that self-help is important for states to maintain survival and security in anarchic world.

Liberalism, on the other hand, gives importance to peace and cooperation between states contrary to what realism advocates. Liberalism pioneered the establishment of the League of Nations to ensure peace through cooperation between states due to the devastating effect of the WWI on the states. According to liberals, a state is not the only actor as well as non-state actors, international organizations, and multinational companies are also important actors. John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Montesquieu, Immanuel Kant, Joseph Nye, and Robert Keohane are among the philosophers here who represent the liberal idea.

Additionally, Liberalism divides into Classical liberalism, Commercial Liberalism, and Neoliberalism. Classical liberals focus on important role of individual and limited role of state. Commercial liberalism focuses on freedom of individual entrepreneur than interference of government. Free trade and commerce increase peace and cooperation eliminate possibility of wars. Neoliberalism focuses on importance of international organizations in ensuring cooperation and peace between states. Constructivism focuses on social approach of international relations. Constructivism emerged as an approach after the Cold War because of the failure of dominant theories to explain the Post-Cold War in international politics. The important scholars of constructivism are Alexander Wendt, Nicholas Onuf, John Gerard Ruggie, Anthony Giddens, and Fredrich Kratochwil.

In constructivism, interest is not given but constructed by identity and ideas. Constructivists argue for the importance of norms, institutions, identity, and culture in international politics. Constructivism accepts the international society is anarchical; it means that there is no single hierarchical government in international politics. According to constructivism anarchy is not given and can be change through interactions of state. Wendt defines “three types of anarchy” as Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian.



CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH-SAUDI RELATIONS

Chapter Introduction

The chapter examines the historical relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia within the framework of the above-mentioned hypotheses. The chapter analyzes the historical relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye and the events from the establishment of Saudi Arabia to the post-Arab Spring period. It analyzes the connection that a close relationship could not be established until 1980 due to the differences in the political and social structures of both countries and western-oriented foreign policy in the Republican Period as stated in hypothesis. In addition, it examines the multi-dimensional and proactive foreign policy of AK Party and its effects on bilateral relations. Moreover, the chapter postulates during the Arab Spring process, the different perspectives of the two countries and its effects on relations between the two countries.

The chapter discusses the historical background of Turkish-Saudi relations by dividing them into five periods: Before the Republican Period, The Republican Period, the AK Party's Period (2002-2011), Arab Spring Period, and the Post-Arab Spring Period. The first section analyzes the conflicts in the Ottomans-Arabs relations, and Arab Rebellion. The second section examines the formal relations which starting with the friendship treaty, establishment of Saudi Arabia, and economic cooperation, and advancements on relations until the AK Party's period. The third section analyzes the reflection of Türkiye's multilateral and diversified foreign policy on relations with Saudi Arabia and strengthening bilateral relations. The final sections assert the perspective of Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia on the uprisings in the Arab Spring, and the post-Arab Spring period and economic relations between the two countries.

2.1. Turkish-Saudi Relations Before the Republican Period

Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are important actors in terms of religious, political, and geopolitical position among the ME countries. Saudi Arabia is a sovereign state in the Arabian Peninsula. Saudi Arabia was located between the boundaries of Yemen, Oman, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait. It has a religious significance for all

humanity as it is the place where the Prophet Muhammad (*PbuH*) has lived and died. Saudi Arabia is an important position among the Muslim countries because of the presence of holy places such as Mecca, and Medina, and the pilgrimage worship in this region (Buyukcoskun, 1991: 248). Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia have a long and deep-rooted history. Historical relations between the two countries started with the conquest of the region by the Ottomans Sultan Selim. In the 15th century, the Ottomans Sultan Selim seized the Hejaz region, which had previously been under the rule of the Mamluk state, with his eastern expeditions, and declared himself the protector of this region. Ottomans has ruled the Hejaz region until WWI (Al-Rasheed, 2002: 14).

In the 18th century, the dissemination of Wahhabism, and the establishment of states in Saudi Arabia were important events that damage the relations between Ottomans, and Arabs. The First Saudi State was established in Diriyah in 1744 with the alliance by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabism and Muhammad Ibn Saud, the leader of the Saudi tribe (Güngördü, 2015: 3). Understanding of Wahhabism is a puritan revival of Islam. Abd al-Wahhab aimed to restore, and return to Islam as prescribed by Quran, and Prophet. As a result of the cooperation between Muhammad ibn Saud, and Abd al-Wahhab, the Wahhabi movement spread to Central, and Eastern Arabia, and they occupied Mecca, and Medina.

Hereupon, the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II appointed the Egyptian Governor Muhammad Ali to prevent the spread of the movement. Muhammad Ali Pasha launched campaigns, and the campaigns were ended with the destruction of the Wahhabi power, and capital of Diriyah (Hitti, 1996: 740). In 1821, Turki ibn Abdallah established Second Saudi State and he governed the Riyadh until 1891. In his term, the Saudis expand Wahhabism throughout Eastern Arabia instead of expanding their territories. However, the internal conflicts experienced in this period led to the disintegration of the state. The Second Saudi State was ended by Muhammad ibn Rashid. In the 20th century, Abdelaziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud ascended the throne, and captured Riyadh. He founded the Third Saudi State which remains until today (Güngördü, 2015: 4).

In this period, the Arab Revolt that erupted during WWI damaged to Turkish-Arab relations. Ottomans State declared a general mobilization after engaging with WWI. Although the Hejaz was initially excluded from the mobilization, it was decided to implement mobilization in the Hejaz due to the losses of Gallipoli. However, the emir of Hejaz Sharif Hussein did not send soldiers, and launched an Arab Revolt by dealing with British officers (Kose, 2018: 55). The Arab revolt is the turning point of Arab nationalism, and the Arabs were represented by the Turks as traitors (Hale, 2012: 27). As a result of WWI and the Arab Revolt, the Ottoman state lost the war and collapsed in a short time (Bostancı, 2013: 86). To sum up, In the 17th century, the Ottoman-Saudi relations that started with the conquest of the Hejaz region caused conflicts in relations due to the Wahhabi Movement and the Arab revolt. In addition, the outbreak of the Arab Revolt caused mistrust between the Turkish society and the Arab society.

2.2. Turkish-Saudi Relations During the Republican Era

After the collapse of the Ottomans, the Republic of Türkiye was established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on 29 October 1923. In the Republican Period, Mustafa Kamal Atatürk has pursued a peaceful, and impartial foreign policy with the understanding of “peace at home, peace in the world”. In this period, Türkiye became distant from the Middle East, and approached to West with the influence of westernization, and modernization (Bostancı, 2018: 63). In this period, as concerns the Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations, although both states have different social structures, and political systems, when the establishment of Saudi Arabia Kingdom, Türkiye was the first country that recognized Saudi Arabia as an independent country (Ataman, 2012: 12). In 1929, the first *Friendship, and Cooperation Treaty* was signed between the two states in Mecca. Relations between the two countries reached a high level with the visit of the delegation headed by Emir Faisal to Türkiye in 1932 (Umar, 2010: 71).

When the WWII break out, the government of Ismet Inonu has protected the independence of Türkiye, and its territorial integrity by staying away from the war. Türkiye implemented successful diplomacy by declaring its active neutrality during the war (Hale, 2012: 75). However, After WWII, Türkiye became dependent on the Western countries in foreign due to Soviet Union threats against it. In 1942, 7

independent Arab countries established the Arab League to protect their freedom, and independence, and to join forces, and Türkiye approached this integration positively (Güngördü, 2015: 15). Nevertheless, Türkiye's recognition of the existence of Israel as a state caused relations with Arab countries to enter a breaking process (Duran-Karaca, 2011: 212). In 1950, Adnan Menderes from the Democrat Party was elected as the Prime Minister, and Celal Bayar was elected as the President, and it transitioned to multi-party life. During this period, Menderes' foreign policy goal was to ensure Türkiye's security against Soviet expansionism.

During the Cold War, Türkiye took its place in the western bloc, and became a member of NATO (Yılmaz, 2016: 204). Menderes followed active foreign policy in the Middle East. In this period, the establishment of the Baghdad Pact under the leadership of Türkiye, at the request of the USA, to defend the Middle Eastern countries against the Soviet Union, increased Türkiye's participation in the Middle East politics. On February 24, 1955, Adnan Menderes agreed with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al Said, and signed the Baghdad Pact. In the same year, England, Pakistan, and Iran joined the pact. The biggest reaction to the establishment of the pact came from Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, and other Arab countries, who were competing with Iraq for the leadership of the Arab world (Bilgin, 2017: 252-255). On March 6, Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia issued a joint statement, and decided that these three states would not join the Baghdad Pact, and criticized the pact negatively (Bostancı, 2013: 178).

The pact had a detrimental impact on Turkish-Saudi relations. During the Cold War, effective developments were experienced in bilateral relations because Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia were in the Western bloc against the USSR, and Türkiye's need for oil. Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations during the Cold War can be understood in line with the realist perspective. In 1957, the USA declared the Eisenhower doctrine and provided military and economic aid to Middle Eastern countries to prevent the spread of Soviet and communist influence in the Middle East (Hahn, 2006: 38). Since Saudi Arabia opposed communism and radical reforms, it was an ideal partner for the US to prevent Soviet expansion in the Middle East and supported the doctrine (Brew, 2015: 99). Türkiye joined the doctrine on March 22, 1957, and then Prime Minister Adnan

Menderes emphasized that Türkiye would play a dominant role in the Middle East with this doctrine. With this doctrine, Türkiye's importance increased for the US (Çetinkaya, 2019: 10). By keeping Türkiye and Saudi Arabia in the western bloc, the US created a balance of power against the Soviets and ensured the security and stability of the Middle East. In 1974, during the Cyprus Peace Operation, Saudi Arabia became one of the countries that supported Türkiye at the regional level (Özev, 2016: 16).

As stated in hypotheses, during the Republican Period, close relations could not be established between the two countries until 1980 due to the western-oriented foreign policy of Türkiye. According to the constructivist approach, identities and ideas influence a state's foreign policy. According to Keyman, "identity is a central phenomenon that forms the cultural basis of the methodology and mode of explanation that international relations use to understand the world" (Keyman, 2005: 218). During the Republican period, the Republic of Türkiye had close relations with the West until the 1980s but did not cooperate closely with Arab countries due to its Western-oriented foreign policy and orientalist perspective. Especially the Arab revolt that broke out in WWI formed the perception among the Turks that the Arab society had betrayed them, so they avoided establishing close relations with Arab countries.

In 1980-1990, economic, and political cooperation was enhanced in Turkish-Arab relations. Mutual visits of Kenan Evren, and Turgut Özal improve the bilateral relations significantly (Ataman, 2012: 123). Turgut Özal, who was elected President of Türkiye in 1989, pursued an active, and courageous foreign policy in the Middle East, like the foreign policy followed by Menderes (Jung, 2005: 10). During the Özal period, Türkiye enlarged its relations with the Muslim, and Arab world, and became active in Islamic, and other regional organizations (Ataman, 2012:132). In addition, commercial relations, and the increase of Arab students coming to Türkiye have promoted the rapprochement in relations. During the Gulf war, which emerged with the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, is one of the factors that positively affected Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. During this period, Turkish Prime Minister, Süleyman Demirel increased the economic cooperation between the two countries by paying an official visit to Saudi Arabia (Altunısık, 2010:8).

2.3. Turkish-Saudi Relations During the AK Party Period

When the AK Party came to power in 2002, Türkiye has reshaped its relations with Middle Eastern countries. In this period, the government has pursued proactive, and multi-dimensional foreign policy, unlike the traditional foreign policy. Ahmet Davutoğlu, who served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2007, and was elected Prime Minister in 2011, present a new vision by mentioning five principles in Turkish foreign policy.

Davutoğlu explains these five principles of Turkish foreign policy during the period as follows: “Since the year 2002, Türkiye has begun to structure its policies based on this new vision, keeping in mind well-defined targets, and looking to benefit from its geographical position, and historical assets. Five principles of Türkiye’s foreign policy balance between security, and freedom, the zero-problem policy with neighbors, developing relations with neighboring regions, multi-dimensional foreign policy, and rhythmic diplomacy” (Davutoğlu, 2008: 79). Türkiye has advanced its relations with the Middle Eastern countries at a high level, especially with its foreign policy of zero problems with neighbors. However, due to the Arab Spring and the changes in the region caused by the Arab Spring, Türkiye abandoned this policy and pursued a security-oriented foreign policy.

As regards the Turkish-Saudi relations during the AK Party period, high-level relations, and close cooperation have been established between the two countries. Both countries have followed a regional policy that does not alienate the other by reducing their dependence on global powers. The Saudi Arabia government wanted to improve its relations with Türkiye, fearing that Türkiye would be marginalized in the Middle East, and established relations with Israel, as it was in the Republican Era. In addition, Saudi Arabia preferred Türkiye for economic, and political cooperation due to the deterioration in its relations with the West after the September 11 attacks, and increased insecurity (Ataman, 2012: 124-125). This period has been called the golden age in the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia (Erhan, 2021).

In 2003, the Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Business Council was established by Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye (DEİK)². Moreover, the Business Council aimed to cooperate in the fields of tourism, and mutual investment, and to contribute to the promotion of the Turkish economy to Saudi Arabia (DEİK, 2021). The increase in mutual visits, and economic cooperation in many fields during this period contributed to the high level of development of relations between the two countries. The new page was opened in bilateral relations with the visit of King Abdallah to Türkiye in 2006. During this visit, 7 agreements were signed to strengthen international ties. The visit has historical importance as it is the first visit of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia after 40 years (Khan, 2021).

In 2007, Prime Minister Erdoğan visited Saudi Arabia for the Jeddah Economic Forum and met with King Abdullah. In addition, during this visit, Saudi Arabia public, and private institutions planned to invest \$25 million in many business areas in Türkiye. In 2010, during Erdoğan's second visit to Saudi Arabia, the awarding of the International King Faisal Award is one of the important developments in bilateral relations. This award was given to Erdoğan for his brave attitude towards Israeli President Peres at the Davos meeting, and his service to Muslim countries, and Islam (Ataman, 2012: 18). Erdoğan's encourages statement against Israeli President Peres had a great impact in the Muslim world. With the effect of this summit, Erdoğan was seen as an important leader by Muslim countries. To sum up, during the AK Party period, Türkiye has maximized its relations with Saudi Arabia through mutual visits and economic cooperation due to the AK Party government's active and multifaceted foreign policy in the Middle East.

2.4. Turkish-Saudi Relations During the Arab Uprisings

Arab Spring represents the demonstrations of Arab people against the dictatorial leaders. Protests in Tunisia, which were ignited by the setting on fire himself

² Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye (DEİK), which was established in 1985, manages the foreign economic relations of the Turkish private sector, especially foreign trade, international investments, services, contracting and logistics; researching investment opportunities at home and abroad; It is the institution tasked with contributing to increase Türkiye's exports and coordinating similar business development activities (DEİK, <https://www.deik.org.tr>).

of street vendor Muhammed Bouazizi, to whom the police intervened badly, later spread to the Middle East, and North African countries such as Egypt, Syria, Bahrain, Libya, and Yemen. While these uprisings resulted in the overthrow of the autocratic leaders in Egypt, and Tunisia, and the transition to the democratic system, the protests in Syria, Libya, and Yemen turned into civil war (Salih, 2013: 184).

Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia play active roles during the Arab uprisings. Both countries prefer gradual changes, and reform than radical changes, and revolutions which lead to chaos. Also, they want to maintain stability in the region (Ataman, 2012: 130). During the Arab uprisings, while Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye have followed the same policy in some cases, they have followed different policies in some issues. During the Arab Spring, Saudi Arabia determines its foreign policy parameters as maintaining internal stability, balancing Iran's rise to become a regional hegemon and relying on the military power of the USA in the region for national security (Zarras, 2018: 120). Besides, Saudi Arabia wants the protection of autocratic regimes for the security, and stability of its regime. As a role model country, Türkiye has supported the people's aspirations for democracy and economic prosperity in the region (Ennis-Momani, 2013: 1128).

Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia followed different policies in Egypt. When demonstrations against Mubarak began in Tahrir Square, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan called for Mubarak's resignation, while Saudi Arabia supported the Mubarak regime. However, in Syria and Libya, both countries followed the same policy of supporting the opposition against the regime (Ennis, Momani, 2013: 1134). Another factor affecting Turkish-Saudi relations is the rivalry between Riyadh and Tehran. In Syria, while Iran backed the regime, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye sided with the opposition. Moreover, the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia has led to ethnic, and sectarian divisions (Ayoob, 2012:2). Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia did not want Iran to become a nuclear power and cause a nuclear arms race in the region. However, Türkiye has been softer in its relations with Iran than Saudi Arabia, and by playing a mediator role, it has participated in negotiations, and initiatives with Iran that were not favorably received by Saudi Arabia (Zarras, 2018: 127).

