

Securitization of Maritime Disputes

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Abstract

There are significant conflicts of sovereignty in maritime areas in international relations (IR). States want to use their sovereignty in maritime areas as well as land areas. In this context, maritime jurisdiction disputes have arisen in various regions of the world. Examples of these are maritime disputes in the Arctic Ocean, the South China Sea, and the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. These boundary disputes over maritime areas are, in fact, vital conflicts. Because states do not agree on how to delimitate maritime areas. However, states make Securitization by using the disputes in the maritime areas and providing legitimacy for their military expenditures with social constructivist and nationalist policies. The securitization process developed by the decision-making states to see and define a maritime issue as a threat to their national security, causes the maritime conflict to be pushed out of the ordinary political processes and legitimizes the urgent measures that can be followed for a solution. These policies aiming at the control and suppression of social groups and individuals also complicate law-based solutions in maritime areas. In this context, in this article, the issue of securitization of maritime disputes by states will be studied and examples from the world will be examined. We will also clarify our understanding of securitization as a tool for examining maritime disputes through its sectors via Turkey. In fact, maritime issues occupy a substantial place in Turkish foreign policy. Securitization is greatly at work in Turkish foreign policy and particularly in maritime-related disputes of Turkey. Within this framework, we will provide a critical perspective about securitization in Turkey with regard to maritime disputes and stipulate that all maritime disputes of Turkey can be solved with peaceful methods.

Key Words: Maritime boundaries, law of the sea, securitization, maritime disputes, Turkey.

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