

A Revised Model for Mutually Constituted Power Relations in Wendt's Constructivism: The Case of Turkish Foreign Policy

Karşılıklı Kurulan Güç İlişkileri İçin Wendt'in İnşacı Modelini Tekrar Gözden Geçirmek: Türk Dış Politikası Örneği

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Abstract

Starting with 1990s, constructivism has become one of the mainstream theories of International Relations and made important contributions to the field. Among constructivists, Alexander Wendt has attracted highest attention by proposing possibility of finding a common ground between constructivism and realism. Is it possible to reconcile these two different perspectives? This paper attempts to reveal the conjunction point between realist and constructivist approaches through the discussion of Wendt's constructivist ideas and realism. The argument follows that although actors shape each other's identities and interests through mutual interactions as Wendt stipulates those who possess more power and capabilities shape the other actors, who have limited power and capabilities, more. To test this hypothesis, this paper analyses change in Turkish foreign policy towards Libya and Syria within the framework of the relationship between Turkey and the United States. These cases demonstrate how a superior

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power, the USA, can influence identity creation process of a weaker state, Turkey, as Turkey was driven to abandon “zero problem with neighbors” policy and peace-prone identity with the influence of the USA since 2011.

Keywords: Constructivism, Alexander Wendt, Turkish Foreign Policy, U.S. Foreign Policy

Özet

1990’larla birlikte İnşacılık Uluslararası İlişkiler alanında ana teorilerden biri haline geldi ve bu alana önemli katkılarda bulundu. İnşacı teorisyenler arasında Alexander Wendt inşacılık ve realizm arasında ortak bir zemin bulma çabasıyla en çok dikkat çeken teorisyen oldu. Bu birbirinden farklı iki teorik bakış açısının uyuşması mümkün müdür? Bu çalışma Wendt’in inşacı fikirleri ve realizm üzerinden tartışarak realist ve inşacı yaklaşımların ortak noktasını ortaya çıkartmayı hedeflemektedir. Wendt’in öngördüğü gibi aktörler birbirlerinin kimlik ve çıkarlarını karşılıklı etkileşimler sonucu biçimlenseler de bu çalışma güç ve yetenekleri fazla olan aktörlerin güç ve yetenekleri kısıtlı olan aktörleri daha çok biçimlendirdiğini iddia etmektedir. Bu hipotezin test edilmesi için Türkiye’nin Libya ve Suriye ile olan ilişkilerindeki değişiklikler Türkiye–Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ilişkisi çerçevesinde analiz edilmektedir. Bu vakalar ABD’nin daha üstün bir güç olarak Türkiye’nin kimlik yaratma sürecini etkileyebildiğini ve bu etkiyle Türkiye’nin komşularla sıfır sorun politikasını ve barış odaklı kimliğini 2011’den bu yana bırakmak durumunda kaldığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnşacılık, Alexander Wendt, Türk Dış Politikası, ABD Dış Politikası

Introduction

Since the Cold War period, the U.S. has had a strong hand in the articulation of international security as well as in the construction of humanitarian intervention and the promotion of democracy norms.¹ Especially after the 9/11 events the Bush administration declared war against international terror and initiated a policy of democracy promotion mainly through hard power. Drastic measures taken by the Bush administration opened the international arena for the debate over boundaries of humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion especially through military intervention, which would also prevent international terror. Since then, these two norms, or called as institutions, have occupied the agenda of international society. Concomitantly, thanks to the hegemonic power, the U.S. effect on the constitution of these two norms reached its zenith. While the U.S.'s effect on construction of humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion has been more powerful, Turkey's contribution has been restricted due to limited material capabilities. Therefore, Turkey's identity and interests have been constrained and shaped by these institutions comparative to the U.S..

During the Justice and Development Party (JDP) government, Turkey initiated a new Turkish foreign policy called "zero problems with neighbors". This new initiative has targeted the creation of a new peace-prone identity, realized through establishing better relations with neighbors especially in the Middle East. Besides providing economic gains, better relations would lead to the democratization of the region, which would contribute to both regional and international security. Within the framework of this "zero problems with neighbors" policy, good neighborly relations were established with Libya and Syria; and Turkey attempted to perpetuate

1 In this paper, the concepts of "intersubjective knowledge", "intersubjective understandings", "norms" and "institutions" will be used interchangeably.

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peace-prone identity in order to be a source of inspiration for a democratic transformation and security in the region. However, after 2011, Turkey's foreign policy approach towards these countries began to contradict with its new identity, which the JDP has been trying to construct. Why Turkey took steps contradicting with this peace prone identity, which it has invested in for almost a decade? How this sudden downturn in Turkey's approach can be explained? This paper investigates the main dynamics of Turkey's identity change and tries to explain this sudden identity change within the constructivist theoretical framework, which offers the best possible explanation for this puzzle, as this paper will try to prove. The main argument of this paper is that Turkish foreign policy towards Libya and Syria has changed along with Turkey's retreat from its new identity because of Turkey's interaction with the U.S. Whenever Turkey has interacted with the U.S. about foreign policy towards these states, it had to make concessions and rearticulate its identity by abandoning the aspiration of becoming a regional power through soft power and a source of democratic inspiration. Consequently, being impeded by humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion norms mainly constructed and guided by the U.S., Turkey had to change its foreign policy attitude whenever it entered into interaction with the U.S.

Through this paper, I will attempt to explain the shift in Turkey's identity by building on Wendt's constructivist arguments with an emphasis on his model of mutual construction of identities and interests. After careful examination of Wendt's model, I will posit my model and then apply my model to the case study of Turkish foreign policy towards Libya and Syria, and argue that change in foreign policy is the product of Turkey's interaction with the U.S. and concomitant U.S. influence over the norms of humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion. Lastly, I will conclude with the summary of my analysis.

Constructivism and Wendt

1990s witnessed so-called constructivist turn in International Relations partly because mainstream IR theories failed to predict and explain the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of Cold War and their analytical tools were incapable of explaining post-Cold War social developments.² A growing number of scholars started studying IR phenomena within the constructivist framework, which embedded in the critical theory. These scholars include Emanuel Adler, Michael Barnett, Martha Finnemore, Jutta Weldes and Raymond Duvall and many more.³ Among constructivists, Alexander Wendt has a special place as he has been appreciated for his sophisticated constructivist challenge posited towards rational choice theories, mostly structural realism known also as neorealism. Although Nicholas Onuf (1989) has been accepted as the “father” of social constructivist research area in IR domain, Alexander Wendt has been one of the most preeminent scholars of contemporary IR constructivist scholarship thanks to his attempt to bring social constructivism to IR domain in order to find a middle ground between rationalism or positivism, and reflectivism or relativism.⁴

Constructivists have underlined the importance of ideational structures besides material ones unlike neorealist assumption, which neglects ideational structures. Emphasizing ideas constitute the basis of interests; constructivists reveal the construction process of ideas and

2 Richard Price and Christian Reus-Smit, “Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism”, *European Journal of International Relations*, 1998, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 264–265.

3 Maja Zehfuss, *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002), p.2.

4 *Ibid.*; John Gerard Ruggie, “What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge”, *International Organization*, 1998, Vol. 52, No. 4, p.862.

