

**THE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY UNDER
JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY GOVERNMENT
IN THE POST-9/11 WORLD**

A Master's Thesis

by

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To Cahit and Ayşe Yanarıřık

THE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY UNDER
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ABSTRACT

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The disastrous attacks on 11 September 2001 signalled the beginning of a new era within which more people believe that Islam is in conflict with the West and western values. Although the Islamic political identity was traditionally based on opposition to the West and the westernization in Turkey, rapprochement between the Turkish Islamists and western values occurred ironically in the same era. The establishment and the rise of Justice and Development Party (JDP) are seen by many observers as an evidence of this transformation in the position of Islamists towards the West.

This thesis evaluates the impact of systemic interactions on the identity formation, interest construction, and thus foreign policy behaviours of JDP-led Turkey through constructivist lenses. In other words, it takes the changing international environment in the post 9/11 world as independent variable, within which international norms are interrogated, East-West perceptions are reconsidered and identities are reconstructed. On the other hand, it takes identity, interests and behaviors of JDP-led Turkey and other international actors as dependent variables.

Keywords: Social Constructivism, Post-9/11 World, Justice and Development Party, Turkey-West Relations, Turkish Foreign Policy, European Union, United States of America, Middle East

ÖZET

11 EYLÜL SONRASINDA ADALET VE KALKINMA PARTİSİ YÖNETİMİNDE TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASININ ANALİZİ

Yanarışık, Oğuzhan

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

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11 Eylül 2001 tarihinde gerçekleşen feci saldırılar, eskisinden daha fazla kişinin İslam'ın Batı ve batılı değerler ile çatışma halinde olduğuna inandığı yeni bir dönemin başlangıç sinyalini verdi. Türkiye'deki İslami siyasi kimlik geleneksel olarak Batı ve batılılaşma karşıtlığı üzerine kurulmuş olmasına rağmen Türk İslamcılar ile batılı değerler arasındaki yakınlaşma ironik olarak tam da bu dönemde gerçekleşti. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'nin (AK Parti) kuruluşu ve yükselişi pek çok gözlemci tarafından İslamcıların Batı'ya yaklaşımlarındaki bu dönüşümün bir kanıtı olarak görülmekte.

Bu tez sistemik etkileşimin kimlik oluşumu, çıkar inşası, ve buna bağlı olarak AK Parti yönetimindeki Türkiye'nin dış politika davranışları üzerindeki etkisini konstrüktivist lenslerle değerlendirmekte. Bir başka deyişle, 11 Eylül sonrası dünyada değişen uluslararası normların sorgulandığı, Doğu-Batı algılamalarının yeniden değerlendirildiği ve kimliklerin yeniden oluşturulduğu uluslararası ortamı bağımsız değişken olarak almakta. Diğer taraftan ise AK Parti yönetimindeki Türkiye'nin ve diğer uluslararası aktörlerin kimliklerini, çıkarlarını ve davranışlarını bağımlı değişken olarak incelemekte.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Konstrüktivizm, 11 Eylül 2001, Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, Türkiye-Batı İlişkileri, Türk Dış Politikası, Avrupa Birliği, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Orta Doğu

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The general elections held on 3 November 2002 became a turning point in the history of Turkish democracy that was named by many writers as a “political earthquake.”¹ Just after its election victory, Justice and Development Party’s (JDP) identity and its possible performance in government have been the subjects of fierce debates both at home and abroad. Although many observers used to identify JDP as an Islamic party that is simply one of those which represented political Islam in Turkey, JDP leaders consistently rejected such identification and named their ideology as “conservative democracy” since the establishment of their party.² Although Tayyip Erdoğan, JDP’s leader, declared that Islam would not even be a point of reference for his party shortly before the establishment of JDP,³ some foreign observers argued that as a result of the elections, “for the first

¹ For instance, E. Fuat Keyman, “A political earthquake in Turkey: an analysis of the prospects of the JDP government in Turkey,” (2003), <http://www.eurozine.com/article/2003-01-08-keyman-en.html>.

² See Yalçın Akdoğan, *AK Parti ve Muhafazakar Demokrasi* (İstanbul: Alfa Basım Yayım Dağıtım, 2004).

³ Ruşen Çakır and Fehmi Çalmuk, *Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Bir Dönüşümün Öyküsü*. (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2001): 189, cited in William Hale, “Christian Democracy and the AKP:

time ever, Turkey had an elected Islamist prime minister with a rock solid majority.”⁴

JDP’s performance as a single-party government was the other point that was wondered and discussed by all foreign and domestic observers from the very beginning of its term in government. Most of the observers were pessimist or at least cautious about the party’s possible foreign policy choices and especially its EU-stance. Those who warned the domestic and international society before the election in 2002 that Turkey has to say ‘Goodbye’ to the European Union if JDP wins the elections seemed to be taken seriously.⁵

Contrary to initial expectations, performance of JDP in foreign policy issues and its Europeanized approach in this field have been welcomed by the majority of the observers in a short period of time. Especially, the unexpected progress of the Turkey-EU relations in the first years of JDP government confused the minds of those who expected a party that is perceived as a representative of political Islam to be an obstacle on the way that leads Turkey to Europe. Many observers started to think that JDP is “more actively and vocally committed to EU accession than any of its predecessors.”⁶ This trend gained speed by the positive developments in Turkey-EU relations and reached to its peak with the opening of negotiation process. The reform process at that time was perceived to be so successful that the

Parallels and Contrasts,” *Turkish Studies* 6, no. 2 (2005): 293.

⁴ David Shankland, “Islam, Politics and Democracy in Turkey,” in Michael Lake, ed., *The EU and Turkey: A Glittering Prize or a Milestone?* (London: The Federal Trust, 2005), 54.

⁵ Tufan Türe , “AKP ile AB’ye elveda,” *H rriyet*, September 14, 2002.

⁶ Leda-Agapi Glyptis, “The Cost of Rapprochement: Turkey’s Erratic EU Dream as a Clash of Systemic Values,” *Turkish Studies* 6, no. 3 (2005): 403.

European Commission declared, “Turkey sufficiently fulfils the [Copenhagen] political criteria.”⁷ In other words, Turkey was accepted by the West, itself, as a country that achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and, protection of minorities under a so-called pro-Islamist government. JDP’s economic agenda and performance has also been welcomed by the West. This has been reflected in the opinions of both private and public actors that openly appreciate what has been done in Turkish economy by the government after 2002 elections.

However, the reform process has experienced a downward slope with the start of negotiations after the screening process.⁸ Although it has continuously been declared by the government leaders and officials that EU membership is a priority for the government, criticisms increased about the slowdown of the reform process. It is emphasised in many circles that Erdoğan gave up using his famous “Ankara criteria” in his speeches. In spite of a debate about the reasons of this situation, even those who are closer to the party circles have started to talk about a gap between the willingness in the first years of government and indolence in the last years about the reform efforts.⁹ This situation is expected to be reflected in the new 2008 progress report of the Commission.

⁷ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament-Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey’s progress towards accession* (Brussels: European Commission, 2004): 3.

⁸ For a discussion on the reasons of the slowdown in the EU membership reform process, see Marcie J. Patton, “AKP Reform Fatigue in Turkey: What has happened to the EU Process?” *Mediterranean Politics* 12:3 (November 2007).

⁹ İsmail Kapan, “Reform Paketleri,” *Türkiye*, October 30, 2008.

The changes in Turkish foreign policy under JDP government are perceived to imply much more than the improvement in relations with the EU. Rather, JDP's foreign policy is generally described as "a significant break with the past" in terms of "foreign policy parameters and practices."¹⁰ This break included Turkey's approach that is closer to EU's position more than ever about major developments in post-9/11 international system. Its resistance to unilateral U.S. action in Iraq, its willingness to actively cooperate in the democratization efforts in the Middle East region, its pro-active approach in solving the chronic problems in Cyprus, its support for diplomatic solution about Iran's nuclear activities have been among the examples of Turkey's Europeanized foreign policy approach under JDP government.

This foreign policy and interesting nature of Turkey's relations with western world under the so-called Islamist JDP is the puzzling situation that gave rise to not only this thesis but also other academic studies and political debates. The aim of this thesis is not to explain Turkish foreign policy under JDP government as a whole with all details and to analyse each and every factor that contributed to this policy. Because of the complexity of the process that leads to the action, it is almost impossible to give a perfect explanation to a state or human action. If the difficulty in understanding a single human being's actions is kept in mind, it can be understood how difficult it is to comprehensively explain a much more complex state action in foreign policy that is a result of a construction process,

¹⁰ Seyfi Taşhan, "Foreword," in Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu and Seyfi Taşhan, eds., *The Europeanization of Turkey's Security Policy: Prospects and Pitfalls* (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 2004), 7.

which involves the interaction of many human beings and other social entities, including other states. Thus, the claim of this thesis is to make a modest contribution to understanding and explaining Turkey's relations with the western world by focusing on the generally neglected part of the explanation (i.e. systemic impacts) and analysing JDP's role in this explanation as the single governing party whose policy choices are inseparable from Turkey's policy choices as a state.

Social constructivism is used in this thesis as the theoretical framework. Thus, this study pays special attention to the explanatory powers of non-material factors (namely identities, norms and perceptions) in explaining the change in Turkish foreign policy in the mentioned period. Alexander Wendt's systemic analysis is given emphasis in this respect.¹¹ Thus, this study can be identified as "state-centric" in that sense.¹² This is done in order to shift the attention to the identity and interest formation process at the systemic level, which seems to be ignored by neorealism that takes identities as constant and exogenously given and by neoliberalism that "either bracket[s] the formation of interests, treating them as if they were exogenous, or explain[s] interests by reference to domestic politics, on

¹¹ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992); Alexander Wendt, "On the Constitution and Causation in International Relations," *Review of International Studies* 24 (special issue, 1998); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Alexander Wendt, "On the Via Media: a response to the critics," *Review of International Studies* 26 (2000).

¹² See Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*; Alexander Wendt, "On the Via Media."

the assumption that they are exogenous, although not necessarily constant.”¹³

Another reason for this state-centrism is what Wendt uses in his studies: Although non-state actors are playing increasingly important roles in international politics, they do so only through state action.¹⁴ States still remain the main actors in the current international system that has the monopoly on the use of force. This situation does not seem to change, at least, in the middle term.

Finally and more importantly, this position is taken in this dissertation also for some practical purposes, like narrowing the scope of the study and having a more feasible target. This target is to understand and explain the impact of some pre-selected factors (systemic interactions and structure) on identity, interest formation and thus the foreign policy choices in the defined period instead of analysing all related factors. By this way, it is planned to prevent covering vast area of domestic politics that has been covered in detail in the existing literature.

This enables this thesis to cover impacts of international system and developments that were highly ignored in attempts to understand Turkish foreign policy in the mentioned era. “Bracketing” the impacts of domestic politics to a certain extent, which is widely used in the literature as the main independent variable to explain the changes in Turkish foreign policy under JDP government, and focusing more on the impact of the changes in international system on these policy shifts aim to

¹³ Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” *American Political Science Review* 88:2 (1994), 384.; for a neoliberal example, see Andrew Moravcsik, “Preferences and Power in the European Community: A Liberal Intergovernmentalist Approach,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 31, no. 4 (1993).

¹⁴ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*; Wendt, “On the Via Media.”

prevent a fruitless attempt to “problematize everything at once.”¹⁵ Thus, this study should not be seen as a competing effort against the analyses solely focusing on domestic politics in explaining identity, interest and policy construction. Rather, it is a complementary approach that can widen the scope of the academic work on the subject.

On the other hand, this thesis accepts, like Wendt mentions, that domestic politics/factors have considerable impacts in shaping state identities, perceptions and thus behaviours, while paying prominent attention to the interaction between states, the international system and states themselves.¹⁶ It is also accepted, as has been observed after the crisis in the election process of Turkish president and closure case of JDP, domestic factors can become dominant on systemic factors. Thus, this study focuses more on the first years of JDP rule when systemic impacts play a prominent role in shaping JDP and its policies. In that context, the period after the start of EU membership negotiation process in October 2005, within which domestic issues dominated the landscape in Turkey is partly left outside of the dissertation. This subject can be a good source for other academic studies in order to analyse the relationship between domestic and systemic factors.

Constructivists are generally criticised for not applying their theoretical position in empirical research and for refraining from addressing “concrete problems of

¹⁵ Alexander Wendt, “The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory,” *International Organization* 41:3 (1987), 364.; Wendt, “Anarchy is what states make of it,” 423; Wendt, “On the Via Media,” 175.

¹⁶ Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 11.

world politics.”¹⁷ The answer to this criticism came with some empirical studies that focus on some specific situations and cases that aim to show that constructivism works in understanding and explaining IR much better than other theories. Instead of explaining every characteristics of IR in one study, they preferred to explain parts of it. Likewise, this study aims to show the appropriateness of constructivism in understanding and explaining the Europeanization of Turkish foreign policy under a so-called political Islamist party, especially in the first years, a situation that obviously cannot be explained in mere material terms. Instead of supporting a claim of a new orthodoxy against the mainstream, this thesis tries to contribute to efforts that try to open new paths of inquiry about Turkish foreign policy. This itself can be seen as a considerable step that can open the way for reconsideration of the strength and sufficiency of traditional explanations that rest solely on material factors.

It can be criticised for covering the impact of a political party (i.e. JDP) in a dissertation that claims to make a systemic analysis that does not focus mainly on the domestic politics related part of the identity, interest and policy construction processes. However, the importance of this specific Party arises from the fact that it is the single ruling party with majority in the parliament during the period analysed in the thesis. This makes their preferences and actions inseparable from preferences and actions of Turkey as a state. Thus, instead of being merely part of domestic politics, contrary to other political parties or domestic actors, it is part of

¹⁷ Martha Finnemore, *National Interest in International Society* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), 32; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 4.

the state through which other domestic actors try to influence policies and change the system.¹⁸ For this reason, although everybody has their own ideas about Turkey's identity, interests and appropriate foreign policy behaviours, JDP's worldview, major perceptions and practical policy decisions deserve special attention as the single governing party that takes great responsibility in the foreign policy actions and their consequences in its term.

JDP's importance also arose from its dominant role against the previously strong state bureaucracy that traditionally created the "representations of the self and others" of Turkish state, which determined the foreign policy choices.¹⁹ Rather than being a simple operator that move according to the predefined 'national-interests,' it challenged many taboos in the area of foreign policy formation and it considerably shifted away from traditional Turkish foreign policy.²⁰

More importantly, including JDP in the analysis of this study is an attempt to partially respond to a widely used criticism against constructivist studies that focus on the importance of social structures: "the neglect of domestic politics."²¹ JDP and its role provide a crucial link in the analysis between domestic politics and social structure, as an actor that is important at both domestic and structural levels.

¹⁸ Ibid., 9.

¹⁹ Jutta Weldes, "Constructing National Interest," *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no.3 (1996): 281-283.

²⁰ For some critical opinions about this 'shift', see Oya Akgöncü, "Evet, Sn. Başbakanım sormak zorundasınız!," <http://www.milligazete.com.tr/print.php?type=writers&id=9849>; Devlet Bahçeli, "MHP 7. Olağan Büyük Kurultayında yaptığı konuşma," <http://www.mhp.org.tr/genelbsk/gbskkonusma/2003/index.php?page=12102003>.

²¹ Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50, no.2 (1998): 332.

As can be understood from the theoretical framework it uses, this study rejects positivist ontology, which believes in the existence of a social world that is independent from human mind and can/should be discovered by social scientists. Rather, it is based on a “modernist” understanding of constructivist ontology by claiming that social world is dependent on human conscience and consists of unobservable factors as well as material ones.²²

This study does not reject the possibility of scientific knowledge and scientific explanation. In contrast to positivist and post-positivist approaches, it believes in the possibility and importance of both causal and constitutive relations that enable social scientists to highlight some regularity in the social world and to make projections for the future.²³ At the same time, it refrains from making universally applicable claims and makes only “conditional” propositions.²⁴

This thesis evaluates the impact of systemic interactions on the identity formation, interest construction, and thus policy behaviours of JDP-led Turkey. In other words, its independent variable is the changing international environment in the post 9/11 world, within which international norms are interrogated, East-West perceptions are reconsidered and identities are reconstructed. On the other hand, it takes identities, interests and behaviours of JDP-led Turkey and western powers as dependent variables.

²² Emanuel Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics,” *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no.3 (1997): 335.

²³ Wendt, “On the Constitution and Causation.”

²⁴ Wendt, “On the Via Media,” 174.

Both primary and secondary resources are used for the research of this study. In addition to books and articles related to the topic, the research has made extensive use of primary sources such as newspaper articles, official statements and documents and the information received from semi-structured interviews that were conducted with scholars and politicians who are interested in the subject at theoretical and practical levels are used. The questions asked in the interviews focus mainly on foreign policy choices of JDP, post-9/11 international system, and the importance of non-material factors in understanding and explaining foreign policies. The sample for this study is non-random, and attempted to capture the views of potentially knowledgeable and influential persons: scholars and politicians. Hence, the answers do not represent the general public opinion.

The second chapter of this thesis covers a general review of the literature on constructivism while clarifying the theoretical position held in this study. In order to prevent any confusion that can arise from the different usage of the term “constructivism” in the literature, the way the concept is used in this study is explained. The advantages and disadvantages of this theoretical position in understanding and explaining changes in foreign policies compared to other theories are evaluated. The impact of systemic values/factors on identities of nation-states and their foreign policy interests and behaviours are analysed in general terms.

The third chapter focuses on the independent variable of the study, namely changing social reality of the international system in the post-9/11 world.

Substance of the core tenets of the system is evaluated with its material and social elements. The perceptions of the West (i.e. the United States and the European Union) related to the international structure after September 11 attacks and the interaction between the western agents and the international structure are analysed.

The fourth chapter evaluates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and examines the systemic impacts on the identity, interest and foreign policy behaviour in the case of JDP-led Turkey. Within this framework, the JDP's relations with the western powers and the international system are assessed.

The fifth chapter takes Turkey's foreign policy in the Middle East region as a case study. This part of the dissertation tests the applicability of constructivism in understanding and explaining foreign policy change in Turkey in post-9/11 world.

Finally, the thesis concludes with the general evaluation of the success of constructivism in the thesis and the general observations are explained.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

Social constructivism arose in 1980s and became a challenging alternative way of thinking in international relations literature against orthodox rationalist theories. However, its roots can be traced back to the 18th century with the works Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico with his belief in the historical world as the product of Man, while the natural world is made by God. Immanuel Kant is another ancestor of constructivism with his belief in the subjectivity of the human beings' knowledge about the world that is filtered through human consciousness. Another forerunner of constructivism is Max Weber, who argues that "subjective understanding is the specific characteristic of social knowledge."²⁵

Especially after the end of Cold War, constructivism gained popularity and has been seen by many as the new rival of the mainstream theories. It was celebrated as the new party of the third grand debate in IR theory. Its biggest contribution to the literature is generally argued to be its success in shifting the attention from

²⁵ Robert Jackson and Georg Sorensen, eds., *Introduction to International Relations Theories and Approaches*, 3rd edit. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 164.

material factors to ideational factors in understanding and explaining the social world. It is generally described as a theory that emphasises the importance of commonly held (intersubjective) ideas and beliefs in shaping the social world that human beings are living in. Thus, rather than taking the social world as given, social constructivism is welcomed as a theoretical position that can explain the changes in it. By this way, it was seen as a challenging view, which rejects any truth claim that can be applied in all times and places and opens the way for analysing the active interaction between humans as agents and the social world as the structure. As a result, it was perceived as a new way to analyse the mutual construction process between agents and structures.

All this being said, however, it is still very hard to talk about clarity and consensus on constructivism's "nature and substance."²⁶ Confusion and debate seem to prevail in the literature about the characteristics and the place of constructivism in International Relations (IR) theory. Different authors use the term in different meanings and this makes it more difficult to understand what social constructivism really is. For instance, although Wendt insists on the need for clearly separating constructivism from postmodernism, Jackson and Sorensen list postmodernists among the critical wing of constructivism, while Adler identifies them as a wing of radical constructivism.²⁷ Moreover, constructivist scholars themselves support different views in the name of constructivism. Thus,

²⁶ Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground," 320.

²⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*; Jackson and Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations Theories*, 167; Emanuel Adler, "Constructivism and International Relations," in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 95.

scholars like Colin Hay argue that constructivists are “unified more by what they distance themselves from than what they share.”²⁸ This situation necessitates clarification about the theoretical position taken in this thesis.

In this chapter, firstly, the background and the common points that establish the basis of constructivism in IR theory are analysed. In the rest of the chapter, the ‘systemic analysis’ that is mostly shaped by Alexander Wendt, the relationship between identity and interest, the international norms and their diffusion processes are evaluated.

2.1 Commonalities in Constructivism

Emanuel Adler defines constructivism as “the view that *the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on dynamic normative and epistemic interpretations of the material world.*”²⁹

However, this is only one of the various definitions of constructivism. Thus, with reference to Hay’s criticism, it seems more efficient to analyse what constructivists distance themselves from in the first place, in order to grasp the core characteristics of constructivism.³⁰ As can be inferred from its widely used portrayal by Adler as the “middle ground,” constructivism seeks to distance itself from the opposing sides in IR theory, namely materialists versus ideationalists,

²⁸ Collin Hay, *Political Analysis* (Palgrave: Macmillan, 2002), 25.

²⁹ Emphasis original, Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground,” 322.

³⁰ Hay, *Political Analysis*, 25.

rationalists versus relativists, individualists versus structuralists.³¹ The commonalities of constructivism are evaluated below by analysing the position it takes about these dichotomies in ontological and epistemological terms. In addition, its position in agent-structure debate is investigated in this section.

2.1.1 Ontology and Epistemology

The first issue that constructivists try to clarify themselves is ontology. This effort started with a criticism of neorealism that constructivism is known to position itself against. Its role as the ‘other’ in the constructivist analysis is so important that Jackson and Sorensen argue that neorealism is still the main rival of constructivism while there is a considerable room for cooperation with neoliberalism, international society theory and even some versions of neo-Marxism.³² This unique role of neorealism can also be easily observed in Wendt’s widely cited book *Social Theory of International Politics* as he clearly states that he positions himself according to Waltz’s structural realism, namely as a critique of it.³³ The most important reason for this seems to be the dominant position of neorealism in IR theory.

Although it has a different place because of its belief in the causal power of norms and social learning, neoliberalism is also perceived in the same camp with neorealism for sharing its materialist ontology and core assumptions.

³¹ Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground.”

³² Jackson and Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations Theories*, 175.

³³ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*.

Its ontology is the main departure point of constructivism from this mainstream camp (i.e. neorealism and neoliberalism). In other words, its answer to a question like “What is out there in social world?” is different from mainstream theories. While a mainstream theorist’s answer includes only material factors that are completely outside the human control with its own laws, a constructivist reply is that there are both intellectual and material elements in the social world and all elements are dependent on human mind. In this respect, Adler defines constructivists as “mediativist[s]” in the sense that they accept the existence of reality out there and believe that this reality is “not determined solely by material reality” and is “also socially emergent.”³⁴

Moreover, for a constructivist, material elements have a secondary status, because they gain meaning only through intellectual processes. This enables the constructivists to believe in the possibility of change in the social world by conscious human efforts and to reject a constant, pre-given, and natural-like ‘social world’ perception. It can be argued that in a world described by constructivists, actions of social beings depend not only on physical constraints or individual preferences and rational choices, but also on shared knowledge, collective meanings and the rules, legitimacy of self, institutions, practices and even creativity.³⁵ From a constructivist perspective, human beings “made” our social world “from the raw materials that nature provides, by doing what [they] do

³⁴ Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground.,” 324.
³⁵ Ibid., 321.

with each other and saying what [they] say to each other.”³⁶

The most famous declaration of constructivism’s different ontology is Wendt’s claim that “anarchy is what states make of it.”³⁷ This claim challenges the mainstream from its roots by showing that even the most commonly-accepted concept in our social world is not given, natural and material. Although, Wendt himself accepts that there is anarchy in the international system, he argues that “it is the interaction and intersubjective understandings of states which gives rise to the condition of anarchy.”³⁸

Another outcome of constructivism’s different ontology is its emphasis on the role of non-material factors, like norms, in shaping the social world. In the mainstream, realists argue that norms do not have a causal power, while neoliberal regime theory argues that norms have some influence in certain areas. However, even neoliberals believe that norms are parts of the “superstructure built by agents on a material base and have only regulative function.” On the other hand, constructivists claim that norms have not only regulative but also constitutive effects on identities, interests and behaviours of agents.³⁹

In their analyses, constructivists focus on the intersubjective beliefs (and ideas, conceptions and assumptions) that are widely shared among people. In other

³⁶ Nicholas Onuf, “Constructivism: A User's Manual,” in Vendulka Kubalkova, Nicholas Onuf and Paul Kowert, eds., *International Relations in a Constructed World* (New York: ME Sharpe, 1998), 59.

³⁷ Wendt, “Anarch is what states make of it.”

³⁸ Hay, *Political Analysis*, 24.

³⁹ Jeffrey T. Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory.” *World Politics* 50, no.2 (1998): 327.

words, “ideas need to be widely shared to matter; nonetheless they can be held by different groups such as organisations, policymakers, social groups and etc.”⁴⁰ It should be emphasised that “intersubjective meaning is not simply an aggregation of the beliefs of individuals who jointly experience and interpret the world.” Instead, it exists “as a collective knowledge that is shared by all who are competent to engage in or recognize the appropriate performance of a social practice or range of practices.”⁴¹ The life of this kind of knowledge is much longer than individuals’ lives and is “embedded in social routines and practices as they are reproduced by interpreters who participate in their production and workings.”⁴² Intersubjective meaning have structural characteristics that do not only constrain actors but also define their social realities.

Although it is well-known for its rejection of purely materialist ontology, it should be emphasised that constructivism’s ontology is also different from postmodernism’s strictly idealist ontology that ignores the material elements in the social world and takes the “world *only* as it can be imagined or talked about.”⁴³ As a “middle ground,” it believes in the coexistence of both material and social factors in the social world.

This brings us to the second point that constructivists seek to clarify themselves: their epistemology. Their difference from postmodernists is noticeable in terms of

⁴⁰ Jackson and Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations Theories*, 166.

