

The Socio-Political Analysis of The July 15 Coup Declaration

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Abstract

Turkey, which is a democratic state of law based on separation of powers, has been subjected to different military interventions directly or indirectly throughout the history of democracy and this has deeply affected the political process. The last of these military interventions took place on 15 July 2016. This coup attempt is different in many respects from other military interventions. However, it reminds me of the 27 May 1960 coup with some aspects. Coup declaration were written and shared with the public during the military intervention process. Coup declarations are texts prepared carefully because they are the first messages given to the society. This messages, given to the society, encloses statements about yesterday, today and tomorrow. The coup declarations, which has become a tradition as in every military intervention, and which contains the reason, purpose and messages of the coup, has been read from TRT screens. The method of this study is to make a socio-political reading on the coup declaration. In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the efforts of the coupists to get public support or to convince society from a sociological and political point of view. Thus, the July 15 coup attempt is evaluated from a different perspective

Keywords: July 15, Coup, Guardianship, Declaration, Democracy

15 Temmuz Darbe Bildirisinin Sosyo-Politik Analizi

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Öz

Kuvvetler ayrılığına dayalı demokratik bir hukuk devleti olan Türkiye, demokrasi tarihi boyunca doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak farklı askeri müdahalelere maruz kalmış ve bu durum siyasal süreci derinden etkilemiştir. Askeri müdahalelerin sonuncusu ise 15 Temmuz 2016 yılında yaşanmıştır. Bu darbe girişimi, diğer askeri müdahalelerden bir çok açıdan farklı olmakla beraber bazı yönleriyle 27 Mayıs 1960 darbesini hatırlatmaktadır. Askeri müdahale sürecinde darbe bildirileri kaleme alınmış ve kamuoyu ile paylaşılmıştır. Darbe bildirileri topluma verilen ilk mesajlar olması sebebiyle özenle hazırlanan ve düne, bugüne ve yarına dair topluma açıklamalarda bulunan metinlerdir. Her askeri müdahalede olduğu gibi bu darbe girişiminde de gelenek haline gelen ve darbenin gerekçesi, amacı ve mesajlarını içeren darbe bildirisi, TRT ekranlarından okunmuştur. Bu çalışmada yöntem olarak darbe bildirisi üzerinden sosyo-politik bir okuma yapılmaktadır. Çalışmada, bildiri metni üzerinden hareketle, darbecilerin kamuoyu desteğini almak veya toplumu ikna etmeye yönelik çabalarını sosyolojik ve siyasal açıdan değerlendirmek amaçlanmaktadır. Böylelikle, 15 Temmuz darbe girişimi farklı açıdan değerlendirilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: 15 Temmuz, Darbe, Vesayet, Bildiri, Demokrasi

Introduction

Politics is the process of regulating and managing state affairs. Meeting social requests and expectations and solving conflicts peacefully are among the most important objectives of politics. It is a requirement in democracies to base decisions and policies on people, and accept people's preferences as a reference point, because public support is needed to come to power and to stay in power. From this aspect, it is against the spirit of democracy for the elected representatives, the parliament where they work and the government to abandon this approach. Besides, in democracies it is not thinkable that such institutions as the media, business world, the judiciary, nongovernmental organizations, and especially the armed forces, whose responsibilities and authorities are clearly specified, to define and establish a tutelage mechanism on democracy. With the condition of adherence to democratic values, making an influence on the government and affecting the decision to be made can be examined in the framework of political participation. However, it should not be disregarded that the fine line between making the decision and making an influence on the decision causes the concept of tutelage.

There have been military tutelage attempts at different times and in different forms in the Turkish political history. The tradition of tutelage in the Turkish Republic started with the coup d'état on May 27, 1960, and exercised with the activities on March 12, 1971; September 12, 1980; February 28, 1997; April 27, 2007 and lastly July 15, 2016. On some of those dates, the army directly took over the control of the country, while it aimed at dominating the political power on the others. The army became successful in almost all of the attempts except for the e-memorandum in 2007 and the coup attempt on July 15. Although what was aimed at did not materialize, we need to state that both the e-memorandum and July 15 corroded democratic values. Besides, it has been observed that the attempt had significant impacts at all levels of the state, from the political power to the people from political, legal and socio-psychological aspects. In this particular study, an analysis of July 15 will be made over the coup statement. The text of the statement will be assessed from political and sociological aspects. The study consists of two parts. The coup attempt will be

analyzed chronologically in the first part, and the text of the statement in the second.

