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**Elite Navigations in De Facto States: Exploring Patron-Client Relationships in the
Case of Northern Cyprus**

MA Thesis

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Table of Contents

Introduction	5
1. Patron-Client Relationship, Ontological Security and Elite Navigations	9
1.1 Patron-client relationships.....	9
1.2 Ontological security	22
1.3 Elite navigations.....	30
1.4 Elite navigations and agency	35
1.5 De facto states and patron states	37
1.6 Summary and expectations	38
2. Research Design, Data and Methods	39
2.1 Case selection.....	40
2.2 Data collection	42
2.3 Process-tracing	43
3. Patron-Client Relations and Level of TRNC Dependence on Turkey	44
3.1 Asymmetry	47
3.2 Reciprocity	48
3.3 Compliance	50
3.4 Affectivity	52
4. Tracing Elite Navigations	56

4.1 Unilateral opening of the Green Line by TRNC.....	56
4.2 Joint Declarations in 2008.....	62
4.3 The pipeline “gifted” to TRNC.....	68
4.4 Crises over the education and youth system in 2016 and 2019	74
Conclusion	80

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the patron-client relationship between Turkey and TRNC. Through the use of patron-client relationships theory and ontological security theory, elite navigations as a concept is developed. Patron-client relationships in the international community are most visible in de facto states and this thesis analyses the case of TRNC and the actions of its political elite in their attempts to defy, dictate or demand patronage from the patron state. It was found that ontological insecurities experienced by the public and political elite motivate elite navigations. For elite navigations to be detected, it is important to judge accurately if ontological security is threatened, what sort of demands are made by the public and the personal qualities of the political elite in charge. Elite navigations are closely connected to ontological security and ontological security to exerting agency. That being said, since de facto states rely heavily on their patrons for physical and economic security, their agency is constrained and hard to detect. In the literature de facto states are not granted credit for being effective agents in international relations. Elite navigations and the findings of this thesis display that de facto states possess agency no matter how limited it might be.

Introduction

De facto states pose a conundrum for scholars of international relations on multiple grounds. First, they look like states and act like them but because of the lack of recognition they are never perceived in the same light as recognized states. They are in the limbo of describing themselves as states, forming institutions like one and believing that they are worthy of recognition, yet never being recognized as such, despite all their efforts. Second, they are a reality which the international community cannot ignore but also cannot include into their exclusive club of legal privileges. Some of these de facto entities are governed more efficiently and democratically than some current members of the UN but are still not recognized because of political reasons. It is because of this rejection and exclusion that topics such as recognition, dependency, security or any matter related to the existence and continuation of a conventional state take different forms when it comes to these unrecognized entities. These many forms of understanding and explaining de facto states have proven to require more than the already established, straightforward studies of recognized states. Different theories and approaches need to be included, as the cases of de facto states have *sui generis* characteristics. This has resulted in the formation of a separate literature focusing on these entities.

One of the main focuses of the literature is on the question of agency. It needs to be mentioned first that, agency is a tricky concept to determine in de facto states. A traditional state is expected to make decisions that alter the course of international affairs in some way, big or small. Agency of states can be determined by the extent that they are able to achieve such feats. However, when it comes to de facto states, to pinpoint agency can be more difficult than one can imagine. The difficulty mentioned has even led scholars to believe that these states in question cannot display agency. The reasons for this belief are threefold. Firstly, de facto states usually depend heavily on a patron or parent state for their existence, this has led many to believe that these states are nothing more than “puppet”, “pariah” or “pirate” states (Bryant&Hatay, 2020). Second, the lack of recognition of these states mean that they cannot legitimately and effectively enter economic and political relationships with other members

of the exclusive club of recognized states. Third, because of the perceived (or sometimes real) lack of institutions attributed to recognized states, these areas can also be understood as “black spots” (Caspersen, 2012).

The main objective of this thesis is to pinpoint agency and how it is manifested in de facto states. Some works on the agency of de facto states have been presented by analysing foreign policy decisions (Berg&Vits, 2018; Jaksa, 2019) and the “aporetic” nature of the de facto states (Bryant&Hatay, 2020). To contribute to the existing research, this thesis will focus on patron-client relationships between the de facto states and their patrons. Through the theory of patron-client relationships, the physical security dependencies such as political/military and economic ones will be explained and geopolitical security concerns of both patron and client will be analysed. Cultural ties classified as “affectivity” (Carney, 1989) will fall under the magnifying glass of ontological security theory. A quantitative approach informative of the strategical issues constraining the two parties and motivating them to further their relationship will provide aid in explaining the material factors in the patron-client relationships. To understand the close ties fully, such an approach is not enough on its own. A constructivist approach to the question of ties of kinship and loyalty will also be utilized. It will be tested if these two approaches combined can shed a new light on the discussion of agency in de facto states.

The political elites are “stuck between a rock and a hard place” when it comes to navigating domestic and patron state demands. It will be argued that the two theories mentioned above can explain agency to a certain extent, and agency will take the form of elite navigations in this thesis. Elite navigations could be conceptualized as the actions of de facto states guided by the political elite to defy, demand or dictate patronage from the patron state. An important aspect of elite navigations is the unit of analysis. In the recent years, the role of individuals in international politics have come under scrutiny (Byman&Pollack, 2001; Murgado, 2019). The decision makers and the effect of their own perceptions of the world have been argued to have great importance on decision making and response systems of states. The individual and their concerns about the nature of the patron-client relationship and security threats are

the focus of elite navigations. As will be further explained in this thesis, the elites assume the role of “broker” (Powell, 1970, p. 413) between the population of the state and the patron. The state is not an individual, but it is run by persons representing the will of the individuals belonging to a certain group (at least in democracies), and especially in the case selected for the research, the significance of elites in de facto state relations are emphasized. It will be argued that elite navigations can sometimes occur under even the most constraining circumstances of patron-client relationships and the manifestations of agency can be found by analysing such instances of navigations. Therefore, the main questions this thesis aims to answer is: “How and under what circumstances do elite navigations occur in de facto states and is it enough proof for agency?”

In order to operationalize the theoretical claims above, the case of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) was selected. The relationship between Turkey and TRNC fulfils the criteria set in some works of the patron-client relationship theory (Carney, 1989; Scott, 1972; Lemarchand&Legg, 1972; Eisenstadt&Roniger, 1980) and the significant cultural ties between the two entities provide wide ground for the application of ontological security theory. First, the geopolitical constraints and threats to the physical security will be taken into consideration. Once the circumstances limiting the agency of TRNC are established, the thesis will then move on to discuss the sources of the ontological security concerns of the de facto state. Elite navigations also have a special place in TRNC, as it is argued by some scholars who are involved in research on North Cyprus, the people vote for individuals rather than political parties (Ekici, 2019; Bryant&Hatay, 2020). Furthermore, the negotiations between the patron and client often happen on the presidential level which is represented by a single elite. Once these concepts are introduced, the theory will be tested in the four cases selected to represent elite navigations in TRNC. In this single case study, the chosen method to analyse the cases is process tracing due to the necessity of understanding the processes that led to the navigations discussed in this thesis. The data collection was made from news articles, scholarly articles and interviews with experts and political elites in charge during the time period from which the cases are selected.

The relevance of this research can be claimed on two levels. First is that there is a lack of works granting *de facto* states agency in patron-client relationships and IR literature. The geopolitical background for the work was provided by Berg&Vits (2018, 2020a) but nothing on the scope of this thesis, combining patron-client relationships and ontological security. The lack of works within the literature on this specific topic is also pointed out by Bryant&Hatay (2020) in their recent work. Therefore, this thesis will further the research in multiple fields of IR, such as patron-client relationships, *de facto* states and ontological security. Second, because the *de facto* states have been assigned no agency until the recent years, the attempts to understand and solve the conflicts these states are in have been to no avail. The perspective has been that these states can only be understood as voiceless subjects of patron or parent states, which is simply not true. These states have their own aspirations of independence and although constrained heavily by geopolitical and cultural factors, they seek opportunities to exert agency. Without understanding the fundamental approaches of *de facto* states to relationships of this nature it is impossible to fully grasp the extent of why such states, or any state for that matter, might willingly enter a relationship which might make them heavily dependent on another, much stronger state in multiple fields.

This thesis consists of four chapters, excluding the introduction and the conclusion. In the first chapter, the theoretical framework will be explained, combined with a literature review on the existing works on the theories selected. Chapter two will discuss the research design and methodology of the research. Chapter three will dissect the patron-client relationship between Turkey and TRNC, explain the extent of the dependency of TRNC on its patron, and how this dependency affects the *de facto* state. In order to fully understand the concepts and claims discussed in this thesis, some information on the relationship between these two states need to be relayed. Chapter four will discuss the four cases selected to demonstrate agency in *de facto* states and how elite navigations play their role in exerting, although limited, agency. The thesis will conclude with a summary of the contents, the findings and some remarks on what the findings mean for TRNC and *de facto* states literature.

1. Patron-Client Relationship, Ontological Security and Elite Navigations

In the first paragraph of the introduction, it was mentioned that de facto states pose a conundrum for scholars and multiple different approaches are needed to understand these highly complex and unique cases of existence in the international community. This thesis utilizes two theories in order to answer the research question posed earlier. In this chapter, the theories of patron-client relationships and ontological security will be explained through a literature review and short analyses of the works included. Both theories will be discussed in a fashion that allows the thesis to include as many opinions as possible from respected authors of the literatures mentioned. Along with the mention of these opinions, the specific framework this thesis uses to explain the research problem will be outlined. There is also a concept mentioned in the introduction, which was called “elite navigations”. This concept is not a pre-conceived one in the literature, but it is in no way an attempt to create a new theory. It is simply a way to explain the findings made by the two theories mentioned under one specific modus operandi, to make it easier to identify such relations in further research. Nevertheless, it requires unpacking as naming the concept alone is not enough to conceptualize it. The chapter will be concluded with the expectations about the case.

1.1 Patron-client relationships

Originating in anthropology, patron-client relationships theory eventually spilled over to sociology and political sciences. If all the complexity of mechanisms of a state such as democracy, economy, health system, foreign policy etc. are put aside for a moment and the evolution of human societies is considered, it is evident that the state as we know it today has evolved over the course of human history from tribal and societal systems. Therefore, it is no surprise that this theory has at least some explanation power in political sciences and more specifically, international relations. Eisenstadt&Roniger mention the ease with which the features of this type of relationship are missed and claim that while many organizations have features of patron-client relationships, “their full institutional impacts and repercussions are seen when they become a part or manifestation of the central mode of regulations of the flow

of resources and processes of inter-personal and institutional exchange in a society and sector thereof” (1980, p. 49). In the current international system, the asymmetry of power and resources are quite visible. While concepts such as sovereignty and horizontal hierarchy may complicate the process of detecting patron-client relationships, a quick look at the international affairs would hint that they exist between recognized states in some aspects of their existence. Due to the norm of non-intervention, these relationships are often concealed, or at least attempts are made at hiding them. At the same time, their effects are not spread to all areas of state sovereignty and consequently, they can be easily missed.

De facto states possess low political, military, and economic power, and international recognition and they rely on patron states or parent states in terms of external support to ensure their legitimacy (Caspersen, 2015) and existence. From a perspective of patron-client relationships, this means that because of their international status, and the consequent limited access to the resources the international system has to offer, de facto states and their relationships offer scholars a chance to observe the effects and consequences of patron-client relationships on state institutions more visibly than the rest of the states in the world. It needs to be stated here that while de facto states are not recognized as legitimate states, this does not mean that they cannot develop state institutions similar to ones in recognized states. It could even be argued that since they are free from outside interference in the state building practices but still open to influences from the existing systems by the way of observation and engagement without recognition practices (Ker-Lindsay&Berg, 2018), they offer a better look at the workings of patron-client relationships within state institutions. To establish the foundations on how to do that, this sub-chapter will focus on definitions and features of patron-client relationships and how they can be used to explain the extent of physical dependency in this type of relationship.

Eisenstadt&Roniger describe patron-client relationships as “a distinct mode of regulating crucial aspects of institutional order: the structuring of the flow of resources, exchange and power relations and their legitimation in society” (1980, p. 49). They proceed to identify nine core characteristics of patron-client relationships and types of social interaction they

involve¹. To summarize; a) they are particularistic and diffuse; b) the interaction is characterized by simultaneous exchange of different resources; c) sources are exchanged in a package-deal, they cannot be exchanged separately; d) strong element of unconditionality and long range credit and obligations involved; e) a strong element of solidarity is present; f) they are informal (but tightly binding) understandings; g) are entered into by voluntary involvement (in principle); h) they are undertaken between individuals or networks of individuals in a vertical fashion; i) they are based on strong elements of inequality and of differences in power (Eisenstadt&Roniger, 1980, pp. 49-50). These features discussed by the two authors, as will be seen in the later paragraphs, are an unpacked and detailed version of the general claims of the literature. Article H may be the most significant one for this thesis, in terms of the application of the theory to states. First and foremost, this means that the patron-client relationships can be applied to states by conceptualizing the state as not an institution irrelevant to the individuals that help it function, but as an entity which takes different forms and actions based on the unique approaches and characteristics of individuals. Second, since this thesis focuses on elite navigations and the unit of analysis are the political elite, this further strengthens the argument for the suitability of the theoretical approach adopted.

Formality of the relationship, however, is required as this is not a relationship between two tribes. Functioning mechanisms of states require the formalization of relationships established and exchanges made between the two sides because of the simple fact that, for de facto state governments to establish internal legitimacy, they need to establish popular support (Caspersen, 2015). Formality brings accountability with it. If there is no accountability, popular support might decline, and in that case, it is highly unlikely that the state will continue to function properly, especially in de facto states. Furthermore, as Kitschelt points out, “clientelist politics establishes very tight bonds of accountability and

¹ Due to space limitations, a summarized version of the features were included. For more information on these features and an extensive overview of anthropology literature on patron-client relationships, see Eisenstadt&Roniger.

responsiveness” (2000, p. 851). As both the states with their entire populations commit to such exchanges, accountability is important both within the relationship and domestically. This works on a two-way lane, as the patron provides material goods and security which are not cheap, without the formalization of the exchanges popular support might decline. On the other side, the same is valid for the client state as resources are scarce, and the constituents wish to see them used for the most immediate needs. Therefore, the only irrelevant feature may be article F. These types of relationships when it comes to states are formal between the two sides, as they require cooperation agreements to be signed and foreign policy decisions to be made (which include formal action). Furthermore, the formal nature of interactions between patron states and de facto states needs to be emphasized for the international community to observe that the state is able to enter into such relations, as all de facto states pursue recognition and independence in some way. The rest of the articles will not be discussed further as they are, although different in wording, included in the other works discussed in the upcoming paragraphs.

Powell argues that patron-client relationships are interactions which “involve an interchange of noncomparable goods and services between actors of unequal socio-economic ranks” (1970, pg. 412). He states that while there are fixed aspects of patron-client relationships such as unequal status, reciprocity and proximity, there are also variables that define the relationship. Origins of initiation of relationship differ in each one. This means that every patron-client relationship begins under different circumstances. Duration or persistence of the relationship also varies over time. This represents the timespan over which the relationship expands. The relationship might cover the full or partial needs of the client, and the intensity of these ties may vary. Powell chooses to classify intensity and its concomitant aspects (affinity, loyalty, obligation, satisfaction) as a variable, but as will later be explained, other authors have decided to include these as main factors which define patron-client relationships. Such abstract concepts are hard to measure, and while being one of the main problems with patron-client relationships, accurate measurements of them are vital to the aims of this thesis. At the end of this subchapter, the physical aspects of the relationship will

be outlined, and ontological security theory will be utilized in the next sub-chapter in an attempt to solve the problem of measurement.

Lemarchand and Legg make similar claims in their widely cited article and they conceptualize what they call political clientelism as a “more or less personalized, affective and reciprocal relationship between actors, or sets of actors, commanding unequal resources and involving mutually beneficial transactions that have political ramifications beyond the immediate sphere of dyadic relationships” (1972, p. 151-152). As political clientelism is a concept in close proximity to patron-client relationships, the findings of the authors were cited widely by scholars. They later identify three general criteria for the conceptualization and although similar to Powell’s description, the authors opt to change unequal status for the word “asymmetry”, take the concept of ties of intensity placed in the variables section by Powell and utilize it as one of the three general criteria of patron-client relationships and choose to call them “character of transactions” (Lemarchand and Legg, 1972, p. 152). The claims of Lemarchand and Legg are important for this thesis, as they assign great importance to affectivity. They describe “affectivity as the primary social adhesive for binding a patron to his clients and vice versa” (Lemarchand and Legg, 1972, p. 151). The concept was later used by other scholars which will be mentioned in this thesis, to represent what Powell has called ties of intensity and can be used to summarize what Lemarchand and Legg called character of transactions.

In the same year as Lemarchand and Legg, James C. Scott, in his work on the patron-client relationships in Southeast Asia, describes the relationship as “a special case of dyadic (two-person) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socioeconomic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron” (1972, p. 92). He then moves on to provide the reader with four criteria similar to those of the previously mentioned authors: 1) reciprocity, 2) inequality, 3) face-to-face character, 4) diffuse flexibility (Scott, 1972). It can be observed that while similar to the descriptions made

and criteria defined by the previous scholars, there are slight differences in wording. This is the third time reciprocity has been mentioned in this thesis, therefore a closer look is required. Scott mentions that in reciprocity demanded, each partner provides a service that is valuable to the other (1972, p. 93), which brings with it a debt of obligation that binds the client to the patron, as the services provided by the patron are usually more valuable than the ones provided by the client. While inequality refers to asymmetry, and face-to-face character refers to affectivity, diffuse flexibility means the range of demands the patron can make from the client.