Türkiye did not want the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia to turn into a sectarian war, so it played a balancing role between both countries. Another event that caused tensions in the relations between Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia is the Egyptian Coup in 2013. In June 2012, After the overthrow of Mubarak, leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Morsi was elected as the first democratic president of Egypt. In this period, while Türkiye supported the Muslim Brotherhood regime to come to power, Saudi Arabia was concerned about Mohamad Morsi's coming to power as it perceived the strengthening of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization as a threat to its legitimacy (Telci, 2017: 224). On the other hand, Ankara wanted the Morsi administration to remain in power. Türkiye-Egypt relations reached the highest level during the reign of Morsi (Telci, 2017: 236). In 2013, a coup was carried out by Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, the Chief of General Staff, against President Morsi. Saudi Arabia took the lead in the military coup and the end of the Muslim Brotherhood rule with the support of the UAE (Telci- Rakiboglu, 2018: 158). However, Ankara met the coup carried out by Al-Sisi in 2013 with a great reaction and criticized the coup administration most severely.

Since Türkiye has faced coups and military tutelage in its past, it reacted very harshly to the removal of Morsi, who came to power through democratic elections, in a bloody coup (Telci,2017:237). The massacre of thousands of innocent people in Rabiatal Adeviyya Square during the coup process in Egypt was harshly met by Türkiye. In addition, the name of the square and the "Rabia Sign", which symbolizes the resistance of the people, were also used by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan with the meaning of "*One Nation, One Flag, One Homeland, One State*".

Considering the impact of the Egyptian coup on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations with the constructivist theory, according to constructivism, identity forms the basis of state interests by showing how the state defines other state or actor (Wendt, 1992: 398). Saudi Arabia supported Al-Sisi due to its definition of the MB organization as a threat to its legitimacy, the idea that Morsi coming to power would strengthen the MB organization and the influence of the USA. However, Türkiye opposed Al- Sisi's coup because of Morsi's coming to power through democracy, Morsi's Islamic perspective

and Türkiye's troubled past with coups. Therefore, the different foreign policies of the two countries against the coup in Egypt had a negative impact on bilateral relations.

2.5. Turkish-Saudi Relations Post-Arab Spring Period

The relations between Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia, which were tense during the Arab Spring period, started to soften with the change of leadership after the Arab Spring. In Saudi Arabia, when King Abdullah died, he was succeeded by his half-brother King Salman. In February, President Erdoğan came to Riyadh to meet with King Salman after his Umrah visit in Mecca. In this meeting, the two leaders discussed “the ways to develop bilateral cooperation, issues of common interest, and external developments” (Al-Arabiya News, 2021). In this period, Saudi Arabia opened a new page with the countries with which it had experienced tensions during the reign of King Abdullah. The US attempt to soften relations with Iran during the Obama era greatly disturbed Saudi Arabia (Öztop, 2019: 215). Saudi Arabia did not want the USA to establish close relations with Iran and Iran's strengthening in the region with the support of the US, which is why it had problems in its relations with the US during the Obama era. Therefore, Saudi Arabia wanted to strengthen its relations with Egypt, and Türkiye.

In this period, Türkiye struggled with the immigration crisis, and DAESH/ISIL/ISIS as a buffer state in its foreign policy after the Arab Spring. During this period, Türkiye faced a migration crisis by hosting 1.9 million refugees due to the Syrians fleeing the Assad regime and immigrating to Türkiye, and other European countries. In addition, Türkiye has been significantly affected by the attacks of non-state actors in European, and Middle Eastern countries, and important cities of Türkiye after the Arab Spring. Türkiye's foreign policy objectives in this period consisted of controlling refugees, fighting DAESH, and PKK/YPG/PYD terrorist organizations, and preventing Iran's dominance in the Middle East (Keyman, 2016: 2280). After the Arab Spring, Türkiye abandoned its policy of zero problems with neighbors due to the attacks of terrorist organizations and the coup in Egypt and gave importance to its military power and defense industry against the threats of terrorist organizations.

During this period, Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen in March 2015 is an indication of its interventionist, and expansionary foreign policy (Rich-Gilbert, 2019: 69). In 2014, in Yemen, Houthi militants captured the capital San'a, then advanced south from the capital to Aden in the Arabian Sea in early 2015. In March 2015, President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi flew to Riyadh, calling for international intervention from Saudi Arabia. Thereupon, the international coalition led by Saudi Arabia launched an operation to intervene in Yemen (Sharp-Brudnick, 2015: 2). The Houthis are the Zaydi form of Shia Islam, which is largely native to northern Yemen, founded as a revivalist movement that later evolved into a formidable militia. Because the group was supported by Iran, Saudi Arabia saw the Houthis as a proxy of Iran (Salisbury, 2015: 2).

During this period, relations between Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia advanced at a high level with mutual visits until 2017. Another important development between the two countries in December 2015 was Türkiye's participation in the Joint Islamic Alliance Against Terrorism under the leadership of Saudi Arabia. The alliance, which is led by Saudi Arabia Defense Minister Mohammed bin Salman, was formed with the participation of 34 countries, including Türkiye and Egypt, against the elements that have emerged in the Middle Eastern countries and have dragged the region into chaos and instability. However, the fact that Iran, Syria, and Iraq were not included in the alliance was an indication that the Middle East was divided into two opposing blocs (Ataman-Akdoğan, 2015: 157). During the Arab Spring and the war in Yemen, Saudi Arabia attempted to build a Sunni bloc against Iran, Iraq and Syria by gathering other Arab countries under its leadership.

Also, during this period, King Salman made social reforms for women in the country. For example, In December 2015, women have achieved both the right to vote, and the right to stand as a candidate in local elections. A total of 978 women have registered alongside, 5,938 men (BBC, 2021). This step was seen as an important step in the modernization, and democratization of Saudi Arabia in 2016, in Türkiye, a coup attempt was carried out by the terrorist organization FETO(Ö), which infiltrated important units of the state to overthrow the AK Party government on the night of July 15, and the coup was failed by the Turkish people. During the coup, the masses living

in the Islamic geography largely supported the government. After the coup failed, the leaders of countries including Jordan, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia declared that they supported the AK Party government and stood by Türkiye (Al-Jazeera, 2021). To sum up; the change of administration in Saudi Arabia and Saudi Arabia's support for Türkiye in the coup have positively affected the relations between the two countries.

2.6. Turkish-Saudi Economic Relations

Economic relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia improved in 1980s in Özal Period with the increasing of mutual visits and economic cooperation. In 1980s, Türkiye imported 1 million tons of oil from oil-exporting Arab countries particularly Saudi Arabia. The economic relations between the two countries have not only been limited to oil but have also advanced in other sectors. The oil-exporting Arab countries facilitated the investment of foreign capital with the beginning of the liberal economic movement under Özal's leadership. Capital flows from Arab countries accounted for 9% of total foreign investment between the years of 1980-1990.

Apart from oil, Saudi Arabia played an important role in the banking sector. Most of the Saudi companies that came to Türkiye were interested in the banking sector. The establishment of the Turkish-Saudi Investment Company by Türkiye and Saudi Arabia in 1984 is one of the important developments in economic relations (Güngördü,2015:45). When the AK Party came to power in 2002, Türkiye has significantly increased its economic relations with Saudi Arabia with the advance of economic cooperation. In this period, Türkiye increased its exports from 554 million dollars in 2002 to 2.2 billion dollars in 2010, quadrupling it. After 2010, Türkiye's exports to Saudi Arabia increased to 3.6 billion dollars in 2012, reaching the highest level (Güngördü, 2015: 64).

However, the effect of the tension between the two countries during the Arab Spring process after 2012 also affected the economic relations. After this period, there was a decrease in Türkiye's exports to Saudi Arabia. In addition, the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in 2017 and 2018 adversely affected the economic relations between the two countries. In this period, exports decrease from 3.2 billion

to 2.8 billion dollars. Finally, the fact that Türkiye's exports to Saudi Arabia decreased by 3 times in 2021 to 265 million dollars is an indication that the Coronavirus Epidemic experienced in this period and the boycott initiated by Saudi Arabia against Türkiye in March negatively affected the economic relations between the two countries (TUIK, 2023).

The most important share in the development of economic relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye belongs to the tourism sector. Saudi Arabia is an important tourism destination due to its holy sites. Every year, during the pilgrimage season, Turkish citizens come to Saudi Arabia to visit holy places and perform their pilgrimage. Especially in the 2000s, Türkiye's emphasis on public diplomacy and increasing its cultural relations provided an important development in the tourism sector. In Türkiye, in 2003, the total number of Saudi Arabian tourists was 23,676, in 2011, the total number of tourists has increased to 116,711. Furthermore, tensions between the two countries during the Arab Spring in 2011, the Qatar crisis in 2017, and the Jamal Khashoggi murder in 2018 did not have a significant impact on the tourism sector. To illustrate the fact that, in 2012, the total Saudi tourist arrivals were 175,467; in 2018, the total increased to 747, 233 (TCKTB, 2023).

However, tourism has also been severely affected by the spread of the coronavirus epidemic in 2020. The fact that Saudi Arabia did not accept visitors for the pilgrimage due to the pandemic in this period also negatively affected the pilgrimage tourism. Considering the economic relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia from the liberalist theory, it can be seen that there is economic interdependence between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. According to Keohane and Nye "Interdependence in world politics refers to situations characterized by reciprocal effects among countries or among actors in different countries". Türkiye has increased its exports to Saudi Arabia while importing oil from Saudi Arabia, cooperated in various fields and strengthened relations through mutual investments.

Chapter Conclusion

Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are important actors among the Middle Eastern countries. The history of relations between the two countries dates to the 17th century.

After the Ottomans Empire seized the Hejaz region, Saudi Arabia remained under Ottomans rule until the collapse of the Ottomans Empire. In the 20th century, After the collapse of Ottoman the Republic of Türkiye was established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923. Abdulaziz bin Saud, who captured the Hejaz region in 1926, established the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Official relations between the two countries started with the friendship agreement which was signed in 1929. The fact that both countries were in the Western bloc against the Soviets led to a rapprochement in relations and economic cooperation between the two countries was enhanced during the Cold War.

As stated in the hypothesis, a close relationship could not be established between the two countries until 1980 in the Republican period due to the different political and social structures of both countries and a western-oriented foreign policy. In the 1980s, bilateral relations advanced at a high level with mutual visits and increasing economic relations. In 2002, after the AK Party came to power, Türkiye followed an active, and multi-dimensional foreign policy, and restructured its relations with the Middle Eastern countries. In this period, Saudi Arabia, which was in search of allies due to the deterioration of its relations with the West after the events of September 11, strengthened its bilateral relations with Türkiye.

As stated in the hypothesis, the fact that the AK Party government followed a multi-dimensional and proactive foreign policy and developed its relations with the Middle East and Asian countries instead of following a western-oriented foreign policy. Therefore, AK Party's active foreign policy increased the mutual visits and cooperation in the relations of Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. However, the popular uprisings against the autocratic leaders, which started in Tunisia in 2011, and encompassed all Arab countries, adversely affected the Turkish-Saudi relations. While both countries acted together in Syria, and Libya, they followed separate policies in Egypt. During the Arab Spring process, different perspectives of the two countries affected the relations between the two countries negatively.

CHAPTER THREE

TÜRKIYE-SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS DURING THE TRUMP ERA

Chapter Introduction

The chapter examines Turkish-Saudi relations in the era of the former US President Trump within the framework of the above hypotheses and discusses Turkish-Saudi relations in the era of Trump by dividing them into four sections. The first section examines effect of Donald J. Trump's winning election on world politics and implementation of nationalist foreign policies and analyzes Trump's harsh practices against Islamic countries, and its effects on Islamic world.

The second section analyzes Türkiye-USA relations, which have continued with ups and downs throughout history, have continued in the same way in the Trump Era, and the impact of events such as the S-400 Crisis, the Pastor Brunson Crisis, and the US assistance to the YPG during the Trump era on bilateral relations. The third section examines US-Saudi Arabia historical relations and economic cooperation, as well as reciprocal visits between the two countries in the Trump era. Final section discusses Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations during the Trump Era and the impact of the Qatar Crisis, Jamal Khashoggi's murder on bilateral relations, as stated in the hypothesis.

3.1 Donald J. Trump and the United States Foreign Policy

The election of American businessman and Republican Party candidate Donald J. Trump as the 45th President of the United States of America by winning the presidential elections held on November 8, 2016, against Democratic Party candidate Hillary Clinton has caused a great surprise, especially in the United States, but also around the world. Former President Trump, who came to the forefront with the slogans "*Make America Great Again*" and "*America First*" during his election campaign, took office after his inauguration on January 20, 2017. He stated that the American people should be prioritized, and the American borders should be protected against other countries. He said that "We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our products, stealing our companies and destroying our jobs. Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength. I will fight for you with every

breath in my body, and I will never, ever let you down. America will start winning again, winning like never before” (New York Times, 2023).

After taking office, former President Trump made changes in American foreign policy by pursuing a different and surprising foreign policy than other presidents. According to Anton who served on the US National Security Council as deputy assistant from 2016 to 2018, “Trump Doctrine has based on nationalism and against globalization. The first pillar of Trump Doctrine is *populist view against the enforced homogenization of globalization*. The second pillar of Trump Doctrine is *the ending era of liberal internationalism*. According to Anton, “globalization has imposed highest cost on the USA with dumb wars to spreading its power”. The third pillar of Trump Doctrine can be characterized as *nationalism for all*. This means the Trump’s foreign policy against transnational bodies such as European Union and World Trade Organization. The final pillar of Trump Doctrine is *the interest of the USA is not to homogenize the world*.

Anton said that “the homogenization of world weakens the states whose strength is needed to defend our common interests” (Anton, 2019: 47). In the first years of his presidency, Trump has broken new ground in American foreign policy. As a result of his nationalist foreign policy, he decided to build a wall between Mexico and the United States to prevent illegal immigration from Mexico, as he had previously stated in his election campaign. During the ceremony at the department of Homeland Security, he said that “A nation without borders is not a nation, beginning today the USA gets back control of its borders” (BBC News, 2023).

On December 4, 2017, Trump imposed a travel ban on 5 Muslim-majority countries (Iran, Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia), as well as North Korea and Venezuela. After the law went into effect, 98 percent of the citizens of the 5 countries were denied visas (Niyesh, 2019). His decision to impose a travel ban on 5 Islamic countries drew the reaction of the Arab and Islamic world. In his presidency years, Trump intend to withdraw from Paris Agreement on Climate Change as a result of his anti-globalization and nationalist foreign policy. On June, 1 2017, he announced the USA would withdraw from Paris Agreement on Climate Change. He argued that the agreement is a threat for American sovereignty and economy. Trump has spoken on

the phone with the leaders of Britain, France and Germany, saying he wants to negotiate a new and better deal. However, leaders rejected Trump's call, saying the Paris Climate agreement is irreversible and cannot be renegotiated (Shear, 2017).

Another agreement that Trump withdrew from was the nuclear deal with Iran. In July 2015, In the era of presidency of Obama, The USA, Great Britain, France, Germany, China, Russia and European Union High Representative of Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Iran signed JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action). According to agreement Iran would restraint its nuclear program over against lifting sanctions imposed by UN (Da Vinha, 2019: 293). After Trump come the office, in May 2018, He announced the USA would withdraw from Iran Nuclear Agreement (BBC News, 2023). After the USA withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal, Trump imposed most robust economic sanctions against Iran and designated Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as terrorist organization (Ibsen, 2019).

3.2. Türkiye- United States Relations During the Trump Era

Türkiye-USA relations have continued with fluctuating course from the past to the present. After America emerged as an independent state in 1783 and formed its own unique structure, it attached importance to Mediterranean trade. The USA wanted to establish commercial relations with the Ottoman Empire due to the dominance of the Ottoman Empire in Mediterranean trade. For this reason, on May 7, 1830, the USA signed the Navigation Agreement and opened embassies in many parts of the Ottoman Empire. After this treaty, commercial, social and cultural developments were observed in Ottoman-USA relations. However, the missionary activities of the USA and its actions against the Ottoman Empire in the Armenian question led to the deterioration of relations (Durmuş, 2011: 2).

On October 29, 1923, after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Türkiye-USA relations became closer. After this period, Türkiye-USA relations were defined as "strategic". Especially during WWII, the USA sided with Türkiye against the threats posed by Russia, which symbolically initiated Türkiye-USA relations. During the Cold War, the aim of the USA was to prevent Soviet expansionism. Therefore, the USA saw Türkiye as a "barrier" and a "valuable ally" against Soviet expansionism. The Truman

Doctrine and Marshall Aid are indicators of this policy (Atmaca, 2011: 165). However, the tensions between 1970 and 1980 also significantly affected Turkish-USA relations. In 1964, with the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, clashes between Turks and Greeks intensified and Türkiye wanted to intervene in the island. However, the threatening letter sent by US President Lyndon B. Johnson to Turkish President İsmet İnönü caused the first diplomatic crisis in Turkish-USA relations. After Türkiye's operation in Cyprus in 1974 with the Cyprus Peace Operation, the USA decided to impose a military embargo on Türkiye that would last for about 4 years (Göktepe, 2005: 435).

