SECURITIZATION OF FAKE NEWS

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ABSTRACT

SECURITIZATION OF FAKE NEWS

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This study argues that fake news is being transformed into a security issue. This transformation has or has the potential to have significant consequences in terms of human rights in Europe and beyond. This study also argues that perceptions of information, disinformation, news, and social media are changing in recent years, and these notions come to be widely accepted as security threats. Initially social media was perceived as a useful platform for obtaining and sharing information that helps the development of free speech and democracy. However, especially after the 2016 US presidential elections and the Brexit referendum, it is understood that social media platforms are also helping the spread of misinformation and it can be used to mislead and manipulate people. Once social media's remarkable impact on the elections is understood, fake news and disinformation came to be perceived as a threat by many actors. These actors claim that disinformation and abusive usage of social media is threatening the economy, politics, and democracy. Presenting fake news as a security issue via securitization legitimizes strict proposals and acts which causes undermining of freedom of speech and censorship in media.

Keywords: Disinformation, Fake News, Securitization, Social Media, Post-Truth

ÖZ

SAHTE HABERLERİN GÜVENLİKLEŞTİRİLMESİ

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Bu çalışmada, sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesi tartışması ve sonuçları, yalan haberler hakkındaki endişelerin nasıl temel insan haklarının altının oyulmasına neden olduğunu anlamak adına araştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmada ayrıca bilgi, dezenformasyon, haber ve sosyal medya hakkındaki değişmekte olan algılar, bu kavramların nasıl geniş çapta birer güvenlik tehdidi olarak kabul edildiği ve bu kabulün etkilerinin neler olduğu araştırılmıştır. Başlangıçta sosyal medya bilgi edinme ve paylaşma adına kullanışlı, ifade özgürlüğü ve demokrasinin gelişmesine yardımcı olan bir platform olarak algılanıyordu. Bununla birlikte özellikle 2016 ABD başkanlık seçimleri ve Brexit referandumundan sonra sosyal medyanın aynı zamanda dezenformasyonun yayılmasına yardım ettiği ve insanları yanlış yönlendirmek ve manipüle etmek için kullanılabileceği anlaşıldı. Sosyal medyanın seçim sistemi üzerindeki hatırı sayılı etkileri anlaşıldığında, sahte haberler ve dezenformasyon da birçok aktör tarafından tehdit olarak algılandı. Dezenformasyon ve sosyal medyanın kötüye kullanımının ekonomi, siyaset ve demokrasiyi tehdit ettiği iddia edildi. Bu sebeple sahte haberler bir güvenlik meselesi haline geldi. Yalan haberleri güvenlik meselesi gibi sunmak katı yasalar ve önerilere meşruiyet kazandırmakta bu durum ifade özgürlüğünün altını oymakta ve medyada sansüre neden olmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dezenformasyon, Sahte haberler, Güvenlikleştirme, Sosyal Medya, Gerçek Ötesi

To My Beloved Parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the securitization of the fake news debate and its consequences by focusing particularly on Western Europe. Even though the term fake news has been around for centuries, it gained popularity in the 21st century. Since it is a recent topic academic work about fake news is limited but increasing. However, existing academic works focus on the definition of fake news, the conditions that give rise to this phenomenon and the ways to deal with this problem. Critical studies that analyze fake news from a securitization perspective are also limited. This thesis seeks to contribute to a critical approach to this fake news literature. Another motivation for this work is the negative consequences of the fight against the fake news. After the claims of interference to the Brexit referendum and 2016 US elections preventing such incidents in the future has become a priority of western governments. This understandable priority brings some "harmful" ideas, proposals, and even bills and laws. With the panic after the interference to the elections, decision-makers wanted to decide and act quickly, and this led to some controversial results. These new developments can be investigated with the help of the term securitization.

There are three main research questions in this study;
1- Is fake news securitized?
2- How is fake news securitized?
3- What are the consequences of the securitization of fake news?

The research method of this study is investigating the discourses of the main political actors via using the approach of the Copenhagen School. I will investigate the discourses and speech acts of the related actors by focusing on proposals and laws

about the prevention of the spread of fake news, concerns, and critics about the laws and consequences of them. While trying to locate securitization, I will search the speech acts of the securitizing actors and indicate the referent object that is the subject that needs immediate protection. After finding the referent object I will show how extraordinary measures are called for to deal with this problem. Immediate actions are key for securitization because they emphasizes the need for taking and implementing unusual decisions to prevent the existential threat to the referent object. The situation of the audience at this point will also be indicated. Securitization of fake news seems to enjoy support from the audience although there are some criticisms. A successful securitization might lead to policy changes. It can start with a single law or inquiry but with the help of the domino effect it can spread to other countries or more strict laws may follow in the same country. There are some links between the securitization of fake news and violation or undermining of some fundamental human rights which show the negative consequences of the securitization of fake news. This study aims to contribute to an area that is newly developing and not studied by many scholars and to look at the fight against fake news from a different perspective. Further studies are needed to understand the securitization of fake news and its consequences.

The rest of this study is organized as follows:
In chapter 2 “Literature Review: Fake News and Securitization” I will present the existing literature about fake news. Various definitions of fake news will be mentioned, and the terms post-truth politics and hybrid warfare will also be mentioned. This will provide a theoretical background for the study. Policy suggestions by some authors are discussed in this chapter thus showing us the policy-oriented nature of the literature of fake news. This chapter informs readers about the foundations of the connection between fake news and securitization.

Chapter 3 “Analytical Framework of Securitization” provides the analytical and conceptual framework of securitization. The historical background, the perspectives of Copenhagen School, and second-wave scholars of securitization is narrated in this

chapter. Critics to the Copenhagen School perspectives and some of the replies for these critics by the Copenhagen School scholars also narrated. After analyzing the different perspectives on securitization, I will indicate which perspective I find more suitable for this work and how I will apply this perspective to the next chapter.

Chapter 4 “Cases of Securitization of Fake News” provides the attempts, proposals, acts, bills, and laws for the fight against fake news in Europe. With the help of these proposals and acts, securitization of fake news in Europe will be analyzed. In the first part, I will mention the foundations of fake news debate in Europe and the first proposals and inquires for fight against fake news. The second part presents some proof of securitization of fake news and analyzes how it is securitized by the securitizing actors. In the last part three main negative consequences of the securitization of fake news: the negative effect on freedom of expression, potential censorship of media, and domino effect are mentioned.

Finally, the Chapter 5 “Conclusion” summarizes the key findings and arguments of the study and provides some ideas about the potential extension of this study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: FAKE NEWS AND SECURITIZATION

The 21st century brings a new phase to politics. With the help of advancing technology, public opinion is becoming more effective than ever. Ordinary people easily become organized and determine new viral political topics. They might easily be influenced by the potential malignant actors who create fake news as a part of a disinformation operation. Because the actions of the governments and international actors influenced by the public and public can be influenced by malignant actors it gave chance to the external forces to interference a country's -especially western liberal democracies- internal political environment. This situation peaks during the election campaigns. In the 2010's politicians discovered the importance of social media and they tried to use it as a tool for political gain. As highlighted by Dans (2018), due to the social media bubble effect people are exposed to one-sided news and easily avoid other perspectives. Also, Social media gave a chance to politicians to easily identify the political opinions of users, categorize them and conduct 'hyper-segmented' election campaigns which provides effective results. The fact that social media users read one-sided news created an environment where the popularity of news is more important than the truth. This is reflected in the relations between public and politicians. Politicians who speak what people want to hear rather than the truth started to gaining votes. Thus, we can say that social media also has a huge impact on the recent increase of populism. In the 2010s populist politicians gained popularity in almost all parts of the world. Public opinion and social media mutually influence each other. Some of the internal or external actors use social media to change the public opinion via fake news. Scandals like Cambridge Analytica[1] is a good example of this. Therefore, with the help of the above-mentioned points, one can claim that in

[1] Cambridge Analytica is a data analytics firm that was guilty of manipulating Brexit and 2016 US elections via harvesting Facebook profiles of the users.

this new phase of politics, information and technology became key instruments. On the other hand, concerns about the effects of fake news is open to manipulation too. Because it can be considered as a serious problem and there are claims that it affected the 2016 U.S. elections and Brexit referendum.

In this chapter, I will provide a review of literature to present the state of art on fake news but also show the limitations of existing studies on the topic. I will mention various definitions of fake news as a part of a newly emerging era of politics called post-truth politics which constitutes the broader context. Then, possible solutions proposed by some scholars will be mentioned to provide information about policy-oriented literature of fake news. Those parts will prepare the reader for the securitization of fake news as foundations of the debate. Finally, I will mention the gaps and limitations of fake news literature via mentioning several academic works on fake news debate and securitization.

2.1 Post-Truth Politics and Definition of Fake News

Fake news is usually considered as a part of a key notion in a new era of politics. Many scholars mentioned the post-truth politics as a new way of policymaking in this new era. Wang (2016) informs us about the Oxford English Dictionary's selection of Post-Truth as the word of the year in 2016. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Post-Truth is an adjective defined as "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief" (Wang 2016, p. 1). Thus, one can claim that in the post truth world that we are living today, people choose to believe what they like rather than the truth. Opinions become more important than the facts and in the eyes of the majority most popular opinion become the fact, people does not want to listen other perspectives and reaching the truth, they want opinions which make them happy. These claims based on the definition of the word post-truth and they are supported the fact that post-truth's popularity since 2016. Post-truth politics is using

the above-mentioned tendency of the general public to gain political advantage. Most of the politicians are twist facts according to views of their potential supporters. Fake news is a way to influence the public for political gain. We can say that fake news is a popular tool that is used by various actors in the post-truth era. Each notion implies that emotions are becoming more important than the truth for the people.

The historical aspect of the post-truth mentioned by scholars frequently. Shore (2017, pp. 1-7) mentioned this aspect by dividing 'lie' into two categories: traditional lie and modern lie. According to Shore traditional lie and modern lie has two main differences. Firstly, the target of traditional lie is not the whole population, it is directed to the enemy. Giving wrong information to a state can be considered as traditional lie. Because only the targeted state misinformed by the malicious actor not any other party. In modern lies with the help of the globalized world, misinformation created for the whole population even though malicious actor has a specific target. Secondly, the goal of the traditional lie is not changing the whole context, its focus is changing only a particular fraction of the truth. In the modern lie on the other hand, the goal is completely changing a fact. Shore says that with the help of technology, modern lies trying to change people's ideas. This makes the regular publication of fake news a must for modern lies.

Freelon and Wells (2020, pp.146-147) mention how and why disinformation increased. The authors called the recent spread of fake news as the increase of digital disinformation. Authors say that governments started to think that their methods, structures and information system is not enough to fight against fake news. According to the authors variety of the media networks and partisan broadcasting are the reasons of the increasing of digital disinformation in recent years.

Al-Rodhan (2017, pp.1-5) mentioned that the political debates are not about ideologies but truth and false in recent years. He considered this change as a new era in politics. Rodhan said that the post-truth era of politics is a serious problem and it can be considered as a threat to democracy. According to Rodhan individuals can find

sources that support their pre-existing ideas and other alternatives cannot reach them and it brings more radical thoughts.

Fake news can be seen as one of the reasons of the word post-truth is mentioned more and more in recent years. Recent fake news debates bring the notion at the top of the agenda. There are many examples such as the occupation of Crimea, 2016 US elections, Brexit referendum. To understand recent debates about fake news we need to define the notion. There are various definitions of fake news. According to Gelfert (2018, pp.85-112), fake news is presenting deliberately created misleading information as if they are true news. He emphasizes that the action is deliberate. He also mentions a lack of interest to clarify the fake news definition. One of the problems in defining fake news is to distinguish it from previous historical examples of fake news and the novelty of fake news today. The scope of the fake news expanded with the help of the technology. Recent form of fake news is trying to change the perception of the audience; the intention of the old version of fake news is trying to change only the fragments of reality.

Shu, Sliva, Wang, Tang, Liu (2017, pp.1-12) also mentioned the historical aspect of the fake news. The authors indicate that the fake news notion dates to the invention of the print press, thus, it is as old as the media itself. They also mentioned various definitions of fake news. The authors think that authenticity and intent determines whether a claim is used as part of a fake news or not. They prefer a narrow definition to leave out other concepts. The authors argue that rumors, unintentional misinformation, or conspiracy theories that are not verifiable, cannot be fake news because they do not have authenticity or intent or both. They mean that the effect of unintentional misinformation on audience is limited because it is not deliberately crated for the audience. According to the authors, fake news has psychological and social roots and human nature makes us prone to this kind of exploitation.

According to Spohr (2017, pp.150-157), the most problematic aspect of the fake news is the fact that it is causing ideological polarization. Spohr covers the relationship

between fake news and ideological polarization by mentioning filter bubbles and selective exposure. The Filter bubble allows a user to block the sources which they does not like and reaching information only from their favorite news sources. Therefore, a user only accesses a certain kind of news source and does not receive counter-arguments it is caused that users think more and more one-sided. It makes users vulnerable to a certain kind of propaganda and makes it easy to believe discourses. However, according to Spohr people already tend to choose their news source ideologically. This is called selective exposure. Spohr claims that selective exposure is the main cause of ideological polarization. Spohr stated that ideological polarization has always existed to some extent. However, with the help of technology, people can select their news sources and avoid counterarguments. Conventional media has not allowed that.