⁴¹ Ira Cohen, “Structuration Theory and Social Praxis,” in Anthony Giddens and Jonathan Turner, eds., *Social Theory Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 287.

⁴² Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground,” 327.

⁴³ Emphasis original, Adler, “Constructivism and International Relations,” 95.

epistemology. In other words, constructivism's answer to a question like "What can we (hope to) know about social reality?" is much closer to mainstream's answer than postmodernism's reply. Postmodernists reject the possibility of objective knowledge and thus, scientific study about social world. Moreover, they believe that "truth claims cannot be adjudicated empirically."⁴⁴ Although constructivists share the scepticism of post-modernists about the universally applicable law-like truth claims in social sciences and about the attempts to discover a 'final truth' about the world which is true across time and place, they accept the possibility of scientific analysis. This scepticism does not prevent them from making "truth claims about the subjects they have investigated...while admitting that their claims are always contingent and partial interpretations of a complex world."⁴⁵

For some scholars, like Steans and Pettiford, this acceptance of science comes from constructivists' desire to "say something meaningful about the (social) world."⁴⁶ Whatever their desires are, constructivism, as Adler argues, has an epistemology "that makes interpretation an intrinsic part of social science and that stresses contingent generalizations," which does not try to fasten up the understandings about social world.⁴⁷ In other words, constructivism does not reject all truth claims and accepts the possibility of explaining social world in

⁴⁴ Hay, *Political Analysis*, 227.

⁴⁵ Richard Price and Christian Reus-Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism," *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 3 (1998): 272.

⁴⁶ Jill Steans and Lloyd Pettiford, *Introduction to International Relations: Perspectives and Themes*, 2nd edit. (Pearson: Longman, 2005), 189.

⁴⁷ Adler, "Constructivism and International Relations," 101.

some certain ways as well as understanding it.⁴⁸

However, this should not prevent anyone from recognising the differences between constructivism and mainstream in epistemological terms. Although they accept the possibility of science, constructivists reject mainstream's claim to find the 'truth' for everyone and explain the social world in the same way with a scientist working on the laws of material world. Wendt underlines this difference by arguing that constructivism's "propositions are *conditional* rather than universal."⁴⁹

Although it has been welcomed by many as a challenging rival against the mainstream, constructivism has been criticised from both sides of the IR theory they try to bridge.⁵⁰ In time, constructivism has been criticised for simply adding 'ideas and norms' as other explanatory variables and accepting the ontological and epistemological arguments of rationalism without any considerable modification. Moreover, it has also been observed that social constructivism does not differ from rationalist theories about the methodology that it applies in practice. These factors cause questions to arise about its difference from the mainstream literature in reality. Postmodern scholars argue that social constructivism does not have a considerable difference from rationalism and it is not really questioning rationalism's general assumptions. They claim that this was the main reason for social constructivism, in contrast to postmodernism, to be

⁴⁸ Wendt, "On the Via Media."

⁴⁹ Ibid., 174 (emphasis original)

⁵⁰ For instance, constructivists were welcomed for "rescuing the exploration of identity from postmodernists." Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn," 325.

welcomed by the mainstream scholars as a sufficiently ‘scientific’ approach that can be taken seriously.

Constructivists are also criticised for being closer to one of the sides, although they claim to be on the middle ground. In this respect, Wendt’s arguments are criticised for being too close to rationalism.⁵¹ Wendt himself accepts that he is not clear as he was before about the difference between constructivism and rationalism and confesses that he changed his attitude and came closer to rationalism.⁵²

Last but not the least, constructivists are criticised for trying to “reconcile the irreconcilable.” The gap between rationalism and postmodernism is argued to be wider than constructivists think.⁵³

2.1.2 Agent-Structure Debate

One of the most important points that should be taken into consideration in understanding constructivism is its position in the debate over the relationship between agents and structure. As Onuf defines, structure is a “stable pattern of rules, institutions, and unintended consequences.”⁵⁴ Agents are the actors in this structure. According to Went, social structure includes three basic elements: shared knowledge, material resources, and practices; and these three elements are

⁵¹ Hay, *Political Analysis*, 25.

⁵² Wendt, “On the Via Media.”

⁵³ Hay, *Political Analysis*, 25.

⁵⁴ Onuf, “Constructivism: A User’s Manual,” 61.

interrelated. In this analysis, “material resources only acquire meaning for human action through the structure of shared knowledge in which they are embedded,” and it is their intersubjectivity what makes the ideas and structure social. He also emphasises that “social structure exists, not in actors’ heads nor in material capabilities, but in practices. Social structure exists only in process.”⁵⁵

From a constructivist perspective, as Wendt mentions, agent-structure debate arises from the fact that “human agents and social structures are, in one way or another, theoretically interdependent.”⁵⁶ Especially with the rise of constructivism, this debate began to attract the attention in the literature on the nature of the relationship between agents and structures. In his influential article, Wendt analyses the perspectives of influential theories (namely, neorealism and world-system theory) that claim to make structural explanation of how states behave in the international system and defines constructivism’s approach.

In his analysis, Wendt argues that there are two possible ontological positions about the issue: one of them is to accept either structure or agents are “ontologically primitive,” while the other one is to give them “equal and therefore irreducible ontological status.” He continues that both neorealism and world-systems theory choose the first option. Neorealism accepts the agents, while world-systems theory takes the system as ontologically primitive. Wendt’s solution to the problem is to see agents and system as “co-determined” or

⁵⁵ Alexander Wendt, “Constructing International Politics,” *International Security* 20, no. 1 (1995): 73-74.

⁵⁶ Wendt, “The Agent-Structure Problem,” 338.

“mutually constituted.”⁵⁷

Wendt borrowed the concept of ‘structuration’ from Anthony Giddens in his study. Giddens uses the concept of ‘structuration’ to describe an interactive relationship between agents and structure. According to him, structures (i.e. the rules and conditions that guide social action) do not determine what agents do in a mechanical way, or *vice versa*.⁵⁸ Rather there is a continuous interaction between them that shapes both sides. In other words, Giddens’ agents are not “structural idiots.” Instead, they consciously have their own constructed identities, structures and practices.⁵⁹ However, it should not be ignored that there is no full independence for any agent. Thus, “full independence is a...friction, and sovereignty is a matter of degree.”⁶⁰ In other words, “people make society, and society makes people” in a continuous two-way process.⁶¹

This perception of ‘mutual constitution’ became one of the foundation stones of constructivism. Thus, constructivism is known for its criticism of mainstream not only for its materialism, but also for its methodological individualism.⁶² Methodological individualism is described by Rhoads to be based on “the belief that society consists solely of its members.” In this view, the members “alone are real” and “individualism rules out social structures as supraindividual causes and

⁵⁷ Ibid, 339.

⁵⁸ Jackson and Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations Theories*, 163.

⁵⁹ Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground,” 325.

⁶⁰ Onuf, “Constructivism: A User’s Manual,” 65.

⁶¹ Ibid., 59.

⁶² Jeffrey T. Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory,” *World Politics* 50, no. 2 (1998): 326.

traces causal inferences to particular individuals in general.”⁶³

In continuation to this understanding, Adler argues that the main aim of constructivism is “to provide both theoretical and empirical explanations of social institutions and social change, with the help of the combined effect of agents and social structures.” By this way, constructivism tries to establish a bridge between individual agency and social structure.⁶⁴

2.2 Wendt’s ‘Systemic Analysis’

Wendt is a well-known constructivist who argues that constructivism should focus on the structure and take the state as the unit of analysis. Although he accepts that domestic politics is also important in constructing state identities, his focus is on the impact of international system on state identity. He accepts that non-state actors are increasingly involved in shaping the international system. However, states preserve a crucial role in his analysis as the means that other actors have to act through. Thus, for him, it is early for taking non-state actors as main unit of analysis. This is the basic reason for him to have a state-centric approach like Waltz. However, contrary to Waltz, he takes identities, norms and other non-observable and non-material factors into consideration in explaining the social world.

⁶³ John K. Rhoads, *Critical Issues in Social Theory* (University Park: Pennsylvanis State University Press, 1991), 117.

⁶⁴ Adler, “Seizing the Middle Ground.,” 325-6.

Wendt starts his analysis by noting that he accepts some core assumptions of Waltz's neorealism, although he has different reasons to do that. The most important assumption that he shares with Waltz is the importance of states in the current international system as the main actors that have the monopoly on the use of force. He also treats states as actors that have "identities, interests, rationality."⁶⁵ He also believes that "states are structures that exhibit macro-level regularities and these although dependent on individuals' beliefs, are not explained by them."⁶⁶ This makes them the main unit of analysis for Wendt. However, contrary to neorealists who take the state for granted and not problematise it, Wendt believes that states are also social constructions. However, this does not prevent him from accepting that states are the main actors in today's social world and will remain so at least in the near future.⁶⁷

Wendt also accepts that there is anarchy in the current international system. However, he does not take this situation for granted as part of nature. He claims that structures are not static, because they are continuously "reproduced and transformed by practice."⁶⁸ This claim leaves room for a change in the structure.

Wendt also agrees with neorealists that today's states most often define their interests in a self-interested manner. What he emphasises is the fact that this situation is not the natural result of statehood; rather it is "socially constructed and

⁶⁵ Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation," 392.

⁶⁶ Adler, "Constructivism and International Relations," 108.

⁶⁷ Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 8-10.

⁶⁸ Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation," 389.

historically contingent.”⁶⁹

Contrary to neorealism’s material structure understanding, Wendt stresses the intersubjective structure understanding that “leaves room for the emergent effects of material capabilities.”⁷⁰ As a constructivist, Wendt believes in the existence of both material and social elements in social world and claims that:

Yes, international politics is in part about acting on material incentives in given anarchic worlds. However, it is also about the reproduction and transformation -by intersubjective dynamics at both the domestic and systemic levels- of the identities and interests through which those incentives and worlds are created.⁷¹

Wendt emphasises that his idealism is not that of “Pollyanna” or “Peter Pan.”⁷²

Like other constructivists, he argues that constructivism is not utopian and its analytical stance is neutral with respect to conflict and cooperation.⁷³

Wendt accepts that he sees “less opposition between rationalism and constructivism than” he did at the beginning of 1987.⁷⁴ As can be understood from his other studies, Wendt’s problem with the mainstream is not epistemological, since he accepts science and causal explanation. Instead, his problem is about ontology. Thus, he does not suggest removing mainstream from the literature. Rather, he criticises what neorealism and neoliberalism neglects, instead of what

⁶⁹ Ibid., 387.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 389.

⁷¹ Ibid., 394.

⁷² Ibid., 389.

⁷³ Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt and Peter J. Katzenstein, “Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security,” in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security-Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 39.

⁷⁴ Wendt, “On the Via Media,” 179.

they do.⁷⁵

Alexander Wendt, with his famous systemic analysis, focuses on the impact of international environment on construction processes of identities and beliefs, contrary to some other constructivists who argue that domestic developments are more important in explaining changes in identities and beliefs. By this way, he shows his place in the debate about the importance of domestic politics and international environment in explaining the changes in social world. Thus, he is also called “systemic constructivist.”⁷⁶

2.3 Identity and Interest

To place emphasis on the importance of national roles or identity perceptions in defining foreign policy choices of states is not a new practice that is unique to constructivists. In his article that dates back to 1970, Kal Holsti talks about and criticise IR theorists who make “references to national roles as possible causal variables in the operation of international systems, or in explaining the foreign policies of individual nations.”⁷⁷ However, it is the constructivists who developed a comprehensive alternative to the mainstream and shifted the attention in the literature from material factors to non-material factors, like identity, in explaining national interest perceptions and foreign policy decisions. As Finnemore puts it,

⁷⁵ Checkel, “The Constructivist Turn,” 324.

⁷⁶ Jackson and Sorensen, *Introduction to International Relations Theories*, 170.

⁷⁷ Kal Holsti, “National Role Conception in the Study of Foreign Policy,” *International Studies Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (September 1970): 234.

constructivists opened a new way of scholarship by “developing a systemic approach to understanding state interests and state behaviour by investigating an international structure, not of power, but of meaning and social value.”⁷⁸

According to constructivists, states’ identities and interests are shaped by the “norms, institutions, and other cultural features of domestic and international environments.”⁷⁹ Thus, Weldes argues that “national interest... is created as a meaningful object, out of shared meanings through which the world, particularly the international system and the place of the state in it is understood.”⁸⁰

From this constructivist framework, “interests and identities of actors,” as Wendt puts it, “emerge only in an interactive process.”⁸¹ In this process, identity has an important role in defining states’ interests. States, in their view, “do not have a ‘portfolio’ of interests that they carry around independent of social context; instead, they define their interests in the process of defining situations.” The actors may face some unprecedented situations that force them to re-construct their interests by constructing the meaning of their new environment. “The absence or failure of roles makes defining situations and interests more difficult, and identity confusion may result.”⁸²

⁷⁸ Finnemore, *National Interest in International Society*, 2.

⁷⁹ Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein, “Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security,” 37.

⁸⁰ Weldes, “Constructing National Interest,” 277.

⁸¹ Naeem Inayatullah and David L. Blaney, “Knowing Encounters: Beyond Parochialism in International Relations Theory,” in Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwill, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 71.

⁸² Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It,” 396-8.

Bukovansky argues that “analysis of the social construction of state identities ought to precede, and may even explain, the genesis of state interests.”⁸³ In other words, state identity is the basis of interest. Thus, state identity is argued to precede state interests because “actors often cannot decide what their interests are until they know what they are representing- ‘who they are’ which in turn depends on their social relationships.”⁸⁴

The constructivists do not neglect the importance of domestic factors in shaping the identities of states. Even Wendt, as a systemic constructivist, accepts the importance of domestic factors by arguing that the way a state satisfies its corporate interests (namely, physical and ontological security, recognition as an actor, and development) is determined by the way it identifies itself in relation to others, “which is a function of social identities at both domestic and systemic level of analysis.” Wendt also accepts that “some state identities and interests” arise “primarily from relations to domestic society,” while others stem from international society. Thus, he agrees that “the content of national interest” is only partly shaped by “structurally constituted identities.”⁸⁵

⁸³ Mlada Bukovansky, “American Identity and Neutral Rights from Independence to the War of 1812,” *International Organization* 51 (Spring 1997): 209.

⁸⁴ Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein, “Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security,” 59.

⁸⁵ Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation,” 385-6.

2.4 International Norms and Their Diffusion

There are various definitions of norm in the literature. However, it seems fair to argue that common position is close to accepting norms, as Finnemore puts it, as “shared expectations about appropriate behaviour held by a community of actors.”⁸⁶ It is crucial to emphasize that norms are considerably different than ideas in this framework. Differently from the ideas, norms are always shared and social. They are also intersubjective and have clear implications in terms of behaviour.⁸⁷ Thus, norms play an important role in constructivist analysis, and they are argued to “constitute social identities and give national interests their content and meaning.”⁸⁸ Although there is almost a consensus on the fact that ‘norms matter,’ there is still uncertainty about how and why they matter. This ambiguity stimulated several attempts by constructivist scholars to deal with the issue of norm diffusion.

As Checkel mentions, there are two main approaches about the reasons for the agents to “comply with the norms embedded in regimes and international institutions.” The first one is the rationalist school that accentuates the importance of “coercion, cost/benefit calculations, and material incentives.” On the other hand, as the second group, constructivist school emphasizes “social learning, socialization, and social norms.”⁸⁹ Thus, the latter group focuses on the social

⁸⁶ Finnemore, *National Interest in International Society*, 22.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Adler, “Constructivism and International Relations,” 103.

⁸⁹ Jeffrey Checkel, “Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change,” *International Organization* 55, no. 3 (2001): 553.

processes that lead to norm diffusion from international level to national level. However, “the norms transfer process,” in Flockhart’s words, “is so complex and multifaceted that practically often prevents consideration of all the different factors that play a role in state socialization, and focus has in most cases been limited to the elite level.”⁹⁰

Socialization is an indispensable part of constructivist analysis. Because, as Onuf puts it, “social relations make or construct people -ourselves- into the kinds of beings we are.”⁹¹ There are various definitions of socialization in the constructivist literature. For instance, Stryker and Statham define socialization as a “generic term used to refer to the process by which the newcomer –the infant, rookie, or trainee, for example– becomes incorporated into organized patterns of interaction.”⁹² According to another definition, in Berger and Luckmann’s words, socialization is “the comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or sector of it.”⁹³ Thus, it can be argued that socialization provides society membership to those actors who take the intersubjective understandings of the society for granted.

For a systemic analysis, ‘state socialization’ is the basic socialization type that a study should focus on. Although there are some debates, state socialization is

⁹⁰ Trine Flockhart, “Complex Socialization: A Framework for the Study of State Socialization,” *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 1 (2006): 90.

⁹¹ Onuf, “Constructivism: A User's Manual,” 59.

⁹² Stryker and Statham, “Symbolic Interaction and Role Theory,” In G. Lindzey and E. Aronson, eds., *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1985), 325.

⁹³ Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Book, 1966), 130.

defined, in a general sense, as a process within which “states internalize norms originating elsewhere in the international system.”⁹⁴ In other words, it can be seen as a process “*that is directed toward a state’s internationalization of the constitutive beliefs and practices institutionalized in its international environment.*”⁹⁵

However, the issue of state socialization becomes complicated because of the fact that “the meanings which objects, events and actions have for ‘states’ are necessarily the meanings they have for those individuals who act in the name of the state.”⁹⁶ Thus, it can be argued that in order for a norm to become a state norm, those groups and individuals who act in the name of the state should internalize it.

There are two main strategies for socialization in the literature. First one is “social influence” that promotes behaviours compatible with the norms by means of “distribution of social rewards and punishments.” Second one is “persuasion” that “encourages norm consistent behaviours through a social process of interaction that involves changing attitudes without use of either material or mental coercion.”⁹⁷

International organisations are important as agents that have considerable

⁹⁴ Johnston, “Treating International Institutions as Social Environments,” 416.

⁹⁵ Frank Schimmelfenning, “International Socialization in the New Europe: Rational Action in an Institutional Environment,” *European Journal of International Relations* 6, no. 1 (2000): 111-2.

⁹⁶ Weldes, “Constructing National Interest,” 280.

⁹⁷ Flockhart, “Complex Socialization,” 97.

influence on norm diffusion in the international system. In this respect, Finnemore claims, in her famous book, that “states may not always know what they want and are receptive to teaching about what are appropriate and useful actions to take.” In these cases, she continues, international organisations act as “active teachers with well defined lesson plans for their pupils.”⁹⁸ The processes before the membership to these organizations play a crucial role in this respect.

In her framework named “complex socialization,” Trine Flockhart talks about groups and individuals that are “intermediate agents” between the socializing agents and nations. These agents are constituted by those limited number of small groups or individuals in the socializing countries who are in direct connection with the socializing agent. They play a kind of bridge role between their domestic constituencies and the socializing agent. In some cases, these agents may not agree with the norms and just “communicate the socialization efforts to their domestic constituency.” However, in other cases, these agents may share the views of the socializing agent and act as “norm entrepreneurs in relation to their domestic constituency.”⁹⁹

Last but not the least; identity also has a crucial role in the diffusion of international norms. As it defines how a state perceives itself, identity is important in understanding why some norms matter more in some places.¹⁰⁰ In other words, identities determine which norms are more likely to influence a particular state

⁹⁸ Finnemore, *National Interest in International Society*, 11-2.

⁹⁹ Flockhart, “Complex Socialization!,” 104-5.

¹⁰⁰ See, Amy Gurowitz, “The Diffusion of International Norms: Why Identity Matters,” *International Politics* 43 (2006): 305-341.

with a certain identity (liberal, eastern, modern, European, Arab, American etc.) by means of intersubjective beliefs that define how that kind of state should be. The wider the gap between the domestic and international norms, the longer it takes the state to socialize in the international system.

By using this theoretical framework, the next chapter assesses the norms that dominate the post-9/11 world. Thus, the chapter mainly focuses on the most important systemic actors (i.e. USA and EU) and the interaction processes between these agents and the structure. Special attention is paid on their perceptions about themselves, the attacks and the international system.

CHAPTER III

POST 9/11 WORLD

As in the cases of important turning points in the history, 9/11 is accepted to open a new era in international relations. After the attacks, some emotional reactions followed that nothing will be the same anymore. Some cautious observers claimed that time is necessary to calculate the impacts of the event.¹⁰¹ However, there was almost a consensus on the fact that the event is much more than a mere terrorist attack and will have long-term consequences.

3.1 September Attacks as a System Level Development

In this thesis, 9/11 is taken as a “system level development,” which is defined by Aras as an event that is “an international happening which does produce direct conclusions on the founding principles and institutions of the whole system that... includes several well-known issues such as power hierarchy in the system, the role and policies of hegemon, general trends etc...” In this sense, 9/11 is analysed

¹⁰¹ For instance see Anas Malik, “Selected Reflections on the Muslim World in the aftermath of 9-11,” in Gökhan Bacık and Bülent Aras, eds., *September 11 and World Politics* (İstanbul: Fatih University, 2004), 155-174.

in this study as a unique event in its influence on world politics in the post-Cold War world that “raised many questions” about “the structure and agents of world politics.”¹⁰²

There are various studies on this kind of systemic events. For instance, in their article on the changing world after the collapse of Soviet Union, Koslowski and Kratochwil talk about “fundamental changes” in the international system that occur “when actors through their practices, change the rules and norms constitutive of international interaction.” In continuation, they add that these kinds of changes occur when beliefs and identities of domestic actors and the rules/identities that are constitutive of their political practices are adjusted.¹⁰³ In another study about this topic, Robert Gilpin argues that systemic change occurs within the system rather than a change of the system itself and refers to the “changes in the international distribution of power, the hierarchy of prestige, and the rules and the rights embodied in the system.”¹⁰⁴ For many observers, this is exactly what happened after September 11 attacks.

According to Aras, one can talk about a “change in the imagination of world politics and international relations” after September 11 attacks. In this respect, Aras insists that 9/11 at least changed “our conceptual understanding of world

¹⁰² Bülent Aras, “Introduction,” in Gökhan Bacık and Bülent Aras, eds., *September 11 and World Politics* (İstanbul: Fatih University, 2004), 3-4.

¹⁰³ Rey Koslowski and Friedrich V. Kratochwil, “Understanding Change in International Politics: the Soviet Empire’s Demise and the International System,” *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (Spring, 1994): 215.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Gilpin, *War&Change in the World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 42.

politics” and forced us to find “new analytical methods and tools to have a better understanding of its transforming nature.”¹⁰⁵ In this world, one can talk about a new set of meanings and symbols that are created after the attacks and influenced our perceptions about the event.

On September 11, 2001, with the help of the advancements in communication technologies, billions of people received enormous amount of information about the attacks in real time. However, at the end of the day, everybody had his or her own story to tell about the event.

A value-free description of the 9/11 may probably be as follows:

On the 11th of September 2001, several people took four airplanes under control on the Northern part of American continent. Two of these planes crashed into two tall buildings in the city named New York, one of them crashed into another building in the city named Washington, and the other one crashed into the ground. Two tall buildings collapsed and nearly 3.000 people died.

Any contribution to this story is very likely to be influenced by ideas, values and perceptions of the storyteller and reflect a constructed intellectual background.

One possible version of such a story may start as follows:

On the 11th of September 2001, the black day for the humanity, several Middle Eastern radical Islamist terrorists hijacked four civilian planes in the U.S.

¹⁰⁵ Aras, “Introduction,” 5.

airspace. In order to achieve their evil plans, they consciously crushed two planes into the World Trade Center towers that represent the economic power of U.S. and one plane to Pentagon that represents the American military might. The other plane crashed into the ground as a result of heroic efforts of the passengers before it reached to its target. Over 3000 innocent human beings died in the attacks, many of whom were American citizens. This terrorist act is not merely an attack to the American people; rather it is a dangerous blow to the free and civilized world and a declaration of war to democracy-loving peoples of the world.

On the other hand, another possible story may be as follows:

On the 11th September 2001, a group of heroes in the *jihad* against infidels successfully took control of four U.S. planes. They crushed the planes to their targets: World Trade Center, the symbol of western imperialism and exploitation, and Pentagon, the center of cruelty of American evil plans all over the world. Some infidels and their allies died in the attacks. This day is an important step in our war against the infidels and their unjust order. This day is just an example of the consequences that infidels have to face as a result of their actions.

There are limitless numbers of various stories about the day, most of which are less emotional and ideological than the ones above. However, one fact is important to mention at this point that the behaviours of the actors that followed 9/11 were mostly shaped by these differences in stories. How people perceived the event mostly shaped the following events and developments.

In one sense, it is important to note that this day was not enough on its own to explain the post-9/11 world. There are various cultural, sociological, economic, historical, political, or even psychological reasons behind the attacks that might be the subject of scholarly work. However, in this thesis, the focus is on the impacts of the attacks as a systemic development and the reactions of the major international actors.

This study is based on an assumption that the international environment and actors shape each other in a continuous process of construction. Thus, the interaction between agents and the structure is crucial. Perceptions of the agents about themselves, the attacks and the international system have played a decisive role in shaping the post-9/11 world. Obviously, as the only superpower in the current system, USA's reaction necessitates special attention in this respect. Its perceptions and reactions have had decisive impacts in shaping the international environment after 9/11 attacks. Thus, many observers believe that 9/11 "has so fundamentally transformed America and its relations with the rest of the world that it will either directly or indirectly impact every corner of the globe."¹⁰⁶ Another actor whose perceptions and actions should be taken into consideration in evaluating post-9/11 world is the European Union. This chapter will evaluate the post-9/11 world and these actors in this world by focusing mainly on the non-material factors.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Friedman, *Longitudes and Attitudes* (London: Penguin Books, 2003): IX; also see Andrew Cottey, "September 11th 2001: A New Era in World Politics?," in Gökhan Bacık and Bülent Aras, eds., *September 11 and World Politics* (Istanbul: Fatih University, 2004) 40.