In his adaptation of patron-client relationships to international politics, Christopher Carney mentions that the first step for using the patron-client concept, is “differentiating patron-clientcy from other types of relationships by examining various links” (1989, p. 52). The patron, for it to be branded as such, needs to have established a monopoly over resources that are vital for the client to ensure their existence. If there is no immediate need for the resources the patron controls, there is no need to build the patron-client link. This is not to be understood as a “free ride” for the client or an enslavement, as this is not a relationship of pure dependency but a relationship of exchanges. While patron-client relationships are voluntary and less binding (Eisenstadt&Roniger 1980, Carney, 1989), dependency imposes a relationship which binds the dependent with “enforced economic power differential” (Carney, 1989, p. 44). The nature of the relationship between the patron and the client is determined by an exchange of goods, and this exchange is defined by the general asymmetry of resources between the two sides. Without this asymmetry, patron-client relationships simply could not be defined in the way they were. In compliance with the arguments made earlier about the perceived lack of agency in de facto states because of the heavy dependency on a patron or parent state, patron-client relationships show clearly that, although at first glance dependency might be the first judgment which might be made, real nature of these relationships are much more complicated. This distinction is vital to the implementation of patron-client relationships within the scope of this thesis.

To identify the dynamics of these relationships, this thesis adopts the formula of Carney. For Carney, patron-client relationships differ from dependency relationships because they involve not only socio-economic factors, but also ideological, cultural, military and diplomacy/strategic ones as well (1989). There are four elements of patron-client relationships which need to be clearly defined to separate them from other kinds of relationships: 1) asymmetry, 2) reciprocity, 3) affectivity, 4) compliance (Carney, 1989; Veenendaal, 2017). While asymmetry, and reciprocity manifest themselves in material issues, affectivity is based on identity ties and a common enemy, and compliance is a result of these combined. Asymmetry could be interpreted as the power difference between the patron and the client within the international system. This is measured in this thesis with the comparison of military strength. Reciprocity could be understood as the characteristics of the economic exchange of physical material between the two sides. What goods are exchanged and the amounts of them are dependent on the specific needs of each party in the relationship. Affectivity represents the connection between the patron and the client established by a common culture, kinship, family ties, identity and/or enemy. It cannot be measured in quantitative means, hence the necessity to include ontological security theory in the thesis. This will be discussed further in the upcoming sub-chapter. Last but not least, compliance refers to the extent which the client adheres to the demands of the patron. This can take the form of villainization of the enemies of the patron, befriending their friends and ideological convergence.

Patron-client relationships are also described as a “dyadic alliance” or “mutual-aid dyad” (Lande, 1983). Lande further specifies these types of relationships as “a voluntary agreement between two individuals to exchange favours and to come to each other’s aid in time of need” (1983, p. 447). Although this is true to a certain extent, patron-client relationships extend well beyond mere exchanges of favour. Furthermore, as the relationship progresses, “patronal sensitivity and acquiescence to client needs can actually enhance the relationship by casting the patron in a more benevolent light” (Carney, 1989, p. 45). The assigned benevolence of the patron, cultural ties associated with affectivity and the highly asymmetrical nature of the relationship combined, leads to what Eric Wolf calls “lopsided friendship” (1966, p. 16). It

is specifically because this is not a mere relationship of favours, when one side offers more substantial benefits continuously, and the other can only offer a fraction of the services provided, obligations of the client pile up, resulting in the lopsidedness of the relationship. The sense of solidarity and friendship could be associated with affectivity. As the asymmetry grows, one would expect that, since “no government wishes to forfeit policy independence and be cast as a ‘lackey’ or ‘satellite’” (Ciorciani, 2014, p. 248), the client would protest the ever-growing dependence on its patron. However, it is found that “rather than the ‘friendship’ becoming more precarious as the relationship becomes more lopsided, the reverse is the case” (Lemarchand and Legg, 1972, p. 152). This could be explained in two ways.

First is that the high dependency of the client on specific resources makes it vulnerable against any sort of outcry from their side to the patron. As patrons are usually scarce, and clients are in abundance, the patron can provide its services elsewhere if need be. It is the client who needs to ensure that the patron remains interested. This is not to say that the patron is only interested if the client can offer something consciously, they have their own agenda. Shoemaker&Spanier mention three intangible ways that the patron can benefit from the client: 1) ideological convergence, 2) international solidarity, 3) strategic advantage (1984). Although ideological convergence can be associated with the Cold War era, the search for the further distribution of ideology still exists today, especially in the case selected for this thesis. International solidarity is also a highly important one, as topics such as sovereignty, human rights, and non-intervention are still hotly debated in the UN, for example. Offering their services might mean a few more allies in the international community. Although de facto states are not members of the UN, this argument might be debated but the international community still cannot ignore the existence and therefore, the wishes of the populations living in these regions because of normative standpoints. The most visible (and arguably the most important to the patron) one is strategic advantage. These can range from division of exclusive economic zones, construction and control of energy pipelines, establishing military bases in the client’s territory or simply the more cost-effective transfer of economic goods.

Second is a situational one but is present, nevertheless. As the influence of the patron, grows regionally and internationally (if it grows, hence the situational aspect), it will require more assistance from the client and since the client has obligations to and ties from affectivity with the patron, they will provide it. Furthermore, it is preferable for the client that the patron gains strength as it means that it will be able to provide physical security needs to the client more efficiently and probably at a higher quality. Mair states that “as power grows, the service of its holder becomes more attractive and the field of clientship expands” (1960, p. 325). When the field of clientship expands, and the patron provides more services to fulfil these requirements, this results in an increase in the resources received. According to the lopsided friendship dynamics, this, in turn will result in the relationship becoming more stable and therefore the already strong ties between the two sides become even stronger. Another result of the expansion of the clientship is that the requirement of more effective ways of managing the relationship between the patron and the client. In the case of patron state and de facto state, the political elites gain importance as the primary negotiators for management.

The agreements between the two sides do not appear out of the blue, and discussions on which fields require support, which commodities will be exchanged in return for what, the expectations of the patron from the client on top of the material demands if any, and the decisions regarding any issues in the relationship is made on the level of the political elite in the case of de facto states. One reason for that is that states represent their respective nations on the international scene. Of course, it can be debated to what extent these representations reflect the will of the people living in the territories of the states and/or whether state goals are constructed to achieve the goals of political parties and elites, but that discussion falls within the scope of another thesis. In this one, it is assumed that states represent their best interests in negotiations to set the rules of the interaction with the patron, and these interests reflect the best-case scenario for the inhabitants of the state, stemming from their political will. Through elections the authority to represent the people is given to political parties, in other words, networks of individuals.

Another reason is that while de facto states can establish state institutions, due to the lack of resources which made them establish the patron-client relationship these institutions might not be fully developed to enter negotiations with the relative organs of the patron state. Furthermore, they might not have the authority to discuss such issues. Hence, the political elites governing the country are left as the only way of interacting with the outside world. There is one concept in patron-client relationships which might help explain the role of political elite in these discussions. Boissevain describes this role as “professional manipulator of people and information to bring about communication”, in other words, “broker” (1959, as cited by Lemarchand and Legg, 1972, pp. 153-154). Brokers “stand guard over the critical junctures and synapses of relationships which connect the local system to the larger whole” (Wolf, 1965, as cited by Powell, 1972, p. 413). The larger whole being the patron state and the local system being the needs of the state, therefore population, the only way for the patron state’s decision makers and the needs of the client state’s population to meet and discuss to reach an agreement is through the political elite. This would mean that, in light of these two explanations for what brokers are, the elites of a state in a patron-client relationship also need to be brokers as they occupy the critical positions in the negotiations and the general course of the relationship.

The significance of brokerage functions increases as the state structures expand (Lemarchand and Legg, 1972, p. 154). More state structures, or expanded capabilities mean that more support to uphold the operations will be needed. As will be seen in the case selected for this thesis, since de facto states are usually small in territory and lack the recognition needed to access the international markets, therefore have access to limited resources, expanding their capabilities also mean higher need for the services of the patron. To support the state with the resources needed, the brokerage functions of the political elite also need to reach across multiple policy fields in which the services are required. Moreover, Lemarchand and Legg also state that “linkages established through brokers increasingly tend to supersede or complement the channels of influence heretofore provided through kinship and family ties” (1972, p. 154). If the political elite also need to conduct the functions of the broker, and the affectivity between the patron and the client is strong, this would mean that the dependence

on the political elite to support the resources needed for the state to function would also be high. While assuming the role of broker between the patron and the client, the political elite become intertwined with what affectivity for the patron represents. This could explain, as will be discussed in the sub-chapter on elite navigations, why populations in de facto states tend to vote for individuals rather than political parties.

Evident from the discussion in the paragraphs above, there are great similarities in the literature when it comes to defining the patron-client relationships and establishing the criteria to identify them. The specific wording of the description and factors change from author to author, and it was determined that the approach of Christopher Carney seems to fit best with the goals of this thesis. The criterion of reciprocity is present in all approaches and is one of the most crucial aspects of the relationship in terms of separating it from other kinds of interactions similar to patron-client relationships. Reciprocity, within the scope of this thesis, is conceptualized as the exchange of goods according to the needs of both the patron and the client. These needs can range from strategic to economic and both members give and take. This means that although having the upper hand in the relationship, the patron also needs to comply to some degree with the client preferences and needs (Carney, 1989, p. 45). The patron and the client seem to be partners who “maintain accounts” (Waterbury, 1977, as cited by Carney, p. 45) in this lopsided relationship, hence distinguishing the patron from a brute enforcer of their demands and the client from a completely dependent parasite. Furthermore, the more advantage the client brings to the patron over its competitor, the more valuable the relationship will be for it (Shoemaker&Spanier, 1984).

Another criterion which the literature seems to agree on and has a place in this thesis is asymmetry. Of course, there is a general asymmetry in the access to the resources, but there must also be one in terms of military power. Asymmetry in military power assures that physical security, deemed the most important type of security by many, especially in the realist reading of international relations, cannot be achieved without the patron. It needs to be stated that asymmetry between the patron and the client is important, but in the case of de facto states asymmetry also needs to exist between the client and the potential threats around

it. Without asymmetry, the patron-client relationship cannot be described as such, because then the interaction turns into one between equals. Equality leaves room for commonplace discussions and threats between recognized states, more comfortable attempts to leave the relationship, and more frequent opportunities for non-compliance whereas asymmetry paves the path for a different sort of communication between the patron and the client. The client needs to adhere by their obligations and the patron needs to respect the needs of the client in order for the relationship to function.

The next criterion that Carney mentions and is present in all discussions is compliance. He also mentions that from a behavioural standpoint, compliance is the most important aspect in patron-client relationships (Carney, 1989). Compliance is conceptualized in this thesis as the extent the client adheres to the demands of the patron and without it, we cannot speak of maintaining this type of relationship. Eisenstadt & Roniger point out to the fact that while there is a high amount of asymmetry in the nature of these relationships, there is also expressed solidarity in terms of personal identity and interpersonal obligations and sentiments (1980, p. 50). Expressed solidarity, while similar to the concept of compliance, can manifest itself in terms of convergence in ideologies, displaying a united front against a mutually conceived other (or enemy) and establishing strong economic ties to further the goals of both sides. The main difference between the two is that while the patron expects compliance with the demands they make from the client, expressed solidarity can only be displayed when the client complies with the demands. Additionally, expressed solidarity results from the combination of affectivity and compliance. Compliance can be measured on a continuum of compliant to non-compliant (Carney, 1989, p. 45). Solidarity is either expressed or not. The continuum of compliance provides a more solid ground for explaining how elite navigations occur, as the physical dependency is high, and affectivity intervenes to determine where compliance will land on the continuum.

Before moving on to mention affectivity, it needs to be stated that the literature also agrees on the fact that patron-client relationships are highly personalized and “operate in markedly different ways” (Wolf, 1966, p. 18). The needs of each patron and client are different,

therefore the resources exchanged are different. Asymmetry varies from case to case, as does compliance. This, in part, explains why there are so many different wordings from different authors working on different cases. It also explains the need to explain affectivity better, as it influences the very nature of the patron-client relationships. All authors included in this thesis agree that kinship, family ties, identity and the establishment of a common enemy play a significant role in the formation and maintenance of the patron-client relationship. The naming of the topic under which these factors are gathered differ from author to author, but nevertheless represent, more or less, the same ideas and connections. The specific nature of these concepts is the most unique part of patron-client relationships. This thesis also utilizes them, under the title of affectivity. However, there is a lack of conceptualizations of how these concepts are formed, and if they can affect the relationship. Furthermore, the question if they are stable ties, which will last forever, or are concepts in flux, begs more explanation.

Affectivity plays a part in how safe the client can feel in the relationship. Since the client is not able to contribute as much as the patron and is aware of their own limitations, they realize that they are heavily dependent on an external source which is significantly stronger than them in terms of military force and economical power. They also realize that a degree of compliance is expected from them, since nothing is as cumbersome as providing high material support in return for almost nothing of equal value. In order to soothe the existential anxieties the client might face, affectivity comes into play. The belief that the identities of the client and the patron are closely tied and are in a fashion which resembles family ties enables the client to establish their ontological security. The patron is perceived as a party which supports the client partly for the sake of the connection between the two sides. Without affectivity, the anxiety resulting from the nonrecognition of the client's own ambitions and capabilities by the patron and more importantly, the client itself would render it dysfunctional. In de facto states, there is also another unchanging source of ontological insecurity, which is nonrecognition by the world. Once affectivity is established and the client's ontological security achieved, at least in their relationship with the patron, disturbances to it can lead to non-compliance and play a substantial role in elite navigations.

Therefore, the next sub-chapter will attempt to explain affectivity, what it represents and how it affects agency and elite navigations through ontological security theory.

1.2 Ontological security

Identity is a complex concept to detect and describe. There are many factors that contribute to what one might call their identity, such as nationality, kinship, family ties, habits, ideas and more aspects of how one perceives life. Identity is not specific to individuals. Tribes, societies, nations and states establish and justify their existence through it. It helps to guide actions, decisions and to make sense of the complicated, sometimes cruel and anarchical life around us. As one proceeds through the timespan of their existence, identity might sometimes come into question and even be threatened. What patron-client relationships describe as affectivity, with its multiple facets, will be explained in this chapter under the umbrella of identity. Ontological security and the outlook it presents provides the grounds on which identity will be dissected in order to understand how affectivity might affect the relationship between the patron and the client.

Ontological security theory and its theorists in IR can be separated into two generations, according to Filip Ejdus (2018). In the first generation of these scholars, Ejdus names Alexander Wendt (1994), Jef Huysmans (1998) and Bill McSweeney (1999). This generation merely imported the concept into world politics but did not name it as a new theory or present empirical applications (Ejdus, 2018, pp. 884-885). The second-generation scholars such as Jennifer Mitzen (2006), Ayşe Zarakol (2010), Brent Steele (2008) and many more (Ejdus, 2018, p. 885) have adopted the state as the unit of analysis for ontological security theory, therefore paving the way for the claims made in this thesis. If we consider the state to be a social structure, while the state might seem like an indivisible entity that has its own peculiar characteristics, it is the networks of individuals (agents) who govern which give it distinct qualities because “agency drives structure” (Steele, 2008). While the idea that the state as a whole experiences ontological security issues is valid, this thesis takes a slightly different approach in incorporating the personal ontological insecurities the political elite might

experience, especially in terms of patron-client relationship where a heavy transactionalism is involved but at the same time identity ties also play a big role. In democracies, being elected to govern is not an easy process. The political elite do not put countless hours and make sacrifices from their personal lives to suddenly lose themselves within the state structure. On the contrary, they assume these positions to implement their vision for the future of the state. The ideas of an individual are closely related to the assumed identity of them, therefore, while it is important to take into account the state's ontological security, the political elites' own interests in establishing their ontological security also needs to be considered. The ontological security concerns of political elites guide the concerns of the state.

Those scholars who associate themselves with the realist approach in international relations have claimed that physical security is the main aim of states and the point of achieving physical security is to ensure survival of the state and maximize the power. The theory described in this sub-chapter challenges that by claiming that states might forgo physical security in exchange for ontological security (Mitzen, 2006; Ejodus, 2018). Although this might be true to some extent, it would be wrong to assume that this means ontological security completely disregards physical security concerns. In his foreword to Steele's widely cited book on ontological security, Neumann states that "states are 'rational egoists' but they base their egoism not upon (independent and exogenous) material structures but upon self-identity needs" (2008). This could be interpreted as assigning the importance of physical security to the theory but connecting it more closely with the need for ensuring the safety of identity. After all, one's existence does rely on the physical possessions one needs to accumulate to ensure their survival. Although at first glance the main goal of states to establish physical security by states can be interpreted as a relentless search for material power to dominate others, the root reason to acquire that power and risk so much is the preservation of the self as the constant anarchy in the international system threatens the continuity of the state.

R.D. Laing, a respected Scottish psychiatrist, claims that a person can have a sense of their presence in the world as a real and continuous one so they can live out into the world and interact with others (1969). Only such a person, who can establish their continuity in the world can be ontologically secure and they “will encounter all the hazards of life, social, ethical, spiritual, biological, from a centrally firm sense of his own and other people’s reality and identity” (Laing, 1969, p. 40). Continuous relationships help the individuals to: 1) confirm their own reality and identity, 2) relate to others as also continuous real beings with their own identity. Out of continuity, who we are as a person is established and without the establishment of such structures, existence poses a heavy burden. Laing uses Lionel Trilling’s (1955) distinction between Shakespeare and Kafka’s characters (Laing, 1969, pp. 39-40) to point out the difference between a person who experiences life as real and one who does not. Although Shakespeare’s characters endure devastating tragedies, they still have loved ones and continuous relationships to establish who they are even under the most troubling circumstances. Kafka’s characters, however, have nothing but their abstract humanity to rely on with no loved ones, “no connections with power, beauty, love, wit, courage, loyalty of fame and the pride to be taken in these” (Trilling, 1955, as cited by Laing, 1969, p. 40). These concepts, however one may look at them, make one realize themselves as real. Without them, life becomes a burden one goes through until it somehow ends, without feeling alive. This is similar to de facto states describing themselves as real states, but never being recognized as real, leaving them in a state of continuous doubt about their identity and place in the world.