Chronological Order Of The Coup Attempt Of July 15

July 15, 2016 is a significant point in the Turkish political history. On this date, a group of soldiers connected with the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETO), nested in the TAF attempted to take over the political power. The initiative did not take place in the chain of command, and more importantly, it was not declared by whom it was conducted. It was countered by the political power and the people on streets, and ultimately made unsuccessful. Due to the communication technology, the coup attempt was followed live by the people and all the processes were recorded. Chronologically, the Anadolu News Agency included what took place that day in its study titled "FETO Coup Attempt Minute-by-Minute." The attempt, which began at 10.00 p.m., was overthrown with all its aspects at 10.02 p.m. on July 16. The attempt was factually concluded with the end of the operation made against the FETO members in Akıncı 4th Main Jet Base Command at this hour. The following developments were observed in the process (AA, 2016, s.6-25):

As a beginning, some shots were heard in the Turkish General Staff at 10.00 p.m. and a helicopter commenced fire on people who were out. At approximately the same time, the Bosphorus and Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridges in Istanbul were closed to traffic by a group of coup plotter soldiers. Similarly, the headquarters of the Turkish General Staff and the building of the Turkish Radio and Television Association (TRT) were seized. In the face of those developments, a coordination center under the chairmanship of the Undersecretary of the Prime Ministry was formed at Çankaya Palace to evaluate the extraordinary situation. Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım went live first on NTV at 11.05 p.m. and then on A Haber, and stated that it was a coup attempt. He further continued: "This attempt will not be allowed. Those who are responsible will heavily pay its price. An attempt of a group of soldiers is in question." The Police Special Operation Department in Gölbaşı, Ankara was hit by the plotters at 11.24 p.m. The information about Chief of General Staff Hulusi Akar's being taken hostage reached at 11.30 p.m. At midnight the following commentary was

made by security sources: "The military attempt is tried to be made by a group of officers in the Army, who are members of the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization/Parallel State Structuring (FETO/PDY)." President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan left Marmaris for Istanbul at 00.01 a.m. An attack was made against the building of the National Intelligence Service (MIT) at 00.09 a.m., and the coup statement was read on TRT at 00.13 a.m. after its building was stormed. At the same minutes, the Presidential sources declared the statement pirate and TURKSAT and TRT went off the air. After those developments, President Erdoğan went live on CNN Turk TV, reacted against the military attempt and invited people on to the streets. The President stated: *"This structure, even if they are a group of minority in the Military Forces or in other institutions of ours, they will get the required response for their attempt of insurrection against the national will, whatever the law, our laws and the Constitution require."* Upon the request of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, *sela's* for union of the people were called in 81 provinces at 00.30 a.m. At that time, the Public Prosecutor's Office in Küçükçekmece, Istanbul initiated an investigation against those who participated in the coup. At 00.57 a.m. an attack took place against the TRT and the TURKSAT which had gone off the air. At 01.00 a.m. the headquarters of the Ankara Police Department was bombed by the plotters, and at the same time Ministry of National Defense made the following statement: *"This is a coup attempt of a junta within the TAF."* At 01.30 Çankaya Palace was fired at, and this attack was rebuffed. The coordination center which had been formed in this building decided that the National Assembly would remain open in the process. Immediately afterwards, the general assembly hall of the Turkish Grand National Assembly was opened with the participation of some parliament members. At 02.30 a.m. it was announced that the Police Special Operation Department in Gölbaşı was hit. After that time, it was on the media that a helicopter of the plotters was downed, that the plotters who were trying to seize the TRT were neutralized, and those who were trying to enter the Presidential Palace were arrested. At 02.42 the National Assembly was hit with a bomb by the plotters. Approximately 7 minutes later a second bomb was thrown at the assembly. At 00.55 a.m. Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım went live on NTV for the second time and stated that: *"Those who pepper out institutions with bullets and bombs from the jets in the air are like members and extensions of this terrorist organization. This kind of*