3.2 The United States after 9/11

It was shocking to see the attacks on TV for U.S. citizens who felt safe in their territories that had not been attacked by a foreign power since the American War of 1812. However, there was confusion about the expectations on the reaction from U.S. administration in response to the attacks. There were some observers who expected 9/11 to provide the necessary stimulus for U.S. to soften its conduct of diplomacy. For instance, in his article written before the American invasion in Afghanistan, Steve Smith argues that a more multilateral US foreign policy should be expected in post-9/11 world.¹⁰⁷ Yet, the formal reaction was harsh and composed of a mixture of shock, sadness, and anger. September 11, 2001, is officially described as “a day of unprecedented shock and suffering in the history of the United States.”¹⁰⁸ American policymakers and media pundits almost immediately described the 9/11 attacks as an act of war.

Bush administration found dramatic and mainly emotional reasons for America to be attacked by terrorists: In President Bush’s words, “America was targeted for attack, because [Americans] are the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world.”¹⁰⁹ However, many do not believe that this is the real reason that lies behind the attacks. Believing in this reason is argued to lead misperception

¹⁰⁷ Steve Smith, “The end of the Unipolar Moment: September 11 and the Future of World Order,” www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/smith.htm.

¹⁰⁸ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (July 22, 2004): 1, <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/index.htm>.

¹⁰⁹ Cited in Robert Fisk, “Bush is walking into a trap,” *The Independent*, September 16, 2001

about the roots of terror and become the biggest obstacle in the fight against global terror. However, this perception became one of the main arguments that is widely used by U.S. policymakers after 9/11. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks Colin Powell declared: “Once again, we see terrorists, people who don’t believe in democracy...”¹¹⁰ Brian Roehrka, spokesman for Homeland Security, argued in a similar way that “terrorists hate our freedoms. They want to change our ways.”¹¹¹

The post 9/11 world from an official American eye is not safe for anybody. There are two clear-cut groups of people in this world: the good ones and the bad ones. If you are a good one, you are the target of terrorists. George W. Bush made this point clear by arguing that “the threats we face are global terrorist attacks. That’s the threat. And the more you love freedom, the more likely it is you’ll be attacked.”¹¹² If you are among the bad ones you are the target of the world’s only superpower and its good allies. Thus, nobody is immune from threat and insecurity in post-9/11 world from this perspective. In his speech to the Joint Session of Congress on 20th September 2001, President Bush declared that everybody has to make a choice in the new war on terror by presenting his famous options: “Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”¹¹³ By defining Iran, Iraq and North Korea as an axis of evil, Bush reinforced this image of a

¹¹⁰ *Miami Herald*, September 12, 2001.

¹¹¹ *Washington Post*, August 1, 2003.

¹¹² Agence France Presse, November 19, 2002.

¹¹³ George W. Bush, *Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People* (Washington, DC, September 20, 2001), www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html.

world divided between good and evil.

These kinds of analyses became so popular that some observers even started to think that the rhetoric of American, British and Israeli experts about 9/11 has become as dangerous as the terror itself.¹¹⁴ Within this environment, the new official U.S. policy regarding post-9/11 world is shaped with the influence of so-called neo-cons in the Bush administration.

3.2.1 Neo-cons and the Bush Doctrine

The influence of neo-cons in the making of U.S. Foreign policy has been subject to fierce debates especially after the September 11 events. Their belief in the importance of military power and unilateralism in maintaining the superpower role of USA in the international system, determined the reaction of U.S. after the attacks.

Conservatives have traditionally been highly involved in policy-making processes either directly through their members in the administrations or indirectly by means of influential think tanks. The Project for the New American Century is a good example for such involvement. As can be guessed from its name, it was established in 1997 with the aim of promoting American identity as the global

¹¹⁴ Rana Kabbani, "Terror has come home," *The Guardian*, September 13, 2001.

leader by applying “Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity.”¹¹⁵

Its first considerable action was the letter written by its members to President Bill Clinton on Iraq in 1998, three years before the 9/11 attacks. In the letter, members suggest that removing Saddam Hussein by using military force should “become the aim of American foreign policy.” Moreover, they claim that the administration should give up its insistence on diplomacy that, in their words “is clearly failing.” They argue that there is no need for a new UN resolution or a decision from UN Security Council in order to take military steps in the region.¹¹⁶ The interesting fact about the letter is that seven out of eighteen authors of the letter took important seats in Bush administration and took lead in the creation of U.S. foreign policy after the attacks. These authors and their positions in the Bush administration are as follows:

Donald Rumsfeld	Secretary of Defence
Paul Wolfowitz	Deputy Secretary of Defence
Richard Perle	Pentagon Policy Advisor
Zalmay Khalilzad	Special Presidential Envoy of Afghanistan
Richard L. Armitage	Deputy Secretary of State
Elliott Abrams	National Security Council
John Bolton	Under Secretary Arms Control & International Security

Francis Fukuyama and Robert Kagan are also among the authors. This fact itself raises questions about the importance of 9/11 as an opportunity that is used by

¹¹⁵ The Project for the New American Century Project, “Statement of Principles,” June 3, 1997, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm>.

¹¹⁶ The Project for the New American Century, “Letter to the President Clinton on Iraq,” January 26, 1998, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>.

neo-cons to apply the plans they prepared much before the attacks.

The Project members were among those who first congratulated President Bush for his “admirable commitment to lead the world to victory in the war against terrorism.”¹¹⁷ They claim that any strategy against terrorism should be determined to remove Saddam Hussein from power, “even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack.” They also argue that U.S. administration should “fully support [USA’s] fellow democracy,” Israel. Moreover, they warn the administration not to hesitate “in requesting whatever funds for defense are needed.”¹¹⁸

Project Members consistently insist on three main points that established the basis of post-9/11 foreign policy priorities of neo-cons: removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, fully supporting Israel and increasing the defence budget and enlarging the armed forces.¹¹⁹ This insistence is so high that Robert Kagan and William Kristol even suggested their “old friends” Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz to resign for not being able to convince the White House to increase defence budget.¹²⁰

In their analysis, Schmitt and Donnelly claim that the Bush Doctrine, which is highly influenced by the ideas mentioned above, is based on three main elements. Firstly, he advocates an active American global leadership that fights against its

¹¹⁷ The Project for the New American Century, “Letter to President Bush on the War on Terrorism,” September 20, 2001, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/Bushletter.htm>.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ See the official web site of the project, <http://www.newamericancentury.org>.

¹²⁰ *Weekly Standard*, July 23, 2001.

enemies in all corners of the world. Secondly, he prioritizes regime change in rogue regimes, namely Iraq, Iran and North Korea. Finally, he “sees in the war [against global terror] not just danger but an opportunity to spread American political principles, especially into the Muslim world.” In addition to describing what Bush Doctrine is, the authors also explain what it is not. For them, Bush’s doctrine is neither close to “multilateralism of Clinton that cares a lot about UN system and expects too much from peace processes. Nor is it his father’s balance of power realism.”¹²¹

Many analysts, like John Judis, argue that not only Bush administration and neo-cons but also conservative Republicans in general have “an unbroken record of failure” in terms of foreign policy decisions.¹²² The most popular criticism in this respect is about Bush administration’s ignorance of international community and legitimacy concerns. This ignorance arose mostly from the over-confidence about the ability of USA in acting on its own. For instance, Richard Perle claims in his televised interview that the “U.S. did not need any coalition to win the war against terrorism” and he adds it is better for the U.S. to “act alone” rather than being “held back by the requirement to hold the coalition together.”¹²³

During its war against terror, Bush administration refused any help even from NATO that invoked its Article V for the first time ever and accepted 9/11 as an attack on all of its members. Wolfowitz said that this help is not necessary

¹²¹ Gary Schmitt and Tom Donnelly, “The Bush Doctrine,” *Project Memorandum*, January 30, 2002.

¹²² John Judis, “State of Rejection,” *The New Republic Online*, August 23, 2006.

¹²³ Richard Perle’s interview on BBC on 8 October 2001

because “the mission would define the coalition.”¹²⁴ This approach, as Aras mentions, is criticised for “de-legitimiz[ing] the UN system and international law, and most of all, consolidat[ing] the widespread idea of a Western double standard toward the rest of the world.”¹²⁵ In this respect, Hirsh argues that the new Bush Doctrine is “used to justify a new assertiveness abroad unprecedented since the early days of the Cold War.” By this way, he continues, it “redefined U.S. relationships around the world.”¹²⁶

Bush administration is also highly criticized for its unconditional support for Israel. For many analysts, it is almost impossible to establish stability in the Middle East without finding a fair solution to Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Bush’s plan to transform the region “through the fire of violence” seems to fail in Iraq and is not likely to work anywhere. On the contrary, his vision is argued to worsen the situation in the Middle East and strengthen terrorist organizations by creating a fruitful environment for them.¹²⁷ Seeing only one side of the coin and perceiving Israel as a “fellow victim of terrorist violence” that “is targeted in part because it is [America’s] friend, and in part because it is an island of liberal, democratic principles - American principles - in a sea of tyranny, intolerance, and hatred”¹²⁸ disables the U.S. administration from being part of the solution.

¹²⁴ Cited in Michael Hirsh, “Bush and the World: the Need for a New Wilsonianism,” *Foreign Affairs* 18, no. 5 (September/October 2002): 18-43.

¹²⁵ Aras, “Introduction,” 6.

¹²⁶ Hirsh, “Bush and the World,” 18.

¹²⁷ See, John Judis, “Apocalypse Now: Bush’s Failed Israel Strategy,” *The New Republic Online*, August 2, 2006.

¹²⁸ The Project for the New American Century, “Letter to President Bush on Israel, Arafat

3.2.2 The Fight against Terror and the War in Iraq

Threat perceptions have had a crucial importance in shaping the reactions of international agents in the post-9/11 world. It became common among observers, especially in the USA, to argue that September 11 attacks proved the existence of a new type of threat that has been mentioned for various times before: “a truly global terrorist group, engaged in an all-embracing conflict with the USA and its allies.”¹²⁹ However, even in this environment, there were some opposing voices that put the blame on U.S. and its previous policies rather than taking some fanatics as the scapegoats. Some commentators like Kabbani argue that U.S. has a considerable responsibility in the process that created the so-called Islamist terrorism. And the most obvious proof for this responsibility is claimed to be its support to Afghan *mujahedeen*, including Osama bin Laden himself, against Soviets.¹³⁰ Some analysts even warned U.S. Administration that “retaliation” is a “trap” that was laid down by Osama bin Laden for George W. Bush.¹³¹

However, the Bush administration was determined to retaliate with military force and declared that a war is going to be waged. However, reasons for the war and tactics planned by the U.S. administration turned out to be wrong. Although, the quick success in Afghanistan helped to create an image of a strong American

and the War on Terrorism,” April 3, 2002, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/Bushletter-040302.htm>.

¹²⁹ Cottey, “September 11th 2001,” 31.

¹³⁰ Kabbani, “Terror has come home.”

¹³¹ Fisk, “Bush is walking into a trap.”

supremacy and the early stages of Iraqi war seemed to support this image, the obvious failure in Iraq turned out this image at the end. After more than five years since President Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq in front of a “mission accomplished” banner, conflict and chaos prevails in Iraq. Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations seem to be more powerful than ever in the region where American troops claimed to bring democracy. Nobody, including President Bush himself and his administration knows how to solve the problem. Almost all analysts agree on the fact that after nearly seven years since September 11 attacks, “the world is a more dangerous place, not safer.”¹³² The Iraq Study Group starts its report with the following sentence: “The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating.”¹³³ After this failure in the war against global terror, especially in Iraq, reasons and the tactics of the war became extremely questionable.¹³⁴ Finally, in 2007, General David Petraeus, the U.S. commander in Iraq, admitted “There is no military solution to a problem like that in Iraq, to the insurgency of Iraq.”¹³⁵ All these facts raised questions about the health of the perceptions of U.S. administration about the post-9/11 world.

One of the most important reasons for USA to invade Iraq was the so-called WMD stockpile of the Saddam administration. With some photographs taken from the satellites, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell tried to convince other

¹³² John L. Esposito, “The war on terrorism: Implications for US foreign policy,” *Today’s Zaman*, February 8, 2007.

¹³³ The Iraq Study Group, *The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward - A New Approach* (United States Institute of Peace, December 6, 2006): 6.

¹³⁴ For instance, see Lawrence Korb and Brian Katulis, *Strategic Redeployment 2.0: A Progressive Strategy for Iraq* (Center For American Progress, May 2006).

¹³⁵ Moises Naim, “America’s Learning Disability in Iraq,” *PostGlobal*, April 6, 2007.

United Nations Security Council members for the urgency to act.¹³⁶ However, American troops could not find any of them. Critics claim that Bush administration manipulated opinion both inside and outside USA. Scott Ritter, a chief weapons inspector in Iraq for the UN, writes in a newspaper article that they “were never able to provide 100 percent certainty regarding the disposition of Iraq’s proscribed weaponry,” while they “did ascertain a 90-95 percent level of verified disarmament. In direct contrast to these findings,” he continues, “Bush administration provides only speculation” without any detailed information.¹³⁷

Another reason was Saddam regimes connection with the terrorist organisations, including Al Qaeda. However, in their famous report, September 11 Commission could not find any evidence of a “collaborative operational relationship” between Iraq and Al-Qaeda.¹³⁸ However, it claimed that a meeting between a senior Iraqi intelligence officer and Bin Laden is a proof of an evil connection between the terrorist organisation and the Iraqi government.¹³⁹ This evidence seems pretty weak when one considers the meetings between American officials including Donald Rumsfeld with Saddam Hussein, the leader of an evil regime. Moreover, the relationship between Bush administration and Laden family necessitates close attention at this point.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ See Colin Powell, *Iraq: Failing to Disarm*, Address in the U.N. Security Council (February 5, 2003), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>.

¹³⁷ Scott Ritter, “Is Iraq a True Threat to the US?,” *Boston Globe*, July 20, 2002.

¹³⁸ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 66.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁴⁰ For instance see Michael Moore, *Fahrenheit 9/11* (A Dog Eat Dog Films Productions,

The main reason in the failure of Bush administration in the Iraqi war is at the roots of its actions: its (mis)perceptions about the military capability of USA and the demographic, cultural, social and political situation in Iraq. The way the war is waged became highly criticised. Bush administration is blamed for not making feasible calculations about abilities of USA and probably making “the most self-defeating decision ever made by an American” administration.¹⁴¹ Paul Wolfowitz claimed that the force necessary to bring peace and stability to Iraq need not be larger than the force necessary to invade it. This argument proved to be wrong. Now, those who support the war believe that more and more troops are necessary in order to establish stability in Iraq.¹⁴² Likewise, the American plans to establish stability in a short period of time burnt in the fire of ethnic conflicts.

Analysts argue that U.S. administration should learn its lesson from the problem they face in Iraq and think twice before using military force without taking all possible political steps.¹⁴³ However, neo-cons insist that Bush administration chose the best option after the attacks.¹⁴⁴ For instance, there are still some strong pro-war neo-cons like Robert Kagan who insist on the necessity of using military option in the case of Iran in spite of its failure in Iraq. The only likely reason for them to abandon or postpone such an option is the lack of availability of troops to

2004).

¹⁴¹ Stephen Kinzer, “EU slams the door,” *The Boston Globe*, December 14, 2006.

¹⁴² See Robert Kagan and William Kristol, “Bush Must Call for Reinforcements in Iraq,” *The Financial Times*, November 13, 2006

¹⁴³ For instance, see Jessica Tuchman Mathews, “Speaking to Tehran, With One Voice,” *The New York Times*, March 21, 2006.

¹⁴⁴ See The Project for the New American Century, *Iraq: Setting the Record Straight* (Washington: April 2005).

use.¹⁴⁵

The place of international norms in the eyes of neo-cons also necessitates special attention. Although international values may have a place in their analyses, at the end of the day, they are just some burdens that USA should get rid of, if it is necessary. For instance, one of the most prominent supporters of the war in Iraq, Robert Kagan, accepts that international legitimacy matters. However, he believes that U.S. administration did the right thing by not really caring about such legitimacy. Because, in his view, U.S. would have never acted, if it had searched for this legitimacy. Yet, even Kagan accepts that “there are many legitimate criticisms to be made about America’s conduct of the war.”¹⁴⁶

3.3 The European Union after 9/11 and Transatlantic Relations

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, Europeans, like the rest of the world, did not hesitate from fully supporting the USA and condemning disastrous terrorist act.¹⁴⁷ They indicated a strong solidarity is necessary to heal the wound created with the attacks. Even the French public that is well-known for its anti-American sentiments declared its wholehearted support to their American fellows. The monumental sentence that became the symbol of this support came from the popular French newspaper *Le Monde* in its front-page editorial: “We are all

¹⁴⁵ Robert Kagan, “Necessary Threat,” *The New Republic*, April 23, 2007.

¹⁴⁶ Robert Kagan, “Anti-Americanism’s Deep Roots,” *The Washington Post*, June 19, 2006.

¹⁴⁷ For a list of some statements against terrorism that condemn the 9/11 attacks by various well-known Muslim figures, see <http://www.unc.edu/~kurzman/terror.htm>.

Americans now.”¹⁴⁸

The threat perception of the Union has become similar to that of the USA after the attacks. Now, like U.S. administration, EU officially defines terror as the biggest global challenge that Europeans have to face.¹⁴⁹ Thus, without any doubt, EU expressed its willingness for solidarity with the American people in their fight against terror after the attacks and supported the military operation under NATO command in Afghanistan, where Al Qaeda established bases. However, the crisis in transatlantic relations came with the discussions about an operation in Iraq possibly without any mandate from any international organisation including NATO.

The tension increased with the reciprocal official declarations that blamed the other side. It reached its peak with U.S. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld’s briefing within which he named those European countries that did not support an invasion in Iraq, mainly France and Germany, as the “old Europe.”¹⁵⁰

The rapid success in Afghanistan increased the courage of USA in its ability to act alone, if it is necessary. Astonished with the early success of U.S. troops, some analysts warned the European leaders that Europe’s importance in the eyes of American policy makers is much less after 9/11 than its level in the last half

¹⁴⁸ Quoted in “You Can Be Warriors Or Wimps; Or So Say the American,” *The Economist*, August 10, 2002, 25.

¹⁴⁹ See European Council, *European Security Strategy – A Secure Europe in a Better World*, Brussels, December 12, 2003.

¹⁵⁰ For the transcript of the briefing see Donald H. Rumsfeld, Briefing at the Foreign Press Center, January 22, 2003, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1330>.

century. This, according to Wallace, forced Europeans to accept the fact that they have no more choice than supporting American policies without being involved in the processes that lead to those policies.¹⁵¹

In the early stages of Iraqi war, as in the example of Robert Kagan, some analysts believed that US proved its ability to “respond to the strategic challenges around the world without much help from Europe.”¹⁵² Kagan went further in this belief and argued that the opinions and statements of the EU do not have more importance in the eyes of Americans than those of other groups of states like ASEAN or the Andean Pact. With confidence, Kagan warned American leaders to “realize that they are hardly constrained at all, that Europe is not really capable of constraining the United States.”¹⁵³

Many Europeans argue that U.S. administration became blind with the American power and fallen into a trap of unilateralism that is characterised by an “instinctive refusal to admit to any political restraint on its action... placing itself above international law, norms and restrains when they do not suit its objectives.”¹⁵⁴

As it is observed more obviously after the war in Iraq, Europeans criticize

¹⁵¹ William Wallace, “Living with the Hegemon: European Dilemmas,” in Eric Hershberg and Kevin W. Moore eds., *Critical Views of September 11: Analyses From Around the World* (New York: The New Press, 2002): 106-7.

¹⁵² Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the World Order* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004): 98.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 100-2.

¹⁵⁴ W. Bruce Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century*, 2nd Edition (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2004): 366

Americans for overemphasizing the importance of political and military dimensions of international issues, while Americans criticize Europeans for caring too much about the role of diplomacy and economic aid packages in international politics.¹⁵⁵ As Akşemsettinoglu mentions, the disagreements between USA and EU are not limited to issues related to Iraqi war. Rather, the list is much longer: “Kyoto Global Warming Treaty, the International Criminal Court, the Multilateral Land Mines Treaty, relations with Iran, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and a number of international trade issues.”¹⁵⁶ What Iraqi War did was to put light on the cracks that already existed in transatlantic relations.

While some observers believe that big cracks became visible in Western world (namely transatlantic community) after 9/11, some others believe that such a world never existed as it is imagined. The former group argues that the disagreement between U.S. administration and European leaders on the Iraqi issue is the “biggest surprise after 9/11.”¹⁵⁷ On the other hand, the latter group claims that 9/11 awakened those who wished to see a united West and showed that “strategic perceptions of the two sides of the Atlantic Ocean differ considerably.”¹⁵⁸

As an example, Kagan starts his book with a strong assertion that “It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the

¹⁵⁵ Wallace, “Living with the Hegemon,” 105.

¹⁵⁶ Gökhan Akşemsettinoglu, *Transatlantic Relations: A Political Appraisal* (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 2005): 91-92.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 89.

¹⁵⁸ Aras, “Introduction,” 7.

world, or even that they occupy the same world... On major strategic and international questions today, Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus.” Kagan believes that transatlantic partners differ from each other in terms of their “national priorities, determining threats, defining challenges, and fashioning and implementing foreign and defence policies.”¹⁵⁹

According to Kagan Muslim fundamentalism cannot be compared with the Soviet threat as a motive that forced Americans and Europeans to “prove (themselves) unified and coherent.”¹⁶⁰ He adds that whereas “once the United States risked its own safety in defence of a threatened Europe’s vital interests, today a threatened America looks out for itself in apparent and sometimes genuine disregard for what many Europeans perceive to be *their* moral, political, and security interests.”¹⁶¹

Neo-cons do not seem to have learned any lessons from the situation in Iraq. They believe that solution is sending more troops to Iraq and spending more on defence. They do not accept any criticism about the legitimacy of the war in Iraq or the actions of the U.S. administration. They harshly criticize reports that raise questions about the U.S. foreign policy after the September 11 attacks. For instance, they do not approve the September 11 Commission’s Report that does not provide enough reasons to legitimize the war in Iraq. Daniel McKivergan, deputy director of the Project for the New American Century, argues that “sloppy September 11 Commission staff report... and biased media coverage” prevent

¹⁵⁹ Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power*, 3-4.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 81

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 116-7.

people from seeing the “unquestionable” ties between Saddam regime and terrorist organizations.¹⁶²

However, after the war in Iraq each party has to pass through a period of reflection within which they can make calculations about their previous perceptions, interests, and related actions.

For the part of U.S. administration, the failure in finding a solution for the situation in Iraq seems to have shown the importance of diplomacy, as in the cases of its approach towards Iran and North Korea. It also shows the importance of establishing a coalition like the one in the first Gulf War in 1991. Moreover, its perception about the roots and causes of global terror and the ways to fight against it became questionable.

For the European part, the negative results of its failure to achieve integration in political and military matters became very obvious after its inability to influence post 9/11 developments, especially U.S. actions in Iraq. This situation also led to a new process within which EU questions its identity and the role it wants to play in the future.

As the former French President Jacques Chirac puts it, each side seem to have understood that world crises cannot be addressed “by one nation acting alone on the basis of its own interests and judgments... Any crisis situation, regardless of its

¹⁶² Daniel McKivergan, “September 11 Commission Staff Report,” June 18, 2004, <http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraq-20040618.htm>.

nature, in any part of the world, is of concern to the whole international community.”¹⁶³ In continuation to this understanding, any contribution in this respect should be welcomed with appreciation. The situation in the Middle East proves the failure of combating terrorism solely with material means.

Many analysts believe that Huntington’s thesis, which claims that the “clash of civilizations” will happen, is likely to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, if no measure is taken. The primary battlefield for preventing such a conflict seems to be the minds and hearts of people.

3.4 Core Tenets of the EU and US-led International Community

In spite of all disagreements in the transatlantic relations, it is still fair to talk about a community that is comprised of European and Northern American countries what Schimmelfenning calls “Western international community,” while Flockhart names “Euro-Atlantic community.”¹⁶⁴ This community seems to survive the problems faced after 9/11. Both parties try to heal the wounds of the crisis situation in the relations. Commonalities, instead of differences, have become more prevalent in the speeches of the leaders on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. It has become common again to give reference to “democracy, individual

¹⁶³ Jacques Chirac, televised interview, July 14, 2003, <http://www.ambafrance-us.org/news/standpoint/stand26.asp>.

¹⁶⁴ Schimmelfenning, “International Socialization in the New Europe;” Trine Flockhart, “Complex Socialization: A Framework for the Study of State Socialization,” *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 1 (2006): 89-118

liberty and the rule of law” as the basic principles that “the freedom, common heritage and civilization” of the peoples of transatlantic community are founded on.¹⁶⁵ Opposition in Europe against comments that describe the USA as a force for good, instead of evil has decreased. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair has become less marginal in claiming that “for all their faults, and all nations have them, the US are a force for good; they have liberal and democratic traditions of which any nation can be proud.”¹⁶⁶

There are still considerable opposition against “the rhetoric of shared values” that is seen as “an exploitation of history for present purposes, deployed by one side or another as circumstances dictate.”¹⁶⁷ However, after the disappointment in both Europe and USA about the current situation in the international system, it has become relatively common to argue that transatlantic relations have no alternative or substitution. More people, like Javier Solana, started to believe that Europe is the only global partner of USA, and vice versa.¹⁶⁸ Many analysts argue that, as Jose Manuel Barroso, European Commission President, puts it “EU-US relations have strengthened considerably [in] address[ing] common economic, political and environmental challenges... with shared values and interests.”¹⁶⁹ These arguments

¹⁶⁵ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *The North Atlantic Treaty*, Washington D.C., April 4, 1949, <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm>.

¹⁶⁶ Prime Minister’s address to British ambassadors in London, 7 January 2003, <http://www.snopes.com/politics/quotes/blair.asp>

¹⁶⁷ Alex Danchev, “How Strong Are Shared Values?” in Samuel Wells and Ludger Kühnhardt, eds., *The Crisis in Transatlantic Relations*, Discussion Paper C143 (Bonn: Center For European Integration Studies, 2005), 11.

¹⁶⁸ Anna Balletbo, “Diverging Systems of Governance?” in Samuel Wells and Ludger Kühnhardt (eds.), *The Crisis in Transatlantic Relations*, Discussion Paper C143 (Bonn: Center For European Integration Studies, 2005), 27.