Adapting ontological security theory into sociology utilizing Laing’s work, Anthony Giddens, an English sociologist this time, describes ontological security as “a sense of continuity and order in events” (1991, p. 243). Continuity and order allow individuals to develop habits, and they are some of the ways the individual makes sense of the world. Ted Hopf claims that “habits do not produce change; reflection on one’s habits does” (2010, p. 555). There is always the chance that continuity and order might fall apart, leaving one alone to deal with the horrors of suddenly changing habits. In the case that one cannot keep practicing their habits (a break in continuity), an anxiety about themselves and the outside world develops. Although anxiety is commonly perceived as a negative feeling, according to

Kierkegaard, it is bound up with freedom and capacity for choosing between alternative possibilities (1981). At this moment of anxiety, one reflects on their habits, makes judgments on their validity and usefulness for realizing one's identity and anxiety can provide a way out of the current situation, if one does not give into the paralysing effects that often attend anxiety. Although in life, at any moment, a situation that disrupts one's sense of continuity may arrive in forms that threaten any established relationship, this not to say that ontological security "presupposes a threat to identity itself but underlines an ongoing concern with its stability" (Rumelili, 2013, p. 57).

The stability of identity is required for the actors to have an idea what to expect as without it, "she cannot systematically relate ends to means and it becomes unclear how to pursue her ends" (Mitzen, 2006, p. 342). Uncertainty such as the one the de facto states face regarding their future undermines the ontological security of them. The imagined self must be operationalized in the actions of the state, but also has to be reflected by the outside world. To be able to validate this reflection the state needs to imagine others to also have a constant identity. Chernobrov argues that "inability to imagine others triggers inability to imagine and maintain self" (2016, p. 582). This problem is overcome by establishing a constant identity through routines in society, healthy basic trust and perception of lacks as temporary (Mitzen, 2006). The patron is the closest source that can provide such needs of the client state, but as evident from the vagueness of the terms, these cannot be provided in material means. A possible way to establish them is through shared values such as kinship, family ties, identity and a common enemy, hence affectivity. If successful in building these ties with the patron state, the de facto states can imagine and maintain the image of self while being constantly challenged by the international community. Establishing a common enemy also helps, as it gives the state another way of imagining itself other than the ties with the patron. Stranger anxiety turns into the enemy other (Volkan, 1988), and helps the state to identify itself in this enemy, supporting the continuity of its identity.

Establishment of an enemy other brings us to the question of how this is performed. In de facto states, where conflicts are the reason for the founding of the state, past grievances play

a big role in identifying the enemy. According to Rumelili, “identity is constituted not through any routine, but specifically those that articulate difference and distinctiveness” (2013, p. 56). Whether real differences or distinctive features between the self and the other exist, or how divisive they can truly be are unimportant factors in supporting the constructed identity. History is turned into “chosen traumas” (Volkan, 1997, p. 36) or “chosen glories” (Volkan, 1997, p. 81). Chosen traumas refer to events that might have caused grievances to the group, and their ways of remembering them. Chosen glories on the other hand contribute to the ontological security of the group by providing stories that tell of the victories past and the victories to come, as they represent how the group wants to see themselves in the real world, regardless of the outcomes. Both of these concepts are closely related to images of the nation (Kinnvall, 2004 p. 756). They are but one of many ways identity as different and distinct can be constructed in the tradition of the nation state. Once they are established, they need to be reproduced through “a rich set of identity markers” (Rumelili, 2013, p. 56).

One of the clearly identified set of identity markers in the literature are the “ontic spaces” of Filip Ejodus (2017). He claims that not only social, but material environments are also sources of ontological security. They can range from damaged buildings left standing (such as the ones in Berlin), monuments, museums, and public sights. There is an undeniable interconnectedness between a state’s identity construction and the establishment of ontic spaces. These material environments are created to affirm the state’s identity, and only when they are incorporated into the narrative, they can be called ontic spaces (Ejodus, 2017). When one walks by a statue erected for the fallen soldiers in a war for the existence of the state, they will inevitably think about the discourses they have heard before about the statue and how it relates to the identity of the state. In some cases, these spaces might even be considered holy and untouchable, and be subject to wide public discussions, therefore reproduced by the public. Ontic spaces help in leaving out the unwanted and disputed aspects of a state’s identity and further affirm the sense of a common and continuous identity.

Providing an autobiography for the group can also be a vital identity marker, and it is how a state chooses to narrate itself to the outside world. Autobiography provides justification and

a “good past” (Subotić, 2016, p. 614) to the group, therefore affirming their sense of identity. Maria Mälksoo similarly describes it as a “biographical narrative of central importance for state identity” (2019, p. 379), “because it is the locus through which agents “work out” their understanding of social settings and the placement of their Selves in those settings” (Steele, 2008, pg. 7). These narrations are heavily influenced by the chosen traumas and glories de facto states have embraced as constituting their identity. They can range from human rights violations to military victories against the parent state and become justified reasons for the existence of a state which are largely denied by the outside world. However, these reasons are not only denied, but also disputed by the international community. What might be an indisputable fact that justifies the existence of a de facto state in its respective public discourse, can be reason for the disputation of the same existence in the international scene. Not only the ignorance of the community of a state’s existence is a danger to its ontological security, but they also need to deal with any claims that dispute the biography they write for themselves. As Chernobrov puts it, “a self is a narrated biography and a rupture to its coherence makes it ontologically insecure” (2016, p. 586).

Ontological insecurity occurs when a state fails to confirm its continuity. According to Kinnvall, it is “a state of disruption where the Self has lost its anchor for the definition of its identity” (2004). However a state might choose to describe itself, ontological insecurity occurs; a) when it is not recognized by the others as carrying these qualities; b) when its continuous relationships are broken and/or disrupted; and/or c) when they cannot reach the goals necessary to confirm the existence of the state through self-realization. This is the point at which states experience the anxiety required for them to revise their established ways and to devise new ones. When de facto states are considered, it can be observed that two of the circumstances mentioned above occur constantly. First is that de facto states are unrecognized by the international community, therefore the autobiography they have developed for themselves as sovereign, independent states is constantly challenged, resulting in ontological insecurity which cannot easily be overcome because of the political nature of nonrecognition. Second, as the goal for de facto states is recognition of self-determination claims, when these cannot be achieved on the long term, ontological insecurity sets in. Steele

draws attention to the importance of identity disconnects, as a result of both nonrecognition and failure to self-realize argued by this thesis, by stating that “agents must perceive that they are capable agents, or they must possess a capacity to alter/prevent/transform these critical situations so that they no longer threaten their identity” (2008, p. 12). These two sources of ontological insecurity are a result of exclusion from the international community, therefore extremely hard to change.

The third source of ontological insecurity can come from an unpredictable relationship between the patron and the client state. Most of the time, when identity (affectivity) concerns are left out of the relationship, there are plenty of patrons around for the client state to associate themselves with if they have ontological security concerns. Material concerns can easily be addressed by another strong patron, perhaps even a rival of the old one. However, ontological security that was established by the continuous relationship consisting of kinship and identity ties with the patron, and the anxiety that results from altercations in these relationships are hard to overcome. Identities are in flux, and they can change on a macro or micro level. The patron and the client might both experience identity changes, and if they happen simultaneously and in the same direction, ontological security can be established. However, if they are not, then the patron might be able to walk out of the relationship relatively easier, but the client cannot because it is still tied to the patron with material concerns. This is when elite navigations are most prone to occur, as the domestic demands in the client state will be different than what the patron imagines their shared identity to be, while some level of compliance must still be maintained by the client state in order to guarantee the flow of the resources needed to attain their goals. The client has more ways to achieve its ontological security in its dealings with the patron because the patron recognizes them as a state. It needs to be clearly stated that no matter how effectively the client manages to secure its identity in the patron-client relationship, as long as nonrecognition is maintained by the international community, the client will be in constant ontological insecurity. The sense of recognition and agency derived from the patron-client relationship cannot fully meet all the ontological security needs of the client as the world is bigger than just the patron itself.

In their article criticizing the identity centred approach of ontological security theory, Browning and Joenniemi claim that “identities are better viewed as crucial elements in the self’s attempts at achieving it” (2016, p. 32). Reflexivity on identity is deemed to have great importance because according to them, ontological security requires: 1) a reflexive capacity to adapt routines, and identities to new situations, 2) purposive meaningful engagement with who one wants to be. (Browning and Joenniemi, 2016, p.44). Self-realization is of utmost importance for a state to establish its continuity in its own perception, and without it ontological security cannot go beyond being an abstract concept only existing in perceptions. This might be true to some extent, but the concerns for the stability of identity cannot be forgotten in the discussion. Hence, it is argued in this thesis that while stability is of great importance in terms of recognition by the outside, the state also needs to be able to realize the goals it sets for itself. The whole purpose of establishing a state for one’s own community is to realize what is decided to be best for them, by themselves, without outside interference. If nonrecognition and incoherent patron demands prevent the state from obtaining those goals, it means that they cannot achieve what they set out to do in the first place. This causes great ontological insecurity as the de facto state cannot attain its goal of the recognition of self-determination claims, leading the shared identity and its benefits to be questioned by the client state. In the empirical section of this thesis, attempts will be made to prove these claims through the case selected.

Before moving on to elite navigations, a final summary of this sub-chapter and a specification of how this framework fits in to the research are required. Affectivity and its components, kinship, family ties, identity and common enemies are constructed concepts which require a theory such as ontological security to explain how they affect the patron-client relationship. The material nature of other dependencies discussed under reciprocity, compliance and asymmetry are simply not enough for a patron or a client to maintain such a relationship. Affectivity ties help actors in these relationships understand what to expect from the other side as the relationship progresses. For the client, the resources gained by entering in a relationship with the patron are important, but those resources are a means to an end, which is recognition of self-determination claims in de facto states. If the exchange with the patron

does not support these goals, then the relationship enters a state in which the client's ontological security is disgruntled. If the continuity of the relationship is broken by the patron, what to expect from them becomes uncertain and ontological insecurity occurs. This situation is worse for de facto states because they are already in a state of ontological insecurity, because of nonrecognition of their statehood and their failure to attain the goals associated with the identity of the state.

De facto states are in a constraining relationship with their patrons, no matter which specific one is selected as a case. This results from the heavy dependency on the exchange of material resources and the contributions of the patron to the de facto state's physical security. An election in the patron state might result in the acquisition of power by a group that looks at the relationship with the client in a completely different light. Because the political elite of the de facto state cannot easily break the ties both material and identity, in addition to being brokers, they also become navigators of a relationship in which each side does not know what to expect from the other. According to Steele, "before agents interact, there is already a bias about which forms of social action truly represent rational and perhaps appropriate behaviour and which do not." (2008, p. 36). In a situation where agents change, and the modus operandi of the social action changes, all expectations become uncertainties, therefore leaving room for elite navigations in order to satisfy both the domestic demands and the patron demands. It proves to be an especially tough operation in cases where the rift between the identities of the patron and the client expands over time.

1.3 Elite navigations

Different states have different modus operandi when it comes to governing their internal and external relationships. Depending on the relative power of the state, in terms of both physical and ontological means to achieve their goals and self-actualize, different modes of diplomacy and governance takes place, specific to each of them. While for some states it is easier to achieve self-help through accumulating the resources they need, for de facto states help is needed from the patron or the parent state. Aid comes in forms of political, military,

economic and cultural support. While the first three can be measured in material resources for the de facto state to attain its goals of independence and recognition, the last one manifests itself in ties of identity, kinship and family. The search for the material resources and how it is located depends on which patron is the strongest in terms of the ability to provide, but also is closer to the assumed identity of the client. Once these ties are established, the costs of backing out or non-compliance are higher for the client state as their physical security will come under jeopardy. Even though the former (backing out), because of the physical and ontological costs attributed to it is seen rarely in international affairs, as was argued in the previous sub-chapter, the latter (non-compliance) can be observed with the right tools.

Patron-client relationships theory provides this research with solid grounds for the observation of elite navigations. A distinction between pure dependency relationships, and patron-client relationships was provided in the first sub-chapter. Precisely because they are distinct from pure dependency relationships, patron-client relationships allow elite navigations to occur. The involuntary aspects of a dependency relationship cancel the need to establish affectivity. The flexibility and the 'friendship' between the patron and the client required to maintain the relationship simply does not exist in dependency relationships as they are involuntary and vertical relationships. Therefore, elite navigations can occur only because this is a relationship based on exchanges of goods. The exchange is important as clients can sometimes accumulate resources in different markets, which do not reflect their low standing in the relationship and can threaten the monopoly of the patron (Eisenstadt&Roniger, 1980, p. 61). If affectivity which is pointed out by the literature to exist in patron-client relationships is a vital aspect of such relationships, then ontological security theory provides the necessary tools to analyse its repercussions on the client state as the most advanced theory which focuses on identity. The reasons of discords in identity, and consequent disagreements for the future of the client state itself and of the patron-client relationship, need to be clarified with the utilization of ontological security theory in order to better understand the dynamics of elite navigations in de facto states. Through a better analysis of elite navigations, agency in de facto states can also be pinpointed more accurately.

The client state that was chosen as a case for this thesis, also happens to be a de facto one. The reason for that is, as was stated earlier, while patron-client relationships exist in many facets of international relations, they become easier to detect when their benefits are dominant in the state institutions and the flow of resources needed to maintain and develop them. Henceforth, de facto state and client state need to be understood as synonymous when used. Elite navigations are the result of a strain between the physical and ontological needs of the client state. The concept can be conceptualized as the attempts of the political elite to exploit domestic demands in their dealings with the patron state to defy, demand or dictate patronage. They occur when; 1) the patron exploits the vulnerability of the de facto states in their dealings with the rest of the world (to exert power); 2) the cost of abandoning the patron is too high physically; 3) the ontological security of the de facto state is threatened. Stuck between the domestic demands to self-actualize by obtaining recognition and independence, and the physical and ontological dependencies on the patron, the political elite are left with no choice but to become brokers and navigators to ensure the survival of the de facto state.

The elite defies the patron state's demands outright in an atmosphere where the patron refuses to communicate and come to a common ground between the demands it makes and the goals of the elite of the client state. Defiance is a result of high ontological insecurity and the exhaustion of diplomatic and bureaucratic means to stall and refuse the demands altogether. Defiance is usually followed with dictating of patronage by the political elite. Since this is a relationship of exchanges between the patron and the client, when a demand is defied another point of view needs to be dictated to the patron in order to establish ontological security once again and to continue the exchanges needed for physical and economic security. The patron might succumb to these because it also has gains beneficial to its own goals. Dictation also utilizes diplomacy as the counter-demands need to be presented in a fashionable way because the client is still dependent on the patron in many fields. Bureaucracy is also important as functioning democratic institutions and their decisions can be used as excuses and ways to dictate demands. Last but not least, demanding patronage occurs when the physical, economic and/or ontological insecurity the client feels has a source other than the patron. These sources can be another political elite or party within the client state that acts contrary

to the public demands and goals of the state, or a third party which is threatening the client. Demands are presented through diplomatic channels, and the personal qualities of the elite in charge assume great importance. The ability to establish good relations with the patron prove useful in terms of achieving the demands.

Another role that the political elites assume within the scope of elite navigations concerns the direct association of individuals as providers of security by establishing the communication between the de facto state and the rest of the world. The position of the president of a de facto state is often interacted with by the international community on the basis of these individuals being leaders of their respective communities. Since official recognition does not exist, direct and formal connections with state institutions are often through the political elite and the de facto state relies heavily on the individual and their skills to establish contact with the outside world. The individuals who assume the top positions of the de facto state are also the ones in direct contact with the patrons, especially in cases of elite navigations. Navigations consist of non-compliance with the patron demands, and they are guided by the political elite, thus the target of the patron state in protest is often the president. Therefore, when one assumes the position of president, it comes with already established expectations of the client state's constituents to guide the discussions on security issues and as a direct communication link to the patron state to balance the domestic demands against patron demands. Furthermore, the more extensive the services provided to the client, the more concrete the role-sets operating at the individual level become (Lemarchand and Legg, 1972, p. 154).

Although the focus of the patron state might be on the president as the political elite who guides the de facto state and the position of elites might be strengthened by the widespread clientship, Caspersen argues that most unrecognized states have witnessed a gradual shift in power away from authoritarian war heroes and towards some form of proto-democracy (2011, p. 342). Since de facto states emerge out of conflicts the wartime leaders gain importance in governing the country after the conflict is over. One of the four central factors of politics of de facto states is military victory (Caspersen, 2012, p. 32), and the leaders to

victory later assume positions of political elite. It is true that in authoritarian states individuals are the sole marker of authority and governance, hence the wide support accumulated by the elites. However, this does not explain why the public vote is influenced by individuals and their vision for the future of the state in democratic de facto states. Democratization allows for the free expression of contradicting ideas, but elites still carry more importance than their respective political parties. This baffling reality is why elite navigations focus on the individual as the unit of analysis and by staying within the parameters of ontological security theory, the concept can also explain why individuals gain such importance in de facto states in patron-client relationships.

First, because the discourse around the identity ties with the patron and the autobiography of the de facto state is narrated by the political elite, there is a tendency to associate individuals as the center of these politics (and more often than not, they are). Second, de facto states usually own small territories occupied by a population which is also small in numbers. In these societies, there are close ties within the public as most people know each other in some way. The leaders tend to draw more attention to themselves as defenders of the “precarious existence” (Caspersen, 2012, p. 32) of a de facto state in such small communities. Third, because the international community interacts with the de facto state through its ‘leader of the community’ they become a representative of the continuousness of the limited relationship, especially in talks of conflict resolution. Fourth, Eisenstadt and Roniger claim that “in pluralistic societies, attempts to counter the power of monopolist patrons are usually made through the combined activities of various elites in the center and the broader groups to which the clients belong” (1980, p. 75). Elites in the center is self-explanatory, and the broader groups can be interpreted as the constituents of the political elite.

In this sub-chapter, the concept of elite navigations was unpacked. While examples of navigations in the de facto states exist because they are mostly regarded as puppet states the attempts at exercising agency have gone unnoticed. One example has been provided by Urban Jaksa, in his attempts to prove agency in de facto states in his work on Abkhazian foreign policy (2019) and the author also utilizes ontological security theory. This thesis, in

an attempt to further the literature on the question of ontological security in de facto states, has developed the concept of elite navigations in order to understand better and further prove the existence of agency in these internationally problematic territories. Elite navigations occur because the specifics of patron-client relationships allow them, and ontological security can take precedence over physical security issues. In other words, ontological insecurity and the anxiety resulting from it motivate the elite to navigate around the patron and domestic demands. They happen on the individual level and the political elite shape the future of the state by guiding the actions it takes and the public associates them with the continuity of the state. After dedicating a small space of this thesis to discuss how elite navigations relate to the concept of agency and the current state of the literature on the relationship between the de facto states and their patrons, a brief summary of the theoretical framework will be provided. The chapter will be concluded with expectations from the application of the theories to the case selected.