Experiments on social media help us to understand the power of the social media and the scope of the fake news. Vasoughi, Roy, and Aral (2018, pp.1146-1151) show the increasing popularity of fake news and reasons for that in their experiment about false news on Twitter. In this experiment, the authors examined 126,000 rumors on Twitter between 2006 and 2017. They concluded that false news reached far more people than the true news. The authors emphasized the role of technology in the increase of misinformation. According to the authors, the reason why people are more inclined to the fake news is because fake news deliberately made attractive to attract the attention of the reader.

There are some alternative views of fake news. Tandoc, Lim, and Ling (2017, pp.137-153) claims that the reasons not necessarily created to mislead the political opinion of people. The authors covered 34 articles about fake news written between 2003-2017. After this research, the authors concluded that fake news may be produced for economic reasons such as advertising or just gaining popularity. The authors emphasized the role of the audience. The audience is key because they not only tend to believe fake news; they also spread the news and make it more popular. Thus, the

audience facilitates the popularity of fake news. The authors claim that without such kind of audience fake news would not even be a subject of discussion today.

Emphasizing the difference between fake news and false news is another alternative version of evaluating fake news. Ilieva (2018, pp.174-179) mentioned that fake news creators use distorted facts deliberately to mislead viewers. However, unintentional mistakes should be counted as false news. Ilieva emphasizes the role of people in spreading both false and fake news. She says that it is the most important factor in the spread of fake news. According to Ilieva spread of fake news should be prevented at the individual level meaning deleting the posts which cause misinformation.

We can say that definitions of fake news are clustered among two different groups. One group of authors claim that fake news should be defined and distinguished from similar phenomena in terms of its impacts on the audience and the changing conditions of public communication. Other authors prefer focusing on the intentions and purposes of the fake news such as twisting reality and misleading people. These authors are examining the impacts of fake news separately or they are not paying attention to the impacts at all. The intentions of the creators may not match the impacts of their actions. I think that to avoid confusion, the purposes and impacts of fake news should be evaluated separately.

2.2 Policy Oriented Literature

Even though we have alternative definitions of fake news, almost all scholars agree that it is a problem and we need solutions to deal with the problem. Aral and Eckles (2019, pp.858-861) claim that we need to update our understanding of fake news and develop new solutions to this evolving problem. The authors point out that to solve the problem one needs to understand the differences between social media and conventional media. According to Aral and Eckles, social media has unique characteristics and dynamics. They argue that that manipulative news target

individuals. Social media news feeds can be tailored to different individuals. Al-Rodhan (2017, pp.6-7) suggests improving fact-checking technology, stronger government actions, and dialogue between scientists and policymakers. He also suggests that fake news should be seen as a security problem by international actors and they should collaborate to overcome the problem.

Klein and Wueller (2017) also believe that the social media aspect is the key part of the fake news problem. They claim that fake news is becoming a multi-dimensional problem. The authors evaluate the term fake news from a legal perspective and give proposals about legal protections available to the fake news. They focus on the online fake news as they think this is the most suitable area for fake news to spread. They emphasize that fake news publishers may be in violation of government regulations. For protection from these violations the authors suggest measures such as updating terms and conditions policies of websites or developing media liability insurance policy. The authors also mentioned that because of the fake news, trust in media by the audience is decreasing. Klein and Wueller stated that the effect of fake news is likely to decrease due to increased public awareness.

Some scholars believe that to develop proposals against fake news one needs to examine its effects. In other words, to limit the effects of fake news one needs to focus on most affected areas. Rosenberger and Hanlon's (2019) article is about the effects of misinformation on the policies of governments and international actors. The authors specify the precautions of the governments and they give specific examples. Hanlon and Rosenberger touch upon structural reforms and the cooperation efforts of the international actors. They divide actors into two categories; manipulators and the ones trying to fight them. The authors used the term democratic governments and explain their efforts against the misinformation

Not all proposals against fake news is about structural reforms or informing citizens. Prohibition is also seen as a possible response to fake news. Pettersson (2019) mentions that social media can be used as a propaganda weapon to change people's

minds and have a political advantage. She adds that politicians have always tried to change people's minds in unethical ways. However, with the help of social media, it can be done to a lot of people and in a much more effective way. Pettersson says that political advertising on social media should be banned even if it will reduce revenues of social media companies. Because the functioning democracy is more important than profits of companies.

Developing policy proposal against fake news is not only the academics' province. Official agencies also join this discussion. The European Commission has published a report (2018) about fake news and how to minimize its effects. The Commission has formed a High-Level Group of Experts (HLEG) in 2018. Their goal is to find how to contend with disinformation and fake news. The HLEG thinks that the transparency of online news should be increased to prevent 'secret' intentional gloating efforts of manipulators. In addition, citizens' awareness about social media and information should be raised. To help potential helper users and journalists avoid spreading fake news, they need to be empowered to spot and report fake news. They think that the European news ecosystem should be more diverse, as it would make manipulator's job harder. This is because more sources mean that one manipulative news sources can be easily falsified. HLEG states that promoting more transparent, more diverse media is the right way to contend with the disinformation. Instead of banning political advertisements in social media, this can be a more effective choice. Also, without the help of users and journalists, fight against fake news and disinformation would not be enough because of the amount of fake news created. However, as the next chapters show, securitization of fake news carried the day and such proposals did not enjoy much traction.

Some scholars examined the existing policies against fake news before proposing a new one. Tambini (2017, pp. 3-11) compared China and Italy's policies towards fake news in his article. Tambini found that China perceives fake news as a national security issue and takes extreme precautions like deleting user's posts from social media. On the other hand, Italians propose fines and even imprisonment in some

cases. However, agreeing upon what is fake or exaggerated news is difficult. Taking precautions without violating freedom of expression is the key to preventing fake news. Tambini proposes an issue-based approach in this article. For example, satire and critical journalism should be considered as a different category then deliberate fake news driven by financial interest.

Some scholars combined the above-mentioned perspectives. Lazer, Baum, Benkler, Berinsky, Greenhill, Menczer and Zittrain (2018, pp.1094-1096) mentioned two potential interventions to the fake news. These are empowering individuals and structural changes. The authors mentioned that informing individuals and using their help to detecting illegal actions. However, the authors claim that this is not enough to solve the problem. The authors focused on structural changes. The authors argue that either government regulations or the self-regulation of social media platforms could be effective. They mentioned the importance of scientific collaboration. They think that we need to approach fake news issues scientifically, comprehensively, and create a truth-based information environment. They suggest that we need to focus on what we can do instead of trying to go back to the pre-social media era. Post-truth politics and fake news are influencing of each other. Fake news also seen as a part of hybrid warfare. The effect of the post-truth era and fake news is not limited only the domestic politics, but they are also a part of international politics. If we define fake news as a tool, it is also can be useful in hybrid tactics of various actors worldwide.

Hybrid warfare is a term to describe the mixing of military and non-military measures used by governments. Some authors accept fake news as a part of the disinformation campaign or hybrid and political warfare between various countries. Charap (2015, pp.51-58) claims that Russian actions over Crimea can be explained by the hybrid war concept. He also claims that both western and Russian perspectives on the term are not enough and he explains his perspective on hybrid war. He says that both Russia and NATO have unrealistic explanations of hybrid war and their perspectives are shaped by their political interests. The author compares conventional methods and hybrid-war, Russian and Western perspectives on the term and how they politicized

the concept. In short, he argues that both parties accuse each other of conducting hybrid warfare and use this excuse to conduct their hybrid warfare against each other.

Polyakova and Boyer (2018, pp.1-18) on the other hand, mentioned precautions ranging from informing citizens about the situation to taking cybersecurity measures with the help of technology. There are a lot of precautions taken by the European Union and European countries. The important thing is that the EU recognized disinformation threat and, to some extent, entered a hybrid warfare with Russia. Those policies show us that western democracies perceived the issue as a serious threat, and they try to "defend" themselves against the Russian hybrid war. The authors claim that the current Russian disinformation tactic is manufacturing reality. They present three proposals for the fight the Russian hybrid warfare. The most important one is information sharing. The authors suggest digital technology companies like Twitter, Facebook and Google should share information with the governments, and NATO, the EU, and the US should establish an information-sharing unit that focuses disinformation. The calls for giving private information of social media users to the government is legitimized as a part of hybrid warfare against Russia. However, it can be also seen as a threat to freedom of expression in the western societies.

There are alternative explanations of hybrid warfare. Hoffman (2009, pp.1-6) thinks that hybrid warfare is a mix of conventional and asymmetrical warfare. He says that hybrid war can be considered as guerrilla warfare which enjoys the help of modern technology. According to him, a hybrid threat can switch between conventional warfare to irregular tactics or terrorism. However, because distorting the facts is a key part of hybrid warfare, one can say that to avoid being harmed by the hybrid warfare, spread of fake information should be prevented. Fake information might cause a change in an election or civil unrest. This perspective is facilitating the securitization of information. The emphasis of social media in the fake news debate might cause limitations of freedom in one of the freest entities in the world: the internet.

Hybrid warfare concept is integrated with the fake news debate. Peters (2018, pp.1161-1164) mentioned Russia's interference to the 2016 US elections and Brexit referendum in his article. He mentions that the Putin government implemented a new type of hybrid war in 2014 on the Ukrainian issue. It is called reflexive control. It has both conventional and new methods spanning from using nuclear weapons as a threat to using social media for legitimizing their actions. He claims that Russia is exploiting the openness of the western media and social media as a weapon against its rivals. He says that Trump's government is the most striking example of post-truth which fed by fake news and populism. New types of hybrid wars and the importance of media in politics is inevitable.

Potential dangers of fake news is various and effective. It can be used both in domestic politics and international politics. With the help of the recent international environment, many actors feel threatened about the fake news and they are ready to many things in principle. Thus, fake news become very open to misusing and securitization. Social media is key for a serious security problem called fake news and it can be used as a propaganda machine to mislead people. In chapter 4 we will see that presenting social media as a part of a security problem, will cause some acts which includes strict regulations.

2.3. Securitization of Fake News

There are different perspectives on the definition of fake news. However, they all have a common point which is fake news is a detrimental problem which needs to be examined and solved. However, fake news is not the only notion that has negative effects. The fight against fake news is open to abuse or exploitation by some actors. This perfectly legitimatized fight can be used to legitimize some extreme actions or gaining political power. This legitimization can lead to negative consequences. A critical framework that underlines the securitization of fake news can be useful in this

connection. Due to its relatively new popularity, there is not much literature on the securitization of fake news.

Donnelly and Pham (2017, pp.1-3) focused on securitization during the election campaigns. In this article Donnelly and Pham is not directly investigate the fake news but they mentioned social media and its effect on elections. Authors describe the election campaigns as the most critical period for the politicians. Thus, analyzing election campaigns may help expose securitization attempts by politicians. The authors mentioned the importance of developing technology and social media during the election campaigns. In this process, securitization can influence more people. According to Donnelly and Pham, politicians cannot ignore the importance of using social media. Thus, the authors question the role of social media, whether it is empowering citizens or promoting more distrust.

Even though fake news was not popular before 2016, there were studies on the relation between propaganda and securitization. Higgott (2003, pp.1-6) analyzed the securitizations of 9/11 during the Bush period. He mentions how the Bush government used the fear and hate of the American people after 9/11 to justify sending American army to Iraq. The U.S. government misled the public by making a connection between 9/11 attacks and Iraq, directing the anger and hate of the population which later helped the legitimization of sending troops in Iraq. Today most scholars claim that we are living in a post-truth society. Higgott also claims that a new era in the politics begun after 9/11. We can link Higgott's claims to the recent claims. Thus, we can say that foundation of the post-truth environment that we are living in can be found analyzing the relations between the 9/11 attacks and U.S. invasion of Iraq as the invasion itself was based on false claims.

Even though I will focus the securitization of fake news in Europe, I briefly mentioned two Asian countries which take strict precautions against the fake news. According to Neo (2019, pp.724-740), Singapore is one of the best countries to observe securitization of the fake news. Neo claims that the Singaporean government

used securitization to consolidate its power. He mentioned specific discourses of the Singaporean government during the securitization process. An important feature of the Singapore is that they are not claiming that there was a disinformation campaign against Singapore. However, they say that it can occur in the future. Singaporean government takes precautions because of the possibility of a disinformation operation.

Malaysia is another Asian country that publishes a counter fake news bill without claiming that currently a disinformation operation conducting against itself. Like the Singaporean one, the bill was adopted to prevent possible incidents in the future. Ullah (2013, pp.178-188) mentions that Malaysia established a task force called The People's Volunteer Corps against disinformation that consists of volunteers. 9/11 was the main excuse for the Malaysian government to take such measures. He also adds that The People's Volunteer Corps and security forces violate human rights.

We can see that post-truth politics in general and fake news more specifically is connected to a wide range of issues from elections to economy and it can occur in different parts of the world. Thus, separating fake news from true news is becoming a very important topic. However, preventing the spread of fake news without restricting freedom of people or violating human rights is also becoming an important topic too.