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interests.⁵ Theorizing within the constructivist framework, Wendt shares these assumptions but what makes his proposition unique is that besides challenging the neorealist and neoliberal schools, which cannot explain structural changes; his ideas clarify changes in both structural and individual levels by seizing the middle ground between individualism and holism. Therefore, although Wendt focuses on the system level by overlooking the state level, his ideas can be utilized in order to expose identity formation of a state.

Although mainstream IR scholarship dominated by neorealism during 1980s, whose vanguard is Kenneth Waltz (1979) with his book “Theory of International Politics”; neorealism could not anticipate the structural change, the end of Cold War by the collapse of the USSR. The source of this failure was apathetic understanding of international structure and states. In order to analyze IR matters, neorealism (and its cohort neoliberalism to some extent) combines an individualist micro–economic approach to the international system with the classical realist emphasis on power and interest based on materialism.⁶ Wendt charges this individualism, materialism, and neglect of interaction form the core of neorealist structuralism when clarifying the causes of its failure to predict the structural change.⁷ By opposing individualism, Wendt sides with holism and confirms that there is an international structure as neorealism assumes but what diverges the path with neorealist approach is their different stances concerning how much ideas matter along with material forces in this structure. Wendt does not

5 Martha Finnemore (1996) provides a strong constructivist analysis of national interests and demonstrates how political leaders have used “national interest” discourse. See Martha Finnemore, “Defining State Interests”, in *National Interests in International Society*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 1996), pp.1–33.

6 Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Cambridge New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press 1999), p.2.

7 *Ibid.*, p.17.

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reject individualism utterly because an analysis of states can be conducted on the individual level due to the assumption that “states are people too” since they are purposive actors with a sense of self.⁸

One of the main puzzles in IR is agent–structure problem. Scholars debate about the ontological priority of agency and structure. While neorealism attempts to solve agent–structure problem by making states agents given (through billiard ball analogy), world systems analysis proposed by Immanuel Wallerstein (2004) makes system structures primitive units; yet, these attitudes result in an inability to explain the properties and causal powers of their primary units of analysis, a weakness which seriously cripples their potential explanations of state action.⁹ Structuration theory, borrowed from Anthony Giddens (1984), helps escaping the agent–structure problem because by conceptualizing agents and structures as mutually constituted or co–determined entities, it enables development of both systemic and statist theoretical accounts without engaging in either ontological reductionism or reification.¹⁰ The philosophical foundation of structuration theory is scientific realism, which defines agents and structures as distinct and observable entities; hence, Wendt declares himself as realist.¹¹ The significance of scientific realism is that it helps building a via media between positivist epistemology and post–positivist ontology by acknowledging social kinds are materially grounded meanwhile social kinds give meaning to materials so that the relationship between social and material kinds

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8 *Ibid.*, pp.194–195.

9 Alexander E. Wendt, “The Agent–Structure Problem in International Relations Theory”, *International Organization*, 1987, Vol. 41, No. 3, p.337.

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 349–350.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 350,360; Steve Smith, “Positivism and Beyond” in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, eds. Steve Smith et. al., (New York: Cambridge University Press 1996), p.26.

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are mutual.¹² Scientific realism separates Wendt from positivists, post-modernists and post-modernist constructivists. By rejecting positivism altogether post-modernists and post-modernist constructivists target showing how arbitrary, particular and historically generated are the logocentric structures, which mark language and thought so to say, knowledge.¹³

By highlighting the role of ideas, Wendt establishes a balance between material and social forces. Therefore, a successful analysis of international relations should consider discursive capabilities besides material resources because ideas give meaning to material forces concurrently constituting social structures.¹⁴ Ideas construct social structure, which constitute actors with certain identities and interest whereas interest-constituting ideas are in turn constituted by the shared ideas or culture of the international system; hence, there is mutual constitution of ideas and social structure.¹⁵ Consequently, Wendt identifies the structure of social system, which contains three elements: material conditions, interests and ideas, thus, he accepts that there are material elements in the social structure as realists claim, yet they explain little themselves.¹⁶ While material conditions are the basis of interests and ideas, ideas and interests shape them.¹⁷ For instance, although the United Kingdom is a powerful country along with nuclear powers, the United States perceives North Korea, with much less power

12 Alexander Wendt, 1999, *Ibid.*, pp.76–77,91.

13 Steve Smith, *Ibid.*, pp.29–31.

14 Regarding the relationship between material and ideational factors, Wendt argues, “Material forces are not constituted solely by social meanings, and social meanings are not immune to material effects”. See Alexander Wendt 1999, *Ibid.*, pp.111–112.

15 Alexander Wendt, 1999, *Ibid.*, pp.78,125.

16 *Ibid.*, pp.139,189.

17 Wendt says “Without ideas there are no interests, without interests there are no meaningful material conditions, without material conditions there is no reality at all”. See Alexander Wendt 1999, *Ibid.*, p.139.

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and limited nuclear capacity, as a threat. Therefore, ideas and interests affect the perception of material conditions.

By stating “There are no structures without agents, and no agents (except in a biological sense) without structures. Social processes are always structured, and social structures are always in process.” Wendt confronts Kenneth Waltz's more deterministic understanding of international structure because Wendt suggests simultaneous construction of agents and structure in continuous process.¹⁸ Overall, Wendt contends that identities and interests of agents and international structure are in an interaction. He defines identities as subjective self-understandings. Identities cannot exist apart from interests because identities are the basis of interests.¹⁹ Therefore, when an agency enters into interaction with international structure or another agency, its identities and interest are affected. In sum, Wendt proclaims the basic idea that identities and their corresponding interests are produced when an agency interacts with international structure and significant others. In this identity-interest formation process how actors are treated by significant others plays an important role because others' behavior affects self-understanding and then reinforces identity.²⁰ This identity formation process known as the principle of “reflected appraisals” or mirroring because actors come to see themselves as a reflection of how other appraise and treat them and they evaluate themselves in the “mirror” of Others' representations of the Self. Within the framework of

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18 Alexander Wendt, 1999, *Ibid.*, p.186; Richard Price and Christian Reus-Smit, *Ibid.*, pp.267; Jeffrey T. Checkel, “The Constructive Turn in International Relations Theory”, *World Politics*, 1998, Vol. 50, pp. 324–348; Dale Copeland, “The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism” in *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and His Critics*, eds. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander, (New York: Routledge 2006), p.3.

19 Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics”, *International Organization*, 1992, Vol. 46, No. 2, p. 398.