1.4 Elite navigations and agency

Agency in IR could be conceptualized as the ability of the state to affect the international affairs meaningfully in order to achieve its authentic goals. In other words, its “capacity to do” (Berg&Vits, 2020b, p. 380) These goals vary from state to state. While some states might choose to pursue military and economic goals, others might follow their ambitions to see their ideologies and norms take roots in other states. However, as Berg&Vits suggest, “the concept of agency remains underdeveloped in IR” (2020b, p. 380). This is especially true with our current understanding of de facto states’ agency. Just as goals of states vary, the specifics of agency and how it is exerted also varies. The difference between how agency is performed in de jure and de facto states is especially important for understanding de facto states. There are degrees that even recognized states can successfully exert their agency and de facto states can easily be overlooked in the discussions of agency because of their dependence on their patron or parent states in multiple areas. Nevertheless, agency in de facto states exist to the attentive eye, and it can be argued that because it has been overlooked for some time, we just lack the necessary tools to detect and analyse it correctly. Therefore, the

approach built in this thesis not only aims to provide evidence for the existence of elite navigations but also suggests that elite navigations can be a good indicator for agency in de facto states therefore contributing to improving our understanding of the concept of agency.

Capacity to do is especially constrained in the case of de facto states because they lack the resources to effectively pursue their goals due to their small size and lack of international recognition. According to Berg&Vits “‘the capacity to do’ is centred around the interactions of states and is most often tied to the external juridical dimensions of sovereignty; that is, only those entities which have succeeded in acquiring recognition are seen as states and hence, as agents” (2020b, p.380). Nonrecognition combined with dependence on a patron or parent state in the case of de facto states has resulted in a perception that does not assign any agency in these states. Challenging this very perception, Berg&Vits have suggested three areas which can help identify how de facto states exert their agency; 1) role in conflict management and conflict resolution processes, 2) capability to enter into international relations, 3) capability to counter the patron (2020b, p. 380). While these three factors present the grounds to begin assessing agency in de facto states, a specific theoretical framework in order to detect whether the role and capabilities of the de facto state exists remains unclear.

Elite navigations and the theoretical framework built in this thesis comes into play at this moment to shed further light on how to determine agency in de facto states. The attempts at achieving their own political will by defying, demanding or dictating patronage fall directly in line with the extent of the agency de facto states can prove. Since it was mentioned that agency consists of goals authentic to the state, when patron demands contrary to the de facto states’ goals cause ontological insecurity, their agency will also be undermined. Feeling as an effective agent is important for de facto states and Berg&Vits claim that “often de facto states are eager to participate in negotiations for the air of acknowledgement it creates” (2020b, p. 382). Through elite navigations, de facto states can feel their agency at work. Furthermore, this air of acknowledgement provides the de facto state with the ontological security it requires. How the de facto state can navigate through the patron demands to exert its own political will in conflict management and resolution processes, international relations

it enters and its dealings with the patron itself provide a way to further prove agency in de facto states. Effective navigations of patron demands are clear proof that de facto states are entities with their own aspirations and ways of achieving their goals. Therefore, elite navigations not only prove agency, but they also explain the specifics needed for the successful performing of it.

1.5 De facto states and patron states

Most studies interested in patron-client relationships utilize the sources which were also used in this thesis. It is rare to find a scholarly work on patron-client relationships between recognized states, let alone finding one which focuses on the peculiar relationship between a de facto state and its patron. However, patron states are mentioned often in the literature, indicating that their existence is widely accepted. Scott Pegg lists heavy dependence on a patron as one of the 5 factors for de facto state development (2017). Caspersen mentions that there is no alternative but to rely on a patron state because of nonrecognition by the international community, and the impossibility of survival without a patron state (2009, p. 51). Berg&Toomla claim that “in most cases de facto states need external patrons to make their voices heard and interests considered” (2009, p. 30) in the international community. While all these claims are valid, this thesis builds upon these ideas to present a more detailed insight on how these relationships function in real life politics and how they are navigated by the political elite. Kolstø claims that “the president is the fulcrum around which political life revolves” (2020a, p. 9) and the reason for that is “besieged fortress syndrome” (2020a, p. 9). The aftermath of civil war and total international isolation creates the sense that it is essential to rally around the leader (Kolstø, 2020a, p. 9). While this is a sound explanation, this thesis argues that political life and the patron-client relationship can be affected by other political elite as well.

Diving deeper into the specifics of the relationship, Kolstø mentions, in another work, that leaders of de facto states can utilize domestic pressures to provide them with the necessary upper hand they might need in the patron-client relationship (2020b, p. 142) and that the relationship between the de facto state and its patron is particularly asymmetrical (2020b,

p.143). Asymmetry is extremely important in determining patron-client relationships and it directly affects the ability of elites to navigate the relationship. However, specifically how they are able to navigate the relationship begs for further explanation and it is closely tied with affectivity. This thesis aims to further the claims of Kolstø by explaining affectivity with ontological security. A different article which focuses on trust between the patron and the client and its effects on trade has found that on the three vectors the research analyses, Abkhazia suffers from distrust in all three of its relationships (Blakkisrud, Kemoklidze, Gelashvili&Kolstø, 2020 p. 18). The approach developed in this thesis can explain the distrust by utilizing affectivity and ontological security. Furthermore, as agency is closely related to exerting one's own political will, Blakkisrud&Kolstø have examined the 2016 elections in Transnistria and have tried to determine if agency truly exists in de facto states by utilizing part of Shoemaker&Spanier's claims on patron-client relationships (2017). Furthering the idea, this thesis utilizes a range of widely cited works in patron-client relationships theory, more cases and detailed research to expand the understanding of the relationship between the de facto states and their patrons.

1.6 Summary and expectations

Research on patron-client relationships is central to deciphering the complicated process of effective exercise of agency by de facto states. Voluntary participation and exchange of goods are the most important factors in these connections. Relationships of this nature can be identified through the four factors specified in the first sub-chapter. Reciprocity gives an idea about the specific needs of the patron and the client and how they are exchanged. Asymmetry, although it is seen in the general resources as well, provides an outlook into how imbalance in the military forces shape the relationship. Compliance aids in the maintenance of the exchange and can be measured on a continuum. Last one is affectivity, and it is a more complicated factor consisting of abstract concepts such as kinship, family ties, identity and a common enemy. Without affectivity, the maintenance of the patron-client relationship is almost impossible as these social ties regulate the lopsidedness of the relationship. The sense of friendship derived from affectivity prohibits the patron from becoming a tyrant which

takes whatever it wishes from the client. Additionally, the sense of friendship provides the client with a sense of ontological security as it is impossible for it to maintain the relationship by only providing material goods in exchange for the patron's services and still justify that the state is independent.

Affectivity was explained through ontological security in the second sub-chapter, hence providing an insight into how this factor affects the patron-client relationship. Through the understanding of how ontological security is established, seemingly irrational decisions such as non-compliance can also be analysed. Ontological security provides the actor with a sense of continuity and order, to achieve the goals they have set for themselves in order to self-actualize and affirm their existence. For de facto states this is especially important because their existence is constantly denied by the international community. Last but not least, in this chapter elite navigations were developed as a concept. They have not been developed under this title in neither patron-client relationships nor in ontological security literature. They serve as an explanation to situations in which a de facto state is in a patron-client relationship and is experiencing ontological insecurity. Without a threat to the ontological security of the state, there is no need to navigate around the patron's demands. If they comply with the imagined identity of the state, they will be implemented immediately. Hence, the expectations of the thesis are to: 1) provide evidence that elite navigations occur when a de facto state is engaged in an ontologically challenging patron-client relationship and is experiencing ontological insecurity from it in addition to the ones that stem from non-recognition and failure of self-realization, 2) prove agency in de facto states by the implementation of these theories to the case selected.

2. Research Design, Data and Methods

In this chapter the research design, data and methods used in this thesis will be explained. The thesis consists of a single-case study. It was already mentioned that each patron-client relationship has its own dynamics and because of that reason a single-case study was an obvious choice in the research design of this thesis. This might pose some problems for

generalizability of the framework but to prove that it in fact is a problem, application to other cases would be required. Opting to use a single-case study also allows the thesis to be clear and concise, as qualitative matters such as assessing ontological security of a state is a complex feat in itself. Furthermore, the space limitations of a master's thesis would have definitely been pushed, if not broken completely, if other cases were to be discussed. Although there are two parties involved, the patron and the client, the focus is on the client and how they are able to manage the relationship. Hence the single-case nature of the study. Some data on the material capacities and the changing identity of the patron were included but these are basic data to present a clear frame for the relationship.

The data collection focused on the client state. There are two reasons for that. First is that the outlook of the patron has already been analysed by many scholars. Second is that because the client state is a de facto state, its agency has already been counted out by some. Therefore, there are not many works that focus on the client's experience in the relationship. This has resulted in a lack of clear explanations of some deviant behaviour from the client and crises between the patron state and the de facto state. If this thesis were to focus mainly on the patron, then it would stray far from its goals of contributing to the literature of de facto states. It would also sacrifice some of the explanatory power it claims to have on fields that have not been explored in satisfying depth. For the reasons listed above, the single-case study approach focusing on the client state was deemed to be the most efficient approach in terms of attaining the goals of the thesis. In the following sub-chapters, case selection, data collection and methods will be explained.

2.1 Case selection

The case selected for this thesis is Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (the de facto state will be referred to as TRNC/Northern Cyprus/North Cyprus as these are the most common ways of referral currently in use) and its patron-client relationship with Turkey. There are multiple reasons for picking TRNC. One of them is that the author is half Turkish and half Turkish Cypriot with a native language of Turkish. Born and raised in Turkey, but frequently

visiting Northern Cyprus throughout his life, the author has witnessed the relationship from both sides. This, combined with the native language of Turkish, enabled the author to conduct extensive research on the case and to adopt a localized but still scientific outlook to the events that were subject to research. While the personal connections of the author are important, another vital characteristic of the relationship between Turkey and TRNC is close ties of kinship. It could be argued that the patron and client states in this relationship are the ones that display the connection of kinship best among current de facto states. The heavy dependency of TRNC in matters of physical and economic security, and the changing identity of Turkey influencing the course of the relationship affect the dynamics of the exchanges between the two states. For these reasons, the relationship was deemed to provide great conditions to test the theoretical approach built in this thesis.

It is not enough just to explain the extent of patron-client relationships as this thesis also focuses on the ontological security of TRNC and elite navigations. In order to fully display the theoretical approach, four events were picked from important events in TRNC's public and political history. Although they will be explained in more depth in the empirical section, it is helpful to mention them briefly to explain why they were selected. First of these events which will be mentioned is the unilateral opening of the Green Line between TRNC and Republic of Cyprus in 2003. The second one is the three Joint Declarations made between the two sides in 2008. Third one is the crisis between Turkey and TRNC over the management rights of the water pipeline which started providing service in 2015. Last but not least, are the crises over education protocols demanded to be signed by Turkey in 2016 and 2019. Selecting which specific events to include was based on the importance of these events. Importance here was determined by how much concern, coverage and attention these cases got from the local media in the de facto state. These events were picked from a time period where pro-unification sentiments in the Turkish Cypriots were high. What pro-unification represents for Turkish Cypriots will be discussed in the empirical section. Another one of the considerations when selecting these events was to include both major ones which concern internal issues and also external ones. To explain further, education and pipeline issues are strictly internal ones for TRNC whereas the opening of the borders and joint

declarations consist of a third party, which is Republic of Cyprus. This allows the thesis to test elite navigations in both areas of sovereignty. Since Turkey has an active presence both on the island and in its affairs as one of the guarantor states, its involvement in all these events were inevitable, eliminating the chance that the patron state might not be involved in the cases at all.

2.2 Data collection

Three sources of data were included in this thesis. One of them is news articles from local newspapers in TRNC and some from Turkey. For the more recent events, such as the ones in 2015, 2016 and 2019, some of the data was easily found in the online publication of newspapers. For the years 2003 and 2008, and more extensive news articles for the other years mentioned, the author conducted his research on physical copies of newspapers in the extensive Cyprus Newspaper Archives located in Famagusta, North Cyprus within the library of the Eastern Mediterranean University. Because researchers were forbidden to check out any of the newspapers, photos of them were taken by the author and then carefully analysed to collect the necessary data which was used in the thesis. The data from the newspaper articles were comprised from well over 400 news articles which were about the events selected for examination. The newspapers to use were selected based on their popularity within the local population and most articles were from *Kıbrıs* and *Yenidüzen*. Another source of data was scholarly articles published in journals and books. These works provided some outlook on the general dependency on Turkey, identity perspectives of TRNC and some of the events selected.

The third source of data was interviews with experts and political elites, past and present. Within the scope of the research, two professors in Eastern Mediterranean University, one former Minister of Education and Culture and two former presidents of TRNC were interviewed. The participants were asked about their recollections and comments about the general relationship between Turkey and TRNC, and also the specific events mentioned earlier. The interviewees were selected based on their expertise on the subject and their direct roles as ruling elites in the events under examination in this thesis. The interviews themselves

were designed as semi-structured ones to allow for further exploration of the personal experiences and ideas of the participants. They were conducted face to face, taking the necessary precautions the pandemic demands. All interviewees signed consent forms informing them of the research. The interviews were recorded with the voice recorder on the author's mobile phone and the recordings were deleted after they were turned into transcripts. None of the interviewees have wished to remain anonymous and they have confirmed it verbally. All interviewees have the contact info of the author in case they wish to ask questions or change their preference on anonymity. The transcripts are stored on the authors personal computer, protected with a password only the author knows. Excerpts from the transcripts of the interviews were used in the empirical section of the thesis. The funding for this research was provided by the Archimedes Foundation's Kristjan Jaak short study visit scholarship.

2.3 Process-tracing

To correctly utilize the data collected to explain the case and events through the theoretical framework built in this thesis, the method of process-tracing was determined to be useful because the main analysis made in the empirical section is within-case. Bennett&George state that the "general method of process-tracing is to generate and analyse data on the causal mechanisms, or processes, events, actions, expectations, and other intervening variables, that link putative causes to observed effects" (1997, p. 5). Process-tracing follows historical processes in specific cases and attempts to analyse them to link the causes which are thought to exist and the effects historical processes under examination have caused in real life. Because elite navigations happen as a result of causal mechanisms, such as patron demands, domestic demands and/or threats to ontological security, they happen over time. The input needs to be faced by the elite, the situation analysed and then navigated. The initial input may change over time because of changes, additions and subtractions of variables. These phenomena occur over time and therefore, in order to fully understand and accurately assess how the navigations happens, process-tracing is necessary as it allows to trace these processes and see if the theoretical expectations are reflected by the historical reality of the situation. The technique utilized in this thesis will consist of process verification to determine if the

theoretical expectations are fulfilled by objective evidence from variables within the events subject to examination. The variables that will be analysed in the processes are: 1) threats to the ontological security of the client state, 2) whether domestic support and/or demand exists or not, 3) the political elites' personal qualities.

We cannot alter historical circumstances to see if they fit our theory when a variable or variables within it are changed. Our speculations on the ifs of history are controversial at best and cannot provide adequate scientific data for any academic work. Therefore, in order to prove our theoretical expectations, we need to accurately assess historical processes and “observe the actual causal effect of that variable” (Bennett&George, 1997, p.1). What was performed in this thesis, and process-tracing overall is not a historical narrative because “it requires converting a purely historical account that implies or asserts a causal sequence into an analytical explanation couched in theoretical variables that have been identified in the research design” (Bennett&George, 1997, p. 6). To explain more basically, the findings from the research were systematically analysed in light of the research expectations and theoretical framework outlined in this thesis. The data collection was formed around the necessities of process-tracing. The efforts to gather data were towards providing accurate and reliable information on the processes leading to elite navigations and how they were performed. In this chapter, the research design, case selection, data collection and methods to analyse the collected data were discussed. In the next chapter, the relationship, physical dependencies and affectivity between TRNC and Turkey will be analysed within the scope of patron-client relationships and ontological security theories.

3. Patron-Client Relations and Level of TRNC Dependence on Turkey

Elite navigations are shaped by the nature of the relationship between the patron and the client. How much room there is to defy, demand or dictate patronage is based on how fulfilled the security needs of the client are. Therefore, it is vital to understand both the material and identity specifics of the relationship. The defining qualities of a patron-client relationship were outlined in the first chapter and in this chapter, they will be applied to the peculiar relationship between Turkey and TRNC. First, a brief history of the Cyprus conflict will be

presented, then the general qualities of the Turkey-TRNC relationship that has developed since 1974 will be examined with a special focus on the period after 2002. This first section could be described as introductory, providing the necessary but concise knowledge to understand the framework of the relationship. In the sub-chapters which follow, the asymmetry, reciprocity, compliance and most importantly, affectivity will be utilized to define the circumstances of the physical, economic and ontological security (or insecurity) TRNC obtains by engaging in its relationship with its patron state. The benefits and constraints implied by these factors are important to establish in order to clearly define the contexts which have shaped the relationship and elite navigations.

In 1959, Turkey was one of the sides to sign the Zurich Agreement and more specifically, the Treaty of Guarantee which entitled the state as one of the guarantors of the Republic of Cyprus which was later formed in 1960. Although the republic was formed, the tensions mounted between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, because of demonstrations of public will against British colonizers to enact *Enosis* which consists of the idea of unification of Cyprus with Greece. In reply to that *Taksim* was demanded which asked for a separate living space for the Turkish Cypriots. The growing violence between the two sides has resulted in the establishment of the Green Line by the UN in 1964 which was extended in 1974 after the intervention of Turkey in the same year. Since then, Cyprus has been a divided island between the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which we now call a de facto state. The conflict has led to the displacement of thousands from both Greek and Turkish Cypriot sides which left the TRNC with an abundance of resources such as factories filled with machinery, luxury hotels, agricultural lands and habitation areas which the small Turkish Cypriot population was unable to fill. Many immigrants from Turkey were brought to the island in order to fill the open positions for the workforce needed for production. The technical know-how and expertise were also provided by some of these immigrants and furthermore, students from TRNC were accepted into Turkey's universities in order for them to receive the necessary education on how to use these resources effectively.