¹⁶⁹ Jose Manuel Barroso, Address in the EU-US Summit, Vienna, June 21, 2006,

have been supported in the last years with the actual developments in transatlantic relations that became possible with the existence of commonalities in perceptions about post-9/11 world in both Europe and the USA.

Even if this approach seems too optimistic, there is still some room for commonality arguments that almost everybody can accept. These commonalities in the Euro-Atlantic community may be described as follows:

3.4.1 Common Threat Perceptions and Security Agendas

Like its precedent in 2002, the introduction to the *2006 National Security Strategy* of the United States reveals the ongoing importance of September 11 in the outlook of what threatens national security. “America is at war. This is a wartime national security strategy required by the grave challenge we face – the rise of terrorism fuelled by an aggressive ideology of hatred and murder, fully revealed to the American people on September 11, 2001.”¹⁷⁰ An example of the clear continuity in policy since September 11 is the obvious way in which the *2006 National Security Strategy* only serves to complement the defining *2002 National Security Strategy*.

One important point that is neglected in many analyses about the current situation in transatlantic relations is the similarity between American and European

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/us/sum06_06/index.htm.

¹⁷⁰ George W. Bush, “Foreword,” in The White House, *2006 National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/nss2006.pdf>.

perceptions about the global threats that should be dealt with in the new international environment. Although their language and the solution suggestions are different, it does not seem wrong to argue that the EU capitals share similar concerns about the global challenges that should be addressed in the post-9/11 world. One of the most obvious examples of this approach is the *European Security Strategy* that was adopted by the European Council on December 12, 2003. This strategy paper has become a milestone in determining the EU's common foreign policy after 9/11 by reflecting the threat perceptions of the Union and defining its security priorities.

It is possible to argue that transatlantic partners share a considerably wide basis about their views on the way to fight against these threats. Both sides seem to have understood that they need each other in this effort. More analysts emphasize the need to combine American hard power with the European soft power in order to be successful now. European leaders already took concrete steps by declaring their willingness to “share in the responsibility for global security and in building a better world.”¹⁷¹ This offer is also something that most Americans cannot reject, especially after the failure they have faced as a result of American unilateralism in Iraq and in the war against global terror.

Moreover, American and European leaders agree on the belief that the challenges in the post-9/11 world are different from traditional threats they faced during the Cold War. They commonly claim that “the first line of defense will often be

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 1.

abroad” and the “best defense is a good offense” in this new world.¹⁷² Last but not the least; they share similar views about the importance of the type of governance in the third world countries, especially in the Middle East. In order to fight with the root causes of the threats arising from these countries, they both believe in the vitality of promoting stable and democratic regimes.

3.4.2 The Rise of Identities

Another core tenet of this new international structure is the increasing importance of identities of the actors within the system. Within this novel environment, major agents in the structure, mainly the EU and USA, entered a period of reflection about their and other agents’ identities and roles in the international system.

This process in the USA attracted more attention because of the far-reaching impacts of its actions after the September 11 attacks. After a short period of vacillation between aggressively maintaining its role as the only superpower and securing itself by means of isolation from the threatening regions of the world, U.S. administration showed its determination to reinforce its role as the leader country in the international system by mainly using its hard power. In other words, an incredible amount of the vast resources of the United States have been committed to engaging the world and proactively protecting its own security. It introduced itself as the leader of free democratic world that will fight against

¹⁷² Respectively, European Council, *European Security Strategy*, 7; The White House, *2002 National Security Strategy*, 6.

those who challenge the core principles of the civilized world. In this framework, Islamist fanaticism gained a prominent role as “the perversion of a proud religion” with its main characteristics like “intolerance, murder, terror, enslavement, and repression.”¹⁷³

Although they have not attracted the same level of attention in the literature that their American partners did, Europeans have entered a much more profound period of reflection about their identities and the place of the EU in the international system. It has become common to emphasize the negative impacts of being an economic giant and remaining a political dwarf. The desire for making the Union a global player is mentioned by Europeans more frequently and more emphasis is put in the EU’s international achievements in this respect.¹⁷⁴ Failure to take any initiative in the Middle East for securing its interests that were ignored by Washington showed the importance of ability to act together in foreign policy issues.

Whether it is right or wrong, the perceptions of the Europeans and Americans about the Muslim world have had considerable influences in the shaping their actions and the East-West relations, in general. This caused transatlantic partners to prioritise efforts to promote democracy and liberal values in the world, especially in the regions with Muslim populations. It is not an exaggeration to

¹⁷³ The White House, *2006 National Security Strategy*,

¹⁷⁴ For instance see Delegation of the European Commission to China, “A World Player- The European Union's External relations,” http://www.delchn.cec.eu.int/en/eu_global_player/index.htm; Delegation of the European Commission to the USA, “EU- Global Player,” <http://www.eurunion.org/globalplayer>; Also see <http://www.euglobalplayer.org>.

argue that democracy promotion has become one of the core tenets of their security strategy. The EU has used enlargement processes, its Neighbourhood Policy and aids, while the USA has attached importance to the Greater Middle East Project, in this respect. Moreover, they prepared plans to stabilise regions like the Middle East by integrating them into the global economic system.¹⁷⁵

Transatlantic partners have also determined supporting moderate actors in the Islamic world against radical groups as a crucial part of their strategy in the new environment. They have increased their efforts to find successful examples or models, which are moderate and liberal Muslims in this world that can provide a better alternative for Muslims than armed struggle or terror. Preventing a possible clash of civilizations in any sense has become one of the top issues in their agenda.

Last but not the least, this situation creates another point that transatlantic allies strongly agree on: the importance of Turkey as an asset in their strategy in the post-9/11 world. For them, a stable and prosperous Turkey became a desirable target to reach in order to cope with new threats and to secure their interests in regions where Turkey is politically, economically, culturally and historically involved to.

Keeping this systemic structure in mind, the next chapter assesses the position of JDP-led Turkey in the wider international picture in the post-9/11 world. Several

¹⁷⁵ See Thomas Barnett, *Blueprint for Action: A Future Worth Creating* (Putnam Publishing Group, 2005).

questions related to this picture are discussed: Does Turkey share the same world perception with its western peers? If it does, how does this influence its foreign policy strategies? Can systemic factors play a decisive role in understanding and explaining this foreign policy?

CHAPTER IV

TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE WEST

After the election victory of Justice and Development Party that is widely known as an Islamist party, domestic and foreign comments were a mixture of caution and surprise. According to some writers, 3 November 2002 was the beginning of a new era not only for Turkey but also for foreigners within which they need to get used to talk about Turkey with a moderate Islamist government under the leadership of a banned winner, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.¹⁷⁶ For many observers, the victory of the party and its leader was mysterious and time was necessary to reach a conclusion about the situation.¹⁷⁷ However, some of them were pessimist about the result and already concluded that the Turkish “voters delivered the ‘wrong’ result.”¹⁷⁸

In this environment, the first action of the newly elected government was to

¹⁷⁶ Peter Preston, “Look into the dark heart of Europe,” *The Guardian*, November 11, 2002.

¹⁷⁷ Andrew Purvis, “Turkey’s Mystery Man,” *Time*, November 12, 2002.

¹⁷⁸ Robert Fisk, “Turkey’s voters have delivered the ‘wrong’ result,” *The Independent*, November 5, 2002.; In the immediate afterwards of the elections, Kemal Derviş, former economy minister, says that he personally does not believe Erdoğan when he says that his party is secular and pro-western. In Kirsty Lang, “Turkey faces crisis as Islamic leader heads for poll win,” *The Sunday Times*, November 3, 2002.

analyse the domestic and international environment and to assure everybody that they do not have an Islamic agenda. Rather, it announced the EU membership as its top priority and promised to continue and reinforce the reform process in the country without damaging Turkey's previous commitments.¹⁷⁹ In order to realise its plans, it took necessary steps to improve relations with Europeans and Americans without delay. The next day after the elections, Erdoğan announced his plan to tour European capitals to make a fresh start about Turkey-EU relations and to "reassure nervous western allies."¹⁸⁰

Contrary to positive developments in JDP perception in the eyes of westerners, there is a growing discontent about the attitude of Kemalist establishment. There have been some critical voices about Kemalism in the West. Even some Europeans argued that Kemalism, as "the underlying philosophy of the Turkish state... implies an exaggerated fear of the undermining of integrity of the Turkish state... together with statism, an important role for army, and a very rigid attitude to religion, which means that this underlying philosophy itself a barrier to EU membership."¹⁸¹ Although these kinds of arguments have not found considerable support until very recently, questions about this Kemalist establishment's real concerns arose through the period that brought the 22 July, 2007 elections and

¹⁷⁹ Judy Dempsey, "Victorious party leader prepares for whirlwind tour of Europe's capitals," *Financial Times*, November 6, 2002; Owen Bowcott, "Turkey's Islamic party makes EU entry top priority," *The Guardian*, November 4, 2002.

¹⁸⁰ Owen Bowcott, "Turkey's Islamic leader moves to reassure west," *The Guardian*, November 5, 2002.

¹⁸¹ European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, *Draft Report on Turkey's Application for Membership of the EU*, March 12, 2003, www.cdca.asso.fr/cdca/rapport-oostlander/rapport_oostlander_anglais.pdf.

afterwards. Turkish secular establishment's acceptance of undemocratic means, including military intervention, in order to reach their aim, namely elimination of JDP, caused domestic and foreign observers to re-evaluate their perceptions about the social and political power centres and their relationships in Turkey.¹⁸²

The cases in front of the Constitutional Court on sensitive and hotly debated issues like the election process of the president or the closure of JDP in 2008 became a milestone in re-evaluations of westerners about the social groups in Turkey. The involvement of judiciary on the side of the secular establishment with highly debatable decisions showed how dangerous the situation for the fate of democracy is.¹⁸³ The source of confrontation between these elites and JDP has begun to be seen more as a clash of interests than a fight over the regime.¹⁸⁴ Worries increased in the western circles about the cooperation between the Kemalist establishment and the ultra-nationalists that are not only "Eurosceptics," but also "sceptical about the whole world."¹⁸⁵ Some European politicians even believe that "it would have been impossible to start EU negotiations," if secular elites "had remained in the government."¹⁸⁶ Thus, most Europeans have used their votes in favour of JDP and Erdoğan in this confrontation, "not because (he) has brought... real changes to Turkish foreign policy but because (he) represents

¹⁸² Peter Preston, "Europe must let Turkey in," *The Guardian*, May 21, 2007; Editorial, "Torn between democracy, the military and Islam," *The Independent*, May 1, 2007.

¹⁸³ Kimklioğlu, "Getting Turkey right."

¹⁸⁴ Ian Traynor, "Secular Turks and Islamists fight for supremacy in the courts and the streets," *The Guardian*, June 12, 2006;

¹⁸⁵ Andrew Finkel, "Turkey: torn between God and state," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (May 2007), <http://mondediplo.com/2007/05/02turkey>; also see The Associated Press, "EU faces delicate tightrope in Turkish political crisis," May 22, 2007.

¹⁸⁶ Joost Lagendijk quoted in Sabrina Tavernise, "In Turkey, a rumble is heard in Ataturk's grave," *The New York Times*, May 20, 2007.

Turkey's most pro-European face."¹⁸⁷ JDP is perceived in western circles as an "opportunity" for the West, and especially the EU, that should not be wasted.¹⁸⁸

For many observers, this dramatic change in the roles of social groups in Turkey and the radical changes in Turkish foreign policy under JDP government became sources of confusion and a great mystery. This ambiguity in understanding the situation forced some analysts search for some invisible reasons like a hidden agenda in the minds of JDP leaders. This gave rise to fruitless and inconclusive debates on the *sincere* concerns of the Party members. Even if those who claim that JDP is pursuing a hidden agenda are right, this does not help too much in analysing Turkish foreign policy in the related era. What made such transformation possible still needs explanation in that case. Moreover, each and every year, it becomes much harder to find a potential relationship between the performance of JDP in government and an alleged hidden agenda. A question posed by a deputy-chairman of JDP to those who blame them for having a secret plan makes more sense at this point: "Political parties come to power in order to achieve the goals in their program. We have been in power with a decisive majority in the parliament for years and have not applied any secret plan. When do they believe that we will apply our so-called hidden agenda? After we leave the government?"¹⁸⁹

During the reign of JDP, it can be argued that Ankara's position about the main

¹⁸⁷ Editorial, "Timely Support for Erdoğan," *Kathimerini*, English Edition, May 24, 2007.

¹⁸⁸ Shankland, "Islam, Politics and Democracy in Turkey," 59.

¹⁸⁹ Interview in JDP Headquarters, July 2005.

international issues on the world's agenda (namely, Iraqi War, Israeli-Palestinian dispute, nuclear activities of Iran, Cyprus problem and so on) has been close to those of most European capitals.¹⁹⁰ In this period, Turkey and the EU started the long process of defining their common future, while re-evaluation became unavoidable for Ankara and Washington about the fate of their relations. At the same time, America and Europe entered a new era within which they consider the future of transatlantic relations. In such a world that is in a state of flux, JDP-led Turkey's interaction with other international agents and the structure necessitates closer attention.

The rest of this chapter analyses JDP-led Turkey's relations with main western agents in the post-9/11 international structure, i.e. the United States and the European Union. As seen in the examples below, both positive and negative influences of the changing ideational and perceptual factors can be observed on these interactions. Turkey's foreign policy actions in neighbouring regions, transformation of Turkey's identity and interest perceptions, and Ankara's relations with Washington are assessed in the coming pages. Finally, Turkey's EU membership vacation in the related era is analysed in detail with special emphasis on the negative impacts of rising non-material factors, like Islamophobia.

¹⁹⁰ See Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu and Seyfi Taşhan, eds., *The Europeanization of Turkey's Security Policy: Prospects and Pitfalls* (Ankara: Foreign Policy Institute, 2004).

4.1 The United States, Neighbouring Regions and JDP

International environment in the post-September 11 era is important in understanding JDP's evolution. In specific terms, it can be argued that one of the main variables that have had impacts on JDP's identity is its relations with the outside world, mainly with United States. The nature of the relationship between Ankara and Washington is so comprehensive that it seems impossible to analyse Turkey's relations with the neighbouring regions separately. JDP has not only affected these relations as the governing party, but also has been affected by the developments in these relations. For instance, the initial confusion about JDP's stance towards USA seems to be a result of this fact. In other words, although, in the early days, it had been seen as a pro-American party that could have been the Trojan horse of USA, JDP was applauded by a considerable part of the international community for its resistance against U.S. policies in Iraq.

The relations between Washington and JDP's headquarters started in a warm environment with Erdoğan's Washington visit in which he was welcomed as if he was a prime minister. However, the famous decision, which was taken on 1 March 2003 not to allow U.S. troops to use Turkish lands in a military action against Iraq, was an important signal for the beginning of a new era in Turkey-U.S. relations. The interesting fact in this case was that the JDP perceptions of international community, domestic actors and even the members of the party were almost completely different before and after the decision. Another fact that makes it harder to explain the situation was that this bill was rejected in spite of JDP's

leading figures' support. Yet, there is a clear fact that this decision and the war in Iraq created "a serious crisis of confidence on both sides and eventually put... the alliance under scrutiny."¹⁹¹ In the early days of the crisis, this was a clear challenge to "the classic image of Turkey" that "has long been misleading" in Graham Fuller words: "an unshakeable friend of the United States."¹⁹² For some authors, 1 March 2003 was the date when Cold War and its security mentality really ended for Turkey.¹⁹³

This event caused anger among the academic and media circles in USA. Although, the administration has not made official statements that can break the links that have already been damaged, pundits did not hesitate from using a harsh language about JDP administration. Especially in newspapers that are known for their close relationship with the Bush administration, like *The Washington Post*, analyses appeared to be influenced badly by the 1 March disappointment. For instance, in its editorial, *The Washington Post* argued that CHP and MHP are "less vehemently anti-American" than JDP and warned the Turkish voters about a possible JDP victory and claimed that the results in 2007 elections would "determine whether Turkey remains a friend of the West, or slips deeper into a hostile Islamist Middle East."¹⁹⁴ Harsher articles appeared in this newspaper, like the one by Frank Gaffney, where he argues that Erdoğan is "systematically

¹⁹¹ Aylin Güney, "An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance: From 'Cold War' to 'War on Iraq'," *Turkish Studies* 6, no. 3 (September 2005): 347.

¹⁹² Graham E. Fuller, "Turkey's Strategic Model: Myths and Realities," *The Washington Quarterly* 27, no.3 (Summer 2004): 51.

¹⁹³ Finkel, "Turkey: torn between God and state."

¹⁹⁴ Editorial, "Turkey's Political Future," *The Washington Times*, October 16, 2006.

turning his country from a Muslim secular democracy into an Islamofascist state governed by an ideology anathema to European values and freedoms.”¹⁹⁵

The most important aspect of this development is that JDP and its grassroots have been seen among the decisive factors that produced the opposition to this war waged against another Muslim country.¹⁹⁶ Washington’s suspicion about JDP and its stance towards U.S. worsened after its hard opposition against Israeli policies on Palestine under Ariel Sharon government. Erdoğan’s criticism was so sharp that he labelled Israel as a ‘terrorist state’ in a meeting with an Israeli minister. Some observers interpreted these harsh words towards Israel as a signal of a new Turkey that is “slowly and gradually distancing itself from the West.”¹⁹⁷ This was, in Israeli minister’s words, another “amazing” development that confused the minds of outsiders about JDP’s identity and policies. This confusion was reflected well by Al Jazeera’s news on Erdoğan’s criticism with its stress on reminding one fact at the same time: “Erdoğan’s Turkey is an Israeli ally.”¹⁹⁸

The terrorist attacks in Istanbul in late 2003 opened a new phase in the war against terror and changed the psychological environment in Turkey-U.S. relations. Although the attacks seemed to target two synagogues, a London-based international bank and the British consulate building, they happened in the biggest city of Turkey and casualties were mostly from Muslim Turks. Observers

¹⁹⁵ Frank J. Gaffney Jr., “No to Islamist Turkey,” *The Washington Times*, September 27, 2005.

¹⁹⁶ Güney, “An Anatomy of the Transformation,” 348.

¹⁹⁷ Bronwen Maddox, “Pleasing all sides will test Turkey,” *The Times*, August 17, 2006.

¹⁹⁸ “Turkish PM: Israel a ‘terrorist’ state,” <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/A81ADBFD-6289-4CD2-9AC3-594F0C8702DE.htm>.

perceived the attacks as Turkey's 9/11, and argued that they "open a new border in the terror war."¹⁹⁹ Bombings seem to have strengthened the position of Turkey and JDP in the western eyes as an important ally in any effort that aims to stop terror and clash between civilizations. As a senior French antiterrorism official puts, Turkey became the target of terrorists who "don't want people to be able to say, 'See, democracy and freedom can thrive in a Muslim country'".²⁰⁰

Another development that brought excitement to Ankara-Washington-Jerusalem relations was Khaled Meshaal's Ankara visit, which took place interestingly in JDP's headquarters instead of any other state building. Both U.S. and Israel criticized the visit. However, JDP told the visit was "the result of normal relations between the two parties, the [JDP] and Hamas," instead of an official invitation and emphasized their aim as putting forward international demands that the resistance group renounce violence, recognize Israel and honour the previous agreements between Israel and the Palestinian authority.²⁰¹

In his book entitled *Strategic Depth*, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Tayyip Erdoğan's chief policy advisor, argues that the traditional pro-Western orientation of Turkey's foreign policy had resulted in its neglecting ties with its neighbours, especially in the Middle East.²⁰² All developments mentioned above are seen as a result of the background and identity of JDP that wants Turkey to have close relations with

¹⁹⁹ Andrew Purvis and Johanna McGeary, "Knocking On Europe's Door," *Time*, November 23, 2003.

²⁰⁰ Cited in Andrew Purvis and Johanna McGeary, "Knocking On Europe's Door," *Time*, November 23, 2003.

²⁰¹ Faik Bulut, "The Hamas Visit," *The New Anatolian*, February 23, 2006.

²⁰² Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2002).

neighbouring Muslim countries, instead of being a loyal ally of U.S. in the region as it has been for decades. Contrary to expectations, this did not seem to have decreased Turkey's importance in strategic calculations of U.S. in the region. For instance, even after Ankara rejected U.S. request to use Turkey as a base in the war against Iraq, U.S. Secretary of State at the time, Colin Powell, named Turkey as "a Muslim democracy" living in peace with its friends and neighbours that post-war Iraq should take as a model.²⁰³

Even more interestingly, Turkey's relations with Israel have recovered so rapidly during the JDP government that Pinhas Avivi, Israel's ambassador to Turkey, says that Israel is "at the highest moment in relations with Turkey ever... that no prophet could have seen... in advance."²⁰⁴

4.2 The European Union and JDP

"Is Turkey seeking a marriage of convenience or of love with the EU?"
Berlusconi, Italian Prime Minister

"A Catholic marriage – one that lasts forever."
Erdoğan, Turkish Prime Minister²⁰⁵

Inter-state relations are generally accepted to be emotion-free. As a continuation to this understanding Turkey-EU relations may be seen as a combination of

²⁰³ Colin Powell, News Conference with Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül, Ankara, April 2, 2003 in Murat Yetkin, "ABD ile Tamiratın Bedeli Ne?," *Radikal*, April 3, 2003.

²⁰⁴ Quoted in Tavernise, "In Turkey, a rumble is heard in Atatürk's grave."

²⁰⁵ Cited in Leyla Boulton and David Gardner, "An Islamist seeking to be Europe's new face," *Financial Times*, December 7, 2002.

rational calculations between two serious international actors. This can be true, if those who interact with each other are really the states themselves. However, states do not and cannot act or interact. Rather, human beings do these kinds of things in the name of states. Thus, common assumptions about international relations may turn out to be wrong in real-life situations. Emotions, perceptions, ideas play important roles in the international relations. Only within this framework, the question of Sylvio Berlusconi, Italian prime minister, and the answer of his Turkish counterpart can be understood.

The international relations may not be this much personal in general. However, this does not decrease the importance of non-material factors in shaping interactions between agents and the system and among the agents themselves. The meanings behind the concepts or words that we use may define the policies of international actors. For instance, “Turkey’s EU membership” may seem to represent a regular membership relation. However, it is much more than that. For some, it means the end of Europe. For some, it is a crucial step in the fight against terror. The perceptions related to these three words differ within a wide range from ‘catastrophe’ to ‘victory.’ Thus, it can be argued that how actors perceive Turkey in the international system defines their behaviours in issues related to Turkey.

Turkey’s prospective EU membership has always attracted attention in the academic and political circles. This attraction has been reinforced by Huntington’s famous argument that Turkey is “historically the most obvious and prototypical torn

country” that “rejected Mecca” and that is “rejected by Brussels.”²⁰⁶ He is confident that Turkey “will not become a member” of the Christian EU because of its Muslim identity.

The attention of the world became so high about the membership of Turkey to the EU that it almost became part of the “daily press coverage” in the West and “discussion in top business and political reaches of the Muslim world.”²⁰⁷ Thus, the issue could not escape from the influences of changing ideational and perceptual climate of post-9/11 world. It became commonplace to argue that if EU rejects “the world’s most democratic and secular Muslim country, it cannot be serious about bridging the gap between Islam and Christianity.”²⁰⁸ As a result, Turkey’s EU membership issue gained an “iconic status.”²⁰⁹ Keeping the achievements during the process that led to the start of negotiation in mind, it is argued that Turkey’s membership means a lot in terms of “peace, prosperity and democracy” in its region.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” 42.

²⁰⁷ Karina Robinson, “Spotlight: Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey,” *International Herald Tribune*, December 29, 2006.

²⁰⁸ Kinzer, “EU slams the door.”

²⁰⁹ Gideon Rachman, “Clashing civilizations on the banks of the Bosphorus,” *Financial Times*, September 19, 2006.

²¹⁰ Ignacio Ramonet, “Turkey: welcome to Europe,” *Le Monde Diplomatique* (November 2004), <http://mondediplo.com/2004/11/01Ramonet>.

4.2.1 Historical Background

“Turkey is part of Europe.”²¹¹

Walter Hallstein, 1963
European Commission President

In historical analyses, it is generally accepted that Ottoman Empire became a part of “European community of states” after the Crimean War in 1856.²¹² The reforms introduced in the Empire towards the end of its history have been seen as westernisation efforts to close the gap between itself and other western powers. Although the independence war has been fought against western states, the establishment of Turkish Republic increased the velocity of this rapprochement. Turkey’s relationship with the West gained more importance during the Cold War because of the common Soviet threat. During this period, Turkey actively took part in all major western institutions, except the European Union. In addition to early memberships in the Council of Europe (1949) and NATO (1952); it became founding member of OECD (1961) and OSCE (1973). On the other hand, from 1959 on Turkey-EU relations gained positive slope in spite of fluctuations.

Its relations with Europe have always had an important place in Turkey’s history. However, especially in the last decade, the European Union has been the most prominent external factor that has had the most considerable impact on the factors

²¹¹ Walter Hallstein, the first president of the European Commission, Speech in the signature ceremony of Ankara Agreement, , cited in John Redmond, *The Next Mediterranean Enlargement of the European Community. Turkey, Cyprus, and Malta?* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1993): 23.

²¹² Ludger Kühnhardt, “Turkey’s Capability to Become Member of the EU,” *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 1, no. 1 (October 2005): 3.

that shaped Turkey's identity. Keeping the 'westernization' as one of the main pillars of Turkish foreign policy in mind, it can be argued that the relations with the EU and the reform (or transformation) process pushed by the EU membership perspective became the main impulse behind the change in Turkey within the last years that led to a kind of silent revolution.²¹³ For this reason, when it is asked to Turkish politicians and analysts about the reasons for Turkish willingness to enter European Union, most of the time the answers start with a political one: to achieve an aim that was showed by the founding father of the republic and to reach to the level of civilised nations.