20 Alexander Wendt, 1999, *Ibid.*, p.327.

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this principle, Wendt indicates that when an actor is appraised as an enemy, he/she is likely to internalize that belief in her own role identity vis-à-vis the significant other. However, Wendt admits that there might be power and dependency relations affecting this identity–interest formation process because actors differ along with their powers. For Wendt, ideas and power are not mutually exclusive because the meaning of power distribution in international politics changes by ideas juxtaposed as comparison of the UK and North Korea unfolds.²¹

As the most important resilient actor in international relations, states are real, unitary actors with definite intentions. States have national interests imbedded in their identities. Wendt defines national interest as the reproduction requirements or security of state–society complexes and underlines that behavior of states is motivated by national interests.²² In fact, national interest discourse has been used as a pretext to legitimize state acts as Jutta Weldes (1996, 1999) analyzes. Similarly, Wendt deconstructs national interests by challenging neorealist claim that states seek power because they feel insecure in international arena due to anarchy. Wendt argues that there is no such thing as “logic of anarchy” per se but there are three kinds of cultures or international systems under which states operate.²³ Wendt opposes systemic theories like neorealism and world systems theory take states given because of self–help system generated by anarchy which homogenize states by motivating them for survival and lust for power. By confronting systemic theories, Wendt asserts that there is no single logic

21 *Ibid.*, p.135.

22 *Ibid.*, pp.233–234.

23 *Ibid.*, pp.247, 308–309.

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of anarchy but three types or cultures of anarchies called as Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian.²⁴

Although anarchy constrains states, intersubjective meanings attained to it determine the scope of relations among states. Thus, besides being affected by each other, states also are affected by intersubjective meanings, which are also constructed by states. As a result, state actors and systemic structures are mutually constitutive. In this mutual construction process, states, as intentional corporate bodies, are responsible for both their own identities and interests and also intersubjective meanings when they enter into interaction with others. Through analysis of this construction process, Wendt challenges rationalist theories which reduces states to effects of international structure and neglects the formation of identities and interests within the state, not just behavior of state.²⁵ Nevertheless, this critique of rationalist theories does not rule out rationalist accounts altogether because Wendt's constructivism drawn from structurationist and symbolic interactionist sociology attempts to build bridge between reflectivist and rationalist traditions.²⁶ Wendt admits the distribution of power may always affect states' calculations, but he conditions the distribution of power by the distribution of knowledge, in other words the intersubjective understandings and expectations, because they constitute states' conceptions of self and the other. Consequently, Wendt assumes that all states regardless of their power are influenced by intersubjective understandings, which give meaning to power. In this formulation, Wendt assumes states as equals; yet states differ

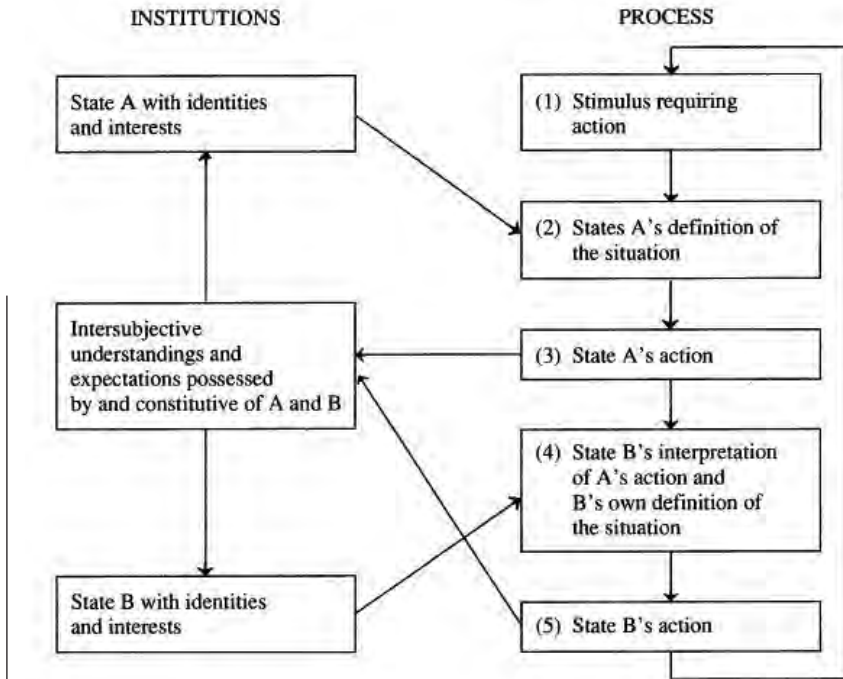
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24 Alexander Wendt argues that among these types of anarchies, Hobbesian system is not inevitable, self-help and power politics do not follow either logically or causally from anarchy as rationalists claim; rather they are institutions of anarchy, not essential features of it, hence anarchy is what states make of it. See Alexander Wendt, 1992, *Ibid.*, pp.394–395, 399. Also see Dale Copeland, *Ibid.*, p.6.

25 *Ibid.*, p.392.

26 *Ibid.*, p.394.

Figure: 1

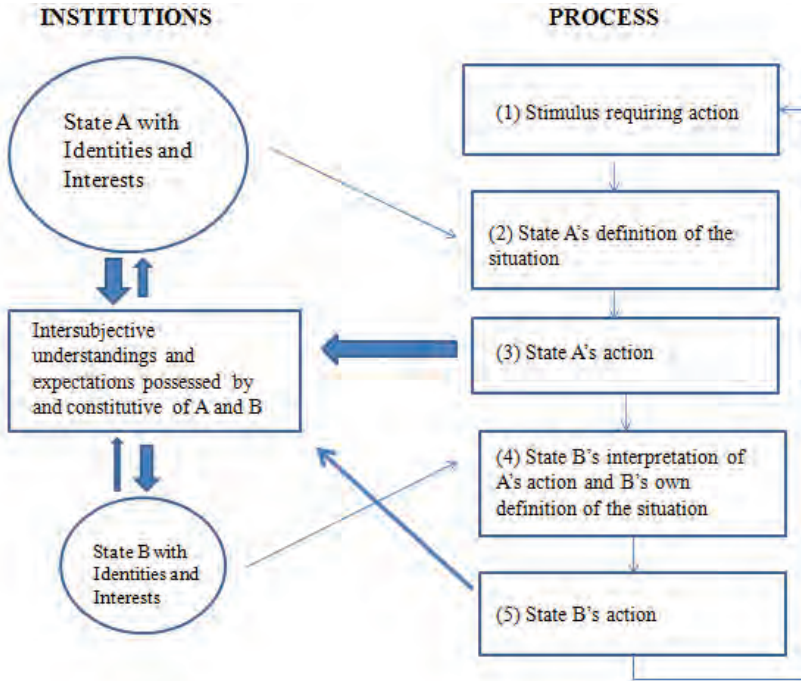


along with their material capabilities and powers. Wendt neglects power disparity in the formation and influence of intersubjective meanings because intersubjective influence can be limited on powerful states compared to less powerful states. The next section introduces my own theoretical model based on revision of Wendt's ideas about the role of power in the construction of intersubjective meanings or institutions.

Wendt Revised: A New Model

In "Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and His Critics" edited by Stefano Guzzini Anna Leander (2006), various scholars criticize Wendt on various issues such as identity, scientific realism

Figure: 2



and grand theory possibility and others; yet, none of these scholars criticized Wendt for neglecting power relations. As discussed in the first part, Wendt theorizes the mutual constitution of actors and intersubjective meanings or institutions as follows:

In his model depicted in *Figure 1* posited in “Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics”,²⁷ Wendt attempts to demonstrate how identities and intersubjective meanings and expectations are shaped through the process. However, in this model of co-determination of institutions and process, Wendt assumes actors symmetrically are

27 Alexander Wendt, 1992, *Ibid.*, p.406.

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affecting and being influenced by intersubjective meanings and expectations. In this formulation, State A and State B are assumed as equal powers both constructing intersubjective understandings and expectations equally and being equally affected as well. However, states differ along with their capabilities and material powers as well as soft powers.²⁸ Therefore, my revised model depicted in Figure 2, incorporates power component, which plays an important role in international politics.

