

FROM A SCHMITTIAN PERSPECTIVE, IDEOLOGICAL DIVISIONS AND THE STATE'S EFFORTS TO HOMOGENIZE SOCIETY IN 20TH CENTURY TÜRKİYE

Samet KOCAMAN

Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University

Graduate School of Social Sciences

Master Thesis, June 2026

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Celal Oral ÖZDEMİR

ABSTRACT

This study examines the elements excluded by the state throughout the political history of the Republic of Türkiye in the 20th century as “internal enemies”, drawing on Carl Schmitt’s concept of the political, and analyzes the state's efforts to create a homogeneous society. The theoretical framework of the study is primarily based on Schmitt’s concepts of the political and the internal enemy, while also incorporating Giorgio Agamben’s theory of Homo Sacer, Ernesto Laclau’s theory of populism, Jacques Rancière’s theory of dissensus, and Chantal Mouffe’s theory of agonistic politics. In the second chapter, Islamism, the Kurdish political movement, Alevism, and communism are examined as the principal categories of Türkiye’s internal enemies. The chapter analyzes why and how these four groups were othered by the state and classified as internal enemies in the Schmittian sense during the period under examination. The third chapter identifies Türkiye’s principal external enemies and examines the country's foreign policy within this framework. Following the devastating consequences of the Second World War, states generally sought to avoid total war and large-scale destruction by resolving international crises through peaceful means. Türkiye likewise pursued peaceful methods in addressing foreign policy disputes. Nevertheless, domestic political and ideological groups continued to exploit foreign policy crises involving Türkiye in order to reinforce processes of othering within the country and sustain antagonistic politics. In this context, Turkish foreign policy not only influenced the country's domestic political landscape but also strengthened friend–enemy distinctions at the societal level.

Keywords: Carl Schmitt, Social Homogenization, The Internal Enemy, Conflict, Türkiye.