In the Post-Cold War Era, After the collapse of Soviet Union, USA started to dominate world politics. In this term, the USA sees Türkiye as “strategic partner”. In 1990s, Türkiye has problems with Iran, Iraq, Syria over management of resources and fighting against rising power of PKK. Considering that Türkiye's security dependence on the USA is increasing and Türkiye's need for the USA economic and military alliance is increasing due to the economic and political instability in Türkiye's domestic politics in 1990. With the outbreak of the Gulf War in 1991, Türkiye sided with the USA against Iraq, allowing the USA to use its bases and closing the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline are indicators of this situation. Indeed, USA President Clinton's description of Türkiye as a strategic partner during his visit to Türkiye in 1999 was interpreted as a strengthening of Türkiye-USA relations (Gülmez, 2020: 480).

The victory of George Bush in the USA elections in 2001, the September 11 attacks was the turning point in USA foreign policy. After the attacks, George Bush announced the National Security Strategy known as the Bush Doctrine in his speech. According to this doctrine, Bush showed that world peace would be achieved by fighting against terrorists and dictators. Therefore, the USA, with the support of NATO and the UN, launched “Operation Enduring Freedom” against Afghanistan, where the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization was located. Türkiye supported this war by siding with the USA (Dagcı, 2012: 2).

The coming to power of the AK Party in Türkiye in 2001 led to a major change and development in Turkish foreign policy. In 2003, the rejection of a parliamentary

resolution to use Turkish bases for the USA invasion of Iraq led to a major crisis between the USA and Türkiye. After the crisis, USA and Türkiye signed Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue and both countries pledged to work together on all common issues. However, In 2007, when Türkiye launched an operation in Northern Iraq due to PKK attacks, the USA opposed it, which is one of the indicators of the failure of the agreement between the two sides (Dagcı, 2012: 6).

In 2008, After the Barack Obama becoming 44th president of USA, USA-Türkiye relations have begun to change and entered new phase. After Obama took office, he aimed to reverse the impact of the unilateral and aggressive foreign policies implemented by the Bush administration and therefore made his first foreign visit to Türkiye, emphasizing in his speech that Türkiye would build a model partnership with the US. According to “model partnership”, Obama government supported to Türkiye’s leadership in Middle East and revitalize the relations between two countries. Atmaca argues that “The new era of Turkish American relations has been divided into two periods; the first period is between 2009-2013, USA perceived AK Party as a model which transform authoritarian regimes in Middle East at the beginning of Arab uprising. The second period is post-2013 era which doubt has been cast on Türkiye’s regional role due both to increasing political turmoil in the Middle East following the Arab Uprising and to worrisome developments in Türkiye” (Atmaca, 2017: 68).

In 2013, the Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia and spread to other Arab countries, had the hardest impact on Syria, leading to civil war and the expansion of the presence of terrorist organizations in Syria. The civil war in Syria has also negatively affected Türkiye-USA relations. In 2014, despite Türkiye’s objections, the USA provided arms to the People’s Defense Units (YPG) fighting the DAESH (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) terrorist organization in the town of Kobanî in northern Syria, which led to an increase in tensions between the two countries. Türkiye’s cross-border operations against DAESH and its seizure of a strategic strip of territory prioritized Washington’s goal of liberating the region from DAESH.

However, Türkiye’s expansion of its operations and its fight against the YPG has led to an escalation of tensions between the two countries (Tol-Pearson, 2016: 2) The most important event that affected Türkiye-USA relations during the Obama era

was the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2015. Türkiye accused Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish preacher and businessman living in the USA state of Pennsylvania, as the perpetrator of the coup attempt and demanded Gulen's extradition from the USA. However, the USA refusal to extradite Gulen to Türkiye exacerbated tensions between the two countries (Al Jazeera, 2023).

Trump's victory in the 2016 US presidential elections opened a new chapter in USA-Türkiye relations. After Trump took office, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed his optimism and support for the new administration. Indeed, Trump, who ran for the presidency from the Republican Party during the July 15 coup attempt, supported Erdoğan's stance against the coup attempt (Gisclon, 2017: 80). While the relations between the USA and Türkiye in the Trump era were positive at first, events such as the relocation of the USA Embassy to Jerusalem, the S-400 and F-35 incident, the US arms aid to the YPG, and the imposition of economic sanctions by the USA on Türkiye have caused tensions between the two countries.

Trump's discriminatory policies against Muslims and his equating Islam with radical terrorism in his speeches have negatively affected Türkiye-USA relations. In this regard, the visa bans on 5 Muslim countries caused the reaction of other Islamic countries, especially Türkiye (Erhan-Sivis, 2017: 110-111). After taking office, Trump has taken steps towards the Middle East and security policies of the USA. Indeed, on December 6, 2017, Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and his plan to relocate the US Embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem jeopardized the peace process in the Middle East, and his decision was criticized by the Arab world and Western allies (Holland-Lubell, 2017). Trump said that "Today, we finally acknowledge the obvious: that Jerusalem is Israel's capital. This is nothing more, or less, than a recognition of reality" (US Embassy, 2023).

Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel has also caused tensions in Türkiye-USA relations. President Erdoğan criticized Trump's decision, saying that it would put the region in a circle of fire. He warned that Jerusalem is a "*red line*" for Muslims and that the resolution ignores the 1980 UN resolution on the status of the city (Al Jazeera, 2023). An extraordinary meeting of the Organization of Islamic Countries was held in Istanbul on 13 December. Iran, Qatar, Jordan, and

Kuwait were represented by their heads of state, while Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which have close ties with the United States, were represented by their foreign ministers. At the end of the meeting, the leaders recognized East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine and called on the international community to do the same. In his speech to close the meeting, President Erdoğan said that a new alliance had been formed against Trump's Jerusalem declaration, which he described as invalid (CNN, 2023).

In 2017, the Qatar Crisis that erupted among the Gulf countries, which will be discussed later, is important in terms of making it clear that Türkiye and the US are on opposing blocs. Following the Qatar Crisis, the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in October 2018 at Saudi Arabian Consulate in Istanbul, Türkiye, was another event that affected USA-Turkish relations. While the economic relations between the US and Türkiye were going smoothly at the beginning, the Pastor Brunson Crisis, Türkiye's purchase of S-400 from Russia and Türkiye's operation in Syria caused problems due to US President Trump's threats of economic sanctions against Türkiye.

In October 2016, following the July 15 coup attempt, the trial of US Pastor Andrew Craig Brunson in Türkiye on charges of overthrowing the Turkish government led to a major crisis between the USA and Türkiye. In its talks with the Turkish government, the USA government has stated that Pastor Brunson is innocent and should be released (CNN, 2023). In this regard, Donald Trump has tweeted about Brunson "Pastor Andrew Brunson, a fine gentleman and Christian leader in the United States, is on trial and being persecuted in Türkiye for no reason. They call him a Spy, but I am more a Spy than he is. Hopefully he will be allowed to come home to his beautiful family where he belongs" (X, 2023).

In his September 2017 speech, Erdogan linked Brunson's release to the extradition of Fethullah Gulen from the US: "*There are professors who follow the unfortunate man in Pennsylvania. What kind of professor are you? What does it matter if you are a professor? They say, 'give me the pastor'. You have a priest, give him to us, let us judge him and we will give him to you. They say, 'Don't involve him'.*" Trump has announced economic sanctions against Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu and then-Justice Minister Abdülhamit Gul over Brunson's non-release. He doubles tariffs on

steel and aluminum imports from Türkiye (BBC, 2023). In response, Türkiye took a step to soften its relations with the US by releasing Pastor Andrew Craig Brunson in October 2018, and Brunson returned to his country.

In 2019, Türkiye's purchase of the S-400 defense system from Russia led to renewed tensions between the USA and Türkiye. In July 2019, President Erdoğan said that Türkiye had begun taking delivery of the S-400 defense system from Russia and that it would be fully deployed by 2020. Türkiye's purchase of the S-400s from Russia was met with a backlash by the US government, a NATO ally, which escalated tensions by saying it would respond to the deal with sanctions (Dadouch, 2019).

Before purchasing the S-400 air defense system from Russia, Türkiye tried to buy Patriot air defense systems from the United States, but Türkiye's attempt failed when the U.S. House of Representatives refused to approve the sale of Patriot systems to Türkiye. Therefore, since Türkiye could not find enough support from NATO and the U.S., it turned to Russia and made a deal with Russia to buy the S-400 air defense system (Yığıtpepe, 2021: 1396). Türkiye's deal with Russia for the S-400 air defense system and its rapprochement with Russia in order to prevent attacks by terrorist organizations due to the Syrian civil war has led to an increase in tensions between the US and Türkiye.

Trump reacted to Türkiye's purchase of S-400s from Russia by stating that Türkiye would be removed from the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. Türkiye, one of the partners of the project and part of the production chain, received the first aircraft under the F-35 project in 2018 (AA, 2023). Despite the delivery and the first payment under the F-35 Program, the US's exclusion of Türkiye from the F-35 Program was met with reaction by Türkiye, which stated that this situation damaged the alliance relationship between the two countries (BBC, 2023). In addition, the USA announced that it would impose sanctions on Türkiye under CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) in response to the S-400 deal. In response to the USA sanctions, President Erdogan threatened to withdraw Türkiye from NATO and expel the USA from Incirlik Air Base (Zanotti-Thomas, 2019: 10). Moreover, the agreement was also met with a backlash by NATO officials, who expressed concern that Türkiye's improved relations with Russia, the alliance's most important enemy,

would undermine NATO's collective security. Despite threats from the USA and NATO, Türkiye received its second batch in September 2019 (BBC, 2023).

With this act, the US did not want Türkiye to act independently of the US and get closer to Russia, but by purchasing the S-400 air defense system, Türkiye has shown that it can act independently of the US. This has led to mistrust between Türkiye and the United States and damaged the spirit of alliance. One of the unresolved problems between the USA and Türkiye is the US's arms aid to the PYD/YPG terrorist organization, the Syrian branch of the PKK. After the 2011 civil war in Syria, terrorist organizations began to settle in the region, while Syrian citizens sought refuge in Türkiye and tried to cross to European countries illegally. This situation has caused European countries, especially Türkiye to face the refugee crisis.

After Trump's inauguration, the USA Middle East policy aims to prevent the Syrian crisis, work with other Middle Eastern countries to prevent Iran's steps towards acquiring nuclear weapons, and fight against radical groups. In its Syria policy, the US has entered a military relationship with the YPG in order to combat radical groups and balance rival states. In April 2017, the USA publicly announced that it would provide heavy weapons support to the YPG (Erol-Çelik, 2018: 32). The USA support for the YPG, which threatens Türkiye's national security, was met with reaction by Türkiye. The USA saw Türkiye as a partner it could work with against DAESH. Therefore, for the USA to effectively combat terrorist organizations, Türkiye warned the USA that it should work with Türkiye and not with terrorist organizations such as the PYD-PKK. (Üstun, 2020: 29).

Türkiye-US relations during the Trump Era and the Syrian Question can be summarized in line with the realist perspective as follows; The Syrian civil war, which emerged after the Arab Spring, caused a power vacuum in the region. DAESH and YPG/PYD terrorist organizations took advantage of this vacuum and established sovereignty in the region. Türkiye perceived DAESH and YPG/PYD terrorist organizations as a threat to its security due to its border with Syria and the increasing terrorist incidents in the region (Bayezit, 2017: 89). Therefore, Türkiye has carried out military operations against terrorist organizations to protect its security and national interest. The US, on the other hand, has provided arms aid to the PYD/YPG against

the DAESH terrorist organization. Türkiye's military operations against the PYD/YPG and the US's arms aid to the YPG/PYD terrorist organization have caused both countries to experience insecurities in their relations. Consequently, the US has tried to wear down the Turkish economy and dissuade Türkiye from its foreign policy that prioritizes its national security by using its economic power to ensure that Türkiye is under the US's guidance and does not pursue a foreign policy independent of the US.

3.3. Saudi Arabia-United States Relations During the Trump Era

The relationship between the USA and Saudi Arabia is seen by the USA as one of its most complex and important connections in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia-USA relations historically started with small contacts in 1940 after the recognition of Saudi Arabia in 1931. The presence of oil, especially in the Gulf countries, also initiated commercial relations between Saudi Arabia and the USA. With the establishment of Aramco (Arab American Oil Company) in 1938, oil trade started between them. The security of Saudi Arabia became important for the USA due to the USA interest in oil (Pollack, 2002: 78).

Between 1946 and 1975, the USA increased its military and economic aid to Saudi Arabia during the Cold War period, although the Arab-Israeli conflict affected bilateral relations negatively, the USA and Saudi Arabia became two close allies against the Soviets (Prados-Blanchard, 2007: 4). In 1960, OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) was established by 13 countries with the membership of Qatar, Libya, Indonesia, UAE, Algeria, Nigeria, Ecuador and Gabon under the leadership of Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Venezuela to ensure cooperation on oil. Later, in order to act jointly in the Arab-Israeli wars and to use oil as a political weapon against other countries, Arab countries established OAPEC (Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries) in 1968 under the leadership of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya. After the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the OAPEC member countries, especially Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Qatar, imposed an oil embargo on all countries that helped Israel against the Arabs and oil prices were raised. However, the USA was less affected by this embargo than other countries. In 1974, through US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's "shuttle diplomacy", the oil countries decided to lift the

embargo (Ari, 2007: 384-390). This embargo led to tensions in relations between the USA and Saudi Arabia.

Regards to the relations during the Cold War, the Gulf War, which erupted in 1990 after the Cold War when Iraq invaded Kuwait, posed a threat to Saudi Arabia's security. In the Gulf War, Saudi Arabia and USA allied against Iraq to defend the Arabian Peninsula and save Kuwait from invasion. This war brought bilateral relations to a high point (Pollack, 2002: 84). In the 2000s, the post-9/11 USA intervention in Iraq in 2003 led to differences of opinion in bilateral relations. The differences deepened during the Obama era. Saudi Arabia was concerned about the USA intervention in Iraq as it was worried that Iraq would come under the influence of Tehran and its demographic structure would deteriorate. Indeed, the fragmented nature of the country and the Iranian influence after the USA withdrawal from Iraq in 2010 justified Saudi Arabia's concerns.

During the Obama era, the nuclear deal with Iran and the Arab Spring process caused bilateral relations to enter a troubled period (Erboga, 2019: 10). Saudi Arabia was concerned about Iran's influence in the Middle East and its possession of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the signing of the nuclear deal with Iran by the United States raised concerns about America's commitment to the Gulf and Saudi Arabia's security (Cordesman, 2016: 4). In 2011, The Arab Spring, which started with the uprising of the people against the government in Tunisia and spread to other Arab countries, is one of the most important developments affecting the political structure of the Middle East.

At the beginning of the Arab Spring, the US administration pursued a non-interventionist policy and after the spread of the Arab Spring, the Obama administration called on the governments of Arab countries to reform. However, as his call did not materialize and clashes intensified, Obama supported protesters in Egypt and Tunisia and called for a change of government. Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, opposed Obama's support for the protesters and rejected US efforts to influence the Gulf countries to reform (Gerges, 2012: 6). The Arab Spring process had a negative impact on US-Saudi Arabia relations. In 2016, Trump made his first foreign visit to Saudi Arabia after taking office as the President of the United States, marking a new

era in bilateral relations. On May 20, 2017, during his visit to Saudi Arabia, an arms treaty was signed between the USA and Saudi Arabia. Trump's first foreign visit to Saudi Arabia was a sign that he was trying to repair relations with USA's Arab allies that had deteriorated during the Obama era (Al Jazeera, 2023). At a ceremony in Riyadh, King Salman bin Abdelaziz of Saudi Arabia presented USA President Trump with the "King Abdelaziz al Saud Collar", Saudi Arabia's highest decoration (Wilts, 2017). During his visit, Trump attended a meeting with Gulf leaders at the King Abdelaziz Conference Center in Riyadh. During the meeting, Trump met with Gulf leaders and officials to discuss regional security, Iranian influence and building trade ties. Following the meeting, US Former President Trump held bilateral meetings with Bahrain's King Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi (Arab News, 2023).

The following day, the "US-Arab and Islamic Countries Summit" was held in Riyadh with the participation of more than 50 Arab-Islamic countries, focusing on unity in the fight against terrorism. The summit focused on unity in the fight against terrorism and explicitly condemned terrorist organizations that commit terrorist acts in the name of Islam (Al Jazeera, 2023). After the summit, the US President inaugurated the Global Center for Combating Extremism with world leaders, including King Salman of Saudi Arabia and President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt. During the inauguration, US President Donald J. Trump, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sisi and Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdelaziz posed with their hands on the globe, which became one of the most discussed photos on the world agenda (Al-Arabiya News, 2023). During the summits, Trump has spoken a lot about the need to limit Iranian influence in the region by cooperating with the Gulf countries. In this regard, he announced his withdrawal from the Obama-era nuclear deal with Iran in 2015, demonstrating a tough foreign policy against Iran (BBC, 2023).