Relative influence on intersubjective meanings and expectations are symbolized as thicker arrows while thinner arrows signified less influence. Since states are not equal in terms of their capabilities and soft powers, their positions should be differentiated. As their powers differ, their influence on the creation of intersubjective meanings and expectations is different, as well. As a result, while State A affects intersubjective understandings and expectations more, State B's effect is lesser. Moreover, since State A has more soft and hard power imbedded in material capabilities, it is less influenced by intersubjective meanings. In this framework, State A's action is more influential than State B's since State A has more say in international arena than State B. As a result, State B has to comply with international rules and norms more than State A and can contribute the creation of intersubjective meanings less than State A. In addition, I believe that apart from states' actions, their position or existence in the international system affects intersubjective understandings and expectations. For instance, although the U.S. does not intervene directly into a weak state's identity and interests or shape it totally, its existence or position in the international system through soft power can influence other states' identities and interests. Therefore, power matters in international politics.

There are many examples of how the U.S as the super power has affected intersubjective meanings as well as institutions. For example,

28 Joseph S. Jr. Nye, "Soft Power", *Foreign Policy*, 1990, No. 80, pp. 153–171.

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sovereignty structure has been one of international institutions, which create international norms such as non-intervention into other states' territorial integrity or domestic politics. However, the U.S., with soft and hard power, has been able to intervene into other states throughout history. Apart from sovereignty, humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion have been one of the intersubjective meanings. Like sovereignty, the U.S. affected these intersubjective meanings via the reinterpretation of self-defense norm and declaring international terrorism as a threat to international peace and security, which can be prevented through democracy promotion.²⁹ For instance, the U.S. note to the UN on 7 October 2001, concerning action in Afghanistan, stated 'We may find that our self-defense requires further actions with respect to other organizations and other states.'³⁰ Thus, the U.S. expanded the boundaries of self-defense and included confronting non-state actors within other states like Afghanistan. In addition to this declaration, the U.S. incorporated this approach to the 2002 National Security Strategy of the U.S. and reaffirmed in the 2006 National Security Strategy, which articulated the role of preemption in national security strategy and to some extent legalized the Bush doctrine of preemption

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29 UN Security Council resolutions declared that international terrorism is a threat to international peace and security with regard to which the right of self-defense is operative. Therefore, large-scale attacks by non-state entities might amount to 'armed attacks' within the framework of article 51; the use of force in self-defense by attacked states is justified. The U.S. took action in Afghanistan against the Al-Qaeda organization which is responsible for the 11 September attacks and justified this action by provisions in the NATO Treaty refer, that specifically both to an 'armed attack' and to article 51 of the UN Charter. However, in reality treaty was not activated because the U.S. acted on its own initiative with specific allies, such as the United Kingdom, by relying on the right of self-defense with the support of international community. See Malcolm N. Shaw, *International Law*, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press 2008), pp.1136-1137.

30 *Ibid.*, p.1140.

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which support deterring any threat before it is unleashed.³¹ However, this doctrine goes beyond what is currently acceptable in international law.³²

Besides the self–defense norm, humanitarian intervention was also articulated with the promotion of democracy along with protecting people under repressive authoritarian regimes and countering international terrorism. The U.S. tried to justify its intervention in Panama in December 1989 as a restoration of democracy but it was not acceptable in international law in the structure of the UN Charter.³³ The Kosovo crisis of 1999 became a corner stone because the NATO bombing, out of UN control area to support repressed ethnic Albanian population within Kosovo, was justified without the UN authorization.³⁴ Despite the lack of UN authorization, it was consistent with the international humanitarian law since the act was not condemned by the UN and attained international support.³⁵ Similar to Panama case, the U.S. used the humanitarian intervention discourse before intervening into Iraq in 2003. In recent years, Syria has occupied the international agenda in terms of humanitarian intervention; yet due to Russian and Chinese veto, no measures could be taken.

To elaborate my arguments, in the next section, I will first discuss the emergence of Turkey’s new identity and in conjunction, I will apply my model to the case study of Turkish foreign policy towards Libya and Syria following the start of rebellions in 2011.

31 Jülide Karakoç, “US Policy Towards Syria Since the Early 2000s”, *Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory*, 2013, Vo l. 41, No. 2, p.229.

32 Malcolm N. Shaw, 2008, *Ibid.*, p.1140.

33 *Ibid.*, p.1158.

34 *Ibid.*, p.1156.

35 *Ibid.*, p.1157.

Turkey's New Identity: Zero Problems with Neighbors

During the JDP government, especially after 2009 when Ahmet Davutoğlu took the foreign minister position, Turkey initiated a new foreign policy with dynamic and multi-dimensional approach replacing old foreign policy understanding, which considered Turkey as a frontier country during the Cold War and a bridge country after the end of it.³⁶ In the old foreign policy understanding, the realist approach in foreign policy was dominant and defensive non-involvement realpolitik was the main principle shaping the diplomatic practices.³⁷ Based on Davutoğlu's world vision, new foreign policy rejected both of these positions because post-Cold War period required new vision and strategy to cope with changing dynamics of international relations.³⁸ Davutoğlu asserted that Turkey has central country status thanks to its geographical location, which provides

36 Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007", *Insight Turkey*, 2008, Vol. 10, No. 1, p.77; Bülent Aras, "The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Insight Turkey*, 2009, Vol. 11, No. 3, p.127; Joshua W. Walker, "Learning Strategic Depth: Implications of Turkey's New Foreign Policy Doctrine", *Insight Turkey*, 2007, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp.44-45.

37 Although it was Turgut Özal, who was the prime minister of Turkey from 1983 to 1989 and the president from 1989 to 1993, attempted to challenge this traditional firstly, and İsmail Cem, who was minister of foreign affairs between 1997 and 2002, tried to establish active foreign policy understanding. However, all these initiatives failed due to lack of domestic support and intertwining this understanding with Özal and Cem with limited time in their positions. Therefore, Davutoğlu's foreign policy approach has not been completely new. Özlem Tür and Ahmet K. Han, "A Framework for Understanding the Changing Turkish Foreign Policy of the 2000s", in *Turkey in the 21st Century: Quest for a New Foreign Policy*, eds. Özden Zeynep Oktav, (Farnham England, Burlington USA: Ashgate Publishing Company 2011), pp.11,25. Birgül Demirtaş, "Turkish-Syrian Relations: From Friend "Esad" to Enemy "Esed"", *Middle East Policy*, 2013, Vol. 20, No. 1, p.111.

38 Ahmet Sözen, "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges", *Turkish Studies*, 2010, Vol. 11, No. 1, p.119; Shaista Shaheen Zafar, "Turkey's 'Zero Problems with Neighbours' Foreign Policy; Relations with Syria", *Journal of European Studies*, 2012, p.145.