behavior is in no way acceptable for our officers or soldiers serving under the glorious flag of the armed forces.” At that moment, the TRT building was taken back from the plotters and went on to its normal broadcast stream, and the Prime Minister declared that all the planes and helicopters hovering over Ankara would be shot with missiles. At 03.20 a.m. President Erdoğan’s plane landed at Atatürk Airport. At 04.00 Public Prosecutor’s Office of Ankara made decision about the arrest of the members of the Peace at Home Council. Between this time and 06.30 a.m. the following developments took place: Prime Minister Yıldırım declared on his Twitter account that a general who was involved in the coup was killed, and 130 soldiers, colonels among them, were arrested. It was informed that the control over the Police Special Operations unit in Gölbaşı was provided, and 42 people were killed during the attack. The helicopter which had bombed TURKSAT was downed. The soldiers who had kept the Bosphorus Bridge under their control surrendered at 06.30. 13 minutes later two bombs were thrown by the plotters in the vicinity of the Presidential Palace. At 06.52 a.m. First Army Commander General Ümit Dündar was assigned as Acting Chief of General Staff. At 07.10 a.m. the Ministry of Interior made public that 366 FETO members were arrested. It was informed that Chief of Staff Hulusi Akar, who had been taken hostage, arrived at Çankaya Palace at 08.32 a.m. At 08.36 the General Commandership of Gendarmerie was reclaimed from the plotters by Police Special Operations officers, and the FETO member soldiers were neutralized. At 12.57 p.m. on July 16 Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım, along with the Minister of Interior and the Chief of General Staff appeared before the cameras and stated that: *“The coup attempt has been quashed. We have so far had a total of 161 martyrs and 1,440 injured citizens. 2,839 soldiers at different ranks who participated in this mean attempt have been arrested. There are high rank soldiers among them.”* Ultimately, 251 people were martyred and 2,193 people were veteranized during the coup attempt. Thousands of people were fired from their jobs and thousand others were arrested.

Thinking over the Coup Attempt of 15 July!

The July 15 coup attempt was quashed with the strong resistance of the Turkish people. This coup attempt has some different characteristics than

the previous coups. Aiming of tanks at people and using F-16 fighter jets and helicopters were the first instances in the coup tradition. Another characteristic was that the identifications of those who conducted the coup attempt were not publicized, and they attempted the coup with a body called "Peace at Home Council" whose members were unknown. Even today, a command chain in the traditional sense has not been unearthed. The most important reason for it is that civilians took charge of the coup. Thirdly, the country's legitimate democratic institutions, administrative and security units, and people were directly targeted. In the attacks, two institutions, the Grand National Assembly and the Presidential Palace, which house elected representatives of the country, were hit (Alkan, 2016, p.253-255). That the coup was commanded by a civil organization can also be added to those characteristics. The July 15 coup attempt was failed due primarily to the resistance of the Turkish people, the decisive and courageous stance of President Erdoğan, and the consensus over the parties. The Turkish media passed the test successfully during the coup. The Public learned the 1960 coup and 1971 memorandum from the newspaper and radio. In addition to these, television was added in the 1980 coup. After 36 years, the social movements changed and the public encountered the first information in twitter about the coup of July 15, 2016. This situation reveals the importance of social media in today's mass communication (Sungur, 2017, p.598). Chinese saying "In order to defeat the invaders, communication must be interrupted." was confirmed once again on the day of the coup. The army, leading the other coup processes from TRT, was desperate in the face of the different media sources. The army's occupation of the TRT has shown that it has not understood the change and transformation in the media in recent years. In fact, it was revealed that the coup plotters, who think and plan all kinds of details to take over the power, did not evaluate the media and communication sources sufficiently. This fact is one of the most important factors in the failure of the coup (Devran and Özcan, 2016, p.72). Social media's similar role have been observed in 2009 events in Iran (Castells, 2015), beginning of the Tunisian Arab Spring, Egypt at Mubarak's overthrow (Lim, 2012), the Gezi Park Movement in Turkey (Bayhan, 2014).

According to Goodpaster and Huntington (1977), in a democratic system, a relationship in which the army threatens the politics and establishes

a control over the political system is closely related to how armed forces are positioned. If the army is entitled an authority to protect the political system, its interference with the politics is the manifestation of its existential objective. This type of state where the military has an autonomous situation in the political system, closely observes political and social developments, has a kind of responsibility of supervision, and intervenes in the system when it deems necessary, is defined as “praetorian state” (Huntington, 1973, p.192-193). As specified above, when we look into the initiatives of military interventions into politics, it is a fact that the TAF accepted article 35 of TAF Internal Service Code as reference. The justification “protection of the republic/regime by the TAF” in almost every coup statement refers to this fact.