In 2017 and 2018, the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, which will be discussed in detail later, led to strained relations between the two countries. A month after Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE and Bahrain cut diplomatic relations with Qatar on the grounds that Qatar was supporting terrorism, which led to a major crisis in the region. The Washington administration took different

approaches to the Qatar Crisis. While US President Donald J. Trump initially blamed Qatar for supporting terrorism and supported Saudi Arabia, Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called for calm (Wintour, 2017). On the other hand, the brutal murder of Saudi Arabia's Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Turkish Consulate General in Istanbul in October 2018 has led to an uncertain path in relations between the USA, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. When US-Saudi Arabia relations are explained in line with the liberalist theory, it is seen that there is interdependence between them. The US encounter its oil needs from Saudi Arabia and considered Saudi Arabia as a close ally in its Middle East policy. In order to ensure its security, Saudi Arabia made arms deals with the US and stood by the US in its Middle East policy. Therefore, despite the crises between them, their economic and military cooperation continued to grow stronger.

3.4. Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations During the Trump Era

Turkish-Saudi Arabian relations have a deep and historical background. Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations started in the second half of the 18th century with the emergence of the Saud family as a political actor. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established by the Saud family in 1932 after long struggles with the Ottoman Empire. The Republic of Türkiye, which was established after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, was one of the first states to recognize the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and a friendship treaty was signed between the two countries. However, relations between the two countries did not improve until the 1980s due to the different administrations and different perspectives of both countries during the Republican period (Ataman, 2012: 12). Between 1980 and 1990, there were economic developments in the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. Especially during the Özal period, the number of Arab students studying in Türkiye increased and bilateral relations boomed in the fields of trade and tourism (Altunısık, 2010: 8). Turgut Özal's joining the coalition forces in the Gulf War, which broke out in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait, was a turning point in relations (Jung, 2005: 9).

In 1995, after Necmettin Erbakan, who has an Islamic perspective, became prime minister, he visited the Arab world and Muslim countries and established close relations with the Arab world (Hamid, 2004: 114). However, in 1996, Türkiye's arms

deal with Israel, and the February 28 coup led to escalations in Turkish-Arab relations (Ataman, 2012: 14). In 2000, after the AK Party came to power, Türkiye developed cooperation with the Middle East and Gulf countries rather than the West. During this period, economic and political relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia were raised to the highest level and mutual visits were increased. Economic cooperation was realized between the two countries in many fields including tourism. In 2006, the visit of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia to Türkiye after 40 years opened a new chapter in relations (Khan, 2022). However, the emergence of popular movements against authoritarian leaders, called the Arab Spring in 2011, affected the authoritarian regimes in the region.

The popular movement that started in Tunisia spread to Egypt, Syria, Libya, Bahrain and other Arab countries. Türkiye, which followed the policy of zero problems and increasing cooperation with its neighbors until the emergence of the Arab Spring, has reached a breaking point in its relations with Syria due to the Assad regime's refusal to respond to calls for dialogue and reform and waging war against its people (Aras-Akarcesme, 2012: 47). The Arab Spring and the subsequent regime changes in the region had a negative impact on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. In particular, the coup against Morsi, who was elected by popular vote after the ouster of Mubarak in Egypt, led to strained relations between the two countries.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE supported the coup against Morsi, Türkiye's ally, as they perceived the rise of the Morsi government and the Muslim Brotherhood organization as a threat. However, Türkiye supported Morsi and stood firm against those who played a role in the coup (Kuru, 2015: 107). In 2015, King Abdullah bin Abdelaziz of Saudi Arabia died and was succeeded by his son Salman bin Abdelaziz. The coming to power of Salman bin Abdelaziz has shown that a new era has been entered the relations between two countries (AA, 2023). During the reign of Salman bin Abdelaziz, important reforms were carried out in the domestic policy of Saudi Arabia.

In this regard, women in Saudi Arabia, who gained the right to vote under King Abdullah, participated and has voted in municipal elections for the first time (AA, 2023). In 2015, Türkiye has improved its relations with Saudi Arabia under King

Salman with economic and military cooperation. In 2016, with the election of Trump as president in the US presidential elections, the US foreign policy has been entered a new era. In 2017, in response to Trump's plan to move the US Embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Muslim leaders gathered at the OIC Extraordinary Summit in Istanbul at the invitation of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. At the summit, the decision of US President Trump was condemned and rejected. Saudi Arabia, which has close relations with the United States, attended the summit at the vice-presidential level (AA, 2023).

When the Palestinian issue is analyzed from a constructivist perspective, The Islamic and Ottoman identity of Türkiye and the Islamic and Arab identity of Saudi Arabia have led them to side with Palestine, as it is home to places that are considered holy by Muslims. Türkiye and Saudi Arabia have assumed a leadership role in the Islamic world due to the love for Palestine among the Turkish people, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's popularity among the Arab community, and Saudi Arabia being one of the most powerful states among the Arab countries. Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by moving the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and ignoring Palestine with this decision was strongly opposed by Islamic countries under the leadership of Türkiye due to the importance of Jerusalem for Muslims. In the Trump Era, tensions were experienced in the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia on issues such as the Murder of Jamal Khashoggi and the Qatar Crisis, but the strategic cooperation between the two countries continued. In 2017 the Qatar crisis between the Gulf countries negatively affected the relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. On June 5, 2017, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Egypt announced that severed their political and diplomatic relations with Qatar. In addition, these countries closed their airspace, road and seaway to Qatar. The Gulf states claimed that Qatar supports terrorism and has close ties with Iran, and therefore announced the severing of diplomatic relations (BBC, 2023). The Gulf states issued a 13-point list of conditions Qatar must fulfill to end the crisis.

The list included Qatar cutting ties with Iran, shutting down Al Jazeera and ending the Turkish military presence in Qatar and any joint military cooperation with Türkiye (Gulf News, 2023). President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who traveled to Doha to defuse the crisis, supported Qatar and opposed the measures imposed by the Gulf

states, sending cargo ships and hundreds of planes loaded with food to Qatar as a show of solidarity. Türkiye also deployed more troops to Qatar in response to a 13-point list that included the termination of the Turkish military presence in Qatar (Al Jazeera, 2023). Another development after the Qatar Crisis that King Salman removed Prince Mohammed bin Nayef from his heir position and appointed his son Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MbS) as the Kingdom's crown prince. MbS appointed as deputy prime minister, and he maintain his serve as minister of defense. MbS played an active role in the developments in the foreign policy and domestic policy of Saudi Arabia (Al-Arabiya News, 2023). After MbS was appointed as crown prince, MbS introduced Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia's vision for the future, which aims to make the Kingdom the heart of the Arab and Islamic world and an investment hub connecting three continents. In addition, MbS has led the way in changing the structure of Saudi Arabia to free the economy from its dependence on oil. He also modernized Saudi Arabia by allowing women to drive and curbing the power of clerics over society (Al Jazeera, 2023).

However, MbS's image internationally has been shaken by the allegations that MbS ordered the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in 2018. In October 2018, Jamal Khashoggi who was columnist for Washington Post and criticize MbS's policy was killed by Saudi team in the consulate of Saudi Arabia in İstanbul. The UN Report claim that the execution has been commanded by MbS. On October 2, 2018, journalist Jamal Khashoggi entered the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul for official procedures to marry his fiancée Hatice Cengiz, but according to Cengiz, he did not come out. Saudi officials insisted that journalist Jamal Khashoggi had left the Consulate but issued a statement confirming that he'd disappeared. (Al Jazeera, 2023).

After the incident, Turkish authorities requested permission from the Saudi government to inspect the consulate. Turkish official made a statement that Jamal Khashoggi was killed in the consulate. Turkish officials said that a team of 15 Saudi agents, assisted by three intelligence officers, arrived in Istanbul in the days before the murder and that the team had removed security cameras from the consulate before Khashoggi's arrival. (BBC, 2023). Trump, on the other hand, said that the US Intelligence Agency was examining the evidence on who planned the murder, and that

Trump would not cancel military contracts with Saudi Arabia, despite pressure from US lawmakers for Trump to impose sanctions on Saudi Arabia (Stone, 2018).

Chapter Conclusion

In 2016, winning of Donald J. Trump presidential election and his nationalist foreign policies with the slogan of “American First” and “Make America Great Again” has opened new page the US foreign policy. Following a nationalist foreign policy Donald Trump’s decision to build the Mexican wall and withdraw from international agreements such as the Paris Climate Agreement and the nuclear deal with Iran were met with surprise by international organizations and states.

In addition, US President Trump’s signing of a decree imposing travel and visa bans on 7 Islamic countries, and moving the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem by keeping good relations with Israel were strongly condemned by Islamic countries. When it comes to Turkish-American relations in the Trump era, the bilateral relationship, which has historically had its ups and downs, continued in the same manner during this period. Trump’s moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem, the Pastor Brunson Crisis, the S-400 Crisis, the US providing arms aid to YPG and economic sanctions against Türkiye have caused tensions and harsh outbursts in bilateral relations. However, despite the tensions, the US has always seen Türkiye as a strategic partner and relations have continued to soften after the tensions.

In terms of US-Saudi Arabia relations in the Trump era, Trump’s first foreign visit to Saudi Arabia and the arms deal between the two countries opened a new page in bilateral relations and continued at a high level. However, the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in 2017 and 2018 cast a shadow over the relations between the two countries. However, despite the tensions, economic and military relations between the US and Saudi Arabia have continued to progress. Regarding Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations in the Trump era, after he took office in 2016, and bilateral relations were strengthened through economic cooperation.

However, the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in 2017 and 2018 led to increased tensions in bilateral relations. In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, particularly Saudi Arabia, imposed an embargo

against Qatar due to Qatar's sponsorship of terrorism. In response, Türkiye stood in solidarity with Qatar and provided military and economic aid to Qatar. As a result, while the Qatar Crisis has led to tensions in relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, it has strengthened relations between Türkiye and Qatar .In 2018, the murder of Saudi national Jamal Khashoggi, a columnist for the Washington Post newspaper, by Saudi agents in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul negatively affected Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations, and the allegation that a senior aide of Crown Prince MbS ordered the murder also shook MbS's image in the international arena. However, after all these tensions, bilateral relations have not completely deteriorated and have been strengthened through mutual visits and economic cooperation.

CHAPTER FOUR

TÜRKIYE-SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS IN THE SHADOW OF CRISES

Chapter Introduction

The chapter examines crises in Turkish-Saudi relations within the framework of the above hypotheses and discusses the effects of crises on Turkish-Saudi relations by dividing them into eight sections. The first section analyzes the Syrian civil war and discusses its impact on Turkish-Saudi relations. The section analyzes Türkiye and Saudi Arabia's roles in the Syrian civil war, Türkiye's struggle against terrorist organizations to protect its national security and the impact of its rapprochement with Iran on bilateral relations. The second section deals with the war in Yemen between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis, with the support of Iran. This section discusses Saudi Arabia's operations and Türkiye's humanitarian policy in the Yemen war. The third section discusses rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The section discusses how Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry began and developed, and then discusses the impact of Türkiye's close relations with Iran on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations.

The fourth and fifth sections analyze the Qatar Crisis and the Murder of Jamal Khashoggi which were most affected bilateral relations. The fourth section discusses the embargo imposed by the Gulf countries in Qatar and the impact of Türkiye's close relations with Qatar on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations in line with the above hypotheses. The fifth section focuses on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi in Türkiye, Türkiye's role in the murder and Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations after the murder. The sixth section examines the process of the pandemic and the boycott of Turkish goods by Saudi Arabia. The section discusses the pandemic process that emerged in 2020, the policies of Türkiye and Saudi Arabia during the pandemic process, and the impact of Saudi Arabia's boycott of Türkiye on bilateral relations. The seventh section analyzes Abraham Accords and its impact on Türkiye and Saudi Arabia's relations with Israel. Final sections examine US relations with Türkiye and Saudi Arabia during the Biden Era and starting of normalization and development of relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia.

4.1. Arab Spring and Syrian Crisis

The Arab Spring is a popular movement that emerged in 2011 and swept across the Middle East and North Africa, aiming to topple autocratic and long-standing regimes in Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Egypt and Syria. The protests started in Tunisia when a street vendor set himself on fire and spread to other countries (Zuber-Moussa, 2018: 245). While the Arab Spring resulted in popular protests and the overthrow of authoritarian governments and the establishment of democratically elected governments in Egypt and Tunisia, in Syria and Libya it turned into civil war due to the resistance of the government and the use of force against its people. In Syria, the regime's response to the popular protests that started in March 2011 against the change of the Assad regime was harsh.

In the late 2011, civil war broke out with armed clashes between the Alawite-based government forces and the Sunni-based opposition group (Khan, 2017: 561). During the civil war, military and political groups emerged within the Syrian opposition, and within the military groups, DAESH, the YPG/PYD, the Syrian branch of the PKK, and the Al-Nusra Front took advantage of the power vacuum and established areas of dominance in the region (Çaglar-Aksu, 2019: 513). The strengthening of terrorist organizations in the region due to the civil war and the use of force by the regime against its people caused the migration crisis and the increase in terrorism activities in the world. As a result of this situation, foreign powers have intervened in the crisis for the sake of international security.

The involvement of external powers and their different approaches to the crisis have exacerbated the crisis. Internationally, while the US and European countries view the solution as the change of the Assad regime, Russia and China have taken a different approach and supported the regime against the armed actors in the region (Çaglar-Aksu, 2019: 514). Regionally, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Qatar provided military and financial support to the opposition, while Tehran, together with Russia, provided support to the Assad administration (Phillips, 2022: 360). In 2017, The Astana process was initiated under the leadership of Türkiye, Iran and Russia to resolve the crisis. However, the crisis has still not been resolved today due to the failure of the peace talks to reach a lasting peace.

4.1.1. The Effects of Syrian Crisis on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations

In 2011, the Arab Spring, which influenced Arab countries, led to bloody interventions and civil war in Syria. The Syrian refugees fleeing the war took shelter in Türkiye and the attacks of terrorist organizations that dominated the region caused Türkiye was one of the countries most affected by the crisis. According to Keyman, Türkiye's proactive foreign policy in 2010 faced security risks and challenges with the outbreak of the Syrian crisis and the Egyptian coup. Therefore, especially due to the refugee and DAESH crises, Türkiye reconsidered its foreign policy priorities (Keyman, 2016: 2283). President Erdoğan, who was prime minister in 2010-2011, tried to persuade the regime to reform at the beginning of the crisis, but after his efforts went unanswered, he made statements calling for the overthrow of the Assad regime (Hale, 2019: 28).

It later voiced support for the opposition against Assad. However, Ankara insisted that the PYD/YPG, the Syrian branch of the PKK, which dominates the region, be excluded from the opposition. Nevertheless, the US support for the PYD/YPG in 2014 worried Ankara. In 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, Türkiye organized military operations in Syria under the names of Operation Shah Euphrates, Operation Euphrates Shield, Operation Olive Branch, Operation Peace Spring and Operation Spring Shield to break the power of the YPG and DAESH (Phillips, 2019: 10). Türkiye has also focused on diplomacy to resolve the Syrian crisis. In this regard, the Astana talks started on January 23, 2017, in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, under the leadership of Russia, Türkiye and Iran.

However, the Astana Process was initially initiated to stop the conflicts between the parties and reduce tensions instead of bringing a permanent solution (Cengiz, 2020: 8). In terms of Saudi Arabia foreign policy towards the Syrian crisis, Saudi Arabia has been regionally affected by the Syrian crisis. After the start of the civil war in Syria, Saudi Arabia supported the opposition against Assad to prevent Iranian influence in the region. Therefore, it aimed to topple Assad and weaken Iranian influence in the region. Moreover, while supporting the opposition, Saudi Arabia opposed the support of radical organizations such as DAESH and Al Nusra Front (Shoaib, 2016: 65).

The outbreak of the civil war led to diverging interests in Saudi-US relations. While the US aimed to break the influence of the DAESH terrorist organization, Saudi Arabia aimed to bring down the Assad regime. Due to the ineffectiveness of the US in its actual intervention in Syria and the nuclear deal with Iran, Saudi Arabia reconsidered its foreign policy strategies and cooperated with Türkiye. Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Qatar supported anti-Assad groups from 2011 until the Egyptian coup. However, during the Egyptian coup, Ankara-Riyadh relations were strained due to Saudi Arabia's support for the coup. However, Riyadh has been cautious in its relations with Ankara in order to prevent the strengthening of the Muslim Brotherhood and the expansion of Iran's influence (Oktav, 2019: 3).

In 2015, After the Salman bin Abdelaziz ascended the throne in Saudi Arabia, the new page has opened between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. In 2015 was the participation of Türkiye in the Joint Islamic Alliance Against Terrorism under the leadership of Saudi Arabia against the elements emerging in the Middle East countries that dragged the region into chaos and instability (Ataman-Akdogan, 2015: 157). However, due to the strengthening of the YPG/PYD presence in the region in 2016, Türkiye, together with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, abandoned the agenda of regime overthrow and prioritized preventing the strengthening of the YPG and PKK. Therefore, in 2016 and 2017, it rallied with Russia and Iran and held the Astana and Sochi talks to secure a ceasefire in Syria. On July 15, 2016, the US and Saudi Arabia remained silent against the coup attempt in Türkiye. The Iranian leader's support for Erdoğan a few hours after the coup led to Türkiye's rapprochement with Iran (Oktav, 2018: 5).