2.4 Conclusion

2016 US election, Brexit and Cambridge Analytica Scandal, fast developments in technology in the last decade, and the recent increase of ideological polarization bring the fake news at the top of the agenda. After 2016, a lot of articles were published claiming fake news is one of the most important political problems today. Various solutions were proposed by scholars and politicians. Whether their reasons are valid or not, some of these proposals have the potential to securitize information. Various

definitions of fake news show that, an actor – usually malicious – is needed for the creation of fake news. The goal of this actor is to create misinformation. Spread of fake news causes changes in the perception of the public or target audience in a specific topic. The malicious actor could be motivated by a personal gain or may be performing this action as part of a hybrid warfare.

Although there are many studies on the definition of fake news and the ways to deal with this problem, academic works that approach the topic from a critical perspective are not sufficient. Most scholars claim that we are living in a post-truth era. Therefore, twisting reality is becoming widespread in international and domestic politics. There are many proposals to deal with this 'new normal'. Some accuse the social media claiming that the structure of the social media is the main reason for the fake news. Others claim that structural reforms and innovative approaches like using ordinary citizens in the struggle against fake news should be adopted. There are also positive methods proposed like encouraging transparency in the media. In practice, practices of countries vary between extreme measures like deleting social media accounts and fining the responsible people or just informing citizens about the problem.

Regardless of which solutions proposed or implemented, labeling the issue as a fight or warfare might be causing a potential securitization of the fake news. To discover the connections between fake news proposals and securitization, one needs to examine the securitization itself. In the next chapter, I will mention different perspectives of securitization and draw an analytical frame to determine how I will examine the specific cases of potential securitization of the fake news.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF SECURITIZATION

Securitization is a notion that is in the center of an alternative perspective on security studies. There are different opinions about the definition and analytical framework of it. The analytical framework of securitization should be defined clearly to apply the notion to an analysis. Copenhagen School is the first group that defined the term and apply it to the security studies. Firstly, they criticized by the traditional security scholars. Then, the second wave group presented their perspective of securitization and they also suggested their own framework.

This chapter is composed of three sections. In the first section I will mention the definition of securitization by Copenhagen School and the alternative definition of Thierry Balzacq as a representative of second wave scholars. Both claim that rival definitions of security and securitization is narrow, and it needs a broader definition. In the second section, I will mention the perspective of the Copenhagen School, their critical view of securitization and the second wave scholars. Then, the reply of Copenhagen school to them. After analyzing the historical process of securitization and perspective of two groups on securitization, I will explain which theory is more suitable for analyzing the securitization of fake news and information. Then I will mention how securitization should be analyzed and how we can understand that something is securitized according to Copenhagen school with an example case. In the last section, historical milestones that increased the importance of securitization in security studies and five sectors of securitization and how these sectors can be synthesized will be explored.

3.1 Defining Securitization

The foundations of securitization date back to as early as the 1980s. Buzan did not use the word securitization in his book *People, State and Fear* (1983) but this work made way for the concept of securitization. Buzan (1983, pp.1-13) mentions the lack of investigation of security in the academic world. He claimed that a lot of aspects of the concept of security is taken for granted. According to Buzan, the definition of security was very narrow, scholars equated security and national security. Buzan emphasized the instrumental role of security arguing that it was ignored scholars. Buzan wanted to develop a multi-faceted concept of security and concluded that there are four types of social threats for individuals: Physical threat, economic threat, threat to rights and threat to position or status. Although Copenhagen School is the first entity that analyses securitization as a key notion in the security studies other scholars also made their definitions of securitization thereby contributing to the development of the literature.

Securitization can be seen as an alternative way of analyzing security issues. The term securitization provided a new perspective on the notion of security. It is presented as a new way of analyzing security for the first time by the Copenhagen school.[2] Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998, pp.2-21) claimed that the definition of the traditional security scholars is too narrow. Security is not only a military notion. They think that if an issue is perceived as an existential threat it is becoming a security issue and when a subject becomes a security issue, extraordinary means are used to deal with the threats. The connection between security and securitization lies in the deciding of what is an existential threat and what is not. At first, policymakers present an issue as an existential threat. Thus, they claim that the issue cannot be solved within the

[2] Copenhagen School is an academic school of thought in International Relations. Buzan and Waever are the founders of this school. Its members emphasizing that security is not only about military. Securitization mentioned by the Copenhagen School for the first time.

normal politics and emergency methods should be used. However, acceptance of the society is what makes a securitization complete.

Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998, pp.21-49) argue that for naming an action as securitization, a securitizing actor should present an issue as a security issue. When the word "security" is used, the issue stops being a subject of normal politics. Securitizing actor legitimizes extraordinary measures by presenting the issue as an existential threat. According to the authors securitization is the extraordinary version of politicization. Securitizing actors demand things that otherwise cannot be accepted by society. Lack of transparency, sudden increase of taxes, violation of human rights, and overusing resources for a task can be the part of emergency measures with the help of securitization. Securitizing actors use speech acts to convince society. They claim that for detecting securitization, an analyst can examine speech acts of the securitizing actor. The referent object is also an important notion for the Copenhagen School. A referent object is the object threatened by an internal or external threat. Extraordinary measures taken by the authorities to protect the referent object. According to Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde, the referent object is usually the state, but it can be anything. They also add that a securitization attempt can be called successful only if the audience accepted it. This acceptance takes place when the target audience's perceptions on an issue are changed or target audience does not disagree or protest an extraordinary measure.

According to Buzan, Jones, and Little (1993) securitization is intersubjective and socially constructed. The authors thinks that politics itself is the shaping of human behavior to govern large groups of people. It is also intersubjective because the audience should accept the securitizing actor's view on the issue. Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998, pp.21-49) emphasized that an analyst should focus on the conceptual level of securitization. He or she should search the patterns between units and regional security complexes and relations between security units and referent objects.

3.2 Criticism towards the Copenhagen School's Definition

Although there are significant differences between almost each scholar, critics of Copenhagen School's securitization theory can be grouped into two different periods. The first group can be called post-war security studies. This period is between the 1990s and early 2000s. The second group is named as the second wave of the securitization theory. This period is between the late 2000s and 2010s. Scholars who criticize Copenhagen school in this period usually have their unique understanding of the securitization concept.

In the first period, the main criticism towards Copenhagen School scholars is that they are not giving enough attention to the dynamics of politics. According to Huysmans (1998, pp.479-505), the Copenhagen School should draw a line between what is a security issue and what is not. Without this clear line, everything is becoming a potential security issue, and this makes security studies trivial. Huysmans also claims that the Copenhagen School's securitization concept is Euro-centric because it is based on European security dynamics. He also stressed that the Copenhagen School kept the theoretical and empirical dimensions separate. Knudsen's (2001, pp.355-368) approach to Copenhagen School's securitization concept is slightly different. His criticism of Copenhagen School is that they are not considering the military sector enough and their notion is threat and politician centric rather than state centric. Eriksson (1999, pp.311-330) also claims that securitization is unethical and apolitical meaning that Copenhagen School excludes the political and especially the ethical dimension of security. According to the Copenhagen School, there are no objective threats; a threat is accepted as a security problem only if an actor labels it as such. Therefore, if someone detects a security problem it is a political decision rather than an analytical one. According to Knudsen, the Copenhagen School understands security as threats and threat perceptions and disregarding the dynamics of politics. This is limiting the notion of security. They also claim that policies come into the agenda and removed from the agenda solely by

politicians. Therefore, the Copenhagen school's securitization concept is making security studies important than the political studies.

According to Waever (1999, pp.334-340), securitization theory is neither unethical nor apolitical. On the contrary, securitization studies breed new political and ethical questions. Copenhagen School's perspective on security studies is not a normative one. Thus, securitization is not meant to reach decisive consequences like traditional security studies. Copenhagen School's goal is to create a formula regardless of the international environment is state-centric or not. Therefore, securitization theory cannot be called state centric. The focus of the Copenhagen School is existential threats and legitimization of extraordinary measure. According to Taureck (2006), the Copenhagen School's goal is different from the mainstream security studies. Securitization theory aims to answer fundamentally different questions than the traditional security studies.

According to Balzacq (2005, pp.171-193), securitization is a broader concept than the Copenhagen School's framework. Balzacq claims that the definition of the Copenhagen School on securitization is unduly formal and fixed. According to Balzacq, best way to understand securitization is seeing it as a pragmatic practice. Three basic concepts preventing determining universal formulation which applies to all issues related to securitization: context, psychological and cultural disposition of the audience and power relations between speaker and audience. He presents a multidimensional approach that focuses on relations and congruity between the context, circumstances, speaker and audience.

Second wave scholars oppose the idea of seeing securitization merely as a speech act. Balzacq (2005, pp.171-193) claims that there are three types of acts that are transmitted via words: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. Locutionary act is the simple conveying of a statement. Illocutionary acts are intended to be performative. Its goal is actualizing certain actions with the consent of the audience. According to Balzacq, illocutionary act and speech act have the same meaning. Thus,

he claimed that the Copenhagen School only focus on the illocutionary act. Perlocutionary acts are acts designed to change the views of the target audience on a given issue rather than actualizing a certain action. Thus, he emphasized that focusing only on the illocutionary act is not helpful to enrich our understanding of security. According to Balzacq, securitization process should be seen as a pragmatic action of the securitizing actor rather than a collection of speech acts. While presenting a pragmatic model of security he criticizes the Copenhagen School for reducing security to a procedure and undermining the role of the audience. According to Balzacq, audience's experiences is a factor shaping the discourse of the securitizing actor. He claims that the Copenhagen School is neglecting the external threats.

Balzacq has not only an alternative view on defining securitization but also has an alternative model of detecting securitization. He claims that someone studying securitization should focus on both persuasion mechanics and linguistic aspects of a securitizing act. He emphasized the importance of context and power relations between securitizing actors, relevant institutions, and audiences. He claims that the validity of the statements and manner of the securitizing actor in the eyes of the audience are important factors that determine the success of a securitizing action. However, he thinks that there is no clear way to understand whether an action is a securitizing action. He also mentions the difficulty of generating a universal method of analyzing security because of two reasons: the difference between audiences, power relations, and governments of countries and differences within the target audience. Balzacq, Leonard, and Ruzicka (2016, pp.494-528) claim that another unclear point is determining when a securitizing action is successful, when the audience agrees only with the security problem or when they both agree on security problem and the proposed solution of the problem by the securitizing actor.

Williams (2011, pp.453-463) proposes a hybrid version of securitization by combining normal and security politics. According to him, general fear of the potential risks of powerful politics of security can be called fear of fear. He emphasizes that fear of fear is central to liberal politics. It is not only the part of

extraordinary situations but also normal politics. Fear of fear is not necessary a negative notion. It can lead to the prevention of potential extraordinary measures in normal politics. Balzacq and Guzzini (2015, pp.97-102) emphasize that the perlocutionary act is at the center of the securitization theory. In perlocutionary acts, the motive of the malicious actor who created securitization is shaping the audience's perceptions and ideas.

Criticism towards to Copenhagen school can be separated into two categories. First group consist of post-cold war security scholars who do not accept securitization as a notion for international security studies. Second group is the second wave scholars who accept securitization as an important notion for security studies, but they have their own perspective. Thus, we have two different perspectives: Copenhagen school and the second wave. In the next section, I will compare the two perspectives and explain which perspective is more suitable to my research.

3.3. Comparing Two Perspectives

Even though there are some similarities between Copenhagen School and the second wave, we can say that these are two distinct approaches to the securitization. There is the Copenhagen School that made the term securitization important in the security studies. We also have a second wave led by Balzacq. This alternative view of securitization agrees with some of the fundamental features of the Copenhagen School's securitization theory. However, Balzacq claimed that his alternative view is the upgraded version of the original securitization theory, which has important deficiencies. To specify which view is the most suitable one to analyze contemporary issues through securitization, we need to examine criticisms of the second wave to the Copenhagen School.

According to the second wave scholars, Copenhagen School has an internal approach to the securitization, and it is neglecting the external threats. Balzacq (2005, pp.171-

193) says that some threats are external and even they are unspoken they can still harm the society. However, the goal of the securitization theory is not to identify all threats to a given society. Securitization theory exists to help understand how some incidents are shown as threats and how they are securitized. To understand that one can use a certain formula which includes linguistic analysis. Second wave scholars also say that focusing only on the illocutionary act is not helpful to enrich one's theoretical perspective. However, Copenhagen School also asks the question of what results and under what conditions and for whom the securitization occurred. I think both perspectives can be used for securitization analysis. If a scholar wants to know why a securitizing act occurs and whether securitizing actor reaches his or her goal, second wave's perspectives may become the most suitable perspective. However, for determining whether an issue is securitized or not and analyzing its effect on the society, Copenhagen School's perspective is the most suitable one. Thus, one needs to determine what he or she is trying to find via securitization analysis to determine which approach of securitization is the most appropriate for his or her work.

Copenhagen School prefers to see securitization as an illocutionary act rather than perlocutionary because the goal of the original securitization theory is not interested in analyzing the effects of the discourses but analyzing how actors trying to transform rights and responsibilities of the public. Speech act theory makes it easier to detect complex political arrangements and testing securitization in case studies. Second wave scholars choose to make a clear-cut differentiation between the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. However, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts are usually linked together. The separation of two acts is caused by the intention of the securitizing actor. In illocutionary act or speech act the intention is actualization of an action, in perlocutionary act the intention is changing opinions of the audience. According to the Copenhagen School with the help of speech acts the audience accepts an issue as an existential threat. A noteworthy point here is that the audience did not accept the issue as an existential threat before the speech act. Regardless of the initial intention of the securitizing actor, his or her speech act usually changes the opinion of the audience. Thus, we can say that the same securitizing action can both

help the actualization of a planned action and changes the opinion of the public temporarily or permanently.