Much longer before the (post-) Communist countries could have imagined being a member of the European Union, and even before Spanish or Austrians were thinking about it, Turkey made its application for becoming part of European Economic Community in 1959. The relationship gained a different status with the signature of an association agreement, namely Ankara Agreement, between the parties in 1963. The agreement foresaw three phases that would lead to a customs union. However, the ultimate aim was the full membership of Turkey. Jose Torreblanca draws attention to the interesting fact that French president De Gaulle rejected British application at a time when he accepted to open the way for Turkey to a possible membership with the signature of Ankara Agreement. His arguments against UK membership were not more than what today's analysts are familiar with: UK "is not fully European, but Atlantic" and moreover, it "is the

²¹³ Other pillar is named as 'keeping status quo.' Baskın Oran, "Türk Dış Politikasının Teori ve Pratiği," in Baskın Oran, eds, *Türk Dış Politikası, Kurtuluş Savaşı'dan Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Volume 1, 6th Edition (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002): 49.

USA's Trojan Horse.”²¹⁴

The relationship has experienced fluctuations due to developments both in Turkey and Europe. 1987 signalled the beginning of a new era in the relations with the application of Turkey for full membership. The application was rejected at that time, however it was emphasised by the Union that Turkey is fully eligible for such application. Although the customs union established in 1996 was a considerably positive step, the problems in the relations reached to its peak after 1997 Luxembourg Summit that left Turkey behind the post-Communist countries in the accession process. The crisis was partly solved in 1999 Helsinki Summit where Turkey gained official candidate status. The coalition government at that time introduced several reforms in Turkey for meeting the so-called Copenhagen criteria. However, the real momentum came with the election of JDP single-party government in 2002.

4.2.2 Domestic Background

It is obvious that a radical transformation has occurred in the attitude of political Islam in Turkey regarding EU affairs. The JDP is perceived to represent an important step in this transformation with its pro-European stand. JDP leaders named their party's ideology as “conservative democracy” in order to show their difference from the previous Islamist movement (i.e. National View Movement)

²¹⁴ Jose I. Torreblanca, “Europe's Reasons and Turkey's Accession,” *Analysis of the Real Instituto Elcano (ARI)*, no. 99/2004 (Translation from Spanish) (7 February 2005): 2-3. <http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/analisis/679/Torreblanca679.pdf>

which most of them had belonged to. However, it is not wrong to argue that many leading figures of the party have a “pro-Islamic background.”²¹⁵ They served in the parliament in parties like National Salvation Party (NSP), Welfare Party (WP) and Virtue Party (VP). This necessitates analysing the evolution of their perception of Europe without ignoring the National View tradition.

National View Movement had traditionally based its position on persistent opposition to the West. This caused it to be against Turkey’s warm relations with the EU and thus its candidacy process. This opposition was so sharp that “a common market between Turkey and western states” was believed to “result in Turkey’s colonization and to make Turks labourers of the West.”²¹⁶

National View Movement maintained its anti-globalization and anti-Western attitude until the late 1990s. However, it is well known that the so-called 28 February process became a turning point in the evolution of this movement in many ways. It also stimulated the radical change in their approach towards the West, especially the EU. The VP, which was established after the closure of WP in 1998, became one of the keenest parties on Turkish membership of the EU. It expected that the membership would guarantee freedoms while diminishing the role of the military in political arena.²¹⁷ Abdullah Gül, then senior VP deputy, after mentioning that “in the past, [WP] was reluctant to join the European

²¹⁵ İhsan Dağı, “Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey: Rethinking the West and Westernization?” *Turkish Studies* 6, no. 1 (2005): 30.

²¹⁶ Esra Çayhan, *Dünden Bugüne Türkiye Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri ve Partilerin Konuya Bakışı* (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1997), 73.

²¹⁷ Reşat Kasaba and Sibel Bozdoğan, “Turkey at a Crossroad,” *Journal of International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (Fall 2000): 18.

Union,” reflected the policy shift of his party by saying, “We now want to become a full member. We realize that without integration into Europe, democratic standards of human rights cannot be achieved in this country.”²¹⁸

Ziya Öniş points out that “radical differences could be detected” in the political programs of WF and VP.²¹⁹ VP, itself, paid attention on emphasizing its difference from WP. Recai Kutan, the leader of VP, told in a television interview that his party, contrary to WP, strictly supported the promotion of democracy, human rights, and political freedoms. He also stressed that the leaders of the VP “had learned from their experience in the last couple of years that democracy comes first - without it, nothing else can be accomplished.”²²⁰ However, this did not prevent the Constitutional Court from closing the party for becoming a center of anti-secularist actions. It is interesting to note that the Court rejected attorney general’s allegation that VP is the continuation of a closed party, namely WP.²²¹

With the closure of VP, the tension between ‘old guards’ and new ‘reformists’ within the party reached to its peak and this gave birth to two new parties: Felicity Party (FP) under the legal leadership of Kutan and informal leadership of Erbakan, and JDP under Erdoğan’s leadership. There is a great debate on the

²¹⁸ Marvine Howe, “The Islamist Agenda in Turkey: Democracy,” *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (October/November 1998), <http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/1098/9810018.html>.

²¹⁹ Ziya Öniş, “Political Islam at the Crossroads: From Hegemony to Co-existence,” *Contemporary Politics* 7, no. 4 (December 2001): 287.

²²⁰ Quoted in Haldun Gülalp, “The Poverty of Democracy in Turkey: The Refah Party Episode,” *New Perspectives on Turkey* 21 (Fall 1999): 54 in Ahmet Kuru, “Globalization and Diversification of Islamic Movements: Three Turkish Cases,” *Political Science Quarterly* 120, no. 2 (2005): 271.

²²¹ Mustafa Erdoğan, “Fazilet Partisi’ni Kapatma Kararı Işığında Türkiye’nin Anayasa Mahkemesi Sorunu,” *Liberal Düşünce* 6, no. 23 (Summer 2001): 37.

sincerity of the change in JDP leaders' views and the reasons for their departure from the National View Movement. Although there are various approaches on this issue, it seems more useful to pay attention to the views of current members of the Movement. For instance, Şevket Kazan, one of the leading and famous figures of National View Movement, argues that there was no trust between 'traditionalists' and 'reformists' even before the closure of VP.²²²

Lütfü Esengül, a leading FP member, argues that the roots of the opposition of the group that established JDP goes back to the congress of National Salvation Party (NSP) in 1978, in which Korkut Özal opposed the traditional leaders of the movement. He believes that Özal is the mentor of them. He also argues that this group tried to transform the VP into a party like Motherland Party (MP) or current JDP before leaving the movement.²²³ However, the change in JDP leaders' attitudes was so radical that it was not only outsiders but also themselves who was surprised about that change. For instance, Abdullah Gül, the former second man of JDP, says that when he watched the video cassettes on Erdoğan's previous speeches with him, they were both astonished and Erdoğan was amazed about his own speeches.²²⁴

Whatever their sincere beliefs are, almost all observers agree on the fact that JDP politicians have given importance to western values of democracy, human rights and rule of law in their core-periphery analysis, and have perceived them as

²²² Yavuz Selim, *Gül'ün Adı* (Ankara: Kim Yayınları, 2002), 170.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 204-206.

²²⁴ Gül cites Erdoğan's reaction as "Neler söylemişiz!" in *Ibid.*, 192.

guarantees for moving their base to the center while establishing legitimacy against secularist Kemalist core. This opened the way for reinforced reform process under JDP government that resulted in the opening of the negotiations with European Union. Democratisation reforms were so successful that the European Commission declared that “Turkey sufficiently fulfils the [Copenhagen] political criteria.”²²⁵ In other words, Turkey was accepted by the West, itself, as a country that achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and, protection of minorities by the year 2004, under a so-called pro-Islamist government. As has been mentioned before, although criticisms arose about the slowing pace of reforms in the coming years, the initial opinion has been reinforced with the repeated emphasis in various declarations and documents on the fact that “Turkey continues to sufficiently fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria” during the negotiation process.²²⁶ JDP’s economic agenda and performance has also been welcomed by the West. This has been reflected in the opinions of both private and public actors that openly appreciate what has been done in Turkish economy by the government after 2002 elections.

Ironically at the same time, “the old line Kemalists, who for 80 years preached about the need to modernize and Westernize Turkey, have in many ways become

²²⁵ European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament -Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey’s progress towards accession* (Brussels, 06/10/2004), 3.

²²⁶ For instance see, Olli Rehn, “Answer given by Mr. Rehn on behalf of the Commission;” European Commission, “Key findings of the progress reports on the candidate countries,” 3.

the reactionaries in Turkey.”²²⁷ The resistance of the old westernisers (i.e. civil and military elites) against the reform efforts seem to have turned them into new conservatives, in the real meaning of the term, while the so-called Islamists have become new modernisers and westernisers of the country. This Kemalist elite is believed by most observers to continue dominating not only military, but also the civilian bureaucracy, judiciary, and media. The so-called “deep state” in Turkey is argued to resist many of the changes introduced by the JDP.²²⁸

This group claims that they are the genuine guardians of Atatürk’s principles and the “real inheritors of the Kemalist legacy.” However, they are criticised for hiding their real concerns: “protecting their current statuses.”²²⁹ Their main argument about the threat against the foundation stones of the regime is called by many domestic and foreign observers as “fact-free paranoia.”²³⁰ Rather, some analysts believe that the real threat for Turkey is “secular fundamentalism” that increasingly turned into an “anti-western, anti-religious and anti-liberal” ideology.²³¹

²²⁷ Carroll, “*Turkey’s Justice and Development Party*,” 26.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Joost Lagendijk, MP in the European Parliament and Co-chair of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliament Commission, “Stern Secularists and the story of a modernising Islam,” *Today’s Zaman*, May 7, 2007.

²³⁰ Zakaria, “A Quiet Prayer for Democracy;” also see Joost Lagendijk, “Secularist paranoia raises tension across Turkey,” *Today’s Zaman*, May 9, 2007.

²³¹ Mustafa Akyol, “The threat is secular fundamentalism,” *International Herald Tribune*, May 4, 2007.

4.2.3 International Background

Post-9/11 environment have had both positive and negative impacts on Turkey's EU vacation. Although it have had considerably favourable influences on policy makers to view Turkey as an asset in the changing international environment, it dropped the support for Turkey's membership by creating a negative image of Islam in the eyes of European public. Thus, a potential flow of Turkish migrants became more than a problem of labour competition in the eyes of some Europeans with the rise of Islamophobia. Although pundits believe that "any moderately-well informed citizen in Europe know that immigrant Turks have not been responsible for acts of violence... and Turkey has the most secularized and democratic polity of any country of Muslim culture," this issue is exploited by "some populist newspapers and politicians in Europe."²³²

The support for Turkey's membership came from a large group of foreign actors that included some interesting allies, like its traditional rival Greece. Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan is seen in the West as the most pro-European leader. However, for Greece, he has a special place as the only Turkish leader who challenged traditional Turkish position in terms of problems between two countries, especially the Cyprus issue.²³³ However, the real change in Greek position came after a shift of perceptions about its interests. By means of ideational change, Turkey's traditional 'enemy' became one of the anxious

²³² Michael Emerson, "Dear Turkey, Play it Long and Cool," *CEPS Commentary*, December 15, 2006.

²³³ Quoted in Soner Çağaptay, "The November 2002 Elections and Turkey's New Political Era," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 6, no. 4 (December 2002): 46.

supporters of Turkish membership. Although, all other material factors remain in place, the official Greek interest perception became based on the belief that a European Turkey is much less dangerous for Greece. This simple but important change in perception dramatically changed the Greek position in terms of Turkish EU membership in public, political and economic circles. Transformed perception openly foresees a potential membership as a win-win situation. This was well reflected in the words of former Greek Defence Minister Yannis Papantoniou, who argued that Greeks “simply believe that if and when [Turkey] joins the European Union it will be obliged to observe these rules and values. This will by itself resolve most of our problems.”²³⁴ The change is so dramatic that Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dora Bakoyanni, claimed that “supporting Turkey’s accession is a choice of strategic character” for Greece.²³⁵

Turkish membership found support from different segments of European leadership as well. For instance, in her visit to Turkey Queen Elizabeth argued that “Turkey is uniquely positioned as a bridge between East and West at a crucial time for the European Union and the world in general.” She continued in reference to the Alliance of Civilizations initiative that Turkey can play “a key

²³⁴ EU-Turkey Relations, *Euractiv*, September 23, 2004. <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/eu-turkey-relations/article-129678>

²³⁵ Yannis Tsantoulis, “EU-Turkey Relations and the Greek Factor: Present Situation and Future Prospects,” *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 3, no. 3 (November 2007): 4-5.

role in promoting peace, political stability and economic development in some of the world's most unsettled areas.”²³⁶

Another astonishing support came from the Pope Benedict XVI in his historic visit in Turkey in late 2006. Contrary to all expectations, he declared that he would like to see Turkey become a member of the EU.²³⁷ This change of mind is seen by some analysts as remarkable, in view of his supposed infallibility.²³⁸

4.2.4 Negotiation process starts, but...

After a positive Commission report on Turkey, EP Foreign Affairs Committee declared that the negotiations should start. However, like other bodies, they felt the necessity to strongly re-emphasise the open-endedness of the process in various places of their decision.²³⁹ The expectation was a smooth beginning for a long and tiring journey. However, in spite of all formal promises given unanimously by all member states and official documents declaring positive results about opening the negotiation talks, the ceremony about opening negotiation process was thrown into crisis and turmoil by Austria's last minute

²³⁶ Britain's Queen Elizabeth's visit to Turkey continues, *Hurriyet*, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/english/turkey/8927125.asp?gid=231&sz=72094>

²³⁷ Richard Owen, “Pope gives blessing to Turkey's EU campaign,” *The Times*, November 29, 2006; G.G. de Lastic, “The Pope's radical shift on Turkey,” *Kathimerini*, English Edition, December 2, 2006.

²³⁸ Emerson, “Dear Turkey, Play it Long and Cool”.

²³⁹ European Parliament, “Turkey: yes to negotiations but no guarantee of membership,” *News Report*, November 30, 2004. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?language=EN&pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+NR-200411301+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN#SECTION1>.

“hostility” towards Turkish membership.²⁴⁰ José Manuel Barroso declared in the opening ceremony that he can “guarantee, on behalf of the European Union, that Turkey will be treated in the same way as all other candidates.”²⁴¹ But, this promise became questionable from the very first day.

The difficulties experienced in taking the decision to open negotiation process gave strong signals about the nature of the issue. The insistence of France on a future referendum and the demand of Austria to open talks with Croatia in return of dropping its opposition to Turkish membership talks showed that some member states have some other plans in their minds. More interestingly pundits did not hesitate to refer to Austria’s battles against Ottoman Empire and its strong Roman Catholic roots to explain its opposition.²⁴²

Moreover, the negotiation framework disappointed many Turks with its emphasis on open-endedness, absorption capacity, potential long transitional periods, derogations, specific arrangements or permanent safeguard clauses.²⁴³ Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Jansa explained the logic behind this emphasis on open-endedness with the aim of preventing everybody from having “the illusion that everything will go smoothly.”²⁴⁴

²⁴⁰ “EU and Turkey Agree Terms,” *The Guardian*, October 3, 2005. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2005/oct/03/eu.politics>

²⁴¹ José Manuel Barroso, “Declaration of the President of the European Commission on the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey,” IP/05/1219, October 3, 2005.

²⁴² Graham Bowley, “A standoff threatens EU-Turkey negotiation,” *International Herald Tribune*, September 30, 2005.

²⁴³ See European Commission, “Negotiating Framework,” (Luxembourg, October 3, 2005).

²⁴⁴ Government Communication Office of Slovenia, “EU Summit: Slovenia Supports EU Talks with Croatia and Backs Turkey Negotiations Compromise,” (Brussels, December 17, 2004)

The Commission has been favouring the continuation of negotiations without artificial interference from member states. Commission officials, like the president Jose Manuel Barroso, repeatedly reminded the fact that the process is handled by them “on the basis of a mandate handed down unanimously by the member states.”²⁴⁵ However, later developments proved that those who expect a highly problematic process were right. Although, as has been clearly mentioned by the former president of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, in his speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly, “the fact that Turkey belongs to Europe was recognised already in [the] Association Agreement of 1963,” Turkey’s Europeanness became questionable for many Europeans after the opening of the negotiations.²⁴⁶

Following intellectual problems, real obstacles arose in the process. In December 2006, the European Council decided to provisionally suspend eight chapters from the accession negotiations with Turkey as a reaction to Turkey’s refusal to apply the additional protocol to the agreement on the EU-Turkey Customs Union to Cyprus, which was supposed to expand the agreement to cover all the new Member States that acceded to the Union on 1 May 2004. However, Turkish government insists that the Union should first keep its promises given to Turkish Cypriots in 2004 after the rejection of Annan Plan by the no votes of Greek Cypriots. The EU seems to be unable to keep that promise because of the veto of

<http://www.ukom.gov.si/eng/slovenia/publications/slovenia-news/1520/1525/>

²⁴⁵ EU-Turkey Relations, *Euractiv*, September 23, 2004.

²⁴⁶ Romano Prodi, “Speech of the President of the European Commission, at the Turkish Grand National Assembly,” (Ankara, January 14, 2004).

Cyprus as a member state. This issue turns out to be a deadlock for the time being. Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik emphasizes that decision to suspend chapters is “a clear break in the negotiations.” According to her, ““tailor-made partnership, say in the form of a European-Turkish Community” is more realistic option than full membership.”²⁴⁷

During German presidency, France pushed hard to block opening one of the three negotiation chapters that were ready to be opened. That chapter was the key area of economic and monetary policy. The only reason for Sarkozy to lobby hard to prevent opening that negotiation chapter was the political, economic and symbolic importance of the chapter by giving a full membership perspective. In the words of a German official, not opening that chapter “was a political decision emanating from Paris.” Turkish side reacted to this decision by claiming that, for the first time ever, a negotiation chapter is not opened “on the grounds that it would bring Turkey closer to full membership.”²⁴⁸ More important point is the fact that it does not seem to be the last time.

Most of the difficulties came with the transformation of official mentality after the changes in governments of some member states, especially France. It is not a secret for anybody that French President Nicolas Sarkozy is firmly opposed to Turkish membership. He based his arguments on geographical and cultural

²⁴⁷ Austrian Foreign Ministry, “Plassnik on negotiations with Turkey: proceeding on sight has proved its worth,” *Press Release*, December 12, 2006. <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/foreign-ministry/news/presseaussendungen/2006/plassnik-on-negotiations-with-turkey-proceeding-on-sight-has-proved-its-worth.html>

²⁴⁸ Dan Bilefsky, “Sarkozy blocks key part of EU entry talks on Turkey,” *International Herald Tribune*, June 25, 2007.

elements by claiming that the EU is not only an idea but also a geographical entity. Although he seemed to accept the fact that the EU should keep its promise to continue negotiations, his strongest comment on Turkey came in 2007 when he claimed that “Turkey has no place inside the European Union.” Although he does not show any reason for that argument, he claims that accepting Turkey will mean “enlarging Europe with no limit” and can lead to risk “destroying European political union.”²⁴⁹

During the process, France used every chance to block negotiations. Even though it was symbolic, it was seen as a victory of France when French officials prevented their European colleagues from using the words “accession” or “membership” in a foreign ministers’ statement on EU enlargement strategy concerning Turkey. Volkan Bozkır, Turkish ambassador to the EU, reflected the situation in Ankara by saying “we are heartbroken and tired of waiting.” He also warned the European politicians that EU is losing its influence on Turkish people by such acts. In his words, in a very short period of time “the EU has lost its leverage on Turkey. It has used up all its ammunition except for stopping the negotiations totally.”²⁵⁰ In reaction to Turkish complaints about French discontent with the word ‘accession,’ Olli Rehn advised the Turkish government to “focus on reforms instead of words.”²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ *EUBusiness*, “Turkey has no place in EU: Sarkozy,” January 14, 2007. http://www.eubusiness.com/news_live/1168786802.44/

²⁵⁰ “France Wins Symbolic Victory Over Turkey EU Bid,” *Javno*, December 10, 2007. <http://www.javno.com/en/world/clanak.php?id=105279>

²⁵¹ *Euractiv*, “Turkey bids to assuage EU critics,” May 29, 2008.

Other blow came when France accepted to hold referendum for new enlargements. The initial aim was to hold referendum only for Turkey by mentioning only those countries with populations over 5% of the Union's entire size. As clearly mentioned by Andrew Duff, vice-chairman of the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, this French law is "an unfortunate example of French xenophobia towards Turkey." His proposal for solving this problem is to transform France into "a more mature parliamentary democracy" instead of "a place where populism and plebiscites rule."²⁵²

Spanish scholar Jose Torreblanca criticises French and Austrian politicians for their populist decision to hold referendum about Turkey's membership by boldly asking them to "imagine" what could have been the result "if Spain's membership in the European Union had been subjected to referendum in 1981."²⁵³ This situation also clearly undermines the credibility of decisions taken by the Council in all other areas. Because it shows that elected governments' unanimous decisions are not really legitimate and enough and should be subject to public vote, especially on important topics. However, this is not the case. This kind of approach was not applied for any crucial decision, including all previous enlargement decisions or treaties. This causes questions to arise whether Turkish membership issue is more important than all actions taken by the Union to date, including the constitution making process of the Union or all other enlargements

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/turkey-bids-assuage-eu-critics/article-172796>

²⁵² "French Parliament strikes blow to Turkish EU bid," *Euractiv*, May 30, 2008.

<http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/french-parliament-strikes-blow-turkish-eu-bid/article-172867>

²⁵³ Torreblanca, *Europe's Reasons and Turkey's Accession*, 5.

with 21 more member states from original 6 members of the Union.

The European Commission tried to answer the questions in the minds of Europeans after the big enlargement wave in 2004 by publishing a paper named *Myths and Facts about Enlargement*.²⁵⁴ In that document the Commission argues that the enlargement was done in a democratic way because of the consent of all member governments in the Summit. However, it is a serious question how this explanation can be legitimised while some member states insist on the necessity to take Turkish issue to public vote.

Turkey is pretty reactive against the behaviour of the European politicians at this point of the process. This was reflected well when the French initiative to establish a Mediterranean Union was not seen in Ankara as a sound plan. Rather, after the general image that “Sarkozy indicated that joining such a club may be a better course for Turkey to follow than joining the EU,” it has been perceived as a trap. It became possible for Turkey to participate in the project only after the assurances from other member states and the Commission about the plan that it is “not directed against Turkey, nor is it aimed at diverting the focus away from Turkey’s EU accession talks.”²⁵⁵

This physiological situation is also reflected in declarations of Turkish leaders. As a reaction to special partnership offers, Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkish prime

²⁵⁴ European Commission, “Myths and Facts about Enlargement,” http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/questions_and_answers/myths_en.htm

²⁵⁵ “Commission further waters down Med Union proposal,” *Euractiv*, May 21, 2008. <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/commission-waters-med-union-proposal/article-172558>

minister, claimed that no country, except Turkey, “has ever been offered a conditional or a special membership, or a conditional or special negotiation period.” These types of behaviours, he continued, are perceived by Turkey as “ugly” ones.²⁵⁶

Turks are assured by officials from the highest levels that “there will be no new conditions.”²⁵⁷ What Turkey expects from EU members is to respect the basic principle of international law, as has been done by Angela Merkel who is against Turkish membership: *pacta sunt servanda*. As mentioned by a Swedish diplomat, “anyone who ignores this principle with regard to Turkey loses political credibility and flouts official EU policy.”²⁵⁸ Turkey also draws attention to the fact that although it is argued that the Union’s absorption capacity has always been relevant, the report on the EU’s capacity to integrate new members came only in 2006.²⁵⁹

Turkish side consistently emphasises the importance of keeping the goal of full membership firmly in place is essential to “keep the reform process alive.” Thus, it criticises the EU for slowing down the negotiations. In a press conference, Foreign Minister Ali Babacan asked why the technical reports on 11 of the 35

²⁵⁶ Susan Sachs, “Turkey Insists on Equal Terms in European Union,” *The New York Times*, October 3, 2004.

²⁵⁷ Romano Prodi, “Speech of the President of the European Commission”.

²⁵⁸ Ingmar Karlsson, Consul General of Sweden, “Turkey’s Cultural and Religious Heritage—An Asset to the European Union,” *CEPS Turkey in Europe Monitor*, no. 10, (October 2004): 2-4.

²⁵⁹ European Commission, “Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2006 – 2007, Including annexed special report on the EU’s capacity to integrate new members,” COM (2006) 649 (November 8, 2006).

negotiating chapter were not completed by the Commission.²⁶⁰

Another criticism from Turkey is the double-standard applied by the Union in terms of membership criteria. The argument follows that the Union actors and public is closely monitoring the developments and the reforms process in Turkey. The conditionality principle is strictly applied in Turkish case. However, the EU is criticised for not showing the same sensitivity and not really caring about the fulfilment of the membership criteria in the last enlargement wave. It is believed that the Union accepted those countries with political decisions. The decisions to close the negotiation chapter often seemed to be arbitrary.²⁶¹ The latest developments in Bulgaria proved that these arguments are not baseless. Although high attention is paid on criticising Turkey and problems about implementations, the real crisis came in 2008 from Bulgaria, a member state, which was punished for wasting the Union funds with corruption. Commission spokesman, Johannes Laitenberger, did not hesitate from saying that “the fight against high-level corruption and organised crime is not producing enough results” in Bulgaria. Commission Report on Bulgaria confessed that “institutions and procedures look good on paper but do not produce good results in practice.”²⁶²

²⁶⁰ “EU urges reform, Babacan wants membership commitment,” *Today’s Zaman*, May 28, 2008.

²⁶¹ Katinka Barysch, “Some Advice for Turkey,” *Center for European Reform Bulletin*, no. 45 (December 2005 /January 2006).

²⁶² “EU suspends funding for Bulgaria,” *BBC News*, July 23, 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7520736.stm>; Also see, “Bulgarian corruption: Brussels busts Bulgaria,” *The Economist*, July 17, 2008. http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displayStory.cfm?story_id=11751745&source=features_box1; “Keeping EU money away from the mafia,” *Euractiv*, July 18, 2008. <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/storms-brewing-commission-bulgaria-report/article-174369>.