When the impact of the Syrian Crisis on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations is analyzed with a realist approach, it is observed that there is a power and security effect in the region. Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry has influenced Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. Saudi Arabia has made the fall of Assad in the Syrian civil war the centerpiece of its foreign policy to break Iran's influence in the region. Türkiye, on the other hand, while initially pursuing a policy to bring down the regime, due to the empowerment of terrorist organizations, has increased its military power against the threats of YPG and DAESH terrorist organizations by putting terrorist organizations at the center of its

foreign policy and has carried out military operations in Syria to ensure its national security.

4.2. Yemen Crisis

Syria, Libya, and Yemen have descended into civil war and humanitarian crisis since the Arab Spring protests began in 2011. A group of university students started a protest in January 2011 against Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has ruled Yemen for thirty years within the framework of unfair and unequal patronage relations. The protests have gradually spread, and the Saleh government has intervened harshly against the protesters. The harsh intervention of the regime has increased the intensity of the protests, and clashes have broken out between the regime and the opposition group. Saleh, who was hit by a bomb during the conflict, went to Saudi Arabia. The GCC led by Saudi Arabia intervened and ensured Saleh's resignation. The GCC, under the leadership of Saudi Arabia, intervened and secured Saleh's resignation.

In line with the agreement reached, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi replaced Saleh as interim president and the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) was launched, but no clear solution was reached (Cingoz, 2019: 8). In the transition process, Hadi announced the end of the dialogue conference a year after taking office and launched a new phase in the transition process that would produce a new constitution. However, the president was criticized for failing to implement the political reforms agreed during the conference and his legitimacy diminished. In 2014, the Houthis pressured Hadi, whose legitimacy had declined, to improve governance and seized Sana'a in June and the city of Amran in July (Salisbury, 2016: 19).

The Houthis were founded in 1991 by Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi under the name of the "Believing Youth Organization". The organization, which was previously established as a cultural platform, turned into an armed organization in 2004 and took the name Ansarullah. The Houthis belong to the Zaydi branch of the Shia sect and therefore cooperate closely with Iran. From 2004 to 2011, they fought seven times with the Yemeni army (Semin, 2015: 2). In response to the Houthis' seizure of Yemen's major cities and seizure of power in 2014, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries perceived the Houthis as a threat to their legitimacy because they belong to

the Zaidi branch of the Shia sect and are in close cooperation with Iran and organized a military operation. Therefore, the crisis in Yemen has turned into a power struggle between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

4.2.1 The Reflection of Yemen Crisis on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations

Saudi Arabia and Türkiye played an active role in the Yemen Crisis. In the context of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy on the Yemen crisis, Saudi Arabia's priority has been the stabilization of Yemen and the control of the Houthis under Saleh's government. Therefore, Saudi Arabia provided all kinds of military and economic aid to the government to maintain the Saleh regime. However, after the Arab uprisings in 2011, Saudi Arabia implemented different strategies in order not to lose its control over Yemen. In this case, it carried out Saleh's resignation and ensured that Hadi came to power by controlling the transition process (Kurt, 2019:315).

However, in 2014, taking advantage of Hadi's economic and security problems, the Houthis seized the northern city of Sada and the capital Sana'a and forced Hadi to flee abroad (BBC, 2023). Hadi called on the United Nations Security Council to interfere in Yemen against the Houthis advancing towards Aden. In response, Saudi Arabia launched a military operation in Yemen on March 26, 2015, called "Decisive Storm" or "Asifat al Hazm", supported by a coalition of Sunni Muslim countries, including the GCC countries (except Oman), Morocco, Sudan, Egypt, Jordan and Pakistan. According to Stenslie, "King Salman has consulted with the leaders of the Gulf states, Jordan, Egypt, Türkiye, and Pakistan, in an effort to create a Sunni bloc (against Shiite Houthi and Iranian cooperation)" (Stenslie, 2015: 2).

However, Saudi Arabia-led military operation has led to the killing of thousands of civilians and subjected them to poor conditions, turning the Yemen crisis into a humanitarian crisis. According to the UN, the Yemen crisis is the world's largest humanitarian crisis. Since 2015, 24.1 million people, representing 80 percent of the population, have needed humanitarian assistance and protection, and more than three million people have been forced to flee their homes due to the operations. (UN, 2023). According to Yemen Data Project estimated "8,983 civilian people was killed, 10,243 civilian people was injured because of airstrikes of Saudi led coalitions (YDP, 2023).

When it comes to Türkiye's foreign policy toward the Yemen crisis, the country supported the military operation launched by Saudi Arabia in 2015 against the Iranian-backed Houthis. However, it was not satisfied with the civilian casualties caused by Saudi Arabia's airstrikes and wanted to heal the wounds caused by Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry.

At this point, Türkiye implemented its humanitarian diplomacy and sent aid to Yemen through various non-governmental organizations, especially IHH and the Red Crescent. Two sets of fifty-bed construction type heavy climate Sahara hospitals were established in Yemen on the instructions of President Erdoğan. In the Yemen crisis, Türkiye supported the legitimate government against the Houthis (Rakipoglu, 2018: 154). When Saudi Arabia foreign policy in the Yemen crisis is evaluated in line with the realist theory, the concepts of security and power come to the fore. Saudi Arabia perceived the Iranian-backed Houthis' seizure of power and their control of important cities in Yemen as a threat to its national security. Therefore, it increased its military power and organized military operations in Yemen. When the crisis is analyzed from a constructivist perspective, identity, sectarian and ideological conflicts emerge between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Since the Houthis belong to the Zaidi branch of the Shia sect, King Salman wanted to form a Sunni bloc against the Shia with the coalition supported by the Gulf countries, Türkiye and Pakistan. Therefore, the rivalry of Saudi Arabia and Iran turned into an inter-sectarian war.

For the sake of maintaining its strategic partnership with Riyadh, Ankara supported the Saudi-led coalition. This is important in terms of balancing Iran's expansionist power. In the Yemen crisis, Türkiye did its best to prevent the conflict from spreading to the regional level and turning into a sectarian war (Kurt, 2015: 21). As a result, Türkiye supported the operations to improve its relations with Saudi Arabia but was not satisfied with the civilian casualties resulting from Saudi airstrikes. It also did not want the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia to lead to sectarian wars and sought to ensure stability and peace by supporting the legitimate government in Yemen.

4.3. Rivalry of Saudi Arabia and Iran

Iran and Saudi Arabia are the two most powerful states in the Middle East, competing in the Gulf with different understandings of Islam, different political systems, cultures and sociological structures. One of the reasons for the rivalry between these two states is the sectarian conflict between them. Shia-Sunni tension has emerged between them due to their strong and conservative adherence to Wahhabi and Shia beliefs. Indicators of this situation are the deterioration of relations, which were good during the reign of the Shah, after the Islamic Revolution and Iran's hostile attitude towards Saudi Arabia (Cordesman, 2001:1).

In 1980, the Iran-Iraq war and tensions during the Hajj period led to increased hostility between them. In 1980, Saudi Arabia supported Iraq against Iran in the Iran-Iraq war launched by Iraq. In 1981, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established with Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE as members to ensure the security of the Gulf against the Iran-Iraq war and Iranian threats. The seven-year-long war ended with UN Security Council Resolution 598, which was accepted by both sides. After the Iran-Iraq War, developments that increased tensions after both sides blamed each other for the deaths of 400 Iranian pilgrims during the Hajj period in 1987 led the two countries to sever diplomatic relations in 1988 (Al-Badi, 2017: 195).

In 1991, Saudi Arabia and Iran accused Iraq of the Gulf War, which resulted from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. This situation ushered in a period of *détente* in relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Diplomatic relations resumed with the visit of Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al Faisal to Iran (Okruhlik, 2003: 116-117). In particular, the election of Mohammad Khatami as president in 1997 and his efforts to promote dialogue in Iran's position in the international arena had a positive impact on Iran-Saudi Arabia relations. However, the USA invasion of Iraq in 2003 in response to the September 11 attacks reignited tensions between the two countries. The overthrow of Saddam's government due to the US invasion of Iraq and Iran's efforts to become the most important actor in the region through the Shia identity in Iraq caused the two countries to confront each other (Özev, 2016: 93).

The Arab Spring, which erupted in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011, changed the history of the Arab peoples and reshaped the politics of the region. The Arab Spring had a significant impact on the relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and both countries acted in accordance with their own interests during the Arab Spring process and adopted foreign policy practices that contradicted each other. As a result, there has been an increase in conflict and rivalry between the two countries (Akdogan, 2012: 465). This confrontation was called the *New Middle East Cold War* by Gause. Gause said that “Saudi Arabia, and Iran did not face each other militarily but continued their struggle for influence in the domestic political systems of the weak states of the region” (Gause, 2014: 3).

Examining the foreign policy approaches of Saudi Arabia and Iran during the Arab Spring, Saudi Arabia and Iran did not engage in direct war in Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria. Instead, they were in indirect competition with each side supporting opposite poles. Saudi Arabia has pursued a foreign policy in favor of maintaining the status quo of existing regimes against anti-regime demonstrations. Hence its support for Sunni, pro-western authoritarian regimes in Tunisia and Egypt (Akdogan, 2012: 470). Conversely, Iran welcomed the popular uprisings. It believed that it would be able to increase its influence in the region, especially with the fall and weakening of the pro-Arab and US-backed regime in Egypt (Chubin, 2012: 16).

Iran characterized the fall of the Western-backed regimes in Egypt and Tunisia and the role of the Islamic movements in overthrowing these regimes as a continuation of the Islamic revolution and Islamic awakening (Behzad, 2018: 130). Therefore, while Saudi Arabia supported the regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and Bahrain, Iran supported the anti-regime groups. However, the roles of Saudi Arabia and Iran changed in the Syrian crisis. While Iran acted in concert with Russia and supported the Shia-based regime of Bashar al-Assad, Saudi Arabia worked in concert with the USA and provided military and economic aid to the opposition (Phillips, 2022: 360).

Iran’s nuclear ambitions are another source of friction between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Iran’s nuclear program, which began in 1974 during the reign of the Shah and developed in the 2000s under Ahmadinejad with uranium enrichment activities, has become a nuclear crisis in the international arena. In response to Iran’s nuclear

development activities, the IAEA determined that Iran was not in compliance with the security agreement and referred the case to the UN Security Council. The UN imposed sanctions on Iran between 2006 and 2009, demanding the suspension of enrichment activities (Mousavian, 2018: 172).

After the failure of the Ahmadinejad regime to reach an agreement with Iran on its nuclear program, the Western powers reached an agreement with Iran in 2013 thanks to the election of Rouhani and his relations with Western states. In 2013, Hassan Rouhani initiated talks with the P5+1 on the nuclear program and a Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) was agreed in Geneva on 24 November 2013. The negotiations were completed with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). On April 2, 2015, and entered into force on October 18, 2015 (Sinkaya, 2016: 14). The deal allowed Iran to pursue its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and provided for the comprehensive lifting of all UN, multilateral, and domestic sanctions related to the Iranian nuclear program, including access to trade, technology, finance, and energy (EU External Action, 2023: 24).

The nuclear deal has raised concerns in the Middle East, especially in the Gulf states. However, it has allowed Iran to improve its relations with the US, the EU, Russia and China. Therefore, Saudi Arabia and Israel were concerned about Iran's rapprochement with the US and did not accept the nuclear deal, which was aimed at strengthening Iran's influence (Hussain-Abdullah, 2015: 587). In November 2016, Trump's election as US president opened a new chapter in US foreign policy. Unlike Obama, Trump was front and center with his anti-Iran rhetoric. On his first foreign visit to Saudi Arabia, Trump stated in his speech at the US-Islamic Countries Summit in Riyadh that Iran should be isolated by working with the Gulf countries against Iran (Trump, 2023).

On 8 May 2018, as part of his anti-Iran policy, Trump announced that USA would unilaterally withdraw from the nuclear deal with Iran, which he has described as the worst deal in history and announced that he would impose new sanctions on Iran (Aljazeera, 2023). In his speech on November 5, 2018, Trump announced the re-imposition of US sanctions that were lifted due to the nuclear deal with Iran, stating that the sanctions would target critical sectors of the Iranian economy (White House,

2023). Trump's anti-Iranian rhetoric and the imposition of sanctions on Iran have increased Saudi Arabia's belief that it can weaken Iranian influence in the Gulf by supporting the US.

In conclusion, Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry stems from power struggle and Shia-Sunni conflict. Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry can be analyzed in accordance with constructivist and realist theories. When Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry is analyzed from the constructivist perspective, it is seen that identity and ideology conflicts emerge. After the Iranian revolution, Saudi Arabia wanted to lead to a Sunni bloc to counter Iran's policy of exporting revolution and Shi'ism in the Gulf region. Sunni-Shia tensions were exacerbated by the post-Arab Spring crises in Yemen and Syria. A realistic analysis of the Iranian-Saudi rivalries reveals the existence of a power struggle between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Especially after the Arab Spring, Saudi Arabia, which perceived Iran's influence in Yemen and Syria and Iran's nuclear power as a threat, increased its military power and engaged in a power struggle with Iran. Thus, the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia has caused the Gulf to become chaotic and destabilized the region.

4.3.1. Effect of Iran-Saudi Arabia Rivalry on Turkish-Saudi Relations

The Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry, which began after the Iranian Revolution and intensified during the Arab Spring, has had a significant impact on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. While Iran's Shiite and anti-western policies after the Iranian revolution led to a Sunni-Shiite conflict in Iran-Saudi Arabia relations, the Iran-Iraq war and its aftermath led to the severing of diplomatic relations. Since Türkiye had a secular and western foreign policy during the Republican era, it distanced itself from Iran after the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as from Saudi Arabia. Iran saw Türkiye as a satellite of the USA due to its cooperation with the USA and Israel (Akbarzadeh-Barry, 2016: 2). Therefore, Türkiye and Iran did not have close relations until the 1990s.

Khatami, who came to power in Iran between 1990 and 2000, abandoned the rhetoric of revolution in his foreign policy and implemented the policy of *détente* with neighbors, which provided an opportunity for the re-establishment of Iranian-Saudi

diplomatic relations, while Türkiye and Iran, which were concerned about security and negatively affected by the rhetoric of revolution, established strong relations with increased cooperation (Sinkaya, 2012: 139). In the 2000s, however, the USA invasion of Iraq in the wake of 9/11 led Saudi Arabia and Iran to compete for influence in the region, reigniting the conflict and rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, while bringing Iran and Türkiye closer together over security concerns stemming from the post-Saddam (Akbarzadeh-Barry, 2016: 3). In 2002, the AK Party government, which came to power in Türkiye with a policy of zero problems with neighbors, pursued an active foreign policy of rapprochement with Middle Eastern countries. Türkiye has strengthened its relations with Iran to strengthen its traditional friendship with the Islamic world and because Türkiye needs economic development (Wang, 2011: 14).

In 2011, the Arab Spring, which affected the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, increased the rivalry and conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which pursued opposite policies in this process. Especially in the Syrian crisis, the increase of rivalry and conflict of interests between Saudi Arabia and Iran and the transformation of Türkiye-Iran relations from competition at the beginning of the crisis to cooperation with later developments had a negative impact on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. At the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia supported the opposition within the framework of their national interests, while Iran supported the Assad regime in line with its national political goals and because it equated Syria's security with its future. Due to this situation, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia followed the same policy and competed with Iran.

However, the emergence of terrorist organizations such as PYD/YPG/PKK and DAESH, which took advantage of the power vacuum in the region to dominate some parts of the region and threatened the national security of both Türkiye and Iran, provided an opportunity for the rivalry between the two countries to turn into cooperation. Therefore, to protect Syria's territorial integrity, the Astana talks between Russia, Türkiye, and Iran were launched in 2017 (Sayın-Kılıncarslan, 2019: 248-249). Türkiye's greater flexibility and cooperation against Iran, which Saudi Arabia perceived as a mortal threat, was not well received by Saudi Arabia (Zarras, 2018: 128).

The reason is that Saudi Arabia saw Türkiye as a counterweight because it was suspicious of US intentions towards Iran. However, Türkiye is economically and energetically dependent on Iran. Therefore, it has played a balancing role between the two countries in the face of Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry (Pourebrahim, 2015: 86). Iran's nuclear program, which began in 1974 and developed in the 2000s, was another development that intensified the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Since Iran's nuclear program was perceived as a threat by Saudi Arabia, it increased the power struggle in Saudi Arabia-Iran relations. Türkiye, as well as Saudi Arabia, had no positive attitude towards Iran having nuclear weapons. This could lead to a nuclear arms race among regional actors. Instead of taking a tough stance like Riyadh, Ankara played a mediating role in the crisis through negotiations and initiatives that were not well received by Riyadh (Zarras, 2018: 8).