Waever (1999, pp.334-340) says that Balzacq has his model of securitization, but he does not have a distinct theory. Thus, the Copenhagen School's perspective of securitization is well-grounded. Waever criticizes Balzacq's idea of focusing perlocutionary act, because it causes endless chains of cause and effect and it makes the securitization a trivial concept. Copenhagen School's perspective on securitization can be seen as a theory which has a specific formula to detect speech acts which lead securitization and this theory has certain goals and its formula is coherent with these goals which makes the Copenhagen School perspective well-grounded.

My goal is to determine whether fake news debates are securitized or not and if it is, how it is securitized and how this securitization is affecting the way information is perceived. Thus, the Copenhagen School's securitization view is the most appropriate view for my analysis. Fake news is openly presented as a threat by many actors. Analyzing the discourses of these actors makes it possible to detect potential securitizing attempts by these potential securitizing actors. Analyzing speech acts of these actors helps us to understand if the fake news debate become politicized or securitized. After fake news presented as an existential threat, prevention ideas proposed and some of these ideas can be considered an emergency means. To determine these factors, one does not need to focus on the reasons for the occurrence of securitization and the results of it. Copenhagen School's approach is suitable to understand the relation between discourses of securitizing actors and changing policies after that discourses.

3.4 Securitization in practice

According to the speech act theory, a securitizing move only became successful if it is accepted by the target audience. Also, some speech acts only stay at the discourse level and not turned into a policy Therefore, we can say that the success of a securitizing act is depend on its persuasiveness on the audience. Speech act is a key tool to legitimize extraordinary measures which normally would not accepted by the audience. We can exemplify this with migration and security associated more and more in recent years with the help of the discourses of the politicians.

Arab spring caused migration flows from the greater Middle East to Europe. The first migration flows related to the Arab Uprisings was Tunisian migration flow to the Lampedusa Island, Italy. First, around 5000 migrants reached the island. Italian authorities said that it is an "exodus of biblical proportions" (Faris, 2011). Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi called the situation as a "human tsunami" (Grant, 2011). On March 30, Berlusconi visited the island and promised that island "will be inhabited solely by Lampedusans within 60 hours" (News Wires, 2011). However, in practice, the Berlusconi government took contradictory actions. According to Monzini (2011), Italy gives temporary humanitarian permits to Tunisian migrants. Therefore, they can travel across Italy freely. However, migration continued to be seen as a security issue by the European Union members and some of the European people. In some cases, discourses and speech acts become anti-migrant policies mainly called Fortress Europe. Like migration, media and news is another topic that is associated with security in the recent years. Fake news came to be seen as a security problem both at the discourse and policy levels.

The origins of this development can be traced back to the annexation of Crimea. The invasion of Crimea by the Russian government in 2014 is seen as part of hybrid and information warfare. According to many western scholars, the Putin government implemented a new type of hybrid war in the Crimean war. It is called reflexive control. Reflexive control is a manipulation style that is directing the targeted actor

to a pre-determined idea and making him/her perform the desired action voluntarily. In international relations both conventional and new methods ranging from using nuclear weapons as a threat to using social media for manipulating masses can be considered as a part of reflexive control. Peters (2018, pp.1161-1164) claims that Russia is exploiting the openness of the western media and social media as a weapon against its rivals. He adds that media became an important area of struggle in this 'second cold war period'. Even though so many scholars have different perspectives on the issue, fake news is incrementally gaining popularity in the political analysis. However, fake news reached its ultimate fame in 2016.

Claims of Russian interference into the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the Cambridge Analytica scandal in Brexit are the two events that can be considered as a cornerstone of the association of fake news and security. Both scholars and politicians give fake news a central position after the 2016 in security studies. The topic went beyond the academic and policy circles and attracted the attention of the public. While the results of the U.S. presidential election and Brexit referendum is sometimes explained with the fake news, it is becoming securitized by so many different actors in the world which I will mention in the Chapter 4. Securitizing actors from various parts of the world show democracy as a referent object and some of them propose extraordinary measures to deal with this threat. Even if there is not a real threat detected, the potential of possible interference to elections is seen as enough to take serious precautions in some parts of the world. Although fake news is seen as a part of military tactics, it has economic, political, and societal effects as well.

Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde (1998, pp.49-163) mentions 5 sectors of security. These are military, environmental, economic, societal, and political sectors. The authors mentioned the sectors to help the understanding of securitization. They are not claiming that there are clear-cut separations between the sectors. The military sector's referent object is state. Securitizing actors is not clear, regional dynamics exists because it is mostly geographical. While describing sectors the authors use a

classical three-level structure of actors in international relations. These levels are individual, state, and international or system. The system level is dominant in the environmental sector indicating that problems involving this sector are global. In the environmental sector, the referent object is the world. The third sector is the economic sector and it is the most complicated one. There are various potential referent objects like oil. The authors use the word blurry to describe the economic sector. The fourth sector is the societal sector. Societal sector has various referent objects like nation, identity, religion, race. According to the Copenhagen School, in this sector, the social group is more important than individuals, and these social groups are constructed. Buzan et al. also mention the role of media is crucial in this sector. Finally, in political sector referent objects are sovereignty and ideology. Non-military threats to political units are emphasized by the securitizing actors.

Copenhagen School's precise formula for analyzing securitization can be useful to understand the features of securitization. Sectoral analysis of securitization applies to analyzing securitization of information and fake news.

I will use the Copenhagen School's method for analyzing the securitization of fake news. I will analyze the speech acts of securitizing actors and the policy changes after the speech act. I will also be mentioned how the audience reacted to the securitizing actions and policy changes. I will analyze the speech act of politicians. Because fake news becomes popular after 2016 and only the last decade, international politics called post-truth politics, I will mention the attempts of securitization of fake news in the 2010s.

I think the most efficient way of determining whether there is a securitization of fake news or not is trying to determine whether a discourse has the potential to change the perception of the audience in a certain subject. These potential changes or change attempts should try making normal political subjects, an extraordinary subject that needs to be solved immediately and needs extraordinary means to solve it. If one can detect a securitizing actor, referent object, audience, the attempt of making a subject

extraordinary, the emphasizing of immediate action by the securitizing actor and proposals or implementation of extraordinary solutions and a link between those proposals or policies and potential violation of human rights, then one can claim that there is a securitization. Securitizing actors or the type of policies, the way of implementation of those policies, or whether it is successful or unsuccessful is not the determining factor of finding securitization attempts of fake news.

3.5 Conclusion

Securitization is a notion created by the Copenhagen School in the 1990s. Securitization is presenting an issue as a security issue or an existential threat that otherwise would be the part of normal politics. Once an issue is labeled as an existential threat, extraordinary measures will easily be legitimized. The actor who presents an issue as security is securitizing actor. The goal of securitizing actors changing the perception of the audience or actualizing a planned action via using securitization, securitizing actors uses speech acts to do it. After extraordinary measures legitimized new policy changes will become valid or the audience's perceptions change in favor of securitizing actors or his/her group.

Two groups criticize the Copenhagen School's perspective on securitization. The first group can be named as classical security scholars. They think that security is mostly about the military. They found the definition of Copenhagen School is unethical and apolitical. They do not accept securitization as a notion in security studies. The second group of criticizers called the second wave. They accept securitization as a notion. However, they think that the Copenhagen School's definition has deficiencies. Copenhagen School scholars answered both critics. Copenhagen School's perspective is more suitable to my thesis because, my thesis is about how a certain subject become a security issue. With analyzing speech acts and relating them with extraordinary precautions one can detect a subject is become a security issue or not.

I think Copenhagen School's theory is enough to help me with this analysis because their specific formula is capable of detecting a securitization attempt by identifying key features you need to investigate. Briefly, the analysis needs to pay attention to labeling something as a threat and changing an audience's perception about a subject.

CHAPTER 4

CASES OF SECURITIZATION OF FAKE NEWS

'Everything is permissible in war and love.' It is a strong and a global idiom. It legitimizes any action in the situation of war and love. In politics, during the time of war, some extraordinary actions are tolerated or even demanded by the people as well. US President Franklin D. Roosevelt's third and fourth term is an example of that. Because. However, the meaning of war expanded, especially after the Second World War. The advancements in weapons make any war between the nuclear power a potential threat to the whole human existence in the World. During and after the Cold War, many topics were considered as a part of war, like space exploration. With the help of advanced technology, social media redefined the news and it caused the birth of the fake news debate. Then fake news becoming part of a war or an area of struggle between the superpowers like space exploration during the cold war. Fake news can be shown as an existential threat with the help of presenting the information as a front of a hybrid war. Even though fake news is an old term it is occupying the headlines in recent years. In the late 20th and 21st centuries, major developments took place in the field of technology. One dimension of this advancement is the development of communication between people. With the help of the personal computers and social media, the ideas and opinions of the people reach other people quicker than ever. People reach the news almost instantly if they want. This development also has some negative effects. Since people can post anything on the social media and it can spread very quickly, fake news can reach more people than ever very quickly. Some actors can use this situation for political advantage or to harm other actors like companies or even states. Especially after the Brexit and 2016 U.S. elections, interference in elections via fake news became a hot topic. A company called Cambridge Analytica is at the center of the scandals of manipulation of the Brexit referendum and 2016 US elections by using personal information of users of

some social media websites like Facebook. Moreover, there are claims that the Russian government is involved as a part of their hybrid warfare against the western countries especially with the U.S. and the EU. This scandal alarmed many people. Official committees conducted investigations and published reports and proposals. Also, many scholars investigated the situation, contributing to the ongoing debates on fake news, and proposing solutions. However, the situation has another dimension. Some actors labeled fake news as an existential threat to their cultures, states, or even the democracy. They suggest extraordinary measures to deal with this extraordinary threat. They securitized the issue for legitimizing their policies against other actors which normally would find such measures excessive. In other cases, the issue was securitized just for gaining political advantage. Securitization of fake news is becoming an important issue together with the debates on fake news. In this chapter, I will analyze the securitization of the fake news in the European Union. The purpose of this analysis is to search the securitization of fake news in Europe and investigating its features. Also, analyzing the negative consequences of the securitization of fake news. In the first section, I will mention the fake news debate and the first steps of turning these debates to securitization. In the second section, the cases of securitization of fake news in various European countries will be shown via providing data on some anti-fake news acts and laws. In the final section, three main consequences of the securitization of fake news will be mentioned.

4.1. The Rise of the Fake News Debate

Fake news debate in Europe started even earlier than the Brexit referendum. Russian annexation of Crimea triggered a new phase in Europe-Russia relations. Relations between Europe and Russia were tense in the cold war era. Western European countries were in the US-led western coalition. NATO was established to mainly restraining the possible Russian attacks in the North Atlantic. Eastern Europe was under the influence of the Soviets. After the cold war, Eastern European countries joined the European Union. Even though relations seem to be cooled down after the

disintegration of the Soviet Union, with the help of the aggressive actions of the Putin government, relations becoming tense again in the 21st century. Russian military's intervention to Georgia (2008) and Crimea (2014) affected the relations negatively. The struggle between Europe and Russia is not restricted only to the military aspect. The claim that Russia is using hybrid war tactics against the EU and the west in general found ground in the western organizations. As we can see in NATO's press release (2019) Deputy Secretary-General Rose of NATO Gottemoeller met the European Commissioner for the Security Union Sir Julian King on 14 March 2019. The EU and NATO discussed how to fight against the hybrid warfare. After the claims of Russian interference to the Brexit and 2016 US elections via social media came to be seen as a front of this warfare. The idea of West and Russia is in a hybrid warfare against each other and that media is a part of this warfare has the potential to legitimize some extraordinary measures. This securitization of information and news may lead to certain measures that harm the freedom of speech and freedom of expression in European countries.

Cadwalladr (2017) mentions whistleblowers' statements and roots of Cambridge Analytica which turned out to be the major actor of a shocking scandal after the elections. Cambridge Analytica harvests information from social media users to manipulate them for the interests of their clients. With the small amount of difference between yes and no votes, Cambridge Analytica's small touch could and possibly did change the election results. Harvesting social media user's information and preparing person-oriented propaganda for the target audience, is the key to changing the election results. Fake news is also used as a useful part of this manipulation. Once they detect the potential voters for leave, they investigate the voters' profile and create fake news according to that specific person's preferences.