In 1983, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was formed, with no international recognition except for its patron state, Turkey. The Turkish Cypriots have been legally isolated from the international community since 1974, and the founding of TRNC only worsened the situation. Rauf Raif Denktaş, who was a wartime leader for Turkish Cypriots, became the first president of the de facto state, and has served as its president for 21 years, 5 months and 9 days. As a political elite, Mr. Denktaş believed that a federated solution was not possible, and the Turkish and Greek Cypriots could not live next to each other without the Turkish Cypriots being under an existential threat whether it be violence or assimilation. Although the Turkish Cypriots were supportive of reunification especially after the year 2000, President Denktaş had the patron's full support in the negotiations for a solution. Mehmet Ali Talat, the second president who was in close contact with Mr. Denktaş has described the situation as "Mr. Denktaş would come to an agreement with Turkey and would repeat the terms in the negotiations" (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021). The governments in Turkey were also not keen on a possible reunification of the island.

The status quo continued until Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party, henceforth AKP) was elected in 2002. AKP was a new government which aimed for a European Union membership, improvement of liberalism, democracy and human rights in Turkey, and generally painted a picture which depicted them as closer to the Western norms and values. As the patron state's government, they adopted the motto of "*çözömsözlük çözüm deęildir*" (non-solution is not a solution) concerning the Cyprus issue. This development lit the brazier of hope for the Turkish Cypriots on the path to reunification under a federated solution and the consequent international recognition and end of isolation from the rest of the world. However as time passed, specifically after 2013 Gezi Park riots against the regime which engulfed the country, AKP and its leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan have increasingly shown signs of authoritarianisation. Along with that, Turkey started drifting from being a pro-EU, pro-Western norms country to one in which religious norms take precedence in daily life and state governance as a result of changes in education policies and discourses in mainstream politics. All the participants in the interviews have stated that the change in AKP's policies towards the Cyprus issue changed from a federated solution to two

independent sovereign states after the Crans-Montana talks in 2017 where the two sides came to the brink of a solution. After the talks broke down, the policy of AKP regarding the Cyprus issue and TRNC changed and they became “diametrically opposed” (A. Sözen, personal communication, April 1, 2021).

3.1 Asymmetry

Asymmetry within the scope of the patron-client relationships finds its application in the field of military. Turkey currently ranks 11th on the 2021 military strength ranking provided by GlobalFirepower (2021). Its defence budget is 17 billion USD, with the amount of active personnel being at 355.000 and total at 895.000. Out of the given amount of active personnel, 40.000 of them are currently serving in Northern Cyprus as part of the military forces positioned on the island after the 1974 intervention. Compared to its patron, TRNC’s number of active military personnel, although an exact number is not given due to security issues, is estimated to be between 3.000-5.000 with a reserve force between 12.000-15.000. Furthermore, although the local military institution Güvenlik Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı (Commandership of Security Forces, GKK) exists, it is in close ties with Turkey’s military, Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri (Turkish Armed Forces, TSK). The entire personnel of GKK are formed out of TRNC citizens, but the appointment of the commander-in-chief of the military and the border between TRNC and Republic of Cyprus are controlled by TSK. Mehmet Ali Talat pointed out to the extent of the ties with the patron by mentioning that GKK is connected to Turkey and Ankara is asked for advice regarding every topic that concerns the military, including even the occasional half-masts (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021). The Turkish military presence on the island has also been a big part of the negotiations to solve the Cyprus issue as a unified Cyprus cannot have this presence within it.

The trauma from the conflict and living side by side with Republic of Cyprus which is still perceived as an immediate threat by some Turkish Cypriots increase the importance of establishing physical security. Although the Green Line still stands between the two sides,

for some locals the UN forces on the island do not operate beyond being “*tatil güçleri*” (holiday forces). The main threat is perceived to be Republic of Cyprus, but it should not be forgotten that TRNC is also in close proximity to the conflicted region of Middle East and the island is located and is in a key strategic location in the East Mediterranean where tensions over natural resources are mounting day by day. Consequently, military power becomes essential to establish physical security and because of its limited population and technological and economic means, TRNC is in a military deficit compared to its immediate neighbours. For example, the military budget for Republic of Cyprus in 2019 was numbered at 420 million USD (TradingEconomics.com, 2019), the one for TRNC was a mere 107 million USD (“GKK ve PGM Bütçeleri Onaylandı”, 2019). Some of the finances for the budget decided for the military forces in TRNC also comes from Turkey. The military budget of the state which is a source of security concerns is four times larger than the de facto state. As evident from this example, without the support of its patron state TRNC would find itself in a grave physical security deficit. Therefore, it is obvious that TRNC is heavily dependent on its patron for its physical security.

3.2 Reciprocity

One of the distinctive characteristics which separates patron-client relationships from pure dependency relationships is reciprocity as it denotes an exchange of goods. This exchange means that although the proportions of the goods exchanged might be unequal, and sometimes even of a different type of commodity but always has to adhere to the needs of both sides. There is still something to be gained from this relationship for the patron although it is an undeniable fact that the client is more dependent on the exchange than the patron. In the case of de facto states, the dependency is even more anxiety inducing as TRNC’s only official trade partner is Turkey. TRNC uses the Turkish Lira (TRY) as its official currency and although there is a Central Bank it does not print any money neither can it set interest rates (Ekici, 2019, p. 235). The head of the Central Bank is appointed by Turkey. This is one of the worst aspects of TRNC’s economic dependency on Turkey because as its patron state drifts farther from the West and the EU in each passing day and becomes more authoritarian,

the currency loses its value rapidly. A deeper look into this dependency reveals that while TRNC is reliant on the aids, grants and credits provided by Turkey, the depreciation of the Turkish Lira means that less can be purchased with that aid. For example, Turkey gives aids to Kıbrıs Türk Elektrik Kurumu (Cyprus Turkish Electricity Board, KIBTEK) in Turkish Liras but the fuel oil which is needed for electricity production is paid in USD (Ekici, 2019, p. 206), which results in a horrible dependency as depreciation of TRY continues.

The financial support of Turkey in the form of aids, grants and credits have been given since the intervention on the island in 1974. It is a well-known fact that some of the salaries of the public servants and social security expenses have been paid and are being paid from this money. When there is a crisis between the two sides, monetary issues can sometimes be stalled resulting in struggles for the government in power. The dependency of TRNC is clear, but Turkey also has gains from this relationship. In terms of geopolitical power and control over the region and more specifically East Mediterranean, Cyprus has been part of the Blue Homeland doctrine of Turkey since its mention in 2006. Blue Homeland doctrine is the assumption of control of a 462.000 km² area in the Black Sea and Mediterranean by Turkey. It is deemed to be extremely important for Turkey's security and establishing a foothold in Cyprus enables Turkey to be effective in the Mediterranean. According to Prof. Ahmet Sözen, "Cyprus has become a trump in the geopolitical negotiations of the East Mediterranean" (A. Sözen, personal communication, April 1, 2021). Turkey might seem to provide aid in exchange for nothing, but the reality of the situation is that by using the Cyprus issue the patron state has gained or aims to gain much more in the East Mediterranean than its expenses on TRNC.

Similarity of identities between Turkey and TRNC cannot be the sole explanation for why Turkey is insisting on its presence and the continuation of financial support to the island's North. Establishing bases or maintaining troops also hold high strategic importance as they are realities of geopolitics. The island of Cyprus is also known as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" ("Kıbrıs Batmayan Bir Uçak Gemisi", 2008). It is in close proximity to the Middle East and North Africa region in which turmoil has not mellowed out. When the British troops

were leaving the island, they were granted two bases, Akrotiri and Dhekelia to guarantee their presence in the region. In such a situation where Turkey is heavily affected by the developments in the region it is extremely important for them to have access to Cyprus and its soil. The rivalry between Greece and Turkey is evident and having a strong Greek presence on the island is also not acceptable for Turkish foreign policy. Since a conflicted relationship with the locals on the island sympathetic to Turkey, especially ones so close of kin, is not sustainable for the security and economic goals of Turkey, having a client state is beneficial both for regional geopolitics and internal support.

Turkey's actions on the island not only benefit their power over the region but also provides material to use in domestic politics, especially with the nationalist constituents. Furthermore, when Turkey and AKP were in the negotiations process during the active candidacy of Turkey for EU membership, Cyprus and the issues surrounding it have provided the Turkish side with negotiation options. Although the issue also provided obstacles for Turkey in its candidacy process, it has also provided them with political leverage over Greece and Republic of Cyprus especially after the 2004 referendum in which the Turkish Cypriots approved the Annan plan and reunification whereas the Greek Cypriots rejected the idea. Therefore, it is evident that while TRNC receives a lot in this exchange, it also provides for Turkey's specific needs. The TRNC need financial support to sustain their sovereign state and interconnectedly, their identity and existence. Turkey needs a presence on the island for physical and economic security. TRNC has also proven useful for gathering domestic support and as a trump card in international politics. A heavy-handed approach by the patron might backfire and push Turkish Cypriots further away from Turkey, as in the examples which will be provided later on in this thesis. It is of critical importance for Turkey to respect the needs of its client in order to reach its goals.

3.3 Compliance

When assessing compliance in patron-client relationships, this thesis focuses on when the client is compliant with the demands of the patron and when they are not. It was mentioned

earlier that compliance can be measured on a continuum, and taking this approach helps in determining on what part of the continuum the compliance level falls. In the case of TRNC, the state is compliant with patron demands as long as: a) the demands do not threaten its internal sovereignty; b) the demands do not threaten its ontological security. Concerning point A, which ideology the government possesses at the time of the demand is an important variable. If the government is occupied by Ulusal Birlik Partisi (National Unity Party, UBP) for example, which is known as a nationalistic political party with a tendency to apply patron demands usually without question, then the compliance level rises on the executive level. The crises between the patron and the client seem to happen in eras where political parties such as Cumhuriyetçi Türk Partisi (Republican Turkish Party, CTP) are in government. The demands of the patron, and the specific nature of them are questioned in a more detailed fashion, resulting in crises and consequently, decreases in levels of compliance and a move in the spectrum towards non-compliant.

Although internal sovereignty and ontological security are separated into two points, in a de facto state which has official relations with only one country which also happens to be its patron, these two concepts are inevitably related to each other. Because the ontological insecurity of TRNC is by now a constant source of anxiety because of continued nonrecognition, attempts at making demands that alter TRNC's internal sovereignty in some way are perceived as threats to its ontological security established by its singular relationship to the outside world. However, since the Turkish Cypriots have had to become entrenched in their identity over the years, which political party is in government does not affect the reactions to perceived threats to ontological security. Analysis of the data collected shows that no matter the circumstances, threats to the identity of Turkish Cypriots will always be met with resistance from the public, and because the democracy in TRNC functions relatively well the elites will have to navigate the public and patron demands somehow. The only difference between political parties is that while UBP governments tend to navigate the public demand to achieve patron demands, the CTP governments will either try to find a common ground or try to convince Turkey of the impossibility of their demands because of public outcry. On one hand, it is extremely hard to completely become noncompliant because

of the dependencies mentioned in the subchapters above. On the other not every demand is immediately obeyed by TRNC because of its functioning democracy and institutions.

3.4 Affectivity

The term “Turkish” hides different meanings underneath and represents a wide spectrum of identities. Even within Turkey, there are multiple ways of being Turkish. Some would consider following the principles and revolutions of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the republic, to be truly Turkish. Others might say that staying true to Islamic norms and practices is what Turkish people should do, as being a Muslim and a Turk go hand in hand. Within the patron-client relationship between Turkey and TRNC, the contrast between the two sides have also reflected on the island. Turkey, until AKP became its governing party, had been following the principles and revolutions of its founder Atatürk under close observation by its military against any threats. The Turkish Cypriots, according to Prof. Yücel Vural have not been *yobaz* (term used for zealots) even before the revolutions of Atatürk (Y. Vural, personal communication, April 5, 2021) unlike the mass populations in Turkey who were opposing these revolutions. The new identity of Turkey brought along by Atatürk was embraced a lot easier by Turkish Cypriots but after 2002, as AKP’s power grew and its governance prolonged, Turkey drifted further away from the Western, modern and secular identity the Atatürk principles and revolutions suggest. The alignment of identities and senses of kinship deriving from them have been turned upside down. As the patron’s identity slowly changed over time, their demands have also taken different shapes, resulting in clashes of identity and even the idea of implementation of these demands caused ontological insecurity for TRNC.

The extent of the embracement of the Turkish Cypriots of Atatürk’s Turkey is visible in their adoption of the Turkish national anthem and the national holidays. The Turkish national anthem was composed to represent the struggles of the Turkish people to establish the Republic of Turkey and stands as a declaration of commitment to the values Atatürk brought with his principles and revolutions. The national holidays of Turkey are also in close relation to Atatürk and his ideas and on these days not only Turkey’s past is honoured but also

Atatürk's vision for the Turkish identity as a modern, secular and Western one. The Turkish Cypriots, however, have also added their own national holidays. Furthermore, a new national holiday which is embraced by AKP supporters especially, July 15, is not celebrated in TRNC. When it comes to the flag of Northern Cyprus, people are free to display it without the Turkish flag but usually they are together as a show of the feelings of kinship. While the political party system was adopted from Turkey, this is a result of having only Turkey to interact with in terms of technical know-how on how to build a state. Furthermore, the political system of Turkey was modelled after the Western ones, in line with the identity perceptions of Turkish Cypriots. The curricula and school textbooks have been in the initiative of Northern Cyprus and still are. The textbooks were even modified after CTP was elected to office, changing the previous discourses of difference between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots and replacing them with pro-unification ones in order to redefine the identity perceptions (Vural&Özüyanık, 2008).

While it is true that the first Turkish settlers came from the Ottoman Empire, over time the Muslim population of the island has developed an identity clearly separate but similar to some aspects of the identity in the "motherland". After suffering violence and displacement, the Turkish aspect of the Turkish Cypriot identity was emphasized, especially by Rauf Raif Denktaş, the wartime leader and first president of TRNC. Ontic spaces were created after 1974, based on chosen traumas and glories. Barbarlık Müzesi (Museum of Barbarism) stands as an ontic space to remind Turkish Cypriots of the horrible events that befell them at the hands of their neighbours. A gigantic TRNC flag on the side of the mountain range is visible from the Greek side, reminding them of the existence of another state constantly and it is even lit up at nights. Right next to it are Atatürk's words are placed, equally large: "*Ne mutlu Türk'üm diyene*" (how glad for one who calls themselves a Turk). Some inferences from these ontic spaces might be that the Turkish Cypriot identity consists of: 1) emphasis on difference from their Greek neighbours, 2) a strong belief in their existence through their established but de facto state, 3) a strong connection to Atatürk and his ideas of what it means to be Turkish.

Turkish Cypriots have constantly been under scrutiny for different aspects of their identity. The identity discussion can be separated into two eras. From 1974 to around 2007 (C. Özyiğit, personal communication, April 8, 2021) the nationalistic tendencies of the Turkish Cypriots were under question. They were considered not to be Turkish enough, while constantly having to defend their own unique identity against these advances. The sentiment of Turkish Cypriots not being Turkish enough comes from the fact that, especially after 2000, they have raised their voices more strongly on a possible solution with reunification. At the same time, while the nationalistic sentiments in Turkey have been more extreme, this sort of extremism has not held up in TRNC in any matter. Up until 2007, the ontological security concerns of Turkish Cypriots were about becoming more Turkified, as the AKP government had not fully displayed its Islamic tendencies yet. Emphasizing differences with both sides have even become a way of establishing ontological security. One of the experts interviewed mentioned that “They do not only say I am a Cypriot but want to say I am a Turkish Cypriot. My guess is that this is a mechanism to protect their identity by separating themselves from both the Turkish people in Turkey and the Greek Cypriots” (A. Sözen, personal communication, April 1, 2021).

After 2007, the religiosity of the Turkish Cypriots has started to become questioned by the patron. The increasing influence of religion over Turkish politics and lifestyle has reflected on the relationship between the patron and the client, leading to some demands, especially over changes in the youth and education system. This has led to multiple crises because the Turkish Cypriot identity does not include religion as a guiding light for their daily lives and future. A participant has provided an observation that explains the outlook of Turkish Cypriots to religion by stating that “A Turkish Cypriot family would like to have an imam present in their funerals but would not want their children to become imams as it represents a lifestyle choice” (Y. Vural, personal communication, April 5, 2021). This is not to say that the Turkish Cypriots abhor religion and completely disregard it but because they have adopted secularism as one of the most important values in their identity, the general idea is that religion should be between one’s maker and themselves. Therefore, as the identity of Turkey changed and started moving towards a more religious one, ties of kinship and identity

were not perceived as they were anymore. The efforts of the patron to influence this part of their identity and their demands towards that, combined with the heavy physical and economic dependency of TRNC on Turkey, has led to great ontological insecurity.

When the strong will of the Turkish Cypriots to have their own living space governed by their own identity is considered, be it in a federation in a unified Cyprus or as an independent, recognised and sovereign entity, it is inevitable that any efforts by the patron to interfere with their sovereignty or attempts to influence their identity will result in non-compliance. Part of Turkish Cypriot identity is their will to exist. The efforts to keep the democracy intact and upholding of secularism is how they want to exist even if it means jeopardizing their relationship with Turkey, a state which holds a dear place in Turkish Cypriot hearts. The Turkey that arrived in 1974 and provided physical and economical security, supported the reunification goals and respected the internal processes of TRNC has become a Turkey that causes ontological insecurity with its demands. Mustafa Akıncı, the fourth president of TRNC mentioned in our interview that while calling Turkey motherland is a sentimental issue, if a TRNC exists then it should have its own identity, and this should be reflected in the relationship with Turkey. Any attempts at pressuring the Turkish Cypriots over their nationalistic sentiments or religiosity has alienated and is alienating them from Turkey (M. Akıncı, personal communication, April 13, 2021).