The process leading to the coup was in particular after the referendum on 12 September 2010. In this process, it has been noted that the images of the private lives of some important political figures are served. There have been administrative changes in political parties. Illegal interceptions and Oslo talks between the MIT and PKK administrators were served to the public. In addition to this, Blue Marmara raid and MIT Undersecretary Hakan Fidan's statement was important events of the process. In addition, the activities of the shutdown of the Gezi park and the private teaching institutions and once for the operations of the 17-25 December carried the step-by-step process to July 15. This coup attempt was the last link of aiming to remove to Erdogan from the power (Genç, 2017, p.23; Demir and Çağlar, 2017, p.9-10). However, the target of the July 15 coup attempt is not only the government but also the regime itself (Akıncı, 2018, p.112). In this respect, it should be considered as an invasion attempt.

According to Alkan (2016, p.260-266), the coup attempt of July 15 has four parameters, which are tradition of recruitment, state-civil society relations, messianic paradigm and institutionalization skills. First of all, the tradition of recruitment, which exists also in the Turkish state tradition, was handled again with a conservative approach by the FETO. The bureaucratic and military structures were formed with the recruitment system connected to the central authority, especially after Fatih's term. When the system, which empowers the political center in its center-periphery approach, deteriorated after mid-18th century, the new personnel of the

system, which depended on non-Muslim elements, were selected from local elements. The founding cadre of the Turkish Republic consisted of those military elites who had come from this reform process and had influence over the civil bureaucracy. This military and civil bureaucracy assumed an important role in the modernization of Turkey. The Enderun in the traditional recruitment was replaced with boarding schools and foreign education in the modern recruitment system. Success of the FETO in this matter revealed its intention to set up a new system with the people "recruited" in the social background, and then the coup attempt. As the second parameter, the breaking experienced in the state-civil society relations should be analyzed. The imposition generated by centralization and the formal ideology appears as an element that threatens the field of civil society. As a part of civil society, religious groups had the concern of not being able to sustain their existence, which led them to seek existence in the political and bureaucratic realm with a secret agenda which they followed underground. The secret infiltration of the FETO into the civil service, the military and the judiciary can be evaluated from this aspect. Thirdly, the messianic paradigm constitutes the belief dimension of true adherence to the leader of the FETO. That he drew attention to it in some of his speeches and he was introduced as the awaited savior in some organizational meetings have strengthened this belief. Lastly, the infiltration into state institutions and being camouflaged in those institutions, briefly the skill of institutionalization, have taken the FETO to the level where it is able to attempt the coup.

Why did the Coup Fail?

Why did the July 15 coup attempt fail? There are a number of answers to this question, which are;

- The coup was exposed and brought forward than the scheduled time (03.00 a.m.),
- The Turkish nation went out and resisted the coup,
- The political power (primarily President Erdoğan), political institutions (the Grand National Assembly, the Presidential Palace and Çankaya Palace) and administrative institutions resisted the coup.
- Media plurivocality and its stance against the coup,

- The TAF did not support the coup as an institution, and the force commanders remained outside the coup,
- The coup remained local and did not spread over the country,
- The people learned from the start that the coup was being made by junta supporters connected to the FETO,
- The existing anger against the FETO in public spilled over to streets,
- There were no political and social grounds for a coup,
- The plotter soldiers were tied to a civil command chain, which was against the tradition,
- The leaders of the organization lacked the experience and characteristics to make a coup.

When considering the responses of the people against the coup in Turkey, it could be said that the July 15 coup attempt of a unique sociological aspects. The presence of a charismatic leader, reconciling the state with the people since the republic, negative image in social memory against cadres who want to perform the coup, the nation does not want to lose the gains was evaluable in this context (Karaaslan, 2016, p.32).