In the Official report of House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) committee[3] (2019, pp.7-98) a detailed analysis of the disinformation

[3] House of Commons DCMS committee is one of the committees of the British House of Commons, it is established to oversee the operations of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

campaign during Brexit is provided. This report is an important cornerstone for the securitization of fake news, because it is one of the first official inquiries about the Cambridge Analytica scandal and it provided proposals for the fight against fake news via exemplifying German and French legislations on fake news. According to the report, Cambridge Analytica worked for the Leave.EU campaign and implemented micro-targeting[4] to manipulate voters. Algorithms of social media websites allow to categorize users by using their personal information, online activities, locations, and friends. This information is used for micro-targeting by the Cambridge Analytica. Their goal is to manipulate the target audience with advertisements specifically prepared for them or their group. Facebook also has a 'lookalike audiences' system that categorizes users who like the same things and then place the same advertisements for the same groups. However, algorithms and 'lookalike audiences' system can also be used for political manipulation. In other words, as the UK Information Commissioner Elizabeth Denham states "We do not want to use the same model that sells us holidays and shoes and cars to engage with people and voters." (Official report of House of Commons DCMS Committee, 2019, p.90)

The committee investigated attempts of data misuse and manipulation during the Brexit campaign. Articles biased against the EU spread by Russian state-owned news agencies Russian Today (RT) and Sputnik are mentioned in the report. Some of those articles went viral in the UK. Statistics show that RT and Sputnik were more influential in the UK than local leave campaigns. Facebook's cybersecurity department detected accounts actively involved in the Scottish independence referendum and Brexit referendum. Thus, Russian interference to British democracy comes at the top of the agenda. The report also called for precautions against the disinformation campaign. The committee defines disinformation as:

[4] Micro-targeting is a way of manipulating the decisions of the target voters via collecting their personal information on the social media. It is used by Cambridge Analytica during the Brexit referendum.

> The deliberate creation and sharing of false and/or manipulated information that is Intended to deceive and mislead audiences, either to cause harm, or for political, personal or financial gain. (Official report of House of Commons DCMS Committee, 2019, p.10)

According to the committee, social media companies should be held responsible for the disinformation attempts that use their platform, and technology companies need to have legal liabilities for the content on their websites. Committee agreed that a compulsory code of ethics should be established for preventing the spread of harmful content. An independent regulator should be able to obtain any information from the social media companies and if they found any 'types of harm' they ask to remove or highlight the content from the Social media companies and if they do not comply large fines should be implemented. According to the committee, the Cambridge Analytica scandal would not happen if Facebook had paid attention to protecting the personal data of its users:

> The Cambridge Analytica scandal was facilitated by Facebook's policies. If it had fully complied with the FTC settlement, it would not have happened. The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Complaint of 2011 ruled against Facebook—for not protecting users' data and for letting app developers gain as much access to user data as they liked, without restraint—and stated that Facebook built their company in a way that made data abuses easy. *(*Official report of House of Commons DCMS Committee, 2019, p.26)

According to the Information Commissioner's Office's[5] (ICO) report on its investigation (2018, pp.14-65) into the use of data analytics in political campaigns, social media users' data were gathered and abused for political campaigns. In this report, relations between Cambridge Analytica and organizations that campaigned for BREXIT such as Leave.EU, Vote Leave is mentioned. The committee investigates relations between political parties and the 'processing of personal data.' They found it problematic mainly because the political parties are not investigating how their sources obtain data. Even though responsible actors of the scandal are penalized, the effect of the incident will continue to change the global perspective on

[5] ICO is a British non-departmental public body that reports directly to the UK parliament. Its duty is defending information rights and privacy of the British public.

political campaigns, voting behavior of the public, and even democracy. Sources of data and spreading of the information likely to be questioned more than ever. Actually, since the fake news phenomenon came to the agenda, there have many initiatives to deal with it. As Locklear (2018) presents while companies like Google launched programs to fight against fake news such as the Google News Initiative and Google Disinfo Lab, many countries have passed laws to criminalize fake news. Especially this legislation against fake news is changing the parameters of the debate on fake news and leading to securitization. The next section looks at this situation.

4.2. Securitization of the Fake News Debate

After the Cambridge Analytica scandal, we can see that fake news is considered as a very serious issue. Many actors focused on how to fight against the fake news. However, the situation has another aspect that is not investigated enough yet. Via fighting against the fake news describing the situation as an existential threat for the democratic system or as a part of a hybrid warfare, potentially legitimizes extraordinary measures. This is causing the securitization of the fake news debate and may bring negative consequences. Proposing controversial laws which is criticized by the human rights organizations and trying to legitimize them by presenting fake news as a fundamental threat to the democracy is leading to securitization. Thus, investigating proposals, acts, laws, and discourses of the governments is key for determine whether there is a securitization of fake news or not.

Before getting into the details of how fake news is securitized, I need to mention the EU's Code of Practice on Disinformation (2018) as an example of fighting fake news without securitization. In this code, the EU focused on the transparency in political advertising, closure of fake accounts instead of deleting fake posts and demonetization of purveyors of disinformation. European Union's constitutive and holistic approach shows that their alternative ways to solve fake news problem without securitizing it.

As presented in the Official report of House of Commons DCMS Committee (2019, pp.7-98) and ICO's report (2018, pp.14-65) Main British proposals to fight against fake news are informing citizens, encouraging digital literacy, taking cyber-security measures, forcing social media companies to share information with the governments via sanctions, supervising social media companies, and political advertisements via an independent body. The reports of the House of Commons DCMS committee and ICO are already mentioned. However, the debate on fake news unfolded differently in other European countries. The main goal of the French law against the disinformation, enacted by French National Assembly (2018, pp.2-13) which is called *Provisions Amending the Electoral Code* is empowering judges to immediately remove any content which they considered fake news. Also, websites would be held responsible to delete the related content in 48 hours. This act was enacted specifically for the election campaigns. This act is mainly justified with reference to the fear of foreign intervention to the elections:

> The law against the manipulation of information, which aims to better protect democracy against the different ways in which fake news is deliberately spread, was approved in its second reading at the National Assembly on 20 November 2018. Particular attention is given to election campaigns, just before and during elections, to concentrate available tools on the real danger, namely attempts to influence election results (as was seen during the last American presidential elections and the Brexit campaign). (Government of France, 2017-2020)

As Fiorentino (2018) narrates the main criticism of this act is that it can cause the censor of the press and jeopardize democracy. The act also allows French national broadcasting service to regulate the content of the TV channels who broadcasts under the influence of the foreign states. To avoid sanctions news agencies must provide 'information that is fair, clear, and transparent. The sanction of violating this act is one year in prison and a fine of €75.000. This act is considered as the first ban of 'false' information in western Europe and it is planned by the president Macron himself. Even though the French senate rejected twice, the act passed by the parliament. Macron needed to describe the fake news situation as a serious threat to legitimize this law because it is an unusual act for Western Europe. As Fiorentino

(2018) mentions Macron says that the act *"*is the sine qua non condition for a free, open and secure internet, as envisioned by its founding fathers.*"*

So, the French government claims that this act is indispensable to prevent this new threat to the democracy. We can say that the French government as a securitizing actor labelled fake news as a very serious and direct threat to -referent object- democracy. They also try to legitimize these decisions with the British inquiry and German legislation even though the UK inquiry did not suggest draconian measures. Sanctions like one-year imprisonment and fining €75.000 for anyone who violates the law and suspending of media agencies under the influence of the foreign state with the decisions of a single judge can be called extraordinary measures for the 'extraordinary threat' to the democracy itself. The emphasis on the foreign state shows us how the hybrid warfare concept is also used for legitimizing the bill. Whether there is an interference or not, making the fear of interference to the elections as the reason for taking measures about the information shared on the internet during the election campaign, forcing social media companies to share their user's information to the government and investigating political advertisements can be seen as unusual measures. This act may also be opening the way to the other European countries enacting a stricter act. Germany passed stricter laws against fake news in 2020. Bonifacic (2020) informs us about the new action against the fake news in Germany. This act forced social media companies like Twitter and Facebook to give the IP addresses of some of the users and forward suspected or illegal contents to the Federal Criminal Police Office. The main criticism of this act is that it is threatening the privacy of the social media users, it can be led to self-censorship of both users and the removal of the content by social media companies. The most controversial part of the law is that social media companies are forced to give user's data.

Interference of a foreign power in one country's election can be called a real threat. However, as mentioned above British proposals and French and German laws show that political advertisements or news are being considered as threat. These are leading to measures such as suspending media agencies which are under the control of foreign states, imprisoning people who violate anti-fake news acts, investigating and limiting

political campaigns and media agencies during the elections, forcing social media companies to delete harmful contents in a very limited time and potential corruption of the investigating bodies and judges also may harm the democracy in a country. Even though all the above-mentioned actions are legitimized based on preventing a threat to democracy, ironically those actions can lead to undemocratic decisions.

4.3. Consequences of the Securitization of Fake News

There are three main negative consequences of the securitization of fake news. Firstly, it may cause the undermining of the freedom of expression and freedom of information. Secondly, it may cause censorship in social media. Thirdly, it can be used for legitimizing strict legislation by some of the European governments. These three proposals are selected because they are the most serious threats to the fundamental rights of the people. First consequences of blocking contents, fining media agencies, social media companies and giving limited time to social media companies to determine harmful content leads to suppression of harmless content and true news leading to censorship and the undermining the freedom of expression. Domino effect is mentioned because every strict law or proposal especially in Western Europe is justifying stricter laws elsewhere in the world.

4.3.1. Undermining the Freedom of Expression

Securitization of the fake news led to the new laws that are a part of the fight against disinformation and fake news. These laws are undermining the freedom of expression and freedom of information. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, p.5) “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” We can see that receiving and imparting information is emphasized in the same article with

the freedom of expression. Freedom of expression and information is the free flow of information and opinion without looking at the quality of content. Also, British Human Rights Act (1998) specifically mentions the right to express any opinion at loud through the internet and social media in Article 10.

Making social media companies the decision-makers on which posts can be published and which ones will be deleted and forcing these decision-makers to decide within 48 hours will most probably cause unfair decisions. Moreover, the banning of legitimate content leads to violation of freedom of expression and freedom of information. Without the basic human rights like freedom of expression and information, there would not be a healthy democracy. Ironically, the laws enacted to save the democracy is possibly harming it. Reports of the various human rights organizations are validating these claims.

The main criticism of the French law on fake news is that it can undermine or violate the freedom of expression. As narrated in the CNN article (2018) French opposition parties reflected their concerns about how this law affects the freedom of expression. Leader of French far-left party Jean-Luc Melenchon said, "the bill represents a crude attempt to control information". Lawmaker Eric Ciotti of the opposition Republican Party said, "The law carries great dangers to our democracy and the idea of 'verifiable facts' opens to way to a particularly dangerous official truth." Journalists are also concerned. The Reporters Without Borders (2018) states that "It is understandable and justifiable to try to prevent manipulative content from circulating online, but the solutions proposed in the bill could be unworkable and even counter-productive." They also criticized the specific emphasis of foreign influence and limited time that is given for social media companies to remove illegal contents.

According to Alouane (2018), French fake news law is not solving the issue but bringing more problems. She claims that the new law won't help prevent fake news, it will just give more control to the French government over the French media. She also mentioned that controlling news agencies that is foreign or under the influence

of a foreign state and banning some news in 48 hours decided by a judge is overshadowing the election campaign and could affect the freedom of choice of voters.

4.3.2. Censorship of Social Media

The internet and particularly social media open new ways from the communication to the free and fast circulation of information. Social media can be used for the expression of opinions about any topic. It also serves as a news source. The effect of social media as news sources especially in countries which has censorship of conventional media is enormous. It helped people organize and even start a revolution in the last decades. Until recently, censorship was seen as a notion that is related to the conventional media. The Internet is seen was a free space where information could freely circulate, and bans seen as impossible. However, the rise of the fake news debate and the urgent calls for stopping it changes this perspective. Today, the restriction or censorship in social media is becoming a reality even in Western Europe with the help of the discourses of political actors and governments. The newly enacted laws may cause the censorship in the social media. The responsibility of the social media companies is increased, and they will face multi-million Euros of sanctions if they do not act quickly. These rules may make social media companies ban legitimate content as well. Also, these laws can damage the anonymity on the internet, and some citizens may choose to not share their opinions about political subjects on the internet. Thus, laws may cause auto-censorship at the individual level too.

The House of Commons DCMS committee (2019, pp.7-98) report causes some concerns about the freedom of social media. The House of Commons DCMS committee suggests increased inspections on social media companies and more monetary sanctions if they are found guilty. They also propose that political advertisements and slogans should be investigated during the election campaigns,

information about the sponsors of political ads should be publicly accessible. They stated that donations from overseas during the election campaign should be banned. According to the committee, social media companies should share the information on who saw or clicked an advertisement. They also emphasized the importance of digital literacy. We can see that disinformation became an important issue even at the government level. Governments issued official reports and developed official precautions. According to the committee, social media companies should be held responsible for the disinformation attempts using their platform. The committee thinks that technology companies need to have legal liabilities for the content on their websites. This may be seen as a good way to prevent fake news. However, social media companies may overreact and delete harmless posts or block users who are not malicious just to avoid possible sanctions.

French law also causes concerns of censorship in the media. As the Local France article (2018) narrates head of France's national journalists' union Vincent Lanier said "It's a step toward censorship" and the editorial director of the Le Monde newspaper Jerome Fenoglio said, "Elections should be a time of great freedom these are the periods when important information emerges." As we can see the specific emphasis on media agencies and quick removal of the fake contents in social media companies during the election periods can worry the public about the access to information during the elections.

4.3.3. Domino effect

The approach used for legitimizing each law against the fake news and the law itself by a European country is making an example of a stricter law in Europe and possibly worldwide. British authorities mention the French law to justify their proposals. Both British and French authorities also mentioned the German law of Act to Improve Enforcement of the Law in Social Networks (Network Enforcement Act) (2017, pp.1-6) even though it does not explicitly mention fake news. The act forces social media

companies to remove hate speech from their websites within 24 hours of receiving the complaint and remove contents that include insults and defamation in seven days. Also, social media companies must prepare reports on complaints every six months. The need for recognition of an independent institution for regulating and supervising the social media companies. According to the act, social media companies that violate the act will pay fines. As Faiola and Kirchner (2017) narrate, with this act social media companies like Facebook and Twitter could have to pay enormous fines up to 50 million Euros.