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Turkey the “Strategic Depth” along with “historical depth”.³⁹ This new identity of “central country” or “regional and future global power” required change in foreign policy practices as they mirror the national identity.⁴⁰ In order to fulfill the requirements of this central country position and being a center of attraction in the region, Turkey would follow five principles of this new foreign policy approach. These five principles are “balance between security and democracy in a country”, “zero problem policy toward Turkey’s neighbors”, “developing relations with the neighboring regions and beyond”, “adherence to a multidimensional foreign policy”, and “rhythmic diplomacy”.⁴¹ Along with these principles, Turkish foreign policy changed from passive to active in international affairs. For instance,

39 Ahmet Davutoğlu, 2008, *Ibid.*, pp.78–79. For the usage of these terms, also see Joshua W. Walker, *Ibid.*, pp.33–34; Ahmet Sözen, *Ibid.*, p.109; Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, p.226; Alexander Murinson, “The strategic depth doctrine of Turkish foreign policy”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 2006, Vol. 42, No. 6, pp.947,951–952; Siret Hursoy, “Changing Dimensions of Turkey’s Foreign Policy”, *International Studies*, 2011, Vol. 48, No. 2, p.151; Stephen F. Larrabee, “Turkey’s New Geopolitics”, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 2010, Vol. 52, No. 2, p.159.

40 Strategic depth and historical depth are the two concepts constituting the basis of Davutoğlu doctrine. According to Davutoğlu, these advantages give Turkey the chance of pursuing independent policies and becoming a regional and global actor. See Joshua W. Walker 2007, *Ibid.*, p.34.

41 Ahmet Davutoğlu, 2008, *Ibid.*, pp.79–82; Ahmet Sözen, *Ibid.*, p.110; Siret Hursoy, *Ibid.*, p.151; Aylin Güney and Nazif Mandacı, “The meta–geography of the Middle East and North Africa in Turkey’s new geopolitical imagination”, *Security Dialogue*, 2013, Vol. 44, No. 5–6, p.438; Ahmet Davutoğlu, “The Three Major Earthquakes in the International System and Turkey”, *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 2013, Vol. 48, No. 2, p.4; Murat Mercan, “Turkish Foreign Policy and Iran”, *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 2010, pp.15–16; Özden Zeynep Oktav, “Regionalism or Shift of Axis? Turkish–Syrian–Iranian Relations”, in *Turkey in the 21st Century: Quest for a New Foreign Policy*, eds. Özden Zeynep Oktav, (Farnham England and Burlington USA: Ashgate Publishing Company 2011), p.76.

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by intense diplomatic activities Turkey took part in global issues using international platforms.⁴²

Before Davutoğlu period, Turkey had prioritized its relationship with the West and had cut its ties with the Middle East because of Westernization efforts and escape from the Ottoman history.⁴³ However, “Strategic Depth” doctrine with active foreign policy understanding contributed to recovery of relations with neighbors in the Middle East⁴⁴ Davutoğlu adds five general principles of Turkish foreign policy further principles related to the relations with Middle Eastern countries. These principles consist of “security for everyone”, “priority must be given to dialogue as a means of solving crises”, “economic interdependence”, and “cultural coexistence and plurality”.⁴⁵ These principles anticipated desecuritization of relations with the neighbors in the Middle East. Desecuritization in Turkish foreign policy has many causes like the decline in military control over the foreign policy, the impact of the EU conditionality and change in foreign policy making elite.⁴⁶ Whatever the source of desecuritization is, it does not change the fact that desecuritization is part of identity change; hence it should be considered within the framework of new identity, which does not contain only desecuritization but more. Through desecuritization, instead of hard

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42 Ahmet Davutoğlu, 2008, *Ibid.*, p.83.

43 Joshua W. Walker, *Ibid.*, pp.34,37. Alexander Murinson, *Ibid.*, p.945. Graham E. Fuller, “Turkey’s strategic model: Myths and realities”, *The Washington Quarterly*, 2004, Vol. 27, No. 3, p.59.

44 Stephen F. Larrabee, *Ibid.*, p.157. Alexander Murinson, *Ibid.*, p.953.

45 Principles of security for everyone, solving problems through dialogue and democratic values such as plurality and cultural coexistence constituted the basis of Turkey’s peace-prone identity. In addition, Turkey attempted to assert ‘the image of a just and impartial arbiter in foreign policy towards the Middle East’. See Alexander Murinson 2006, *Ibid.*, p.953. Also see Ahmet Davutoğlu 2008, *Ibid.*, pp.84–85, Siret Hursoy 2011, *Ibid.*, p.141, and Aylin Güney and Nazif Mandacı, 2013, *Ibid.*, p.438.

46 Siret Hursoy, *Ibid.*, p.147; Stephen F. Larrabee, *Ibid.*, p.161.

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power, Turkey's new identity emphasized the use of soft power, which targets becoming a center of attraction and inspiring other countries to democratize especially in the Middle East.⁴⁷ As the soft power should be supported by economic power, Turkey turned into a "trading state" through zero problems with neighbors.⁴⁸ In economic terms, Turkey's relations with neighbors grew out of three channels which are increasing economic and trade relations with developing trade volume, broader movement of people and lastly, civil society contacts reinforcing the integration process by assisting the diffusion of values of democracy, conflict resolution and cooperation in addition to liberal market economics.⁴⁹

A significant part of this new approach towards the Middle East has been depicting Turkey as "regional security provider" and "regional arbiter".⁵⁰ Along with the "zero problems with neighbor" policy, this principle in Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East has foreseen cooperation and dialogue with neighbors in order to overcome security problems and foster economic development and prosperity. Moreover, Turkey would

47 Siret Hursoy, *Ibid.*, pp.141–142; Aylin Güney and Nazif Mandacı, *Ibid.*, pp.437,442; Özlem Tür and Ahmet K. Han, *Ibid.*, p.25; Daphne McCurdy, "Turkish–Iranian Relations: When Opposites Attract", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 2008, Vol. 7, No. 2, p.88; Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Süleyman Elik, "Turkey's Growing Relations with Iran and Arab Middle East", *Turkish Studies*, 2011, Vol. 12, No. 4, p.646.

48 Özlem Tür and Ahmet K. Han, *Ibid.*, pp.21,25; Nihat Ali Özcan and Özgür Özdamar, "Uneasy Neighbors: Turkish–Iranian Relations Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution", *Middle East Policy*, 2010, Vol. 17, No. 3, p.111; Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's Engagement with Its Neighborhood: A "Synthetic" and Multidimensional Look at Turkey's Foreign Policy Transformation", *Turkish Studies*, 2012, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 319–321.

49 Kemal Kirişçi, *Ibid.*, pp.320–321.

50 Aylin Güney and Nazif Mandacı, *Ibid.*, pp.438; Bülent Aras and Rabia Karakaya Polat, "From Conflict to Cooperation: Desecuritization of Turkey's Relations with Syria and Iran", *Security Dialogue*, 2008, Vol. 39, No. 5, p.507; Murat Mercan, *Ibid.*, p.16; Siret Hursoy, *Ibid.*, p.153; Murinson, *Ibid.*, p.953; Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.114.