Although it is known that the plotters of the July 15 coup acted with different aims from a number of aspects, it can be said that they took the May 27 coup as an example. Because a bottom-level junta movement outside a chain of command was successful on May 27, the plotters of July 15 coup took it as a reference. However, this time the junta movement could not be adopted by the whole TAF. The most important reason for it was that those who attempted the coup on July 15 did not have any thoughts about the regime, constitutional principles and future of the state, etc. Although the coup declaration included such statements, they were not taken seriously because the world perspectives of those who had written the declaration was known. Besides, there are some differences between July 15 and May 27, such as the social developments and chaos that existed before May 27 were not observed before July 15, the media was plurivocal, Turkey now had a higher level of democracy, both the government and the opposition were against the coup, and more importantly, the people made a coup against the coup. Nevertheless, the similarity between July 15 and May 27 (Peace at Home Council vs. lower-level junta) causes us to

think that if the coup had succeeded there might have been similar developments. From this perspective, the Turkish nation protected their representatives who they elected and factually said "Enough, the word is people's!" It is necessary to comment the President's statement "Now we owe our nation our lives" which he made at many places after the coup in this framework.

How the coup attempt of July 15 was reflected upon the public and how it was perceived by the people are very important. The field study titled "Guarding Democracy: Coup Attempt of July 15 in Public Perception" and done by SETA revealed some important data. The study was done in 9 cities of Turkey between July 18 and August 10. Three quarters of the participants of the study stated that they had gone out at the night of July 15 to react against the coup. The motivation which led people out was that the President urged people to go out, that the declaration was read on TRT and *sela's* were called from mosques. Participants who did not go out that night explained their behavior with fear and confusion. Almost all the participants pointed without doubt the FETO as the plotters of the coup. Majority of the participants believed that there was foreign aid involved in the coup, and it would not have been possible to make such an attempt without it. The survey revealed that this junta movement and the TAF were considered separate, and the TAF was not held responsible. Only few participants stated that they would have a negative view about the TAF in the face of the situation, but the general observation was that a group of FETOists and TAF members were considered the same. It attracted attention that when the participants were talking about the TAF, they used such terms as "pupil of the eye of the society" and "home of the prophet." In response to the question "What would have happened if the coup had been successful?" some participants said "*We would have been like Syria.*" In that matter, a participant from Van used these words: "*The situation would have been worse than Syria, if the coup had succeeded. But because I think it cannot be successful, I cannot even imagine. Syria had a place to go to, but we do not.*" Many participants stated that nobody would help Turkey and we would have a civil war, which is another example of how the society perceived the coup (Miş et al., 2016, p.51-96).

A Reading On The Coup Declaration

The declaration, which was forced to be read by a group of pro-junta soldiers who attempted the July 15 coup, was a breaking point for the coup process. This step, which was considered as traditional and consisting of the information about why and how the coup had been made with reasons and future plans, was once more shared with people on TRT, the official channel of the state. However, since other TV channels are active in today's communication world, it is required that the plurivocal media be consolidated in the same direction. The following statement which was read at the beginning of the declaration points out this fact: *"Broadcasting of this text in the channels of the Turkish Republic is a request and an order of the Turkish Armed Forces."* When doing the analysis of the coup declaration, what the objectives of the plotters were, what message they wanted to communicate to the people with the declaration, and how they viewed/wanted to show the coup legitimate will be examined.

The declaration started using an inclusive language with the address *"Valuable citizens of the Turkish Republic"* and continued with the following sentences: *"The systematic violations of the constitution and laws have been a significant threat against the basic characteristics and the existence of vital institutions. All the institutions of the state, including the Turkish Armed Forces have been started to be designed according to ideological causes, and therefore they have been put into such a situation where they cannot function."* When we examine those explanations in detail, we see that it expresses that the long-lasting systematic illegal policies and applications left the basic organs of the state nonfunctional, and all of those have been made for ideological purposes, and threatened the republic and the founding values. It is not a coincidence that the declaration started in such a way. Because, those statements inform, at the same time, about the reason why the army implemented this coup. The declaration also gives the message that all the mechanisms which may restrict and supervise the political power have been ineffective, and the TAF was no exception, and therefore it has had to make the coup. The declaration continues with the following words which refer to Ataturk's address to the youth: *"The fundamental rights and freedoms were tarnished by the President and the government officials who are in error, misguided or even in betrayal, the secular and democratic legal system which depends*