Human Rights Watch (2018) says that the German Network Enforcement Law is making an example and causing a domino effect and mentions the new strict anti-fake news laws of Singapore, Philippines, Russia, Venezuela, and Kenya. They also mentioned the then British prime minister Theresa May's "call on large social media companies to do more to identify and remove terrorist content" They also mentioned the European Commission's report which says that social media companies should take greater responsibilities. After the Human Rights Watch report, France enacted stricter law against the disinformation and Macron said that it is essential for democracy. After the securitization of the Macron, Germany enact even more strict law in 2020. Thus, the domino effect prediction of the Human Rights Watch has been proven. Therefore, this domino effect may continue in the future and increasing the importance of all the above-mentioned negative consequences year by year.

We can see the 'inspiration' of the European countries each other in their direct statements. French government (2020) answers the question of why this act is enacted as:

> To tackle the new threat to democracy posed by the dissemination of fake news, the British Parliament set up a Board of Inquiry; Germany's Parliament passed legislation; the Italian authorities created a platform for reporting fake news items. France could not afford to sit still.

The same statement is made in the British house of commons DCMS committee's report (2019) too. They wrote a specific subsection and mentioned the German and

French laws and continue to the existing situation with the UK and emphasize the inadequacies of Facebook's existing regulations. So, we can say that other countries' actions show as one of the reasons for the acts. So, each act who including a decision which is stricter open a way to other European countries to enact even stricter act like France and it is one of the main consequences of the laws against fake news which is caused by the securitization of the fake news debate.

4.4. Conclusion

Even though fake news debates existed before, the Brexit referendum and 2016 US elections brought the issue at the top of the agenda. With the increasing interest in the debates of fake news, securitization of fake news is becoming a global and serious issue. Fake news debates attract the attention of many people around the world from politicians to ordinary citizens. It is creating fear amongst people. In Europe, the idea of Russian hybrid warfare is strengthened after the Cambridge Analytica scandal during the Brexit campaign. After the investigation of the House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, and Information Commissioner's Office, some proposals started to be discussed. Some of the proposals were informing citizens, encouraging digital literacy, taking cyber-security measures, improving transparency in the internet, asking or even forcing social media companies to share information to the government or a third party, conducting investigations and implementing sanctions and investigating and restricting some political slogans or advertisements if necessary. The bills, acts, laws, and proposals to deal with anti-fake news, in the UK, Germany, France, and also some non-European countries are the consequences of the securitization of fake news. Those proposals can have a negative influence on the freedom of expression of the people or even democracy. Because the anonymity of the internet gives a chance to everyone to criticize any actor on any topic without fearing any sanction or reaction. Some of these sanctions may cause self-censorship eventually. People can hesitate to share even the true news. Third parties or government can be corrupt and prevent true news and allow some fake

news to be published. In addition, the possibility of prevention of anything on the internet is debatable too.

While British authorities conducting inquiries on the Cambridge Analytica scandal, Germany enacted the Network Enforcement Law and it became the first step towards violation of human rights. French president Macron mentions the German law and British inquiry and emphasizes the importance of a law against disinformation, particularly during the election periods. He said that fake news is threatening the democracy itself and this problem needed to be solved immediately. French government and president Macron acted as securitizing actors and securitized the issue via making democracy as the referent object and taking extraordinary measures like the imprisonment of the person who violates this law. This policy change of France may lead to further violation of human rights in Western Europe. Finally, Germany's even stricter law against fake news is enacted in 2020, which forces social media companies to give IP addresses of the "suspected" users. Securitization of fake news is followed by new laws. These laws have negative consequences. Firstly, they are causing the violation of fundamental human rights like freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom of information. Secondly, heavy liabilities on social media companies that force them to act quickly will probably throw the baby out with the bathwater and cause taking down of legit postings on the internet.
The priority of the social media companies will be avoiding the multi-million Euros sanctions naturally. Finally, each law can be seen as pushing the authorities toward the slippery slope of stricter laws which only focuses on the fight against fake news.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study analyses dynamics of the securitization of fake news. In this study, I posed the question “is fake news securitized?”. If yes, in what ways is it securitized, and what are the main consequences of the securitization of fake news? This final chapter provides a summary of the arguments and key findings of this study.

The main argument of this study is that the fake news debate is securitized, and this securitization is followed by some proposals or laws which complete the realization of this securitization. It is also argued that securitization will bring negative consequences like undermining the freedom of expression, censorship in media, and domino effect that leads to adoption of even stricter laws. Whether intentional or not, proposals and laws are serving the securitization of fake news. First, framing the issue as a direct threat to democracy is an exaggeration of the situation. Although the Cambridge Analytica scandal shows that there was an attempt to influence some voters in a way that benefited one side of the campaign, it cannot be presented as the destruction of democracy. Before banning/deleting some posts or trying to censor information in other ways, authorities could emphasize transparency or look for quick and effective ways to disclosure of false information. Instead of taking more structural decisions like constituting more transparent environment for political campaigns or creating a mechanism which focus to detect and punish the creators of fake news rather than banning suspicious contents, taking quick decisions via presenting the issue is a unique threat to the democracy itself and emphasizing the need for strict rules can led creation of suspicion and the securitization of the situation. This attitude can be a result of the panic after the Cambridge Analytica scandal and the close results of the critical elections that determines the future of global politics, especially the Brexit referendum. However, it can also be a sign of deliberate securitization attempts by some actors like politicians who could use the

situation for their interest. Finally, the fake news and hybrid warfare can be connected. Fake news can be used to mobilize the public and the authorities against what is labelled as hybrid warfare. Recent aggressive Russian actions can be used as a justification to show that fake news is part of a Russian hybrid warfare against the West. It legitimizes the idea that media is a part of a war; it is a front in a war of existing against an aggressive enemy.

Some key findings of this study support the arguments mentioned above. The specific emphasis on the French law for regulating the content of media channels which is under the influence of foreign states is another point which shows us fake news debate trying to relate with hybrid warfare. This view potentially opens a way for stricter laws against fake news in Europe. We can see that fake news is considered a serious issue by looking at the official reports and inquiries in the UK. Also, specific laws from some of the important European Countries like France and Germany show the importance given to the issue. However, the EU's law of code of practice shows that there some alternative ways to fight against fake news like highlighting the transparency, structural changes, and holistic precautions.

British proposals, French and German acts can be seen as securitization of fake news. Some of the points which causes these negative results from these proposals and laws are forcing social media companies to share information with the governments via sanctions, strict supervision on social media companies, and political advertisements, the French laws which are empowering judges to immediately remove any content which they considered fake news. Also, the very limited time which is given to social media companies to delete the illegal contents, the fact that this law is specifically for the election campaigns, and German laws of 2017 and 2020 which is forcing the social media companies to delete unlawful content and forcing them to give IP addresses of the suspicious users to the police. French government's defense for this law is that the law is sine qua non and it needs to be enacted quickly. French government shows the issue as an emergency and justifies extraordinary measures with the need to protect democracy.

Focusing on the removal of false or fake posts in social media, trying to control the flow of information, which is freely circulating on the internet, trying to interfere with the sensitive process of election campaigns can undermine the fundamental human right of freedom of expression. Trying to find alternative ways for the identification of false content quickly and emphasizing transparency would be the best way that is both helpful for prevention of fake news and for maintaining the freedom of expression.

Harsh sanctions like astronomic fines for tech companies or imprisoning people responsible for the spread of fake news on social media can lead to censorship. French laws against fake news can also lead to censorship in conventional media outlets. Because it gives power to the government to supervise media agencies and allows French national broadcasting service to render some content of them.

Each strict law passed in the name of the fight against fake news can be used as a legitimization for stricter laws in the future. We can see the evidence that several laws are already being used for stricter laws. In British inquiries, the laws in Germany and France are shown as a justification for a stricter British law. Also, the French government defends their strict law against fake news via showing German Network Enforcement Act as a pretext despite the fact that this law does not include any sanctions against fake news itself.

It should be noted that further research for securitization of fake news and the consequences of it is needed. In addition, securitization attempts of fake news in other parts of the world or strict laws against fake news especially in Asia can be investigated. Another possible path extension would be investigating the governance of information as a wider subject rather than focusing only on fake news.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Sahte haber kötü niyetli bir aktör tarafından hedef kitleleri manipüle etmek için oluşturulan haber olarak tanımlanabilir. Sahte haberler özellikle son birkaç yıldır gündemde önemli bir yer edinmekte. Her ne kadar sahte haberlerin yüzyıllar öncesine kadar dayanan bir tarihi olsa da son yıllarda dünya çapında ses getiren tartışmalı seçim sonuçları ve bu sonuçların manipüle edildiğine dair ciddi kanıtlara ulaşılması sahte haberler tartışmalarını gündemin ön sıralarına taşıdı. 2016 Amerikan başkanlık seçimleri ve Brexit referandumu dışarıdan müdahale edildiği iddia edilen bununla ilgili ciddi kanıtlar bulunan en önemli iki seçim. Bu seçimlere müdahalenin en önemli ayaklarından birini sosyal medya oluşturuyor. Sosyal medya aracılığı ile kişilerin neleri takip ettikleri, siyasi düşünceleri, ne tarz haberlerden hoşlandıkları gibi kişisel bilgileri üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılabiliyor. Bu paylaşım sonucunda ilgili kişilere ilgili yalan haberler ulaştırılıyor ve bu sayede görece çok yakın sonuçları olan seçimlerde sonucu değiştirecek kadar büyük bir etkiye ulaşılabiliniyor.

Bu çalışma sahte haberler tartışmasının baskın sonucu olan hemen hemen ne pahasına olursa olsun sahte haberlerin acilen durdurulması gerektiği, sahte haberler ile mücadelenin bir savaşın parçası olarak görünmesi gerektiği fikrine eleştirel bir biçimde yaklaşmaktadır. Çalışmanın temel argümanı sahte haberler tartışmalarının farklı bir noktaya çekildiği ve sahte haberlerin olağanüstü ve varoluşsal bir tehdit olarak gösterilerek güvenlikleştirildiği ve bu güvenlikleştirmenin insan hakları üzerinde negatif etkileri olduğudur. Ayrıca, çalışmada alternatif olarak sahte haberlerle güvenlikleştirilmeksizin nasıl mücadele edilebileceğinin bir örneği de bulunmaktadır.

Sahte haberler tartışmasının güvenlikleştirilmesi ciddi derecede sonuçları olan ve siyasi gündemi meşgul etmeye devam edecek bir konudur. Yapılan öneriler ve çıkarılan katı yasalar sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesinin etki alanını artırmaktadır. Sahte haberlerin çok önemli seçim sonuçlarını değiştirmesi halk kitleleri üzerinde de korkuya sebep olmuştur. Bu korkular Güvenlikleştirme aktörleri tarafından hedefledikleri katı yasaların meşruiyeti için kullanılmaktadır. Sözü edilen katı yasalar Güvenlikleştirme aktörlerine siyasi ya da ekonomik avantajlar sağlasa da tek sonucu bu değildir. Sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesi, temel bir insan hakkı olan ifade özgürlüğünün altının oyulmasına, medyada sansür uygulanmasına neden olmaktadır.

Batı Avrupa ülkelerinin sahte haberlerle mücadele ederken çıkardığı yasalar özellikle dünyanın diğer kesimlerine de örnek olmaktadır. Liberal düşünceyi ve demokrasiyi temsil ettiği savunulabilecek, görece dünyanın en özgürlükçü ülkeleri olan ülkelerde çıkarılan katı yasalar hem bölgedeki diğer ülkelerdeki hem de dünyanın diğer bölgelerindeki ülkelerdeki Güvenlikleştirme aktörlerine çıkaracakları katı yasalar için meşruiyet sağlamaktadır.

Bu çalışma sahte haberlere eleştirel bir şekilde yaklaşmasının yanı sıra sadece olayın kendisini değil sonuçlarını ve insan hakları üzerindeki negatif etkilerini ele alması bakımından literatüre bir katkı sağlamaktır. Ayrıca Batı Avrupa'da sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesine yapılan özel vurgu, bu bölgede çıkarılan katı yasaların yarattığı domino etkisinin etki alanına değinmesi açısından önemli bulunabilir.