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become a role model for the region, as supported also by the U.S., with reconciling moderate Islam and democracy, and successful economic development.⁵¹ Therefore, Davutoğlu projected becoming a regional power, which would be the first stage of becoming world power.⁵² However, with the outbreak of protests in the Middle East against repressive regimes in 2010 starting with Tunisia, Turkey dragged into a dilemma because helping protest movements would conflict with “zero problems with neighbors” policy; yet siding with repressive governments crushing their own people would violate the principle of security provider and democracy promoter through soft power.⁵³ Under these conditions, the best option compatible with Turkey's new identity would be playing the regional arbiter role, which would balance two principles of “zero problems” and “security provider”. However, being deficient in material capabilities, Turkey could not hold on to its new identity and had to compromise. In addition, the interactions between Turkey and the U.S. contributed making concessions, which started with the humanitarian intervention into Libya.⁵⁴ Moreover, the spread of protest movements to Syria further challenged Turkey's new identity and

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51 Aylin Güney and Nazif Mandacı, *Ibid.*, pp.440; Özlem Tür and Ahmet K. Han, *Ibid.*, p.18; Nihat Ali Özcan and Özgür Özdamar, *Ibid.*, p.140; Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, pp.223, 225, 235, 238; Ömer Taşpınar, “Turkey's Strategic Vision and Syria”, *The Washington Quarterly*, 2012, Vol. 35, No. 3, p. 131.

52 Ahmet Davutoğlu, 2008, *Ibid.*, p.96.

53 Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.116.

54 Walker, (*ibid.*, p.46) argues that Turkey cannot simply pursue its regional policies independent of Washington due to the preponderance of U.S. power at both a global and a regional level. Although mainstream constructivist approach rejects these power structures in explanation of state behavior, my model does not deny the impact of power in states' interaction. Due to asymmetric influence of a super power and middle power in both intersubjective meanings and their mutual identities, it is hard for Turkey to pursue policies without entering interaction with the U.S. However, this does not necessarily mean total domination or bandwagoning of Turkey is compulsory act as realists claim.

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Turkey had to abandon the assertive role that it aspired to play in the pre-Arab Spring period and “zero problems with neighbors” policy gradually.⁵⁵ Therefore, the next section will analyze the concessions in Turkey’s identity and change in Turkish foreign policy towards Libya and Syria.

The Case Study of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Libya: To Intervene or Not to Intervene?

The Middle East and North Africa have been dragged into turmoil starting with protests against authoritarian government in Tunisia in 17 December 2011.⁵⁶ The riots in Tunisia were followed by outbreak of protests in Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya and lastly Syria. Up to now Tunisia’s President Ben Ali, Egypt’s President Hosni Mubarak and Libyan President Moammar Gaddafi have been overthrown from power and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh preceded by his deputy in 2012; only Syrian President Bashar Assad is still struggling to stop insurgents.⁵⁷ NATO organized a humanitarian intervention, starting with 31 March 2011 only to Libya among these states.

Before NATO’s intervention, when debates on a possible intervention were continuing, Turkey opposed to NATO’s intervention into Libya. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said “Military intervention by NATO in Libya or any other country would be totally counter-productive. In addition to being counter-productive, such an operation could have dangerous

55 Ömer Taşpınar (*ibid.*, pp.134–135) remarks that Turkey’s “zero problems with neighbors” policy just turned into “zero neighbors without problems.”; Siret Hursoy, *ibid.*, p.159; Aylin Güney and Nazif Mandacı, *ibid.*, pp.444.

56 BBC News Africa, 2011, “Q&A: Tunisia crisis”, 19/01/2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12157599>

57 Siret Hursoy, *ibid.*, p.159; Ahmet Davutoğlu, *ibid.*, p.6.

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consequences” at an international forum.⁵⁸ His declarations were sharp as he said, “What has NATO to do in Libya? NATO’s intervention in Libya is out of the question. We are against such a thing,” in a speech delivered at a meeting organized by the Turkish–German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Hanover.⁵⁹ Moreover, he bitterly criticized international community for double standard approach by declaring, “We are not one of those who see unearned income when looking at the Balkans. We are not one of those who look at Caucasia, Asia and Africa with interest considerations. This is all what we say: We say democracy, we say human rights, we say justice, we say law and we say international values. We are not one of those who see oil when looking at the Middle East. Whatever we say for Baghdad, we say the same thing for Darfur. Whatever we say for Cairo, we say the same thing for Tripoli.”⁶⁰ Furthermore, Erdoğan blamed Western states as demanding democracy in states with oil sources while keeping silence for democracy in other states without oil reserves; hence, Erdoğan argued that Western states have double standard approach towards other states and they are insincere.⁶¹

One of the main causes of this opposition and harsh criticisms was Turkey’s economic ties with Libya, which included \$10 billion worth of contracts with the regime, and 25,000 Turks were working in the country.⁶²

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58 Herald Sun, 2011, “Turkey opposes NATO Libya intervention”, 14/03/2011, <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/world/turkey-opposes-nato-libya-intervention/story-e6frf7mf-1226021431931>

59 Today’s Zaman, 2011, ‘PM rules out NATO intervention in Libya’, 28/02/2011, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-236953-pm-rules-out-nato-intervention-in-libya.html>;

Jamestown Foundation 2011, ‘Turkey’s Opposition to Military Intervention in Libya’, 17/03/2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4d8846552.html>

60 Today’s Zaman, 2011, *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*

62 Ömer Taşpınar, *Ibid.*, pp.134–135.

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Thus, realist accounts can explain Turkey's negative attitude because NATO's intervention would damage economic interests and activities especially construction investments.⁶³ Moreover, Turkey refrained from taking part in any unilateral NATO intervention because the U.S. and NATO's involvement might have led to an Iraq-like invasion.⁶⁴ However, on the contrary to realist expectations, eventually Turkey agreed to take part in NATO's humanitarian intervention by sending five Turkish warships and one submarine in order to monitor the UN embargo.⁶⁵ While initially, Prime Minister Erdoğan declared the NATO operation as unnecessary and nonsense by harshly criticizing the states supporting any intervention into Libya, just in a month's time he changed his mind and discourse. What was the main drive behind this change in Turkish foreign policy? How can this foreign policy change be explained? Realist and neorealist explanations cannot solve this puzzle because material capabilities of all parties stayed same during two months and Turkey took the initiative despite economic damage. Moreover, one can be suspicious of Turkey's responsibilities towards NATO, which might play role in the change of policy preference through path dependency. However, historical institutionalism borrows analytical tools from constructivism because it uses the internationalization of norms along with path dependency in order to explain foreign policy decisions. Moreover, Turkey did not have to actively contribute to NATO and it could settle with neutrality rather than supporting the operation because NATO membership requires the support of member states only when a member state is attacked by another state but Libya is not a NATO member; hence, there is no obligation of supporting NATO for

63 Henri J. Barkey, "Turkish-Iranian Competition after the Arab Spring", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 2012, Vol. 54, No. 6, p.150.

64 Ömer Taşpınar, *Ibid.*, p.135.

65 Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.116.