on separation of powers has been factually removed." At this point it was emphasized that the elected President was a traitor, which was a very hard accusation. In none of the previous coup declarations was such a statement used about the politicians of the time. This statement is also important in terms of reflecting the plotters' view about the President. Besides, this statement hints that the related politicians would be charged with "treason" after the coup. The emphasis on misguidance and treason reminds of the Address to Youth, and the following call for the youth that *"even in such circumstances it is your duty to save the Turkish Independence and Republic."* From this point of view, the TAF is fulfilling its duties. Besides, as stated and clearly explained above, the emphasis on factually annihilating the fundamental characteristics of democracy and the Republic urged the TAF once more to save (!) the democracy. The statement in the declaration that *"Our state has lost its deserved credibility in the international arena and it was turned into a country which is ruled with autocracy based on fear and where universal basic human rights are ignored."* can be perceived as a message of the plotters directed towards within and also the outer world. That Turkey has lost prestige in the world, the reasons of which are annihilation of fundamental human rights and also the existence of an autocratic regime based on fear is another cause of the coup. Although it can be deduced from this statement that the fundamental rights and freedoms would be guaranteed and the problems of those whose rights have been violated would be solved, how a power with guns in its hands and directing their barrels to democracy would do it is discussable. However, it should especially be indicated that what is intended with the statement "deprived of fundamental rights and freedoms" is in fact the people who had been expelled, arrested or jailed for their ties to the FETO. In other words, the plotters who are bound to the FETO mask the policies applied against them with the statement of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The following messages in the declaration have the characteristic of being messages directly to the people: *"Terrorism, which the political will has abstained from struggle because of its wrong decisions, has escalated and caused the lives of many innocent citizens and officers who were in charge of fighting terrorists."* and *"Corruption and theft in the bureaucracy have increased to serious levels, and the legal system which is supposed to fight against this has been*

neutralized." The first statement aims at terrorism and the second at gaining social support over corruption. Although what was intended with the expression of the political power's wrong decisions is vague, the expression of abstaining from struggle shows that it can be about the "solution process." While the political power is accused in the face of the escalation of terrorism, the issue that should especially be specified here is the emphasis on "innocent citizens." This expression reminds of the people who were killed in bombed terrorist attacks in big cities. By this way, it is emphasized that the coup, which was made against the political power deemed as having the biggest responsibility for the terrorism, had also a social cause. The second statement directly reminds of the "December 17-25 Process." The expression that the corruption has become a serious problem and law has been helpless against it gives an impression that the coup attempt was planned as the second phase of the December 17-25 which was not succeeded legally (!). In addition to that, the emphasis on terrorism brings to mind that the previous terrorist acts could have been made to legitimize the coup in people's eyes. When the position of the FETO, which had been a parallel power in the state, is taken into consideration, the probability that this assumption is correct gains strength.

Later in the declaration a direct reference to Atatürk took place. A coup which has the objective of protecting the Republic is expected to make a reference to the founder of the Republic. This had been observed in all of the coup declarations. What attracts attention with the statement in the July 15 coup declaration "*Under these conditions, the Turkish Armed Forces which is the protector of our republic which our nation founded with extraordinary sacrifices under the leadership of Atatürk and has brought it until today, following the principle of 'peace at home and peace in the world'...*" is that the TAF positioned and charged itself with protection of the Republic. Besides, attention to the difficult conditions under which the Republic was founded by the Turkish people under the leadership of Atatürk and how it has been brought until today was drawn, and it was mentioned that protecting the Republic is a conscientious responsibility towards the history and the nation. With the expression "peace at home, peace in the world," a reference was made to Atatürk for the second time and the name of the administrative organ which made the coup was mentioned.

As responses to why the coup was made, the following statements were listed as: *“the Turkish Armed Forces which is the protector of our republic, following the principle of ‘peace at home and peace in the world’ seized the control of the country*

- 1- *to continue the indivisible unity of the country, provide the continuity of the nation and the state,*
- 2- *to eliminate the challenges that the earnings of our republic has been exposed to,*
- 3- *to destroy the factual obstacles before the rule of law,*
- 4- *to prevent corruption which has become a national security threat,*
- 5- *to allow effective struggle against terrorism and all types of terror,*
- 6- *to validate basic universal human rights for all of our citizens without considering any discrimination of denomination or ethnicity,*
- 7- *to reestablish the constitutional order which is based on the principles of secularism, democracy, social and law state,*
- 8- *to reclaim the respectability which our state and nation have lost,*
- 9- *to establish stronger relations and cooperation to provide international peace, stability and tranquility.”*