This relationship in which the physical dependence is felt in the everyday lives of both the public and the political elite, also has become a scene of anxieties over the kinship felt towards Turkey. As a result, crises and efforts to navigate them by the elite occur more often. It is the public will against some demands of Turkey that drives the elite navigation. Affectivity allows the client state to establish a secure relationship with its patron state, in which there are minimal fears of annexation, bullying or assimilation. Ontological security is established by the linkages over the identity. Any disruptions to it will ultimately result in a disruption to the sense of affectivity, as trust is broken and now the de facto state not only needs to deal with the ontological insecurity resulting from nonrecognition, but also insecurity resulting from a break in the continuation of its only official relationship with

another state. Furthermore, increased patron pressure to comply with demands that are contrary to goals such as recognition, reunification, and independence result in a fear of not being able to self-realize by achieving these goals. Because the Turkish Cypriot identity has become entrenched and politicized over the years, and the isolation is felt by every member of the society, public sentiments are directly related to the ontological security and consequently, elite navigations. In this chapter, the specifics of the patron-client relationship, the extent of TRNC's dependence on Turkey and its ontological security concerns were explained. In the next chapter examples of elite navigation in the events chosen will be displayed.

4. Tracing Elite Navigations

In this chapter, elite navigations will be pinpointed through process-tracing applied to data collected on several events from TRNC history. Newspapers and semi-structured interviews with experts and political elite were used as data in order to provide a clear account and accurate analysis. Newspapers are especially important within the context of this thesis as it is concerned with the identity dynamics in the patron-client relationship and “media are the sites of struggle for identity establishment” (Şahin, 2011, p.2). The unilateral opening of the borders between TRNC and Republic of Cyprus is the first event which is talked about. As for the second one, the negotiation processes and joint declarations resulting from them in 2008 will be discussed. Third is the pipeline “gifted” to TRNC by Turkey which became operational in 2015, and the crisis that occurred because of disagreements with Turkey over the management and distribution of the water brought to the island. Fourth and last one, are the crises over attempted interference by Turkey with TRNC's education and youth system.

4.1 Unilateral opening of the Green Line by TRNC

In the new year's message to his people in 2003, Mr. Denktaş mentions that on a path to the solution to the Cyprus issue, they are “on the same side with the motherland” (“Tarih Bizi Affetmez”, 2003). However, the reality of the situation was different. The solution and how it should be formed was different for Mr. Denktaş and he was subject to pressure from both

Turkey and its newly elected government, and the Turkish Cypriots. Mass demonstrations by the public for reconciliations between the Turkish and the Greek side had been going on since the previous year of 2002, while the negotiations between Mr. Denktaş and Mr. Klerides were bearing no fruit due to the uncompromising stance of Mr. Denktaş on reunification based on a federal solution. In Turkey, AKP was just elected in the November of 2002, and they had a different vision for a solution to the Cyprus problem, which supported a federal solution, contrary to Mr. Denktaş's views. Then chairman of AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated his support to the Turkish Cypriots just a day later than Mr. Denktaş's new year's message, by saying that the demonstrations of 30-40 thousand in Cyprus cannot be ignored ("Halkı Bir Kenara İtemezsiniz", 2003). At a first glance to this picture, it is obvious that the number one political elite considered almost as a father figure, was now stuck between the changed demands of the patron state, and the increasing pressure in the domestic constituency.

Most striking evidence of public support to reunification is a survey conducted in the disputed region of Morphou. This region was demanded by the Greek Cypriots in all negotiations, and Mr. Denktaş was adamant in not relinquishing it. However, in the survey the residents of Morphou were asked if they would approve of the transfer of Morphou to the Greek side, and 75% of them remarked that if it makes a solution easier, then Morphou could be given away ("Güzelyurt, Çözüm ve AB'ye Hazır", 2003). Meanwhile support for Denktaş was at an all-time low at just 27.1% according to another survey ("Denktaş'a Destek %27.1", 2003). Demonstrations continued to gather impressive numbers of Turkish Cypriots, numbers estimated at 60,000 and all of them asking for the resignation of Denktaş, a solution, peace and EU ("Bu Sesi Duyun!", 2003). Republic of Cyprus had come to an end in its accession process and was going to join the EU in the 2004 expansion without the Turkish Cypriots if a solution was not reached by then. Turkish Cypriots and Turkey both, had expressed their support for the Annan plan and a referendum was in the mentions. However, Mr. Denktaş would not budge, and even stated that even if there is a yes in the referendum for the existing plan, he would not sign it ("Mevcut Plana Referandumda...", 2003). While support for

Denktaş declined, the main opposition CTP's leader was constantly meeting with important positions in Turkey, Republic of Cyprus and EU.

The third version of the Annan plan was presented to the sides on February 27, and on the same day another demonstration was held by the Turkish Cypriots to express support for the plans ("Halk Kararını Yineledi...", 2003). Kofi Annan, then the General Secretary of the UN had asked both sides to hold referendums for the plan's approval and wanted the leaders to meet up in the Hague to sign an agreement for referendums ("İmzasız Referandum", 2003). While this was met with support from the Turkish Cypriots, and both sides agreed to meet in the Hague, the answers to the call for referendum were not decided yet, and Mr. Denktaş would state that "it is not time for a referendum yet" ("Denktaş: Referanduma gitme zamanı...", 2003). This was to be followed by a meeting for the discussion of a referendum in the TRNC parliament, while unions were to be on strike in schools and workplaces, and shopkeepers were to shut down in support of the referendum ("Kritik Gün", 2003). However, the meeting could not be conducted due to the absence of UBP deputies, which formed the majority of the government along with Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party, DP). After the blockage of the referendum discussions by the party Mr. Denktaş founded, political parties of TRNC and Mr. Denktaş would go to Turkey to discuss the referendum. ("Gözler Anavatanlarda", 2003). Before the meeting, Mr. Erdoğan stated that "if Cyprus is not solved, they will not let us in the EU" ("Kıbrıs Çözümlemezse...", 2003), while Mr. Denktaş said that he would not decide alone and Turkey should also decide ("Kıbrıs Çözümlemezse...", 2003). At the end of the discussions, the position of Turkey was clear as they stated that the decision is for Turkish Cypriots to make ("Karar Sizin", 2003), which meant that in the end, the Turkish Cypriots would have to decide for themselves.

On March 9, another meeting was to be conducted in the parliament about the referendum issue, but UBP did not send its deputies to the parliament again and as a protest to that the main opposition parties CTP and Toplumcu Kurtuluş Partisi (Socialist Liberation Party, TKP) decided to boycott the parliament until March 30, and announced that they would hold a plebiscite ("30 Mart'ta Referandum...", 2003). The Turkish Cypriots were hopeful about

the meeting in the Hague on March 10 but after the intense talks there was no result, the negotiations had failed (“İpler Koptu”, 2003) and Kofi Annan, the UN, EU, and USA blamed Denktaş for his attitude in the negotiations (“Dünyada Öfke”, 2003). The failure in the Hague only resulted in an increase in the intensity and frequency of the public demonstrations and calls for resignation while Turkey’s prime minister at the time, Abdullah Gül remarked that “there is still a chance for a solution” (“Gül: Lahey’de Kapılar...”, 2003). Symbolic referendums were attempted to be held but were met with heavy resistance from the TRNC police and unions went on another strike to protest the attitude of Mr. Denktaş (“Halk İradesine Polis Copu, 2003). Cracking under the pressure, Mr. Denktaş presented 6 articles to the Republic of Cyprus for agreement and the third article mentioned easing the regulations for passage between the two sides (“Denktaş’tan Açılım, 2003). Turkish Foreign Ministry welcomed these articles and Mehmet Ali Talat, CTP’s leader met with Mr. Erdoğan to discuss a possible solution (“Talat Erdoğan’la ‘Çözüm’ü Konuştu”, 2003). Two more hits for Mr. Denktaş’s presidency came as the report of Kofi Annan published a report, blaming the failure of the process on Mr. Denktaş (“BM’den Denktaş’a Suçlama”, 2003) and Republic of Cyprus signed the agreement to join the EU without the Turkish Cypriots (“Ve Rumlar İmzayı Attı”, 2003). After this, as Mr. Denktaş realized that he could not block the will of the Turkish Cypriots anymore as public dissatisfaction grew and the borders were opened to passage on April 23, 2003.

While this thesis accepts the opening of the borders as an important event in TRNC and Cyprus history, it should be mentioned that in the process leading up to it, the discussions around the Annan plan and whether it should be accepted is the main motivator of this result. Mr. Denktaş believed firmly in a more Turkish identity for Turkish Cypriots and represented devotion to Turkey and its continuous existence in TRNC (Y. Vural, personal communication, April 5, 2021). Turkey and its governments had always respected and stood behind Mr. Denktaş’s decisions too, up to the point where AKP was elected. The policies implemented by the AKP government contradicted the attitude of governments past. Furthermore, it could be argued that the proposed solution, public support for it and patron’s willingness to implement the Annan plan have also contributed to an ontological insecurity

occurring in Mr. Denktaş himself. He had always seen the Turkish Cypriot identity as one close to Turkey, often in a hierarchical relationship as Turkey is the motherland and TRNC the *yavru vatan* (baby-land). From Mr. Denktaş's perspective, the sentiments of kinship and unwavering support and solidarity resulting from it characterized the relationship between the two states. Therefore, in this process we can observe elite navigations, or at least attempts at it in a situation where both the domestic consensus and patron's demands are against the top political elite.

When it was clear that the situation cannot be navigated the only way to deal with the increasing pressure was to open the borders. There are some details that go with the wording of the decision and whether Denktaş and Turkey were somehow convinced to open the borders. First of all, in our interview one participant has rightly pointed out that the wording "bilateral opening of the borders" and any terms surrounding it are politicized ones (Y. Vural, personal communication, April 5, 2021). The border was never technically closed, as the Republic of Cyprus allowed passage and it was TRNC who was blocking off passage to the north of the island, some would claim that this is merely granting freedom of passage. As for convincing Turkey and Mr. Denktaş to open the border, there are two important aspects to consider. One is that since the public pressure was so high, four out of the 5 participants in the interviews mentioned that if the borders were not opened by the hands on the government, they might have even been torn down by the public. This would result in an almost Berlin Wall like moment in the history of TRNC, seriously delegitimizing Mr. Denktaş's presidency and his party's governance.

Second point is that while the decision had to be discussed with Turkey, the AKP government did not require much convincing. At that time, they had been just elected, with the legitimacy of their government still unproven as the military was against their election out of concerns that they represented a radical Islamist approach. However, AKP was on board with the decision, as they were much more serious about joining the EU at that time. Erdoğan's words were mentioned in the earlier paragraphs, and the solution of the Cyprus issue has been a key part in Turkey's EU accession process. In order to show good will, and not to jeopardize the

process, the governing party and its components always displayed support to the mass demonstrations and overall political will of the Turkish Cypriots for reunification. One of the parties that had to be convinced, although no data is present on this claim, had to be the Turkish military. The borders are controlled by TSK's force in TRNC, and they have always adopted a more hard line approach to the Cyprus issue as a solution consisting reunification would jeopardize Turkey's national interests in the East Mediterranean. Due to the heavy involvement of TSK in the GKK, it would not be an illogical assumption to think that the Turkish military had to be convinced of this decision, but since no data could be acquired on this during the research, this thesis will not speculate more on this issue.

Although there are clear attempts by Mr. Denktaş to dictate patronage towards his cause of non-unification by consulting Turkey at each decision, hence displaying elite navigations, there is another political elite who was demanding patronage through meetings with the patron state's officials. Mehmet Ali Talat, who was the opposition leader at the time, would become the president of TRNC just two years later in 2005. Known for maintaining good relations with Turkey throughout his career, he had multiple meetings during the first quarter of 2003 with officials from Turkey in order to discuss the situation. When asked if Mr. Talat asked for any support from Turkey throughout the process, he mentioned that he asked for support from Turkey to convince Mr. Denktaş to accept the Annan plan. While CTP was only an opposition party at that time, he explained that he was personally managing the relationship established between CTP and Turkish government about a solution to the Cyprus issue. He further mentioned that with his suggestion Ertuğrul Apakan, a Turkish diplomat, came along with Mr. Denktaş and Mr. Talat after a visit to Ankara. He also stated that Mr. Apakan was an important figure to convince Mr. Denktaş. Mr. Denktaş did not like Mr. Erdoğan because he wanted reunification and therefore, he would not be able to convince Mr. Denktaş but Mr. Apakan could (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021).

The analysis of the events which unfolded in 2003 that led to the opening of the borders has revealed that elite navigations can be performed in multiple ways on different levels of governance of a client state. The attitude of Mr. Denktaş reveals what happens when the

ontological security of an elite is threatened, as it was mentioned earlier that while ontological security of states is important, since the individuals guide the states, their ontological security also matters. On one hand, for Mr. Denktaş unification meant assimilation of the Turkish Cypriots. The demands of the patron to solve the Cyprus issue and lack of domestic support led him to defy and attempt to dictate patronage in this issue. He defied by rejecting to agree in the negotiations, and he dictated, as his ideas were not shared, through diplomacy by meeting with multiple important positions in Turkey to express his thoughts on the Annan plan. When he realized he did not have neither the patron's nor his public's support, Mr. Denktaş allowed the borders to open in order to cool the tensions down. While this worked to end the mass demonstrations, he would not be re-elected in 2005. On the other hand, we have Mr. Talat who demanded patronage against Mr. Denktaş because he did not represent public will anymore and was in the way of Turkish Cypriots achieving their goal of unification and the consequent end of isolation by joining the EU along with Republic of Cyprus. For this thesis and elite navigations, the actions of Mr. Talat mean that although the patron's demands did not threaten his and the general public's ontological security at the time, because other threats were present to it such as the president of the country jeopardizing the solution for the Cyprus issue, he chose to demand patronage through diplomacy. If anything, the patron's support enhanced the sense of ontological security for Mr. Talat and the Turkish Cypriots in this event.

4.2 Joint Declarations in 2008

The joint declarations announced by Turkish and Greek Cypriots in 2008, could be interpreted as a pre-negotiation process. The conditions needed to start the process came with the election of Demetris Hristofyas on February 23, 2008. After the era of the incumbent president, Tassos Papadopoulos the election of Mr. Hristofyas had created an atmosphere better fit to start discussing the Cyprus issue again, as the president of TRNC was Mehmet Ali Talat, who was known for his willingness to come up with a solution. Even before the election of Mr. Hristofyas, Mr. Talat had mentioned that the TRNC is ready for a new negotiation process and Turkey had expressed its support to it (“Yeni Bir Müzakere...”,

2008). Since the Greek side had always expressed their belief in a UN negotiated solution, Mr. Hristofyas responded to the wish of starting negotiations by contacting the UN (“Hristofyas: Talat’la görüşmek için BM...”, 2008). At that time, although disappointed after the accession of Republic of Cyprus in 2004, Turkey was still hopeful of joining the EU. In a dinner with ambassadors of EU member states, to which Mr. Talat was also invited by Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the prime minister of Turkey at the time, stated that they (Turkey) “are sincerely desiring a UN initiative” (“BM inisiyatifini samimi...”, 2008) for a solution to the Cyprus issue. Five days later, Mr. Talat would meet Mr. Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül, then president of Turkey and would state that they are on the same page about bringing a solution to life (“Çözüm 2008’de Hala Mümkün”, 2008).

After the 2004 referendum in which the Turkish Cypriots voted yes for unification, the TRNC who had been seen as opposing a solution during the era of Mr. Denktaş had turned into the side which is actively supporting a solution. This development changed the sentiment in the international community and even allowed TRNC to join a conference of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation under the title of Cyprus Turkish State, and Mr. Talat as the Head of State (“İzolasyonları Kaldırın”, 2008). In this atmosphere of positivity for Turkish Cypriots, Mr. Talat and Mr. Hristofyas met for the first time as presidents on March 21, 2008 and this meeting produced a joint declaration. In the joint declaration it was decided that working groups and technical committees which will be formed by Turkish and Greek Cypriots would be conducted, Lokmacı barricade would open, the leaders would meet again in 3 months and full negotiations would start (“Bahar Havası”, 2008). Under these circumstances, Turkey even suggested that if the EU removed sanctions to TRNC, they would open their ports to Republic of Cyprus (“Yaptırımları Kaldırın...”, 2008) in order to contribute further to a solution. While preparations for peace continued on the island, TRNC had full support of Turkey as a solution would mean becoming one step closer to achieve EU accession.

In light of the joint declaration in March, the Lokmacı barricade opened for passage with great excitement from the public. Although taken as a positive development, a disagreement between Mr. Talat and GKK was mentioned by Mr. Hristofyas regarding the opening of the

barricade which was denied by the presidential spokesperson of TRNC (“Talat ile asker...”, 2008). Around this time, Mr. Hristofyas was constantly calling for Turkey to change its politics regarding TRNC and the Cyprus issue. Turkey on the other hand was constantly emphasizing that they “support a comprehensive and fair solution in Cyprus within the UN parameters” (“Babacan: Kıbrıs’ta BM...”, 2008). The response from Mr. Talat to protests of Mr. Hristofyas against the close cooperation between Turkey and TRNC is striking in its presentation of how TRNC perceived the relationship at that time: “We are conducting the process together with Turkey. Turkey’s singular support against the Greek side which is supported by the entire world should not be begrudged us” (“Ya çözüm ya bölünme”, 2008). While the protests of Mr. Hristofyas continued, Turkey also appealed to the EU to “motivate the Greek side for a solution” (“Türkiye’den AB’ye...”, 2008). A day after the appeal of Turkey, the two leaders met at the Ledra Palace reception on May 7 and decided that they would meet again on May 23. This meeting produced another joint declaration in which both sides affirmed their commitment to a federated solution, and Turkey stated its satisfaction with this declaration (“Türkiye Memnun”, 2008).