However, tensions between the two countries were heightened in 2015 by Iran's agreement with the P5+1 over its nuclear program. Saudi Arabia opposed the nuclear deal with Iran and did not want Iran to become stronger in the region. Türkiye, on the other hand, supported the deal and President Erdoğan visited Iran after the nuclear deal. With the lifting of sanctions against Iran, Türkiye saw Iran as an excellent trade partner. Türkiye's close relationship with Iran after the deal was not welcomed by Saudi Arabia, which opposed the deal (Zavada, 2019: 19). After Trump came to power in 2017, he took anti-Iranian actions, unlike Obama.

One of these actions was Trump's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal on May 8, 2018, which he described as one of the worst deals in history. In response to Trump's activity, presidential spokesman İbrahim Kalın responded by saying that the "US withdrawal from the nuclear deal would lead to instability and new conflicts" (X, 2023). With Trump's withdrawal from the nuclear deal Saudi Arabia, a competitor to Iran, can use the assistance provided by the United States, Israel, and the European Union to isolate Iran for its own interest (Mousavian, 2018: 183).

After Trump announced his withdrawal from the nuclear deal, he ordered the re-imposition of sanctions against Iran. While the first sanctions were imposed on Iran's financial institutions and automotive industry, the second sanctions were imposed on Iran's oil industry. This situation created economic hardship for Türkiye,

which had increased its oil imports from Iran after the nuclear deal lifted sanctions in 2016 (Wald, 2018: 144). Turkish Foreign Minister Cavusoglu opposed the sanctions against Iran and stated that “Türkiye will not comply with the US sanctions against Iran” (Sputnik Türkiye, 2023). Türkiye continued its relations with Iran despite the sanctions. In addition, Türkiye, which was in tension with Saudi Arabia over the Qatar crisis because of its opposition to the Gulf embargo on Qatar at the time, was on the side of Qatar. Türkiye’s close relations with Iran and Qatar had a negative impact on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations.

To sum up, in the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, Türkiye was not fully committed to either side and continued to maintain relations with both countries. In Saudi Arabia-Iran relations, which conflict and rivalry increased after the Iranian revolution, Türkiye, like Saudi Arabia, did not want Iran to have nuclear power and influence in the region. However, in its relations with Iran, Türkiye has been more friendly than hostile compared to Saudi Arabia. One of the reasons is that Türkiye imports oil and natural gas from Iran. Therefore, Türkiye has played a balancing role in Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry by not completely severing ties with both sides. However, the fact that Türkiye and Iran, which were initially in competition during the Syrian crisis, later turned to cooperation, and that Türkiye did not support the sanctions and maintained close ties with Iran during the Trump era, negatively affected Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations.

4.4. Qatar Crisis

The Qatar crisis erupted on June 5, 2017, with the announcement by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, and Kuwait of the severing of diplomatic relations with Qatar. The crisis began on May 23 when Qatar’s state-run news agency published controversial statements allegedly made by Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad al-Thani about Qatar’s good relations with Iran, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Hamas. Qatari officials claimed that Thani had not made such comments and that his news agencies and social media accounts had been hacked. Saudi and UAE media, however, did not believe the hacking story and accused Qatar of supporting Hamas, the MB and Iran, which they labeled terrorism (Jones, 2017: 8). Then, on June 5, 2017, the foreign ministries of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, and Egypt announced the severing of diplomatic

relations with Qatar, and Saudi Arabia and the other three countries closed sea, air, and land routes to Qatar, leading to a diplomatic crisis between the Gulf countries (Al Jazeera, 2023).

In this process, the Gulf countries gave Qatar's diplomatic representatives 48 hours to leave their countries and asked Qatari citizens to leave their countries within 14 days (Akdoğan, 2017: 18). These four countries cut diplomatic relations with Qatar for supporting terrorism and issued a list of 13 points for the Emir of Qatar to fulfill to end the embargo. According to the list, "1) Scale down diplomatic relations with Iran and close its diplomatic missions, 2) Sever ties with terrorist organizations, including the Muslim Brotherhood, ISIS, al-Qaeda, Fatah al-Sham (formerly Jabhat al-Nusra), and Lebanese Hezbollah, 3) Cut off all funding to individuals or organizations designated as terrorist organizations by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE, Egypt, and the United States, 4) Repatriate "terrorist figures," fugitives, and wanted persons from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, and Bahrain. Freeze their assets and provide requested information on their residence, movements and finances. 5) shut down Al-Jazeera and its affiliate stations (Al-Jazeera was asked to be shut down due to its headlines supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas). 6) Immediately, shut down the Turkish military base in Qatar and stop their military cooperation, 7) End interference in the internal affairs of other countries, 8) Pay compensation for the loss of life and property caused by Qatar's policies in recent years, 9) Align with other Arab countries militarily, politically and socially, 10) Cease contact Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain with the political opposition and hand over files detailing their support for opposition groups, 11) Shut down all news organizations directly and indirectly funded by Qatar, such as *Arabi21*, *Rassd*, *Al Araby Al Jadeed*, *Mekameleen* and *Middle East Eye*, 12) Accept all demands within 10 days, 13) Upon acceptance of the demands, it authorize monthly compliance inspections for the first year, quarterly inspections for the second year, and annual inspections for the following 10 years" (Al Jazeera, 2023). In response, Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman Al Thani stressed that the demands are aimed at surrendering Qatar's sovereignty and that they will never do any of these points and called for dialogue (BBC, 2023).

As for the impact of the Qatar crisis on the USA agenda, two days before the Qatar crisis, Donald Trump tweeted the following about Qatar during his visit to the Gulf. *“During my recent trip to the Middle East I stated that there can no longer be funding of Radical Ideology. Leaders pointed to Qatar - look!”* (X, 2023). With these words, Donald Trump stated that he accused Qatar of terrorism and supported the Gulf countries. As a matter of fact, the embargo imposed by the Gulf countries against Qatar after the visit reveals the influence of the US in the crisis (Yilmaz, 2019: 15). The Qatar crisis was later resolved on January 5, 2021, with the mediation of Kuwait and the United States. At a summit in Saudi Arabia, the leaders of the member states of the GCC signed a treaty that, in the words of Saudi Crown Prince MbS, ensures Gulf, Arab and Islamic solidarity and stability. Following the agreement, Saudi Arabia reopened the air, land, and sea routes it had closed to Qatar, and the Qatar began to normalize diplomatic relations with the Gulf States (BBC, 2023).

4.4.1. The Reflection of Qatar Crisis on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations

On June 5, 2017, the Gulf countries severed diplomatic relations with Qatar and closed their land, air and sea borders with Qatar, which led to a major crisis among the Gulf countries. As the crisis affected the Gulf countries, it is also one of the most important developments affecting Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations. The Gulf countries accused Qatar of supporting terrorism and published a 13-point list to end the crisis. The list included shutting down Al Jazeera, severing ties with Iran, cutting aid to organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qaeda, and closing the Turkish base in Qatar (Al Jazeera, 2023).

Qatar rejected all these articles as being against its sovereignty. A realist approach to the Saudi-led policy against Qatar reveals that Saudi Arabia with the support of the United States, has played a hegemonic role among the Gulf states due to its economic and military capacity. However, during the Arab Spring, Qatar broke away from the Gulf countries and pursued an independent foreign policy, hosting the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, which it considered terrorist organizations, and had close relations with Iran. Therefore, Saudi Arabia aimed to bring Qatar into line by imposing a severe isolation policy on Qatar (Akdogan, 2017: 20). Firstly, after the

Egyptian coup in 2013, Saudi Arabia and Emirati leaders reacted to reports that Muslim Brotherhood members were gathering in Doha.

King Abdullah II of Saudi Arabia summoned Emir Tamim and gave him an ultimatum to change Qatar's policies and bring the country in line with Gulf states on regional issues. Tamim was also forced to sign a treaty stating that Qatar would not interfere in the internal affairs of any of the other GCC states and would abide by the Gulf states. However, in 2014, Saudi Arabia, along with Bahrain and the UAE, withdrew their ambassadors for nine months because Qatar continued to pursue an independent policy and did not abide by the agreement signed in Riyadh. (Ulrichsen, 2017: 4). Finally, the embargo imposed on Qatar in 2017 by the Gulf countries, led by Saudi Arabia, to dissuade Qatar from its policy by completely severing diplomatic relations with it, further increased tensions in the Gulf region. Türkiye's foreign policy during the Arab Spring, it resembles Qatar's foreign policy. While Türkiye pursued an independent foreign policy from its Western allies during the Arab Spring, Qatar pursued an independent foreign policy by separating itself from the Gulf states.

To illustrate, Türkiye and Qatar supported the Muslim Brotherhood against the Sisi regime in the coup in Egypt and the opposition against the Assad regime in Syria. (Aras-Akpınar, 2017: 3). As a result, the two countries have maintained close relations. During the Qatar crisis, Türkiye was torn between its hard and soft power preferences. On the one hand, Türkiye acted in favor of Qatar through the establishment of a military base; on the other hand, it was in favor of mediation (Aras-Akpınar, 2017: 5). Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took steps to resolve the crisis peacefully by meeting with Gulf and Western leaders at the onset of the crisis (Daily Sabah, 2023). Erdogan stressed that the embargo against Qatar was an inhumane act.

Later, Türkiye provided food aid by cargo planes to Qatar, which was suffering from food shortages due to the closure of its land border by Saudi Arabia. In response to the closure of the Turkish base in Qatar, which was included in the list published by the Gulf states, the Turkish parliament approved the deployment of Turkish troops to Qatar and the two countries conducted joint military exercises (Euronews, 2023). The impact of the Qatar Crisis on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations can be understood through a constructivist theory. According to constructivism, the identities and

interests of states influence the foreign policy implemented by states (Adler, 1997: 330). Türkiye and Qatar followed the same policy and opposed the coup by supporting the Muslim Brotherhood leader Morsi and did not consider the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization. Both countries had close ties with Iran (Asisian, 2018: 10). Therefore, both countries followed a different policy from Saudi Arabia due to their identities and interests. For these reasons and Türkiye's support for Qatar during the Qatar crisis, Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations have been negatively affected, while Qatar and Türkiye have strengthened their relations.

4.5. The Process of Jamal Khashoggi's Murder

The Saudi assassination of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate General in Istanbul, Türkiye, on October 2, 2018, was a bombshell on the international agenda. Khashoggi was born in Medina, Saudi Arabia and he completed his primary and high school education in Saudi Arabia and his university education at Indiana State University in the United States. In 1986, He began his career as a journalist, writing for various newspapers in Saudi Arabia (Black, 2023). Journalist Khashoggi criticized the rapid rise of MbS and the waves of repression and arrests that followed his promises of reform.

Khashoggi was targeted by the Saudi government for his outspokenness. He fled to the United States after being ordered to remain silent. In the USA, he continued to criticize MbS from a distance, writing for the Washington Post (Al- Jazeera, 2023). On September 28, 2018, Khashoggi made an appointment to marry his fiancée, Hatice Cengiz, at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul, and the consulate gave him an appointment for October 2, 2018. On October 2, 2018, Khashoggi arrived at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul with his fiancée and was captured on security cameras entering the building at 13:14 local time, assuring his friends that nothing would happen inside and telling his wife Cengiz to call President Erdogan's advisor if anything happened to him. After Khashoggi entered the building, Cengiz, who had not heard from him for 10 hours, notified the Turkish authorities (BBC, 2023). The day after the murder, despite statements by Saudi officials that Khashoggi had left the consulate, the Turkish president's spokesman said that Khashoggi had not left the consulate.

On October 10, the DHA news agency published footage of a 15-man hit squad and videos of suspicious activity inside the consulate following Khashoggi's disappearance. On October 15, Turkish investigators searching the consulate announced that they had found evidence supporting the suspicion that Khashoggi had been killed. (Al-Jazeera, 2023). On October 20, Saudi Arabia announced that Khashoggi had died during a fight and that it had arrested 18 people in connection with the murder (Arab News, 2023). Erdoğan accused Saudi Arabia of masterminding the murder and demanded an answer as to who ordered the killing (Al-Jazeera, 2023).

According to Reuters, MbS's top aide Saud al-Qahtani ordered Khashoggi's murder at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul via Skype. Saudi state media subsequently suspended Saud al-Qahtani and four other officials for their involvement in the murder. (Reuters, 2023). On December 23, 2019, the Riyadh Criminal Court sentenced five people to death and three people to imprisonment (Arab News, 2023). As a result of the investigation conducted by the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in Türkiye into the murder, an indictment was issued against 20 defendants and a public trial was opened. In the indictment, Saud al-Qahtani, who served as an adviser to MbS, and Mohammed al-Asiri, the former deputy chief of Saudi intelligence who ordered the suspects to kill Khashoggi, were charged with "incitement to intentional murder and torture with monstrous sensation." Separate aggravated life sentences were sought for the other 18 suspects on charges of "intentional killing and torture with cruelty." (AA, 2023).

Salah Khashoggi, Jamal Khashoggi's son, made a statement on X about forgiving those who killed Jamal Khashoggi on May 22, 2020. (X, 2023). The Saudi public prosecutor's office then sentenced 5 of the 8 people involved in the murder to 20 years in prison, one to 10 years in prison, and two to 7 years in prison (Arab News, 2023). According to the report released by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in June 2019, Saudi Arabia was held responsible for the deliberate murder of Khashoggi. The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial and arbitrary executions, Dr. Agnes Callamard, has claimed that MbS was the prime suspect in the murder of Khashoggi and that she has circumstantial evidence that such murder could not have been carried out without MbS' involvement (Euronews, 2023).

A year after the incident, Prince MbS announced for the first time that he took full responsibility for the incident, but he denied that he ordered the killing of journalist Khashoggi (Al Jazeera, 2023). His international image has been undermined.

4.5.1. The Impact of Jamal Khashoggi's Murder on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations

On October 2, 2018, the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate General in Istanbul had a direct impact on Turkish-Saudi relations, as the incident took place in Türkiye. Türkiye played an active role in conducting the investigation. Türkiye did not take a direct front against Saudi Arabia and did not want to link the future of bilateral relations to the murder. It wanted the murder to be internationalized and solved at the international level. Therefore, while maintaining its relations with Saudi Arabia, Türkiye also wanted to find those responsible for the murder (Telci,2018:12). Regarding Saudi Arabia's policy on Jamal Khashoggi's murder, Khashoggi's criticism of the Saudi government led the Saudi government to implement a repressive policy.

Khashoggi's statements in support of the Muslim Brotherhood organization disturbed the Saudi government. In an article published in the Washington Post, Khashoggi criticized Trump's anti-Muslim Brotherhood policy, stating that the "elimination of the Muslim Brotherhood would lead to Arabs continuing to live under authoritarian and repressive regimes" (Kasıkcı,2018). In addition, Khashoggi's criticism of the embargo on Qatar and his support for the alliance between Qatar and Türkiye, which is rising and gaining influence in the region, caused discomfort in Saudi circles (Telci,2018:11). In terms of the impact of the murder on Saudi Arabia, the murder of Khashoggi has damaged the image of Crown Prince MbS, the alleged suspect, in the international community.

As a result of the murder, business partners have distanced themselves from MbS's projects to build a technologically diversified and modern economy (Bouoiyour-Selmi,2018:8). According to Ataman, although MbS thought he could cover up the murder with Trump's support, the world public opinion insisted on the murder and demanded a satisfactory explanation from Riyadh. As a result, the image

that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been building in the West has also been shaken (Ataman,2023). Regards with the impact of Jamal Khashoggi's murder on the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, Türkiye did its best to find the person responsible for the murder and to reveal the events that were covered up by Saudi Arabia. However, it did not take a tough stance against Saudi Arabia. In fact, in an article published in the Washington Post, President Erdoğan stated that he did not believe that the order for Khashoggi's murder was given by the Saudi government and that he did not see the murder as a problem between the two countries and that friendly relations with Saudi Arabia would continue (Erdoğan,2018). On 7 April 2022, the 11th Istanbul High Criminal Court in Türkiye, which has become a problem in bilateral relations, decided to stop the Khashoggi case and handed it over to the judicial authorities of Saudi Arabia (AA,2023).

4.6. Pandemic Process

In December 2019, the emergence and devastating consequences of the coronavirus in Wuhan, China, recognized as the largest outbreak in human history, was recognized as a global threat by the entire world. Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-Cov-2 virus. The most common symptoms of coronavirus are fever, cough, tiredness, loss of taste or smell. Most people infected with coronavirus recover with mild illness. However, older people and those with medical conditions such as illness, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease or cancer are in the high-risk group and have become very seriously ill and died. The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that to protect people from coronavirus, they could stay at least 1 meter away from others, wear a mask, and wash your hands frequently. (WHO, 2023).