When those statements are examined, it attracts attention that they are multifaceted and handle different issues, and give messages to different social sections. First of all, corruption and terrorist events, which were previously mentioned, were placed again in a separate article. Similarly, the state’s and the nation’s reclaiming of their respectability in the world was once more mentioned as a cause of the coup. The expressions *“provide the continuity of the nation and the state”* and *“to eliminate the challenges that the earnings of our republic has been exposed to”* are those directed at protection of the regime. Therefore, the plotters claimed that they had attempted the coup to protect the republic and its gains, and to sustain it forever. It is also possible to examine article 7, which is mentioned among the causes of the coup, in this context. Although fundamental rights and freedoms were listed among the causes of the coup, the emphasis on its validity for all citizens *“regardless of their denominations or ethnicities”* is quite important. With this expression, it was intended to show as if there were violations in Turkey regarding those two concepts. It will not be wrong what was intended with the word *“denomination”* was Alawi citizens, and with

the word “ethnicity” the Kurdish citizens. As had already been experienced many times, those two frameworks, which constitute two social fault lines, were expected to support the coup after being sent messages. In addition, disguising the legal processes that the members of the organization were going through in their civil lives over those two sections of the society and claiming that the human rights violations had an ethnic and denominational base by including them into the process were aimed. Lastly, with the emphasis on international peace and stability, a message to the outer world, primarily the United States, is given. It was stated that the current government was away from providing and approving of those two concepts in international relations. The declaration gave the message that the problems which was generated by the axial dislocation in the foreign policy, primarily in the Syrian problem, would be eliminated with the coup, and the Turkish foreign policy would be revised. It is necessary to reconsider the expression “peace at home peace in the world” from this perspective.

The statements in the declaration “*The state will be ruled by the established Peace at Home Council.*” and “*The political power which has lost its legitimacy has been removed from the government.*” explain that the coup plotters assumed the ruling of the country by neutralizing the political power. Again, the statement “*The Peace at Home Council has taken all the measures to fulfill the responsibilities that originate from the UN, NATO and all other international organizations.*” has the characteristic of an address to the international community. It can be said that they expected the world to show their appreciation and support, or at least to remain silent. The following statement in the declaration draws attention to the fact that the representatives of the political power, who they have already claimed as being traitors, would be tried: “*It will be provided that the persons and institutions that are in treason to the country will be brought before the courts which are authorized to decide with rightness and justice in the name of the people as soon as possible.*” Lastly, it was mentioned that the army declared a curfew throughout the country, people are prohibited from going out until further notice, and every citizen is required to obey those warnings. Those explanations have similarities with statements in previous coup declarations. The declaration made some additional explanations in its ending lines. For example,

with the statement “Additional measures have been taken at airports, border gates and ports regarding leaving the country.” It was observed that the law enforcement would take precautions in this matter, escape of people who were defined as criminals would be prevented and the control over the country would be taken over by having the control on important coordinates. Among the last statements were “No behavior disturbing the peace will be allowed, no citizen will be harmed and the state order will be provided in the shortest period of time.” Those explanations refer to the new state order which was going to be established with the new public order. It was indicated that all the initiatives to be made to impede this public order would be resisted against. It is necessary to look into the people and institutions that resisted the coup from this point of view. The statement about not desiring citizens to get hurt indicated the warning between the lines not to go out. From another perspective, those statements were written with the thought of softening the reaction against the coup. Besides, it should be indicated that with the statement “reestablishing the state order in the constitutional order in the shortest period of time” the message that the army would leave the democracy to political actors again some time later was given. From this aspect, it can be claimed that the coup attempt was an initiative more against political actors in the person of President Erdoğan other than the political realm. Lastly the statements that “*The Peace at Home Council will have a constitution prepared in the earliest time, which embraces all sections of the society in the unitary state structure and without making any discrimination in terms of language, religion or ethnic origin.*” and then “*The Peace at Home Council will take all the precautions in the name of our nation until the constitutional order based on contemporary, democratic, social and secular principles is established.*” were used. When those statements are examined, it can be said that there was the promise of making a constitution as the previous plotters made, but this time some messages were given in terms of its contents. It is seen that the Peace at Home Council, which considered itself as the founding power in the discussions of a new constitution especially since the adoption of the Turkish Constitution of 1982, would take the advantage and promised to make the expected constitution. Messages were sent to the sections of the society which had a concern about division of the state with the statement that the unitary state structure would be protected, and to the sections that had the

desire of constitutional representation with the statement “without making any discrimination in language, religion or ethnicity.” By this, support for the coup from every section of the society is expected. It was stated that the Peace at Home Council would be at work until the establishment of the democratic, social and secular constitutional state, which made it difficult to make an estimation about how long they would stay in power.