After this positive development a memorandum of understanding between the Republic of Cyprus and the United Kingdom was signed on June 5, 2008. This memorandum was meant to improve the relationship between the Greek Cypriots and the UK, but the content and wording of the memorandum caused disturbance in the Turkish Cypriot side. Both Mr. Talat and the Turkish foreign ministry expressed their dissatisfaction and were united in claiming that it interfered with the solution process (“Memorandum Çözümüne Engel”, 2008). Although both the Greek side and the UK denied that the memorandum posed a threat to the process, the crisis led to the refusal by Mr. Talat of a social dinner arranged by Lynn Pascoe, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, between the leaders of the Turkish and Greek Cypriots (“Yemek Krizi”, 2008). While this crisis lowered the amount of trust between the two sides, the clear pro-solution stance of TRNC and Mr. Talat was not broken. The will of the Turkish Cypriots for a solution was establishing them and consequently Turkey, as the side truly willing to negotiate peace. This is further confirmed by the words of Peter Millet, the British High Commissioner to Cyprus, after the memorandum crisis: “Talat has proven

he is ready to negotiate” (“Talat Müzakereye Hazır...”, 2008). Highlighted by this quote, the positive feedback from the international community throughout the process was also another source of ontological security for Turkish Cypriots and Mr. Talat.

The dissatisfaction of Turkish Cypriots with the memorandum did not stop the negotiation process however, and the two sides met again on July 1, 2008. The meeting resulted in another joint declaration which stated that it was the first time the two leaders met to discuss the works of the working groups and technical committees established earlier. Furthermore, the issues of single sovereignty and citizenship were taken up and the leaders agreed to meet again on July 25 to evaluate the works of the working groups and technical committees one final time (“Vatandaşlık ve Egemenlik Pazarlığı”, 2008). A few days after this conclusion, Mr. Talat would state that “single sovereignty and citizenship in the United Cyprus is definite” (“Birleşik Kıbrıs’ta tek...”, 2008). The single sovereignty and citizenship were questioned and there were suspicions that the Greek side and Mr. Hristofyas was stalling to delay the beginning of comprehensive negotiations. In a television programme which Mr. Talat participated in, he responded to the concerns by stating that single sovereignty and citizenship did not mean full Greek sovereignty and that he was ready to begin negotiations immediately. Mr. Talat also pointed out to the fact that although there are special relations between Turkey and TRNC, this relationship does not mean they cannot practice their sovereignty (“Egemenlikteki payımız...”, 2008).

Meanwhile Turkey would have no objections to any of the joint declarations and/or the statements by Mr. Talat, other than occasional speeches declaring support to the negotiations. However, during the uncertainty about when the formal negotiations would start and as the pressure on Mr. Talat grew, multiple remarks came from Turkish political elite. Abdullah Gül remarked that Turkey supports TRNC no matter what (“Gül: Adada Kalıcı ve Kapsamlı...”, 2008) and the Turkish parliamentary speaker Köksal Toptan mentioned that Turkey thinks in the same way as TRNC in matters related to the future of TRNC and its people, and there could never be a divergence in opinion (“Hiçbir Alanda Fikir...”, 2008). These statements, especially the ones belonging to Mr. Toptan did not spark outrage or were

not considered as threats to internal sovereignty and ontological security as the goals of the patron and the client were the same, and kinship sentiments were strong. Furthermore, six days before the next meeting between the two sides, a joint press conference was held by Mr. Erdoğan and Mr. Talat in which Mr. Erdoğan declared trust and full support to Mr. Talat. (“Talat’a Güven ve...”, 2008). Although the presence of a case court against AKP which was submitted to the Turkish Constitutional Court on March 14, 2008 to close the party could have been effective in the governing party’s active participation, objections would certainly have been raised if the patron state did not fully support any of the new developments. Furthermore, a solution negotiated by the Turkish Cypriots for themselves would solidify the claims of Turkey of not being an invader on the island.

In Northern Cyprus, the unions play an active role in the country’s politics, contributing to the pluralist structure. The pluralism of the Turkish Cypriot democracy is also one of the key characteristics of their political identity. For example, in the event previously examined, the most important unions of the de facto state had played an active role in the organization of mass demonstrations. Garnering the support of the unions also means that the public is actively supporting whatever decisions the unions declare their support to. Some of the most important unions are Kamu-Sen (Kıbrıs Türk Kamu Görevlileri Sendikası-Cyprus Turkish Public Officials Union), KTAMS (Kıbrıs Türk Amme Memurları Sendikası-Cyprus Turkish Civil Servants Trade Union), KTOEÖS (Kıbrıs Türk Orta Eğitim Öğretmenler Sendikası-Cyprus Turkish Secondary School Teachers Union) and KTÖS (Kıbrıs Türk Öğretmenler Sendikası-Cyprus Turkish Teachers Union). The majority of the members being native Turkish Cypriots, the analysis of the data shows that a decision which they are protesting is highly unlikely to be legislated. Two days before the final joint declaration, these unions and more had declared their support for Mr. Talat (“Sendikalardan Talat’a Tam Destek”, 2008). The fourth meeting between Mr. Talat and Mr. Hristofyas took place on July 25, 2008 and it was declared that solution negotiations would begin on September 3. Other important articles from the declaration were that the 16 decisions the technical committees had made would be implemented immediately, a direct phone line was to be established between the two leaders and that they would be working closely with Alexander Downer, Secretary General of the

UN's special envoy to Cyprus and his team ("Başlıyorlar", 2008). After the three joint declarations and a determined date for negotiations, Turkish Cypriots, Turkey and the world were hopeful for a solution to the Cyprus issue.

The analysis of the developments in 2008, shows that the president of the TRNC, along with his team, negotiated extensively and took major decisions that altered the course of TRNC without any interference from the patron state. During the period Mr. Talat not only had the full support of his public and the patron state but also was leading the negotiations as an equal actor to the patron state. According to Prof. Ahmet Sözen who was directly involved in the process, there was cooperation and harmony between Turkey and TRNC (A. Sözen, personal communication, April 1, 2021). The cooperating behaviour of the patron state enabled the client to direct the process as they see fit, enacting their agency and fulfilling their self-realization needs, thus contributing to the establishment of ontological security. The data collected for this event displays that when ontological security is not threatened, and kinship ties provided by affectivity are felt strongly the de facto state was able to act as an agent more freely. When this is the scenario, elite navigations were not observed as the domestic demand and patron demands reflect each other.

Mehmet Ali Talat himself, has made some interesting remarks about the 2008 process in our interview. Although he mentioned that from time to time, he experienced difficulties with Turkey these were nothing that could not be solved without establishing dialogue. According to him, the topics related to the negotiations and TRNC's stance on these were discussed before the meetings with Mr. Hristofyas. However, when he was face to face with the Greek side, with the UN watching from the side some reasonable suggestions could not have been denied outright. He mentioned of the need to act according to the situation there and contrasted himself with Mr. Denktaş who according to his words, would "come to terms with Turkey beforehand and repeat the same things in the negotiations" (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021). He also mentioned that sometimes he would have to convince Turkey to accept certain terms such as cross voting as part of the federated state. In a meeting with the Turkish foreign minister, it was mentioned that Turkey could not be

convinced of this. In return, Mr. Talat asked for a meeting with Mr. Gül and explained the situation to him. In this conversation, his suggestions were found as reasonable and therefore Turkey was convinced. It needs to be noted here that these difficulties are different than patron demands that would cause ontological insecurity to occur. These are discussions between two sides which are in the negotiation as equals, and therefore there is no threat to the ontological security of the client state.

The continuity of the sense of solidarity and cooperation proves to be extremely important in this event. As Mr. Talat also stated in our interview, “there is no need for there to be good relations, but the continuation of the dialogue is extremely important” (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021). The continuation of the relationship between the patron and the client was not broken and the self-realization goals and identity of the de facto state was not threatened. If anything, the temperate discussions over topics regarding the issue further confirmed the sense of agency and ontological security in the client state. Because these are not patron demands, there was no need to defy, demand or dictate patronage, as on the grand scale the patron was fully supportive of the client’s goals. TRNC found ample room to negotiate their own terms with the Greek side, to self-realize by working to achieve their own goals and there were no demands contrary to the identity and goals of the de facto state but instead there was full support from the patron. The existence of such a case is important for this thesis as it further confirms the suggestion that elite navigations occur when the ontological security of the state and the political elite are threatened.

4.3 The pipeline “gifted” to TRNC

While the two events discussed in the earlier sub-chapter have aspects that involved third parties other than the patron and the client, the crisis that occurred throughout this event is purely between the two states. The entirety of the island of Cyprus suffers from not only political matters but also from a lack of potable and agricultural water supplies. Although there are underground water supplies, these are not enough to support the needs of the growing population and water from Turkey was even carried with balloons before the

pipeline was built. The water pipeline promised not only to end the water issues but also could have been a factor which would better the relationship between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. However, the patron demands that came with the pipeline and the refusal of CTP to comply with these demands resulted in a crack in the CTP-UBP coalition government which was already built on unsteady foundations as the two parties represented two different ends of the political spectrum. The basics of the agreement for the management of the pipeline and the distribution of the water supplied had been established during the UBP majority government. Therefore, some articles in the agreement were not to the liking of the CTP which is opposed to implementing everything Turkey suggests or demands without an evaluation of the specific terms.

The pipeline was set for an official opening on October 17 and on July 20, during the celebrations for Peace and Freedom Day for TRNC Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, president of Turkey, mentioned in his speech that the “the water project will be water for peace” (“Çözüm Önceliğimiz...”, 2015). The specifics of the agreement between the two countries were still hazy at this date, however Mr. Talat, the leader of CTP had stated that there would be a “Su Kurumu” (Water Board) of TRNC to manage the water after its arrival through the pipeline (“İstihdama Yasa ve...”, 2015). Even before Mr. Talat’s remarks, 28 municipalities had founded BESKİ (KKTC Belediyeleri Su ve Kanalizasyon İşletmeleri-TRNC Municipalities Water and Sewage Operation) in early June and had expressed their intention to manage distribution of the potable and running water which would be accessed through this project. Later on, the DSİ (Devlet Su İşleri-State Hydraulic Works) and Özelleştirme İdaresi (Privatization Administration) of Turkey made a presentation to the coalition partners, submitted their demands for the transfer of property rights where the water would pass from and insisted that the government should produce a decision on the issue of privatization (“Su’da Mülkiyet...”, 2015). Furthermore, the mayors of some municipalities were taken to Anamur, Turkey where the water originates from and they were told that BESKİ was useless, the management would have to be privatized and there would be no water to TRNC until the protocol regarding the management would be signed (“Su’da Mülkiyet...”, 2015).

The imposition of privatization to the municipalities was met with reactions from the mayors and Mr. Talat stated that the government would not approve of such a protocol (“Su’da Mülkiyet...”, 2015). This was the first time that Turkey had made clear its intentions to privatize the management of the water and CTP was strictly opposed to this as they considered it as an interference in their internal sovereignty. Although the pipeline started providing water on October 17 as planned, the water protocol between the two countries had not been signed yet and discussions continued for the next 2 months. On one hand, in December, Veysel Eroğlu, the Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs of Turkey at the time would state that although a complete understanding could not be reached on the issue of water management, Turkey has already made great expenses and because they are experienced, they should manage the water (“Suyu İşletmede...”, 2015). On the other hand, however, Ahmet Davutoğlu, the prime minister of Turkey at the time provided messages of kinship by stating that “if Turkey calls a soil baby-land, and if it wants to reach its kin and siblings with a shared history, it will take the water over there by overcoming seas” (“Türkiye eğer bir toprağa...”, 2015). At the end of December, it was decided that DSI would manage the water temporarily until a settlement could be reached.

The messages of kinship were intended to calm the crisis down, and Mr. Talat even flew to Ankara to discuss the water issue (“Kıbrıs Sorunu ve Suyun Yönetimi Konuşuldu”, 2016). However, between the insistence of Turkey on privatization despite the wishes of CTP, the major partner of the coalition, and the delay of the economic protocol that was also to be signed, the crisis grew. After his return, Mr. Talat took the issue to a caucus in CTP for discussion, but the Turkish Embassy in Nicosia unexpectedly announced that the issue should not be discussed in the caucus but in the council of ministers and the agreement should take effect immediately (“Su Konusunda Adres...”, 2016). Of course, this was met with protests from Mr. Talat and in reply he stated that “how it will decide is up to CTP” (“Elçilik Açıklamasının...”, 2016). It is important to note here that after almost every new development concerning the issue, the caucus of CTP would convene, and it is reported that there were divisions even within CTP on how the water should be managed. Meanwhile the position of UBP was to accept the agreement as it is. It was unclear up to this point to what

exactly CTP was against in this agreement, so an explanation was published in *Yenidüzen*. CTP listed three factors as their reasons of opposition: 1) the uncertainty about the specific terms of the transfer of water management to a private company, 2) the monopoly that would be established over underground sources, 3) the lack of say TRNC has in all of this (“‘Su’da Müzakere Planı”, 2016).

At the end of January, a letter was sent to Turkey, delineating the final situation of the government regarding the water issue and it was suggested that there should be a partnership between public and private sectors in the management of the water (“‘Üstesinden Kolay Gelinecek...”, 2016). An important survey was also published, proving that although 74% of the public was accepting of the delivery of water from Turkey, 75,96% was rejecting the management of the water by a private company (“Halk, Suyu Özeline...”, 2016). Although the suggestion for public-private partnership received a positive reply from Turkey, the economic protocol still had not been signed at the start of February (“Su Konusunda Uzlaşma”, 2016). Upon the positive reply from Turkey, four ministers (two from CTP and two from UBP) from TRNC were sent to Ankara to have a meeting over the water management issues. (“Gözler Ankara’da”, 2016). A consensus was reached in the meeting, albeit not without a minor tension between the CTP and UBP ministers. The private sector was to manage, and the public sector was to oversee the operations (“Özel Yönetecek...”, 2016). The next day, the new agreement between Turkey and TRNC caused disturbances especially in some groups led by young members of CTP, asking for the resignation of members of their party that would sign the new agreement, or they would resign themselves. (“CTP-BG’de Huzursuzluk”, 2016). TDP also voiced their concerns over this agreement by stating that the agreement is an imposition and that the Turkish Cypriots should resist it. (“TDP, Tüm Kesimleri...”, 2016). These tensions led to Mr. Talat announcing that a referendum could be held if needed, and CTP caucus discussed the water issue again on February 13 (“Gerekirse Referanduma Gideriz”, 2016).

Part of why a consensus could not be reached faster is the fact that Turkey had assigned deputy secretaries to conduct the negotiations with the ministers sent from Turkey. The prime

minister of TRNC at the time, Ömer Kalyoncu mentioned that this should not be the practice and stated that this is the reason why the process cannot move forward (“Bakanlarımızın Karşısına...”, 2016). Meanwhile UBP declared that to keep the coalition alive, CTP needed to solve the water issue and gave them five days to conclude the agreement (“Su Krizini Çarşamba Gününe...”, 2016). After these calls Mr. Erdoğan, through Mr. Davutoğlu and the other relevant ministers, indicated to TRNC that Turkey did not want a crisis about this and Mr. Talat was provided a long-awaited meeting with Mr. Erdoğan (“Ankara Kıbrıs’ta Kriz İstemiyor”, 2016). In this meeting, Mr. Talat requested political support from Mr. Erdoğan (“Sürece Siyasi Destek...”, 2016) as the coalition government was cracking under the water crisis. After the meeting, CTP was to ask for additional time from UBP (“CTP UBP’den Ek Süre İsteyecek”, 2016), UBP granted it and the TRNC government sent some propositions for changes in the agreement to Turkey which were met positively (“Suda Uzlaş”, 2016). The new text that was devised was approved by the council of ministers and Mr. Kalyoncu was given authority to sign the agreement (“Su Krizi Çözüldü”, 2016). This was to be the first visit of the prime minister to Turkey in eight months. The water agreement was finally signed, approving the public-private partnership and leaving the control of underground water sources to TRNC (“Su Konusu Tamam”, 2016).

Throughout the process the pipeline project was branded as “the project of the century” and the discourses surrounding it was utilized to gather more constituents to AKP’s cause. Due to the wide use of the project to garner domestic support, it was extremely important to Turkey that the agreement would progress along seamlessly but the defiance of CTP and Mr. Talat jeopardized the prestige of Mr. Erdoğan and AKP. Around this time, AKP had consolidated its power and was becoming more authoritarian each day. Since TRNC is regarded as the baby-land, non-compliance made the issue more complicated. For example, in 2008 Mr. Erdoğan was available to Mr. Talat at any time but in the pipeline event Mr. Talat had to wait for a long time before he could meet the president of Turkey. It was mentioned earlier that in the case of TRNC, ontological security is closely connected to internal sovereignty as the Turkish Cypriots are aware that they are considered to be a puppet of Turkey, which is contrary to their established identity. Any interference to internal

sovereignty is considered as a threat to the existence of the Turkish Cypriot identity. Mass demonstrations like the 2003 event did not occur however, because Mr. Talat was able to navigate the crisis with his good relations while still being able to negotiate a contract which was a common ground between Turkey's demands and TRNC's vision. It is important to note that although the water crisis was claimed to be the central factor for the coalition government to fail (Mason, 2019) it was the first crack in the government and it failed because of the financial protocol which could not be signed.

Mr. Talat confirmed that although this was a big crisis, he was able to mention it with the good relations he had established. Regarding the discussion over the underground water supplies, Mr. Talat exclusively stated that if the agreement was signed, he would not have been able to explain to his public why they would have to pay a private company for the water extracted from their own wells. CTP's and his reaction were mostly to the increasing interference of Turkey in TRNC's internal affairs (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021). He further confirmed that the continuity in this era was problematic, as after the failure of the coalition government, when he met the Turkish prime minister Binali Yıldırım, he faced an entirely different attitude regarding the water issue (M.A. Talat, personal communication, April 14, 2021) although it was the same leadership in Turkey. It is clear in this event that the demands of the patron motivated ontological insecurity in the client by making demands that were in contrast with the client's understanding of internal sovereignty and therefore with their ontological security. The insistence of Turkey to privatize the management of the pipeline and the underground water sources and especially the patron's approach to mayors of TRNC were perceived as impositions to the internal sovereignty of the de facto state.