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the operation in Libya. Therefore, all of these approaches fail to explain this foreign policy change while constructivist approach offers the best explanation for this puzzle because the main factor behind this was Turkey's new identity, which supported peace and democracy in the Middle East region. Although this operation would both result in damage in economic interests and concession in "zero problems with neighbors" policy, promoting democracy and providing security in the region surpass these concessions. Nevertheless, the preponderance of promotion of democracy and security in the region is a product of Turkey's interaction with the U.S. especially through phone call between the President Barack Obama and the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.⁶⁶ Through this interaction, the U.S. affected the identity of Turkey by adjusting and harmonizing their attitude towards humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion. Moreover, in the past 20 years the U.S. played an important role in setting the boundaries of humanitarian intervention as well as democracy promotion as the Kosovo and Iraq interventions demonstrated.

Consequently, the U.S. affected the construction of intersubjective knowledge or institutions, in this case humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion, more than Turkey and Turkey had to comply with these norms because its material capabilities and power fell short to affect and redefine these norms as the U.S. did. Turkey's inability to foster a collaborative humanitarian intervention into Syria clarifies further the asymmetric influence of Turkey and the U.S. on these norms; hence, the next section focuses on Turkey's foreign policy change towards Syria.

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66 Sabah 2011, "Başbakan Erdoğan Obama ile görüştü", 25/02/2011, Accessed 10 March 2014, http://www.sabah.com.tr/Gundem/2011/02/25/basbakan_erdogan_obama_ile_gorustu.

From Friends to Enemies: Turkish Foreign Policy Change Towards Syria

The protests against repressive governments started in Tunisia and in March 2011 they spread to Syria. Syria was different from Libya and Egypt because Turkey easily sided with protestors and supported transition to democracy.⁶⁷ However, Syria was a more challenging dilemma because good neighborly relations were built in economic, military and economic areas since 2004; hence, Turkey find itself caught in the middle. If Turkey supported protestors, it would have further violated “zero problems with neighbors” policy but if it sides with Bashar al–Assad, then it would have contradicted with its promotion of democracy and security in the region.

The main factor behind Turkey’s fluster was the fact that Turkey invested too much in building friendly relations with Syria. Besides establishing personal relationship between Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Syrian President Bashar al–Assad, who succeeded his father as president in 2000, two countries set up a higher council for strategic cooperation, lifted visa restrictions, arranged joint military exercises and Turkey helped Syria to escape from the isolation, which was the result of the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al–Hariri in 2005.⁶⁸ Overcoming the past problems, especially caused by Syrian support to the Kurdish separatist organization the PKK, through increasing economic, cultural, and diplomatic relations with Damascus even led Turkey to play arbitrary role between Syria and Israel in 2007 and 2008 with its very effective mediation

67 Ayşe Zarakol, “Problem areas for the new Turkish foreign policy”, *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 2012, Vol. 40, No. 5, p.739.

68 Ömer Taşpınar, *Ibid.*, pp.135; Joshua W. Walker, *Ibid.*, pp.39–40; Bülent Aras and Rabia Karakaya Polat, *Ibid.*, pp.510–511; Stephen F. Larrabee, *Ibid.*, p.166; Shaista Shaheen Zafar, *Ibid.*, pp.154–155; Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.111. Henri J. Barkey, *Ibid.*, p.151. Oktav, *Ibid.*, p.77 Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür, “From Distant Neighbors to Partners? Changing Syrian–Turkish Relations”, *Security Dialogue*, 2006, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp.242–243.

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efforts.⁶⁹ Therefore, it was hard for Turkey to take side with protestors at this time. Turkey chose to pressure Assad government for the social, economic, and political reforms, which would put an end to protests. However, Assad did not pay attention to Turkey's push for reforms and vocal admonitions and Assad's insistence on staying in power seriously undermined Turkish efforts to mediate between protestors and the government.⁷⁰ Thus, by June Erdoğan started to raise his critical voice towards Assad regime by accusing him not to hold his promises regarding reforms.⁷¹ As Assad's attitude seriously undermined Turkey's claim of being a regional leader, Erdoğan's critiques got offensive.⁷² By November 2011, Turkey made its mind that the Syrian President had to go, hence, several meetings of the Syrian opposition were held in Turkey and the second "Friends of the Syrian People" Summit was held in Istanbul in April 2012.⁷³

Turkey's attitude towards protests in Syria has struck contrast with its stance since June 2011.⁷⁴ Meanwhile, the protests in Syria turned into a

69 Ömer Taşpınar, *Ibid.*, p.137; Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.114; Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, p.228.

70 Siret Hursoy, *Ibid.*, p.157; Shaista Shaheen Zafar, *Ibid.*, pp.157–158; Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.116; Henri J. Barkey, *Ibid.*, p.151.

71 Ömer Taşpınar, *Ibid.*, p.137.

72 Ayşe Zarakol, *Ibid.*, p.740.

73 Ömer Taşpınar, *Ibid.*, p.137.

74 Ted Galen Carpenter explains this policy change by the religious aspect of the Syrian conflict. According to Carpenter, when the Syrian conflict exploded in 2011, the Erdoğan government soon made a deal with Saudi Arabia about the regime change in Syria because Erdoğan's ruling conservative Sunni party cannot tolerate Alawite and Christian Syrian military slaughtering Sunni insurgents and civilians. Along with this plan, Ankara has provided sanctuaries inside Turkey to the Free Syrian Army and has given funds and other aid to the insurgents. However, what Carpenter is missing that the violence did not start after June when Ankara changed its mind, violence was already there and Sunni insurgents were dying. In this case, instead of waiting Assad to implement reforms for almost three months, Turkey could have taken necessary measures and already started supporting the opposition. Therefore, although sectarian aspect might have played a role in Turkey's

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sectarian civil war and the Syrian government has kept using force against protestors of the regime because Bashar Assad decided that protests in Tunisia and Egypt would not become successful if they were crushed from the beginning, thus, the protestors in Syria must be prevented by all means.⁷⁵ By turning into a bloody civil war, violence got out of hand, because various groups in Syria are fighting over consolidating sectarian cantonization, or the creation of sub-national units, each of which is dominated by a predominant sect.⁷⁶ Moreover, the extent of Sunni domination of the rebel Free Syrian Army and the Syrian National Council, the insurgents' political leadership in exile, was alarming because while the Assad coalition is secular, the ideological composition of the opposition is far more opaque; hence, there have been massacres of opposition groups.⁷⁷

Syria became the battleground of alliances constituted by Syrian government and Iran backed by Russia and China on the one side and Saudi Arabia and Turkey backed by the U.S. on the other.⁷⁸ This polarization revealed itself during the February 2012 decision by both Moscow and Beijing to veto a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the violence in Syria and calling for an immediate end to the bloodshed.⁷⁹

decision to support the opposition, it does not explain the whole picture. In addition, Davutoğlu (2013) claims that Turkey supported protestors in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt despite the fact that leaders in these countries were Sunni Muslims; hence, he tries to refute sectarian claims like Carpenter has. See Ted Galen Carpenter, "Tangled Web: The Syrian Civil War and Its Implications", *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 2013, Vol. 24, No. 1, p.5.