Araştırma Soruları

Bu çalışmada üç temel araştırma sorusu ele alınmıştır. Bu sorular: Sahte haberler güvenlikleştirildi mi, eğer güvenlikleştirildiyse nasıl güvenlikleştirildi ve bu güvenlikleştirmenin sonuçları nelerdir sorularıdır. Araştırma sonucunda ulaşılan bulgular sahte haberler tartışmasının güvenlikleştirildiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Kopenhag ekolünün geliştirdiği Güvenlikleştirme formülünün yardımıyla Batı Avrupa'da yapılan öneriler ve açıklamaların ardından çıkarılan katı yasalar buna

kanıt olarak gösterilebilir. Sahte haberlerin nasıl güvenlikleştirildiği sorusunun cevabı ise yine Kopenhag ekolünün formülünde bulunabilir. Sahte haberler söz eylemler aracılığı ile güvenlikleştirilmiştir. Güvenlikleştirme aktörleri halkın 2016 Amerikan başkanlık seçimleri ve Brexit referandumuna dışarıdan müdahale iddiaları sonrası oluşan korkusunu kullanarak sahte haberlerin direkt olarak demokrasinin kendisine bir tehdit olduğunu savunmuşlardır. Bu düşünce birçok aktör tarafından defalarca dile getirilmiş ve kamuoyunun durumu bu şekilde kabullenmesi sağlanmıştır. Bu kabullenme daha sonra çıkarılacak olan katı yasaların meşruiyeti için kullanmıştır. Bu yasaların sonuçlarından en önemlisi ise ifade özgürlüğü kavramının altının oyulmasıdır. Kamuoyunun özellikle sosyal medyada düşüncelerini ifade etmesini kısıtlayan maddeler yasalaşmıştır. Sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesinin bir diğer önemli sonucu ise medyada ve özellikle sosyal medyada sansür ve oto-sansüre yol açmasıdır. İleride açıklanacak maddelerde görülecektir ki, sahte haberlerin önüne geçilip demokrasiyi korumak amacıyla çıkarılan yasalar insanların demokratik haklarına birer tehdit oluşturmaktadır. Son önemli sonuç ise domino etkisidir. Yukarıda da bahsedildiği gibi her katı tavsiye, karar, söz eylem ya da yasa daha katı yasaların önünü açmaktadır.

Sahte Haberler Tartışmasının Arka Planı

Sahte Haberler tartışmasının gündeme gelmesindeki en önemli neden toplumdaki sosyal medya algısının çok büyük ölçüde değişmesidir. Yirmi birinci yüzyılın başlarından itibaren sosyal medya ifade özgürlüğünün korunması ve demokrasinin yayılması açısında oldukça etkili ve pozitif bir platform olarak görülmekteydi. Özellikle ‘Arap Baharı’ sırasında birçok kişi sosyal medyanın önemini vurguladı, hatta bazı yazarlara göre sosyal medya olmasaydı hareket başarıya ulaşmaz ya da hiç başlamazdı. Bunun nedeni olarak sosyal medyanın sansürü imkânsız hale getirmesi ve bilginin anında yayılabilmesini sağlaması gösteriliyordu. Fakat 2016 yılında ABD başkanlık seçimleri ve Brexit referandumuna Cambridge Analytica adında bir veri analiz şirketinin çeşitli yöntemlerle müdahale etmesi ve seçim sonucunu değiştirmesi ile ilgili iddiaların lehine önemli kanıtlar bulunduğunda, toplumun sosyal medya

algısı dramatik bir biçimde değişti. Cambridge Analytica mikro-hedefleme ve benzer izleyiciler adı verilen çeşitli yöntemlerle seçmenleri manipüle etmiştir. Mikro-hedefleme seçmenlerin özel bilgilerinin ele geçirilerek bu özel bilgiler aracılığı ile kararlarının manipüle edilmesini sağlayan bir yöntemdi. Bu yöntem için benzer izleyiciler metodu kilit rol oynamaktadır. Benzer izleyiciler Facebook tarafından üretilen ve üyeleri neleri sevip sevmedikleri üzerinden kategorilere ayırarak onlara sevecekleri ürünlerin reklamlarının ulaşmasını sağlayan bir yöntemdir. Bu yöntem 2016 yılında kadar sadece ticari amaçlarla kullanılıyordu. Cambridge Analytica skandalı ile birlikte bunun siyasi amaçlar için de kullanılabileceği anlaşıldı ve bu kamuoyunda sosyal medyaya karşı büyük bir güvensizlik oluşmasına neden oldu.

Oxford sözlüğü 2016 yılında yılın kelimesi olarak Gerçek-Ötesi (Post-Truth) kavramını seçti. Günümüzde birçok bilim insanı yaşadığımız dönemi gerçek ötesi dönem olarak adlandırmaktadır. Kısaca gerçek ötesi insanların kişisel duygularının ve inançlarının gerçek olgulardan daha önemli haline gelmesi olarak adlandırılabilir. Bir başka değişle insanlar popüler olan fikirleri gerçeklere tercih eder hale gelmişlerdir. Bunun en önemli nedenlerinden biri olarak sahte haberler gösterilmektedir. Sahte haberler kişilerin bir konu hakkındaki düşüncelerini etkilemekte kilit rol oynamaktadır çünkü sahte haberler insanların ilgisini çekebilmek için özellikle ilgi çekici bir biçimde hazırlanmıştır. Doğru haberler genellikle toplum tarafından ‘sıkıcı’ bulunma riskine sahiptir. Sosyal medya üzerinde yapılan birçok deney de sahte haberlerin çok daha fazla kullanıcı tarafından okunup paylaşıldığını kanıtlamaktadır. Sosyal medya da günümüzün gerçek ötesi dönem olarak adlandırılmasında önemli rol oynamaktadır. Filtre balonları sosyal medya kullanıcılarının bir kaynaktan gelen haberleri engellemesine ve hep kendisiyle benzer görüşü savunan kaynaklardan haberleri okumasına neden olmaktadır. Bu durum karşıt fikirler arasındaki kutuplaşmanın artmasını sağlarken, nadiren de olsa karşıt görüşü savunduğu bilinen bir medya kuruluşunun haberiyle karşılaşan kullanıcıların bu haberlere de önyargılı yaklaşmasına neden olmaktadır. Tüm bu nedenlerden dolayı gerçeklerin yerini popüler fikirler almaya devam etmektedir.

Böyle bir atmosferin içinde sahte haberler kavramı ve tartışması gündeme geldi. Sahte haberlerin insanların kararlarını etkilemesi ve özellikle seçim kampanyası dönemlerinde kitleleri etkilemek için dışarıdan müdahale edilerek kullanılması artık sahte haberlerin bir güvenlik meselesi haline gelmesine yol açtı.

Bu gelişmelerin yanında uzun süreden beri güvenlik çalışmalarında önemli bir yeri olan karma savaş kavramı da sahte haberlerin merkezinde olduğu tartışmalarla bütünleşti. Karma savaş bir ülkenin askeri ve askeri olamayan teknikleri bir arada kullanmasına verilen isimdir. Karma savaş, soğuk savaş döneminde daha çok uygulanılan bir taktik olmuştur. İki kutuplu dünyada birer nükleer güç olan süper güçlerin birbiriyle geleneksel yöntemlerle savaşmasının mümkün olmaması nedeniyle Kore ya da Vietnam gibi vekalet savaşlarının yanı sıra Uzay yarışından diplomasiye kadar birçok askeri olmayan yöntem iki gücün arasındaki soğuk savaşta kullanılmıştır. Soğuk savaş sonrası dönemde önemini kaybetmeye başlar gibi olsa da karma savaş Putin hükümetinin Gürcistan (2008) ya da Kırım (2014) gibi bölgelerdeki saldırgan aksiyonlarının ardından yeniden gündeme gelmiştir. Putin hükümeti Refleksif kontrol yöntemini kullanarak mücadele ettiği ülkelerdeki kitleleri etkilemeye çalışmayı denemiştir. Refleksif kontrol hedeflenen aktör ya da aktörlerin daha önceden belirlenen bir fikri benimsemesi ve hedeflenen eylemi gerçekleştirmesi için manipüle edilmesidir. Birçok politikacı, bilim insanı hatta bazı resmi raporlar Rusya'nın batıya karşı açmış olduğu karma savaşın bir parçası olarak refleksif kontrol yöntemini sosyal medya ve Cambridge Analytica şirketi aracılığıyla 2016 ABD başkanlık seçimleri ve Brexit referandumunda seçmenlerin kararlarını etkilemek için kullandığını iddia etmektedir. Yalnızca belli aktörlerin siyasi çıkar için para karşılığında illegal şirketleri seçmenlerin kararlarını etkilemesi için kullanması ile Rusya'nın batı medeniyetine açtığı karma savaşın bir cephesi olarak gördüğü medyanın batı medeniyetinin temellerini oluşturan demokrasisini etkilemek ve onu tehdit etmek için kullanması arasında önemli farklar vardır. Sahte haberler tartışmalarını karma savaş kavramı ile birleştirmek ve bunu demokrasiye doğrudan tehdit olarak göstermek durumun suiistimal edilmesinin önünü açmaktadır. Bu

çalışmada değinilen bir zirvede NATO ve AB yetkilileri açık olarak sahte haberlerle mücadelenin Rusya'ya karşı verilen karma savaşın medya cephesi açısından hayati öneme sahip olduğu vurgulanmaktadır.

Sosyal medyanın yalan haberlerin yayılmasının en önemli sorumlusu olarak gösterilmesi, yalan haberlerin ise gerçek ötesi dönemde yabancı ülkelerin batı medeniyetinin iç işlerine karışıp demokrasilerine müdahale ettiğinin öne sürülmesi ve 2016 yılında yaşanan Cambridge Analytica skandalı, sosyal medya ve yalan haberler kavramlarının birer korku objesi ve dolayısıyla güvenlik meselesi haline gelmesine yol açmıştır.

Araştırma Yöntemi

Güvenlikleştirme kavramı Kopenhag ekolü tarafından oluşturulmuştur. Kopenhag ekolünün Güvenlikleştirme kavramını oluşturmasındaki en önemli neden klasik güvenlik kavramanı 'dar' bulmalarıdır. Kopenhag ekolüne göre güvenlik kavramı sadece askeri bir kavram olamayacak kadar derin bir kavramdır. Güvenlik kavramının pragmatik yönünün bilim insanları tarafından göz ardı edildiğini savunurlar. Kopenhag ekolüne göre Güvenlikleştirme gerçekte güvenlik sorunu olmayan bir durumun, acilen çözülmesi gereken hayati bir sorun olarak gösterilip normal siyaset sınırları içerisinden çıkarılmasıdır. Güvenlikleştirme söz eylemler sayesinde gerçekleştirilir. Güvenlikleştirme aktörü söz eylemleri kullanarak hedef kitleyi etkilemeye çalışır. Güvenlikleştirme aktörü bir gönderge nesnesi belirler. Gönderge nesnesi, toplumun neredeyse tamamı tarafından hayati bir nesne olarak görülen nesnelerdir. Devlet, kimlik ya da demokrasi en çok kullanılan gönderge nesneleridir. Gönderge nesnesinin tehdit altında olduğunu söz eylemlerle hedef kitleye kabul ettiren Güvenlikleştirme aktörleri, bu olağanüstü sorunun ancak ve ancak olağanüstü yöntemlerle çözülebileceğini savunur. Ayrıca Güvenlikleştirme aktörleri bu yöntemlerin acil olarak uygulanması gerektiğine özel bir vurgu yapar. Normal siyaset ikliminde kitlelerin büyük ihtimalle kabul etmeyeceği önlemler ve

yasalar bu sayede hedef kitleye kabul ettirilmiş olur. Bu kabullenişi genellikle katı yasalar izler. Bu katı yasalar insan haklarının altının oyulmasına ve hatta ihlaline kadar varacak bir yolun kapısını açmış olur.

Kopenhag ekolü Güvenlikleştirme aktörlerinin nasıl toplumun haklarını ve ödevlerini dönüştürebildiğine odaklanmıştır. Bunun için yukarıda değindiğim spesifik formülü hazırlamışlardır. Bu teoriye söz eylem teorisi adı verilir. Söz eylem teorisi kompleks siyasi manipülasyonların tespit edilmesini kolaylaştırmakla beraber güvenlikleştirmenin vaka çalışmaları aracılığıyla tespit edilmesini sağlamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı da sahte haberler tartışmasının güvenlikleştirildiğini tespit etmek ve eğer güvenlikleştirildiyse bunun nasıl yapıldığını ve bu güvenlikleştirmenin insan hakları üzerinde ne gibi etkileri olduğunu araştırmak olduğundan, yukarıda gösterilen özellikleri nedeniyle Kopenhag ekolünün yöntemi güvenlikleştirmenin tespit edilmesinde kullanılan yöntem olarak belirlendi.

Sonuçlar ve Bulgular

Bu çalışmada Batı Avrupa'dan üç ülke vaka çalışması için kullanılmıştır. Bu ülkeler: Birleşik Krallık, Fransa ve Almanya olarak belirlenmiştir. Birleşik krallığın seçilme nedenleri arasında olayların merkezinde olan Cambridge Analytica şirketinin bir İngiliz şirketi olması ve Birleşik Krallık hükümetinin sahte haberlerle ilgili en kapsamlı incelemelerden birini gerçekleştirmesi vardır. Fransa ve Almanya ise sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında çıkardıkları yasalar nedeniyle seçilmiştir. Özellikle Endonezya, Malezya ve Singapur gibi ülkeler sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında çok daha katı yasalar çıkarmasına rağmen Batı Avrupa'ya yoğunlaşılmasının nedeni bu ülkelerin görece Dünya'daki en demokratik, liberal ve özgür düşünceyi savunan ülkeler olmasıdır. Bu ülkeler belki de Dünya'da bazı temel insan haklarının altını oyan katı yasalar çıkarması beklenen en son ülkeler olabilir. Bu ülkelerde çıkarılan yasalar Dünya'nın diğer bölgelerindeki ülkelerin çıkaracakları katı yasalara da meşruiyet kazandırmaktadır.