On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic, and WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanam Ghebreyesus called on "countries to take action to contain the virus" (WHO, 2023). The increasing number of cases and deaths have not only affected the physical health of people, but also negatively affected many states in economic, health, political and other fields. Many countries, including the superpower such as the United States, could not develop a successful defense strategy because they were caught unprepared for this virus. It has

not only shaken the economic system, international organizations, the state and all interactions in the world, but also put them in a process full of uncertainty (Arslan-Karagul, 2020: 8). States have imposed restrictions in the fields of health, education, economy and socialization to prevent the disease. The fact that states have taken several measures, such as closing borders in the economic field, stopping tourism and trade, has also damaged the perception of a world without borders given by the concept of globalization. According to Fukuyama, during the pandemic process, the liberal world order established by the United States was damaged and the rise of nationalism, isolationism, and xenophobia accelerated (Fukuyama, 2020).

The fact that many EU countries, especially Germany and France, banned the export of medical supplies in the early stages of the pandemic, and that Italy, which was hardest hit by COVID-19, did not receive aid and closed its borders to each other, undermined the EU's solidarity policy (AA, 2023). Regarding the USA's response to COVID-19, USA has failed to combat the spread of the virus. After the outbreak of coronavirus in China, the first case was detected in USA on January 20. After the declaration of pandemic by WHO, Trump administration declared national emergency and implemented restrictions in education, economy and other areas.

The USA is one of the countries most affected by COVID-19 due to rising mortality rates and the rapid spread of the virus. Trump's underestimation of the virus during the pandemic and his lack of a successful policy are among the reasons (Baccini-Brodeur-Weymouth, 2021: 743). From the pandemic process to date, the total number of cases in the USA has reached 108,670,700 and deaths 1,176,595 (Worldmeter, 2023). In 2021, with the development of the vaccine against the virus and the decrease in the number of cases, in May 2023, the WHO ended the global emergency status for COVID-19 (Rigby-Satija, 2023). Thus, the states began to relax their strict regulations and people returned to their normal lives after the pandemic process that had been fought for three years.

4.6.1. Impact of the Pandemic Process on Türkiye-Saudi Arabia Relations

Since COVID-19 was affecting the whole world, it also had an impact on Türkiye and Saudi Arabia in all areas. Regarding Türkiye during the pandemic,

Türkiye, like other countries, took precautionary measures with an emphasis on humanitarian diplomacy and solidarity. On March 11, 2020, after the first case was detected by the Ministry of Health and the spread of the disease, the government imposed nationwide restrictions to reduce the spread of the virus, like those imposed by other countries. These restrictions damaged the economy and many sectors from textile to food, transportation to tourism, energy to construction. (Arkılıc, 2020). However, during the process of the pandemic, the government implemented a humanitarian and enterprising foreign policy. Türkiye has sent medical aid to 161 countries to prevent the spread of the virus and to help treat infected people. Most of the medical equipment and respirators produced in Türkiye have been sent to vulnerable countries (MFA, 2023).

Since the beginning of the pandemic in Türkiye, the total number of cases has reached 17,232,066 and the number of deaths has reached 102,174 (Worldmeters, 2023). With the announcement of the first case in Saudi Arabia on March 2, 2020, the government has taken several steps to address the impact of the coronavirus on Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, which is the custodian of the holy relics, closed the entry and exit of the cities of Mecca-Medina and Riyadh as part of the COVID-19 measures. Saudi Arabia is the most affected country in the Gulf (Ozoral, 2020:6). In May 2020, the Minister of Finance of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed al-Judan, said in a statement to reduce public expenditures considering the current situation reflected in the world economy, including Saudi Arabia's economy, which is still heavily dependent on oil revenues, due to the serious impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on oil prices. He announced that they are moving towards the "austerity" phase (Şarkul Avsat, 2023).

In addition, Saudi Arabia's decision to close the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and to temporarily ban Hajj and Umrah to prevent the spread of the virus has discouraged Muslim countries from visiting Islamic holy sites and caused difficulties for Saudi Arabia's economy. This ban was supported by WHO, Organization of Islamic Cooperation and other Muslim countries (Alam, 2021: 464). In terms of Turkish-Saudi relations during the pandemic process, Saudi Arabia boycott against Türkiye in October 2020 had a negative impact on Turkish-Saudi relations.

In October 2020, the head of Saudi Arabia's Chamber of Commerce called for a boycott of Turkish products, amid reports from traders that previous tensions between the two regional powers had hampered the flow of goods. According to the Turkish Exporters' Association (TIM) "Exports from Türkiye to the kingdom fell 92.5% in the first month of the year, from about \$221.9 million (1.59 billion Turkish liras) to about \$16.6 million". After months of a semi-official embargo, the Turkish authorities made an official announcement. The Turkish Exporters' Association said on November 27 that it had been informed by the Ministry of Trade earlier in the month that imports of some Turkish goods had been officially suspended. Later in November, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Saudi King Salman announced that they had agreed to resolve problems and improve bilateral relations (Daily Sabah, 2023). In conclusion, relations strained by the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi have been further strained by the boycott, rather than rebuilding relations through economic cooperation during the pandemic.

4.7. Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Israel Relations in the Framework of the Abraham Accords

In 2020, Israel initiated normalization relations with Arab countries by signing the Abraham Accords with the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan, mediated by the United States. The agreement was first signed at the White House on September 15, 2020, between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Foreign Ministers of UAE and Bahrain Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, led by US former President Donald Trump. US President Trump stated that the day the agreement was signed was an incredible day for the world and that history took a new course with the agreement (Holmes, 2020). Two months later, Sudan and Morocco joined the agreement and started normalization relations with Israel (Arab News, 2023). Since 1948, Arab-Israeli relations, which have been in conflict over the Palestinian Question, have begun to normalize with security cooperation between Arab countries and Israel, especially due to the regional changes caused by the Arab Spring and the threat of Iran.

The content of the agreement included the establishment of peace in the Middle East, the development of a culture of peace among the three Abrahamic

religions and all humanity, and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and its neighbors in the region (U.S. Department of State,2023). Moreover, the agreement brought the two Gulf states closer to Israel against the threat of Iran and its expansionist power in the Middle East, while providing economic and strategic benefits for both sides, as it gave Israel direct access to the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf (Dazi-Héni, 2020:2). However, the Palestine Question was not addressed in the agreement. As a matter of fact, the fact that the solution of the Palestinian issue was ignored in the agreement after the agreement is understood from Netanyahu's statement that he only agreed to postpone the annexation and that Israelis will never give up their rights to the land of Israel. In addition, Qatar and Kuwait stated that they would not normalize relations with Israel without resolving the Palestinian issue (Bayrak, 2021:111).

Saudi Arabia, like Kuwait and Qatar, has stated that it will not join the agreement until the Palestinian issue is resolved. King Salman of Saudi Arabia stated that Saudi Arabia could establish relations with Israel in exchange for Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967, while Crown Prince MbS emphasized the advantages of cooperation with Israel and stated that he was in favor of the agreement and supported the Gulf countries that made the agreement (Dazi-Héni, 2020: 4). In an interview with Reuters before the agreement, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel Jubeir stated that if the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved based on the Arab Peace Initiative, all Arab countries will have diplomatic and political relations with Israel, but there will be no normalization of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia unless this happens (Heller-Kalin, 2017). Saudi Arabia is seen as the center of Islam as it has holy cities such as Mecca and Medina for Muslims. In addition, Jerusalem and the Palestine Question are among the red lines of Muslims. Saudi Arabia did not take such a step because Saudi Arabia's agreement with Israel would be met with a great reaction by its own people and the people of other Muslim countries.

Despite these statements, Saudi Arabia has secretly cooperated with Israel in the field of security against Iran's growing presence in the region with the support of non-state actors, especially after the Arab Spring. In 2017, Israel's Chief of Staff announced that Israel could share intelligence with moderate Arab states, particularly

Saudi Arabia, against Iran (Rakipoğlu-Kurt: 2019:112). Considering Türkiye-Israel relations within the framework of the Abraham Accords, Türkiye's decision to appoint ambassadors to Israel in 2022 showed the beginning of normalization in relations between the two countries. While Türkiye was getting closer to Israel in order not to be alone in its policies in the Eastern Mediterranean, Israel initially wanted to cooperate with the Gulf countries and Türkiye against Iran. However, Türkiye did not ignore the Palestine Question while cooperating with Israel. In this regard, Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu emphasized that normalization with Israel does not mean giving up the Palestinian issue (BBC, 2023). In 1996, Türkiye signed a defense agreement with Israel and in the 2000s, Türkiye had problems with Israel due to the Davos incident in 2009, *the Mavi Marmara* incident in 2010 and its support for Hamas (Yesevi, 2021:2).

However, Türkiye, which had economic difficulties due to the Ukraine-Russia war and the economic crisis in the world in 2022 and did not want to be alone in the process of sharing hydrocarbon wealth in the Eastern Mediterranean, took normalization steps with the UAE and Israel. In addition, after the Abraham Accords and normalization steps with the UAE and Israel, Türkiye has also taken normalization steps with Saudi Arabia through mutual visits and economic cooperation. As a result, the Abraham Accords led to rapprochement in Israel's relations with the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan, and cooperation with Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. However, it can be argued that Türkiye and Saudi Arabia did not give up on the Palestine Question while taking normalization steps with Israel, but only to protect their security and economic interests.

4.8. The Recent Relations of Türkiye, USA and Saudi Arabia

In the November 2020 presidential elections, Donald Trump lost by seven million votes to Joe Biden, who served as vice president during the Obama administration. Biden won the election with 60 percent of the vote (Kapucu-Moynihan, 2021: 2). However, Trump refused to accept the elections, claiming that it was rigged. On January 6, 2021, he claimed that it was fraud and that he wanted to fix the states' votes (X, 2023). Later, in a speech to his supporters in Washington, Trump called on his supporters to march on the Capitol and fight to prevent the ratification of the

elections results. After the speech, thousands of rioters stormed the Capitol and entered the Senate chamber. The riot left 5 people dead, and 140 police officers injured, and it was contained within hours and Biden was confirmed as president. In January 2021, Joe Biden was sworn in and took office (Cohen, 2023). With respect to USA foreign policy under Joe Biden, Biden reversed the isolationist policies of Trump and pursued a foreign policy that prioritized American world leadership and democracy, like Obama. He said that “Biden foreign policy agenda will place the United States back at the head of the table, in a position to work with its allies and partners to mobilize collective action on global threats” (Biden, 2020: 2). Biden has restored America’s leadership role and relationships with NATO, UN, WHO organizations to restore trust and cooperation, in contrast to Trump’s policy of isolating America by withdrawing from international agreements and international organizations (Sloan, 2020: 34).

Biden has also rejoined the agreements that Trump has pulled out of them. On January 20, President Biden signed the document that included the United States in the Paris Agreement, officially rejoining the treaty in accordance with the agreement (Blinken, 2021). Later, Biden wrote an article on CNN on September 13, 2020, about Trump’s deal with Iran and he argued that “I will offer Tehran a reliable way back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear agreement, the United States will rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-up negotiations” (Biden, 2020). In short, by returning to the agreements that Trump ended, Biden is attempting to restore American leadership and a foreign policy that prioritizes democracy.

During the Biden era, the relations between Türkiye and the USA went through a series of highs and lows due to the USA support for the PKK/PYD, its CAATSA sanctions against Türkiye’s purchase of the S-400 missile system from Russia, USA sale of modernization of F-16, the Armenian issue and Russian-Ukrainian war. On February 10, 2021, 13 Turkish citizens, including police, military and civilians, were killed by the PKK during Türkiye’s Operation Claw-Eagle 2 on Mount Gara in northern Iraq. Türkiye reacted to the USA statement on the incident, which emphasized that the USA would condemn the killing of Turkish civilians by the PKK if it was proven.

Türkiye understood this to mean that the United States did not trust what Türkiye was saying. Secondly, the S-400 tensions between the USA and Türkiye, which started during the Trump era, were on the rise during the Biden era (Yılmaz, 2022: 64). In April 2021, the USA announced that it would impose CAATSA sanctions over Türkiye's purchase of the S-400 Air Defense System from Russia. Under CAATSA, sanctions were imposed on İsmail Demir, the president of the defense industry, and officials within the institution. Ambassador David Satterfield stated that the S-400 issue remains a problem in bilateral relations and that Türkiye should give up the S-400 defense system (Daily Sabah, 2023).

At the end of 2021, Türkiye requested to purchase F-16 Block 70 fighter jets and 79 modernization kits from the United States to overcome the crises in defense cooperation between the two countries. However, the U.S. Congress, citing Türkiye's cooperation with terrorism, declared that it would not approve the sale, as Türkiye remained the only country that had not approved Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO. After two years, the sale was finalized and the crisis resolved after Türkiye agreed to Finland joining NATO, leaving Sweden out of consideration (BBC, 2023). The continuation of the S-400 crisis and the fact that the sale of F-16s was connected to Türkiye's approval of Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO, even though it had nothing to do with it, damaged the alliance relationship between the two countries. However, the resolution of the crisis with the F-16 sale is an indication that the USA and Türkiye are taking new steps in defense cooperation. Other problem between Türkiye and the USA during the Biden era was Biden's written statement on April 24, which emphasized the events of 1915 as the Armenian Genocide. In a statement issued by the Turkish Foreign Ministry: "The Turkish people did not accept Biden's statement on the events of 1915 and stated that it would open a deep wound that would shake mutual trust and friendship and would be difficult to heal" (Euronews, 2023).

In 2022, the Russia-Ukraine war, which began with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, also affected Türkiye-USA relations. One day after the war began, Biden approved a \$350 million military aid package for Ukraine and imposed sanctions on Russia (AA, 2023). Türkiye sent Bayraktar TB2 combat drones to support Ukraine's struggle to protect its territorial integrity. However, Türkiye did not join the sanctions

imposed on Russia by the USA and the EU and continued to maintain relations with both Moscow and Kiev, following only the UN sanctions. (Lesage, 2022: 3). On March 10, 2022, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavusoglu met with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmitro Kuleba and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and held peace talks at the Antalya Diplomatic Forum with Türkiye's mediation (AA, 2023). Türkiye's role as a mediator was welcomed by the United States. US Secretary of State Ned Price expressed his appreciation for Türkiye's constructive role in the efforts to end the barbaric war (TRT Haber, 2023).

Regarding USA-Saudi Arabia relations during the Biden era, the withdrawal of USA support from the Yemen war, the Biden administration's response to the Khashoggi murder, and the oil issue were the issues that affect relations between the two countries. On the Yemen War, on February 4, 2021, Biden abandoned the policy of US support for the offensive operations of Saudi Arabia-led coalition during the Trump era, ending the support and promising to intensify diplomatic efforts (Raghavan-Ryan, 2021). Saudi Arabia welcomed Biden's decision and offered the Houthis a peace deal to end the war. However, following this initiative, the Houthis attacked Saudi oil infrastructure facilities with eighteen drones. According to Alamer, "Biden's decision did not represent a departure from the policies of his predecessors. Instead, it signaled a slow transition from the current policy, which began in the last months of the Obama administration, progressed under the Trump administration, and was implemented under Biden" (Alamer, 2021).

The murder of Jamal Khashoggi is one of the events that caused tensions between the USA and Saudi Arabia during the Trump era. Biden stated that Crown Prince MbS, who was blamed for the murder, was not personally responsible for the killing. (BBC, 2023). Regarding Crown Prince MbS, who has also been blamed for the murder, Biden stated that he has immunity from the jurisdiction of USA courts in the murder case because he is the prime minister of Saudi Arabia. Biden was criticized for this statement by Hatice Cengiz, Jamal Khashoggi's fiancée (Whitcomb-Holland, 2022). In addition, US Secretary of State Blinken said of the intelligence report outlining MbS's role in the murder that the relationship with Saudi Arabia was bigger than any one individual. This is why the administration did not sanction the crown

prince directly. This shows that Biden sees Saudi Arabia as a close ally (Miller-Sokolsky,2021). In 2022, the oil issue between the US and Saudi Arabia caused tension in the bilateral relationship. On October 5, 2022, the OPEC+ alliance, consisting of 13 oil-exporting countries led by Saudi Arabia and 11 allied non-member countries including Russia, announced that it would reduce oil production by 2 million barrels per day. The Biden administration expressed disappointment with this decision, calling it short-sighted due to rising energy prices caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Lenthang-Wile, 2022). Biden also warned Saudi Arabia that their decision with Russia would have consequences. Saudi Arabia said the decision was aimed at stabilizing the oil market, not raising prices (Al-Jazeera,2023).

As a result, Biden prioritized America's global leadership in foreign policy and ensured trust and cooperation with allies by rejoining agreements that Trump withdrew from. With regards to the USA-Türkiye relations during the Biden era, such problems as the S-400 crisis and the USA support for the PKK, which were experienced during the Trump era, were brought back to the agenda during the Biden era. The continuation of these problems led to an increase in mutual mistrust in bilateral relations. Regarding the relations between the USA and Saudi Arabia during the Biden era, it can be seen that the USA has continued its alliance relations with Saudi Arabia.