4.2.5 What Makes Turkey's Negotiations Different and Harder?

Turkey's EU membership negotiation process has attracted unprecedented level of attention all around the world. Even those who are not really interested in EU related issues are keen to talk about Turkey-EU relations. Because of the popularity of the issue, it became almost impossible to escape from emotional and ideational perspectives. This negotiation process is no more an issue that is dealt only by European and Turkish bureaucrats. Rather, it is something that even ordinary citizens are used to hear or read on the news.

Turkey's negotiation process is different and more problematic than the previous ones. It took less than one year after the start of the negotiations for the Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn to warn the parties about a potential "train crash."²⁶³ Contrary to the formal discourse, the process is much more than a technical procedure. Although, post-9/11 social environment provided some arguments for supporting Turkey's EU membership in strategic calculations, it created considerable obstacles at the same time by being source of the fear and confusion in the minds and hearts of Europeans. This has been reflected well in the fact that "the more Europeans have begun to see Islam as an existential threat in post-September 11 era, the more they tend to define Turkey as one of the potential 'others' of the EU's emerging identity."²⁶⁴

²⁶³ "EU Warns Turkey to Step Up Reforms to Avoid "Train Crash," *Deutsche Welle*, October 4, 2006. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2193029,00.html>.

²⁶⁴ Oğuzlu, "Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy." 13.

As European Commissioner Olli Rehn rightly points out “every time the EU accepts new members, it changes.”²⁶⁵ However, Turkish membership, contrary to other ones, seems to force Europeans to transform their perceptions about themselves. Many things that have been taken for granted are questioned. Europeans seem to start understanding what “united in diversity” really can mean. In the words of David Phillips, Turkey’s membership will not only change Turkey but also “transform what it means to be European.”²⁶⁶ As Jose Torreblanca puts it, the process showed that “to be European in Turkey is quite different from being European in Paris, Stockholm or Dublin.” But this is the case, he continues, for every member country. It is not only Turkey, which is different.²⁶⁷

The reasons behind the difficulties in the negotiation process are mainly based on perceptions and ideas. Non-material factors play a considerable role even in those cases that might be seen as material factors such as geographical location or Turkey’s big population. The debates on the borders of the Union or the perceptions about the labour force requirements of Europe in the future show the importance of constructivist perspective in understanding such issues.

Although the opposition in Turkey towards EU membership is a factor in determining the pace of negotiations, it is not what makes Turkish membership different than others. Because, the character of that opposition is not too much

²⁶⁵ Olli Rehn, “Foreword,” in European Commission, “Understanding Enlargement: The European union’s Enlargement Policy,” Directorate General for Enlargement (Belgium, 2007).

²⁶⁶ David L. Phillips, “A Crescent Among Stars,” *foreignaffairs.org*, December 22, 2004. <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20041222faupdate84176/david-l-phillips/a-crescent-among-stars.html>.

²⁶⁷ Jose I. Torreblanca, “Europe’s Reasons and Turkey’s Accession,” 3.

different than what can be observed in other candidate countries. On the other hand, the real challenge comes from the opposition in the EU against Turkish membership, which is unprecedented in the enlargement history.

The reasons behind the difficulties in the negotiation process are mostly based on perceptions and ideas shaped within the new international structure after September 11. Non-material factors play a considerable role even in those cases that might be seen as material factors such as geographical location or big population. The debates on the borders of the Union or the perceptions about the labour force need of Europe in the future show the importance of constructivist lenses in understanding these kinds of debates. As mentioned by Antonio Missiroli, “it is extremely difficult to base the debate [about Turkey] on an objective assessment” because of the fact that “where one stands depends on what one sees” in this case. Turkey’s characteristics like its population, size, and geographical location are perceived as “strategic assets” by some, while they are seen as “structural liabilities” by others.²⁶⁸

There are various arguments used by those who oppose a potential Turkish membership. Its geographical location, religion, culture, large and agricultural population come among the most popular ones. However, the tension in the debates dramatically increased when the opposition about Turkey’s EU membership became based on arguments with identity and civilizational basis. It

²⁶⁸ Antonio Missiroli, “Foreword,” in Amanda Akçakoca, “EU-Turkey relations 43 years on: train crash or temporary derailment?” *EPC Issue Paper*, no.50 (November 2006).

is generally argued that economy or any other objective material criteria will not be the real concern in deciding about Turkey's full membership. This argument is supported with the relative success of Turkey about these criteria. Very few Europeans can deny the fact that Turkey's situation, in objective material terms, is similar to the two newcomers in the Union, namely Bulgaria and Romania, and at least as good as Spain and Portugal when they applied.²⁶⁹

Thus, emotional, identity-related and civilizational arguments seem to dominate the opposition against Turkey's EU membership. For instance, former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing argues that "Turkey's capital is not in Europe; 95 per cent of its population lives outside Europe; it is not a European country."²⁷⁰ However, his real concern is the identity and Muslim population of Turkey. Although Turkey is officially accepted by the Union to share the European values that are known to everybody, some Europeans like Edmund Stoiber, the Bavarian prime minister, believe that "Turkey is not part of Europe's community of values,"²⁷¹ without mentioning what these values are. Looking at these examples, many commentators believe that there is at least a certain amount of hostility to Turkey in some EU member countries.²⁷²

The reasons for objections have sometimes become harsh as in the example of Dutch European commissioner, Frits Bolkestein, who warned that Turkey's

²⁶⁹ Norman Barry, "Turkey and the European Union," *Today's Zaman*, January 30, 2007.

²⁷⁰ Quoted in Anthony Browne, "We can strengthen Brussels, says Turkey," *The Times*, March 5, 2004.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² For Norman Barry, there is "definite hostility" to Turkey in France. See Norman Barry, "Turkey and the European Union."

membership will mean “the Islamisation of Europe” without hesitating to claim that it will mean “the relief of Vienna in 1683 will have been in vain.”²⁷³ For Turkish public, nothing can be more awkward than using this argument to oppose Turkey’s membership to a Union that arose from the ashes of the most brutal war the world has ever seen. This shows a lack of understanding even at commissioner level about the logic behind the establishment of the Union on the basis of cooperation of two recent enemies, namely France and Germany.

The role of media is crucial to mention at this point. After a general survey on the news related to Turkey in the European press, Ellen Svendsen concludes that the most important characteristics is “negativity.” By focusing only on negative things like bomb attacks, catastrophes, violations of human rights and ignoring all positive developments the news coverage create a negative image of Turkey.²⁷⁴ Another important aspect of media coverage is the emphasis on Turkey as a Muslim country. With influences of negative image of Islam after 9/11 in the eyes of European citizens, this became one of the reasons of opposition to Turkish membership. In Svendsen’s words, “throughout European history, Turks have persistently been associated with violence, sexual perversion and stupidity.” Combined with the historical ‘otherness’ of Ottoman Empire in shaping European identity, it became more common to argue that Turkey is culturally different than other Europeans whatever the developments are. It also became commonplace to

²⁷³ Quoted in “Open the gates of Vienna,” *The Spectator*, September 18, 2004. Also see, Ian Traynor, “In 1683 Turkey was the Invader, in 2004 Much of Europe Still Sees It That Way,” *The Guardian*, September 22, 2004.

²⁷⁴ Ellen Svendsen, “The Turks Arrive! European Media and Public Perceptions of Turkey,” *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 2, no. 3 (November 2006): 3.

hear European politicians asking for opening a debate about European Union's identity when they are asked about Turkish membership. However, the same politicians do not refrain from giving long speeches about the success of European Union although they claim that they do not know what it really is. For those who cannot tell what Europe is, says Ellen Svendsen, Turkey plays a crucial "role of the convenient *other* that can tell us who we are."²⁷⁵

One interesting argument of those who oppose Turkish membership like Wolfgang Schauble, deputy head of the CDU/CSU group in German Bundestag, is that Europe has made a crucial mistake by "postpon[ing] for too long a discussion about the ultimate limits of EU extension and about the meaning of European identity."²⁷⁶ Although David Phillips criticises him in the same article for reflecting the view of Europe's older generation, Schauble asserts that Europe should stop lying to Turkey and be "honest" enough to say that it will never be a full member.²⁷⁷ This perspective is well reflected by a speech of another CDU member in the Bundestag who claimed they are the honest ones by saying Turkey can only have a privileged partnership, while SDU is giving wrong hopes (or lying) to Turkey about full membership.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 5.

²⁷⁶ Wolfgang Schauble, "A Still-European Union" in Wolfgang Schauble and David L. Phillips, "Talking Turkey," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2004).

²⁷⁷ Wolfgang Schauble and David L. Phillips, "Talking Turkey," *Foreign Affairs*, (November / December 2004).

4.2.6 A critical look at objections

Culture and Religion

Swedish diplomat Ingmar Karlsson claims that if Turkey is rejected on cultural or religious basis, it can easily be argued that Greece should have been kept out for its Eastern Orthodox religion, or “semi-Orientals” like Romanians and Bulgarians should not have been accepted, or Albanians and Bosnians should be forced to be the outsiders forever. She adds that this will be a serious message to Muslims already residing in the Union that they are “second-class citizens.”²⁷⁸

In Ludger Kühnhardt’s words, “it would constitute a blatant betrayal of trust if Turkey’s orientation towards Europe and European promises to Turkey were refused by the EU itself.” He emphasises at this point that the core of European credibility, namely “honesty,” should not be demolished by the EU itself.²⁷⁹

The time for Europeans to discuss the Europeanness of Turkey was when Turkey applied for association agreement in 1959. The Union had another chance to discuss it in 1987. Again the Europeans said Turkey is eligible for application. And there is only one criterion for application: being a European country that respects 6(1) of TEU. The EU members declared that Turkey was eligible contrary to countries like Morocco that was rejected for not being a European country. After the formal candidacy and opening of negotiation process it is not

²⁷⁸ Ingmar Karlsson, Consul General of Sweden, “Turkey’s Cultural and Religious Heritage—An Asset to the European Union,” *CEPS Turkey in Europe Monitor*, no. 10 (October 2004): 3.

²⁷⁹ Ludger Kühnhardt, “Turkey’s Capability to Become Member of the EU,” *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 1, no. 1 (October 2005): 3.

possible for Turkish side to understand this questioning.

For many Turks, adopting EU *acquis* is a serious commitment and it can be done only with partners, which do not keep questioning Turkey's identity each and every year again and again in spite of all previous declarations.

Absorption capacity

Proponents of the crucial importance of the concept especially in terms of Turkish membership openly argue that this criterion is more than enough to prevent Turkey's membership even if it fulfils all requirements.²⁸⁰ As has been said before, although it is argued that the criterion has been valid for all candidates, the effort to determine what absorption capacity means came only in 2006 with a Commission report.²⁸¹

On the other hand, some analysts believe that the debate on the absorption capacity of the Union is used as a tool by "those who are afraid of the effects of their own [acts] and curse European integration for things which in fact their own national governments and the leftovers of their respective sovereignty have caused."²⁸² Likewise, Vural Öger, member of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, also claims that this debate is used "to formulate a new criterion to be

²⁸⁰ Elmar Brok, "Absorption Capacity as Criterion to Join the EU: The Negotiations with Turkey," *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 2, no. 2 (August 2006) 3.

²⁸¹ European Commission, "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges."

²⁸² Ludger Kühnhardt, "Editorial," *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 2, no. (August 2006).

imposed to candidate countries, especially to Turkey.”²⁸³

Although he agreed that the absorption capacity is a criterion, Olli Rehn cautioned that Europeans have to “avoid making enlargement hostage to a theological debate on the final borders of Europe” and wanted European politicians not to disrupt the negotiation process irresponsibly, “for the sake of Europe.”²⁸⁴ For some observers, rather than being a result of enlargement, the debate about the absorption capacity arose with confusion in the minds of Europeans about their identity and a loss of confidence after the failure of the ratification process of the Constitution. At this point there is a general agreement that discussions about further enlargement are highly influenced by a number of problems and fears, real or imagined, some of which have nothing to do with enlargement.²⁸⁵

Privileged partnership

This issue seems to become an obstacle because of the problems of some European leaders in reading the new international picture and Turkey’s perceptions rightly. Although such status does not exist in the Union *acquis*, some members, including Germany and France, started proposing a privileged partnership to Turkey. This caused serious reaction from Turkey and was totally rejected from the very beginning. Turkish side claims that there is an obvious fact

²⁸³ Vural Öger, “EU’s Absorption Capacity: A Condition by the Candidate Countries to the EU?” *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 2, no. 2 (August 2006): 5.

²⁸⁴ “EP seeks clarity on Union’s absorption capacity,” *Euractiv*, March 16, 2006. <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/ep-seeks-clarity-union-absorption-capacity/article-153426>

²⁸⁵ Graham Avery, interview in *ZEI EU-Turkey-Monitor* 2, no. 2 (August 2006): 8.

that many refrain from mentioning: not any single EU member state will accept giving away their membership rights and simply adopting what other EU members do even if they believe that what EU does is “good” for everybody. Forget about membership rights, it is not secret that all member states debate for long days or months to discuss their voting weights or a commissioner chair that is supposed to be non-national. The reaction of member states towards decreasing the number of commissioners shows how sensitive the issue is.

There is also a misunderstanding that the customs union between Turkey and the EU is a good basis for establishing a privileged partnership status. However, the customs union is seen by Turkey as a step towards full membership. That’s why it accepted to apply those customs also towards third parties even though it has no power in the decision making mechanisms. It is impossible for Turkey to continue this one-sided relationship that favours the EU if it loses the full membership perspective.

Olli Rehn, European Commissioner for enlargement, also warned that “the regular talk of privileged partnership only undermines the EU’s credibility and weakens the conditionality in Turkey.” He highlighted the fact that this kind of behaviours only reduce “the political incentive for reforms and causes political backlash among ordinary Turks.”²⁸⁶

Scapegoating

²⁸⁶ Judy Dempsey, “Merkel visit to Turkey complicates life at Home,” *International Herald Tribune*, October 4, 2006.

European politicians seem to use opposition to Turkish membership as a tool in domestic politics. It seems more efficient if they try to face the problems and refrain from taking populist positions like offering Turkey a different status than membership and ensuring their voters that they were not really serious when they promised Turkey a clear membership perspective in various documents and presidency conclusions. If they do not change their positions, it is impossible for Turkey to “win the hearts and minds of European citizens” on its own, as it is asked by the Union.²⁸⁷

For instance, the failures of the ratification process of the draft constitution and the Lisbon Treaty occurred in the Union without Turkey. Contrary to the expectations, it was not a big country like Turkey but a small country, Ireland, which stopped the second process. Moreover, it is interesting to observe that the membership of 12 different nations with a similar total population and much bigger voting weights did not create a similar discussion among the Europeans like the one about Turkey that might become a member in at least more than a decade.

Many Europeans claim that the EU will not work with a huge country like Turkey. However, there are already serious problems about decision making mechanisms of the Union. It is commonly accepted that the political and institutional problems are evident in the EU of 27. The Council is frequently

²⁸⁷ Barroso, “Declaration on the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey.”

unable to take decisions due to the existing veto rights²⁸⁸ On the other hand; there are scientific studies that show that Turkish membership will not have considerable negative impact on the ability of a reformed EU to act.²⁸⁹

Open-endedness

The difference in open-endedness issue is the fact that any result other than succession of the negotiations would be seen as a failure for both the candidates and the Union in previous cases, especially the one in 2004, while this kind of failure is seen as an openly desired result by many Europeans, including the French president and the German Chancellor, in the Turkish case. Unfortunately, renaming failure by inventing concepts like “privileged partnership” does not change the essence of the issue in the eyes of Turks. For the Turkish government, it is not really easy to convince the Turkish public to try to adopt all EU acquis while European leaders keep offering Turkey a status, i.e. privileged partnership, which does not even exist in the acquis. Another point that necessitates attention is the frequency of usage of this term by European leaders in terms of Turkish membership negotiations.

Misinformation

Another point that is pretty hard for Turkey to understand is why many people in

²⁸⁸ Brok, “Absorption Capacity as Criterion to Join the EU,” 4.

²⁸⁹ Richard Baldwin and Mika Widgren, “The Impact of Turkey’s Membership on EU Voting,” *CEPS Turkey in Europe Monitor*, no. 13 (January 2005): 2-11.

Europe open debates about taking in other countries like Russia, Ukraine, Israel or even Japan if Turkey is accepted. In addition to mentioning the long and close history between Turkey and EU, the Commission replies to such claims by saying that “EU has never offered a membership perspective” to these countries and decisions about Turkey has been taken unanimously.²⁹⁰

Another reason for opposing Turkey’s membership is its poor population. This position tends to ignore the latest developments in Turkish economy. It is generally accepted that the economic success is impressive. In a report recently released by Goldman Sachs, a US-based investment banking and securities firm, Turkey is even predicted to be the ninth largest economy in the world with 6 trillion \$ nominal GDP, moving ahead of countries such as Japan, Germany, Italy, France and Canada in forty years. In parallel to its total economic growth, per capita income in Turkey is envisaged to be the tenth largest in the world by 2050.²⁹¹

Many people also say that Turkey will be a problem with its large agricultural society. One wrong image about the Turkish expectations from the membership is the perception that Turks are really dreaming about taking a big share from the CAP. Not many people, especially farmers, even heard about CAP in Turkey. That is not the real concern for Turks. It seems to be better for Europeans to question what their answer will be if Turkey proposes to abolish all these funds.

²⁹⁰ European Commission, “Myths and Facts about Enlargement.”

²⁹¹ Hamish McRae, “In 2050 the world will be run by a new middle class – based in Asia,” *The Independent*, July 10, 2008.

Will it be the Turkish farmers or the French farmers who will resist this proposal more?

4.2.7 On the Eastern Side of Bosphorus

Turkish public is becoming increasingly indignant towards the EU because of the perception that Europeans are not keeping their promises and applying double-standards against Turkey. This anger is making it harder for the government to introduce reforms and slowing down the negotiation process. This point is emphasised by European Commission Vice-President Günter Verheugen, in an interview when he warned that “Europe is sending Turkey almost exclusively negative signals.” He continued that “we are focusing on the weaknesses of the country and not encouraging them to change. This is feeding a reluctance to make the reforms we are asking for, which in turn leads Europe to the view that the Turks simply can’t manage it.” According to him, this “is a dangerous spiral that threatens to lead to a global political failure of the highest order.”²⁹²

Like many other analysts Amanda Akcakoca observes that “the national consensus on Europe is fading away, with every reform being portrayed as a concession to the Union.”²⁹³ For those in Turkey who oppose EU membership, the main reasons are fears about losing sovereignty, territorial integrity or Turkish

²⁹² Günter Verheugen, interview in *Bild am Sonntag*, October 8, 2006 cited in “Verheugen defends Turkey’s EU membership,” *EUobserver*, October 9, 2006.

²⁹³ Amanda Akcakoca, “EU-Turkey relations 43 years on: train crash or temporary derailment?” *EPC Issue Paper*, no.50 (November 2006): 16.

culture/religion, the belief that Europeans hate Turks and ‘they play with us’ perception. Some also think that Brussels is much far away to Turks and some do not see a desirable future in the Union.

This situation is exploited by some Turkish politicians in order to block the reforms leading to EU membership. Many of them blame foreigners including Europeans for Turkey’s own problems and mistakes. Many tend to picture reforms as concessions to Europeans. Many others seem to forget that it is Turkey who applied for membership and show what Europeans do as a reason to stop introducing reforms that are in the interest of Turkey.

4.2.8 Implications for JDP

The EU may be perceived as a social group, as a ‘social group’ is defined by Turner as “one that is psychologically significant for the members, to which they relate themselves subjectively for social comparison and the acquisition of norms and values.”²⁹⁴ As it is well known from the example of the EU, only those who meet the required criteria can become a member to a particular social group. In other cases, problems arise for the newcomer, the old members and the social group as a structure. Thus, there is a vast amount of literature on the process that transforms the EU candidates in the negotiation process in both material and non-material terms. It is very common to argue that enlargement is the most powerful

²⁹⁴ John Turner, *Rediscovering the Social Group* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 1.

policy of the Union that is unique in its success in transferring norms in a relatively short period of time. EU membership negotiations are a concrete example of socialisation which is more institutionalised and put under schedule. The Union openly uses social influence methods and conditionality principle.

As mentioned in the introduction part, EU has been the most important external factor that shaped JDP's evolution process, because it created a democratic environment within which it could push for more freedom for all, including itself. As Paul Kubicek mentions, although there have been political liberalisation demands in Turkey for many years, the real "impetus for this transformation was the EU's decision in 1999 to accept Turkish candidacy for membership with the stipulation that Turkey would have to make numerous political reforms to gain eventual entry into the organization."²⁹⁵ Ziya Öniş points out this fact by noting that the EU has started a new "period of profound and momentous change in Turkish history ... [that] would have been impossible in the absence of a powerful and highly institutionalized EU anchor in the direction of full membership."²⁹⁶ This situation was reinforced by the fact that Islamists, in general, has seen EU membership process as a path toward "de-Kemalisation" and thus greater religious freedom.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ Paul Kubicek, "The European Union and Grassroots Democratization in Turkey," *Turkish Studies* 6, no.3, (September 2005): 361..

²⁹⁶ Ziya Öniş, "Domestic Politics, International Norms, and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the post-Helsinki Era," in Ali Çarkoğlu and Barry Rubin, eds., *Turkey and the European Union* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 13, cited in *Ibid.*, 362.

²⁹⁷ Bertil Duner and Edward Deverell, "Country Cousin: Turkey, the European Union and Human Rights," *Turkish Studies* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 6.

It is well-known that Islamic identity in Turkey was strengthened by “European snubs in the past, which were seen as evidence of a double standard with regard to Muslims.”²⁹⁸ However, today the credible prospect of EU membership is believed to lead Islamists, the grassroots of JDP, in a liberal direction. This was another face of the impact of EU on JDP’s identity formation process.

Although EU membership process seems to open a manoeuvre space for JDP in Turkish politics, there is a continuous debate on its sincerity in its commitment to this process. Yet, it is generally believed or assumed by both domestic and foreign observers that JDP, at least in a pragmatic way, wants full membership. Moreover, most of the observers think that, as Greek scholars Lega and Agapi Glyptis mention, JDP “more actively and vocally committed to EU accession than any of its predecessors” and shows its commitment to European values through diplomatic and other means,” as in the example of Cyprus issue.²⁹⁹

JDP seems to have realised the importance of meanings and symbols in the new international structure. This can be understood from its choice for its symbol as a light bulb that is a modern and traditional symbol, which represents enlightenment after darkness. It is not only its symbol but also its policies that are prepared with this consciousness. Thus, they use identity-related and civilizational arguments as its main cards in its relations with the foreign world. In this respect, JDP leaders relate their arguments to the clash of civilizations debate. They frequently use the

²⁹⁸ Thomas W. Smith, “Between Allah and Atatürk: Liberal Islam in Turkey,” *The International Journal of Human Rights* 9, no. 3 (September 2005): 309.

²⁹⁹ Leda-Agapi Glyptis, “The Cost of Rapprochement: Turkey’s Erratic EU Dream as a Clash of Systemic Values,” *Turkish Studies* 6, no.3 (September 2005): 403.

argument that “Turkey is an answer to the clash of civilizations.”³⁰⁰ In this respect they claim that Turkey can play a vital role in relations between the Muslim world and the rest of the world, including the West.

Erdoğan insists that Turkey’s membership will strengthen the position of EU in the world and provide the world crucial assets in its efforts to prevent any clash between civilizations. In his words, Turkish membership “will change the image of the EU in the Islamic world.” He adds, by this way “rather than an economic union, or a union of a certain religion, it will show it’s a union of values.”³⁰¹ Abdullah Gül, Turkish president and former foreign minister, in continuation argues that a rejection from the EU about Turkey’s membership will make the Islamic world to believe the existence of double standard that prevents a Muslim country from membership whatever it does.³⁰² Ali Babacan, Turkish foreign minister and chief EU negotiator, warns his European counterparts that Turkey’s membership process has a crucial importance for the “future of east-west relations.”³⁰³

Many foreign analysts and politicians agree with these arguments. For instance, in this respect, U.S. President Bush emphasizes the importance of Turkey’s EU membership as “a crucial advance in relations between the Muslim world and the

³⁰⁰ Stephen Castle, “Recep Tayyip Erdogan: ‘Taking part in the EU will bring harmony of civilizations- it is the project of the century’,” *The Independent*, December 13, 2004.

³⁰¹ Quoted in Anthony Browne, “We can strengthen Brussels, says Turkey,” *The Times*, March 5, 2004.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Daniel Dombey and Vincent Boland, “A road to nowhere? Why Turkey’s long journey west is in jeopardy,” *Financial Times*, November 8, 2006.

west.”³⁰⁴ On the EU side, the most crucial matter related to Turkish membership is its possible contribution to the Union to become a global player. Turkish membership is agreed to contribute the Union to establish its security force and to “project the power of democratic ideals to troubled” regions.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ Quoted in Rachman, “Clashing of civilizations on the banks of the Bosphorus.”
³⁰⁵ Kinzer, “EU slams the door.”

CHAPTER V

THEORY MEETS PRACTICE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Throughout the research process, showing direct relationship between dependent and independent variables have been the hardest part of this study. Because of the nature of non-material factors like emotions, ideas or perceptions, it became pretty hard to see how they have impacts on the dependent variables we observe in the aftermath of September 11 attacks. This situation created suspicion about the explanatory power of constructivism on the issue analysed in this dissertation.

The main expectation from the reader of this study has been to see the relevant relationship between the variables, after reading the explanation of the post-9/11 international environment and the evaluation of Turkey's relations with the west in the mentioned era. However, if the expectation of the reader is to see open and clear links between the variables, the problems of constructivist theory begin at that point.

Discussions can be widened about the methods to examine the explanatory power

of a theory. However, this question is well beyond the scope of this study. That being said, one occasional deficiency of constructivist analysis compared to its positivist alternatives is its lack of giving satisfaction to its readers as much as the latter can do. Thus, a constructivist might face a criticism about the scientific contribution of his/her study in understanding and explaining a subject.

On the other hand, one obvious success of constructivist school is to persuade IR scholars about the necessity of paying attention to non-material factors in the social world. However, one should not forget the difficulties in answering questions such as 'how, when, where do these non-material factors play a significant role?'