Birleşik krallık hükümet düzeyinde sahte haberlerle ilgili kapsamlı bir araştırma yürüttü. Birleşik Krallık Avam Kamarası Dijital, Kültür, Medya ve Spor Komitesi (Bundan sonra Komite olarak anılacaktır) bu araştırmanın sonucunda bilgilendirici bir resmi rapor yayınlamıştır. Bu raporda Cambridge Analytica skandalının nasıl olduğu ile ilgili geniş bilgilere ve kanıtlara yer verilmiştir. Kısaca değinmek gerekirse Komite, Rus kaynaklı Russia Today (RT) ve Sputnik gibi haber kuruluşlarının Brexit referandumu seçim kampanyası sırasında etkili olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Komite bu haber kuruluşları ve Cambridge Analytica skandalı arasında bağlantılar kurmuştur. Komite ayrıca Facebook'un kullanıcılarının kişisel bilgilerinin korunmasına daha çok özen göstermesi durumunda bu skandalın yaşanmayacağını belirterek sosyal medya şirketlerini skandaldan sorumlu tutmuştur. Bu sonuçtan yola çıkarak Komite sosyal medya şirketlerine kalıcı olarak konu ile ilgili hukuki sorumluluk yüklenmesini tavsiye etmiştir. Komite ayrıç raporunda bağımsız bir düzenleyicinin sosyal medya şirketlerinden kullanıcıların bilgilerini toplaması ve bu bilgileri değerlendirmesi gerekliliğini vurgulamıştır. Komite göre bu kuruluş gerekli gördüğü takdirde zararlı bulduğu içeriklerin bildirilmesini ve hatta kaldırılmasını sosyal medya şirketlerinden talep edebilmelidir. Komite'nin kararına göre sosyal medya şirketleri bu yükümlülükleri yerine getirmediği takdirde büyük miktarda para cezalarıyla cezalandırılmalıdır. Bu rapordan da anlaşılacağı üzere sosyal medya şirketleri için beklenmedik ve zor bir dönem başlamaktadır.

Komite'nin raporuna göre Birleşik Krallık Hükümeti'nin sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında dile getirdiği öneriler arasında; vatandaşları konu ile ilgili bilgilendirme, dijital okur yazarlığı özendirme, siber güvenlik önlemleri alma gibi görece zararsız ve pozitif maddelerin yanı sıra sosyal medya şirketlerini hükümetle bilgi paylaşmaya zorlama ve bunu yapmamaları takdirde büyük miktarda para cezaları ile cezalandırma, seçim kampanyaları döneminde sosyal medya sitelerinde yayınlanan siyasi reklamların bağımsız bir kuruluş tarafından denetlenmesi gibi tartışmalı ve katı maddeler de yer almaktadır. Bu katı maddeler ilerleyen bölümlerde değinilecek negatif sonuçların önünü açmaktadır.

Fransa sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında resmi olarak ilk yasayı çıkartan Batı Avrupa ülkesi oldu. 2018 yılında çıkında Seçim Kanununu Değiştiren Hükümler (Provisions Amending The Electoral Code) isimli kanun ile resmi olarak sahte haberler bir güvenlik meselesi haline gelmiş oldu. Bu kanun ülkedeki hakimlere tespit ettikleri sahte haber içeren içerikleri silme yetkisi veriyor. Kanun ayrıca sosyal medya şirketlerinin bulunan sahte haberleri 48 saat içinde kalıcı olarak silmesini öngörüyor. Kanunda bu durumun özellikle seçim kampanyaları döneminde işletileceği vurgulanıyor. Kanunda ayrıca Fransa'nın devlete bağlı resmi yayın kuruluşu olan Fransa Ulusal Yayın Servisi'ne (FT) ülkede bulunan tüm yayın kuruluşlarını denetleme yetkisi veriliyor. Kanunda bu denetlemenin özellikle ülkede yayın yapan dış kaynaklı yayın kuruluşları ile yabancı ülkelerin etkisi altında kalan yerel yayın kuruluşları için olduğu vurgulanıyor. Bu kanunda belirtilen maddelere uymayan yayın kuruluşlarını ve şahısları ciddi yaptırımlar bekliyor. 1 yıl hapis cezası ve 75.000 Euro para cezası kanunda belirlenen yaptırımlar arasında yer alıyor.

Bu kanunun amacı seçim kampanyalarına herhangi bir dış müdahaleyi engellemek ve ülkedeki demokrasiyi korumak olarak belirlenmiş fakat demokrasiyi korumak için çıkarılan bu kanun ironik olarak demokrasiye zarar verecek maddeler içeriyor. Yukarıda sayılan maddeler siyasi partilerin seçim kampanyalarını kısıtlayıcı bir niteliğe sahip. Ayrıca bu kanun medya kuruluşlarının da çalışma alanını kısıtlama potansiyeline sahip. Sosyal medya şirketlerinin 'zararlı' içerikleri 48 saat gibi kısa bir zaman içinde silmeye zorlanması ve denetleyici kişi ve kurumlarda muhtemel yozlaşma ülkedeki demokrasiye ve ifade özgürlüğüne zarar verici konumdadır.

Sahte haberler problemi Fransız yetkililer tarafından hayati bir sorun olarak gösterilmiş ve bu sorunun demokrasiyi tehdit ettiği, ülkedeki demokrasinin korunabilmesi için acil çözümlere ihtiyaç olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Fransız hükümeti resmî açıklamasında bu kanunun amacının demokrasiyi dış müdahalelerden korumak olduğunu söylerken, Başkan Macron bu kanunun güvenli bir internet için olmazsa olmaz olduğunu belirtti.

Sahte haberlerle mücadele ederken durumu hayati önem arz eden bir durum olarak göstermek, demokrasiye bir tehdit olarak betimlemek ya da yabancı bir ülkeye karşı

verilen karma savaşın bir cephesi olarak göstermek her türlü olağanüstü tedbirin alınmasını meşrulaştırmaktadır. Bu durum sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesinin önünü açmış ve birçok negatif sonuca neden olmuştur.

Fransız Hükümeti burada Güvenlikleştirme aktörü olarak görülebilir. Hükümet bu kanunun demokrasi için vazgeçilmez olduğu ve mutlaka seçim kampanyası döneminde uygulanması gerektiği gibi çeşitli söz eylemler kullanmıştır. Gönderge nesnesi olarak seçilen kavramlar ise seçimler ve demokrasi olmuştur. Bu kanunda belirtilen hakimlerin sahte haber içeriklerini anında silebilmesi, sosyal medya şirketlerinin 48 saat içinde kendilerine bildirilen ya da tespit ettikleri sahte haber içeren içerikleri tamamen silmesi ve Fransız Ulusal Yayın Kuruluşunun ülkede haber yapan tüm kuruluşları denetleyebilmesi, yabancı ülkelerden etkilenen kuruluşlar şeklinde özel bir vurgunun yapılması ve bu kanuna uymayanlara 1 yıl hapis cezası ve yüklü para cezası gibi yaptırımların uygulanması, normal bir zamanda kabul edilemeyecek olağanüstü önlemler olarak gösterilebilir. Fransız Hükümeti ayrıca birçok kez bu kanunun acilen çıkarılması gerektiğini vurgulamıştır. Birçok tepki gelse de hedef kitle ciddi olarak bu konu üzerinden hükümeti eleştirmedi çünkü hükümet sahte haberleri Güvenlikleştirme konusunda başarılı oldu. Yasa kalıcı olarak yürürlüğe girdiği için kalıcı değişimlere neden oldu. Son olarak bu kanun ifade özgürlüğüne zarar verdiği gibi sansüre ve domino etkisine de neden oldu.

Görüldüğü üzere Fransız Hükümeti'nin 2018 yılında yürürlüğe soktuğu seçim kanununu değiştiren hükümler yasası Kopenhag ekolünün ortaya koyduğu formülün her maddesinin gerçekleştiği açık ve başarılı bir Güvenlikleştirme örneğidir. Güvenlikleştirme aktörleri söz eylemleri kullanarak ve etkili gönderge nesneleri belirleyerek, olağanüstü önlemlerin hayata geçmesini sağlamış ve acil harekete geçme çağrısı yapılmış, normal şartlarda bu kanunlara çok daha büyük bir şekilde tepki göstermesi beklenen Fransız halkı (hedef kitle) göreceli olarak düşük yoğunluklu bir tepki göstermiş, kanun kalıcı hale gelmiş ve insan haklarının altını oyan zararlı sonuçları olmuştur.

Almanya sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında katı yasalar çıkaran bir başka Batı Avrupa ülkesi olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Almanya 2017 yılında çıkardığı Sosyal

Ağlara Yaptırım (Network Enforcement Act) ile sosyal medya şirketlerine yayınlanmasından itibaren 48 saat içinde sahte haberler ve nefret söylemi içeren paylaşımların tespit edilip silinmesi sorumluluğunu yüklemiştir. Kanuna göre bunun yapılmaması halinde sosyal medya şirketleri 53.000 Euro ceza ödemekle yükümlüdür.

Sosyal medya şirketlerini sahte haberlerin tespiti için yetkilendirmek ve onlara çok kısa bir zaman tanımak sosyal medya şirketlerinin şüpheli gördükleri her içeriği detaylı bir kontrolden geçirmeden hızlı bir şekilde silmesine neden olacaktır. Açıkça görülüyor ki bu durum ifade ve haber alma özgürlüğünün ihlalidir ve sansüre ya da oto-sansüre yol açmaktadır. Sosyal medya şirketlerinin öncülüğü doğal olarak şirketlerinin maddi durumu olacağından ve kısıtlı bir zamana sahip olduklarından dolayı birçok zararsız içerik de bu şekilde silinmiş olacaktır. Almanya ayrıca 2020 yılında bu kanunun üzerine bir düzenleme daha çıkardı. Bu düzenlemeyle sosyal medya şirketleri şüpheli görülen bazı kullanıcılarının IP adreslerini Alman Federal Polisi ile paylaşmak zorunda bırakılmıştır. Almanya'da çıkarılan bu yasalar devlet yetkilileri tarafından Fransa'dakine benzer bir biçimde savunulmuştur.

Birleşik Krallık Hükümeti'nin önerileri ile Fransa ve Almanya'da sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında çıkarılan katı yasalar, sahte haberler tartışmalarının güvenlikleştirilmesinin bir yansımasıdır. Bu kanunlar temel olarak üç önemli olumsuz sonuca neden olmuştur. Bunlar ifade özgürlüğü kavramının altının oyulması, sansür ve domino etkisidir.

Sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesinin en önemli sonuçlarından biri ifade özgürlüğü kavramının altının oyulmasıdır. Yukarıda belirtilen nedenlerle insanlar okudukları haberleri paylaşmaktan ya da sosyal medyada düşüncelerini belirtmekten çekinir hale gelmektedirler. Sosyal medya şirketleri de zararlı ya da zararsız birçok içeriği kanunların dayatması sonucu silmek zorunda bırakılmıştır. Seçim kampanyası dönemine yapılan vurgu da seçmenlerin özgürce karar vermesinin önüne geçmektedir.

Fransa'nın sahte haberle mücadele kapsamında çıkardığı yasa birçok kesim tarafından Fransız Hükümeti'nin Fransız medyasının kontrolünü ele geçirmesi olarak görüldü. Medya kuruluşlarına sıkı denetlemeler ve sosyal medya şirketlerine ağır yükümlülükler getiren Fransız ve Alman kanunları sansüre ve oto-sansüre neden olabilecek niteliktedir.

Son olarak sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında Batı Avrupa ülkeleri tarafından yapılan katı öneriler ve çıkarılan katı yasalar domino etkisine neden olmaktadır. Birleşik Krallık Avam Kamarası Dijital Kültür Medya ve Spor Komitesi, Fransız ve Alman Hükümetleri önerdikleri tedbirler ve çıkardıkları yasaları meşrulaştırmak için birbirlerinin çıkardığı yasalara atıfta bulunmuş ve bu ülkeler bu yasaları çıkarırken kendi ülkelerinin hiçbir şey yapmadan duramayacaklarını belirtmiştir. Ayrıca Dünya'nın diğer yerlerindeki birçok ülke de demokratik Batı Avrupa ülkelerinde çıkarılan bu kanunları kendi çıkaracakları daha katı kanunların meşruiyeti için kullanmıştır. Dolayısıyla sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında çıkarılan her katı kanun daha katı kanunlara neden olmaktadır ve bu durum domino etkisi olarak adlandırılabilir.

İleri Çalışmalar

Sahte haberler ile ilgili eleştirel yaklaşım geliştiren önemli çalışmalar olsa da genellikle sahte haberlerin nasıl durdurulacağı ile ilgilenen ve bunun insan hakları üzerindeki potansiyel etkilerine değinmeyen araştırmalar literatürde daha baskın olarak yer almaktadır. Bu nedenle sahte haberlerin güvenlikleştirilmesi ile ilgili daha geniş kapsamlı araştırılmalar yapılmalıdır. Ayrıca özellikle Güney Doğu Asya gibi bölgelerde sahte haberlerle mücadele kapsamında çıkarılan katı yasaların da incelenmesi faydalı olabilir. Son olarak yalnızca sahte haberlerin değil, genel olarak bilginin denetimi ve güvenlikleştirilmesi konusunda da araştırmalar yapılabilir.

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