75 Steven Heydemann, "Syria and the Future of Authoritarianism", *Journal of Democracy*, 2013, Vol. 24, No. 4, p.62.

76 Ted Galen Carpenter, *Ibid.*, p.3; Steven Heydemann, *Ibid.*, p.62.

77 Ted Galen Carpenter, *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.

78 Emile Hokayem, "Syria and its Neighbours", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 2012, Vol. 54, No. 2, pp.9,13; Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, p.223; Steven Heydemann, *Ibid.*, p.63.

79 Amir Taheri, "Has the Time Come for Military Intervention in Syria?", *American Foreign Policy Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy*, 2013, Vol.

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During the George W. Bush administration the rapprochement between Syria and Turkey created frustration in the U.S.; yet, the Obama administration changed the former policy and approved Turkey's close ties with Syria because this relationship could reduce the effect of Iran in the region and focused on rebuilding a strong strategic partnership with Turkey.⁸⁰ However, the break out of civil war in Syria reversed the policy calculations and the Obama administration started to search for democratic transition in Syria. This shift in foreign policy based on the "responsibility to protect" doctrine which necessitates military intervention of international community for saving repressed civilians from brutal authoritarian regimes as it was the case in Kosovo and Libya interventions.⁸¹ This doctrine has been interpreted as a way of spreading democracy and initiating democratic transition by creating a duality and emphasizing the contrast between authoritarian and democratic states although the Obama administration based this policy on Turkey and Saudi Arabia, which are not good representatives of democracy either.⁸² Since the protests started on 18 March 2011 only until mid-November 2011 approximately 3,500 Syrians had been killed while at the time 1.2 million Syrians were refugees in neighboring countries and most of them, 900,000 people, in Turkey.⁸³

The huge number of refugees, killings and tortures led Turkey and U.S. to agree on the idea that Assad must step down and there should be a

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35, No. 4, p. 217; Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, p.241; Ted Galen Carpenter, *Ibid.*, pp.7–10.

80 Stephen F. Larrabee, *Ibid.*, pp.166,176; Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür, *Ibid.*, p.243.

81 Ted Galen Carpenter, *Ibid.*, pp.9–10.

82 Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, pp.234–236.

83 In 2017, the number of Syrian refugees has reached almost 3 million. See Aljazeera, 2017, 'UN: Number of Syrian refugees passes five million', 30/03/2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/number-syrian-refugees-passes-million-170330132040023.html>. Shaista Shaheen Zafar, *Ibid.*, p.158; Amir Taheri, *Ibid.*, p.217.

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democratic transition in Syria. Turkey has accepted Syrian refugees but at the same time, it became the center of training and meeting of opposition groups.⁸⁴ As a response to this support, Syrian forces hit a Turkish jet on June 22, 2012 and Turkey further raised its critical voice and tried to provoke the U.S. for humanitarian intervention into Syria like Libya and Kosovo because despite support for opposition groups, Assad was still in power and does not have any intention to leave the power.⁸⁵ Although humanitarian crisis in Syria went beyond a small scale humanitarian crisis in Kosovo, the U.S. considered the use of chemical weapons as the condition for military intervention by changing the humanitarian intervention norm. However, even though Syria used these weapons, the U.S. refrained from taking military action; instead, struck a bargain with Russia in September 2013 to prevent Syria using chemical weapons.⁸⁶ Besides the Russia's protectorate of Syria, one of the main reasons of this step back was uncertainty of Syria's future because even though Assad is overthrown, there would be a danger of Syria's fragmentation into three sectarian and ethnic zones controlled by the regime, the Arab opposition, and a third

84 Emile Hokayem, *Ibid.*, p.9; Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.117; Jülide Karakoç, *Ibid.*, p.238. ;Henri J. Barkey, *Ibid.*, p.156; Seth G. Jones, "Syria's Growing Jihad", *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 2013, Vol. 55, No. 4, p.64.

85 Eyal Zisser clarifies the conditions created the protests and why Assad is still in the government despite intense struggle with the protestors. The protests began because periphery turned its back on the regime due to years of severe drought that struck mainly the peripheral areas of the country in addition to domino effect of the revolutions in other countries. Bashar Assad is still in power because big cities and the Syrian bourgeoisie support the regime and there is solidarity, loyalty and commitment to the regime among governmental apparatus and state institutions, Zisser argues. See Eyal Zisser, "The 'Struggle for Syria': Return to the Past?", *Mediterranean Politics*, 2012, Vol. 17, No. 1, p.108. Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, p.117.

86 Warren Strobel and Miriam Karouny, "U.S., Russia agree on Syria weapons, Obama says force still option", *Reuters*, 14/09/2013, Accessed 10 March 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/14/us-syria-crisis-idUSBRE98A15720130914>

one controlled by the Kurdish forces allied with Kurdish counterparts in Northern Iraq and Southeastern Turkey. Besides, Syria turned into a heaven for Qaeda-affiliated organizations.⁸⁷

Meanwhile, Turkey both has suffered the increasing costs of Syrian refugees and persisted in calling for humanitarian intervention. Like Libya case, Turkey's approach to the Syrian issue not just contradicted with "zero problems with neighbors" policy but also almost abandonment of it as it called for military intervention.⁸⁸ Although Turkey was willing to do whatever necessary to remove Assad by calling for humanitarian intervention, due to its limited capacity and power to change intersubjective knowledge or institution — in this case humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion— Turkey has had to live with the fact that there will not be a humanitarian intervention soon.

Conclusion

Throughout this paper, I attempted to present Alexander Wendt's constructivist arguments, which I believe shed light to identity and interest construction process of states and intersubjective institutions and norms. However, since Wendt assumes states as equivalent in this construction process, I posited my model by building on Wendt's ideas and adding power component, which is imbedded in material capabilities, to it. I argued that on the international arena, states have different material and ideational capabilities; hence, great powers have more influence on the creation of intersubjective meanings and expectations. Moreover, weak states have to comply with the international rules and norms to which they contribute less whereas great powers are not constrained by international social structure as much as weak states. Furthermore, weak states' identities and

87 Steven Heydemann, *Ibid.*, p.70; Seth G. Jones, *Ibid.*, p.53; Eyal Zisser, *Ibid.*, p.108.

88 Birgül Demirtaş, *Ibid.*, pp.117–118.

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interests are simultaneously affected by the influence of powerful states and intersubjective institutions, which are heavily influenced by powerful states.

Within constructivist framework provided by Wendt and my revised model, I analyzed the construction process of Turkey's new identity under JPD leadership. I applied my model to Turkish foreign policy towards Libya and Syria and argued that Turkey's identity has been affected by humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion norms, which are intensively affected by the U.S thanks to being super power. In Turkey's foreign policy approaches towards these two states, whenever there is a dilemma of choosing between security and promotion of democracy, which are the main principles of Turkey's new identity, Turkey has chosen the former. Turkey's decision to make concession of its new identity has been a product of the interaction process between the U.S and Turkey as the cases of Libya and Syria have demonstrated. Turkey has affected the intersubjective knowledge and institutions —humanitarian intervention and democracy promotion as well as threat perception of international organizations— less than the U.S.; hence, it has followed the international norms mainly articulated by the U.S.

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