The efforts in trying to find 'concrete' proofs of the explanatory power of constructivism in the subject of this thesis well reflected the matters mentioned above. In order to make things easier for the analysis, Turkey's relations with the West related to developments in the Middle East have been selected as a test area in this chapter. The influences of non-material factors (i.e. ideas, perceptions, emotions) have been searched within newspaper articles and between the sentences in speeches. 'Turkish model' discussions, Turkey's role in the Greater Middle East Project and its leading position in the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative have been prioritised in that framework.

5.1 Middle East under Spotlight after 9/11

American people, like the rest of the world, were trying to give a meaning to the event while watching the breaking news on 9/11 attacks. The first reaction was obviously shock and deep trauma. From the very beginning, suspicion about Middle Eastern terrorists was mentioned. Interestingly, as in the case of Oklahoma bombing, pundits did not hesitate for a moment from showing Muslim fanatics as the ones who are responsible for the events. It was not perceived as a criminal attack, but a modern declaration of war on TV. Huntington's books are taken back from the shelves to be read once again and his thesis about a possible clash of civilizations became one of the most popular topics in discussions.

Under these circumstances, provocative arguments found open ground in the world media, especially in the West. One example was an interview of a respected British historian Sir John Keegan in an Australian radio station. His message was simple and clear:

“Oh kill them (terrorists) I think. Actually get rid of, physically get rid of them. There's nobody to deal with. You can't rationalise - how can you reason with somebody who actually wants to die?...

(Al-Qaida network) is very.... it's very Islamic, but particularly very Arab - and you can see that it has its roots in Islamic but particularly Arab Islamic style of war making that goes back to the 7th century AD. The surprise attack... victory... killing for its own sake...

Islam was that funny sort of pure system of beliefs, that depressed people in the Middle East held as their religion - and the revival of Islam dates from the early years of the 20th century - no longer than that - the Arabs awakening. It was brought about by their humiliation... by their sense of how low they'd fallen compared with the West.”³⁰⁶

These kinds of analyses became so popular that some observers even started to think that the rhetoric of American, British and Israeli experts about 9/11 has become as dangerous as the terror itself.³⁰⁷

Although transatlantic leaders hesitated from using the term ‘Clash of Civilisations,’ they all believed in the necessity to get ready for a possible clash with some bad people. In that framework, threat perceptions of the EU and USA have been one of the main commonalities between the transatlantic partners in the new international system after 9/11. It is not secret for anybody that September 11 has been the decisive event shaping the foreign policy of the Bush administration. President Bush declared three days after the attacks, “Our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil.”³⁰⁸

Similar to their American allies, Europeans declared that they believe the world “faces new threats which are more diverse, less visible and less predictable.”³⁰⁹ The security strategy of the Union emphasises the vitality of fighting terrorism as the most important threat that the world faces now. Moreover, Europeans argue

³⁰⁶ Sir John Keegan, interviewed on Foreign Correspondent, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 10 October 2001, <http://www.abc.net.au/foreign/stories/s387060.htm>.

³⁰⁷ Rana Kabbani, “Terror has come home,” *The Guardian*, September 13, 2001.

³⁰⁸ George W. Bush, Address in the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C., September 14, 2001, quoted in The White House, *2002 National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 5, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2002/nss.pdf>

³⁰⁹ European Council, *European Security Strategy*, 3.

like their American counterparts that other important global challenges are proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as in the cases of Iran or North Korea, regional conflicts as in the cases of Middle East or Kashmir, failed states as in the cases of Afghanistan or Liberia, organised crime that includes drug and weapon trafficking, and maintaining energy security.³¹⁰ Very few Americans are likely to reject this list.

5.2 Civilizational Debates

The concept of “clash of civilizations” is firstly used by Bernard Lewis who in his article that dates back to 1990 argues that what occurs between the West and its “ancient rival” Islam that is “against “(the West’s) Judeo-Christian heritage, (its) secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both” is “no less than a clash of civilizations.”³¹¹ However, it is Samuel Huntington who turned the concept into one of the most controversial issues in the international relations literature.

By the early years of 1990s, according to Huntington like many others, the world was entering a new era within which “the fundamental source of conflict... will not be primarily ideological or primarily ideological or primarily economic.” Rather, the “great divisions... and conflict(s),” he continued, “will be cultural.” In

³¹⁰ Ibid., 3-5.

³¹¹ Bernard Lewis, “The Roots of Muslim Rage,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 266 (September 1990): 60.

this world, “the fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines.”³¹² The main issue in the post-Cold War period, in his words, is the “interaction between the West and non-Western civilizations and among non-Western civilization.” In this picture, the West is supposed to remain united without any conflict.

Many analysts have given reference to Huntington’s arguments in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks. This increased the enthusiasm in western circles about the prospective ‘other’ for the West, namely the Islamic world. However, prejudices and misunderstandings seem to prevail in the western world, especially with the negative influences of terrorist with the ‘Islamist’ banner. Yet, it is important to mention that this problem is not a new development. In his book written in 1981, well-known scholar Edward Said criticises the West for taking Islam as the scapegoat for everything that seems to be wrong in the world system. He believes that there is almost unanimity in the West about the guilt of Islam about the problems that world faces today. In his words, “for the right, Islam represents barbarism; for the left, medieval theocracy; for the center, a kind of distasteful exoticism.” Thus, instead of starting by telling what Islam is, Said starts his book by saying that “Islam is not what it is generally said to be in the West today.”³¹³

Whether it is right or wrong, the perceptions of the Europeans and Americans about the Muslim world have had considerable influences in the shaping their actions and the East-West relations, in general. This caused transatlantic partners

³¹² Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?,” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22.

³¹³ Edward W. Said, *Covering Islam* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981) 163.

to prioritise efforts to promote democracy and liberal values in the world, especially in the regions with Muslim populations. It is not an exaggeration to argue that democracy promotion has become one of the core tenets of their security strategy. The EU has used enlargement processes, its Neighbourhood Policy and aids, while the USA has attached importance to the Greater Middle East Project, in this respect. Moreover, they prepared plans to stabilise regions like the Middle East by integrating them into the global economic system.³¹⁴

Transatlantic partners have also determined supporting moderate actors in the Islamic world against radical groups as a crucial part of their strategy in the new environment. They have increased their efforts to find successful examples or models, which are moderate and liberal Muslims in this world that can provide a better alternative for Muslims than armed struggle or terror. Preventing a possible clash of civilizations in any sense has become one of the top issues in their agenda.

This situation creates another point that transatlantic allies strongly agree on: the importance of Turkey as an asset in their strategy in the post-9/11 world. For them, a stable and prosperous Turkey became a desirable target to reach in order to cope with new threats and to secure their interests in regions where Turkey is politically, economically, culturally and historically involved to.

This approach has been strengthened with declarations from JDP government that

³¹⁴ See Thomas Barnett, *Blueprint for Action: A Future Worth Creating* (Putnam Publishing Group, 2005).

try to show Turkey shares similar interests and perceptions with its western partners. For instance, Egemen Bağış, Erdoğan's foreign policy advisor, claims that it is a commonly observed fact that the world needs NATO more after September 11, not less. After mentioning the importance of cooperation and alliance relations between NATO members, Bağış lists a group of new threats that are very similar to what Turkey's western allies claim: terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, crimes, human-drug-weapon trafficking etc. He uses a similar rhetoric with other western politicians and show how strong the solidarity among Turkey and the western world is.³¹⁵

5.3 Turkey as a Model

“Turkey has wisely dealt with the post-September 11 world.”
Ghassan Charbel, *Al-Hayat*³¹⁶

After a period of observation, Turkey's new leaders were welcomed by foreigners as a new group of hardworking politicians that deserve some credit and time.³¹⁷ It took less than two years for Erdoğan to enter the top 100 list of *Time Magazine* in 2004 as the “rarest blends in the Islamic world,” who can be described as “a deeply religious man with a talent for the rough and tumble of democratic

³¹⁵ “11 Eylül'den sonra dünyanın NATO'ya daha fazla ihtiyacı var,” *Hürriyet*, April 4, 2007.

³¹⁶ Ghassan Charbel, “The Turkish Passage,” *Al-Hayat*, April 28, 2008.

³¹⁷ Helena Smith, “New breed of Islamic politicians start to find their feet,” *The Guardian*, March 10, 2003; “A new face, maybe,” *Kathimerini*, English Edition, November 19, 2002.

politics.”³¹⁸

Within a short period of time, JDP has become a party that is closely observed by the Islamic world. Some analysts claim that one of the main reasons for this attention is the fact that JDP “has become the first and only post-Islamic party.”³¹⁹ It is argued to become a political party that is carefully watched especially by the moderate Islamist groups as a model or a source of inspiration, although, until recently, it have had “and awkward relationship” with the Arab Islamist groups that accused it for “abandoning its Islamist principles in pursuit of power within a secular state.”³²⁰ The subsequent developments after the achievements of the party seem to support this argument. In Morocco, even a party that took the same name with JDP is established with its Moroccan initials PJD. Mustafa Ramid, an MP from PJD, says “The JDP lives under a secular umbrella- we say we’re a democratic party but in an Islamic state.”³²¹

The importance attached to Turkey’s EU membership issue among the Muslims in the Middle East was so high that some pundits have argued that “If Muslim Turkey joins Christian Europe as a full member, it would be the most important historical act taken during the last few centuries against the logic of the clash of civilizations. It would break down and dissolve the bloodiest borders, to use

³¹⁸ Andrew Purvis, “Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Turkey’s Builder of Bridges,” *The 2004 Time 100*, April 26, 2004.

³¹⁹ Joost Lagendijk, “Stern Secularists and the story of a modernising Islam,” *Today’s Zaman*, May 7, 2007.

³²⁰ Roula Khalaf, “Turkey tests Islamist appetite for democracy,” *Financial Times*, May 14, 2007; Suat Kınıklıoğlu, “Getting Turkey right,” *International Herald Tribune*, May 2, 2007.

³²¹ Khalaf, “Turkey tests Islamist appetite.”

Samuel Huntington's phrase and create common interests in belonging to a single space.”³²²

In continuation to this understanding, Khaled el-Hroub argues that “Europeanization of Muslim Turkey... constitute the most important experience in terms of the relationship between modern Islam and the weight of western modernization.”³²³

Haşim Salih, an Arab writer living in France, believes like many other Muslims that the fear of Europeans about Turkey is based on their fear of Islam. They think European leaders’ real concern is the Muslim population of Turkey. This perception gives another crucial dimension to Turkey’s EU membership issue in the eyes of Middle Easterners.³²⁴

In the western academia and media, there is a growing consensus about the fact that JDP is the most pro-Western actor in the Turkish politics that pushes hard for the entry requirements of the EU, eliminates old-fashioned bureaucrats, politicians and politics styles, and actively takes initiative to solve chronic domestic and international problems of the country.³²⁵

Contrary to arguments about confusion and mystery, it is claimed in this thesis

³²² Khaled el-Hroub, “Bin Ladenism Removes Turkey from Europe and Prevents a Meeting of Cultures,” *Al-Hayat*, July 4, 2005.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Haşim Salih, “Avrupa Kapıları Türklere Değil İslam’a Kapalı,” *Zaman*, April 24, 2004.

³²⁵ Wendy Kristiansen, “Turkey: post-Islamists in power,” *Le Monde Diplomatique* (March 2003), <http://mondediplo.com/2003/03/06turkey>. ; Peter Preston, “Europe must let Turkey in,” *The Guardian*, May 21, 2007; Fareed Zakaria, “A Quiet Prayer for Democracy,” *Newsweek*, International Edition, May 14, 2007; Kinzer, “EU slams the door.”

that such transformation is totally understandable if one looks at the issue through constructivist lenses that is explained in the second chapter, while keeping the post-9/11 international system that is evaluated in the subsequent chapter in mind. Because non-material factors, especially the changing ideas and perceptions of post-9/11 world, played decisive roles in shaping Turkish foreign policy under Justice and Development Party government. After September 11 attacks, JDP-led Turkey entered a period of high interaction with the international structure, as an agent that has been highly influenced by the developments while shaping the developments at the same time. In Wendt's words, Turkey and the post-9/11 international structure have "mutually" influenced each other. Because of the relative size of the structure, the impact of the structure on Turkey as an agent has been much more decisive.

Although Washington traditionally had problems with pro-Islamist political parties, Graham Fuller argues that "Washington has come to terms quite successfully with the [JDP]'s power, demonstrating that at least one Islamist party, or party of Islamic origins, in the world can be a viable partner for the United States in a drive toward regional stability."³²⁶ He adds that JDP's "shift towards greater independence from Washington" in the region made "Turkey more a part of the Middle East than ever before."³²⁷ Hasan Cemal argues, as a result of his consultations with high-level decision-makers in Washington, that this fact increased Turkey's importance in the eyes of Americans, although it was

³²⁶ Fuller, "Turkey's Strategic Model," 55.

³²⁷ Ibid., 61.

watched with suspicion in the early days.³²⁸ In other words, Turkey with a distance from Washington, rather than Turkey as a close American ally, is “more sympathetic to Muslim states” while “its... domestic accomplishments are viewed with greater sympathy and respect and thus facilitate Turkey’s serving in part as a regional model.”³²⁹ Although it may create some problems in the short term, it is commonly argued that this situation is also in the interest of the USA. This position seems to be reinforced with the active role played by Turkey recently as a mediator on highly sensitive issues in its region. New Turkey seems to be able to successfully broker talks between countries like Israel and Syria, USA and Iran and recently Russia and Georgia.³³⁰

Graham Fuller, more recently, claimed that Turkey became a regional power for the first time in a century by applying its own independent foreign policy in its neighbouring regions. According to him, although cooperation is still possible and existent, Turkey and USA are no more allies. For him, after decades of pretension as if no one exists in the eastern and southern part of Turkey, Ankara now accepts it also has a “Middle Eastern” identity. This gives a different image to Ankara in the eyes of Middle Easterners that begin to see Turkey as a gate to the outside world.³³¹

Discussions about “Turkish model” date back to 1990s in the aftermath of the

³²⁸ Hasan Cemal, “Washington’un Ankara Nabzı (1),” *Milliyet*, May 16, 2006.

³²⁹ Fuller, “Turkey’s Strategic Model,” 61; also see Fareed Zakaria, “How Not to Win Muslim Allies,” *Newsweek*, September 27, 2004.

³³⁰ *The Christian Science Monitor*, “Editorial - Building Bridges in Turkey,” August 7, 2008.

³³¹ “Türkiye 100 yıl sonra yeniden büyük bir güç,” *Star*, October 31, 2008.

Cold War. In a speech Anthony Blinkmen, former U.S. President Clinton's Special Assistant and Senior Director for European Affairs at the National Security Council said "Turkey sits at the crossroads--or, if you prefer, atop the fault-lines--of the world. Because of its place, because of its history, because of its size and strength, and most important, because of what it is--a nation of mainly Islamic faith that is secular, democratic and modernizing--Turkey must be a leader and can be a role model for a large swath of the world."³³²

Within this framework, as Meliha Benli Altunışık mentions, Turkish model notion "re-emerged more forcefully" after 9/11.³³³ One example she gives in that respect is American President George W. Bush's speech in NATO's Istanbul Summit in June 2004 within which he stated that he appreciates the example that Turkey has set on "to be a Muslim country which embraces democracy, rule of law and freedom." He expressed his admiration about Turkey's record of development and recommended the country as a "model" for the rest of the Muslim world.³³⁴

Ahmet Necdet Sezer, former president, and Hilmi Özkök, former Chief of Staff, told to American authorities in every occasion that Turkey should not be presented as a model or an example in any way.³³⁵ However, in Erdoğan's Washington visit in 2005, American President Bush did not hesitate to repeat that

³³² Antony Blinken, "After the Summits: The Future of U.S.-Turkish Relations," presentation delivered at The Washington Institute's Third Annual Turgut Ozal Memorial Lecture, December 2, 1999.

³³³ Meliha Benli Altunışık "The Turkish Model and Democratization in the Middle East," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 27:1&2 (2005): 46.

³³⁴ "Bush: Türkiye Ortadoğu'ya büyük bir örnek," *Hürriyet*, June 28, 2004.

³³⁵ Ibid.

Turkey's democracy is an important example for the peoples of the Middle East while thanking for Erdoğan's leadership in that respect. During the visit, parties declared that they perceive the Greater Middle East Project as an opportunity to improve Turkish-American relations and promised supporting each other.³³⁶

Sociologist Nilüfer Göle supports Turkish model argument by claiming that "global terror symbolised by September 11, authoritarian-theocratic structure identified with Iranian Revolution, chaotic instances like Algeria or Taliban movement... Alternative to all these can come from Turkey and JDP. We can observe only in Turkey that radical Islamist movements can follow a different path than terror or theocracy. A 'good-humored' Islam is arising in Turkey."³³⁷

Various writers like Erdal Güven, argued that not Turkey but JDP itself is a source of inspiration for the reformists in the Middle East who defend democracy in their region. In his words, Turkey perception of the Muslim world has changed after JDP came to power as an Islamist-rooted movement. JDP strengthened the hands of reformers in the Middle East as an example, as a reference party, as a success story...³³⁸

At the Congress of Democrats from the Islamic world in Istanbul, a former Yemeni foreign minister showed how such opinions are perceived in some segments of the Arab world: "It was a conscious choice to hold this meeting in

³³⁶ Murat Yetkin, "Büyük Ortadoğu'ya Evet," *Radikal*, June 9, 2005.

³³⁷ Nilüfer Göle, "AKP Hem Kendi Dönüşüyor Hem Türkiye'yi Dönüştürüyor," *Vatan*, October 1, 2003.

³³⁸ Erdal Güven, "Ortadoğu Nereye Türkiye Nereye?" *Radikal*, February 27, 2005.

Turkey. The (Turkish) Islamic movement embraced the secular state. This new experience in Turkey is a model for all Muslim countries.”³³⁹

Turkey’s decisions not to allow American forces to use Turkish territory to invade Iraq or Erdoğan’s criticism about the violence applied by Israel against Palestinians are seen as bold behaviours of JDP-led Turkey. Some Arabs base this boldness on the fact that JDP, contrary to Arab governments, came to power with democratic means. Thus, they believe that there is a “lesson” to be learnt there.³⁴⁰

Ghassan Charbel explains how JDP-led Turkey seems through Middle Eastern eyes by describing Turkey as a close US ally who can oppose US invasion of Iraq, a state that claims membership of the European club, while being “equally planted in the Middle East,” a mediator who makes sure to maintain the ability to talk to all sides, including Israel, in a “sick and turbulent region.”³⁴¹

After September 11 attacks, the main priority of the Western actors became to combat international terrorism and marginalise terrorist groups by clearly separating their ideologies from Islam as a religion. All parties agree on the unique role that can be played by Turkey in such efforts. Even if JDP leaders, in the words of Ahmet Davutoğlu, claim that “neither Turkey as a country, nor [JDP] as a political party, wants to be a model for anyone,”³⁴² JDP-led Turkey is implicitly or explicitly seen by all parties as the most promising model for

³³⁹ *Aljazeera*, April 13, 2004.

³⁴⁰ Nader Fergany, “More Arab than the Arabs?” *Al-Ahram Weekly* 694, June 10-16, 2004.

³⁴¹ Ghassan Charbel, “The Turkish Passage,” *Al-Hayat*, April 28, 2008.

³⁴² Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Harmonising Immutable Values and Ever-Changing Mechanisms,” *Al-Ahram Weekly* 716 (November 11-17, 2004).

disproving terrorist groups' claims on a potential clash between Islam and western values.³⁴³ This seems to be in line with the common expectation to see more liberal-democratic regimes in the region that are economically and politically integrated to the global system. Abdullah Gül's call for democratisation in Tehran Summit of the Islamic Conference Organization was seen as one of the first steps taken by the government to answer the calls for being a model.³⁴⁴

Within this framework, it can be argued that JDP found a perfect environment for its "proactive"³⁴⁵ foreign policy understanding in the post-9/11 international structure. In other words, the changes at the systemic level enabled JDP to realise its plan to transform Turkey into a "pivotal country" from a passive *bridge* country in the region that has long been perceived "as having strong muscles, a weak stomach, a troubled heart and a mediocre brain."³⁴⁶ This understanding found its place in five main pillars of JDP-led Turkey's foreign policy that were listed by Davutoğlu as: maintaining a sensitive balance between security concerns and protecting civil liberties; applying "zero-problem policy" toward Turkey's neighbours; developing close relations with neighbouring regions and beyond; adherence to a multi-dimensional foreign policy; and applying a "rhythmic

³⁴³ See Fareed Zakaria, interview with Dutch public radio broadcaster VPRO; June 11, 2007. www.vpro.nl/programma/tegenlicht/afleveringen/35446086/items/36884544; Tarık Oğuzlu, "Soft Power in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 61, no. 1 (March 2007).

³⁴⁴ Kemal Kirişçi, "Between Europe and the Middle East: The Transformation of Turkish Policy," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 8, no. 1 (March 2004): 48.

³⁴⁵ Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times," 49.

³⁴⁶ *The Economist*, "An eminence grise."

diplomacy” instead of a static one.³⁴⁷

This perceptual environment opened the way for close cooperation between Turkey and USA in the Middle East within the framework of Washington-led Greater Middle East Initiative, which mainly aims to “combat the appeal of Islamist extremism” by promoting political and economic liberalism in the Muslim world.³⁴⁸ This situation makes perfect sense in the post-9/11 security perceptions of the Western powers. Although Turkish secular elites reject identification of Turkey as a “moderate Islamic” country and emphasize its secular characteristics, it is seen by the West, especially U.S., as a model country in the Initiative that could have harmonised Islam with democracy.³⁴⁹ JDP leaders do not seem to be uncomfortable with such views. Rather, they use these kinds of arguments in their rhetoric.

JDP also officially reflected such understanding in its foreign policy strategy. One prominent example is the famous initiative named Alliance of Civilizations that is co-sponsored by Tayyip Erdoğan and Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, the prime minister of Spain, under the auspices of the United Nations.³⁵⁰ The initiative started in 2005 upon the proposal of Zapatero at the 59th General Assembly of the UN and continued with several meetings and a comprehensive report that analyses the current situation in the relations between the Muslim and the Western worlds

³⁴⁷ Davutoğlu, “Turkey’s Foreign Policy Vision,” 78-84.

³⁴⁸ Tamara Cofman Wittes, “The New U.S. Proposal for a Greater Middle East Initiative: An Evaluation,” *Saban Center Middle East Memo 2*, May 10, 2004. <http://www.brookings.edu/views/op-ed/fellows/wittes20040510.htm>.

³⁴⁹ Güney, “An Anatomy of the Transformation,” 355.

³⁵⁰ See the official web-site of the initiative <http://www.unaoc.org>.

while providing solution suggestions.³⁵¹

5.4 Greater Middle East Initiative

At the end of the Sea Island Summit in June 2004, G-8 countries committed themselves “to a *Partnership for Progress and a Common Future* with the governments and peoples of the Broader Middle East and North Africa.” They claimed that this partnership would be based on “genuine cooperation with the region’s governments, as well as business and civil society representatives to strengthen freedom, democracy, and prosperity for all.”³⁵²

Along with Yemen and Italy, Turkey became co-sponsor of Democracy Assistance Dialogue that is planned to bring governments, civil society groups and other organizations together. In the official web-site of Turkish Foreign Ministry, it is declared that Turkey has been negatively affected by the instability in the Middle East and has a strong interest in the resolution of its problems. In the same page, it is offered to share Turkey’s “valuable and unique experience” with its Middle Eastern neighbours. Turkey’s participation to the G-8 Summit in Sea Island as a democratic partner and its co-chairmanship of Democracy Assistance Dialogue is evaluated in that framework.³⁵³ Some writers even thought

³⁵¹ Alliance of Civilizations, *Report of the High-level Group*, 13 November 2006, http://www.unaoc.org/repository/HLG_Report.pdf.

³⁵² “Broader Middle East/N. Africa Partnership,” June 9, 2004. www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040609-30.html.

³⁵³ Turkish Foreign Ministry, “Synopsis of the Turkish Foreign Policy,” www.mfa.gov.tr/

that Ankara's participation to the Summit is a signal of Turkey entering the 'giants' league.'³⁵⁴ The main objectives of the meetings are to:

Coordinate and share information and lessons learned on democracy programs in the region, taking into account the importance of local ownership and each country's particular circumstances; work to enhance existing democracy programs or initiate new programs; provide opportunities for participants to develop joint activities, including twinning projects; promote and strengthen democratic institutions and processes, as well as capacity-building; foster exchanges with civil society groups and other organizations working on programs in the region.

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The Project has been perceived to aim finishing global terror by bringing democracy to the Greater Middle East region. This understanding was argued to be a transformed version of democratic peace theory that foresees democracies do not go to war with each other. The Project was argued to increase the importance of Turkey in the international system.³⁵⁶

Martin Beck argues that the real motivation behind the Greater Middle East Project is based on the security interest perceptions of Western actors. The target of democratisation in the region was not for the sake of any humanitarian reason. But, it is more a result of a search for eliminating security threats emerging from

synopsis-of-the-turkish-foreign-policy.en.mfa.

³⁵⁴ Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, "G-8 Gündemi," *Sabah*, May 31, 2004.

³⁵⁵ "G-8 Plan of Support for Reform," June 9, 2004. www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/06/20040609-29.html.

³⁵⁶ Mensur Akgün, "Türkiye ve Büyük Ortadoğu," *Hürriyet*, March 22, 2004.

the region by means of a transformed understanding of “democratic peace” theory. In other words, Beck believed that the Project had a good chance of success because of being “motivated by... self-interest” of Westerners.³⁵⁷

According to Çağaptay, Turkey’s importance increased with the Project that is a product of post-9/11 world. Terrorist bombings in İstanbul, in Çağaptay’s words, convinced U.S. President that Turkey is among the good actors and is a target of bad actors. Interesting point made by Çağaptay is that moderate Islam model is the vision of JDP, although many people in Washington administration have reservations about Turkey’s ability to be a model for the Middle East.³⁵⁸

Erdoğan has been willing to participate in the Project and play a central role from the very beginning. In his Washington visit, he warned President Bush that if they exclude Turkey from the Project, all attempts would be resisted within the region. This was a clear message to ask for an active role in the Project.³⁵⁹ Erdoğan also declared that Turkey is in the international front that was created for fighting against terrorism and all kinds of radicalism after September 11.³⁶⁰

He claimed that the question was not whether democracy is possible in the Middle East, or not. The real question was how the demand of the peoples of Middle East

³⁵⁷ Martin Beck, “From Divergent Views to a Common Policy: U.S. and EU Approaches to Promoting Democratization in the Middle East,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 4:2 (2005): 130.