In almost nowhere in the text, the coup declaration touched the concept of reactionism which was highlighted in the e-memorandum given against the political power. Besides, there were several references to Atatürk with the expressions “under the circumstances”, “under the leadership of Atatürk” and “peace at home, peace in the world.” From this aspect, the declaration was tried to be written in a Kemalist jargon. However, since the coup had nothing to do with the regime and the principles of Atatürk, this method remained far from being credible. When the coup statement is examined as a whole, it is seen that a declaration including very complicated and different issues was tried to be combined. This point is another example of the fact that it was written in a flippant manner. As in the May 27, 1960 coup, adherence to the UN and NATO was expressed in the July 15 declaration. This aspect was explained in the May 27 declaration as such: “We believe in NATO and CENTO, and we are adhered to them. Our thought is peace at home and peace in the world.” The declaration, which contained similar expressions, involves the messages that the coup had been made under guarantee, which is to say, all the international measures had been taken. Besides, it can also be said that by using the name Peace at Home, the plotters and codes of the 1960 coup was wanted to be reminded (Çağlar et al. 2017).

Conclusion

Democracy is the rule of people for the people and by the people. Mankind reached democracy after several governmental systems. The most important characteristic of democracy is that it bases its legality on people and does not accept an understanding “in spite of the people.” Organizations or institutions are also entitled to get involved in politics in democracies, like individuals. However, this involvement, whose objective is to make influence on the political power, should not change into dominating

the political power. It is unacceptable in democracies for the structures and institutions, which are already defined and positioned, to define and design democracy or to make an equalization on democracy. In some quarters, positioning of democracy in a new area is accepted as tutelage. At the top of the elements of tutelage comes the army which has the armed power. The Turkish political history has experienced a number of attempts of tutelage. In that sense, this process is a history of coups at the same time. In the army-politics relations, several military interventions, starting with the raid into Bab-ı Ali in 1913, were observed in 1960, 1971, 1980, 1997, 2007 and 2016. It was observed that the army directly took over the political power in some of those interventions, and the army sent memorandums in the others. As in the process of February 28, sometimes an equalization was made to democracy. The last phase of this process was the coup attempt of July 15. One of the most important documents of military coups is the coup declaration. Those declarations, which offer important clues regarding the past, the current time and the future, also answers the question why the coup was made. It has a traditional character that the declarations, which have been prepared as coups' identification of legality, are read and declared on TRT screens. By whom, how and why the coups have been made are explained in those declarations. Besides, they involve some information about matters such as public order, establishment of the public order and messages to the international arena. Similarly, the declaration written by the Peace at Home Council had some information about the process in the coup attempt of July 15. The highlights of those matters, which have been analyzed in detail above, are as follows:

Codes of the Coup Declaration

- Outpouring of FETO's secret agenda
- Kemalist Jargon and ideological setting: Kemalism cover
- Legality facing outside with international messages
- Legality facing inside with the messages about social dynamics
- The emphasis of Peace at Home –reminding of plotters and processes of May 27
- Abstaining from the concept of “Nation” with the concern that it might remind of the national will.

The first one of the above statements refers to the fact that the FETO members who made the coup placed their secret agendas between the

lines. However, this fact is disguised with a Kemalist cover. It will not be a mistake that, with the messages for the West, it was expected of other countries to view the coup as legitimate or at least to remain silent. Similarly, the expressions, such as corruption, denomination and ethnic identity, bear the expectation of support from within. References have been made to the methods and processes of May 27 with the code of "Peace at Home." This situation offers hints for the process to come. Lastly, in the declaration such concepts as "citizen" were used instead of "nation." It might have been thought that the concept is associated with the national will, and it would contradict with the coup. The coup declaration was written with an understanding which includes different messages, does not make its real intention clear, and makes attributions to current political developments other than offering concrete reasons. This situation points out that they failed in the coup statement which was prepared before the coup, just as the plotters failed in the field.

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