The political elite in charge of the major partner of the coalition at the time used tools such as bureaucracy to stall the process and diplomacy to negotiate terms that are acceptable to them, therefore defying and dictating the patron's demands. The caucus and the insistence on not bringing the matter to the council of ministers consisted the bureaucratic measures implemented and the dialogue that was established was the diplomatic aspect of elite

navigations. Although the tension between Turkey and TRNC was high at the time, when the coalition government was at stake Mr. Talat also demanded patronage in terms of a display of political support from Turkey. A failure of the coalition would mean that UBP would have a chance to form a new government with another party, therefore leading to loss of power in CTP and implementation of Turkey's demands without question by the UBP government. This posed a threat to the ontological security of Mr. Talat and CTP, therefore leading him to demand support. The navigating elite's personal qualities are also important in managing a crisis like this. If Mr. Talat did not have good relations with Turkey that dated back to the first event discussed in this thesis, he may not have been able to come up with an agreement that satisfied both sides.

4.4 Crises over the education and youth system in 2016 and 2019

In 2016, the Turkish Cypriot youth gathered in mass demonstrations to protest against what was known as Yurtdışı Koordinasyon Ofisi (Overseas Coordination Office-YKO). The agreement between Turkey and TRNC to establish the office was signed on March 12, 2014 and was published in the official gazette of Turkey on August 8, 2015 ("Koordinasyon Ofisi", TC Resmi Gazete'de Yayınlandı", 2015). The most controversial articles of the agreement foresaw that TRNC would have to choose from youth and sports activities conducted by Turkey to implement, the programmes, projects, youth camps, sports facilities and state student dorms would be managed by YKO, the head and personnel of the office would be appointed by Turkey and if the agreement were not cancelled after five years, it would be renewed ("Koordinasyon Ofisi'ni 'Reddeddiler'", 2016). The Turkish Cypriots were able to observe the educational practices in Turkey and had witnessed the Islamic norms and values dominating the lifestyle gradually since the changes began taking place during the reign of AKP. Identifying as modern, secular, democratic and closer to Western norms, the Turkish Cypriots, especially the youth did not welcome the agreement as a beneficial one for development but one that was trying to establish control the young populations of Northern Cyprus. Mass demonstrations were held under the slogan "Reddediyoruz" (We Reject) and during the UBP-DP-Independents coalition the agreement was to be brought to

the parliament for approval (“Gençler Kararlı”, 2016). Since this was an international agreement which had the five-year renewal clause, the agreement had to be approved by the parliament in order for it to become effective.

The parliament gathered while the Reddediyoruz platform was protesting outside the building. The platform included 62 unions, associations, organizations and youth branches of political parties (“Reddediyoruz Platformu’ndan...”, 2016) and had performed multiple protests since the announcement on Turkey’s official gazette. The discussions within the parliament were lengthy and the members of parliament even witnessed a record-breaking speech by TDP deputy Zeki Çeler, which lasted for seven hours and fifty-eight minutes. However, the protests were not enough and the resolution to implement the agreement passed (“Meclis’te ‘Koordinasyon Ofisi’ Mesaisi”, 2016). For the legislation to become official, the last signature that was needed was from the president Mustafa Akıncı. Under normal circumstances, although the TRNC presidents’ opinions on legislative and executive organs are respected, the presidents are not concerned with interfering with these processes as they conduct other sensitive matters, such as the Cyprus issue. However, Mr. Akıncı took the matter into his own hands by rejecting the resolution and sending it to the TRNC Constitutional Court for inspection (“‘Koordinasyon Ofisiyle İlgili Yasa’...”, 2016) as a result of the discomfort the Turkish Cypriots displayed. The Constitutional Court decided that the agreement was contradictory to the TRNC constitution (“Anayasa’ya Aykırı”, 2016) and sent it back to the parliament (“Söz Meclis’te”, 2016). The ratification of the agreement was delayed indefinitely as the parliament’s law and political matters committee concluded that the agreement cannot be altered as it was an international one, and Serdar Denktaş, leader of DP, deputy prime minister and minister of finance announced verbally that the agreement was withdrawn (“Koordinasyon Ofisi: Komiteden...”, 2016).

Although seemingly the agreement was withdrawn because of technical issues in discord with TRNC’s constitution, the mass demonstrations against the YKO and Mr. Akıncı’s involvement in the process suggest that there are other dynamics at play in the elite navigation clearly displayed in this event. Not only the ontological security of the Turkish Cypriots was

threatened but also Mr. Akıncı's. When asked about his involvement in the process, Mr. Akıncı, stated these words before mentioning the technical aspects of the agreement: "I tried to be a shield against issues that might damage the democratic, pluralist and secular identity of this society" (M. Akıncı, personal communication, April 13, 2021). While he tried to do that by referring the resolution to the Constitutional Court, he actively navigated the patron demands of reform in the education and youth system in TRNC, providing one of the clearest examples of elite navigation at work. The data collected shows that ontological insecurity created through a seemingly friendly coordination office suggested by Turkey led to the utilization of bureaucracy by Mr. Akıncı to block the legislation of the resolution. The matter rested in his hands, as the coalition at that time was formed by pro-Turkey political parties and had already given their approval for this agreement in the parliament. The decision, affirmed by Mr. Akıncı's words, rested purely on concerns of ontological security as the implementation of the agreement would have meant that the identity of the next generations of TRNC would be dictated by Turkey's YKO.

The events of 2018-2019 played a significant role in the failure of the four-party coalition. The CTP-Halkın Partisi (People's Party, HP)-TDP-DP coalition was the first of its kind and according to Prof. Ahmet Sözen, Turkey took a dislike to this coalition even from the start (A. Sözen, personal communication, April 1, 2021). The short time period in which this coalition governed, was shaped by the crisis over a memorandum of understanding that would allow Turkey to appoint a coordinator and manage Hala Sultan İlahiyat Koleji (Hala Sultan Theology College) which was opened in TRNC in 2013. During the era it opened, it was justified by the TRNC elite to hold importance for parts of the society that desired a school which would provide religious education. However, the school was subject to criticism from KTÖS which stated that it is part of religious colonisation and that it is a threat to the existence of Turkish Cypriot identity ("Kültürel ve Kimliksel Varlık Tehlikede", 2013). Cemal Özyiğit, who was secretary general of TDP at the time claimed that the college aimed to "raise monotypes of people" ("Tüm Söylemlerini Yaladı Yuttu", 2013). In our interview Mr. Özyiğit stated that Mustafa Arabacıoğlu, who was a DP member and minister of education, claimed in a personal communication that he was uncomfortable and felt

alienated in the opening ceremony of the theology school (C. Özyiğit, personal communication, April 8, 2021).

It was no surprise that one of the first things Mr. Özyiğit did when he assumed the chair of the minister of education and culture was to visit and inspect the college. In this visit he emphasized the importance of secular and democratic education (“İlahiyat Koleji’nde bilimsel ve...”, 2018). Meanwhile a new financial protocol had to be signed between TRNC and Turkey, as part of the aids and grants provided to the de facto state. The newspapers published during the reign of the four-party coalition constantly mentioned that the financial protocol was in the discussions and was to be signed, yet there were no specific details on why it was delayed. While the publications mentioned that this would be a “social and economic development” protocol (“Sosyal ve Ekonomik Kalkınma...”, 2018), the social aspect was not discussed thoroughly. The same protocol was later named to be a “medium-term program draft” which was to be discussed with Turkey (“Dönüşüm’ Taslağı Hazır, 2018), but there was still no indication of why the protocol had not been signed yet or any references to regulations in the educational field. In an interview, when asked about if the ministry of education had problems with Turkey, Mr. Özyiğit mentioned that both sides had sensitivities and that they would meet with the minister of education of Turkey on September 4 (“Camide Değil, Okulda Eğitim”, 2018). This meeting never happened.

Later on, Mr. Özyiğit would make some claims that would indicate the true nature of why the meeting never happened and why the financial protocol TRNC desperately needed had not been signed yet. In a ceremony organized to celebrate the Teachers’ Day, Mr. Özyiğit mentioned that because they were following Atatürk’s principles and revolutions in their understanding of education, they had some difficulties and the new education year had started among budget deficits (“Eğitim ve Kültür Bakanı Özyiğit’in...”, 2018). In an interview which the financial protocol was discussed, the prime minister of TRNC at the time, Tufan Erhürman would not make any references to the issues the ministry of education was having (“Erhürman: ‘Somut Konuşalım Diye...’”, 2018) and the financial protocol had not been signed yet. These data indicate that although there was obviously a problem in the terms

presented by Turkey and were required to sign the protocol, the coalition government at that time was silent about it. Furthermore, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the Turkish foreign minister would later state that the public of TRNC is demanding another theology college (“Çavuşoğlu: ‘Bir Tek Federasyon...’”, 2019) although there was no clear demand from the public towards the opening of another religious school. This would be rebuked by Mr. Özyiğit a few days later, and he would state simply and clearly that there is no need for another theology school (“Yeni Bir İlahiyat’a İhtiyaç Yok”, 2019).

Between the tensions about education and the financial protocol, the four-party coalition dissolved at the end of May 2019. Mr. Özyiğit made public that because he rejected Turkey’s demands on the theology school, the communication between the two governments had been severed and that the Turkish minister of education had suggested that a transfer would make things easier for both sides (Baturay&Ernur, 2019). Less than two months later in July, a “memorandum of understanding towards cooperation for improving the quality of education” would be signed on July 9 by the UBP-HP government that followed the previous one, but the content of the memorandum was not announced (“İlahiyat Koleji için ‘Koordinatör’”, 2019). When the content was reached by Turkish Cypriot newspapers, it was seen that the memorandum was entirely about Hala Sultan Theology College and the coordinator that would be appointed by Turkey was approved with the signatures of the ministers of education of both TRNC and Turkey. Mr. Özyiğit spoke in the parliament on July 18 and stated that Turkey had asked to take over the management of the theology college and he had not approved (“İlahiyat Koleji için ‘Koordinatör’”, 2019). It is also another important fact here that Mr. Özyiğit was not able to receive an appointment from Turkey during his tenure. The memorandum of understanding was even hidden from the parliament according to claims by CTP (“Meclis’ten de Gizlenmiş”, 2019). Following the signatures to the memorandum, the long-awaited financial protocol was also signed, and TRNC received the aid it needed (“‘Geçiş Dönemi’ Protokolü’ne İmza, 2019).

In our interview, Mr. Özyiğit clearly stated on two different questions that the refusal to sign the memorandum of understanding was an important factor in the dissolution of the coalition

(C. Özyiğit, personal communication, April 8, 2021). He also provided interesting details about internal events in the theology college. For example, he mentioned that new year's celebrations which are part of Turkish Cypriot culture had caused a disagreement between the teachers from Turkey and Turkish Cypriot ones. Because of this disagreement, six teachers were sent back to Turkey and instead of them, Turkish Cypriot ones were appointed. However, after he left his position of minister, the Turkish Cypriots teachers were not given assignments in the school again. Furthermore, he stated that while dealing with patron demands he also had to balance public demands because some unions and more extremist spheres of the society was insisting that he should close down the theology college altogether (C. Özyiğit, personal communication, April 8, 2021). It was not possible to comply with these demands as students were enrolled and some parts of the society believe the school is necessary. It was also impossible for Mr. Özyiğit to implement the patron's demands as he himself stated that he believes AKP is trying to engineer the society of TRNC, and that the Turkish Cypriots have embraced secular and democratic principles (C. Özyiğit, personal communication, April 8, 2021) which could not find their reflections in the Turkey of that time period.

The discussions over the management of the theology college were shaped by the political elite in charge and the demands of Turkey were completely defied, making this event another clear example of elite navigations at work. When the event is carefully examined, it can be observed by the fact that the financial protocol was signed right after the educational one, that the patron state attempted to coerce the client state by withholding on the monetary aid which the client is dependent on. In such a case, without the financial aid from the patron and with the ongoing nonrecognition by the international community, it became increasingly difficult for the government to maintain its financial affairs. However, ontological security concerns of the political elite led them to navigate the situation by defying the patron demands even though it meant losing the financial support. The defiance of the minister of education of TRNC led to the failure of a four-party coalition because the patron was not willing to discuss the differences of the two sides on this specific topic and the ontological insecurity concerns were too high for the client. The previous ties on kinship and the

ontological security resulting from that were turned upside down, as no dialogue could be established, and continuity failed. The political elite in charge could not make the decision to implement the demands of the patron because of the ontological insecurity they caused but also was not able to communicate with the patron to broker a deal. However, the political elite responsible for education would not relent, providing a solid example for this thesis in its aim to prove agency and the effects of ontological security in a client state.

Conclusion

The objective of this thesis was to analyse the patron-client relationships in de facto states with the help of ontological security theory to provide evidence, if any, for agency in de facto states. In order to achieve that goal, patron-client relationships and ontological security theories were applied to the case of TRNC, and through elite navigations to the important events within the de facto state. In the first chapter, the theoretical framework of the thesis was outlined. The thesis utilized patron-client relationships mainly to understand the physical dependencies of the de facto state on their patron. Asymmetry and reciprocity provided theoretical grounds for analysis of physical dependencies. While the asymmetry between the military forces was the primary focus in this thesis, a general asymmetry in resources available to both the patron and the client also gain importance in determining what specific the shape the relationship will take. Reciprocity was conceptualized as the exchange of goods according to the specific needs of the two sides. Compliance is an important factor in determining patron-client relationships but at the same time it is the outcome from the physical dependencies and kinship ties between the patron and the client state.

Affectivity however, because it consists of kinship, family ties and identity, needed a different approach to understand it clearly. The approach taken to it was ontological security. Ontological security was framed in this thesis as both the security of identity and the ability of the state to self-realize by achieving its goals. The ties resulting from affectivity enable the client state to feel ontologically secure despite the physical dependencies which might pose a threat to their own identity and/or reaching their goals. Elite navigations were also

outlined in this chapter. Elite navigations were expected to result from ontological insecurities the client might feel overall and in their relationship with the patron. They were conceptualized as attempts which utilize domestic demands to defy, demand or dictate patronage by the political elite. In the case of de facto states, elite navigations gain special importance as nonrecognition by the international community is a constant source of ontological insecurity. The chapter was concluded by giving a short overview of the literature so far on the relations between de facto states on their patrons.

In the second chapter the research design, data and methods were explained. This thesis utilized single-case study along with process-tracing to implement the theoretical framework into the empirical part of the thesis. The case chosen was Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the majority of the data was collected from newspaper articles. Other sources chosen to provide a clear picture of the case selected included scholarly articles and semi-structured interviews with experts and political elites. The third chapter provided a short summary of the conflict history and a general application of the theoretical framework needed to understand the environment in which elite navigations were performed. Asymmetry proved that the military deficit between Turkey and TRNC was extremely high and revealed that TRNC suffers from a physical security deficit. Reciprocity not only made clear that the economic dependency of TRNC on Turkey was high, but at the same time it exposed the necessity of TRNC for Turkey in order to achieve its own security goals as the patron state. Compliance showed that non-compliance can occur when internal sovereignty and ontological security are threatened while affectivity presented the reality of the shared identities between the patron and the client. In the fourth chapter, process-tracing presented the specific of each event. Data collected from interviews were analysed along with the processes which provided examples of elite navigations in TRNC.

As per the expectations stated earlier in the thesis, it was found that elite navigations do occur when the ontological security of the de facto state is threatened. It was also found that the personal qualities of the political elite decisively determine how the relationship will proceed and to what extent ontological security is perceived to be under threat. For example, during

the governments which consisted of UBP members who are known to be pro-Turkey and believe that the identity of TRNC is aligned with Turkey, the demands of the patron were implemented without problems. When it comes to members of CTP, or individuals with pro-unification sentiments who believe that the Turkish Cypriot identity is unique and different from the Turkish identity in Turkey, elite navigations were more prone to occur. The reason for that is the changes and existing differences in the patron's identity which are almost the opposite of what the established identity in TRNC is. Especially in matters concerning internal affairs of Northern Cyprus, the ontological insecurities were so high that most of the crises occurred during the era in which AKP and Turkey became more religious in their identity. To establish their ontological security, the tools the elite could use were found to be threefold. First, they can adhere to diplomacy, but that requires the listening ear of a patron which intends to cooperate. Second, they can utilize internal bureaucracy and institutions to completely stall or cancel the implementation of some demands. Third, they can outright deny implementing the demands by not even taking them to the parliament. Out of the three ways elite navigations can be performed, the third one is the least efficient one, but it could be argued that it only occurs when the patron refuses to adhere to diplomacy as an option.

The findings in this thesis have important implications for agency in de facto states. The heavy physical dependencies limiting the agency of these states are obvious in this case. This means that although there are attempts to navigate the demands of the patron, they need to be executed carefully because compromises need to be made in areas in which the patron is insistent on. A counter-argument to the claims in this thesis may be that semi-agency is no agency at all. However, expecting the agency of de facto states to be the same as a recognized state is absurd. First of all, they do not have the support from the international community to find themselves allies and/or trading partners to ensure the continuation of their fragile existence. Second, the nonrecognition they face push them further into their patrons', sometimes suffocating, grip. Therefore, this thesis found that although agency exists in de facto states, it is expressed more subtle ways than a recognized state. When a de facto state is using the currency of its patron and cannot even print its own money, it becomes extremely hard to navigate the demands of the patron. Thus, they resort to the tools which were pointed

out to in the previous paragraphs. Elite navigations not only allow the political elites to establish ontological security and exert the agency they claim is present in their de facto state but also to consolidate public support needed to realize their vision for their state. In small democracies like these, to be re-elected elites need to listen to their public intently because if the demands are not met, they can lose support incredibly fast.

By utilizing patron-client relationship and ontological security theories, this thesis contributed to three fields of IR studies. It contributed to patron-client relationships literature by applying the theory to a de facto state while also utilizing ontological security. The thesis also contributed to ontological security theory by applying the theory to patron-client relationships and a de facto state. The biggest contribution of the thesis is to de facto states literature. This thesis not only combined two theories which are not usually utilized together, in order to explain de facto state behaviour but also made contributions to discussions over whether de facto states can possess agency and exert it as other states can. The findings in this thesis can help scholars better understand the phenomenon of de facto states and the nature of their relationship with their patrons in order to come up with more ways to explain and deal with de facto state behaviour. One possible limitation of this study is that the results might not be generalizable. However, this can only be proven by applying the theoretical approach in this thesis to other de facto states and their relations with their patrons. If the theoretical approach presented in this thesis is utilized in further research, our understanding of de facto states will certainly expand.

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