³⁵⁸ Derya Sazak, “Sohbet Odası’nın konuğu, Washington Enstitüsü Türkiye Direktörü Dr. Soner Çağaptay,” *Milliyet*, February 23, 2004.

³⁵⁹ Sedat Ergin, “Türkiye ‘Büyük Ortadoğu’ sahnesine çıkarken,” *Hürriyet*, March 2, 2004.

³⁶⁰ Erdoğan’s speech in his visit to Malasia, June 12, 2003. http://www.akparti.org.tr/haber.asp?haber_id=130&kategori=1

for democracy can be met.³⁶¹ Thus, he asked the help of USA and EU for turning the democracy demand in the region into a political will and concrete process. In other words, he wanted the Western world to listen to democracy demands from the Muslim world. He showed the benefits of Turkey's interaction with the outside world during its own democratisation process.³⁶²

In Erdoğan's words, participants of the G-8 Summit in Sea Island presented their will to support the Middle East's transformation into a region of peace, wealth and modernity. According to diplomats, USA, Germany, Italy, France and UK unanimously believed in the importance of Erdoğan's presence in a Summit where Middle East's reformation issue is discussed. Another important point about the Summit was the influence of Erdoğan's speeches in shaping the documents produced at the end of the summit the Summit.³⁶³

Abdullah Gül, former foreign minister and current president, declared that Greater Middle East Project was compatible with Turkey's foreign policy aims and principles. In that framework, he expressed that Turkey does not have any reservations for the Project initiatives for political, economic and social reforms in the Middle East. Rather, he continued, Turkey has been supporting such views for the region for a long time.³⁶⁴ After stressing the importance of freedom in the Muslim world, Gül mentioned that they could not have been in power if freedom

³⁶¹ "Kıbrıs'ta toprak verilecek," *Radikal*, February 1, 2004.

³⁶² "Recep Tayyip Erdogan: The road to Middle East democracy," *The Independent*, February 9, 2004.

³⁶³ Yasemin Çongar, "Bu Ortaklığı Küçümsemeyin," *Milliyet*, June 14, 2004.

³⁶⁴ "Gül: Büyük Ortadoğu Projesi müdahale öngörmüyor," *Hürriyet*, March, 5, 2006.

and democracy did not exist in Turkey.³⁶⁵ This approach underlines that not only Turkey as a country, but also JDP as a political party is an appropriate source of inspiration for others in the Muslim world.

According to Davutođlu, “Greater Middle East Project is already a late Project. Because the Middle East (1) could not reach economic wealth in spite of its rich natural resources; (2) could not offer a culture alternative to the West in spite of its deep rooted historical background; (3) failed in terms of political regimes in spite of having very old, deep rooted and considerable political customs. As a voice from this region, we should ask this question to ourselves: why?”

In Davutođlu’s words, “Turkey is not a peripheral country, but a central one. It’s neither EU’s nor Middle East’s periphery. Turkey can no more be identified with Cold War terms like ‘regional power.’³⁶⁶ The central country understanding that is continuously mentioned in Davutođlu’s speeches aims at transforming Turkey into a global power that has more say in shaping international structure and its norms.

Etyen Mahçupyan points out that Turkey, as the eastern brink of the western coalition, is facing many risks in an era within which the world is searching for a new order. On the other hand, he supports Davutođlu’s argument by claiming that this situation gives many opportunities that can be used if Ankara can apply

³⁶⁵ “Gül: BOP İçinde ABD ile Birlikte Hareket Ediyoruz,” *Radikal*, March 14, 2006.

³⁶⁶ Meral Tamer, “Davutođlu: ‘AB için B planımız yok, BOP geç kalmış bir proje,” *Milliyet*, June 18, 2004.

proactive policies and take initiatives.³⁶⁷

This changing perception of Turkey as an active player in its region found support from different segments of western and eastern world, at least as far as the Middle East is concerned. For instance, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair believes that Turkey has a unique position in the Middle East that can be trusted by both Israel and Palestinians at the same time. In the current world order, he claims, “there is far greater interest in Turkey than ever by means of its relations with the West and with Islam.”³⁶⁸ Ghassan Charbel, an Arab writer, argues that Erdoğan’s mission as a mediator between Israel and Syria is not an easy one. However, he highlights the importance of that mission by claiming that it concerns all nearby and remote actors including Washington, Tehran, Hezbollah and Hamas.³⁶⁹

Similarly, Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado asserts, “Turkey is playing a vital role in the management of the complex conflicts of the Middle East.” This situation, in his words, changes the long-held perceptions of the country in Western eyes. He adds, “Turkish government is fostering new dimensions to its foreign policy, and this is appreciated very much in Europe. In the end we [Europeans] will have a new perception of the strategic importance of Turkey.”³⁷⁰

Contrary to initial expectations, the things did not go smoothly for the Greater Middle East Project. Developments like American failure in Iraq, escalation of

³⁶⁷ Etyen Mahçupyan, “Kelebek etkisi,” *Taraf*, September 16, 2008.

³⁶⁸ Kerim Balcı, “Blair hopeful of Turkey’s unique role in the Middle East,” *Today’s Zaman*, October 10, 2008.

³⁶⁹ Ghassan Charbel, “The Turkish Passage,” *Al-Hayat*, April 28, 2008.

³⁷⁰ Kerim Balcı, “Proactive diplomacy promotes Turkey,” *Today’s Zaman*, August 6, 2008.

violence in the Middle East, worsening situation in Israeli-Palestinian relations showed that the Project is far from achieving its goals. For many, what the Project brought to the region was not democracy but more blood and poverty. After a question about his efforts to decrease the tension between Israel and Palestine, Erdoğan stated that Turkey has taken a role in the Greater Middle East Project in order to contribute to efforts to establish a peaceful and wealthy region where human rights and rule of law are respected. Contrary to expectations, he continues, the situation in the region is worsening.³⁷¹

At the peak of Israeli military operation in Lebanon, Erdoğan gave the strongest negative message about the Greater Middle East Project by saying that Turkey can review its co-partnership in the Democracy Assistance Dialogue if the negative situation continues.³⁷²

In April 2008, Erdoğan claimed that the Greater Middle East Project that was promoted by Washington to bring democracy to the Middle Eastern region proved to be unsuccessful. His arguments signalled the beginning of a new understanding in Turkey's foreign policy related to the region: "The Middle East project was stillborn. It died as a result of the G-8's failure -- so we have shifted our projection to the Alliance of Civilizations"³⁷³

³⁷¹ "Erdoğan: Ortadoğu'da olanlara duyarsız kalamayız," *Hürriyet*, July 11, 2006.

³⁷² "Terörle ödersiniz," *Milliyet*, July 16, 2006.

³⁷³ Ömer Şahin, "Middle East project stillborn, says PM Erdoğan," *Today's Zaman*, April 26, 2008.

5.5 Alliance of Civilizations

“The complex international situation created in the wake of September 11, as well as of all the other terrorist attacks that constantly marked this decade, has turned dialogue between civilizations, religions and cultures into a humanitarian urgency that cannot be postponed. The Alliance of Civilizations is the right initiative, at the right time.”³⁷⁴

Jorge Sampaio
UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

As a result of the general elections held only three days after the terrorist bombings in Madrid on 11 March 2004, Luis Rodriguez Zapatero came to power in Spain. One of his first decisions was to call Spanish forces back from Iraq and to show a new way of fighting with terrorism: dialogue instead of using military force. The first step was his speech in the United Nations General Assembly on 21 October 2004, within which he called for an alliance between western and Muslim civilisations. On the suggestion of former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to cooperate with a Muslim country, Zapatero proposed co-sponsorship of the project to Turkey in July 2005. Ankara accepted the proposal and the initiative was officially announced to start on 14 July 2005. After that point, Turkey promoted the initiative in every international platform. In spite of the lack of interest in the early days, the international support to the initiative increased substantially in the coming months.

³⁷⁴ Jorge Sampaio, UN high representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, “Alliance of Civilizations Forum: a promising gathering,” *Today's Zaman*, January 14, 2008.

A report was submitted by the “High Level Group” to the UN Secretary General Sampaio and co-sponsor prime ministers Erdoğan and Zapatero on 13 November 2006 at the final meeting of the high level group in İstanbul. The following points are highlighted: For instance, the report states that the origin of the existing tension between the Western and Muslim societies should be searched in the political incidents of near past, not in the history or any religion. Israeli-Palestinian conflict has an important role in that respect. Moreover, the report criticises the military operations of western powers in the Muslim world for deepening fear and enmity. The report also emphasises the existence of some unprogressive forces as a result of fragmentation in Islam.³⁷⁵

After receiving the report, the Secretary-General highlighted the important role played by non-material elements in the problems that we face now and said: “We need to get away from stereotypes, generalizations and preconceptions, and take care not to let crimes committed by individuals or small groups dictate our image of an entire people, an entire region, or an entire religion.”³⁷⁶

In Mahmood Ayub’s words, the alliance aims to strengthen mutual understanding among different civilisations; counteract the influence of those elements promoting intolerance; recommend practical measures to lower the risks to world

³⁷⁵ High-level Group of Alliance of Civilizations, *Report of the High-level Group*, November 13, 2006. www.unaoc.org/repository/HLG_Report.pdf.

³⁷⁶ High Level Group of Alliance of Civilizations, “Press Release: Politics, not religion, at the heart of growing Muslim-West divide, new report argues,” November 13, 2006.

stability stemming from these extremist tendencies; promote the idea that global cooperation is indispensable to security, stability and development.³⁷⁷

In his speech at the start of the Alliance of Civilizations meeting in Madrid, Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, argued that dialogue is the slow but sure way to fight against the “terrifying” threats we face in the new world order. According to him, “never in our lifetime has there been a more desperate need for constructive and committed dialogue, among individuals, among communities, among cultures, among and between nations.”³⁷⁸

Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, the secretary-general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, called the countries participating in the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative to put forward their political will and warned that the contributions should not be merely academic if the real aim is to build peace in the world.³⁷⁹

U.S. State Secretary Rice pointed out that the Initiative, like the Greater Middle East Project, “promises to encourage greater understanding and promote democratic reform, peace and stability in the broader Middle East.” For this reason, she added that they can support the Initiative projects as far as they are “compatible with” Washington’s “own program goals for the Middle East

³⁷⁷ Mahmood Ayub, the UN resident coordinator in Turkey, “Alliance of Civilizations aims to celebrate diversity,” *Today’s Zaman*, January 16, 2008.

³⁷⁸ “Alliance seeks to bridge differences,” *Turkish Daily News*, January 16, 2008.

³⁷⁹ Nazif Erişik, “İhsanoğlu urges political support for Alliance of Civilizations,” *Today’s Zaman*, April 23, 2008.

regions.”³⁸⁰

The alliance’s Group of Friends consists of dozens of governments as well as multilateral organizations including the European Commission and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) that support the mission of the alliance. Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado shows his trust in the Alliance of Civilizations Initiative by arguing that the Initiative is a helpful means in “avoiding a rupture between civilizations.” The number of states joining the initiative and UN support is clear signs of success.³⁸¹ Similarly, Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan said the “growing confidence in and support for the Alliance of Civilizations is strong evidence of the determination among nations for maintaining cooperation and reconciliation instead of conflict.”³⁸²

In April 2007, Ki-moon appointed former Portugal President Jorge Sampaio to the office of High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations. Sampaio described the High Representative as a kind of coordinator organising relations among governments, NGOs, universities and institutions such as the European Council.

The Alliance of Civilizations concentrates on four fields: education, youth, media and immigrants. For situations like the Cartoon Crisis in 2005, an Emergency Intervention Mechanism will be in force that is another point Sampaio. This mechanism suggests ambassadors of the Alliance of Civilizations to write articles

³⁸⁰ “Diplomacy Newline,” *Turkish Daily News*, February 18, 2006.

³⁸¹ Kerim Balci, “Proactive diplomacy promotes Turkey,” *Today’s Zaman*, August 6, 2008.

³⁸² “Group of Friends of Alliance of Civilizations growing,” *Today’s Zaman*, September 26, 2008.

or to show up in media organs such as radio and television in crises and act in a way to stop the crisis.³⁸³

The Initiative was received with excitement in Turkish media. Some even named it as a “Turkish stamp” on the world society.³⁸⁴ Common expectation from the co-sponsorship was to increase Turkey’s influence in the international arena.³⁸⁵ Pundits like Sami Kohen argued that this Initiative would not harm Turkey’s place in Europe and should be seen as an opportunity for Turkey.³⁸⁶ Reactions concerning new perception of Turkey supported such views. For instance, it is believed by many, as Portuguese Foreign Minister Luis Amado asserts, Turkey has a new role in the post-9/11 international environment. He explains this situation with a constructive manner and claims that this is a product of both the changing “perceptions of the European people of the importance of the Middle East for their security and that of their children” and of the active diplomacy of the Justice and Development Party.³⁸⁷

The Initiative has interesting aspect for Turkish foreign policy: Although it had similar experiences in regional organisations such as Baghdad Pact or Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Alliance of Civilizations is the first global initiative that Turkey has taken a leading role.

³⁸³ Gila Benmayor, “A new breath to the Alliance of Civilizations, is it possible?” *Turkish Daily News*, June 30, 2007.

³⁸⁴ “Dünya Meclisine Türk Damgası,” *Hürriyet*, July 19, 2005.

³⁸⁵ For instance see, Yasin Doğan, “Medeniyetler İttifakı,” *Yeni Şafak*, July 18, 2006; Davut Dursun, “Medeniyetler İttifakı önemli bir adımdır,” *Yeni Şafak*, July 21, 2006.

³⁸⁶ Sami Kohen, “Türkiye İçin Bir Fırsat”, *Milliyet*, July 29, 2005.

³⁸⁷ Balcı, “Proactive diplomacy promotes Turkey.”

Abdullah Gül emphasised the risk of “estrangement between different cultures and religions” in his speech in the UN General Assembly and promised “Turkey will continue to be a leading country that will help [Alliance of Civilizations] achieve its goals.”³⁸⁸ In his words, Turkey is “an interface that promotes dialogue and harmony among different cultures and religions” and has a crucial role for that reason.³⁸⁹

In his speech at the Khartoum Summit of the Arab League on 28 March 2006, Erdoğan stressed the importance of new circumstances that the world faces, which “require international cooperation and solidarity more than ever.” In his words, “with its multi-faced relations, rich history and cultural assets, [Turkey] feels a special responsibility to actively participate in efforts to maintain dialogue and mutual understanding between different cultures.”³⁹⁰

Ankara used similar arguments in order to ask for a seat in the UN Security Council. In an article he also pledged that Turkey will attempt to bring [the] perspective [of Alliance of Civilizations] into the work of the Security Council, if Turkey is elected to have a non-permanent seat.³⁹¹

Turkey paid prominent attention in establishing a bridge between the Alliance of Civilizations concept and Turkey’s EU membership issue. In that context, in his

³⁸⁸ “Turkish president addresses UN General Assembly,” *The Anatolian News Agency*, September 23, 2008.

³⁸⁹ Abdullah Gül, “Why Turkey should have a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council,” *Turkish Daily News*, June 20, 2008.

³⁹⁰ “Erdoğan Warns of East-West Split,” *Turkish Daily News*, March 29, 2006.

³⁹¹ Abdullah Gül, “Why Turkey should have a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council,” *Turkish Daily News*, June 20, 2008.

London visit, Erdoğan claimed that Turkey's EU membership would mean that Alliance of Civilizations would occur in the European Union.³⁹² In a similar way, he asserted that the EU cannot become a world power without Alliance of Civilizations and the Union will take the support of 1.5 billion Muslims after Turkey's membership.³⁹³

According to Veniamin Popov, the main reason for Turkey to take a leading role in the Initiative is obvious: Turkey wants to join the EU and it wants to "project the image of an 'enlightened' Muslim country, tolerant and drawn to the West."³⁹⁴

Turkey's participation to the initiative has been mainly because of its 'oriental' and 'Islamic' character. Thus, in spite of genuine efforts for EU membership, the initiative became one of the departure points from the traditional "western country" image of Turkey.³⁹⁵ This can be seen as a continuation of a perception change in the government about the place of Turkey in the global picture. Davutoğlu, Erdoğan's chief policy advisor, explains this transformation by describing Turkey as a "central country... [that] holds an optimal place in the sense that it is both an Asian and European country and is also close to Africa through the Eastern Mediterranean."³⁹⁶ This perspective might be seen contradictory to the EU membership goal of JDP. However, the Party leadership

³⁹² "10 Numara Uyum," *Milliyet*, July 28, 2005.

³⁹³ "Medeniyetler İttifakı Olmadan AB Dünya Gücü Olamaz," *Sabah*, October 13, 2005.

³⁹⁴ Veniamin Popov, "The Alliance of Civilizations Project," *International Affairs: A Russian Journal of World Politics* 53:5 (2007): 60.

³⁹⁵ Ali Balcı, "Medeniyetler İttifakı ve AKP," *Radikal*, November 12, 2006.

³⁹⁶ Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," *Insight Turkey* 10, no. 1 (2008): 78.

thinks that Turkey has more chance to find a plausible place in the western world with this perspective, instead of claiming to be an ordinary European country, when everybody knows Turkey certainly is not so. This understanding caused the Party to “increasingly capitalize on its Eastern identity with a view to securing its place within the West.”³⁹⁷ Davutoğlu explains this situation by pointing Turkey’s unique multiple-identity out by claiming that “Turkey can be European in Europe and eastern in the East, because we are both.”³⁹⁸

Such efforts have been among the steps taken by JDP in reading the new international structure correctly and taking an active role in post-9/11 world by benefiting from the expectations of Western powers from Turkey in the new international structure. At this point, it seems crucial to highlight some intersection points in the new security understandings and interest perceptions of Turkey and other western agents. In spite of some disagreements on methods, all parties seem to agree on the main global challenges that should be addressed in the post-9/11 world. In this direction, they prioritise maintaining stability and security in the neighbouring regions of Turkey as a goal in the new international structure, especially in the Greater Middle Eastern Region. Establishing EU-like Kantian security regions that replace already existing Hobbesian environment in the region seems to be on top of the goal lists in their foreign policy agendas.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁷ Tank Oğuzlu, “Middle Easternization of Turkey’s Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Disassociate from the West?” *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1 (March 2008): 7.

³⁹⁸ *The Economist*, “An eminence grise: The visionary behind Turkey’s newly assertive foreign policy,” November 15, 2007.

³⁹⁹ For more information on Kantian and Hobbesian cultures see Kemal Kirişçi, “Turkey’s

So far, Turkey has shown a great willingness to be part of a dialogue between civilizations. In addition to co-sponsorship of Alliance of Civilizations, Ankara did not hesitate to take additional steps in the same direction. One example was the First Meeting of Civilizations that has been organized in Hatay with the high participation from Muslim, Christian and Jewish religious communities in 2005. Erdoğan called for cooperation among civilizations and openly condemned all kinds of terror in his opening speech. He also criticized those who use the concept of ‘Islamist terrorism’ after September 11.⁴⁰⁰

The structure and nature of the Initiative is still under construction. The next forum of the Alliance of Civilizations will be held in İstanbul in April 2009. And it is still early to talk about the fate of the Initiative.

Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times,” *Chaillot Paper* 92 (September 2006); Tarık Oğuzlu and Serkan Bulut, “Explaining the Europeanization of Turkish Foreign Policy: An interest based account,” unpublished article.

⁴⁰⁰ “Medeniyet Zirvesi Hatay’da,” *Sabah*, September 26, 2005; “Dünyaya Hatay Mesajı,” *Akşam*, September 26, 2005.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This thesis concludes that non-material factors in the social world are indispensable parts of a complete story that claims to understand and explain the post-9/11 world in a comprehensive way. Material factors are not sufficient alone to analyse the systemic developments after the September 11 attacks. Even in the issue of 'war' that is one of the main issues that rationalist theories are assertive to explain, non-material factors play crucial roles as in the example of the Iraqi war. Even if one can easily argue that the neo-cons in the Bush administration shaped their policies mostly in line with rationalist school. Perceptions, ideas and even emotions were decisive in the support for these policies that enabled the Bush administration to realize its plans.

This study also concludes that the appropriateness of social constructivist analysis in analysing the foreign policy behaviours of states is obvious, especially in transformation periods that create a break with the past. Understanding the JDP and its policies is almost impossible if one only pays attention to material factors in the system or domestic developments. However, if the neglected part of the

story is taken into consideration (namely, non-material systemic developments) it becomes easier to make sense of JDP's performance and policy direction that is closer to the western capitals than any time in the history of the young republic.

This thesis also concludes that constructivist theory faces considerable challenges in meeting the expectations of readers who look for concrete and clearly observable relationship between dependent and independent variables in a study. This arises mostly because of the non-visibility of non-material factors that constructivist school focuses on. This shows that constructivist analysis should be more precise on how the non-material elements in the social world interact with other material elements.

Another conclusion reached with this study is the fact that 'systemic analysis' of Wendt may suffer from its ignorance of domestic factors, especially in cases where systemic impacts are less influential. Although it has been pretty useful in explaining Turkish foreign policy in the first years of JDP government, it seems to be inadequate in dealing with periods where domestic developments are dominant in shaping the political, economic and social landscape of Turkey.

That being said, although it is impossible to ignore the importance of domestic politics and developments in shaping the international norms, interest perceptions and foreign policy decisions, this thesis claims that systemic developments deserve close attention. In order to narrow the gap in the literature, it seems as a fruitful path to reconsider the importance of systemic developments and the non-

material factors in more detail in the future studies. On the other hand, more efforts seem to be necessary to systemize the processes that lead to construction of non-material elements in the international system. The complexity of human relations makes it harder to create well-defined rules or blueprints for analysts in this respect. Time will tell whether these kinds of efforts are impossible (or unnecessary) to succeed.

As it has been mentioned at the beginning of this study, the disastrous attacks on 11 September 2001 signalled the beginning of a new era within which more people believe that Islam is in conflict with the West and western values. However, although Islamic political identity was traditionally based on opposition to the West and the westernization processes in Turkey, as İhsan Dağı mentions, rapprochement between the pro-Islamist groups and western values occurred, ironically in the same era.⁴⁰¹ The establishment and the rise of Justice and Development Party is seen by many observers as an evidence for this transformation in the position of the segments of Turkish society with religious concerns.

Political Islam in Turkey is a result of a process that led to the creation of symbols and an Islamic identity. For many domestic and foreign analysts, Turkey's Islam is different from the Islam of Arabs or the Persians. It can be argued that the reflection of Islam on Turkish politics is different from its counterparts around the Muslim world. This fact has a serious place in understanding JDP's identity and

⁴⁰¹ Dağı, "Transformation of Islamic Political Identity in Turkey," 21.

its reflections on its foreign policies.

The Erdoğan government, elected on 3 November 2002, continued and reinforced the reform process that started after the Helsinki Summit in 1999, in which Turkey was declared as a candidate country. It faced some important foreign policy issues after it came to power, like the Iraqi invasion of USA or the Cyprus issue. In most of these cases JDP's identity and background have played a crucial role in its foreign policy formation. In addition to agreeing on this role, this thesis argues that these events also had considerable impacts on JDP's identity formation process.

There is a commonly shared argument that western support for moderate Islamist political parties can strengthen their commitment to political and economic liberalization, as seen in the example of Turkey. This argument can be reinforced by the observation that JDP seems to be a product of “an evolving Turkish Islamist tradition that has grown ever more moderate as it has moved closer to the realities of politics and the requirements of pragmatism, especially under the watchful eye of the militant secularism of the army and old elite structure.”⁴⁰²

The political and economic conditionality attached to Turkey's EU membership also played a crucial role in shaping JDP-led Turkey's identity and interest perception by drawing the lines for its manoeuvre space in Turkish politics. As in the example of headscarf issue, the West showed its limits of being used by JDP

⁴⁰² Fuller, “Turkey's Strategic Model,” 53.

as a tool to overcome the dominance of civil and military bureaucracy. In another example, namely the so-called adultery issue, Europeans moved in line with the secular elites and forced JDP to step back.

It can be argued that instead of applying strict principles arising from its identity in its foreign policy, JDP acts pragmatically and tries to understand its limits. For instance, the famous 1 March decision was not a result of conscious policy-making process. The leading figures of the party, including Erdoğan, were surprised about the result. However, its impact on its following actions and position about the issue cannot be denied.

There is a continuous debate on JDP's identity and ideology. Erdoğan identifies JDP as a broad-based, conservative democrat party. This concept is new for the political science literature. It can be seen as part of an identity formation effort of a party that had to enter elections in only one year after its establishment. Thus it is far from being mature and sufficient to explain JDP's ideology. Some observers see it as a useful effort while others argue that instead of searching for a new concept, JDP should accept that it is a 'Muslim democrat' party. Some others argue that it is more like a European social-democratic party with a commitment to EU-related reforms. Moreover, JDP is also seen more liberal than the mainline parties on many issues. All these views have some right points and, even after six years in the government, JDP's identity formation is far from complete. Time will tell how JDP's search for its identity and ideology will end. Yet, it is obvious that Turkey's relations with the outside world will continue having considerable

impacts on this journey while being affected by it, in return.

In general terms, it is fair to argue that JDP seems to have made a successful analysis of the new international environment of the post-9/11 world. It has pragmatically used the perceptions of the major agents in the structure and positioned itself accordingly. It has benefited from not only the commonalities but also the differences between major western powers, mainly the EU and USA. In general terms, Turkey is believed to have a new role in the post-9/11 international environment. This situation is a product of not only the changing perceptions of the main actors in the post-9/11 international system, but also the active diplomacy of the Justice and Development Party.

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