In fact, the USA did not impose sanctions on MbS although it was known that MbS played a role in the murder of Khashoggi according to the intelligence report published in the Jamal Khashoggi murder case and Biden's statement that MbS should be granted immunity showed that the US attaches importance to the development of relations with Saudi Arabia. However, while the USA considered Saudi Arabia as an ally, Saudi Arabia's reduction of oil production in cooperation with Russia caused the USA to damage its alliance with Saudi Arabia.

4.9. The Recent Relations of Türkiye and Saudi Arabia

In 2021-2022, Türkiye entered a period of normalization with other Gulf countries, especially the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. In 2022, a new page was opened with mutual visits and economic cooperation in Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations, which started to be strained during the Arab Spring process and intensified

with the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Riyadh on April 28 and 29. During the visit, Erdoğan met with both Crown Prince MbS and King Salman. Commenting on the meeting, Erdoğan said that increasing cooperation with Saudi Arabia in the fields of health, energy, food security, agricultural technologies, defense industry and finance is in line with common interests, adding that the two countries have serious potential for cooperation in renewable and clean energy technologies (Daily Sabah, 2023).

A month before Erdoğan's visit, the 11th Istanbul High Criminal Court in Türkiye decided to stop the Khashoggi case which has become a problem in bilateral relations and handed it over to the judicial authorities of Saudi Arabia. Commenting on the transfer of the case, Justice Minister Bekir Bozdağ said that the transfer of the case was in accordance with the law and did not mean that the case had been dropped (AA, 2023). The dropping of the case, which had been a problem in relations before the visit, is seen as a step by Türkiye to improve relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. In June 2022, four years after Khashoggi's murder, Saudi Arabia Crown Prince MbS paid his first return visit to Ankara. Erdoğan stated that the talks with MbS will focus on taking Turkish-Saudi relations to a much higher level (Euronews, 2023).

Bilateral visits between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia have focused on ways to increase investment and cooperation in the economic sphere, as well as cooperation in the defense industry. In July 2023, Erdoğan, who was re-elected president after winning the presidential elections in May, paid his first visit to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE. During his first visit to Saudi Arabia, the two countries signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) in a number of areas, including energy, direct investment, and industry. In addition, the Turkish defense company Baykar and the Saudi Ministry of Defense signed a contract for drone (BBC News, 2023). Considering the reasons for the normalization of Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations, which have been strained for a long time due to the Qatar Crisis and the Murder of Jamal Khashoggi, from Türkiye's perspective, first of all, it can be said that Türkiye, which is facing economic difficulties due to reasons such as the depreciation of the Turkish lira and the rise in inflation, needs the investments of the Gulf countries for foreign investments. In November 2021, according to data of Turkish Statistical Institute

(TÜİK) the annual rate of change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 19.89 percent, while in November 2022, this rate increased to 84.39 percent (TCMB, 2023). Therefore, the economy has been at the forefront of Türkiye's agenda and Türkiye has been cooperating with the Gulf countries to overcome economic challenges and realize their economic relations and foreign investments.

Thinking of the normalization of bilateral relations from Saudi Arabia's perspective, due to the oil crisis and the deterioration of relations between the USA and Saudi Arabia during Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Saudi Arabia felt a sense of geopolitical alienation and therefore wanted to cooperate with Türkiye (Bakir-Ersoy, 2022). Another factor that encouraged Saudi Arabia to normalize is the success of the Turkish defense industry, especially drones, in Syria, Libya, Karabakh and Ukraine. Therefore, the Gulf states needed Türkiye's defense assistance to prevent Iran's strengthening and to ensure their security due to the US rejoining the nuclear deal with Iran (Duran, 2022: 171).

As a result, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which were in competition due to their different political approaches during the Arab Spring process and experienced tensions in their relations due to the Egyptian coup, the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi after the Arab Spring, opened a new page in their relations in 2022 when Türkiye launched the normalization initiative with the Gulf countries. Mutual visits, investments and agreements in economic and many other fields have brought the relations between the two countries to a higher level. The factors that encourage normalization can be summarized as Türkiye's economic difficulties, Saudi Arabia's desire to cooperate with Türkiye, China, Israel, and Russia due to its deteriorating relations with the US, and Saudi Arabia's desire to benefit from Türkiye's defense against Iran due to Türkiye's success in the defense industry. An analysis of the normalization between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia from a liberalist perspective, according to liberalism, states can cooperate within the framework of mutual interests (Goldstein-Pevehouse, 2015: 136). Therefore, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia cooperated to realize their mutual interests.

Chapter Conclusion

The relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which was already strained due to their different foreign policy approaches during the Arab Spring, was further strained by the Qatar crisis, the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and the boycott imposed by Saudi Arabia during the Trump era. The crises that formed tensions in Saudi Arabia-Türkiye relations began during the Arab Spring. The civil war that erupted when the Arab Spring spread to Syria caused competition between regional and global actors. In the civil war, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia allied with the US and supported the opposition against the regime. However, the threat to Türkiye's security posed by the terrorist organizations that dominate the region and the USA arms aid to the YPG, the Syrian branch of the PKK, which Türkiye considers a terrorist organization, and its opposition to Türkiye's operations against the YPG, caused Türkiye to move closer to Russia and Iran. The coming together of Türkiye, Russia and Iran at the Astana and Sochi summits to protect Syria's territorial integrity has disturbed Saudi Arabia and the USA.

Another event that affected Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations is the war in Yemen. The change of government in Yemen during the Arab Spring and the seizure of the Yemeni capital Sana'a by the Iranian-backed Houthis, who took advantage of the power vacuum, and Saudi Arabia's operation in Yemen led to clashes between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Türkiye, on the other hand, initially supported the Saudi operation but was not content with Saudi Arabia airstrikes due to the humanitarian crisis in the region. In addition, Türkiye has played a balancing role between Iran and Saudi Arabia in the rivalry between the two countries, starting with the Iranian Revolution and culminating in the Arab Spring, by not being completely loyal to either side and not severing ties with either side. The Qatar crisis after the Arab Spring, the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and the boycott imposed by Saudi Arabia on Türkiye during the pandemic caused an increase in tensions in the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia.

In June 2017, the Gulf countries, led by Saudi Arabia, cut diplomatic relations with Qatar and imposed an embargo on Qatar by closing air, land, and sea routes and published a list of 13 points to lift the embargo. The reason for the embargo was

Qatar's implementation of a foreign policy independent of the Gulf states during the Arab Spring and its rapprochement with Türkiye. Türkiye, which opposed the embargo imposed by the Gulf countries, stood by Qatar and provided food and aid to Qatar. During the Qatar crisis and its aftershocks, Türkiye and Qatar have become closer, while Türkiye and Saudi Arabia have become distancing. The brutal murder of Khashoggi, a Saudi national and Washington Post columnist, at Saudi Arabia Consulate General in Istanbul in 2018 was one such event that affected the relationship between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. The international image of Saudi Arabia and MbS was damaged by the fact that it was a top aide to Crown Prince MbS who ordered the murder. While Türkiye did its best to clarify the murder and find the person who ordered it, did not want the murder to damage its relationship with Saudi Arabia.

The pandemic process and the boycott of Turkish goods by Saudi Arabia were among the most important events that affected the economic relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia. During the pandemic process, the states closed their borders as a precautionary measure, which damaged the economies of the states. Saudi Arabia's boycott of Turkish goods due to the strained relations with Türkiye over the murder of Jamal Khashoggi during the pandemic also damaged the economic relations between the two countries. During the last Trump years, Israel, with the mediation of the United States, initiated normalization relations with the Gulf countries within the framework of the Abraham Accords in an attempt to avoid being alone against the Iranian threat. The Abraham Accords also enabled Türkiye and Saudi Arabia to establish moderate relations with Israel. Subsequently, with the end of the Trump era and the beginning of the Biden era in the US and Türkiye's desire to rebuild its deteriorating relations with the Gulf countries and increase cooperation with the countries in the region, a period of normalization between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia began in 2022. In this period, relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia were brought back to a high level with mutual visits and economic cooperation due to Türkiye's economic difficulties, Saudi Arabia's deteriorating relations with the US due to Saudi Arabia's reduction in oil production during the Biden era, US rapprochement with Iran, and Saudi Arabia's need for Türkiye's defense due to Türkiye's success in the defense industry.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are two of the most powerful and important players in the Middle East. Both countries have a historical past and deep-rooted relations with each other. Beginning in the 17th century and strained by the Wahhabi movement and the Arab Revolt in the 18th century, relations were diplomatically restored in the Republican era when the Republic of Türkiye recognized Saudi Arabia and signed a treaty of friendship, even though both sides had different regimes and ideologies. However, a very close relationship between the two countries could not be established from the Republican period until the 1980s. In the 1980s, under Turgut Özal and Kenan Evren, the bilateral relations improved with mutual visits and economic cooperation. In the 2000s, with the coming to power of the AK Party and its multifaceted and active foreign policy in the Middle East, bilateral relations have developed at a high level with mutual visits and economic cooperation in many fields.

The relationship between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia was stable from the Republican Era until the Arab Spring, but during the Arab Spring there were some problems due to the different foreign policy practices of the two states and the crises that resulted from them. In 2017, Trump's coming to power and the developments that took place during this period increased tensions between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which had experienced tensions during the Arab Spring due to the Qatar Crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and the relations were reduced below the existing level. Despite these crises, the relations between the two countries were increased to the highest level again in 2022 due to the changing regional developments through trade cooperation and mutual visits.

Throughout the study, the crises between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia and the effects of the crises were analyzed using the Case Analysis method. The research questions asked, and the results obtained about the crises and their effects on the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are as follows: First question is the following "What are the factors affecting the historical relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia?". The thesis concludes from this question that relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia began with the Ottoman conquest of the Hijaz region in the 17th

century. In the 18th century, the emergence of the Wahhabi movement and the Arab Revolt during the WWI brought both sides against each other. However, in the 19th century, with the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye in 1923 and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932, a friendship treaty was signed between the two countries and formalized the relations. In the Republican period, as stated in the hypothesis, due to the different ideological and political structures of both countries, Türkiye's western-oriented foreign policy, the Turkish people's perception of the Arabs as traitors because of the Arab Revolt, a close relationship between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia could not be established until the 1980s.

Second question is as follows "What are the effects of Türkiye's multilateral and active foreign policy during the AK Party period on the relations between the two countries?". From this question, the thesis arrives at the following answer, in the 2000s, with the coming to power of the AK Party and its multifaceted and active foreign policy in the Middle East, bilateral relations have developed at a high level with mutual visits and economic cooperation in many fields. As stated in the hypotheses, during the AK Party period, Türkiye establish close relations with Saudi Arabia because of Türkiye's active and zero-problem with neighbors' foreign policy. Türkiye has played an active role in the Middle East region and maximized its relations with Saudi Arabia by following the multifaceted and zero problem foreign policies with neighbors until Arab Spring due to the AK Party government's Islamic identity and its popularity among the Arab community.

Third question asks "What are the perspectives of the two countries against the Arab Uprisings? How did these perspectives affect the bilateral relations?". The following answer was obtained from this question during the Arab Spring, while both countries pursued the same foreign policy towards the civil wars in Syria and Yemen, they pursued opposite foreign policies towards the coup in Egypt. Saudi Arabia and Türkiye acted together in the Syrian crisis by supporting the opposition against the Assad regime, but in the Egyptian coup Türkiye stood by Morsi against the coup and Saudi Arabia supported the Al-Sisi. As stated in the hypotheses Türkiye and Saudi Arabia's contrasting perspectives on the coup and their foreign policy practices led to tensions in bilateral relations.

Fourth question seeks to know “What events in Türkiye-Saudi Arabia relations during the Trump Era and how did these events affect the relations between the two countries?”. During the Trump Era, winning of Donald J. Trump presidential election and his nationalist foreign policies with the slogan of “American First” and “Make America Great Again” has opened new page the US Foreign Policy. Considering Turkish-Saudi relations in the Trump era, the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi are among the developments that increased tensions between the two countries.

In 2017, Qatar Crisis which directly affected the relations led to diplomatic crisis between the Gulf countries. In June 2017, Gulf countries under the leadership of Saudi Arabia cut diplomatic relations with Qatar and impose embargo on Qatar due to the Qatar’s implementation of independent foreign policy of Gulf countries. During the Qatar crisis, Türkiye stood by Qatar and provide aid to Qatar. As stated in the hypothesis, During the Qatar crisis and its aftershocks, Türkiye strengthened relations with Qatar and move away from Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, the brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi, Saudi Arabia citizen and Washington Post columnist, at Saudi Arabia Consulate General in Istanbul in 2018 caused tensions in the relationship between the two countries. In the aftermath of the murder, Saudi Arabia made no effort to find those responsible for the murder and initially prevented Türkiye from entering the consulate, while Türkiye made significant efforts to investigate the murder and find the perpetrators.

The fifth question seeks to answer, “How did Türkiye’s rapprochement with Qatar during the Qatar Crisis affect the relations between Saudi Arabia and Türkiye?”. Türkiye and Qatar followed the same foreign policy during the Arab Spring, supported Morsi in the Egyptian coup, did not consider the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization and had close relations with Iran. Therefore, Qatar and Türkiye have been in close relations during the Qatar Crisis and stood by Qatar. However, Saudi Arabia has reacted against Qatar and Türkiye for implementing a foreign policy that is independent from the Gulf countries and Western states, having a rival and hostile perspective towards Iran, and defining the Muslim Brotherhood as terrorists. Therefore, the Qatar Crisis has led to a deterioration in relations between Türkiye and

Saudi Arabia. The final questions are as follows “How Türkiye’s perspective on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi has affected relations between the two countries? How did the murder affect the role of the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed Bin Salman in the international arena?” As stated in the hypothesis, during and after the murder, Türkiye played an important role in investigating the murder and finding those responsible but did not take a tough stance against Saudi Arabia government. In fact, before the start of normalization of relations in 2021, the transfer of the Khashoggi case in Istanbul to Saudi Arabia courts was seen by Türkiye as a new step towards normalization of relations with Saudi Arabia. The murder of Khashoggi caused shaken of MbS’s and Saudi Arabia’s international image, after it was revealed that a senior aide of Saudi Arabia Crown Prince MbS ordered the murder. As a result of the murder, business partners have distanced themselves from MbS’s projects to build a technologically diversified and modern economy.

In this dissertation, the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia are analyzed according to the theories of realism, liberalism and constructivism. The foreign policy of Türkiye and Saudi Arabia during and after the Arab Spring can be evaluated from a realist perspective. Theory of realism argues state increase its power to protect its own interest and security. During the Arab Spring and Post-Arab Spring, Türkiye abandoned zero-problem policy with neighbors because of strained relations with Egypt and Syria and pursued security-oriented foreign policy against the threats of terrorist organizations by increasing military power. Saudi Arabia has also pursued a security-oriented foreign policy by emphasizing its military power due to the Houthi occupation of Yemen and its desire to weaken Iranian influence in the region.

Türkiye and Saudi Arabia’s relations during the Egyptian coup and the Qatar crisis were analyzed from a constructivist perspective. According to constructivism, identity forms the basis of state interests by showing how state define other state or actors. Saudi Arabia supported Al-Sisi due to its definition of the Muslim Brotherhood organization as a threat to its legitimacy and Türkiye opposed Al- Sisi’s coup because of Morsi’s coming to power through democracy, Morsi’s Islamic perspective and Türkiye’s troubled past with coups. Therefore, the different foreign policies of the two countries against the coup in Egypt had a negative impact on bilateral relations.

Regarding the Qatar Crisis, Türkiye and Qatar followed the same policy and opposed the coup by supporting the Muslim Brotherhood leader Morsi and did not consider the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization. Both countries had close ties with Iran. Therefore, they followed a different policy from Saudi Arabia due to their identities and interests. The fact that Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, whose relations were strained due to the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, took a step towards normalization in 2022 can be understood in line with liberalist theory. According to liberalism “Economic and other forms of interdependence among state and non-state actors moderating effect on state behavior”. Türkiye’s economic crisis due to the rising inflation rate and the devaluation of the Turkish lira due to the war between Ukraine and Russia, Saudi Arabia’s disputes with the US over oil during the Biden era, and Saudi Arabia’s desire to benefit from Türkiye’s globally successful defense industry have led to increased interdependence between the two countries. Despite the crises, both countries have maximized their relations through mutual visits and economic and military agreements.

If the relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which have a long and deep-rooted history, are evaluated in general in accordance with the development of bilateral relations during the Arab Spring process and the Trump era, it can be observed that the political relations between Türkiye and Saudi Arabia, which were in a competitive relationship through the implementation of different foreign policies during the Arab Spring process and then dragged into a crisis environment due to the Qatar crisis and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, have fallen below the existing level in this process. However, this situation changed in 2022 and both countries took a normalization step to ensure cooperation, stability and trust in relations in line with the geopolitical developments in the region and common interests. After this step, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia should increase their cooperation in solving the problems in the region and act together to ensure stability and peace in the region by uniting Islamic countries against political actors that disrupt the stability and balance in the region.

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